

PREFACE

**Autobiography**  
**of**  
**Thomas Brush Brown**



*Reprinted 1967 by Isabel Grace Uren  
with additional notes.*

## PREFACE

When this autobiography was written it was the intention of the author to have given a complete history of his Life and Times, with a special reference to the early settlement of Nissouri. However, after it was written so far the infirmities of old age came on, which prevented the accomplishment of his object. This accounts for its incomplete and fragmentary character. For this reason many interesting events and the names of individuals who were prominent in the early settlement of the township are unnoticed; but as it is it will be a valuable contribution toward preserving in a permanent form its early history. It will be a pleasing reminder to many who were personally acquainted with the author during his lifetime. In order to make the work as complete and interesting as possible a few additional facts are given.

## HIS WORK AS A LOCAL PREACHER

Being blessed with strong physical constitution and great force of character, what he determined to do he did with all his might. His leading motive was not to amass property, except to provide for the reasonable wants of himself and family, nor to attain to the petty offices of the township, but to serve the church of his choice as a local preacher. When he commenced as a worker in the church the few scattered settlers of Nissouri and surrounding townships were but scantily supplied with opportunities they had were mostly on week-days, leaving the Sabbath unprovided for. Under these circumstances he commenced his work as a local preacher, preaching regularly once or more nearly every Sabbath. As the country was new, without any travelled roads, he found his way to his appointments sometimes on horseback and often on foot, crossing creeks and swamps on fallen timber, through the unbroken forest. At first as there were no churches or school-houses, he held his meetings in the rude shanties of the early settlers. His first sermon was preached in a private house in the 1<sup>st</sup> concession of Zorra. The late Mrs. Charles Mitchell, of Lakeside, who died in 1897, aged 93 years was one of his bearers on that occasion. In after years she told him that he took a big text for his first sermon, to which he replied that "it was just what a boy would be likely to do". The following incident, as related by an eye-witness, will give some idea of the style in which meetings were conducted in those early days. He was called on to preach a funeral sermon somewhere on the third concession of Nissouri. The place where the service was held was a new log house, having neither windows nor floor and the cracks between the logs being open. An old gentleman who wished to attend the service had not shoes to wear, but his grandson, a young lad growing into manhood, had just got his first pair of boots, and they were rather large for him. These he lent to the old gentleman to wear to the funeral service and attended himself barefooted. Under these circumstances he held meetings and preached, not only in Nissouri but also through London, Zorra, Blanchard and other townships. Not only did he spend the Sabbath working for the Master, but also a considerable portion of his week days were spent in the same way. As camp meetings were an established institution in those early days, and as he possessed in his younger days a powerful voice, this peculiarity fitted him for work in these meetings in which he always took a prominent part.

## HIS LOVE FOR AND ATTACHMENT TO THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

One thing greatly strengthened his attachment to the church of his choice - the Methodist Episcopal church - and encouraged him in his labors as a local preacher. It was a fundamental part of the policy of that branch of the Methodist church to ordain local preachers, so that they had the same right to baptize, marry and administer the sacrament as the regular minister had. He himself often said that one reason why he was so strongly attached to the M. E. church was because it was the only branch of the Methodist church which gave to the local preachers these privileges. But when the M. E. church merged itself into the union of the Methodist churches, every vestige of these were swept away, except that those local preachers who were ordained previous to the union should not be interfered with, but no more ordinations of local preachers would be permitted.

### THE EARLY SETTLERS IN NISSOURI

The Township of Nissouri was surveyed and opened for settlement in the year 1818. It is somewhat difficult at this distance of time to give the exact date when some of the early settlers came into the township. The following account is now probably as near as can be ascertained. The first field cleared was on lot 14 in the 2nd concession, but the first actual settler was William O'Brien, who settled on lot 7 in the 8th concession. John and Thomas Scatcherd, who were wealthy and took up lots 9, 10, 11 and 12 in the 1st concession, and the McGuffin family who settled what is now called Thorndale, were among the earliest settlers. Clawson Burgess was the first actual settler in the vicinity of what is now called Cherry Grove; he settled in 1819 on lot 26 in the 4th concession. His daughter Nancy (born in December, 1819), now the widow of the late Cornelius Near, was the first white child born in the township. William, Robert and Peter Smith were the sons of Nicholas Smith, a U. E. Loyalist who fought in the Revolutionary War and also in the war of 1812. They each drew 200 acres of land, being lots 30, 31 and 32 in the 4th concession. They were attracted to these lots, because there was plenty of running water and good springs and also an abundance of fish in the creek. They settled in 1820. Francis Bowers settled on lot 16 in the 5th concession, in 1820. The Davis family settled in 1820 on lot 21 in the 6th concession. John Uren settled in 1820 on lot 28 in the 4th concession. John Farley, father of the late Turner Farley settled in 1821 on lot 7 in the 2nd concession. Robert Cameron, the father of the present genial jailer of the Town of Woodstock, on lot 5 in the 9th concession in 1822. Charles Bolard settled in 1822. He was a shoemaker. John Cunningham settled in 1822 or perhaps one or two years earlier, on lot 23 in the 3rd concession. Mr. Dean settled close to Cunningham at the same time. Mr. Coleman settled in 1822 or perhaps earlier on lot 23 in the 4th concession.

Wm. Garner settled in 1823 on lot 25 in the 2nd concession. His son Robert, born in 1823, is now the oldest living man born in the township. Robert and George Logan settled in 1823 on lot 16 in the 3rd concession. Samuel Sherlock, a U. E. Loyalist, drew 200 acres near Thamesford. James German settled in 1823 on lot 29 in the 10th concession. He carried with him from St. Catharines the seeds of apple, pear and plum. From these he raised a quantity of young trees, out of which he planted an orchard for himself and also a number of other orchards. As a matter of fact he was the first nurseryman in the township. John Bowman settled in 1823 on lot 30 in the 5th concession. John, William and Adam

Haynes were sons of U. E. Loyalist parents and each of them drew 200 acres. John got lot 34 in the 6th concession; William got lot 35 in the 7th concession and Adam settled in East Nissouri. This was in 1827. John Pickard settled in 1828 on lot 33 in the 5th concession.

Joseph Johnston and Elijah and Hiram Ferris settled at an early date. Joseph Johnston is said to have brought the first team of horses and wagon to the township.

The Lince, Presley and Swazie families were among the early settlers, but at a later date than those aforementioned.

JOHN M. McAINSH  
Nissouri 1899

## HIS BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

I, THOMAS B. BROWN, of the Township of East Nissouri, in the County of Oxford, was born August 4th, 1804, in the Township of Argenteuil in what was then called Lower Canada, but now the Province of Quebec. My grandfather, a comb-maker by trade, was born in Northumberland, England. He emigrated to America and lived in Rhode Island, New England States. He fought and was wounded in the Revolutionary war. By his first wife he had three daughters, two of whom were married in the State of Vermont. He married for his second wife, a lady who had been captured by the Indians, and had been in captivity several years. The relation to her step children of the history of her captivity, including the cruelty and suffering she endured, inspired in them a great dread of the Indians.

Becoming dissatisfied with some forms of the new Government, he as well as my father Joseph, who was born in Rhode Island, moved to Lower Canada remaining there until his death and leaving a large family of sons and daughters. His second wife died about fifteen or twenty years ago. A notice of her death with all the particulars of her captivity was given in the Christian Guardian of Toronto.

My father was married in the State of Vermont, to Rebecca Brush. They were members of the Congregational Church, being descended from the Puritans. In his early days he followed the trade of comb-making, but when in 1790 or 1795, he with my grandfather moved into Lower Canada, he commenced farming. Lower Canada at this time was very thinly settled and principally with French. The agricultural pursuits had very little attention paid to them, making it difficult for a poor man like my father, unaccustomed to farming to make a livelihood for himself and family. At one time he resided in the city of Montreal and started to work at his trade of comb-making, but failed for want of means to compete with large establishments. Paul once fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, but my father fought with a bear, which was a very heroic deed. One morning while hoeing in his corn-field near the woods his attention was attracted by the loud squealing of a hog in the edge of the woods. Starting without any thought of the danger he would encounter he ran on until he came upon a bear in the act of killing one of his neighbor's hogs. Although having no weapon but his hoe he concluded to try to rescue it. In calling to a neighbor that a bear was killing a hog his voice attracted the bear's attention. Old bruin looked around to see from whence the intruder came and hearing the voice again he dropped the hog and came to attack my father. He came to within a few feet of him and then sat down on his haunches and prepared for a box. He struck at his antagonist with his paw but missed his aim. My father then seized the opportunity and struck the bear in the nose with his hoe, which stunned him; then by repeated blows with the hoe he finally killed him. In his dying struggles the bear broke great green roots with his feet. This waked my father to a sense of jeopardy in which he had placed himself in trying to rescue a neighbor's hog. As there was no local newspaper to chronicle all such incidents it was spread through the neighborhood by word of mouth. After we moved to Nissouri, a neighbor who knew all the above facts moved into the Township of London and settled on a farm formerly owned by Orange Clark. His name was Walter Nichols. Father and he had several visits together and related the bear story and other incidents of their early life in Lower Canada. When the children played on the bear skin, father would animatedly tell them how it came into his possession.

Shortly after coming to Canada my father and mother embraced religion under the labors of the ministers of the M. E. Church sent out by the New York Conference. They were

Revs. Prindley and Coats. Mr. Prindley located in Upper Canada near Ancaster. He became so corpulent and heavy (weighing over three hundred pounds) that he was obliged to carry a small ladder with him to enable him to get in and out of his buggy. He preached once in Nissouri, and having heard my mother speak so familiarly of him, I spared no pains to see and hear him. I introduced myself to him as the son of Joseph Brown, saying that my parents embraced religion when he and his colleague traveled to Lower Canada. He conversed freely, but seemed to have no distinct recollection of my parents. He said at the time he was like a walking skeleton. What a great change! Before I left him I told him that I was an Episcopal Methodist. He seemed to receive this information with some regret and did not give me so cordial a good-bye as when he first received me. I learned afterward that he was one of those who were very much opposed to those that remained Episcopal Methodists in 1833.

Father was a short, thick, heavy, bald-headed man of a cheerful lively disposition, very active, of a sound mind and a ready talker. Although not very successful in gaining much of this world's goods, yet he was very precise in keeping his family from associating with low company, notwithstanding the fact he had lost much of his religion and was living in a back-slidden state. But it was not so with my mother. She maintained her integrity with God, always guarding her children with great care and Godly counsel. In a secondary sense I owe all my religious impressions to her teaching. She often said when I used naughty words in her hearing that she would rather I would strike her. I sometimes fancy that I can almost feel now the impress of her hand on my head saying "Prepare to meet thy God." So amiable her disposition that in her lifetime she never had a dispute with anyone.

When my father came to Canada his family consisted of three children - two girls and a boy. My eldest sister Elizabeth became the wife of Reuben Gleason, who with his family came into Nissouri in 1828. Although in very moderate circumstances yet by industry and frugality they accumulated a large property in land and money. His life and character are well known to the inhabitants of East Nissouri. They have both passed away and left their wealth to their children. My second sister, Laura, was the wife of the late Thomas Uren, Esq. of West Nissouri. They too have passed away in the triumphs of a living faith.

My only brother James came with my father into Nissouri. He married Mary Uren, the youngest daughter of the late John Uren, and sister of John Uren, of Ingersoll. She together with her first born died a little more than a year after they were married. Their remains are now in the family burying ground near my residence. She and her husband were members of the M. E. Church. He embraced religion at a Quarterly meeting held in the Bailey Settlement under the labors of the late John Ryerson, the presiding Elder of the London District.

My brother afterward married Elizabeth Bodwell, of Dereham, daughter of the late Captain Bodwell, and sister of the wife of the late Elder S. Vining of West Nissouri, well known as a minister of the Baptist Church. My brother and I from infancy always lived and worked together in great harmony, living on adjoining farms and owning a team, wagon and log chains in partnership. Truly we were like David and Jonathan.

Becoming tired of the backwoods life he moved first into Dereham Township, which was an older settled country; then he finally settled in Genesee County, Michigan, living there until his death. His wife and eldest daughter, as well as himself, have gone to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. His remaining five children are still living in that country in fair circumstances. My brother's leaving Nissouri gave me great pain be-

cause it seemed to break up our labors in Church, day and Sabbath School work. Our families being large sustained the schools.

My sister Rebecca, as well as myself, was born in Lower Canada. While attending Sabbath School she was very proficient in committing Scripture to memory - often repeating a whole chapter, to the great amazement of the school. After coming into Nissouri she became the wife of the late William Uren.

## **THE WAR OF 1812**

My father lived in Lower Canada about sixteen years, moving several times and finally settling on Colwell's Manor, near Oddletown. I was then about seven years of age. While living here the war of 1812 commenced by the American Government declaring war against Great Britain. When the news reached Canada I remember asking father how long the war would last. He told me the Revolutionary War lasted seven years, but impossible to say how long this would last. In common with the whole neighborhood, our family felt a great terror of the Indians from the knowledge we had of their cruelties in the last war; the very sight of one of them would cause great excitement. One evening a fire was kindled in the edge of the woods not far from us. Supposing it was the Indians camping there, our parents awakened us, thinking that before morning we would be taken prisoners or murdered. Then came fresh into our memory the fate of our grandmother and the many others captured and scalped. It was a long and fearful night, never to be forgotten. We were expecting every moment to be our last. When morning dawned father ventured out slyly to investigate the cause of our alarm and found to our great pleasure it was only two white hunters camping out for the night.

Both nations were making active preparations for open hostilities; a large body of troops was stationed on the Isle of Or; all was excitement. Our government passed an order-in-council that any person who wished change from United States to Canada or visa versa, could have an opportunity before the lines were guarded. Although my father's predilections were in favor of Canada, yet because of those fearful forebodings of the Indians he concluded to leave the country during the war and move into a more thickly settled place, where there would be less danger from the Indians. The late Reuben Gleason, of E. Nissouri, and his father's family moved to New York State with our family and settled near Plattsburg, remaining in that part of the country during the war. He was in that notable battle fought in Plattsburg, where McDonald on the American side, fought his own cousin, McDonald, on the British side. For this service he drew land in Michigan some years ago. Only one of our neighbors was killed in the fight. It was while living here that Gleason married my eldest sister and here also my sister Mary was born.

