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"DAN" MCKENZIE

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A lifetime of service and devotion to his community, his fellows and his family was ended on Friday night, November 4th, when death claimed Donald "Dan" McKenzie, of The Advocate, in his 87th year. Although he had been in failing health for some months, he had remained active, and his passing came quickly and as a shock to those who were closely acquainted with him.

For 57 years Dan McKenzie had published and edited The Advocate. Born October 15th, 1863, at Branchton, Ontario, near Galt, a son of Alexander and Isobel McKenzie, he was the eldest in a family of eleven brothers and sisters. His grandparents, born in Scotland, had emigrated to New York State, and came to Canada with the United Empire Loyalists, settling on farms near Galt.

Shortly after his birth Mr. McKenzie's parents moved to Sombra Township, on the St. Clair River. When he was four years old, the family removed to the 4th concession of Elderslie Township, and a year later to the 2nd concession, and he first attended school in S. S. No. 2 Elderslie. In the fall of 1869 the family came to Paisley, where the subject of this sketch attended the original brick schoolhouse on Queen Street south, and later the four-room school erected in 1872. For years his father, Alexander McKenzie, was school caretaker. The task of providing for the growing family presented problems. So, when the publisher of The Advocate proposed to his parents that Dan McKenzie enter the printing trade, the latter's school days ended and he entered upon his lifetime's work. He started his duties as a 'printer's devil' at the age of 14, and at a wage of 50 cents a week. With pride, Dan McKenzie has related how, when his father, mother and one sister lay seriously ill for weeks with typhoid fever, he was able to provide for the family. His duties in the little shop that housed The Advocate included manipulating the roller on the hand press and delivering the papers to subscribers in town.

In the winter of 1880 Dan McKenzie left Paisley to take employment at Ingersoll. En route to that town he stopped over at Galt. There a former associate in The Advocate offered him one dollar a week more than he was to receive at Ingersoll, and he joined the staff of the Galt Reformer. Throughout his life he regarded this move as a regrettable breach of contract or of faith. With his added experience in 1882 he moved to Toronto, where he worked in the old Presbyterian publishing house. But the sanitary conditions of the city in that era undermined his health, and he returned to The Advocate. Then, as a partner with Robert Munro, principal of Paisley schools, he purchased The Waterloo Chronicle, but soon they sold out to take over The Port Elgin Times. He remained in the lakeshore village for four years, and in 1892 acquired ownership of The Paisley Advocate.

Then began a career unique in the annals of weekly journalism in Canada. For the ensuing 57 years of his life, Dan McKenzie unobtrusively exerted upon the community served by his pen and his newspaper a tremendous influence for good and advancement. If not by the brilliance of his writings, then by the clarity of his thought and steadfastness of purpose he was able to impress his reading public with the virtues and advantages of every worthy cause or institution. Likewise, he felt it his duty to criticise the unworthy. Unequivocally he opposed the liquor traffic. Editorially, he held to a political independence, catering to no party, but supporting legislation he believed to be in the people's best interests.

Chronicling the events of the community for more than half a century, he was very closely in touch with the history of the district and the daily lives of its citizens, and throughout his lifetime took a personal interest in the ebb and tide of the surging stream of life about him. As a result, he was a reliable authority on the lore of Bruce County generally, and of the Paisley district in particular. The minor details and the momentous events alike of local history he knew intimately. He had retained interest in and contact with a legion of former residents who had removed to distant places.

Out of this bond of interest which stretched around the continent grew the great Bruce County Old Boys' and Girls' Re-

(Continued on page 4)