Part III presents a number of texts, arranged in approximate chronological order, that supply useful context for the memoirs published in Parts I and II. These texts include stories, short manuscripts or excerpts from manuscripts, and letters that provide information and background on events, observations, persons, and topics mentioned in Elizabeth Young’s and E. Ryerson Young’s memoirs. Some items speak for themselves and need no introduction; others are introduced by brief comments. Unless otherwise indicated, the documents from which these texts are drawn are from the JSHB collection.

1 Resolution, Quarterly Board of Hamilton City East Circuit, 4 May 1868

In view of the unexpected departure of our dearly beloved Pastor and wife from our midst, to go into the far “North West” as missionaries of the Cross: We the members of the Quarterly board of Hamilton City East Circuit cannot allow them to depart without an expression of our high appreciation of their Services amongst us. Therefore moved by brother Whyte and Seconded by bro Dunnett and carried unanimously. That whereas our pastor the Rev E. R. Young, having been called to leave us and go to a distant part of our mission work, we desire to record our entire confidence in his piety, ability and usefulness during the period in which he laboured amongst us. His faithfulness, zeal and affection have endeared him to all our hearts, and we pray that in the land to which he journeys he & Mrs Young may be equally successful in winning souls to
Christ, and when they cease to labour on earth they may have an abundant enterance into our fathers house on high.

Resolved that a copy of the foregoing be furnished bro Young as well as inserted in the Circuit minutes.

Signed, Tho[ma]s Morris Circuit Steward of Hamilton City East

2 The Rope from Hamilton, by Egerton R. Young

Among Egerton Young’s papers is a typescript of 118 pages titled “In the Red Man’s Country.” Most of its chapters appear in his 1907 book, The Battle of the Bears, but that book begins quite differently from the typescript, which was probably written not long before. Near the opening of the typescript (pp. 4–5 and 9–13), Young described a gift received in Hamilton and its usefulness in a terrific storm that the Youngs and their fellow travelers experienced on the night of 3 July 1868 beside the Red River. It adds vivid details to Elizabeth’s account of the storm in her memoirs (at the start of the section headed “Sojourn at Red River”).

Many and varied were the gifts which we received [on leaving Hamilton in May 1868]. The most of them were very suitable either for ourselves or for the poor Indians among whom we were so long to dwell. Some that at first we hardly knew what to do with, and yet were loath to refuse, came in very serviceable in some unexpected emergency. The following is an example:

“Tis but little I can give you, but I want you to take this fine rope which I have made for you. Maybe it will come in handy in some of your wanderings in the wild country to which you are going.” Thus was I addressed by a big, large-hearted rope-maker on the eve of our departure from Hamilton. He was far from being a rich man, and so he had brought me as a gift this great coil of rope, which he now threw down before me.

We could not then see how it would ever be of the slightest use to us, and in addition we had no desire to add more to the weight of our already heavily-loaded wagon, in which we were to travel for thirty days over the prairies after we had left all railroads
and steamboats behind. Still, to have refused the rope would have wounded a dear friend’s kindly heart. We accepted the rope and found a place for it in our wagon.

For days that coil of rope seemed an eyesore. It was always in the way. When our wagon was unloaded on the prairie, it was over “that rope” somebody stumbled. If something was wanted in a hurry, it was always that heavy, awkward rope that was in the way or on top of the thing desired. Thus it came to pass that that big, useless rope belonging to Egerton Young began to be talked about as a nuisance and they said that it ought to be thrown aside. But there was work for it to do ere our journey ended. . . .

On 3 July 1868, the party camped near a settlement of “French half-breeds” just south of Red River. Egerton noticed how the smoke from their log houses was rolling down the roofs to the ground. “As it was evidently so much heavier than the air,” he observed, “the latter must be very much rarified, and I was certain there would soon be a storm.” The evening was so beautiful that the others laughed and dismissed his predictions. However, Egerton wrote, “I decided to follow my own convictions.” Once the Youngs’ tent was pitched in the usual way, Egerton took his axe into the nearby woods and cut a dozen or so extra tent pegs which he pounded in to secure it more firmly.

My persistent hammering and pounding . . . considerably annoyed some of my brother missionaries and their wives, who had already retired to rest, and they were not slow in shouting out their protests against the noise and the unnecessary precautions I was taking. However, I heeded them not; and it was well I did not, for I was even then preparing a shelter from the storm for nearly all of them.

When I had pounded the stake-like tent-pins to my satisfaction, I went to my wagon and pulled out and uncoiled that long rope. Fastening one end securely to a stake, I passed it over the tent and then back again. Long as it was, I utilized every bit of it in lashing down that tent solid and secure. I was well satisfied with my work, but I knew that I would be laughed at the next morning, if no storm occurred, by all who were clever enough to get up before I had removed the rope. . . . I lay down and was soon fast asleep.
“Egerton! What is that?” It was my wife who had awakened me.
“Only the wind sighing in the tops of the forest trees,” I sleepily replied.

“Egerton!” again cried the wide-awake, excited wife, “it is more than that!”

Yes, indeed, it was more than that. It was a first-class western cyclone that was coming. Like a great monster, howling for its prey, we could hear it as it was rapidly rushing down upon us.

Others had now heard it, and from the veteran leader of our party, the Rev. George McDougall, who had dashed out of his tent, there were heard some brief commands. But all were apparently useless, for the cyclone had now struck us. It seemed as though everything must go down before its irresistible power. Tents, wagons, buckboards, blankets, sheets, shawls, pillows and other things movable went flying through the air.

My tent, however, stood the terrible strain, but it had to pass through a fearful ordeal. The storm shook it till it trembled like a leaf. Then, as though maddened by his failure, the cyclone tore loose the side curtains and, pouring in great blasts of air, tried to lift it up like a balloon and carry it away as other had already gone. But that rope, woven by the hands of love, and therefore every strand and fiber good and true, did its work and successfully stood the tremendous test. Screech and howl, struggle and blow as it would, the cyclone could not break the rope, and we knew that so long as it held our tent was safe.

A cyclone soon expends its dangerous fury. So it was in this case, but the wind continued to blow furiously, and soon the heavy rain came down. Now my tent was indeed “a shelter in a time of storm.”

All the destitute, tentless ladies of our party were quickly sheltered under its impervious canvas, while the men were all busy in the dawnlight searching and securing as many as possible of the various articles which had been blown away. Some were found more than a mile distant, while there were other things that were never seen again.
3 Adventure with a Bull at Norway House,
by Egerton R. Young

Egerton Young included this story on pp. 6–10 of the manuscript of chapter 5 of By Canoe and Dog-Train but omitted it from the book. The book manuscript has not survived, but these pages were kept, possibly for use elsewhere. The fragments of text at the top of page 6 and the bottom of page 10 show that the story, had it appeared in the book, would have preceded the second paragraph on page 56. His account of the incident, which evidently occurred on 30 July 1868, adds colour to Elizabeth Young’s brief reference to the episode in her memoir (in the “Settling in at Rossville Mission” section). Young may have omitted the story from the book because it did not flatter a brother missionary.

A singular adventure the next day [after our arrival] came pretty near putting an end to my Missionary career. While walking through the village with Mr. [Charles] Stringfellow and getting acquainted with some of the Indians, he and I had occasion to cross an unoccupied common where a savage bull was roaming about. Not dreaming of danger, for I had never in my life been molested by these animals, we moved along the foot path and got near the bull. Then I noticed that my nervous brother had quietly taken the other side of the path, thus placing me between himself and the furious animal which was pawing the ground near the foot path ahead of us. Absorbed in the conversation about the Mission work, I paid no attention to the bull, as I had no fear, when a sudden start from Brother S. caused me to look at the bull and I saw at that instant he was about to charge. Fortunately for me I did not lose my presence of mind, and so did a good deal of thinking in a very short space of time. Hastily looking around, I saw that no stick nor stone, as weapon of defense was within reach. I saw also that flight would be useless. I also observed that this bull had very wide horns and the thought came, rather than take either horn of this dilemma, better try and get between the two.

No sooner said than done; so as with a savage roar the bull charged me, I turned myself sideways and moved so that he struck
me fair between his horns throwing me perhaps twenty feet, in such a way that I lit on my feet uninjured: quickly as possible he charged again, and I received him exactly in the same way with the same result. The third time as he charged again I was not quite quick enough in getting into position, and so one of his sharp horns made an awkward rent in one of my garments. But fortunately for me, he threw me this time on a pile of stones, and as the battle had thus far been on one side, and getting rather monotonous in its methods, I was glad of an opportunity of assuming the offensive. So seizing some of the stones and striking him severely over the head, he gave up the contest and retired in disgust.

From my coigné of advantage on the stone heap I was amused at seeing my Brother Stringfellow about a hundred feet away with hands uplifted and face white with terror.1 Hurrying over to quiet his fears, I found him almost incapable of speech, and when I laughingly said to him: “Did you think I had lost my presence of mind?” his queer answer was, “I think you were, I think you were.” As my coat was a long one I buttoned it close around me and we hurried back to the Mission house. When we reached there Mr. S’s bloodless face excited the suspicions of the good wives that something was wrong, but all the poor man could say for a time in answer to their inquiries was, “The bull, the bull, the bull.”

We had thought that possibly we might, in the wild missionary life before us, be at times in perils oft from savage men, and in the dreary forests perhaps from wild beasts, but this unceremonious attack in the heart of the village, had never been imagined or thought of. However, we were thankful it was no worse; and that the danger of its repetition might be averted, there was a big feast [doubtless the New Year’s feast described by Elizabeth] soon after and the principal article offered was the not very tender meat of this savage bull.

1 Shakespeare, Macbeth, act I, scene 6: “coign of vantage,” a position affording facility for observation or action (OED).
4 Letters of Clarissa Bingham and Sarah Bingham to Elizabeth and Egerton Young, 1868–69

While Elizabeth Young headed to Rossville mission in the summer of 1868, her recently widowed mother, Clarissa Vanderburgh Bingham, remained in Bradford, running a boarding house and supporting her younger children as best she could. Two of Elizabeth's sisters, Mary Ann and Nelly, had married, and their brother John had died in August 1867, the same month as his father, Joseph. Four were still at home: Sarah Louise, aged about fifteen; Joseph, aged about twelve; Clarissa Jane (Clara), aged ten, and Charlotte (Lottie), who turned nine in December 1868.

The Youngs preserved a small collection of letters sent to Elizabeth by her mother and some of her siblings in 1868–69; the original letters are now in the United Church of Canada Archives in Toronto (Young fonds, box 1, file 9, “Correspondence from the Bingham family,” 1868–69). Later letters have not survived, nor have those that Elizabeth and Egerton sent to the Binghams. The excerpts that follow document the challenges that Clarissa faced, taking in as many boarders as she could with few resources and very little assistance. Sarah helped out, amid her schoolwork and music lessons. Clarissa Jane (named as Kit in the letters) and Charlotte (Lottie) doubtless helped, too, but they were still very young. For health and other reasons, prior to his death, Joseph, their brother, evidently spent considerable time living with his married sister, Mary Ann, and her husband, James Strong.

A constant theme in the letters is Clarissa’s missing of “Libby,” who must have been a major source of support before she left home, as is evident from her repeated questions about when and how soon Libby and Egerton would be coming home. The long gaps between letters from her daughter fueled Clarissa’s worries about their well-being and fears about whether they had even “gone to that spirit land.” As of November 1869, she had heard about Eddie’s birth five months earlier, in June, but not about his name. Trusting he was still living, she wrote, “I hope you have chose a name by this time.”

2 Wilson Brown, family history files. The Bradford 1871 census generally confirms the children’s ages; it also shows that Clarissa was still running a boarding house as of that year.
Clarissa’s letters provide a few close glimpses of a Bradford family in the 1860s. They are also evidently the only surviving documents in her hand. Their idiosyncratic spelling and freedom from punctuation tell us something about her educational background — a level of literacy probably higher than that of many in rural Ontario, yet not on a par with that of her daughter and son-in-law. Some of her letters are quite long; passages referring to local news of friends and neighbours not identified are omitted here. Mother and daughter had a close relationship. Elizabeth’s love and respect for her mother and her hard work are strongly reflected in the Berens River episode later recorded by her son and quoted in Part 1, in the section headed “Where Are My Quilts?”

From Clarissa Bingham
Bradford, Sept. 25 [1868]

My Dear Children
We have just received your very welcome letter of the 20th of August we were getting very anxious to have another letter from you. Sarah and I were taking our dinner after the boarders were done and she just turned her cup and in there was as pretty a cup as ever I saw there was a place it seemed a long way off and a straight line to the top of the cup and 2 dots at the top and I told her there was a letter coming from Libby and Egerton poor Sarah could hardly believe it tonight when one of the boarders came in with a letter for her “now Ma you told me I was going to get a letter from Libby right strait” and the girls from the shop came in with their cups and I laughed and told them things I saw in their cup some of theirs came true tonight and they all think I can tell fortunes now, well enough of the fortune telling I am glad to hear you have a girl [to help] but I don’t like to hear of Egerton going away so long from you we are getting along pretty well. I am paying my rent and keeping ourselves without drawing on the interest. . . .

