

Just as I am closing I
see the name which
must have inspired me. All is
quite clear now. Don't blame me.

J.W. (Tongue) Prop.

Hotel Leland

Portage LaPrairie, Man.
Oct 23, 1897

My dear Martha

You will see by the above that I have arrived at the town of Portage-La-Prairie which years ago was the sort of half way house on the plains west of Winnipeg.

I can quite distinctly recollect the town as Father & I saw it ten years ago but as with all the other places I have visited, in none can be found hardly a trace of that former period. I suppose it necessarily must be the case that a young country rich and fertile must push forward till the laurel wreath of old age and full fruition comes to bedeck its brow. Such is life and one coming from an older town down East cannot but be struck with the vigour and enterprise which seems to be the predominating feature of all the classes of the community. The town itself is rather rambling and as far as I can see most of the business seems to be on one side of the street (the sunny side). The blocks are nearly all of brick and some of the buildings in course of erection are quite fine, particularly one of cut stone, The schools, churches and public buildings would be very creditable to any town in Ontario. The capacity of the people seems to be unlimited if one could judge from the number of grocery stores so many of them large and displaying a fine assortment. The two best stores in the place are the Hudson Bay stores and Garlands the latter being wholesale & retail general Dry Goods & Groceries. They occupy a three double store frontage and about ninety feet depth with three stories high.

Well I suppose Jack will be wondering why I have not answered his letters containing the enclosures which arrived all O.K. To tell you the truth I went out to Mr. Newtons a week ago Monday and only got back to Carberry yesterday afternoon. I got all the letters & papers in one batch three weeks of them and as it was so far from the post office in town I had not a chance to write. I put in nearly the whole evening reading all the home news immensely when I had not heard a line for nearly three weeks.

I had a splendid time whilst at Mr. Newtons and you must know that they could not do enough to make my visit enjoyable. We were out for long drives in the country nearly every day, and in every direction; so you may be sure I have seen the country within a radius of ten miles and more of Carberry pretty thoroughly. We were over at the Neepawa Fair, and there saw all the products of Manitoba in great profusion. We took our gun every where that we went so you may take it for granted that we have dined on Prairie chicken and partridge almost every day. Mr. Newton thinks I am quite a crack shot. I fired at eleven flying birds and killed all at the first barrel in two case shooting one with both right and left and chicken shooting is not so easy as ducks. They fly just as swift as a partridge and very similar. Ask Fred and Cyrus if that is bad for a green horn and a novice.

Mr. Newtons nearest neighbour is a Mr. Caithness a good Scotch name. We were down there for dinner on Thursday. He was until quite a lad a native of old Scotland and went to South Africa before the days of very much railroad development and about the time the Kimberley diamond mines were being put in operation. He was there when the Zulu war was on and the memorable fight at Rourke's drift. It is so interesting to meet with these travellers from the distant

parts. I asked him how he liked the first winter after coming from a climate where he had never seen any snow for years. Like all these hardy Britons he said he did not mind it a bit. He is a handsome chap and his eyes sparkled when he said "Do I look as if I had suffered much." He has made alot of money here and is one of the _____ going Scotchmen. Mrs. Caithness showed me a beautiful collection of nearly all the wild prairie flowers of the country nicely mounted on white cardboard. Some of them are perfect little gems of beauty and give me a faint idea of what the Prairie must have been when the indian roved the plain in solitary grandeur, his pony sinking to the fetlocks and breaking off the delicate petals of a carpet woven by the rain, the sun and the wind, rivalling in color the blue vault above, and displaying in its pattern the tracings of a hand devine. That afternoon Mr. Newton and I drove East from his place as he wanted to show me a Manitoba bush. Talk of your Baltimore hills they simply were not in it at all. It was some of the roughest I have been through yet but at the same time if no fire goes through contains enough firewood to last this community a decade.

On our way we went through a square mile of Hon. Robt. Watsons timber. He bought this some time ago thinking it might be valuable in the future, but alas put not your faith in the people, in his absence I am afraid it is fading away as quickly as the proverbial arab, and his tent, silently yet surely.

