

William Whitcomb Whitelaw  
Memoirs

Earliest recollection - 42 Princess Street

Typical British tenement - 3 score houses in one row - faced across the street by similar row. Front door to pavement, then the street. Back alley, back yard - paved - surrounded by wall. Two rooms downstairs, 2 or 3 up. Outdoor sanitary convenience. Midden, archaic - dunghill, refuse heap, steel pans, Privy during night emptied by the city. Outhouse serving as adjoining the toilet was a coal house - kept the soft coal.

Only heat was the kitchen fireplace, coal oven on one side.

The street was our only recreational area. At Easter, Mother would take us to ~~Albert Park~~ in Middlesboro, a distance of 3 to 4 miles along a very dusty highway. The greensward, the artificial ponds with swans and ducks gracefully swimming, was a great treat. My mother was a stalwart and not too communicative a woman. She was quite authoritarian and expected obedience in even minor details from her children. My father was tall and slender, very aesthetic. He was a step son and never knew his parents. Before the factory act became law, he like others worked as a boy in the factories or plants. He could not read or write, but was quite sensitive and artistic. When we in later years, moved to a better house, always as renters, of course, we had a parlor, and was that the symbol of promotion and prestige. He bought a little organ with two pump pedals and used to sit and play by the hour; he likewise played the violin, all by ear, of course.

The largest iron works in England and one of the world, was concentrated around our area - Bolckow Vaughan and Co.. The River Teas provided deep and accessible waterways to the North Sea and the hills provided the iron ore, limestone, and adjacent were the extensive coal fields. This era was one of total management control and dominated every industry and trade. In the Midland textile area conditions as to the cheapness of human labor and life gave rise to the poignant and dramatic poem of Thomas Hood - "The Song of the Shirt". Factory and labor laws were at an irresponsible minimum. Safety and health factors were negligible, and the worker had no resort but to toil meekly, get his paycheck, and largely frequent the poor man's country club, the ubiquitous

"pub". Beer drinking, weekends visiting, playing chequers, darts or dominoes were the customary activities of the pub. My father worked a 12 hour a day shift, alternating every second week on the dreaded night shift. Quiet had to prevail as much as possible so father could sleep. The street calls of the vendors - rag and bone men, watercress, and many others were beyond controls. Every other week he would work the double "shift" on Sundays - 24 hours. I carried his "tommy-box" - we call it a dinner pail, and would wait on some occasions till he ate it. He would be dripping with perspiration. His job - I dare not dignify it by calling it a "task" - was to load large pieces of iron on a barrow and then wheel it to the blazing furnace door through which he pitched the chunks of iron. Many times when it was raining I saw the rain dripping on his back; a few yards of steel roofing would have protected him - they made financial fortunes out of steel but couldn't use a portion to protect the workers from the weather. Frequently I saw his mouth covered with a muffler or scarf to screen the lime dust from his throat. Years later, at a relatively early age he died, after a painful illness, of cancer of the throat. Posterity can draw its own conclusions about the source of the disease. My recollections of my father are all kindly. Aesthetic, generous, kindly - vitally interested in home and family. The highest and ethical code was his. I was always sorry he did not affiliate with our little Methodist Church "at the bottom of our street". The humble, informal church was a godsend to people. In fact with no libraries, no recreational facilities, the church was the wholesome social center.

At "Harvest Festival" time - a two day program still carried on in the evangelical churches over in England - the church would be decorated with sheaves of wheat, oats and barley and two or three miniature hay stacks would be made by some parishioners. The service on Sunday would be built around the harvest season. Always the hymn "Come Ye Thankful People, Come" raise the song of harvest home; all is safely gathered in, ere the winter's storm begins", etc. would be sung. On Monday night a popular program would be given and later the vegetables, the fruits, etc. would be autctioned off. A great weekend. My father would

hike several miles to a grapery enclosed with glass and bring back as his contribution the largest bunches of lucious grapes grown in that area. Sorry I was not able to be home when my father suffered from his fatal illness, being in American at the time.

It was a period of real grief for me because I admired his qualities of hard work, patience, and kindness, and had an affection for my father, who despite his ceaseless toil, his grim surroundings and limitations was even in temperament, bouyant, and radiant in his bearing. Each weekend he would be nicely dressed, white shirt, collar, and tie, a handsome tall gentleman of over six feet in height.