This is the 10th of October I was very poorly on Sunday and Monday with a dizziness in my head I could not walk across the room without holding on to something but I am quite well now and the children except Kitty has got her bad headache and
Steve has just come in and brought some figs and maple sugar he come in often to see how I am getting along. . . . I wonder sometimes if my Libbie and Egerton wont be back next summer you remember George Chantler he was here to see me poor fellow he has berried 2 wives in 8 years . . . he was asking about you and Mary Ann and Elly he thinks you wont stay thare long it will be sutch a change for you, you will pardon me for not sending this sooner but you wont think hard of me for I am so tired at night that I cannot sit up late and get up early to get the mens breakfast by half past 8 [6?].

My Dear Children I am just going to send this in the morning whether I get it finished or not you will see that I have had several tryes to get it ready we have been getting the stove pipes fixed today and I am verry tired and it has been snowing all day. . . . I have been thinking about you today more than common when I see the snow I wondered how it is whare you are do write all the particulars and tell me when you think of comeing home you will say you have barely got thare. . . . it seems as though I cannot get to say good by but I must say farewell with a mothers love and best wishes for 2 Dear Children that are ever in her thoughts and prayers as feble as they are. . . . Libby and Egerton pray for your Mother that is lonely and needs you pray some time I think I shall have to give up keeping boarders for I cannot get a woman to help me when I want and then I have to work to hard myself you will be tired of reading this good night again.

Bradford, October 26th, 1868

Dear Children
I am geting verry anxious to get another letter from you we think everry day will bring one we are all well except myself I have a bad cold and we have been fixing the house up for cold weather I have had the stove pipe run up by my room door and the door moved to the other end of the hall and the pipe runs from the kitchen through the dineing room into the one that goes in my room so I think it
will be comfortable. Joe has come down to spend Sunday with us and brought me some eggs and 2 geese and some pumpkins . . . he is afraid I will work to hard. . . . Sarah is getting along with her music verry well Mrs Ambrose says it would be such a pity to stop her takeing lessons for she is getting on so fast James [Strong] thinks it is to bad for her to take lessons and me to work so hard but she must have some encouragment for she has to work very hard as well as me. . . . Kitte is home with us know and goes to school and getting along in her studyes very well some times I think I will have to keep her home to help for we have a great deal to do we have 8 boarders and there is 3 more wants to come as soon as I can make room Miss A[??] is giveing up the shop and I am going to make a petition [partition] across whare the counter was and carpet it and it will be more comfortable than going up stairs. . . .

poor Nelly I think she is worse than ever she is freting about me getting up to light the fires but I do not for I get Sarah up in good time to light them it seems so unfortuniate for me to be living so far from all of you that are married. . . . I have got butter in for the winter there is not many potatoes in yet people are digging them now perhaps they will be less the cheaper after they are gathered they have been froze there has been hard frost here.

It is well for you that you can get your washing done for you for that is more than I can get all the time Sarah and I had to wash week before last. . . . Kit is writeing and she is running over the paper so fast it would be a pity to stop her going to school for she bids fair for a good schooler if she has a chance I am trying to get the Children fixed up for winter I have made Sarah a tippet and muf out of that fur and it looks verry nice they say she looks like Libby you don't say anything about your melodian or (w)ringer I hope you wont neglect your music. . . . there is a gentleman in this evening that plays on a guitar and it makes me think of my Libby in years that is past and I live in hopes that I shall have the privelage again of listening to her voice again.
Bradford – Sept. 15th, 1869

My Dear Children,
You will think Ma is getting careless but that is not the case I intended to answer my Dear Egertons letter as soon as I possibly could and one week after another has gone untill 3 has gone by since I received your letters. . . . kit was reading about those that were murdered [Red River troubles] and she says it is time for Egerton and Libby to come home before they come there to hurt them we are all well and getting along as well as we can I am beginning to dread the winter for it is so cold for me to get up and light the fires. . . .

I often think how long will it be or will I ever see my Egerton and Libby again do not make up your minds to stay there many years when I think I have Children and a dear little nephew [grandson] away off in the far far West but it is really true but I must stop or this will be a gloomy letter tell us your prospects as regards provision for the winter I hope you will be better provided for this coming winter please God our crops are good except potato the rot is coming pretty bad it has been a wet season all through. . . . Egerton can do most anything could he not take that babys picture and send it to us for the Children don't know how they can wait. . . . Kiss that dear babe for us. . . . hope to hear from you soon and it be good news your affect[ionate] Ma

From Sarah Bingham
Bradford Sept. 30th 1869

Dear Libby and Egerton,
I suppose you think I have all moust forgotten you but I have not it is a shame that I have not written before this. . . . I wish that I could see that little Nephew of mine Eg[erton]. And I would have some fun. . . . I would like to have its photograph but I suppose I cannot until you come home. We expect Nelly home soon I wish you could come to and stay all winter but we cannot think about that. I hope we will see each other some day. I am taking musick lessons again. Mrs Ambrose was wishing that I had a pianio but there is no youse
of wishing that. How is your melodian getting along you never say anything about it. I have been trying to teach Kitty but she is very hard to learn.

I suppose you offen wish for some good apples we have to bye all ours. . . .

I have been getting my picture taken to send to you it is not very good of my face but it is very good every other way. . . . Ma has been drying some raspberries for you if she can get a chance to send them. I must stop now I cant send another half sheet with this letter

Give that baby a lot of kisses for me

From your dear Sister Sarah to her dear Sister and Brother

From Clarissa Bingham
Bradford Nov. 6th, 1869

My Dear Misionary Children it is know 3 months since we have had any word from you the longest that we have been since you left us and I am thinking something must be wrong or we would have word I am trying to keep up heart and hope for the best but it is hard work as the weeks pass I think I surely will get a letter but none comes I think Egerton is away and something has hapened him and Libby don’t like to let me know or Libby has taken cold and she is sick or gone for death is on our track Old Mr. Stephensan is dead and Old Wille Hardman Mr. Hardman was found dead in the field he went for potatoes for dinner and Old Mr. Stephenson give away to drink since his wife died and it caused his death. . . . sometimes I think perhaps you are coming home and we dream of seeing you. . . .

I am verry mutch confind at home I have had a bad cold but am better I have been to Mary Anns they are well I left Sarah and Kit to keep house they done for a day but I would not leave them over night we have 7 boarders 3 girls and 4 men I have to keep Kit at home Sarah is not strong and it is to hard on me and we can not afford to keep a girl if we had a house of our own we might last year was a hard one we hope for a better one this but it bids fair for a long one. . . .

I often wonder whether you are liveing or no if you are liveing do come home soon as you can do write and give us some
encouragement about your coming home again this is the 3 letter since none has come I must wait as patiently as I can and hope for the best and say good by once more except of our kindest love and kiss Dear little boy for us all for we often wish we could see him and we hope nothing has happened serious may the Lord bless and spare your precious lives till we meet once more this side the grave.

From your ever affection Mother to Egerton and Libby and baby Young.

November 15th

Still no word from my Dear Children. . . . we are dreaming of seeing you. . . . I feel some times as if it is no use to write Libby and Egerton is gone to that spirit land and then someone says something to cheer me and get me to fell a little better and trying [to] think all is well. . . . winter is coming pretty fast we have had some very cold weather and a great many have not got their potatoes dug it makes me think of you whether you have plenty.

I am foolish enough to think perhaps you are coming home then it is too much to expect I must say fare well once more hoping to hear from you soon kiss that Dear Babe if he is living Still hoping to hear from my Dear Children from your affection. Mother Bingham

To Libby and Egerton Young and baby I hope you have chose a name by this time.

From Sarah Bingham

My Dear Sister and brother, I am all most ashamed to sit down to write I have put it off so long. We have seven boarders and it keeps Ma and I very buissy. You must not think for a moment that I have forgotten you for as buissy as I am with my music and work I often think of you and Egerton and wish you hear with us. I have got two new pieces of music called Nora O’Neal and the reply they are very pretty pieces. Would you like to have them sent to you if you would I will try and send them to you. I have had the tooth ache for three days and could not do
anything to help Ma so I had to have it drawn I never had anything hurt me so. The Doctor sed I would never die with consumtion I made so much noise. Egerton I have not forgot that piano yet. I hope you will excuse my scribbling. Goodby for this time I remain your affectionate sister Sarah L. Bingham To her dear sister and brother — write soon.³

5 “A Great Surprise to the Missionaries Wife”: Moss

In the set of memoirs titled “In the Land of Fur and Frost,” a typescript prepared by E. Ryerson on the basis of his mother’s stories about mission life, he quoted her as recalling that moss was “made as soft as cotton wool” and provided “one of the best dressing for babes in the world” (3). Elizabeth also composed the following description of moss, handwritten on a single sheet of lined paper.

In place of carpet-sweepers, Electric sweepers, Dusters, floor polishers, and all the civilized devices, Moss, Moss, was gathered from the woods bye the Indian women, picked over & made free from stems, Thorns, dried placing it on the rocks when dried gathered up for drying and cleaning purposes. One important use it was to perform, as Indian mothers make a frame like a shoe, and decorate it with beadwork, or any kind of leather or cloth and lace it up with leather laces made of Indian deer-skin, and when about to put the Papoose in they put a layer of this beautiful soft moss in, lay the little rosy cheeked Papoose in on top and cover him up with it to the face or chin & lace him up, and as there is a bow shaped top and to it a strap that goes around the mothers shoulders, she carries it in summer and in winter throws a blanket over it to keep it warm & the child comes out piping hot. The next thing the moss is used for, as floors need cleaning there as in civilized countries, this moss is used for drying purposes, it is very useful. When the floor is dried up, it is then swept out and burned, for all cleaning purposes it is most useful.

³ This brief letter was probably written in November 1869 and enclosed with Clarissa’s letter of 15 November, above.
6 Women’s Work

Tanning Moose Hide

Egerton Young took an interest in tanning — which, in Ontario, was men’s work — partly because he was familiar with the process: his father-in-law, Joseph Bingham, was a tanner. In his Stories from Indian Wigwams and Northern Camp-fires (1892), Young set down a detailed description of the processing of a moose hide, based on his observations of Little Mary’s work. Following intensive scraping, cleaning, and stretching of the hide, “deer” (caribou) brains “are carefully rubbed in, after which the skin is subjected to an amount of rubbing, pulling, and scraping that would wear out the patience of any white tanner. However, the result is a skin so tough and enduring that nothing can tear it.”

Next, the skin was smoked. “Mary, the old Indian woman nurse, who made all our moccasins, used a large kettle, in which she placed pieces of a peculiar kind of rotten wood, which, when ignited, made a most pungent smoke but no flame. Over this she would fasten the mouth of the skin, which she had sewed up into the form of a sack. The dense smoke poured into this baglike affair, and, not being able to get out, soon permeated the whole concern, and the skin was tanned.” If several skins were being tanned, the burning wood was placed in a hole in the ground, and the skins spread under a tightly secured tent. In this, Elizabeth recalled, “the leather is tanned to a lovely fawn color” (“In the Land of Fur and Frost,” 4).

Young added, “For nine years I wore a coat made out of moose-skin tanned in this way. It was then still considered to be good enough in which to appear before enthusiastic crowds . . . in America, and also on the platform . . . in London, and in many other places in England. It is good for at least nine years of hard service yet.”* Figures 11 and 12 show Young in what he called “my trusty suit of moose-skin.”* Elizabeth, in contrast, was never portrayed in “Indian” dress.

4 Young, Stories from Indian Wigwams and Northern Camp-fires (New York: Eaton and Mains, 1892), 263–64.

5 Ibid., 281. See also the portrait of him wearing the coat, opposite that page.
“To Tan Deer Skin”
In “The Bride of 1868,” Elizabeth described the labour entailed in preparing a “deer” (that is, caribou) skin for use:

The Indian women like to keep this a “secret.” After dressing the skin and making it perfectly clean and white, they sew up all the holes if there are any, which they sincerely hope there are none, then make a bag, and then with rotten wood they make a smudge smoke & put the mouth of the bag over it: Constant care is necessary to keep the smoke regular and steady.

In drying the skin, a very still fire is needed and two women one each side of the fire, pull & stretch the skin, until it is soft and dry. Then the tanning process takes place. Moose skin is done in the same way. When it is all ready to be made into moccasins, leggings, mens jackets, moose skins make very good warm coats for travelling in the cold weather, on which there is a capote [hood? word smudged] for the protection of the head which is easily drawn over the head. [See figs. 11 and 12.] The Indian women make beautiful silk work for the moccasins, leggings, coats, & caps. The Patterns for their silk work is drawn from fancy prints of which their dresses are made, the leggings are decorated down the outsides of the leg. This is done with Silk & Porcupine Quills. The vamps of the moccasins are decorated [see figs. 2 and 9]. And the surround of the Caps [see fig. 10]. The young Indians think they are quite swell when decorated thus.”

