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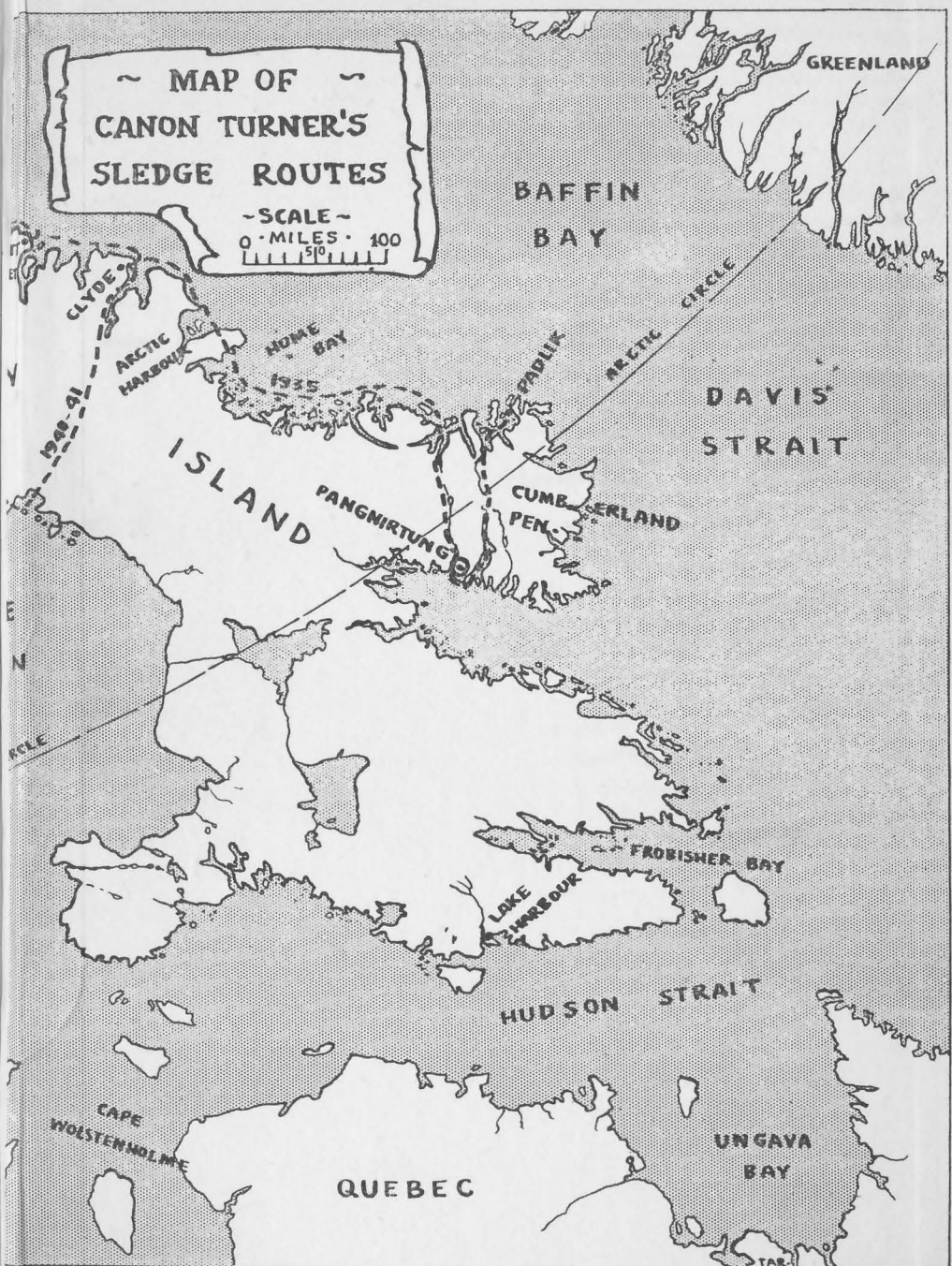
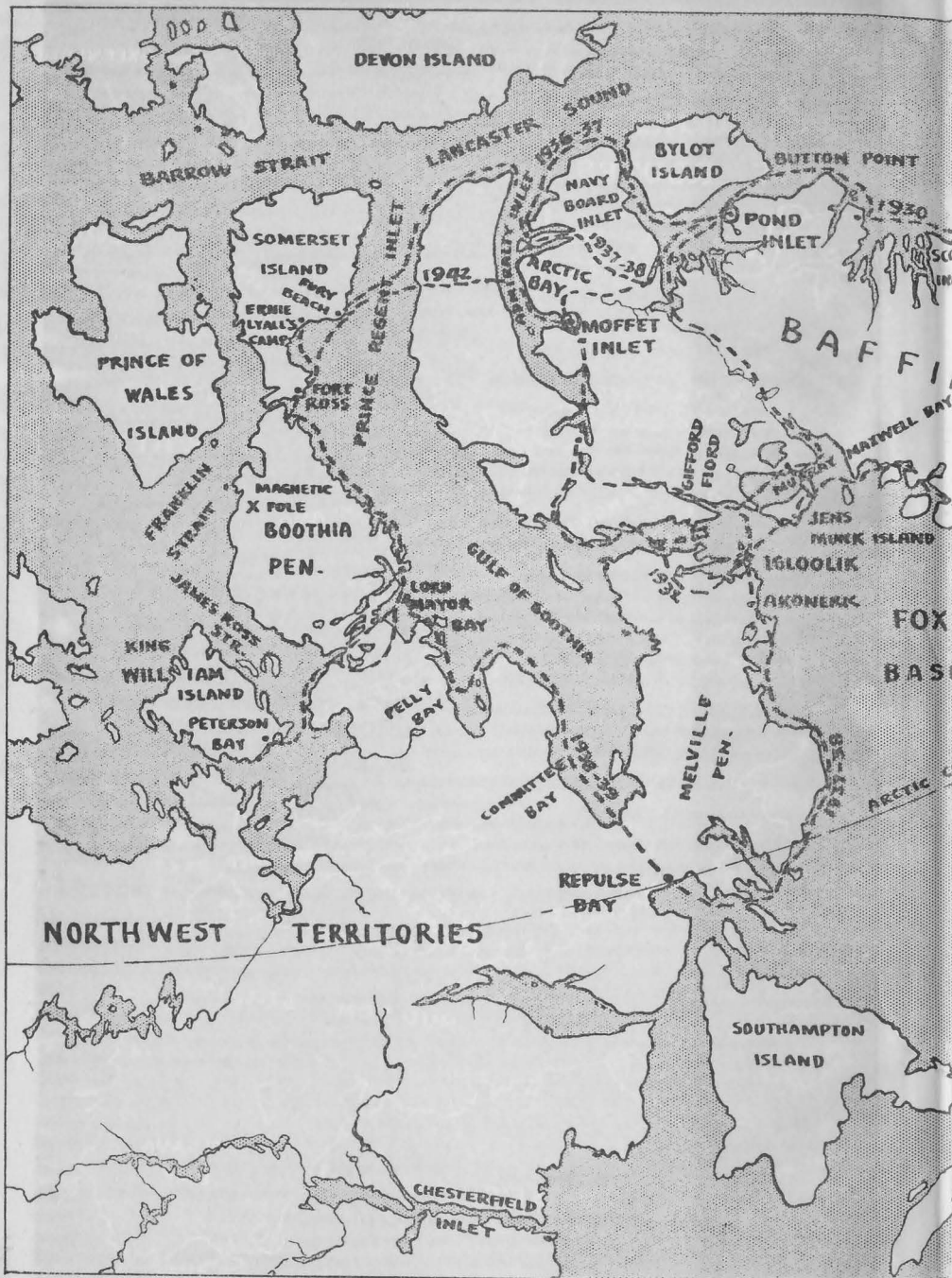


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OPERATION CANON

A short account of the life and witness of THE REVEREND JOHN HUDSPITH TURNER, M.P.S., Coronation Medal for Arctic Service (1938), Hon. Canon of the Cathedral of All Saints at Aklavik in the Diocese of the Arctic, Missionary of The Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society in its Eskimo field

by

MAURICE S. FLINT

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The Reverend Maurice S. Flint was a missionary of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society in the Arctic 1936—41, being stationed at Pond Inlet. During the war he served as a chaplain with the Royal Air Force in Canada, and is now completing a course in Theology at Wycliffe College, Toronto. He has engaged in Eskimo translation work.

To
the three little girls
JUNE, GRACE and FAITH,

with the prayer that these pages may help them either
to remember or to know their Father, whose consecrated
life will always inspire those who were privileged to
know him.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It was with trepidation, and a sense of unworthiness, that I complied with the request of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society that I should write the biography of my friend and former colleague, John Hudspith Turner. The task has been so great, with such numerous possibilities, that I dared not attempt it without first receiving in my own mind the assurance of Divine leading.

My twelve years of association with John Turner were times of inspiration and affection, for his daily living demonstrated *signs following* the steps of faith. His story has been difficult to record, for his simple belief, sterling moral qualities, deep spiritual insight, and great physical achievements, marked by meekness, sincerity, and steadfastness, glowed with such inner holiness and consecration that words, expressions, or descriptions seemed inadequate.

I have found my work akin to that of the writer setting out to describe a large cut and polished diamond. At close range its well-defined edges and many plain facets are easily pictured, but that same stone, viewed from a distance and while moving in a bright beam of light, assumes each moment so many startling and rare beauties that it almost defies description.

May a loving Saviour by the "*riches of His Grace*" so overcome my imperfections that something of the true consecrated personality of His devoted servant will be revealed to the readers of this book.

TORONTO, July 1948

MAURICE S. FLINT

INTRODUCTION

It was a September evening in the great Dominion of Canada. Many farmers had finished their 'chores' on the wide prairies, and were seated at their meal tables. Office workers from the cities and towns had attained the comfort of their easy chairs, and sat engrossed in the newspaper or their favourite book. Students in their colleges, young people from the schools, patients in hospital beds, and especially the old people, who found the fruits of broadcasting a real boon in their lives: all were now awaiting the evening news report, thankful for this Dominion-wide service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

The words of the announcer that night seemed charged with a new interest. The usual reports of unrest abroad, the strikes and labour troubles at home, assumed second place to a fresh and startling news item.

A joint force composed of members of the Royal Canadian Air Force and paratroopers of the Canadian Army were to undertake a dangerous mission. Some unknown northern missionary had been accidentally shot and the bullet was lodged in his brain. His mission station lay well within the Arctic circle, far from civilization with its hospitals and medical care. The only earthly hope for this man, his young wife and two little daughters, rested in the resourcefulness of the armed forces.

An experienced air crew waited beside their Dakota aircraft on an air field in Western Canada. A picked team of four paratroopers, including a doctor, had already been chosen and equipped to jump into this northern outpost.

A former missionary to the Eskimo, an ex-RAF chaplain, resident in Eastern Canada, but well acquainted with that northern district, and who possessed maps of the location, was now being flown by special plane to 'brief' the members of the rescue team before they departed on their difficult assignment.

Ex-service men moved restlessly in their chairs as word of this hazardous undertaking came through. Ministers of churches were vitally interested. Doctors thought of the perilous task of their young colleague. Veterans of

the northern wastes realized the extreme difficulties of this mission. The heroic impulses of men far and wide were stimulated, while the deep sympathies of human nature for those in distress were aroused. Great congregations in the Christian Church were called to prayer, and these rescue efforts received worthy attention in the daily newspapers.

The 'rescue' dragged on for many weeks, as sufferer and rescuers were marooned in the grip of the polar regions. The skill, courage, and resourcefulness of the airmen and the paratroopers filled the Canadian people with admiration. Whilst the endurance, bravery, and faith of the badly wounded missionary and his wife appealed to all people, awakening interest and sympathy in many in whom it had been dormant for years.

Shortly after his arrival in hospital in the city of Winnipeg, the emaciated frame of Canon John Hudspeth Turner, so long dominated by his will to live, could no longer sustain his slowly ebbing life, and early one morning nearly ten weeks after the day of his accident, he 'slipped' into the presence of His Saviour.

For many people 'OPERATION CANON' ended there, but even they are thankful for the message that it brought to their hearts. They are conscious of a deeper appreciation and renewed interest not only in their fellowmen, but in the Church, and in acts of courage and sacrifice beyond the demands of duty. But nobody who knew Canon Turner believes either that 'Operation Canon' started on the day that he was wounded, or that it ended at the time when he quietly passed to his reward.

This short book is an attempt to record 'Operation Canon', as those who knew and loved him see it with the eye of faith, both in view of personal Christian experiences and because God, the Everlasting Father, has said,

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways. My ways."¹

"... I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending."²

¹ Isaiah 55. 8

² Revelation 1. 8

PART I

THE MAN—and HIS CONVERSION

“ Before I formed thee . . . I knew thee ; and before thou camest forth . . . I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations ”—*Jeremiah* 1. 5

CHAPTER I

“BEFORE I FORMED THEE . . . I KNEW THEE”

ANCESTORS—BIRTH—EARLY DAYS

“My times are in Thy hand”—*Psalm 31. 15*

THE French wars of religion, which occupied the latter half of the sixteenth century, had many far-reaching results both in that country and in places overseas.

Many devout, sincere Huguenot believers began to flee to lands which were, for people of their deep Protestant convictions, of comparative safety.

These members of the ‘new Faith’ were not unconscious of all that was happening in other lands. In England Queen Mary had sent Protestant bishops to the stake, while in the Netherlands their co-religionists were being buried alive. However, in many places the brave flag of Protestantism rode the stiff winds of opposition and heralded the approaching victories of Biblical Christianity, and the advent of a new era of freedom from the mediæval bondage of blindness and intolerance. Before that time was to come many innocent souls were to perish in the ‘Massacre of St. Bartholomew’, and numerous brave soldiers were to give their lives on European battlefields for a “*Faith which was once delivered unto the saints*”.¹

Of these French Protestants fleeing before such horrors of religious persecution, some came to England seeking there a home and security. From amongst these devout, earnest folk, there is reason to believe, are to be found the ancestors of John Hudspith Turner.

His birth on July 14, 1905, was marred by an earlier tragedy. His parents had lived in London where two older sons were born. Four months before his birth his father Thomas Hudspith Turner died, and the young saintly widowed mother, Ellen Anna Turner, was compelled to return to the home of her aged and ailing parents in Felixstowe. It now became necessary for the older boy, aged five, to be sent to stay with relatives living nearby. The young widow’s time was fully occupied in tending to her invalid parents, assisting with the work of the parish church to which she was deeply attached, and caring for her young family.

The family was often in straightened financial circumstances but Faith was in that home where prayer was often made to God, and His love filled their hearts, bringing contentment and peace.

¹ Jude 3

The old grandfather had served his church as Parish Clerk for over twenty years, and his knowledge of the liturgy and love for the Scriptures were a fine example to the growing boys.

After the death of their grandmother, the family moved into other quarters, and it was again possible for the boys to be reunited under one roof, but this was not until John was in his seventh year.

A number of close relatives of these lads were well-known and respected in their locality for piety and kindness. Neighbours sought them out in times of trouble and distress to obtain sound advice, comfort and help.

In this environment of true Christian living the three healthy lads, Edward (Ted), Arthur, and John (Jack)—filled with fun and high spirits—grew up and became inseparable companions.