I never looked back into my family tree, first because I have never had much of an interest in ancestry beyond the couple of three immediate generations. The fact is my father was born in Staffordshire but did not know where as far as any town was concerned. Some years ago - 25 to be exact - when I gave the John Shaeffer Foundation lecture at Northwestern University, a Professor Whitehouse, head of the Music Conservatory, visited with me and said he was engaging the services of a genealogist and would I be interested, in which I did not indicate any interest. However his people came from Staffordshire - my Dad's home county. I have never in my life met any relative called Whitehouse. My mother's name as Whitcomb. She had three brothers and one older sister. Two of her brothers were sailors; one whom I never met, sailed around the world many times in the "Schooner" days. He finally left the ship to explore an island and was never heard of again. My young years heard the conjectures about being lost, can-ibals, etc.. The other brother Phillip left the sea and was a brilliant mechanic - he became a pipe engineer in the steel plant and knew where all the fittings were, so much so that he became indispensable. The Landlubber way of my Uncle William, it was prophetic that I should be named after him - became like the Captain of the Pinafore, "I never went to sea." He was studious, quiet, business-like and had one son, John Henry, who became a clerk in the plant. Uncle Bill visited us, but as a family John Henry and his mother were on a higher social level so we had little in common.

We used tallow candles to go to bed by and oil lamps for

illumination. I have spanned a relatively simple era with a technological one. Our small Christmas tree had candles on it. Nowadays they are electric and before long will be electronic.

Interim: This is the day Santa comes to Albion. I walked down Main Street to get a paper. Hundreds of cars were in Victory Park - Santa came by parachute, then mounted the ladder fire truck, escorted by siren-screaming police cars to Santa's headquarters on Superior Street. Hundreds of people waited. I got a glow out of it even though I didn't have a baby on my shoulder. So it goes in an automatic and aerial age. It's the same concept - tradition - values. As a child I would walk along Main Street and peer in the windows of stores. I would get my gift and Santa would bring it. Today, the day after Thanksgiving, decorations are up, Santa is here, and stores are already laden with Christmas goods.

More of my childhood later

School days:

I attended the council schools. The classes were large and my best recollection is that I was no better than average. There was a reticence in expressing myself. It was difficult for me to engineer a recitation. School hours were from 9 - 11:45; 1 - 4:30 five days a week. There was one month's vacation - August - a year. On festival days we would torment and harass the pupils of the Wesleyan School - this was a tuition, private one. The students were of a more genteel quality than the boys in the council schools. Somewhat lower in the echelon was the Catholic school. Those boys, tough as leather, would torment and trouble us on occasions, particularly St. Patrick's Day. We were larger numerically but were outclassed and intimidated by their belligerent tendencies. On St. Patrick's Day the council school would change their lunch hour to protect the students from the Irishment and "micks" as we called them.

The discipline was authoritarian. Boys who were late or who had committed infractions of the rules would be "caned" before the class. Each classroom had its sugar cane standing in the corner - half an inch in diameter. Not the bamboo cane. Half a dozen blows on the palm of one's hand would raise

welts. Corporeal punishment was the accepted method and there was never a question as to its application as a disciplinary tool.

There were no graduation exercises. When a boy reached 14 years of age he had finished his formal schooling. There was no so-called high school in our town. The neighboring city provided such facilities on a scholarship and tuition basis. The average working man's boy left school at the elementary level.

J. J. Marie in his detective stories built around Inspector Gideon of Scotland Yard, speaks of Gideon, now a commander at the Yard, calling himself "an old London Elementarian", in contra distinction to the "public school" boy.

J. J. Marie - "Gideon's Staff"

It is interesting that in the year I was born the "Special Act of 1891", "placed free education within the reach of every child, fees being retained (with few exceptions) only where some instruction of a higher elementary type was given." (Encyclopedia Britanica, P. 982, Vol. 7, 1929 Ed.). Up to this time the existence of numerous and frequently very wealthy endowments, arising from private benefactors had at all times been a great feature in education as in other departments of English social life. In 1889, counting councils, boroughs and urban districts were permitted to levy a rate tax for establishing municipal technical and secondary schools.

The most revolutionary act was the Education Act of 1902 - the establishment of county elementary, secondary and technical schools on an equal level with the voluntary and private schools. Since 1902, revolution in number of well equipped secondary schools all over - pupils can continue through 16 years of age. Then followed the provisional and state colleges, technical institutes and universities.