“Silk Work on Leather, Deer Skin,” by Elizabeth Young
To encourage industry, soon after reaching our mission, the callers were so frequent at the mission for food, clothing, a thought occurred to me as they were handy with the needle making moccasins, leggings, bead work, &c, so spoke to some of the Indian women. They were quite willing & happy. At once I gave them, leather, silk thread, thinking this [was] all at present or until the work was finished, but no, epacis Pacquashacan [pahkwēsikan] a little flour & tea to keep them while they do the work, and some soap to keep my hands clean. This was all just now. The work and
everything went on as usual. To my surprise I was called on again in a few days for a little more soap to keep my hands clean, and so on and in a little while some more tea, and in a few days some more Pacquashcan. So now I began to think the Venture was expensive & a failure, at last the silk work was done, and other ventures tried. But it was all the same. Their wants were all the same.

We were always glad when parcels, bundles came from England or Canada, so that we could be Almoners distributing to the needy ones. We were more than happy making the poor people comfortable.

The above text is written in ink on a single loose page. At the top are some notes in pencil, seemingly by E. Ryerson Young: “Dress making — Leather & then cloth. Coat & moccasin making. Leggings.” Below are written some women’s names: Mary Murdo, Nancy Kennedy, and Mary Robinson. Elizabeth referred to Mary Murdo in her 1927 narrative, noting the help she received from Mary when she was first learning Cree. Nancy Kennedy was probably the mother of Alex Kennedy, often mentioned as the Youngs’ dog driver: see his letter of 1890 later in this part. Mary Robinson — who was described in pencil on another page as the “best sewer” — was, of course, “Little Mary,” so important in the Youngs’ family life in their mission years.

A paragraph on another single page is headed “Rabbit Skin Blankets.” Here, Elizabeth wrote: “An Indian woman will take about 30 or 40 rabbit skins, dress & cure them & cut them into strips of about two inches in width while they are still ‘green’ & weave them into a blanket. When dry, the skin tightens & there is a perfect surface of fur on both sides. This makes a beautiful, warm blanket.”

“Dressing Up Their Men”

“In the Land of Fur and Frost” (4–5) also preserves reminiscences from Elizabeth regarding the sophisticated craftwork of Cree women (for examples of their skill, see figs. 2 and 7–10). As she recalled, this labour was rarely dedicated to the women themselves:

The women take great pride [in making garments]; there is keen rivalry amongst them in their skill in decorating their work and
dressing up their men. And some of them [the men] are real dandies with beaded caps, beautiful silk work on their leather shirts, leggings neat and gracefully decorated down the sides and the moccasins with front and vamps beautifully decorated with silk or porcupine quill work, with horse-hair or bead work, or a pretty combination of several of these. The skill of the women was lavished upon the men. They seldom bothered much about their own dress, unless very young and very aggressive, which was little seen in the women at Norway House.

7 Sandy Harte

In September 1869, Egerton Young travelled north by canoe from Norway House on a missionary trip to Cree people in the Nelson River area. The Norway House Wesleyan Methodist Register of Baptisms (uca, Winnipeg) holds records of his visit: entries 1457 through 1463 list names of seven males whom he baptized there. All were adults except for the first, Alexander, aged “about 12 years,” son of “John Harte,” the chief. In fact, Young baptized many more than those seven. At the bottom of the page, he added, “N.B. I have baptized 110 at Nelson River. As I was unable to find out their ages, or the names of their parents, I have not entered them here. E.R.Y.”

Number 1457, Alexander — or “Pe-pe-qua-na-peu,” his Cree name as Young later transcribed it — was Sandy Harte, who was taken into the Young family and of whom Young, Elizabeth, and their son, Eddie (E. Ryerson), were all to write so warmly. Young recorded Sandy’s story most fully in

6 Egerton Young recorded Sandy’s name in an old notebook as “Alexander Sandy Harte. Pe-pe-quá-ná-péu. (Indian name).” Underneath he translated the name as, “One making sweet music.” Jeffrey Muehlbauer has interpreted the name as pipikwan-nápēw, ‘Eagle Flute Man,’ or pipikwēw-nápēw, ‘Flute-playing/Flute-having Man’ (e-mail, 19 June 2013). The name may have been conferred at Rossville where, Young recalled, Sandy was “a sweet singer [who] sang in his own musical language” and at times “would burst into song,” singing hymns in Cree (Young, On the Indian Trail and Other Stories of Missionary Work Among the Cree and Saulteaux Indians (London: Religious Tract Society, [1897]), 119, 121). No use of flutes was mentioned, but perhaps he sometimes played Elizabeth Young’s melodeon, a wind instrument of another sort. The origins of the name “Harte” (sometimes spelled “Hartie”) are unknown.
his book *Indian Life in the Great North-West*, telling how he found the boy lying in the chief’s lodge, crippled by an accidental gunshot wound to his leg. Young had with him copies of biblical texts printed at Rossville in Cree syllabics and found the invalid greatly interested in learning to read and write the Cree characters. He wrote that, at the boy’s request, “he was given the English name of Sandy Harte.” Sandy’s father, whom Young described as “a fine-looking man,” must have sanctioned the baptism, and Young published a drawing of him (artist unknown) on page 17 of *Indian Life*.

Young was impressed at Sandy’s intelligence and interest in the syllabics and wrote that, when he was leaving Nelson River, he commented to some people that if Sandy had an education he could be a teacher, even if he could never be a great hunter. The next summer (1870), some of the men he had met there turned up at Rossville — bringing Sandy in a canoe. They were acting, they said, on Young’s suggestion that Sandy be educated and had brought him for that purpose.

Of course, we can’t tell how Young’s words at Nelson River were translated, understood, or remembered by his listeners. In any case, Sandy’s coming was a surprise to the Youngs, and a challenge as well: their resources were very limited owing to the troubles in Red River and the many needs they faced at Rossville. However, they rose to the occasion. As Young recalled, he talked the matter over with Elizabeth, asking divine direction. Elizabeth evidently provided the guidance he sought: “The noble woman said, ‘The Lord is in it, and He who has sent the mouth to be filled will surely

7 Young’s first-hand account of the episode varies considerably from its more simplistic reading by his younger colleague, the Reverend John Semmens. Although, in *On the Indian Trail*, Young alluded to a “prevailing custom” (often asserted by missionaries to exist) of killing helpless persons, writing that “they had postponed the killing of this lad because he was the son of the chief” (103), in *Indian Life in the Great North-West* (Toronto: Musson Book Company, [1899?]), he wrote more warmly that he “was the chief’s son, and so he was cared for.” (14). Semmens, however, in his *The Field and the Work: Sketches of Missionary Life in the Far North* (Toronto: Methodist Mission Rooms, 1884), cast the episode in a darker light: “To his pagan father’s mind there came but one thought. He would end the life of his sick boy.” Semmens also simplified the adoption story, stating that Young, seeking “to preserve the boy’s life . . . volunteered to take him back to his own home at Norway House, doctor him, educate him, and send him back again to his people. . . . All this was readily agreed to by the selfish father, who saw no advantage in the education offered, but . . . a present escape from caring for a helpless invalid” (133–34).
supply all our additional requirements.’ So we cheerfully received Sandy into our home, and made him as one of our family.”

Young wrote a further twenty or so pages about Sandy in Indian Life in the Great North-West and devoted chapter 6 of On the Indian Trail to him as well, providing a good many more details. Elizabeth’s account of him, written probably between 1927 and 1931, complements her husband’s descriptions, providing insights into her own responses, her challenges in dealing with the new arrival, and the strength of the bond that developed:

Very Early in the Spring not long after Mr Young’s Visit to the Nelson River Indians, a Strange Canoe & Strange Indians our Indians know so well when any stranger[s] arrive, they gather around them. So these Strangers came to the Mission with this cripple boy, saying, “we have brought Sandy as we promised you.” Of course this was all news to me, but after it was all explained to me, I sincerely acquiesced & felt very much interested in the poor lame boy who was forced to use crutches. Of course it was another mouth to fill & another one added to my care, another one to keep, etc.

I little knew how much it meant to me to take the poor boy under my care as I already had all I could do to care for the mission & the innumerable callers I was receiving constantly. But here was a poor cripple boy, needed care. If it had not been for the missionaries appearance at his father’s home just when he did, the poor lad would have been disposed of. Thanks to the missionary & a kind Providence he is alive, & now I have an opportunity to help him by caring for him, & with God’s blessing I am going to. He is left to us & his friends have gone. The poor boy will feel strange so far away from his own people, & it beho[o]ves us to try and make him feel at home, & happy.

We do just the same for him as for our own dear Children. First to be clean about his person & his clothing his room; but of course

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8 Young, Indian Life in the Great North-West, 15–21. His consulting with Elizabeth parallels his account (quoted in the introduction to the present volume) of her role in accepting the call to mission work back in January 1868 (By Canoe and Dog-Train Among the Cree and Salteaux Indians [London: Charles H. Kelly, 1890], 28). See also chapter 10 of By Canoe and Dog-Train for Young’s description of his second visit to Nelson River.
not all at once, only just a little at a time, he goes to school, in a very short time the Teacher announced that Sandy was playing truant this of course could not be allowed & when it continued the missionary one day found him standing on a prominent point looking directly towards home & brought him to the mission and had a good faithful talk with him; we found out he was not willing, not only to attend school but did not want to obey Okimasquao [Muehlbauer: okimâskwêw, ‘the master’s wife’]. S. M. Young informed him, that Okimasquao was working for him, every day, cooking for him, washing for him, making his bed, and home nice for him. So he must be obedient & if Okimasquao asks him to help her, he must do it.

Just at this time I was very much tried in finding the bed & bedding were running away with vermin, not only the bed but they were marching up the walls. So the missionary just put it straight, but very kindly, & firmly Sandy boy just get your clothing & bring them to me. Now the boy was frightened thinking he was going to be sent away, but the missionary just said, here is some soap, take these clothes to So & So & [an] Indian woman, and ask her please to wash them and bring them to the mission, & then you come for me.

In the meantime there was some fumigation going on, in the mission, some scrubbing some cleaning & when the clean clothes came home, we had a consultation & a love feast, & a reconciliation, & Sandy was now my boy clean happy & satisfied having really found out who cared for him. So now I had one sincere friend & it was Sandy. The missionary had precious meetings going on in the church with the Indians & our Sandy boy was one of the first to give his heart to God. After this he was such a kind loving boy a real comfort & help, helping me in so many ways, with the children, with the work, making snow shoes, cleaning fish, helping with the fires as well as studying.⁹

⁹ In a three-page manuscript titled “The First Visit of a Missionary,” in which Elizabeth described Egerton’s trip to Nelson River, she supplied further details about Sandy’s presence at Rossville. He helped to look after the dogsleds and dogs and, “although he had to go around on crutches it was wonderful what he could help [with] in the school, in the church, in the house and around the mission, and when Mr Young was away he was a great comfort to me . . . [also] making Bow and arrows for our son Egerton, paddles.” JSHB collection.

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One day an old Indian woman came in calling. I was very anxious to see some of their fantastic steps. So I asked her if she would show me some, if Sandy boy would Tum-Tum for her, ah, ha. If I would give her a new pair of moccasins, my answer was ah, ha, and away she went, and sure enough it was hard on the moccasins.10

Our boy Sandy’s friends came to visit him and now we invited them into the mission, set the table and gave them the best we had. When all was ready we all sat down with them, Sandy said “Chesquaw” [Muehlbauer: cêskwa], that is in Indian Wait, & Sandy asked the blessing. Then all were helped but not one touched anything until the missionary did, then they all joined & really & truly were most polite. Sandy boy talked & prayed with them ere they left.

And when our time came for leaving Norway House we left our Sandy boy, a fine young man, & a very sad young man knowing full well he was loosing [a] good friend, of course he went home. A little while after we heard he was a local Preacher, & schoolmaster, married, & a good man & Indian.11

Egerton’s writings from the period 1871–73 shed further light on the Youngs’ relations with the Nelson River people. They help to date the feast mentioned above, at which the Youngs and Sandy welcomed his friends and relations, to the early summer of 1871. They also record a gift of great significance that marked the occasion. As Egerton later reported to his Toronto superiors, the visitors from Nelson House, numbering about twenty-five, presented him with a “splendid redstone pipe” as a sign, he said, of their turning to Christianity.

10 E. Ryerson Young made some pencil notes on his mother’s telling of this story. The woman demonstrated her dancing, described as “a shuffle & gliding,” and Sandy made “music” for her — “sticks on wood — to keep time.” Then, indeed, she “needed [a] new pair” of moccasins.

11 This text is transcribed from pages 10–14 of a fifteen-page handwritten memoir by Elizabeth Bingham Young titled “Daily Reminiscences of Norway House’s Living,” the original of which is in the UCCA, Toronto. Although previously misattributed to Egerton Young and filed in series 4, it is now in series 5, Records of Elizabeth Bingham Young, box 10, file 3.
This pipe travelled far, both before and after 1871. Its bowl, which now resides in the Young collection in the Royal Ontario Museum, is made of catlinite, a fine-grained, red stone that may have come from a western Minnesota quarry long used by Aboriginal people as a special source of pipestone, or from a smaller quarry on the Bloodvein River, in Manitoba. The Nelson River Cree must have acquired it through trade or travel some years before Egerton’s mission visit to them in 1869. Egerton saw its giving as a symbol of conversion: his Cree visitors told him that “nearly the whole tribe have given up conjuring, &c.” Sandy’s people, however, would have attached their own meanings to the pipe, which, Young wrote, “they almost worshipped as a god” (he was ill-equipped to grasp their spiritual understandings). Their gift of it signified their regard for him but also surely expressed with great power their recognition of the Youngs’ care and love for their chief’s son, Sandy. The Youngs, in turn, valued it in their own way, bringing it to Ontario, where it joined several other treasured objects on the wall of Egerton’s study (see fig. 13). Sometime after his death in 1909, his daughter Lillian Helme brought it to her home in England, whereupon it passed to her son, Egerton Helme, who took it to his new home in South Africa. Late in his life, having some notion of the pipe bowl’s importance (the stem had been lost), he found a means to return it safely to his uncle (Egerton Young’s son, Eddie) or his family around 1962, ninety years after its giving.

