

A Great Christian Layman

In
Connection with
Missions

of
Wiwemikong, Saugeen
and
Cape Croker

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MR. AND MRS. JOHN ELDRIDGE IN 1891

A Great Christian Layman

A MEMOIR
OF
JOHN ELDRIDGE
HEPWORTH, ONT.

BY
Rev. M. V. KELLY, C.S.B.

JESUIT
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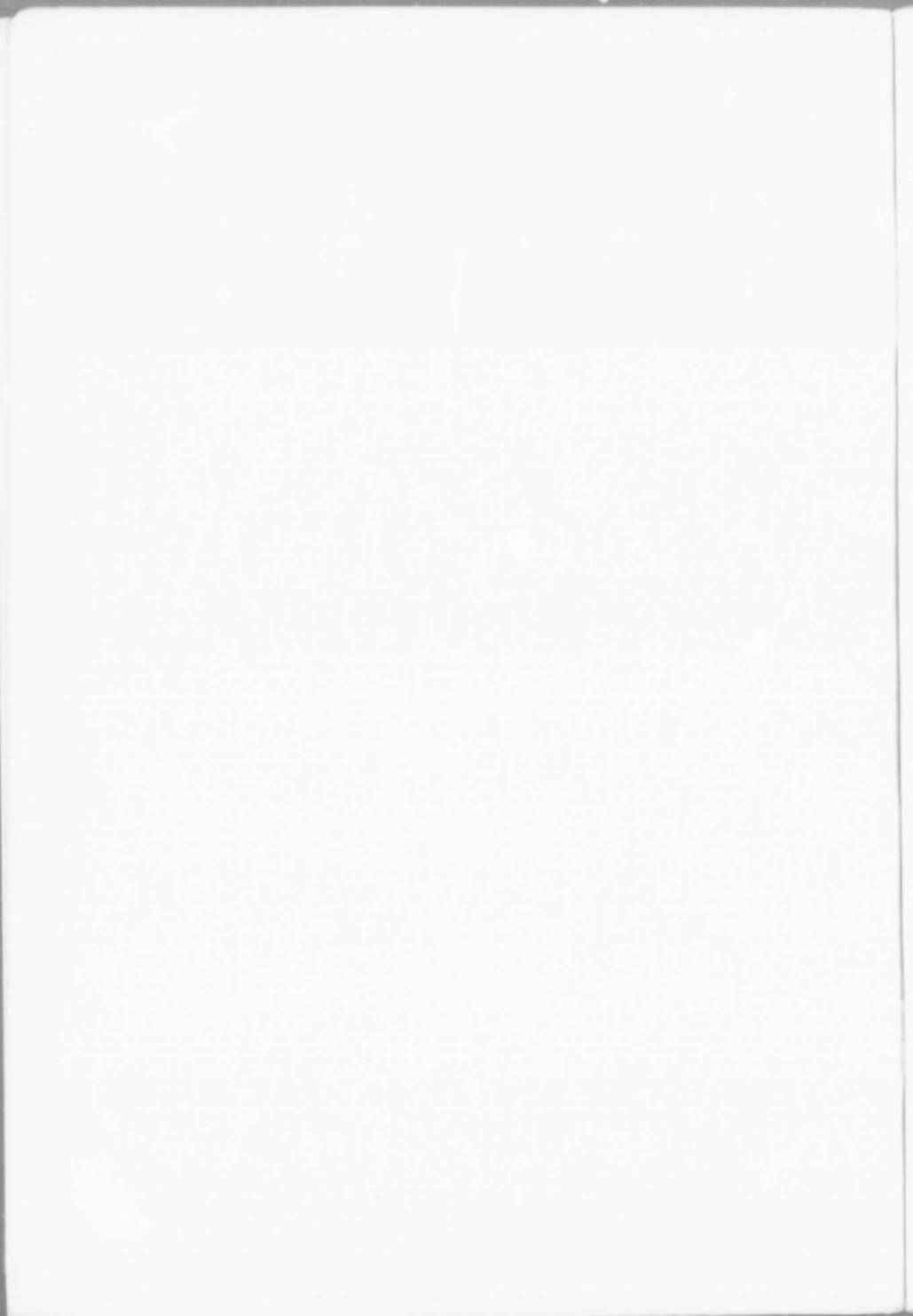
THE ELDRIDGE COAT OF ARMS

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JOHN ELDRIDGE

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you."—St. Matt.