Our meals, typical I presume for the working classes of that period, were very limited, at least in variety. Breakfast was always bread and jam and tea. Milk was usually the canned type. Since living in America I have scarcely drank any tea, yet at parties, people always guess I "prefer tea". Probably I had so much of it when a youngster, that it held no further attraction for me. There seemed to be a scarcity of fresh milk, and our ration of meat was quite limited. Mashed potatoes

were a staple. My neck is still scarred from having abscesses lanced. There was probably some dietary deficiency involved. Our <sup>doctors</sup> docets were a foregleam of the socialized medicine era. I remember sitting in the office with mother, waiting for hours for our turn. Cough medicine was the popular remedy for almost everything. One physical event stands out in my memory. I had severe abdominal pains and after a few days a doctor came and ordered a police stretcher on which I was taken to the hospital, where I was for several days. A tube was placed in the rectum to drain the pus caused by a burst appendix. They made no abdominal incision. Years after in my first year at Albion, I had my appendix removed at Hillsdale where I was preaching for the summer. Dr. Walter Sawyer who was a regent at the University of Michigan brought a couple of doctors in to see the appendix, which bore the imprint of scars from the episode of years before. This event is merely my amateur opinion, and recollection - - Keith will expungiate it, I am sure.

My early religious life:

Hardly any of the boys I played with as a boy, known as "our gang" affiliated with the church. This group of boys from very poor homes played hard, but as far as I can remember had no characteristics of what we hear of now as gang disorders or vandalism. We loved to play soccer, and had a club that bought a 12 cent india rubber ball with which we played. We largely played in the street and often were chased away by the police constable. That was the nearest we came to an infraction of the law. Near our home was an area known as the brick yard. Several large ponds had formed in the large excavated area, and we built dykes, tunnels, etc.. There were tow or three drownings so I was eventually prohibited from frequenting that yard. How I missed it! Many times I fashioned a steam engine out of the unusually heavy pliable clay, stuff in with used engine waste, and delight to see the smoke come from the stack.

I am so grateful to my parents who did not belong to any church, who sent me to Sunday School in my early years. In retrospect I owe more to this fact than any other in my young life. The small Free Church as at the corner of the street where we lived - Princesman, and the main shopping street, Nelson.

Say, are they not historic names? The Methodist Free Church was a splinter sect of the original Wesleyan Methodist Church. There was the Wesleyan Methodist, the Primitive Methodist, and the United Methodist Free Church. This was their order of strength, not only in our town, but nationally. In 1907, the United Methodist Free Church, the Methodist New Connection, and the Bible Christians merged into the United Methodist Church. The Wesleyan Methodist was the largest - 4 times so - The Primitive Methodist 2 times larger than the union of the three. In our town there was a real social cleavage as well as Numerical between them. Our small church was quite informal and ministered to a poorer class economically. The Episcopal Church of England was, of course, the church of the elite in England at that time. To repeat, it was singularly democratic both in theology and social standards. As such it played an important part in the life of many poor people who felt subjectively estranged from some of the other churches in town with their traditional rented pews and social status.

Sunday School met at 10 a.m. and also at 1:30 p.m.. A "pleasant Sunday Afternoon" met at 3:30 and was a less formal program than the evening service at 7 p.m.. For years I received a book prize at the annual Sunday School anniversary services for perfect attendance. We carried "star cards" each Sunday which were marked at each service. With pride did we watch those luminous blue stars fill the 52 spaces. With keen anticipation did we conjecture what book we would receive - a history, a story, a biography - which? These books were read and re-read.

The annual school treat was thrilling to look forward to. I would always go to bed early and was up at daybreak the next a.m., excited at the prospect of this excursion. We would sometimes go on farmer's wagons, with the wooden benches roped on the flat tops, but in later years would go by third class rail. Marske-by-the-Sea, quaint and ancient; Ayton, nestling under the towering Mt. Roseberry, home of the famous explorer Capt. Cook; Middleton-One-Row in the hills and by a river; Yarm, historic with it's stately viaduct and quiet river and thatched cottages; Pitchinthorpe, a gentleman's estate with Kennels of hounds and fine hunting horses. You know, I was one