In the summer of 1872, several Nelson River people travelled to Winnipeg for the first Methodist church conference to be held in Manitoba. The next summer, before he left Norway House, Egerton Young recorded a sequel to that event:

Macedonian Calls. The Nelson River Indians called again on me today to have a talk. The first question was, “Has a Missionary come...
for us yet.” The Bishop Dr [Enoch] Wood told us when we saw him in Manitoba last year, “That something would be done for us. We carried that good news home with us to our fathers and it was like the sunshine to them. When we were leaving our home this year with our furs, our father said to us, “You had better take another boat with you to bring back the Missionary’” [but they lacked means to do so]. . . . They were very sorry that there was no supply for them.

When the rumour which was [earlier] current among the NH Indians reached them that in all probability I would be removed from Norway House they came and putting their arms around me and urged and besought me to go and live with them and be their Missionary.\(^\text{13}\)

As Elizabeth noted, and as Egerton wrote (see sec. 11, below), Sandy and the Youngs parted with great sadness in the summer of 1873. Sandy stayed for most of the following year at Rossville, studying and working for the Reverend John Ruttan. On 23 March 1874, he wrote to Egerton, in English, of feeling “grief in my heart because of the loss of my brother” (at Nelson House) but finding comfort “from those good books I am learning and reading now. I am very comfortable with my new Master who is kind and cares for me. I am learning very much at the school, and hope that I may be useful to my people at Nelson River.”

His next letter to Egerton, however, was very different. Late that spring, the Reverend John Semmens was delegated to start a mission at Nelson House, and Sandy accompanied him, at least initially. Things did not go well. The letter, written in Cree syllabics, is hard to decipher in some places, as well as challenging in its older and sometimes obscure usages.\(^\text{14}\)

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\(^{13}\) Young, on pp. 63–64 of an 1870 diary used for later writings (copy in JSHB collection). Missionaries frequently invoked “Macedonian calls” to inspire mission work, evoking Paul’s vision one night of a man of Macedonia praying and saying, “Come over into Macedonia and help us” (Acts 16:9).

\(^{14}\) In 1984, a University of Winnipeg student, Donna Hartie (the widow of a Nelson House Cree, although she had never heard of Sandy Harte) and Cree-speaker Joe Mercredi produced a preliminary translation for me. Then, in 2013–14, Jeffrey Muehlbauer took up the task, labouring hard to achieve the best translation possible of a very difficult text. My warm thanks to him and his Cree consultants for all their help and efforts. Happily for Young, he would have received the letter at Berens River, where his Cree associates could read it for him.
In it, however, Sandy referred, rather obliquely, to conflicts with Semmens regarding a shortage of food supplies; it also appears that Semmens may have drawn him into selling furs at the fort, which missionaries were not supposed to do. Linguist Jeffrey Muehlbauer has worked intensively to arrive at the translation that follows. The words he has placed in parentheses provide alternate translations of Cree terms, while bracketed texts represent Muehlbauer's and his consultants' best efforts to surmise the meanings of the Cree syllabics, which pose problems of both legibility and interpretation.

I am writing to you, Mr. E. Young, so that you should know I am still doing well through God's compassion. So then, that is how I am hoping it [this letter?] should find you of course. There is nothing much that I will be able to tell you about, but I will tell you that I did not accompany the prayer chief [Semmens]. He sent me out, like they would send me away before. That's what he did to me. So then, I will tell you the reason I left. Probably at the moment the fishing season is the reason. Mr. Semmens did not give me a little bit for us to make food with. So I worked for them. So my father was there, also my brother was there where I fish. I was happy that we are going to tell them about God's religion. So then, I thoroughly (already) told to you why he allowed me to sell beavers at the fort. It was not intentional. He was not supposed to have done that. He got nothing. Similar to that, that's what I want to tell you, him [me?] being poor on earth. Truly, I was not able to grasp it (i.e., I frown on it), what's happening to me now. I cannot tell you who should do it; me myself or Mister Semmens. So I will not swear to you responding much to me. Of course I will be able to swear the truth that God knows if [I sold things]. [So then, I will have to think a little better about Mr. Semmens.] [Untranslatable text follows.] I myself do not remember when I stopped accompanying you. I hope you will tell me what you're thinking. It is me, Sandy, who is writing you, Mr. Young. Truly, I knew that I loved you and my father to such an extent. So then, you should tell me about God's religion. I myself have never forgotten. So then, I hope that you should pray for me. These are the only things I will say to you. Try and write me if you are able. I greet all of you, all your children, also the chief woman [i.e., Elizabeth].

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Although Semmens’s Nelson River relations with Sandy got off to a bad start, his later writings made no reference to the difficulties, which we hear of only through Sandy’s letter to Young. In 1884, Semmens recalled in his memoirs of the North that when he started the Nelson River mission, Sandy Harte, son of the chief, was his “companion, assistant, and fellow evangelist. Without delay, he began his work of faith and labor of love. Teaching with him became a passion. Early and late, and at all hours, he was at it. . . . He taught his fellows Zion’s sacred melodies. He made them acquainted with the Evans’ characters. . . . To this day, without ostentation and without remuneration, he esteems it a privilege to speak to the people concerning the salvation of Jesus the Christ.”

Sandy’s father, John Harte, continued as chief at least until 1900. Writing to Egerton Young from Winnipeg in 1900, Semmens reported that “John Hartie sits by his fire-side awaiting the Master’s call while Sandy his son still talks of the great love of the Father Divine.” The Reverend Samuel Gaudin and his wife served at the Nelson House Methodist mission for many years, starting in 1891. In 1900, when they were leaving on their first furlough, “an old Chief, John Hartie, came to say Good-bye. . . . The Chief was a sincere Christian respected by the entire community. . . . When he came to say farewell to us, he said in a very beautiful way, ‘May you find the hand of the Great Father stretched out to you as I have found your hands reached out to me.’” On his death a few years later, he received many warm tributes.

15 John Semmens, The Field and the Work: Sketches of Missionary Life in the Far North (Toronto: Methodist Mission Rooms, 1884), 135. On p. 113, however, Semmens noted that his stay at Nelson River was brief: “We were not long in making the discovery that we were entirely useless in this locality. We had no interpreter,” as the Hudson’s Bay Company had reneged on supplying one. This is a puzzle, as Sandy could presumably have served in this role, but he may not have been hired or paid as such. The “we,” unidentified, may be a royal “we.”

16 Semmens to Young, 16 November 1900, ucca, Young fonds, series 1, correspondence (copy in jshb collection).

17 S. D. Gaudin, Forty-Four Years with the Northern Crees (Toronto: Mundy-Goodfellow Printing, 1942), 97–98.
Postscript
On 1 April 1935, the Reverend A.C. Huston, the United Church missionary at Nelson House, responded to a letter that E. Ryerson Young had evidently sent him inquiring about Sandy Harte and his family. Huston provided further valuable details:

Sandy Harte has a brother living here by the name of Joseph and a grandson by the name of Angus Bonner, from them I learned Sandy was the oldest of the family of six boys and six girls. The father’s name was John and his wife’s name Charlotte. They could not recall her last name prior to her marriage to John Harte. . . . John Harte was by what they say the first chief, having been chosen before the treaty regulations. . . . He died about thirty-five years ago. They said your father took Sandy back to Norway House after one of his visits here and when he returned to Nelson House it was to carry on as a local preacher till his death in 1910 or thereabouts. He had married a girl by the name of Jane Hunter and had three daughters and one son. They are all dead now. Sandy was shot in the thigh after his return from Norway House but recovered [misdating the injury that happened before Egerton Young’s visit in September 1869]. He must have been about sixty years of age at the time of his death. He was buried here on the reserve.

8 Egerton R. Young’s Illness with Typhoid, 1872

Norway House, Aug. 29th 1872

It is with great weakness I write you this short note. 18 Shortly after leaving Winnipeg I was seized with diarrhoea. I was exceedingly sick the last six days. We had a very disagreeable passage of twelve

18 At the top of the page on which he transcribed this letter, Young wrote “From a private letter,” but the name of the person to whom the letter was sent does not appear. In all likelihood, though, it was addressed to the Reverend Enoch Wood, who, at the time, was the superintendent of missions for the Wesleyan Methodist Church.
days. I think if I had not got home when I did, I never should have reached here alive. The disease is not yet cured. If I use any strong remedies to stop it I am thrown into a violent fever, and then break out into the most profuse perspiration. I am so wasted away you would hardly know me. I cannot check it gently and restore nature to her natural work. I am so depressed and sad in spirits. I enjoyed the Conference in Winnipeg exceedingly. I felt the continued comforting presence of the Holy Spirit but now I am under a heavy cloud and seem to have so very little faith or power to pray. In the midst of my gloom I can only keep saying: “Peace! doubting heart; they God’s I am!” I know you will pray for me. I never was so sick before. I never had such fierce attacks from the devil. “Oh God, forsake me not!” Will you be so kind to give my apologies to our honored President, Dr. Punshon, for my not having written, as promised, an account of Indian children’s habits, amusements, etc. My sickness has unfitted me for everything. My people were glad to see me back; but alas! I cannot minister unto them. Timothy [Bear] is pushing ahead at Beren’s River.

E. R. Young

Around the end of September, Young wrote a sequel to the above letter. The following excerpt is from a typed transcript of that letter:

I think I wrote you a letter when very sick, about a month ago. I had a bad attack of typhoid fever. I was very much depressed, mentally, and had some dark and gloomy hours; but the cloud passed away, and now, with a glad heart, I can exclaim, “The Lord is my light and my salvation,” &c. I am very much thinner than when I was in Manitoba, and am still very weak; but I feel well, and am now able to attend to my labors. One great drawback here to rapid recovery of wasted strength, is the difficulty of getting any of those little dainties, such as beef tea or chicken broth, — which the sick crave. We had in the house pork and pemmican; but at this season there is no fresh meat of any description.
9 Schooling in Rossville: The “Infant Class” and Miss Batty’s Thoughts on Shawls

The most detailed accounts that the Youngs left of Rossville mission schooling are found in two chapters of Egerton Young’s book *The Battle of the Bears*. Chapter 9, “Indian Boys and Girls at School” describes the Youngs’ teaching arrangements. The Sunday school, in particular, was important to their efforts to reach a broad cross-section of the community. There, Elizabeth “had charge of the infant class, which consisted of all under the age of eight or ten years.” The regular day school teacher, Peter Badger, “had the intermediate pupils, including all . . . up to the age of sixteen years.” Badger was a fluent Cree speaker and writer, “a man used to writing his language,” as David Pentland has observed.19 Egerton Young had charge of the older people who came to the Sunday school. As he wrote, “Many of the older people would at times come in, and often . . . they would strike a light, and have a good smoke out of their long pipes, while listening to the lesson for the day.”20

In chapter 10, “The Old Indian in the Infant Class,” Young shed further light on the “infant” Sunday school class taught by Elizabeth. It was “the most popular one. Many grown-up infants wanted to be in it, and as the reasons they urged . . . were strong ones, we had to yield in some cases, and let them sit down with the little ones.” One was a Cree man of about seventy who arrived from some distance and began to attend all the services and the Sunday school, where “he would always go into the infant class.” When Young invited him into his class, “he would shake his head and refuse me most decidedly.” His argument was that he had “seen many winters, but my mind is just as a newborn child in the knowledge of the Good Spirit. . . . So I must sit down and learn with the young ones, who are of my own age in these things.”21 His reasoning was surely genuine, but Elizabeth’s manner of teaching and her efforts to communicate in Cree were also surely factors in the popularity of the “infant class.”

20 Young, *The Battle of the Bears* (Boston: W.A. Wilde, 1907), 134.
21 Ibid., 150.

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Young also set down a vivid description of the pupils’ school dress. Among the boys, it was quite diverse; some had items of Western clothing, but a good many had leather garments that varied widely in quality, fit, and ornamentation. The girls’ dress, however, had one common element, namely, “the great blanket which each one wore. It was amusing to watch the girls’ efforts to keep their faces hidden, with only one eye visible, while in many cases the girl was so small and the blanket so large, that much of it was trailing in the snow or on the floor of the church.” The Youngs evidently made no effort to standardize dress other than to try to furnish warm clothing and encourage cleanliness.