THE title of this essay will probably suggest the name of a learned professor, who endeavored to inculcate sound doctrine among his following, of a public man of outstanding ability, fearlessly fighting that just measures might prevail, or, perhaps, of a wealthy benefactor, who united to strict integrity in a successful business career, a willingness to distribute among the deserving poor, the goods his competency and energy accumulated. In reality it will tell of none of these, but of a greater,—of a greater, if an exemplary life, a desire to do the best in the cause of God, an heroic resolve which neither trials nor difficulties could intimidate, and deeds accomplished worthy of unceasing admiration, are the elements of true greatness. It will tell of one who in the obscurity of Ontario farm life did things no less deserving of attention than the achievements of philanthropists whose names are receiving the homage of all classes of society.

ANCESTRY

Among the few families in England who steadfastly preserved the faith throughout the long, dark period following upon the so-called "Reformation" were the Eldridge's of Sussex County. For centuries they had owned a large estate in the vicinity of the Southdown Mountains, where members of the family have continued to reside down to our day, though long since despoiled of their early possessions. In the glorious days of Merrie England, the name was associated with a rare success in the manufacture of church-bells, the world being indebted to this distinguished firm for the first use of silver in the process. The *Sussex Daily News* of November 13th, 1907, supplies the following information: "It will be remembered that nine years ago, after the fire in the old church at Preston, one of the bells there was found engraved with the ancient name of Eldridge. This family were famous all over the country, as far back as the fifteenth century, for the sweet tones of their church bells, of which, it is believed, as many as ninety in Sussex alone yet remain."

Their splendid business was ruined in the usurpations of Cromwell. The tyrant found in Sussex a family in whose stout hearts there was something more highly prized than possessions and lands and the cherished grandeur of an ancient heritage, and when the dread alternative was offered, they stood by the teachings of Holy Faith at the sacrifice of all that earth could offer, and even at the peril of life itself. Thereafter, the name was heard of in law, architecture, civil engineering and agriculture. In this latter occupation we find a John Eldridge and his wife, Elizabeth Stevenson, engaged, near the Sussex village of Hurst in the early part of the nineteenth century. Here their third and youngest son was born March 13th, 1837. The boy's mother died when he was but six years of age, his father when he was thirteen, one brother soon after, and the other was carried off in the cholera plague at the age of twenty-one. Previous to his father's death, John junior, had received such education as the primary schools of an English country district in those days could give. From that time forward he was obliged to make his way alone.

EARLY EMPLOYMENTS

In search of a livelihood, he made his way to the metropolis and found occupation in the firm of Leftwick & Co., wholesale and retail produce merchants. Clerking, delivering goods to the suburbs, taking messages to the bank were among the varied duties of his first business experience. Amid the conditions which obtain almost universally in the mercantile establishments of our day, it is difficult to understand the position of a London clerk in the early fifties. His hours were from 4.30 a.m. to 11 and 12 at night; the work was continuous and exhausting, and the pay was very small. Even with the miserable pittance allowed him at the commencement he contrived to make ends meet, while his capacity to adapt himself to every form of undertaking soon induced his employers to improve his position. His career there was never forgotten by the firm-members of his day, who ever afterwards spoke to their staff of this singularly gifted and faithful apprentice. Through generations of clerks and employees has been handed down the story of a young girl looking for employment in the store. So rare were opportunities at that time, that her shoes

were actually worn out in the hopeless search. While she was being dismissed by a manager with the usual "not needed here," young Eldridge gave her the price of a pair of shoes, and canvassed the other employees to obtain sufficient to pay for lodgings until some occupation could be found. In gratitude for the generous response, the young lady returned not many days later to say she had at last secured work.

CROSSES THE ATLANTIC

But reward for effort and efficiency came very slowly in the London of that date, and the subject of our sketch at the age of nineteen resolved to seek his fortune across the Atlantic. The city of Cleveland he made his destination, in the hope of finding there certain relatives who had preceded him, a hope which was never realized. He had actually booked passage on the *Ocean Queen*, but being advised that she was in the hands of a reckless captain, prudently cancelled the engagement. The *Ocean Queen* foundered in mid-ocean.

