

**MEMORIES OF
PIONEER LIFE IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

By
FLORENCE GOODFELLOW

**A Short History
of the
Agassiz Family**

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Amated by Susan Medkiff - Anderson

leaves. Mother had to take all of the fat which the men had cut off the meat and cut it into very small pieces to render down into lard. It was always frozen so hard that it often had to be sawed, and poor Mother's hands were stiff with cold. The heads had to be cooked down to make head cheese or brawn. That was my part of the performance. An Indian woman with her baby on her back would walk across the river on the ice every Monday morning to do the washing. They did not seem to mind it at all. They got two meals and fifty cents and often a piece of liver or kidney. Sometimes her husband would come and shoot a couple of grouse which was a great treat after unlimited salt pork and salmon. My mother taught all of the women to knit and bake bread. The only money they ever saw was what they got from us for washing, shooting, catching salmon, and working in the fields. I don't know what we would have done without them. The Indian village of Cheam was on the other side of the river and that is where Bill Bristol, the express and mail carrier, always left our mail. After several years there was a telegraph office there also.

That first winter, as I have already mentioned, was terribly cold, and it was very late before the ice broke up. We were entirely out of flour and coal oil. We had to grind wheat in a tiny pepper mill screwed to the wall and we made candles from beeswax and tallow. We had candle molds which we threaded with cotton wick and tied at the ends to keep the hot tallow from running out at the blunt end. We put the looped wick over sticks and when they were cold and hard we cut the knots off and pulled the candles out. When burning the wicks would grow long and unsightly and had to be constantly snuffed, for which we had a pretty pair of silver snuffers standing in a silver tray which my sisters still have.

The wolves used to circle around the house at night and their blood-curdling howls would frighten the little ones and often wake them up at night screaming. They often struck terror into my heart also; I really never heard those terrible howls without cringing. During the winter poor James cut his hand and it became badly infected. Mama poulticed it with flaxseed and everything she could think of but it got worse and worse. Then Father remembered he had heard of someone in the wilderness curing a bad infection by binding on the wound a piece of deerskin, so he killed a lamb and bound the raw part of the skin on the wound. It had been on only a short time when James screamed and fainted. When Mama reached him she found the abscess had

broken, and discharged frightfully. After that it healed nicely.

We had never experienced a blizzard before that winter. The cold blast came down through a gap in the mountain. It was next to impossible to stand against it. It piled the snow in tremendous drifts. It would have been very exciting if it were not that my brothers had to struggle against it in their outdoor tasks, feeding the stock and milking the cows. We all felt happy when the first spring rains came, melting the snow and then it was not long until the beautiful wild flowers sprang up on mountainside and in the valley. My mother laid out a nice vegetable garden after the land had been grubbed and plowed. The soil was very rich and it was not long before we had all sorts of green vegetables. Spring brought lots of work, the men plowing and sowing, and Mother with the help of Jinny and me did the housework, cooked, made butter, looked after the garden and tended the chickens. There was no more play except for the little ones. My father had a high picket fence built around the house to keep the children safe.

We were up at five every morning. My brothers milked the cows while we got breakfast; they taking theirs with the men in the kitchen; Father, Mother and we girls having ours in the dining room. So the days went on until the hot weather melted the snow from the mountains, swelling the Fraser to overflowing and filling all the sloughs that ran here and there through the valley, making it quite difficult to get about. About the first of July it began to subside and then came the plague of mosquitoes. It is impossible for anyone who has not had experience with them to imagine the torture they were. We did not have the wire screening they have now. We had to tack mosquito netting over the windows and burn smudges in the rooms and even then our faces, hands and legs were swelled out of shape. The poor children would scratch them until they were raw.

During the summer Bishop Hills sent a clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Cave,* to baptize the baby, Eleanor Maud, then eight months old. During the ceremony she entangled her little fingers in his long beard to the great amusement of the children, but Mr. Cave said he was quite used to it, as most of the children he baptized were old enough to pull it. His wife was a sister of Mr. Dewdney's. They had no children and wanted to adopt little Minnie, who was five years old and a very bright and chatty little person.

The nights were worse than the days with mosquitoes. They had been known to kill calves. Sometimes they were so thick

* J. Cace Brown Cave.

that it was difficult to breathe without getting them in your mouth or nose. This would last until the middle of September. Since this time the buiding of dykes and clearing of the land has almost done away with the pests.

That summer my poor parents had much more than mosquitoes to worry them as the man Maxwell's wages had fallen very much in arrears, and he held a mortgage covering farm stock and everything. My mother often said what a nightmare it was to her. Then we received a box of books from an Uncle James (an uncle of my father's) a retired naval captain. In the box was Mueller's "Life of Trust" and she was so impressed with it that she began to pray with more faith than ever, and one day my father went to the steamer landing to get the mail and on his return he tapped on the dining room window and beckoned Mother to come out and showed her a letter he just received from Uncle James enclosing a draft for three hundred pounds sterling, which was just a little more than was owed on the mortgage. You can imagine the joy and thankfulness of my parents. Father had never dreamt of getting anything from Uncle James as he was the one with the least money of our relatives. He was always a good and generous man.

After Maxwell had been paid off and had taken up a place of his own, Father hired a man to weatherboard the outside of the house, had lining and paper inside, making it much more comfortable for the winter.

They then arranged for me to go to Angela college in Victoria. I was to teach the youngest class in payment for my tuition. The fall term opened in September. Mother went to Yale to get me some clothes. She was taken to the landing in the oxsled to wait for the steamer. The steamer always came on Monday and Friday but erratic as to the hour, as they had to make many landings taking on and putting off freight. There were no docks or wharfs. The boat just ran up to the bank and men ran a plank out for the passengers to walk on. Mother was very much pleased when she went on board to find Mr. O'Reilly and several friends which made her trip very pleasant. They were the first white faces she had seen since leaving Hope. When she reached home she said, "I did have such a delightful time. I don't think I stopped talking from the time I stepped on board until I reached Yale."

I was having a birthday (my fourteenth) before I left. so we four elder children climbed a small mountain near the house to celebrate with a picnic. We told our parents we would light a fire

bed at an early hour. We wakened in the morning with our faces frightfully swelled and eyes almost closed from mosquito bites. It was bad enough for the older ones, but the poor tiny ones suffered dreadfully. Fortunately it was September, and almost the end of the season.

It took poor Mama some time to get order out of chaos, as the men were so busy in the harvest fields they could give her no assistance. We had to carry the clothes to the slough to wash them and carry all the water for use in the house. Nelly was born in October. A horrid little French woman came from Yale to take care of poor Mama, she and her husband ran a saloon in Yale. She was furious because the baby did not arrive for three days after she did and proclaimed aloud all the good times she was missing in Yale, and went home when the baby was only five days old. We children were thankful to get her out of the house.

That was a terrible winter. The first frost cracked the clay that was stopping the chinks between the logs and the terrible blizzards from the north whistled through the house. The snow blew through and covered beds, floor and everything upstairs. All beds were brought down to the living room and sacks nailed all over the room to keep out the snow. We all yearned to mind the baby for that task meant the warmest corner by the stove. The snow drifted into the kitchen. We had to keep our heads and shoulders wrapped to protect them. The water that splashed from the dishpan froze on the table. The bread sponge set by the stove to rise, would freeze on one side and scorch on the other. Fortunately the well had been dug before the cold weather started. It was very primitive, a square box put around the top, a round hole in the box through which a stout rope was drawn and knotted, the other end fastened to a metal bucket and the water was drawn up hand over hand. We kept two buckets on a bench in the kitchen full of water. When I was in charge of the kitchen I always kept one eye on these buckets and the other out of the window and when the water began to get low I would hail an Indian or Chinaman and present him the buckets to be refilled.

At the beginning of winter there were always a lot of pigs to be butchered. The man Maxwell understood all about butchering; the hams and bacon were divided and salted and a large smoke house built when they were ready to be smoked. They were hung up in the roof of the smoke house and a heavy smoke made by kindling a fire and keeping it half smothered with dampened

not, for whatever she had to go through, she never lost her sense of humor. She had given an old Indian three of her old hats. He was running about looking for a place to put them. She caught them from his hand and clapped them one on top of the other on his head, to the great amusement of the other Indians who shouted with laughter. Of course, the whole Indian village was standing about, watching proceedings. Father, who was an expert either in a canoe or a boat, took command. He was in the stern of one boat and an Indian in the other, two squaws paddling in the bows. The other Indians helped where necessary. How we ever kept the children from falling overboard I do not know. Dick was only two years old, and determined to cast himself into the foaming waters. He strongly resented being held by his skirts or any other way. Except for his desire to jump overboard it was a most thrilling adventure. The distance was only twenty miles but rapids all the way. I am sure dear Mother must have breathed a sigh of thankfulness when we reached the first landing at the mouth of the big slough.

After reaching the Big Slough landing, we had to disembark and separate the canoes as the raft was much too unwieldy to take up the slough. The bulk of the cargo was piled on the bank and the family and immediate necessities were taken to the second landing. As we landed we could see the beautiful fields of yellow grain stretched out in front of us, the men all busily reaping. Maxwell waved his cap and shouted, "Welcome to Ferny Coombe, Mrs. Agassiz!" and brought Indians and Chinamen to help us unload. Arthur, who was helping on the farm, rushed to meet us, and flung his arm around Mama in great excitement.

