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Memoirs of William T. Cowan, pioneer merchant of northern Montana

Jean Keller Crockett

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THE MEMOIRS OF WILLIAM T. COWAN
PIONEER MERCHANT OF NORTHERN MONTANA

By

JEAN COWAN CROCKETT

B. A. MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY, 1926

Presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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1957

Approved by:

[Signatures and dates]
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Mr. Mervey Moore, Librarian at North Montana College
Havre, has been most generous with books, suggestions, actual looking up of material, and allowing the use of the library facilities during vacation periods. Virginia Walton of the Historical Library in Helena has generously helped with research and has written letters to other libraries for material. M. Catherine White, librarian at the University of Montana, found material which was difficult to locate and gave freely of her advice and suggestions.

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Jean Cowan Crockett
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INTRODUCTION

Realizing the lack of historical facts written about Northern Montana I have edited these Memoirs left by my father, William Thomas Cowan. They contain accurate and true accounts of hitherto unpublished facts about this section of the state.

In addition to leaving his unpublished Memoirs he saved a vast accumulation of papers concerning accounts of trading with the officers at Fort Assiniboine and records of sales of land from 1904 including the papers concerning the sale of five thousand acres of his land to the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in 1939. He kept business letters relative to the business in Box Elder from its beginning in 1889, including Articles of Incorporation of the Rocky Boy Trading Company in 1931 which Cowan and Son operated until 1955. He has kept a record of his correspondence during the twelve years he was a member of the Montana State Senate. He had data, letters, and surveys relative to the beginning of the agency at Rocky Boy, the steps leading to building of the Tiber Dam on the Marias Irrigation Project, and the formation of the college of Northern Montana at Havre.

William Cowan was in business from the age of fifteen,
when he assisted his father, until three months before his death at the age of seventy-seven on January 18, 1951. His father relied on his son and never regained his feeling of confidence and business sureness that he had before his bankruptcy in Winnipeg. William quickly assumed responsibility for his mother and for his two sisters. After his father's death on January 18, 1925 he cared for his mother until her death at the age of ninety-three in 1939.

He was always generous to a fault with his own four children and most of his friends could always "borrow" a few dollars from "Bill" Cowan. He did not accumulate wealth nor did he care for more than a comfortable home. He never desired a show place. He did accumulate friends who even now remember him and speak with pride that they can be numbered as his friends. He always bought second hand cars and drove them until they were ready to fall to pieces.

His philosophy of life was that the simple life was the best. He was God-fearing and honest and truthful. He attended church regularly, but used to say he enjoyed it more when the sermon was poor because he felt in that way he did more penance for his sins. He believed in the free-enterprise system. He felt that a person should try to engage in several activities and if one failed another could be depended upon to carry one over any emergency. He would deny himself pleasures in order to provide for sickness and old age. He rarely took a vacation, hurried at the
noon hour to get back to work, worked long hours, and did not believe that the world owed him a living. When he received his first check for not putting in a crop his sense of right and wrong was truly shocked. He could not understand the philosophy of a government that would pay a man for something he had not done. In other words, he did not understand or believe in the "New Deal" philosophy. When his children were young and dependent he carried much insurance so they would not be left in want if something happened to him. He belonged to the "old school" and there are not many like him left today. He contributed generously to the church and other charities and always was willing to help a fellow man in distress. Part of this aid consisted in giving credit for groceries to the extent that he never collected over one hundred and fifty thousand dollars due him from credit sales. Some of these accounts were carried for a period of several years. He did not consider bankruptcy because he felt that it was dishonest, but he had many hard years trying to pay back that money, most of which he paid off after his father died. Undoubtedly the firm was too generous with credit. He used to say that people traded with him until they were ashamed to face him, and then they went to Havre and paid cash at some chain store. He did not favor chain stores and has left much literature denouncing them. The old bills of these unpaid and uncollectable accounts are still in the store.
He did try to collect these bills and secured the services of C. F. Morris, a lawyer in Havre, to assist him. In order to make it easier for his creditors to pay he deducted four hundred dollars from the amount of the bill if the debtor would pay two hundred. During the years of 1915 and 1916 the store did an average business of eight hundred dollars per day. Of course, more than half of that was on "time." The net profit of the business in 1916 was forty-one thousand dollars. Although the income tax law was passed late in 1913 the rates were very low in comparison to today. Considering that Box Elder was a grassy spot in Montana with only a few Indians in the territory before David Cowan moved there the business that did develop was quite spectacular. The town was always small, there was no payroll of any extent and all the business was with the farmers settled in the surrounding territory and the Indians.

William Thomas Cowan was born September 21, 1874 in Norfolk County near Simcoe, Ontario. His mother was Jane McKim. Although of Canadian birth there was no one more loyal to the United States government than he. His children were taught a profound respect for the government and their obligations to vote, to pay their taxes and obey the laws. An ardent Republican all his life he had many life-long friends of the opposite party. When it seemed his duty he ran for office and served faithfully in the Montana Legislature for twelve years. When he was defeated in 1932, at
the time of the Democratic landslide, he continued to work for his country, state, and community.

He did seriously consider running for governor before the close of John E. Erickson's term in 1932. In fact he went to a meeting in Helena with the intention of doing so. He attended a meeting with some of his friends and near the close of the discussion he was offered a check of eight hundred dollars by a representative of the A. C. M. (now Anaconda Company) in order to begin his campaign. That was enough for him. He decided then and there that if he had to sell his soul to become governor of the state he would remain where he was. He was chairman of the Hill County State Republican Committee and also served under Governor Ayres as a member of the State Board of Education.

Many people when dissatisfied with their environment leave and make a home elsewhere. That was not the way Cowan did things. He believed in the saying that a "rolling stone gathers no moss" and spent most of his life trying to improve his own community. He worked for two things, irrigation for the land and higher education for the children. He knew from the years there was rain that crops could be raised in Montana. He wrote to his senators and representatives, caused the formation of irrigation organizations, wrote and talked about irrigation. He was called the "father" of the Marias Irrigation Project.

When President Truman shoveled the first load of
dirt from Tiber Dam near Chester, Montana, Mrs. W. T. Cowan was honored and introduced. Among guests on the platform who were introduced were Congressman Mike Mansfield, Senator James E. Murray, Secretary of Interior, Oscar Chapman, and Mr. Michael W. Stauss, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, Washington, D. C., and John W. Bonner, Governor of Montana. The ground-breaking ceremony took place on September 18, 1952. He saw the need for an institution in this section so that the children would not have to travel over three hundred miles to reach a college. It was largely through his efforts in the state legislature that Northern Montana College was established in 1928. A new building was dedicated on November 16, 1953 and again Mrs. Cowan was honored and introduced. The new building was named Cowan Hall in his honor.

The following account of the history of the business in Box Elder is taken from the Cowan papers.

David Cowan started a small store or trading post, as it was then called, in Box Elder in 1889. While operating the store he bought furs and buffalo bones from the Indians. He took contracts for cord wood, hay, and coal for the army at Fort Assiniboine. This trading area covered more than a fifty mile territory. Later he developed and operated a ranch four miles north of Box Elder on which he raised hay, cattle, and sheep. In 1907 the trading post was destroyed by fire and Mr. Cowan continued his business in a small
building until he built the present store. In 1914 he built and operated the Cowan and Son grain elevator. By this time William T. Cowan had acquired a half ownership in the business. When David Cowan died in 1925, William bought the interest from his sisters, Mrs. A. H. Thompson and Mrs. W. W. Jones. William E. Cowan assisted his father, William T. Cowan, until he enlisted in the army in 1942. He returned in 1945 and has since operated the business. He has built another elevator and also repaired the old store.

It is hoped that the publishing of these Memoirs will add a little to the meager knowledge we have of this section of the state and that more work of this kind will be undertaken. The editing of these Memoirs has been the work of two years of enthusiastic and concentrated effort, but the Memoirs are the result of a life-time of observation and study of this section of Northern Montana.

They were written and compiled over a period of many years and typed into book form for the first time during 1950. Cowan kept all his business papers, and, enroute, made detailed accounts of trips; he used these to refresh his memory before writing his chapters.

In editing these Memoirs the author did not change punctuation or the body of the text. Only minor changes were made when they were obviously errors in typing. It seemed more interesting to leave the papers in Cowan's original style. These Memoirs are exactly as written by
William T. Cowan with the exception that one page concerning Pershing was omitted, as it was the reprint of a magazine article.
Obviously the Cowan family must have come from some place. There must have been some kind of background. It is with the object of passing on to my children a story covering this and telling in more detail, the history of the struggles, ups and downs, incurred in keeping a small business a going concern for more than half a century that I am attempting to write this record.

My paternal grandfather, William Cowan was quite a story teller and historian of the Cowan family. My mother and father also have told me many things as time went on.

For instance, when I was leaving home to go to school in Helena, Montana, in the winter of 1893, my father called me aside to give some advice. He said, as nearly as I can recall, about as follows:

"Now William, you are going away from home for the first time. I know you have been raised right and I know you will behave yourself, but we Cowans have a rather definite Code of Morals. When I first left home, your grandfather passed it along to me, and I am going to hand it on to you—"

Don't lie. Only a coward tries to get out of his mistakes by lying. Don't steal, for after all, life is only a game, and no one feels very happy over cheating to win. If you find you cannot carry liquor like a gentleman, do not
drink, and lastly, never betray the confidence of a lady.
I am not discussing religion, but if you adhere to the code
I have just told you, you will not get into much trouble."

Where father and grandfather got this code, I do not
know, but I agree with them that it is good advice.¹

ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE COWANS

According to family tradition, the Cowans were members
of the Clan Colquhoun. This clan was composed of the Cowans,
MacCowans, Cowans, MacCowans, Kilpatricks, Kirpatricks, and
Ingrams. The ancestral home was around Loch Lomand, a part
of Scotland noted for its beauty of scenery.²

May I digress at this point to record a Scottish
legend?

You will note from the above that there were Cowans
and MacCowans. The legend goes something like this:

At one time, this part of Scotland was invaded by
the Scandinavians. They bested the Scotch in battle and
proceeded to take over the families of the Scots. These
doughty warriors believed in the saying, "He who fights and
runs away, will live to fight another day." At any rate,
the Scottish warriors retired to the Highlands. The invaders
promptly took over the wives and families of the defeated foe.
The wives of the Scotchmen, in order to distinguish the sons
of their Scotch husbands from the sons of the invaders, called
the Scotch sons, "Mac," and the sons born from the invaders
just plain "Cowan," or "Donald," as the case might be. If there is any truth to this legend, then the Cowans must have had in their background, Scandinavian blood. In any event, the legend continues and alleges that the Scottish women conspired together and decided to rid their country of the invaders and agreed to drive a dagger in the hearts of the usurpers upon a certain date at midnight. With the invaders thus disposed of, no doubt the Scottish warriors returned to their firesides.

However, to continue my story. Those of you who have read Scottish History, will recall that when Mary, Queen of Scots, was reigning over the country, she was married to Lord Darnley who had been a Court favorite. Darnley was not satisfied to be a Prince Consort, but continually urged Queen Mary to make him King. This ambition was bitterly opposed by the Scottish Nobles. So upon the birth of Queen Mary's first child, a son, these Nobles promptly had him crowned King. This child thus became James the Sixth of Scotland and, upon the death of Elizabeth, Queen of England, he was called to the English throne, becoming James the First of England. This united the two countries under one King.

To revert to the incidents which followed the crowning of this child as King of Scotland. The Nobles appointed one of themselves Regent. During the minority of King James there were several Regents. The one who was acting when James came of age was Lord Douglas, head of the Hamilton Clan. James
promptly took over the perogatives of King, and Douglas fled in fear of his life and took refuge with the Clan Colquhouns. The King promptly sent a detachment of soldiers to apprehend Douglas. The Hamiltons and Colquhouns were allies, and Sir Humphrey Colquhoun promptly sent out the fiery cross and assembled his clansmen and attempted to defend the Douglas. The Clan was defeated with the loss of two hundred fighting men. In retaliation for this action, the Clan lands were confiscated, and the members of the Clan driven from their ancient homes. As a consequence, the Colquhouns scattered through Scotland and were driven into trade and business. The Cowans were thus turned into innkeepers, shopkeepers and laborers.3

With the invasion of Ireland by Cromwell, many of the family settled in Northern Ireland. With the establishing of colonies in North America, many established homes in the new country.4

HOW OUR BRANCH OF THE FAMILY CAME TO AMERICA

According to family tradition, there were twelve sons in my great-grandfather's family. Eight of these came to the American Colonies and scattered along the Atlantic seaboard from New York to the Carolinas.

One of the brothers—David Cowan, (my father was named for him) was employed by George Washington as a landscape gardner on his farm or plantation at Mount Vernon.5
In the year 1919, I was sent by the people of Northern Montana as a delegate to Washington, D. C. We, that is, the delegation, represented the Sun River Irrigation Project, The Milk River, and The Marias River Projects. Our delegation was headed by the late Louis Newman, Mayor of Great Falls, Phil Col of Chouteau, W. J. Coburn of Cut Bank, Judge Dignan of Glasgow, Fred Gillette of Hinsdale, and several others whose names I do not recall, and myself.

While visiting Washington, and between hearings before various Senate and House Committees, I took advantage of my proximity to visit Mount Vernon. While looking over the mansion and grounds, I noticed a gentleman coming out of the manager's cottage. I introduced myself to him and told him that a member of my family had been employed on the estate, prior to the American Revolution. This gentleman asked the name and upon my telling him David Cowan, he smiled and asked me if I was a citizen of the United States or from the British possessions. He also told me that General Washington kept a Diary or Log book and had recorded the fact that Cowan had been employed by him.

The manager then took me and Mr. Gifford of Loma, one of our delegation, on a personally conducted tour of the grounds, pointing out roads that David Cowan had laid out and trees that he had planted, but explained that as General Washington owned slaves, the work done by David Cowan was that of supervision and direction. He stated that the road
building and landscape gardening was of a high order and a credit to the supervisor. 6

When we went to the burial place of General Washington, he pointed out that the Mausoleum where the General's body had been placed was a very modest brick structure that, as he said, cost some $250.00 to erect. I was particularly struck by his remarks in regard to this. As nearly as I can recollect he said: "It may seem strange to you that a great rich nation like the United States would leave the remains of their greatest man in such a small, insignificant vault. The reason for this is that General Washington designed this crypt with his own hands. The nation has always respected his wish." 7

The manager then took us through the mansion, pointing out the marble fireplace that Lord Fairfax shipped from England when General Washington was remodeling his mansion. We also were shown the room in which General Washington died and the rather small room which Mrs. Washington occupied after the General passed away, and in which she went to her reward. In explanation of the small room occupied by Mrs. Washington, we were told that at that period no one occupied a room in which there had been a death until at least three months' time had elapsed.

Considering the circumstances, this visit to Mount Vernon, and the courtesy extended to me by the manager of the estate remains one of the most delightful memories of my life and made me eternally grateful to the kinsman of long ago who
apparently left a record which still commands respect.

According to family tradition, at the outbreak of the War for Independence, General Washington suggested that David Cowan enter the American Army and offered him an officer's commission. However, this offer was declined. Cowan being of Scottish birth, desired to remain loyal to the British King. General Washington then gave him a letter of recommendation and a letter of safe conduct.8

David Cowan went north into Canada and entered the British Navy at Montreal, serving during the war. He had been promoted to the rank of Commodore by the end of the war.9

As a reward for his services, he was given a grant of 2500 acres of land near what is now Sarnia in the Province of Ontario.10

This David Cowan never married and died without a family. Under the law of succession, the grant of land went to his father, who was my great-great-grandfather.

My great-great-grandfather was quite an old man at the time, and had an inn and farm about twenty miles from Glasgow, Scotland. He still had three of his sons, John, my great-grandfather; William, and Alexander.11 The lure of 2500 acres of land in America was too much of an attraction. That many acres in Scotland would have made them members of the landed gentry. So, it was decided to dispose of their property and sail to Canada to take over this inheritance.

A trip across the Atlantic in those days was no idle
undertaking. My grandfather was born after the family reached Canada, but apparently the ocean voyage was quite an episode. It must have been talked over, told, and retold, for grandfather seemed well versed on the hardships incurred. It took three months to make the crossing. Adverse winds blew the vessel off its course and everyone on it nearly starved before reaching Montreal.

ON FROM MONTREAL

Upon arriving at Montreal, a welcome haven after the long ocean voyage, the only way of travel was by bateaux, or river boats. My grandfather seemed rather uninformed in regard to how his father and grandfather with their folks and retainers proceeded up the St. Lawrence River, but was under the impression that they must have hired their passage.

I have just mentioned family and retainers in the former paragraph. It appears that not only were there in the party my great-great-grandfather, his three sons and their families, but there were also several additional people. I can remember as a boy, hearing several families spoken of as having originally come to Canada with my grandfather's people. I recall the Davidsons, the Powells, and the Collines. There may have been others of whom I am not aware.

At any rate, the voyagers finally reached Kingston, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. By this time, the location of the land grant had been somewhat located. As
stated before, it was in the vicinity of where the city of Sarnia in the Province of Ontario now stands. They were told that the country was a wilderness, covered with heavy timber, and it would be practically impossible to establish homes on the grant.

In any event, Alexander Cowan, one of the brothers of my great-grandfather, decided he had had enough and decided to stop at Kingston. This branch of the family later became known as the "Cocoa Kings" of Canada. The sight of billboards and signs carrying advertisements of "Cowan's Chocolate and Cocoa," was a familiar sight all over Canada.

You will realize, of course, that my great-grandfather, John Cowan, by reason of the advanced age of his father, who inherited the land grant, had by this time become the leader of the party.

He decided to press on. It became necessary to hire ox teams to portage the household goods and equipment around Niagara Falls.

There must have been considerable household effects and other property. There is still some of this owned by various members of the family. I remember one heavy oak table, large oak trunks and the like. On one trip, I discovered some brass candlesticks stored in a barn belonging to my Uncle James Blayney. I tried to buy them, but had no success. Evidently, the Scotch traits about which so many jokes are made still
prevail among my kinfolks. Along with the candlesticks there were some Cavalry swords that were abandoned by the soldiers on the battlefield of Lundy's Lane.\textsuperscript{17} I tried to buy one of these but was told that my relatives had intended to have these implements of war made into corn knives and they could not think of selling them. It was some 125 years after the battle was fought, but my relatives still had hopes of getting around to getting the knives made.

However, to get on with my story. After portaging around the Falls, my folks apparently secured some sort of boat transportation. They continued their journey, skirting along the north shore of Lake Erie. They finally came to a small settlement called Vittoria.\textsuperscript{18} By this time one other brother, William, decided he had gone far enough and was going to stay.

My great-grandfather, apparently disheartened by the decision of his two brothers, decided to buy some land. Lord Simcoe\textsuperscript{19} had been given or had obtained possession of a grant of land a few miles north of the settlement at Vittoria, along the Lynn Creek or River.

John Cowan bought 300 acres of land from Lord Simcoe or his agent. At any rate, this tract of land was about eight miles from the town of Simcoe, county seat of what later became Norfolk County.

My grandfather told me that the land his father had in Scotland was a heavy clay. The land John Cowan selected in
Canada was light sand, and according to my grandfather, was covered with light oak and pine timber. It was evidently easy to clear and that may have been an incentive. At any rate, here, the family settled.\textsuperscript{20}

Great-grandfather had four sons in his family. John, James, and Alexander were born in Scotland; also, one or two girls whose names I have heard but cannot recall. Grandfather, who was named William, and his youngest sister, Mary, were born after the family came to Ontario.

I can remember when I was a small boy visiting with my father and mother at grandfather’s house. He still lived in the house erected by his father. The three oldest boys struck out for themselves as they came of age. Land, of course, was no particular attraction at that time.\textsuperscript{21} It could be had for a very nominal figure. Grandfather, being the youngest, was to stay on the home farm and take care of his father and mother. That was the custom in those days. As a reward, he was to have the home farm. My great-grandmother, after the death of my great-grandfather, decided to go and live with her youngest daughter, Mary. So, as long as she lived, my grandfather paid his sister to look after the mother.

I can remember when I was a very small boy, I do not know how old, but on one visit we made, my great-grandmother was visiting grandfather. She was a tall woman dressed in a gray dress and wore a white bonnet. I can distinctly remember
her to this day. She asked to have me brought to her so she could find out what I looked like. I remember going to her and having her pass her hands over my face. I could not understand, so mother told me, that she was totally blind, but could tell from feeling my arms, legs, body, and face, how large I was, and what kind of features I had.

The house grandfather lived in, was, as I remember it, a large log structure. The front center or living room was quite large and had a stone or brick floor. There were bedrooms on each side of this main room, and a kitchen and dining room combined at the back. In this living room there was a large fireplace at the back end. This fireplace was large enough so that in the fall a large green hardwood log about eight feet long could be drawn into the room with a horse and rolled to the back of the fireplace. This was what is called a "backlog." The regular fire was built in front of this backlog. Matches, either having not been invented, or high priced, the fire was banked at night with ashes and so kept alive all night.22

There were swinging iron contrivances on which a tea kettle or dutch oven could be hung to boil water or cook food. Of course by the time I arrived on this earth, regular cast iron stoves had replaced the fireplace as a method of preparing food. However, when father and mother went visiting, I can remember my grandmother heating water on the fireplace for
The living room with a good roaring fire was a very pleasant place. It was used as a sitting room. The fire from the hearth helped out with the candlelight. Then the men would sit by the fire and spin yarns as they whittled off shavings to light at the flame to ignite the tobacco in their pipes. 23

Grandmother generally had her spinning wheel going, and I can still remember the ache in my muscles as I held my arms while she made a skein of yarn.

There was a loom house in the farm. It had not been so long since the women folks carded the wool, spun the yarn, and wove cloth. I can remember grandmother wove cloth when I was a boy, but by that time they had taken the wool to a carding mill where it was washed, and made into little rolls of soft wool, ready to be twisted into yarn on the family spinning wheel. Also the cloth was taken to a tailor who made the cloth into pants and suits. I remember my grandfather saying a pair of trousers made from homespun yarn would outlast a dozen pairs of store trousers.

Of course all the socks were knit at home and also mittens and warm scarfs to go around our neck. A boy fitted out with home-made stockings, mittens, and scarf did not need much more clothes.

The men folks all wore high-top boots. I cannot remember their having overshoes. So one of the activities of father and
the hired man or men, was to grease their boots with tallow made from mutton fat. This was done nearly every night and was supposed to keep the boots waterproof and pliable.

Of course, by the time I was born, the real primitive conditions that prevailed previously had passed. I can remember going with my grandfather to the grist mill. Father lived about a mile west of my grandfather's home. The mill was located about at Lynedoch, an inland village about a mile still farther along the road.

This mill was run by water power. I can remember at least one time when grandfather came by our place with his load of grain for the mill. Of course he stopped for me.

When we got to the mill, it appeared that the water was low in the dam and it was necessary to put down the headgates to accumulate a head of water to run the mill. Of course I presume this was a regular part of the procedure, but at least it gave grandfather and the miller a chance to sit in the shade and discuss politics and the like.

Before the day of the grist mill, with its stone grinding facilities, the farmers had to grind their own grain. The vivid description given by grandfather of the way his folks got along when he was a boy has stuck in my memory. He said his father had cut down a large oak tree, squared off the top, then chopped and burned a bowl in the stump for a mortar. He then fashioned a pestle out of a small oak log and rigged up
a spring pole of hickory. The method of operation was to suspend the pestle with the spring pole, bore a hole through it, and insert a round stock for a handle. When ready for operation, the grain to be crushed was dumped into the mortar. Two men took hold of the handles of the pestle and pounded the grain, the men using their strength on the downward pull, the spring pole raising the pestle. One can see how a regular rhythm would result. The men pulling down, the spring pole rising, and the pounding of the grain would be much more effective. After the grain was crushed, the resulting meal was carefully screened, the fine meal being made into bread and the coarse portion into mush.

This kind of food must have been quite nutritious, for my grandfather and all his brothers and sisters were certainly very fine vigorous specimens of humanity. Grandfather weighed about 250 pounds and was not a fat man.
1This was a code widely accepted at the time and represents the end product of a series of experiences which carried the frontier from Jamestown to California. Had it been recommended half a century earlier, religion would have been part of it.

2Like many other families the Colquhouns came originally from an Irish forefather. Conoch, one of the branches of the family in Ireland, came to Scotland in the reign of Gregory the Great (875-891) and obtained some land from the king in the county of Dunbarton. Robert Bain says that the same land was granted at the time of Alexander II (1214-1249). Sir Robert Kilpatrick of Colquhoun married the daughter of Luss and since then the chief has been described as of Colquhoun and Luss. In 1602 a desperate battle was fought between the Colquhouns and the MacGregors and after a bloody conflict the Colquhouns were defeated and their chief killed. William T. Cowan was very proud of belonging to the Clan Colquhoun and had the coat of arms put on some of the headings of his business papers. Alice Cowan Coleman visited the estate belonging to Sir Ian Colquhoun near Loch Lomond in 1933 and has a picture of the gate leading to the grounds. John G. Calhoun was a member of the same clan. McIan, Costumes of the Clan of Scotland (Glasgow: David Bryce and Sons, 1855), pp. 150-153; Robert Bain, The Clans and Tartans of Scotland (London: Collins, 1954), p. 70.

Mary, Queen of Scots, was born in 1542 and died in 1587. She married Lord Darnley, her cousin, on July 1564. He was the only remaining claimant of Tudor stock and by this marriage she would have a double claim on the English succession and would unite all the English Catholics. Her Protestant subjects, afraid of the revival of Catholic domination, opposed the marriage. Maitland and the Douglasses did not join Murry and the Hamiltons who, even before the marriage, were in open rebellion against the Queen. After a son was born to Mary a band was formed who murdered Darnley. When she married Bothwell, whom the whole world believed murdered Darnley, all the nobles turned against her. She was forced to abdicate in favor of her infant son, James. The first regent was Murray, known as James Stuart, who ruled with vigor; his enforcement of anti-Catholic laws aroused hostility. In 1570 he was assassinated by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh. Other regents who followed were Lennox, Mar, and Morton. Mar and Morton were killed and Lennox forced to leave the country. The Raid of Ruthven in 1582 put James in the hands of the Protestant nobles. On March 24, 1603, the last conscious act of Queen Elizabeth was to ratify by a sign that James VI of Scotland should be James I of England. (The story in the Memoirs is fairly accurate except there is
a misunderstanding about the clans. Lord Douglas was not a Hamilton as stated in the Memoirs. There was a Douglas Clan.)


4When Charles II was proclaimed the ruler in Ireland Cromwell decided to conquer that country. On August, 1649 he arrived in Ireland. He took the City of Drogheda by storm on September 11 and spared no one. Every priest and friar was killed and the corpses searched for valuables. The same type of butchery occurred at Wexford. In the spring of 1650 Cromwell left Ireland and turned over the rest of the conquest to Ireton and Ludlow. When the war ended in 1652 most of Ireland had been conquered and a third of the people had been killed. Since that day the natives have used the expression, “The curse of Cromwell upon you,” to show their keenest expression of hatred. The Catholic landholders and others who fought against the Parliament were driven into the poor land of Connaught in Northeastern Ireland. The common people, the laborers and artisans were not deported. (Evidently the Cowans were of a better class and so lost their homes.) Arthur Lyon Cross, *History of England and Greater Britain* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), p. 511; Sir Winston Churchill, “The Curse of Cromwell,” *Life*, XLI (November 19, 1956), pp. 161-162.

5An early settler near Kingston (about 1790) was Lieutenant David Cowan of the navy. He moved to the Long Point settlement near the town of Simcoe. He was later Captain of the Ottowa on Lake Erie, running mainly between Niagara and Detroit. He fought in the War of 1812 with the Canadian Navy. In 1817 four Cowan brothers came to Canada, John and Alexander settled at Cananoque near Kingston, Ontario. William and James came to Norfolk County, Ontario. The great-great-grandfather of William T. Cowan was born and spent a large part of his life in Scotland. He came to Canada and settled near Simcoe about 1817 on land bought from Simcoe. James Cowan’s broken tombstone in Delhi Cemetery in Norfolk County, Ontario bears the following inscription: “Immigrated from Scotland to Canada in 1817, Died September, 1850 aged 64 years.” This grandfather is called John in the Memoirs. Letter from Leslie R. Gray (President of the Ontario Historical Society, 206 Huron St., Toronto, Ontario) to Jean Crockett, March 5, 1956; letter from Lela Blayney Challand of Simcoe, Ontario to Jean Crockett, February 11, 1956. Mrs. Challand is a first cousin of W. T. Cowan. (All letters mentioned in the footnotes are to be found in Jean Crockett’s papers at Chinook, Montana.)

6John William Crockett on April 15, 1956 saw a photo-
static copy of George Washington's cash memoranda at Mount Vernon. This showed the following facts in George Washington's handwriting: On 4 July 1773 Cowan was paid by Washington the sum of 12 pounds, 4 shillings. On 19 October 1773 Cowan was paid by Washington the sum of 12 pounds, 7 shillings. The particular cash memoranda that this information came from was a photostatic copy of the original which is owned by a private individual. Further information regarding Cowan can be found in the Article of Agreement, Washington Papers of the following period: 25 December 1771 to 2 July 1773. Briefly they show that David Cowan, gardener (from Fredericksburg) was engaged by Washington on 11 January 1773. (The above papers are to be found in the Library of Congress in Washington, D. C.) Letter from John Crockett, April 15, 1956.

7 A few months before his death Washington selected the site for the new family burial vault and included in his will directions for its building. The new vault was completed in 1831 and the transfer was then made. The old vault, a plain brick structure near a wooded ravine a short distance from the house, has been restored and retained as a point of interest. Mount Vernon, Virginia, a pamphlet issued by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union.

8 David Cowan was given a passport to Canada. He later died at Fort Erie, Ontario. Letter from Lela Blayney Challand to Jean Crockett, February 11, 1956.

9 There is no evidence that David Cowan was in the British Navy with any rank at all. A search was made of the Admiralty and Colonial Office Records until 1812. The navy expert at the Public Records Office was consulted. David Cowan probably served with one of the merchant ships which were requisitioned by the British during the War. Letter from Helen Thacker, London, England, to Jean Crockett, August 9 1956.

10 In the Cowan papers there is a copy of a sale of land made to William Cowan, John Cowan, and James Cowan on the 9th day of September, 1824. In consideration for the sum of one hundred dollars land was granted in the township of Charlottesville, in the county of Norfolk, in the district of London, in the Province of Upper Canada. The boundary line is traced and the amount of land given as three hundred and seventy nine acres more or less. This is not the original grant as that was many more acres and much earlier, but it was probably the land later bought by the family when the first grant proved to be unsatisfactory.
Alice Cowan Coleman visited Scotland in 1933 and learned that there was a Jamie Cowan there who talked in such a broad Scottish dialect that she could not understand him. Many of the facts concerning the Cowan family have been largely passed down from one generation to another by word of mouth.

Because there is no mention of first names it is difficult to actually identify these people since the names are fairly common. The Deputy Surveyor General in 1790 was John Collins who died before 1797. Another John Collins was a lieutenant in the Indian Department. He settled near Simcoe. Upper Canada's Chief Justice in 1790 was William Dummer Powell. A John Powell was in Lancaster township in 1792. Letter from Leslie R. Gray (Note 5).

Kingston is the chief city of Frontenac County in Ontario. It is located on the northeastern shore of Lake Ontario near the head of the St. Lawrence River. In 1673 Frontenac built a fort there on the recommendation of La Salle. In 1674 La Salle was granted the fort and named it Fort Frontenac. The Indians later gained control of the fort. In 1758 a British expedition under Colonel Bradstreet captured and destroyed the place. It was rebuilt in 1784 by United Empire Loyalist who named it Kingston in honor of George III. The first lieutenant governor of Upper Canada was Colonel John Graves Simcoe. He arrived in Kingston on July 1, 1792 and created counties and established a wilderness capital. During the war of 1812, Kingston prospered and was a Canadian naval base. It was incorporated as a city in 1836. From 1841 to 1844 it was the capital of United Canada. "Kingston," Encyclopedia of Canada (Toronto Murray Printing Company, Limited, 1948), p. III; Carl Wittke, A History of Canada (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1928), p. 72.

Sarnia is a city in Lambton County, Ontario located at the mouth of the St. Clair River on Lake Huron. It is sixty miles west of London and is served by the Canadian National and Pere Marquette Railroad. The town was first settled in 1833 and was called "The Rapids." In 1836 it was called Fort Sarnia; in 1866 the name was changed to Sarnia. "Sarnia," Encyclopedia of Canada, V. 351.

From the book of Harold Underwood Faulkner there is the following statement: "To the pioneer farmer the rich forest lands of American seemed only an obstruction to be cleared away as quickly as possible in order to open up his farm." The very early settler did not want to take time to clear the forest. However the later settler valued the timberland which he could sell at a profit to the English or the

16The John Cowan who started the chocolate business under the Cowan name was born in Ireland about 1850 and came to Canada as a young man. The business was first established as a tea and coffee business in 1876 at 52-54 Front St., in Toronto. Later cocoa and chocolate were added to the line and this became their principal product. The son of the man who started the business still lives in Canada and says there is no possibility of relationship with the W. T. Cowan branch of the family. The founder of the cocoa business died in 1908 at Toronto. Letter from Leslie R. Gray, August 18, 1956 to Jean Crockett. (Note 5).

