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The Coming of the Barr Colonists

The “All-British” Colony that Became Lloydminster

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THE COMING OF THE BARR COLONISTS

(The "All-British" Colony that became Lloydminster)

APPENDIX: *The Diary of a Barr Colonist describing the Journey and the Settlement.*

By Rev. EDMUND H. OLIVER, Ph.D., F.R.S.C., Principal, St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, Sask.

The founding of no settlement in the Northwest Territories ever attracted greater attention than did the "All-British Colony" that in the spring of 1903 located in the Saskatchewan Valley. The projected name for the settlement was "Britannia Colony". But that designation never gained permanent acceptance. At the time the newcomers were generally called "The Barr Colonists" after the promoter of the enterprise, Rev. I. M. Barr. It was the Chaplain, Rev. George Exton Lloyd, now Bishop of Saskatchewan, rather than the Leader of the Colony, who ultimately gave his name to the settlement—Lloydminster.

In the literature that he issued for the promotion of the enterprise Rev. I. M. Barr, formerly a curate at St. Saviour's Church, Hanley Road, Tollington Park, London, N., styled himself as founder and proprietor. He claimed to have had experience in Western Canada as early as 1874. It is alleged that he was concerned with a doubtful colonization scheme in the vicinity of Yorkton. This in itself may not have been greatly to his discredit for in the eighties many colonization companies failed in the territories. In not a few instances the lack of success was due to ignorance of western conditions and inadequate capital for development.

Mr. Barr was himself a Canadian. Born in Halton County, Ontario, he was, it was claimed, the son of a Church of Scotland minister. On completing his education he entered the Church of England. After ordination he had charge of parishes in Ontario at Exeter, Pt. Edward, and Woodstock. For some years he served as a missionary to the Indians of the Tuscarora Reserve. At the conclusion of the Boer War he was curate at St. Saviour's Church. The unsatisfactory labour conditions of post-war England were turning young men, and among them members of Barr's congregation, to study the opportunities offered by the Colonies.

Barr sought to exploit this interest by forming a colonization enterprise for his native land. To further his plans he visited Canada in the autumn of 1902 and interviewed the Deputy Minister of the Interior, the Commissioner of Immigration for the Northwest, and Third Vice-President of the Canadian Northern Railway, and other prominent Canadians. He succeeded in securing the reservation of some sixteen townships lying north of township 48 and extending to the North Saskatchewan river and east of the 4th principal meridian. These townships lay along the projected line of the Canadian Northern Railway. The homesteads in these townships were to be reserved for entry to Barr's colonists till June 1, 1903. The colonists were, further, entrusted by the Canadian Pacific Railway with the sale of their lands, that is, the usual odd numbered sections in the reserve.

On his return to England Barr issued glowing accounts of the West and of his colonizing undertaking "under the sanction of the Canadian Government". Prospects of work were held out and assurances given that the Canadian Northern Railway would "traverse our settlement and be ready to haul out the harvest of 1903". A scheme of hospital insurance was outlined. Barr, also, was the author of a pamphlet entitled 'British Settlements in Manitoba and the Territories'.

Barr's scheme for inducing English settlers to come to Canada was supported by letters to the English papers by Rev. George E. Lloyd. Rev. Mr. Lloyd was a graduate of Wycliffe College, Toronto. He had enlisted for service at the time of the Half-Breed Uprising of 1885. He had been wounded at Cut Knife Hill in the same valley of the Saskatchewan to which Barr was now inviting colonists. At this time Rev. Mr. Lloyd was Organizing Secretary of the Colonial and Continental Church Society. This society guaranteed him a salary of at least \$1,250 a year for five years to minister to the spiritual needs of the colonists.

The point of departure from the railway was to be Saskatoon. In a pamphlet issued at Christmas, 1902, Barr stated, "At Saskatoon there will be provided horses, wagons, harness and provisions for the journey, also coverings for the wagons, camp stools and other necessary things. Here the party will use their tents for a few days while getting outfitted for trekking to the settlement. . . . I have arranged to have covered light wagons to come from Battleford to Saskatoon on my arrival to convey the women and children rapidly through to Battleford, where they will be housed and cared for until the men of the party shall reach the settlement, when they may be brought forward. . . . It is not as a clergyman, although I happen to be one, that I am promoting emigration to my native land, but simply as a man who wishes to see Canada remain British". It had been well both for Barr and other members of the enterprise had another clause in his manifesto been followed to the letter: "Every man will handle his own money".

Further, Barr's suggestions were, in the main, wise: "Families should possess £100 as a rule, especially when there are several children; this over and above the travelling expenses. Young unmarried men may venture with but little over travelling expenses, as there will be plenty of work in the country at good wages". "It is my intention," he wrote, "to introduce a few experienced Canadian and American farmers into the settlement, whose farms may prove object lessons to the less experienced of our British settlers. I am already in touch with a number who wish to join our ranks. This part of the scheme has met with much

favour from the deputy minister of the Interior to whom I submitted it. These farmers, however, will be of British descent." In this connection should be mentioned the selection by the Dominion Government of Mr. A. A. M. Dale, of South Qu'Appelle, as farm instructor for the colony. Barr also organized for his colony the British Canadian Settlements Stores Syndicate, shares in which he sold at £1.

Barr concluded his pamphlet with a challenging appeal:—

"I do not desire to present a picture that is highly rose-coloured. There are many difficulties and drawbacks to be encountered, but for the brave man obstacles are something to be overcome, stepping-stones to victory and success. Britons have always been the great colonizers. Let it not be said that we are the degenerate sons of brave and masterful sires.

"Let me say in brief that you cannot pick up nuggets of gold on the surface of the soil—you must dig for the wealth of the land. Hard work and plenty of it, lies before you; more or less of hardship, and, not seldom, privations. You must sometimes sweat, and sometimes you may suffer from the cold. You shall not always find everything to your hand. Many of the comforts of England you must leave behind. Some years the crop may not be a perfect success, may even prove a failure. It may even be that hail may sometimes strike your crop and destroy part of it. Sickness may come to you there as here, and also losses. Don't expect to be rich in a day. It is not possible anywhere except for a few fortunate ones. If you are afraid, stay at home—don't come to Canada. It is a land of brave and conquering men. But if you are honest and brave, and intend to work hard, if you purpose to lead the temperate and strenuous life, then come and cast in your lot with us, and we will stand together and win".

For two hours before midnight of March 30, 1903, the departure platforms at Euston station, London, England were packed. The starting notices read,—“Emigrants, Liverpool”. Signs were in evidence,—“Platforms 12, 13 and 14. Rev. I. M. Barr's special trains to Liverpool for s.s. *Lake Manitoba*”. An English despatch of the time thus describes the scene:—

"They were no common emigrants, these. All of them were of a fairly well-to-do appearance. Many carriages contained whole family parties of father, mother, and children, some of the latter hardly more than babes in arms. But young men, in the prime of youth, formed the larger proportion. For three hours before the hour of departure last night they came pouring into the station-yard with their goods and chattels and a host of friends to bid them farewell. Animated and apparently in the best of spirits, the crowd pushed along to where the three special Liverpool boat trains stood waiting. They planted their baggage, plastered with the bright-colored Beaver Line labels, on seats of vantage in the compartments, and then turned to chat with their friends. Long before midnight these latter formed with the colonists themselves a crowd of between 4,000 and 5,000 persons. The scene was in every way a remarkable one. Although the crowd was chiefly in hilarious good spirits, occasionally, like an April sky, it was under a spell of gloom. But a party of new arrivals would come to the station with a burst of cheering which was taken up along the whole line to the banishment of any signs of depression. Many busied themselves scanning their fellow passengers and drawing hasty conclusions. A young man, who, waiting for the departure, walked backwards and forwards alone, had the unmistakable appearance of one who had seen better days. Some of the men among the future colonists had no one to see them off and these sat stoically smoking their pipes. A few concertina players enlivened the passing minutes as the hands of the clock crept towards midnight, at which hour the specials were due to depart. With spirited voice the crowd sang, 'Auld Lang Syne,' 'The Old Folks at Home,' and the latest popular and appropriate ditty, 'We've made up our minds to sail away.' There

were emotional scenes when the strident voices of the porters shouted, 'Take your seats,' and the last parting embrace was given, and men held the last clasp of each other's hands. In quick succession each train moved slowly out of the station, amidst a tremendous outburst of cheering and a wild waving of hats and handkerchiefs. Then the crowd drifted silently homewards. Women held handkerchiefs in their hands, and here and there, an aged mother passed out leaning heavily on her husband's arm."

Some 2,300 colonists boarded the ss. *Lake Manitoba* on March 31, 1903, in what was little less than a scramble. The tonnage and capacity of the steamer would have been inadequate had the number of passengers been only half what it was. Other parties of colonists sailed by other steamers, notably the ss. *Megantic* and ss. *Lake Simcoe*. Nearly every county in England was represented among these colonists. About one hundred came from Ireland and Scotland each. London contributed a large number. "It is a mistake", declared Dr. Robbins to the *Manitoba Free Press*, "to confound these hard-working colonists with the sons of rich men reared in the lap of luxury, who had failed in the past in Canada. A good proportion are agriculturists, other are mechanics, and all come out ready and expecting to work. There are a number of sons of clergymen but these young men have been hardened by cricket and football in the public schools for a life of outdoor labour".

The destination of the ship was St. John, N.B. Alterations were made in the steamer to merge the first and second classes. General intercourse was permitted between all passengers to enable them to gain information from each other about the method of work to be employed on the opening up of the settlement. The fare to St. John was, for cabin £8, for steerage £5. 10. The railway fare to Saskatoon was \$25.75.