CHAPTER 2

"BEFORE THOU CAMEST FORTH . . . I SANCTIFIED THEE"

SCHOOL DAYS—CHURCH ASSOCIATIONS—EARLY BUSINESS LIFE

"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and He pondereth all his goings"—*Proverbs 5, 21*

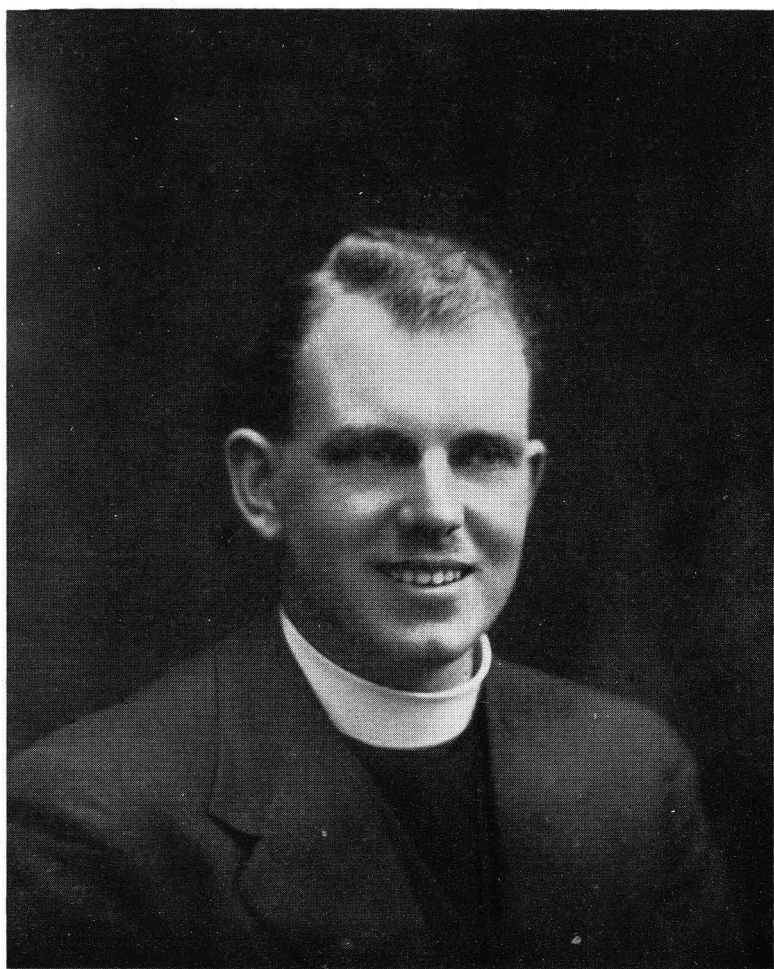
THE boys received their schooling at the local Felixstowe elementary school, and were popular with their young schoolmates. Often in company with a young lad from 'next door' they took jaunts together into the marshlands bordering the River Deben, and with home-made bows and arrows sometimes stalked numerous species of wild fowl that nested there. Such ramblings would take them twelve to fifteen miles afield over most difficult country which involved many adventures in navigating dykes and swamps.

They all loved to 'camp out', and even in those early days made a make-shift tent in the back garden of the house, by borrowing mother's clothes-horse and using old mats and worn pieces of linoleum. Incessant pleas to mother finally procured the necessary permission to sleep out at nights. Not many months later, by pooling resources from choir pay, rewards for running errands, and doing 'odd jobs', they became the proud possessors of a small canvas tent, which was to provide nightly accommodation during many summers.

John did well at school and at the age of eleven years proceeded to the Ipswich Municipal Secondary School. He stayed there from 1917 until the autumn of 1921, when he finished his schooldays, having attained the sixth and highest form, and become captain both of cricket and football.

From his earliest days he had been introduced to Church activities, of which he attended Sunday school and Bible class. However, he was never very seriously-minded, as his Sunday school teachers were apt to discover—when sitting upon a 'tack', or in a specially prepared pool of water. Such early pranks caused his mother no little grief, as his mind seemed far from attracted by the most important things of life. This sense of humour remained throughout his life, and his face was often wreathed in smiles, and his laughter and fun filled the house.

In 1925 a new Vicar, the Rev. H. B. Greene, was appointed to the parish church of Felixstowe, with its daughter church of St. Andrew. He was a man of outstanding gifts, and a keen and ardent minister of the Church of

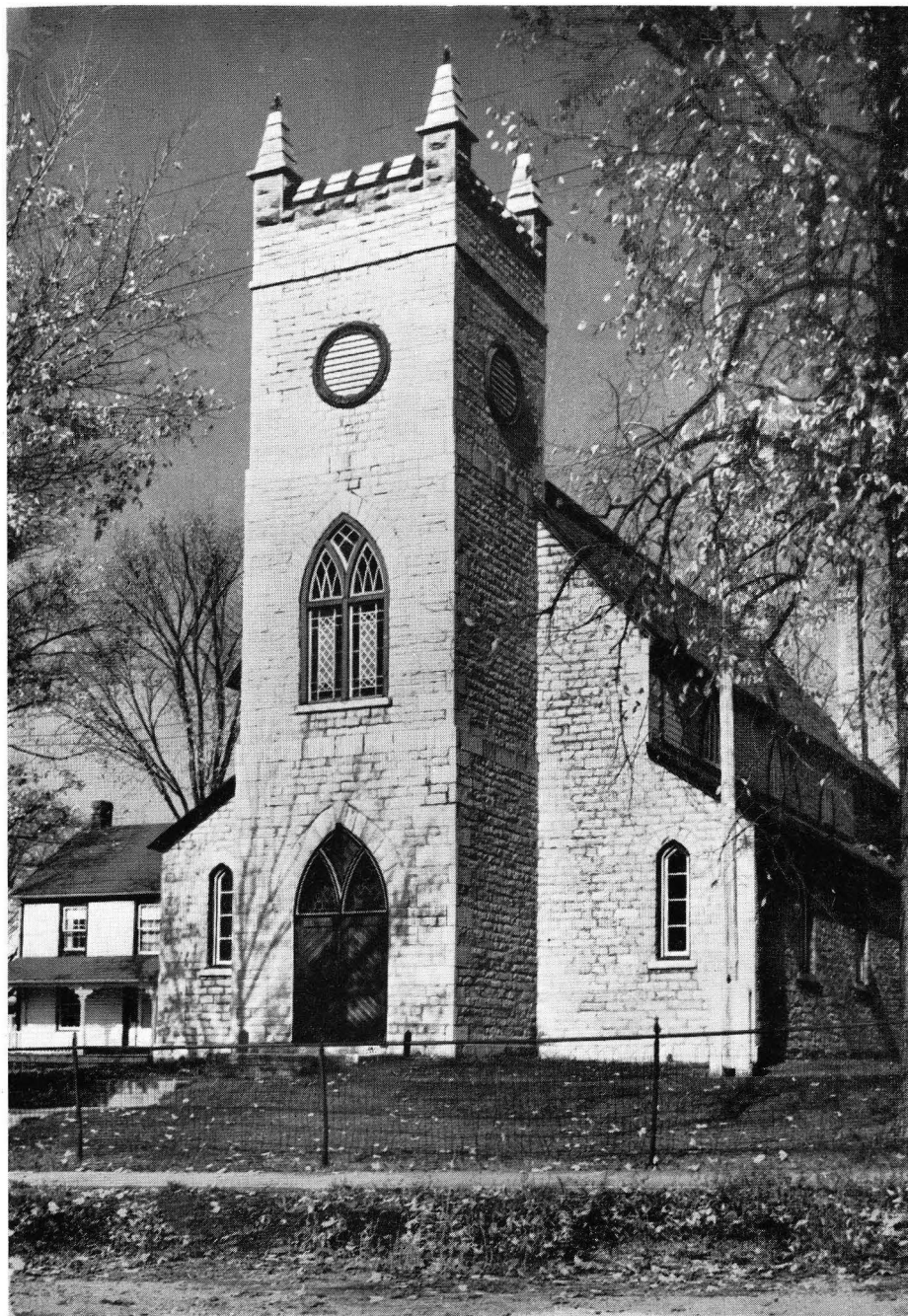


JOHN HUDSPITH TURNER



“Your labour is not in vain in the Lord”

Eskimo, carrying New Testaments, Prayer and Hymn Books, outside the mission at Pond Inlet after a service



Christ Church, Aylmer, Quebec, Canada
Built A.D. 1842

The scene of JOHN TURNER'S ordination, July 12, 1929.



JOHN TURNER in his kayak at Pond Inlet

Note the barbed harpoon at his side, the 'drag' behind his seat, and the inflated seal skin used as a float

England. He was loyal to the Scriptural foundation of that Church, accepting the Scriptures as the "*Word of God*", and adamantly refusing to permit any teaching or practice contrary to the XXXIX Articles and the Book of Common Prayer.

Fully alive to the great need of the young people he threw open the doors of the Vicarage to them every Sunday evening after Church. Thither many wended their way to sing hymns, and enjoy fellowship in a wholesome environment, whilst coming within the sound of the Gospel message. This faithful ministry had its obvious results, for ten young people now on the mission field call Felixstowe their home Church.

When John left school, he began training as a chemist and was employed in the nearby town of Ipswich. The hitherto infrequent use of a cigarette had now become a general practice and he liked his 'pipe'. Having become friendly with some members of a local dance band he was made their popular percussionist.

A pleasing personality, friendly attitude, and manly bearing made him an attractive young man, especially with the fair sex, and his life was very full.

Ted, the eldest son, after a period of service with the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve during the first Great War, returned home, and found time to give his younger brothers instruction in the handling of boats, especially under sail. They had all learned to swim magnificently. Thus John grew into a fearless, strapping young man, self-confident but never arrogant, always happy and seldom serious: wholesome but not particularly 'religious'. What was in his heart those years few people know, but the prayers of a godly mother, the example of a fine Christian grandfather, and the faithful witness of true servants of Jesus Christ, were soon to be effective.

Does not our God say

"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known"?¹

¹ Isaiah 42. 16

“I ORDAINED THEE A PROPHET UNTO THE NATIONS”

CONVERSION—EARLY SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”—*Proverbs* 14. 12

DURING Advent 1925 in the first year of his ministry in this parish (which was to last until his retirement in 1946) the Vicar invited Mr. Reginald T. Naish to conduct a series of meetings on Prophecy, in the St. Andrew's Church Hall. Mr. Naish was a seasoned minister of the Gospel, rich in experience, and a firm believer in the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ. His consecrated humble life and prayer-filled ministry had already proved an instrument of great blessing to many lives.

John Turner, now at the age of twenty, was not particularly attracted to these special meetings and at first ignored them. Passing the Hall one rainy night, however, he entered, and was immediately struck by the obvious joy of the missionary, and the force of his message.

Perhaps it would be well to report the events of that evening, and subsequent days, in the words of an eye witness. The Rev. Rowland H. Haste, a great personal friend of John, who later sailed under the B.C.M.S. flag to India, has written :

“The great moment of John's life was when he yielded his life to God. Reginald Naish had been holding meetings on ‘Prophecy’ in St. Andrew's Hall, Felixstowe. John, Harold Denny, and Alf. Adams were present when the Holy Spirit fired a salvo, and hit them all amidships. Instead of sinking, they ventured at midnight to Mr. Smith's house, White Lodge, where Reginald Naish was staying, and all these found the Lord. They had a midnight prayer and praise meeting afterwards in the house. From that moment John was all out for the Lord.

One autumn morning John and I were going to Ipswich on the top of an open-roofed bus, when he exclaimed, ‘My pipe must go!’ He stood up to the astonishment of the other passengers and threw pipe, pouch, and matches into the field, from the top of the bus, saying, ‘There goes another weight’.”

From his conversion on December 20, 1925, John Turner became a living proof of St. Paul's words: “*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*”.¹

Ted, his brother, has written concerning this event in the following manner :

“Many views are held regarding conversion, some even doubt if it has any value at all! In this particular case, however, there was no uncertainty. John from that day forward was a new creature. Henceforth he had one aim and one object in life, and that to glorify God and to serve Him to the limit of his capacity.”

Whenever an opportunity came he still resorted to the old haunts in the marshlands of the River Deben, or on the river banks. But now accompanied by new friends in the Christian Faith he spent the time around an opened Bible in prayer and meditation. Only the sea birds flew overhead to break the silence of those quiet meeting places, while the Saviour drew near to comfort and guide these young lives. As John grew in grace there came to him the vision of a new standard for living. "*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*"²

This inner growth, and deepening spiritual conviction affected even his business life, for he felt even there, in a work which he deeply loved, and which was so full of interest, that he was not really permitted to serve His Lord fully. Prayerfully the future was faced, and then with willing heart, a deep sense of unworthiness and human frailty, he offered his life for service anywhere.

Prepared in body, soul, and spirit he was learning the truth of the Psalmist's words, "*Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass*"³.

¹ 2 Corinthians 5. 17

² Ephesians 4. 13

³ Psalm 37. 5

PART II

THE MAN—and HIS COMMISSION

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit”—*1 Corinthians* 2. 9-10

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me”—*St. John* 14. 6

CHAPTER 4

A PREPARED WAY

“Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way”—
Exodus 23. 20

THE BIRTH OF A NEW MISSIONARY SOCIETY

“... if thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord”—*Deuteronomy 28. 9, 10.*

DURING the early years of John Turner's youth, even before his conversion, God was forging another instrument of His blessing to the world, which was to influence his life greatly.

The birth pangs of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society were already apparent in missionary circles within the Church of England. Many stalwart supporters of Evangelical missionary endeavours, over a period of years were distressed by the very obvious results of earlier Liberal theological views, and the growth of Modernism. It was evident that missionary recruits were being commissioned to the foreign field who no longer preached a Scriptural message and who lacked the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Also young recruits of great promise were being sent to work with senior men who had little sympathy with a dynamic faithful ministry, but endeavoured to circumscribe the activities and lives of their new colleagues.

In an atmosphere of misrepresentation and misunderstanding a few faithful servants of God, convinced of His guiding and leading, prayerfully initiated a new Church of England missionary society.¹ The birth of this society was not an easy one, for men who once worked and prayed together on missionary committees for many years, were now in disagreement and could no longer walk together harmoniously. The forces of criticism fanned by the strong winds of opposition were to try these new endeavours for Christ's Cause from its very beginning.

The Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society came into being on October 27, 1922, with the motto,

¹The history of the formation and work of the Society is fully told in *The First Twenty-Five Years of The Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society*, by W. S. Hooton, M.A., B.D., and J. Stafford Wright, M.A. Obtainable from the Society, 256 pp., illustrations and maps, 7/6.

*“FOR THE WORD OF GOD, AND FOR THE TESTIMONY
OF JESUS CHRIST,”²*

and has endeavoured (accepting the Holy Scriptures as in very truth the Word of God, and remaining true to the Reformation principles of the Church of England) to reach with the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ some of the unevangelized fields of the world. All workers, missionaries and members are required to sign the basis of the Society annually and every safeguard is taken to ensure continuance of its evangelical character.

It is possible that for many casual observers the history, accomplishments, and great blessings of the B.C.M.S. have been overshadowed by the dread fears of ‘controversy’ and ‘schism’. However, in providing the setting for the life and witness of Canon John Turner, it is not improbable that some will understand in a new and deeper way the need and worth of this society, which has always been intent upon doing everything possible, both to maintain a Bible Christianity at home, and to send it to the uttermost parts of the earth.

² Revelation 1. 9

CHAPTER 5

A PREPARED MAN

“ Jesus calleth unto Him whom He would . . . And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach ”—*St. Mark* 3. 13, 14

CALL—COLLEGE—CONSECRATION—AT KESWICK—GOD’S CARE

“ And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them, and the sheep follow Him ”—*St. John* 10. 4

A VERY clear sequence of events led to John Turner’s association with this missionary society. His new Vicar had formerly been the assistant in Liverpool to the Rev. Daniel H. C. Bartlett, M.A., who was so soon to become the stalwart, courageous leader of the Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society as its first (and honorary) Secretary.

