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TRINITY

A SHORT HISTORY OF WILLIAM KELSEN, ESQ. OF HEREFORD, ENGLAND, AND TRINITY, NEWFOUNDLAND.

About the middle of the 18th century, there lived in the parish of Hereford, in the County of Hereford, England, a well-to-do gentleman-farmer by the name of George Kelson.

The family name had come down to him unaltered through two or three generations; and his careful every day life in the performance of his threefold duties--to his God, his neighbour, and himself, was an assurance to all who had dealings with him, that the family name would never suffer through him. In his first year of practical farming, after the death of his father and mother, George Kelson had lived alone in the fine old house in which he was born, and which his father had left to him. During the year, he tried hard to get himself to believe that the faithful old housekeeper, who studied his every comfort, was all sufficient for the happiness of what he referred to, as his quiet home life.

I repeat, he tried hard to get himself to believe this; but how far he was from actually doing so, would have often become apparent to others, if they could have seen him in the library during the winter evenings, with the book that he had taken from the shelves to read, closed on his knee, and his troubled expression indicative of efforts on his part to settle some very important question.

Though no one knew it but himself a decided change had come to his thoughts and plans, since Mary Hefford had visited the farm, a few weeks before, in company with her mother,

and her father Colonel Hefford. He was glad that they had accepted his invitation to come back again in the near future, and to spend a week at the aristocratic old farm house, that in its arrangements and equipment was suggestive of many comforts and luxuries, not usually found in such surroundings. He decided that so far as he was concerned, nothing should be left undone that would tend to make the visit of the Colonel and his family thoroughly enjoyable.

The visit was an enjoyable one. The dining room that had been used only in a restricted way since George Kelson had taken personal charge of the house, had been thoroughly restored to its requirements for the use of a larger number of people. As George personally inspected it all just before his guests arrived, the old familiar things, and covers laid for four, reminded him of days gone by, when all this was in evidence at every meal. As he took Mrs. Hefford in to dinner, followed by the Colonel and his daughter, and was seated at the table with Mrs. Hefford on his right, and the Colonel on his left, and Miss Hefford at the other end of the table, it reminded him of the days when the dear old father and mother, and his mother and self made up that number.

The presence of Miss Hefford in his dear old mother's place at the table, reminded him of the fitness of things and practically decided for him the question that had been worrying him for the past fortnight. During the evening he seized the first opportunity to assure Miss Hefford of his love for her, and asked her to become his wife. For several reasons it was not difficult for her to say yes, and with her father and mother's consent, the last few days of their visit were spent in making plans for their future.

It was a happy day in the parish of Hereford when Mr. Kelson returned to it with his bride, and they took up their permanent residence in the old

farm house. The next three years were very happy ones to them, for God had blessed them with two healthy boys, who at their baptism were given the names of William and Joseph respectively, and from that date every effort was made to develop their physical, mental and spiritual parts. During the next ten years two girls and a boy were added to the family; but the two elder boys--William and Joseph--were inseparable in their daily life; and when their school days were ended, and the question of their work in life was to be decided, it was not surprising to their parents to find that the boys had one vocation in common--they would fit themselves practically for a business life, and then put their knowledge into practice, in one of Britain's colonies across the sea, of which they had heard so much at school.

Hereford was too far inland for them to learn anything practical about the sea; so by the kindness of an uncle who had spent some years in colonial development, they went down into Gloucester, and secured positions in a shipping office, in the seaport town of Bristol; where during the next two years, a thorough knowledge of colonial business was obtained. In the year 1808 William and Joseph Kelson left Bristol in the brig "Gannet" consigned to Robert Slade, Trinity, Newfoundland, with the promise of a position there. It was an opportune time for William Kelson to arrive in Trinity, for Mr. Joseph Gover, who had been Slade's agent for years severed his connection with the business that year, and William Kelson was appointed to succeed him. (His brother Joseph went north to Labrador, where for several years he carried on a successful business, married, and raised a large family at "Pinware," and died there.)

From the first day of Mr. Kelson's taking charge of Slade's business, he fully realized the responsibilities, developed a sturdiness of character, and a brusqueness of manner, that had come down in his blood from his grandfather. This brusqueness, however, was largely superficial, and underneath it all was the kindest of hearts that he had inherited from his mother.

As the representative of the firm of Robert Slade, and in his daily life as a citizen, he took a deep interest in everything that had for its object the spiritual and temporal benefit of the people of Trinity. In the old books that contain the record of the doings of those years, Mr. Kelson's name appears for years as Church Warden; and in every subscription list of money collected for church and school upkeep and extension, his name appears as one of the largest subscribers.