In the meantime the citizens of the territories and particularly of Saskatoon, then a village, had been apprised of the coming of the Barr colonists. The Saskatoon *Phoenix*, as the name of that paper was then spelled, carried an editorial on January 9, 1903: "It is especially important that this class of settlers be well looked after. Coming as they do from a country of high cultivation they are not so well adapted for the roughing of pioneer life which they have never seen before and do not understand". Writing under date of January 23, 1903, from Kirkkuneon, Scotland, Thomas Copland of the Temperance Colonization Society warned the people of Saskatoon to expect at least 2,000 persons in the party. "It behooves Saskatoon to bestir itself and see that such a large and sudden influx of people is not only welcomed (that would be a sure thing in any event) but that provisions is made for them. Shelter will be wanted most of all, but the Immigration Department should see to that, except where parties want hotel or house accommodation. Bread and provisions will also be in order, and where the means of conveying so large a party to their destination are to come from will be a puzzle requiring solution".

On March 22 George Douglas, C. Lucas, F.C. Belson, and J. H. Tanner arrived in Saskatoon as an advance party for the Barr colonists. They made arrangements to send in a large stock of provisions and staple goods, and to erect a store. They intimated that a large supply of tents would be forwarded to be set up at Saskatoon and other points. Mr. A. A. M. Dale, Farm Instructor for the colony, arrived in Saskatoon on April 14.

The first group of Barr colonists to reach Saskatoon arrived on April 8, 1903. They had sailed by the *Megantic*. Tents were pitched on Spadina Crescent for their accommodation. "A better impression has not been

created by any of the many batches of immigrants who have arrived at this point," said the Saskatoon *Phoenix*, April 10, 1903. The main body arrived the following week—three contingents on April 17 and the fourth on April 18. No serious mishap had occurred on the way except that one man had had his leg cut off through jumping off the train at a station in Ontario. An account of the coming of the colonists is given in the Saskatoon *Phoenix*, April 24, 1903: "At 11 a.m. the toot of the double headers was heard and immediately from all sides there was a wild rush for the Canadian Pacific depot.¹ The platforms had been roped in, and no one was allowed to pass, so box cars and other points of vantage were quickly taken possession of. After the usual delay at the bridge (uncoupling the extra engine) the train pulled in with a few extra toots and a good hearty cheer from the Saskatoonites. The train consisted of 14 coaches and one box car and had 510 of the party on board. After a very short delay they commenced to leave the cars, and, without waiting to use the regular exit, they shot their baggage through the windows and in a great many cases the owners came the same way." Then Rev. John Robbins gave the order to line up in front of the platform. Mr. C. W. Speers, Immigration Agent, extended to them a cordial welcome on behalf of the people of the country and the Government. He reminded them that there would be difficulties to face, but they belonged to a race whose sons never turned back in the face of trouble. Land guides and agents would be provided. The land to which they were going was one really flowing with milk and honey. It only required their strong arms to cultivate it and bring it to perfection. Hearty applause followed with three cheers for the King, for the Dominion Government, for Mr. Speers and Mr. Barr. The single men were given the bell tents for their accommodation. The larger tents were assigned to families. "Then a long stream of men, women and children could be seen wending their way over the prairies, all carrying some necessary article,—kettles, frying pans, rugs or umbrellas—but only one cane was in evidence. Babies were plentiful, including the little Canadian girl born on the train near Ottawa. Things were soon shipshape, and when the mill whistle sounded noon most of the party were eating their dinners. The kettles were soon filled with good clean ice, the immense blocks with which the river is still filled being a source of wonder and admiration. One could see there was a strange military element about. The quick way holes were dug and fires started in such a manner that there was no waste and every scrap of heat did its duty showed beyond a doubt that the hands that built them had done the same thing on the South African Veldt, or in other lands where Britain's soldiers had been called upon to uphold the honour of the old flag." The name given to their temporary Saskatoon home was Canvas Town, "Yes, it's deuced like Aldershot," said an ex-soldier among the colonists.

The axe was plainly a new tool to some of the immigrants. One man stood in a tub to prevent injury to his feet while cutting. It was solemnly recorded in the local Saskatoon press that in one case two were "busy working a bucksaw as if it were a regular cross-cut."

Some of the second contingent left the train at Winnipeg and other points. As a consequence the second and third contingents arrived on one train about 6 o'clock on April 17. This train "carried 410 souls in eleven coaches; also one car of dogs." This party received the same welcome and gave the same cheers, as the first contingent. They remained on board the train till the following morning.

¹ Where the C.N.R. depot now stands.

The fourth and last contingent arrived at 6 a.m. on Saturday, April 18. Twelve coaches brought 517 persons. There were also two cars of effects. On this train arrived the chaplain, Rev. G. E. Lloyd. Barr arrived in the evening of the same day.

"All are well conducted," reported the *Phoenix* in the following week, "and the police have had little or no trouble. There have been some amusing scenes and the ravine between the two camps has caused some awkward falls. Then the ox-driving ability of some of the proud owners has caused much merriment. It is said that one young Englishman, with a rather tender heart, hit one of his team in the eye, whereupon he immediately begged the animal's pardon, and said he did not mean to do it. There were, of course, lots of folks willing to give the drivers instructions, some misleading; but the Englishman is, if anything, very cautious, and, with the assistance of the South African veterans, will soon master the difficulty. That there are quite a few sportsmen in the camp can be easily seen by the constant shooting at targets, and early one morning a couple of enterprising ones were seen returning from the Nutana side of the river with three pairs of jack rabbits."

"Quite a fancy price has been paid for some horses and several excellent teams have been purchased by the immigrants, but the majority claim that horses in Canada are too high." This admission on the part of a Saskatoon paper has reference to the sudden rise in price of commodities in Saskatoon. During the few days the colonists were encamped at that place to wait for baggage and to secure their outfits, prices soared to enormous heights. One Saskatoon firm alone sold 500 stoves to the colonists. Rich harvests at enhanced prices were reaped by the merchants and dealers of Saskatoon. There was a temporary store set up in a tent for the colony itself—The Saskatchewan Valley Emporium. "There should be," declared the *Phoenix*, "some one whose duty it would be to see that these people are protected from sharks. There are men who are so intently bent on making money that they do not hesitate to ask \$225 for oxen that they know are worth only \$150 and horses are sold to these people by outsiders at prices the sellers would not have dared for shame's sake to have asked an old settler to pay. If these people will take things quietly, not get in too big a hurry, follow the advice of those acting on behalf of the Government, and not expect too much all at once, they will come out all right. There are great difficulties before the colony; the transportation of nearly 2,000 people by teams over 160 miles of country is no easy task, but once the people get settled and get to work and begin to have some returns for their labour they will forget all about the trials and hardships, and those who stay with it will one day bless God that they ever came to Canada. There are abundant resources in our soil which, when developed, will give a far better living to the faithful toiler than he ever enjoyed in the old country. All that is necessary is grace, grit and gumption."

The Barr colonists created a splendid impression. The general verdict, as expressed at the time, was: "Taken all through, the Barr colonists are the very best, and will be a credit to the Old Land, as well as to Canada and are just the sort of settlers needed to develop the great Canadian Northwest."

The camp fires by the river resounded with songs. The women were pronounced to be "neat, bright and cheerful, and yet not afraid of work." The children were "all remarkably intelligent and in perfect health." The city children among them could be noticed by the great interest they took

in what they called the "moo cows." The men were all hardy fellows who, "if they have not done hard and heavy work, have yet plenty of muscle. the result of gymnasium, exercise, etc. They have mechanics of all classes among them and soldiers who are used to roughing it, and at least one man-of-warsman."

Divine service was held on Sunday, April 19, in a large tent. "The singing, led by a pianette, violins, etc., was hearty and good." Ven. Archdeacon McKay, the veteran missionary to the Indians, preached and took for his texts the words, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." He declared that not only were they going to make the land blossom like a rose, but they were going to build churches, schools and missions,—all to the glory of their Heavenly Father. At 3 p.m. there was a children's service. In the evening Rev. Mr. Lloyd dealt with Moses and the journey of the Israelites. His text was, "Then gather the people together,"¹ He told them they were now within sight of their "promised land." He discussed the prospects of building a new church. Already he had about £280 subscribed by friends in the Old Land. When the time came he intended to call a bee of all hands and put up buildings in which they could gather together. One of the hymns chosen was, "Through the night of doubt and sorrow, onward goes the pilgrim band." The *Phoenix* records, "Many women, and men also, were weeping, doubtless thinking of the old ivy-covered churches in the Old Land and the dear ones left behind."

After a few days' delay the trek began to the colony. A well-equipped field hospital with three cots went in advance. The larger hospital was to follow in the rear with two doctors, a matron and two nurses. Battleford was the first important objective. Most of the party took the greater part of a week to cover the distance. They stopped at the Government tents which were set up en route, or selected their own location and pitched camp as night fell. Swampy ground impeded them in the first portion of their journey. More than one party was stuck and obliged to unload at least three times in the first day. Some half dozen of the colonists had insisted on taking their pianos as they were heirlooms or gifts, and these caused endless trouble. Those who had purchased oxen found them difficult to manage. In many cases their harness was badly fitted. There were instances where waggons were overturned and the occupants pitched into the streams. The death of a horse proved serious to owners who had not many dollars to spare. Some colonists, getting provoked at their slow-paced oxen, purchased horses from the Russian settlement. But there were diversions of a more pleasant character. The sportsmen were successful in securing ducks, prairie chicken and other game. The Doukhobours showed a fine open-handed, if completely vegetarian, hospitality. "The neatness and comfort of their log and plaster houses caused much favourable comment, and many of the travellers were careful to note the way in which buildings in course of construction were being put together." The marquees and stoves provided by the Government along the route were highly appreciated but they were found to be too far apart from each other. Only those with specially good teams found it possible to camp each succeeding night at the spots chosen by the representatives of the government. Many took the opportunity of making bread and baking it

¹ This sermon in part Rev. Mr. Lloyd, then Principal Lloyd, repeated in September, 1909, at the opening of Emmanuel College in Saskatoon and the founding of the University of Saskatchewan.

at the stoves. Those who brought no flour and had not provided sufficient bread at the start were obliged to obtain it either from their friends or, at what were considered ruinous prices, from some of the homesteads along the way.