It was the first time Mama or the rest of us had seen the place and we were delighted with it, a beautiful valley surrounded by mountains gradually disappearing to the south. The house was built of logs, a story and a half high. The front door opened into a good sized living room (the present dining room) with two bedrooms opening off it and stairs leading out of the living room, and a large kitchen leanto at the back. Our parents and brothers occupied the downstairs bedrooms and the girls the large upstairs. It was all very rough and unfinished, with carpenter's tables, tools and sawdust still all over the floor. We all set to work sweeping and cleaning up. The stoves were put up, beds made, and children fed and put to bed. The water had to be carried from the slough as there was no well and the men were too busy with the harvest to dig one. Everyone was glad to go to

to show them how far up we had got. Arthur gathered a few sticks and put a match to it and it seemed to me that in about half a minute the whole mountainside was in flames. We had a hard time getting down alive, Arthur took the hands of the two youngest and I followed, racing over rocks and boulders until we finally reached safety at the bottom. My father and mother were relieved to see us. There was a fire raging on the other side of the river. We never dreamed that our little blaze would set our own side on fire.

Our parents used to have prayers every evening and they gave special thanks for our deliverance. Poor Arthur couldn't sleep that night. He would start up screaming, "That fire I started!" My father was out most of the night fighting it with the Indians and Chinamen. He had a barn full of hay and grain on the bank of the river, already sold, and waiting to be shipped to Yale. They had to plow all around it for some distance and back fire. They fortunately saved the barn.

Just before I left for Victoria there was a heavy rain which put out most of the fires but for several days the smoke and fog was so dense that we would get lost crossing the field. When the day arrived for me to leave I was frantically excited. Father accompanied me to Victoria. We walked from the dock to Angela college, the name of the school. It had a high board fence all around it. Miss Pemberton, the principal, was a frail and delicate little woman, very kind and gentle, and I liked her very much. I had a happy time the few months I was there. There were girls from all parts of the country. There were two Russian girls from Alaska, the daughter of the then Governor, two delightful American girls, Ione and Lue Bangor(?) daughters of an American army chaplain. The youngest one, Lue, almost at once became my greatest chum and room-mate. I had at that time very long and luxuriant hair, only six inches from the floor. Long hair was thought a lot of in those days. When I arrived, Miss Pemberton took me to my room to tidy up for dinner. She told me just to brush my hair out and leave it hanging down. All of my sisters had a lot of hair and having known very few other girls, I was quite unprepared for the surprised exclamations that greeted me, and every girl made an excuse to pass my chair and lift my hair as it lay several inches on the floor around me. This will seem strange to young people of this day and age, who far prefer short hair. I must say mine was a good deal of a nuisance at times. It was always tumbling down at the most inconvenient

times, playing prisoner's base and running games like that. We used to ride a great deal on the farm and it did not matter how tightly I tied and pinned it, as soon as we stretched into a good gallop, down it came all over the back of the horse.

The boarders at school were all a very sweet lot of girls and were kindness personified. They were all a long way from their own homes and I have no doubt had suffered a lot from homesickness. I was very happy and contented. On Friday evenings we used to dance or get up little plays and I was always very much pleased because I was asked to take part in them. I was in the highest class in all English studies and second in French. There were two other girls in the class of my age, the others were all much older, up to seventeen. They would all crowd into my room after we were supposed to be in bed while I told them stories from the Waverly novels, Dickens, Arabian Nights, etc. I don't think any of them had read very much for they always seemed so thrilled with the stories I told them.

One morning Miss Pemberton said, "I seem to hear flutterings and flittings about the halls in the night. I wonder if any one else hears them."

We all laughed rather guiltily, I am afraid, and the others told her all about it, and begged her to let it go on.

"If you only knew, Miss Pemberton, how we love it, and it is really quite educational."

Miss Pemberton laughed, and said if they would promise not to stay more than an hour and to wrap up well she would not stop it.

During the Christmas holidays some friends of my parents asked me to stay with them and I was asked to all of the Christmas festivities. The greatest event for the young people was a large Twelfth Night Ball at Government House. Oh, the wonderful joy of it! There were two men-of-war at Esquimalt and crowds of middies. My friends lived just over the hedge from Government House, their name was Stallschmidts, English people with two daughters of my age. We all went to the ball. I am afraid the poor young boys of the town did not have a very good time as the naughty girls had eyes for nothing but brass buttons that night. I was almost delirious with joy. It seemed as if it must be a dream. I went to so many parties through the holidays. It was a delight to write home and tell all about it. The postage was twenty-five cents a letter. I wrote once a week.

Poor Miss Pemberton was growing weaker and thinner, we

his discharge and was looking for a position. Poor mother used to say it took her years to undo the harm he did in the way of pronunciation. He used to drill us children, line us all up, and yelling, "Chest out, belly in. March."

In Victoria, Bishop Hills had started a boys' school and one for girls. All of the teachers in the boys' school were college men, the principal being a clergyman, the Rev. Charles Woods, a very charming and worthy man. The boys' school was called the Collegiate school, and the girls' Angela College. The principal of the latter was a Miss Pemberton, a very highly educated and competent woman with an excellent staff of teachers.

The money my father received in place of the Victoria appointment paid for the farm and built a house of logs, and enabled him to buy out one of the men living on the place. This man could not get on with the other man and fought with everyone. He retired to his own side of the fence when we went to the farm and was a thorn in the flesh for many years. From the farm my brother Arthur was sent to school in Victoria for a year, winning every prize. Everyone who met him was astonished at his cleverness but he was terribly homesick and would remain no longer.

While we were still at Hope, Father engaged a man named Maxwell to take charge of the farm, paying him \$60 a month, and a Chinese boy \$10 to help him, and stocked the place with cows and oxen and a few horses. Maxwell was supposed to be an authority on houses, and Mother and the children were left at Hope until the house was built. This was mere supposition as we nearly perished with cold the first winter. I can never forget our move from Hope. The Pringles had gone to England and we and the Landvoights were the only families left. My father wanted to ship our belongings by boat but the captain asked such an exorbitant price that he decided to take us all down on a raft. It is hard to get anyone to believe us when we tell about it. It certainly seems like a foolhardy thing now. Father said, "Captain Irving thinks he has me in his power and can force me to pay his price."

He therefore hired two large Indian canoes, fastened them about ten feet apart and fastened planks across from one to the other, and loaded household belongings, chickens, children—everything on it. We were all very excited, as of course, were the Indians. Mother had given them all the trash that was left, to their great joy. My mother always said that Father did not know the meaning of the word "fear" and I am quite sure *she* did

to get some good farming land, somewhere in the Fraser valley to locate. The government gave him his old position at Hope. He went there because it was much closer to the district in which he was trying to find suitable land. So we all went back to Hope, having been away two years, to find it a much changed place and almost deserted. The only people of our acquaintance still there Mr. Mr. and Mrs. Pringle and Mr. and Mrs. Landvoight, and the Pringles were preparing to leave for England as they wished to have their children properly educated.

Leaving us in Hope, Father and a friend went exploring for land. They took a canoe and an Indian for a guide. Mr. Pringle had taken up a large tract in the name of all his children—a beautiful tract covered with prairie grass with clumps of trees here and there about it like a lovely park, on which he had a family living to hold it for him. He told my father of another place near his of which he had heard. The Indians knew how to reach it and took my father down the river in a canoe then up a small hill where he had a wonderful view of the valley. My father was so enchanted with it that he lost no time filing papers on it. He then hired two men to work and put the proper amount of improvement on it. A man was allowed to file on 150 acres to begin with and when he had proved up on that he had the option of purchasing 300 more at a dollar an acre for the whole tract. These men, Walker and Taylor, by name, each took up land adjoining for themselves at each end of ours, and built log cabins on the boundary lines, father putting up all the money required. (Our grandfather died while we were in Hope the first time, but beyond a couple of hundred pounds to each of his sons he left everything to his wife and daughter.)

After the Cariboo road was finished the government decided to close the office at Hope and offered my father the position of warden at the penitentiary at Victoria at a much better salary, but he had set his heart on taking up land and accepted a sum of money instead. (The man who got the position of warden was knighted and pensioned upon his retirement.)

My dear mother was greatly disappointed not to go to Victoria, as her children's education was her one thought, and there were excellent schools there even at that early date. The last few months we were in Yale my mother, after much agitating, got up a petition to the government to find a good teacher for Yale. They sent a married man who had been trained as a teacher and was in the army to teach the soldiers' children, but had got

could hear her coughing all night long. She was in the last stages of tuberculosis, and was preparing to go to the south of France. Doctors did not know that it was catching. In fact, they knew very little about it and thought it was entirely hereditary. Miss Pemberton always kissed us night and morning. Both of the Raynor girls died of it several years afterwards, also two young girls from Nanaimo. There may have been many others of whom I never heard.

In March I was recalled home. Poor Mama was going to have another baby and was far from well and with all the spring work, dairy, garden and chickens, not to speak of housework and cooking, she could not do without my help. I went home about the end of March as soon as the river opened. A number of my schoolmates walked to the boat to see me off and bought a large bag of our favorite cookies to console me. All the girls seemed very much grieved at parting with me and I missed them very much. Many are still my lifelong friends. I was put in charge of a Mr. Charles Jones, a young banker, who was crossing to Westminster, where my mother met me and took me home.

A month later Miss Pemberton went to France, but died a few days after her arrival.* She was a very sweet, lovable woman and the scholars all adored her.

Mother and my brothers and sisters were all happy to have me with them again and I had so much to tell them about all the friends I had made and the wonders of the city, the men-of-war and all of my gay experiences. Of course I went home to gruelling hard work which was shared by all, even the tiny ones who could pick up chips to start the fire or hold a dishtowel. I taught the little ones now, most of my school friends wrote to me, and Mother encouraged me to write to them. Their letters were always a great pleasure to both my sister Jinny and me.