In September 1873, the Reverend John H. Ruttan took charge of the Rossville mission. Peter Badger, who had taught there for several years, continued in his post. In June 1875, Badger left, however, to become teacher and catechist for the numerous families leaving to settle at the White Mud River, and in early August a new schoolteacher arrived from Ontario — Clementina Batty. Miss Batty made some changes in the school regime. A few months after her arrival, she wrote a letter for the Methodist publication *Missionary Notices*, dated 6 January 1876 and directed to schoolchildren. Describing the Cree people in largely negative terms, she detailed her campaign to change the girls’ dress and demeanour:

If you had come with me the first morning I opened school, you would have been surprised to see twenty or thirty girls sitting, each with a shawl over her head, though it was a warm summer day. Every time one was spoken to she would draw the shawl over her eyes and mouth, making it quite impossible to hear what was said. . . . so it is little wonder if I could not understand them, especially as they could not speak a word of English and I could not understand a word of Cree.

Mr Ruttan told me he had been waiting for me to come and take these shawls off, so I thought I would do it. I went round to one, shook hands, and said, “What cheer?” for I had learned that much “Cree” or rather sailor’s English. I waited until we were a little acquainted, and then showed them I had no shawl on, and asked them to fold theirs up.

22 Ibid., 134.
Poor girls! They were astonished at such an unheard-of proposition and only hugged their shawls the closer. I had to laugh at their dismay, but at the same time took off the shawls one after another with my own hands, for they seemed quite paralyzed. There was a great hiding of faces and a great many half-terrified half-bashful looks, and for several days I had to take the shawls off myself. It was amusing to see how awkward they seemed, especially when strangers came in; very much the same as you would, if you should find yourself in church some day without a hat. But they are getting over it. . . . I will tell you one good effect it has. My poor girls, I’m afraid, seldom combed their hair while they had their heads covered, and you would have been almost horrified to see such rough-looking heads as the removal of shawls revealed. They nearly all comb their hair now, and I keep a comb in the school for those who have none at home, or forget to use it.23

Wittingly or not, Miss Batty was challenging Cree protocols that mandated shyness and a degree of concealment for girls and young women in the presence of strangers and men — protocols that the Youngs and Peter Badger had simply accepted.24

23 A handwritten version of Miss Batty’s text, titled “Cree School Children. By C.B.,” appears in Egerton R. Young’s Berens River notebook (ucca, series 2, box 2, file 3), 188–94, but it is not in his hand. Her account was printed in Missionary Notices of the Methodist Church of Canada, 3rd ser., no. 6 (March 1876), 100–101 (thanks to Anne Lindsay for finding it). The issue of the Notices also quoted a letter from the Reverend John Ruttan dated 28 September 1875, which warmly praised Miss Batty’s “earnest manner and kind heart. . . . Though she has much to discourage her in the capacities of her pupils, yet neither diligence nor piety is wanting in her work of faith and labour of love. The children are learning the English, or . . . how to use the English, quite fast” (86). For further information on her, see the postscript ”Mission Wives at Rossville,” in Part 1.

10 “Thanks to the Kind Ladies of Canada”: Egerton Young to the Christian Guardian

The following letter, dated 8 October 1873, appears in Young’s Berens River notebook (ucca, Young fonds, series 2, box 2, file 3), 176–77. By October, Young was on his way to (or was already in) the Toronto area and so may have delivered the letter in person.

Dear Bro, — Mrs Young and myself desire through the columns of the Guardian to return our very sincere thanks to the kind ladies of Canada who sent, through our friend Mr [William E.] Sanford, of Hamilton, the cases of warm clothing for our poor Indians at this mission. The names of the good ladies we did not receive. We found out either by parcels in the cases or by letter the following names, which we gladly place upon record: Mrs. Jackson and Mrs Sanford of Hamilton; Mrs Cox, of Ottawa; Mrs. Lewis, of Queenston; Mrs Morren, near Barrie.

If our dear lady friends could only have seen the tears of joy, and smiles of gladness, and heard the hearty words of thankfulness, and observed the marvellous change wrought in the appearance of our Indians, they would have felt amply repaid for all their trouble and sacrifices. May they ever realize in their own souls the blessed fulfilment of the Saviour’s promise. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” [Matthew 25:40].

There was a marked improvement in the personal appearance of the congregation the next Sabbath after the arrival of the cases. Some, whose best coat had been an old one made out of a threadbare blanket, were enabled, through their gifts, to appear in God’s house clothed in broadcloth, which although a little worn, will be carefully preserved and kept, exclusively, for Sabbath use for many years.

I noticed that one old Indian, who is called Rabbit Hunter, to whom I had given a second hand black coat, still persisted in wearing his old ragged one. I asked him why he came to church looking that way, when he might have been so much more decently
clad. “Where is the nice black coat I gave you? I said a little sternly. “Now, minister,” he replied, “don’t be angry with me and I will tell you all about it. You know I never had such a fine coat as that in all my life, and I was afraid if I wore it to church I would be thinking about it, and so not be able to listen well to the sermon; and then, you see, some of the young fellows would like to get that coat, and they might ask me to trade coats, even on God’s holy day, and so I thought I would leave the coat at home in the box for a while. Please don’t be cross with me, I will put it on and wear it as soon as the big glad thought of getting it settles down in my heart.” Pretty good logic that for a poor Indian, and an answer from which much can be learned.

Our kind lady contributors will not be offended at the length of time which has elapsed since these cases were sent, and our acknowledgment of the receipt of them, when we inform them that, although sent more than a year ago, they only reached us a few weeks ago. Japan is as near Toronto or Hamilton as are these isolated mission fields.

Egerton R. Young

11 Transitions, 1873–74: Letters from Egerton to Elizabeth Young

The following letters were published by Harcourt Brown, a grandson of Egerton and Elizabeth Young, in *Manitoba Pageant* 17 (1971): 2–11. The letters, together with the full text of his preface, are available on the website of the Manitoba Historical Society (www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/pageant/17/youngletters.shtml). Egerton wrote the first two letters in August and September 1873, from Norway House, and the two others, one apparently incomplete, in April 1874, from Berens River. The text of the letters has been rechecked against the originals for accuracy, and one passage that was omitted in the published version of the first letter (in the second paragraph below the “August 11th” heading — from “Do you really believe it” to the end of the paragraph) has been restored here. The letters record the strong bond of affection between husband and wife, the warm attachment that the
Rossville people felt for the Youngs, and the logistical challenges of a mission family’s life and travel. At least one letter between the second and third is missing: at the start of his letter of 6 April 1874, Young mentioned sending “my last to you” from the Stone Fort (Lower Fort Garry), before leaving there for Berens River in late March. The letter of 10 April 1874 is unsigned, seemingly lacking a final page or pages. The first letter was originally kept among diaries and other documents held by Harcourt Brown; the second and third letters were among the Young papers held by the Reverend H. Egerton Young, in Toronto. All are now in the ucca, Young fonds, series 5, box 10, file 5. A note that Egerton Young wrote in his Berens River notebook (ucca, Young fonds, series 2, box 2, file 3) may serve as introduction: “Parting words: ‘We shall be so glad to see you darling, but do not come to us until your work is well arranged and you can come without anybody saying with any reason, “What doest thou here, Elijah?”’ Libbie’s parting words on the northern shore of Lake Winnipeg, July 31st /73.”

Norway House, August 4th, 1873

My darling Libbie,
We watched your receding boats until they went out of sight near Montreal Point.26 That my heart was sad and lonely I need not stop to say. A great large vacuum, all at once, seemed to have at once taken the place where my heart was supposed to be. As you faded out of the vision of your husband’s eye, he earnestly prayed that the all-seeing eye of the One, who beholdest all things, would ever be upon you and on our darling little ones. I was in no mood for shooting that evening and so we remained upon that sandy shore until sundown.

25 The quotation is from 1 Kings 19:11-13: God was critical of Elijah for being in one place when he should have been fulfilling responsibilities somewhere else.
26 Young (with Sandy Harte) accompanied Libbie and the children as far as Warren’s Landing, at the north end of Lake Winnipeg, saying goodbye on 1 August. Montreal Point is the most northerly point on the east side of the lake itself.
We parted on that shore, Love,
You for our childhood home
I to the field of toil, Love,
Where the red men do roam.

As the mosquitoes were thick we went out to a little rocky island which was destitute of trees and spent the night. My bed consisted of an oil cloth, one blanket and a pullover. I rolled myself up in the blanket and oil cloth and slept well, although my side was a little sore in the morning as the rock was a rough one. At Prayers both morning and evening all prayed. It would have done your heart good to have heard Sandy [Harte] pray. I was amazed at his fluency and earnestness. Poor fellow, he mourns over your departure in a way that shames my apparent indifference.

We spent the day in shooting, called at Johnny Oig’s in the evening and saw the dogs. Tell Eddie Shunias [Money] and Robin and Lothair and all the rest, even Poquashikum [Flour] and Koono [Snow] are all well, and were glad to see me. We reached the Mission about dark. Mary had returned before us. Everything is neat and tidy. Poor Timothy [Bear] is very feeble. He eats with me and I think it was the best arrangement we could have made. Times are hard. The nets yield us but little. We have eaten up the dried fish and must live on pemmican as there are no sturgeon. We had a nice mess of green peas yesterday. I am teaching the school while Peter [Badger] is away at Red River.

Yesterday I packed up my tools, medicines, and two Cases of Books. Harriet Badger is making me some moccasins and Mary is working at the gloves. I have sent Willie and four others to cut hay. We have a little boy to bring in the cows, and Chloe milks them.

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27 For a substantial biography of Oig, see “John ‘Johnny’ Oig, c1817–1889,” www.redriverancestry.ca/oig-john-1817.php. He had local importance in the Cree community of Rossville, although he was said to have Chipewyan background.

28 Chloe was the daughter of Timothy Bear. John Semmens recorded that on 16 April 1874, at Rossville, Timothy Bear invited him to the wedding of Chloe to James McDonald (The Field and the Work, 70).
I have not got Martin [Papanekis] of[f] yet. I am annoyed that he is so slow, and begin to think that the better way would be to go and board at Mr. Flett.

If I only knew that I was to go on to join you in Ontario, I would soon decide what to do but this uncertainty is what perplexes me. Depend upon it I will come as soon as I honourably can, but not before even if I never come. No one shall accuse me of deserting my Post and running Home without authority. Still I am well convinced that I could serve the Church better this year at Home, than out here. But you will say there is a good deal of con
cate [conceit?] as Pat would say, in that last sentence: well scratch it out then if you like.

The Indians all miss you very much. They come and sit around, and look so sad that I have to get out of their sight to keep from having the blues. We have had two fine showers hope they did you no harm. We all hoped you got to Beren’s River for the Sabbath and for fresh milk for the dear little ones.

As a few days have dragged their slow length along since I wrote the previous sheet, I will now commence another one.

This is Saturday. I have been trying to get up my work for tomorrow, but the thoughts do not seem to flow with their accustomed freedom. Perhaps because it is that my thoughts are far away. The wind has been contrary for you for the last few days, still we hope you have managed to get to the Stone Fort ere this.

I have packed up most of the books and tools and medicines. The women have well cleaned the house from top to bottom. I think they have made a good job of it.

I have looked over the old Letter Box and have sorted out a great pile and burnt a still greater lot. I read and read until the brain got in a whirl, and the memory of other days drove the present out of thought.

The day is cloudy with any amount of higher winds. Slight showers have been falling but the ground is very dry. The wheat is a complete failure this year, and I don’t think we will more than get our seed potatoes back again. We are having plenty of green pease but very few young ducks to eat with them.
Tell Eddie and Lillie their little *pussies* are able to run around the floor a little. The men are away at the hayfields. They have to cut it all under water then gather it in boats and take it to the shore and spread it on the rocks to dry. Very slow and very expensive work.

I think I have about packed up everything that is to go from here. It is a little *wearing* on the nerves, this being in a state of such great uncertainty as to the future; however, “God reigns on high.” All will be right, and we shall yet praise Him.

August 11th

I have decided to hire Martin [for Berens River] and have given him a hundred dollars advance. This will put the Mission on a good footing at once, as his son Donald will keep the school. I will be able then to come on to Ontario as soon as possible after I get word.

I have been at the *old Letters* again. Oh dear what a time. Do you really believe it, I waded through our *correspondence* of the Golden time. Don’t you think we were a little *soft*, or *spooning*, or *moonstruck* or something else? Perhaps not, you are just as dear, and as much beloved as ever and, if I get in a hurry and don’t know what to write why I think I will just slip in one of those old *Love* letters and say, multiply it a thousand-fold and accept it from your beloved.

We are nearly all starving. Out nets yield nothing and there is precious little else and that is not very *satisfying*. However we will get through. Poor little Mary is really so ambitious to do well, and, for her, she does well. She tried to make a little porridge for my breakfast this morning, but she burnt it dreadfully, and then she was so vexed about it. The bread is very good, considering the bakers.

[Charles?] Paulette was married today to Ellen Memotas. William’s relations are hopping mad about it. When I scolded some of the Scotchmen for not coming to church, their answer was that the church seemed so sad and drear without Mrs. Young’s sweet strong voice that they felt better at home. So you see even those poor fellows miss you.
They are so very kind and friendly at the fort that I would if I dare leave the extensive Mission premises, go over and stop there a great deal. But I have a great deal to do, and must stand by the stuff. I am teaching the school which I find not very pleasant for the olfactory nerves this warm weather.