It must not be imagined that the high principles, Protestant teaching, and evangelical outlook of the vicar necessarily endeared him immediately to all his new parishioners. Amongst those who looked upon the change in the parish with disfavour were the young Turner brothers, Arthur and John. However this prayer-filled ministry was empowered from on High, and even before one year in that benefice had passed, there came the joy of seeing twenty-five young men, including Arthur and John Turner, respond to an appeal to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour and to surrender their lives for His service.

Then on March 26, 1926, Dr. Bartlett (as he later became), visited the parish to introduce the new missionary society and seek recruits for full-time service. The two young Turner boys, among others, stepped forward in complete and glad surrender.

As the society had already founded its own Bible Churchmen’s Missionary and Theological College at Clifton, Bristol, thither the lads turned their steps in preparation for service whithersoever God might lead.

From the beginning of his college days John Turner’s life and witness began to assume unique proportions. In his studies he not only attained a standard satisfactory for ordination but ‘extra-murally’ gained his membership of the Pharmaceutical Society. The Rev. Dr. C. S. Carter, M.A., first principal of the college, has written in glowing terms of his former student,

“ I would like to bear my testimony to his outstanding zeal and diligence during his period of training (1926-9). I can truthfully say that I never had a more

wholehearted and consecrated student. His sunny and joyous disposition was a tonic to all, and even non-Christian fellowstudents with whom 'extra-murally' he also studied chemistry bore witness to his single-minded devotion to His Master and Saviour. With him it was clearly, '*This one thing I do*', and the watchword of his college life could well be summed up in 'WORK' to be more effective as a future missionary and constant witness for Christ. In fact St. Paul's words were literally true of him, '*For me to live is Christ*'."

Money was very scarce for this young soldier of the Cross during his days of training, and often at the end of the terms, whether in winter or summer, he cycled the one hundred and ninety miles between his home and the college to save travelling expenses.

At all times and in divers manners he endeavoured to witness for His Lord, and often, as he passed through the streets carrying his small attache case in his hand, its sides were illuminated by brightly painted Scripture texts.

During the succeeding days of his training, the strong influence of his godly Vicar, the environment of a consecrated home life, the atmosphere of a college directed by a faculty of true evangelical scholarship, together with a deep conviction of his past worthlessness and a growing love for His Saviour who had so lovingly redeemed and saved Him, began to remould the young man.

This metamorphosis in a life is hard to describe in a few words, but possibly the notations in the margin of his well-worn and much beloved Bible will indicate the change.

"Come ill, come well, the Cross, the Crown,
The rainbow or the thunder,
I fling my soul and body down,
For God to plow them under."

Is not this an echo of the words and mind of Martin Luther ?

"Christians are to be exhorted to endeavour to follow Christ, their head, through pains, death, and hells."¹

From his earliest days John seemed to attain a new attitude to time and a new sense of the need to use every opportunity for witness.

"Take from me all slothfulness, that I may fill up all the spaces of my time."

"Tis death, my soul, to be indifferent."

Thus submitting his life daily to the hammer blows from God's Word, his personality began to shine with a new lustre and his character became

¹ 94 Thesis, 1517

endued with new strength. Even though such lessons were hard and the discipline severe, yet neatly in the margin of his Bible appear these words,

“ There is no bar that can shut out love.”

Perhaps the shadow or spirit of John Calvin marked this life, for his love for Scripture and his obedience to that Word could easily be described in the Reformer's words, “ Nothing therefore is safer than to banish all boldness of human sense, and adhere solely to what the Scriptures deliver ”.

These deepening Protestant convictions were reflected in his rigid adherence to the Reformed rule of the Church concerning vestments, and his unswerving faithfulness to the 1662 Prayer Book, which he loved. Such attitudes, although not necessarily conducive to popularity with many (though they had sworn similar oaths of fealty in the Church), admirably portray his sincerity and devotion to His Lord and His Church.

Before he left for the mission field, John longed to visit the Keswick Convention, and being without funds he committed this desire to His Master. The distance was some 300 miles across England, but taking his bicycle, with a small tent made from two bed sheets which had been rendered waterproof with a mixture of linseed oil and paraffin wax, he loaded his clothes, food, and equipment and set forth. Sleeping on the roadside for two nights he reached his destination on the third day. The conference proved a great spiritual blessing and joy. On the morning of his return he climbed Skiddaw to watch the sunrise, and then starting out he took but two days and one night of cycling to reach home.

A little later a remarkable escape from serious danger confirmed in John's mind the assurance of his Heavenly Father's watchful care, and increased his sense of indebtedness. During one of his trips up the River Deben with a group of seven youngsters the boat capsized, and he nearly lost his life when, with one of the younger passengers, he became entangled in the sail. However, he managed to free himself and help his young companion to the safety of the river's bank. John felt sure that this was but another sign of God's blessing in his life.

This, then, was the man whom the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society commissioned to its unique Arctic field. Is it not obvious that a gracious Heavenly Father had watched over him in a wonderful way since his birth? Born with a wonderful spiritual heritage forged in the fires of persecution; reared in a truly Christian home where faith, hope and love reigned; and nurtured by faithful ambassadors of the Living Christ, he was “ *a vessel unto honour . . . meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work* ”.¹

¹2 Timothy 2. 21

CHAPTER 6

A PREPARED PLACE

“ . . . the place which the Lord your God shall choose ”—*Deuteronomy* 12. 5

A PRAYER—A NEED AND A CALL—ESKIMO MISSIONS—ORDINATION
IN CANADA

“ . . . to bring thee into the place which I have prepared ”—*Exodus* 23. 20

ONE day there appeared in the margin of his Bible the words of a prayer,
“ Lord, what wilt Thou have *me* to do? ”

Thus John sought God's plan and purpose for his future ministry. His Heavenly Father did not leave His servant in doubt very long, for the place and the work were already being prepared. The Lord Himself had indeed “ *gone before* ”.

Although the founding of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society had taken place only in October 1922, in the March of 1923, but five months later, Bishop Lloyd of Saskatchewan, Canada, urgently appealed to the Society for help. He wrote saying,

“ As the Church Missionary Society has entirely withdrawn from the field, we are faced with the necessity of closing up some if not many of the missions . . . I sincerely hope that B.C.M.S. may see its way to saving this work.”

The Bishop of Keewatin on May 23 of the same year issued yet another appeal,

“ I venture to bring before you the urgent needs of the Indian and Eskimo work in the Diocese of Keewatin, and apply to your Society for assistance for at least a few years.”

These two appeals had no sooner received sympathetic attention than Bishop Anderson of Moosonee Diocese appealed that the need of the Eastern Arctic Eskimo be met. Following up this written appeal Bishop Stringer, of the Yukon, visited the College at Clifton, and after telling the story of Eskimo missions in Canada, appealed for volunteers. Both Arthur and Jack at that gathering sensed a call, and later offered themselves for service in the polar regions.

There is little wonder that these young men were enthralled by the story of the Eskimo missions, for it is a narrative filled with sacrifice, noble endeavour and great accomplishments.

The Eskimo of the Eastern North American continent were first visited by missionaries of the Christian Faith in the middle of the 18th Century. These ambassadors of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, sent by the Moravian Brethren, first reached the Eskimo of the Labrador in 1752. On September 13

of that year their first messenger of the Cross was murdered at Davis Inlet, Labrador, by natives who were then described as "the most savage people in all the world". For the next fifty years the Moravian missionaries "*constrained by His love*", reached out to the "*regions beyond*"¹ and in 1811 visited Ungava, becoming the first Christian missionaries to reach the Canadian Eskimo.

It was not until 1820 that the Rev. John West, sent to Canada by the Church Missionary Society, passed through the Hudson's Straits, and, meeting Eskimo who visited his ship, became the first Church of England missionary to them. Later in 1823 he visited the Eskimo at Fort Churchill and spoke to them of Christ through the interpreter Augustus, who had previously accompanied the then Captain Franklin on his adventuresome exploration of the mouth of the Coppermine River.

In 1862 the Rev. John Horden, later to become Bishop Horden, using as an interpreter an Eskimo who had formerly lived on the Labrador coast and who had received Christian teaching there, journeyed northward from Moose Factory and carried the Gospel of glad tidings to the Eskimo of Great Whale River. He wrote concerning this trip, "those eight days were indeed blessed ones, and will not soon be forgotten by me, for they were amongst the most successful missionary days I have had since I have been in the country".

In 1878 Mr. E. J. Peck came from England and was placed in charge of the work at Great Whale River. The subsequent history of this missionary's service amongst the Eskimo is an epic of the Christian Church and caused him to be called 'The Apostle to the Eskimo'. In 1884 this valiant soldier of the army of Truth, after failing two years before, when he suffered much hardship on the trail, managed to reach Fort Chimo, Ungava, and stayed there three weeks preaching the Good News to those needy people.

Ten years later, in 1894, the Rev. Dr. Peck was permitted to establish a more northerly mission on desolate Blacklead Island, in Cumberland Sound, Baffin Land, and became the first and much beloved missionary to the natives of Southern Baffin Land. He was given the Eskimo name of Okangmat—meaning '*The Speaker*', or 'because he speaks'.

On May 4, 1900, the first convert there, a girl on her deathbed, was admitted to the visible Church of Christ. From Blacklead Island a more southerly station was opened at Lake Harbour on the north coast of the Hudson's Straits. It was here that the Rev. A. L. Fleming served from 1909-11 and 1913-15. Then in 1919 he was granted his Licentiate of Theology

¹ 2 Corinthians 10. 16

from Wycliffe College and served for the next ten years both as Chaplain and Secretary of his 'Alma Mater' and latterly as Rector of St. John's (Stone) Church, Saint John, New Brunswick. In 1927 he was appointed Archdeacon of the Arctic, and subsequently assumed great responsibilities in the lives of the English missionaries proceeding northwards. Then in 1933 the Rev. A. L. Fleming was consecrated the first bishop of a newly formed Diocese of the Arctic. This new diocese was to cover a territorial area of two and a quarter million square miles and a land area of 1,204,697 square miles or one third of the Dominion of Canada.

Meanwhile in 1915 the C.M.S. had withdrawn from the Arctic work and the field was left to the care of the Canadian Church. The heritage of Dr. Peck's unselfish and devoted ministry was left to the care of partially-trained native catechists.

Ten years later, in 1925, Bishop Anderson of Moosonee appealed to the B.C.M.S. to save this work, not only by shepherding the flock left so long without real pastoral oversight, but by undertaking the opening of new missions in the East coast of Hudson's Bay, and in the unevangelized fields of Northern Baffin Land.

How true the Word of God is that says, "*and it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear*".¹

A work, which had begun many years before and left fallow for ten years, and which had proved to be too great for the young and growing Canadian Church, was committed to this new missionary society less than three years after its inception. At the same time young men filled with faith were being called out and trained to accept the challenge of the great need.

In the summer of 1928 the Rev. Arthur Turner at twenty-six years of age sailed for Pangnirtung, a new station only a few miles from Blacklead Island. He has now given twenty years of faithful and effective service amongst his beloved Eskimo people.

In the following year, John Turner, at the age of twenty-four, sailed with a companion, Harold N. Duncan, also a graduate of the B.C.M.T. College to establish the most northerly mission in the British Empire at Pond Inlet, Baffin Land. Thus began a brilliant missionary career in which he was so manifestly conscious of the power of his indwelling Lord and so obviously dependent upon His daily guidance.

John Turner, on July 12, 1929, under a special faculty from the Primate of the Church of England in Canada, was both made a deacon and admitted

¹ Isaiah 65. 24

to the priesthood of the Church of England by Bishop Farthing of the Diocese of Montreal.

This ordination took place in the small but historic and beautiful Christ Church, Aylmer, Quebec. It is of interest to note that although this church was founded in 1842, it has, through monetary difficulties since the depression of the early thirties, become a 'mission' church. Nevertheless the Rector, the Rev. Cecil Earle, reports that in spite of difficulties his congregation are planning some permanent memorial to commemorate the ordination of Canon Turner whom they have come to regard as one of their own sons.

On the day of his ordination John's constant companion "Daily Light upon the Daily Path", a book which he loved next to his Bible and Book of Common Prayer, contained the following promises.

*"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee: He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee . . . The Lord, He it is that doth go before thee . . . for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."*¹

Is there any wonder that this young man yearned to go forward into the unknown in the face of such gracious assurance of the Divine blessing?

¹Exodus 33. 14; Deuteronomy 31. 6, 8; Joshua 1. 9

PART III

THE MAN—and HIS MISSION

“And a still more excellent way shew I unto you . . . Love . . . beareth all things, believeth all things . . . endureth all things . . . Love never faileth”—
1 *Corinthians* 12. 31; 13. 7, 8 (*R.V.*)

“I feel a greater love for the Eskimo each time I go amongst them; they are a most lovable people”—*John Turner's Diary*, 1929

“I love this country and its people . . . This is my first love”—*John Turner's Diary*, 1947

CHAPTER 7

"NOW THEREFORE . . . SHEW ME NOW THY WAY"

AN ARCTIC VOYAGE—FIRST CONTACT WITH ESKIMO—SOME ESKIMO
COMPANIONS—THE SECRET OF HIS POWER

CANADIAN friends were most gracious and kind to the young missionaries before they departed on the final part of their journey northwards. On Monday afternoon after the ordination there began a friendship and fellowship in the work which was only to reach a climax in the great kindnesses and affection during the tragic days of December 1947. The Women's Auxiliary of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada gave a reception in the Hebert Simon Memorial House, Montreal, for the young recruits, and this was followed by a farewell service in the Cathedral. The next day the voyagers were bidden farewell by their friends, including Mrs. Farthing, the wife of the Bishop of Montreal. Showered with presents and gifts they stood at the rail as the faces of the watchers on the quayside dimmed in the distance.

The long awaited day had arrived! The last lap had begun! The trip on the *S.S. Nascopie* was filled with interest and fascinating experiences. As the days lengthened into weeks they steamed through the cold waters of the Hudson's Bay, and gigantic icebergs passed majestically by in the bright sunlight of the Arctic summer. An occasional walrus or seal was seen sporting in the water. The ship called at various isolated trading stations as places with historic names were visited. At each settlement Eskimo were encountered and contact made with personnel of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, traders of the Hudson's Bay Company, as well as missionaries, both of the Anglican Church and the Roman Catholic Mission.

The panorama of daily events during the initial voyage in Arctic waters holds the interest of the travellers. There are the days and nights in the ice pack when the ship shudders from stem to stern, crashing her way through the heavy frozen pans. There are the nights in the cabins or dining saloon when experienced northern travellers relate their personal experiences and tell stories of the North. How 'tall' some of these events have grown in the imagination of the narrator will only be proved during arduous personal adventures in succeeding years. Then there are the days and nights when the gales buffet the small vessel and angry waves with gaping maw seek yet another victim, only to be thwarted as the valiant craft rides serenely over their greedy lips.

John Turner and his companion were much inspired by the eager desire of the natives for Church services, and often at various ports of call, even with their meagre knowledge of the difficult Eskimo language, they helped the various catechists in a number of services. Harold Duncan pleased the natives with his rendering of hymn accompaniments on his accordian. John, too, learned to play this musical instrument, and in very many igloos of the Northern Eastern Arctic he was to sit some time during the next eighteen years to play hymns and watch the dark faces of the natives lighten and glow with pleasure, as they joined vigorously in their praises to their newly-found Heavenly Father.