17The Americans made a final attempt to invade Canada in 1814, when General Jacob Browne and General Winfield Scott crossed the Niagara River with fifty-five hundred men and drove the British forces from the field at Chippawa on July 5. Three weeks later Browne fought a furious battle at Lundy's Lane, a few miles down the river. The Americans had the advantage until the dark forced them to retire and the British were left in possession of the field. In November the Americans withdrew to their own side of the Niagara for good. David Mussey, *A History of Our Country* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1950), p. 190.

18Vittoria is a village on Young's Creek in Norfolk County, Ontario. This town is five miles south of Simcoe. It was one of the earliest settlements in this region and was the judicial center of the old London district from 1816 to 1827. In 1827 when the judicial center of the district was transferred from Vittoria to London the city of London began to grow. In 1854 the Grand Trunk Railway reached London and since that time it has become the metropolis of Western Canada. "Vittoria," *Encyclopedia of Canada*, Vol. VI, p. 246.

19There was no Lord Simcoe. The famous Simcoe was Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Graves Simcoe, who was in
Canada only from 1790 to 1794. The Ontario Historical Society has published his letters and official documents in five volumes for the members of the Society. Simcoe was a veteran of the American Revolution and an ardent imperialist. He opened his little Parliament in the wilderness with a military procession and the booming of cannon. He delivered his address from a throne built for the purpose. He did a remarkable job of building roads in the province and his reign was notable in its efforts to encourage immigration. In many ways he was farsighted. In 1794 he was promoted to major general and in 1796 he left Canada. Leslie Gray (President of the Ontario Historical Society), personal letter to Jean Crockett on March 5, 1956: Carl Wittke, A History of Canada, p. 72.

20See note 15, above.

21In the St. Lawrence region land was opened for settlement in 1791. Because of freehold tenure and Governor Simcoe’s inducements 9,000 land hungry settlers had arrived by 1812 to establish an English speaking population. In nearly all the provinces the settler found plentiful land available on easy terms. Any applicant who showed good faith could secure a land grant between 200 to 1200 acres. Officers could claim as much as 6,000 acres, as could members of the Legislative Counsel or other favored persons. The son or daughter of a Loyalist was entitled to 200 acres on becoming of age. These grants were made free of charge and the ordinary settler paid but a small fee. By 1798 over 1,000,000 acres had been granted and by 1804 the figure rose to 4,500,000. Since hired labor was almost unobtainable the holders of the land were chiefly interested in their speculative value. Edgar McInnis, A Political and Social History of Canada (New York: Rinehard and Company, Inc., 1947), p. 175.

22The first time that the friction match was marketed was in 1827. Charles Singer, (et al., eds.) A History of Technology (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1954), 1, p. 319.

23The most important business of the pioneer was just plain living. The Jacquard loom came into the United States in the middle of the 1820's. The kitchen was the center of activity in the home; the fireplace was the sole means of heating the home. To keep a good fire going it was necessary to have a log about two feet in diameter and about six feet long for a backlog, smaller logs were used for feeders and for cooking. Every two or three days a new backlog was rolled into place after being dragged to the door by a horse.
Fires were carefully tended because they were hard to start with flint and steel. Matches did not come into use until about 1836. The earliest matches had to be dipped into a bottle of prepared liquid to ignite and were called "lucifers." Grandfather Cowan's house was far better than many of the early homes because they were able to bring many of their old world things with them. The above material, checking closely with the description of the early Cowan home, was found in Buley, The Old Northwest, Pioneer-Period 1815-1840 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1951), Vol. I pp. 213-232.

The importance of the village mill, the techniques of the craft and the social life surrounding it, are best seen in the many reconstructions of historic water-power mills in Canada and the United States today. Spring Mill State Park in Indiana is one of the most complete restorations, and probably represents the type of installation young Cowan saw in Canada.

Securing food was a serious problem to the first settlers of any region. Wild game and fish were abundant in a new country, but this diet was not very attractive without salt. Salt was difficult to obtain. In regions away from the river the price rose to twenty dollars a barrel. Bread-stuffs were hard to obtain. When grain matured it was made into meal as Cowan describes in the Memoirs. To make it finer it was sometimes rubbed over a strip of "tin" punched full of rough edged holes, or ground by hand between two stones. The "Johnny cakes" or "hoe cakes" were made of meal with shortening as bear grease, lard or butter and baked flat on a board. To vary the diet there was other food as nuts, wild cherry, black and red haw, wild grape, plum and crab apple. Honey of the wild bee was very valuable. Coffee and tea were rare and expensive. Many contagious diseases were prevalent such as scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles, erysipelas, pneumonia. Also cholera and ague and typhoid epidemics came and went. (A brother and sister of Cowan died of diphtheria before the family moved to Montana.) The conditions described here existed in the United States, but were very similar in Canada. The average diet was not as good as Cowan suggests. Buley, The Old Northwest, Pioneer Period 1815-1840, pp. 148-249.
CHAPTER I

RECOLLECTIONS OF MR. JAMES J. HILL

No one will question the statement that the Trans­Continental Railways were the great factor in settling and developing the Western United States. Among the various railways crossing our country was the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba, built by James J. Hill and his associates. Without the financial aid and railroad building of Mr. Hill, Northern Montana would not have made the advances it has in the past fifty years. I saw Mr. Hill just twice in my lifetime and it is to set down a record of these events that I am writing this.

My father moved into the city or village of Winnipeg from Ontario in 1879. He had been an agent for William Maxwell and Sons of Paris, Ontario, manufacturers of farm machinery. When the boom started in Manitoba, father was sent to Winnipeg, as a dealer in Maxwell machinery, to open an office and stock the products of Mr. Maxwell's factory.

Father soon became so absorbed in the speculation of real estate that Mr. Maxwell decided a man could not serve two masters. Consequently, father gave up his agency for the Maxwell line of farm machinery and secured the agency for the Deering Factories owned and dominated by Mr. William Deering. Some time after securing this agency, father received word from Mr. Deering advising him that Mr. Deering
intended to visit Winnipeg and desired meeting Sir Donald A. Smith, head of the Hudson Bay Company. Sir Donald later became Lord Strathcona and wielded a large interest in Canadian and British Imperial affairs.

SIR DONALD SMITH AND MR. WILLIAM DEERING

I was not told all the details, as I was a boy of seven or eight years of age, but as father discussed his problems with mother at times, I was aware of the circumstances. Apparently, father made arrangements for a meeting between Mr. Deering and Sir Donald. In accordance with family tradition (not to have all the eggs in one basket), father had a livery stable business in connection with his Agricultural Implement business. When a farmer came to town he could put up his team in father's livery barn. Among the equipment was an open carriage. That was one of those carriages that the top could be folded back and front so it could be used either for an open or closed vehicle, depending on the weather. When the Marquis of Lorne, son-in-law of Queen Victoria and Governor General of Canada visited Winnipeg, it was the one carriage, in the frontier town of those days, suitable for the Governor General to ride in the parade or procession provided for his entertainment and to enable the citizens of the town to see the distinguished visitor.

A cousin of father's, Alsimas Almas, was the manager of the livery barn and generally drove this prize equipage.
I remember Alsimas was a very handsome man with a wavy, black moustache and he cut quite a figure as a coachman.

Mr. Deering arrived in the city in due time, so father dressed himself in his best Sunday clothes, and in those days in Winnipeg, the men were quite dressy, morning coats, striped trousers, etc., etc. Practically all men wore beards and while my father was under thirty years of age, he wore a heavy, luxuriant, brown, bushy beard. So he was a very distinguished citizen, at least in my youthful eyes, when he was dressed up.

Sir Donald Smith lived in a beautiful house near the mouth of the Assiniboine River, where it empties into the Red River of the north, near old Fort Garry. This house was surrounded by silver-leaf poplars and enclosed by a high fence. We boys went swimming in the Assiniboine River as the Red River had eddys and an undertow which made it dangerous for inexperienced swimmers.

We boys greatly admired the house and grounds at Silver Heights, but because of the fence, we were never able to examine it except through the panels of the fence.

While father was preparing himself to meet and escort Mr. Deering for his interview with Sir Donald, boylike, I teased to be allowed to ride down to the hotel with father in the wonderful carriage. I had visions of how I would raise envy in the hearts of my boy playmates, riding in this vehicle beside my distinguished looking father and driven by a coachman. (My grandfather had been a horse lover and a
breeder of good horses in Ontario. If he did not take the prize at the County Fair for his draught and driving team, he thought there had been a miscarriage of justice, but it was seldom that he did not win with one and generally with both teams. So father was also a lover of good horse-flesh and kept one driving team which was the equal, if not the best, driving team in the city.)

After considerable parley and mother's assistance and co-operation, father finally said, "Well, put on his Sunday clothes, change his shirt and put on a neck-tie and he can ride down to the hotel with me," he also cautioned me that I was to get out of the carriage when Mr. Deering joined him and go straight home.

Well, I remember sitting beside father in this open carriage and I would not have changed places with the Marquis of Lorne or even with Queen Victoria herself, I felt so proud and important.

We drove up to the Leland Hotel on Market Street where Mr. Deering had put up. Father got out of the rig and went into the hotel. I sat in the carriage, the envy of other boys who went along the street. Soon, father and Mr. Deering came out of the hotel, both stern looking, bearded men. Father said, "Now, Willie, get out and run away home." Boylike, I burst into tears. Mr. Deering said to father, "Whose boy is that?" Father replied, "He is my boy." Mr. Deering then said, "What does the boy want?" Father told him I wanted to continue my ride and go with them to Silver
Heights. Mr. Deering then said, "Why, let him go along, David, he can sit on the front seat." Well, that settled it, and I went along.

When we got to Silver Heights, I expect my father was considerably flustered with the responsibility of properly presenting such a distinguished man as Mr. Deering to an equally, if not more prominent, man as Sir Donald. At any rate, father probably forgot all about me, so I got down out of the rig and followed them in.

When we reached Sir Donald's reception room, I noticed a couple of men already there. Then father presented Mr. Deering to Sir Donald, and in making the presentation, father explained that Mr. Deering had called to try and interest the Hudson's Bay Company in the distribution of the Deering line of farm machinery. Apparently, all the people of Canada and many in the United States believed the western Canadian prairies would be the bread-basket of the world, and they thought it would come about right now. 6

JAMES J. HILL AT SILVER HEIGHTS

I remember, Sir Donald listened to this introduction and then said, "Gentlemen, I want you to meet a man who will be instrumental in selling more farm machinery than I can ever hope to. I want you to meet Mr. James J. Hill." 7

Mr. Hill had interested Sir Donald Smith, and two other directors or stock holders in the Canadian Bank of Montreal, in advancing the money to obtain control of the
St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway. This road ran from the Twin Cities to Fargo, North Dakota, (if I remember right) and originally had a line of river boats running north to carry freight and passengers to the rapidly opening Canadian province of Manitoba. This railroad had extended its roadbed north, the preceding year, and now had full rail connections between the Twin Cities and the town or city of Winnipeg. 8

When I heard Sir Donald say that Mr. Hill would be instrumental in selling more farm machinery than he could ever be expected to, I immediately thought Mr. Hill was going to get my father's job selling the Deering line of machinery.

My mother had worried over father's loss of the Maxwell agency and naturally talked it over with me. Mother was a very conservative person, who did not believe in the Great Winnipeg Boom, as father had once described the activity.

(He said when he started for his office, he might meet a man who had a property to sell. They would discuss the matter and if they agreed on a price, each made an entry in their notebook and the transaction was closed, a down payment or payment being a matter of honor and any agreement was never broken. Father then said as he continued his way to his office, he might meet some one else on the way and would price the new purchase at, say, $500,000 over what he had paid for it and frequently the property would change ownership several times a day. Father often said he occasionally made a profit of five-hundred or a thousand dollars on his way to his day's work.
Mother, of course, had no confidence or patience in "such goings on". She constantly preached that the bubble would break in their faces and the last holder of the property would go bankrupt and this episode be remembered in history as the same sort of frenzy that had caused the South Sea Bubble and other periods of madness when the human race expected to win fame and fortune without working for it.

So when I heard about what Mr. Hill was going to do, selling farm machinery, I immediately thought how mother would feel when she heard father had lost the Deering Farm Machinery Agency. She always relied on it as a sure source of income, not affected by the boom in real estate.

I do not remember much more about the trip. I was apparently preoccupied thinking about the coming family disaster. However, I determined to ask my father about the matter before we reached home so I would be able to tell mother. After Mr. Deering went into his hotel, I rode home with father. He had to change into his regular business suit to go to his office. On the way home, I asked father what Sir Donald meant when he had said, "Mr. Hill was to get his job". I remember father explained that it was the intention of Mr. Hill and his associates to extend the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway west to the Pacific Coast. That the building of this railroad would open up land for homesteads and cultivation and that the people who took up this land and farmed it would buy great quantities of Mr. Deering's farm machinery and that Sir Donald did not mean that Mr. Hill
This was my first sight of Mr. Hill and it made a very vivid impression on my mind as I have tried to outline above.

EXTENSION OF HILL’S RAILROAD TO THE PACIFIC

Mr. James J. Hill did in fact extend his railroad west to the Pacific Coast. The road was built from Minot, North Dakota, to Assiniboine in Montana in 1887. Here it met the Montana Central Railway which had been built from Helena, Montana to Fort Assiniboine the same year. It appears that there was an agreement between the Northern Pacific Railway and the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba that neither would build their lines closer than within two hundred miles of each other. In building his railroad into the Northern Montana wilderness, Mr. Hill, I presume, had to think of some way to produce revenue. The only activity of any consequence in Montana of those days, was the mines at Butte, Montana and the more or less settled country around Helena.

BUILDING OF THE MONTANA CENTRAL RAILWAY

Colonel C. A. Broadwater was a very prominent man in Montana, owner of the "Diamond B" line of mule and ox team freighting systems and owner of various sutler stores at the government military posts in the territory of Montana.

Apparently Mr. Hill, who we must admit had a very fertile brain, hit on the expedient of having Colonel Broadwater incorporate a company for the purpose of building a railroad.
Colonel Broadwater owned the Sutler Store at Fort Assiniboine and in applying for a charter, his reason given for building the Railroad was to supply his store with merchandise to be shipped to Helena over the Northern Pacific. It looks kind of fishy at this day, but many things were done in the early days of Montana that might not be construed to be strictly ethical now.

At any rate, the Montana Central was built from Helena with rails and material shipped in over the Northern Pacific Railway and connected with the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba at Assiniboine Station in 1887.

The second time I saw Mr. Hill was at the County Fair in Havre, I cannot remember the year, but Mr. Hill had presented the Fair Board with a pavilion of sorts. The fair was being held at the east end of Havre near where the first gas well was drilled and north and east of the Railway Round House.

Mr. Hill was introduced by the Rev. Christler, the Episcopal Minister of Havre. I do not remember the speech, but I remember considering it quite dull. No doubt there was much advice in it, in regard to farming practices, but dry land farming had not been thought of and all agriculture and stock raising was predicated on the diversion of the streams and constructing irrigation works and on cattle and sheep using the Government owned lands, the free range.

Mr. Hill, of course, was interested in the agricultural
development of the country to provide a larger population and revenue for the Railroad.

1 Manitoba entered the Confederation in 1870 without a public debt so as to avoid a subsidy from the older provinces. Manitoba grew rapidly from immigration from the United States, from the older provinces, and from Europe. It was soon discovered that the province had the richest wheat land in Canada. Money was spent by the government to encourage immigration. Homesteads were given to actual settlers after three years occupation; as much as 640 acres could be purchased for one dollar per acre. Under these conditions Winnipeg grew from 300 people in 1870 to 3,000 in 1876. By 1881 its population was 186,000 and in 1891 it had reached 250,000. After the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad in 1886 a remarkable period of growth and progress began. The population of the city reached 223,103 in 1946. Winnipeg was the "Neck of the funnel" for eastward and westward traffic. The city has the largest cash wheat market on the continent with bank clearings equalled in Canada only by those of Montreal and Toronto. Carl Wittke, A History of Canada, p. 205 ff; "Winnipeg", Encyclopedia Americana, XXIX (1943), 397.

2 In 1883 there is listed the Cowan, Robbins and Co., (W. Cowan, D. Cowan, D. McK. Sinclair) Dealers in Agricultural Implements, sole agents for the Deering Harvesting Machinery. The office and showroom was in the Opera House Block, Princess Street. William Deering had his start in the United States and his Canadian interests were a sideline. William Deering was born April 25, 1826 in South Paris, Maine. He died December 9, 1913. In 1865 he organized a wholesale-commission dry goods house under the firm name of Deering, Williken and Co., with headquarters in Portland, Maine and offices in New York City. He later gave up his wholesale business and went to Plano, Illinois and entered the harvester business. His business prospered so much that it became the largest agricultural implement factory in the world with 9,000 operators. In 1883 the business was called William Deering and Co. Later the name was changed to the Deering Manufacturing Co. In 1902 Deering retired and the Corporation was merged with the International Harvester Co., of Chicago. Cyrus McCormick, The Century of the Reaper (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), pp. 11-119; "Deering," Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), V, 195.

3 Sir Donald Smith was born in Scotland in 1820 and died in 1914. The tall, well built Scot was about fifty years old
when he first met Riel and one year later he met Hill. On May 19, 1870 Mr. Smith was traveling out of Fort Garry by dog team, Mr. Hill was travelling toward Fort Garry in the same manner. According to J. K. Howard this was the first meeting between the two men. Eight years later they bought from the Dutch bondholders the St. Paul and Pacific Railway. In 1881 they became associated with others in the Canadian Pacific Railway. Accounts differ as to how Hill met Smith. Cowan has another story about the meeting between the two men. Smith had a long and varied career in Canada. When he first arrived in Canada he was a shipping clerk for the Hudson's Bay Company; he later became part owner. He was appointed special commissioner by the Canadian government to investigate the insurrection of Riel in 1869 at the Red River settlement. Riel received him with courtesy. He did not end the rebellion. He did, however, undermine Riel's influence by promising full provisional rights to the region when it should be admitted to the Dominion. In 1870 Smith represented Manitoba in the Federal House of Commons. He was knighted in 1886 and in 1897 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal. He was president of the bank of Montreal in 1887. He received degrees from a dozen universities; as a patron of art he was said to have the largest art collection in Canada. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1952); William McCutcheon Davidson, Louis Riel (Calgary, Alberta, Canada; The Albertan Publishing Company Ltd, 1955); Donald Creighton, Dominion of the North (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1941); Wittke, A History of Canada; Joseph Gilpin Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1917), Vol. 1; Edgar McInnis, Canada (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1947). See also John MacNaughton, Lord Strathcona (New York: Oxford University Press, 1926); Beckles Willson, The Life of Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915); William Thomas Rochester Preston, Lord Strathcona and the Making of Canada (New York: McBride, Mast and Company, 1915).

The Marquis of Lorne was known as John George Douglas Sutherland Campbell. On March 21, 1871, he married Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria. He was Governor General of Canada 1878-83. "Argyle, Campbells of" Encyclopedia Americana 11, (1946), 232.

When the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company merged in 1821 a new company post, Fort Garry, was built. In 1870 the population was 215. It was the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America. The fort was a large, strong, stone structure near the fork of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers; within were numerous stout buildings for dwellings, administrative offices, barracks,
and store rooms. It was the only strongly fortified building in the Northwest and was the distributing center for all goods entering or leaving the country. In 1835 a colony of settlers grew up outside the walls of the fort which was given the name of Winnipeg. Davidson, Louis Riel, p. 37; "Winnipeg", Canada Encyclopedia, VI, 311.

6 At first, the Hudson's Bay Company bitterly opposed settlement of its territory because experience had proved that in any conflict between fur trade and settlement the fur trade was doomed. Since 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company had been successful in driving out most of its rivals. With the coming of the railroads and thus more settlers the company agreed to sell out to the Canadian government. They received 300,000 pounds in cash and 45,000 acres around its posts as well as one-twentieth of the fertile belt. The lands were surrendered to the British in 1869 and transferred to Canada as soon as they were ready to take possession. The government used every inducement to get settlers in the area; both the railways and the Hudson's Bay Company agreed with that policy since their holdings would increase in value with the spread of settlement. The United States got most of the settlers. There was prosperity in 1880 as the railroads came in, but by 1883 the boom had collapsed and many homesteads were abandoned. McInnis, Canada, pp. 267, 307, 335.

7 James J. Hill was born near Guelph, Wellington County, Ontario, Canada, September 6, 1835 of Scot-Irish parentage. He died in St. Paul, Minnesota May 29, 1916. At the age of eighteen he moved to St. Paul and built up a flourishing business of his own. In 1878 a syndicate of four men bought the defaulted bonds of the St. Paul and Pacific Railway. These men were Hill, Lord Strathcona, Lord Mount Stephen, and John B. Kennedy. This sale is sometimes called the Magna Charta of the Great Northern Railway. In 1879 this was organized as the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba Railway. This road was rapidly extended westward, Mr. Hill was general manager, became its vice president in 1881 and president in 1882; (which office he held for twenty-five years without pay). The railroad grew rapidly from 1880 to 1890 and in 1889 the name was changed to the Great Northern Railway and was extended to the coast, reaching Seattle in July 1893. In 1895 Hill secured control of the Burlington. Mr. Hill resigned in 1907 to become chairman of the board of directors. He was succeeded by his son Louis W. Hill. Through advertising, through gifts and the establishment of model farms thousands of settlers were brought into Montana in 1910, the boom year, since it was said that dry land farming had been proven a positive success. Hill's opinion was widely sought on many subjects. He took a lively interest in art, literature and economics. He was married in 1867 and the couple had ten children. In spite of the fact that there is much written
on James J. Hill and the Great Northern much of the material
is unreliable and written according to the prejudices of the
writer. Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill, pp. 9-221; John
MacCormack, Canada, American's Problem (New York: The Viking
Press, 1941), pp. 202-203; Glenn Cheaney Quigg, They Built
the West (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, Incop., 1934),
pp. 458-488; Allen Johnson, The Railroad Builders (New Haven:
Yale University Press, 1919), pp. 146-174; Donald J. Kerr,
The Story of the Great Northern Railroad and James J. Hill
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939); Havre Plains-
dealer, April 30, 1910; Ibid, September 25, 1919 and Ibid,
January 11, 1911).

A boom accompanied the arrival of the Canadian
Pacific Railroad in 1881 and when the railroad was completed
in 1889 Winnipeg became a great distributing center. In
1878 the Canadian Pacific and Hill's line were joined at the
boundary. This line was Red River Stern-Wheeler. This was
a money-making scheme. "Winnipeg," Canadian Encyclopedia VI,
311, Joseph Kinsey Howard, Strange Empire (New York: William

In 1711 the South Sea Company was incorporated. In
return for the monopoly of the trade of the South Sea and for
an annual payment of $5,000,000 it offered to assume the na-
tional debt of England at an annual interest rate of 5%. In
1720 (Called South Sea Year) when it took over the debt of
$150,000,000 the managers by fraud inflated the stock so
that a share sold for $5,000 (par $500). The extraordinary
success of the company produced a crowd of imitators, many of
them frauds, and the wild speculation which followed involved
numerous honest companies in disaster. In July the stock rose
rapidly but by November it had fallen to 135. Thousands were
ruined and many left the country. "South Sea Bubble",
Encyclopedia Britannica XXI, (1951), p. 94.

From a letter from Hartwell Bowsfield, (Provincial
Archivist, Winnipeg) to Jean Crockett on February 20, 1956
the following facts indicate that the conversation took
place between the years 1881 and 1883. In the year 1881
David Cowan is listed as an agent for the David Maxwell Com-
pany, Dealers in Farming Implements, with an address as
Market Square, opposite the Fire Hall. From the Memoirs we
learn that David Cowan did not remain long in the employ of
the Maxwell Company. In 1883 there is listed the Cowan,
William Cowan was the brother of David Cowan (uncle Will)
and Sinclair is later mentioned as a bookkeeper for the
Opera Company. Cowan, Robins and Co., are listed as sole
agents for the Deering Harvester Machinery with office and
show room in the Opera House Block, Princess St. In 1885
and 1886 David Cowan is listed as an agricultural implement
dealer living at 50 Jenima St. Considering the above facts
and since Cowan mentions that he was seven or eight years old at the time of the conversation with Hill, it is evident that this conversation took place in late 1881 or early 1882 and this may well be Hill's first reference to his long range plans. After the conversation with such a vital business man as Mr. Deering he might well have seen a future with his rail-road and the need to extend it to the coast. However, he did not say so in so many words. From John Moody's A Chronicle of the Welding of the States, there is also a reference to Hill's dreams. The dream to extend his railway to the coast had been in Hill's mind constantly while he was extending his St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba to Winnipeg. This line paid so well that the owners became millionaires almost overnight, but this was only the stepping stone to the really great thing. In 1880 Hill wrote to Paris Gibson of Great Falls and asked for a description of northern and western Montana. He also wanted to know the number of cattle in that area. On May 3, 1883 Hill resigned as a member of the Canadian Board of Directors and was free to do his own work without any "entangling alliances". No one but Hill believed that he would build the transcontinental line. It was in June, 1884, that he actually met with Paris Gibson. At that time he declared that the Manitoba would be built into Montana. He did not then actually declare his intention to build to the coast. Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill, pp. 381-382.

11 Colonel Charles A. Broadwater was master of transportation in the early days. He was head of the Diamond "R" freighting outfit. He also built the Montana Central Railroad from Great Falls to Helena. He organized the Montana National Bank and was interested in many other empire developing undertakings. He has been called a "Daly" of that period. The famous "Diamond R" Transportation Company was founded in 1863 by Captain Nick Wall. In 1869 C. A. Broadwater was taken in the firm. He was superintendent of the company until 1879 when the railroad began to push in the country. The company was not only a transportation company but was a bureau of information about Montana. Evidently the use of the Diamond "R" was a typographical error. News item in Liberty County Farmer, January 7, 1932; Matt Carroll, Story of the Diamond R (typed and dated Sun River, October 9, 1894, State Historical Library, Helena Montana); news item from the Anaconda Standard, December 16, 1900; Paul Sharpe, Whoop Up Country (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1955) pp. 184, 190.

12 Clifford Walker, Assistant Secretary of State of Montana in Helena, produced the original copy of the formation of the corporation called, "The Montana Central Railway Company". A photostatic copy of the transaction is among the
papers belonging to Jean Crockett. This states that the corporation was formed on the twenty-fifth of January, 1886. The following men were associated in the corporation: Charles A. Broadwater, Charles W. Cannon, Nick Lessler, William B. Raleigh, and Benjamin Potts, citizens of the Territory of Montana. The terminus of the railroads are to be located within the County of Lewis and Clark and the route is given. The amount of Capital Stock necessary to construct such roads is given as one million dollars. Pyle says that the corporation issued five million dollars of stock and in May, 1887 an issue of ten million dollars worth of bonds was authorized. At the same meeting the directors entered into an agreement with Mr. Hill by which he was to furnish the money necessary to construct and equip the line and to receive the stocks and bonds of the company in exchange. "The Montana Central was to all intents and purposes James J. Hill." It was to occupy the Montana field until the Manitoba should be ready for the rush westward from Minot." Benjamin F. Potts was the governor of Montana Territory from July 13, 1870 until January 14, 1883. Thus Potts was governor when railroad building was extending toward Montana. He was anxious to have the railroad for Montana but was cautious in the aid that the territory should extend to them. When Hill offered to build the road the plan suited Potts because he could have a railway in Montana without the state incurring any obligation. Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill, p. 388; Merrill O. Burlingame, The Montana Frontier, (Helena, Montana: State Publishing Company, 1942) p. 172.

Hill's policy in railroad building was to buy small lines and connect them with his main line. His first buy was the St. Paul and Pacific in 1878 which was composed of various unrelated lines. In 1879 the St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Manitoba was organized. Other defaulting properties were brought into the company at foreclosure sales. When the Great Northern was organized in 1890 the system was in theory finished, but there were many lines to be filled in before Mr. Hill was through with his work. Many of Hill's lines could not be finished until government permission was secured as the territory was all in unceded Indian territory. After 1899 a general act was passed granting rights of way for railroads passing through Indian country after due compensation had been paid to the tribes or individual Indians affected. Whenever a line was in difficulties Hill bought it. At the same time that he was stealing a march on his competitors in Montana he was securing lines between St. Paul and the heads of the lakes and the Atlantic Ocean. He also built terminals and depots ahead of the arrival of the railroads. Glen Chesney Quiett, They Built the West, (New York: D. Appleton Century Company, 1924) pp. 456-488; Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill, pp. 162-420.
Both James J. Hill and his son Louis W. Hill were present at the first fair to be held in Havre after the creation of Hill County in 1912. Over the main entrance to the fairground was a painted sign which said, "J. J. HILL COUNTY FAIR". The fair was formally opened by Louis W. Hill, chairman of the board of directors of the Great Northern Railway. James J. Hill also addressed the audience. A news item from the Havre Plainsdealer, October 5, 1912.

Mr. Louis Hill was introduced by the Reverend L. J. Christler, who paid an eloquent tribute to James J. Hill, the great empire builder and father of the man who had taken his place in the work of developing the great northwest. A democrat, Christler was a candidate for the Montana State Senate in 1910. He always dodged the issue in a dispute between capital and labor; he was defeated for the office. He was rector of the Episcopal Church in Havre from 1907 until his death on October 27, 1922 when he was shot by a jealous woman. He was well liked in Havre and built the present church. He gave several gifts of importance to the church and also was instrumental in getting others to give to the same cause. The honorable W. G. Conrad donated the granite for the church. Louis W. Hill carried all material to be used for the building of the church free of charge. Mr. Newton of Auburn, New York made a gift of $3,000 cash to be used as Christler saw fit. In 1910 the work had to be discontinued because of lack of funds, but was continued in 1911. News items in the Havre Plainsdealer for October 29, 1910, March 11, 1911, November 12, 1910; Chinook Opinion, November 2, 1922.

Evidently what Cowan was referring to was the fact that there was little or no dry farming in Hill County and the territory with which he was acquainted. The tradition of the Great American Desert was at its height in the decade between 1850 and 1860. Here was over a million acres where there was not enough water for successful agriculture. Because of the shortage of water the system of farming as dry farming developed. It is a means of conserving soil moisture during dry weather by a special means of tillage. Dry farming is said to have first developed when the first people crossed the plains on the way to the gold of California. The Mormons made the attempt to grow crops without irrigation in 1855. Nebraska became the heart and center of the dry farm movement as well as the windmill movement. Dry farming tends to produce large farms and the land unit is nearly four thousand acres. W. P. Webb, The Great Plains (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1936), pp. 159-369.

Hill is not much of a hero to J. K. Howard who says that Hill ruthlessly shook down the communities for rights-of-
way and other concessions. He was clever in his financial
manoeuvres and knew his way around with the legislatures. He
told the people in Havre that there should be a farm family
on every 160 acres of land in Montana's public domain. He al-
most realized his vision because in the years from 1910 to
1922 the homesteaders took up 42 percent of the entire
area of the state. Many of the old timers also blame Hill
for the ruin of Montana. They say the homesteaders would
have come to Montana without Hill's campaign to get them
there, but there would not be so many and the failure of
homesteading would not have been so disastrous to so many
people. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana, High, Wide and
Handsome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943) pp. 160-
170.
CHAPTER II

HOW MY FATHER CAME TO MONTANA

True to mother's prediction, the Winnipeg real estate boom blew up in the faces of the "get rich quick" fellows. True, Winnipeg has become a large city and the metropolis of the Canadian West, but it took many years.

When father and Uncle Will came to the town of Winnipeg in 1877 they bought two lots on Market Square for $2900.00 and built a warehouse or Farm Implement Store. This property was lost by them when the boom broke, but someone sent father a newspaper, many years after he came to Montana, in which was described these same two lots that had been bought by the Canadian Bank of Commerce for five-hundred-thousand dollars.

FATHER BUILDS AN OPERA HOUSE

I recollect with vividness father coming home one day with a bundle of blue-prints under his arm. He told mother, "I have fifty-thousand dollars in the bank and one-hundred-fifty-thousand dollars worth of real estate, all clear." I remember so distinctly, mother saying, "David, you promised me you would go back to Ontario when you had made fifty-thousand dollars." Father's reply, in the airy superior way of his, was, "Why, Jane, I have only gotten started."
He then unrolled the blue-prints and showed us the plans that he had an architect prepare for a beautiful home to be built near the sight of the new University of Manitoba, which had just been started or was about to be founded. He stated that it was his intention and desire that Willie, (that was me), should go to college when the time came and that as a preliminary, he intended to build a home that was fitting and suitable to a family like ours.