In Cleveland he looked for employment with the firm of Hussey & McBride, copper-smelters,

and was entrusted with the care of Mr. Hussey's large property on Euclid Avenue. By at least one Cleveland family of those days, the memory of this young Englishman has been kept green. He had become aware that a widow in the domestic service of the place was striving to maintain her two children in a convent boarding-school. Convinced that their Christian training depended on the effort, and realizing that the undertaking was beyond the poor woman's means, he regularly made contributions to the good work from the limited surplus his own modest salary provided. It is worthy of record that one of the employees of Hussey & McBride at that time was John D. Rockefeller. Certainly none of their associates have claimed the discernment necessary to forecast the very divergent careers awaiting two young men who worked side by side with apparently equal ability and energy. But, in any case, how much soever later opportunities may have been responsible for this divergence, no one need regret that though the one did attain a world-wide reputation by amassing untold wealth, the other with never more than a modest competency spent his days doing good.

I am not in a position to say authoritatively what aims or circumstances accounted for the next move. It is not at all unlikely, however, that the son of old England, in whose home to the end an elegantly framed copy of Magna Charta' hung prominent to view, cherished a secret feeling that life in a British colony would be more congenial than elsewhere, whatever the relative advantages for material prosperity. At all events the year 1859 found him located in London, Ont., foreman in a grain elevator. In addition to the duties entailed in assuming general charge, he was at times expected to look after construction operations, an experience which stood him in good stead in the more important undertakings of later life. The employer who profitted by his services in London was wont to remark: "Given adequate capital there is really no limit to the enterprises one might engage in, were he sure of assistants at once as competent and reliable as John Eldridge."

HIS MARRIAGE

It was during those years also, that he made the acquaintance of Miss Bridget Costello, a

young woman from Tipperary who, like so many of her country people of that time, looked for more favorable opportunities in the Western world. No one at all familiar with the events of subsequent years has any doubt that John Eldridge, every day for the remainder of his life, blessed that morning of January 9th, 1866, when their marriage ceremony was performed in St. Peter's Cathedral. Bright, cheerful, energetic, intelligent, capable in every way, the young woman he had chosen for a life partner was ever the congenial companion, the faithful helpmate, the unflinching support of a deserving husband. Equally courageous under all circumstances, equally affable to all, Mrs. Eldridge was always equal to her part, and continues to-day, at the completion of nearly four score winters and summers, the most interesting figure in that very interesting home, so long lit up by the sunshine of her presence.

AN HEROIC RESOLUTION

The first eleven years of their married life, spent in London, were blessed with health, prosperity and happiness. They made many friends,

a young family growing up around them gave every sign of promise, the oldest, John and George, attended the parochial school, and on every side the outlook was of a smiling future. Nevertheless, they were contemplating a change—a change which none of their friends suspected, and few would understand. You know what Shakespeare says:

“There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life,
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”

The hour of this devoted young father and mother had come. God was calling them elsewhere. Upon their decision depended the future of their children and their children's children. One great truth had gradually dawned upon them. If they would do justice to the young family with which they had been blessed by God, a city was not the place for them. They saw in the realization of their purpose, it is true, hardships to be faced which their present situation would never impose; but they saw also boys and girls breathing in physical vigor from that pure country air, growing up in habits of industry and thoughtfulness and a sense

of responsibility, protected alike against the frivolous tendencies that come of too much pleasure-seeking, and against all manner of dangerous temptations in which city life everywhere abounds. The heroism of their determination can only be measured by remembering how many parents have realized this great truth just as fully as they, and how few can bring themselves to carry out what that realization dictates. Out of the hundred fathers and mothers willing to admit the superior advantages guaranteed to youth in a country-rearing, scarcely do we find one ready to sacrifice his or her present prospects and comfort in the interests of the little ones committed by heaven to their care. How few habituated to the ease, pastime, distractions, and excitements of city life, can be induced either by fear of consequences on the one hand or hope of gain on the other, to exchange that city-life for life on a farm? It is not, therefore, without feelings of wonder and admiration and awe that the writer dwells upon the unusual devotion and heroic purpose of John Eldridge and his wife at this critical hour of their history.