Just north of this land lies some of Sir Donald Smiths over which Mr. Newton has the (nominal?) charge, at least he charges and gets in remuneration \$40.00 per year, all his firewood besides any building timber he might regain.

I ran around Carberry yesterday afternoon & evening seeing all my friends and saying au-revoir besides doing some business & setting more in motion, I will enlarge on my arrival home again. I decided not to sell any because I do not see any better investment just at present and for a few years than Manitoba farm lands, if in the midst of a growing & progressive section our land is admitted by all to be some of the very bestest (that is the new superlative) on the plains. I could sell it for \$1,500 and have lots of buyers but of course it is worth more than that by \$100.00. The Mr. Craig you were going to offer some to has bought a half section a mile nearer Carberry but not nearly so good besides being cropped pretty heavily for \$500.00. That will give you some idea of the value of land here. Mr. Newtons half section is five miles again north of our place and he wants at least \$100 hundred for it.

One feature of the prairie I have forgotten to tell you about are the magnificent sunsets. Words indeed fail me in attempting to describe the magnificence of its glory, as it sinks to rest on its western couch. The beautiful rich full coloring, the tints, the shades, the delicate tracery of filmy clouds, goes up to make a scene of such splendor that could a Raphael himself catch but a breath of such glorious shading, he must surely feel as happy as old sol, who his days work being done draws closer the curtains of the night embellished with their fleecy clouds of crimson and gold, and sleeps happy, in the thought that the stars have been lighted, and the fair Luna given her lantern under such a peaceful scene, if summertime, I fancy I could hear the sprinkling of the tiny flowers with dew, and the soft soughing of the wind in trees as the birds are cradled and hushed to sleep beneath the warm sreading wings of their mothers, whilst the firefly flits about the low lying fields and adds a spirit of eerieness to the scene.

But goodness gracious you will be saying what has gotten into the fellow today is he clean daft. I believe he must be. For fear of showing any more alarming symptoms of my serious malady I must call a halt or as Harold says "Dry up".

I am glad to say that the Manitoba air unassisted by medicines has entirely cleared out my cold, and I weighed yesterday 147 lbs. see how that compares with Miss Bakers weight on the office door way the day I went away I forget. I am going to Winnipeg tonight. I don't know a soul here which makes it all little slow. I promised Eliza I would stay a week on my way back.

The last three days have been quite warm summer wather. Everyone with doors and windows wid open & sitting on verandahs. Say Marth do you know Fred said the letter he opened and forwarded was from my girl, now wouldn't that make (you) laugh. As Eddie McNachtan said the dogs name was "You know". With lots of love to all of you not forgetting Ned, Rose and the wee bairns.

I remain

Your loving brother,
Harry.

P.S. Tell Maggie I have not had time to write her a letter as yet but I have not entirely forgotten her. Let her read this one and then she will feel it is a combination to you & herself.

A-Field Family (G-15)

Ninette
Broadlands Farm

e4

overlooking the Pelican Lake, Bone Lake
and Great Pelican Valley
Sunday morning, eleven A.M. Oct. 3/97

Dear Mother,

I left Brandon yesterday morning at 6:30 A.M. pretty early dont you think. I arrived at Hilton about eight and after having breakfast I had a short time to wait as Harry had not called for me.

In Brandon the eve before I met Mr . William Henderson & his mother who came from Plainville. I also met Mr. Hunt who runs dry goods & gents furnishings at Brandon. He used to know John F. well when he was in McLachans. I think he also ran a store on King St. in Toronto. I met also Arthur Hawkey. Harry arrived for me a little after ten & we had a nice drive over the country which is very rolling and hilly. The farm is nicely situated overlooking the places named above and commands a fine view also of Turtle Mountains 40 miles away. I have seen a great amount of game in the distance. At dinner yesterday a tremendous prairie fire went by on the other side of the lake the wind was blowing our way and do you know that at dinner time the sun was so entirely obscured that we had to have a lamp it being pitch dark outside the sun looked like a ball of fire.

Mrs. Lowe was very glad to see me and is looking very well although it does seem not nice to see a woman of her accomplishments in such an outlandish place. I think she would like to go East & see all of the folks. Harry and I are just going over to Belmont a ten mile drive one way.

