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A TRIP THROUGH THE GREAT WEST

An Interesting Letter from a Resident of Victoria County, on a Jaunt Through the West

Mr. Duncan McArthur of Kirkfield, recently made a trip to the west where according to the following letter he seems to have had rare fortune in meeting Victoria county people.

He says: I left Kirkfield on Sept. 11th on an excursion to Manitoba. We took the regular train to Orillia. Here we boarded the excursion train at 5 o'clock the same evening. The country along the road we then passed over is more adapted for grazing than for grain growing. We passed through a few manufacturing towns such as Gravenhurst, Bracebridge and Huntsville. North Bay with a population of 3000, situated on Lake Nipissing, the capital of Nipissing district is soon reached.

Here we take the main line of the C.P.R. which traverses a comparatively wild region where forests, meadows, lakes and rocky ridges alternate.

The scenery is most striking and in places extremely interesting. There are wide intervals of agricultural land. We reach the town of Sudbury, with a population of 1700, in the vicinity of which the most extensive copper and nickel deposits known in the world are found.

We had to stop over at Cartier, a divisional point, for ten hours to await the repairing of the track.

Thirty-five miles further on we come to Chapleau, population 700, a place of considerable importance, also a divisional point, with railway work shops. It is a bright lively little town. Farming operations on a small scale have lately been started in the surrounding country. From Chapleau to Heron Bay the country is the same. Sixty miles from Heron Bay the line is carried through and around the bold and hard promontories of the north shore of Lake Superior, with deep rock cuttings, viaducts, tunnels constantly occurring.

From Superior West At frequent intervals where the railway is cut out of the face of the cliffs, the lake comes into full view.

No part of this wonderful scenery should be missed by the traveller. The great sweep around Jack Fish Bay is particularly fine. White river, in addition to buildings common to all divisional stations, has yards for resting cattle enroute from the Northwest to the eastern market. Port Arthur, pop. 3500, next reached, is a stirring town. We next come to Fort William, population 3500, formerly a very important Hudson Bay post and the great rendezvous of the hunters, voyageurs and chief factors of the company. The fur house of the old fort now used as an engine house for the great coal docks, and some of the largest elevators in the world overshadow all. There are railway-shops and the usual buildings and sidings incident to a divisional point. It will be remembered by many when Wolsley led an army from Fort Willigen to Fort Garry in April 1870 a distance of 426 miles. From here to and beyond Rat Portage the country is excessively broken and the railway passes through numerous rocky uplifts. The scenery is of the wildest description and deep rockbound lakes are always in sight. Manitoba is reached just after leaving Ingolf at White-mouth where settlement is reaching large proportions. Saw mills again occur and beyond to Red river the country flattens out and gradually assumes the characteristics of the prairie.

At the Capital At east Selkirk the line turns southward following the Red river towards Winnipeg and St. Boniface the river is crossed by a long iron bridge and Winnipeg is reached. The capital of the province with a population of 50,000 was formerly known as Fort Garry. There is nothing left of this romantic fort but the gate to mark where it once stood. Through the kindness of Mr. Jno. McDonald, I had a pleasant drive through the city. It is handsomely built. Superior brick and stone being available. It has an electric street railway, electric lights, parks, hospital, churches, schools, great flour mills and grain elevators and many notable buildings. Here the train yard contains more than forty miles of siding. I spent a pleasant time with Hugh Ure and his mother, well known to many in Eldon. The old lady in her eighty-second year remembers well the early days in Eldon, some seventy years ago. She said: "I never saw so much hardship in Manitoba as I did in Eldon in the early days." Hugh is a fine steady fellow not yet married. He would be a good catch for whoever he would offer his hand. Next morning we boarded the train for Portage la Prairie; though the coun-

try here is apparently as level as a billiard table there is a belt of fertile land west of Winnipeg; but from Rosser as far as Poplar Point—25 miles—the settlement is slight, due to the fact that it is mostly held by speculators and the scattered farmers visible are chiefly devoted to dairying and cattle-breeding.

Meets Eldon People

Beyond Poplar Point farms appear almost continually to Portage Plains. A fine country around Portage where I had to stop over till Wednesday to make connections to Neepawa. At Portage I stayed at the Albion hotel, McLeod Bros. proprietors. This hotel will accommodate 175 guests comfortably. McLeod Bros. have many friends in Eldon and Mariposa who will be glad to hear of their success in Manitoba. The surrounding country here is fine. Here I met Jno. O'Reilly who was clerk for C. L. Baker in Lindsay at one time, now in business of his own. Saturday, the following day, we boarded the train for Neepawa passed through a fine country with good dwellings on every side. We reached Neepawa at 2 p.m. Here I met Jno. Matheson, merchant tailor doing a good business. His father resides in Woodville. I also met Archie and William Brown well known at Grass Hill and Mariposa, Geo. Foster, son of Wm. Foster, Portage Road, Eldon, Jno. McMillan, nephew of Duncan McMillan well known in Eldon. He is farming and doing well. Dan Campbell tailor is well known in Woodville. Jno. Jackson formerly of Pleasant Point, Fenelon is progressing well. Mr. Smale in grocery business well acquainted in Ops and Eldon is getting on well.

