

Ladies.

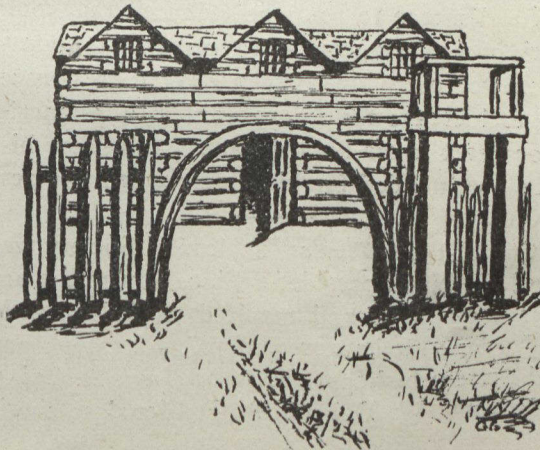


A three-mile drive through an alkali swamp, another three miles along sandy trails, and there before us, half-way up the bank of the Assiniboine Valley, rise the red gables of the old Ft. P.—, originally an important Hudson Bay Post. The old Fort is now made up of a cluster of three buildings, all of whitewashed logs, against which the red gables of the former residence and office of the factor stand out in strong relief; to one side stands the Hudson Bay store, to the other a large tumble-down building with a few narrow windows—this, we are told, was formerly

used as a kind of prison. Now all is deserted, save for a few settlers, among them an old Hudson Bay man in the store. A quaint picture he is indeed as he comes from the dim interior of the building, his long silvery beard bearing witness to his seventy years of age scarcely borne out by his sturdy, upright carriage.

Deserted as the old fort now is, we can picture it as it must have been seventy-five years ago; the little colony of hardy Scotch, by whom the place was founded; the constant coming and going of the Indians in their brightly colored blankets, the men stalking along with their guns, the squaws trudging behind with the precious load of skins. The old look-out, and the remains of the stockade call to our minds, the days when the safety of the sturdy pioneers perhaps depended upon these rude fortifications.

Things are changed to-day. We see an Indian coming through the gateway, in his blue jean overalls, his slouch hat, with his indolent, spiritless bearing,



AN OLD FORT IN THE ASSINIBOINE VALLEY.