Sometimes services were held in the fetid atmosphere of huts or tents on the shore. The eager smiling faces of the dusky natives, their obvious attention to their leader as he discoursed from the Word of God, left an indelible mark on the mind of the visitors from overseas.

It was after one of these meetings at Port Burwell that John Turner wrote to his mother,

“there were about fifty to sixty natives present and the service was held in the Hudson's Bay Post Manager's House, where the natives always go for worship. They all seemed to enter into the meaning of the service, and the singing was sweet. We had the hymns, ‘Jesus loves me’ (Jesu naglegengmanga, ela kauyemavoonga, etc.); ‘There is a gate that stands ajar’; and, ‘Abide with me’. I feel a greater love for the Eskimo each time I go amongst them; they are a most lovable people.”

The missionary party was increased at Lake Harbour, Bishop Fleming's former mission station, by the addition of an Eskimo called David Sandy, and his family. This native hunter was engaged to act as catechist to the Pond Inlet mission for at least the first year of its history.

Later at Southampton Island Ben, a young Eskimo lad, one of two boys who had spent some months in a Canadian School in Ontario, but who through ill-health were being forced to return home, continued northwards with the missionaries. John Ell, the boy's father, a leading Eskimo of Southampton Island and pilot to any boats entering the waters of that district, was most anxious that his son should continue his education.

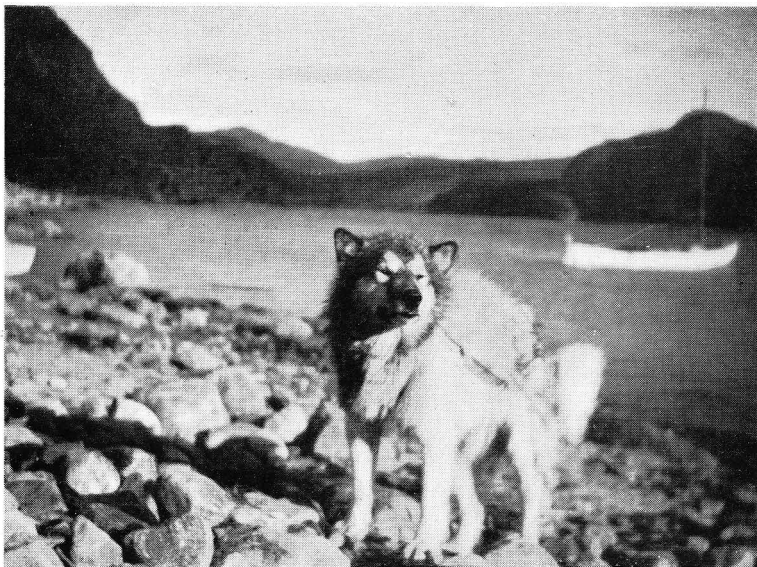
Thus a wee native lad, with a shock of black hair, mongoloid features, twinkling black eyes, ever capable of mischief and fun, came both to enliven and brighten the lives of his white companions. He struggled aboard with two suitcases, a box containing exercise books, pencils, an atlas, toys, New Testament in English, geometrical instruments and a primer, together with one broad grin.

These native companions were to be a real asset to the mission. David was a truly spiritual and devoted Christian with a delightful family. He



The Arctic Traveller

Note the igloo (snow house) in the left foreground



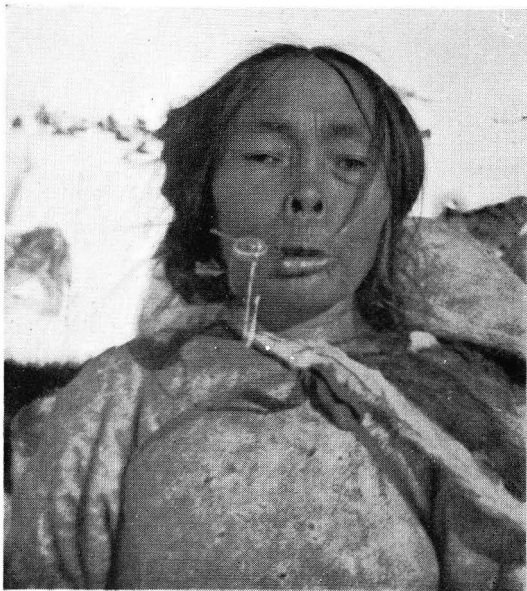
Ooakadlak

The only survivor of one of Canon Turner's dog teams after a long winter journey



The Eskimo : Mukce

The Eskimo :
A woman with her pipe



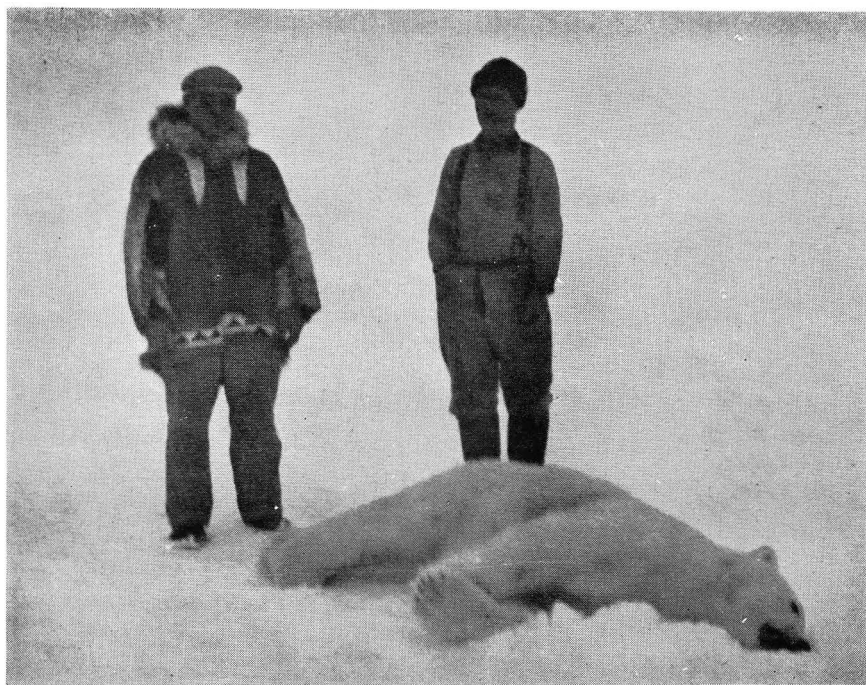
The Eskimo : Mukpak



The Eskimo : Lydia



A captive baby polar bear



A polar bear shot on the trail

introduced the raw recruits to Eskimo ways of living and helped them through the difficult period of adjustment. Ben, in his search for an 'education' was a great source of information to his white teachers and provided one means whereby they quickly grasped the difficult Eskimo language.

John Turner in later years often related stories of Ben's adventures, whom they lovingly endeavoured to treat like a son or a younger brother. One day after John had removed one of Ben's teeth, the lad suggested that he should continue and remove them all and then put them all back again. The missionary explained that this was impossible, but the lad having seen some white person remove a dental plate was insistent and even endeavoured to prove his point by trying to see whether he could remove his companion's full set !

John Turner's letter at this time began to reveal the source of his growing strength, and the reason for his later success as a missionary. Each evening in the dusk, as the Northern Lights played across the heavens, or the moonlight floodlit the seas, he sought the quietness of the upper deck, and there spent precious times of meditation and prayer. The words of an old familiar hymn sung by friends at home often came to him,

“ Walk with me,
Precious Saviour, walk with me.
All the way from earth to heaven,
Precious Saviour, walk with me.”

These times of quiet waiting upon His God charged his life with a new dynamic so clearly demonstrated in his daily routine.

One night as the boat steamed northward through the Hudson's Straits, he heard God speaking "precious promises" to him from the 43rd Chapter of Isaiah, and these he continually claimed throughout his ministry as being "*Yea and Amen*"¹ in His Saviour Christ.

“ Fear Not :
for I have redeemed thee,
I have called thee by thy name ; thou art Mine.
When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee . . .
I have loved thee . . .
I will say to the North, Give up . . . bring my sons from far,
and my daughters from the ends of the earth . . .

¹ 2 Corinthians 1. 20

Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen . . .

I will work, and who shall let it ?

Behold, I will do a new thing ; now it shall spring forth

I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

Therefore a young soldier of the Cross of Christ set foot upon the rocky shore of Northern Baffin Land, conscious of His Master's call and commission, and confident in His ability to undertake in all things.

CHAPTER 8

"I HAVE CALLED THEE BY THY NAME"

POND INLET—NORTHERN NATIVES—MIKENEKSAK—REASSURANCE

THE ship's motor-boat bearing the two missionaries approached the shore at Pond Inlet. Gazing at the land which had never known the shade of a tree and where tiny flowers grew but a few inches high in the short summers, they hardly saw the small sandy shore almost completely surrounded by the hills coming down to the water's edge. For them this was not necessarily Pond Inlet or as in the native tongue Mitsemutalik—'the burial place of Mitsemut', but the place of God's appointment.

This mission station was to be the headquarters for the most northerly parish in the British Empire and most probably the largest. In area it is greater than the whole of England and France together. To the East, across Baffin Bay, stand Greenland's icy mountains. Northward and Westward it is bordered by the famous North-West Passage, the grave of so many fond hopes and brave seamen.

The work of these missionaries was to be entirely among the Eskimo, for apart from a handful of white men they are the only inhabitants of this Arctic fastness. It is a desolate land, creating an impression of barren rocks, stunted growth, and wind-swept snow. Summer is like one long day of nearly three months' duration and winter is a night of similar duration. Between the two there are periods of twilight. In winter the northern traveller depends a great deal upon the light of the moon. The Eskimo are a nomadic people, whose peregrinations are governed by the seasons and the supply of game. They dwell in camps, which may be hundreds of miles apart, and which vary in size but seldom contain more than a few families.

The sole means of transportation during the cold period, snow being on the ground for ten months of the year, is by dog team and sledge, which when loaded will weigh up to 1,200 pounds. Twenty miles of travelling a day is a good average in the depths of winter. In the warmer spring weather and in more favourable conditions this distance may even be doubled.

Whaling vessels had in favourable times wintered in the more sheltered waters of Pond Inlet, farther back than any of the living Eskimo could remember, but until now the ministry of the Christian Church had scarcely reached them. The content of the Gospel message was not unknown to them, for in their constant travels other natives had told them a great deal

and in 1928 Bishop Anderson of Moosonee had visited Pond Inlet, both preaching, baptizing and distributing the Scriptures.

These natives now stood upon the shore watching the advent of their new teachers. Standing in groups they conversed animatedly amongst themselves, often bursting into laughter and displaying a sense of good humour and bonhomie. Less touched by civilization than their fellows of the more southerly districts, the Northern Baffin Land natives are usually better dressed, for the hunting is good in the north. They appear healthier, having an abundance of fresh meat. Although in their isolation they are more inclined to be under the influence of their pagan background and their heathen witchdoctors.

When the white men reached the shore the Eskimo came forward to shake hands most ceremoniously, father shook hands and mother shook hands, the children shook hands and even the little babes shook hands, while every face glowed with an eager smile generated by a spontaneous friendship and goodwill.

Each newcomer is given an Eskimo name and because of the marked difference in height, John Turner was called MIKENEKSAK—'the smaller one', and Harold Duncan, being well over six feet, ANGENEKSAK—'the bigger one'.

AYOGESUEYE MIKENEKSAK—'the smaller teacher', is now a name which has become firmly entwined in the history of the Eskimo people and there are few names in the Northern limits of the Eastern Arctic that are given such respect and affection by the native population.

How true it is that when the world only sees a 'small one', God in Heaven may recognize a 'great one' although probably not until Eternity's dawn will the true greatness of the life of Canon John Turner be fully revealed.

The promises which strengthened John's spirit on September 2, 1929, as he began his Arctic missionary career appeared in *Daily Light*.

"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart."

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness."

"For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."¹

¹ Psalm 27. 14; Isaiah 41. 10; Hebrews 10. 36

CHAPTER 9

"BEHOLD, I WILL DO A NEW THING"

POND INLET MISSION, 1929—AT THE MISSION—WITH THE CHILDREN—

A MISSIONARY'S DAILY ROUTINE

"For ye have need of patience"—*Hebrews* 10. 36

FOR two days some members of the Nascopie's crew helped the missionaries lay the foundation of their house and erect its framework. Natives also came along to help. Then the ship slowly steamed out of the Inlet, not to return until the following September.

All the supplies for the mission had been placed on the shore and these could not be replenished until the following year. Probably northern missions are amongst the most isolated and expensive to operate. Mail is delivered but once each year while the freightage charges amount to about one hundred and fifty dollars a ton, or thirty pounds sterling at par (five dollars to the pound). Already during that first week in September snow had fallen and remained strewn over the rocky ground, and nightly the temperature was falling below freezing. It was becoming difficult to handle the tools and the construction of a four-roomed house with loft presented no mean task to these novice carpenters. In describing their progress John Turner wrote in 1930 :

"By the time the boat left we were well on with the work. After a week we were able to sleep in the loft until we had finished the outside work and our own rooms. This took five or six weeks.

After two months we were pretty comfortable. The natives received us warmly, and showed us no little kindness; men and women alike set to and transported all our goods and lumber from the shore to the site. We cannot tell how much we owe to the copies of the Scriptures which we found here but the people gathered around us very readily, eager to unite for worship and hear 'the Word'. We have visited their houses regularly and have always had a warm welcome."

This was but the first of three mission stations that John Turner was instrumental in building in the North. In the Autumn of 1937 he set out to Arctic Bay to found the Moffet Inlet station, but perhaps his personal description of this event will provide a more adequate picture than the words of any third party.

"November 18, 1937. Arrived at Arctic Bay at 2.30 a.m. We wore out the native's sledge completely before we had gone three miles on the land. We cached what gear we could and went on with just my sledge. When my runners gave out we kept patching them with pieces of iron, wood, etc., but eventually had to go on the wood of the sledge and when we finally abandoned the latter about sixteen miles from the head of Adam's Sound, it was getting 'down badly at the heel' and one side was cracked in the middle. One day our camp was only about 200 yards from

the previous one, after nine hours' hard work. Another day we made about 300 yards, and several days we averaged less than a mile. While still near the Pond Inlet side, I thought seriously of going over to a camp and borrowing an iron shod sledge (though even that would have soon worn out as events proved later) but the Lord said unto me—'in Me is thine help'¹, so I refrained and went on as we were and certainly HE did help us through."

"November 25. Left Arctic Bay with borrowed sledges and heavy loads after spending about a week sorting out gear."

"December 3. Arrived at SIORALIK (Moffet Inlet) feeling definitely that this is God's will to stop and build here. Snow was deep and going hard on dogs for whom we had not much reserve food. Huge loads—the native had a load of stores and I had lumber for shack (including door, windows, nails—130 pounds) besides 400 or 500 pounds of other gear."

"December 4. Finish foundations and floor of store and begin sides. Temperature—43° F. Cold on hands!"

"December 11. Go into store—leaving David (native helper) and family in an 'igloo' (snow house). NOT enough wood to finish store roof so use sail."

In this manner yet another mission is born, and concerning its dedication in the following May, the intrepid and zealous missionary writes :

"I should have liked you to have been here for the dedication of the site of this new place but I know you will be with us in spirit, and praying that this may be a centre of Light and Life in a Dark and Dying world. These last two mornings I have had significant and encouraging messages in my daily readings. 'The Lord God of Heaven . . . hath charged me to build Him an house.'² It seems indeed the height of presumption for one so absolutely unworthy to claim this as a word for oneself, but one remembers that our 'sufficiency' is of Him, 'The Lord our Righteousness'."