The difficulties of descent and ascent of Eagle and Beaver creeks taxed their ingenuity and patience.

Some expressed disappointment at the appearance of Battleford, which they expected to find a second Winnipeg. The last few miles of hilly road before that town was reached proved especially trying. The halt of two days, however, restored their spirits, for nothing could daunt them long.

The journey from Battleford to the "Promised Land" required all the courage of the colonists. The road was terribly rough and the weather bitter. Had it not been for the Government tents many must have died from cold and hunger. Such, at any rate, was the report they sent back home. Some were on the point of collapse when the settlement was ultimately reached.

In the meantime what of Barr himself? He had come into much disfavour on the voyage through his failure to provide lectures on Canada. There is little doubt that the enterprise had proved too great for his capacities. He had started with the idea of directing some twenty or thirty families of emigrating members of his own congregation to go to Canada. The scope of the movement had unexpectedly widened till more than two thousand had sailed. Barr began to show signs of incompetence and even of knavery. Many of the party, afraid to encounter the possible losses and unknown dangers of a prairie journey of two hundred miles, entrusted their money to his keeping and failed to receive from him any acknowledgement or a receipt for their deposits. Barr, who had himself purchased supplies in large quantities, conspired to increase the prices of such necessaries as oats. The newspapers began to discuss the gains he would reap from the enterprise,— "The Rev. Mr. Barr will make enormous profit out of his all-British community idea. Besides the \$5 per capita from the Government he gets \$7 per head from the steamship companies and a commission on supplies. The diary of a highly respected Irish resident of Lloydminster has the following item under date of May 14, 1903: Mr. Barr is a 'nasty' man. Can we live at his prices? Oats \$5 a sack; flour \$7 a sack; potatoes \$7 a sack; sugar 15 cents a pound; butter 45 cents a pound."

There was a gathering storm of indignation. The feeling against Barr assumed a serious aspect. There was the famous "democrat" departure of Barr by night. A meeting of the colonists was hurriedly called one Saturday afternoon in May. By unanimous resolution Barr was deposed from the leadership and Rev. Mr. Lloyd and a committee appointed to act in his place. Representatives armed with powers of attorney were sent to prevent the withdrawal of deposits in Battleford banks. Barr at first positively declined to step aside or to open the books for inspection. He, however, changed his mind and handed in his resignation in writing. There is a tradition that Barr narrowly escaped being hanged. Barr himself told a newspaper correspondent that he had been warned that it was not safe for him to return to the Colony and that his life was in danger. The Battle River bridge was for a time patrolled by colonists to prevent his escape. Barr himself claimed that the principal cause of the troubles and dissatisfaction was the large number of the colonists who had arrived without sufficient capital.

The diary quoted above contains the following memorandum: "Messrs. Lloyd, Still and Jones arrive in special buggy from Battleford at 10 o'clock with great news about the colony and Mr. Barr who is said to be gone home."

No words perhaps could describe the flight of the reverend gentleman with finer sarcasm than those quoted,—'said to be gone home'. The *Saskatoon Phoenix* of May 29, 1903, contains the following editorial note: "Mr. Barr has 'resigned' and 'my people' can now sing with heart and voice 'Britons never shall be slaves'."

Early in July Barr left Saskatoon for Winnipeg. At Regina some Englishmen threw rotten eggs at him. Barr himself was missed, but the porter on the train received one in the eye.

There were difficulties enough in the early days of the settlement. The old survey was nearly obliterated and slow progress was made in the work of locating the Colony. A bad prairie fire swept over, burning some outfits. The high prices which the colonists attributed to the Barr store continued after the departure of Barr and till the coming of the railway. The frosts menaced their crops. Building material proved scarce and expensive in spite of Barr's plans to have lumber and all house and building supplies brought by rafts from Edmonton to Fort Pitt.

We have seen that at the request of the colonists Rev. G. E. Lloyd came to the assistance of the colony. A well-earned tribute to his services was paid in the name they gave their town—Lloydminster. He encouraged and cheered them during their months of privation, pioneering and adaptation. By November the majority had erected comfortable houses, but some were still in tents. There was a lack of an adequate fuel supply. The one article they could use was poplar and there was not enough of that.

It is interesting to compare the leaders' estimate of the work of Barr. Dr. Robbins compared Barr's plan for a colony to that of William Penn in Pennsylvania. In August, 1903, Barr himself went to Ottawa to press his claims for a bonus for bringing over the settlers. He admitted frankly that he would not repeat the experiment, but would rather see the immigrants settle among the Canadians and adopt their ways. Speaking of the financial aspect of the enterprise, he said:—

"My commissions on the steamship tickets were all I got, and they amounted to \$13,000. I charged no direct fee to the colonists although I might have done so. Of the amount I received over \$8,000 was spent in my London office in clerk hire, postage and printing, rent and other expenses, and incidental and unforeseen expenses have more than used up the \$5,000 left. I was not in this work out of feelings of pure philanthropy, and would think it would only be fair that I should have my services appreciated."

By September Rev. G. E. Lloyd was in the East to interview officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway regarding the possibility of bringing out another colony of British immigrants the following year. Of the Barr colony he said: "The colonists are now well satisfied, as they would have been at first had it not been for Mr. Barr's inordinate greed. He wanted to make a dollar out of everything he sold them. I can give you an instance. When we arrived Mr. Barr bought up all the oats off 14 farms, in fact, the whole oat supply. For these oats he paid 40 cents a bushel although 23½ cents was the average price in the market. When he bought them he sold them to his own people at \$1 a bushel. Flour he sold at \$6.25 for a sack of 88 pounds. Everything else was the same, and the result was a mutiny. The colonists refused to have anything further

to do with Mr. Barr and he returned East, after getting only as far as Battleford. He was never in the colony at all. Well, after he left we got things in something like order, and the colonists became more satisfied. We started our little settlement which the immigrants have been kind enough to call Lloydminster, and now we have taken up 600 homesteads, and have 1,000 people in the colony. The trouble of the Barr party was not the fault of Canada or the Government, but was directly due to Mr. Barr."

"Nothing," said Dr. Amos, "came of Mr. Barr's medical scheme. Members presented their subscription cards, but the hospital and nurses proved as theoretical as my salary. Of course, we helped one another, and monetary considerations scarcely existed. My work was constant and pretty monotonous—every day I was stitching up axe wounds! You see in those days the men were strangers to that most useful tool".

The chief defect in the "All-British" colony consisted in its primary characteristic—it was "All-British". Barr had promised an admixture of other settlers acquainted with Territorial conditions. He himself believed that it would have been better "to settle among the Canadians and adopt their ways".

The colony was too isolated. Plenty of good land could have been secured without going 150 miles from Saskatoon. But the colony was on the route of the Canadian Northern Railway and it was expected that the isolation would be only temporary. And the further advantage was anticipated that the settlers would secure work at good wages in the construction of the railway. And further, as Dr. Robbins told the *Toronto Globe* on May 9, 1903: "This was not thought to be an insuperable hardship when it was remembered that the early settlers of Ontario who came from the Old Country and found themselves in the Queen's Bush on the Huron Tract surrounded by forests without hope of a railway at least for a generation."

Undoubtedly there was a complete demoralization of arrangements. The settlers were abruptly thrown upon their own resources to cope with problems that had never been anticipated. Many had depended too implicitly upon Barr. Individual initiative was sadly lacking. The colony manifested a perfect mania for calling meetings to discuss questions which each individual should have settled for himself. Too much trust was put in the principle of co-operation and in the debating of problems for the solution of which all were equally inexperienced and without resource.

Of the Barr colonists some 320 found work in Manitoba. Some remained at Regina, Moose Jaw, Dundurn and Saskatoon. Considerable groups settled in the Jack Fish Lake country, some at Bresaylor, others at Eagle Hills and along the route of the Canadian Northern Railway. The Department of the Interior threw open the balance of the land in the settlement for entry by others who did not belong to the colony. This wise policy operated for the welfare of the community, for many of these later arrivals possessed more experience of Canadian conditions and their coming was of distinct benefit to those who had located earlier. With the coming of the railway came prosperity and an end to the chief hardships of isolation and pioneering. When the first locomotive came within sight of Lloydminster the Barr colonists "sang and wept for joy".

The "All-British" colony made a very definite contribution to the Canadian West. The notoriety which its affairs gained in England proved the best advertisement the Northwest Territories ever received. To its

association with the Barr colonists Saskatoon owes the impulse that enabled it to reap the full advantage of its splendid geographical situation. For Canada the most valuable contribution was the development of the country along the Canadian Northern Railway from Bresaylor to Vermilion.

For the colonists themselves, for those, at least, who persevered, there came prosperity and the establishment of homes on land that was their own. When the Great War came, from no part of the country was there a prompter or more enthusiastic response to the call to arms. This was to be expected. What, perhaps, was not to be expected, however, is that these Barr colonists have won great distinction even in the art of that very prairie agriculture of which, at their coming, they were so ignorant. Their distinction has been achieved both in grain growing and in stock raising. Lloydminster has won world's championships in oats and has produced "Wee Donald" the famous Clydesdale. One of the most famous of the farmers of the settlement was an engineer of London, a Barr colonist.

The colonists founded better than they dreamed.