Well, he never got around to building the home. Someone sold him on the idea that a growing city like Winnipeg needed (and it would be a very profitable thing to build) an Opera House. So he got hold of an architect who drew plans. The proposed cost of this building, which provided for an Opera House with space in the lower story for the Farm Implement business, (which by that time was run under the name of Cowan, Robinson and Company) was estimated at fifty-thousand dollars. Father was too occupied with his real estate ventures to give the Implement business much of his attention and in addition to Uncle Will, he had taken in a partner by the name of Robinson, to give the business personal attention and had also employed a young man named David Sinclair as Bookkeeper and office manager.

Father was, according to his own ideas, too smart to "let" a contract for the construction of the Opera House and decided he would build the building with the employment of masons, carpenters, etc., under his own supervision and direction. No contractor was going to make a profit at his
Well, the building finally was built, but in place of the cost being fifty-thousand dollars, called for by the estimates, it cost seventy-five-thousand dollars. This naturally compelled father to borrow the additional fifteen-thousand dollars on his other property. Then there had been some kind of a fire or catastrophe in a theater or opera house some place in the United States, which caused the officials of the City of Winnipeg to compel father to make a couple of additional exits with outside stairways. This, of course, cost additional money and while I was too young to know, still it is my opinion that the completed structure must have cost close to one-hundred-thousand dollars by the time it was completed.

Father ran the Opera House for two or three years, but as there was no other theater (or city large enough to support one) west of the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, all the theater troupes and opera companies had to make the long rail trip from the Twin Cities and back in order to show in father's theater. I remember he tried to, and in fact did, secure the best talent available. I do not remember much about the members or names of the companies that played, but I can remember that Emma Abbott, the great singer, gave a weeks show. I also remember the name, Sol Smith Russell; then there was a Shakespearean Star, Edmund Keene, if I remember right. I also have a recollection of one company that played Faust.
In the meantime, the boom was subsiding. The city of Winnipeg had a population of fifty-thousand people at the height of the excitement. The population began to dwindle away. There was not sufficient trade or industry to support that many people. As the town began to shrink, naturally the money available for attending theater shows, dwindled.

Father made an effort to try and stimulate the attendance by bringing to town a play called, "The Black Crook". Apparently it was considered a very naughty and almost an indecent show in those days and mother was quite incensed at father for his action in securing this so-called attraction. At all events, about this time, father's creditors closed in on him and I can recollect a "council of war" or whatever one cares to call it, being held in our house where grandfather, father, Uncle Will and Davy Sinclair met to talk things over. It was decided that there was nothing else to do but go into bankruptcy to prevent some of the more aggressive of the creditors from filing attachment proceedings and thus become preferred creditors. Apparently in those days, there were no adequate protections for debtors in the bankruptcy courts of Canada. At any rate, father waited two or three years trying to get a settlement. He had been such a spectacular success as a financier that many of his creditors, and one in particular, were very venemous. And as it required the unanimous consent of the creditors to wind up a bankruptcy, father did not succeed in saving much from the
wreck. As nearly as I knew and can recollect, he finally succeeded in affecting a settlement of sorts and managed to salvage some five-thousand dollars.

Well, to a man of father's then exalted ideas about finance, this sum of money was not even chicken feed. I recollect he had a very close friend, the owner or manager of a small wholesale grocery establishment. Father loaned this man two-thousand dollars, ostensibly for a few days to pay for a shipment of merchandise of some kind. The next morning after father let this man have the money, he discovered that his friend had skipped the country, running off with his wife's younger sister. The last heard of the couple was that this man and his paramour had gone to Denver, Colorado.

Apparently the extradition laws between the United States and Canada were not what they are today for there were many people in Canada who had left the United States between two days and many Canadians who had taken what is called "French Leave" of Canada and went to the United States.

At all events, father was left with only three-thousand dollars. It did not take long for this money to evaporate. Father could not get the idea out of his head but what the "Goddess of Fortune" would again smile on him and he would stage a comeback.
FATHER WORKS FOR CANADIAN PACIFIC

I recollect about this time, he succeeded in getting a contract for rock work on the Canadian Pacific Railway which was building their line north of Lake Superior. As I remember the story, father had to buy and store the giant powder or dynamite to be used during the winter (on his contract in the fall) where it could be shipped into the work by boat. He built a cave in the rock and stored the powder. Two of the men working for him got drunk and apparently went out to the storage place. At any event, the powder blew up and nothing was ever heard or seen of the two men; so it was assumed they had exploded it and lost their lives at the same time.

The loss of his cache of powder put father out of business as far as the rock contract, for the Canadian Pacific Railway, was concerned.

FATHER SELLS MERCHANDISE

The next move was suggested by a Frenchman who had a store in Winnipeg. The Riel Rebellion was just concluded and the Canadian Government had spent something over a million dollars suppressing the uprising of the half-breeds in the North West Territories. It was suggested that father buy a supply of trade goods, go to the town of Maple Creek on the Saskatchewan River, build a couple of flat boats, float down the river and trade for furs with the half-breeds and Indians.
who camped along the river. This, my father proceeded to do. He made his first trip and went as far down the river as Battleford and was quite successful. He returned to Winnipeg taking the stage or going by private conveyance the two hundred miles overland to the Canadian Pacific Railway, taking his furs with him. With the sale of the furs, etc., he bought another supply of merchandise and got ready to make another trip the second year. This second trip apparently was not as successful as the first. When he reached the point where the City of Saskatoon now stands, he had not succeeded in doing much business. There was a man living at Saskatoon who had a 160 acre homestead and a small store. This man wanted to trade his land and store for father's flat boats and stock of merchandise. Father came back to Winnipeg to consult mother, but she refused to move to that wilderness. I can remember she said she wanted to stay where we children could go to school and that she had moved from Ontario to Manitoba and did not intend to take us out among the breeds and Indians who had so recently rebelled against the authority of the Government. And as their leader, Louis Riel, had just been hanged at Regina, there was much unrest among the same people who had rebelled and she did not know when they might rise again and we would all be killed. Many white settlers had been massacred by the breeds and Indians and the North West country was not considered very healthy by people who valued their scalps.

Well the upshot of the matter was, that father went
back to his flat boats and continued his way down the
Saskatchewan with his merchandise. Father has given a very
vivid picture of the trials and difficulties he incurred
on the second trip down the river. Apparently the water was
low and the flat boats frequently stuck on sand bars. It was
necessary for him to unload or lighten the boats, push and
row to get them off the bars. He described how he worked
'till his hands were blistered and raw. He had no liniment
or salve to put on them and was forced to use his urine as a
hand lotion. Apparently this was a remedy used and approved
by the French and half-breed boatmen on the river.

He finally reached Battleford with the most of his mer-
chandise unsold. He then decided to open a store where he
could sell his stuff. This he proceeded to do and he sent
glowing reports of his success. I remember his telling us in
his letters that he was selling about $100.00 worth of mer-
chandise a day.

I remember an amusing thing that happened. Mother had
a way of joking and in one of her letters she wrote father
that no doubt his success as a store keeper would perhaps make
him want to stay at Battleford and that probably she would
soon hear that he had secured a handsome half-breed girl for
his housekeeper and that we might not hear from him much
longer. I can remember father wrote back, apparently he had
taken mother's joking seriously, for he told her in his let-
ter that he would soon cut off his right hand as to do any-
thing like she mentioned. At any rate, mother was very pen-
intent over her attempt at joking father. I do not know what she wrote back, but apparently she squared herself.

Father was a great person to take partners when he began to prosper, so it was not long 'till he had taken a Frenchman in as a partner. Father, of course, made trips to Winnipeg to bring down the fur they took in at the store in trade for goods, and to buy more merchandise to replenish their stock.

One day when father returned from a selling and buying trip to Winnipeg, he reached Battleford and learned that his partner had loaded all the goods in the store into boats or carts and had shipped out into the vastness of the Arctic, north of Battleford. Well, this brought the store business to an abrupt conclusion in Battleford. Father managed to salvage some $800.00 from the wreck and started south to look for a new location.

FATHER MOVES TO THE UNITED STATES

He went to Calgary and on to Victoria, B. C., not finding anything that looked like an opening and with only the $800.00 he decided to go to the United States. The only way across, was to go back to Winnipeg and then south and west over the recently built St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway. Father's objective was Great Falls, Montana, where he knew Colonel Stanford of the Conrad Bank and also Matt Dunn.
The shortest and easiest way was to go by buckboard across country to Fort Assiniboine. There was a "breed" trail, south. He managed to secure a ride with two Frenchmen, who were making the trip. This was in June, 1888.

Mr. James J. Hill had completed the extension of the railroad to Assiniboine Station, near Fort Assiniboine in the fall of 1887. The round house and shops of the Railway were at Assiniboine Station on the Fort Assiniboine Military Reservation. The military authorities would only allow the round house, and the necessary buildings required to house the Railway employees, to be built on the Reservation. So it was realized at that date that sooner or later the country would support a town at a railway division point. There was not only the Railway employees, but some hundreds of soldiers at Fort Assiniboine who would be potential customers for a town.

When father reached the Big Sandy Creek, three miles north of Assiniboine Station, he found the adventurers had started a town which was called Cypress. This town consisted of thirty-two saloons, two houses of prostitution, a Chinese eating place, but no store. All the merchandise and food was bought in the Fort Assiniboine Sulter Store, owned and run under the name of Broadwater, McCullough and Company.

At Cypress, father met another Frenchman named Supernault. This man told father about there being great quantities of buffalo bones along the new railroad and in some way or other, father contacted a man named B. M. Hicks of
Minneapolis, Minnesota, who operated under the name of the 14
North West Bone Syndicate, Mr. Hicks told father he would
buy all the bones he could secure for him, paying $8.00 a
ton, loaded on cars. So father concluded Cypress would be a
good location for a store. He managed to borrow a tent from
a photographer at Fort Assiniboine which was 10 x 20 feet in
size. He erected this tent, used rough boards for shelves,
a couple of beer cases for the ends and middle of his coun-
ter. After getting his store erected, he went to Fort
Benton and bought his stock of merchandise from I. G. Baker
and Company who owned a retail and wholesale store in that
place.15

All the money father had was about $250.00 and he put
it all into goods. After returning to Cypress with his stock
of goods, he discovered that the I. G. Baker Company had over
charged him on some of the merchandise, so he then trans-
ferred his business to the T. C. Power and Brothers at Fort
Benton, a rival and competitor of the I. G. Baker Company.
We traded with the T. C. Power and Brothers people for years
and they were the soul of honor.

It cost $6.00 a ton, in trade, to get the bones
picked up. There were a lot of half-breeds in the vicinity.
Mostly political refugees from Canada and the Riel Rebellion,
so father had no trouble in getting plenty of people who
jumped at a chance to exchange wages for food and tobacco at
any kind of a job. Father would only buy bones in exchange
for goods, refusing to pay cash; the breeds and Indians would
only spend the money for whiskey, anyway. In addition, the only outlet for the sale of bones was to Mr. Hicks of the North West Bone Syndicate, and Hicks would not buy bones from any one but father, for the reason that there was only a market for a steady supply to the Empire Carbon Works of East St. Louis, Illinois, and Mr. Hicks realized that if he bought the bones from everyone who wanted to go in the business, there were not bones enough to last long and no one would make any profit if the field was over crowded.

We wintered at Cypress the year of 1888-89. But the Commanding Officer at Fort Assiniboine, Colonel Otis, had stopped the soldiers from coming to Cypress to make "Whoopie". By fall, everyone had left town except a man called Ole Olson, who had squatted on the townsite and had built a frame saloon building and a log or pole feed barn. And there was another saloon owned by a man named George Bickle and father's store which was still housed in a tent.

A brother-in-law of Ole Olson, named Mike Healy, had built a two-room house in the close vicinity of a house Mr. Olson had built, and father rented the building for us to live in.

In the meantime, after father left Battleford, he sent mother a draft for $100.00 before he struck out to seek a new location. We did not hear from father for several weeks and did not know whether he was dead or alive. Things looked pretty desperate for us at home in Winnipeg. The house we lived in had been lost when father went broke; we continued
to live in it. It had just been bought on a tax sale or by some other means by a man who lived across the street.

Apparently Winnipeg was beginning to emerge from the effects of the bursting of the boom and far-sighted individuals were picking up property here and there at bargain prices.

The owner of the house was a very good hearted man, for he permitted us to live in it without paying any rent. We only had the $100.00 father sent us and mother was hanging on to it like grim death to a dead monkey.

I decided it was up to me to get a job. I was to have finished the eighth grade in school, but a friend of Uncle Duke's was starting a grocery store. Uncle Duke had been kind of sweet on the sister of this man and I applied to him for a job. He hired me at $3.00 a week to sweep out, put cans on the shelves and drive the delivery wagon.

Mother decided that as our income was three dollars a week our expenses should be held down to that amount. My sister Grace was about two years old so it was decided we must have milk for her. I think we took a couple of quarts a day, but perhaps it was less. At any rate, as I was the bread winner, mother always managed to have a small piece of meat for me every day. How mother managed, even with the low prices for food prevailing in those days, I do not know, as there were four of us to be fed, Mother, Minnie, Grace and myself.

After I had worked a month or so, I got a new job working
for a dry goods store called F. A. Beauteau and Company, a Frenchman. I also got a raise to four dollars a week. Mother, however, did not raise our standard of living, but put one dollar a week into savings. She talked about going to work in a laundry to earn money herself, but on account of Grace being so young, I assume that may have been one of the reasons she did not work.

FAMILY MOVES TO MONTANA

Shortly after I secured my new job, father wrote about his getting started in Montana. Mother wrote him about my having work. I think it was the first time he had thought about my being able to help. So he wrote back to mother, urging that she have an auction sale of our furniture and household goods and that we go out to where he was. I recollect father said it would be impossible for him to send us money enough to pay house rent and live, and besides he needed me to help in his store.

So we had a sale of our stuff. It was decided that we would only have a log cabin to live in and as the distance was so far, the freight on the household goods would cost too much for us to ship much of it. Practically everything we had was sold. The sale brought us in seven hundred and fifty dollars, although I heard mother lament that on account of hard times, the stuff went practically for nothing.

After the sale we went south to Crookston, Minnesota, and then west over the newly completed St. Paul, Minneapolis
and Manitoba Railway. The train west was what they called, "mixed", part freight and one or two passenger coaches.

We finally arrived at Assiniboine Station on September 7, 1888, where father met us with a half-breed and a wagon or buckboard of some sort and we had reached Montana for good. Our house was only partly built so we had to live in a tent for the first few days until the house father had rented was far enough along to move into.

"RED" McCONNELL AND HIS SENSE OF JUSTICE

There was not much business during the winter of 1888 and 1889. The people of the town bought a few things and father got quite a lot of fur in exchange for his goods. Also the half-breeds killed deer and antelope and we could buy a ham of venison for 50 cents. We practically lived on venison that winter.

Along during the winter sometime, father had gone to Fort Benton. About four o'clock in the afternoon, a couple of men drove into town with a four horse team, new wagon and harnesses. They were loaded with whiskey in barrels.

After the suppression of the Riel Rebellion in Canada, the Canadian Government had prohibited the sale of liquor of any kind in that country. The man who owned the outfit was called "Red" McConnell. They drove the team up to Ole Olson's log barn and put up the horses. McConnell came over to our store and told me he wanted to buy a supply of food to be used on his trip and asked me to try to get down early
the next morning to open the store and wait on him. Early the next morning, I went over to the store. I noticed the wagon was gone and when I got to the store, I found a hole had been cut in the canvas wall. When I went inside, I discovered that the place had been robbed of considerable merchandise such as bacon, canned goods, coffee, etc. Going over to Ole Olson's Saloon, I found "Red" Hopper, the bartender and handy man employed there, sweeping out the saloon. I asked Hopper what had become of "Red" McConnell and his team and wagon. ("Red" was going up to Canada with his load of whiskey to sell it. He was what we call a whiskey smuggler). "Red" Hopper told me that "Red" McConnell (they both had red hair, and that was the reason for their similar nick names) had gotten into a poker game the night before, and had gone broke. He said that McConnell and his companion, instead of going to bed, had taken their horses out of the barn along about two or three o'clock in the morning and had pulled out. I started up the road towards Canada and found the tracks of their horses and wagon in the road. They were headed north towards what was called the Cypress Crossing on Milk River.

I went home to breakfast and shortly thereafter, father returned home. He had come in from Port Benton on the night train and had walked the three miles from Assiniboine Station to the town.

We did not own any horse or rig so father went to "Red" Hopper and tried to borrow a rig for him to follow
McConnell. Hopper asked father if he was prepared to shoot it out with McConnell. He said "Red" McConnell did not have any money, was a whiskey runner and had a reputation as a very bad man and that the only way to recover the stolen goods would be to kill both McConnell and his partner. He wound up by refusing to lend father Mr. Olson's team and rig. He volunteered the information that "Red" McConnell would pay father for the merchandise stolen if and when he returned. In those days, news seemed to travel by some kind of "grape-vine". We heard that McConnell had just reached Canadian territory when he was discovered by a Mounted Police Patrol; that his team, wagon and load of illegal whiskey had been seized by the Mounties and that he had barely managed to get back into Montana a few jumps ahead of the Canadian soldiers.

McConnell went to Harlem, a town some 40 odd miles east of Assiniboine; borrowed a tent, got hold of a five gallon can of alcohol and proceeded to make up a batch of whiskey (of sorts), and started a saloon.

All the above happened some time in the winter. Along in the spring, May or June, father got a letter from McConnell saying he had three car-loads of Buffalo bones he had gotten from the breeds and Indians and asking father if he would buy them. Father immediately took the train for Harlem. Before he left he said, "Here is where I collect the money from "Red" for the goods he stole last winter."

When father got off the train at Harlem, he found Mr.
B. M. Hicks on the station platform. Hicks told father that, noticing the pile of bones, he had inquired about who owned them and had been referred to "Red" McConnell as the owner. He told father he had offered to buy the bones from McConnell, offering him $8.00 a ton. (Bones had increased in price to $9.00 a ton). Mr. Hicks said he had offered $8.00 with a view of protecting father for his profit and allowed one dollar a ton to go to father, should McConnell want to sell. Mr. Hicks told father that "Red" refused the offer saying he had written Dave Cowan offering him the bones and was waiting to hear from him. When father went to McConnell's place, he asked "Red" what he wanted for the bones. McConnell said five dollars a ton. Father, of course, closed the deal at once. The box cars were small in those days and the bones were bulky. The average amount of bones that could be loaded was ten tons to a car, so there were something like thirty tons of bones. McConnell took that way of paying for the supplies he had helped himself to, out of father's store. The profit on this transaction came to around $120.00, less father's time and his expenses loading the bones. We had estimated that about $60.00 worth of merchandise had been stolen, so McConnell settled his bill in a rather round about way. There seemed to be a kind of code of honor among the cut throats and desperadoes, who lived by their wits, not to steal from people who were poor. It was all right to steal from the Government and the Railway Company; and to gamble and cheat to win at cards; or to run
whiskey into Canada; but to steal from a poor man was not ethical. They were a funny sort of people who lived in Montana when we came here.

1 The University of Manitoba was established in 1877. The three colleges already in existence in Manitoba, St. John's (Anglican Institution), St. Boniface College (Roman Catholic) and Manitoba College (Presbyterian) were affiliated with the University when it started. Since then five other colleges have been affiliated. Although the University was established so early Manitoba was forced to starve the institution while the great depression continued. For thirty years the Province depended upon its small denominational colleges for higher education. When the University of Manitoba did become successful it was based on a federal union similar to that of the University of Toronto. "University of Manitoba", Encyclopedia of Canada, VI, 203-205; Donald Grant Creighton, Dominion of the North (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924) p. 418.

2 A common frontier delusion. Many of these structures were not true opera houses. They catered principally to stock companies and itinerant lecturers, and later vaudeville. They were among the ugliest buildings erected in North America, but every up-and-coming town felt obliged to have one.

3 The Princess Opera House which was at the south-west corner of Princess and Ross and of which no trace remains is listed for the first time in 1883 - David Cowan and T. B. Rutledge, proprietors. An announcement of the opening appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press of May 14, 1883. C. A. Dunlap is listed as the Manager and D. McE. Sinclair as Treasurer. In 1884 R. Gerris and Charles W. Sharpe are listed as the proprietors. A letter from Hartwell Bowsfield to Jean Crockett (Chapter I, Note 2).

4 In New York City the Park Theater opened on Park Row where it assumed a leading place as an amusement center until it was destroyed by fire in 1846. There was also a disastrous fire in Chicago in 1871 which made all but 7,000 people homeless in a city of 77,000. This fire was supposed to be started by a cow kicking over a lantern in a barn. In the fire 17,000 buildings were destroyed including banks, hotels, theaters, elevators, stores and warehouses. "New York City", Americana Encyclopedia, xx, 226; "Chicago", Ibid, VI, 142.

5 That is, in Canada.
Emma Abbott was born in 1850 and died in 1891. She studied in New York and sang in concert with Ole Bull. In 1872 she studied in Europe. She appeared in London in 1876. In New York she formed her own company managed by her husband, Eugene Wetherwell. Thereafter, until her death in Salt Lake City, she toured the country and sang leading roles in the Abbott English Opera Company. Sol Smith Russell was born in Brunswick, Maine in 1848 and died in 1902. After being a drummer boy in the Union regiment he joined a theater company at Defiance Theater in Cairo, Illinois. He soon joined stock companies and toured the Middle West. In 1884 to 1885 he was the leading comedian at the Boston Museum; made a New York debut in 1874; is mentioned as an actor with Lillian Russell, Weber, and Fields. It is probable that he did appear in Canada. However, the other actor, Edmund Keene, mentioned by Cowan, could not have appeared in the Winnipeg theater at the time Cowan was describing as he was born in 1781 and died in 1833. Evidently he had heard of this actor and thus made this mistake. Cowan was young at the time his father operated the theater. Keene was Junius Brutus Booth’s greatest rival and is principally identified with the stage of England. However, he was highly praised in his American engagements. “Emma Abbott”, Dictionary of American Biography, (1943) XII, 18; George Freedley and John Reeves, A History of The Theater (New York: Crown Publishers, 1941) P. 328; “Edmund Keene”, Dictionary of American Biography (1943) XVI, 246-247.

The boundary was established between Canada and the United States by the Anglo-American Convention of 1818, but the boundary remained unmarked until 1874 and it was not until ten years later that the boundary really indicated a division in the two countries. Blue-coated troops assisted the federal officials in enforcing the law, but there was a long boundary line. The term "French leave" became popular during the first World War and signified going away without permission when a person was in a position to need permission. Sharp, Whoop-Up-Country, pp. 310 and 274.

British Columbia entered the Confederacy in July, 1871 because of a promise by the Dominion Government to build a railroad to the Pacific coast within ten years. In 1872 Hugh Allen of Montreal got the charter to build the road but failed financially. In 1874 Parliament authorized the construction of the railroad as a government enterprise and by 1876 a strip of road from Pembia to Winnipeg was finished. In 1880 the MacDonald government found three men willing to undertake the building of the road. The company, consisting of Donald A. Smith, George Stephens and James J. Hill, received a cash bonus of $25,000,000 and 24,000,000 acres of land and also 700 miles of road already constructed. In 1882 Mr. Hill withdrew from the company. Promised no competition
for twenty years, the Company agreed to complete the 1900 miles of track necessary to link the Pacific with the Atlantic. On November 7, 1885 Donald A. Smith drove the golden spike which held the last tie in place. It was the only railway system that was able to withstand the shock of World War I and not be absorbed in the Canadian National System. Wittke, A History of Canada, pp. 211-22; John MacCormac, Canada; American's Problem (New York: The Viking Press, 1941) pp. 202-203; Donald Creighton, Dominion of the North (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1944) p. 317.

Pembina on the Red River was the first capital of the Metis, a race of mixed white and Indian origin. After the Hudson's Bay Company surrendered its land to the Canadian government in 1869, surveyors were sent to the Red River settlement. They disregarded the river - lot boundaries of the existing farms. The Metis, very alarmed, stopped the survey under the leadership of Louis Riel, an educated, intelligent man. They seized the stronghold of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Garry and organized a formal, full provisional government, Riel was the head of this government for 295 days when he lost control. His big mistake was when he had Thomas Scott, a white Protestant and native of Ontario, executed as a rebel. An act of 1870 made the Red River settlement a part of Canada when it was admitted as the province of Manitoba. However the struggle was not ended between the Metis and the Canadian government. There was a gradual plan to secure all the fertile land and place the Indians on reservations and to change their way of life by education and by teaching them methods of agriculture. By 1884, the resentment had so increased that there was a desire to openly rebel against the Canadian government and the Metis again turned to Riel to lead their struggle against the Ottawa government which had not learned a lesson fifteen years before. Riel had spent that time in America, some in Montana; he had been elected to Parliament in 1874 but only appeared to sign the member's book and left before his enemies could get control of him. The revolt was again caused because of land surveying. This time there was bloodshed. This first encounter was at Duck Creek on March 26, 1885. This battle aroused intense excitement in Canada. There were several engagements between the Metis and the Canadian soldiers including the massacre at Frog Lake. The final battle was at Batoche on the morning of May 9th. After four days of the struggle the lack of ammunition forced Riel to surrender. He was taken to jail at Regina; he was in jail eight weeks and was then tried for treason and felony. He was hanged at Regina in November 1885. The resistance was of some value because the Canadian government was forced to recognize that the Metis were worthy of citizenship. J. K. Howard, Strange Empire, pp. 28, 103, 112, 153, 183, 407-565; William McCarty Davidson, Louis Riel, 1844-1885 (Calgary, Alberta: The
Saskatoon is on the South Saskatchewan River and 150 miles northwest of Regina. The site was laid out in 1883 and it was reached by railroad in 1890. "Saskatoon", Rand McNally World Guide (1953) 59h.

Peter A. B. Widener III, a member of a wealthy Philadelphia family, in his autobiography (which is the story of three generations) mentions using urine on his feet when they were very sore from marching in World War I. He had read about the healing qualities of urine and says that the soreness of his feet was cured. Widener, Peter Arrell Brown, Without Drums (Philadelphia: Putnam Publishing Company, 1940).

A bill authorizing the construction of a military post at or near its present location was passed by Congress in 1876. The act appropriated $100,000 towards the building of Fort Assiniboine which was to protect the citizens of Montana from the hostile incursions of Indian tribes in that region. There was tension along the international boundary in 1878 and 1879. Raids of the Sioux Indians into Montana kept the inhabitants on edge; white settlers regarded Sitting Bull as a constant menace. Soldiers from Forts Benton, Shaw and Assiniboine assisted local officials in enforcing the law. The Mounted Police denied that the Indians planned a mass attack. The main purpose of Fort Assiniboine was to police the border and keep the Sioux out of Montana. Miles was to keep the Indians in Canada by a display of force rather than fighting. The plan was successful and the Indians, cut off from their supply of buffalo, added to Canada's problems. In 1904 the United States spent $200,000 on the fort as at that time it was felt that the fort, the largest military reservation in the world, would be permanent. However in December of 1912 the United States Senate passed a bill providing for the sale of the abandoned fort. The sale was to be conducted by lottery. Since the land was one of the finest pieces of agricultural lands in the West there was a rush for the land. The post was sold to the State of Montana for educational purposes and at the present time is used as an experiment station for the county of Hill. Many of the fine brick buildings were torn down and the brick sold. News item in Havre Plainesider, July 9, 1904 and December 21, 1912; Havre Independent, April 28, 1934; Paul F. Sharpe, Whoop-Up-Trail, pp. 126 and 161.

C. A. Broadwater came to Virginia City in 1865. He was a freighter there, hauling a pack belonging to the firm of King and Gillette. The famous "Diamond R" Transportation Company was joined by Broadwater in 1869. In 1878 when Fort Assiniboine was established Broadwater saw a chance for a lucrative trade. So in addition to his transportation company
he became post trader for the fort, the business being conducted under the firm name of Broadwater, McCullough and Company. Broadwater first became associated with Robert L. McCullough, who came from Salt Lake City in 1881, when he was first employed by the Diamond "R" Freighting Company. The vast amount of business conducted by the company during the twelve years of operation was almost unbelievable. The company also owned 5000 head of cattle in 1886. In 1887, the Great Northern reached Fort Assiniboine. The railroad soon slowed up the business and the company was disbanded. Broadwater's business interests were many in Montana. He was associated with C. J. McNamara of Big Sandy, a former state senator. When he died the management of his affairs fell into the hands of his wife's nephew, Tom Marlow, who was associated with McNamara in a mercantile and farming company in Big Sandy, eighty miles from Great Falls. He had interests in the First National Bank in Great Falls and Neihart. He had cattle and mining interests all over the state. The Broadwater Hotel in Helena was named for him. Before he died he was well worth over a million dollars. Joaquin Miller, The State of Montana (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1894), pp. 378 to 382 and 756; J. K. Howard, Strange Empire, p. 341; news item Havre Daily News, May 5, 1936; Havre Independent, April 26, 1934; The Anaconda Standard, December, 15, 1900.

Tons and tons of bones were strewn all over the West after the extermination of the buffalo. As late as 1886 there could be seen immense heaps of bones along the tracks waiting for shipment. Mrs. A. S. Lohman of Chinook, an old timer about 87 years old, remembers well the piles of bones which resembled haystacks from a distance. In 1885 a single firm shipped over two hundred tons of bones from Miles City. The bones were used as fertilizer and sugar refiners used them for obtaining carbon. Indians as well as whites made a business of picking up these bones; they would often build prairie fires in order to be able to see the bones more clearly. In a glass case in the Mint Saloon in Great Falls, Montana there is saved an old fashioned letter head which says "Office of B. M. Hicks, Dealer in Buffalo Bones, Minneapolis, Minnesota". The letter is dated June 17, 1895 and is addressed to Mr. John M. Lewis, Glasgow, Montana telling him that the company would pay him $5.00 per ton for bones. The cars must contain twelve tons or more of bones. Burlingame, Merrill O., "The Buffalo in Trade and Commerce", North Dakota Historical Quarterly (July, 1929), III no. 4; Howard, Montana, High, Wide and Handsome, p. 21.

In 1864 Isaac Gilbert Baker was a chief clerk for Pierre Chouteau, Jr. at Fort Benton. In 1865 in partnership with his brother, Charles, he organized the I. G. Baker and
Company firm. In 1873 he sold his interest to Wm. and
Charles Conrad and opened offices in St. Louis to supervise
the purchases of goods sent to Fort Benton. By 1878 the firm
shipped two million dollars worth of goods annually and was
one of the largest taxpayers in Montana. This firm and the
T. G. Power firm grew strong and wealthy because of their
many interests and because they eliminated small competitors.
They engaged in fur trading, mining, milling, banking, Indian
trading, retail and wholesale merchandising, river steamers,
wagon freighting and government contracting from both Canada
and the United States. There is evidence they dealt in whis­
key and sale of arms to the Indians. However in 1875 they
began to oppose the liquor trade and the arrival of the
Mounties controlled the illegal sale of whiskey. By politi­
cal pull they sold about a third of the supplies used by the
Mounted Police. In 1875 they received $222,771 for this
trade alone. They also provided beef and supplies for the
Reservation alone. They also provided beef and supplies for
the Reservation Indians across the boundary. The sinking of
the "Red Cloud" in 1882 marked the end of the I. G. Baker
Company in river steamboating and in 1891 the Conrads sold
their holdings to a Great Falls firm. Paul F. Sharpe,
"Merchant Princes of the Plains", Montana Magazine of
History (Winter 1955), Vol. V No. 1 Sharpe, Whoop-Up Country,
p. 220.

In 1867 T. G. Power came to Fort Benton equipped
with a stock of goods and hopes of trading with the gold
seekers. The firm prospered and built a great empire on the
ruins of the American Fur Company. T. G. Power boasted that
he could provide anything in Fort Benton that could be pur­
chased in New York. The T. G. Power Company organized the
famous Benton Transportation Company whose little steamers,
the Helena, Butte, Benton and Black Hills were familiar
names on the upper river. The railroad stopped the big trade
on the river. In July 1883 the last important shipment left
Fort Benton for Fort Macleod. By August of that year a
twenty-year era had ended. The store also engaged in the
cattle industry and placed thousands of work oxen on the open
range during the winter. Sharpe, Whoop-Up Country, p. 220.

Mr. George Book was the president of the Empire
Carbon Works at St. Louis, Missouri. He later reported that
70 percent of the bone shipments had been processed at that
city. The rest were sent to Philadelphia, Baltimore and
Detroit. The price paid for the bones delivered F. O. B.
ranged from $18 to $27 per ton. The Empire Carbon Works
took more than one and a quarter million tons. Probably in
all there was a total business of more than forty-million in
money value for the whole industry. However it is not until
recently that the business has had the attention of the his­
tory writer. Comparing the price that Mr. Hicks paid David
Cowan and the price paid in St. Louis it can be seen that the
business was a very profitable one. David Cowan was called "Big Bones" and William Cowan "Little Bones" by the Indians. Major I. McCreight, "Buffalo Bone Days", Du Bois Courier Express, (1949).