Again in April 1940, John Turner built the outstation at Fort Ross, which he used as a base for missionary activities amongst the Netselingmiot and other Western natives. It is of interest to note that practically the first hundred dollars subscribed towards the founding of this mission was subscribed by a missionary leaving for furlough who sold his 'breakfast cereals' to an incoming white man and gave the proceeds for this purpose. It is probably the only mission in the world founded on 'Corn Flakes', 'All Bran' and 'Puffed Rice'!

These three centres at Pond Inlet, Fort Ross and Moffet Inlet, during the days since the initiation of this most northerly work, became true centres of light and love.

Each evening when a missionary is in residence, although usually in the winter he is on trail for anything up to nine months of the year, a service is held at the house. Also natives coming in to trade, or for any other reason, will visit the missionary both to enjoy his hospitality and to ask questions concerning difficulties in the Scriptures. During most of these informal chats those in the house will kneel down around the kitchen chairs for a word of prayer, or to commit the visitors to God's gracious keeping.

¹ Hosea 13. 9

² 2 Chronicles 36. 23; Ezra 1. 2

The mission house becomes, too, a centre for the children who come to look at picture books or to play games of ludo, snakes and ladders, chinese checkers, or jig-saw puzzles. It is at these times that the house is filled with laughter and screams of delight. John Turner loved the children and they found in him not only a teacher and a guide, but a very jolly playmate. His ingenuity often created great fun for them. He would wire old radio batteries together and the kiddies would form a circuit, and then the middle two would make a contact by kissing in Eskimo style by rubbing noses. Each time they would get a shock right on the centre of their brown flat noses. They loved it! At other times they would complete the circuit by dipping their fingers for a prize in a bowl of water, and of course the one who could withstand the shock and grasp the prize could keep it. Most nights the fun would end with a large bowl of tea in the centre of the table and each child would be given a long stick of macaroni. A race would then start to see who could drink the most. This method, of course, saved the missionary washing-up duties!

Concerning the children John wrote in his diary, in 1940 :

"I might add that as usual the children occupy their time (not only on Sundays but often during the week) in memorizing Scripture. In just over a fortnight the elder children have practically mastered the first chapter of Romans, and the two younger children are making surprisingly good progress. I hope to get the children to learn in time the whole of the Epistle."

And from Pond Inlet, Christmas, 1942 :

"We had some competitions for the Eskimo. The first one took the form of a Scriptural Examination. I distributed paper among them and then quoted a number of texts and asked for the references. This competition gave much pleasure. Samuel (age 14 years) was the winner with 18 out of 32, a very creditable performance since I am sure very few white people could have equalled it."

The northern missionary's life is very full indeed. The Eskimo people are friendly and seek his teaching. He must learn the language which, as V. Stefansson, the well-known Arctic traveller and pioneer, says, is harder to acquire than Russian, Swedish, French and Greek together, as well as visit his parishioners scattered so sparsely in this wilderness.

John Turner acquired the Eskimo language to a remarkable degree of accuracy and was in the period of his greatest literary accomplishment when his accident occurred. He had prepared a number of Old Testament Books for publication, revised the existing Eskimo New Testament, translated many new hymns and a remarkable number of Scriptural choruses, and had almost completed the translation of the Book of Common Prayer.

In the midst of these arduous tasks the sole regular contact with the outside world, other than by the annual mail ship, is through their radio receiving sets.

Although radio reception in these areas is by no means dependable at all seasons, the isolated white men are usually able to keep abreast of current affairs. A reference to this phase of the missionary's life occurs in John's letters home in October 1940.

"One continues to find the radio a pleasant link with the homeland. It is nice to feel that some of the programmes, at least, we are sharing with our loved ones at home. One such was Princess Elizabeth's delightful debut this evening. It might be of interest to the Princesses to know that their voices were heard at the extreme North of the British Empire.

After service this evening I turned on the radio so that the Eskimo could hear the electrical transcription of that broadcast and at the same time give the gist of what was being said. The Eskimo were very interested as they listened, especially as they had before them, on the walls around, pictures of the Royal Family. It was good to be able to tell them that the King and his family were true believers in the Lord Jesus. It was moving to hear Princess Elizabeth boldly follow the example of the King and Queen and acknowledge her faith in God."

In the darkness of the Arctic Night and the brightness of the summer days, the lone missionary fulfils his task and follows his vocation. Commander Peary, the conqueror of the North Pole, enumerated the forces militating against his victory as being, (1) the difficulty (sometimes almost insuperable) of conveying heavy baggage over steep, rugged, slippery mountains of ice, (2) the difficulty of the piercing, penetrating, paralyzing cold, and (3) the difficulties of the dense depressing darkness—the long polar night. So the workers in the spiritual realm have many problems with which they must contend. If the true experiences of John Turner are to be recorded, some of his many problems must be narrated.

As St. Paul said concerning his missionary labours, "*For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries*".¹

And the works of these adversaries are manifold.

¹ 1 Corinthians 16. 9

CHAPTER 10

“ BESIDE ME THERE IS NO SAVIOUR ”

THE TASK IN HAND—HEATHEN RELIGION—SIN—ANGAKOKS—
CANNIBALISM—GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

THE task of evangelization which faced the young missionaries in 1929 could only have been done in a wisdom and a strength surpassing that of men. Their parish stretched southwards from Pond Inlet to Home Bay on the East coast of Baffin Land, south-eastwards to Repulse Bay on Melville Peninsula, and westwards to King William Island. For more than nine years during his eighteen years of service John Turner lived alone either as the sole Protestant missionary in the district, or when maintaining one of the small bases as a centre for long distance sledge trips to the more outlying regions. Few natives live in this area, probably not more than 2,500, yet only by constant travelling across thousands of miles of territory was he able to carry the message of redeeming love into every camp.

The Eskimo of these Northern parts, scarcely touched by the Gospel message in 1929 and almost pagan in their outlook, were not easily to be won. Even today, some twenty years later, it would appear that their pagan customs and old habits have outlasted in certain places the earthly ministry of God’s faithful and diligent servant.

A few quotations from John Turner’s diaries will give an adequate picture of these conditions as they exist today.

“ May 18, 1941. Amongst these Eskimo one is up against the *old heathen religion*, which has still quite a firm hold, though most of the people are favourably disposed towards Christianity. Some, however, attempt to combine both the old and the new. Often when trouble comes they turn back to the old ‘torngaks’, or spirits. Their cult seems very much akin to spiritism (spiritualism).

One young fellow refused to observe some of the old customs when his elder brother died and for this reason was ostracised by the rest of the camp, though all apparently professed a desire to follow ‘The Book’. There is one custom that is still almost universally observed even by most Baffinlanders and that is the naming of children after dead relatives. On the surface this seems a very innocent custom but there is so much more attached to it than what appears at first sight. I thought that in Baffinland at least all heathen significance had been lost, but I was surprised to learn that even amongst the most promising

Christians there was considered to be 'something in it'. The old heathen belief was that the 'torngak' of the departed returned to the child or children named after the deceased one. Also recently an old man from near Fort Ross, while he was dying, told his sons that as he had great affection for them he was going to return after his decease to look after them, but since his 'torngak' was going to frequent a certain tract of country they must not go there after his death. This was very unfortunate, for that land was the most convenient route to the Trading Post. I used the story of Dives and Lazarus to discredit this belief.¹"

The more awful result of some of these customs is exemplified in a later diary written while staying in a camp in Lord Mayor Bay, Boothia Peninsula, in February 1942.

"At this camp we stayed in a house which was by no means the most suitable, for it was not only small but indescribably filthy—even by Eskimo standards! These folks are loath to abandon completely their old heathen customs. Few if any of the sins found in Sodom are lacking here and in this uncongenial atmosphere any who would follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth² need the mighty power of God. These children here have a special claim to our prayers."

In March of the same year, while in a camp near Spencer Bay, King William Island, the missionary relates more of his experiences.

"This cold reception and lack of friendliness is explained by the fact that these folks still cling tenaciously to their old pagan customs. One of their 'angakoks' 'witch doctors' is a young fellow, possibly in his twenties. Incidentally he is a murderer and his young wife, who instigated the murder in order to be relieved of her former husband, is his accomplice in the 'black magic'. In fact this young lady has had two previous husbands. The first, a white man, became insane and committed suicide by fixing up a rifle over his bed in an 'Heath Robinson fashion'. This woman was at our service and seemed to be quite interested. This was the locality in which Sir John Franklin and his men perished from hunger and scurvy, in spite of the fact that the shallow waters around these coasts abound in 'rock cod'. Beneath their feet there was good health-giving food in abundance yet little or no attempt seems to have been made to procure it, and consequently all the men perished. I pointed out what a wonderful parable this

¹ St. Luke 16. 19-31. ² Revelation 14. 4

was for the Eskimo people. Many Eskimo are just like those white men. God's Word is a 'life-giving food' to our souls, but how many Eskimo are proving it to be so although it is so near to their hands? "

Later on in the same missionary journey yet another contact was made with the heathen witch doctors and their practices.

" April 1942. Unfortunately over at their camp is a noted witch doctor, a young woman. She and her husband do their best to keep the folk following their old heathen customs. Although few of these Eskimo around here want to be led by the witch doctors, most, if not all, have great respect for their powers. Cases of sickness, and barrenness, etc., are attributed to the spell of some person who bears the victim some grudge. This seems to be firmly believed even by the Christians. I told them that Jesus had all power and when he was on earth was able to cast out evil spirits. If He indwells us, no evil spirit has any power over us.

One young fellow, who has a nasty rash on his head, attributes it to the machinations of a certain witch doctor who is displeased with him."

At another camp Mr. Turner came into contact with one of the few Eskimo who has practised cannibalism and is still living. The history of this event is interesting.

" Two Eskimo, a man, Umaga, and a woman, Takornak, were travelling across the land between Igloolik and Arctic Bay just north of the Gifford River, when they encountered great difficulties in deep snow. While struggling with the sledge and urging the dogs forward they seemed to hear strange sounds in the distance which were like a dying animal in great pain, but at times interrupted with a human voice. Drawing nearer, the sounds though cracked and lacking in power seemed to carry some meaning, although the words were jumbled, and at times broken off altogether. Suddenly in the side of a snow drift, sitting in a small shelter, the emaciated form of a woman was discovered, who weeping and in great sorrow, was mumbling :

' I am no longer one who can be with my fellows because I have eaten my kinsfolk '.

By her side was a human skull with the flesh gnawed from the bones. Her face, thin with suffering and sorrow, turned piteously towards her visitors and she moaned repeatedly in almost unintelligible sounds,

' I have eaten my husband and children '.

Apparently this family, stranded by poor travelling conditions and unsuccessful in the hunt had been reduced to the point of starvation. Their dogs had died and they had fed upon the carcasses and had even eaten the skins from their bedding. After the father and the two children had been frozen to death the woman as a last resort had fed upon their flesh. Returning to Igloodik the woman was, years later, re-married and is today the wife of the leading Eskimo there. She has been known to recount these experiences in the presence of her present husband ! ”

John Turner, with a heart filled with love for these needy people, prayerfully sought every opportunity to reach them all with the words of salvation. Here again there is evidence in the diaries of wonderful answers to his petitions.

“ Our Scripture reading for the day (Daily Light, etc.) seemed to encourage us to pray that the Eskimo from the more distant camp might meet with us on the trail. We were not entirely surprised, therefore, when we called at a camp about 15 miles from the Trading Post to learn that four men from the camp in question had arrived the previous evening and had gone on to the post, and here we met them when we arrived at 8.30 p.m. Praise God for His wonderful over-ruling : ‘ *Before they call I will answer* ’, had been one of the promises the previous day. We gave these visitors something of His Word to take home with them. May He add His blessing to our feeble efforts to bring them to a knowledge of Him.”

In spite of many more problems in this Arctic missionary service, the faithfulness which reacheth unto the clouds¹ was gloriously manifested and His Promise, so freely given and so tenaciously claimed, was to be fulfilled—

“ Since thou was precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee : therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.”²

¹ Psalm 36. 5 ² Isaiah 43. 4.

CHAPTER II

"I WILL EVEN MAKE A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS"

DIFFICULTIES—THE SERVANT HONOURED

JOHN TURNER in his wilderness environment was not only to be opposed by the forces of heathendom alone, but also at times the influences of white civilization were not conducive to the progress of his missionary work. Government reports and other publications have indicated these difficulties in a clear and concise manner.

"However, contact with white men during the whaling and exploring days of the past few centuries has added other blood to the race."¹

"I cannot too strongly emphasize the duty of the white man to save a race they have done so much to destroy. The work has been made more difficult by the adoption of white man's sin."²

Any encounters with such problems were not to be too easy for a man whose personal standards were so high and whose vision of "*a perfect man*" in "*the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*"³ was so bright and clear. During some periods of his ministry he found that any relationship with some of his fellow white men was almost impossible without jeopardizing his witness amongst the natives.

At one Christmastide, for instance, when John was living with another missionary, they were both invited to the annual Christmas dinner at the Post. Some unfortunate happenings during preceding months created the necessity of courteously declining this invitation. One of the white men, though, came later to urge the acceptance and was very insistent, even voluntarily promising that if only the missionaries would attend the white men would conform to their unusual standards during the mealtime. He urged that as the missionaries abstained from both alcoholic beverages and smoking that they, too, were most willing during the mealtime to act likewise. Faced by such insistence, generosity and apparent sincerity, the missionaries joined the festivities. However, before the meal was finished one of the men excused himself from the table, promising to return quickly. Shortly afterwards he was followed by another guest. As these men failed to return, fearing some reason for this unheard of breach of etiquette, Mr. Turner also excused himself in similar terms and hurried back to the mission, which he had left in charge of two orphan Eskimo girls who were in the care of the

¹ Government Report

² Captain Burnier, Report 1910

³ Ephesians 4. 13

mission at the time. Quietly entering the mission he discovered the missing guests in the mission house with his native charges.

Such incidents repeated in manifold ways proved a constant hardship. Nevertheless John Turner never evaded his responsibilities 'in Christ' to his white companions and his diaries contain evidence of his zeal and love for them and his friendship with them.

"January 1943, Pond Inlet. Before we left for our Christmas rendezvous with the natives . . . the H. B. C. Manager here gave the usual Annual Dinner and all the white inhabitants were invited. It was an enjoyable time . . . has always treated us very well, we could not wish for anyone more considerate or helpful. We certainly have much to be thankful for in this, for missionaries are by no means popular, generally speaking."

"March 1942, Fort Ross. The next day, Saturday, we covered about 32 miles and reached the camp north of Elizabeth Harbour. There we spent the weekend. On Sunday evening a sledge was reported but as it was Sunday and I do not encourage the Eskimo to travel unnecessarily on that day, I did not go outside to welcome it. It turned out to be the Police patrolling for the ship *St. Rock*, now wintering in Paisley Bay on the West coast of Boothia. The Sergeant, a Norwegian, said he thought it was Saturday! He and his constable and Eskimo helper, Ekoalak, came into the house where we were staying and joined us in our Services. The Sergeant and I sat up talking till about 2.45 a.m. so as I was up again at 6 a.m., it was rather a short night."

"September 1942, Pond Inlet. The *St. Rock* was here several days taking on oil and putting ashore a number of things. Four of the men, including Sgt. Larsen, the skipper, came to our service on Sunday night. They preferred to join in the Eskimo Service rather than have a special service in English."