of the first on hand in the morning with my sandwiches tied up in a package and a tin mug in the hand. It was always a jolly crowd - that was for so many of us the only train ride in the year. Our leader was the hearty and jovial Mr. Barker, then 60 or more, dressed in knickerbockers and wearing a Van Dyke beard. For over thirty years he had been Superintendent of the Sunday School, local preacher and choir director. He came on his bicycle two or three times a week from his town, where he had a high class tailor's shop in the best English tradition. On a Sunday he would have an immaculate Prince Albert coat and oxford gray trousers and a tall silk hat - oh yes, and spats. His steady and consistent influence on us was benign. He was the jolliest of all at the excursion. We would have races of various sorts, and he would give prizes. About two o'clock we could sit in circles in the field - usually a pasture. When it rained we would gather in some shed or bar, on one of the estates where we were privileged to meet.

The multitudes were fed in circles; we would have tea or milk brought from the farm and eat our sandwiches, and then the Sunday School or Mr. Barker would have an apple and a sweet cake given to each one. This was an outstanding event. Throughout my life, there have been repeated demonstrations that "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things". In unscriptural language, happiness and contentment are relative values. One's cup of joy depends more upon one's inner source and sense of values and points of view than mere external and material factors. It would be an untenable and screwy world if happiness and the lasting things in life were proportioned according to material standards. Probably this is a prime lesson for any age, but particularly ours. When I was 13 years of age, a lay preacher, Mr. Arthur Davies, who was a tradesman during the week and a "local" preacher on Sundays, serving churches in the district, was preaching in our Church. They had "after meetings" and during this one, three or four boys decided to join the Church. The early Methodist Churches were informal - pews, pulpit, and organ constituted the furnishings - no cross, candles, burning altar lamp. In fact, it was at the opposite extreme from the formal ritualis-



tic service of the Episcopal Church from which it sprang in its inception. The Christian Endeavor was active in the Church. It still has a large influence throughout the Church. This was an enriching experience and I became a district officer. It seems anomalous that this was the only social and cultural outlet for young people of my status. The Christian Endeavor had inspirational district rallies and this was my first opportunity to be inducted into group and organizational activities. On Thursday night, several young people would go to the Public Lodging House, frequented by vagrants, etc., and conduct religious services. The Methodist Church was very evangelical - quite similar to several fundamentalist groups of today - Nazarenes, Church of God, Wesleyan Methodists, and in many respects the conservative wings of the Baptist Churches in the USA. One of my great experiences was singing in the choir; it was fairly large - 30 - for such a small church. I question whether more than 2 or 3 could read notes. We loved to sing the hymns and always had a simple anthem. On Christmas we would sing carols at various homes. Another phase was noteworthy - before the evening service we would sing in several streets adjacent to the Church and Mr. Barker would ask one of us young 'uns' to tell them where we were from, the time of the service, and extend an invitation for them to come to the service.

Historically, the British Labor Movement was born in the Methodist Church, and the early reform movements had a Christian and evangelical tone to them. Some authority has remarked recently that very few of the members of Parliament today are active churchmen. Standing out through the years, in bold relief, was a circumstance that left an impression upon me. I was asked to speak at a large open air service outside the "Workman's Institute" one Sunday in June. Twelve churches combined in this service. After I had finished the speech or sermonette, a young aristocrat, several years older, approached and scathingly and arrogantly said I ought to repair my English before exhibiting in public again - there were many grammatical errors, he said. I don't doubt that the air was charged with the notable "fall out" of split infinitives, etc.. If this had come from a friendly, robust type of an individual it would have been different. This hollow chested, anemic and stooped shouldered

fellow, sone of an iron master, hurt me deeply. I meekly said thanks, but wihtin I resolved that I would show Mr. So&so that my English was repairable.