His peculiarities of action, which are embodied in several stories that are still told of him, and which are as deeply interesting, as they are highly amusing, only go to show how human and natural he was.

Those who knew him best, maintain that a shortness of temper, and a "crankiness" that he so often exhibited, were results of his living so much alone in bachelor life, and that those traits of character largely disappeared after he had taken unto himself a wife. It was nothing new to see him going to the Parsonage in the evenings to spend a pleasant hour with Rev. John Clinch; but when those visits became increasingly frequent, people began to suspect that there was some other attraction besides that of the Parson.

Mr. Clinch's only daughter was a child of eleven years at the time; but there was living with the family a Miss Ann Hipditch. Upon her rested the responsibility of admitting visitors on the front door, and later to open the door when the visitors were leaving. The fact, that when Mr. Kelson came and went he was in no great hurry, either to pass on to the drawing room, or to go out into the night; and that the delays were attended with whispering, and other sounds, which though new to the parsonage hall, the Island of Newfoundland, were not unnatural, confirmed the suspicions that Mr. Kelson was getting wiser as he grew older, and that Mrs. Clinch would soon have to look for another maid.

That all this became a stern reality, the following entry in the old Church Register will attest:--

1818--January 29th. Married William Kelson, of the parish of Hereford, in the County of Hereford, England, and Ann Hipditch of Trinity, in

"Witnesses: John Hipditch, Charles Ainsworth."

The highest compliment that could be paid by a business firm to one of its employees, was paid to Mr. Kelson by Mr. Robert Slade--Mr. Kelson was offered a partnership in the business, and upon his accepting it, the firm name of Slade and Kelson became familiar to the people of Trinity and elsewhere.

In 1837 came the death of Mr. Robert Slade, and the end of the firm of Slade and Kelson.

The business was reorganized under the name of Robert Slade and Co., and with Mr. Kelson again as agent, the business went on with unflinching regularity, and supposed prosperity. Then, however, though the public were unaware of it, times in Slade's business had begun to change, and profits to disappear.

In 1860, like a bolt from the blue, came the announcement that Slade & Co., had failed, with heavy liabilities and but few assets. Before this Mr. Kelson had retired from the business, and he and Mrs. Kelson had gone to live in the house which stands to-day next to the shop of Mr. Sam Grant. After Mrs. Kelson was called to rest, Mr. Kelson's niece, Miss Emily Bayly

kept house for him. About that time someone had revived the subject of "perpetual motion," and Mr. Kelson got himself to believe that it was possible of achievement, and that he could produce a machine that would embody all its supposed possibilities. This provided him with an occupation of the deepest interest to him in his declining years, till in 1866 God called him to rest.

At his request, his body was laid beside that of his wife in the little Wesleyan Cemetery in Trinity, and one head-stone marks the two graves. (I intended to give the inscription on this stone; but when this article was ready for the press, the stone was covered with several feet of snow.)

N.B.--William Kelson, Jr. (whose name is often confused with that of William Kelson, Sr.) was a son of the Joseph Kelson who did business on the Labrador. Hence William Kelson, Jr., was a nephew of William Kelson, Sr., and the father of our Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Pittman of today. When Joseph Kelson died on the Labrador, his brother William in Trinity adopted his two children, William and Mary, and they came to Trinity to live. Mary married Robert Bayly in 1828 and died in 1848, and William was

married to Elizabeth Mary Ash in 1838, and was lost in Trinity Bay in 1855.

A FEW ITEMS OF LOCAL HISTORY OF TRINITY.

1806--Joseph Gover of Weymouth, Dorset, England, married Grace Waterman. Mr. Gover was Agent for Slade at this time. His family were, Thomas, Joseph, John, Margaret, and Camilla. After Mr. Gover's death in 1821, his widow married a James Penry of English Harbour in 1830.

The Sextons were an old family in Trinity. The first Sexton came from Dorset, England. George House Sr., came from Bonavista in 1832, and married Elizabeth Sexton.

Property at Hog's Nose, near that of the House family was once owned by Samuel Finch. He went to Canada and John Pittman, step-brother to Finch succeeded to the property. John Pittman was a son of Benjamin Pittman and married Ann Tocher.

The property of James Collis and Robert White at Hog's Nose, was at one time the property of Jenkins & Archer, who did business there. Thos. Archer died in 1783.