APPENDIX

THE DIARY OF A BARR COLONIST DESCRIBING THE JOURNEY AND THE SETTLEMENT

The following are letters from Mr. and Mrs. William Rendell, covering the period April 11, 1903-November, 1905:—

S.S. LAKE SIMCOE,
April 11, 1903.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

As I am quite unable to write to each individually I have decided to write a *circular* letter giving you a brief account of our adventures on the voyage out to the new country. As for the trying ordeal of wishing our dear relatives and friends farewell (many of whom assembled at Newton Station to see the last of us and give us a cheery send off) we proceeded to Liverpool, travelling most comfortably in a "reserved carriage," the children quite happy and amused at their new experience as travellers. We duly arrived at Liverpool at 5.50, where we were met by officials of the Beaver Line and directed to a boarding-house all connected with the B.L. This boarding-house is evidently built and fitted up absolutely for the use and convenience of emigrants, scrupulously clean, but the bed rooms all divided off into small cubicles. Well, there was only one night to spend there (thank goodness) but it was a grand opportunity for studying human nature, all sorts and conditions of men and women and all nationalities. At 11 on April 8th we were conducted by brake to the docks. There we were met by our cousins Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Rendell, the latter accompanying us on the tender to see us safely on board the *Lake Simcoe*. For a while all was chaos. Bewildered looking groups sitting on their baggage waiting like sheep to be allotted their pennis. However, after a somewhat severe test of our patience we found ourselves safely housed in a very comfortable 4-berth cabin and before we had settled down and unpacked we were under weigh and fast leaving the shores of old England behind. We all turned in early, feeling very tired. The children were delighted with their little "bunks" and very quickly fell sound asleep. Our ship was pretty much on the roll coming up the Irish Channel. April 9th was a fair day but several of the passengers were already succumbing to the dreaded sea sickness. We spent a pleasant day sitting on deck watching the passing steamers and the fast receding Irish shore. By the time the bugle sounded for late dinner the *vacant* seats told their own tale and the following day, April 10th, the decks greatly resembled a battle field strewn with dead and dying. I am thankful to say I still kept up my reputation as a good sailor and was able to flit about and help some of the less fortunate. But the awful ground swell was fearfully trying, far worse than a rough sea. Saturday, April 11th, was a lovely calm morning with glorious blue sky and sunshine and as the day wore on, so the disabled ones gradually resurrected and the decks were quite lively, all sorts of games going on. It was indeed a grand day, and most thoroughly we enjoyed basking in the glorious sunshine. The children were delighted running about all over the deck as happy as could be. They both (Doris and Leslie) have proved capital little sailors, Doris

especially so. On Sunday (Easter Day) there was service in the saloon conducted by a clergyman, one of the passengers on board who came originally from Exmouth. Monday proved a terribly rough day, the waves breaking right over the ship. The climate had by this time undergone a great change and was bitterly cold. The captain had to proceed very cautiously owing to fog and icebergs. Two of the latter were passed during the night and sometimes they prove very dangerous. Tuesday we were surprised to see snow on the decks and it was so slippery it was impossible to keep your footing and every one had to seek shelter in the saloons. It seemed a long day, but it was an eventful one on board, a gentleman slipped over the stairs leading to the cabin and broke his leg. There was a birth on board and a foreigner in the steerage cut his throat and is not expected to live. In addition to all this they have discovered no less than 20 stowaways. To-day, Wednesday, we expect to sight land and very thankful we shall be. We have made friends with a very nice gentleman who is going up to our settlement. I only hope we may be near neighbours. His wife and family are coming out in June. Wed. night. There is a grand concert on to-night in aid of the Sailors' Widows and Orphans, after which there is to be a display of fireworks in honour of the record voyage. I think this must end my general letter for the present as there will be too much of a rush to-morrow to be able to add any more. My next letter will probably be from Saskatoon or the Settlement. I must ask your indulgence for this disjointed account, but my little ones do not leave me much free time.

My best wishes to all.

Yours very sincerely,

ALICE RENDELL.

SASKATOON, April 22.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

My letter this time will contain just a few startling incidents of emigrant experience. We landed at St. Johns last Wed. April 15th and were just rushed off the *Lake Simcoe* like a pack of hounds in a most disgraceful way quite late in the day. We had had the usual 12 o'clock meal and by this time the poor children were famished, all tired out with waiting to land, and they would not even give out a drop of milk for them until some of the passengers made a big disturbance and they were compelled at last to lay a meal. We were one and all faint, cold and weary. Mr. Barr and his party had landed a few days before on the *Manitoba* and the customs authorities had not been able to get clear of all the baggage and were not at all prepared to receive any more. Having made a record voyage the Beaver Line ought most certainly have kept us on board for the night but as were driven off the boat into the bitter sleet and snow with no possibility of getting on our prospective journey for hours. Well, we were landed miles from the Emigrant shed where we had to go and await the arrival of baggage owing to the proper dock being full. By way of filling up the time the women and children were safely deposited in a kind of café where they could get a concoction called *tea* but unrecognisable as far as flavor went. Presently we heard an alarm of fire and looking out of the window found the whole place black with smoke. It was not many minutes before we recognized that we were in peril and must beat a hasty retreat. The men were for the most part away hunting for baggage. For the moment I was terrified lest there might be a panic. Thank God my husband arrived on the scene and rescued us, Barnes rescuing the dog and baggage. The train was standing in the roadway and we had literally to be thrown in to escape the danger of being either scorched or stifled with the smoke. Once in safety we all felt like breaking down. It was a moment not soon to be forgotten. Well, we never got away from St. Johns until long past midnight on Thursday, owing to the dilatory way in which the luggage was discharged from the *Lake Simcoe*. It was simply scandalous. My husband could not find a single piece of all our baggage and they telephoned from the ship that everything was out of the hold, and after causing us and many others hours of anxiety and very great suffering and privation they found that any amount of baggage had been left in the hold owing to carelessness. After weary waiting my poor husband's patience was at last rewarded and our lost property duly checked and on board the train en route for Saskatoon. Well, I have heard a great deal about the travelling on the C.P.R., and being a shareholder too felt a special interest in it. I have always understood its cars and accommodation to be unequalled for *comfort* and *luxury*, but if you substitute for the two latter terms *discomfort* and *misery* you will be nearer the mark. I can only say that the 3rd class carriages on the English Railways are a king to the filthy cars we were huddled into. No sleeping accommodation and as to the lavatory arrangements they were simply a disgrace to civilization and in this misery we were boxed up to spend just one week. I do think for the sake of others it ought to be exposed.

With so many little children to be cared for it was a wonder there was not a serious outbreak of illness. Owing to the overcrowding of the carriages it was almost impossible to get at our provisions and many a time we have felt faint and famished with hunger to say nothing of starved with the cold. Our two little ones have proved themselves brave little souls facing already hunger and privations too numerous to mention. However, the most unfortunate part was I took a chill at St. Johns from exposure and a dreadful abscess formed in my face causing me terrible suffering for three days until it broke. But enough of the gloomy side. I cannot give much description of the country we passed thro. as pain has almost blinded me, but skirting some of the great lakes there were some grand bits of scenery but not a sign of life, no birds, no cattle, the vastness of it all just strikes one with awe.

Friday, April 24th. We have now been located in Saskatoon since Wed. eve. busy setting all in readiness to trek up to the Settlement. We have overtaken Mr. Barr and his party. They are all in a huge camp, but the children and I and Willie are in a *room*, just a shelter that is all. Yesterday I was greatly pleased to see my husband and our travelling companion and friend Mr. Young come in with smiling faces and say they had been successful in securing a splendid pair of horses and a wagon. These are ours as Mr. Young is not purchasing yet. The children and I went in the afternoon to see the new purchase. The horses are really beautiful animals, strong, powerful, good-looking, in fine condition and well "educated," one black and the other chestnut, a pair to be proud of. We have now horses, wagon and harness complete, the wagon has a large covered hood, so will act as house for a while. The next bit of good news is that we have had our land allotted to us and Mr. Barr has arranged that Mr. Young's homestead is within a *mile* of us. I need not say how mutually pleased we are at the prospect of being near neighbours, Mr. Young is in every respect such a perfect gentleman. He will go with us up to the Settlement. We hope to start tomorrow. Saturday,—we are only waiting now for our baggage. Sat. night,—still waiting for baggage. It does seem such a shame and all this irregularity on the world renowned C.P.R. There is absolutely *no* organization whatever. I certainly think we ought to get some compensation for all the extra expense this is causing us for it is a serious matter. We ought to have been in the Settlement by now, and of course everything here is an enormous price. Barnes has fixed up one of the camps to-day and will have the other up to-morrow, *Sunday*, when I think I shall start camping with the children as the weather is fine and dry. This morning we had a drive round in our carriage and pair much to the delight of the children. To cut a long story short we never got away from Saskatoon till Wednesday mid-day, April 29th. As to our journey up to Battleford I must condense my account as much as possible as I want to post this at Battleford where we arrived safely yesterday, *Sunday*, May 2nd, after 4½ days trekking through most perilous country. Some of the dykes we had to pass over were simply awful. Very few got through the journey without some serious loss of baggage or horses. I have a fair amount of courage but it has been taxed to the utmost the past few days. The children have been most plucky. The natives here think my husband and Barnes have done splendidly to have brought us thro. so well and free of all mishap. It has been bitterly cold camping out some nights, 2 deg. below freezing. Still we are alive and contemplate continuing our journey to the Settlement to-morrow. Tuesday, May 4th, another 70 miles. We have our camp stove and start and end the day with a good foundation of porridge which we all find a splendid thing to keep us warm and satisfied. This morning I rushed 1st thing to the P.O. but experienced a very bitter disappointment not *one* line from home, everyone with smiling faces eagerly devouring their home news. I must say I came away feeling very sad and lonely, as it is just a month now we left home. On our way my husband fired his first shot on Canadian soil and shot a fine duck and 3 prairie chicken, and to-day we are greatly looking forward to a nice savoury dinner, the first hot meal for many days. We cannot feel too thankful that we are all safe thus far. There have been so many mishaps and no wonder, the bogs, ravine and gullies are really fearful. Our good horses have done splendidly. We are quite enjoying a rest to-day. I am writing this in camp. The vastness of this country is wonderful and fearfully wild. I must now close my 2nd general letter written as before under great difficulties. Our thoughts are constantly wandering to our dear old friends and the dear old country, but although we have passed through so much already our courage is still undaunted. Dear friends, don't forget our address is P.O. Battleford, N.W.T., Canada. Love and kindest remembrances to all.