## **HIS FATHER AND FAMILY MOVE WEST**

After peace was declared, emigration set in for the western country. Ohio was then open for settlement. Father also started westward in 1815. With a team of old horses and wagon, mother and children, bed and bedding, all in one craft, making our way slowly on, when money failed stopping and laboring to earn more, we pursued our journey, stopping sometimes longer and sometimes shorter until in 1817 we reached the western part of New York State, near Buffalo. It has always proved that a rolling stone gathers no moss

and so father moving so many times acquired very little property. A few incidents in our journey might be worth noting. A Cayuga Indian, seeing our heavy load thought to lend assistance by pushing behind. He then solicited his pay. We were glad to give him a trifle to get rid of him, for we were afraid his intentions were evil. Great inducements were made by wealthy people to adopt us and make us heirs of wealth, but my stoutly withstood all these offers. While residing near Buffalo father found an elder brother of his about to move into Upper Canada with his son-in-law, J. German of East Nissouri. Having the same predilections as ourselves for British rule, he encouraged us to return with him to Canada, which we all did in the winter of 1818. My uncle, Thomas Brown, was a soldier in the Revolutionary war. He afterward drew a pension of \$80 a year by returning to his native land, which he did in his advanced years, dying near Buffalo.

There were then no railroads or canals and no way of conveying goods except by wagons and horses. Merchandise brought from New York to Buffalo was conveyed on double-tired wagons drawn by three span of horses and a leader over the turnpike. The same year we moved into Canada the project of the Erie Canal was formed and the first sod turned by the Governor of New York State. It has proved to be a success to the astonishment of the mass of the people.

Buffalo, at this time, was but a small town. Buffalo Creek was crossed by a ferry boat. My uncle moved first into Canada, settling in a place called Short Hills. Then father joined him there, crossing at Black Rock. For the first time we beheld that wonderful cataract - the Niagara Falls. It was a beautiful summer morning which enabled us to see the many-tinted rainbow. Halting in our journey for a few days at uncle's, we then traveled to what is now called Smithsville. Father had agreed to clear a new place of thirty acres, clearing ten acres each year for Jeremiah Johnston, who furnished father with a yoke of oxen, two cows, and some provisions for doing so. This he accomplished in the three years, but unfortunately for poor Johnston he had placed us on the wrong land. Strange to tell, when the Township of Grimsby was surveyed the surveyors commenced at the lake shore running to the centre of the township, then commencing at the southern part to meet the other lines. In making out the map they skipped one whole concession. This was where we cleared the land. Some years afterward the mistake was found out and that whole concession fell into the hands of the government and was open to be located by any person having the right to draw land. The U. E. rights drew 200 acres, a Flanker 100 acres. These rights could be bought for a nominal price. Before we left it began to be rumored that there was something wrong with the old survey and father was advised not to leave until it was investigated and that he would have the pre-emption right; but having bought a lot already located from a Flanker - being lot No.27 in the 7th concession of Nissouri, said to lay on the Thames River - father declined to stay any longer than three years and accordingly in March 1822, he started for his new home. The price for the land was fifty cents per acre.

## **HIS EARLY EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES**

In consequence of father moving so often his family had little opportunity for acquiring an education. The principal chance I had was while living at Smithsville. I attended a school taught by Henry Smith, who continued in that school for many years. He came from New York State. By his industry and economy he bought a farm in the same neighborhood, married a Miss Cutler, raised a family, and has gone to his reward. From being often in new neighborhoods I was influenced by my associates. I distinctly remember

the first boy who taught me to say bad words. I vainly thought that if I had not seen him I would not have learned the habit. Whenever my playmates were a better class I fell in with their influence. In Smithville my opportunities for fostering any good desires were better than formerly. My sister, Rebecca and I attended the Sunday School regularly while staying there. I could never compete with my dear sister who was very proficient in committing Scripture to memory. Our teacher was the late Ebenezer Griffin, long since gone to his reward. His father, Smith Griffin, whose name the village bears, was a local preacher in the M. E. Church, one of the leading men in the church and in the village, being owner of the grist mill, sawmill, carding machine, store and ashery. What a blessing it is to any place when the leading man is a Christian.

Here I had the opportunity not only of Sabbath School, but of preaching, forming the acquaintance of the early pioneer preachers. I had the pleasure of hearing and forming the acquaintance of the late Elder Ryan, whose home was near. He was one among the first Presiding Elders in the M. E. Church in Canada. His District comprised all Upper Canada, part of Lower Canada and a large portion of New York State. Here I also heard the wonderful Isaac Peffer of precious memory, who traveled this circuit the first year of our stay in Grimsby. I distinctly remember the first text and the first hymn gave out at his first appointment, which was in Acts; "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, etc.," the hymn being,

"O, for a heart to praise my God,  
A heart from sin set free."

This text and hymn were so imprinted on my memory that I never forgot them. I was as thoroughly converted to him as a man as I should have been to God. No child was ever fonder of home and friends than I, yet I would have left them all and gone with him. Through his influence the first chapel in this part of the country was built, for the old school house failed to hold his congregation. Here I heard the great William Case, that wonderful Indian missionary. He preached and addressed our Sabbath School. He spoke of Timothy's early knowledge of the Scriptures and conversion. He dwelt much on the duty of mothers to their children by frequently saying, "of whom did he learn this? Of his pious grandmother and his religious mother." The address was a great blessing to the school. We were well supplied with preachers. One of our traveling preachers by the name of Warren married a daughter of Smith Griffin and received with her a fine farm near his father-in-law, which induced him to leave the ministry and try farming, of which he had no knowledge. This, I believe, finally proved his ruin. We also had Elder Ryan's son-in-law. I might here mention an incident of Elder Ryan's history. Methodist preachers had no right to perform the ceremony of marriage, but he ventured to marry Mr. Davis, of Westminster, which caused great excitement. He was brought before the court and condemned to be banished, not to Van Dieman's Land, but to the United States for 14 years. However he was reprieved through the influence of a petition.

## HIS FATHER AND FAMILY MOVE INTO MISSOURI

On our journey from Grimsby to Missouri we stayed a short time in the neighborhood of the Rynells and formed some excellent acquaintances, who proved lasting friends. Our route was then over the mountain road. Hamilton at that time comprised only

a few houses. We continued on by way of Brantford, which was mostly peopled by Indians. We crossed the river on the ice, there being no bridge; then through Burford Plains, which proved to be the finest wheat land in that part of the country, although the settlers all passed it by and sought the timbered bush; thence to Oxford to the south branch of the River Thames, following it down to Chote's Tavern; then turning north in the township of Nissouri, staying at the farm of Joel Cass, now owned by Asa Cogwell, in Thamesford. While the rest of the family were here my brother and I, who were driving the stock, had fallen behind in consequence of one of our sheep tiring out. A wedding party overtook us and we hired them to take the sheep to Marten's Tavern. To our great astonishment when we got there we found that they had pawned it to treat one another and we were obliged to give as much more or leave the sheep. This was great grief to us for our means were very small. Then we proceeded on till we put up for the night at Carroll's Tavern. In consequence of our misfortune with the sheep we concluded that we could not pay for a bed and intended to make the bar-room floor our bed, and soon fell asleep in our chairs. We were awakened by our good landlady and when we informed her that we could not afford to pay for a bed she insisted that we should go all the same and gave us water to wash our feet.

The roads were very bad and our shoes not by any means waterproof. We were very tired, which made us fully appreciate her kindness. We then joined the family at Thamesford.

We hired a man to take us up to the nearest neighbor to our own lot. This neighbor's name was Chas. Moore. His place was three miles distant from our lot. He and his family, and Frances Bowers and Hugh Davis and their families were settled together. We stayed with Chas. Moore until we got a shanty built on our lot. The shanty in which Moore and his family - consisting of himself, his wife and two children - lived was about 12 x 12 feet without any chimney for the egress of the smoke which did not very often find its way out. Our family of eight, together with his own and also some fowl, who made it their home, filled up the shanty, yet Mr. Moore tried to make us comfortable - did everything in his power under the circumstances. Here we stayed until we got a shanty built on our own lot. Through the help of Mr. Moore, and his yoke of oxen we finished the shanty and moved in. At this time, although the snow was gone on the roads of Oxford, it was a foot deep in the woods. Our pilot to this lot was the late Robert Davis, who lost his life in the Rebellion of 1837. When the snow left we discovered that we had not found the best place for a road and in cutting a new road our dog discovered that there was something hidden at the foot of a large white ash tree. His barking drew our attention and it proved to be a bear and two cubs. We succeeded in killing the bear and one cub and caught the other alive. The flesh of the animal served well for meat and we exchanged the skins and cub for provisions, which were very acceptable. We afterward felled the tree and split it up, getting a carpenter to make a loom for the family use, which under the circumstances was quite an advantage. Our first work was to try and clear off a piece of land for a spring crop.

## **CONDITIONS OF THINGS IN NISSOURI AND ITS FIRST SETTLEMENT**

I will now give some account of the condition of things in Nissouri when we first settled in it. At this time there were but a few settlers in the township and they were scattered at great distances apart. There were no settlers to the north of us. Four miles to

the west was the Uren Settlement; the late Mr. German had settled three miles to the east; and Moore, Davis and Bowers lived three miles to the south. The early settlement of Nissouri was very much hindered from the following reasons: - there were a great many Clergy Reserves, Crown Reserves, Flanker or soldier rights and U. E. rights in the township. The first two were not in the market and the owners of the other two were hard to find. Our nearest grist mill and post office was at Ingersoll and our nearest saw-mill was at Putnamville. All the buildings were made of logs and covered either with the bark peeled off water-elm trees or basswood troughs made by splitting small basswood trees and hollowing them out with an axe. Our first vehicle for taking a grist to mill was a small tree with a critch dragging behind. A box was formed on it by boring holes in it and putting stakes in the holes. With these we could go through the woods over logs or anywhere. We also had an ox-sleigh with runners made out of a tree with a natural crook. These were the only vehicles we had for a length of time. This state of things existed for several years and made it very inconvenient to get to our neighbors and mills. When we commenced to raise grain the only way we had of cleaning it was with a hand fan. Any quantity of cattle could be kept in the summer time, the vast wilderness affording plenty of pasture, but it was very different keeping them through the winter on account of scarcity of winter feed. We often had to resort to browsing them by felling trees and allowing the cattle to eat the young growth off the ends of the branches. It was impossible to keep the sheep on account of the prowling wolf. Articles of clothing were very dear and hard to be got. On account of the scarcity and costliness of leather, shoes were hard to be got for the winter; boots were not to be thought of. In summer neither men nor women ever thought of wearing any. Of course the large nettles and mosquitoes which were very plentiful in the woods were a great annoyance to bare-footed people. Calico and brown cotton were sold at the exorbitant price of fifty cents per yard so, as soon as we could, we raised flax and made our own linen. As it was a great place for making maple sugar we took it into the more open country and sold it and bought wool. We manufactured it ourselves together with the linen, wearing the woolen as it came from the loom. It will not be thought strange that under these circumstances we sometimes suffered from hunger and cold. There were no newspapers taken among us and books were scarce, therefore the only way we had of enjoying ourselves was by meeting together. The first thing we had to sell was black salts made out of the ashes of the timber we burned in clearing the land.

## **RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES IN THE PIONEER DAYS OF NISSOURI**

As we were now settled in an almost unbroken wilderness, isolated, as it were, from all society, the effect on us, who had just removed from the privileges of Sabbath School and the preaching of the Gospel can be better imagined than described. When I tell that for three years we lived without hearing a sermon it will not be thought strange that we became careless and indifferent about religious matters. My brother and I, William and Thomas Uren, living at what is now called Cherry Grove, Thomas and Alonza Hall who lived at what is now Thorndale, and Robert and Joseph Davis, living three miles to the south of us, formed the society of men in this part of the township. In these days we were obliged to go long distances to get help for our raisings and bees and as we were often obliged to stay over night we became very intimately acquainted. Generally we spent the night in a spree, dancing to the sound of the fiddle. As whiskey was then king, a considerable quantity of it was generally consumed and it was not considered proper etiquette to

leave until the whiskey was all drank. At a marriage in our own family twelve gallons of whiskey and one gallon of rum were provided. As bees and raisings did not happen very often, we made appointments to meet on Sundays and spent the day in playing ball and cards and other amusements. The climax was reached when we made a bee on Sunday to mow a meadow in the southeast corner of London Township, now called Dreaney's Corners. Thus it will be easily seen how soon people removed from under religious influence, will become hardened to sin.

The first wedding in the township was that of the late Donald McDonald to Miss Sarah Cameron, sister of the later Squire Cameron. They were married by the late Charles Ingersoll, J. P., at the house of Mr. O'Brien, step-father of the groom. Most of the young people of the township were invited. It was a genuine Scotch wedding and the Scotch reel was first introduced to my notice. It would amuse the young dandies of the present day to have seen some of the elderly men dancing reels clad in buck-skin breeches and tow shirt. It was customary in those days to have whiskey on all occasions and so father said he could not raise his barn without it. About that time a man by the name of George Coleman moved in and settled about four miles from us. He had whiskey for sale for labor and so we procured three gallons from him. As he was very fond of it himself he concluded to help us home with the article, but it was all drank on the road and never reached my father's house, so he had to raise his barn without it.