18. There was a severe drought in Montana in 1888 and 1889 whose effects were not felt until the late summer of 1889. In January and February the range cattle were in excellent condition due to a recent snow. However in June and July the drought was being severely felt and it was admitted that the year was the driest ever known in Montana. The Missouri had no rise for the first time in its history and on the first of July there had been no rain for fifty days. Advocates of irrigation urged that there could be no successful farming without the aid of irrigation ditches. A special committee was appointed by the United States Senate in June to tour the fields that needed irrigation. On August 15, 1889 Senators Stewart and Regan accompanied by Director Powell of the U. S. Geological Survey arrived in Helena as members of the Senatorial Committee on Irrigation. The River Press (Fort Benton, Montana) January 9, 1889 and July 3, 1889; Helena Weekly Herald, June 27, 1889; "The Arid Lands", Helena Weekly Herald, August 15, 1889.

19. Most sources say that Port Benton was first established in 1850 by the American Fur Company under the direction of Major Culbertson. It was built of Missouri River mud dried on the spot and named for Senator Tom Benton of Missouri. In the early 1860's the entire population lived in the fort walls and no one ventured out unarmed. From this trading post more than one half million dollars worth of furs and robes were shipped annually to the states. A ragged little settlement grew up outside the trading post; there were about five or six hundred men and less than twenty-five women. In the 1860's Port Benton was called a squaw town, the home of horse thieves and whiskey traders and cut throats. With the coming of big business as T. C. Power and I. G. Baker Companies there was a demand for law and order. Troops were stationed there from 1866 to 1881, but it was never a major military post as was Port Assiniboine. In 1882 the land was opened to settlement. Real estate skyrocketed as much as 500 percent in 1879. Prices were high through 1882, but by 1882 because of the economic depression and the loss of the steamboat trade real estate values declined. There were many trials and dangers in the early community. There were two early newspapers, the "Record" and the "River Press". School was first opened in 1874 with Miss Fannie Culbertson as teacher. The mullen Road constructed in 1858 to 1862 made a land route between the Columbia and Missouri Rivers. It extended from Walla Walla, Washington Territory to Fort Benton. The first steamer, the "Yellowstone" reached Fort Benton in 1858. The steamboat trade reached its peak in 1869 when forty two boats unloaded.
Margery Jacoby Cowan, the wife of W. T. Cowan came to Fort Benton on the steamer, "Helena", in 1883. In 1895 she was elected county superintendent of old Chouteau County.


Although selling whiskey to the Indians had been illegal since the Indian Act of 1854, many traders engaged in the trade as also did some reliable firms. Since in the later years there was a stigma attached to the whiskey trade, it is hard to get actual evidence against these firms. In the early years both the Hudson's Bay and the American Fur Companies used liquor to lure the Indians to trade at their exchanges. Money values were unknown to the Indians and it was much easier to cheat them of their just pay for furs when they were under the influence of liquor. Surprisingly few Westerners disapproved of the trade. Many of the traders were young men just out of uniform. They were mostly "decent" men by frontier standards. They avoided violence whenever possible. The traders used good whiskey but mixed up all sorts of concoctions for the Indian trade. With a quart of whiskey they would mix a pound of chewing tobacco, a handful of red pepper and a quart of molasses. The mixture was diluted with water and then diluted to give quicker results. Some used wine, others painkiller and a touch of red ink was sometimes used to please the Indians love for color. Sharpe, Whoop-Up Country, pp. 35, 42, 122, 145, 215.

The Cypress Hills Massacre in May 1873 hastened the formation of the Northwest Mounted Police in the same month. The force was a civil one under military discipline with the British red coats and headquarters at Fort Macleod two hundred and forty miles from Fort Benton. In 1878 headquarters were moved to Fort Walsh only seventy miles from Fort Assiniboine. The immediate purpose of the force was to stamp out the whiskey trade, they patrolled the boundaries, collected customs, halted smuggling, and stopped possible Fenian invasion. Because the Mounties traveled in twos and threes and never seemed afraid they aroused the respect of the Indians. Fort Whoop-Up was located near the present site of Lethbridge. The whiskey traders there gave a quart of diluted whiskey (Note 20) for each buffalo robe worth five
dollars. The post secured 9000 robes in one summer. The Mounties decided to stop the whiskey traders at this fort and after advice in Fort Benton and a good guide, Jerry Potts, they advanced toward the fort which was virtually abandoned when they arrived. After the capture of the main post the rest was easy and the traders learned that the free and easy days were over. One whiskey trader who had not heard of the Mounties was fined two-hundred dollars and sent to jail. The Mounties had taken all the profit out of the whiskey trade. John Peter Turner, The North-West Mounted Police 1873-1893 (Ottawa, King's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1950), pp. 390, 394; Sharpe, Whoop-Up Country, pp. 54, 126, 161, 274, 283; Richard L. Neubarger, Royal Mounted Police (New York: Random House, 4th printing, 1953), pp. 32-32.

Harlem lies on Highway 2 between Havre and Glasgow in a valley shaded and sheltered by cottonwoods. It secures its water from Milk River, a tributary of the Missouri. Modern brick structures are mixed with wooden structures of pioneer days. It is the trading post for the Belknap Indian Reservation which has its headquarters about three miles from the town. The 1950 census gives the population of Harlem as 1107. However, R. J. Gwaltney, the city clerk, in a letter to Jean Crockett June, 1956, estimates that about 1,500 people live in the city of Harlem.
CHAPTER III

THE MOVE TO BOX ELDER

By spring, Cypress was completely folded up. Father realized he would have to move. He had been to Box Elder loading out bones. The Railway Company had brought in a colony of people from Ohio to take up land and settle the country. There were forty families at Box Elder led by a man called Bremer. The Railway Company had furnished construction crew cars for the people to live in and they laid out a townsite, which they called Bremer. There were also four homesteaders on the Box Elder Creek flat, Robert Corcoran, John Henry, Dave Adams and Clem Sailor. Also on Duck Creek, a couple of miles south, there were two settlers, Ray Mack and Milton Tow.

The first four men had been employees of the Broadwater, McCullough Company at Fort Assiniboine. All the land in Northern Montana around Fort Assiniboine and as far west as the Rocky Mountains had been a part of the Blackfoot Indian Reservation. The Government had bought a part of this land from the Indians and it had been thrown open to settlement in 1888, if my information is correct. Messrs. Corcoran, Henry, Adams and Sailor had staked out their claims in the vicinity of the Box Elder Stage Station on the creek; where horses were kept to relay the horses used on the stage coach which had a run from Fort Assiniboine to

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Helena prior to the building of the Railroad. Mr. Tow was an Englishman who had been a section foreman at Box Elder siding and Ray Mack was from Oregon; where his people had been among those who went to that country years before by overland wagon trains.

The Broadwater, McCullough Company had a cord wood contract. The wood was cut by the half-breeds and Indians some 12 to 15 miles from Box Elder, on the head of Big Sandy Creek, hauled by string mule and ox teams to Box Elder, loaded on flat cars and shipped to Assiniboine Station to within a mile of Fort Assiniboine.

Box Elder was near enough to Cypress so it would not be much expense to move our tent store, stock of merchandise and household goods. So it was decided to move. Father loaded all his household goods, the stock of merchandise and several cords of stove wood, in a box car at Assiniboine Station. Father came with the car and Mother, Minnie and Grace (my two sisters) came on the train. We secured a place to live in one of the cars furnished by the Railway Company for the settlers.

I rode from Cypress with a man called John Haggerty, who had owned a saloon in Cypress and abandoned it the same time we left there. I can still remember the June grass waving in the sunlight. There were no cattle or other livestock in the country and a four day rain the last of April and first part of May had caused a most luxuriant growth of
grass. In all the years since, I never have seen such a beautiful sight as were the hillsides and flats covered with the headed June grass.

Father set up his tent store. What with the bone business, the employees of the wood contractors, the settlers around and the travelers going through, we managed to pick up quite a lot of business. I was fifteen years old, but father seemed to think I was fully grown up. We had a folding scale which we had secured at Fort Assiniboine, and I went as far east as Chinook and as far west as Portage, weighing, loading and billing out the cars of buffalo bones. All the bone-pickers had to come to Box Elder to get their supplies and make final settlement for what was coming to them. It looks, these days, as though that was a long way to travel by wagon and pony cart, but the half-breeds apparently thought nothing about it. (They were a happy-go-lucky people, putting in the time between birth and death as pleasantly and happily as possible. There was no rush as far as they were concerned. If they had some overalls, calico for dresses, food and an occasional "drunk", they were as happy as larks.)

The year 1889 turned out to be a very dry year. After the four days rain in the spring, no more rain fell all summer and during this time most of the Ohio settlers went back home. Only three families remained, Mr. Alvin Brough, his wife, two sons, Henry and Clarence and a daughter, Nellie; Mr. L. C. Stocker and a man named
Lomenick. This man, Lomenick, built a house but sold it to L. C. Stocker in the fall and then he went back to Ohio; so of the forty families who first came to Box Elder, only two remained. Mr. Stocker sold out in 1910 and moved to the Salmon River country in western Montana. The two Brough boys and their sister Nellie are still living in the Bear Paw Mountains, where they raise cattle.

The St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway started the extension of the railroad west from Pacific Junction in the spring of 1890. This place was located on the Fort Assiniboine Military Reservation so it was necessary to start the division point at Bull Hook Creek. The new townsite was named Havre. I do not know how the name was picked, it is probably just the creation of some fertile brained romancer, but the story that went around was as follows: There were two squatters on the Bull Hook Creek bottom, where the city of Havre is now located. Gus Descelles and Joe DeMars, both French Canadians. Gus Descelles, known as French Gus, was a little sawed-off man; while Joe DeMars was a very large, strong man. The story went that they got into a fight over the affections of a charming half-breed girl and Joe DeMars got the best of the struggle. Little French Gus, in giving up the struggle, is reported to have said, "You can have her," and this is reported to be how Havre got its name. At any rate, when the town of Havre started, the division point with the Round House was moved from Assiniboine.
The local rich man of the country was Simeon Pepin. He had been running cattle on the Fort Assiniboine Reservation and was employed by the Broadwater, McCullough Company as train-master. That is, boss of the mule and ox teams used to freight merchandise before the advent of the railroad; and later he became foreman of their hay and wood contract operations. Mr. Pepin had supplied the beef steers with which the Post Trader, Broadwater, McCullough and Company, furnished the beef for the soldiers.

Then when Havre opened up, Mr. Pepin got the idea that he wanted to go into the store business. He came to Box Elder and tried to get my father to move into Havre and go into business with him and manage the store. But father had had such disastrous experiences with partners, and particularly with Frenchmen, that he was afraid to make the move. Then too, we had gone in debt to the T. C. Power and Brothers people of Fort Benton for lumber to build our store at Box Elder and father knew if he left the building it would mean a total loss. He also had such a bad time in the Winnipeg boom that he was afraid the town of Havre would dwindle away as soon as the activity caused by the road construction was over. He thought it was probably better to be safe in the small business at Box Elder, than to venture into a larger place with all the hazards such a move would entail. Well, Mr. Pepin took for his partner, Mr. Ed Broadwater, nephew of Colonel C. A. Broadwater, who had been a book-keeper in the Fort Assiniboine Sutler Store. The firm prospered and
Mr. Pepin died a millionaire and Mr. Broadwater also became very wealthy in Havre real estate.

An account written May 1, 1888 states that the U. S. Commissioners on August 28 and 29th of December concluded an agreement with the various tribes of Indians residing on the Gros Ventres, Piegan, Blood, Blackfoot and River Crow Reservations in Montana Territory as follows: (a paraphrase)

Since the reservation set apart for the Indians is too large for the number of Indians occupying the territory, the Indians wish to dispose of the land in order to make them self-supporting and to educate their children agree:

ARTICLE I AND ARTICLE III

The permanent homes of the various tribes shall be on the separate reservations described and set apart. In return the United States agrees, under the direction of the Secretary of Interior, to give the Indians at the Fort Peck Agency $150,000 for the purchase of cows, bulls, clothing, agricultural implements, education of children and medical care and aid for the aged, sick and infirm. They also erected new agency buildings. The agreement was signed at Fort Peck Agency, December 28, 1886. Other reservations were treated in like manner. $430,000 was to be made immediately available for carrying out the agreement.

SECTION III

The lands that the Indians relinquish are to be made a part of the public domain and will be settled under the Homestead Law. The total area was 17,000,000 acres. The nearest military post was Fort Assiniboine; post office was Browning; telegraph address was Blackfoot, Montana.


Pacific Junction is just west of Havre, and by 1890 Jim Hill's entire line had been laid out from Fort Assiniboine (six miles from Havre) to Spokane. Glenn Chesney Quiett, They Built the West (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Incop. 1934), pp. 458-488.
Le Havre, France received the following radio message from the mayor of Havre, Montana on November 11, 1918: "In 1879 a young Frenchman, Simon Pepin, drove to Montana. In a little valley through which runs the Milk River he established his home. This was the center from which the village grew. It was first called Simon, but he later asked to have it changed to the name Havre, after his beloved city of Le Havre, France." He left land for a park at his death.

When the Great Northern Railway was built from Minot to Great Falls in the summer of 1887 the names of the towns were selected by some one in the office of the General Manager in St. Paul. Havre was named for the French city. News item in the Great Falls Tribune, November 14, 1918; letter from L. K. Devlin, December 7, 1937 from Havre, Montana to the State Historical Library in Helena, Montana.

Ed Broadwater was born in Memphis, Missouri. He came up the Missouri River in 1882. He came overland to Fort Assiniboine and was a clerk in the post traders' store at the age of twenty. He stayed at the Fort until 1891 when he went into partnership with Simon Pepin. They started a business called Broadwater Pepin Company. They had branch stores at Harlem, Hays, and Browning. They had a store on the north side of the tracks where the Eagles Hall is now located. In 1904 they built a brick building on the other side of the tracks. In 1910 the company built a handsome brick and stone structure for occupancy of Frank Stenle and to be called the Stenle Style Store. The firm gave land to the railroad and partners always had passes on the train. The business continued in Hays until 1922. Mr. Broadwater owned business property in Havre, and was a farmer and cattle rancher until his death in 1942. Personal interview with Miss Kathleen Broadwater, daughter of Ed Broadwater, of Havre, Montana.
CHAPTER IV

JOHN J. PERSHING

Not long after we located at Box Elder the buffalo bones were all picked up. I began to worry about our future. It seemed that we were living in a part of the country with only one resource, the land grass. The winter of 1886 and 1892-93 had proven that range raising of cattle on a large scale was a hazardous business. I wanted father to move to the Flathead Lake country where there would be farming, lumbering and more than one resource. I argued that the bones were all picked up and the few settlers who depended upon Fort Assiniboine for a market for their hay crops was too small a population for a store to be prosperous. I remember father's argument. It simply was, "something will turn up."

True enough, from about 1890 on, herds of cattle were brought in. Cowboys and others took up homesteads along the creeks, built small dams and took the creek waters out to irrigate the small bottoms to grow hay for an insurance against the hard winters by providing a supply of hay.

During this time, we secured the cord wood contract for supplying Fort Assiniboine with wood from the Military Wood Reservation in the Bear Paws and contracts for hay for the cavalry horses and the mules used for transportation.

This gave us an acquaintance with a few Army Officers,
particularlly in the Quarter Master Department. Army Officers and their families of those days were very conscious of the caste system. The soldiers, teamsters and ranchers used to say the commissioned officers were officers and gentlemen by Act of Congress. At any rate, the average civilian was not made very welcome in a social way among the officers of the garrison. Fort Assiniboine was garrisoned with the Ninth Cavalry, a colored regiment. Among the officers there was John J. Pershing, a first lieutenant. Lieut. Pershing frequently came to Box Elder. I said to him one day when he was visiting our store, "Lieutenant, it is rather strange you come out and visit with the settlers and people outside the Fort." His reply was that he liked to get acquainted with the people who were settling the country.

He generally had an ambulance, as the wagons were called that carried camp equipment. He rode his horse and was accompanied by a soldier and the conveyance carrying camp equipment. He explained that he was making a study of the topography of the country, mapping it and preparing a place for offense and defense in case of a war.

General Pershing really got his start at Fort Assiniboine. The story is about as follows:

It was the duty of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to make inspection trips to the various Military Posts over the country. General Nelson A. Miles was the Commanding General at the time. General Miles sent word he was coming for an inspection and said he wanted to go up Beaver Creek for a
prairie chicken hunt. There had been a hail storm that spring, which had broken up the nests of the prairie chickens and there were very few hatched out.

The officers of the Post held a meeting to try and decide what to do. Practically all the officers were afraid to go out with the General for fear they would not be able to find any chickens, which of course would put them in an unfavorable light with the General. Their future advancement was largely in the hands of the General, or at least it was presumed any special privileges or advancement might be barred if the General was not favorably impressed.

Finally, Lieutenant Pershing volunteered to take General Miles out for a hunt. After the General arrived, an expedition was arranged, and a trip was made with saddle horses for the General and Lieut. Pershing and two Army ambulances with six mules to each wagon, carrying the camp equipment and soldiers to set up the tents, cook the meals, etc. The camp was made at a place called Wilson's Crossing, on Beaver Creek, about twelve or fifteen miles up Beaver Creek, in the foothills of the Bear Paw Mountains. Shortly after arriving at the camp ground, Pershing accompanied the General on a hunting trip up a small side creek. As luck would have it, they ran into a covy of prairie chickens almost right away and succeeded in getting some. This was perhaps one of the very few bunches of prairie chickens left in the Bear Paws. At all events, the General was very much pleased over the
Within three weeks after the General's visit to Assiniboine, Lieutenant Pershing received an appointment to a desk job in Washington, D. C. 7

President Theodore Roosevelt was so pleased by the strategy displayed by Pershing that he jumped Pershing's rating, if I remember correctly, up 380 or more points. (Army officers are advanced by the system of seniority). I recollect the newspapers opposed to Roosevelt's administration made a lot of fuss over this favoritism. It was alleged that it was caused by the fact that Senator Warren of Wyoming, Pershing's father-in-law, was chairman of the Military Committee of the United States Senate. Regardless of the reasons, the fact remains that this advancement given to Pershing must have been the reason the Supreme Command of the American Expeditionary Forces was given to General Pershing in World War No. I. 8

So the final results were based on the fact that Pershing as a first Lieutenant of the Tenth Cavalry at Fort Assiniboine, Montana, had the nerve to volunteer to take General Nelson A. Miles on a prairie chicken hunt up Beaver Creek when the consensus of opinion among his brother officers was that it was practically military suicide.

1 The cattle business was not good in the seventies, due to the panic, and the boom was not realized until the
eighties. When it was found that cattle wintered well on the Montana plains Chicago began to pay as much as forty-five to sixty dollars per head. In 1883 there were 600,000 head of cattle on the range; the cowboy had become an institution; profits of 25 to 40 per cent were reported so the cattle companies multiplied and there was wild speculation. Gradually the "free grass" was used and the first meeting of the Stock Growers Association was held in Helena in 1870. Indians on the twenty million acres of reservation land aroused the stockman's anger; "cattle rustlers" caused much trouble; there was danger from diseased cattle; fencing of the public domain began until it was stopped by law in 1885. The winter of 1880 and 1881 had been severe and the loss of cattle heavy. However this was forgotten in the good years that followed until the terrible winter of 1886 to 1887 hit. This winter showed it was futile for both the large and small cattle men to depend entirely upon the open range. In 1888 a good year made things look better and that same year the reservations were reduced in size. The range cattle business lasted ten years longer, but it was on its way out. Outside capital was no longer available and there were severe quarrels between the large farmers and the cattle men. There was livestock on the isolated farms where there was winter feeding and places where there was scattered irrigation. Ernest Staples Osgood, The Days of the Cattlemen (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1929, second printing 1954).

2 It was in the Bear's Paw Mountains about fifteen miles from the town of Chinook and about a day's ride from the Canadian border that Chief Joseph fought his final fight with General Miles in October 1777. In the Great Plains part of Montana several mountain groups stand above the general plains. These are said to be of volcanic origin. These mountains are called the Sweet Grass Hills, the Bear's Paw, Little Rocky, Highwood, Moccasin, Judith, Big Snowy and Crazy. Valleys partly or entirely filled with earth materials occur in the northern half of Montana. The Missouri River flows north until it gets near to the Bear's Paw Mountains and then it turns abruptly eastward. The river once flowed north of the Bear's Paw and Little Rocky Mountains, that old valley of the Missouri is occupied by the Milk River. The Indians named these mountains because of their actual resemblance to a bear's paw. Daniel E. Willard, Montana, Geological Story (Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Science Press Printing Company, 1933), pp. 46, 97.

3 A saying popular until the beginning of World War II.

4 John J. Pershing was born at Laclede, Missouri in 1861 and died at Walter Reed Hospital July 15, 1948. His
burial was in Arlington National Cemetery. He graduated from West Point in 1886, served against the Apaches in Arizona in 1890, in Dakota in 1891, in Cuba in 1896, the Philippines in 1903, and Japan in 1905. In September 1919 the office of General of the Armies was re-created and given to Pershing which made him outrank the four generals of the army in World War I. In 1921 he was made Chief of Staff. He was chairman of the American Battle Monuments; in 1931 he published "My Experiences in World War I". On October 1895 Pershing reported at Fort Assiniboine to join his regiment which was Troop "D", 10th Cavalry. He was a lieutenant in charge of this colored regiment. He earned the title of "Black Jack" while at the Fort. In the summer of 1896 about five hundred Crees poured into Montana after the collapse of the Riel Rebellion, and caused some apprehension in the territory around the Bear's Paw and surrounding territory. The hard work of rounding up the Indians to be sent back to Canada fell to Pershing. When the Indians heard that the soldiers were coming, they would break into small bands and make for the coulees. The 10th Cavalry returned to the Fort after sixty-two days of work in the field. Pershing did his work thoroughly but "Rocky Boy" came back. Pershing had an opportunity in this isolated Fort which helped him to become a general in the United States Army. This was a chance to gain the friendship of General Nelson A. Miles. Pershing and another officer took the General on a chicken hunt. Pershing wanted an assignment at West Point and in a few weeks after the chicken hunt with Miles he left the Fort. On June of the following year he became instructor of tactics at West Point. While he was at Assiniboine he took part in home talent plays. He was a great friend of Mr. L. K. Devlin, a clerk at the Fort, and his wife living in Havre has letters to him from Pershing in her possession. He used to ride out to the ranch of Andrew Johnson, south of Chinook, and buy the sixty-day grain which ripened in the mountains. He remembered George W. Fuller of Chinook, band director at the Fort, when he talked to Bill Johnson of Chinook when he met him at Soulle in the Argonne Forest. "John J. Pershing" Encyclopedia Britannica Vol. XVII, (1951), p. 546; Montana Illustrated Monthly, Vol. I, No. 3; (May 1895), News Item in Rocky Mountain Husbandman, Great Falls, Montana, July 23, 1912; news item in the Medicine Lake Wave, March 17, 1919; Personal interviews with Kathleen Broadwater and Mrs. L. K. Devlin of Havre and with William Johnson of Chinook.

Pershing was probably considering the fact that the Indians which he had taken back to the Canadian boundary might return and cause trouble. The only issues between the United States and Canada at this time, when the Liberals had come in power with the election of Wilfred Laurier, were the Pacific and Atlantic fisheries and the Alaskan boundary dispute neither one of which would cause war.
Nelson Appleton Miles was born August 8, 1839 at Westminster, Massachusetts and died May 15, 1925. He served in most of the battles of the Civil War. In May 1864 he was promoted to brigadier-general and in 1865 major-general of volunteers. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor in July 1892. When he entered the regular army he was commissioned colonel of the 40th United States Infantry. For fifteen years he was associated with difficult but successful campaigns against various Indians west of the Mississippi. In 1877 he captured Chief Joseph. In 1878 he captured Elk Horn and his band on the edge of Yellowstone Park. In 1878 and 1879 he was around Fort Assiniboine (Note 4). In 1886 he forced Geronimo, Natchez, and a band of Apaches to surrender and thus restored peace to Arizona and New Mexico. For his services he received thanks from the legislatures of Kansas, Montana, and New Mexico. In 1895 he succeeded to the command of the United States Army. The office of Commanding General of the Army was created mostly for the purpose of bestowing honors on distinguished officers rather than a need for such an office. There was a continual struggle for command between this office and that of Secretary of War. Elihu Root, Secretary of War, struggled against Miles because he hated the old system. Root's attempt to get along with Miles failed because of Miles feeling of importance, - he even desired to run for president of the United States. Theodore Roosevelt also disliked Miles who hinted that Roosevelt had never been at San Juan Hill. On August 8, 1903 Miles was retired without a word of praise from Root for his past services. After the retirement of Miles the old office of Commanding General was replaced by the new position of Chief of Staff. Philip G. Jessup, Elihu Root (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1938), pp.226-251; "Nelson A. Miles", Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. XII, (1913).

At this point Mr. Cowan gives a description of Pershing from an unidentified magazine article which is compressed as follows: In 1899 Pershing was sent to the Philippine Islands. He was there for four years as adjutant-general in the department Mindanao in command of military operations against the Moros. His success in subduing the Moros and even winning their confidence attracted the attention of the authorities in Washington. He was recalled to the United States in 1903 and became a member of the General Staff Corps. This position he held until 1906. In a message to Congress on December 8, 1903 President Roosevelt paid a tribute to Pershing's achievements. An account is given that Miss Frances Warren, daughter of United States Senator Warren of Wyoming, was in the visitor's gallery at the time he was praised by the President. She remarked to a friend, "What a wonderful record, I would like to see the man who made it". She did meet him later and on January 26, 1905 she became his
Pershing was in command of the Tenth Cavalry, not the Ninth. He received the appointment as a first lieutenant on October 20, 1892. He was sent to Fort Assiniboine on October 11, 1895 and remained there until October 16, 1896. In June and July of that year he assisted in deporting the Cree Indians. He served in the First and Fifteenth Cavalry as well as being appointed military attache at Tokyo, Japan. Because of his outstanding services he was brought before the attention of the President who wanted to reward him for his faithful services. There were obstacles in the way of rewarding him and the President tried to get laws changed so Pershing could be honored. Although no apparent progress was made in changing the laws President Roosevelt nominated him as Brigadier General. The nomination was confirmed and the President had by his action jumped the new general ahead of 862 senior officers. None of his work had been spectacular and there were protests from some disappointed seeking after office. This probably hurt Pershing but he did not complain and when he was sent back to the Philippines he demonstrated that the action of the President had not been an idle or thoughtless impulse. Mrs. L. K. Devlin of Havre owns a picture of Pershing and a group of officers at Fort Assiniboine which is dated 1897. The caption on the picture reads "Before the Spanish American War". There are officers of the Tenth Cavalry and Companies C, and E. of the Twenty-fifth Infantry. "John J. Pershing", Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol. XVII, 1951), p. 546; Tomlinson, The Story of General Pershing, pp. 60, 96, 99.
CHAPTER V

ESTABLISHING OF A SCHOOL AT BOX ELDER

We moved from Cypress to Box Elder in June, 1889. Father got his store built, shipping in two carloads of lumber from Minnesota. Things settled down and as is usual in a small place, the General Store was the club room and assembly place for the community. There were several families in and around Box Elder. So the proposition of getting a school started was discussed pro and con. If I remember correctly, the requirements were that there be ten children of school age, (that is, between the ages of six and twenty-one years). In time a petition was drawn up applying to the County Superintendent of Schools for the establishment of a school.

Chouteau County was the county in which Box Elder was located and Fort Benton was the County Seat. Miss Finnegan was County Superintendent of Schools. (Old Chouteau County has since been sub-divided to such an extent, that there are now seven counties within the area which this county covered when we settled here.). As an indication of how early a community Box Elder was in this vast area of Northern Montana, our school, when established, was the 13th school established in Old Chouteau County, an area extending south of the Canadian boundary from within fifteen miles of Great Falls to the Dawson County line a short ways west of
Glasgow, Montana and embracing all the land north of the Missouri River. Father furnished a small building for the school. It was perhaps fourteen by sixteen feet square.

Our first teacher was a young lady named Nannie E. White who originally came from Champaign, Illinois. At the time she accepted the position teaching our school, she was visiting or living with her relatives, people by the name of Redding. They lived at or near Clancey, Montana, which was a short distance west of Helena on the Montana Central Railroad. (This railway ran from Butte, Montana to Assiniboine Station, eighteen miles north and west of Box Elder and the terminus of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railroad. In 1890 the railroad was started west from Pacific Junction. The end of the division on the railroad was moved east of Assiniboine to Bull Hook Creek and the new division point was named Havre).²

Miss White received the munificent salary of $50.00 a month out of which she had to pay her room and board. She stayed with us. I do not remember what mother charged her for board and lodging, but I assume about twenty dollars a month.

The coming of a teacher to the community was quite an event. The few people who lived in the community were mostly single men. There were only a few white families living at or in the vicinity of Box Elder. Those I can remember were Mother, Mrs. Milton Tow, Mrs. L. C. Stocker, Mrs. H. F. Schwartz, and Mrs. Walter Brown. The Schwartz's consisting
of Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Schwartz and their grown sons, Byron, Robert, Henry and Paul, and Emma, their only daughter. They lived on Sage Creek, about six miles north of Box Elder.

The Brown family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Brown and their two children, John and Isabel. Mr. Brown had a sheep ranch on Box Elder Creek, some eight miles east of town.

In addition to the above families, there were two men who had Indian women for wives, Mr. John Henry and Robert Corcoran. There were, of course, a considerable number of Indians and half-breeds who lived in the vicinity and made their living cutting cord-wood and hauling it to the Box Elder siding for shipment to Fort Assiniboine to supply the Garrison with fuel. They also worked at cutting and hauling hay, in the summer, to the same place. The Fort was about the only source of money or work in the entire country. The Garrison furnished a market for cord-wood, hay, etc.

Besides taking Government contracts, my father bought bleached buffalo bones from the Indians and half-breeds. He operated from Wolf Creek, some forty miles south west of Great Falls, all along the railroad as far east as Glasgow, Montana, and shipped many hundreds of carloads. The cars were small in those days and ten tons constituted a minimum carload. They went to Empire Carbon Works of East St. Louis, Missouri and were used to filter the juice of the sugar cane to refine it so it could be made into granulated or white sugar.

Getting back to the school at Box Elder and our new teacher. Father jokingly said that as soon as a school
teacher came to board, he had to double the length of the hitch-rack; where the bachelors of the country, as well as every one else, used to tie their horses. Every one rode horseback in those days, as there were no roads or buggies. A saddle horse or a lumber wagon were the only means of transportation. I cannot remember how many pupils there were, probably four or five white children and as many more mixed bloods, children of the Henry and Corcoran families.

I remember an amusing incident. One of our leading young men was Clem Sailor, who had a homestead where the old Stage Station was located, about a mile east of town. By some hook or crook, he managed to find a side saddle and invited Miss White to go for a horseback ride. As you may imagine, it took nerve and plenty of it, to face the facetious remarks of the other young men of the community. However, Clem arrived Sunday afternoon, dressed in his best, riding one horse and leading a quieter pony on which was the side saddle. He had to face a battery of sallies and jokes. The rest of the fellows pestered him so much that he accepted an invitation to take a drink to brace his courage and fortitude. Well, this, of course, was just what the gang wanted. They continued to buy drinks and finally got Clem so plastered he forgot all about his date to ride with Miss White. I can still recall about his mournful lament as some one put him on his horse and took him home so drunk he had to be tied to the saddle. The refrain was, "My goose is cooked, my goose is cooked." In the meantime, Miss White had borrowed
a riding costume and sat uneasily all afternoon awaiting her delinquent swain.

Our little school house gradually evolved into the large, brick school and gymnasium where a complete high school course is now given.

1 Joseph Kinsey Howard felt that the practice of dividing Montana into many small counties was a vicious practice. He considered that Dan McKay was responsible for much of this. Dan traveled around the state on horseback visiting people whom he thought could be expected to be future office holders in the county, or people who had land to sell for the future sites of the courthouse. Dan helped to split up a dozen counties before bankruptcy set in many of these counties. The county seat fights were so serious as to cause death in some cases. From 1912 to 1921 the per capita tax rose from $26.83 to $50.00. Counties increased from thirty-three in 1913 to fifty-four in 1921. The rate of tax foreclosures in Montana was the highest in the nation with the exception of Mississippi. However, the writers of the 1889 Constitution for Montana could see a need for small counties because the distances in the state were so great. Distance was considered more important than wealth or population in dividing the state into counties. There was also a fear that big counties would be extravagant. Not until 1922 could the legislature interfere with the counties to any extent and not until 1934 could the legislature combine the duties of the various county officers for economy. It was still difficult to abandon or consolidate counties. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana, High, Wide, and Handsome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 236-247; John Welling Smurr, "A Critical Study of the Montana State Convention of 1889" (Unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Montana, Missoula, 1951), pp. 245-257.