Early work experiences:

When 10 years of age I worked Friday nights and all day Saturday in Fred Rudderham's Barber Shop, chiefly as a "lather boy". Additional duty was to help them onwith their coats and brush them down and sweep the floor. There was no tipping whatsoever. Friday hours were 6 - 9:30 P.M.. Saturday, I went to work at 8 a.m. and left after 11 p.m., always glad to see the last customer. I would take my pay home to Mother - 1 shilling and 6<sup>d</sup> - about 36 cents in the exchange at that time. There was scarcely a time when the store lacked customers and vivid is the recollection of how sore my finger tips would be on Saturday night. I would have to rub the beards with the palm of my hand as much as possible. For most of the customers, a weekly shave, for Sunday, sufficed. What a study of human nature it afforded. Mr. Rudderham was red-haired, although almost totally bald. Many times he would lose his temper - and no wonder, at the doings of some of his none too sober customers. He had a few bottles of hair restorer on the counter which were for sale. One night a burly drunk still with some wit left, poked his head in the door and said "Fred! do you sell hair restorer?" Hopefully, customer-wise, Fred said, "Yes!" "Then why the H don't you use it yourself?", whereupon he re-treated. The barber was hard to live with the rest of his tonsorial day. I would always look forward to closing hours on Saturday night first to see the end of a long day but jubilantly looking ahead to my supper at home - menu always delightfully the same - and the chance to read the later, green, sports edition of the "Gazette", and study the football games and scores. Never did a modern night club habitus enjoy his supper as I did those Saturday nights. I would have "Fish and Chips" - stopping at the shop to get them. Liquid refreshment was a bottle of pop. They used to wrap their delicacies in used newspapers. Salt, vinegar and pepper were added. I was always a sports addict. How I

loved soccer which was the great sport. Games were always played on Saturday afternoons, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Each Yuletide, the barber would cover a cigar box with a slot cut in it with colored tissue paper and hang it up with a sign, "Merry Christmas. Please remember the Boy." I have no memory of how much was in the box, but every once in a while I would feel it for weight. It was always appreciated.

When I was 14 years of age I finished the formal school work, equivalent to our 8 grades. Saying goodbye to the hair-dresser on Saturday night, I started a new job on Monday AM following. My Uncle Phil got me a real opening in the Steel Plant, firing one of the small locomotives that pulled the wagons carrying red hot ingots of steel from furnace to rolling mill. It was all so strange. Noise, confusion, dirt, etc., were characteristic work conditions. After a few weeks, I disappointed my people and my uncle (and particularly my uncle) by leaving this position. Who was I to dislike a job; to close the door on the opportunity of being a locomotive engineer eventually. There were stirrings and aspirations in my boyish heart at that time not evident to any but myself. Somehow, I have always felt there was the guiding hand of a loving, all-wise, heavenly Father leading me along life's road. Theologically we used to call it Providence. Some of the old gospel hymns were symbolic of this deeply rooted and somewhat untutored belief or faith "where He leads me I shall follow". One of the significant tenets of evangelical protestantism was the fact that religion was personal, a person knowing God without any intervening priest or gadget.

From the steel works on Saturday I went the following Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. to the butcher shop of Thomas Albert Jackson. For blatancy, blasphemy, and hot-headedness he was an entirely new factor in life. I guess I had been in a sheltered environment so that the contrast was a dramatic one. The work week counting late hours on Friday and Saturday evenings, covered 77 hours. The pay was 5 shillings - \$1.25 - a week. I shall not go into the details of this job. I had to cut much meat and still carry two scars - one on the little finger and one on the thumb- reminding me of that experience. It was customary for the butcher boy to stand on

the pavement outside the open window calling the attention of the Saturday evening shoppers to the meat bargains. He needed an orator rather than a butcher for this task. If business was poor - the "barker" was at fault, and his scoldings and blasphemy would rise in temperature.

Each Saturday night he would give me a piece of meat, no round steak, to take home. It was usually a chunk that would not keep until Monday. This evidently made up in part for the deficit in salary - payment in "mature" bonds. I never communicated to my mother about his rough treatment of me until one Saturday noon when he threatened to throw an axe at me. Mother, put on her shawl, and unknowing to me, visited Mr. Jackson and how she laid the law down to him. He's our lad and by gum, nobody will mistreat him, so I give you a "week's notice". My mother was a strict legalist, hence the notice. The last week I worked there the boss was so congenial; he did everyhting to woo me to stay. Mother had dramatically and drastically led me across the Rubicon. Furthermore, I didn't like the job - was that the aristocrat coming out in me? Two or three hours a day I would scrape sausage skins and then wash them ready to be filled with meat. I have never been a sausage devotee to this day. Again, quitting on a Saturday, I started working for Edward Upton and Sons, grocers, on Monday and thus began a most pleasant relationship.