The shack is a 3 roomed house, the sleeping part being divided off by curtains. How do you think Martha would like to live way out here & keep house $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile to the nearest neighbour.

I must hurry as Harry is waiting. Mrs. Lowe sends her kindest regards to all the Cobourg people.

Harry thinks I look like Cyrus when he saw him last.

With much love to all

I remain

Your ever loving son

Harry Field

A-Field Family (0215)

P.S

Macdonald Hall,
Guelph, Ontario

My dear Murray,

Your letter just rec'd, and I was so glad to hear from you many thanks for the clipping. Needless to say I was the girl who proudly displayed the end of the cigarette. It certainly was a mighty thrilling day to say the least.

When you see it in the movies you will discover me standing next to His Royal Highness. I was just thrilled to death. On his way from our residence over to the boys the Prince was talking to me, of course I thought I was walking on air. I had shaken hand with him before, so when he turned and asked me if I liked dancing I simply looped. I talked with him for a minute or two then the crowd pushed me on.

Just when he was leaving he gave all his cigarettes away he handed out all he had to the girls on the left side of the car. I was standing with the mob on the right side of the car. What do you suppose he did? Reached right over the heads of those on the right side and handed me his last fag, I was so thrilled I didn't know whether I was coming or going.

But the best came yesterday when I got my mail there was a big box containing 100 cigarettes from the prince. They were his own private brand. Those with the three plumes. I'm just so excited I can hardly exist. You are probably bored hearing only news of the Prince but I will probably have recovered by the next time I write.

Until then,

Much love,

Your little pal,

Lenah.

P.S. Do write soon, Please remember me to everyone. L.

Macdonald Hall,
Guelph, Ont.

My dearest Mother,

Well the excitement is over. The Prince was here yesterday and it certainly was terrifically exciting.

He arrived at twelve thirty just in time for lunch. The girls were all at the front windows and just as he was coming up the walk we sang "Jonnie's in Town" which is his favorite song. There were about umpteen reporters movie men, and official photographers, who took the Prince's picture as he entered. After having lunch with us in the big dining room we all assembled in the gym, which is on the second floor. The Prince came in and shook hands with all of us, I was the second one honored. We were all simply thrilled to death as he was going down the steps at the front door the photographers and movie men again got busy. They ask the Prince to remain on the steps a minute and the girls all crowded around. And my dear "I" was standing beside his Royal Highness. So when the movie of his tour through Canada is shown when it comes to his Guelph visit just look for this child and you can't miss the Prince of Wales.

On the way from our residence over to the boys Gym, we were singing Jonnie's in Town the movie men got in front and took a movie of us singing, I was in the front ranks. Halfway across the campus I found myself walking on the grass just opposite the Prince so he said to me - "Do you like dancing?" I said "Yes I love it", he said "Do you do very much of it here?" I said we usually dance for a while after supper in the gym," he said, "that's great", and then the crowd shoved me on (the big brutes). Later on one of the official photographers said to me "Have you any souvenirs," and I told him "yes". He asked to see it & I produced the end of a cigarette which the Prince had just thrown away. The photographer ask me to hold it up & my dear he took my picture holding the cigarette. Just as the Prince was getting in the car to leave the boys shouted all together. We want a holiday so the adorable Prince arranged for it.

When he was seated in the car some of the girls who were gathered around the car ask him for cigarettes for souvenirs. He produced his case and gave all the girls one on that side of the car. I was standing in a mob on the other side he only had one cigarette left so what do you suppose he did? Simply reached over all the girls close to the car and handed his last cigarette to me. Was I Thrilled?! I simply looped.

To end the tale this morning I went in for my mail what should there be in my box but a package with just these words From The Royal Train. On opening I discovered a huge box of cigarettes. 100 in a box, each cig. is marked with the Prince of Wales own private crest that is the three plumes I feel as though I were in 7th heaven. Its getting late so must close. Do write soon and tell me the news.

Heaps of love your own little daughter

Lenah

P.S. For heavens sakes don't put this in the paper.