I have not mentioned the boxes we used to get from England. Our English grandmother and aunts used to shop for us and send us presents as well. Especially if any of the family died we used to get lots of old clothes and other things the rest of the family did not want. There was one marvelous box, in which were two side saddles for Jinny and me. Before that we had only had an old Mexican saddle and as women did not ride astride in those days it was very difficult to stick on it, so we got no end of fun out of our side saddles and we all learned to ride. My mother

* There seems to be a discrepancy in dates here. Miss Pendleton left Victoria in 1868 and died in 1870.

was a great believer in fresh air, and it mattered not what there was to do we had to spend an hour every day in the open air, working in the garden, walking or riding. When we rode, a good part of the hour was spent in catching our horses. The children always received lots of dolls and toys and story books in the boxes.

That September in the middle of harvest, and on my fifteenth birthday, my sister Lue was born. Mother was not able to get a nurse. An Indian woman had to take the baby and poor Mama attended to it herself, and I had to bathe and dress the poor little one and care for my mother who was very ill. There were twenty men in the harvest field to be cooked for, bread baked, twenty pounds of butter to be churned every other day, a large flock of chickens to be looked after besides the housework and the children to be taken care of. Jinny was only thirteen but took entire charge of the chickens, children and room work. I took care of Mama and baby, cooking, baking and dairy. My brothers did the milking. James was only eleven. Jinny helped with the milk pans and buckets, Minnie and Connie, six and seven, dried dishes. It was a long time before dear Mother was strong again. It must have been terrible for her, she had always tried to spare us as much as possible, but she had come to a place where the best help she could give was to keep perfectly quiet and as cheerful as possible.

But it was a good lesson for me. Dear Jinny was always unselfish and bright and gay, but I was impatient and inclined to be rebellious at our hard lot. I found out then that it was the dear mother who was bearing the heaviest burden and was always sweet and uncomplaining, and that she was the one who had to be watched over and loved, she who had always been sheltered, loved and admired, to be living such a desperately lonely, poverty-stricken life, never the sight of a white face beyond her family from one year's end to the other, and her one thought was to get the best out of it all for her children.

Every day she and Father held family prayers morning and evening, and on Sunday morning the regular church service, Mother reading a sermon written by some brilliant divine. I have often heard some wayfarer, stopping over night, say he had heard "Mrs. Agassiz preach a better sermon than he had ever heard at church." She tried to instill us with character and principles, also she would take time to drill us to stand and walk correctly. Many are the hours I have spent manipulating a back

occurred to them that the people would be offended, until a delegation from the town called on them and gave them a formal invitation. And when they mentioned their little babies as an excuse, they were assured that there would be a large room with beds for the babies. So the older children were all put to bed, and the three families, the Charles, Saunders, and Father and Mother assembled at our house, the three mothers in lovely evening gowns, and the babies in red flannel nighties. Each father picked up a baby and they all started for the dance.

Everything went along very nicely and they were all enjoying themselves, when suddenly there were wild screams from the babies' room, which was a large one opening off the ballroom, with a long bed built down all one side of it, covered with mattresses and blankets, the babies being put to sleep one after the other down the length of it.

Of course every father and mother rushed toward the room when a large dog burst through the door, followed by an irate father with a baby in his arms. He aimed a kick at the dog, but unfortunately missed him, but he and the baby went sprawling. Somebody's pet dog had followed them to the dance and got into bed beside his own baby, waking up the one next to it. However, peace was soon restored and the dance went merrily on.

After this there were many changes in Yale. Mr. Saunders and family were sent up to Lillooet, Mr. and Mrs. Charles to Kamloops, and Mr. Joe McKay, a Hudson's Bay Company factor, came to Yale with his family to take Mr. Charles' place.

There was a very nice church and rectory built and the Rev. Mr. Good took charge. He had a large family. The Bank of British North America started a branch bank with Mr. Henderson as manager, and Mr. Leigh as accountant. So you can see that the little town of Yale was growing into quite a place.

Shortly before we left Yale there was a very bad fire, which nearly wiped out the town, leaving only one brick store, belonging to the Oppenheims. It was at night. All the women and children came flocking up to our house on the hill. Mama gave them tea and cocoa and made up beds for the children on the floor.

It was not long before it was built up again. The houses were very cheaply constructed in those days, just boards and cotton lined, no plaster. There were only two houses in town that were plastered; the Hudson's Bay house and the rectory.

At this time Father resigned his position at Yale as he wished

stabled at the Frenchman's, and that good man started to put the harness on him. The brute of an animal let out at him with both hind legs, sending him flying. Frenchy clasped himself around the middle, yelling, "Oh, my bellee, my bellee." Father rushed over to him and picked him up, took him into the bar and gave him a couple of stiff drinks. In a few minutes he was all right again. Father told Mama to take us down the road, while he was hitching the horse to the wagon, and said he would pick us up shortly. We walked on and on, Mama carrying the baby. The sky became overcast and the rain came down in torrents. When we had gone about two miles Father and Arthur caught up with us, but that brute of a horse had decided to say at the Frenchman's. He had behaved like a mad thing, thrashing out with his legs, and wouldn't let anyone come near him. Father, thinking that he would probably kick the wagon to pieces even if he got him hitched, decided to leave him there all night and let his master get him in the morning. He picked up little Connie, and we all trudged along in the soaking rain until we came to the toll-gate. The gate-keeper and his wife were very kind and took us in. The bright, cheerful fire warmed and dried us. There were a number of delicious looking pies standing on the table which I am afraid we children eyed hungrily, for the kind woman gave us each a large piece. Dried and rested we started off again in the dark and in a little while arrived home.

Mr. and Mrs. William Charles had come from Hope to live in Yale. The Company had built them a very nice house, close to ours.

Both the Hudson's Bay house and store at Hope were built of logs and were very large. The employees' houses were also built of logs but were much smaller. They formed a large square and had at one time been surrounded by a palisade, very tall and strong. Most of it had been used for firewood before our arrival, but there was enough left at the back to look most imposing and thrilling to the children. There must have been a battle with the Indians there at some time as the palisades were full of small bullets which we used to pick out with a knife, but even old Yates,* the oldest of Hudson Bay employees, and quite a character, declared he had never heard of one, and he had lived at the fort with his Indian wife for many years.

The people of Yale often had dances, but none of the ladies on the hill above the town had ever attended them. It had never

* William Yates.

board with a book on my head, or coming quietly in the door closing it gently behind me, with a smile on my face to greet the imagined company. She trained us even to make a court curtsy which was considered part of every lady's education. Of course we were rather inclined to make a joke of the latter performance. Mother would laugh with us but insisted that it be done properly and it certainly stood us in good stead. I was presented to the Governor General and his wife, Lord and Lady Dufferin, when they visited in Victoria many years later. Arthur and my sisters, Minnie and Connie, were presented to King George and Queen Mary when they were Prince and Princess of Wales. The Princess shook hands with Arthur.

My brothers worked desperately hard, they were so young and worked from 5 A. M. to 6 P. M. and often much later when there was a press of work. Of course our father worked hard also but he was a large and very powerful man, six feet two inches in height and weighed over 250 pounds. Arthur was always small and delicate looking for his age. One day Father went into one of the barns and was shocked to find poor Arthur lying on the hay, sobbing bitterly. Father asked him what was the matter. Arthur said he thought he must be very ill, that he felt so weak and tired all the time, and that he was ashamed to cry but he could not help it. Father took him in to Mother and they decided to send him to Victoria to see a doctor. We all had a standing invitation to stay with Mrs. Charles when we went to town, so the next morning Arthur went out with his gun for two hours and shot four brace of grouse which he took to Mrs. Charles. He went to see the doctor, dear old Dr. Helmicken (?) the Hudson's Bay Company doctor, and very clever. He told Mrs. Charles that the boy was very much run down and overworked and needed a change and rest, so Mrs. Charles made him stay with them for two weeks. He went about and saw his old classmates and teachers and enjoyed himself very much, and came home looking very much better. He was only seventeen at this time and James eleven. Arthur could do a man's work and James could drive the oxen.

All of the work was done by hand, the hay and the grain were cut with a scythe. The man cutting walked up and down the field swinging the scythe from morning till night, then it had to be raked into windrows and tied in bundles, the oxsled following to gather it up, then piled in the barns. The barn floor was swept clean and the sheaves of grain spread over it a few sheaves at a

time and a man stood on each side with a flail (which consisted of two short heavy poles fastened together with leather thongs). The men would hold one end of the flail, flinging the other round and round their heads bringing it down on the grain with great force. They did this turn about until they thought the grain was all threshed out of the straw, then they would take pitchforks and toss and shake the straw and throw it to one side, when all the grain had been separated from the straw. It had then to be gleaned from the chaff, which is the outside shell of the grain. For this they had trays made of coarse wire into which the grain was gradually poured and shaken back and forth while another man turned a fan made of sheets of cotton nailed on wings of wood to blow the chaff away. You can imagine it was a long and arduous task, the barley especially, which has long and sharp stickers which tore their hands, and got into their underwear, scratching and tormenting them cruelly. The barley was in much demand for feeding the horses that were used on the Cariboo road.

All of our produce was sold in Yale, eggs, butter, hay, grain, and fruit, and a great deal of it was paid for in goods of kinds. My father used to go to Yale to attend to all of the buying and selling; the things he sometimes brought home would have been laughable if they had not been so tragic. Once he brought home a fifty-pound barrel of currants, all wormy, and once an enormous case of allspice. Everything we ate was flavoured with allspice until we hated the name; and again a large bolt of cotton print, a dull brick red with a white polka dot with a black spot in the center. I was the seamstress for the family and I had to make dresses out of that hideous stuff for all of my small sisters, myself and Jinny, it seemed to me, for years and years. I used to be sorely tempted to throw it all in the fire.

Of course Yale was on the very edge of civilization and all the stock in trade was solely to attract the eye of the Indians.