It was my privilege to know the founder; who had retired and left the business to three brothers, Walter, Martin, and John. John because of ill health, retired to a farm. Walter was the entrepreneur. In addition to the grocery store, he operated a furniture, motor cycle, cycle, and piano store. It was a reliable, high-class grocery store. My relationship was so pleasant and the experience gained was invaluable. For a year, I was "a carry-out boy" largely, although doing odd jobs around in intervals. Orders were made ready in special wooden boxes for delivery to customers. They had a large "barrow", large enough to take 12 or 14 orders, and no small load for a pony. I would fasten a rope around the top legs and attach it to my shoulders and then between the shafts, I would do the steering. Normandy Hill was fairly steep and it

was quite a tug to get it to the small village, a good mile away.

Hours were 8 - 7, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday; 8 - 1 on Wednesdays, 8 - 10 Fridays and Saturdays. The beginning wage was six shillings a week. I worked many months in the stock rooms. Some days we would weight flour in 10 or 20 lb. bags. Flour would come in large cloth sacks and it needed scooping, weighing and wrapping. Of all grocery items, flour was the veritable staff of life. Most every home baked its own bread - and it was the chief staple of all meals. The flour room was dusty and, of course, there was no ventilation equipment. We roasted coffee, ground it, and mixed it with chicory; cleaned raisins and currants. This was an arduous job. Two large fans were part of a large machine - at the top was the box into which we empty the currants as they had come from far away lands in wooden boxes. With one hand, we would push some currants through a slot, then they would go through the two fans, I would turn the large handle, the stalks would be clipped off, and then the currants would fall into the bottom drawer. To do that consecutively hour after hour was taxing. Another job, twice weekly, was to make baking powder. I still remember the ingredients, - ground rice, bi-carbonate of soda and tartaric acid. What they are called now is beyond me. It was another muscular job, grinding the substance between steel fins or arms so when it passed through the sieve it would be well-mixed and powdered, ready to be packaged. In due time I began clerking and worked first at the butter, cheese, and bacon counter. When customers were infrequent, we used to cut, by wise pounds, half pounds, and quarter pounds of butter and margarine from large tubes that had come from Denmark. We kept so many cheeses on hand - Cheshire, Wensleydale, Cheddar, Edam, Yorkshire, Danish, American, Gorgonzola, etc., almost as many cheeses as "shires" in England. Every once in a while we would use the cheese tester, a kind of gimlet affair that would go to the center of the cheese to indicate its maturity and readiness for sale. The extracted piece would be slid back into place after the operation. Eventually I worked on the other counters. I can still make a cone that will hold half a pound of sugar and close

it without cord and having no danger of leakage. Same when wrapping pounds on an open sheet of heavy blue paper. This was the pre-process, the pre-package, and pre-conveyor age.

This was a worthwhile experience, in human relations, in working with others, in taking orders, and in consumer spending. When my father was out of work (coal strike in Durham - the plants had to shut down for months with no employment in sight, although he tried, and no unemployment insurance) my mother was given credit by Upton's. By paying a small sum over months, she eventually paid off the total bill. This was my first insight into a business that rose to success on two qualities that made for good will, personalization and excellent merchandizing ethics and principles. They knew their customers and were always concerned to meet their requests and needs. My mother would have thought it sacriligious to have bought groceries anywhere but from Upton's - "they trusted me". Of course, this is reciprocal.

They had various grades of goods - all of fine, dependable quality. Take the biscuit trade. For the top level economic customer, there were the famous McVittie Price - the Scotch company. The salesman would come by train, have his samples brought with him in a cab - horse-drawn from the station. He was a stately man, well dressed from head (tall silk hat) to foot (highly polished shoes). Many of the commodities we sold are still selling - Peak Frean Biscuits, McVittie Price - whenever we go to Canada, we usually buy some - Lea & Perrins Sauce, Colman's Mustard, Lifebouy & Sunlight Soap, Cuticura, Carter's Little Liver Pills "for Pale People", and the famous Beecham Pills (Sir Thomas Beecham, the conductor is a branch of that family) and Crosse & Blackwell's Preserves, etc..

A vivid memory of my experience there was the damp coldness of the store. Never any artificial heat, even in the desk area. I suffered much from chillblains. Going home for lunch and supper I would sit on a steel bracket next to the oven and enjoyed the baking. Another favorite and necessary pose was to stand by the open fire usually with my back to the heat.