The first death in the township was the late Hugh Davis, father of Robert and Joseph Davis. He was killed by the falling of a tree. The first sermon I heard in this township was in old Mr. Comstock's barn on lot 13, on the 3rd concession. It was preached by a Jeffries, a Christian Unitarian minister, who turned out to be an imposter. Previous to this I think some Methodist ministers from London township had preached in the Scatcherd neighborhood and formed a class and John Scatcherd and wife opened a Sunday School in their house, the scholars coming to it from many miles around. Many years after this I met a lady who informed me that she would never have been able to read the Bible had it not been for that Sunday School. The first ministers that came here were two Baptist missionaries, Elders Maybee and French, sent by some Christian ladies of the Township of Oxford. They were paid in socks, mittens and some home-made clothing. Their labors were rewarded by a Baptist church being formed of several persons in the Vining settlement and Solomon Vining finally became their minister. The first sermon I heard of them was preached by Elder Maybee in a shanty occupied by the late John Uren, Sr. His text was, "I am come to get the bride for my master, if ye deal kindly and truly with me, tell me, and if not tell me that I may turn to the right or the left." These were the words of Isaac's servant to Rebecca. He addressed the audience, telling them that he was on the same errand as Isaac's servant, seeking a bride for his Master Jesus and then impressed the necessity of giving ourselves to God. I became deeply awakened while he portrayed our real lost condition as sinners. "You must come to Christ to be his bride and if you do not come I am clear of my oath" he said. I felt he was a messenger from God and if I did not come to Him I would be lost. I then and there resolved to give my heart to God. Though Calvinistic in doctrine, he preached free agency. "If ye will ye may." Though deeply convicted, yet it was some time afterward before I experienced a change of heart.

## HIS CONVERSATION AND UNION WITH THE METHODIST CHURCH

About this time a Methodist preacher by the name of Matthew Whiting stationed on the London circuit, took up an appointment at the house of Francis Bowers, Sr. and another at the shanty of John Uren, Sr. who, with his wife, had been for many years members of the Methodist church in Cornwall, England, but had fallen into a backslidden state as they had been for a number of years in the wilderness without any means of grace. My father and mother also were in a backslidden state from the same cause. They had formerly been members of a Methodist Episcopal church in Lower Canada. Mr. Whiting formed a Methodist class consisting of John Uren, his wife and my brother James and I, with the late John Scatcherd, Esq., for our leader. After Mr. Whiting, John H. Hueston was the next preacher on the London circuit. He took up a regular appointment at Father Uren's, now called Cherry Grove, and another at my father's house, now called Brown's neighborhood, also a new appointment, forming at E. Hiram Ferris', in what is now the Johnston neighborhood, forming a small class of Mrs. Ferris, Mrs. J. Johnston, Mr. James Howard and his wife. At this time our Quarterly Meetings were held in the frame school-house in the Jacobs Settlement in the Township of London and at one of these meetings the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered. As the congregation were singing the hymn

"Crowd to your places at the feast  
And bless the Founder's name,"

I felt a desire to go forward, but was restrained by the fear that I was unworthy. I told my desires to the late Rev. John Bailey He said in reply, "My dear young brother, venture on Him, venture freely, let no other trust intrude." I went forward and have never regretted the step I then took.

At this time I had not received satisfactory evidence of my acceptance with God. I had failed not in using every means of grace to obtain more light and knowledge of what is a Christian's privilege. A Camp Meeting was held this year on the farm of Aaron Kilborn near the place now called Lambeth. At this meeting, after public preaching, a rude altar was formed with crotched sticks driven into the ground with poles laid across them, making a square with the ministers in the centre and the members and seekers kneeling on the outside. As I took no part in these prayer-meetings they appeared to me to be a scene of confusion. The people were all praying at once and as I was in rather a cold spirit, the longer I looked the more hardened I became. I had gone to this meeting fully convinced that I was a Methodist, but I thought if this was Methodist worship I was not a Methodist. I said to my young brother, George Garner, who accompanied me from Nissouri, "If I live till tomorrow morning I will start for Home." I am convinced that my pastor, the Rev. J. H. Hueston, above referred to, knew the state of mind, in which I was from my dejected looks. The next prayer meeting was to be held that evening at five o'clock. He invited me to come forward and kneel with the brethren at the altar. As I had great respect for him, I thought I must obey him. He called on me to lead in prayer and I had hardly opened my mouth when the Lord so abundantly blessed me that I could not contain myself. I sprang to my feet, clapping my hands and shouting at the top of my voice "Glory to God!" At this moment Sister Williams of precious memory, was so pleased with what the Lord had done for me that she arose and coming behind me put her arms around my neck and mingled

her shouts with mine. I was so happy that I hardly knew whether I was in the body or out of the body. I believe I then experienced what Paul said, "But ye are justified, ye are sanctified."

In that same meeting a young woman, a Miss Stafford, experienced religion and how to shout. Different people are differently exercised by the same spirit. I will here relate that she fell and lay for some time as one dead and when she recovered consciousness the first words she uttered were "Glory to God!" She afterwards became the wife of Eli Harris, third son of the late Daniel Harris of Harris Street, Oxford, and her subsequent life proved that her conversion was genuine, as she lived and died in the triumphs of Christian faith. Her husband now resides in Norwich.

After the meeting broke up I found that my horse had been stolen from the pasture where I had left it, but I had often felt worse grieved when I was a little boy fishing in the brook and losing my hook, than I did now at the loss of my horse. I took the horse that brother Garner had ridden and started for home, making diligent enquiry after my own horse. I saw a large common and a man at work among the logs that covered it. I turned from the road and went up to him. Before asking him if he had seen a stray horse I asked him if he had ever attended a Camp Meeting, and as he stared at me as if he thought I was crazy, I told him my late experience and that if he would attend one he might obtain a like blessing. I then asked him if he had seen a stray horse. As I proceeded on my way I found no tidings of my lost horse. Having to pass through the woods I was preaching to the trees as I went along and there happened to be an old man by the name of Cummings, a blacksmith, who hearing my voice, placed himself in ambush so that I did not see him. He afterwards told the neighbors that young Brown meant to be a preacher for he had heard him trying to preach to the trees. I reached home without hearing any tidings of my horse. After resting one night I started in pursuit of home and found him feeding on the roadside in the Township of Dorchester near Putnam's sawmill. Some lads who had attended the meeting had stolen it, together with another man's saddle and bridle. The saddle and bridle were found a few weeks afterwards by some berry-pickers in a fence-corner, near where the horse was. I continued to believe for a length of time that all whom I should tell would believe and seek the same blessing and was astonished that they did not. For to me the trees and all the works of God seemed to Praise Him. Old things were done away and all things were become new.

### **HIS FIRST LABORS AS A WORKER IN THE CHURCH**

The next Conference year we had Hamilton Biggar for our preacher. He was a fine young man, a good preacher, and did us excellent service. Our presiding Elder was the late John Ryerson. About this time the late John Scatcherd, Esq. built a meeting-house at his own expense, at what is now called Wyton, it being the first M. E. church in this western country. This man, being wealthy, his praise for building a church was sounded in all the churches. Strange to say in the course of a few years this church was sold and became a tavern, to the great annoyance of all well-wishers of religion. It has often been remarked by friends that it would have been better if the church had burned down.

After and absence of a few years, Matthew Whiting was returned to this circuit, to the great enjoyment of his friends. He continued to be the same successful man on this cir-

cuit that he had been in former years. He extended his labors by forming a new class on the townline between Nissouri and Zorra, ten miles south-east from my place, preaching at the widow Talman's, near the late Nathan P. Allen's and afterwards preaching at the house of John Youngs, two miles further south, where the class met. Some of the first members were Nathan P. Allen, and wife, John Youngs and wife, Widow Talman, John Fletcher and wife and the late Benjamin Thornton and wife. This afterwards became a large class. I was appointed leader of this class which position I held for over 2 years. I seldom or never was absent from my class, though I performed the journey on foot and in a few instances I attended their Thursday evening prayer-meetings. It is hardly creditable to some that I would go to a prayer-meeting on foot ten miles.

I received my first license for an exhorter from this minister and before he had left the circuit he said to me one day, "Brown, the people say you have been preaching, but you know some people call anything preaching." I thought he was speaking ironically. This was the year 1829. In this year the Guardian was first printed. I took the first number and continued taking it until the year 1833. My brother also took it. About this time Coubourg College was first started to which my brother and I gave \$10 each. The amount seems small, but in those days it was considered a big subscription for backwoods people.

### **HE JOINS THE FIRST TEMPERANCE SOCIETY EVER FORMED IN NISSOURI AND IN CANADA**

Mr. Whiting formed the first Temperance Society in the township. He drew up a constitution, the main article of which was what was afterwards called the "short-pledge", viz., to abstain from the use of ardent spirits ourselves and to use our influence with others for the same purpose. He asked me to join it. I hesitated at first, but after some consideration I concluded I would. But we were something like the blind man whom the Saviour healed, who at first saw men as trees walking, we only had our eyes half opened. We found that nothing short of total abstinence would do and the total abstinence pledge soon followed. The members of our first society were Joseph Brown, Sr., Nathan P. Allen, George and John Grout, Stephen Teeple, William and Thomas Uren, Robert Davis, Turneley May, my brother James and I. I have since learned that this was the first temperance society ever formed in Canada. The next was formed in the Township of London, the next in the town, now the city of London.

### **OPPOSITION TO THE TEMPERANCE WORK**

I had never dreamed that anyone would oppose such a society, but the very first raising that I attended after signing the pledge was at a farm, the owner of which had procured [as was custom] plenty of whiskey. I was not aware that I was generally known that I had signed the pledge, but I had not been there very long when a man offered me a bottle of whiskey, wishing me to drink, and when I refused he said I should drink if he poured it down my throat. I resisted him and in the scuffle he let the bottle fall and it broke. He then made a great outcry, saying that I struck him and was ready to fight, saying also that it was a pretty way for a Methodist preacher to act. This, however, was not the end of it, for when the barn was raised and supper was over, a young man seated himself on the fence and called the attention of the crowd by telling them that he wanted to sing them a

song that had been lately composed. The name of "Tom Brown" as I was then familiarly called figured prominently in this effusion and it was about the terrible effects of cold water. It told of a man who had refused to drink whiskey and said the doctors had cut ice out of him after he died. I went home from the place with a very heavy heart, feeling as if I were disgraced and embraced the first opportunity of letting my pastor know what had happened. To my great astonishment he said, "Oh, my dear brother, I wish it had been me instead of you for then I could have said with David, 'I am become the song of the drunkard.'"

### **RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION**

I might here relate an incident or two to show that spirit of persecution which existed in a certain class against anything of a religious nature. An evil-disposed person reported that I had torn the cap off an old lady and otherwise ill-treated her. [I had happened to be present at a family quarrel, but had no part in it whatever]. He also reported that I had stolen an Indian's canoe on the north branch of the river Thames, which was also a malicious fabrication. This gave me great trouble of mind, but one day as I was travelling in the woods and grieving over it, these words of Christ to his disciples came to mind, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in Heaven for so persecuted they are prophets, which were before you." These words were like an electric flash and the transition from grief to joy was instantaneous. I went on my way rejoicing and praising God who giveth us the victory through His son, Jesus Christ.

### **DEFEAT OF THE WHISKEY MEN**

About this time there was a great strife among the whiskey men to keep up the old custom of having whiskey at bees and raisings. One of our staunch temperance men, Stephen H. Teeple, residing on the Governor's Road, was determined to raise his barn without it and invited his neighbors with that understanding. They turned out well, but had secretly determined to have it there. When the foundation was laid and the bents all ready to raise they placed themselves in readiness to raise the first bent and then pretended it could not be raised unless he sent for whiskey. They offered to purchase it themselves and send a man for it but he stoutly refused and finally the men left the barn unraised. The next day Teeple went to all the temperance friends through Nissouri and Oxford, and they turned out and raised the barn without any difficulty to the great chagrin of the whiskey men and the joy of the temperance party, and a good many of whom determined not to go where it was and not to have it at any of their raisings.

### **HE BECOMES A REFORMER IN POLITICS**

My first knowledge of the political questions of the day were not by reading the Christian Guardian of which Egerton Ryerson was then the editor. He took a strong stand in favor of the Reform Party. He specially made a strong opposition to the claims which were then put forth by the Church of England to be recognized and supported by the State in preference to all other denominations. He showed that the church had a monopoly for

her ministers, claimed the Clergy Reserves. Beside that they drew large amounts of money from the Government and they alone had the power to marry except where Magistrates had the power if no church of England was within 18 miles. Afterward Mr. Bishop Strachan wrote in defence of the claims put forth by the Church of England. The letters of controversy between the two were published in pamphlet form and distributed among the people. It is evident that the large majority of the people endorsed Ryerson's views for the law was changed so that all clergymen had the right to marry, the clergy reserves were secularized, and finally the Church of England was placed on a common footing with other churches, the Government of Canada adopting the principle of "equal rights to all and special privileges to none". I embraced Ryerson's views and have never seen any good reason to change. However, strange to say, when Ryerson went to England in 1833 to form a union with the English Wesleyan Methodist Conference, after having fought and won the battle of Reform, he changed his views and took Government money in support of the new Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada and became a Conservative in politics, taking no part with the Reformers nor in the temperance movement.

