

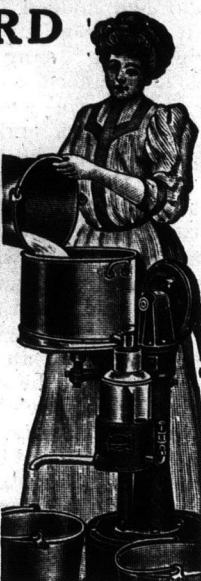
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ing in of a strangling dog prevented him, and soon we were crouched in our lashed down canoes on the deck of that dark plunging mass rubbing the sore necks of our faithful dumb friends.

There were just two on that boat that did not heap verbal abuse on that captain, when the storm drifted us again into shelter, and they were, Dash and Daisy, our Gordon setters.

A Man to Whom a Century's Years are Known

Written for The Western Home Monthly by J. D. A. Evans

HE was seated in an armchair at the stoveside. We pause. A man to whom not alone the nonagenarian years are known, but the days of a century. James Cunningham is one hundred and two years of age!

A mile eastward from Somerset, Southern Manitoba, James Cunningham is spending the remaining span of life's journey. To him the rays of a declining sun must in the natural course of material affairs soon disappear beneath the horizon of a life well spent. To-day he is looking forward to the rest which arrives when the last milestone of the earthly pilgrimage has been passed by. His abode is a frame house situated in the woods, through which a roadway carpeted with the scattering leaves of autumn winds along. The writer and a friend, the Rector of Somerset, had come out to visit the venerable centenarian at his quiet home amongst the trees.

"This is Mr. Cunningham," said the lady who had opened the door and bid us enter. "Father, here are some gentlemen to see you."

What a wonderful man we are greeting! Tall, erect of stature, a brilliant eye, clear resonant voice.

"How old are you, Mr. Cunningham?" asks the writer.

"I am one hundred and two years of age," is the reply the question is recipient of.

His appearance is not indicative that the threescore years and ten had occurred to him in a remote period. Mr. Cunningham is slightly impaired in auricular capabilities; reads without glasses; is a brilliant conversationalist; enjoys the solace afforded by his pipe. The infantile years of his life were spent upon the lonely shores of Hudson's Bay. He was born in August, 1811. With pride he traces his ancestry to the north of Ireland. He is the sole survivor of six children of a father, whose service with the adventurers trading into Hudson's Bay, placed him in charge of Saveril Post, a remote location in that desolate country. At the age of sixty years, Mr. Cunningham, senior, met death by drowning; the swamping of a boat was accountable for his tragic end; the body, despite diligent search by Indians, was never recovered. For two years following this calamitous event, the widow and family remained at the Post, then decided to leave for Red River Settlement, a hazardous journey, necessitating several weeks of boat travel to Norway House, from thence along Lake Winnipeg and Red River to Selkirk and Fort Garry, meeting-place of Indian and trapper, its meagre white population comprising employees of the trading companies.

There was the Lower Fort, and the memory of James Cunningham harks back to days when no walls encompassed this historic spot upon Red River's banks. A small store of the Hudson's Bay Company was located here; the stone walls were erected by masons dispatched from the Old Country a few years after his arrival in the colony. The bastions, observable from the Winnipeg and West Selkirk main highway have been utilized for various purposes; as places of detention for prisoners they have been frequently requisitioned. When a boy about twelve years of age, Mr. Cunningham witnessed an invasion of the grasshoppers, when growth of every description was utterly demolished. At this disaster it became necessitous for settlers to travel southward to St. Anthony's Falls (Minneapolis of to-day) and procure supplies of flour. Then in the early years of the thirties, his memory is verdant concerning this, a flood of preponderous proportions took place. Let his own words be quoted:

"We had an awful time to get away from the waters. Some of the folks went to St. James, others out to Bird's Hill. It was a fearful inrush of water over the river bank where nowadays the transfer track is. But father used to talk of one which took place when he was a boy, and this came so suddenly that several people were drowned."

Even in Mr. Cunningham's earliest remembrance, East Kildonan was not without store accommodation. In St. Boniface a few log buildings might be seen, in one of which Beauvette conducted a blacksmith shop. A small frame house represented that which is to-day the great educational establishment of the Jesuits, and Provencher, bishop and scholar was intimately known to him. A school existed in Middlechurch; at this academy, presided over by Mr. Pritchard, children of the Hudson's Bay Company's employees received an education.



James Cunningham, born 102 years ago at Fort Churchill, Hudson Bay. He was elected to the first Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

"Mr. Christie was in charge of the store within the walls," said the centenarian, in making reference to the Ancient and Honorable's establishment. Its original location was adjacent to the estuary of Assiniboine into Red River; it was removed to the site whereon to-day in a city park stands the stone gateway, when he was quite a young man.

"A few log houses and I think a couple of stores comprised Selkirk. There was a good business in fish from the lake even in those times. As far back that I can recollect there was an Anglican Church at St. Andrews, the Rapids we always called it. You've heard of Bishop Anderson, he used to preach there."

Anderson, the man of whom the old settlers refer to with such great respect; he whose sanctified life is remembered along Red River's banks to-day. And he was likewise the pathfinder who penetrated the fastnesses of distant Yukon, carried the Gospels to its aboriginal inhabitants.

A suburb of Winnipeg is called St. John's; a Cathedral church and college are located therein. But the majority of people are not aware to what source the name of this district owes its origin. The first Anglican clergyman who arrived in the colony was the Rev. David Johns, who after several years of residence returned to England at the death of his wife. A trio of Mr. Cunningham's children were baptized by this reverend