Each summer I would get a week's vacation, and spent practically all of it taking long cycle trips. Food was taken

along in a knapsack on the rear of the machine. The small villages, country lanes, ancient places, abbeys, moorlands, with it's heather, seaside and fishing towns and villages. Naturally this was a highlight of the year. I have still kept in touch with Mr. W. Upton now 90 years of age - my one remaining tie with the Old Country. For years and years we have never received any letters from our cousins. Years ago, one wrote me asking if we couldn't take two of their children, war days, - we are glad we did not accede because of the problems that would undoubtedly continue for beyond the emergency period. I have no sense of loss in not corresponding with relatives - my roots for so many years have been in America which I love and will always serve.

#### Educational Foundations:

There are some loose phrases that spring up as I begin this section - "Bottlenecks", Sam Smile's historic book "Self-Help", Do-it-Yourself", "The Nebulous Aspirant" - which reminds me of Thoreau "I learned this by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours - if you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.". All the days I worked at Upton's I had an overwhelming hunger for education. Knowing how impossible or unlikely it seemed to ever go beyond the 8th grade in formal education, let along "public school" or college, there was always the impression, deeply rooted, that somehow some new horizon would appear. Yet as far as I can recall, I had no frustration and certainly no bitterness. I worked and played, chiefly worked, with enthusiasm and a daily sense of gratitude. There were 3 or 4 school friends, probably brighter than I, who were victims of this stagntory determinant of a caste system, that even forbade a boy the privilege to develop eht mind God gave him. There undoubtedly were some who went ahead, probably because of a city environment that provided some educational opportunity. I knew of none. What a waste of talent; here was one friend with a great gift of music and art; another a demon for lan-

guages, and so it went with several of the top intellects - but circumstances up to that time gave no privilege of formal education. I have not kept in touch with them, probably one or two of them literally forced their way up to a professional level. I hope so.

My awakening, my advent into the fringe of learning all dated to my life in the church and particularly to a few adults but one man in particular - Rev. W. A. Todd. The large area circuit of the Church had three ordained ministers - none stationed in our town. There were 20 - 25 local preachers who were scheduled on the "quarterly plan" - a printed calendar showing the preachers and their assignments. Several times a year, one of the ministers would be the preacher, but otherwise we had a rotating pulpit supply method covering the local preachers. When a little over 14, I walked several miles with a blacksmith during the week, and a prophet on a Sunday. He "preached the word" with common sense, fervor and dedication. He had me go into the pulpit with him and read the scriptures. It was quite an experience. In due time I became a probationary local preacher and had to read some books and pass an examination. You see the very genesis of early Methodism in England was that the control was vested in and dependent upon lay leaders. The superintendent minister had his guidance to give - organization wise - but it was largely a layman's movement. My great inspirer, tutor, educational God=father, in English academic terms my "don", was the dark eyed, brilliant, literary, and methodical Rev. W. A. Todd. He was a scholar and used and wrote beautiful and expressive English. He had spent several years as a missionary after his university degree in South Africa. He gladly took me under his wing and I eagerly appreciated and responded. His study was lined with books, the most I had ever seen. He would take me on his lecture trips always on the proverbial "shank's pony". Two evenings a week some weeks permitting - largely once a week - I would hike to the neighboring city after my work was done and spend a couple of hours with him. He would have me look at a shelf of books, then write as many titles as possible from memory on paper.



He stressed the value of cultivating the sense of observation, in his words - "Notice men, nature, and events". He gave me a small book on Greek and Latin, arithmetic and some lower math. I prized for so many years, and may still have it the famous little volume - "Logic". Britain has always cultivated the art of writing great works in small compass - there are exceptions. Their mysteries are more meaty than ours, and less wordy, grammar and English books. Some of these I bought and would carry in my pockets as I went to work, and even snatched some time at Upton's to read them. Our Church always had a trained and full time deaconess. They helped nurture the young people. I looked at a book in my library covering the geography and story of Yorkshire just the other day, and it bears the following statement - "To Will, My Yorkshire Laddie With happy Christmas wishes, Sister Sarah".