### THE UNION OF 1833

The Canada Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which was the first in connection with the parent body in the United States, had in 1828 become a separate and independent Canadian Church; but in 1833 a union was formed between it and the British Wesleyan Methodist Church, the new church calling themselves the Wesleyan Methodist Church of British North America. Some radical changes were effected in connection with the union the principal being the doing away with the episcopacy and depriving the local preachers of the rights and privileges the formerly enjoyed. The large majority of the Conference in Canada went with the Union, although it was much against the will of some of the oldest men of the conference, and when the full details of the Union were known they left. The few travelling preachers, local preachers and the laity who resisted the union from the beginning numbered about 1,000. They suffered many privations and much opposition from the party which had left and united with the new church although still remaining Episcopal Methodist and using the old Discipline and hymn book. We were not allowed to hold divine service in any of the old meeting houses, school houses, barns and woods. Under those circumstances many of our local preachers left their homes and took circuits. One of these local preachers, John Nixon, was appointed to the London circuit, and on his way to an appointment met Richard Phelps [he being one of the Wesleyan preachers] who accosted him thus: "What do you expect to make from this opposition." I will tell you the course I purpose taking toward you. It is this. If you visit me I will ask you to pray in the family, but if we meet in public service I'll not ask you to pray, neither do I want you to ask me." Not long after I met this Oxford preacher at a friend's house. We stayed together all night. In course of our conversation in talking over the Union I asked him if he was instructed by the Ryerson party to treat all the Episcopal Methodist preachers as he had Brother Nixon. He stoutly denied it, but after several hours conversation in regard to the nature of the Union, he completely gave way to his feelings and weeping, threw his arms about my neck, saying that he was surprised so many of the laity freely gave up their own church by joining the Wesleyan Methodists and a new class. Notwithstanding all this our loyal preachers continued to labor on, building churches and forming societies, God blessing their labors, souls being converted, until the circuits which

they travelled have now become districts for presiding elders. For several years after the union the Wesleyan Methodists supplied no preachers for the following places, East and West Nissouri, Blanchard, Fullarton, Biddulph and as far as Mitchell. The first meeting held in St. Marys was organized by myself. It was held in a shanty belonging to George Treacy, and then in Joshua Brink's and other shanties all through the settlement. But the time came when the Wesleyan Methodists were supplied with men and money to take up the work in these fields. When the Wesleyan Methodists formed classes the emigrants from the Old Country naturally united with their former church. Our missionaries' and ministers' labors were not lost, though many who were converted under their ministry went into other churches. We are acknowledged to be the pioneers in laying out the work in the above mentioned places. The case in other parts of Canada was very different. As a church we have continued to prosper in all church enterprises equal to other branches of Methodism. The class formed by Rev. Mr. Whiting in 1829 on the townline between Nissouri and Zorra, called the Allen class, has now a good brick church. Nathan P. Allen was one of the first members of that class. His wife is now the only surviving member of that class. A part of that same class came to Kintore, forming a separate appointment which has now a few faithful members and a comfortable frame church.

### **HE MARRIES AMANDA HARRIS**

In 1830 I was married by the late Peter Teeple, Esq., to Amanda Harris, second daughter of Elisha Harris, Esq., of Harris Street, Oxford. His father was one of the earliest settlers who came in with Col. Ingersoll, father of James Ingersoll, of Woodstock, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, taking up a large tract of land. Having a large family he gave each of them a farm in that locality which is now known by the name of Harris Street. At one time the Harris family were all members of the Baptist Church though afterwards some of them united with other churches; but time has removed them to that country where denominational creeds are unknown. With the exception of Col. J. Ingersoll, all the Ingersoll family have passed away and finally all the early settlers and many of their children of the County of Oxford are gone the way of all the earth.

### **THE VILLAGE OF INGERSOLL**

The village of Ingersoll was formed in 1822 by Ingersoll, Daniel Carrol and Benjamin Loomis. The late Charles and James Ingersoll had the first store in this part of the country, a small grist-mill, distillery and ashery, making pearl ash, buying the ashes or black salts from the early settlers of Zorra and Nissouri. By this opening the people could procure tea, tobacco, salt and whiskey. It was a great accommodation to the early settlers who had not much money or surplus grain. Those gentlemen were very accommodating to their customers by giving them credit until they could furnish the black-salts. At one time when there was a scarcity of grain, they bought up a quantity from the older farmers and supplied the new settlers with it. They purchased a quantity of corn from a man of the name of G. Nichols. When we went with our order for this corn and went for it, we had to shell it ourselves.

I remember the first load of black salts I drew to Ingersoll on an ox-sleigh with a yoke of oxen. It was in the month of June and it took about four days to make the trip.

There was about two cwt. in the load. They were worth about \$2.50 per cwt. in exchange we got brown cotton and prints at 50 cents per yard and other commodities at an equally dear rate. What a change to the present day when cottons can be bought for 5 cents and prints at 10 cents per yard with gravel roads, comfortable wagons and buggies, drawn by horses, thriving villages only a few miles apart and good markets for all our products.

### **BACKWARD STATE OF NISSOURI**

From 1822 to 1830 there was very little improvement in roads or settlement. For the first two or three years there were no township meetings or officers, so that there were no taxes levied and in consequence of the few inhabitants being scattered so far apart no public schools were organized. The first school that I know of was taught by a superannuated Presbyterian minister in the Cameron neighbourhood at a private house where a few young persons received all their education. School houses and meetings houses were not known.

### **JOHN AND THOMAS SCATCHERD**

Among the early settlers of this township who have remained and borne patiently the hardships incident to settling in a new country, been industrious and have succeeded in making comfortable homes for themselves and their children and who have been the leading men in church and state are John Scatcherd, Esq., and Englishman, settling in the south-west part of the township and his brother Thomas, who purchased land adjoining his brother, both of them marrying sisters, the Misses Farleys whose father had settled in that locality a few months previous. The way of finding the road from one home to another was by trees marked with an axe, called a 'blaze'. Scatcherd had no other way of finding the road to Farley's but was told to follow the 'blaze'. He supposed the marks on the trees were those of fire. This gave him a great deal of trouble until he was better informed; he often laughed at his ignorance of bush-life.

These gentlemen brought a great deal of money into this country, which enabled them to outstrip their neighbors in clearing and improving their farms. Their wealth was a great benefit to their neighbors and country by giving money to pay for labor. They soon had a cleared farm and comfortable buildings, having the first frame barn that was built in the township. In order to raise their building at that time they had to go many miles for sufficient help.

After clearing their farms they erected a grist-mill and a saw-mill, which were a great benefit to the surrounding settlers. Both of them raised large and respectable families some of whom have filled important positions in society. John's eldest son Thomas chose law rather than farming, practicing his profession in the City of London until his death. He was one of the most honorable men who ever graced the profession. He was a member of the Canadian Parliament, representing the County of Middlesex with distinguished ability. He died in Ottawa by overtaxing his physical strength, honored and mourned by all, and leaving a wife and two sons who are following their father's profession. They are in comfortable circumstances. The second son, James N., settled in the City of Buffalo when young, engaging in the lumber trade with one Dr. Blockley, of Woodstock, Ontario. By his industry and attention to business he finally became the sole proprietor of the firm, becoming one of the wealthiest and most honorable men of the city. His wife was

the daughter of the late George Belton, Esq., who was a neighbor of his father. He has now one son in partnership with him the business.

### JOHN SCATCHERD, ESQ.

John Scatcherd, Esq., when he first settled in the township, was rather unsociable and distant. He had been brought up in the Church of England and so strong was his attachment to that church that when his sons, Thomas and James, were babes he took them to St. Thomas to have them baptized by a Church of England minister. Shortly afterwards his father-in-law, the late Mr. Farley, died. As there was no regular minister in this part of the country, Mr. Robert Webster father of the Webster family, now living in the Township and City of London, who was an exhorter in the M. E. Church was called upon to conduct the burial service. He made a strong appeal to the audience on the necessity of a new birth. God, by His Spirit, carried home that truth to John Scatcherd's heart. His conviction of sin and his sad state were so great that he at one time thought of killing himself and wife. The neighbors thought he was losing his mind and considered it would be best to consult doctor. He concluded finally to tell his wife, and calling her by name, said, "Jane, do you know that I intended to kill you and myself?" She replied, looking smiling into his face, "John, you wouldn't kill me." This was the very climax of his deep conviction and shortly after in fervent prayer he experienced the blessing of God, realizing the truth that "man's necessity is God's opportunity, and bid him at the point to die, behold His face and live." Never in any man was there a more visible change in looks and actions. With him it was true "Old things are passed away and all things are become new." A Methodist travelling preacher soon found his way to that neighborhood and formed a society that exists to this day. So great was his zeal of God, that, having means, he built a church on his own farm with hardly any support from others. Strange to tell this church fell into disuse, went out of his hands and finally was used several years as a tavern, to the great mortification of himself, family and all Methodist friends. But, happy to say, now there is a good brick church in the same village, having regular preaching and a good class. Both of the Messrs. Scatcherds have raised very respectable families. Thomas and some of both of the families are still living in part of the old homestead. The place is now called Wyton.

John Scatcherd was a strong politician, taking the Liberal side and being a man of more than ordinary talents he soon became Councillor, Reeve and Warden for the County and finally a member of the Canadian Parliament.

Esquire John Scatcherd, his family and himself had always been special friends. As an evidence of this James Scatcherd now of Buffalo, brought his children to his father's home, preferring to have myself to baptize them. Besides myself, my wife and many of his old friends were invited to be present at the baptismal service. It was certainly a very social as well as religious gathering. His wife's father, Mr. Belton, said that any of the Bishops of the M. E. church in the United States would have been pleased to have performed the ceremony for so honorable a man. This was the year 1860. Besides giving me \$4.00 as a present to myself, he gave me the first \$10.00 raised for the erection of a church in these parts.

Esquire John Scatcherd was taken ill at Ottawa, while attending to his Parliamentary duties. His room mate being a doctor he applied to him for help. The doctor did not speak discouragingly of his case, yet strange to say he wrote home to Scatcherd's wife and died in his chair before finishing the letter. The last words he had written to her were

**T**HIS INDENTURE, made the  
Day of *October* in the *Year*  
Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord **GEORGE** the  
Third, by the Grace of God, of *Great Britain, France, and*  
*Ireland*, King, Defender of the Faith, &c. and in the Year of  
our Lord 17*87*) between *Henry Caldwell, of Belmont near Quebec,*  
Esq; of the one Part, and *Thomas Brown*  
of the other Part, WITNESSETH, that for and in Consideration  
of the yearly Rents; Covenants, Provisions, Conditions, and  
Agreements herein-after recited and contained, on the Part and  
Behalf of the said *Thomas Brown*.

his Heirs and Assigns, to be paid, kept, done, and performed,  
he, the said *Henry Caldwell*, hath granted, conveyed, and confirmed,  
and, by these Presents, doth grant, convey, and confirm, to the  
said *Thomas Brown* his Heirs and  
Assigns, all that Piece or Parcel of Land, containing *One*  
*Hundred* Acres English measure, being  
Part of *Caldwell Manor, Lot No. four* in the *fourth*  
*Range* north of *the five Degrees of*  
*Latitude*

together with all Woods, Underwoods, Trees, Profits, Com-  
modities, Emoluments, Advantages, and Appurtenances whaso-  
ever, to the said Piece or Parcel of Land belonging, or in any  
wise appertaining, (all Mines and Minerals, and all running  
Waters whereon Mills may be constructed, always excepted) to  
have and to hold the said Piece or Parcel of Land and Premises,  
with the Appurtenances, unto the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs and Assigns for ever,  
yielding and paying therefor, unto the said *Henry Caldwell*, his  
Heirs and Assigns, the yearly Rent of *four shillings*  
per Acre, reckoning the Spanish Dollar at Five Shillings. Said  
Rent to be due and payable the first Day of *October, 1787*  
and every first Day of *October* thereafter for ever. And the said

*Thomas Brown* for  
himself, his Heirs and Assigns, doth hereby covenant, promise,  
and agree to and with the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and  
Assigns, in Manner following, that is to say, that he, the said

*Thomas Brown*

his  
Heirs

Heirs or Assigns, shall and will, yearly and every Year, well and truly pay, or cause to be paid, unto the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, the yearly Rents above reserved, at the Days and Times above-mentioned.

And also that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, from Time to Time, and at all Times hereafter, to erect and build upon any Creeks, Streams, or Runs of Water, within the said Premises, or upon any Part of the said Premises, near such Creeks, Streams, or Runs of Water, all such Mills and Mill-Dams as he or they shall think proper; and to dig, trench, and use the Ground for that Purpose; also to erect any Windmill on the Premises he may think proper; and to pass and repass through the said Premises, with his and their Horses, Cattle, Carriages, and Servants; and to lay out Roads to and from the said Mills, as also all other Roads that may be adjudged necessary for the public Utility. And also that, he the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs and Assigns, shall not, nor will, at any Time hereafter, erect, or cause to be erected, any Mill or Mill-dam, or other Work or Building, upon any Creek, Stream, or Run of Water, within the said Premises; or any Windmill on the said Premises; or suffer or permit any other Person or Persons so to do, other than and except the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns. And also that he, the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs and Assigns, shall and will from Time to Time, and at all Times hereafter, under the Penalty of paying double Toll besides Cost of Suit, carry all Corn and other Grain he or they shall have occasion to be ground, to some Mill or Mills belonging to the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs or Assigns, upon or near the said Premises, for the Purpose of grinding such Corn or other Grain; for doing which, the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, shall and may lawfully take and retain to their own Use, One Fourteenth Part of all such Corn and other Grain. And also that he, the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs or Assigns, shall and will, within One Year and One Day, erect and build a Dwelling-House upon the said Premises; and also during the first Five Years thereafter open and clear yearly one Acre of the said Premises, fit for Pasturage or Corn. And also that upon every Sale, Assignment, Alienation, or other disposal of the said Premises, or any Part thereof, by the said *Thomas Brown*

his

*Witness my hand and seal this 7th day of August 1789*  
*Thomas Brown*

*N<sup>o</sup>. N<sup>o</sup>. 15*  
*Signed*

his Heirs or Assigns, he, the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, shall be entitled to and have and receive from the Purchaser at the Rate of 8l. and a half per Centum of the Purchase Monies. And also that he, the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, shall be also entitled to the Right of Retrait or Preference the Premises, or any part thereof so purchased, he repaying the full purchase Money and all legal Cost; (any time within Forty Days after the Bargain with such person is notified to him). Provided always, nevertheless, and this present indenture is given and granted on these express Conditions, that if it shall happen the said yearly Rents above reserved, or any part thereof, shall be behind and unpaid by the Space of Forty Days next over or after the respective Days of Payment, whereon the same ought to be paid as aforesaid; then, and in such Case, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, unto and upon the said premises, or any Part thereof, to enter and distress; and the Distress and Distresses, then and there found to take, lead, drive and carry away; and the same to dispose of at Public Vendue; and out of the Monies arising therefrom, to deduct and retain all Arrears of Rent, and all such Costs and Charges attending such Distress and Sale; and the overplus, if any there be, to pay unto the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs and Assigns. And if no sufficient Distress can be found on the Premises to satisfy such Arrears of Rent, or in Case the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs or Assigns, shall not live on and cultivate the Land or cause it to be cultivated, and that it should remain without a Tenant for a Year and a Day; then, and in either of the said Cases, it shall and may be lawful to and for the said *Henry Caldwell*, his Heirs and Assigns, into and upon any of the said Premises hereby granted, or any Part thereof, in the Name of the Whole, to re-enter, and the same to have again, repossess, and enjoy, as in his or their former Estate, any Thing herein contained to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding. And the said *Henry Caldwell*, the said Piece or Parcel of Land and Premises, with the Appurtenances, (subject to, and under the Rents, Covenants, Restrictions, Conditions, and Agreements herein-before mentioned, and not otherwise) unto the said *Thomas Brown*

his Heirs and Assigns, shall and will warrant and defend against all and every Person and Persons claiming the same. In witness whereof, the said Parties to these Presents have hereunto interchangeably set their Hands and seals, the Day and Year first above written.