Yours as ever.

ALICE RENDELL.

May 15th, 1903.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

It seems a long time since I had a paper chat with you all, but my thoughts have been wandering many times to old times, old friends and the old country, causing me many a bitter pang of homesickness. We arrived here "Doris Court" our *own* estate yesterday, May 15th, and are now rejoicing that we are at last at our journey's end. On our reaching Mr. Barr's camp my husband went to survey the section of land allotted to him, but he was not at all satisfied and would have nothing to do with it, so Mr. Barr went with him to look in a different section which resulted most happily for my husband, and he is now perfectly satisfied with his location and considers he is the proud possessor of as fine a tract of land as is possible to procure. As I am writing I can look out at my tent door and see him quite happy doing his first bit of ploughing on his own soil. There is no doubt it is most beautiful land. We have plenty of wood and water which is a great boon and much to be thankful for. Our friend and travelling companion has the next land adjoining ours which is just as good. We are only half an hour's drive from the stores in Mr. Barr's camp, half a mile from the prospective station, and only a few minutes from the school site. I must now hark back a bit and tell you something of our bitter experience while trekking up to the Promised Land. On leaving Battleford we had a 90-mile journey through most awful country, shaking us all to pieces, sometimes charging across great streams and gullies, at others driving through thick scrub. After a long day's journey we have arrived at the government tent simply perished with cold and hunger. By the time we reached Mr. Barr's camp I think we all felt weary, worn and sad. My dear little Doris was taken ill the day before we arrived, and seeing how very feverish she was I was terribly anxious. However, Willie immediately sought out the camp Dr. She had a temperature of 104. I had to poultice her and thanks to the Dr.'s kind attention she soon pulled round but misfortune seemed to dog our footsteps. Barnes now sickened and we thought it necessary to call in medical advice. He was much concerned about him and told us he feared it would turn to pneumonia. Owing to skilful and careful treatment he managed to ward it off. I suppose all the worry and anxiety proved the last straw as far as I was concerned, for I was the next to collapse with a bad chill and bronchitis, from which I am still suffering together with an abscess in my face all of which combined makes me feel very low and out of sorts. I am writing this on May 17th, dear father's 83rd birthday, and my thoughts have been with him. Every good wish, and we hope he spent as happy a day as possible under the circumstances. Whilst in the Barr camp we were greatly terrified at the terrible prairie fires which simply surrounded us on all sides and we had some very narrow escapes of being burned out of "house and home." At one time every man in camp, every horse and every plough was ordered out to plough round the camp to save it from total destruction. It was terrible to witness a terrific wind carrying all before it and as night came on it really was an awful sight, the pitiless flames as far as eye could see in every direction. There was a lovely lot of grass on our land when Willie first came up to see it, but the next day it was all burnt, still all the lovely young grass is shooting up very quickly and at any rate we are now safe from fire of which I am very nervous after all I have witnessed. 18th of May,—Willie started ploughing on Mr. Young's land on Sat. morning and in the afternoon started on his own. This morning, Monday, he had made up his mind to a good day's work as both Willie and Mr. Young are anxious to get in a few oats for the horses, but alas both are disappointed for the *snow* is falling and we are thankful to keep in our tent by the fire. I think all the country around here will be very pretty in a short time. We are now hunting out a nice spot for our little house which we are anxious to get up as soon as possible. The great difficulty is to get lumber. There is a gentleman in Mr. Barr's camp who thinks of returning home. He has the plan of a little 4-room bungalow and the timber all complete for building it. If he does go back he will sell it outright to Willie, but he would have to fetch it from Fort Pitt, 25 miles from here. Barnes goes to Battleford on Wednesday to fetch the rest of our baggage and Willie's plough, harrows and a cooking stove. He will be gone a week and will take all the letters down to post and I *hope* bring some back. You cannot have the least idea how we long for news and some papers, any literature would be so gratefully received. There is no paper sold here under 5 cents. We have any amount of prairie chicken and wild duck all over the *estate*, and Willie, I need not say, keeps us supplied. Yesterday and to-day we have thoroughly enjoyed a delicious dinner of prairie chicken, beans and potatoes. The beans are like little white peas and are very good. They are used here a great deal instead of potatoes which are scarce and very dear, equivalent to 3d. per lb. We are getting some vegetable seed from Battleford to start our kitchen garden as soon as possible. I shall be so thankful when the warmer weather

sets in. I can quite understand the charms of camping then but under present circumstances it has very few charms I can assure you, and what with the bitter cold and hard ground we don't get much refreshing rest. Still with all the hardships it is certainly a glorious feeling to be able to look around on our own property and feel that each day's work is for future benefit, no landlord and no rent to pay nor taxes! ! This indeed compensates for a very great deal. Best love and remembrances to all relations, friends and acquaintances.

Yours very sincerely,

ALICE RENDELL.

Township 49,
Range 1,
Section 36.

BARR'S COLONY,
BATTLEFORD, N.W.T.,
June 4th, 1903.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

So much has happened since I last wrote that I hardly know where to begin. Firstly I have to tell you of a very sad occurrence. Our poor friend and neighbour Mr. Young took a chill during the severe weather a fortnight ago. He seemed so unwell when my husband went up to see him in his own tent $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away that I suggested to Willie to drive him down to us as Barnes had gone down to Battleford to fetch back implements, etc., and his tent was vacant for some days, then we could look after him. We sent for the camp doctor who thought it a serious case. Friday and Saturday he became gradually worse and was very delirious. Two doctors came on Sat. and there happened to be an experienced nurse in camp and he came out to remain the night Sat. I was alone with the poor fellow whilst Willie drove the doctors back to camp and fetched the nurse during which time he told me he knew well he was going to die and wished me to note down his wishes and write and cable to his wife. He wished Willie to take charge of everything he had until such time as we should receive instructions from his family. He passed away at 3.30 a.m. on Sunday, May 24th, after only four days' illness. It was an awful blow to us as you may imagine. We had been such good friends and he and Willie were so much together. He was buried the same evening at 7 o'clock on his own ground, the Dr. and Mr. Lloyd making all arrangements. We cabled to the poor wife in Manchester, and I wrote her a long letter giving her all details and we are now awaiting instructions from her. They were coming out this month. He has 4 children, two sons 18 and 20 and two daughters 16 and 13. We have the satisfaction of knowing we did everything we possibly could to save him. It all seems like a dream. Ever since this sad event we have had glorious weather and as one looks around on the lovely green grass and the bushes all in thick foliage one can hardly realize that a fortnight ago the ground was covered with snow. Willie has been working very hard. He started ploughing (as I told you in a former letter) on May 16th, the day after we arrived here. Now, June 4th he has 5 acres ploughed, $\frac{1}{2}$ acre into potatoes, 1 acre barley and $3\frac{1}{2}$ oats. The latter are already well up and looking splendid. About a week ago we managed to buy a nice cow and calf and I can assure you that I feel quite proud that I am now not only able to have a nice drop of milk for our own use, but I supply our next neighbour with a quart a day, and yesterday we all thoroughly enjoyed a good cup of cream for tea. What a treat it was!! Next Monday Barnes goes off to Onion Lake, Fort Pitt, to fetch the lumber to start our bungalow. We have chosen the site so I suppose it will be commenced in a fortnight's time. We have never received any home papers yet. We are going in to camp this eve in the hope that a mail may be in. Barnes brought a few letters back from Battleford, father's, Miss Harvey's (with good news of my darling little Eric), Lillie Laxton's and Mr. Rogers'. How we poured over those letters! The first from home! I can quite understand the alarm felt on our behalf on reading all the reports, but there was a great deal more *truth* than *fiction* in them. Mr. Barr did not carry out all he promised (though *we* have no cause to complain as he has always dealt very fairly with *us*) but there was no provision for the people on their arrival or on the journey up to the Colony either in way of provision or accommodation, and great were the sufferings in consequence, more especially among the women and children. But everyone is loud in their praises of how the women have faced all hardships and privations and they were no trifles I can assure you. Mr. Barr is pretty well out of it now I think, but we have a splendid man in his place the Rev. Lloyd and he is doing everything that can be done for the benefit of the colonists. They say Barr will be arrested but I don't know if it true. Mr. Lloyd has gone after him to Battleford and all the Stores Committee and there is evidently something wrong somewhere. We are all right and have lost nothing through him; he has always been

especially kind to us in all our dealings with him. I forgot to mention when telling you about the cow that one of the young fellows who brought it up to us was called Lyle and he told us he had an uncle of that name living at *Newton Abbot*. He is a clergyman but retired. We are just tortured to death with mosquitos, the poor children are nearly driven crazy with them. We have to cover our faces with mosquito netting in order to rest at all. I must now close as it is time to get tea and be off and I want to post this in camp to-night. I end with my usual appeal for news from all friends who can find time to write if only a few lines also anything in the way of literature. We haven't seen an English paper since we left home.

With best remembrances to all and love to dear Father and Frank,

Yours very sincerely and affectly,

ALICE RENDELL.

LLOYDMINSTER,
BRITANNIA COLONY,
BATTLEFORD, N.W.T.,
CANADA.

July 22nd.