In these histories of his travels John often speaks of the desire of the white men in the north to be helpful, and there is evidence of his many attempts either to speak to them or loan them literature in an earnest endeavour to win them for His Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. Although he often felt that his labours were being undermined and that some white men did not appreciate his presence, this was by no means entirely true. Once again his Heavenly Father graciously kept His promise to his sincere and earnest servant that "*If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour*"¹, and in September 1938 John Turner was awarded the Coronation Medal in recognition of his 'Arctic Service'. Later in the following year (1939) he was made a Canon of the Cathedral of All Saints at Aklavik (North-West Territories) in the Diocese of the Arctic, a richly deserved promotion after ten years of pioneer activities in the North.

¹ St. John 12. 26

CHAPTER 12

"I WILL BE WITH THEE"

SLEDGE TRAVELLING—DEEP SNOW—IN NEED OF DOG FOOD—BAD ICE CONDITIONS—A BROKEN SLEDGE—IGLOO BUILDING—CROSSING THE LAND—THE LORD SUPPLIES A NEED—ON THE LAND AGAIN—TRAVELLING COMPANIONS—ANSWERED PRAYERS—IN GRAVE DIFFICULTIES—ON THE MOVING ICE

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"—*Hebrews* 13. 5

"Men sometimes grow impatient at what they consider God's slowness. But those rest periods are necessary for later fruitage. Nothing of serious import should be rushed"—*John Turner's Diary*, 1940

The Lord's Sufficiency

"I will go in the strength of the Lord,
To the work He appoints me to do ;
In the joy which His smile shall afford
My soul shall her vigour renew.
His power will protect me from harm,
His grace my sufficiency prove,
I will trust His omnipotent arm,
I will rest in His covenant love."

Author unknown, John Turner's Diary, 1940

WHEN John Turner had been in the North some three years there appeared in his diary a description of sledge travelling.

"Soon after midday we came into very rough ice which meant plenty of warm work. We wanted to reach another snowhouse, so we pushed on. 'Pushed' is hardly descriptive enough; 'struggled', 'stumbled', 'pulled', and 'sweated' are only some of the words needed to describe travelling in the dark, through rough ice and deep snow."

Most travelling in the Arctic regions presents many hazards, difficulties and dangers, and it is so easy at times to be "*much discouraged because of the way*"¹. Like David of old, John Turner in his journey oft "*encouraged himself in the Lord*"² and his diaries are redolent with the fragrance of God's goodness at all times.

¹ Numbers 21. 4

² 1 Samuel 30. 6

“February 25, 1932, Pangnirtung Fiord. Wind extremely heavy. Feed dogs with little meat found here. Repair kumotik (i.e. sledge) broken in rough ice. Walls of snow house nearly worn through by wind, and house half full of snow. Remain here, *Daily Light* very appropriate. ‘*When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet*’¹.”

“March 3, 1932. We have had to leave one sledge and most of our load on the trail and proceed with dogs combined into one team. A bit better going this morning but terrible in the afternoon, through not only deep snow but water underneath it. The weight of snow on the top of the ice had made the water rise through the seal holes. This salt water when it sticks on the runners of the sledge makes the going extremely heavy, almost impossible. Stop at a little island about 3.30 p.m. Feet very wet with salt water, so walk up and down while house is being built, to prevent them freezing; have happy time of communion with the Lord at the same time.”

“March 10, 1932, Amitoakjoogoserk. Today *Daily Light* says ‘*My God shall supply all your need*’ and He cannot break His Word. I sent my native companion off on Monday with all the dogs in company with other hunters of this place to the floe edge. What a sorry sight our dogs were, thin and shivering, and especially when one remembers how well and fat they were when we left Pangnirtung. How slow they were as they started with hardly any load: When we left Pangnirtung they raced away with nearly half a ton . . . One of the hunters returned bringing some seal-meat and blubber and says that three seals have been secured by the men (my man getting one) and that all the dogs have been fed! Praise God! You cannot realize what a great relief it is to know that the dogs have been fed. We expect the hunters back tonight, in fact they have been seen in the distance and I trust that they will arrive with a good supply of dog feed. The Lord said, ‘*ALL your need*’ and there is no doubt that He will make His word good. Meanwhile as I remain here there is a good opportunity of teaching the people. I am having regular teaching times once a day and sometimes twice. There is a young lad here in the last stages of consumption. He is too bad to do much for but I trust that the Word of God which he is hearing daily may do a far greater healing work in his soul. The Lord grant that it may.”

¹ Proverbs 3. 24

“ January 1936, from Pond Inlet to Pangnirtung. We had hoped to reach before night a camp only $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles away but were disappointed. We found that the winds had broken and carried out the ice at the mouth of the fiord and the new ice formed was too thin to bear. We tried by the edge of the land, but broken ice was piled up too badly and there was very deep soft snow all around. We decided therefore to camp and try again in the morning, hoping that the ice would bear by that time. In the morning we found that the winds had been favourable throughout the night in keeping the ice in. The ice was none too thick and there were cracks through which some of the dogs fell occasionally, but we crossed safely to the other side.”

“ March 1936, near Kivitok, Baffin Land. On Thursday evening just before we camped, as we rounded an island we came to a wide crack in the ice. I had stopped my dogs to let Arpak (native helper) get around where the crack was narrowest, but my dogs had still plenty of life in them and before I could stop them some had leapt across the crack to follow the other sledge and I was powerless to hold the sledge back. I could only give it a little push to straighten it and let it go and hope for the best. It seemed almost certain that even if the bow went across safely the stern of the sledge would slip back into the water and all my gear be spoilt, even if the whole sledge was not lost, for it was heavily loaded. Two things, however, were in my favour, the sledge was long and I had placed two heavy seals on the bow where the front of the sledge curves upward and the extra weight prevented the sledge from falling back into the water. The Lord's promise that morning was surely fulfilled—‘*There shall no evil befall thee*’¹.”

Then a few days later :

“ Yesterday the alarm wakened me at 5 a.m. but the wind was almost as strong as ever, so I pushed my head back into my sleeping bag for another $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours, by which time the wind had dropped considerably though there was still heavy ground drift. We encountered rough ice for about a mile after the start and then two or three miles of fairly smooth ice. This did not last long and soon we were back in rough ice again. My native companion was troubled most by the rough ice, mostly on account of his sledge and at dusk his sledge runner buckled under as all the lashing broke. It was impossible for him to proceed so we stopped just where we were, though I had

¹ Psalm 91. 10

hoped to go on until 6 or 7 p.m. Our troubles, however, were by no means over. After chopping up a seal for the dogs—a job which takes a considerable time—we started to build an igloo. The snow was poor, so we took much longer than usual especially as we built a larger house for convenience over the weekend. We had just finished filling in between the blocks of snow with loose snow when the whole thing collapsed like a pack of cards. The only thing to do, of course, was to follow the man who did not succeed, and ‘try again’.”

The narrative of the sledge journeys of Canon Turner is so filled with daily stories of high adventure and his Heavenly Father’s undertaking, that to present a true and fitting picture of his life would take many, many volumes. It is hoped that these will one day be written, that the Church and the world may realize afresh that “*the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*”¹, and loves His children upon earth.

That this book may be a true account of the real ‘Operation Canon’ a few more incidents are included to exemplify other difficulties of the life of the Arctic missionary, although the reader must bear in mind that these are but a few isolated events torn from the glorious pattern of God’s daily beneficence over many years.

“November 1940, between Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet. The day before yesterday was another strenuous day. The snow was soft and deep but no protection from the rocks beneath so we could keep no ice on the runners. In spite of much exertion it is doubtful whether we covered more than three miles. Yesterday we found our hopes realized and the snow was much better though still far from good. At least it was hard in parts. We stopped once to ‘ice up’ (put ice on the runners of the sledge) on a lake and soon after had to cross a rocky ridge and then make a steep and rocky descent. Immediately after this we came to an almost impossible hill to descend. We went to inspect and decided that not only must we take off the dogs but also remove everything breakable from the sledge. We managed to get everything down without mishap, thank God, though it took about 3½ hours, and it was after 6 p.m. . . . We went on for another hour in the glorious moonlight that we have been enjoying lately and then camped at the end of another lake. As a result of our strenuous week’s work, it was 1.30 p.m. when we woke today (Sunday) but nevertheless the remaining hours have been very blessed. You all (Mother and friends at home) have been much in my thoughts and prayers. Angnadloainok

¹ Revelation 19. 6

informs me that he wants to go home. I think he is afraid of making the long journey back with only his young brother. He is only a young fellow and is only now building snow houses for the first time. I had to help him the first night. He has not been long married either and possibly is anxious to get back to his wife whom we left at Strathcona Sound. . . . The Lord's messages today are very encouraging. '*I will bless thee . . . and thou shalt be a blessing*' . . . and '*I have put My words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee with the shadow of Mine hand*'¹."

On the trail the problem of an adequate supply of dog food for the team is always present.

"January 1941, Clyde River. Yesterday the weather—after long waiting—was perfect, and we were up again at 4.30 a.m. and away after 7.30 a.m. We found a place where seal holes were plentiful but in spite of this we had very little success. The Lord had not yet seen fit to grant us the dog food necessary for resuming our journey. We each stood at several holes. Aooloo fired three times without success. Idlout also fired twice without getting a seal. I had two chances and missed one. The first time, however, though I did not hit the seal, the concussion stunned it and I was able to harpoon it quickly, killing it outright at the same time. It was not a large one and while we continued hunting my dogs attacked the sledge and devoured half of it before they could be stopped, but still there was some excellent meat left for ourselves and the remainder will help feed the dogs later. . . . I have been without sugar for about ten days and for some time have been short of biscuits (though locust beans are proving a good substitute). Paraffin was all but finished. . . . The Eskimo at the camp we went to were very hard up and their poor dogs, those that remained, were a pitiful sight. I would like to have given them a good meal but had not got sufficient, though we did give two or three of the weakest some blubber. One of the dogs was too weak even to eat. . . . Next morning while we were at breakfast one dog got over the snow house into the store and this caused a stampede amongst the remaining dogs. Our snow house was unable to stand the weight of the dogs passing over it and it collapsed on top of us. It took us some time to clear up the mess but fortunately the weather was calm and mild (—20° F.) at the time. We were able to clean up the mess as a storm broke upon us."

¹ Genesis 12. 2 ; Isaiah 51. 16

“ February 16, 1941, Middle of Baffin Land on way to Igloolik. On Tuesday there was a strong head wind and drifting snow and the temperature registered -38°F . The prospects were not too pleasant but as the first big waterfall was near, I decided to take part of our load and get that up and then if possible return for the rest the same day or else return to the house to sleep. The wind was so unbearably cold in our faces that we soon determined to dump our load and return to the snow house, but changed our minds and went on to the waterfall which was only about a mile farther on. The fall itself was a straight drop of 50 feet or more so of course it was impossible to ascend there, but to one side was a steep rocky incline, and it was here where we had to climb. We carried our load up on our backs, except my large travelling box weighing about 200 pounds which we hauled up by the dogs, together with a barrel of paraffin. Idlout almost froze his feet and I slightly froze my chin and ear but that is a common occurrence and not at all serious. Next day the thermometer was down to -47°F . but fortunately the wind was not quite so strong; nevertheless it was strong enough to drift the snow along the ground and it was extremely uncomfortable to our faces, but we soon reached the fall and, praise God, had much less trouble than was anticipated. We were able to get up a small load on the sledge in spite of the extreme incline of the ascent. The dogs pulled well. Then we made two journeys using our bear skins for a sledge and thus we got up everything and were loaded up and were ready to start again before 1 p.m. . . . and so again we were able to praise God for obstacles overcome. He had not granted us the human aid we had expected, but in its place He had given *more* grace, and we found that ‘ sufficient ’ for us.”

The choice of suitable travelling companions who are both willing and able to accompany the itinerant Northern missionary is a matter of constant prayer.

“ February 1941, Fox Basin, on way to Igloolik. On Tuesday morning we brought our need of dog food to the Lord as usual, and as this was good deer country expected He would bring some deer to us. However, He speedily answered our prayer in quite a different way. Only a few minutes after we started we sighted a sledge coming in our direction, and it proved to be Pewatok—probably the best hunter in Fox Basin. He had, as usual, a fine team of dogs, and a load of walrus meat. It seemed rather a pity that we should meet him here and so early in the day. A few years earlier, he seemed to have

little interest in spiritual things but since then his keenness to hear has steadily increased. I would like to be able to spend a little time with him but do not feel that I could sacrifice a day. It did not seem to be the Lord's will somehow. I gave them their Scripture Union card which they were anxious to have, and gave his two tiny boys the customary package of sweets, and Pawatok on his part gave me a sack of walrus meat already chopped for the dogs. He bemoaned the fact that it was so early in the day and we could not camp and have some time together, and I heartily agreed, though I felt that I must hurry on. He was in no hurry, he said, and throwing off his load, prepared to turn back with us so that we could camp together that night and have a chance of hearing more. So not only did the Lord provide dog food, but also he sent a helper to take part of our load and go ahead of us! Hallelujah!

We camped early in the afternoon out of consideration for Pawatok and had a good time over the Word in the evening. In the morning Pawatok brought out his New Testament and asked to have various passages explained. We had another nice time over the Scriptures and then talked of other things. He said that I could have all the dog food that I required from his camp. I mentioned that I must look for another travelling companion as Idlout complains of a hernia and ought not to undertake anything strenuous. Pawatok decided that the business in hand was not urgent and, as there was plenty of food at his camp, that he himself would travel with me. 'We need to hear more of this', he said, touching his Bible. 'There is no one I would choose in preference to Pawatok as a travelling companion. He has, I should say, the best team around here and is a really competent hunter and traveller. I cannot help feeling that this is the Lord's arranging. May He grant too that Pawatok may come to a fuller knowledge of the Saviour!'

This prayer was wonderfully answered on Sunday, January 25, 1942, at Moffet Inlet.

"I have no doubt of the sincerity of Pawatok's faith, so last Sunday I felt led to suggest baptism and that evening he was baptized. Beforehand he went diligently through the service to get a clearer conception of the vows he was about to take. Soon after the service we had a quiet little communion service. There were only three of us but the promise holds good. '*Where two or three are gathered together in My name.*'"¹

¹ St. Matthew 18. 20

In a striking way John Turner not only accepted the promises of God but claimed them from God as his right in Christ.

“ March 1941, en route to Fort Ross. I made a mistake in reading *Daily Light* yesterday, reading the portions set for today, but I am sure the Lord intended it to be so for no collection of Scriptures could possibly be more appropriate to our circumstances. ‘*How long wilt Thou forget me, O Lord, forever? Can a woman forget, etc.? The trial of your faith, etc.*’¹ (see *Daily Light* for Evening, March 30).

Again in error I read tomorrow’s portion this morning, and how reassuring: ‘*My God shall supply ALL your need, etc.*’² Again the Psalms for the day (the 30th) are most appropriate, and we have been rejoicing over them in our evening devotion as those who find great spoil. ‘*The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord: and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand: and fillest all things living with plenteousness. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. Who feedeth the hungry . . . who giveth fodder unto the cattle . . . and filleth thee with the flour of wheat*’³.

We have only enough beans for the morning and our rolled oats will make but one more good meal, but we still have plenty of *biscuits and flour*.