Old Walker, the man who owned a farm adjoining ours, one of the men who put the necessary work on ours to hold it before we went on it, had, up to this time given us little trouble. He was absolutely without equipment of any kind and borrowed everything from us. Whenever he was in trouble of any kind he came to my father to help him. Mama went to him if he was ill and was always sending him a cake or pie. He was always, even at his best, surly and bad-tempered. As he began to make some money he began to be most disagreeable. Our only road to the

frozen snow on the level for a long distance, sometimes hitting a hidden rock and upsetting. None of the other children in the town had ever tried this form of amusement, but we soon coaxed a little girl named Harriet Oppenheimer, to go with us, but unfortunately we hit a rock the first time we went down and took a terrible spill, and poor lovely little Harriet's face was badly skinned. We rushed her into Mama for first aid, who applied a healing lotion. It did not take long to heal, but neither she nor any other of the children would trust themselves to our tender mercies on the mountainside again.

Mr. Joseph Trutch and his brother, John, civil engineers, were building a suspension bridge across the Fraser a few miles from Yale. It was considered a wonderful piece of engineering work and was called the Alexandria bridge after the late Queen Mother, then the young and beautiful bride of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, later King Edward. Mr. Trutch's mother, a charming old English lady, and her youngest daughter, visited with Mrs. William Charles at Hope during the summer to be near her sons. Mrs. Joseph Trutch was staying with them also, a very delightful American lady, an aunt of George Hyde Preston and the late W. T. Preston of Seattle. (Mr. Trutch was later the first lieutenant governor of B. C. and was knighted in recognition of his many public services.)

My mother wished very much to go for a drive up the Cariboo road to see the suspension bridge, and the brewer offered my father his horse and spring wagon; so we had a delicious lunch packed in a champagne basket, (champagne baskets were very plentiful and put to many uses) and we all got into the wagon. The horse trotted along beautifully through the town, and we all sat up feeling very pleased with ourselves, when a lot of little children ran out shouting, "Smarty boots, proudy hoops" after us. We were very thankful they did not see our ignominious return. After we passed the tollgate we came to rather a steep hill which the horse absolutely refused to climb. Father tried every known trick to start a balky horse, but he stood perfectly still. After standing for about half an hour he suddenly started on his own, and he went through the same performance every hill we came to, and there were many hills.

About 2 P. M. we reached a roadhouse called "the Frenchman's," about five miles out of town. Our parents decided that it was too late to go further, so we had our picnic on a grassy shelf overhanging the river. Father went to get the horse which he had

nurse, for the baby came before she did, and poor mother (who had never seen a confinement before) had to take care of her. With Mr. Pringle calling directions from a doctor's book outside the door, however, all went well and the baby was the longed-for little boy.

After two and a half years Mr. Commeline,* who was Chief Constable and postmaster at Yale, decided to give up his position and go home to England and my father was promoted, so we were all shipped back to Yale, which was now the head of navigation. The Cariboo road was finished. Thousands of people and tons of freight now went through on stage and wagons. To pay for the road and maintenance, the government put in a toll gate and weighing station.

My youngest brother Dick (R. R. Agassiz) was born in Yale.

The winters there were very severe and the river would freeze solid from two to three months. The mail and express were carried over the ice. The express agent, Bill Bristol by name, we always looked upon as a great hero. He made the trip from Westminster every two weeks and it was always a great day when he arrived with the mail. He always took a canoe with him, his Indians pulling it over the ice so they could make use of it when they came to any open water. This was very dangerous especially toward spring, as the ice would commence to get soft and break. He had many narrow escapes.

The last winter we were in Yale was a very hard one. The ice did not go out until late in March, causing a great shortage in food. The ice had to be blasted to allow the steamer through. I shall never forget when we heard the first whistle of the steamer. Every man and child sprang to their feet and started for the landing, cheering and shouting.

Gold was the one topic of conversation in Yale. All along the river were flumes and sluice boxes carrying water for washing gold-bearing sand and gravel. A great many miners and including Chinamen worked with rockers, some of them taking out as much as sixteen dollars to the pan. Of course, some got a great deal more than this in rich places.

We did not like Yale as well as we did Hope. Most of the trees had been cut down, and the town was built on the side of a mountain. The sun poured down on the rocky slope making it very hot, and in winter it was correspondingly cold. We used to get a lot of fun coasting down the side of the mountain and out onto the

* H. T. Commeline.

river was through his place and at low water it was the only possible road. We were always very careful about closing gates and avoiding giving any trouble. Then my father's uncle, James (Captain Agassiz, R. N.) died and left us a thousand pounds. My father ordered an immense amount of machinery, threshing machine, grist mill, mowing and racking machines, etc. My father told Walker about it. He said he would not allow it to be brought through his place. My father told him we had a right to a right-of-way through his place, that it could not possibly do him any harm. It went through no fields, and if Father asked the Government to have it surveyed it would put Walker to the expense of having the whole road fenced on both sides. As it was, the small, steep mountain on one side and a gate there it needed no fencing. Walker said he would like to see the government try to put a road or anyone dare to drive through his place again.

Everything was landed on the bank of the river, and my brothers took two teams and started to bring them home. The foolish old man had nailed up the bars and was standing there with a shotgun and said he would shoot the first one to pull down a bar. One of my brothers picked up a bar and ran at him, he dropped his gun and ran for his house. My brothers laughed heartily and pulled down the fence and drove on, but at every trip back and forth they found the fence nailed up hard and fast, which made the teaming a long and arduous task, but I must say it was a great joke to all the Agassiz family and served as a source of conversation and uproarious laughter for many months.

With this money we also had the house made much more comfortable. We got a carpenter from Westminster to do the house up, whom the children spoke of for many years as "the man." My father took a trip to the Sound and bought a flock of sheep. He also built a stone dairy.

The machinery was a great thrill for Arthur. Of course it was all in pieces, some very small. My father could not make head nor tail of them and was astonished at the way Arthur gradually assembled everything. There were numbers and instructions but no member of the family had ever seen a machine up and running except the engines on a steamer. There was great excitement when the large threshing machine was up, the horses harnessed to bars which they pulled around and around starting the big thing going. The whole family went out to gaze with awe. Arthur was driving, Father putting the sheaves of grain into the huge revolving maw, the clean grain pouring out of a

spout at the side, James catching it in large buckets and pouring it into bins, Ah Lat, the Chinaman, tossing the sheaves from where they were piled high in the high mows to my father to be fed to the machine. Everyone was so excited and happy, it seemed little short of a miracle doing in a few days work that had taken weeks before, and with a tenth of the waste and discomfort. Nowadays threshing done by horsepower is considered primitive. (My contractor sons with Diesel engines, steam and electricity, or lighting a city by the touch of a button!) What an age we are living in! Butter making was still done by hand, but in one of the boxes from England our grandmother sent us a small sewing machine run by hand which was at once given to me as the family seamstress, and how proud I was of it. Mother subscribed to Harper's Bazaar, in which there was always a large sheet of patterns, each pattern outlined with different shaped dots and lines. I used to lay the pattern sheet on paper and prick the pattern I wanted out with a pin, and then cut it out on the paper, altering it to fit the one the garment was for.

The sheep for a while were a great care as the fences were only built to keep cows and horses from straying, and my small sisters, two of them at a time, had to take it in turns herding them. In winter the wolves would come howling about the place at night but the sheep were out only in the daytime. But one day as my sisters were playing about the field they were suddenly startled to see an enormous wolf prowling around the fence. It leaped over and ran toward the poor sheep who were all in a huddle and bleating wildly. My poor little sisters started for the house, shouting for help. The brothers heard the commotion and ran out and frightened the wolf away. He had killed one poor little lamb. My father put poison in the carcass and got "the big bad wolf" that night. They entered the barn one night and killed one of the dogs who was sleeping there, and once when Arthur was shooting they followed him. He was riding and would fire at them but he had only birdshot. They would run off for a little while and then come on again. He had my little black water spaniel with him and the wolves killed it. When he came home and told me I wept bitterly and all of my small brothers and sisters joined in so I had to stop and quiet and console them.

Mother always insisted that Jinny and I should be out of doors for two hours every day, rain or shine, gardening or walking. I gathered quite a large collection of wild flowers and mosses

his sons, Fred Alexander, also in the lumber business, lives in Seattle with his wife, the former Miss Martha McVey.

About a year afterward three English officers came through by the same route, and I believe, suffered many hardships. I do not remember their names. I think they returned to England.

Many young Englishmen came into the country at this time, looking for adventure. Two brothers, Cornwall by name, sons of a clergyman, chaplain to Queen Victoria, took up a large tract of land and turned it into a fine farm. They also started a road house and a small settlement grew up in the wilderness called Ashcroft, and they did very well. Clement, the eldest, married a Miss Pemberton, of Victoria. He was afterward Lt. Governor of B. C. Henry, the younger son, married a Miss Ayers. There are some members of the family still living on the old place, and one in Victoria with his wife and two charming little daughters.

A Col. Haughton, and two brothers, Forbes and Charley Vernon, all delightful young Englishmen, started large cattle and horse ranches in the Kootenay country.

A Miss Moresby arrived with her mother and brother and sister from England and Mr. Pringle engaged her as governess for his children, but Mr. Edward Saunders, of Yale, soon persuaded her to become his bride, much to the chagrin of the Rev. Mr. Pringle, but he performed the ceremony.

It was a very grand wedding. My father and mother gave them a breakfast which was served in the large office. The decorations were beautiful. I remember being very much distressed because the icing on the wedding cake was so hard it splintered when cut and scattered all over the floor. Fortunately there was no carpet. Fannie Pringle and I were bridesmaids.