2 When the Pacific Extension was constructed from Pacific Junction most of the line went through Indian Reservations. On March 2, 1899 a general act was passed granting right of way for railroads through Indian lands after due compensation was paid to the Indians affected. Active work on the Pacific Extension commenced in August, 1890 and went ahead without interruption. The last stretch of 834 miles from Pacific Junction, four miles west of Havre in Montana to Everett on Puget Sound in Washington, was in place January 5, 1893. Joseph Gilpin Pyle, The Life of James J. Hill, Vol. I, pp. 366, 462, 463.
Since women were very scarce in those days many prominent men married Indian women, among them such men as Grenville Stuart. This tradition had been handed down from the days of the fur trade.

It is often forgotten that the coming of the trans-continental railroads by no means solved the transportation problems in the trans-Mississippi West. It was not until the coming of the national highways in the 1920's that the rural inhabitants were put in the current of affairs. The North-South gaps between parallel railroads were enormous. The railroads only served the inhabitants within twelve miles of its station. Even when the roads were dry in the spring it would cost the farmer as much to take his grain ten or twelve miles as to ship it all the way to New York. The output of motor cars had risen from 11,000 in 1903 to 485,000 in 1913. However even by 1915 good roads in any full sense did not exist. In 1916 Congress appropriated $75,000,000 for highways to states that would match the federal aid and we had the beginning of federal highway departments to handle the road building projects. Allen Nevins, Ford (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), pp. 487-488.
CHAPTER VI

STARTING OF CHURCH WORK

In the early days the only church services were those given the French half-breeds by visiting Priests and Nuns of the Catholic Church. As we lived in town and had the only house suitable for the entertaining of strangers, the Catholic clergy stayed at our house. Mother was the soul of hospitality and while her people were North of Ireland Protestants, she welcomed the itinerant Priests and Sisters. She used to tell a story of how in Ireland (during some 12th of July observance) the Catholic men got into a terrific battle with the Orangemen and after besting them, started to abuse the women and children of the opposite faith. A neighbor woman, who was a Catholic, came over to her grandmother's house and took all the women and children to her home and hid them in the cellar. The Catholic friend sagely observed that the basement of a Catholic's home was the last place the drunken and frenzied Catholic men would look to find a Protestant family of women and children. In her goodness of heart, mother tried to repay as best she could, the debt incurred by her folks to the kindly, Christian Catholic neighbor of long ago in the old country.

However, after a school was started, mother hankered
for a church where she could worship and have us children go to church and Sunday School. Mother's people had been Episcopalians, and Father's, being of Scottish ancestry, were Presbyterians. Mrs. Tow told of a Methodist Missionary who occasionally came to Fort Benton and was engaged in founding churches in the vast territory of Montana. Mother asked me to write the Rev. William Van Orsdel, more familiarly known as Brother Van, and ask him to come to Box Elder to discuss starting a church. \(^1\) Mother said she did not care particularly what name a Protestant church organisation bore, as long as she and the children could have church services and the civilizing influence of a church.

All during her lifetime, Mother was a Sunday School teacher and kept the work going by her personality and persistence. In January, 1899, Margery Jacoby of Fort Benton and I were married. Margery was a very devout Christian and was mother's right hand man for years and has kept the Sunday School and Church Work going to this day. We now have a very nice Methodist Church, quite well organized and with Church Services every Sunday.

In 1920 at Havre, Montana I was asked by Dr. Sweetland of the Van Orsdel Methodist Church to give a paper. They were having a memorial service in memory of Brother Van. In this talk, I gave a description of the starting of the Methodist Church at Box Elder and some of my recollections of Brother Van.
We assemble here today, not for the purpose of praising the virtues of the dear departed, but to talk over and refresh our memories by mutual contemplation of the life work, personality and outstanding goodness of the friend who secured such a hold on our heartstrings during his stay among us.

Would that I had the eloquence of a Gladstone, or the power of expression of a Beecher to revive in you the memories which we treasure in our hearts of him who has gone before us. Such is, however, not the case, and we know full well that such tribute is not needed to exalt the memory of dear "Brother Van" as we loved to call him. Rather would he have the poor halting words from the lips of those who loved him, than the praises of the great and gifted, for was not his ministration on this earth among such of us as are here today?

When Doctor Sweetland called upon me to tell of my little store of knowledge of Brother Van's influence upon the people of the early days and of his mingling with them, I was profoundly affected. The influence of this great man on my own life was such a sweet memory, that I at first felt it would be exceedingly simple to impart to you a share of the great reverence, love, and admiration with which I regard him in life, and now contemplate his memory; but while my heart is full, for some reason I find it impossible to convey to you in words the sentiments which animate my being.

Brother Van, in his associations with us, has left no impression of the spectacular in our memory. We humans appear to be filled with the desire for hero worship. Consequently, the constant association with one who goes about ministering to us, cheering us, helping us over the rough places in the road, but at all times standing out distinctly from among us, leaves nothing for us to mull around in our
minds; so that we may glorify ourselves by reason of our association with, and knowledge of this life and aims.

We all believe that each human being has in him a spark of the Divinity. Occasionally, there comes among us, a man, who by his life and example, justifies this conclusion. Such a man was Brother Van. Never to my knowledge, have I known a man who more nearly followed in the footsteps of the Master. Brother Van could not be called a militant minister of the Gospel. His rare gift of seeing the good in his fellowman kept him from denouncing erring brothers. To him, all men were brothers.

My own acquaintance with him began about thirty years ago this autumn. A settlement had been established at Box Elder; we had succeeded in getting a school started, and we felt we were well on the way to becoming settled in our new home. Now with our school, should go the Church. A lady living near our village had met Brother Van some time before. His fame and nature were well known throughout Montana. My family had been affiliated with the Presbyterian Church before we came to Montana and Box Elder. But Mother said it did not matter what the name of the church organisation was, and as the Methodists have ever been pioneers, it was decided, after a conference of those interested, to write Brother Van and see if we could get him to arrange for church services in our midst. I was selected to write the letter. I was not vitally interested in the matter myself, for I was then only seventeen years of age and enamored with the life in the West and not particularly concerned for the growth of my personal, spiritual life. No, I wrote the letter because my mother told me to. However, the writing of that letter and the receipt of it was ever remembered by Brother Van. Many and many times during his life, did he refer to the receipt of that letter, and he assured me frequently that he still had it among his correspondence. I must confess to you that I never offered any explanation to him of the motives which induced me to write it. However, by reason of the letter referred to, I ever remained a prime favorite with Brother
Van; and the interest he took in my welfare, and the wonderful talks I have had with him, and the insight into his character will always remain a most fragrant memory.

It was one of the delights of life to see Brother Van meet the various characters who usually hang around a frontier store and post office. Ranchmen, cowboys, freighters, saloon keepers, half-breeds, Indians, they all were friends of Brother Van. When he came into town, his greeting to one and all in his cheery, genial way, was, "How," or "How goes it, brother?" Men whom I knew to be anything but angels were touched by his great soul, and never have I heard a slurring remark made about him among any group of men after he had greeted them and departed. While a brother to all men, yet never in all my association with him have I ever known him to forget or act for one moment other than the Ambassador of the Master to his fellowmen. His every word, action, carriage, dress, appeared to command the respect and consideration which was his due, and by reason of his firm and calm knowledge of his place among men, it secured for him the universal acknowledgement from all men that he was truly and fully an accredited representative of his God.

It has been my privilege many times to meet Brother Van on trains, in the cities of the state, and note his mingling among all manner of men. The cheery greeting, the hearty handclasp, the adoration with which men of the humblest calling, as well as the important men of the State, received his advances, was wonderful to behold. I have seen him on the train, greet the roughest cowboy, and behold the lingering handclasp, the laying of the rough hands on the sleeve of Brother Van's coat, as if the touch of his garment was a solace and a benediction.

Of late years, there have been Methodist Churches both at Box Elder and Big Sandy. When visiting these charges, it was Brother Van's custom to come to Box Elder Saturday, give us a morning service and drive to Big Sandy for the evening meeting. One of his firm
and steadfast beliefs, was that the railroad men should have an opportunity for the observ­
ervation of the Sabbath, and that no trains should be run on Sunday. For this reason he absolutely refused to ride on a railway train on a Sunday. Well owing to this belief of his, it was always necessary for us Box Elder people to find a way to get him over to Big Sandy by private conveyance. It usually fell to my lot to drive him over. Another of his particular hobbies was, never to miss an appointment. From this combination of circumstances there arose at one time a peculiar circumstance which gave me a deeper insight into Brother Van's character and faith than I had heretofore had.

It was this way. My car was broken down. I was feeling out of sorts, temporarily suffering from a cold or other indisposition, and I allowed myself to become peeved over what I considered Brother Van's foolishness in refusing to ride on a train on the Sabbath. The passenger train came through Box Elder about three o'clock in the afternoon. I told my wife that I did not see why Brother Van could not ride on the train for once and spare me the cold drive in the state of health in which I fancied myself to be. So I did not offer to take him. I had no horse that I considered I could drive and I was unable to see who could arrange to take him even if I had been ever so willing. We talked the matter over and decided that Brother Van would either have to go by train or miss his appointment. However, we did not know Brother Van, even if we had been with him for fifteen or twenty years. Along about three o'clock, Brother Van sauntered toward my front gate carrying his overcoat over one arm and his grip in the other hand. He came through the gate and into the house and said he had come to bid us good-bye for the time being, and was going to walk to Big Sandy. I glanced at my wife and she said, "Why William, can't you hitch the children's pony to the old buggy and take Brother Van a part way on the road?" Well, of course I could, and as she followed me out to see whether I was properly dressed, she remarked, "There is no use trying to beat this game; Brother Van has God on his side and he will always find a way to meet his appointments."
Other people had tried to drive that pony in a buggy, and he was the most obstinate pony in his disinclination to be hooked up in harness, that it has ever been my misfortune to attempt to drive; but on this occasion, he behaved like a lamb, and we succeeded in making the trip without accident, and strange to say, when I returned home, I was completely cured of my indisposition.

Making these drives with Brother Van gave me a wonderful insight into his real character. You all remember his life struggle was to convince by his example and manner that religion was not a sad, solemn calling. We all remember with delight his ever cheery manner, his hearty greeting, and merry laughter. His sincerity among us, and his rare sympathy in listening to our woes, and the fact that he never apparently had any troubles of his own which needed human sympathy, may have given us the impression that he was not a deep student and thinker. But when we were out making drives such as I have taken many times with him, and the conversation turned to matters of national and state interest, or when matters of business were under discussion, rarely have I found a more profound thinker or a man who had a clearer conception of the problems of the day. His powers of reasoning and his reminiscences of the earlier pioneer days, and the discussions of motives which actuated men who became outstanding figures in our State's development, were a liberal education in itself.

His broad-mindedness in matters affecting the church and the qualifications for membership was a revelation to me and I can best illustrate this by relating my personal experience with him when I contemplated joining the Methodist Church. When my children began to grow up, and especially when my boy began to discuss matters concerning the church, I began to realize that if I was going to require my children to attend church, and secure for them the moral training which can be gotten in no other way than by the teachings of the Christian religion, I perceived that it was up to me to join a church. At the first opportunity, I took my problem to Brother Van and stated my case.
something in this manner: I said I realized that I felt there was no such thing as being neutral in the matter of our relations towards the good and the bad in the world; that I would like to join with the people who were working for the uplift of humanity, and that I would like to join his church, but that I had not felt that exaltation of spirit which the evangelists describe as possessing a person who has been converted; that he knew my past life and I asked if he thought the Church could accept my application for membership under these conditions.--------Much to my surprise, he grasped me by the hand and, with tears in his eyes, he said, "My dear Will, of course we will take you in; God Bless you, my boy!" No formalities, no questioning; just such a welcome as I never anticipated. I hope and pray that my entry into the next world will be in like manner.

In concluding this poor effort, I can only say that in this period of unrest and the growth of the various "isms" with which the world is afflicted, one is prone at times to ponder if Darwin was right in his theory that men are descended from monkeys; but then a remembrance of the life and grand example of such men as Brother Van comes to us, and we realize, "God's in His Heaven, all's right with the world."
Brother Van was often a visitor at the W. T. Cowan home and frequently remained over night. He was present in Box Elder when the Luccock Methodist Church was dedicated in 1913. This church still is used every Sunday. William Van Orsdel was born March 20, 1848 near Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. He died in Great Falls, Montana, December 19, 1919 after being sick for several weeks in Chinook. He joined the Methodist Church at the age of twelve. On July 1, 1863 he carried water to the wounded and dying on both sides at his aunt's farm in Gettysburg. He reached Fort Benton on the "Far West" on June 30, 1872. With no money, he paid for his fare by singing and preaching plus a promise to raise fifty dollars which was about half the customary fare on the boat. When he arrived in Fort Benton dressed in a long black preacher's coat and black Stetson hat, which had been given him when he left Sioux City, some thought that he was a gambler. He held his first services in a saloon in Fort Benton. He sang the song "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" with the saloon pianist accompanying him. Brother Van served in the Nez Perce War as a scout of General Howard. In 1877 he was appointed a circuit rider between Bannack and Sheridan. Before the war he had begun a church in Bannack and miners, cowboys, and soldiers helped to complete the building. As there were only four Methodist ministers in the State he travelled all over by horseback. In 1890 he was made the Presiding Elder of the Great Falls district. He worked eleven years before he saw the establishment of the Montana Wesleyan College in 1890. At one time Brother Van borrowed $40,000 from the bank for the school. It took the earthquake of 1913 to close it for good. The same school is now connected with the Rocky Mountain College in Billings. Brother Van was visiting at the home of H. D. Riegal in Chinook, Montana when he had a stroke. The daughter, Leafy Riegal, was in love with Brother Van who gave her an original Charlie Russell painting. Just before his death he rallied enough to sing a song. The funeral was held in Great Falls and he was buried in Forestvale Cemetery, Helena, with a simple boulder to mark his name. He was riding one day with some Catholic friends, Mr. and Mrs. A. S. Lohman of Chinook; they came to a ranch where some chickens were eating and he said, "What a wonderful place to spend a vacation." To a woman who had served him and other ministers some chicken he said, "Your roosters are now in the ministry." Mrs. Lohman said that he walked and talked with God and that was his greatest appeal. He did not favor abolishing the Sun Dance as some religious leaders wanted to do because he said that the Indians received benefit from that even if they were not worshipping God at the time. Stella W. Brummit, Brother Van (New York: Missionary Education Movement of United States and Canada, 1919); Alson Jesse Smith, Brother

\(^2\)The Plainsdealer of Havre, Montana was bought by the Hill County Publishing Company and named the Havre Daily News in 1928.
CHAPTER VII

THE INDIANS AND HALF-BREEDS

In my recollections of starting of the school at Box Elder, a large percentage of our population has always consisted of the Indians and half-breeds, comprising the people of the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation. These people were political refugees who came down from Canada following the Riel Rebellion in western Canada in 1886.

Attached hereto, is a story of these people that I wrote for the Great Falls Tribune in 1924, and which was copied in many of the fillers furnished by the late Mr. William Cheely in the patent insides he printed for the weekly newspapers of the state. I was startled and surprised one day by being called upon by a writer from Hollywood who said he wanted to use the material for a moving picture. I gave it to him and arranged for it to be used, but apparently the idea did not click, for I have never received any revenue or heard or seen where it was used.¹

Every year these people stage a "Sun Dance," in a religious ceremony.² This event is well patronized by the Indian people both on and off the Rocky Boy Reservation. Visitors come from all parts of Montana and also from across the border, from Canada. In my long contact with these
people, I have gleaned a rather haphazard idea of the origin of this ceremonial and have written a fantasy which I have called, "The Indian Creation," and which as near as I can determine contains the folk lore tradition in regard to the Indian idea of the "Happy Hunting Grounds."

(The following story was written by me for the Great Falls Tribune in 1924.)

ROCKY BOY INDIANS, OUTCAST TRIBE ONCE SCAVENGERS OF MONTANA CITIES, NOW SUCCESSFUL FARMERS; ARE REDEEMED

This is the story of the redemption of the so-called Rocky Boy Tribe of forlorn and outcast Indians. These unfortunate people, thanks to the kind ministrations of a beneficent government, have been redeemed from a life of beggary, depravity, disease and menace to their white neighbors, into a self-respecting, industrious and contented people, in the short space of seven years.

The story of the appearance of the Rocky Boy Tribe in Montana and their many years of wandering until they were finally rescued and placed upon the Rocky Boy Reservation, is one of the little mentioned phases of Montana history.

Rocky Boy, the late Chieftain of this roving band of Canadian Cree Indians, (who infested the dumps and garbage cans of our larger cities for thirty years or more) was, according to his story, and local tradition, a Chippewa Indian from one of the Northern Minnesota tribes. Many
years ago, when he was a young man, he left his native village, accompanied by his younger sister and a few of his fellow braves and followers. They immigrated to Canada. While residing in that country, for a period of years, his sister married an Indian Chief, of one of the Cree Tribes, named Big Bear. Tiring of life in Canada, he moved into Montana and selected for camping and hunting grounds, the vicinity of Fort Assiniboine.

INSURRECTION OF 1886

In 1886 the Canadian half-breeds under the leadership of Louis Riel, undertook to redress what the many breeds in the Canadian northwest considered their wrongs and staged an armed rebellion against the Canadian government. The avowed purpose was to drive the white men out of that country and establish a government and independent country for the half-breed or Metis Nation, as they styled themselves. This was one of the early efforts at which is now called, self-determination of peoples.5

In a frenzied effort to defeat the Canadian forces, the breeds enlisted the support of some portions of the Indian tribes. Among them was a band of young braves led by a Chieftain called Little Bear, who was the son of Big Bear who had married the sister of Rocky Boy. These young warriors, carried away by the pleasing prospect of killing
white people and the greed for loot, committed many depredations among the white settlers. They also attacked some of the missions and it is alleged they killed one or more of the Sisters and Priests in charge.6

RIEL HANGED AT REGINA

The rebellion was put down by the Canadian troops. The final victory was at the Battle of Batoche, where the half-breeds and their Indian allies were thoroughly defeated and routed by the Canadian militia, but not without severe loss of life among the flower of Canadian youth. The 90th Battalion of Winnipeg Infantry suffered most severely by reason of their taking the "bit between their teeth" and charging the rifle pits of the rebels without orders from the Commanding Officer.

Following the defeat of the rebels and the suppression of the revolt, Louis Riel, the leader, was tried and condemned. He was later hanged at Regina, the seat of government of the then, Northwest Territories.

Little Bear and his followers, having committed many crimes against the settlers' families, were afraid to take advantage of the pardon to all participants offered by the Canadian government. Not that they feared the officers of the law, but many men whose homes had been destroyed and whose wives and children had been outraged and tortured,
had sworn vengeance against Little Bear and his warriors. Such being the status of their affairs, we find that these Indians, afraid to return to their reservations in Canada, turned to the only succor they knew, and came across the line into Montana as fast as they could sneak away. I am told that they did not come in a body, but by twos and threes. What was more natural then, than that Little Bear would seek out his Uncle, Rocky Boy, and join his camp? Later as opportunity presented, the wives and families of these refugees came across the boundary to join their husbands. By the year 1888 there was a camp of nearly one hundred lodges of these Indians in the vicinity of Fort Assiniboine and these people managed to make a living by hunting, fishing, and trapping. They also cut cord-wood for the contractors who had the contracts to furnish the Fort with wood. In June, 1888, the country east of the Marias and north of the Missouri River, which was a part of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventres Indian Reservations, was thrown open to settlement. The stockmen soon brought in herds of cattle and flocks of sheep; the game was rapidly destroyed and exterminated by both the Indians and whites, and it wasn't long until the Indians were in a precarious condition. Some winters the authorities at Fort Assiniboine issued rations to them.7
The Indians turned to many expedients to live and many of us can remember the numbers who met all trains, selling polished buffalo horns and bead-work to the travelers. Gradually the tribe split up and gathered in small camps in the vicinity of the larger cities; living off the discarded rubbish of the white folks, eating refuse from the slaughter houses and animals that had died from natural and unnatural causes, the carcasses that had not been destroyed.

**LAX MORALS**

In the meantime, there came about a laxity of morals among the Indians. In fact, they became a menace to the health and welfare of the white people.

To remedy these conditions, the Montana city authorities decided to appeal to Congress for relief. Realizing that these Indians were rightly the wards of Canada, our representatives in Washington succeeded in getting the state department to take up the question of returning these people to the country from which they had come. The British Ambassador was notified of the condition existing and a demand was made that Canada take back her people and care for them. This program was decided upon and the British agreed to have a detachment of troops meet the Indians at the Canadian boundary if they were delivered
there by the American authorities.

PERSHING DETAILED TO THE JOB

The story is familiar to the Montana reading public of how the gathering up of these scattered Indian families was detailed to Lieut. John J. Pershing, then an officer of the Tenth Cavalry stationed at Fort Assinniboine. It is a matter of local history how effectually he did this job. However, it is not so well known how the deportation finally came out.

My information is not official, but Indian and soldier talk, and it is not my intention to vouch for all of it, but I give the story as I have gleaned it from different sources for the past twenty years.

It appears that in spite of the willingness of the Canadian government to accept and care for their wayward wards, many of the Indians feared to return to Canada for fear of the vengeance from the fathers and husbands of their victims in the Riel Rebellion. I know of one Indian who committed suicide, while the roundup conducted by Lieut. Pershing was taking place, rather than return to Canada.

However, by dint of much riding and effort, they were finally rounded up and started towards Canada, escorted and guarded by some three hundred regulars from Fort Assiniboine.
The story goes that our army officers, relying upon the assurance of the British Ambassador that a detachment of British troops would meet them at the boundary, took along considerable quantities of refreshments, such as soldiers in all parts of the world relish; and the mess supplies, and refreshments were carefully husbanded during the trip so that ample quantities would be on hand when American officer met British officer. In fact, so sparing was the use of the refreshments, a real drought prevailed on the way to the border.

CANADA'S "TROOPS"

Arriving at the designated time and place of meeting, the Commanding Officer of the American forces and his staff rode forth to meet the Commander of the British. What was the surprise and chagrin of our warriors, when, up to the agreed locality, rode a solitary mounted police sargeant. Asked if he was the detachment of British troops, he replied: "No, indeed, I left him in camp washing the breakfast dishes."

It appears that the Canadians were no more anxious to secure the return of the prodigals, than the people of Montana were to keep them, and had considered that they were fulfilling the letter, if not the spirit of their agreement, when they furnished an escort of two policemen
to guide the Indians to their allotted reservation.

It may have been the keen disappointment of our soldiers at not meeting and visiting with their British fellows; or the strenuous effects of their vigilance while in charge of the Indians; or the possession of unused refreshments; or all combined———anyway, our troops went into camp for several days. Some say, who were with the expedition, that the time was spent in consuming the supplies taken to entertain the British. They felt the refreshments would be an unnecessary encumbrance upon the return trip.

The Canadians evidently did not use much effort to retain their new settlers, for the Indians came back. Many families, with their tents, horses and equipment, went through my home town of Box Elder before the soldiers returned to Fort Assiniboine. The Indians evidently preferred the husks and swill in the land of the free, to the flesh pots of Canada.

RESERVATION GIVEN INDIANS

Following this failure to get rid of our unwelcome guests by force, they continued their mode of living for several years. During this period, some of our benevolent and public-spirited citizens began to devise ways and means of securing for these people a place upon American soil where they could be placed under the control and
supervision of our Indian Department.

Two of the principal advocates for the Indians were W. M. Bone of the Great Falls Tribune, and Theodore Gibson, also of Great Falls. They consistently espoused the cause of these people without much success until the opening of the Fort Assiniboine Military Reservation, in Hill County, to settlement. At that time they succeeded in getting set aside some two and a half townships, of this reservation, for the establishment of an agency and home for them. The Indian Reserve was named Rocky Boy, after the aged Chieftain. Poor Rocky Boy had a little better luck than Moses, for he lived for a year or two after the reservation was set aside for his people.

The family history of the members of the tribe was taken in May, 1917. The roll was approved by Secretary Franklin K. Lane on July 16, 1917. The reserve was set aside in 1916, and the intervening time was utilized to enable the scattered Indian families to gather from all portions of Montana. When finally completed the total number of members was about four hundred and fifty. The population at this time is about four hundred and ninety.

PROGRESS IS MARVELOUS

John B. Parker, of the Indian Service, took charge of the reservation in May, 1917, for the Indian Department.
At that time the only buildings were a few rude, log huts that the Indians had built to winter in, the previous winter, while they were gathering. Mr. Parker was compelled to reside in one of these cabins until such time as he could build quarters. The contrast between this first effort of the Indians, without direction, and the present splendid, though modest, agency is rather surprising to anyone who has not visited the agency since that time.

The progress of these poor, homeless, dejected, and untaught people towards self-support, self-respect, clean living, and success in agriculture is a marvel to all who knew them during the time of their pilgrimage through the wilderness. Much has been published recently, in the Montana papers, about the progress of the other Indians in the business of agriculture; but it is my firm belief that no group or race of people in modern times have made more progress from a wandering, starved and degraded tribe to an almost self-supporting position in the brief period of seven years. That period, as well, being one of adverse climatic and marketing conditions for all who were engaged in farming pursuits.10

"EVIL SPIRITS" VISIT

I remember, last summer, that one old fellow put in his crop carefully. He then went for a visit about the time
his crop was due to head out. The field looked promising when he left, but what was his surprise, upon his return, to find that his field of wheat had turned into wild oats during his absence. Nothing could convince him but that the "evil spirit" had visited his farm during his absence and changed his wheat into wild oats.

Another old man, named "Crooked Nose," took his farm so far up in the hills that it was impossible to get harvesting machinery to his plot. He had in two and a half acres. Not to be deprived of his harvest, he cut the entire patch with a butcher knife; his old wife binding it into sheaves. However his yield was 138 bushels, so his industry and resourcefulness were quite well rewarded.

The buildings now erected at the agency are: four employees' quarters; one police quarter; one administration building; one concrete jail (but empty most of the time, I am glad to state); one barn; one machine shed; one blacksmith shop; one warehouse; two root cellars; and a school house, 24 x 60 feet in size. The school building contains a recitation room, 24 x 24 feet; dining room, 20 x 24 feet; and pupils' kitchen, 12 x 18 feet. The children are given a warm meal at noon, the superintendent raising the vegetables in the
agency gardens and the department furnishing the rations. There are 40 pupils attending. The school is presided over by Miss Coulter.

All the buildings are constructed of log with shingle roofs. All the building operations, from getting out and hewing the logs, to finishing the interiors, has been done with Indian labor under the direction and supervision of the superintendent. The buildings are sightly and the work is well and skillfully done. Mr. Parker tells me that they contemplate installing a water system next year.

The spiritual welfare of the people is ministered to by the National Indian Association, which is in charge of Mr. and Mrs. Burroughs, assisted by a young lady missionary. The buildings are neat and picturesque. The postoffice is located in the Mission building. The women of the reservation are taught to sew, among other social activities, and Mr. Burroughs has secured a market for bead work so the workers derive considerable revenue, in the course of a year, through the instruction and help of the association.

IN THE BEAR PAW MOUNTAINS

The Catholics have had allotted to them, four acres of ground on which to build. They have not built a structure as yet, but the Rev. Father Corbett of Havre holds services about once a month for the adherents of that faith.
The reservation is situated in the Bear Paw Mountains, about 16 miles from Box Elder and 25 or 30 miles from Havre. It contains much beautiful and picturesque scenery. The rainfall is greater in the mountains than on the plains and this no doubt accounts for the success of these people in raising crops. Their success is, of course, due greatly to the able instruction of Mr. Parker, who is devoted to his work and has wrought little short of a miracle with these people in the short period he has been among them.

There is a camping and playground area on Beaver Creek, east of the Indian Reservation, set aside by Congress for the use of tourists. We believe the quaint ways of these people and the beauty of the scenery in the Bear Paw Mountains will bring many visitors, as soon as it becomes known what facilities Hill County has to offer for their pleasure and entertainment. The roads from either Box Elder or Havre are excellent in the summer season.
A warning to others who may have historical information of value. Montana in particular has suffered from pilferers who have carried away important documents without payment of any kind.

The Sun Dance is a ceremony confined to the Plains Indians and is similar in all tribes. It occurs in summer, the ritual is chanted and consists of a group of usually eight songs. The dance lasts about eight days with half of the time used for preliminary ceremonies. The type of building used to house the main dance varies with the tribes. It is usually sixty to one hundred feet in diameter with the opening toward the East. The naked, except for the loin cloth, Indians dance and blow whistles accompanied by musicians who sit about a large drum at the south side of the entrance. The dance has religious significance and the object of the ceremony seems to be to overcome certain cosmic elements. The missionary movement opposed the Sun Dance and it has been abandoned among the Dakotas, the Crows, Mandans, Pawnees, and Kiowas. It is still performed by the Crees, Cheyennes, Assiniboines and others. It was held this summer, June 20th at Rocky Boy Indian Agency. In fact, two dances were held there this summer. Frederick Webb Hodge (ed), Handbook of American Indians (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1910), pp. 649-652.

In a letter to Jean Crockett dated February 6, 1956 Mr. R. D. Warden, Executive Editor of the Great Falls Tribune, gives permission to use any part of an article which was printed in that paper about W. T. Cowan. He writes, "William T. Cowan played a large part in the development of Northern Montana and was a good friend of the Tribune."

The original homes of the Crees were north of the present United States. They were known to the French traders and missionaries as early as the first half of the seventeenth century. The English knew them through posts of the Hudson’s Bay Co. For a time there was rivalry between the French and English for their patronage. They early formed an alliance with the Assiniboines which enabled them to push as far southward as the Red River and the territory of the present United States. In coming to the United States they fought with the Dakotas, Blackfoot and other tribes. In comparatively late times a number given by the census of 1910 at three hundred and nine settled in Montana. The Chippewa had little contact with the region now known as Montana until in recent times when a considerable number came to live here. Four hundred and eighty six came to Montana according to the census of 1910. The Chippewa were located first at Sault Sainte Marie and later extended
over the entire north shore of Lake Huron and both shores of Lake Superior and as far west as the Turtle Mountains of North Dakota. They are one of the two largest divisions of the Algonquin linguistic stock and from earliest times this tribe has been most prominent in the minds of writers about American Indians. There were ten major divisions of the tribe and four of the divisions lived in Minnesota.


5Not all writers agree with Cowan's interpretation at this point. Refer to: (Chapter II, note 9). The proposed incorporation of the Red River district alarmed many of the people. Some of them, particularly the Metis, were squatters and had no title to their land and feared that the new government would dispossess them. The people felt that they had been sold as serfs on a medieval manor. Politically they hoped to become a self-governing province. When Riel seized Fort Garry, he destroyed the only government in the colony. William McDougall, the new Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, issued a proclamation transferring the region to Canada. However he was turned back by the half-breeds when he tried to enter the colony; the government in Ottawa refused to accept the transfer while the revolt persisted. That left Riel as the de facto government and Riel seemed to be guided by the American annexationists who hoped to take advantage of the uncertainty that hung over the province. The annexation movement did not succeed because the people of the Red River region preferred Canada to the United States. The movement hastened what it tried to prevent, the union of the British Northwest with the Dominion of Canada. Canada gave most of the demands of the "List of Rights" drawn up by Manitoba and reserved 1,400,000 acres of land for the half-breeds and their children. They established a separate school system for them. This became the fifth province to enter the Dominion and the annexationists career was over. The Metis were willing to join with Canada when Riel was expelled and when they were given their rights drawn by the people of Manitoba. "The Metis in 1869 were willing to settle for simple autonomy within the Confederation . . . and in 1885 they attempted nothing more than a military demonstration in order to force the Canadian government to settle longstanding grievances."


6There is evidence that the Indians did commit
Atrocities in the early years but the formation of the military forts did away with most of this. The Sioux attacked Fort Union in 1850--four hundred strong--burning buildings and killing and wounding men who were cutting hay here. They also destroyed thirty head of cattle and fired on the Fort. The Blackfoot Indians robbed and murdered whenever they could find a white man. Whole parties were killed and whole pack trains seized. In 1863 the Sioux attacked a party of five men whom they invited ashore from a ship. They killed three and mortally wounded a fourth. The winter of 1879 was notable for outbreaks among the Utes. The winter of 1878 and 1879 was noted for trouble with the Sioux and Cheyennes who escaped from their agencies to return to war. The bad management of the Interior Department complicated the difficulties. H. H. Bancroft, Washington, Idaho, and Montana 1845-1889 (San Francisco: The History Company, 1890), pp. 412, 693, 719.

7 From a letter written to Mr. Earl Woolridge, Superintendent of the Rocky Boy Indian Agency, on April 10, 1945 by Mr. Cowan there is information that Colonel Otis, Post Commander at Fort Assiniboine, sent salt pork, hard tack, green coffee and other supplies to tide the Indians over the severe winter of 1888-1889. These Indians were camped at the mouth of the Big Sandy Creek about five miles north of Fort Assiniboine. In January, 1889 the Blackfoot, Fort Belknap, and Fort Peck Indian Reservations were surveyed and the boundaries of these reservations were established. Seventeen million acres of land was thrown open to the public domain. Glendive Independent, Glendive, Montana, February 2, 1889.