*Signed sealed & Delivered Henry Caldwell*  
*In the presence of*

*Henry A. Smith*  
*Patrick Brown*  
*[Signature]*

*Thomas Brown*

"Scatcherd will never get well." This affected him so much that he started and came home. He never left his own house again until he died. I shall never forget the cordial reception I received from him. In the course of our conversation he expressed himself as never expecting to recover. One of his legs was so paralyzed that he had no power to move it and the ideases continued to work up until it took his life. Thus passed away one of the noblest men of the Township of Nissouri. It is men life him who have made Nissouri what it is as regards religion and all other improvements.

### THE VINING FAMILY

Among the early settlers of Nissouri were the Vinings - two brothers Jared and Zalmon. These two brothers, like the Scatcherds, settled on adjoining farms. They came from New York State, USA, Zalmon was a soldier in the war of 1812 and for his services in that war, drew from the United States Government, lands, located in Michigan, not many years ago. Notwithstanding this soon after the war they preferred settling in Canada to their own country. They were sons of a Baptist minister. They both married sisters of the late Captain Bodwell of Dereham. Both they and their wives were of more than ordinary talents. A few years after their settling in Nissouri, two missionaries, Elders Maybee and French, were sent to labor in Nissouri by the Christian ladies of the Baptist church in Oxford, who having no money, paid them with coats, socks and other home-made clothing. The labors of these missionaries were not vain for the word was blessed and many were awakened and converted and among the converts were the Vinings. Though the Christian ladies and the missionaries are long since gone the way of all the earth, yet "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord for they rest from their labors and their works do follows them." A Baptist church was formed in the Vining neighborhood and these brothers were leading spirits in it. The elder brother, Jared became the Deacon and Zalmon soon became the minister; he was of more than ordinary talent for preaching. This church has had its difficulties like all other churches. Though these brothers have passed away to their reward, there still remains a Baptist congregation in that locality with a fine brick church; many of the children and grandchildren of the two Vining brothers are members of it.

### NATHAN P. ALLEN

The late Nathan P. Allen, who seemed to be providentially thrown as an early settler of this township, was a native of Cherry Valley, New York State. He had a pious bringing up by an excellent mother. She was a member of the Presbyterian church and a strong Calvinist. Her son being of a religious turn of mind would naturally lean to her way of thinking in these things. When he was leaving home she cautioned him to beware of the Methodists and their doctrine and selected a number of books for him to read to guard him against any false doctrine and establish him in the Calvinistic faith. Through some mistake in packing the books she put in one that taught an unlimited atonement and free grace for all. He then married and moved into Nissouri, where there were no meetings nor periodicals to be had. Under these circumstances he found the books very useful to read during his leisure time. Being a good English scholar and a man of more than ordinary intelligence, when he came to the above mentioned book and read its title page he hesitated

to read it. Before he finished he underwent a thorough change in his theological views and became at heart a Methodist in doctrine. When Matthew Whiting took up an appointment in his neighborhood he embraced religion and became a member of this townline class, and a liberal supporter of the cause of God in all its institutions. Being a man of weakly constitution he was induced to teach the first public school in his neighborhood. Like most of the early settlers he had only scanty means, but by judicious management he cleared a farm, raised a respectable intelligent family, and filled some important township offices as Assessor and School superintendent. His eldest son was accidentally killed by a saw-log rolling over his body. This was a severe blow to him, for he had designed, God willing, to prepare him for the ministry. I always found him a true friend and a safe counselor, but he, like most of the early settlers has gone to his reward, leaving a widow, two sons and five daughters, giving to each daughter \$1000, and a large farm to each of his sons. Prescott, his second son, sold his share of the farm to his brother, and settled in Iowa, carrying on a large farm and mercantile business. Horatio sold the old homestead for a large amount of money and is now a banker in the northwest of Ontario.

### THE McDONALD FAMILY

In the same neighborhood as N. P. Allen was a family of McDonalds from Scotland. They had lived for a few years in New York state before coming to Canada. The father and mother died some few years after coming to his country, leaving a family of 5 boys and three girls. They were left with but scanty means, being still in debt for their land, but they wisely agreed to stick together and work for the interests of the whole – John to look after the farm and Catherine to look after the house. In this way they succeeded in paying for the land, cleaning it up and making it become a valuable farm.

The Rev. E. Bristol held a protracted meeting in their barn, at which two of the boys and all the girls embraced religion and united with the M. E. church. They had been brought up Presbyterians and were strictly moral, but at that meeting they saw the need of a change of heart. They united with the township class. The two eldest girls taught school and were popular as teachers. Catherine married the late Willard Eastwood of Ingersoll, then a merchant, but afterwards going into the foundry business. Margaret married Mr. Stimpson of Ingersoll, where they still reside. Jeanette married Mr. Brown of Woodstock, a very respectable and wealthy man. They are still living there.

John sold the farm, moved into Ingersoll and went into the mercantile business, following it a few years and then retiring with considerable means. He is a magistrate and has been Mayor of the town several terms. Alexander went to California with another young man named James Bains, during the first excitement of gold fever. They were both stricken with sickness. Alexander started for home and was never heard of after, but his comrade died and was buried there. James came into Ingersoll with his brother John and was in partnership with him. They both married wives in the neighborhood they came from. John's wife being Flora, daughter of the late John Fletcher, and James' wife being Emily Lewis. Robert was married to the daughter of the late Herman James of Oxford, and settled in Ingersoll. Losing his wife he married again. He was a leading member of the M. E. Church in that town. James is dead, losing two wives and leaving two daughters by the first wife. All of the family who embraced religion at the meeting held in their barn are still holding to their integrity in the faith of Christ.

Among the early settlers was the Day family, who settled on the Governor's Road,

near Thamesford. Mr. Day having lost his wife contracted a second marriage, which resulted in adding a number more children to his already large family, making the name of Day quite numerous. They all, or nearly all, resided in the same neighborhood and some reside there at present

The McCarty family, consisting of three brothers, smart, intelligent men, making property very fast, settled at Thamesford. George died quiet young, leaving a wife and two children and quite a large property. Jared and Eleazer are still living in the village, owning nearly all the land on which the village stands. They sold their land in village lots and had a grist-mill and saw-mill. Like all the early settlers they had a very limited education, but Eleazer's natural abilities were far above the ordinary. He had his own way of doing business, of which he did a great deal. No lawyer could outreach him. His nephew, Nelson McCarty, is now one of the leading merchants of Thamesford.

### **THE HORSMAN FAMILY**

Dennis Horseman, Esq., came into Nissouri from Ireland when he was a small lad, with his father, who was a widower in 1820. they settled on No. 6 Concession 11, the father and his little boy keeping house together for many years, without any assistant. Having money they hired all their work done without boarding the men. They lived this way until they had a good farm cleared up. The father married widow Hall, of Ingersoll, mother of the late Elisha Hall of the same place. This lady had one daughter yet unmarried, and some years after, the son, Dennis married her. When Dennis' father died he left his wife a widow for the third time, but with ample means to support her while she lived. Dennis inherited the whole of his father's property. Being a shrewd business man and his wife a true helpmate, he became what was considered a very wealthy farmer. By this marriage he had three sons, John, Ichabod and Charles. But in the midst of his prosperity death came and took first his wife and then his eldest son who was studying law and whom he expected to be of great use to him in carrying on the large amount of business he was engaged in. But disappointment is the common lot of men. Ichabod and Charles are living on and near the old homestead.

### **W. H. GREGORY**

W. H. Gregory was one of the earliest settlers in the northern part of the township. He received from his father 4000 acres of land and he bought fifty acres more. He was considered a good business man, was a Justice of the Peace and was respected in the community in which he lived, being a member of the M. E. church. He lived about thirty years in Nissouri, when he removed to the Western States. One of his daughters, Mrs. Sturge of Medina, and three of his sons, Richard, Barney and Gilbert, still live in Nissouri; Gilbert, living on part of the old homestead.

When under the regime of Sir Francis Hincks, the Municipal Act was passed by which the people elected their own township and county councillors, Dennis Horsman, W. H. Gregory and Joel McCarty were among the first councillors for East Nissouri. They felt the need of a gravel road through the township and passed a by-law to have one leading from the Thamesford and Ingersoll gravel road to the township of Blanchard. Although a goodly number of people were opposed to the enterprise, yet the road was nearly finished

before the council lost its power. Unfortunately there arose a dispute between the council and the contractor, Mr. Eleazer McCarty, who was bound in specifications definitely understood to make a good and sufficient road and was to receive his pay from the council from time to time. If he had done according to the agreement the road would have been an accomplished fact, but when it was found that the road was not done according to the specifications the reeve refused to pay any more money on it and this dispute put the opponents of the road in power. The new council backed by the opposition of the enterprise, were determined to put a final stop to the building of the road and employed engineers at great expense, who after examining it condemned it as being badly done. Then they forbade the contractor to do any more work, refusing to give him any pay. The contractor, however, paid no attention to the new council but determined to carry the road through, so he used his own means, finished the road and then sued the council and contractor – one man against the township. At the first trial, which was held in London, more than 100 witnesses appeared in the case and when the judge saw the length of time it would take to try the case, he refused to try it by jury and appointed a judge for this special suit, to be held in our own county, at Woodstock. This took a long time and with hard swearing on both sides the verdict was in favour of the plaintiff, giving the contractor his full claim and throwing the costs on the township. Before the trial the contractor offered to settle the case for \$1000.00 less than his original contract. This threw a heavy debt upon the township, doubling the cost of the road. This debt thrown on the township caused heavy taxes for a good many years before the debentures were raised and the township was clear. The road, however, has proved very useful to the township.

### **DIFFICULTIES OF THE EARLY SETTLERS IN TRYING TO EDUCATE THEIR CHILDREN**

As my family increased and grew up I found at first a great difficulty in educating them on account of the thinness of the population, their being only the families of myself, my brother James, and Mr. Chauncey Purdy within a reasonable distance to attend school. The government having as yet taken no interest in the erection of Public Schools. Under these circumstances we had to do the best we could, so we concluded to build a school house, each one to bear a third part of the expense of buildings, paying the teacher, who boarded around among us, and each finding his equal share of firewood. This was the first school house built in this part of the township. This was the beginning of our educational work, and as the population increased as a matter of course there was a larger attendance of and more people to bear the expenses. We continued this way until Egerton Ryerson introduced a school system for the benefit of the country in general. There have been a great many improvements on this system since its introduction, until it finally became a free school but not without a great amount of opposition. This system contemplated that every acre of land, whether occupied or not, should be taxed for the support of the schools, and the trustees of each section had the power to levy taxes on vacant lands for the benefit of their school. If the taxes were not paid the county paid them and charged the amount to the land. If not paid after a certain length of time the land was sold to pay the taxes.

Under this system every township had its local school Superintendent, whose duty it was to apportion the public money granted to each school, to examine the schools and to give a lecture once a year in each school under his charge.

For the active part I took in the contest of obtaining free schools, I was appointed

local Superintendent for the Township of Nissouri, by the township council who had this power. I tried faithfully to perform the duties of my office to the best of my ability. As the township was divided into East Nissouri in Oxford and West Nissouri in Middlesex Counties in the year in which I held office, it made the work much more than usual. Through the assistance of the late A. B. Near, a man of excellent education and a great friend of education, I succeeded in making a proper report of each county.

## **DIVISIONS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH THE RYANITE MOVEMENT**

When I united with the Methodist Church the Episcopal Methodist was the only Methodist church in Upper Canada. But shortly after Elder Ryan, a prominent minister, and James Jackson, one of our own greatest preachers, broke off from the church and formed a new one, calling themselves Canadian Wesleyans. Contrary to the established policy of the Episcopal Methodist church, they received grants of money from the government. For a time they seemed to prosper exceedingly, spreading their work all through ours, settling up altar against altar and publishing a paper to slander the old church and build up their own. But in a few years they became embarrassed and disagreed among themselves – preacher going to law with preacher. As they never succeeded in having an Educational Institution, they soon found that they could not compete with those who had. Finally they united with another branch of Methodists of England, calling themselves New Connection Methodists. By this union they received grants of money and men, which gave them encouragement to hope that they would then be able to compete with others. The money was obtained from the hard earnings of the poor class in England and brought here to support ministers in this land of plenty. This needs no comment. With all these helps they failed to support themselves as a separate body, or to found any institutions of learning. They finally formed a union with the Wesleyan Methodist, calling themselves the Canada Methodist Church.