Captain Thomas Verge lived on Tack's Hill; owned a schooner and carried on a business. He and his son were drowned when his schooner was lost between Trinity and St. John's. Henry Burnell (the Constable) and his son, and a prisoner who was being taken to St. John's, were drowned at the same time. Dennis Cashman and William Stoneman were the only persons saved.

CHILDREN OF REV. JOHN CLINCH. I have been asked to give the names of the children of Rev. John and Hannah Clinch, who were born in Trinity. They were as follows:--Edward Jenner, born 1876; Thomas 1788; George Charles Routh 1790; John 1798 (died in infancy); John 1796; Frederick Garland 1799; Mary Elizabeth 1803; Joseph Hart 1808. N.B.--Mary Elizabeth became the wife of Rev. William Bullock; and John signed his calling as surgeon. His father came to Newfoundland as a surgeon.

A FEW BAPTISMS OF EIGHTY YEARS AGO.

1842--Aquila, child of Martin and Eliza Miller, Trouty. (Died February, 1823.)

1843--Richard, child of Richard and Hannah Vivian, Cat Cove.

1849--Richard, child of Richard and Mary Cook, Trinity.

1848--Jane, child of George and Marianne Bellows, Trinity.

1849--Silva, child of James and Ann Senack, Trouty.

GEORGE GARLAND'S BIBLE AND PRAYER BOOK.

In preparing my week-end items, just when I believe that I have called attention to everything that I can possibly gather about the Garland's in Trinity, something else turns up, and I am glad. This time it is George Garland's Bible and Prayer Book. Several of our people will remember having seen it in its depository in the Garland's Pew of St. Paul's Church over forty years ago; but owing to its having been kept in careful custody all those years, many of our younger people know nothing about it. The book is 1 1/2 inches long, 5 inches wide, and 3 1/4 inches thick. It is bound in dark red leather, edged and clasped with heavy ornamental brass. It contains the Prayer Book, the Bible, Canticles in Metre, Family Prayers, and the whole Book of Psalms in Metre by Sternhold and Hopkins. The history of the Book is during his stay in Lisbon. On the 5th Parish Church of St. Toland, Southwark, England, in 1795 by Henry Martin Esq. In 1816 it had become the property of George Garland Jr., during his stay in Lisbon. On the fly-leaf is the following:--

Compreto In Lisbon para duzentos reis. Anno Domini 1816

In hoc signo vinces. GEORGE GARLAND, JR.

Whilset on a fly-leaf at the back of the book is the following:--"Livro de oracao's pertencendo a George Garland; Anno de Jesu Christo, 1816."

It was brought by George Garland to Trinity, and used by him in St. Paul's Church until he left for England in 1833 (The year he died). The book was left in the Garland Pew in St. Paul's, and in 1840, when the tablet (that is now in the Mortuary Chapel) was erected over the family pew in memory of George Garland, the book was placed in a drawer of the seat under the tablet, and the following note was appended to it by Thomas Drawbridge. "It is requested that this book should never be taken out of the seat, over which is its original owner's monument." Owing to years of faithful use, the binding of

the book was broken, and the leaves were loose. Twenty-six years after this, Miss Margaret Deborah Garland visited Trinity, and having found her Uncle's book in this condition, she took it back to England with her, and handed it over to her father, John Bingley Garland. This action on her part, and her father's action afterwards are told on a title page of the book, in the hand writing of John Bingley Garland, as follows:--

"This Bible was brought from the 'Church in Trinity, Newfoundland, by my youngest daughter, 'Margaret Deborah Garland, 'she having seen it there in a very 'injured state, and obtained permis- 'sion to bring it to me; being con- 'fined from the Manuscript Writing 'on some of the leaves, that I would 'again return it to the Church, with 'binding restored, returning the origi- 'nal manuscript, and requesting 'that such Bible, thus newly bound, 'should remain in the Church, agree- 'ably with the wishes expressed. The 'Bible was delivered to me by my 'daughter on the 29th Day of Novem- 'ber, 1867, being the 76th anniversary 'of my birthday