8 Fort Assiniboine was practically abandoned in 1898 when the Tenth Cavalry was ordered from there to Cuba. In 1911 President Taft signed a bill abolishing the largest military post in the United States. It was to be opened by lottery to settlement and as it was one of the finest pieces of agricultural land in the West there was a rush for the lands. The buildings and two thousand acres were sold to the State. The State legislature passed a bill creating a State school and appropriated money for it but the school never materialized nor was the money available. In 1916 the land was turned over to the State College for experimental purposes. Public spirited people including Frank Linderman and Senator T. J. Walsh worked for the establishment of an agency for the Indians and a bill was passed in 1916 to create the Rocky Boy Agency, Havre Plainsdealer, December 21, 1912; Harold C. Babcock, Fort Assiniboine (Term paper for Dr. Merrill O. Burlingame at Montana State
College now at the State Historical Library in Helena. (No date.)

9A letter from the Rocky Boy Agency to Jean Crockett on February 6, 1956 states that the present population of the Agency is 1,260. However all those enrolled do not live at the Agency. Only about six hundred live there.

10The Tribal life is not interfered with at the Rocky Boy Agency as it is due to die a natural death. Little Bear was the last real chief. Interview with R. T. Crawford, district agent at Rocky Boy Agency office.

11There have been some changes made at the Agency. There is no police quarter now, there are fifteen separate administration buildings, there are two sets of employees' quarters, the jail is still there, and there are three school buildings in the Agency. There is a need for a new school building. If one is not secured there is a move to send the children to school in Havre, Montana. Rocky Boy is now a sub-agency of Fort Belknap near Harlem. Interview with R. T. Crawford.

12The National Indian Association was also known as "Central Indian Association," "Indian Treaty Keeping and Protective Association" and from 1883 to 1901 as "The Women's National Indian Association." In the annual report of the Rocky Boy Indians in 1920 there is the information that the Department of Missions of the Association had received a grant of eighty acres from the government for "missionary purposes among the Rocky Boy Band of Chippewas and Cree in Montana." Mr. E. A. Burrough and his wife were decided upon by the Department of Missions from among five applicants. In 1928, the Rocky Boy Mission was transferred to the Board of American Missions of the Lutheran Church of America. U. S. Department of the Interior, Handbook of Indians North of Mexico (Bulletin 30, Bureau of American Ethnology).

13There is now an agency church used by both the Lutherans and Catholics. Father Feretti from Big Sandy holds services there every other Sunday. Interview with R. T. Crawford.
CHAPTER VIII

THE WORLD'S FAIR IN CHICAGO—1893

1893 was the year of the great World's Fair in Chicago and the beginning of the so-called Cleveland Depression.\(^1\)

Of course the talk of the Fair was ever present. Miss Nannie White, our school teacher, had decided to leave Montana and wrote some of our folks about the Fair and strongly advised us going to see it. Of course, money was very scarce and the only transportation I could think of was to get a ride on a cattle train. While in Big Sandy, Montana, one day, I asked Mr. C. J. McNamara if I could go with one of his shipments. He told me I could and sent me word when he had a trainload.

I arrived in Big Sandy on the 11th of October and when I presented myself to Mr. McNamara he said he had no one to go with me and wanted to know if I thought I could take the trainload through. I was so anxious to go that I told him: "You bet, Mr. McNamara, I can take them to Liverpool if you say so."\(^2\)

Well I started with 21 cars, but I guess Mr. McNamara must have had misgivings because when I reached Havre, Mr.
M. A. Arnold came down to the train with his "bag and baggage." He had four carloads of cattle in the train and had received a wire from Mr. McNamara who probably had not the same confidence in my ability that I had. One of the first things Mr. Arnold asked was if I played a card game; I forget the name, but the counters are High, Low, Jack and the Game. Mr. Arnold was a "card shark" and when men came along during the trip asking to be taken aboard, he questioned them as to whether they knew this game; if they said they did not, he would not take them. Before we had gone far, he had picked up two men who played, so every spare hour was spent in playing cards.

He had lunch with us and rode in the caboose behind the cattle. We made coffee and one of Arnold's obsessions was to put fresh coffee on the old "grounds" till the pot was so full of coffee grounds that he finally had to empty the pot and start over. Another of his ideas was to break an egg among the "grounds," so the coffee pot soon was full of coffee grounds and boiled egg.  

I wrote a diary describing the trip, at that time, which follows. After rereading it, I am surprised that I could write so well way back in 1893.
October 11, 1893. Started from home for the World's Fair at last! Got up early, as I was afraid I would miss the train and so lose my last chance for the Fair.

Started with Ed Dumont with his cayuses and thought I had never ridden after a slower moving team than his. However, at last I reached Big Sandy in time. Mr. McNamara said that I had come in time and that they would load in the course of an hour or so. We got loaded by 1:00 p.m. and I started alone with a train of twenty-one cars of cattle for Chicago, not knowing if I should have anyone but myself to run the outfit or not.

At Havre, old man Arnold and one man came aboard and Arnold said he was going to Chicago. Well, we made the evening run all O. K.

October 12, 1893. Woke this morning, or rather did not sleep much last night and found daylight just commencing. Had breakfast and looked over the cattle at the first stopping place and found them all right. Day continued about the same.

October 13, 1893. Another day of continual ride on the train. Now came my turn to be initiated into the mysteries
of raising a cow when she was down in the car. This process is very simple and consisted of prodding the fallen animal in the ribs and flanks until she or he, as the case may be, concludes that it is pleasanter standing than lying down suffering from a severe application of prod pole.

I neglected to state that Mr. Arnold is an A. M. and an M. D. and is a graduate of one of the best New England States' Universities. Tonight he succeeded in getting a stand on me and gave me an hour, or more truly about four hours, of a certain lecture on astronomy and on the various sciences, gradually working from one thing to another until he branched off into spiritualism and other things of a like nature. 5

October 14, 1893. After breakfasting this morning we got into Crookston 6 and found that there were three trains of cattle ahead of us and that we would have to wait until one or more loaded out before we could unload and feed. After a delay of six and a half hours we at last got our cattle out of the cars and into the yards where they were fed hay and watered.

Crookston is a nice little town and we found our stay there more pleasant than otherwise, although there are no places of amusement.

October 15, 1893. We had the cattle loaded by 9:00 A.M.
and got them on board of cars at 3:00 P. M., after all hands turning out and helping the stockyards men hay and fix the cars and load the stock. Never saw such a place for delays, and if I was a stockman I would never feed there.

Made the run of the day without any incident of note.

October 16, 1893. Arrived in Minneapolis Transfer this morning and got our cars hayed in about 15 minutes. The people here know how to handle stock and hay cars. Signed our contracts with the Burlington and transferred from the Great Northern to that road. Got started out upon our last journey to Chicago and had one of the most delightful trips I have ever made. The railroad follows the banks of the Mississippi and the banks of Lake Pepin down for about 150 or 200 miles and the scenery is as magnificent as any I have ever looked upon. What with the towns nestling down to the water's edge and this picturesqueness framed in a background of bluffs covered with various kinds of foliage just tinged enough with the frost to turn the leaves to the most varied and enchanting colors. And on the other side of the view the huge bluffs across the lake seeming, at a distance, to be of an azure blue and the sheen of the sun as it glanced hither and thither on the little wavelets like molten gold, seeming in all, to one accustomed to the unchanging Montana views, to be like glimpses of another world.

Tonight as we pass on the opposite side of Dubuque,
Iowa, the electric lights of the town surmounted by a moon of unwonted brilliancy together reflected back on the broad bosom of the Mississippi, the "Father of Waters," combine and produce a scene as wildly beautiful as it seems unearthly and the impression produced of seeing the product of the works of man combined with that of our Creator in one mighty panorama lends to this, my first Sabbath passed on a stock train, a sense of awe and an acknowledgement from the heart, that great as man is, he is still but of the utmost insignificance as compared with his Creator and Benefactor. Altogether, I do not remember to have ever passed a more enjoyable day, and the one view alone of the broad river illuminated as I have above tried to describe, has repaid me for all privations endured on this, memorable to me, journey.

October 17, 1893. Well! Chicago at last. We reached the great city this morning at about 3:00 A.M., while the place was still covered with darkness. After a delay of some time we at last reached the stock yards at about 7:00 A.M., and after seeing that the stock was passed over to the right hands, I and Mr. McCormak, one of the men we picked up on the road down, started for the great city.

Leaving the yards, we followed Halsted Street for about ten blocks and there concluded to take the street-cars and follow the street still farther down. Letting it go as
it might and trusting to chance alone, we stayed in the car until we reached what I now know to be West Madison. Here, after standing on a street corner for perhaps a minute, we decided to enter a barber shop and have a bath and try and remove some of the signs of travel. Personally, I was as black as the "Ace of Spades!"

After having a bath and changing clothes throughout I felt and looked another man. After leaving the bathroom, I went into the barber chair to have a shave and while there happened to mention that I had a friend somewhere in Chicago by the name of John Wedeking. Judge to my surprise when the barber said that he was personally acquainted with Mr. Wedeking and that his place of business was only one and one half blocks from the barber shop. Immediately upon getting my toilet in shape, I struck out for Mr. Wedeking's place, (he is a brother to our Wedeking boys who live close to us in Montana) and upon my making myself known to him and saying that I had a letter of introduction to him from his brother, William, he at once offered me his assistance in securing a room and took me to a place with some friends of his in a very nice and convenient location. I left my satchel in my room, got my new landlady to fix me a lunch and started for the World's Fair. Mr. Wedeking gave me explicit directions as to my route and I had no difficulty in finding my way. I went to the Randolph Street Station and took the suburban
train to the Fair at a cost for a ticket of 10¢. After about 15 minutes of travel, or perhaps more, interrupted by frequent stops, I at last reached the Fairgrounds at the 60th Street Station. This opens into the Great Midway Plaisance.

Traveling this, up a ways, I came in view of the great buildings that go to comprise the principal features of the Great Fair. I am unable to give any names yet as I have only so far just walked over the grounds to kind of get acquainted with the lay of the land and I will write further of the sights and the names of the buildings as I see them and study them.

The first thing I did after taking a kind of general look over things was to go to the Montana building and register and look over the book to see if anyone I knew had been here within the last few days. I found no one, however. Upon inquiring if there was a letter for me I found that I had a letter from Uncle Duke stating that he would be in Chicago about tomorrow or next day, so I will not be alone long.

The Montana building seems fair, but yet is not much of a showing for $10,000. The principal exhibits consist of some stuffed wild animals and birds and a few buffalo horns and I do think that we might have made a better showing if we had tried a little harder. However, I am perhaps a little premature in my criticisms as perhaps I have not as yet covered all the ground.
After leaving the Montana building, I ate my lunch and rested on one of the benches scattered about for that purpose and took great pleasure in looking over the people who came to see the show. They are almost as much of a sight as the show itself, to one accustomed, like myself, to the solitudes of the great west where we do not see as many people in a year as can be seen here in one minutes time. All nations and peoples are here from the heathen "Chinee" to the versatile Frenchman and the lively American to the stolid Esquimaux. Among the visitors, the old farmer with the goat beard and his family, seem to predominate.

They are scattered around through the crowd and one can tell at a glance if a man is a farmer or not by his gazing thunderstruck here and there and by his talk, which is about crops, etc., fall plowing and milk cows. One would naturally expect to see him around the Agricultural building but he is invariably to be found around the Midway, taking in the side-shows, and seems to care but little for the exhibits of grain and grasses.

I am leaving my part of the show, however. After finishing my lunch, I immediately left for the Midway Plaisance and here are the greatest fakes of the age, which I will endeavor to describe as I become more familiar with them.

"The Ferris Wheel" is the greatest piece of machinery
I ever saw, 250 feet in the air. I took a ride in it at a cost of 50¢ and was well repaid. Had a most enchanting view of the grounds and of the city. Words fail me in attempting to describe it.

Well, after prowling around all afternoon, with eyes, ears and mouth open, I finally concluded to go home and took the Illinois Central Express for the city and got out at Van Buren Street and found my way without much trouble to my lodging place at 133 West Madison Street. Here, after taking a wash, I found supper waiting for me and found my new boarding place quite homelike. The charges are quite nominal—only $3.00 per week for a nice room and meals 25¢ when I wish to take them at the house. Upon asking a man sitting on the opposite side of the table about the location of the theatres, I found that I was located within a stone's throw of some of the finest in the city, but was too tired to go out and see any of the plays. Went to bed at 10:00 P. M. sharp.

October 17, 1893. Upon getting up this morning, I decided to look around the city and not go to the Fair. Anyway I had to go to the Burlington General Offices and make arrangements to have my pass extended as it is only good for three days if you do not have them extended. So after breakfast I put on my overcoat and strolled about town until 12 o'clock. Then I went into a restaurant and had
one-half dozen fried oysters and some coffee, the whole thing costing me only 20¢. Then I went around again and went into several dentist’s offices and found that the cheapest I could get my teeth fixed for would be about $12.00. I had no time then but will have them fixed before I go.

Going to the R. R. offices at 5:00 P. M., I met Mr. Arnold just getting his pass for home and as his train did not go until 6:10 we walked around town and he showed me how to reach the trains without going through the crush at the gates of the depot. There is a bridge over the R. R. tracks on the street I am rooming on and all one has to do is to go under and walk up to the train you want to go on.

Did not go out alone anywhere as was afraid some one would hit me on the head and roll me for what money I had.

October 18, 1893. Started for the Fairgrounds this morning early, at 9:00 o’clock, fully expecting to meet Uncle Duke there by this time. I went down to Van Buren Street and took the boat for the grounds as a kind of variety and was glad that I had done so as it was very nice on the water and the trip fully repays one.

Arriving at the dock at the grounds I immediately bought my ticket and went in. I then made a bee-line for
the Montana building to see if I had any word. Arriving there I was greatly disappointed not to find the least word of any kind. I guess Duke must have given up the idea of visiting the Fair. Not seeing him however, I went at once to the Fine Arts building and spent the rest of the forenoon there and got some small idea of what it contained, but of course could not see one tenth part, in a whole day, of what it contained. The Fair is gotten up too large, and one half of the people will not derive as much benefit from it as they would if it were smaller and they could grasp some of the ideas set forth. The first sensation upon entering the grounds is a sense of being stunned by the magnitude of the undertaking, and by the time one gets over being stunned, it is time to leave the Fair for home, and then perhaps if one were to stay to the next day, they would see something further to stun.

After dinner, which consisted of oyster stew, I went over and took a look at the U. S. exhibit of the Battleship, "Illinois," and was much struck by the way in which they have everything fixed up to stand off an enemy. Leaving there, I went down and had a look at the Viking ships that are a model of those Lief Ericsson used when he made his voyage to America in the year 1000. They are very small, and I should dislike to venture out on a large river in one, much less across the ocean.
From there I looked at the armour plate they used on battleships. It is 14 inches thick and yet a bullet, such as they use, will make a hole 10 or 12 inches deep in the solid iron plate. It is most wonderful.

I next walked down to the "Bandstand" and listened to the music for awhile. It is very grand and such as is not heard in Montana every day. While there I saw the life-saving crew, drilling. The way they run ashore on their outfit, over a rope, is quite thrilling.

I then walked down to where there were the models of the boats Columbus used in searching for America. They are quite small but yet are real strongly built and are much ahead of those used by Lief Ericson. Here I met a fellow who belongs to one of the city fire departments and made up a brief friendship with him and he undertook to show me around the grounds. We visited the transportation buildings and saw all sorts of rigs and ways to travel, from walking with a pack on your back, to riding on a nicely upholstered first class Pullman car. There are stuffed and waxed figures of men on horseback, on bicycles, in wagons and buggies and all kinds of buggies from the Mexican Ox-cart to the American Millionaire's surrey. Leaving the transportation building, we went down to Wooded Island, to hear the chimes which begin at 5:00 o'clock but there was such a crowd and the band played so loudly that we could hear nothing. We
then went to where my friend had to meet his mother and from there we went home.

October 19, 1893. Today I started in to see the Fair on a system, and as a starter, visited during the forenoon all the States' buildings that I could, and in the afternoon, first took a ride on the Interureial Railroad around the grounds and saw them at good advantage and then getting off the railroad at the South Loop, I visited the convent of Larabia and saw the various pictures, letters, documents and relics of Columbus. There are soldiers on guard over the relics as they are very valuable and were lent by the Spanish government.

Finishing Larabia, I took a walk through the Agricultural building and saw Montana's exhibit of vegetables, etc. From there I entered the Electrical building and as night is the best time in which to see it, I was astounded by the display. I guess the building contains almost every kind of electrical contrivance.

I next visited the Art Galleries as they were illuminated tonight and feasted my eyes for a time on some of the beautiful pictures and statuary such as I suppose I shall never see in one collection again. Having heard that a sail in an electric launch on the waters of the Lagoon was very fine at night, I next bought a ticket at the cost of 50¢ for one hour's ride and getting into the first boat
coming along, I was soon gliding along on the water and enjoying the lovely views as they broke, one after another, upon my vision.

Leaving the launch, I decided to take a walk down Midway before going home. So walking down the street, the like of which is not to be found upon earth at any other spot, and being tired after my hard day's walk, I went into one of the theaters and was amused for perhaps an hour by the show which really was very good for all it cost to get inside—10¢.

October 20, 1893. Getting up rather late this morning as it was late when I got in last night, I had breakfast at a cost of 20¢ for a cup of coffee and a half-dozen fried oysters that would carry me around all day, as I only eat twice on an average, although I often have 15¢ worth of oysters before going to bed if I come in late from the Fairgrounds.

Upon getting down to the Montana building for my mail, as I always inquired for it when I first went to the grounds, I found a letter from Uncle Duke stating that he was in town and for me to keep looking for him until we should meet. This somewhat amused me as in a crowd of two or three hundred thousand people it is somewhat difficult to find one person, especially if one has no special place to look, and if we were to meet in the grounds it would
only be by the merest chance. However, I did not spend much
time looking for him as my time is to be so short at the Fair
that I must not waste one moment's time and shall try from
now on to make every second count.

I spent the day among the exhibit of stock over in
the Stock Pavilion. Saw and heard a guide explain the relics
of the Cliff Dwellers and as I cannot describe them as well
as the guide book, I will refer to that when I am puzzled.

Leaving the grounds rather discouraged at not seeing
Duke, but fully expecting to see him at his hotel (he stated
in his note that he was staying at the Palmer Hotel, one of
the best hotels in the city--gilt-edged and everything of
that sort), so upon getting off the car I made a bee-line
for the Palmer House and knowing his room number, I went up
to his room but was again disappointed in not finding him
there and indeed the room was locked and no one was in.
Feeling sure that he was somewhere enjoying himself, I left
a note for him, making an appointment for 9:00 A. M. next
day at his room and then strolled down street to see if I
could see anything worth seeing. I spied a dime museum and,
as it would be necessary for me to take one in before leaving
town if I wanted to see all the sights, I went up and bought
a ticket to see what was going on. They have all sorts of
things—men dressed as women with their hair done up and
whiskers. You can see at a glance that they are men. Saw
a man walk with his bare feet upon two rows of sharp knives and I knew that they were sharp as I tested them myself and how he keeps from cutting himself I can't see as the least slip would mean a rather mean gash in the foot.

Passing out of the Museum I went down to the theatrical part of the show which was really very good when one considered the small price of admission. It was here that I met the genius "street walker," or whatever term one might give such a creature. While seated in the audience before the show commenced; two, who were evidently ladies by their dress—one rather oldish and the other rather young and pretty—as there were two seats vacant on the other side of me, I very politely raised out of the seat I was occupying and allowed the two ladies to pass in, the older going first and the other sitting down next to me. I thought nothing further of the matter until my lady friend at my side made some remark about the cleverness of some of the parties on the stage. Of course as mine is a very chivalrous nature and being somewhat of a ladies' man, I politely answered, and from that, sprang quite a conversation. I learned that she was a Variety actress and claimed to be Mrs. Willie—(queer name for a woman)—and that she lived upon Farquhur Street. I was very conservative in telling her anything about myself further than that I came from St. Paul and my name was "W. T. Jones" and that I was like herself, visiting the Fair. After the show was over we walked out together with
the crowd and after we got outside, many were the hints I got, to escort them home, but assuring them what it would be a most exquisite pleasure if it were not for an appointment I had to meet a friend at 11:00 o'clock, (it was 10:30 then) and so I did not extend my acquaintance any farther.

Leaving these people, I started for home and arrived there in about 10 or 15 minutes and was greatly surprised upon getting to my room to find the Landlady waiting for me in the hall and with the news that some man had been waiting to see me for three hours. I was puzzled to know who would be interested enough in me to wait three hours for me in a city like Chicago and you may imagine my surprise when I found that Duke had been there all that time. I was so sure that he was somewhere enjoying himself that I was in no hurry to go home as I had not the faintest idea that he would ever come way up town to hunt me. After a very warm greeting we went to my room and after talking for some time he insisted on my going with him down to the Palmer House where he said Uncle Will and his Winnipeg pardner in the Brandon Bank were stopping. So we lost no time in getting on the street-car and getting down to his hotel which is one of the best in Chicago and is where all the "way-up" people stay. Arriving there, we went to their room, and found Uncle Will asleep and Mr. Crawford just ready to roll in. Uncle Will was, or seemed, glad to see me and after
talking for some time we retired for the night.

October 21, 1893. Uncle Will called us about 9:00
o'clock and we got up and went to a restaurant and had a
breakfast at a cost to me, (for my share) of about 40¢.
I saw that if I was to stay with them I would have to pay
more for my meals than if I went it alone. After breakfast
we held a consultation as to where we should go and at last
decided to go with Uncle Will, in a body, to see a doctor
he has been corresponding with about a cancer or something
that he has on his tongue. So, taking a car, we went almost
to the city limits, as the doctor lives away from the center
of the city. I did not hear what synopsis the doctor gave
of the case as only Duke went in to hear what he had to say
to Uncle Will. Even then, Duke did not want it known that
he was one of the profession. However, I guess that they
did not receive much satisfaction as I had the fellow put
down as a fake.

From the doctor's office Duke and I went down town
where he bought an overcoat and from there we went out to
the Fairgrounds. However, Duke turned sick after we had
walked around awhile and we, or at least I, didn't have any
fun at all as he was too ill to do anything. We started
for home about 6:00 o'clock. I had a ticket to see 'America'
at the auditorium and so I took Duke to the hotel and I
started for the theatre. The show is one of the finest if
not the finest spectacles that has ever been upon the American stage. There are somewhere about six hundred people on the stage at one time. The only thing I can say is that it is the finest I ever saw and I think it is as fine a thing as I saw while in Chicago.

October 22, 1893. Got down to the Palmer House this morning before my friends were up, but they got up and let me in and then they all got up. We decided to have breakfast over as soon as possible and then go and hear Moody, the celebrated Evangelist, preach. After we had gotten our meal we started for the Hay Market Theater, but by the time we got there, there was a crowd of people extending way into the street and it cost 50¢ to get in and than a person had to stand so we concluded to go to Lincoln Park and see that. It was here that Uncle Duke remembered that he had forgotten his purse and he started for the hotel to see if it was still under his pillow where he had left it, and the rest of us went to the park. This is a very pretty place and is a find breathing spot for the thousands of Chicago to get a breath of fresh air. Leaving the park, we went back to the hotel and rested there the rest of the day.

October 23, 1893. Had almost made up my mind to start for home today, but I had hardly seen enough of Chicago so I concluded to stay another day. Spent the day in looking
over the town and visiting Uncle Duke. Went out in the afternoon to look up David Sinclair but could not get his address. Duke bought theater tickets and we went to see Henry Irving and Ellen Terry play in the Columbia Theater. It was very fine.

October 24, 1893. Started to pack my stuff this morning ready to leave Chicago tonight and after getting my stuff packed I visited Uncle Duke the rest of the day until it was time for me to go and get my passes from the Railroad for St. Paul. Went down to the train at about half past five and when the train was ready to load I succeeded in getting a chair in a chair car and passed a medium comfortable night.

October 25, 1893. Got into St. Paul this morning at 7:45 and I thought I had struck a village. The place was so quiet after the hustle of Chicago. After getting one-half dozen oysters, to stay my stomach, I walked around town awhile and suddenly thought of going to see Mr. Hicks of Minneapolis; so taking the Interurban train (electric) I was at his office inside of half an hour after I thought of seeing him. He seemed pleased to see me and immediately asked me to his house to have dinner with him. Of course, I consented and we took a car for his place and got there in the course of 10 or 15 minutes. Mrs. Hicks is very nice and they have everything very nice in their home. We started
back about two o'clock. We walked to his office which was quite a long walk. Leaving his office at about 3:00 o'clock I went back to St. Paul and taking the train there, I started for home.

Nothing happened during the trip except that I met our old friend, Agent Bartlett, at Havre and Miss Annie Herron who was going home to Assiniboine.

Got home at 12 or somewhere about that time.
The reference is to the economic reverse which became sharp in 1893 and lasted for five years or so. President Cleveland was blamed by many Democrats and radicals for refusing to inflate the currency and thus arrest the long price decline in Agriculture, and by the Republicans for his reformist views on the tariff. Though the depression was severe the Fair was well attended. Many people from the Middle West attended whose lives had heretofore been colorless and narrow, and many of them had never visited a large city. Hamlin Garland told his parents living on a Dakota farm to be sure and come to Chicago. Arthur Meier Schlesinger, The Rise of the City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 285.

2Liverpool, England, was the great mart and commodity exchange for important American products. Many a Yankee found the market there more interesting, though no more lucrative, than the stock exchanges at home.

3An occasional old cowboy still swears by this method.

4The original diary is to be found among the Cowan papers in W. T.'s. own handwriting.

5The distinction between science and spiritualism was not very clear to many another educated person at the time. Spiritualism was a popular feature of the Fair in 1893.

6Crookston is a city in the northwestern part of Minnesota. It is on the Red Lake River eighteen miles from the North Dakota border. It is the county seat of Polk County and had a population of 7,161 in 1940. It is served by the Great Northern and Northern Pacific Railways. It was settled about 1872 and was chartered as a city in 1883. "Crookston," Encyclopaedia Britannica (1951), VI, 747.

7Cowan refers to eastern Montana, the Great Plains area, and not to the mountainous region west of the continental divide.

8Known as caravels.

9High-grade bonds of large denominations were often featured with gilt-edge, whence the adjective used here by Cowan. It is an interesting thing that a youth of his limited experience would know the term, and know it as a symbol of unshakeable value, as it then was. He really should have said the building was "gilded."
Dwight L. Moody was born February 5, 1837 in Northfield, Massachusetts. He died December 22, 1899. He was a famous evangelist who spent much of his time in Great Britain. However he was in America at the time of the World's Fair in Chicago and spent six months of successful evangelistic services in Chicago from May to November, 1893 during the progress of the World's Fair. "Dwight L. Moody," Dictionary of American Biography, XIII, (1943), 105.

Sir Henry Irving's real name was John Henry Brodribb. He was born near Glastonbury, England on February 6, 1838. He was a noted English actor. In 1883 to 1901 he came to America with his company which included Ellen Terry. Ellen Terry was an English actress born in Coventry, England on February 27, 1847. Until 1896 she played all of Irving's leading female roles. "Henry Irving," The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia, IX, (1904), 332; "Ellen Terry," Encyclopedia Americana, XXVI, (1956), 449.
CHAPTER II

THE MARIAS IRRIGATION PROJECT

For fifty years I have been talking of an irrigation project to use the water of the Marias River in irrigating lands on the Lonesome Prairie and in Big Sandy Creek Valley.

I believe the attached documents will tell the story better than I can write it. I refer to: 1st: A talk I made to the Havre Commercial Club; 2nd: A copy of a diary I kept while I was a member of a delegation which went to Washington, D. C., in September, 1919, to urge Federal help for irrigation in Montana. My trip was financed by funds from the Big Sandy and Havre Commercial Clubs as well as my own funds; 3rd: In the course of my struggle to get this project started, I secured the passage of a resolution or Senate Joint Memorial, No. 2, a copy of which is attached.

I sent a copy of this resolution to Mr. George Horace Lorimore, editor of The Saturday Evening Post. I received a letter from Mr. Lorimore, saying he had been considering a series of articles on the subject of the distress in our state caused by the severe drought, followed by a series of articles on the irrigated areas of the Western States, showing the contrast between the hap-hazard returns from so-called "dry farming" and the sure production on irrigated
lands. He stated he had engaged Mr. Garet Garrett to write the articles.

Mr. Garrett arrived in Havre, Montana and called me on the telephone. I met him and we had dinner together and discussed the program. I had recently attended an irrigation meeting in Salt Lake City in company with the late Governor Joseph M. Dixon. At the meeting I had been selected to carry on what publicity was possible to convince the people of the United States the value of irrigation to the economy of the entire nation.

The attached sketch showing the number of carloads of merchandise originating all over the nation had been shipped to one irrigation project alone, the Salt River Project of Arizona. Total number of carloads was 7935 in the year 1920.

The publication of the first of the series of articles by Garet Garrett, called the "Pain in the North-West," caused such a commotion among investment bankers, railroads, and state officials, that The Saturday Evening Post felt compelled to discontinue the series and the readers of the Post never learned about the enormous production which irrigation develops.

Needless to say, I kept rather quiet about my part in the affair, waiting at least till the heat had died down.

The hearing on the proposed Marias Irrigation District
was held this winter in Fort Benton, before Judge J. W. Speer.

The forming of a district has been very bitterly contested by the large land owners west of Big Sandy on the grounds that such advances have been made in "dry land" farming methods that irrigation is too costly.

Perhaps this opinion has been developed because we have had 10 favorable crop growing seasons and war prices.²

We old timers believe a few unfavorable seasons, lower prices for grain, and exhaustion of the soil from a one crop system, might prove disastrous. Of course, anyone knows if we could be permanently assured of conditions and prices much as have prevailed the past 10 years, no one would advocate irrigation.

The following article was written by me, and published in the "MOUNTAINEER" of Big Sandy, Montana, on Thursday, Sept. 15, 1949.⁴

HISTORY OF THE PROPOSED MARIAS PROJECT

At various meetings and informal discussions of the proposed Marias River Irrigation Project, the question has been propounded as to who asked the Reclamation Bureau to come here and work on this project.
In 1937, after a previous dry spell, the Havre Chamber of Commerce asked me to give them a history of the project.

In this talk I outlined the project briefly as of that date. The data applied to the original project as investigated by the U. S. G. S. in 1902 and 1904. The later plans propose to move the site of the dam up the Marias River approximately 20 miles and construct an earthen dam in place of the concrete dam formerly contemplated by the first investigators. Earthen dams have been built and the science of constructing them perfected in the past 40 years. A striking example being the Fort Peck dam in the Missouri River. However, the new project contemplates irrigating the same area.

I also enclose a Resolution passed by the Montana Legislature in the 1921 session, following the disastrous drought of 1917-1918-1919 and the severe winter of 1919-1920. The drought broke the farmers, store keepers and the hard winter broke the stockmen and the banks.

In the fall of 1919 the business men and farmers took up a collection and sent Mr. Gifford of Loma, Montana and myself to Washington with a delegation from the Sun River and Milk River territory. Our mission was to try to get some action on the Marias Project. We found the demand for irrigation projects was so strong from all over the west that our prospects were nil.
Upon our return we organized an association and circulated a petition and initiated a bill to bond the State of Montana for 20 million to construct our own irrigation projects following the example of Colorado. This bill was voted and passed by the voters of the state, but the Supreme Court held it unconstitutional.

Around this time the people living in Toole and Glacier Counties undertook to organize an irrigation district to use the waters of the Marias River in the vicinity of Shelby. The late James Johnson of Shelby was one of the principal promoters and it went by the name of the "Jim Johnson Project." The district was organized, but apparently they could not sell their bonds.

The proponents of this Shelby project then became very active in importuning the Reclamation Service to build their project which was called the "Upper Marias." We people have had our Marias Development Association organized for years. Naturally we opposed the claims of "Upper Marias" people and a grand row was on for several years.

Finally, Senator B. K. Wheeler got us together and told us plainly there was not enough water for two projects and to resolve our differences.

We then entered into a gentlemen's agreement with the "Upper Marias" advocates to leave the choosing of the most feasible area for irrigation to the Reclamation Bureau and pledged ourselves to accept their findings.
The Bureau after a lengthy investigation and survey decided upon the Lower Marias, or the one now under consideration. The Shelby people have proven true sports and are awaiting our action.

It is inconceivable that the waters of the Marias River will be permitted to run idly to the sea when irrigation has proven such a boon to the development of the entire semiarid west. Should we turn the proposition down, it would be only reasonable for the "Upper Marias" people to accept it. Our people would in fairness be obliged to accept the situation and forever lose an opportunity to build a great empire on the Lonesome Prairie and the Big Sandy valley.

Yours respectfully,

W. T. Cowan

The following article was written by me, and published in the "Mountaineer" of Big Sandy, Montana, on Thursday, Sept. 22, 1949.

MORE HISTORY OF THE MARIAS PROJECT

(Copy of speech given by W. T. Cowan to the Havre Chamber of Commerce in the fall of 1937.)