Nor was this all. With the limited means they had been gradually accumulating, there

was no possibility of acquiring cleared, improved land, not too far away. Very well, then, they will do what is possible; they will go further away; for if capital is necessary to procure property near London, with years of hardship and privation they will eventually have a farm by felling the trees and clearing away the virgin forest. After some enquiry this formidable prospect was offered them in the County of Bruce.

BRAVING THE FOREST

Among the privations which they had foreseen and felt keenly, both in anticipation and reality, was the long distance they should find themselves from a church. Owen Sound was fifteen miles away; the roads at that date were never good and at some seasons barely fit for travel at all. They would be there, however, when possible, and in the beginning, with conveyances not the most commodious, that possibility was fraught with much difficulty.

Everyone reminds us of the paramount value of home training in religion, as in everything else. At least, everyone subscribes to the theory, and does not hesitate to affirm that without it the

best efforts of schools and of every possible form of organization is largely ineffective. If any further confirmation of the theory were needed, it might be worth while examining the case we are now considering. Nothing was neglected in the Eldridge home. The schools available were distinctly without religious instruction, and the distance from church precluded the possibility of receiving anything more than a minimum assistance there. But looking back over a rather varied experience in the ministry, covering a period of nearly thirty years, I should not know where to look for a more truly exemplary Christian family, exemplary in faith and practice, than I found in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eldridge.

1877-89 Owen Sound was the nearest point to reach Mass on Sunday. The opening at the latter date of a small church in Wiarton where the Holy Sacrifice was offered one Sunday in the month, reduced the distance by four miles. Even yet, in that northern district, there are days—several in succession—when no one attempts to travel the roads. But the Sunday morning during all those years when the unfathomable mud or unclimbable snowdrifts prevented a

well-filled buggy or sleigh making its eleven miles from the Eldridge home in time for Mass was such that the Catholic residents of the town felt themselves dispensed from making their way up the hill to the church.

DIFFICULTIES UNFORESEEN

But there were other difficulties attending the making of a home in the Amabel township of those days. A farmer cannot get along without neighbors, much less a farmer making his way through the forest. Apart entirely from the loneliness of his position, he needs their assistance in a mutual interchange of labor. None of the settlers were in sympathy with Mr. Eldridge's religious convictions. They had never been acquainted with a Catholic people. From one source or another they had, from earliest remembrance, heard strange allegations against them. As yet they had no reason to distrust impressions so received, and were therefore inclined to look with suspicion upon the first representative of that religion it was their fate to encounter. Although of a friendly disposition, and actuated by the best intentions in their

relations with those about them, they deemed it a safer policy to stand aloof from this newcomer. With his usual good sense Mr. Eldridge knew exactly how best to meet this distressing situation. Sooner or later they would discover that his religion raised no barrier against friendly feeling and friendly dealing, and he would await the change in patience. He and his family would live up strictly to every duty inspired by faith and the church's laws; they would be at the service of their neighbors in every way Christian Charity should dictate and then leave the rest to God. As always happens, under like circumstances, results far surpassed the most sanguine expectations. We are hearing a great deal nowadays of the lay apostolate. Certain well disposed Catholics, are apparently anxious to know in what way they, as men of the world, can be of service to God and His Church. The question is fully answered here. There is really no measuring the great service to religion rendered by Mr. Eldridge among the people with whom he was called upon to associate, and his chief instrument in its execution was the fearless example of virtues natural and supernatural every good Christian is expected to give.

CONQUEST COMPLETE

So the good work went on. The great trees were being felled and transported to the mills, the stubborn stumps were being uprooted, the fresh earth was tilled and yielding abundant returns, the farm stock was gradually increasing, everyone inside and outside was working hard, and meanwhile something about this yet unknown family, so cheerful in their humble, honest toil, was ingratiating them with everyone who had an opportunity to come near and observe. At length conviction took root that in this retiring, unobtrusive settler, whatever his religious persuasions, the locality had become possessed of a treasure. "Eldridge never strikes a blow that does not tell" was a common saying among them. It was a reference to the superior intelligence brought to bear upon everything he attempted. They saw an unusual mechanical skill, they saw repeated success rewarding capable management, and they marvelled that this man from the city could so soon give his neighbors lessons in the science of agriculture. His judgment in practical matters, his quiet, well-studied decisions impressed them more and more. But especially did they realize that here