. . . When I came up with Pewatok I joyfully discovered that he had got the bear though it was a small one and had already fed his dogs on a great part of it. Nevertheless, our need for the immediate present had been supplied and we thanked God. *However*, His word had said, ‘*according to His riches in glory*’ and this small bear when He had other and larger bears in abundance in these parts was not ‘*according to His riches*’, so we knew that this could not be the whole amount promised nor the final answer to our prayer. We loaded the remains of the bear on the sledge and started off back to our load which was a long distance off and already it was getting on toward 7 p.m. Suddenly Pewatok spotted a bear beyond the barrier of rough ice. The dogs got wind and turned into the rough ice and got stuck. I hurriedly freed some of my best dogs while Pewatok did the same. Then he ran off with some of his dogs, while I got my rifle to follow, but realized it would not do to leave some of the dogs behind me for

¹ Psalm 13. 1; Isaiah 49. 15; 1 Peter 1. 7

² Philippians 4. 19

³ Psalm 145. 15, 16, 19; 146. 6; 147. 9, 14 (P.B.V.)

they would undoubtedly be up to some mischief, especially since mine had not been fed. I therefore stopped and set all the dogs free before following myself. When only a short distance off, some of the dogs turned back. I did my best to make them go on but to no purpose. They were determined to go back to the sledge so I went back with them and harnessed them up again, and taking them some distance from the sledge and out of wind and sight of it, tethered them to a piece of ice.

By this time Pewatok, the dogs, and the bear, were a long way off and worse still there was no indication of the way they had gone. I felt sure that Pewatok and the dogs would overtake the bear and then Pewatok had no rifle with him . . . I imagined him waiting in vain for my arrival and then having difficulty in getting the dogs to leave the bear and return. Already it was getting dark. When would troubles end? I went some distance in the direction that the returning dogs had indicated and then climbed a high pile of rough ice and listened, but the wind was too strong. I went on a bit farther, but again I listened in vain. It was getting dark and I did not want to lose the sledge as well, so I thought I had better return. I followed my own tracks carefully until I came to the place where I had first listened and then close by I lost my tracks on a hard patch of snow. Thinking I could judge my direction well enough I did not stop and look carefully for them but went on. After a time I realized I should be getting nearer the sledge, but did not recognize the ice. First I went in one direction and then in the opposite one in the hope of crossing my outward tracks, but there was no sign of them. I chided myself for foolishly getting off the tracks and started to go back to the place where I had separated from them. I thought that I might start the dogs howling by shouting, so I called out. There was no response. Later though I heard Pewatok's voice and fortunately he was not far off from the sledge. The bear had gone to the southward and he had not been able to follow it. We could not reach our load that night, so Pewatok built a tiny house and we crawled in after giving the dogs their belated meal. We had no primus, no light, but munched frozen bear meat and biscuits before lying down. I was too cold to sleep much—at least one foot was—and I did not want to risk freezing it. The temperature in the house next morning was minus 18° F. and outside it must have been minus 30° F. With no proper meal we felt the cold badly when we started at about 7 a.m."

Two days later in the evening.

“ . . . I finished building the snow house and prepared a ‘ mug-up ’ and kept looking out for signs for Pewatok who had gone out for a bear. The daylight faded but the moon, half-full, was bright. Midnight passed, and then Pewatok’s head appeared in the doorway. The dogs have had a feed, he announced. Praise God! He had fulfilled His promise. The bear was a full-grown female and fat with lots of blubber so this was according to His riches. Furthermore, I can testify that never before have I tasted such lovely bear meat. It was 4 a.m. when we turned in eventually but of course not before remembering the Giver of ‘ *every good and perfect gift* ’ and returning thanks.”

The danger of moving sea ice is also recorded.

“ Easter Day 1942, near Fort Ross. Last Monday we met trouble that might have ended much more unpleasantly than it did, but for the Grace of God. About half an hour after we had started, while attempting to cross a smooth patch of ice it gave way beneath the sledge, for it was new and we had failed to realize it. I could feel the ice giving and shouted to the dogs to keep going but Pewatok called them to stop, and they stopped with the result that the sledge settled down in the water and all our load was in danger of perishing. Fortunately my two more important travelling boxes were on the front of the sledge and were accessible and Pewatok soon got them off the sledge. With the bow of the sledge lighter it lifted, and we were able to start going again but a small pan of thick ice in our road made matters worse than before. The sledge was plowing its way through the ice when one runner went over this pan which was too thick to give, with the result that it threw the sledge over on the side and things which up to now had been dry were tipped into the water. I feared that if we broke the ice which was partially supporting the other runner in an attempt to put the sledge on an even keel, the whole thing would sink. For a long time we were at a loss what to do. Pewatok fell in the water above his knees in attempting to right the front of the sledge, but eventually he got one or two of the heavy things from the middle of the sledge and then while he levered up the nose of the runner that was under water with a spear, I started off the dogs, and fortunately we were able to keep going and reach thick ice—though as we went we plowed a furrow. On reaching firm ice

we set about repairing the damage as best we could and for hours we were beating ice off skins and pouring water out of boxes and pots and pans, etc. By the time we had loaded up again it was after 4 p.m. so practically the whole day had been lost. We camped about an hour later since we still had much to do as a result of this experience. That night we were better able to estimate the damage. The things on top of my smaller travelling case had all been in the water but I am thankful to say that nothing of importance was badly affected. My Bible and other books had not been on the bottom and were not injured. My cine camera and some other valuables including my concertina were in the larger box and into this not enough water had been able to penetrate to do any damage. Our rifles had been on the top of the load and were not at all wet. My sleeping bag was too wet to be of any use for a long time for it will take ages to dry, but I can easily do without it. Most of Pewatok's spare clothes and books were badly soaked."

"March 1942, on the moving ice near Fort Ross. The ice on which we were travelling was moving steadily to the north and was touching the fixed ice, but 'rubble ice' which we would have to cross was not sufficiently frozen together to be safe for a sledge. Idlout, who went over to try it with a spear, had great difficulty in getting back. It was getting dark and was extremely cold, and the prospect of spending the night on this damp new ice without shelter was not very pleasant. I felt sure, however, that the Lord would not allow us to endure that, and He didn't.

"After a short time the ice touched at a safer place quite handy and we hurried across. The dogs were most unwilling, and we had difficulty in getting the sledge through the rubble caused by the grinding of the floes. To crown it all our sledge tipped over in the process. It was 11 p.m. before we were able to camp. It was very cold and our boots were frozen stiff but in a couple of hours we were enjoying the modest comforts of a snow house. All through the night the roar of the grinding ice floes was terrific and awe-inspiring. How wonderfully our God takes care of us—'The steps of a man (it does not say "good" in the original) are ordered by the Lord'¹. Praise God! As usual *Daily Light* was most appropriate yesterday. 'He... preserveth the way of His saints.' 'The Lord your God... went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in.' 'Many

¹ Psalm 37. 23

*are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.*¹

Thus this man of God travelled, seeking lost sheep for his Master's fold, fighting each day the good fight of Faith and following after righteousness. In all John Turner's trips, covering well over 25,000 miles of hard winter travelling, he had nought but praise for His loving kindnesses.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."²

¹ Proverbs 2. 8; Deuteronomy 1. 32, 33; Psalm 34. 19

² Psalm 23. 6

CHAPTER 13

"WHEN THOU PASSEST THROUGH THE WATERS"

OPPOSITION AND EVIL INFLUENCES—FALSE PROPHETS—COMMITTED TO HIM
THAT JUDGETH RIGHTEOUSLY—AMONGST THE PROSELYTIZERS

THERE are times when the missionaries of the Master are cast into the fiery furnace not only of opposition and difficulty, but also of testing, temptation, and divers evils.

Many white people have in the past criticized Christian missions and found it convenient to refer to certain incidents, or mistakes of young and inexperienced missionaries, to support their criticisms. It is not unusual to discover that many such attacks are founded on misunderstanding of the facts, misrepresentation by untrustworthy people, or a poor interpretation of actual events. Such experiences can often be most difficult for the sincere Christian minister, especially if he labours in isolated areas.

John Turner's life was not unmarked by these experiences, which, faithfully recorded in his diaries, will enlighten the reader yet further concerning his valiant fight for the Faith. In one of his last letters to his mother he wrote,

"December 1946, Moffet Inlet. '*Against principalities, against powers.*' I am sorry to say that recently two or three Eskimo not far from here have set themselves up as 'prophets' to their own people. By their fruits it is evident that they are false prophets and it is good that the Scriptures give ample warning that such would arise. We pray that this may turn out to the furtherance of the gospel. Two Eskimo arrived last week to tell me the news and I hastily wrote letters to those concerned and also epistles of warning to all the rest. Fortunately there were some other visitors here at the same time so that we were able to send our letters in all directions without delay."

"March 1947. It certainly does seem that the trouble I mentioned has turned out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel. Most of the Eskimo seemed quite alarmed, realizing that this was the work of the Evil one and a number who had not bothered very much about spiritual things now appear to be taking some interest. Evalak and Aooloo his son-in-law have camps close together and it was there that the trouble began. It seems that Aooloo's wife began acting strangely last fall. She set herself up as a teacher and to give authority to her words pretended to be able to perform ridiculous little miracles.

Probably as a result of her influence her half-brother and her husband were affected. When some visitors from Fury and Hecla Straits called by their camps on their way to the Post to trade, they, too, became influenced, so much so that they all became abnormal and one young fellow lost his reason for quite a long time. Alooooloo, Evalak and son went along to the post with these visitors and influenced several of the Eskimo at the camps on the way, who in turn became abnormal. It is doubtful whether one of these has completely recovered mentally. Immediately Evalak and his party had returned to their camps, two Eskimo arrived, as I mentioned, to report this matter and seek advice.

As is usually the case, the false prophets had mixed a little Scripture in with their teaching with the result that a number of the Eskimo were half inclined to believe them.

Our epistles, however, seemed to have the desired effect. Thank God! And now most of those who were influenced for evil realized the danger they were in and will, I feel, be more careful in the future. The whole affair was obviously the work of evil spirits¹, and one fellow under their influence claimed to be God. When he arrived, however, at Christmas he immediately confessed his wickedness and seemed truly sorry for what he had said and done. He found much comfort in Psalm 51. Alooooloo and his wife called a few weeks ago and they too seemed sorry for what they had done. The woman is still 'mental', though her husband says she is improving gradually. I had a letter also from the young fellow who lost his reason, and he thanked me for writing to admonish him, and said how grateful he was that his reason had been restored. Evalak and his son have also called twice since I sent out those epistles but I fear that they do not show any sign of true repentance, though they do seem very anxious to please us. None of the Eskimo will call by their camp now so they feel very isolated. Evalak's son denied saying a number of things of which he was accused; he said people had misinformed me. I told him that whether I had been misinformed or not the chief thing was the influence which his words had on those who heard him and this influence I knew was entirely evil.

The Spirit of God would never make people say and do the things which those people who had been influenced said and did. Evalak's son Eperk, has always had a very high opinion of himself, and I know he will find it hard to confess that he was in error. Although the

¹ Timothy 4. 1

trouble is over for the moment, I cannot feel that we have seen the last of it so prayer is needed that the devil, who will undoubtedly return to the fight, may be completely defeated."

The incidents recorded above occurred after the veteran missionary had laboured consistently for nearly seventeen years amongst these people. Perhaps the reader can envisage the perils in which the young Christian Church of the Northern wastes stands now that their faithful pastor and friend has left them.

In the midst of this wrestling with the enemy, even the missionary's character, reputation and person are not exempt, being brought under constant bitter attacks. In 1939, before he returned home for furlough, John Turner employed various native families at Moffet Inlet to do certain tasks for him. As the natural Eskimo is a very carnal person both in word and deed, the missionary's kindness was most evilly repaid, but the results of the wickedness was not known to John Turner until some three years later.

"Christmas Day 1942, Pond Inlet. '*Against the wiles of the devil.*' There was only one thing to mar the pleasure of a happy day, and that was the news of having to deal with a very unpleasant affair. I hesitate to mention it, but this would be a very one-sided account of things if I omitted it, and in any case it will serve to show how active the enemy is, and how much we need your prayers. While I was home on furlough a woman made some serious and absolutely untrue remark about me. She possibly thought that I would never return to the North. Until the spring though, I was quite ignorant of the unwholesome rumour that had gone far and wide. I do believe that there were many who refused to believe it but unfortunately there were some who would like to think that there was some truth in it. Angnawyak was the first to acquaint me of the story and I immediately summoned the woman in question and made her answer for herself before Angnawyak. Of course she could not substantiate the story, and denied even having said anything of the sort. All I could do was to urge the woman to make known the truth so that 'the work' would not suffer. The matter virtually dropped until a few weeks ago when a young man came along obviously distressed in mind.

He went straight to his subject. He had been the person to hear those unpleasant remarks about me from the woman's own lips, and there is little doubt about the fact that it was he who helped to spread the tale. Now, however, he himself had become the victim regarding some further remarks the woman had made more recently. He said

that he had been inclined to believe what the woman had first told him about me but now that he had some obvious evidence of her untrustworthiness, he accepted her word no longer. I told the young fellow that at the first opportunity we would have this poor woman face to face and do our best to clear up the matter. Of course I could safely leave my defence in the Lord's hands,¹ but I felt that for the work's sake it was essential that I should do all in my power to counteract the effect of this evil report.

This Christmas was our first opportunity of meeting the woman together. I called her and the young fellow along to our snow house and invited Samuel in as a witness. I might have invited more witnesses but the size of our snow house would not allow it. At first the woman denied having circulated the evil report, but when the young fellow recalled the words she had used she remarked quietly, 'Did I say that?' He assured her that she did and she remained silent. When he reminded her of some of her more recent untrustworthy stories she tried to justify herself but was not very convincing. When they had finished I turned to Samuel and said, "You were living over at Moffet Inlet with me and know very well my mode of life. You know there is no truth in this story that has been circulating". Samuel assured me that he himself had not even heard the story nor had he known any such evil to charge me with. I then tried to show the woman the great evil she had done—not so much to me personally, that did not matter a great deal as far as I was concerned—but to the Lord's work here, by putting a stumbling block in the path of the Eskimo and others. I urged the three of them to do their utmost to counteract the evil done. I am afraid, however, that some amount of evil had already been caused, but we have a wonderful God who is able to turn even curses into blessings."

Added to these trials and temptations to despondency in the heat of the conflict, the missionary needed much grace to face the incessant subtleties of active Roman Catholic opposition. In the same summer of 1929 the Roman Catholic Church established its mission at Pond Inlet and thus this small settlement, hundreds of miles from civilization, with but three hundred and eighty natives from widely scattered camps trading into its store, was to be the scene of rivalry in the name of Christianity.

The subsequent history of these missions, although closely connected

¹ 1 Peter 2. 23

with the life of Canon Turner, must not be permitted to colour this narrative too greatly. John reporting to his headquarters in 1931 said :

“The R.C.’s. have been more active this year and just recently I felt led to give some direct warning against them. Hitherto I had been content with, very occasionally, pointing out one or two of the chief differences between the R.C. teaching and that of the Scriptures (e.g. re mariolatory, Corporal Presence, etc.), but when I learned of definite attempts on the part of our adversaries to pervert the people—and you are not ignorant of Rome’s devices—I felt the time had come for something more aggressive. We had always, of course, exalted the Scriptures, and this is where we have a great advantage over any false teaching. The people have a great reverence for the Word of God, and any appeal to it is final.”

How effective this prayerful ministry and witness proved in the North, is amply exemplified in the recent words of a Roman Catholic bishop who is responsible for that district. His words were reported in *La Presse*, Montreal, October 23, 1946 :

“Of the three hundred and fifty natives of Pond Inlet where ‘oblates’ established a post in 1929, not a single person in good health has consented to receive baptism . . . it is not superfluous to note that a protestant missionary lives here.”

