

The Ven. H. A. Cody, M.A., D.D.

In response to an appeal I made in 1904 by the Rev. I. O. Stringer, Rector of Christ Christ, Whitehorse, I went to the Yukon as a travelling missionary. Bishop Bompas who was living at Caribou Crossing, which he later named Carcross, needed a man to visit the new mining district at Alsek and other places in southern Yukon. That year I travelled by pack-horse over the trail to the Alsek region, and in the fall by canoe, the "Skookum", from Caribou Crossing to McClintick, Tagish, etc. with an Indian Billy Johnson. During the winter and spring of 1905 visits were made by dog team with Capt. Jimmy Jackson as guide along the Dawson trail to Tantalus then up the Yukon to Little and Big Salmon, Hootalinqua, Livingston Creek, and other places. That spring we went to Champagne Landing and from there into Dalton Post. The trip was very hard and the overflowing Kaskawulsh River gave us great trouble. Services were held in all places visited. I understand there are missions now at Little Salmon and Champagne Landing.

When Mr. Stringer was appointed Bishop of the Yukon, which name he had changed from "Selkirk", I became Rector of Whitehorse, where with my wife, who came there as a bride. I remained until the close of 1909. Bishop Bompas came often to see us, arriving in the evening by train and leaving the next morning. The responsibility of his office as Bishop was becoming a burden to him and it was a great joy when at last his successor was chosen. He planned to do down river to act as missionary at Moosehide below Dawson and, in fact, wrote to me asking me to purchase his ticket and book a passage on the Steamer "Whitehorse." But God willed it otherwise and called his faithful servant to a

higher service. We laid him to rest in the little burying ground at Carcross near the Indian village. And “there he lies where he longed to be,” among the natives he loved so well.

The first Synod of the Yukon was held in Christ Church, Whitehorse, September 11, 1907. Only nine were present. A picture was taken at that time is of considerable historic interest. Of that group only one is now living in the Yukon, Mr. Isaac Taylor (age 94). Three are dead: the Bishop, the Rev. A. E. O'Meara, and Major Snyder of the NWMP. The others are the Rev. J. Hawksley, the Rev. JM Comyn-Ching, Mr. P. R. Peele, Mr. W. W. Young, and the writer of this article.

When I went to Whitehorse there were 150 men in the “H” Division of the Mounted Police stationed there, with that most efficient officer, the last Major A. E. Snyder in command. Every Sunday night one side of the church was filled with men from the Barracks. They were a fine body of men, with eleven staff officers.

Robert W. Service was a clerk in the Canadian Bank of Commerce during my rectorship. The manager of the bank, Mr. DeGex, was a warden, and Mr. Service became vestry clerk. Usually after evening service several men came into the rectory and Mr. Service often came with them. It was while at Whitehorse that he wrote “Songs of a Sourdough”, which made him famous. The last time I saw him was when on a visit to Dawson he came to see Mrs. Cody and me at the rectory.

It might be of interest to some to know that when Mr.

Stringer was Rector at Whitehorse, we built the addition to the rectory to be used as an Indian school. Mr. Paul Jameson was in charge. We held school there for the Indian when they were in town, and among the scholars were old men and women, eager to learn. Dawson Charlie, one of the discoverers of gold in the Klondyke, came as often as possible and was a very pleasant Indian.

Names of Whitehorse friends came to me as I write, faithful members of the Church who did all in their power for its welfare. Only a few, I believe, are there now. But others have taken their place and so the work goes on.

Mrs. Bompas stayed with us at times at the rectory. She was there for several weeks when I was writing the life of the Bishop, and was always eager to hear the chapters read as they were written. Her Journals which she placed at my disposal were of great value. They were written when she was living on the Mackenzie River side of the mountains.

These are but a few memories of the past which may be of interest. Space will not permit me to give details of the five-and-a-half-years we spent there. But I am thankful to know that the work is still being carried on by faithful men and women. May God's blessings rest upon you all.

A Page from my Life by H. A. Cody. 17 March 1941.

His Life in the Yukon

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