## **THE CANADIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

The Methodist Church in Canada at first was in Connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, Canadian minister preaching in the United States and their ministers preaching in Canada, without any respect to political lines. This gave the enemies of the church an opportunity to raise the cry against the church, calling them ‘Yankee Methodists’ and their ministers the ‘saddle-bag preachers’, because they either travelled on foot or on horseback, carrying their Bible, hymn book, etc. in their saddlebags. Some of our ministers thought to take off the odium of being called ‘Yankee Methodists’ by separating from the American M. E. church and becoming an independent Canadian church. This was effected but it did not seem to produce the desired result for some restless spirit in some of our leading men led them to seek for other changes, until in 1833, without consulting the laity, the majority of the conference formed a union with the English Wesleyan Conference, calling themselves the Wesleyan Methodist Church of British North America. There were a few travelling ministers, local preachers and laymen, numbering in all about 1000 who refused to go with the new church, but held fast to the old landmarks yet, although they faithfully adhered to the discipline and policy of the old church, as the Wesleyans were in an overwhelming majority, they took with them all the

church property, college, printing establishment and nearly all the church buildings, leaving the few faithful Episcopal Methodists with nothing to carry out their work except a brave determination to persevere and succeed. Although they have been a people scattered and peeled they have worked on through evil as well as good reports and have greatly prospered and continue to this day doing a good work.

### **EGERTON RYERSON AND DR. WEBSTER**

Dr. Egerton Ryerson was acknowledged on all hands to be the leading man in the new Wesleyan Church and being a man of great ability and editor of the *Christian Guardian*, he used his powerful influence to oppose and crush out if possible the struggling few who remained Episcopal Methodists. He compared their ministers to asses clothed in Lion's skins making a tempest in a teapot, and said that they were as children born out of wedlock. One chief point of difference between the M. E. Church and the Wesleyans was that the former refused to accept Government money while the latter accepted it in an indirect way. Dr. Ryerson stoutly denied that his church arose as the champion of the M. E. church and vindicated it against the attacks of his lion foe. He showed that the Wesleyans received Government money in an indirect way; the real facts of the case being that the Canadian Government granted a certain sum of money annually to the English Wesleyan Missionary Board, and then the same board granted the same amount for the support of Canadian Methodist Mission. At first, as the M. E. church had no organ, Dr. Webster had to have recourse to the secular press; but when Webster became editor of the *Christian Advocate* the organ of the M. E. church, he was then in a position to successfully contend with Ryerson. Besides editing the *Advocate* he wrote several works in defence of the Church, the chief of which was "The Union Considered" and the "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada".

### **REV. JOHN BAILEY**

The Rev. John Bailey was a very important factor in the M. E. church, during and after the troubles of 1833. He emigrated from the city of New York and settled in Nissouri in what is now called the Bailey settlement, sometime between 1820 and 1830. He was a wealthy man and was very liberal to the church. He was a local preacher but was soon employed as a travelling preacher. As he was a man of wealth his influence was a great help to the struggling few to sustain the old landmarks. He gave up all his time to the work of the ministry without any charge for his labor, becoming one of the principal supporters of the church especially in starting a religious paper, "The Canadian Christian Advocate". He continued to labor as an itinerant preacher and presiding elder until he was worn out when he located in Nissouri where he first settled. After locating he was induced by his sympathy for others to back notes which he had to pay. This left him without means when he was an old man and caused him to reproach himself. But he died a good man and was buried where he first settled in a burying ground he had secured for that purpose.

He had three brothers who settled in the same neighborhood, the youngest one James, being a local preacher and always well received. Being a large man with a strong voice and a powerful man in prayer at camp-meetings he had often been heard at a great

distance. Thomas was remarkable for his hospitality – his house was always open to the ministers and strangers as well. They have all passed away and gone to their reward. May their children follow them as they followed Christ!

### **A REVIVAL OF RELIGION AMONG THE NATIVE INDIANS**

Early in the history of this country a revival was continually in the church, not only among the whites, but also among the red men of the forest who caught the holy flame. This revival work was especially among the Chippewas, Mohawks and Six Nations commencing at the River Credit, on the Grand River on to Moravia and Muncey Town, from Goderich and Saugeen down to Rice Lake, all through the Huron Tract and all, what was then called Queen's Bush, the church forming missionary stations among them.

It was in these glorious days that Peter Jones and his sister Polly, John Lindsay Racoon and Muskaloung with their squaws embraced religion at a camp-meeting near the Grand River. Besides these several hundreds of these tribes embraced the gospel and in their hunting excursions scattered the holy fire among their red brethren. During the hunting season they often tented on our place and became our near neighbors. The woods reverberated in the morning and evening with prayer and praise to God. They often attended our meetings and though they spoke in their own native tongue, their countenances told of the fire in their souls. At the camp-meetings their tents occupied a large portion of the ground and added much to the interest of the meeting. Their women often fell under the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. Many of their race were added to the church. The camp-meetings in those early days were the means of adding large numbers of the whites as well as the red men to the church.

### **THE REBELLION OF 1837**

The Government of the Province had fallen into the hands of a clique, composed chiefly of the aristocratic element, called the Family Compact. They filled almost entirely the offices of trust and had the management of the public lands. They ruled in an arbitrary manner, which made them very unpopular in the country. After seeking in vain for redress for their grievances, a party led by William Lyon Mackenzie raised a rebellion which, however, was soon quelled with the loss of only a few lives. Of all wars a civil war is most to be dreaded, for your nearest neighbor may be your greatest enemy. Mackenzie was naturally a good man, but was led to take a wrong step. As the Family Compact had been fairly beaten by sound argument through the press, and as their maltreatment of the colony had been clearly proved, if they had been patient they would have got redress. The Rebellion, however had the effect of bringing about reforms sooner than would have been done in a constitutional way for the British Government sent out Lord Durham to inquire into the administration of affairs in Canada. His report gave the Home Government a better idea of the troubles of the colony and they granted Canada a new Constitution, embodying the principle of responsible government and also gave them a Liberal Governor, Lord Elgin. These changes caused the downfall of the Family Compact. Under this new administration the country became settled, the people generally at least, being well satisfied with our present form of government, preferring it to any other; and it has developed

into one of the finest in the world's history.

## **PROGRESS IN THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT**

The Temperance Society which was formed in the township in my early days has continued to exist and increase in numbers and influence. Among those who were first to embrace the temperance cause, many have brought up families who could not tell the taste of liquor. At first it was thought that moral persuasion would effect the needed reform, but now the friends of temperance see the necessity of legal prohibition. A number of Temperance Acts have been passed which though accomplishing some good, have failed to wipe out the evil. But now we have the Scott Act, which we believe to be effectual. If it should fail we will persevere until we obtain one that will have the desired effect in crushing out the great evil that has been the cause of so much misery and suffering over our land.

## **REMINISCENCES OF THE EVILS OF INTEMPERANCE**

The first winter after my father moved into Nissouri, I hired out to a tavern keeper for \$10 a month, to work in the lumber woods, cutting logs; \$8 to be taken in lumber and \$2 in cash. This tavern was situated in what is now called Putnamville and the tavern keeper's name was Abraham Carroll. As young men often spent their evenings in the tavern treating and drinking whiskey, he was very anxious to have me take part in the treating that was going on and in several instances he was successful, though much against my wish. When the spring came and I wanted to settle up with him he took the amount I had spent in treating out of the cash part of my wages. An old man who worked these part of the winter drank up all his wages and when spring came he hired out to boil potash in what is now called Ingersoll. Mr. Ingersoll kept a distillery and whiskey was plenty. That old man fell into the boiling potash and was burned to death.

Another young man, active, smart and well dressed in tailor-made clothes called to stay over night and became embroiled in a drunken spree. He stayed about a week and when he came to settle up his bill he had not money enough, so the tavern keeper took his broadcloth coat and gave him an old one to wear away with him.

There was a time in the history of my life when I peddled goods and tins procuring my wares in Hamilton. On one occasion I called at a tavern in the Town of Brantford to stay over night. This tavern was kept by a Mr. Bradley. When I went into the bar room I saw he had a piece of black crepe about a foot wide stretched across his bar. I was very much struck with its appearance and said to him that I thought that badge was very appropriate as a badge of mourning for the many slain through the use of liquor. He took great umbrage at what I had said and spoke very roughly to me.

The hostler at this tavern was a smart young man about 30 years of age. He took the opportunity to tell me that he wanted to get away from there and if I would take him he would go with me. On asking consent of the landlord, he replied that he was quite willing for him to go as he was so fond of drink that he could not depend on him. So the next morning we started and he gave me a short history of himself on the way. He had been married, but lost his wife in New York State. He got in the way of drinking but wanted to get away from where it was. He said that he was accustomed to chop and clear land and

that he would stay with me as long as I would keep him and would try to break away from his drinking habits. I bought an axe and he came and lived with me for two years. In all that time I never knew him to drink any, as whiskey could not be had nearer than Ingersoll or London. When he was sober, a better and kinder man about the house could not be found. He had been brought up well, having a good common education. During the time he lived with me he got himself well clothed and had saved some money. One of my neighbors, a professor of religion who had been a teetotaler, got him to go to Ingersoll and there induced him to drink. He never ceased drinking until all his means were gone. When he became sober, this same man who had induced him to drink gave him a job of chopping, giving him a cow of payment. When the job was done he drove the cow to London, sold her, drank up the proceeds and got locked up for his bad conduct. So for several years, he lived about this part of the country, working and then spending his wages for drink. Strange to tell he married a girl pretty well connected and induced her to go with him to the States where he came from. He stayed there a year or so and then came back to Canada. After raising quite a family he left his wife and children at Burford and came back to Nissouri a mere wreck of a man and hired with a neighbor. At this time Lakeside was cursed with a tavern. He went there, got into a drunken spree and when all his money was gone it being a cold November night, his drunken comrades took him outdoors and tied him to a hitching post where the cold piercing winds could blow on him. There he remained until some passerby saw his doleful situation, untied him and brought him back to the place where he was working in a fearful state of suffering. They put him into a warm bed, but he remained unconscious, snoring continually and foaming at the mouth as though he had been poisoned. Dr. Wilson of St. Marys was sent for, but he pronounced him to be incurable. He lived in this condition for a few hours and then died. He was buried by the neighbors, the township paying the doctor's bill. His widow is living in sheer poverty and his children are scattered through the country some of them following in their father's footsteps. This man, so completely ruined by drink, came of a good family.

This same Lakeside tavern is still going on in its nefarious work, several families being ruined by it. But at this time of writing the English church minister, Mr. Seaborn, has been carrying on a great temperance work in the church and there is a strong feeling among the people there to do away with the evil. At this time more is being done to suppress the evils of intemperance than at any other period of the world's history. The effects of intemperance on society are very blighting when it will ruin a young man who might have been an ornament to society.

### **HIS APPOINTMENT AS A LOCAL PREACHER**

In the year 1823 I was appointed class leader of the town line class, Matthew Whiting being the preacher in charge. In the following year I commenced to hold meetings, sometimes trying to speak from some text and the people began to call me a preacher. For a time I attended to my class and also held meetings, but after two years in this way the class relieved me and appointed another leader in my place – the late Mr. Kelly, Sr. At our next quarterly meeting I received license as a local preacher. I was then in connection with the London circuit which at that time was composed of London township, nearly all of Nissouri and West Zorra. Throughout the section of country I was the only local preacher of several years and had my regular appointment for every Sabbath besides occasionally attending funerals, etc. on week days.

## **DRAWBACK TO THE CHURCH IN EARLY DAYS**

As Nissouri remained for a number of years after its first settlement in a very backward state with little or no improvements being made, some got discouraged and concluded to leave it. Among those who left were some friends of the church. The first one to leave was Bro. Alex Baines of Lakeside. As he was one of our most prominent members he was very much missed both in the church and as a citizen of the place. The next to go was my brother James. Then followed W. H. Gregory. Thus taking three of our near friends who were strong friends of religion, education, temperance and reform. At the time I felt the removal of these brethren keenly, as it gave me a great deal of uneasiness for the future of the church.

## **DEATH OF HIS FATHER AND MOTHER**

My mother died on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1837 from a cancer in the breast, from which for a number of years she suffered a great deal of pain, which she endured with Christian fortitude. As she was passing away she exhorted all her children to meet her in heaven. After her death there was something more than a vacant chair – a vacancy in the family gatherings which made us all feel that something was gone; for her smiles, amiable disposition and loving ways made us all feel that it was home. She never had a dispute with anyone and was always kind and obliging. Among her family there were none so much like her as my sister Rebecca, now the widow of the late William Uren. She was indeed a perfect transcript of her mother. She has now been a widow for over forty years, living with her eldest son on the old homestead, loved and respected by all. It may be said of her “She was a widow indeed, having brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints’ feet, relieved the afflicted, and diligently followed every good work and is now waiting to hear the Master say ‘It is enough, come up higher’”. She has now three sons all members of the church, professing faith in Christ and some of her grandchildren are walking in the same way. Among all the bereaved ones there were none who felt the loss like father. He often said to me “How lonesome I feel.” He continued to live in his own house for some years, my wife doing his work, until our family had got quite large. He then thought it best to go and live my sister Rebecca, as her family was small. While there he was tenderly cared for as a child until he died sometime in September 1844, after a short but painful illness. His last words were “Farewell, my lambs.” The remains of both father and mother are now lying in the family burying ground.

## **CHURCH BUILDING IN NISSOURI BAILEY’S CHURCH**

For a good many years there were no church buildings in Nissouri, every denomination using in their turn the same school-house, the same congregation generally attending every service no matter what the denomination was. If any missionary came along we all greeted him as a brother not being by any means bigoted. In this days we all did our best trying to sustain them. After a time this kind of liberal Christian feeling seemed to pass away, every denomination feeling that they ought to have a church of their own.

The first Methodist Episcopal church built in Nissouri after 1833 was erected in the

Bailey settlement by Rev. John Bailey and called "Bailey's Church". This church is used to this day and is called the Bailey appointment.