was a man of character and highest principle, of stainless integrity, of breadth of view, incapable of anything petty or irritating, and with the modesty which always goes with greatness, ready to respect the intentions and feelings of others while apparently forgetful of his own. Almost without being aware of it he had become their acknowledged leader. Whatever public movement was on foot, he was looked to as its guiding spirit. Any appointment in their gift was his, if he chose to accept. Through a conviction that his energies could render greater service in other fields, he persistently declined all prominence in politics or municipal administration, though for years he continued an invaluable member of the school board.

HOME-MAKING: HOSPITALITY

The popularity which Mr. and Mrs. Eldridge had so rapidly attained in the community, leads me to speak of another great success in their lives,—perhaps the greatest,—a success which even their most distant acquaintances learned to appreciate. Is it too much to say that when God calls a man and woman to the married state, their greatest earthly ambition should be the

making of a real home? Whether in providing for the comfort and pastime of their children, or for the entertainment of their friends, the bright, genial, atmosphere of a home had, with Mr. and Mrs. Eldridge, been from the beginning an aim of paramount importance. Although everything about it spoke of industry and attention, the children were constantly encouraged to cultivate music, to read the best books, and take part in any activity which made for improvement and culture. Few farmers can look upon summer as anything but a season of unremitting toil. Mr. Eldridge saw that nothing went behind on his farm, and still arranged to maintain a summer cottage on Lake Huron, where all were given time to spend a holiday. There was a home in which the father and mother never seemed to grow old, and to the end they continued to join in the amusements their sons and daughters enjoyed. Ennui, dull hours, were practically unknown. No one ever paid a visit there, however short, without a desire to return. Their friends were legion; there was welcome for all. At any time, any day, any hour, that same bright smile greeted the caller, that atmosphere of ease and contentment and cheer prolonged his stay.

IN THE CAUSE OF RELIGION

But above all others was this generous hospitality to priests' and religious. Mr. Eldridge and his family stood ever ready to do any service possible for those who called in the name of the Church. We simply imposed on them, one and all, and asked their assistance to an extent we should not have dared expect of others. One duty which invariably repeated itself during the long winters, was a sick call to the Indian Reserve at Cape Croker, forty miles distant from Owen Sound. Father Buckley—since gone to his reward—usually accepted the task, and, especially when the weather was particularly severe or the roads particularly bad, never hesitated asking Mr. Eldridge to accompany him. The wish, even unexpressed, was equal to a command, and at times when the Wiarion physician, with only half the journey to make, declared the roads impassable and refused to go further, the intrepid missionary and his faithful companion worked their way against all obstacles until they found themselves at the bedside of the poor, expiring Indian.

The Eldridge residence was three miles west

of the village of Hepworth. In time a few Catholic families had settled in the vicinity. For their accommodation it was then permitted to hold a station at intervals in Mr. Eldridge's house, a circumstance which brought untold consolation to this pious, devoted family. Providence was rewarding them for generosity in His cause; but what they could never have dreamed of, the day was actually coming when, through an eventuation I shall speak of later, the Jesuit father attending the Saugeen Indians, should find it convenient to say Mass the first Friday of every month in the Eldridge home, and thus make it possible at last for the entire family to become monthly communicants.

In this connection, I wish to record that it was once my privilege to celebrate High Mass in this house. The home possessed not only a piano for everyday pastime and entertainment, but also an organ for use when the occasion called for sacred music. The family were a choir in themselves. I am probably safe in saying that that morning and a Christmas midnight a year or two later, are the only instances in Canadian missionary history of High Mass being celebrated in a station-house.

HE BUILDS A CHURCH

I have remarked above that the time came in Amabel township when any appointment in the gift of its residents or its administration awaited the acceptance of Mr. Eldridge. Although usually preferring to escape such duties, he did agree in 1891—providentially as the event showed—to take the census in the district which included the Saugeen Reserve. To his great surprise between forty-five and fifty of this population were Catholic, some of whom concealing the fact until assured that the census-taker was of their faith. It seems that at some earlier date a few Catholics had wandered to the Reserve, intermarried with the occupants and remained there. Though never discovered by missionaries, some of these families preserved a marked religious spirit and practice in their private lives. Just why information of their presence on the Reserve had never come through any previous census has not been stated. Mr. Eldridge immediately communicated with the Jesuit house at Wikwemikong and one of the fathers was despatched to visit them.