Having heard so much of all the exaggerated reports in praise of and in condemnation of this new colony and everything connected with it I have decided to devote some of the few spare moments of my time to writing my actual personal experience as one of the new colonist settlers hoping that a true unvarnished account of the state of affairs may perhaps if made public counteract a great deal of unnecessary harm which such reports must reflect on the Colony. To start from the commencement I left England April 8th by the *Lake Simcoe* as I was unable to settle up my affairs in time to join the Barr party on the *Manitoba* which afterwards proved more of an advantage than disadvantage. As far as qualifications are concerned for my starting farming in Canada I may say that I have farmed in the old country all my life the estate I rented in Devonshire having been farmed by my forefathers for over 200 years. I was paying rent at the rate of over 10 dollars per acre in addition to rates, tithes and taxes and wages. A crisis having come and failing to get my landlord to do anything either in reduction of rent or repairs of any kind to dwelling house or out buildings all of which were rapidly falling into ruins I determined to throw up the life of slavery for others and strike for independence in Canada for good or ill. Having acquired from headquarters all necessary information respecting the free grant lands in N.W.T. I applied for a homestead for myself and another for one of my men who had decided to throw in his lot with mine and in spite of the disapproval of many and dismal prophecies of failure, I with my wife and children aged 2 and 4 left the old country not without many a heartache for all near and dear to us that we were leaving behind yet with a strong determination to face all difficulties and succeed in the end. Our voyage from Liverpool to St. John's was a record one and we landed in St. John's April 13th having sailed from Liverpool April 8th and from this time onward our trial of endurance commenced. We were just bustled off the *Lake Simcoe* like so many cattle late in the day in terrible weather, snow and sleet, hungry and miserable, no proper meal having been provided on board since early in the day. Owing to the *Manitoba* being still in dock we had to land a long distance away and managed to be in the very thick of the fire which is now ancient history but was alarming indeed to those who happened to be as near it as ourselves, next door in fact. Thank God I got my wife and children, also baggage, in safety. We then had to wait till past midnight to get our baggage from the *Lake Simcoe*, viz. from Wed. till Thursday midnight just huddled together in the train almost starved with cold and hunger. Over the next portion of our journey I would like to draw a veil. It seems all the sleeping and colonist cars had been requisitioned by the *Manitoba* party, consequently the accommodation provided for us by the C.P.R. was of the most miserable description both as regards comfort and cleanliness, such as no English Railway would tolerate for cattle. My wife, who is a shareholder in the C.P.R. exclaimed, "Is this the wonderful C.P.R. that we hear so much of with all its wonderful accommodation for comfortable travelling!" After enduring indescribable misery in the train from April 15th to April 22nd we reached Saskatoon remaining there till April 29th. Here was the huge Barr encampment, but of the arrangements there I know little or nothing as I made my own independent arrangements and took a room for my wife and children, but I much doubt if those in camp suffered much more than we did, for accommodation and food were alike miserable and filthy. My first business at Saskatoon was to purchase wagon and pair of horses and harness which cost me 508 dollars, a stiff outlay but a necessitous one, also camp stove, plough, harrows and good supply of nails and tools. I had to waste a week here "waiting for baggage" thanks to the

total lack of organization on the part of the C.P.R. causing us great unnecessary expense which we could ill afford. However, we managed at last, having duly packed up our traps to set out April 29th en route for Battleford having duly provisioned ourselves for the journey, which was fortunate for there was nothing to be got on the road as represented or rather misrepresented, thus causing much misery and privation to many of the poorer class who had in a great measure counted on availing themselves of this promised boon. My experience of horses and driving in the old country stood me in good stead and in spite of all difficulties, inclement weather, rough country we reached Battleford safe and sound without one mishap in 4½ days which was considered very good as I had a heavy load. We remained at Battleford from Sunday, May 2nd, till Tuesday, May 4th, when we once more resumed our journey to the "Promised Land." This part of the journey was the most trying of all, the road terribly rough and the weather bitter. Had it not been for the government tents many must have died from cold and hunger. My wife and little girl now began to feel the effects of exposure to the bitter cold, and by the time we reached the Settlement both collapsed thoroughly ill, in fact we were all worn out and weary with the long journey and want of rest. My first enquiry was for a doctor who quickly came to our assistance and whose kindness and attention I cannot speak too highly of and little dreamt how frequently we were destined to call his professional experience to our aid within the next few weeks. With care my wife and little one soon recovered, when my man sickened with threatened pneumonia, and again Dr. Amos thanks to prompt attention saved him from a serious illness. We remained in camp from May 10th to 15th, prairie fires raging around on all sides causing terrible damage and giving rise to serious anxiety at one time for the safety of the whole camp, necessitating summoning out all men, horses and ploughs that happened to be available. I lost no time in starting to view the homestead allotted to me by Mr. Barr in Township 50, Sec. 23 24, Range 1, but quickly decided it was no good for agricultural purposes, and after due application Mr. Barr escorted me himself the next day to Township 49, Sec. 36, Range 1, with which land I was greatly pleased and decided at once upon it for my location, and on May 15th, after many weeks of great anxiety, weary travelling and the facing of many and great difficulties we pitched our tents at last on our own domain with a blessed feeling of thankfulness that journeying was over and the longed-for goal reached at last. I started the very next day to plough, and in less than a week had ploughed and tilled three acres of oats and the week after 1½ acres barley and ½ acre of potatoes. At the time of writing this, July 22nd, I have ¼ acre Swedes, also mangolds and vegetable of all kinds in my garden, all of which are looking splendid considering late sowing in consequence of the severest and latest spring known in the colony for 25 years. I am much pleased with my land which is good soil mostly cleared fit for plough with sufficient wood and brush for useful purposes. My wife and I view daily from our tent door the rapid completion of our bungalow which is to be our future home. This has been a heavy expenditure owing to the lack of lumber, having to fetch all from Fort Pitt or Onion Lake 30 miles distant. The supply is totally inadequate to the demand which seems the great drawback in respect to *all supplies* and a great hindrance to the settlers generally who have so much to do in the short time and this is a matter which greatly needs the attention of the authorities. The stores are terribly deficient of all necessaries and unless arrangements are made to improve this department and greater facilities for obtaining tools, implements and general necessaries the colonists will be heavily and seriously handicapped and the success of the colony seriously affected. This is the cry of the majority of the colonists and the difficulties above mentioned are doing much to discourage those anxious and willing to work, to say nothing of those who belong to the noble army of grumblers and only too ready to look on the black side of everything. The many who "turned back" and spread such alarming and distressing reports of the colony were mostly those who placed too much confidence in the rosy accounts of everything they read in print and relied too much on the promises made as to provisions and transport on their journey up to the settlement. That there was real ground for complaint in respect to the latter there is no doubt whatever. On the other hand many never brought their common sense into use at all, else they would have realized that as pioneers in a new colony they must have many serious difficulties and drawbacks to encounter and that all the courage and determination one is possessed of must need- less be brought into play to surmount the inevitable drawbacks we are bound to face before we can hope to "stem the tide." I cannot speak too highly in praise of the valuable and kindly assistance of the Government Officials who have spared no trouble or pains to smooth away all difficulties as far as they were able. We cannot live without supplies, we cannot work without tools, neither one nor the other are forthcoming as they ought to be. When complaints are made we are told,

"Oh, it will be all right when we get the railway through the colony." I quite believe it but what are we going to do meanwhile for the workers on the Railway cannot get on with their work for the very same reason, they cannot procure the necessary tools. Delay everywhere. Real workers eager to *get on* with the success of the Colony at heart will I am sure join with me in a very earnest plea that those in authority who have the power to do so will come to our aid, remedy the above-mentioned deficiencies and thus save much needless distress and anxiety to those who have given up home, country and friends in the old country to devote their future to the success of the New Colony.

(Signed) W. RENDELL.

Township 49, Section 36, Range 1.

LLOYDMINSTER,
BRITANNIA, Sask.,
N.W.T.

August 6th, 1903.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

I see my last letter was dated June 4th. Time flies even in camp life which thank goodness terminates to-day, for this afternoon we contemplate moving up to "Doris Court" and sleep to-night for the 1st time for 4 months within shelter of 4 walls. July is the rainy month here and when the rain does come down it is like a deluge. Imagine the delight of being aroused night after night from your slumbers by the rain trickling down on you and as a rule it has a nasty habit of drifting just the very side of the tent you happen to be lying. I can assure you we have found it awfully trying. Next month, September, we are supposed to get what they term "Indian Summer." Then about the 2nd week in October winter sets in.

August 12th.

Since writing the above we have really removed to our *very own* domicile, and right proud we feel to look around, even though it be on bare boards and feel it is indeed our own *home*. All the weary "trekking" at an end. We look from one window and see the lovely oats and barley looking splendid. From another window I look across and see the "Master of Doris Court" ploughing away for dear life with his fine pair of horses, each acre ploughed meaning the better prospect for the coming year. The said team are just as fat as butter, they having taken themselves off 7 weeks ago across the prairie and baffled all efforts to find them until about 4 days ago when Barnes and another young fellow rode away we having had some tidings of their whereabouts and greatly to our delight they returned the same evening bringing the delinquents with them. Their long absence was getting a serious matter as time is growing short and every available hour must be devoted to ploughing before winter sets in. Well, the many friends who are sufficiently interested in our welfare will be wondering what sort of "shanty" "Doris Court" is, so I must try and paint it as vividly as possible in your mind's eye. It is in bungalow form, measuring 30 ft. by 30 and contains 5 rooms, 1 large attic the whole extent of the house quite fit to use for a bed room as we have had it all nicely boarded round and floored and 2 very large cellars in which we can store all necessary provisions for the winter. I shall try and send with this a little plan which will give you all a pretty clear idea of the position and size of the rooms. Everyone that sees it is of the same opinion that it is quite the best house in the Colony. There will be a verandah 4 or 5 feet wide round 3 sides of the house which will be lovely in summer and a fine garden all around as we are not stinted for ground and we hope in the spring to set up some fruit and other trees from the experimental farm to plant around. There is certainly a great charm and fascination in planning it all out knowing that it is our own property. I often say it compensates one largely for all the hardships we have passed through. Everyone assures us that we shall not have the chance of feeling lonely thro' the winter as we are close to the township and they will all be trooping out to see us. We have gone to more expense over our house than we intended in the first instance but so many want putting up for the winter that we felt it would repay us to have extra room. As it is we have had a lot of applications already which we have under consideration. Our bungalow will be warmed throughout by means of pipes from the kitchen stove and a heating stove which is placed in the octogan hall. There are no stoves as in England and we burn nothing but wood. The fires have to be kept going night and day during the winter and we have to put up double windows, viz., outside frames which can be removed in summer. The wild flowers are very lovely and those of my friends who know me best will guess the delight they afford me. The small single sunflowers are now in abundance all over our land, also gallardias, a kind of lily of the valley and red tiger lilies. Whilst I think of it I want all old friends who can to send me some seeds in a letter as I

would much like my garden to be one of reminiscences of the dear old country, especially Buckland, Netherton, Homefield, Brooklands and Home House, and I should prize them so. The mail goes out this eve so I must reluctantly curtail this edition and reserve further news till the next budget. Love and kindest remembrances to all relations and friends.