Enormous fires are raging in the woods all round us. The air is full of magnificent smoke clouds. The wind is blowing a gale, and the Lake is lashed into foam.

A large number of boats under reef sail have shot by in the distance. They have come up from York and I am a little nervous that perhaps the Red River boats may be among them and so you will not get this letter. However if I can hire a couple of men to brave the raging waves I will send this letter across to Mr. [Roderick] Ross to forward it to you.

This is the 14th of August. Two weeks ago today you left your Northern Home, the birthplace of your children, the home still of your husband. God bless and take care of you and our little ones. I will not disguise the fact that I am very lonesome, still I am not downhearted as I believe your going was for the best. I will feel anxious until I hear from you.

John Sinclair has written up another of his miserable letters. He now accuses Dr. T. [Lachlan Taylor] of having been on the spree and of having done incalculable injury by his constant drinking before the poor Indians &c, &c, &c.29

Sandy and Isaac Keeper have gone to the old Fort to try and get us a few ducks. I would have gone with them only I am busy getting Martin ready and in keeping the school. Now darling I know of nothing else to write about. I hope you are well and that you have met with no misfortunes. If you cannot get a lock for

29 Lachlan Taylor visited the Oxford mission (as well as Rossville) in the summer of 1873; for accounts of his visit, see Part 1 (“The Birth of Nellie and the Pitfalls of Hospitality”) and George Young, Manitoba Memories: Leaves from My Life in the Prairie Province, 1868–1884 (Toronto: William Briggs, 1897), 256–57. John Sinclair, the lay preacher then in charge of that mission, was to be replaced by the Reverend Orrin German, whose arrival at Norway House is noted in Egerton’s next letter, of 8 September 1873.
the big Trunk, get a good needle and thread and completely sew together the canvas cover. This would be a good way to fix the ones you do not wish to open. I hope you have found plenty of dear friends to aid you in your affairs. I felt a little uneasy about your purse as it was in that big casette near the top. The HB Company’s bills are in it also, they are of one pound each. They will pay your board bill if you are at [sentence unfinished].

As I have not yet heard about the arrangements made by Conference of course I can give you no advice as to the future. Be influenced by your own feelings and health and that of the children and also by the judicious advice of friends.

Give my love to Mr. and Mrs. Flett, Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Semmens, Mrs. Young, George, and all the others you meet including the Mr. Stewarts.

I will close this and then go and see if I can find anybody willing to go across with it. Kiss the dear ones and tell them Papa sends lots of love to them. God bless you my dearest. May he ever have you in his holy keeping and save you from all harm. So prays as ever

Your affectionate husband
Egerton R. Young

Mrs. E. R. Young
Stone Fort, Manitoba

Norway House
September 8th, 1873

My darling,
Our successors have arrived and entered upon their duties. I think they will do well. Mrs. Ruttan is very young and will have much to learn. The Lord help her. They have a beautiful organ, so our

On meeting Ellen Ruttan in January 1875 at Rossville, George Young described her as having come “right from the Wesleyan Ladies’ College, Hamilton, only a few weeks elapsing from the day she left her studies till she entered upon her duties in this far-off mission” (Manitoba Memories, 295). When she arrived at Rossville in early September 1873, she was about nineteen years old, having married earlier that year. (The
dear little melodion [melodeon] has its song put out.\textsuperscript{31} I must leave it here for the present and also the pictures. They are not as well supplied with clothing &c as I should have liked to have seen them. They are well off as regards provisions &c. They will live well.

Mr. [Orrin] German is two days late for the last Brigade and so must go in a Canoe. I am to go today with Big Tom [Thomas Mamanowatum] to my new field [Berens River].

I hope to be with you about the middle of October. I was so dreadfully disappointed that Mrs. Ruttan had no letter for me from Libbie. But I suppose you were too busy. Well darling, this is the last letter from Norway House. The place of many joys and more sorrows. The birthplace of our children, the battle ground of many a victory.

Yesterday I preached to the Indians in the afternoon. Mr. Ruttan in the morning and Bro. German at the Fort.

I never thought the poor creatures loved us half so well. There was weeping and crying all over and my own heart was deeply moved.

Mr. and Mrs. Ruttan are wonderfully pleased with the mission. The Lord give them prosperity. We are to make arrangements today about their servants, &c &c. Mary refuses to stay. She has done nobly for me.

Well so at last our career here is ended. Well, let us thank God we have not labored in vain or wept or suffered for nought. Love to Eddie and Lillie. Kisses and loving words to them I send: our little treasures who saved [us] from many a weary hour. I do not think I will have another chance of writing. Love to all the dear ones.

God bless you my dear good faithful loving wife. So ever prays

Yours lovingly

Egerton

\textsuperscript{31} The Ruttans evidently kept up the musical side of mission work. On 30 August 1875, Egerton wrote to the Reverend Edward Hartley Dewart, editor of the \textit{Christian Guardian}, that Norway House had been “handed over to Bro. Ruttan, a veritable singing pilgrim, and, if the people will not be preached into heaven, they will surely be sung into it, by him and his devoted wife” (Egerton R. Young scrapbook, clipping, p. 55).
In the Berens River notebook (UCCA, Young fonds, series 2, box 2, file 3), Young wrote: “Left Norway Ho. Mon. 7th [8th?] Sept. 1873 at 10 o’clock at night. Slept on the river at the crooked turn. Started again at daybreak. Lots of Indians followed us for miles. Last thing I saw were the uncovered heads of sorrowing Indians. . . . Said Bros. Ruttan and German, ‘Bro Young, your letters brought us here. We thank God we have come.’ These words uttered after they had witnessed their first Indian service.”

Egerton subsequently journeyed to Ontario, where he remained for roughly five months before returning to Manitoba, arriving at Berens River at the end of March 1874. Elizabeth and the children (Eddie and Lillian), who had preceded him to Ontario, could not make the return trip until midsummer.

Ferrier Mission, Berens River
April 6th 1874

Dearest wife: One week has passed since I reached this place. As there is to be an extra packet sent in towards the end of this month, I will not delay until the time for writing is limited, but will commence now.

My last to you was written at the Stone Fort. We left that place a few hours after the letter was sent off. The day was warm, the snow soft, the sun brilliant, and so we suffered. We had not gone half a mile, ere one of Mr. Semmens’ new dogs slipped himself out of his harness and started off on a run for his home, a place twenty-five miles away. We spent about an hour in trying to overtake him, but it was all in vain, so we pushed on without him, much to Bro. Semmens’ chagrin.

At an Indian’s house a couple of miles down the river, I found Donald Papanekis, who had come in as one of the Indian lads for me. He had injured himself by running too much,

32 In the latter section of his first letter (dated 11 August), Young referred to hiring Martin Papanekis, mentioning that Donald, his son, will “keep the school.” Martin’s father, William, and his three sons — Martin, Samuel, and the Reverend Edward Papanekis — were close associates of the Youngs in Rossville. Martin and his family moved from Rossville to Berens River late in 1873, where they provided important assistance with the Youngs’ mission there.
and was very sick. He and most of the Indians thought he had not better attempt to return to Beren’s River, but I thought differently, and carried my point against them all, and carried the lad in my cariole, all the way back to his anxious father and mother who were overjoyed to see him with them again. He is far from well, yet still he is better than when we left Red River. He rode in my robes and blankets every step of the way. So you can imagine that the trip was not as pleasant a one as I had anticipated as I had to walk much more than I had fondly hoped would have been my lot.

After we had left the settlement and the river we at once reached the bitter cold, which made us shiver. The fierce north winds blew against us every day, with but one exception. The bright sun on the dazzling snow blistered our half frozen faces, and partly blinded our eyes with its brilliancy. When we came to where the boys had cached the fish for our dogs they were not to be found, and so we had to take our fresh beef and bread and share with our dumb and patient companions, the dogs. Fortunately I had purchased a hundred weight of fresh beef, fondly hoping I might have it to use here with the white fish, but alas the best-arranged plans sometimes get all astray.

Mr. Semmens fell and badly hurt his knee just as we were starting and the result was he was in misery all the time. His dogs were small, one untrained, and one (the one purchased to take the place of the rascal that slipped off his collar and ran away) was wretchedly poor. Sometimes a fit of stubbornness would come over them and they would be thrashed until the good brother inflicting the punishment would get a little riled in spirit and flushed in the face. When the battle was over, and the dogs were once more thrashed into line, he would shout out “Bro. Egerton, do you believe in Christian perfection?”

“Yes, my brother, I do.”

“Well, do you believe we can enjoy it, and live it, when training and driving stubborn obstinate dogs?”

“Yes, my Brother. Firmness and decision in conquering dogs are not sins, and if we ever expect these Esquimo dogs to be of
service to us in carrying us to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to bands of Indians, who can in the winter months be visited in no other way, we must teach them obedience and give them a few proofs of our power to enforce it."

“Bro. So-and-So,” says he, “never gets ruffled. What do you think of such an experience?”

“Well, perhaps there is not depth enough in him to make a ruffle,” I answer. “Our Saviour was ruffled, when he cleaned out the temple of money-changers. Stephen was ruffled when he delivered his splendid address, closing up with: ‘Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears &c.’ Moses was ruffled when he saw the golden calf, and as the Sabbath school child said, ‘smashed all the Commandments at wonst.’”

“Let us push on my Brother Semmens, the night is advancing” (for we had been travelling on the frozen lake throughout the long cold night). “See the Bear is fast completing its circuit around the North Star, the little stars that have been shining so brightly through the long night now like little children are the first to retire out of sight. The glorious Milky Way that all night long like a great white bow of promise spanned our sky sinks into oblivion. We are getting tired out with this walking and running and riding, and our dogs also seem weary, and as we are nearing this well known point let us turn in and make a fire and have something to eat and drink.”

We dug a hole in the snow, spread out some boughs, opened out our camp bed, and then after eating, and then not forgetting our faithful dogs, wrapped ourselves in our blankets and robes and went to sleep. It was a fearfully cold night or rather morning.

So it went on day by day. Saturday night found us forty miles from home. What should we do. We had been accustomed to rest on the Sabbath day, but now our circumstances were different. I had a sick lad in my cariole. Our dogs’ fish had been stolen and they were not at all satisfied with the fresh beef we could afford to give them. So I assumed the responsibility, and said we would push on. We travelled thirty miles that Saturday night. Sunday morning found us ten miles from the new Mission field. We had
breakfast, then on we pushed. A fearful headwind arose. The lake smoked with the blinding snow, and the storm roared like a dozen Niagaras.

“Cannot face it,” says one.

“Yes we can,” I shout, push on, we cannot compare [?? illegible] green willows. Bro Semmens cries out, “It is a judgment of God against us for travelling on the Sabbath.” “No such thing,” I shout back. “It is from the Devil, who is angry at our coming to rout him from this place where he has so long had his seat.”

Gallant Jack and Cuffee, with the new dogs Boxer and Muff, answer nobly to my words of cheer and pushed along barking with delight at the fierce elemental war. Sometimes so dense was the blinding snow, that the lead dogs of the train would be invisible but success crowned our efforts, and the whole four trains safely reached the shore. We were close to the little humble dwelling of Martin Papanekis ere we were seen. Martin rushed out to meet us and I saw his face was full of anxiety about his boy, but his respect for the ookemou caused him first to shake hands with me, and then I threw off the robes and told him his boy was better. A great big lump came up into my throat, as with tears of gladness in his eyes he stooped down and so lovingly kissed the poor sick fellow. I felt so glad then that I had brought him out with me instead of leaving him in Red River, as the others proposed.

Well, we were so thankful to get into a house again. But what sights we were. Our faces are blistered and burnt out of all recognition. A week has passed since I arrived here, and I spend a portion of each day in picking off the dried skin which comes off like fish scales.

I am living in my end of the little house which has been fitted up for me by Martin. It is small, cold, cosy and I am not uncomfortable. I have so much to do that I can eat anything eatable, and then when night comes can sleep anywhere. But I must leave for another time and sheet a description of my work.
Ferrier Mission  
Beren’s River  
April 10th 1874

My darling wife,

I must write you a letter on this glad day. I have had as pleasant a day as I possibly could under the circumstances. I arose early, had white fish and flat cakes and tea for breakfast. Then chopped wood for a while — then wrote letters until noon, after doing which I went over to Mr. Flett's for dinner and remained there until after tea and now just as the glorious sun is sinking to rest behind the western snowy expanse I am again at my table in my little room, with my pen writing to my heart’s treasure on this the anniversary of her natal day. I can only say the Lord bless thee, my darling and spare you to see many happy returns of this glad day.

I went out last Monday to the big Island with the men. I had my own dogs and worked like a good fellow, hauling the timber, logs, &c, &c, out of the dense forest to the shore. We had over four miles to go with some of them, and I assure you it was hard work. The men had made a little log shanty in which to live, and if you could only have seen us in it, and observed the rough way we lived you would have been amused and amazed.