Poor Mr. Saunders had a pet bear he had raised from a cub. The morning of his wedding day he went out to feed it and when he offered it the food the bear grabbed his nose instead, and the poor man had to be married with a plastered nose. The bear was killed.

Two of my sisters, Minnie and Connie, were born in Hope. My poor mother who had never been confined without a doctor, was quite sure she would never live through the ordeal. She was able to get a clever experienced nurse from Westminster and came through very well in spite of the fact that she had been considered a very delicate woman.

Poor Mrs. Pringle had had two children in Hope and was expecting another. There was some misunderstanding about the

expert in the culinary art. We could always get Indian women to do the washing and scrubbing.

Mother had to entertain all the distinguished visitors who came through on their way up the country. Governor Douglas (afterwards Sir James) a very tall, handsome man, always wore his uniform and made a great impression on the Indians who had a great admiration for him. We children also stood in great awe of him, and felt very proud when he shook hands with us all. Sir Matthew Bailie Begbie, at that time Chief Justice, also stayed with us when on circuit, and was also a very tall and handsome man and very fond of children. Mr. Edgar Dewdney, an engineer, often came to Hope, the attraction being the very pretty eldest Miss Glennie, whom he afterwards married. He had a very successful career, first being sent to Canada (Ottawa) as representative and then being made Governor, first of the Northwest Territory and then of British Columbia. His wedding was a great event in Hope. My small brother, James, who was a great pet of the bride's, acted as "bridesmaid."

While we were in Hope a shipload of coolies arrived from China and all of the families got some for house boys. We got one bound for two years. The Chinese merchants would bring them out by the shipload and bind them out to work until they had paid their passage money. Ours was a good boy and it was not long until he was quite a help. The Chinamen, like everyone else, had come for gold, and at the end of the two years he had paid his passage and saved enough money to buy himself an outfit and he left us to seek his fortune.

There were no cows in Hope so my father bought a goat, sending to Westminster for it. None of us knew how to milk, but after a great deal of trouble and fun Arthur and I learned to do it.

When we first arrived in Fort Hope a number of men from England came across the Rockies. There were Hudson Bay Company forts all across Canada at that time which was a great help to the travellers, but it was, nevertheless a very hard and perilous journey. There was a German and his wife with them, she being the only woman in the party. The poor thing had a baby on the way and they had to wait in camp until she was strong enough to travel. After crossing the mountains she and her husband left the party at the first settlement. There was only one man in the party whose name I can remember, a Mr. Alexander, afterwards one of the biggest timber and mill men in B. C. One of

but knew very little about them and had no books or way of learning how to take care of them and they gradually turned to dust. The wild flowers were wonderful and most beautiful. We often transplanted them into our garden. We used to gather nuts also after the frost touched them and they would drop to the ground and open, making it very easy picking them. Hazel nuts were the only kind and those very small, but we would get a flour sack full and were very glad to get them as they were the only nuts we had. We had to get them as soon as the frost touched them or the bears and squirrels would get them first.

One winter day as we were walking in the woods after a heavy fall of snow we came upon some large footprints. We knew at once they were bear tracks. I wanted to go home and tell our brothers, but Jinny being far more courageous than I wanted to follow them to their cave. We walked on for a little while but I was getting more frightened every minute and at last prevailed upon her to turn back. When we got there Father and the boys were out, but there were two Indians with guns and we told them, and showed them where to go. In about an hour they came back with a lot of bear meat and two poor little cubs which they wanted to sell us. Of course the children were wild to buy them, but Mama told them if they did when the cubs grew a little they would probably bite their noses off, and as they had often heard the story of Mr. Saunders losing his they began to think maybe they might.

The Bishop of British Columbia wrote to Mama to tell her that he intended holding a confirmation service in New Westminster just after Easter and thought Arthur, Jinny and I should be confirmed, so Mama wrote to Archdeacon Woods (who had moved to New Westminster and given up the school in Victoria) about it. He wrote at once and said he would like us to go a week early so that we could attend the last two classes. Mrs. Woods also wrote asking all three of us to stay with them for a week or ten days. You can imagine what a wonderfully kind thing it was for her to do. She had twelve children of all ages, one a little baby, and she was far from being a strong woman, and the poor clergymen were always poverty-stricken but wonderfully self-sacrificing. We all three went and were very much impressed with the beauty of the service and especially the Archdeacon's address to us which was most beautiful. There were several little parties given for us which we also enjoyed most thoroughly. Mr. and Mrs. Bushby gave a small party for us and made us stay two

days longer with them. They had two charming little daughters and a small son two years old. Mrs. Bushby was a daughter of Sir James Douglas and the mother of George Bushby of Vancouver, and Mrs. Boltby,* of Victoria.

After our return we had a young friend, Hettie Clarkson, from Westminster, to visit us for several weeks. Shortly after, my youngest sister, Edith, was born. This time there was no mistake about the nurse, a very good, kind and efficient one, who arrived two weeks before the baby and dear Mama came through very well.

My English grandmother began to be very anxious to see my father, who was her eldest son, and as things had begun to be a little easier and Arthur was more of an age to manage the farm, being now twenty years old, Father decided to make the trip, put everything shipshape and left for England. He stopped off to visit our Canadian grandmother for a short time, to her great joy, and then on to his own mother who was wild with joy and happiness. He stayed with her many months, visiting all his many relatives. He at last decided to come back around the other side of the world. In going through Syria, his servant found him dead in his bed. We thought it must have been the heat as he always suffered very much from it, being very large and stout. All his belongings were sent home. It was very sad.**

The next year Jinny visited Mrs. Charles for two months and had a very delightful and happy time. She also had a delightful visit with the McKenzies who lived a short way out of Victoria on a farm, a large family of boys and girls all very good-looking and gay, with many horses to ride. She invited two of the sisters, Goody and Betty, to visit us. When they came we had a very gay time, my brothers enjoying them very much. When they saw the rough country we had to ride over they were astonished and said, "It is no wonder you are such good riders if this is where you learned to ride." Arthur had just taken up some land of his own and built a log cabin on it. We would all ride over and picnic with him. Jinny and I had to rise at four in the morning to get our work done and the dairy work, make the bread and feed the chickens. Company or no company, the work had to go on and the men had to be fed. It always surprised me how very much all of our friends seemed to enjoy their visits and stayed as long as they possibly could, going out to watch our brothers milk or

* Boltby or Bolton?

** Dates here seem to be uncertain.

was a structure called stocks, for fastening prisoners in by their feet. They sat on a plank and their feet were put through bars with holes for their ankles, and padlocked, but during our stay there it was used only by the children to play with.

Hope was a most exciting and thrilling place for children in those days. All through the spring and summer months, long pack trains were coming and going into the Kootenay Country. We used to watch them being packed—such rearing, kicking, bucking and chucking of packs. There were hundreds of Chinamen going into the goldfields carrying their own supplies. They would follow one another in single file, their packs on each end of a pole carried over their shoulders—large mat sacks filled with rice, tea, dried fish, etc. They always went along at a jog trot; we had never seen anything to compare with it before. The Chinamen were very fond of mining. We could see them all up and down the river on the sand bars, working with pans and rockers.

The Indians liked to look through the windows at night into our lighted rooms, at first frightening us very much, but we soon got used to them and became very friendly and learned very quickly to speak the Chinook jargon so that we could converse with them with ease. In winter the Indians all went to live in what they called Keekwillie holes, a large, deep, round hole in the ground, covered by a large roof topped with branches of trees interwoven with a layer of clay and earth on top, making an immense mound. Here the whole tribe lived all winter. They had an open fire in the center and a hole in the roof through which both the smoke and the Indians had exit.

Hope is still a most beautiful place and our life there has always remained a bright spot in my memory—the forest primeval all about us; fallen trees covered with deep moss. The beautiful Coquihallo River was full of fish and delightful pools to bathe in. In the winter we had toboggans into which all the youngsters in the village scrambled while their fathers ran them about over the hard frozen snow. Of course, the children had all of the delight and few of the hardships of pioneering.

The families were all very congenial. There was no school but my dear mother taught us very faithfully. She herself had a hard time learning to cook. I remember her weeping bitterly with a batch of bread burned to a cinder on the floor in front of her, but she soon overcame these difficulties and became an

We turned and walked back. Then Mother asked him who was the highest official in town. He said a Stipendiary Magistrate, Saunders* by name, so they called on him, told him all about it and asked if there was any position he could give my father. Mr. Saunders was a very charming man, an Englishman by birth. He had been an officer in the Austrian army. He said we had come in the nick of time as there was a position open as Chief Constable and postmaster at Hope, a few miles down the river. It had been the head of navigation until the government started to build the road at Yale a few months before. Of course this position was accepted with joy, although the salary was very small. We had a small remittance from England every year and a house and large garden went with the position. We sold one horse and the mule, taking the other horse with us.

The steamer was leaving the next day, so we again put all our belongings on board and were not long in reaching Hope as the river was running very swiftly.

Mother was very pleased to find that there were many fine women in the small community. The Rev. Mr. Pringle, of the Church of England, with his wife, and four little girls just our ages, had a very pretty church which everyone attended. The Hudson's Bay Company's factor, Mr. William Charles, was there with his wife and family. Mr. Landvoight with a nice little French wife, owned the principal store. A family named Glennie had a small farm close to town. The office of Chief Constable, which my father accepted, was the only official position representing the government and carried with it the position of postmaster, mine recorder, licenses, etc.