Yours very sincerely,

ALICE RENDELL.

October 21st.

DORIS COURT, BRITANNIA,
LLOYDMINSTER,
N.W.T., CANADA.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

Whenever anything of importance happens I always feel it is about time to write a general letter. Yesterday was a day never to be forgotten by any of the inmates of Doris Court or inhabitants of Lloydminster. For days past we have been anxiously watching 7 huge prairie fires raging in the distance fearing that a wind might bring heavy disaster to our homestead and town. The night of Oct. 20th was an anxious one, the terrible circle of fire closing around us. The general opinion was that we were safe for the night but I could not sleep. The next morning our worst fears were realized and we knew that a few hours would decide our fate. The only safeguard against prairie fires is a broad belt of ploughing all round your homestead. This my husband had done with the exception of one side which, alas, was the very side towards which the fire was sweeping with awful rapidity. Needless to say the plough was soon at work and it was literally ploughing for dear life. Every available tub was filled with water, every sack collected together to beat out the flames when the time should come. Mr. Rendell, Barnes and another man who is working for us were all on the alert watching with intense eagerness all the different points. Meanwhile within the house I together with Mrs. Falmark (the wife of our postmaster who is boarding with us for the winter) and Mrs. Bunyan, who nursed me when my little girl was born, stood gazing out of the window horror stricken at the awful sight that met our eyes. We each of us had 3 little children and each one in arms. We mustered 9 little ones all under 6. Our little flock fortunately were too young to realize the deadly peril we were in and we had to keep on "rounding them up" preparatory to a hasty flight. I collected a few little valuables and looked around with a very heavy heart wondering whatever would become of us if in an hour or two we should be homeless. At last we could stand still no longer and we three women rushed out and filling buckets with the clay and soil dug up from the foundation we scattered it all over the ground immediately around the house. The wind was blowing a hurricane, bringing or rather driving the fire straight on us. The awful roar of the flames was enough to make the bravest shudder and the smoke and smell stifling. Willie continued ploughing until absolutely compelled to stop owing to heat and smoke. Our two men meanwhile drenched our roof with water and arming themselves with wet sacks hurried to the weakest points where there was the least probability of the flames "jumping" the fire guard which was only 150 yds. off the house all round. We could do nothing more than wait with bated breath. At last came the joyful sound "safe" from the western side but the danger was not yet over for on the north west side we were again threatened, and after the horses had been placed in safety all hands had to fly round to meet the enemy at the fresh point of attack and after a hard fight thanks to cool heads, strong arms the dreaded fire was kept at bay and after a short time of awful suspense and anxiety my husband came back to us with the welcome assurance "All danger over, safe for another year." We were all too overjoyed for words and after the dreadful strain of so many hours you may pretty well guess what the reaction was like. Mr. Rendell was literally fagged out, but after a little rest and refreshment we all felt better. We lost 4 ton of hay only but many have lost all their hay ricks. The fire started by the Vermillion River and was raging for days before it reached us and swept on down towards Battleford. There is no doubt whatever but that our fire guard in a great measure saved the town life. Apart from the horror of it, it was a most wonderful sight. Of course on the prairie you can see an enormous distance, and for 20 or 30 miles there was nothing but flames. As it grows dusk the effect is most weird. How thankful we were that the fire reached us in the day time and not at night! Thus ends my description of a prairie fire and I earnestly trust I may never witness such another. We have quite a houseful at present mustering 15 in all which is a big family to cater and cook for. My little ones are quite happy, the little *Canadian* girl being especially bonnie and thriving splendidly. Our town site is all surveyed and the Government have decided to grant a plot of land to every colonist who cares

to apply for it. Mr. Rendell and Barnes have each got one and we intend erecting a little store on ours for the disposal of our dairy produce. We are hoping to get 2 or 3 more cows this next week. Everyone likes our butter made in the old Devonshire fashion. I have been for a drive to-day and the town is growing very, very fast, dozens of little "shacks" springing up all around. There are two large general stores, 2 Restaurants, Post Office, Butcher's Shop, Blacksmiths, Vicarage all within 20 minutes' walk of Doris Court. I have had to write this at odd moments and in great haste and must reluctantly curtail this and write the rest of my news later on. I was overjoyed to receive to-day 6 home letters from my dear old friends in acknowledgement of the news of the birth of my little daughter.

Yours as ever,
A.R.

DORISCOURT,
LLOYDMINSTER,
BRITANNIA,
SASK., N.W.T.,
CANADA.

Dec. 10th, 1903.

MY DEAR FRIENDS:

Little did I dream this time last year that I would be sending you my New Year Greetings this year from over the sea thousands of miles away. The approach of Xmas makes me feel pretty homesick at times, tho' I haven't much time to brood over it which is perhaps a very good thing. Before launching into my "yarn" let me wish one and all every happiness and prosperity for the coming year and all succeeding ones. There is to be a general gathering of the whole colony on Xmas Day and great preparations are being made to make it a great success. Church Service at 10.30, High Tea at 5 followed by Concert and large Xmas tree for the children. It is all being well organized, sub-committees consisting each of 4 ladies being appointed as follows: Meat Committee, Bread, Butter and Milk, Cakes and Pastry, etc., etc., all acting under a general Committee. Mr. Hall, who is the owner of the large stores, is lending his building for the occasion and on Boxing Night we hope to have a dance. Everything is going ahead now with amazing rapidity. We have been most fortunate in having most glorious weather, continuous sunshine from day to day and hard frost at night. Our clergyman Mr. Lloyd is a very musical man and every Wednesday he holds a choir practise at his own house. The 1st hour is devoted to the music for the following Sunday services after which we have secular music, quartettes, trios, duets and solos, all the best music we can muster. He has now formed a "Musical Union" and we have already 110 names on the list of members. I need scarcely say I have joined and I thoroughly enjoy the practises, they are so splendidly conducted. We really have a very fine choir. Every Thursday eve there is either a concert or debate upon some popular and instructive topic. The past fortnight it has been decided by general consent to erect a structure which for the time being will serve as church, school and recreation room. Everyone is giving a log (it is of course to be built of logs) and the name of each donor to be engraved thereon by their own hand. All the work of erecting it is to be done voluntarily, each one having volunteered a day's, two days' or a week's work. Things go ahead and no mistake. With regard to the Choral Union the idea is for all the places around such as Battleford, Onion Lake, Bresaylor all to form branches and practise the same music and then have a meeting from time to time of the amassed choirs. The Lloydminster choir has already been invited to Onion Lake in March (36 miles). The whole party to go in sleighs. We have a sleigh now which we use with our wagon box. It is a delightful sensation flying over the snow which is not soft like in England but very hard and crisp. One great drawback here is lack of water. We dug one well without success and have now started another. They have got down 20 feet but no luck as yet. Every drop of water I use for cooking and washing is melted snow and lovely water it is too, but of course it means a lot of labour carting it in and melting it down. Everyone is in great excitement just now. An "overseer" has to be elected (same as our *Mayor*) and canvassing is going on pretty smartly and I rather fancy the general favourite is Dr. Amos. So you see with one thing and another we are quite busy. And now, dear Friends, a little bird tells me some of you are just working hard for the benefit of the hospital here in response to my appeal. I can find no words to express my delight and gratitude and am positive that your kindly effort in so good a cause will surely bring its own reward and I am sure many a hearty blessing will be evoked on your behalf in Lloydminster. A little lumber shack is to be put up almost immediately so great is the need for it. I thank you all most earnestly. You would not wonder at my taking this so much to heart could you but have witnessed what I have or been through what I myself have suffered.

You cannot realize how awful it is. My next letter to you will be a true and accurate account of how we spent our first Xmas in the Colony. The little ones are all well and happy and growing very rapidly. The wee Canadian is the happiest baby I have ever seen. She will, I think, be very like Doris. I think I have told you most of the news. I have been somewhat handicapped in my work lately owing to a sprained arm. I have managed at some time or another to strain the principal muscle of my left arm. It has been terribly painful. Dr. Amos feared at first that I had put it out of (joint). Mr. Rendell has just bought in a piece of Railway land adjoining our homestead consisting of 320 acres. As soon as the railway is up it must be most valuable and will add greatly to the value of our homestead. We also have bought a little colt 1 year old for 11 dollars and a ton of hay thrown in. The children are very delighted. Our old Sport is very well and quite at home. Our police are still with us and are very lively boys; no fear of being *dull* where they are. They make a great pet of Doris. She always pours out tea for them. The other people are leaving next Wednesday, for which I am truly thankful.

I must now close with hearty good wishes to all.