She was a frail, elderly lady with a splendid mind and a refreshing and uplifting spirit as she visited the poorer homes. I began to build my own little library. Recently, when we moved from 501 Michigan Ave., I gave several hundred books away to colored churches and schools down South, and am afraid most, if not all of these, were included. Several times a year, our little church and, of course, the city church, would feature an elocutionist in a recital and charge a small admission. Large audiences would and still attend. They would give readings from well known plays and books. Probably you have hear on TV, read or recited some passage. We once tried to get him at Albion for a program. This meticulous training in diction, etc. may account for the continuous dominance in our movies and theaters of English actor. As I look back to my seminary training, I deplore the time spent and the small rewards in the so called speech department. Too cold - mechanical, and unimaginative. Therefore, I learned to love books. In may respects there were parallels in my life to G. B. Shaw's early life. (Have just noted in the Britannica some coincidental experiences.) He went to a Wesleyan School and never to a University. He was asked as I remember to what University did he belong, or where were you educated. He remarked "The British Museum". I made several efforts to get

employment as a church leader, but the educational lack was the obstacle. I wrote two short stories, one of which appeared in a red bound volume - "Northern Authors", a compilation of stories that had been published in the Northern Weekly Gazette. I also wrote several poems. I destroyed a little book of them - much against the wishes of Adele, but I did not want posterity to be burdened with them.

Mr. Upton gave me a branch store, a small one to manage for a while during the illness of the manager. I presume one could have made this clerkship a lifetime task. Opportunities for starting a business for oneself were very sparse - out of the small wage one could never hope to save. Then there was the constant urge to become a preacher or a teacher, the former being the most likely to aspire to. How important is one's family background in the process of starting a career. Once a workman, a hired sevant, always one, was the dominant atmosphere of determining of birth and lowly status particularly when there was no incentive or opening in the total environment.

One day I noticed in the Methodist Recorder, which is still thriving as a weekly publication, an announcement, that there were openings for local preachers in Canada. They sent a minister over to England to interview prospective candidates. I was accepted with half a dozen others - most of them much older than I was. I was thrilled for here was a dream blossoming forth into probable reality. I had no funds, oh, a few sovereigns tucked away, my folks had less. In common with the bulk of working people, the family never did any banking. None of us had even been in a bank and less did we know any. My only hope was to borrow the boat fare from Mr. Upton. I think it was about \$80.00 to cover the steerage fare from Liverpool to Halifax, Nova Scotia. I waited one evening until I saw Mr. Walter coming from the store. My heart failed me. The next day I told him of this opportunity and would he kindly loan me the amount needed to take care of my transportation. He said, "Willie, I know you so well, and trust you, so count on me." I made no note out, and I remember how marvelous I felt as I went home with the golden sovereigns jingling in my pocket.

Throughout life I have always corresponded with him. He would, after I became a man of affairs, ahem! address the blue envelope - The Hon. Rev. W. W. Whitehouse, Esq. and his letter would inevitably start with "Dear Willie". I have had Io Triumphe sent to him. An added joy was Adele's and mine a couple of years ago when his son, now President of E. Upton's and Sons Ltd., and his charming wife stayed with us three days at Albion as they were making a trip around the world. Io Triumphe carried a picture of both of them standing alongside of the Goodrich Chapel as it was being constructed. We drove them to Morenci to see where Keith and Lorene lived. Mr. W. Upton, Senior, takes a great joy in hearing about K. and J. and their families. Unfortunately Keith and Lorene were away, but they did see the children in the school playground. Was I proud to show them Keith's home and office. We drove the Concord - Moscow Road and they said that scenery reminded them more than any other they had seen of English countryside. The rolling hills, the grazing cattle, and the nice fields appealed to them. They had just crossed the country by train from California. So, this section ends my record of early educational experiences in England.

#### Towards the New World:

I got a booking on the Allan Line, the S.S. Siberian. The steerage passengers, most of them Central Europeans, at least many of them, ate and had their social life in a large room away down, practically the length of the ship. The rooms for sleeping opened from this large dining room. There were six in a room on bunks. The odors of cooking were ever present and the illumination was by oil lamps. It was late Sept., 1910 and the voyage was a rough one. We stopped at St. John's, Newfoundland for a day, a rugged fishing port. It was my first introduction to wooden buildings. After a couple of days at sea, I became acquainted with some of the crew who worked in the galley, and got a part time job peeling potatoes. They, the workers, saw to it that I got better meals than the 3rd class passengers. The few days I was able to eat I had my meals in the galley. It took 12 and 1/2 days to make the journey to