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Havre Commerce Club:
You have asked me this evening to discuss with you the merits of the proposed Marias River Irrigation Project. In the study of any irrigation project it is well to take into consideration the five following points: (1) Permanency and adequacy of the water supply; (2) Quality of the soil; (3) Cost; (4) Accessibility; (5) The need.

Before discussing each of the five above mentioned sub-divisions, it may be well to recite very briefly the history of the Marias Project, as we know it.

The Federal Government in 1892 first took up the practicability of reclaiming western lands. When the probability of securing development in this section appeared to be rather definitely settled upon, I wrote to the late Senator Thomas Carter, calling his attention to the possibility of diverting waters from the Marias River into Lonesome Prairie Lake, and irrigating the territory throughout this section of the Lonesome Prairie.

As a result of my letter, Senator Carter interested himself to such an extent that an investigation party, under the direction of the U. S. G. S. made a thorough study of the Marias River, and the possibilities of diverting its water. This investigation was contemplated as being a development in connection with the Milk River Irrigation Project. But after a thorough field examination, it was decided definitely there was a sufficient flow of water in
the river, and a large enough acreage to justify planning an irrigation project entirely from the Marias River waters, to be used upon Lonesome Prairie and the Big Sandy Valley.

The U. S. G. S. definitely settled upon a site for a dam in the canyon of the Marias River about thirty-four miles due west of Box Elder, and twenty-two miles south of what is now Rudyard on the main line of the Great Northern Railroad. 14,000 acres of land was withdrawn from settlement in the canyon of the Marias River for a site which would impound approximately 450,000 acre feet of stored water. Diamond drill borings were made in what is known as Sand Stone Canyon of the Marias. Under the plans formulated by the U. S. G. S., it was proposed to build a dam 185 feet high which would provide both for diversion and for storage. The ditch was to be taken out and extended along the north bank of the Marias River, and carried a distance to the Lonesome Prairie Lake.

At the Lonesome Prairie Lake, 13,000 acres of land was withdrawn from entry to provide a right away for the contemplated reservoir. This reservoir when completed will hold approximately 200,000 acre feet of water.

A high line canal was projected directly from the stored water in the reservoir in the Marias River, leading north and east and a low line canal extended from the Lonesome Prairie Lake running east and west of the Big Sandy Valley. These two canals when constructed, would irrigate,
it was estimated, approximately 200,000 acres of land. Both the reservoir sites, the one in the canyon of the Marias River, and the one at Lonesome Prairie Lake, have been held intact to this day, giving evidence that the U. S. G. S. and the Reclamation Service must consider the project feasible and practical. Returning to the five points, first mentioned, I will discuss briefly, each in turn.

First: The permanency and the adequacy of the water supply. Prior to the investigation made by the U. S. G. S., no measurements of the water flow of the Marias River had ever been made, but following the investigation above described, stream measurements were started by the U. S. G. S. in 1902 and continued to 1907. The years 1908 to 1910 inclusively, were abandoned, but again measurements were made for 1911, 1912, 1913. For the nine year period above described, the average flow was 719,000 acre feet per year.

It has been recently stated that one of the reasons nothing has been done upon the Marias Project was because when the land in North Montana was bought from the Blackfeet Indians, the Federal Government made a treaty with the Blackfeet promising them a sufficient amount of water to irrigate available land upon the present Blackfeet Indian Reservation. Press notices have carried word that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and others interested, have now come to the conclusion that approximately 250,000 acre
feet will be sufficient for the use of the Blackfeet Indians. Deducting this from the 719,000 we would have left an average of 469,822 acre feet per year available for storage and use upon the land.

No records were kept of the flow of the Marias River between 1913 and 1922, but during my first session in the Legislature, I succeeded near the close of the session, in having an amendment added to the Appropriation Bill, for the State Engineer, adding $4,000 per year to his appropriations which would be used in conjunction with funds supplied by the Federal Government in stream measurements in Montana. As a result of this appropriation, which I was careful to see continued during the twelve years I served you in the State Senate, records have been kept continuously from 1922 to 1936, inclusive. These show a total flow of the Marias River, past Brinkman’s ranch of 9,214,500 feet, or an average of 641,305 acre feet per annum. Again subtracting 250,000 acre feet from the annual flow for use of the Blackfeet Indians, there would be left an average of 364,305 acre feet per year for storage and irrigation. The 364,305 acre feet of annual flow, together with the 650,000 acre feet which can be stored in the two reservoirs would give ample water to irrigate, not only the 200,000 acres of land contemplated by the U. S. G. S., but it would be sufficient, in my opinion, to water twice that amount of land.
Second: Quality of Soil. Anyone who has seen the bountiful crops raised and produced upon the soil of the Lonesome Prairie and in the Big Sandy Valley, during the years of abundant rain in 1915, 1916, 1927, will agree with me that there is no better soil in the State of Montana than we have under this so-called Marias Project.

Third: Cost per acre. Various estimates have been made as to the cost of the dam, and the various canal systems, all of which, however, was figured almost forty years ago. With the invention of labor saving machinery, lower costs of construction, I would not be in a position at this time to hazard a guess as to the final cost. I do know, however, that this dam in the Marias River, founded upon a solid sandstone foundation with sandstone walls on each side, would look like a child's toy in comparison to the Fort Peck Dam.

Fourth: Accessibility. With the Great Northern Railroad extending west from Havre along the north side of this contemplated irrigation project, and the branch line from Havre to Great Falls, traversing the east and south side of this project, we have ample rail facilities. The improved highways: Roosevelt Highway, parallel to the line of the G. M. R. R. and Highway 87 extending to Great Falls, as well as the farm-to-market roads now established, would give ample accessibility.
Fifth: Need. Anyone who has lived in Montana as long as we have, realize that we must have additional irrigated land in order to support our present population. I venture to say, the loss taken by our farmers and stockmen alone would total up to more than this project would cost. We know that our population during the last three or four drought years could never have continued without the assistance of the Federal Government in seed loans, feed loans, W. P. A. work, and the various other activities, which have assisted our people.

It is definitely known that no semi-arid country in the world can support a dense population. For example, in North Africa, in the valley of the Nile, we find, where irrigation is practiced, approximately 850 people to the square mile. On the surrounding deserts, Tangiers, Morocco, and other North African countries, the population is estimated to be from three to five people per square mile.

If any of you question what we would gain from construction of the Marias Project, I would suggest that you take a trip down to Billings, over on the Sun River on the Valier Project, or down to Pocatello and go west on the Oregon Short Line, and see the wonderful cities irrigation has developed.

In conclusion, I believe that for Havre and all North Montana, there is nothing which will build up our country
faster, and is of more importance to all of us than the construction of this project. I thank you,

W. T. Cowan

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I submitted the following article to the "Mountaineer" of Big Sandy, Montana, and it was printed on Thursday, Sept. 29, 1949.

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MORE HISTORY ON IRRIGATION

Passed by the State Legislature in 1921.11

Senate Joint Memorial No. 2. (Introduced in 1921) by William T. Cowan

A resolution memorializing the Congress of the United States to enact appropriate legislation and provide appropriations for the completion of Federal Reclamation Projects within the State of Montana, at as early a date as possible, and candidly to advise the Congress and the cabinet at Washington of the exact facts relating to irrigation and public land settlement within the state of Montana.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress:

Whereas, there has existed and exists now, for reasons herein appearing, most injurious conception of the circumstances and conditions prevailing within the State of Montana, affect the subject of irrigation and reclamation, and the
necessities and desires of the people in respect thereto, requiring correction and immediate legislation to overcome the misfortune and suffering within the State, now the Legislative Assembly of said State, in the earnest hope that a candid and exact statement of the case, will prompt, on the part of the Federal Government, that vigorous and beneficial action so urgently necessary, respectfully shows as follows:

1. That the State of Montana contains 93,000,000 acres of land of which one-third is agricultural in nature and may be made to produce, under proper conditions, great quantities of grain and foodstuffs, far in excess of any amount required for the needs of its own people.

2. That prior to the year 1910 Montana was principally a mining and grazing country. Thereafter, and consequently on the passage of 320 acres enlarged homestead act, by the Congress, there was initiated an intensive campaign, persistently conducted by railroad immigration agents and private land vendors, to induce settlers to come into Montana from other sections of the United States and enter upon homestead acres on the great eastern plateau of the Rocky Mountains. Inspired by the hope of a free home on easily tilled land, and accompanying economic and financial independence, thousands of settlers, originating from every state in the Union, came into Montana from the years 1910 to 1915, and entered homesteads upon the great empire of grazing
lands sloping from the Rockies to the Mississippi Basin.

3. During the years 1911 to 1916 inclusive, a plentiful natural precipitation of moisture caused the growth of grain crops sufficient to justify the broadcast representations of railroad immigration agents and land vendors that irrigation was unnecessary and dry-land farming always a feasible and safe undertaking, and to warrant conviction on the part of the newcomers, ignorant of the experience of the past, that irrigation was not essential to their welfare; a conviction clinched beyond the possibility of removal by adverse arguments and warning when the summer of 1916, produced, on the plains for three hundred miles east of the Rocky Mountains in Montana, enormous yields of wheat, of greater value than the total annual production of Montana's gold mines. Under the spell of their new wealth, and with five years of experience behind them, thousands of these settlers, firmly believing irrigation to be unnecessary, resisted the incorporation of their lands in the Federal Reclamation projects, or petitioned their homesteads out of the projects. These actions of the new settlers were strongly opposed and counselled against by the older settlers of Montana whose long acquaintance with her climate had impressed them with the indispensability of irrigation on a great scale, with the knowledge that without irrigation there was no security for man or beast, but their warnings were thrown aside as the obsessions of alarmists, in the face of
4. With 1917 came the World War. Financed by the bounteous return of 1916, and stimulated by the two most impelling motives of human impulse, Patriotism and Greed, the new settlers broke up great stretches of new land and planted the greatest acreage ever sown in Montana. For lack of rain-fall the crop practically failed, returning but enough to furnish seed for 1918. The farmers being without resources of their own, the bankers and storekeepers took up the burden of financing the planting for the crop of 1918. The seed was sown, but there was no crop, for again the rains failed to come and the autumn of the war's second year witnessed a greater disaster than in 1917. Goaded by the universal cry for greater production, and endeavoring to recoup part of the losses of 1917 and 1918, these new settlers, by this time reduced to the extremity of appealing for public aid, brought their case to the attention of the President of the United States, and the President set aside five million dollars, from his war emergency fund of one hundred million dollars, to finance the farmers of the drouth stricken areas in another attempt to grow wheat as a war emergency measure. The spring of 1919 passed into summer solstice without rainfall and the summer continued and closed without any rainfall, producing the greatest drouth in the history of Montana, the grasses on the prairies failing
to grow, and the streams and rivers diminished in flow to a lower point than ever known in the history of the state.

5. When in the middle of the summer of 1919, it was as established fact that the state was in the third year of drouth, and the most disastrous year of the three, a special session of the Legislative Assembly of Montana was called to devise plans to carry stockmen and farmers over the winter and finance another attempt to plant a crop. Laws were passed permitting the counties in the drouth section to issue bonds for the purpose of financing this attempt. The winter that followed the drouth of 1919, for extreme length and severity has never been equaled, with the result that from at least fifty millions of dollars were expended outside of the state for the importation of forage to keep the herds and flocks alive. All seed grains were imported from Canada and adjoining states for seed purposes. The crops of 1920 proved on an average a little greater in quantity than the crops of 1917, 1918 and 1919, but the cost of forage, of seed, of labor and of farming machinery, the increased freight rates, and finally the precipitate decline in the prices of agricultural commodities swept away any margin of profit that might have accrued to be used against interest payments on the debts arising from the operations of 1917, 1918 and 1919.

WHEREAS, all the people of Montana are now thoroughly convinced beyond any doubt that the salvation of agriculture
in the state is directly dependent upon proper irrigation and reclamation and the new settlers of the state are frank to acknowledge the error of refusing encouragement to irrigation and reclamation; and,

WHEREAS, throughout the state of Montana there are mighty streams and rivers flowing abundant quantities of water easily and readily susceptible of use for irrigation, but the diversions of which are beyond the ability of private individuals and can only be undertaken by the State and National government; and,

WHEREAS, it is the firm conviction of the Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana that the only remedy for the present deplorable situation lies in an enlarged program of irrigation development whereby these destitute people can be given employment on construction of irrigation dams and ditches, and ultimately placed upon irrigated lands where they can acquire a home and financial independence;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 17th Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana and the House of Representatives concurring therein, that we do hereby petition the Congress of the United States for the immediate passage of liberal legislation providing for the prompt completion of irrigation and reclamation projects now undertaken by the Federal Government, and further providing for the initiation of new irrigation and reclamation
projects on a large scale within this state; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we hereby pledge to the Congress of the United States Washington, our full and unstinted aid and cooperation in such Federal measures; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted by the Secretary of the State of Montana to the Honorable Members of the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, and to the President and the Cabinet officers at Washington, and to the Senators and representatives from the State of Montana, with the particular request that they exert every possible effort within their power to enact such legislation as is prayed for herein.

Approved February 26, 1921:

Jos. M. Dixon, Governor

Filed February 28, 1921, at 9:45 o'clock a.m.:

G. T. Stewart, Secretary of State

(Sent in by W. T. Cowan, of Box Elder.)
Joseph M. Dixon was born July 31, 1867, in Snow Camp, North Carolina, of Quaker parents. He was educated at Earlham and Guilford Colleges (both Quaker institutions), and received his A.B. from the latter in 1889. He came west and received his license to practice law in Montana in 1892. He was a resident of Missoula and married Miss Caroline M. Warden of a pioneer family in 1896. They had six daughters and one son, the latter died a few days after his birth. In 1894 he was elected county attorney, in 1900 he was a member of the state legislature, a Congressman in 1902 and 1904 and a Senator in 1907. He was an ardent supporter of Theodore Roosevelt and was soon at odds with the Taft administration in Washington and the "stand-patters" in Montana. In 1912 he served as chairman of the Progressive National Committee and was retired to private life. After serving as a newspaper editor and a dairy farmer he ran for governor in 1922 in the Republican primary and overturned his old enemies. He defeated the Non-partisan League supported Burton K. Wheeler, who was the Democratic candidate, in a bitter election. He incurred the wrath of the A. C. M. and the Montana Power because of his insistence on taxation and other reforms. He was defeated in the election of 1924. In 1928 he lost the Senate race to Wheeler. He was appointed assistant secretary of the Interior in 1929; he resigned in 1932. He died in Missoula May 22, 1934. Report given to Jean Crockett from the Dixon papers by Jules Alexander Karlin, Montana State University, September 14, 1956.

A letter from William J. Stevens, Jr., assistant managing editor of the Curtis Publishing Company dated February 10, 1956 gives permission to reprint Garrett Garrett's article from the April 12, 1924 Saturday Evening Post. He also states that Mr. Garrett has not been a member of the Post Staff since 1942. Garrett wanted to show the irrigation would do for the country but he was not allowed to finish what he had started. Money to buy land was being loaned at ten percent and irrigation would destroy the money market for land at that time.

Cowan here refers to the situation existing before the setback referred to in The Saturday Evening Post article, reprinted in part later in this thesis. In this and the succeeding paragraphs he is obviously quoting at a later date from comments he wrote down ten years before 1916, or thereabouts. After World War I prices were very unsatisfactory to growers.

Reprinted through the courtesy of Louis W. Lawrence, editor of the Big Sandy Mountaineer. "You have our permission
and are more than welcome to use any article that appears in the Mountaineer for your thesis about W. T. Cowan."

Letter to Jean Crockett on August 7, 1956.

5 The Geological Survey is in the Department of the Interior. It was established in 1879. It makes topographic and geological maps of the United States and Canada and studies the surface and underground resources. Cowan bases his comments on the report of the U. S. G. S. on the Marias Project taken from the Fourth Annual Report of the Service 1901-1905. A copy of U. S. G. S. report on the Marias Project is in the Cowan papers. "Department of Interior," Encyclopedia Britannica, X (1951), 578.

6 Burton K. Wheeler was born in Hudson, Massachusetts on February 27, 1882. He attended business college and the University of Michigan. He came to Montana in 1905 and was admitted to the Montana Bar Association. He began his first law practice in Butte. He was a member of the United States Senate from 1923 until 1947. He was defeated by Leif Erickson in the July primaries in 1946. He had served for twenty-four years which is longer than any other Montanan had served in either house. Wheeler was a member of the Montana House of Representatives from 1911 to 1913. He was appointed United States attorney for the District of Montana by President Wilson and served from 1913 to 1918. He was a Methodist and a Mason. Few Americans have climbed so swiftly to national eminence and few have been so prematurely "counted out." In 1922 he had such a reputation for radicalism that he was called "Bolshevik Burt." In 1920 he was the unsuccessful Democratic candidate for governor, being defeated by Joseph M. Dixon. In 1924 he was an unsuccessful candidate for vice-president of the United States on the Progressive Party ticket with Robert LaFollette heading the ticket. After his defeat in 1946 he resumed his law practice in Washington, D. C. His permanent home is in Butte, Montana. Dr. C. W. Parker, "Wheeler," Who's Who in the Northwest, (Portland: Western Press Association, 1917), Vol. II; Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana, High, Wide and Handsome, p. 246; Joseph Kinsey Howard, "Decline and Fall of Burton K. Wheeler," Harpers (March, 1947); Wheeler, Who's Who in America, Vol. XIV, (1926-1927), 2009.

7 The United States Bureau of Reclamation is a Bureau in the Department of Interior of the United States government which was created by Act of Congress, June 17, 1902, for the purpose of survey, examination, construction and operation of works for the reclamation by irrigation of arid and semi-arid lands in the seventeen Western States. Funds were provided by this act by setting aside the proceeds of the disposal of public lands which from 1902 to 1915.

The reference is probably to the Carey Act of 1894 (August 18), wherein the President was authorized to give up one million acres to each of the public land states for reclamation and other purposes, the proceeds of which were to constitute a revolving fund for the reclamation of other lands in the states.

Senator Thomas Henry Carter was born near Portsmouth, Ohio on October 30, 1854. He engaged in farming, school teaching and railroading. He was admitted to the bar. In 1882 he moved to Helena, Montana. He was a delegate to the fifty-first Congress from March 4 to November 7, 1889. He was elected as the first Representative from Montana and served from November 8, 1889 to March 3, 1891. In 1890 he was an unsuccessful candidate for re-election to the fifty-second Congress. He was Commissioner of the General Land Office from March 1891 to July 1892. He was elected as a United States Senator and served from March, 1905 to March, 1911. He died in Washington, D.C., September 17, 1911. He became an outstanding advocate of land reclamation in the West. He made a famous filibuster opposing a $60,000,000 river and harbors bill which was favored by the East but unpopular in the West. He opposed this bill at the direct request of President McKinley who would have had to veto this bill if it had passed. Honorable Lee Mantle believed that this speech caused the ultimate success of reclamation. Carter also introduced a bill for the formation of postal savings banks. This bill became a law and some believe this was his crowning act. When in 1905 he was again elected to the Senate he became a member of the Joint High Commission on Boundary Water between the United States and Canada. He held this post of international importance until he died. "Carter," *Biographical Dictionary of American Congress, 1774 to 1949* (United States Government Printing Office, 1950); Lawrence P. McHattie, *Mid-America* (St. Louis University pamphlet, July, 1930), pp. 53-71.

10 See Note 5 above.

11 Senate Joint Memorial No. 2 was introduced by Cowan and passed by the Seventeenth Legislative Assembly of the State of Montana and approved by Joseph M. Dixon, Governor of said State on the twenty-sixth day of February, 1921. This memorial was signed by C. T. Stewart, Secretary of State. A printed copy of the Memorial is among the Cowan papers in Jean Crockett's files. Montana, Senate Journal (Published by Authority, 1921), pp. 303, 386, 513.
CHAPTER X

TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D. C.

Washington, D. C.
September 13, 1919

Took train from home at 1:10 A. M. and found Mr. Newman had reserved a berth for me.

Upon getting up in morning found the balance of the delegation on train. We were headed by Mayor Louis Newman of Great Falls. The delegation consisted of the following:

Louis Newman, Great Falls
W. W. Cole, Fairfield  ) Sun River Project
S. C. Moore, Poplar  ) Milk River Project
Dr. R. P. Minnich, Saco  )
F. B. Gillett, Hinsdale  )
Tom Dignon, Glasgow  )
J. R. Griffin, Loma  )
W. T. Cowan, Box Elder  ) Marias River Project

During the forenoon a caucus of delegates was held in the observation car and steps were taken to prepare statements for the St. Paul papers and for the Associated Press. Also each delegate outlined or rehearsed the points which he hoped to present to the Secretary of the Interior.

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and our representatives in Washington.

My observations from the car window showed considerable hay stacked on the Milk River Irrigation Project and some corn standing in the fields in the eastern edge of the state.

Crops appeared to begin around Culbertson. Many small grain stacks were in evidence and a lot of hay.

On waking morning of Monday, the green grass, trees and wonderful stacks of grain and partly-cut fields of corn fodder filled me with envy and sorrow over our drought. The contour of the country is similar to Montana and all we need to equal this beautiful country is water, more water and again water.

VISIT IN ST. PAUL

Upon arriving in St. Paul I attended to some private matters. The weather was fearfully hot, but called upon a firm for whom I had made a large number of dry farm loans. The reception given me was sufficiently cool to lower the temperature several degrees.

Met the delegation at the St. Paul Hotel and we delegated Mr. Newman to attend to the publicity, leaving the balance of us to watch the wheels go round.

I called upon Mr. George Warner, of Lindeke Warner & Son. He introduced me to Mr. McMann of the St. Paul Civic Association. I gave Mr. McMann a talk on irrigation and the
importance of Montana's future to the business men of the Twin Cities.

The association asked us to prepare a set of resolutions covering our mission and they promised to forward same to the Minnesota Delegation in Washington with a view of securing their assistance and cooperation in our mission.

In the afternoon the Delegation headed by Mr. Newman called upon Mr. Kinney of the Great Northern Railway and found him a very well posted and interested man in Montana development and particularly in matters pertaining to irrigation. We discussed the matter with him for about half an hour, when he offered to write the Minnesota Delegation in Washington and particularly to the representative of the Great Northern Railway and secure for us all of the assistance possible.

We then called upon Mr. Stone, of the Passenger Department and bought our transportation to Chicago.

Leaving the office of the railway company, we next called upon the Civic Association and leaving Mr. Newman to arrange the resolution which we desired forwarded, I took four of the delegates for a swim in the plunge of the Athletic Club, where I had been given a two weeks ticket by Mr. Warner.

We got on the train for Chicago at 7:00 P. M.

Upon the way to Chicago we passed through a beautiful country—the grass green and great fields of corn and hay.
There will be a wonderful corn crop and an abundance of hay.

It started raining as we left St. Paul and continued to sprinkle as long as it remained light enough to see.

Mr. Kinney offered a suggestion in regard to making irrigation bonds negotiable that I intend to take up with Senator Walsh.

The idea is to make these bonds free from all Federal and State Tax. If it is not possible to secure money from the Federal Treasury it may be possible to get a bill passed exempting these bonds from the provision of the Income Tax.

Mr. Kinney also offered to look into the matter of the sale of Irrigation Bonds and to have a report ready for me upon my return from Washington. We should know definitely by that time just what can be done by the Federal authorities.

VISIT IN CHICAGO

Chicago: Reached this city in the morning at 8:00 o'clock. Went to the Great Northern Hotel, checked our baggage and had breakfast.

The name Great Northern seems to have a wonderful fascination for our efficient and genial leader, Mr. Newman. After breakfast, we went to the Pennsylvania Ticket Office and purchased our transportation to Washington. We leave Chicago at 5:30 this evening.

Called at the Continental and Commercial National Bank and presented my letter of introduction to Mr. Alex
Robertson, Vice-President. Mr. Robertson gave me about five minutes of his time and agreed with me that it was very necessary for Montana to take some steps to avoid the "slings and arrows" of outrageous fortune.

He of course stated that the Commercial and National was a strictly commercial bank but that they had a trust company in connection and he introduced me to a Vice-President of the Trust Company. This gentleman listened to my story in regard to irrigation development and turned me over to a subordinate to take up the particular case I had in mind. This young man discussed the matter quite fully and asked me to return for a conference at 12:00 o'clock.

Upon my return he read the synopsis of our report on the Marias Project. He happened to have a friend in Havre, Montana and knew of our drought condition. During our discussion of the proposition for selling bonds, it developed that several years ago, one or two bond houses in Chicago had backed various irrigation schemes in the west, and had not alone lost a lot of money for their clients, but had gone broke themselves. For this reason, there was at the present time no market for bonds in Chicago.

This gentleman agreed with me that there was a very urgent need for development in irrigation extension throughout our state but was of the opinion that unless we could secure Government assistance, it would be necessary for the
state to assume the initiative and by some new legislation
guarantee the bonds for irrigation districts.

The Trust Company promised to take this matter up
and give the proposition further consideration and write me
fully and asked me to call upon our return from Washington
to learn if there were any further developments.

From present indications, it would appear that the
prospect of selling bonds was rather remote.

In the afternoon, Mr. Gillett of Hinsdale and myself
went down to the Lake Front, across Michigan Avenue and were
fortunate enough to see the daily mail carrying flying
machine make a start on its way to Cincinnati. When the
plane rose in the air against the wind, it made a circle
like a giant Hawk, and struck out over Lake Michigan,
straight for its destination like a crow flies.

SIGHTS ON THE WAY TO WASHINGTON

We all assembled at the Great Northern Hotel and
boarded the train for Washington at 5:30 P. M.

On the run out of Chicago through Indiana we passed
through beautiful country to our Montana Desert blinded
eyes. It consisted of one continuous corn field after
another. The trees and woods scattered over the country
make a strange contrast to our treeless plains. There
appeared to be a good sized town every few miles and one
of the strangely noticeable features to our startled eyes was the number of cemeteries and graveyards; out in God's Country, (if he has temporarily forgotten us) such ornaments are few and far between.

The leaves of the corn and leaves on the trees show the effect of the hot dry weather. People complain of the recent hot dry spell, but these people do not know what a drought means.²

The roads appear to be in splendid condition and well cared for. Apparently the surface has been graveled and they stretch away from the railroad track for miles. The white surface of the crushed rock in the center of the road being in sharp contrast to the green of the trees and the yellow of the ripening corn.

Corn, corn, corn. I did not suppose there were so many corn fields in the world. It is seldom that one sees a straw stack, but at occasional farms there appears to have been a small threshing of small grain.

Waking the morning of the 10th, found us in what I suppose to be the Allegheny Mountains or foothills or appurtenances thereto. At any rate, we were just outside of Pittsburgh.

This is certainly a strange looking land to us. The first sight that greeted my eyes on waking, was a river of yellow paint. Apparently the waste from some furnace
or factory is turned into the small river and it was a very bright color.

I could not help thinking what an asset such a stream would be to our old friend Little Bear of the Rocky Boy Agency.

The soil of this section seems to be poor. Where there is plowing the tilled land is a rather white color, a good deal like our white Gumbo. I understand it takes about $25.00 worth of commercial fertilizer to produce a crop on this land. To my way of thinking, a payment of $5.00 per acre over a 30 year period to acquire a water right in God's country would be nothing to the yearly purchase and distribution of fertilizers.

Apparently vast stretches of this country have not been cleared of brush yet, or it is not worth clearing or is underlaid with mineral. The corn is poor and so far I have not been able to observe any other crop. The ground is covered with short brush, hazel bushes and weeds. I have never noticed so many weeds before. Where the land is cleared and cultivated, there seems to be a good stand of Blue Grass, or at least I take it for such.

It is plainly to be seen that this country is made great by the mineral, not the agricultural resources. The towns are very close together, but have a very squalid, dirty appearance. There are great gashes in the hillsides
where rock is excavated and crushed for industrial purposes. I notice the roadbed of the railway is ballasted with crushed rock and not gravel, as in the west.

The sky is obscured by a cloud of smoke, but the smell of the air has not the pungent odor of our western forest fire smoke, but has a very disagreeable odor. In fact, during the night, I was awakened a time or two and thought a skunk had crawled under the window, but on becoming fully awake and realizing where I was, I decided it must be the odor of this Eastern, soft coal-burning in the engine of the train and be caused by the smoke blowing in through the screens.

On this trip we could not but be impressed by the evidence of power and might as shown by the miles and miles of box cars, the vast and extensive industrial plants, miles and miles and miles of factories, towns, houses and people everywhere.

As I look out of the car window, I can see, or rather have just passed furnaces belching fire and smoke. Buildings with twists and turns of pipes that I cannot imagine the meaning of.

I am just told that this is Johnstown, where the great loss of life from the breaking of a dam, occurred long ago. The freight yards and platforms are all concrete and steel, faced on top with brick. Everything seems so solid
and permanent. One member of the party seemed to express the combined opinion of the delegation, in regard to this country, when asked what would have been the result if Columbus had landed on the West Coast. His reply was that the country would never have been settled.

If there was any grass this country would make a great sheep range. I never could understand why land in this section was advertised so cheap, but after a look at the country I can understand now.

Give me good old dry Montana, with irrigation, when possible, but without if necessary.

Even our Russian thistles have a feeding value and all we need to make our country one of the best is a campaign to inculcate habits of thrift and forethought among our farmers when we get a crop to husband our resources in preparation for the adverse years.

When I see this poor impoverished country from an agricultural or stock growing standpoint, I am afraid I will lose my pep in plugging for Montana irrigation. We are so much better off the way we are now than these eastern mountain farmers that I am better satisfied with our lot already.

All the houses seem to be built narrow and high. Row after row all alike. Built by the mining companies.

To sum up, this country is just one vast Butte,
Montana, for hundreds of miles in the character of the industries. We, of course, are following the valleys and stream beds and we do not get to see the country on the hill tops.

The roads appear to be kept in excellent condition and the whole country is very dry. I would like to make an automobile trip through this section.

The only cattle appear to be Jerseys.

The effect of the lower altitude and humidity in the air is peculiar to a Western man. One seems to only need about one quarter the lung space down here that is required in Montana. The increased density of the air and the ease with which the oxygen can be extracted from the air by our mountain trained lungs, gives a feeling of exhilaration and explains why our Western man and horses make such an enviable reputation for strength and endurance.

I can for the first time understand how the late Senator Thomas H. Carter of Montana was able to talk to death the appropriation bill in the United States Senate and by reason of this stunt made himself and his state famous for at least the endeavor.

It is to be hoped that the members of our delegation get an opportunity to convince the "powers that be" as to the merits and necessity of granting our petition.

We recently passed the famous horse shoe bend on the
Pennsylvania Line, but this bend is only a mild imitation of the similar construction in the Cascades on the line of the Great Northern.

After passing Altoona, Pa., the home of the greatest locomotive works in the United States, we seem to be getting out of the industrial section and to be in more of a farming country. We begin to see small corn fields, pasture lands and farms. It is strange to notice rail fences and log houses. The style of contracting the log houses seems to be similar to our Montana fashion.

These mountains are covered with timber clear to the top, but we are not high enough for pines or evergreens.

It is remarkable the number of dams in the streams and rivers. Apparently the water power of the streams has not been overlooked.

After riding all day through a wilderness of hills, weeds, brush land and swamps and observing the vast amount of unoccupied and apparently waste land between Baltimore and Washington, I am almost ashamed to be a seeker after Federal assistance to reclaim our Western lands. It appears to me that there would be an opportunity to use all the funds of the Government in reclamation work within an hour's ride outside our Capital City. However, I presume these people know what they want, but so many of the fields do not look any better than our dry land fields that I am surprised and
disappointed in the country.

I am told that there is good land in spots, but certainly these spots are not along the railroads. The soil does not seem to be over a couple of inches deep and there seems to be miles and miles of land covered with brush and where cleared there is very little grass, but weeds galore. I would imagine goats would thrive here, provided the moisture would not be too great, as there would certainly be plenty of browse.

MEETING MONTANA SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Reaching Washington at 5:50 P. M. it took three taxis to carry the crowd, but my share of the fare was only 30¢. Washington seems to be a combination of Fort Benton and Great Falls. The streets are wide like in Great Falls, but the atmosphere of the city and people seems more like that air of elegant leisure, which distinguishes the citizens of the Head of Navigation.5

The delegation met this morning at around 9:30 and taking a street car we proceeded to the Senate Office Building and called at Senator Meyers' office.6 After waiting for about half an hour the Senator came in and received us very cordially. He, however, greeted us with the old, old story of how certain Montana people had fought irrigation in the past, etc., etc.
After a half hour's discussion, the Senator excused himself as having a committee meeting to attend. Leaving Mr. Newman dictating some letters to the Senator's stenographer, the balance of the party proceeded into the Capitol Building, and after dodging the guides, we proceeded to examine the paintings and statuary. Famous men in American history are here kept fresh in the memory of countrymen.

The one thing remarked upon by us, was the physical beauty of Alexander Hamilton and the stern look about the mouth and face of George Washington. From his facial appearance, I would judge that he must have been a very determined man and dangerous to fool with.