Your affectionate friend,

ALICE RENDELL.

DORISCOURT. LLOYDMINSTER,
BRITANNIA, SASK.,
N.W.T., CANADA.

DEAR FRIENDS:

According to promise I am going to do my best to give you to the best of my ability a graphic account of how we spent our 1st Xmas in Lloydminster. I think as Xmas approached we all rather dreaded it knowing how this special season brings with it so forcibly the memory of all the home gatherings in the Old Country. Fortunately, we personally, are far too busy in our surroundings to brood over vain regrets and Xmas Day was upon us almost before we could realize the fact. There was service at 11 o'clock a.m. and at 5 p.m. the "Festivities" started. Thanks to the generosity of Mess. Hall Scott and Co., who have just completed a very large building for General Stores, the Gathering of the Colonists took place there and it is certainly owing to their great kindness that our Xmas and New Year was spent so pleasantly and happily. The 1st item on the programme was a big feed followed by a capital concert divided into two parts. After the 1st half had been successfully carried through came a large Xmas tree very prettily decorated, the little gifts being distributed by an ideal "Santa Claus." I need scarcely say how delighted the little ones were. The whole proceedings were brought to a close about 11.30 p.m. after a most enjoyable social gathering and the 1st Xmas in Lloydminster is a thing of the past but nevertheless it will be remembered by all who were present as a bright and happy one the more so as it was unexpected and so well carried out. The effect it had upon us was that we all felt cheered by this little excitement after all we had previously passed through and somehow "longed for more." Thanks again to Messrs. Hall Scott and Co. another happy gathering was arranged for New Year's Eve.. and yet another on New Year's Day. They not only gave the use of their splendid building for a dance but undertook all arrangements and issued a general invitation and welcome to all. The room was very prettily decorated and the floor well waxed. The *Band* consisted of several violins, 2 cornets and harmonium. We started dancing at 8.30 p.m. and after a most enjoyable evening broke up at about 4.30 a.m. We all felt years younger. We women up with Sir Roger and Auld Lang Syne and walked back to Doris Court in brilliant moonlight, arriving home as the clock struck 5 a.m. The next evening (Saturday) there was an excellent concert at the conclusion of which there was an impromptu dance, this being the last chance in Messrs. Hall Scott and Co.'s spacious building. You will see that our Xmas and New Year was by no means dull or miserable, nor were our dear absent ones forgotten. We are much amused at the reports that reach us from England as to the terrible plight we are in even to the verge of *starvation*. Please once and for all disabuse your minds of any such ideas. We are quite happy and contented, very much better off than we were in England, whilst as to food we live quite as well as ever we did. We have 2 butchers on the town site. Our meat is delivered at the door and is of the very best quality. Certainly we have had difficulties to surmount and hardships to endure but we quite expected we should before we left England and we treasured up a reserve fund of determination and pluck which stood us in good stead when the need came. I would never advise anyone to come out here who is the least afraid of work, they are better off home. There is plenty of room to breathe in this country and if the work is hard the freedom, which is the indispensable attribute of the life here, makes one far less susceptible to physical fatigue than in England where

one seems to have such a feeling of weighty oppression to handicap one's energies. Here one feels that each week's work is a step onward whilst alas in the old country oftentimes a year's hard toil brought nothing but disappointment and additional anxiety. We are the proud possessors of the best house in the colony and I think I may also add the best homestead. It is generally pronounced, by those whose opinion is worth having, to be of exceptionally good value owing to its close proximity to the town, our land is actually adjoining the town site. There is no doubt whatever but that Lloydminster bids fair to be a very important centre, its growth week by week is marvelous. The Government are now erecting a large Emigration Hall in anticipation of the arrival of the newcomers in the spring. Meetings are being held now to discuss and perfect all arrangements for the meeting of expected friends and families and ensure their safe conduct right up to the Colony. There seems to be a terrible feeling of jealousy or something akin to it existing at Saskatoon and Battleford with regard to this colony and they are doing their utmost to dissuade people from coming up beyond those two points by spreading the most gloomy reports which are utterly untrue. Many there are who seemed to expect that luxuries sprang up on the prairie like mushrooms, ready for them without any special effort or exertion on their part. I need scarcely say that they are now sadder and wiser men. So far we have passed through the winter splendidly and at the time of writing this it is 19th Jan. Brilliant sunshine from week's end to week's end. Our bungalow has kept beautifully warm, it is heated throughout by pipes connected with the kitchen stove and a heating stove in the hall. The rooms are all pretty well of an even temperature. The worst feature we have had to contend with is want of water. We have had two wells sunk close to the house but up to now have not been successful in striking water. Of course we are never without water whilst the snow is about. We use nothing else but melted snow for washing and cooking, lovely water it is too. From what I hear I fancy we are being favoured with an exceptionally mild winter to make up for the exceptionally severe spring that greeted us on our arrival in this country. Any way we have all kept well up to now. We have had a good supply of wood from our own land and the "price of coals" is another item over which we have no need to worry. We have to pay very dearly for flour, 4½ dollars for 100 lb. The reason things are so dear is of course owing to the freightage. When the Railway comes through the Colony everything will be cheaper. There is every prospect of the Rail being opened up in a year from now. The telegraph will be in working order in a few weeks time. We have two large general stores, drug stores, a resident Doctor and Hospital in view. We have a Choral Union mustering 120 members and they are now forming a Rifle Corps, 160 members enrolled. Mr. Rendell has been appointed Lieutenant and Auditor. The temperature at time of writing registered 28 below zero. Those who have been outside say it is a bit "nippy" and if you don't take proper precautions to well protect nose and ears you soon get them frost bitten, the only remedy there is to well rub the part affected with snow till circulation is restored. The land here is of splendid quality fit to grow anything and especially adapted for mixed farming. We have now 480 acres. By next spring several thousand more are expected to arrive in the Colony and no trouble is being spared to arrange everything for their comfort on their arrival either at Saskatoon or Edmonton. Should this letter be made public and meet the eye of any who may be desirous of coming out to the Colony I can only say we shall be only too pleased to answer any questions or give any information in our power. There can be no doubt whatever but that the Colony will succeed and that Lloydminster in a few years' time will be a very large and prosperous centre. But I earnestly hope I have ere this dispelled all unfavourable ideas as to our fortune. Probably many who have been commiserating our lot have far greater need of pity than we, for whilst they are still plodding and "hybernating" we are on the "progressive," probably making greater headway in 12 months than they in as many years for this is nothing if not a "Go-ahead" country.

Best wishes to all old friends in the "old country" from

Yours sincerely,

Alice Rendell.

DEAR FRIENDS:

It has come to my ears that some of you are still athirst for "more about Canada" so I am going to try to send you a short account of how we are progressing in this far away land. Well, the town of Lloydminster is growing not "slowly and surely," but rapidly and surely." Just recently we have a fine Bank building belonging to the "Canadian Bank of Commerce."

LLOYDMINSTER,
Nov., 1905.

DEAR FRIENDS:

It is such a long time since I last wrote you a general letter that I think I must make an effort to give you some idea how we are getting on up to date. Much has happened since I wrote last and I hardly know where to begin. Lloydminster is now quite a little town, the rail is up and our station is quite a pretty addition to the town. Little did I think that the whistle of an engine would ever sound so sweet. The passenger service is not properly organized yet as the line is still in the hands of the construction party but as soon as the line is completed and handed over to the C.N.R. company then we shall have a regular service. It is hard for you in the old country surrounded by every comfort and luxury to realize in the smallest degree what we have all put through the past 2 years in comparative isolation. Sometimes without the slightest idea of what was going on in the outside world for a fortnight or 3 weeks together. For the winter comparatively at the mercy of the weather for news or provisions all having to come by road from Saskatoon and when they did come the price of the commonest necessities was enough to make the pluckiest feel downhearted when we saw the capital we had thought ample to carry us on for a year or so vanishing like dust almost in bare living. "It will be different when the train is in" became a stock phrase. It was weary waiting and many of us had almost lost heart until one day we heard the rails were laid within 2 miles of Lloydminster and in less than a week later the 1st train steamed into Lloydminster. Since then there has been quite a revolution in the price of everything. Flour which we had paid 5 dollars per 100 lb. bag is now \$2.80 top price and everything else in proportion. Lumber too is coming down in price. Town lots have been on the market and bought at high prices. Everyone is now building lumber houses instead of the log shack of the "old timers," bricks too are being extensively used for building and this winter will probably be a pretty severe test as to whether they will stand the climate or no. To those like ourselves who were amongst the 1st to arrive up in the Colony in May, 1903, and at most 1 doz. tents were all that could be seen on the bare prairie and now 3 large Hotels are in course of erection, stores of all kinds, a fine building for the Branch of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Drug store, printing office from which is issued weekly our newsy little paper the "*Lloydminster Times*." It is just *marvellous*. This year has been a good season on the whole for harvest, but everything has to be done with such a rush the summer season is so short. One needs an infinite amount of patience in this climate, the late and early frosts play such awful havoc. This year we have had 50 acres under cultivation: our grain is not threshed yet as the threshing outfit has not been up our way yet, but the general yield is oats about 50 to 60 bushels per acre, wheat about 25. We had about 2 acres of potatoes and a splendid crop, but alas an early frost spoilt half before they could be got out of the ground. From 4 lbs. of seed from the Experimental Farm Mr. Rendell had a yield of 136 lbs. Many of them weighing over 20 ounces. Our garden produce was splendid. We picked several cwt. of peas and disposed of them in town, one Restaurant taking nearly all we could supply. We have put on a large addition to our house in the shape of a substantial log building 14 ft. by 18 which will serve to store the grain in winter and in summer will be utilized as a summer kitchen. Mr. Rendell is now completing a fine stable also log, 30 by 15. We have some good cows and our milk is disposed of right away and fetched from the door so that we have no bother.