The house was quite comfortable, consisting of a very large office cross the front and a large living room, two bedrooms and a kitchen. Behind the kitchen and across the yard was a small and gloomy looking jail. I am pleased to say that it had but two prisoners during the two years of my father's term. A murder had been committed up country and my father had been notified that two men resembling the guilty parties had been seen on the trail going towards Hope. Taking Mr. Evans, his deputy constable, he went out in search of them. They returned in three days with the suspected men who were held in jail one night and sent down to Westminster for trial. I am glad to say they were found not guilty. After this we converted the jail into a chicken house and the chickens were never disturbed. Behind the jail

* E. H. Saunders.

bring in the cattle, or canoeing in the daytime, playing games or dancing to a jewsharp in the evening.

Victoria was a very gay little place besides being the seat of government. It was also a naval station with a flagship with an admiral on board and one or two smaller ships and something doing all the time. The people of the mainland were very jealous of Victoria being the seat of government and were always petitioning the British to either create two colonies or transfer the seat of government to Westminster, so for a short time they sent two Governors, one to Westminster, and one to Victoria but it did not last. It was far too expensive for such a sparsely settled country.

Just about this time the Canadas, East and West, now Quebec and Ontario, began to agitate for a union of all the American colonies in one Dominion with an English Governor-General at Ottawa, all the colonies to be called provinces with lieutenant-governors appointed from Ottawa, the whole to be called the Dominion of Canada. British Columbia stood out for a long time against joining. The people were all English and were rather contemptuous of the Canadians. After a great deal of agitation they said they would join if the government would build a railroad across the continent. This they promised to do. Joseph Trutch was appointed the first Lieutenant Governor and for a while every one was happy, but the government at Ottawa kept putting off doing anything about the railway. They would send a few surveyors through the country and a few local ones at this end to keep the people quiet. I remember going to Victoria when the steamer was crowded with leading ranchers and business men from the upper country on their way to Victoria to protest against any further delay. It took so long to get word back and forth in those days. Of course we were all as excited and wrought up as everyone else. Engineers and surveyors were running back and forth all over the country and everyone owning property attending to their boundaries, talking townsites, etc.

Captain Jemmet, an army officer, retired, and a surveyor, did a lot of that sort of work in the Agassiz valley. They stayed with us and made a croquet lawn in their spare time. Our grandmother sent us a very good croquet set from England. Captain Jemmet was a good player and taught us the game. Charley Woods, a son of the Archdeacon, was his assistant, and we would have very merry evenings while the light lasted. Susie Woods visited us while they were with us.

That autumn was a terrible time for us all, especially for poor Arthur. He and James had a lot of Indians doing the harvesting. In the midst of the threshing, Arthur, who was feeding the machine, got his sleeve caught in the cog wheels and his poor arm was drawn through and completely severed. Oh, the horror of it! Fortunately it was steamer day which was only twice a week. James ran as fast as he could to the river, which was two miles, crossed it in a canoe to the telegraph office, telephoned* a friend in Westminster to meet the boat with a doctor and made arrangements with a Mrs. Carey, who was a very good nurse and had attended my mother, to receive Arthur on landing. Dear Mama and all of us got everything that was necessary for his comfort and drove him to the landing place. I remember my mother saying that James' clothes were scattered all of the way, he had thrown them off as he ran to lighten his weight that he might run the faster. He met them at the landing. It was most awful waiting for hours before the boat arrived. There were some people named Farr who lived on a farm a short distance down the river. James paddled over to them to try and get something to ease poor Arthur's pain. He was suffering terribly. They fortunately had some chloroform which they kept giving to him from time to time. He was marvelously brave. When at last the steamer arrived the captain stopped for nothing but rushed straight through to Westminster. They were all terribly shocked. All the men from the captain down had known Arthur since he was a little boy and had the greatest admiration and respect for him, for the way he had taken on all the family cares. Everyone was kindness itself to him. There was a very wealthy young tourist on board (I never heard his name) a young man. He made a tourniquet for Arthur's arm. Mother and James had made a crude one but it was very painful and inadequate. He also had chloroform. He never left them all the way to Westminster, sat beside Arthur, told him stories of his travels, and did everything he could think of to distract their minds.

All of our friends and the doctor were at the dock with a conveyance. There was no hospital. Mrs. Carey kept a boarding house and took them in. Dr. McInnes was a very clever surgeon and did everything that was possible for Arthur. Dear Mother stayed a month with him. Then Mrs. Woods insisted that he should stay with them until he was strong enough to make the trip home and I was to go down and look after him.

* Telegraph probably meant.

over the next to impossible trail. As I said before, it had not been used for a year until the other passengers from the boat had gone over it. There were innumerable fallen trees across the path which caused the horses to fall. Mother's horse fell backwards several times, throwing her and my small brother off and scattering bundles in all directions, and my poor little sister, Jinny, was continually sliding from the back of the mule, and Father was always rushing up to replace people and baggage. To cap the climax, the horse Arthur was leading stepped on his foot and hurt him badly. It is a wonder to me that we all got through alive.

It was dark night when we arrived at the log cabin on the outskirts of Yale, a very tired and discouraged family. The only furniture was a stove and several bunks built one above the other on the side of the wall. By lantern light we got something to eat and were put to bed. I have often heard my mother say that notwithstanding the terrible outlook of danger, hardship and drudgery, that when she opened the door of the little log cabin the next morning and saw the glorious panorama of mountain, vale and river, such a feeling of joy and exultation flowed through her, it seemed to sweep away every doubt and dread. As for the children, well, we were beside ourselves with joy. The rarefied mountain air was so exhilarating, we raced up and down the mountainside, found beautiful flowers, caught fish in a leaping, sparkling stream, and only wished to live on there forever.

That afternoon we all walked into the little mining town of Yale. It must have been a curious sight for those poor hard-working miners to see a refined and dainty little lady with four nicely dressed little children walking through the one sordid street. They all came to their doors and watched us pass. The new Cariboo road had just been commenced. A regiment of engineers, sappers and miners had been sent from England to build it and any other much needed road. We walked through Yale to where the road began. Only about half a mile was finished, cut out of solid rock, sheer mountain above and sheer precipice down to the boiling Fraser below. Beyond this was the old trail looking like a scratch, winding in and out among the mountain. Poor Mother looked at it.

"Is that the road we have to travel to reach the promised land?" she asked.

Father said, "It is not so bad as it looks."

"I would rather go back to Victoria and take in washing," she said.

very dangerous. The steamers had to burn wood as they had not discovered the coal deposits yet, so they had to stop and take on wood at different places, the Indians carrying it to the boat on their backs.

We reached the Harrison, a very beautiful tributary to the Fraser late the same afternoon. While the boat was unloading local freight, my father went on shore and cut wild grass for the horses, which he tied into bundles and he and little Arthur carried it aboard the boat. The steamer went on up the river to the lake of the same name, where the now noted hot springs are located, and from there up the lake to Douglas, at that time the best route to the Cariboo. After discharging freight, we retraced our way to the Fraser and continued up that river until we came to Emory's Bar. Here, after several attempts to make the rapids, Captain Ainsley (commonly known as Delaware) decided it was useless and landed the passengers and freight on the bank. From this point to our destination, Yale, was only five miles, but over a mountain trail which had not been used for a year. All the old campaigners packed up and went on that evening, but my father thought it better for us to camp there for the night.

After putting up the tents and taking care of the horses, he showed mother how to cook dinner over a camp fire. Dinner over and the children in bed, father and mother went to the bank of the river where mother was given a lesson in panning gold. While they were enjoying themselves, two Indians appeared, and seeing the tents, poked their heads through the opening which frightened us nearly out of our senses. Our screams terrified the Indians and also our parents, who came running to the scene. It took some time to pacify us, but at last all was still and we slept soundly through our first night in the forest. We found later, however, that during the night an Indian dog had made off with a ham worth in those days about twenty dollars.

The next morning on waking we were thrilled to see across the river the wreck of the steamer "Yale."

We had two horses and a mule. My mother with the youngest boy in her arms was mounted, then innumerable bundles were tied on all sides. Large pack-saddles were put on the other horse and the mule, to which sacks of flour, sides of bacon, bags of beans, and it seemed to me, every imaginable thing was fastened. On top of the mule's load were put my little sister, Jinny, aged five, and me, aged seven. My father then shouldered a large pack himself, and with Arthur leading the other horse, we started

I went and they were all most kind. They had two little orphans living with them who came down with the measles. Elsie, the oldest daughter, was visiting in Victoria so I had to take charge of the two sick young ones. Mrs. Woods was a very delicate woman. She had thirteen children and she also taught a number of young girls at a day school. It was quite late in November. It was nearly two months since Arthur's accident, the weather turned bitterly cold, with a raging snowstorm. We had to make arrangements to return at once as the river usually froze and stopped navigation when it turned so cold. The night before we left for home there was a terrible shipwreck. The "Pacific," plying between Victoria and San Francisco, went down with all on board. She was loaded with Victorians going down to California to spend the winter. It was horrible. It spread misery all over the colony. Bodies were being thrown on the beach for weeks. Only one man was saved, and strange to say, it was the third time he had been the only one saved from a wreck.

The next day we left for home. It was a dreadful day, frightfully cold, the wind blowing a hurricane and the river full of floating ice. The captain could not take the boat past the mouth of the Harrison River, he was afraid of being crushed in the ice. Bill Bristol, who was on board in charge of the mail and express, hired a large canoe and two Indians. Arthur and I were wrapped in blankets and put in the canoe, the captain blew a number of blasts of the whistle hoping it would be heard at Agassiz, ten miles away, and bring someone out to meet us. It took several hours to go those ten miles, I forget really how long it was. We had a large hot meal before we left the boat. I don't remember feeling in the least frightened although it took all one Indian could do to fend the enormous cakes of ice off the canoe, while Bristol and the other Indian paddled with all their strength against the rapid current. At last late at night we made the landing and found James there to meet us. He had a large fire on the point to guide us and an oxsled to tuck us into. In another half hour or three-quarters we were at home, the house warm and bright, and a delicious warm meal waiting for us. How happy dear Mother was to see us safe at home again, Arthur none the worse for his trying journey.