The flat cakes were made on the lid of an old packing case. When they were taken off the box, Cuffy or Jack would go and lick up what flour was left. Then when dinner was ready, that same box served as my chair, while my table was a rough work bench with a dirty old flour bag as a table cloth. For breakfast and supper we had fish and flat cakes and tea. For dinner we also had a little meat. We slept on the rough boards in a bed composed of a blanket and buffalo robe, and slept well too.

This was the way, my dear, I spent my birth day. I am feeling strong and well, and have so much to do that I keep up in spirits splendidly. What is there to cry or fret about, when all nature is rejoicing and the world is bright and sunny. The Indians are very kind and respectful and I have bright hopes for the future of this place. Tis true there are not many here at present, but they
will crowd in as fast as it is possible to make them welcome and comfortable. Mrs. Flett got up such a nice dinner and supper in honor of the day. You must really feel grateful to her for her kindness to your faraway beloved on this happy day.

A nice pound cake has been sent up to me by Mrs. Flett. It must go a long way, and last a long time. It was made on your birthday. Am I not highly honored?

Mrs. Flett has another son, a fine little fellow a few weeks old. His name is Donald McTavish. So you see they have their hands full without boarding me. I am going in for the fruit &c, &c. So if you come out we must have a fresh supply. I expect to leave here as early as possible so as to be in Winnipeg early in June. Shall I meet you there? Take good care of your dog; if he is going to be large, perhaps somebody coming by the Dawson route will bring him for you. Don’t try to bring him by cars. It would cost 25.00 or 30.00 dollars.

The barking crows are flying. So spring is coming.

Our new house is to be more of the style of Mr. Geo. Young’s of Winnipeg as it will cost less than Mr. Ferrier’s den would, be more easily heated and more convenient. Only it will have a good large bedroom below.

12 Elizabeth Young’s Second Account of Ontario and Berens River, 1873–76

The following text is transcribed from the first six pages of a memoir by Elizabeth Young, handwritten on twelve loose-leaf lined pages preserved in E. Ryerson Young’s papers. Elizabeth’s reference to her son’s serving as a

33 Young refers here to the successful Montréal businessman James Ferrier, whose elegant home — which evidently included a luxurious den — the Youngs visited during their Ontario furlough (and where Eddie had his rooftop adventure, described in chapter 7 of “A Missionary and His Son”). He and his wife, Mary, were strong advocates of Methodism and made considerable donations in kind to the Berens River mission, which Egerton Young sometimes referred to as the Ferrier mission. In her 1927 memoir, Elizabeth spoke gratefully of the Ferriers’ support, crediting them with “making the bell, carpenters tools, & many other things a donation to Berens River mission.”

doi:10.15215/apress/9781771990035.01
Now we are on our way, Winnipeg is our first stop. Then we proceed. Port-Arthur, Collingwood, Barrie, Bradford to my mothers.\textsuperscript{34} Here we staid until Egerton came & then we went to Trenton, to visit Grandpa and Grandma Young & the Young folks, & on to dear Auntie Bowles at Brighton. We had not been home very long until the children soon began with the children’s diseases first the measeles. We were visiting at this aunts with Lillian when she took the Measeles, & here we had to stay until it was safe to proceed. At the same time my dear boy Eddie had them at Grandmas in Bradford. So here I was between two fires. I just had to rest content that he would be well cared for. I could not leave Lillian so had to trust to the dear ones for his care, and pray for Wisdom and Guidance. As soon as we dare to push on we went to Trenton & from there leaving Lillian with her grandparents [William and Maria Young] there I went with Egerton to Montreal. There we met some very warm kind people, who made us happy & comfortable. Our friends were [the] Ferriers. They gave me a beautiful black Astrichan Coat, which was very much appreciated & enjoyed, for didn’t I have to go back to that cold country, my, it was just what I wanted & needed.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{34} As of 1873, Port Arthur (now part of Thunder Bay, Ontario), was known as Prince Arthur’s Landing and was the starting point of the Dawson Road or Trail, a very rough land and water route to Manitoba. Elizabeth, like most other travellers at the time, probably went from Winnipeg to Moorhead, Minnesota, and then by rail to Duluth, embarking on a steamer, which would also have stopped at Prince Arthur’s Landing before crossing Lake Superior.

\textsuperscript{35} “Astrakhan” is “the skin of newborn or very young lambs, the wool of which resembles fur, from Astrakhan in Russia” (\textit{oed}). Such a coat would have been an expensive item. The photograph (fig. 14) showing Elizabeth wearing the coat was probably copied for the Ferriers in gratitude for the gift.

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We were taken to Hamilton to give some lectures, while there we were the guests of Mr Sandford & Mrs Sandford [Sanford] & were Royally entertained. While there two dogs were sent from the East to Mr Sandfords & when they reached there although they were in a box [they] were so furious that the men did not dare to go near them to take them out. Fortunately Mr Young was there & went to there relief. As soon as he saw the dogs he knew what was the matter, he immediately got some water & some food, & had no trouble. While there Mr & Mrs Sandford & the mission friends gave us a very handsome present a silver tea & coffee set. Which is now in the hands of our beloved son who is now a minister in Newtonbrook, Ontario, Canada.

While we were in Toronto we were cordially invited to senator John McDonalds [Macdonald’s] for a week. A very happy one it was. They did much to make us comfortable.

As soon as Mr Young was through with his engagements he was forced to leave me & go on [to Berens River] as it was getting late in the season and would be very uncomfortable travelling for me and the children as the winter season was closing in. So again I was forced to travel alone, & yet not alone for those two dogs were left to my care as well as two Ministers Dr. Warner, Rev Mr Morrison & a Lady Teacher, Miss Batty. These with my dear

36 Elizabeth Young corrected her text from “a dog” to “two dogs.” However, Egerton, in My Dogs in the Northland (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1902), 184–90, told of receiving one rather agitated Newfoundland dog, called Rover II or Kimo, at Hamilton, shipped from Ottawa by its donor, the Reverend Dr. Mark.

37 Similarly, in By Canoe and Dog-Train, 256, Young wrote, “A very happy week was spent with my family at ‘Oaklands,’ Toronto, the beautiful residence of the Honourable Senator Macdonald, the Lay Treasurer of our Missionary Society.” In fact, John Macdonald was not appointed to the Senate (by Sir John A. Macdonald) until 1887, although he was elected to the House of Commons in 1875: Michael Bliss, “Macdonald, John,” Dictionary of Canadian Biography online. It was during the Youngs’ visit with the Macdonalds that Eddie encountered the apple with “fish scales” in it.

38 In fact, Egerton left Ontario in early March 1874, doubtless taking a steamer to Duluth. His rail trip to Moorhead, Minnesota, was much delayed by snow, and he then had to travel 250 miles “in a stage on runners over the snowy prairies” (By Canoe and Dog-Train, 257).
children were my companions, so I was not alone, & yet another very uncomfortable companion seized the children, the whooping cough, first one would cough & run to me and then the other. So my hands, my heart, & my physical body was taxed to the limit. But in time we reached Winnipeg & there we found our dear loved one waiting for us.

Now we pushed soon on to our mission. There was much required to get ready for the winter. The mission house was new and there was much to be done. The little log hut Mr Young had lived in still had to be our habitation for ourselves & our precious children. The carpenters & Indians were pushing on as fast. Of course I had to cook & look after their food as well as take care of my children who still had their cough. We were glad to be able to help & do what we could to make & see things close up so that we could put things in some kind of a comfortable shape for the Winter. We did some painting and chinking up. For soon after going to that cold climate we sent for a webb of factory cotton seemed [seamed] it up tacked it at top & bottom of our living room walls, & then pasted newspapers all over that. Of course this made it much more liveable. Our fuel was not of the very best but such as it was we were thankful for. No maple, no beech, no coal, our wood soft Poplar, so through the very cold weather we had to be fuelling constantly to make it liveable at all. Until we got acclimated we were very uncomfortable I won’t say unhappy for we were sure we were in the path of duty. So we worked & did the best we could to make ourselves comfortable, & went on with our work.

The little log hut that Mr Young lived in so long still had to be our habitation. One night it rained so hard that a large lump of mud & grass fell through unto the foot of our little one’s cot. Had it been on her head it would have killed her but fortunately that was prevented.

The Church was to be built later on, but the school house, called the Tabernacle, was built & finished so that the services were carried on. The mission house was well on, and very habitable and a great improvement to the mud hut. We were now very comfortably settled.
This is where our dear Florence was born May the ninth, 1875, now as circumstances prevented our remaining any longer, Mr Young informed the Mission Rooms that he desired a change for my sake as the strain was too great.

So in the early part of the summer of 1876 we went to Port Perry. It was indeed a wonderful change.

While on the journey our babe Florence was taken with summer complaint so that every stopping place we called in a Dr but of no avail until we reached my mother's & the Dr there did much to relieve & place her on the way of recovery much to our delight.39

Can you fancy travelling over three thousand miles with three children and one seriously ill, & while on a flat bottomed steamer with the sick child in my arms [I] tripped over a hidden ring that is used for hawling in large bundles from shore, and so lamed myself I was unable to walk for days. I much needed help but being a poor missionarys wife, had to do without. Glad we were to get to a Dr that could give our darling relief, and at my mother's where we could be comfortable and rest. And get ready for our new circuit.

Here I was helped by my sister Clara, who went with me to Port-Perry to help me get settled, & here we met some very kind loving people, Mr & Mrs Aaron Ross & family & many others who were extremely kind and attentive to us.40 It was a marvelous change from no stores, to be placed where we have shops of all kinds, Drs & nurses, & every convenience. The greatest trouble now, the money problem.

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39 The "summer complaint" was acute diarrhea associated with summer heat and indigestion.

40 Clara married the Rosses’ son William in September 1877; in her memoir of 1927, Elizabeth mentioned attending their fiftieth anniversary in September of that year.
Two Letters from the Reverend Enoch Wood
Regarding the Youngs’ Appointment to Berens River

As the Youngs’ assignment to Berens River drew near, issues and challenges arose that were to make Egerton uncertain about remaining in “the Indian work” — and indeed the Youngs did leave Berens River after only two years, having been expected to remain for at least three.

The first letter, addressed to Elizabeth, indicates that she (with Eddie, Lillian, and the two dogs in her charge) was staying with her husband’s family, the William Youngs, at Trenton and reflects uncertainty over plans for her solo trip to rejoin Egerton in Manitoba. As her memoirs indicate, she and her children and the dogs did join the Saskatchewan party that left in July.

The second, addressed to Egerton’s father, the Reverend William Young, takes up his son’s concern about Elizabeth’s health and, in a decidedly critical tone, Egerton’s seeming ambivalence about continuing mission work in the northwest.

—

Toronto, June 24th 1874

Dear Mrs. Young,

Miss Wiggins will be free from her present engagement on the 15th July and will be ready to start in Aug. I presume early in the month.41 I hope the party for the Saskatchewan Dt [District] will start by the middle of July at the latest: perhaps it would be more agreeable to you to wait for Miss W. than to go earlier. Ask Father Young to give me directions about the Dogs. I think they might accompany the first who go. Hoping your health will justify your taking this long journey, I am, D[ea]r sister, Affec[tionatel]y Yours in the Lord.

E. Wood.

Mrs. E. R. Young, Trenton

41 Miss Wiggins does not appear further in these records and so was not a fellow traveller. She may be Miss Charlotte Wiggins, who, by the 1890s, was active in the Ontario Women’s Christian Temperance movement.
Toronto, July 31, 1874

My Dear Bro[ther],
Your son’s wish to be retired from the work at Beren’s River as expressed in a letter dated on the 25th of June is founded entirely upon the reported ill health of Mrs Young and the prohibition to her joining him by some medical authority. The decisions of the Committee of Consultation and Finance may have strengthened that wish, but they had nothing to do with its origin. Mrs. E. R. Young’s strongly expressed wish to me to come back to her beloved Ontario induced me to say, after the time they had spent in the north, I think he did not intend to devote himself to the Indian work I did not think he would be asked to stay. He showed so much interest in this new mission that we naturally looked to him to begin it, and thought he would put in a term of three years: had we known their united opinion about this, we should have made other arrangements. The Com[mittee] have treated your son with great consideration and even liberality, and will regret the large expenditure incurred by sending out a family for so short a period. There are so many things involved in the dissatisfaction he has expressed to you I cannot undertake to narrate them. This I will say, nothing has been done but what you would have sanctioned yourself. He labored under an error as to the sum given for Beren’s River, the amount not being half of what he thought it was, but if it were ten times more the Committee’s duty is to say when and how it shall be expended. I have always been interested in him and his family, and yet from the time he left Hamilton on the 4th of March, until the 25th of June in Winnipeg not a line was received from him at this office. We know nothing of what he was doing, and yet supposing he might have made a beginning Fifteen Hundred Dollars had been forwarded for his use. The work is the Lord’s and He will take care of it.

I am, Dear Bro[ther] Faithfully & Affectionately Yours,
E. Wood
Rev. Wm. Young, Trenton
14 Letter from Little Mary to Egerton R. Young, 1887

This letter from Egerton Young’s papers indicates that Little Mary returned to Rossville from Berens River and was still in touch with the Youngs eleven years after they left the Northwest. It also documents that she was still making moccasins and doing beadwork for them and that she warmly remembered the two children she looked after during the Youngs’ mission years. The letter was written for her, perhaps by Mr. Flett, who was to send it, together with the items she had made, to the Youngs, who were living in Brampton, Ontario, in 1887–88.