Neepawa, population 2100, is a fine town, with substantial brick buildings, including seven churches of different denominations and a fine High school, while nine grain elevators overshadow all the town, with a capacity of 700,000 bushels of wheat in one season. Through the kindness of Mrs. Murchison I got a ride with Duncan Smith to the Smith homestead. Here I received a hearty handshake with Mr. Peter Smith, his wife and family and Mr. Peter Brown. Mr. Smith in his eighty-fifth year is hale and hearty and still remembers well pioneer life in Mariposa on lot 9, con. 14, where he lived for forty-six years. He was 17 years old when he settled in Mariposa and has been in Manitoba for the last 22 years. His family are all settled around him. John, Donald and Katie are married. Neil and Duncan who are not yet married have the cage ready to catch the lucky birds to whom they might offer their hands. Peter who saw service in the rebellion of 1885 is ready to crack a joke or discuss politics in a friendly manner. Tena, the youngest of the family is a young lady of more than ordinary intelligence. Katie who is married to a Mr. Jackson, a well-to-do farmer, lives about a mile from her father's home. The Smith family have about 1920 acres of fine farming land among them. They require ten teams of horses to till their farms in the spring.

This is a fine country to look over. As far as a person can see, fine dwellings, some brick, some frame, others rough cast and log meet his gaze. I visited Malcolm Murchison, his wife, robust son and amiable daughter, well known to many at Islay, Fenelon. Mrs. Murchison is daughter of James Irvin, formerly of Fenelon, but now of Neepawa. When there Mr. Murchison had 1400 bushels of wheat thrashed in his granary which was about half his crop. I had a pleasant drive with Neil Smith through the country twelve miles to the Riding Mts, down Hun's valley where the scenery was grand. This place is settled by Hungarians and Galicians. The present generation of these people do not appear to be of much benefit to that country. I had a pleasant visit with Mr. Donald McFadden, who will be remembered by the older people around Woodville. His good lady is a daughter of the late floure McDonald of Manilla, Mariposa. Mr. McFadden has his farm rented and is living retired.

More Victoria Folks

Land sells in Rosedale district in which Neepawa is situated at: \$9,000 for 320 acres, \$6,000 for 160 acres, \$7,000 for 320 acres, \$3,800 for 200 acres and \$3,500 for 160 acres and some land a quarter section is held at \$5,000 and other places neither love nor money will buy. I now bade all good people around Neepawa good-bye, and took the train for Dauphin. At Plumus I met James McLaughlin well known in Woodville 22 years ago. James has a large farm 1120 acres with stock and implements to work the same. From here, Plumus, the country is more adapted for grazing than grain growing until Dauphin is reached where the appearance of the country is better for grain-growing. On reaching Dauphin I was met by my son at the station. He was glad to see me and I, just as glad

to see him looking as he did, the picture of health and doing well in the harness business. This town, Dauphin, four years ago, was a wheat field; to-day it is a town of 2000 inhabitants, substantially built with brick and frame buildings, some of them four stories high. Five elevators with a capacity of 2500 bushels of wheat a day. A grist mill with a capacity of 80 bushels a day, with two flat grain houses. This was a very busy place when farmers were hauling grain to these elevators I took a ride out to where threshing was going on—quite a sight to see for one who never saw such threshing in Ontario. I got acquainted with Edgar Mark who has a good business, being editor of the Weekly News. He was formerly from Little Britain where his parents now reside. A. L. Bond, doing large business in fruit and confectionery, spent part of his boyhood days in Lindsay, Oakwood and Eden, Mariposa, where he has friends residing. Mr. T. A. Burrows, a member of the local legislature, and a nephew of Dr. Burrows of the town of Lindsay, resides in this town; as does Mr. Wm. McKenzie, son of Alex. McKenzie, well known in Kirkfield.