### **CHERRY GROVE CHURCH**

About the year 1860, church building among the Episcopal Methodists in Nissouri began in earnest, I being the oldest man and best acquainted with the wants of the people, took a prominent part in building them. The first one I took an interest in building was Cherry Grove church. The subscription list was headed by a \$10 subscription from James Scatcherd, of Buffalo, whom I met while on a visit to his father in Wyton. As the neighborhood was quite willing, a sufficient amount of subscription was soon raised to warrant a commencement. My brother-in-law, the late Thomas Uren, Esq., took a very deep interest and became a leading spirit in building. This is a brick church now comfortably seated, with a good driving shed. They have a good congregation, a good class, regular preaching and Sabbath school every Sabbath. This is known as the Uren neighborhood and the first Methodist meeting was held there by the late Rev. Matthew Whiting of precious memory. Mrs. Rebecca Uren is one of the oldest members and is still able to attend meetings.

### **McKIM'S CHURCH**

My next effort was to build a church in the McKim neighborhood, near Lakeside. They decided on a brick one also, of the same dimensions as Cherry Grove. Andrew McKim and Sylvester Rounds were the leading men in carrying on the work. They had a hard struggle, but finally, with the help and sympathy of the neighbors, it was accomplished. In addition to the church they have now a good shed, well fenced, preaching and the Sabbath school every Sabbath and a respectable class.

An unfortunate affair happened at this appointment which was a great drawback and made it harder to carry on the work than it would otherwise have been. The late William McKim and W. H. Gregory were both members of this class and were wealthy and leading men in the neighborhood. Gregory was in the council and worked hard in favor of the gravel road through the township. McKim was strongly opposed to the undertaking and as feeling ran very high over the matter, he finally through this left the church and united with the Wesleyans. After he changed his church relations, we as a class felt the loss of his support. His death was very sudden. One day he took a load of wheat to St. Marys. After selling it and putting away his team, he went into the sitting room of a hotel, laid down upon a lounge and died unknown to anyone. This threw a gloom over the whole neighborhood and was a terrible blow to his family. He was always considered a good man, hospitable to the poor and a great giver to the church.

### **BROWN'S CHURCH**

The next was one in my own neighborhood, called Brown's church. It is also a brick with stone foundation, the material being the very best. It was begun in 1862 and finished in 1863. several gave subscriptions of \$100 and \$50. I also solicited and obtained help in

other places where for many years I had labored as a local preacher without fee or reward. It has also a good shed in connection with it.

### **WHITE CHURCH**

The next was White church, near Thorndale, in the Rumble neighborhood. There were but a few families to bear the burden, but they were united and liberal. It is a frame building, painted white. There is still a small class with regular preaching and Sabbath school, part of the year.

### **THORNDALE CHURCH**

Before White Church was finished we commenced to build one at Thorndale. Although I took a deep interest in the building of this church, I did not take any responsibility. Dr. M. Foster, living in the village, and Robert McGuffin, Esq., a farmer living near by [both liberal men to sustain the cause] were the leading spirits in erecting a very comfortable church, where we have regular service every Sabbath, a Union Sabbath School and a small class of excellent members.

### **HARRINGTON CHURCH**

The Township of Zorra was for along time in connection with the Nissouri circuit. I felt a deep interest in their churches. I took the lead in building a small frame church in the village of Harrington. With the assistance of James Mathieson, Esq., a very liberal Presbyterian, who accompanied me in soliciting subscription, a sufficient amount was raised to warrant us in commencing to build. Matthew Morris, Esq., gave the land for the site as a free gift. The contractor was a very honorable man and finished the building to the satisfaction of all concerned. I continued to canvas and raise money until the last dollar was paid. They have a very good class with preaching and Sabbath School every Sabbath. They are in much need of a larger church. The members and adherents of the church are able to build a good brick one, and if I were not so old and feeble I would go and raise means and never leave them until they had one all paid for as before. It is a pity that our circuit preachers do not take a deeper interest in improving our churches. They are the proper persons to lead in this direction. I pray that they will soon have a better church in Harrington.

### **MRS. BROWN**

It would be unjust in a work of this kind to pass by unnoticed the author's wife, who for over sixty years travelled through life's journey with him. Under ordinary circumstances the wife of a farmer has a great responsibility; but when the farmer is only in moderate circumstances and is often away from home serving the church, without fee or reward, her responsibility becomes greater. Had she been of a shiftless disposition one of two things would have been the result. Either he would have had to have given up spend-

ing so much time for the sake of the church, or else financial ruin would have been the result. But by her industry and prudent management of the home interests, with the upbringing of a large family, they were enabled, although they were never what is termed wealthy, to pass through life in comfortable circumstances.

The Bible everywhere highly commends the grace of hospitality. The exercise of this grace in the church was more imperatively necessary in the days of the early settlement of Nissouri than it is at present. The circuits were very extensive as compared with the present time. The circuit preacher in order to attend properly to his work had often to find a home wherever night overtook him. The Quarterly Meetings were different affairs from what they are at present. Instead of the people going only a few miles to one service on the Sabbath, then they lasted for two days, commencing on Saturday and continuing over Sunday and were often occasions of great spiritual power. Many people in order to enjoy these meetings, came long distances, often more than twenty miles, and as the way of travelling was slow and tedious of necessity they had to find homes among the people where the meetings were held. And in many ways, whether in the service of the church or in transacting their own private business, the people were under the necessity of giving and receiving hospitality. Under these circumstances in conjunction with her husband, Mrs. Brown cheerfully exercised this grace in a large degree, knowing the Master had said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me and ye shall in nowise lose your reward."

#### OBITUARY

#### REV. THOMAS B. BROWN

(The Christian Guardian, May 4, 1894)

Rev. Thomas B. Brown was born in Argenteuil, Lower Canada, in the year 1804, he with his father's family, moved into the township of Nissouri, then an almost unbroken wilderness, and shared in the hardships and privations of the early settlers. Having no religious privileges, he lived for a time careless about religion. His first religious impressions were received under a sermon preached by Elder Maybee, a Baptist minister; but it was not until several years after, at a Methodist camp-meeting held in the township of Westminster, in 1829, that he went forward and knelt at a rude altar, and there fully experienced his acceptance with God, and that he was "A new creature in Christ Jesus".

Immediately after his conversion he commenced to work for the Master. He was appointed leader of a class ten miles distant from his home, and he regularly walked that distance every Sabbath, and occasionally on the weekly prayer meeting night to meet his class. Soon after he received license to preach, and, as the country was then thinly settled and scantily supplied with regular ministers, his labors were very extensive, going far and near, often ten to twenty miles from home – at first sometimes on foot and sometimes on horseback, without any road except a track through the woods. He preached the first sermon ever delivered in what is now the town of St. Marys, in the log shanty of the late George Treacy. Being ordained first deacon, and then elder, he baptized, married, buried the dead and administered the Sacrament. At revival services and camp-meetings he was a prominent worker, often, after doing a hard day's work on the farm, going five or ten miles to attend an evening meeting.

In consequence of his varied and extensive services in the Methodist church in later years he was known as 'Bishop' Brown. Perhaps more than any other human agency his

labors were largely instrumental in establishing Methodism in this section of the country. He was zealous in supporting the Church paper. He subscribed for and received the first number of the Christian Guardian, and in later years he took a great interest in extending the circulation of the Canada Christian Guardian.

When the troubles of 1833 came, by which the Methodist Church was divided he loyally and faithfully continued with the old Episcopal Methodist Church until the late union of the Methodist churches in Canada into one body, when believing the movement to be for the best interests of the Church, he heartily fell in with it. Although he was strongly attached to the old Episcopal Methodist church, yet he was always ready to sympathize with and help any other organization in their efforts to advance the spiritual and moral welfare of men, but in this short obituary notice I cannot speak of them in detail.

He was a strong and life-long worker in the temperance ranks. He was a member of the first Temperance Society organized in Canada. At first he encountered a great deal of ridicule and opposition. On one occasion, being at a 'raising', some of the whiskey men, determined to make him drink, and threw him down on his back, and attempted to pour the whiskey down his throat, but in the scuffle the bottle was broken and the whiskey spilt. But he lived long enough to see the public sentiment so changed that in less than one month after his death the whole province by a large majority voted in favor of total Prohibition.

When he came to Nissouri he had not much of worldly wealth, yet he succeeded as a farmer, by honest industry, in making a comfortable living. In 1830 he married Miss Amanda Harris, by whom he raised a family of six sons and seven daughters, nearly all of whom are comfortably situated in life and following in his footsteps. Two daughters, Mrs. Jane Fitzgerald and Mrs. Angelina Thompson, several years since, preceded him to the better land. His wife, after sharing his joys and sorrows for over sixty years, passed on before him about a year before his death.

Being of a strong constitution he enjoyed through life almost uninterrupted good health. He was sick only a few days before his death which took place on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1894. (N.B. This is manifestly a mistake, the account being published in May 4, 1894, and his wife predeceasing him about 1 year in January 5, 1893), it should read 1893).

In his last words he kept exclaiming, "All is well! It is spring!" and "For me to live is Christ, and to die to gain." His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. E. Lounsbury of Hamilton, who was his life-long friend, first as his circuit preacher, and afterwards, for many years as his presiding elder. The text, which was selected by Father Brown himself some ten years previous, was 2 Timothy 4:6-8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing."

Thus passed away the oldest Methodist in this section of the country, except his sister, Mrs. Rebecca Uren, who still lingers behind, awaiting her call to her heavenly rest, all his early associates have gone to the other shores before him.

JON M. McAINSH

**MRS. AMANDA BROWN**  
(The Christian Guardian, July 19, 1893)

Mrs. Amanda Brown, whose maiden name was Harris, was born near Ingersoll, Ontario, in 1813, and early gave her heart to God and consecrated her life to his service. In 1830 she was united in marriage with Mr. T. B. Brown, whose name is a household word in the County of Oxford, as an earnest, faithful talented pioneer preacher in the time of the early settlers, receiving special ordination to meet the demand of the times. For the sphere to which she was thus introduced, Sister Brown showed herself eminently fitted, often taking charge of the farm, as well as the house for days together while her husband went from place to place to preach the Gospel, visit the sick, bury the dead, marry or baptize, as the occasion demanded, esteeming it an honor and a joy to be associated with the heralds of the cross in labor and sacrifice. Later on, when the itinerant preachers came in, they found in the home of the Browns a cordial welcome, and while the husband remained a faithful co-laborer, the wife provided a genial hostess, a sympathizing friend and a wise counsellor.

Endowed with more than ordinary mental gifts, and fully consecrated to the service of God, her light shone clearly before men, so that she became indeed a mother in Israel, loved, trusted and honored by all, but chiefly by her husband, sons and daughters, to whom she was as an oracle, and through whom her example and precepts are still shining out upon the world in the exemplary lives and strong mental qualities, not only of children, but grandchildren. For several years Sister Brown was much afflicted with rheumatism and asthma, but bore her sufferings with patience, and even cheerfulness, ever manifesting a lively interest in the cause of God and the success and welfare of his servants.

Last autumn her strength seemed almost suddenly to give way, and after a few weeks of suffering she fell asleep in Jesus on January 5, 1893. As to her spiritual condition and prospects no doubt seemed to be entertained either by herself or her friends. The same confidence in God which sustained her in life remained in the final conflict, and 'latest for' was 'beneath her feet at last.

The funeral was conducted by Rev. B. Bristol, who testified to the grace, wisdom and faithfulness which characterized Sister Brown as he remembered her in years gone by. She sleeps in the family cemetery, while her life companion, enfeebled by age and toil, awaits the Master's Call to join her redeemed spirit in the house of many mansions.

T. J. SABINE

This indenture, made the \_\_\_\_?\_\_ Day of October in the Nineteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King Defender of the Faith, &c, and the Year of our Lord 1789 between Henry Caldwell, of Belmont near Quebec, Esq. of the one Part and Thomas Brown \_\_\_\_?\_\_ grant, convey and confirm and by these presents, doth grant, convey and confirm and by these presents, doth grant, convey and confirm to the said Thomas Brown his Heirs and Assigns, all the Piece or Parcel of Land, containing One hundred Acres English Measure, being Part of Caldwell Manor, Lot forty-five the fourth Concession North of Forty-five degrees of Latitude.

In Witness thereof, the said Parties to these Presents have hereunto interchangeably set their Hands and Seals, the Day and Year first above written.

Signed Dated and Delivered

Henry Caldwell

In the presence of

Henry Rurity (?)

Patrick Conroy

Thomas Brown

From the Archives of the Province of Quebec,  
Former Superior Court Building, Montreal

## THE MARRIAGE REGISTER

Isabel G. Uren

The mottled brown cover is marred and crumbling and the blue linen-like pages are sadly discolored but the old book still bears record of events of vital importance. MARRIAGE REGISTER, COUNTY OF OXFORD, say the gold letters on the binding and each page is headed by an engraved line, Marriages Solemnized by \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ a Minister of \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_.

Lost for forty years or more it came to light recently bringing echoes of forgotten names and witnessing to the establishment of families still noted in Western Ontario.

In the early days of the year 1822 a family of eight reached a lot in the uncleared woodlands of Upper Canada which marked the end of a long quest. The adventure began by a voyage from Northumberland, England to Rhode Island in New England. After a few years in that region the family moved up through Vermont where some members of the group married and settled, but representatives of three generations travelled on through the Lake George and Lake Champlain district to make another stop of some years at Caldwell's Manor, a farm on the banks of the Richilieu not far from the border. The blockhouse of Fort Lennox on L'Ile aux Noix was seeing renewed activity and additions to its building in fear of an American invasion which finally took place in the War of 1812. before this date however, a part of the family had moved off to try their fortune in Montreal and when competition proved too keen in the wage-earner's trade of comb-making, to L'Orignal, and then to the county of Argenteuil across the Ottawa, where in 1894, a baby boy was born, later to be the keeper of the Marriage Register. Soon after, the father took them again to

the family farm on the Richilieu. During this period the little boy watched military preparation from an attic window, standing on warmed chips to protect his bare feet and sometimes seeing older members of his family rowing across the river with provisions and hot cakes for the troops. He remembered this all his life and told his grandchildren; the story as handed down was linked in their minds with Montreal but it seems more likely to have been when he lived on the Richilieu, the island he called Island of Or.