Rossville Mission
July 31st/87

My dear master,

I write these few lines to let you know that I send all the shoes that I made for yours and the beaded cap, I send [sent] these things with Rev. [John H.] Ruttan, the time that he went to Manitoba last winter, and now I send some beaded work again with Mr Flett that is for to use for the legings. Now this is all I done for you, and Please Sir. I would be very much thankful, if I see anything to pay me for my trouble making of these things.

This is all for the present. Please will you give my kind kiss to Sakastawokemaw and Lillie and kind respects to all of you. And may God bless you all.

I am yours very truly Servant
Little Mary

42 The Norway House treaty annuity lists show Mary Robinson as living there on her own from 1876 through 1887. In 1888, she was listed as “dead.” Thanks to Anne Lindsay for retrieving this information.
15 Letter from Alex Kennedy, the Youngs’ Dog Driver, to Egerton R. Young, 1890

In “A Missionary and His Son,” E. Ryerson referred to Alex Kennedy as “my father’s dog driver,” which did appear to be his chief duty, although he was also described as “the man about the house,” who sometimes speared sturgeon from the pond and helped in other ways. Originally from the St. Peter’s Reserve, Red River, Kennedy achieved some notice in later life both as former Nile voyageur and as a dog driver, “the fastest runner in the North,” making a one-hundred-mile trip from a Peace River post to Lesser Slave Lake in only twelve hours. His letter indicates that he still fondly remembered the Youngs fourteen years after they parted at Berens River.

Lesser Slave Lake, Peace River District
January February 2nd 1890

Dear Sir
I have a Great Pleasure of writing you a Few lines of Remember you still I Cannot never Forget you where ever I have Been since at that Time you left us at Berens River soon after I and my Father and Mother went Down to Red River and Riman [remain?] since then and my self I am Been Traveling a Great Dale now I Pass in Canada in 1884 & 1885 I seen many a wonderful thing since Bouth in Europe and Africa and America I sopose I travel more than any Boys [??] I youse [used] to go to school [with] at Norway House. I Having been Here in this District & going on 3 years my time [w]ill Be out this Coming spring Back again to Winnipeg Manitoba. I was away down at Fort Chipewyan last Summer with late Senator

43 This feat was noted by Church of England clergyman Richard Young, in a circular letter describing a mission journey through the Athabasca–Peace River country, Diocese of Athabasca (Athabasca Landing, NWT: Mission Press, 1897). Kennedy was one of the Canadian “voyageurs” sent on the failed expedition to relieve Major-General C.G. Gordon at Khartoum, Sudan, in 1884–85, during the Mahdi uprising; he was listed among the boatmen as no. 94 on the nominal roll. C. P. Stacey, ed., Records of the Nile Voyageurs 1884–1885 (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1959), 259. The ninety-one men recruited in Manitoba, both Aboriginal and white, were, Stacey observed, “by far the most literate”: only seven made marks instead of signing their engagement forms (13).
Hardisty. I am Carr[y]ing mail for HBCO since ever I Came out Here. I often wish to see Mrs Young I could never Forget the way she youse to Kindly Treat me she youse to treat me more than my mother even. I sopose Eady and Nellie [Lillie] Growing up Big I received a Bund[l]e of Picturs from Eddy when I was at Selkirk Manitoba

Late oul Chief Factor HBCO [Robert] Hamilton’s son Max Hamilton is Here. He only Came Here 2 years ago and now is a Countant for the District its Him He told me He often told about you. I sopose you Have Forgotin your Dog Driver Now. I sopose oul Dog Jack Died Long now [?] of Dog Drivers in this Country yet.

This about all Kind [?] to you all

I am yours truly
Alex Kennedy

16 Elizabeth Bingham Young: Appreciations and Memories

Egerton R. Young, Dedication in By Canoe and Dog-Train, 1890
To the Faithful and Loving Wife
Who so cheerfully and uncomplainingly for years shared the hardships and toils of some of the most trying mission fields; whose courage never faltered, and whose zeal abated not, even when “in perils” oft, from hunger, bitter cold, and savage men; this volume is dedicated, by her affectionate husband.

“The Red Indian Missionary”
The following is an excerpt from an interview with Egerton Young, titled simply “Further Interview,” that appeared in the Bathurst Daily Argus (New South Wales) on 21 June 1904, during the Youngs’ travels in Australia.

“Where was Mrs. Young while you were wandering about these trackless regions?” we naturally inquired. Mrs. Young, who was sitting by a cosy fire, as we put this question, looked up and smiled. It seemed impossible to realise that these two, looking so comfortable and unconcerned, had been through such extraordinary experiences. “My wife,” replied Mr. Young, “was home missionary and I was the foreign missionary. While I was away Mrs. Young was in charge of the work at the Head mission at Norway House, which was about 400 miles from the city of Winnipeg. . . . So well did Mrs. Young attend to the school and look after the varied duties around that, when I returned after six weeks’ travelling with my dogs preaching to the wandering tribes, the chiefs would meet me and, in their quiet, dignified way, would say, “Well, missionary, we are glad to see you back, but we did not miss you at all.”

An Unusual Ballad, by E. Ryerson Young
December, Nineteen Twenty-Five. In Memory of December, Eighteen Sixty-Seven.

Yes, bring in the preacher and bring in his son;
For naught will be missed where a good deed’s done.
Then loudly there rang the old school bell
And when all had been greeted,
And at table were seated,
In bounded Libbie, and Mary and Nell.

With shouts and with laughter, with health and bright eyes,
They entered; were silenced; but Love cried, “A prize!”
For back, in fast time, came the preacher’s bright sonny;
And for Libbie, he brought a pretty white bunny
“Out of this,” said the mother; “no vermin for me!”
And away went the lad and his bunny, pell mell.
But nothing could smother the love and the glee
Of those jolly ones, Libbie and Mary and Nell.
They drove the old horse in the tan-bark mill
And would sleigh-ride down the Bradford hill.
For work did not rob them of joy, love and play;
They could wash and could bake, make hats and be gay.
For quick were their fingers; nothing shirked, I can tell;
Aye, smart ones were they, Libbie and Mary and Nell.

The years came and went; they always hold sway.
The minister’s son, to teach school, went away.
A Jim came for Mary and Nell took a Will;
Though many called Libbie, she held out still.
For love keeps its secret, like a clam in a shell;
And Libbie made hats for Mary and Nell.

From school to the pulpit, our hero ascended;
And was heralded wide, as someone right splendid.
Then offers were his of heiress’s hands,
With preferment and riches, honors and lands;
But all of this glory to earth flatly fell,
When he thought of those bright ones, Libbie, and Mary and Nell.

Then back to the home where he met the school girls,
Where his heart leaped a-thrill at the sight of their curls;
And there our Ulysses found his brave Penelope,
Baffling the men and waiting in hope.
Then joy filled the days and loud rang the bell
As the last of them married, of Libbie and Mary and Nell.

This typescript was pasted on pp. 110–11 of a scrapbook kept by Grace Young Brown and inherited by her daughter, Elizabeth Brown, who gave it to Harcourt Brown in 1981. E. Ryerson Young, writing to his sister Grace in about 1933, noted of the “Unusual Ballad” that it “is absolutely correct!!” about their parents’ early attachment.

In his 1962 memoir, E. Ryerson recorded a sequel to his father’s original venture with rabbits. Soon after arriving at Norway House, Egerton made a try at raising rabbits in the attic, where the Youngs’ predecessors,
the Stringfellows, had kept their hens. “When mother had cleaned the hens out of the attic,” he recalled, “father’s love for rabbits revived, for they had been his hobby when a boy, and he thought the attic would be an ideal place to raise them. But the stars were on mother’s side. She had not hesitated to protest against having animals in her home, and thought they were no better than hens. She reminded him of the time when they were in Bradford when he brought his first rabbit as a love gift to her. At the first sight of the rabbit, her mother had denounced him and said with all the forces she had, ‘get that vermin out of here.’ My mother was a pioneer’s daughter, and when her father had cleared the trees away she had tried to raise a garden, but rabbits had made it almost impossible. Hence before grandmother’s fury father with his rabbit fled.”

“However,” he continued, “in due course father managed to start his rabbit colony in the attic. The next day an Indian was sent to put some fish nets there and he threw it up in the attic. When father went to see his flock the next morning he found the rabbits had caught their heads in the mesh and strangled themselves. After father had cleared away the dead rabbits, mother and the Indian woman thoroughly cleaned the attic and disinfected it and made it a desirable place where they could store the new things that were made for them by the Indian women.” Presumably, the rather unsavoury end to the venture did little to increase Elizabeth’s fondness for rabbits.

The Funeral Services for Elizabeth Bingham Young
Elizabeth Young died on 29 May 1934, aged ninety-one. As Newton Brown, the husband of Elizabeth’s daughter Grace Amanda, recorded, the funeral oratory tested the Christian patience of the mourning relatives:

The service was conducted by three ministers with the Rev. Ferguson a classmate of Ed’s [E. Ryerson Young] in charge and he was the worst I ever heard. Over one hour at the house with the most fulsome talk about what Grandma had done as a girl — won a beauty contest in Bradford before she was married — and then ten minutes on her journey to the west in which he got his geography all mixed up. And slathers more on her wonderful family and then some straight evangelical preaching at the grandchildren and more
of the most banal talk I ever listened to. [The guests then drove to Bowmanville for the burial.] Here at the church where Grandfather used to preach 50 years ago . . . Ferguson went over the same stuff that we had heard at the house. . . . One hour and a half — It was awful — not a touching incident or phrase and such an opportunity for a man to have made a beautiful inspiring address, but it was not to be. . . . At the church Beth [Brown, daughter of Grace and Newton Brown] got up and stalked out of the church after a particularly insufferable bit of drivel — she had stood it for 40 minutes. But Ferguson . . . went on for 50 minutes more.45

Recollections from Harcourt Brown
On 5 September 1979, Harcourt Brown, Elizabeth Young’s grandson, sent a copy of the Manitoba Pageant issue (Autumn 1971) in which Egerton’s 1873–74 letters to Elizabeth were published to Nigel Helme, the grandson of Lillian Young Helme, in South Africa. What follows is an excerpt from the accompanying letter:

Re “Your interest in our common ancestry”: The E. R. Young letters in the Manitoba Pageant fill a gap in the story, but only a small gap; there is much more to be read about in the mss and old periodicals of the Wesleyans of that day, and certainly room for a biography of Egerton Young and his devoted wife, with whom I had the pleasure of innumerable associations from earliest childhood as long as I lived in Canada — up to 1929 — and thereafter, as we returned for various occasions.

Jack Watson [Elizabeth Young’s grandson] . . . described her to me as the most methodist person you could imagine; he should know, for she made her home with [his parents] Aunt Win and Uncle Herb [Watson] from about 1915 to the end of her life in 1934. From her life in the Northwest she kept the habit of a cold

45 Newton Brown to his son Harcourt Brown, in New York City. Harcourt, who was unable to attend the funeral, visited Toronto a few weeks later and delivered to Victoria College library many books and other publications that his grandmother had kept. Winnifred Young Watson probably supplied the “beauty contest” story: see the introduction to Part 1.

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bath every morning, all year round; I recall that I had to clear a space on the shore of Lake of Bays when she came to spend part of a summer with us about 1921;\textsuperscript{46} I moved rocks and smoothed the sand and when I came from the cottage where I slept to the house for breakfast I kept my eyes carefully averted from the small bit of beach where she bathed \textit{au naturel}.

She loved her radio for church services; she sang the hymns in Cree from a small hymnbook. . . . She was generous to a fault, but no spendthrift; what she gave was worthwhile and usually treasured — I still have a fine Bible she gave me on May 30, 1916 [his sixteenth birthday], which I do not use for reference but keep in its pristine morocco binding.

She was a dynamic person, an organizer — she had to be, for \textit{ery} could get people working but his wife told them what to do and how to do it. I remember as a small boy of six or seven maybe eight — how the whole family rose at dawn in summer to cut the tremendous crop of sweet peas in the garden at Bradford [Algonquin Lodge] to count and package them for shipment by an early train to Toronto forty miles away for the morning market; there were several boxes every day, with bunches of flowers in fifties, I suppose; the director of operations was the same Elizabeth Bingham Young whose picture you recall. She ran the household at Bradford with tremendous energy; if one did not toe the line one heard about it with vigor. I don’t remember being sloppily sentimental over her but I did have tremendous respect for her, and I have no single thought of anything but good about her. I may have disagreed with some of her views, but in retrospect I know now that I was wrong, and she was right; I could quote [George Bernard] Shaw and [Henrik] Ibsen, usually in the wrong places, but her silent disapproval was apparent and never led to an argument. . . . You have set free a flood of memories of a much-loved person, a grandmother to be proud of, to give us a heritage of courage and serenity and quiet breadth of sympathy and confidence.

\textsuperscript{46} Harcourt Brown’s parents, Newton and Grace Young Brown, spent parts of several summers at a cottage on Lake of Bays in Muskoka, Ontario.