The storm kept up for several days. We heard from the Indians that Bristol was on his way back again. James went out to the landing to see if there was any freight or mail. When he arrived there what was his horror to find the express canoe with

Bristol and a lot of passengers caught in the ice away out in the river. He seized an axe and began tearing down the small barn my brothers had built for storage. The river between the shore and the canoe was filled with slush ice. He laid the boards end to end, drawing one after him and laying it ahead until he got to them and brought them all in, Bristol coming last with express and mail. The last one had hardly left the canoe when the whole thing was swept out of sight. It was dark night by that time. James brought them all home where we were anxiously waiting not knowing what had happened. They were all given a nice hot dinner and spent the night spread all over the dining room floor. Many years afterward my mother was told by a friend that she had read an account of this rescue in an English paper written by a man who was one of the rescued ones.

That was a desperately long and severe winter. Arthur gradually recovered his health and strength. It was marvelous how well he managed. Anything that any man could do he could do. He was the best shot of any man in Agassiz, or any who went for the shooting. He was a splendid horseman who could drive a pair or ride with anyone. He was the same with the work on the farm, so full of energy and ambition he would let no one surpass him.

In the spring of 1876 British Columbia had come to the end of its patience. The Dominion decided to ask Lord Dufferin to come to Victoria and smooth things out. Lady Dufferin came with him. Mrs. Charles at once wrote and asked Jinny and me to spend the whole summer with her, a marvelously kind thing to do. Mr. Charles, being the chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company in B. C. at the time was, of course, very much to the front in everything. As I was the eldest and as Jinny had spent the summer before in Victoria, Mother decided that I should be the one to accept. She would not think of allowing us both to go, she said it would be an imposition. Of course I was very sorry that Jinny could not go, but wild with delight on my own account. Of course I had to work very hard to get all the family sewing done for the summer and with five young ones to sew for, ten or more little dresses to make, not to mention my own clothes, was some task.

I can never forget the joy of that summer. Staying with Mrs. Charles, I was, of course, included in all of the festivities except dinners. The Dufferins came by rail to San Francisco, where they boarded a British man-of-war for Esquimalt. There they were met by the Governor and Mrs. Trutch, Premier Elliot and all of the leading people. They drove to the outskirts of Victoria where

first time we had ever seen a camel. They were intended for pack animals in the northern plains of British Columbia, but frightened the horses so badly it was impossible to use them. The climate did not agree with them and they all died off after a while except one tough old fellow who lingered on for a number of years wandering around the settlement of Kamloops. I have always thought the town was named after them and is not an old Indian name as most people seem to think, having forgotten all about the poor old camels.

In Victoria, we bought two horses and a mule and all the supplies considered necessary for the journey. Arthur, my eldest brother, aged nine, had to take the animals to a grassy spot and herd them every day. He took little James, aged four, for companionship, (the poor children had never been anywhere without a nurse, before), and would leave him to watch the horses while Arthur went to the beach and caught crabs. One day, James and the horses all disappeared. Arthur ran home in terror to find James had been found in tears by a clergyman and taken home, but the horses had wandered off and some time was spent in recovering them.

From Victoria we crossed to New Westminster on the mainland by means of a small steamer, "The Otter," a side-wheeler. A friend of my father's, a Mr. Finlaison,* head of the Government customs, met us and insisted that we stay with him during the week we had to wait for another boat to take us up the Fraser. Mr. Finlaison and my father had built a hotel in Westminster some time before, but it had burned down and they lost all they had put into it. It was our intention to take the steamer "Yale," but that ill-fated craft had blown up on its last trip in an attempt to put on enough steam to make the rapids just below the little settlement of the same name, and its master, Captain Jamison, was killed.

Mr. Finlaison was a bachelor and had a nice little house and garden. He later married a daughter of one of the engineers and had a family of eleven sons and finished with twin daughters.

We children enjoyed our visit very much, even though we were frightened every evening when the chain gang passed, and it was here also we had our first experience with mosquitoes.

After a few days the steamer "Hope" arrived to take the place of the "Yale" and we all embarked for the trip up the mighty Fraser river, which at this time of year was in flood and

* Charles S. Finlaison.

poor men who died.) We took only a pineapple and a cocoanut on board the boat for San Francisco.

There was a man on that boat to whom for some reason, I took a great dislike. Mama thought him very entertaining, but he was too funny for my taste, and when, a few days out, Arthur brought the cocoanut out to be eaten, he capered around and clapped his hands, to my mind in a most undignified manner. When the cocoanut was cracked open, instead of luscious meat and milk there was only an enormous spider in a web. I couldn't help giving him a most vindictive look.

We landed without mishap at Aspinwall, (renamed Colon), and spent the night there, crossing by railway to Panama the next day. While in the harbor we children got much joy by dropping pennies into the water for the natives to dive after. We took ship again (an old side-wheel steamer), calling at Acapulco on the way up the coast and arrived without accident at San Francisco. Here mother met an old friend who had lost her eldest son while crossing the Isthmus and she was suffering terribly from homesickness.

We were forced to wait one week here before we could get a boat for Vancouver Island. The old Lick House was then in course of construction—for many year the best hotel on the coast and always spoken of by Californians with great pride.

A week after leaving San Francisco, we arrived in Esquimalt with the measles. We were told afterward that all children sailing on the "Oregon" got the measles. They could not have known very much about disinfecting in those days. We recovered rapidly, however. Father met us at Esquimalt where the boat docked, with an express wagon, into which he piled all of our luggage, and to our great joy, we three eldest on top. He, Mother and little brother James (whose fourth birthday it was), sat in front as we drove the five miles into Victoria where we took a cottage for a month, and our parents saw our lady companion safely married to her happy young carpenter.

Preparations had to be made and our plans laid for the trip into the Cariboo, where Father intended to locate. The only furniture in the cottage was a small cooking stove, a bedstead, a deal table and boxes for chairs. We children thought it was great fun. We had been there only a few days when a band of camels arrived and were penned in a large field at the back of the house. Needless to say, we children spent most of the time on top of the high board fence surrounding them, it being the

the parade started and marched through town to Government House. The navy and middies with their bands, the police and firemen, school children carrying long silken banners, and the Chinese with musical instruments. Everyone cheered wildly.

The next day, or rather evening, the earl and countess held a drawing room. For months before all of the ladies had been in a state of excitement about their dresses and court trains. Mrs. Charles who was a beautiful woman with shoulders like white velvet, wore a beautiful black velvet with white lace. Mine was an old pale pink silk which one of my aunts had worn to Queen Victoria's court, made over with lots of pink illusion. It really looked lovely—at least all my friends said it did, but there was such a crowd and so many beautiful dresses it was no doubt quite unnoticed. Two days after, Lady Dufferin held a small reception at Government House—only the elite of the town were at it. It was a delightful affair. Lady Dufferin was graciousness personified. She chatted pleasantly with each and everyone and left a delightful impression upon all who met her, as also did the earl. He, of course, was a trained diplomat, being a wise and clever statesman. He realized the great need of a railway to unite the east with the minerally wealthy west.

Earl Dufferin opened the first large naval drydock ever built in Esquimalt. There was great rejoicing over it. Lunch was served in a large shed put up for that purpose. Lord and Lady Dufferin sat at the head of the table with the Admiral, Lt. Governor and Mrs. Trutch with the engineers, Dawson and Bennett, the rank dwindling to captains and middies. Mabel Charles, Mrs. Charles' daughter, and I were at the small end and had a very gay time. The banquet hall was profusely decorated with flags, bunting and evergreens. There were several callow lords amongst the officers at our end of the table, one a Captain Hare, who, I heard afterward came into some very high title, and was ambassador to Russia. While in Victoria he married Lt. Governor Trutch's niece, a Miss Pinder. A great many Victoria girls married into the navy.

That summer I met Mr. Goodfellow. He was the manager of the Bank of British North America, branches of which were in Victoria and Barkerville. When I left to go home we were engaged to be married. There was great excitement over our engagement. We were both well-known all over B. C., Mr. Goodfellow on account of his high standing in financial circles, and I

because there were so few young women in B. C. at that time that they were all pretty well checked.

When I went home in September, having spent three joyous wonderful months in Victoria, Mr. Goodfellow followed me to meet the family. He wanted to be married at once, but my mother and brothers and sisters wanted us to wait until spring. I had to get a lot of sewing done. At last we decided upon the 27th of November. Jinny was the only one whom Mr. Goodfellow knew, but of course they all liked him and it was not long until they loved him as a brother. They were very busy days until the 27th.

We were married at Ferny Coombe in the old log house in the dining room which then was both dining room and living room, at seven in the morning to enable us to catch the boat at nine A. M. It was a cold, wet day but just as the service was ended the sun broke through the clouds, shining upon us—a happy omen for a happy life.

Mother made a beautiful wedding cake and the bridegroom brought a basket of champagne. The Venerable Arch Deacon Woods performed the ceremony and my sister Jinny and Susie Woods were bridesmaids. Captain Jemmet was best man. The bridesmaid each got a beautiful locket and chain, gifts from the bridegroom. The wedding chariot was a hay wagon filled with bags of hay and covered with blankets. Of course, we were pelted with rice and old shoes. We reached the landing just as the old "Reliance" came in sight, Captain Johnnie Irving blowing the whistle like mad, and the crew cheering. The wedding party all went down with us.

It was dark night when we reached New Westminster where we were to spend the night. All of the bells were ringing, even the chimes given by Baroness Burdett-Coutts. It sounded beautiful pealing over the water. We really had more rice than was coming to us, as we were met at the dock with sacks of it.