Meanwhile a new interest had come into the life of the earnest Amabel farmer. The gentle

simplicity and innocence of these unknown, neglected children of a savage race appealed to him. Much like the great St. Gregory who, upon seeing the fair, blue-eyed Anglo-Saxon boys for sale in the Roman slave market, yearned for the evangelization of their nation, so the heart of this good man longed to do something for his newly-made and apparently deserving acquaintances. They should have a church of their own; he must see if one cannot be erected. The government was approached but declined assistance. Refusal only served to steel Mr. Eldridge's determination. He would collect funds; but where? His few Catholic acquaintances—none of whom were rich—contributed generously, but the sum so accumulated was barely sufficient for a commencement. Well, if money were not forthcoming, voluntary labor might take its place, and with the return of spring he bade his wife and family look after farming operations at home, while he and the Indians were erecting the church. Satisfied with the coarse fare and uninviting lodgings procurable in one of their cabins, and assuming the rôle of architect, chief carpenter and business manager, he remained six full months on the Reserve, to see his efforts

crowned by the completion of a neat, well-appointed church, free from debt and encumbrance. It was formally opened by the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Hamilton in the Fall of 1896.

Some time after, the government decided to make a small grant, on receipt of which Mr. Eldridge went back to the Reserve, gathered his Indians together and erected an addition in the rear, which served as a vestry and living quarters for the priest, who from that time forward regularly visited the mission, spending several days there on each occasion.

We hear of city residents giving much time to attending meetings, serving on committees, and making speeches, in behalf of some good cause, we find a few among them willing to go among the needy and unfortunate and degenerate, and making personal sacrifices to effect their amelioration, we sometimes hear of generous benefactions on the part of the wealthy, but who will find us a man, with the responsibility of an extensive business requiring constant attention, leave everything in the hands of Providence for six long months and amid discomforts of every kind, amid repeated difficulties and inconveniences, struggle from early morn till late at night

that fifty obscure, forgotten Indians might have a place of worship?

The results of this achievement were very far-reaching in the spiritual life of three congregations. On that same Bruce Peninsula was also the Indian Reserve of Cape Croker, which for years previous a Jesuit missionary had contrived to visit every Spring and Fall. For the remainder of the year, embracing periods of five or six months, they were without attendance unless when the call came from one in danger of death. But soon the Saugeen mission lately established, Cape Croker and a colony on Christian Island were considered sufficient territory for one missionary, and accordingly a Jesuit father from Wikwemikong was from thenceforth permanently located at Cape Croker. For the past seventeen years the Indians in these three districts have enjoyed the regular attendance of a real apostle.

STILL BUILDING CHURCHES

Father Cadot soon found it necessary to replace the modest church at Cape Croker by a larger and much more handsome structure. The project at once appealed to Mr. Eldridge's zeal

and betaking himself to the Cape at the pastor's solicitations, assisted in making the plans and held himself in readiness for every kind of service until the work was completed.

It was not long after this that Father Cadot contemplated the erection of a church at Honey Harbor, trusting in the same forces for the realization of his project. Once more Mr. Eldridge had consented to mobilize the energies and resources of the native Red Men in the prosecution of this good work, but before a beginning could be made, the call of the Great Master came and Mr. Eldridge was confined to bed with an illness which was to end only in death.

What I have now to reveal in connection with this subject is perhaps still unknown to the members of his family. In the year 1904 Mr. Eldridge told me of his dreams for the future. He was then in his sixty-seventh year, his long continued success in farming had assured him a competence, his sons and daughters he would soon have placed in a position to make their own way, and he would retire. But where? Not to the neighboring town, among his many long-tried friends, not to the city with its ever-recurring interest and pastimes, but to a residence he

