

Rev. A. H. Anderson

Rev. A. H. Anderson came to Manitoba in the spring of '80. They went by oxcart from Winnipeg to Brandon, - a terrible trip – spring floods – and the only places where they could stop for the night were someone's house or shack. You paid fifty cents or twenty-five cents, according to what part of the floor you could get to spread a blanket on and lie down for the night; men, women and children where they could find space. My mother decided she and the baby would sleep outside in the wagon. She and the baby caught a terrible cold and were sick when they arrived at Brandon.

The first summer was spent helping to break land and put up houses or shacks, in the Rapid City district.

After time spent at Nelson, Portage, Snowflake and the Cypress Hills, often setting up a new congregation, the Andersons moved to Killarney.

I think Father was three years preaching at Killarney. Then he had to resign on account of health and some trouble with the powers over him. So he bought the 160 acres and we moved out on the farm. He had only a couple of drivers, a cow, a buggy and cutter and a family of small children. It was July when he moved out, and he only got 10 acres broken that year. It was done by members of his church. You can imagine what a trying time it must have been. I know he only had \$250.00 a year coming in from his superannuation fund. He got \$125.00 in January, and \$125.00 in July, and that's all he had to start on. By hard work and grim determination, we did pull through. One thing I think must have looked odd and amusing to the neighbours was the fact of Father always wearing a white collar and stiff stove pipe hat when working on the land.

Father only had a year off, and then he was on call to fill in for someone sick, or lack of a minister for some church. A good half of his time he was away preaching. I think there weren't many schools around that Father hadn't preached in, even old Oak Ridge. He got the debt on the old frame church paid off, and then Killarney Church started, and he worked hard to get the new (present) church underway. The old church records must have information on how it was done.

I remember a cold winter night and the minister having to close up the service on account of a terrible smell and many folks started sneezing. The janitor and some of the men of the church went down to see what the trouble was but couldn't find anything wrong. Next day they took the furnace apart and cleaned pipes. Father, coming home at noon, told us all about the work they had done and couldn't find anything wrong, lit up the furnace again and no smell. Well, crime will out, they say. My youngest sister had taken a box of snuff that someone, for a joke, had sent father. Reta had it in her coat pocket, and pulling out her handkerchief, the box of snuff came too, and fell on the hot air register. She didn't know what to do, so quickly brushed it all down the register and then went

to her seat. When she got home, she told Mother what she had done and didn't want Mother to tell Father. Mother promised to keep the secret but on condition Reta would walk the straight and narrow path in future. We gals had many a good laughs over it.

Another time, they, Theo and Reta, took some pepper tied up in the corner of a handkerchief and the idea was to put it on some certain person's collar. She had it loose lying on the hymn book and when getting up for the hymn the pepper blew off and not where intended to go. I believe dear old Grampa McLean got most of it and he started to sneeze and couldn't stop and had to go out. We often wondered if he suspected what had happened, for later, when talking to someone he said, "I like those girls but they are awful devils."

This remark was quickly brought back and told to us, and we couldn't understand why Grampa McLean should say such a thing.

Father was always sent to open up new districts or to pull a church out of debt and get it going again. He always seemed to manage that, and he used to be away from home a lot. He kept splendid driving horses and they went all over southern Manitoba.

Father was Irish and loved a good joke and had he not been a minister, would have been a rip roaring old politician. He dearly loved election time. He was always chairman for whoever was electioneering. When George Lawrence was M.P., he and Father worked together often. When Geo. Lawrence took the holiday trip back to Ireland, he brought Father back a black thorn walking stick which we kids all called his "shillalay."

Father's rule when company was around was to be seen and not heard and only speak when spoken to. A grim old rule that I am sure had a bad effect on us. We used to keep out of sight and calling whenever we could, often sliding down a plank from an upstairs window if no other way of getting out was possible.

When we were extra naughty, Father would say, "Those children of yours are needing attention," to Mother. We were always her children then, but if we were good and did something worthy of praise (once in a while we did), we were his children. We all loved Father and were very loyal to him, but we liked being Mother's children best. When I used to kick over the traces and say what I thought of things in general, Father would look grieved and say, "I'm sure I don't know where you get such a rebellious spirit from. I'm sure it's not from me."

Mother's folks back East used to send a barrel of things. For several years when first on the farm we got this barrel. It would have a large bag of dried apples, a big square tin of honey and several blocks of maple sugar, also some pieces of cloth, and a large bundle of knitting yarn, from which Mother knitted Father's socks, our mittens and caps. I guess it saved the day for Mother.