When we arrived at Victoria the next day half the town met the boat with more rice. My husband put up my umbrella, caught my arm and we ran as fast as we could go for the carriage. Mrs. Charles was at the house to welcome us. The Chinaman, grinning broadly, had spread wine and cake for refreshments. Mrs. Charles, of course, had to hear all about the wedding and everything was gay and happy. There were many wedding presents waiting to be opened. The house, which belonged to the bank, was large and beautiful, ten large rooms and a ballroom. There were four acres of land, which included a large orchard with the best of every-

The farm on Prince Edward Island where my father and mother went after their marriage was the birthplace of my brother, Arthur. My father made a dismal failure of the farm, as, of course, he knew nothing of farming, so the family went back to London, Ontario, where he tried several businesses but did not do well at any of them. Then gold was discovered in Cariboo, British Columbia.

In 1858, leaving my mother and their four children with her parents in Canada, he set out for the goldfields, by sailing ship around Cape Horn. Every ship was crowded by eagerly expectant men, all hoping to return to their families laden with gold. It was a six months' journey. After arriving in Victoria, and journeying up the Fraser and over the mountains into the gold fields, which was very hazardous, he fell and broke his leg while going in over the mountain. In coming back down the Fraser in a boat, he was struck on the head by a windlass and was pronounced dead by the doctor who examined him. A few hours afterward he came to and walked out of the shack, saw a man making a coffin and asked him whom it was for. Great was his astonishment to find it was for him, but he was troubled by that blow more or less for the rest of his life.

After three years of unsuccessful mining, he sent for mother and the children. So in March, 1862, we left London, Canada West, for New York, much against the wishes of our grandparents whom we children never saw again. My dear mother visited her mother shortly before the latter's death about 1890. The visit was a great joy to them both.

In New York we children all came down with mumps at the hotel and had to stay there a week before taking boat for the Isthmus of Panama. My mother had offered to pay half the expenses of a young girl who was going to Victoria to be married if she would help her with the children en route, but being ill all the way, she was far more trouble than she was worth. My mother was very much annoyed by a lot of Federal officers on board, who were always talking about what they would do to the South. Mother said she hoped most ardently that the "Alabama" would happen along and capture them all, a thing which actually happened on the boat's next trip.

We were cautioned against eating fruit at the Isthmus, as it was considered almost a death spot, so many people died when making the journey. (During the building of the railway they said the roadbed could have been paved with the bodies of the

When my father was twenty-four years old, his regiment was stationed at London, Canada, where he met my mother, Mary Caroline Schram. The Schrams (originally Von Schram), were descendants of an old Dutch family who had settled in New York State many years before the Revolution. They took part with the Royalists and after the war went to Canada and were given large grants of land as a reward of their loyalty. They were, and still are, called the U. E. Loyalists—United Empire Loyalists. My mother and her sister were considered the two most beautiful young women in what was then called Canada West, now Ontario.

After becoming engaged to my mother, my father, wishing to be a captain before he was married, wrote to his father, asking him to buy his captaincy for him. My grandfather refused, whereupon my father sold out his commission, only to receive shortly after, word that his father would agree to his request. To compensate him, however, my grandfather then gave to my father a large farm he had bought on Prince Edward Island, to which after a grand wedding, he and my mother repaired.

My grandfather had bought this farm, stocked it with thoroughbred cattle and horses, built fine buildings and equipped it with everything necessary for a first class farm for his next eldest sons, Arthur and Rudolf. Arthur was drowned rescuing two laborers from a well and Rudolf would not remain on the farm, said he wanted to take Holy Orders, so returned home and to Cambridge to study for the church.

My poor grandfather had sixteen children, of whom eleven sons and four daughters lived. He had the gift of a living on his estate, which was given to Uncle Rudolf after his ordination.

The only English cousin I ever met, was his youngest son, Lucien, who also took holy orders. He was for a number of years British Vice-Consul in Tacoma. One of his sons is married and living in Vancouver.

My mother's sister married a Captain Pulston some years before my mother's marriage and went to England. They were received with great joy and pomp by the tenantry and all the people of the county. Her husband was the son of a Baronet, Sir Richard Pulston, whose ancestors had come to England with William the Conqueror and have been prominent there ever since. My aunt had one son who was heir to the title and a large fortune, but never came into the estate as he died at the age of twenty-five, before the death of his grandfather.

thing in the way of fruit, a large kitchen garden, lawn, shrubbery and flowers.

There were a number of other brides and we were all largely entertained. I gave many dinners and dances. I had a marvelous Chinese cook. He would say to me when I went to consult him about a dinner, "Now, Missie Goodfellow, just leave it all to me. You just very young little lady and not understand much big dinner. I long time cook for all best families in Victoria. You just run away and I take charge. You likee do flowers velly good." He was quite right so I left him to it. For the waiting there were a man and his wife who most efficiently took charge of all Victoria entertainments. The dear old cook was perfect. Everyone had Chinese cooks, they were perfection. It was a very gay and happy winter, (all of my recollections of Victoria are bright and happy) a wonderful climax to a wonderful year, and one which was famous historically for British Columbia.

These memoirs are printed as they were written. Any seeming variations in names or dates are noted in the footnotes. The author was in her late seventies at the time of writing, about 1929-33, and trusted entirely to her memory.

MEMORIES OF PIONEER DAYS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

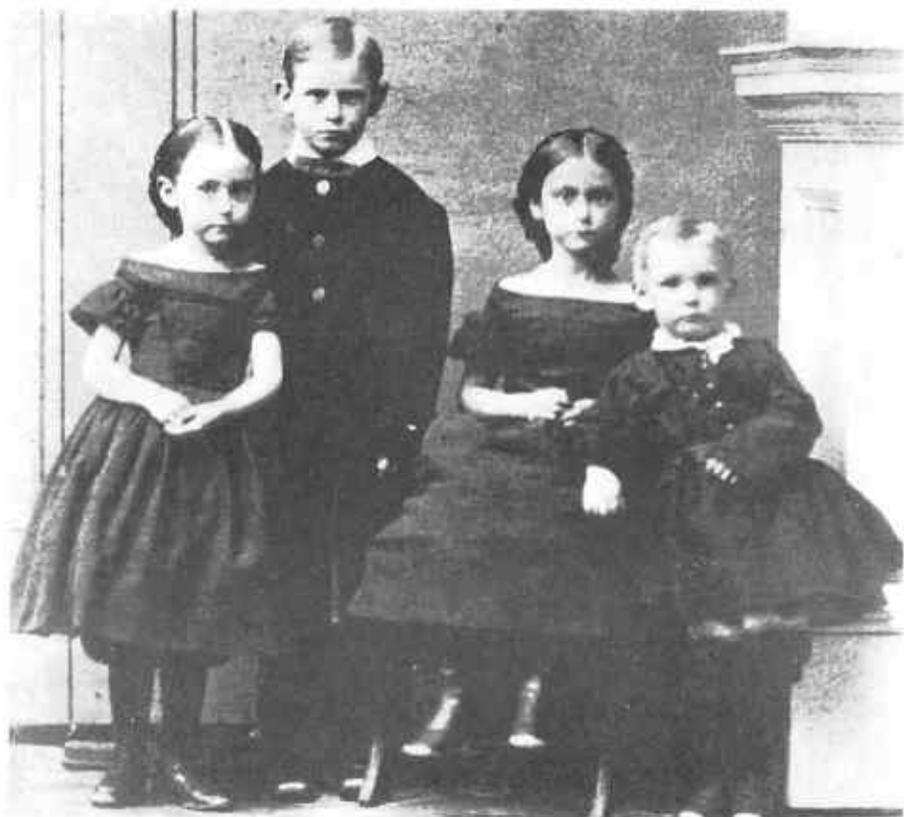
My children are anxious to have me write a history of my family and their pioneer days in British Columbia, so I have promised to do my best, although I have told them that I am afraid they will be disappointed at the lack of wild adventure there.

The Agassiz family came from a Swiss ancestry. The famous naturalist of the same name was also a member. Our branch migrated to England in 1726 from the Canton Vaud, where they had lived since the 13th century.

My grandfather and great-grandfather were both officers in the English navy; the latter commanded a ship under Lord Nelson and received honorable mention. My grandfather resigned from the navy early in life, married, and as he was very wealthy, spent most of his time travelling in Europe. He was quite a friend of the then King of Prussia and spent much time at his court. Upon an occasion when the king was holding a large military parade, my grandfather being with him, what was the latter's chagrin to see his eldest son, then about fifteen years of age, supposedly at school, mounted on a spirited horse, gallop up and join the parade. The king, noticing the disturbance in the ranks, made inquiries, and my grandfather said he was ashamed to say it was his son. The king was quite amused and sent an orderly to bring the boy before him. When asked what he was doing there, he said being anxious to see the parade, he ran away from school and hired a horse, which being an old military animal, bolted and joined the show.

The king was very much taken with my father, who was a tall, good-looking boy, and offered him a commission in the Prussian army. He would have to begin at the bottom, but was offered swift promotion. The boy thanked him, but said he intended entering the British army. The king said he would see that he got a commission, and it was not long until he received one in the 23rd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, entering at the age of sixteen.

The king was godfather to my uncle Frederick Wilhelm who was named for him, and presented him with a beautiful christening cup with both their names upon it. My uncle was a colonel when he died and had fought in many wars.



This picture was taken before the Agassiz family left Ontario.
Left to right are Jane Vandine Caroline (Jinny), Lewis Arthur, Margaret
Eliza Florence Askin (the author) and James Burwell.



Lewis Arthur Agassiz



Lewis Nunn Agassiz, Snr.



Early pictures of "Femie Coombe"



Mrs. Mary Caroline Agassiz