About this time, Mr. Tom Dignon of Glasgow and Mr. Gillett of Hinsdale showed up with Representative Carl Riddick. Mr. Riddick took us in charge and we went into the House of Representatives in time to hear a very lively quarrel between a Congressman from Texas named Blandon, with a gentleman from Pennsylvania. The quarrel was hard to get head or tail of, but was quite heated while it lasted and was about some matter the Texas Congressman wanted to get changed on the Congressional Record, or had changed in some way.

By this time, it was lunch hour and Mr. Riddick took us all into the House Restaurant and entertained us. We were joined by Congressman Evans before the meal was over. We all sat around a large table and the meeting and luncheon
was more like a country hotel than anything else.

After lunch we went over to the Senate Chamber to get in touch with Senators Meyers and Walsh. While waiting for Mr. Walsh we sat in the gallery of the Senate. Vice-President Marshall was presiding in the Chair and Mr. Riddick pointed out the various celebrities, including Senators Lodge and LaFollette. Representative Nick Longworth, the husband of Alice Roosevelt, was in the Senate Chamber.

From my observation, United States Senators and Congressmen are just ordinary folks and while there is some attempt at putting on airs, as a whole, everything is very democratic.

Upon getting in touch with Senator Walsh the whole of our delegation on irrigation, accompanied by Senators Walsh and Meyers and Representatives Riddick and Evans went out on the balcony of the Senate, drew up chairs and proceeded to hold a young Congress of our own. We held this meeting to first get our views before the Montana delegation and get their advice and counsel as to our future proceedings.

Senator Walsh showed a surprising familiarity with all phases of our problems. Each delegate presented his mission and learned the various difficulties our Montana delegation has to work under.

It appears that while in the beginning of the Reclamation Service, the funds derived from the sale of public lands were turned over to the Secretary of the Interior and he had
full authority to apportion it out as he saw fit. Later his liberty of action was taken from him and the money turned into the United States Treasury and apportioned out by Congress. The way this works out is for the heads of the various departments to make estimates for the expenditures expected the following year.

The government fiscal year was June 30th and all reports and settlements are made for the past 12 months at that time. During September the estimates for the following year are made up, the various departments get out their estimate and all different departments are combined and the estimates are handed into the Secretary for his approval.

The Secretary, and as the Reclamation Service is under the jurisdiction of the Interior Department, of course, Mr. Lane is the last man to give his approval. From the Secretary's hands the estimates go to the various committees of the Senate and House. As it was explained to us, these committees never increase any estimate, but almost invariably cut them down.

As to the funds for reclamation work, these being derived from the sale of public land, the appropriations are held down to the amount received into the fund from the year previous.

The machinery for handling the funds of the Treasury has gotten into a regular routine and the Chairman of the various finance committees grow very conservative with the
They realize that with the thousand and one demands upon the Treasury, that the Government would soon become bankrupt if there was not a very strong hold on the lid.

After listening to their explanation, we of course realized what kind of a proposition we were up against, but Senator Walsh explained that Senator Jones of the State of Washington had introduced on August 30th a bill authorizing the expenditure of two hundred fifty million dollars on reclamation projects. He explained that he would hunt up Jones and learn what was being done. Mr. Walsh went out and returned with the information that this Jones Bill would come up before the Irrigation Committee of the Senate Monday and that he had arranged for us to appear before this body and give our testimony. It was also arranged that we meet Mr. Davis, the Head of the Reclamation Service, at 8:30 A.M. on Saturday and Secretary Lane at 10:30 on the same day.

WOULD ACCEPT FOOD IF OFFERED

Mr. Walsh also asked us to hold a conference and advise him what our views were concerning his requisition, asking the War Department to give up to $750,000 worth of food to destitute people in the Drought Area of Montana. Later in the evening it was unanimously decided to recommend the acceptance of the food if it was available.

After our future course of action was mapped out,
Mr. Riddick took four of us out in his car and drove us for two or three hours all over the city and out to the Arlington Cemetery. This cemetery is on the Estate of Robert E. Lee and contains the Lee Mansion still intact. The view from the front of the Mansion is very grand. The house is on a hill overlooking the Potomac River, with the City of Washington in the distance.

I am unable to give a description of the City of Washington. The plans were evidently laid by a master mind. The buildings are immense, and the parks, flowers, drives, trees and general air of distinction and grandeur are beyond my powers with the pen. There is an army of laborers, overseers and gardeners. The flowers and shrubbery are of very prolific growth. This country almost seems a fairy-land, it is such a contrast to our sun-baked plains.

It rains here with the greatest ease. This afternoon there was bright sunshine, tonight we had a regular tropical thunder shower. The thunder and lightning were intense and the rainfall heavy enough to run in streams down the streets. Shortly after the shower was over the cement walks looked dry, although the puddles still stood in the streets.

While in the Senate Chamber we heard a Senator make quite a plea for irrigation. He evidently was very much in favor of irrigation and made the statement that of the 154 million dollars so far expended in reclamation work,
33 millions had been repaid by the settlers. So it would appear that we are not alone in our effort to secure more reclamation funds for our State.
1. A pet idea of municipal financiers from this day on.

2. Cowan, on the other hand, did not know what a sweltering southern Indiana summer means.

3. Johnstown, Pennsylvania is a city in Cambria County. It is the center of an important iron ore and bituminous coal mining region. The city is notable as an industrial center, with iron and steel plants extending for many miles along the Conemaugh River. Johnstown attained its high civic and industrial development in spite of repeated ravages by disastrous floods. The government passed a $7,610,000 Johnstown Flood Control project slated to be completed in 1942. The work was begun in 1939 under the direction of the U.S. Army engineers and is expected to afford the city complete flood protection. The most disastrous of the city's floods occurred May 31, 1889. The loss of life was approximately 2,200; of property $10,000,000. The second most disastrous flood was in 1936 with twenty-five lives lost and $40,000,000 property damage. "Johnstown," Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. XVI (1946), p. 187.

4. Carter gained the floor and began a speech which lasted over ten hours until the session came to a close. This attracted the attention of the whole country. (See Chapter IX, Note 10.)

5. After the coming of the railroad and the loss of the river trade Fort Benton seemed to be satisfied to be a sleepy little town kept alive by the farmers who came to Benton to trade. The railway station was about a mile from town as if the people did not want to admit that they even used the thing. The river kept merrily flowing through the center of the town. Now the city is more isolated than ever since highway 87 from Havre to Great Falls completely ignores it, and the road is steep, so no one ventures in the city unless they actually have business there. People are still proud of the town's historical background.

6. Henry Lee Meyers was born in Missouri on October 9, 1862. He practiced law in Missouri and in 1893 he moved to Hamilton, Montana where he engaged in law practice. In 1894 he was elected county attorney and was re-elected in 1896. In 1898 he was elected as state senator; in 1907 he was chosen as judge of the district court from the fourth judicial district. In 1911 he was elected by the Montana State Legislature as United States Senator for the term beginning March 4, 1911. In 1916 he was elected as Senator for a second term. This term expired March 3, 1923. U.S. Congressional Directory, 66th Cong., 2d Sess., December.

7Carl W. Riddick was a United States Representative from Lewistown, Montana. He was a wheat and cattle farmer. He was born in Wells, Minnesota on February 25, 1872. He attended college at Albin, Michigan and Lawrence University at Appleton, Wisconsin. He was elected to Congress from the second district in 1918. U. S., Congressional Directory, 1919.

8John M. Evans was a United States Representative from Missoula, Montana. He was educated at West Point and the University of Missouri. He began law practice in Missoula in 1888. He was a police judge of Missoula from 1889 to 1894. He was the register of the United States Land Office from 1894 to 1898. He helped to establish the commission form of government in Missoula. He was the first commission mayor of Montana. He was elected as a representative to Congress from the sixty-third through the sixty-sixth sessions. U. S., Congressional Directory, 1919.

9Twelve days after Cowan left Montana President Wilson collapsed at Pueblo, Colorado, during his speaking tour on behalf of the Versailles Treaty, then fast losing ground in the U. S. Senate. It seems strange that Cowan's party failed to mention these important events, and stranger still that others, Senator Walsh in particular, said nothing either. Vice-President Marshall was thus on the threshold of great responsibility when Cowan first saw him. It turned out that he was to be of no great importance during Wilson's disability. He is best known for having remarked, "What America needs is a good five-cent cigar."

10In 1924, if not in 1920, Walsh was eyeing the presidency. Within a few months after Coolidge's accession to the Presidency there were ugly rumors involving Harding's Secretary of the Interior, Albert B. Fall of New Mexico, and Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana, a Democrat, called for a public hearing on the peculiar circumstances concerning the leasing of two naval oil reserves to private corporations. The lease of the Teapot Dome field was awarded Harry F. Sinclair, an oil magnate, without the inconvenience of competitive bids. Sinclair's refusal to answer many of Senator Walsh's questions brought him a contempt citation from the Senate and three months in jail in addition to a fine of $1,000. In 1933 President Roosevelt had planned to hand over the office of Attorney General to Thomas J. Walsh, but his death two days before the
In the last months of the Wilson administration, Lane was replaced by J. P. Payne. Under the succeeding Harding administration the Secretary was the notorious Albert B. Fall, whom Senator Walsh hounded from office for abuse of trust. He was fined $100,000 and sentenced to a year in prison. Cowan and his friends could have chosen a more auspicious year for their campaign.

Governor S. V. Stewart called an extra session of the Montana State Legislature in 1919. He considered the matter very seriously before he called this session. He made it understood that the people as a whole were not in a destitute circumstances, it was only a few people who could not be relieved by ordinary business methods. He says, "There are some however, and enough to elicit our interest and demand instant action, who must have relief of a character that cannot be afforded by the ordinary course of business, even under the most wise and beneficent laws possible of passage through the Assembly. I am one who believes that Montana can and will take care of herself if the interest of her citizens is properly aroused and if a suitable plan is suggested and put into effect." He was strongly opposed to seeking outside help like the Red Cross which would have to raise money by drives and would let the whole nation know the condition of Montana. Montana, Messages and State Papers of Governor S. V. Stewart (Helena: Independent Publishing Company, 1913-1920).
CHAPTER XI

NEED OF IRRIGATION

The following contains brief sections of an article titled, "That Pain in Our Northwest" by Garet Garrett, which appeared in The Saturday Evening Post on April 12, 1924. This article was written after I sent a copy of the resolution: Senate Joint Memorial, No. 2; to the Editor of The Saturday Evening Post, Mr. George Horace Lorimore, I had dinner with Mr. Garrett in Havre, shortly before this article was written and we discussed the grave condition of our great Northwest without irrigation.

THAT PAIN IN OUR NORTHWEST

by

Garet Garrett

Oh, wretched abundance! Ruin and plenty are as twin specters stalking to and fro in the land. The Department of Agriculture causes expensive color posters to be displayed on the walls of the post office, urging people to eat more meat. This is for the sake of the cattle raisers. There is propaganda in the same spirit for the sake of the grain growers. Bread is man's perfect food. Increase thereof by morsel.

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We eat what we can. Yet of precious sustenance there is a surplus left. American agriculture is at the verge of economic despair. Over great fertile areas it is bankrupt. The Government is called upon to save it, either directly by grants of money from the United States Treasury, or indirectly by law, or both. It is believed to be unable to save itself. Also it is believed that unless it is saved the whole country will sink under the calamity of excessive abundance. Does it lie in riddle between God and man that you can have ruin and plenty at the same time? Hath man himself invented this contradiction? Or is the omen of disaster a product perhaps of the political imagination?

INCREASING WHEAT ACREAGE

The high point, or peak, both in cattle production and wheat acreage, was reached in 1919. The year after the Armistice. Prices were still very high in 1919 and until mid-year of 1920, higher than during the war; and then suddenly the demand slumped. The high price for wheat---$2.56 per bushel on the farm---was touched in 1919, after the Government had removed its price control. Similarly the high price for beef cattle---ten cents a pound on the farm---was touched in 1919.

In 1914, before the war, the number of beef cattle on the farms was 36,000,000. It increased steadily, as the price rose, until it touched 45,000,000 in 1919. The
decrease since has been much slower than the increase was. Last year, according to the yearbook of the Department of Agriculture, the number of beef cattle on the farms was still 42,000,000— that is to say, one-sixth more than in 1914, and only one-fifteenth less than the highest point touched on the peak of the postwar demand.

So also as to wheat. The area in wheat in 1914 was fifty-three and a half million acres. It increased steadily as the price of wheat advanced until it was seventy-five and a half million in 1919. Not until last year was the acreage reduced to somewhere near the prewar level; and by that time the world's production had so increased that the total supply exceeded the prewar demand. The Wheat Council of the United States, which is an organization formed last year of farmers, millers, railroad men and bakers to take a world-wide view of wheat, discovered that in 1923 the wheat exporting countries had perhaps 350,000,000 more bushels to sell than had been required in any one year before the war by all the wheat-importing countries of the world. In view of that fact, which is a continuing and not an accidental fact, and seeing, moreover, that the cost of producing wheat in the United States is higher than in the other surplus-wheat countries, such as Canada, Argentina, India and Egypt, it appeared to the Wheat Council of the United States to be perfectly futile for American farmers
to go on raising wheat for export.

TOO MANY BANKS

Here in Montana one of the famous disaster spots is a vast three-cornered area of semi-arid land, half the size of Iowa, in the north-central part of Montana, called the triangle. Until a few years ago this was public land, covered with natural buffalo grass. All it was supposed to be fit for was cattle grazing. Then it was opened for settlement by homesteaders. Montana decided that what it needed was people. It got that idea first from the Great Northern Railway; the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway, which had just extended its line through Montana to the Pacific Coast, supported it. The three of them together—the State, that is, and the two railroads—put on a great advertising campaign for people. They spread color posters at country fairs in the East and Middle West to excite the eye; these were followed by paid criers to excite the ears. One of the posters represented the farmer plowing silver dollars out of the soil of Montana. The criers said it was not at all exaggerated. And this was free land. All you had to do was to go and take it.

The rush began. Havre, at one corner of the triangle, was overwhelmed. Every Great Northern train disgorged homesteaders. They slept in heaps at the railroad station because there was nowhere else to sleep, and vanished at
dawn with the professional locators who knew where the free land was and charged fifty dollars for pointing it out. So the triangle was settled. Nobody knew what would come of it. The natives, whose business had been cattle, mining, merchandising and banking, with a little oil speculation aside, looked on uneasily. They did not believe this land would farm. They had heard of dry farming; but they could not imagine growing grain in place of buffalo grass on this high semi-arid bench. Moreover, these rash homesteaders were not all farmers. Nearly two-thirds of them were people who knew nothing about farming; they were doctors, lawyers, miners, blacksmiths, bartenders, old maids, wrestlers, butchers, sailors—thousands of them in this miscellaneous character.\(^2\) And as to the one-third who were farmers, they were from Iowa, Illinois and Missouri, and knew nothing whatever about dry farming here or anywhere else.

Yet a miracle happened. All of them planted wheat on that virgin soil; nothing but wheat—no gardens, no trees, no shrubs, not even feed for their livestock. And the wheat came—wonderful hard wheat, commanding a premium in all the markets of the world—prodigious wheat, twenty, thirty and forty bushels to the acre, from merely throwing seed upon the ground. This happened in 1915; it happened again in 1916; and people abandoned themselves to ecstasy. The poster was true. You could plow dollars out of Montana soil. From land that had cost them nothing but the trouble
of taking it, two-dollar wheat, thirty bushels to the acre! What was that land worth now? Figure it for yourself. Life became very exciting. You might have seen at sundown on a harvest day one hundred wagons waiting still at the elevator to unload the fabulous wheat, and the owners playing black jack in the village nearby. A cigar was a quarter; a shave was fifty cents; and food was dear because nobody raised any food to eat—nothing but wheat to sell. Everybody was rich. Everybody wished to be richer still. The way to get richer was to get more land. Having got all the free land that was available they began to buy it. Newcomers bought it from the lucky first comers; then they bought it from one another.

PYRAMIDING MORTGAGES

"You could have sold the top of that mountain then," one banker said sadly.

A man with a quarter section he had got for nothing mortgaged it at 10 per cent to buy a whole section, part cash and part mortgage. Then to farm the section he needed a steam tractor, and for that he borrowed money on his note at 10 or 12 per cent. Expectations were so great that nobody cared about the rate of interest; and because the rate of interest was unlimited, money especially mortgage money, came pouring in from the East. Loan companies sent agents
around in automobiles soliciting farmers to mortgage their land. This was another miracle. Credit was like wheat. All you had to do was to wish for it, and there it was. It came to the door in an automobile.3

Thus they built an enormous pyramid upside down, everybody getting richer and richer on credit. You didn't need any capital. You could borrow at the bank on the value of your land for anything you wanted, even a closed car, and pay out of the next crop. Once it was that the first thing that opened in a new town was the saloon. In the triangle it was the bank. A proper triangle town consisted of six or eight little houses, one large garage, and two banks in shingle shanties. And the activity of banking was somewhat like this:

Farmer: "I own a half section of land up the road worth fifty dollars an acre. That's $16,000. There's a mortgage on it for twenty-five an acre. That's $8,000. Eight from sixteen leaves eight. That's what I'm worth—$8,000, not saying anything about what's on the land. I need some ready money until my crop comes off. Am I good for $2,000 on my note?"

Banker: "I guess you are."

The banker writes it down in his book that the farmer is good for $2,000 on his note and may draw his checks on the bank up to that amount. But he has not got the money
in the safe. He has to get it. So he sends the farmer's note to the Federal Reserve Bank at Minneapolis for rediscount. That means he pledges the farmer's note there for a loan of $2,000 in bright clean currency, which duly arrives in a nice package and is paid out over the counter to people who bring in the farmer's checks, and want the cash on them. The banker has charged the farmer, say, 10 per cent interest; but he himself pays only 4\(\frac{1}{2}\) per cent interest at Minneapolis. The difference is the bank's profit.

The reason why the farmer needs this $2,000 of ready money is not that he is poor. He needs it because he is getting rich so fast. He has bought more land and more equipment to farm it with; then he has to hire labor because he has more land than he can farm himself, and that means a pay roll to meet; and he has naturally bought an automobile to go about in, having so many things to oversee. The more land he can swing, the more credit he can borrow to increase the scale of his operations, the more money he will make if nothing happens. But if his crop fails he will be unable to pay his note; not only will he be unable to pay that note; but he will be obliged to borrow more on a second note to bring off the next year's crop; and the bank, having started with him, is obliged to go on, for if it doesn't, everything will be lost.
So it comes that more notes go to Minneapolis to be rediscouned, and more currency is duly received in nice packages and paid out over the bank's counter to people who bring in the farmer's checks and want the cash; and everybody has more at hazard on the next crop. If that fails, so that the stakes have all to be doubled a second time, it begins to be serious. Then if a third crop fails disaster begins. The value of land collapses. Mortgages begin to be foreclosed. The farmer cannot pay what he owes the triangle bank; and his notes which the triangle bank has hypothecated at Minneapolis are worthless because there is now no equity in the farmer's land above the mortgage.

The Minneapolis bank writes to the triangle bank, saying: "Those farmer notes you pledged with us are overdue. Please redeem them at once."

But the triangle bank cannot redeem them. It has paid away the money on the farmer's checks and there is no way to get it back. So it answers the Minneapolis bank, saying: "All the farmers hereabouts are bankrupt. When we ask them to pay they say, 'All we've got is nothing. If you want that come and get it.' And that is all we can say. You have their notes, as we pledged them with you. We cannot redeem them. But if you think there is
anything around here you want, please come and get it.
We don't know what that could be."

Just then two or three depositors who had some real
money with the bank come in. They have heard a rumor.
They want their money out. The banker walks past them
without speaking and sticks a piece of white paper on the
glass of the front door. There he stands, looking out,
with his hands in his pockets. The bank is bust.

All this had been supposed, for uses of illustration.
But it happened, literally, throughout the triangle. The
1917 crop, out of which people meant to pay for their
automobiles, their tractors, their extravagances and their
added land, fell to seven bushels per acre. Nobody was
dismayed. You had to expect that in dry farming. They
borrowed more money and planted more wheat—more of
course than the year before. The 1918 crop averaged less
than five bushels to the acre. Still they were optimistic.
Credit seemed inexhaustible. The counties sold tax-exempt
bonds to Eastern investors and distributed the money among
the farmers to enable them to plant again. Hill County
alone did this to the tune of $8,000,000. The thing was
to plant more wheat, more than ever before; there could
not be three failures in succession. If only they planted
enough and then if they got another crop like in 1916, every-
body could pay. After that they would be a little more
conservative.
It was a desperate gamble—the last throw—all or nothing! Result: Nothing. The 1919 crop was just nothing. And the whole triangle was bankrupt. Many of the people to whom the county loaned money just up and moved away. You may drive through the triangle now for forty or fifty miles along the new, bonded Roosevelt Highway, and seem to see nothing but abandoned towns, abandoned farms, banks along the road with pieces of white paper pasted on their door panes and steam tractors sinking in the fields like lost locomotives.

Kremlin is a characteristic town—six or eight houses, an elevator, a large garage and two banks. The garage is closed; but in one year it sold 125 automobiles. Both banks are closed. One has not yet got its receiver in. There is a famine of receivers, owing to the unprecedented demand. The cashier is still there. It is only decent; after having taken a snapshot of the bank as if it were a public exhibit, to go in and speak to him. He is from South Dakota and smokes a corn cob pipe.

DOMESTIC TRAGEDIES

"The Government told us to raise wheat," he says. "It never told us to stop. We raised it, or tried to raise it, until we all went broke. That’s the end of the story."

"Do you speak as a banker or as a farmer?"
"Both. I had 1000 acres in wheat this year. It looked like a good crop. Then the grasshoppers came. They were so bad the locomotive engineers had to sand the rails to get through here. That's the truth. You can see what happened. They ate everything there was. I got 125 bushels from 1000 acres."

"Now what are you going to do?"

"I'm going to stick around here. It's worse in South Dakota, from what I hear; this wouldn't be so bad if only we had raised some corn. Did you know corn would grow here? We didn't know it."

At Havre the bank buildings are of brick with stone columns, and the fatal pieces of white paper are read through plate glass. In one plate-glass window may be several notices, announcing not only the insolvency of this bank but that also of a number of shingle-shanty banks out on the bench, or a foreclosure notice like this:

To whom it may concern: The Chattel mortgage of Frank and Eloise Robinson for $1650 being now due and unpaid---the following property will be sold at auction, to wit: One red cow named Betty, one roan heifer named Irene, one black gelding named Dick, one gray mare, 14 years, named Bell.....

(signed) First National Bank of Fresno, By Its Receiver.

This receiver has received not only the brick bank but a number of little banks, including the one at Fresno, where Frank and Eloise mortgaged Betty, Irene, Dick and Bell. He is within. He is glad to see you. Visiting
breaks up the gloomy echoes. There are some people in
town. He will have them in... the man who was governor
when Montana thought what she needed was people, and the
president of a bank that ought not to have failed and
perhaps would not have failed if its depositors had not
got themselves into a sympathetic panic. These and
others. They seem all a little dazed. Nobody could have
imagined what happened. It seems unreal, stranger than
fact. Only three years ago the President of the bank
that ought not to have failed would not have taken $300
a share for his bank stock. Now he will pay me assess-
ment if he can, or lose it if he can't.

"But isn't this what happened? You overcapitalized
and overmortgaged two freak years of plenty and put nothing
by. You believed your own color poster at last."

"Yes," they say, "That's so."

"Too much credit. That is what ruined you really?"

"It did," he says, the man who was governor. "Not
here in the triangle only. Everywhere. The loan companies
swamped us with money. I know a man who had the finest
10,000 acre ranch in the state. Owed nobody a penny. He
thought he would borrow $60,000. The loan agent said:
'Why not take ninety?' He said, 'All right--- ninety.'
Now he's bankrupt. The mortgage is being foreclosed."

"Why did he borrow $90,000?"
"I asked him that question. I said, 'Why did you borrow the money?' He said, 'I'm damned if I know why. Everybody else was branching out. I thought I'd get me a few tractors and some fine stock.'"

"This is Hill County?"

"Yes."

"It's black with foreclosures?"

"Almost solid black," they sigh.

"But here and there is a white spot. What has happened in those white spots?"

"There are what you call white spots," says the man whose bank ought not to have failed. "That's a good way to put it, white spots. I'll tell you what happened in one of them. This last year, you know, we were about to get another crop when the grasshoppers came. The sky was veiled with them, gleaming in the sunlight. A pretty sight, if you've never seen it. But what a scourge! They eat everything down to moisture. The land they've been over is as if it were summer fallowed. You have seen it. Well, there was a woman out there whose husband worked on the railroad. She did the farming. She fought the grasshoppers with her hands, and right there, surrounded by people who got no wheat at all, she brought through a crop of forty bushels to the acre and paid off a $1200 mortgage. Last year! I know because she paid it at my bank. I said, 'Well, you ought to be mighty glad to get
that paid." That seemed to hit her in a place she'd forgotten about. First she stared at me, then she began to sob. That was a white spot, wasn't it?"

"And badly as the cattle business is hurt, there are white spots in that picture too."

"There are," says the man who was governor. "I know a man who is making money in cattle right now."

"How does he do it?" the others asked.

"He doesn't raise too many, and they are fine. Up to 1600 pounds per head. He always gets the top price."

What befell the cattle industry of Montana is a separate story. First is the fact that cattle raising there had always been an exciting gamble with Nature. It did not have to be; people liked it to be. Natural buffalo grass, which cures on the stalk, makes rich grazing both winter and summer---winter in the valleys and summer in the mountains. Therefore the drudgery of raising feed may be avoided. There is the story of a ranchman who on returning from an errand to the city was furious to find that a raw hand had plowed a patch of ground for potatoes.

"But potatoes will grow here," said the culprit.

"I know they will," said the ranchman. "But if you start that the hunnyackers will come in."

That is a contemptuous word, meaning farmers who work the soil. The rancher's idea was both to grow and
fatten cattle on the untilled bosom of Nature. Now and then came a bad year. Then he lost. But the next year he began again, pyramided his herd with each successive good year, and played for sweepstakes.

TROUBLES IN FLOCKS

They were doing this, as usual, in 1917 and 1918, only on a much larger scale than usual, and went into 1919 with a clean-up in sight such as hitherto they had dreamed of. Never had the pyramid been so enormous, never so dangerous, and the price was in the sky. Then came the drought, the same that killed the wheat growers in the triangle. There was not enough buffalo grass to bring the herds through another winter. And just as they had made up their minds not to risk it, but to scale the pyramid by selling off a lot of cattle, the outlaw switchmen's strike began. For weeks livestock accumulated at the shipping pens; cattle cars couldn't be moved out. In October it began to snow; and the snow that fell in October was still on the ground the next May. The winter was terrific. Without feed, never having raised any, they had to import hay from other states, and it cost them up to forty-five dollars a ton. They borrowed money on their notes at the bank to pay for it. But already they had borrowed on their cattle as much or more than it had been safe for the banks to lend. The
banks were caught. If they didn't lend more money for feed the cattle would be lost, together with all the money already loaned upon it.

Take a concrete case, in the autumn of 1919 two banks in the Judith Basin were lending $3,000,000 on growing livestock which at the very highest prices was worth $10,000,000. There was margin enough in that, provided nothing happened. In the spring of 1920 their loans on that same livestock had increased to $6,000,000. The increase represented money loaned for hay. Then there was no calf crop to speak of, because the cows were weak and slunk their calves. Finally, in 1920, came the great fall in prices, and the disaster was complete. A steer that had been thought worth $200 fell to actually $60; a cow that had been worth $100 fell to $30. In the fall of 1920 the livestock on which those two banks in Judith Basin had loaned $6,000,000 could not be sold for $6,000,000. Much of it was carried over for another year, everybody desperately hoping for a better price. The price did not improve; the livestock did not fatten. It had not the bone. The hard winter had hurt it. The banks at last could go no further. They could not borrow any more money in Minneapolis because they had nothing to pledge; and Minneapolis was calling upon them to pay what they already owed. The cattle at last were sold off for canners and cutters, and brought less than the cost of
the hay they had eaten in the winter of 1919-20.

Never had there been so great a cattle disaster in Montana. But then, never had the play for sweepstakes been so steep. 7

The banker who tells you this story brings out some folders containing the cattlemen's notes. You shall see how it was. Here, for example, is a man who in 1918 borrowed $8,000 on his note to buy some cattle. He had sold out and was going in again; and he borrowed the money to do so. At that time his net worth was $30,000, a figure obtained by subtracting his debts from the estimated value of his land. That note was never paid. It was renewed and increased. In 1921, on what survived of his cattle, he owed the bank $20,000, and his net worth was nil, because the estimated value of his land had fallen. He owed more than he was worth. Wasn't it amazing? And how could anyone have foreseen it?

WHEN NATURE FROWNED

It was prevalent. Yet it was not universal. We must keep the perspective. A great majority of the banks of Montana were always sound and always will be. And the strength of Montana is still in the sons of those pioneers who when Helena burned up, held a meeting to decide what they should do. They had no cattle, no sheep, no agriculture.
Placer mining was about played out. Quartz mining had not begun. All their merchandise came from St. Louis, up the Missouri to Fort Benton and then by wagon overland. A message of commiseration was received from the merchants of St. Louis, who said they had collected a large sum of money which they wished to contribute to the restoration of Helena. To whom should they send it? The men of Helena sent back word, saying: "Thanks. Please return the money to those from whom you received it. We came here with nothing but our hands. Therefore we are no worse off than when we started. And we like to think we can start all over again."
1 Permission was granted to print The Saturday Evening Post article. (Chapter IX, Note 2).

2 If true, this last American frontier was different from earlier ones—they were largely settled by farmers.

3 All very reminiscent of an earlier boom, that of the Prairie States of the East after the Civil War. John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), second printing, 1955, pp. 5-30.

4 Tragic reminders of the banking bust are still to be seen in the Northwest. Square brick buildings with large front windows and "Bank" inscribed over the front door, now provide space for general stores, service stations, and so on.

5 The origin of the name, "honyocker" is not known. In Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Canada the people from Slavic countries were known as "hunyaks." The term was used in a contemptuous manner in Montana and was used to cover all foreigners in the state. The honyockers came in various ways, some in tourist sleepers, others in Model T Fords, while still others came in immigrant trains. These people were met at the trains by agents who helped them find their land for a fee which ranged from twenty to fifty dollars depending on how anxious they seemed to secure their land. Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana, High, Wide, and Handsome, pp. 180-183.

6 Episodes of this kind doubtless contributed to the feeling of indifference or even dislike held against organized labor by the cattlemen of the West. Of course, the fact that the cattlemen thought of themselves as lordly capitalists was the principal reason for the common attitude.

7 The range disaster of 1886-87 was surely as bad.
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Gives an account of old Fort Benton in the seventies and eighties.

Tells of Brother Van's part in Indian Wars and praises his extreme courage in times of danger. Not always accurate.

A detailed account of the securing and preparing of food in the early days and also an explanation of the many illnesses suffered and the causes of disease at that time.

Activities of the territorial governors and their attitude towards the railroads was of value.

An account of the settlement of the West including a description of the forest lands in Canada.

This book was helpful in the many references that concerned Canada. It is clear, concise and a "must" in Canadian history from the time of the Hudson Bay traders to the middle of the twentieth century.


A sympathetic account of Louis Riel and his struggle to gain rights for his people. Valuable for a clear understanding of the entire affair. Too many writers have only criticism for Riel.


Tells of early railroads in the West.


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Expresses the desire of the farmers for a fair share of the wealth of the nation. Explains cause of western boom.


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An excellent account of early cars and the first highways.

There were actually only ten very good years for the cattlemen. Fences, dry farmers, and small ranches contributed to the break-up of the range. An excellent account of the conditions including study of prices and markets. Verifies Cowan's stories of the wet and dry years in Montana.

A sympathetic account of Hill's activities with praise for all he did. The account of his actions from his early business in St. Paul until his death is revealed. A very useful book for this thesis and referred to frequently. The first volume was the most useful.

Explains how Hill had the Montana Central organized and his method of securing control of small lines to add to his main railroad. Tells of Hill's political activities.
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As this book deals with somewhat the same territory as Cowan does it was very valuable for the Memoirs.

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II. PERSONAL LETTERS TO AUTHOR

During the years from 1955 to 1957 the following people have written to Jean Crockett concerning the Memoirs: Hartwell Bowsfield, Provisional Archivist, Winnipeg; Lela Blayney Challand, cousin, Sincoe, Ontario; Leslie R. Gray, President of Ontario Historical Society, Toronto; Lewis Lawrence, Editor of the Big Sandy Mountaineer, Big Sandy, Montana; Jules Alexander Karlin, Professor of History and Political

III. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Jean Crockett has had personal interviews from 1955 to 1957 with Kathleen Broadwater, daughter of Ed Broadwater, Havre, Montana; Maida McCartney, Chinook Radio Hour, Chinook, Montana; R. T. Crawford, Assistant Superintendent of Rocky Boy Agency; Mrs. L. K. Devlin, old-timer, Havre, Montana; William Johnson, World War I veteran, Chinook, Montana; Mrs. Lillian Lehman, old-timer, Chinook, Montana; and Office of Secretary of State.

IV. MASTER'S THESIS


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