would provide for himself and Mrs. Eldridge close to the church at Cape Croker. There they would assist at daily Mass; as for the rest, he had no desire to be idle. He would joyfully devote what years of leisure God should spare him in this life to the service of the Indians. He would go among them day by day, endeavoring to improve their crude methods of cultivating the soil, would train them in the use of necessary implements and tools, suggest methods of bettering their home-conditions, of beautifying home surroundings by some attention to flower gardens and other forms of decoration, and by having them realize what are the normal rewards of toil, stimulate habits of intelligent application and industry. The glorious idea was defeated by the early approach of death. Could we have seen its fulfilment even through a short decade of years, there is no telling what one so admirably fitted for the work might have accomplished. With his rare capacity for guiding any undertaking of a practical nature, his moral influence ever effective and seemingly irresistible, the respect and confidence he had long since won for himself in the hearts of these simple people, and above all with his unbridled devotion to the

cause, any result seemed possible, though already more than three-score years and ten, would have well-silvered that contracting brow. Perhaps it is not yet too late to make something of the idea. Representatives of governments at times do make efforts, more or less intelligent, more or less sincere, to elevate the poor Indian. If another such man as John Eldridge can be found willing to undertake the work, no price will be too great to pay for his services.

A CHURCH IN HEPWORTH

By the year 1903 the number of families in and around Hepworth had increased to fourteen, situated, some eight, some thirteen miles from Wiarton. Mr. Eldridge proposed the erection of a church in Hepworth. The writer who was then in charge of the missions attended from Owen Sound, discouraged the proposal, and for the time nothing came of it. Even at this late hour he feels an explanation is due the parties interested. Most of the families had come from districts inhabited chiefly by people of their own faith, where everyone was within easy reach of a

church and parochial school. He had no desire to see others exchange such advantages for anything Hepworth could hope to offer, a possibility in which the interests of children especially would be involved, and there was a danger of a church in Hepworth being an invitation to other Catholic families to make that very change. However, he was succeeded a year or two later by a pastor of more kindly and sanguine temperament, who at once acceded to Mr. Eldridge's proposal. As might have been expected, Mr. Eldridge was willing to assume the entire burden of seeing his project to a finish. From his non-Catholic neighbors as well as from the little congregation generous contributions came in. Cash subscriptions were supplemented by unstinted voluntary labor. Mr. Eldridge gave all his time and attention to the work. The blessing and formal opening of the church took place November 14th, 1906, on which occasion the pastor, Rev. J. B. Collins, C.S.B. was handed the key of a beautiful little church, finished in every detail, with vestments, plate and all requisite furnishings, and, what was not less interesting, practically free of debt.

THE END

The life work of this good man was approaching its end. What was to be a prolonged illness overtook him early in the year 1908. Years of zealous activity were to be crowned by months of patient suffering, the final pledge of a Redeemer's favor on the road that leads to a Kingdom. Both Basilian and Jesuit fathers who had so repeatedly availed themselves of his hospitality, his support and his friendship contrived to be with him frequently during this period. Thus it was that from his death-bed he was privileged to assist at Mass and receive Communion, the Holy Sacrifice being offered up in his house sometimes for five or six days in succession. It had been his joy to erect abodes in which his Sacramental Lord might dwell on earth, and now, morning after morning, that Sacred Presence is pleased to come and be with him, when he is nearing the eternal goal, and the last great struggle is almost at hand. The end came September 20th, 1908.

Looked at from the most worldly point of view his life had been a great success. Blessed with continued health and vigor, prosperous in his business activities, finding contentment and

happiness in the interest his daily occupations afforded, surrounded by a dutiful and affectionate family, enjoying the esteem and devotion of ever-increasing hosts of friends—what more could the most worldly-ambitious ask for? From earliest years his one desire was to serve his Master faithfully and await the reward which was promised in another world, and he had received in addition abundant reward on earth also. The Master had kept His word. He had sought first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things were added unto him.

Three sons and three daughters survive; John on a farm nearby, William a lumber-merchant in Warton, Mrs. G. H. McClarty of Owen Sound and Mrs. E. J. Downs of Hepworth; George and Elizabeth with their mother in the old homestead,—all honored descendents of an honored race, all worthy sons and daughters of a great and good father and mother. Let us hope and pray that they and their children and their childrens' children may preserve in their homes those beautiful Christian traditions

which through generations in the past, even in the face of an unsparing opposition, inspired a fearless and a generous devotion to the cause of God.