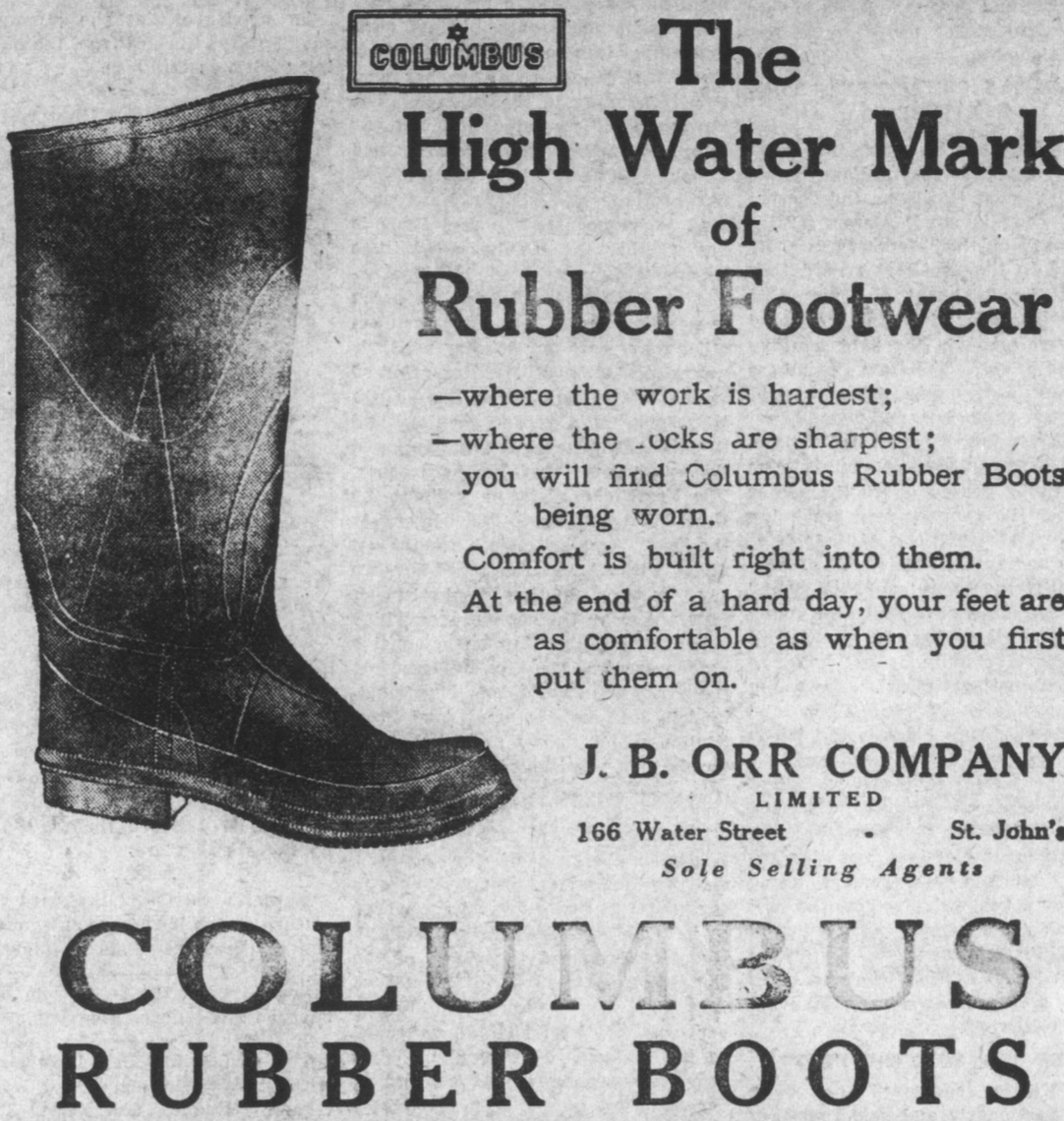
(Sgd.) J. Bingley Garland, the elder brother of George Garland."

"Stone Cottage, near Wimboris, Dorset."

The book, thus beautifully re-bound and placed in a joshua brass-bound oak box, was sent back to Trinity, to the rector and Warden of Old St. Paul's. They accepted it in trust and guaranteed to have it carefully preserved amongst the other book treasures of the Church, and this has been done to date. (I shall be glad if some one will kindly send me a translation of the Portuguese words in the book.) In the preface to the Metrical Psalms as given at the end of the book, is the following note; which, though somewhat old fashion in its phraseology is not without its timely suggestions for our private homes in our day and generation, for the development of Christian manhood:--

"These Metrical Psalms are set forth to be sung in all Churches, of all the people together, before and after Morning and Evening Prayer; and also--in private houses, for their Godly solace and comfort; lay- 'ing apart all ungodly songs and ballads, which tend only to the nourish- 'ing of vice, and corrupting of youth."

April 7th, 1823. --W. J. L.



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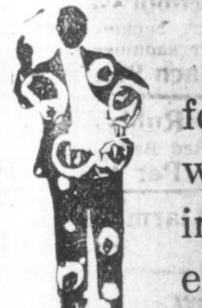
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