Fear of Indians common to many settlers and accentuated by the fact that his grandmother had been stolen as a child and kept for some time by Indians, led this family to forsake the new home and seek the more settled district around Plattsburg, on Lake Champlain. Following the war as the country settled down, the young lad, now about eleven years of age set out with his father and mother and various members of the family including a little sister born in Plattsburg. They still wished to lived under British rule and hoped to make their permanent home in Canada. This time they took a route south of Lake Ontario making their way westward to Niagara. Crossing the river at Black Rock they stopped at Smithville where work clearing the land was available to recoup the family treasury.

Before crossing the river, at a stop near Buffalo the party met their father's elder brother who also wished to settle in Canada and who encouraged them to continue their journey. He preceded them and settled at Short Hills, a flourishing young community, where they visited and rested awhile before starting work.

According to old accounts the work had an unfortunate turn for their employer. Jeremiah Johnston settled them on his thirty acres where they agreed to clear ten acres a year for three years; the owner was to furnish them with a yoke of oxen, two cows and some provisions for this work. When three years were up and the clearing complete the unfortunate owner found he had placed them on the wrong island. His explanation was that the township of Grimsby was surveyed beginning at the lake shore and running to the centre of the township then commencing at the southern part to meet the other lines. In making the map they had apparently skipped one whole concession. This was where they cleared the land.

The family were urged to remain at Smithville, however the father had bought a lot from a Flanker, said to front on the Thomas River but actually found to be about six miles distant, nevertheless a good situation with great promise toward which they still wished to make their way. adventure and experiences, pleasant and not so pleasant met them at every stage of their journey and supplied material for stories loved by later generations of children.

While in Smithville the future keeper of the Marriage Register got a little education under Henry Smith and attended a Sunday school of the Methodist Episcopal Church taught by Ebenezer Griffin a son of Smith Griffin who was a local preacher of that Church. He also came under the influence of Elder Ryan, one of the first presiding Elders in Upper Canada, whose district comprised all settled parts of Upper Canada, part of Lower Canada and a large portion of New York State. Here also he heard Isaac Peffer who attracted him greatly. In 1818 they set out again and by the time the family reached their journey's end this young man of eighteen showed a gift for speaking and a wish to prepare for the ministry. He had been a gay and sociable youth and he carried these qualities to the end of his life which was no doubt responsible in part at least for his success with people. In 1829 he received his license as an Exhorter, and in 1833, when restriction surrounding denominations other than the Church of England were removed, he was able to perform all the ceremonies of his Church.

Thus it was that the blank in the old book are filled in, Thomas B. Brown, The Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.

The book itself, as well as its history and content deserves attention. A large volume, about twelve by eighteen inches it is well bound, looking as if it was intended for a long life. The bookseller, whose name appears on the inside cover was William Warwick, Merchant, West Woodstock.

William Warwick  
Bookseller, Bookbinder, &c., &c.,

Every description of Blank Books ruled and  
Bound to order on the most reasonable terms.  
County merchants supplied at a liberal discount.

One puzzling fact was noted, the record began with a ceremony performed in 1858 while it was known that this minister had officiated at marriages much earlier. A study of the rather handsome heavy paper reveals the papermaker's signature and the date, then, this book was made up and bound about that time and began to be used shortly after. Alternate pages showed the elaborate watermark and the monogram A. C. & S. A. further observation found one page of very slightly different shade marked A. Pirie & Sons, 1857. The page opposite this odd one had what seemed to be the same watermark but with the single initial P. below. These are both well known Scottish firms, the latter of Aberdeen and the former having the paper mills at Penicuik, not far from Edinburgh. (The early Canadian paper mills were said to have been begun by men who had been trained at Pirie's)

At a later time Thomas B. Brown gathered up some details of earlier marriages he had performed and listed them. They are not complete or in order and not all details are filled in but some were dated as early as 1844. It would be interesting to know whether these entries were made from memory or from some earlier record book. Perhaps he consulted the principals when he saw them for data.

The pages are divided into three sections. One is devoted to the bridegroom, with a column for his name, his age if known, his residence, place of birth if known, names of parents if known. The second sections asks for similar information about the bride. The third section is for witnesses, with a place for their names and places of residence. There is a final column at the right edge for the date of the marriage.

There is no column for recording the exact place of marriage. Some of the couples no doubt came to the minister's home for the ceremony; it had always been a gathering place for the community and was called by many Bishop Brown's house, giving him a courtesy title of the old Methodist Episcopal church; some less respectful or slightly facetious nicknamed it Uncle Tom's Cabin. Few congregations had church buildings in the earliest days. Religious services were often held in the schools and many, especially week day meetings were held in the homes and it is probable that the marriages were performed as the minister made his rounds through the community. These early minister were confirmed travellers, some earning the name of "Saddle-Bag Preachers", but some like Tho-

mas B. Brown before his ordination, depending on an even humbler mode of locomotion, "Shank's mare" or "Marrow-bone stage". In his autobiography he tells of walking ten miles each Sunday for two years to be a class leader and frequently attending mid-week prayer meeting with his group as well.

For years this book of marriage records was sought by T. B. Brown's descendants who supposed it would contain the marriage records of his sons and daughters of whom twelve married and most were married by their father. Curiously, not one of these is entered, either in the original entries beginning in 1858 or the re-copied ones of earlier dates. Did he keep these family records in some separate book, were they entered in a family Bible, or did he not think it important to write down these family weddings which would be so well-remembered while he lived? Some pages have been removed from the old book, it is possible they have been mislaid in this way? In a number of instances his children figure as witnesses at other nuptials and it is believed they made some of the entries.

The list of witnesses is very interesting and raises various questions. Some no doubt were arranged ahead and were present as wedding attendants with parents and friends. In some cases the witnesses were neighbors or as noted members of the minister's family. Other entries make one wonder, as the persons were known to live at a considerable distance and had no known connection with the couple being married. One couple having a baby baptized acted as witnesses for a marriage taking place the same day.

It is not known who actually wrote most of the entries which are in many different hands with many different styles. The book starts out in an effort at Spencarian but degenerates to more commonplace writing after a few pages. Usually all the item relating to one marriage are in the same hand, indicating that the witnesses did not sign this register themselves. The writing varies greatly, some good, almost beautiful, and some very poor indeed. Changing styles were evident, some writers still using the old 'S' and 'H' and 'F'. Numerals represent the forms of more than one country.

Spelling was most unusual, indicating a lack of familiarity with distant places and perhaps with the written word. 'Ilinois', 'U. States', 'Flainbury' (Flamboro?), 'Pickron' (Pickering?), even the next county appears as 'Midelsex', several times. Surnames and given names are spelled as pronounced which was often colloquial, 'Samyl', 'Pheby', 'Solaman'. Family names hadn't settled down to consistency, one member spelling his name one way and others using a different form. They belonged, like some of George Eliot's characters, 'to a generation with whom spelling was a matter of private judgment'.

Local and even national history can be glimpsed in a study of these pages. Over the years one can almost hear the pride in the voice of a young bride, as in the early months of the 1868 she announces her place of residence as "The Dominion of Canada". Also in 1868 we find the first use of 'Ontario', reflecting the provisions of the British North America Act which had been passed in the previous year. This act united the provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick into one Dominion under the name of Canada. It also provided that "the parts of the province of Canada which formerly constituted respectively the province of Upper Canada and Lower Canada, shall form two separate provinces," and the names Ontario and Quebec gradually supplanted the earlier designations, which for Ontario had often been Canada West after the Union of 1841, as well as the older name Upper Canada.

It was surprising to see how often in even the earliest principals gave their place of birth as Canada; Canada East appears occasionally, Canada West or Upper Canada more often, indicating even at that time a second generation of Canadians growing up. The places of residence were usually East Nissouri [the township in Oxford County where T. B.

Brown lived], the adjoining township of West Nissouri which became part of Middlesex County in 1850. Another place frequently mentioned was the old Scot's Settlement of Zorra, which in addition to the great influx of Scottish settlers from 1820 to 1840 had also its quota of settlers from Canada East, the New England States and England. There was always a great clannishness in the community and it was said that a resident of Zorra would not marry anyone outside the township. The old marriage register almost seems to bear this out.

In March 1874, opposite one set of names is the notation, "Churches of England Banns". After 1876 almost all have the notation, 'licence'. In a few cases there is another minister's name or initials indicating that he performed the marriage.

Many pages remain blank but there are three or four pages at the end that had been put to use as a register of baptisms. There was something appropriate in this as many of the babies were offspring of the unions listed earlier. In this section the writer has mentioned the township in which the baptism took place. Squares removed from certain blank pages suggest that this fine paper may have been taken to make 'marriage lines' or baptismal certificates in the absence of ready-made forms.

Found in the register was part of a form evidently detached from a larger sheet. It seemed that the missing part was intended to be sent in, perhaps to a newly formed department of vital statistics. The piece found was marked 'Slip for the clergyman and was date 187-.

One last use was made of the old book before it was stored, a few pages in the middle were used to list the donors to the Brown's church building fund. This was for the second church building put up in 1906. These entries were made by a granddaughter some years after Thomas B. Brown's death. This and other churches he helped start represented the visible evidence of the value the new settlers placed on their Christian heritage, and the buildings marked the development of the settlements from the first stages of pioneering to established communities still claiming descendants of the unions recorded in the old Marriage Register.

Thomas Brown

b. Northumberland Region

Came to (Scituate) Rhode Island, fought in Revolutionary War

Moved to Lower Canada 1789, (see Indenture)

Caldwell's Manor m. (1)

three daughters – (two married in State of Vermont)

Thomas Brown – m. Hannah Spencer

*children,* Varnum m. daughter of Daniel Hopkins

James

Russell (died young)

Martha

Elizabeth m. James German

Abigail

Joseph Brown – m. Rebecca Brush

*children,* Elizabeth b. 1798 (USA)

m. Reuben Gleason in Vermont

Laura b. 1800

m. Thomas Uren



Edward *m.* Emma Cunningham

Emily *m.* Charles Horsman  
*No children*

Amanda *m.* Ichabod Horsman  
*No children*

Thomas Brown *m.* Emma Griffin  
*Children,* Herbert (Bert) *m.* Virgie  
Joseph *m.* (1) Maggie Bulyer  
(2) Myrtle Senn  
Minnie May *u.*  
Franklin Benson *m.* Nellie Myers  
Ida Amanda *m.* Webster L. Sovereign  
Cecil Leroy *m.* Mary Copeland  
Wilbur (adopted) *m.* Ada Spackman

Joseph *m.* Helen (Nellie) Dresseke  
*Children,* Mabel *m.* Edward Parker  
Lenora *m.* Fred Greenaway  
Ethel *m.* William MacGregor

Angelina *m.* Andrew Thompson  
*Children,* Clara *m.* George Eldon  
Charles *m.* Grace  
Emma *u.*

*(Clara and Emma were adopted by their aunts, Mrs. Charles Horsman and Mrs. Ichabod Horsman as their mother died when they were children)*

Martha *m.* Andrew McKim  
*Children,* Thomas *m.* May Wilson  
Emerson *m.* Lillian Ready  
Elizabeth *m.* Henry Snell  
Regina *m.* William Chisholm  
Alice *m.* Elmer Cody

Lorenzo Dowe *m.* Pamela Vining  
*Children,* James Vining *m.* Barbara Statler  
Frederick Charles *m.* Floss Berry  
Evelyn *m.* Robert Lyons  
Amanda Eugenia (Amy) *m.* Joseph Showers  
Lois *m.* Dr. Andrew Walker  
Charlotte Louise *m.* Wycliffe Davidson  
Clara Rebecca *m.* William McIntyre

Regina *m.* Thomas Wilson  
*Children,* Joseph *u.*  
James D. *m.* Grace Lawrence  
Lorne *m.* Alicia Muma  
Margaret *m.* Louis Peterson  
Roy Hill *m.* Olive Sulston  
Brush *m.* Emma Racknor  
George *u.*  
Charles *u.*

Rebecca *m.* Rev. Thomas Graham  
*Children,* one son died in infancy

Note:

The record of the Indian Captive has not been found though a number of children were stolen or captured during the years and some of the records have been traced.

Colwell's Manor, this may have been a mistake of Thomas Brown himself or of those who helped with his history. The name should read Caldwell's Manor according to the Indenture. Caldwell's Manor was formerly a French Seignior and was on Missisquoi Bay at the north end of Lake Champlain very near the border of Vermont.

See page 1 of Genealogy. Eldest child of Thomas Brown Jr., Varman may have been named after a general of that name who led a regiment in the Revolutionary War. His home was in Rhode Island, south west of Compton.

Our family of eight – Joseph and Rebecca (Brush) Brown, James, Thomas, Rebecca and Mary and probably Laura and daughter Lois (by a previous marriage)

Mr. Whiting's Class – John Scatcherd Esq. Class leader, John Uren and Grace (Kemp) Uren. Mary probably the daughter who married James Brown, William Uren and Rebecca (Brown) Uren, Joseph and Rebecca Brown, James and Thomas Brown and George Garner.

In 1850 Nissouri was divided into East and West. East in Oxford and West in Middlesex. Before this there was just one Nissouri all in Oxford County of Oxford

Pioneer Life in Zorra

(the early ministers)

“Zealously as these devoted Christians worked so large was the field and so scattered the people that little could have been accomplished had it not been for the help given by the local preachers, or class leaders as they were more familiarly called. Prominent among these was Thomas Brown of East Nissouri. His was a peculiarly joyful nature, ever living on Pisgah’s height, and commonly known as “Great Heart”. At the love-feast, it is said his voice was always raised in thanksgiving. He was a universal favorite, and so successful was he as a preacher that at length he was ordained. After his death a memoir of life was published in book form.”