At the Fair

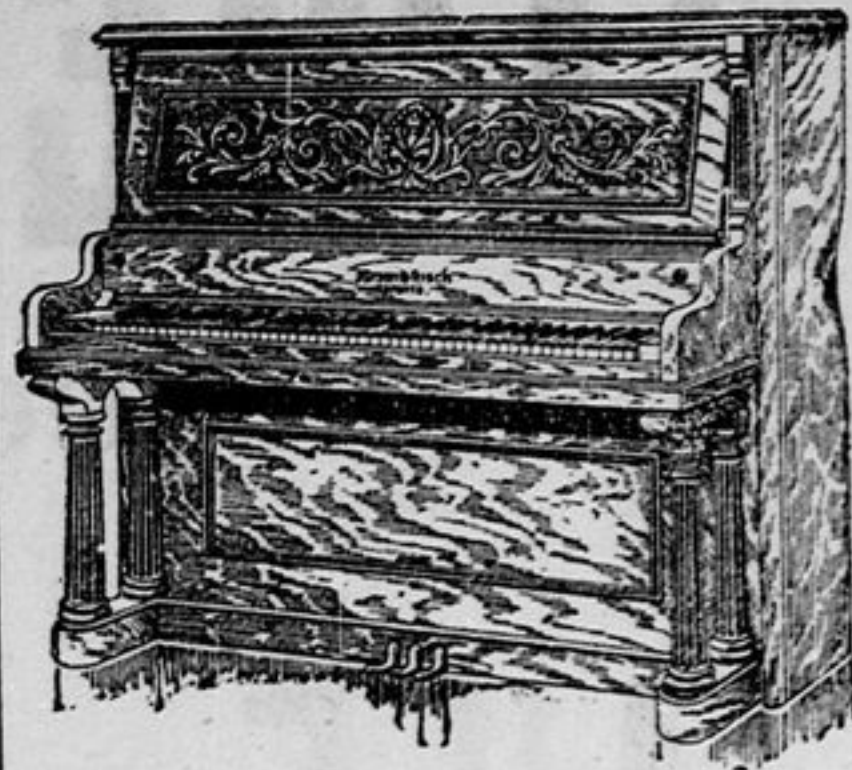
I was present at Dauphin fair and was much pleased with the exhibit at a town just 4 years in existence: horses, heavy draught, carriage, drivers and saddle horses. Speeding in the ring omitted owing to softness of track. Cattle—thoroughbreds Durham, Holstein, Jersey, Devons, male and female. Sheep—Cotswold, Southdowns, Leicesters. Hogs—Tamworth, Berkshire, Chester White, Fowls—Geese, ducks, turkeys, hens of different breeds. In the hall grains of all kinds, potatoes, turnips, mangolds, carrots, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, tomatoes, onions, pumpkins etc., house plants, butter and cheese, fancy work of all descriptions which the Ontario women would find hard to surpass in taste. I took a trip 30 miles up the line to a sale of town lots, where a new town was starting called Gilbert Plains and ten miles further on another town called Fair View. The first lot where there was nothing but the level prairie sold for \$310. Through the kindness of Colin McMillan I got a ride 4 miles next morning. Miss Betsy McMillan a very intelligent young lady drove me to her father's, Colin S. McMillan's place, where I had a hearty handshake with him, his wife and brother John who has a farm there also.

I now visited Mr. Archie Currie, his wife and their two children. I saw Dan Gilchrist, son of Jno. Gilchrist, north of Hartley. Dan who is a hustler is sure to succeed. I paid Charles Cummings, who runs a threshing machine a visit. I had a pleasant talk with his wife and fine family. All those people have many friends and acquaintances in the vicinity of Hartley, Eldon. I bid all these kind friends good-bye; and Mr. Archie Currie kindly drove me to Glanion that night and I remained with Colin McMillan jr., and his amiable sister that night. I might mention here that all those people from Hartley vicinity have commenced on new farms with bright prospects before them. Their farms are situated about 8 miles from Gilbert Plains. The next morning I took the stage 30 miles to Dauphin, passing through a fine country, but rather hilly along the rivers.

I remained in Dauphin a few days and then bid friends and relatives good-bye and began the return trip. On reaching the Portage I met Miss Susan Thornbury, daughter of Mr. Henry Thornbury who lives north of Hartley. She appeared the picture of health. I reached Winnipeg at midnight and next morning boarded the train for Treherne. West of Winnipeg for a considerable distance the land is owned by speculators. Then a fine country is reached and farming is carried on extensively. The fine town of Carman, 1400 population is then reached. It has four elevators with a capacity of 175,000 of wheat a day. The Boyne river runs through the town and passes on through a good agricultural district. From here on to Treherne all along the line, with the exception of a few miles of hay land, the soil is excellent for grain-growing. I reached Treherne at 12 o'clock at noon. During the afternoon I walked around to take in the sights of the town. I soon became acquainted with a tailor named Robt. Moore, an Irishman and a gentleman in every sense of the word. He invited me to dine with him which I did. I next formed the acquaintance of Mrs. Carr, who also welcomed me by having me take tea at her home. I next visited Dr. Staples, brother of Joe and Robt. of Palestine. The hospitality which the Dr. bestowed on me by having me visit his home several times, spend a night with him, and by giving me a long drive through a fine farming country I shall never for-

(Continued on Page 7)

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