The eighteen years of service at Pond Inlet demonstrate a glorious triumph for the Reformation principles and historic Scriptural Faith of the Church of England, upheld by a single minister who was faithful to his vocation. It would be a mistake, though, to think that this aggressive opposition to the Protestant cause was easy to bear.

It is a hard thing for primitive Eskimo to see white men, professing to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, who will not shake hands or greet one another. Bribery, untruth, misrepresentation and baser methods are not new to students of history, but to the isolated natives of the Northern darkness they provide nothing but misunderstanding, and a hindrance to full spiritual development. Old native men and women in these Arctic wastes, by nature given to hospitality, friendly and happy, have found themselves threatened with eternal punishment if they entertain a Protestant missionary. New Testaments and Prayer Books have been confiscated and burned by the servants of Rome. One good example of these methods is given in John Turner’s diary for March, 1946.

“Those who have been asked here why they follow the priests have acknowledged that they have no desire to do so but simply respond to pressure. The priest tells them all that unless they follow

him they will die. His latest story is that the great chief of Protestant teachers (presumably the Archbishop of Canterbury) has now become an R.C. so it is foolish to follow the 'teachers'."

Roman Catholic priests in the North have been known to support such claims by showing pictures of the hierarchy of the Protestant Church, extracted from the daily newspaper of civilization, in which they are wearing vestments which the priests claim are essentially Roman.

Throughout the past eighteen years the Church of England staff has nearly always been outnumbered by three to one, but as "*He can save by many or by few*", and His Word is the Sword of the Spirit to those who wear the helmet of salvation, the victory has been sure.

During his missionary journey in 1940 Canon Turner reported one of his many brushes with the Roman Catholic priests which may prove interesting.

"This morning just as we started our service in one of the snow houses here, I was surprised to see one of the priests coming in.

... Father—— is a very ardent Romanist who misses few opportunities of proselytizing. One cannot doubt his sincerity and undoubtedly it was his conscientiousness that made him come to our service. One could not help admiring him for it. He listened quietly throughout our service. The Scripture Union (of which most of our natives are regular daily readers) portion seemed rather appropriate, being St. Mark 7. 1-23, and spoke of those who made the Word of God of no effect through their tradition. In my comments I told the Eskimo that the Word of God is our only guide, neither I nor the priest here was to be followed except in as far as we adhered to the Scriptures. After we had finished our service the priest got up and said he had a word for the people. He said that the 'teachers' (as we are called by the Eskimo) differed much amongst ourselves and were no guides to the people, but the Church of Rome was one the whole world over and only through the priests who were infallible could the people get the Truth. He also mentioned the subject of saint worship which I had been attacking very strongly. I feel that there is nothing more dishonouring to God than mariolatry and saint worship. They are a wilful breach of the First Commandment."

In the dim recesses of that snow house with perspiring natives crowded together, with their dark eyes intent upon the speakers and the flickering light of the blubber lamps casting strange shadows on the igloo walls, the controversy continued.



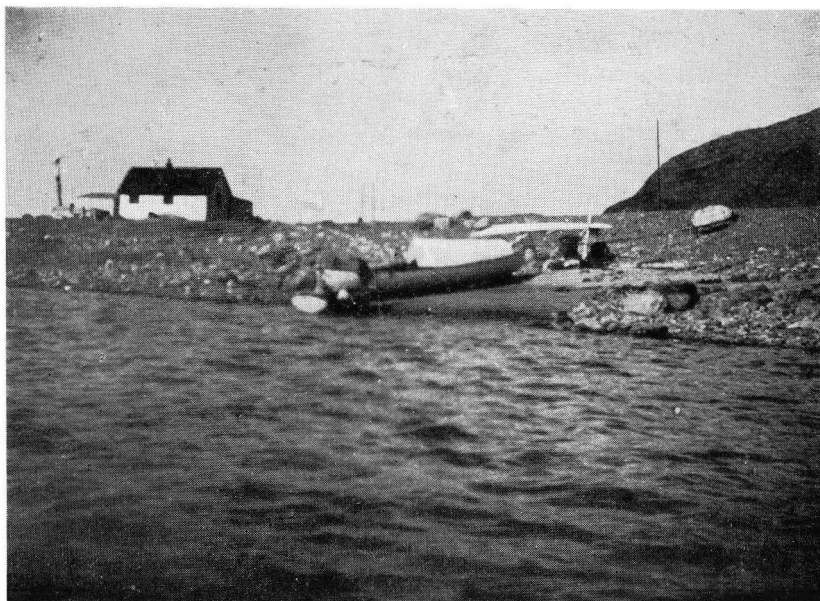
Cutting up a large seal for dog food
At the same time the skin is being prepared for a seal skin line



Building the Moffet Inlet mission house



Building the Moffet Inlet mission house



The mission house and 'shipyard' at Moffet Inlet, August 1947



After the wedding at Pond Inlet, August 29 1944

Note the *Nascopie* in the background

Left to right: Mr. HUGH LONGFIELD, O.I.C. Meteorological Station at Arctic Bay, the Best Man; Miss JEAN GREENLAW, en route for Pangnirtung as a nurse in the Diocesan hospital, the Bridesmaid; Mr. J. W. ANDERSON, Manager of the Ungava Section of the Hudson's Bay Company, who gave the Bride in marriage; and the Bride and Bridegroom



After the wedding at Pond Inlet, August 29 1944



CANON and MRS. J. H. TURNER, with JUNE and GRACE
Moffet Inlet, March 1947



MRS. J. H. TURNER, with JUNE, GRACE and FAITH
England, January 1948

“Father —— said that we knew that the saints were with God, and so it was right to seek their help. He gave no Scriptural reference, of course. He quoted 2 Peter 3. 16 to prove that it was not right for the folk to attempt to understand the Scriptures without the guidance of the priests. I allowed the priest to have his say and then replied. I said that it was perfectly true that there were different kinds of ‘teachers’, but I reminded them that I had said previously that we were not to take man as our guide, but simply the Word of God Himself. I quoted John 7. 17 and said although it was true there was much that was ‘hard to be understood’ in the Scriptures just as there is in all God’s works, yet it only requires a sincere mind and a willingness to do His will to be able to understand all that is necessary (to our salvation). I disagreed that the Church of Rome was as united as the priest would have us believe . . .

How were we to know that the priests were the only true guides? I asked. Were we to accept blindly their word for it? I saw nothing in the Bible to that effect. He had said that our Scriptures contained errors, but the priest was unable to produce any evidence of the fact though I invited him to do so. One of the Eskimo had asked him to do the same thing and had received no enlightening reply.

I was very conscious of the Lord’s help in speaking, and I cannot help feeling that the whole affair will turn out to the furtherance of the Gospel and not to the advantage of the Church of Rome as intended. The Psalms for the day again seemed most appropriate, Praise God!”

How reminiscent this is of the words of John Bunyan :

“Then did Mr. Greatheart, Mr. Contrite, Mr. Holy Man, Mr. Dare-Not-Lie and Mr. Penitent with their weapons, go forth to meet him. Now the monster, at first was very rampant, and looked upon these enemies with great disdain; but they so belaboured him, being sturdy men-at-arms, that they made him make a retreat . . . And it is verily believed by some that this beast will certainly die of his wounds.”

But even John Bunyan never conceived of Greatheart as going into battle by himself. Perhaps now that Greatheart has been called from the fray, his comrades of history will step forward to fill the breach and meet the raging of the seriously wounded enemy.

CHAPTER 14

“MAKETH MANIFEST THE SAVOUR OF HIS KNOWLEDGE
BY US IN EVERY PLACE”

ON FURLOUGH

IT is natural that the thoughts of the missionary in the Church in far distant places should often turn homeward, and the longings come to see familiar faces and embrace loved ones. John Turner had a great affection for his home, and a deep love for his mother. These emotions, though deep and intense, seldom caused, as they so often do, soul distressing home sickness, for he found true communion and satisfaction in prayer around the Throne of Grace. When reading his diaries the impression is sometimes given that he managed to participate in a real, though spiritual way, with many of the events at home.

“January 4, 1942. We are reminded over the radio from London that today commences the Universal Week of Prayer. I am still the more glad therefore to be at home with you all and with all Christians throughout the world.”

He never seemed to forget a loved one's birthday, and special prayers were offered on that day. The open-air meetings on the beaches or in the streets in which he formerly was such an effective and appreciated witness were always remembered, and on his knees he battled for the Faith with his friends in other places. In order to keep pace with events at home a pile of 'last year's' Church papers and periodicals were always kept by the side of the meal table, and while eating, in order that no time should be lost, he would also digest their contents.

“October 12, 1941, Moffet Inlet. My meal times have been very long—though rendered pleasant and profitable—by perusing *The English Churchman* that Miss Todd so kindly sent.”

“July 1943, Moffet Inlet. The periodicals, though some are now two years old, have been much appreciated. Especially *The English Churchman*, which made many a meal time much more enjoyable and profitable. I finished them only yesterday.”

An impression that John Turner did not look forward to his furlough must not be created, for he deeply appreciated the spiritual fellowship of his praying friends, and the atmosphere of his mother's house was a comfort to him. During his years of service he returned to England only twice. At first in 1933-34 and again in 1939-40. His friends noticed during the latter visit that his thoughts seemed to turn often northwards and the time did not seem to pass quickly enough before he could return to his deeply loved people in the land of his adoption.

Although at home and on furlough, John still retained his sense of vocation, and the urgency of his message burdened his heart. The man who so often knelt in snow and ice and braved the opposition of the elements and the hindrance of sinful man, now in the midst of 'civilization' and the progress of the 20th century displayed the same zeal, courage, and sincerity of purpose.

An incident that occurred at a Glasgow railway station, and its sequel on the train journey southward, is of untold interest to those who would seek to know the truth of this man's life. James Stewart, the founder of the European Evangelistic Crusade, was paying one of his many flying visits to his native Glasgow. In showing his ticket at the barrier he handed the ticket collector a Gospel tract urging him to read it. "What!" exclaimed the ticket man, "another of you religious chaps giving away leaflets?" "What do you mean?" asked Stewart. "Just now a tall chap gave me one of these things", the collector replied, as he waved Stewart's tract in the air.

Thinking that the company of 'another religious chap' might be interesting on the long journey southwards, Stewart asked to be shown the carriage which the 'tall chap' had occupied. Soon both men were deep in conversation. They possessed so much in common and both were filled with the same passionate love for the unconverted. "What's your name?" asked Stewart. "Turner, Jack Turner of the B.C.M.S. Arctic Mission", replied his newly-found companion. "What does B.C.M.S. stand for?" enquired Stewart. "Is that a Baptist or a Brethren society?" Turner explained the meaning of the initials B.C.M.S. Stewart looked at Turner. "But you can't be a member of the Church of England and distributing tracts. I've never heard of such a thing." Turner laughed heartily and explained that within the borders of the Church of England there was a large band of keen, faithful people who did such things. Stewart was hard to convince. A member of the Church of England giving away tracts! He had seen many strange things in his widely travelled life but this was a new experience. John Turner saw incredulity written on the young Scottish evangelist's face. To give convincing proof he took down his travelling bag from the luggage rack and opening it he displayed his surplice, scarf and hood which he had been using over the weekend, during deputation services. This final revelation was nearly too much for Stewart. A member of the Church of England giving away tracts—well! Perhaps that might be true. But a clergyman of the Church of England doing so! That seemed impossible. Yet the evidence was before him. The collector's testimony, the broad-shouldered young missionary, the suitcase containing clerical attire. He bowed before the

inevitable, and both praised God together. By the time the train had conveyed Turner to his destination they had talked long and earnestly of the work that lay nearest and dearest to their hearts—one, of his passion for the scattered Eskimo, and the other, of his yearnings for Europe's suffering millions. In relating this story James Stewart said, "Jack Turner was one of the finest Christians I have ever met".

John Turner was an acceptable and efficient deputation speaker for his missionary society as may be well imagined. The following letter from a young boy in England reveals the enthusiasm for his work. Only those who knew him, though, ever realized how hard he found preaching, and how inadequate he felt himself.

"Canon Turner visited this small town in the early days of World War II. I do remember this visit very well as he gave the most interesting talks on the Arctic and its peoples. There was snow on the ground at the time and the Canon was in his element as we boys stood aside and watched him run and crack his whips. He also brought a model 'igloo' and we all had a very interesting time trying to build it, and even though it was a model there was still a 'knack' in building it, and the Canon was the only one who could overcome the difficulty.

Canon John Turner was a great man and it will take an awful long time for another servant to do such work as he did in his time with the Eskimo."

One of the most revealing incidents that occurred to John while he was at home happened in 1934. Just a few weeks before he was due to sail back to the mission field he developed an acute attack of appendicitis. The operation was successful and he soon returned for convalescence. As the time for his sailing drew near an attack of pleurisy prolonged his recovery and medical advisers were strongly against his departure. His surgeon, somewhat concerned about his patient, paid him a surprise visit, and discovered to his dismay that John was not in bed, but sleeping in his old boyhood tent in the garden despite a late frost—in order to harden himself to go back to the Arctic. His determination and these methods won over both doctor and the committee of the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society, and all gave their consent for his return. As soon as the ship reached his station he wrote home saying, "Thank God I am once more at Pond Inlet".

Could there ever have been a more fitting representative of the Church of England than this man, whose life both on the mission field and at home showed such wholehearted devotion and singleness of purpose to do His beloved Master's Will?

CHAPTER 15

“THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID”

FRIENDSHIP—DELAY—ENGAGEMENT—THE WEDDING—BLESSINGS

“Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord”—*Proverbs* 18. 22

“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”—*St. Matthew* 6. 33

THE missionaries had often sat together in their Pond Inlet house and discussed their life and witness amongst the natives. Sometimes, but not often, the subject of marriage would be discussed. Natives would often question why the missionaries had no wives and there could be no doubt that the celibate missionary was in some ways handicapped while living with these primitive and natural peoples. Amongst the natives a man without a wife is an oddity. In their simple philosophy of life it was not good for man to be alone, and a wife is not only a companion and help-meet but essential to the completion and fulness of living. Celibacy for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake is to them an incredible idea, and appears totally unnecessary.

The missionary often realized what a real witness a Christian home and family could be to the people, but always the discussion would end with the thought—whoever would ask a loved one to share such a life of hardship, loneliness, and difficulty? Sometimes a brave young woman would venture into this wilderness of ice and snow and the white men would moodily foresee tragedy or unhappiness. More brides came, brave, courageous and earnest and their influence was seen to be good amongst the natives, especially with the women and children. Their husbands, too, were happier and more settled.

What of the missionaries in the more distant place, far from the reach of civilization? Were they not committed to months of travelling each year? Surely no one could expect a wife to share such an ‘existence’. Sometimes when a missionary biography was studied, though seldom in the foreground, the wonderful work of a Christian help-meet could be seen contributing much to the success of her husband. These facts were at times measured against the Scripture teaching, and the Gospels and St. Paul's words¹ would weigh heavily in the discussion, which would usually end with a confident assertion that *if* God wanted them to have a help-meet, one would certainly be prepared and ready in His time!

¹ St. Matthew 19. 12; 1 Corinthians 7. 7-9, 29-33

This time came for John Turner during his furlough in November 1939 when he was introduced to Miss Joan Miriam Hobart. Little did Joan think as she spent her girlhood in foreign countries and camped with girl friends in the deserts of Egypt, visited the bazaars, and grew to love the nationals among whom she lived, that she was being well prepared for missionary labours in the Arctic regions in Canada. The day did come in her life, however, when she found in the Lord Jesus Christ her own personal Saviour and acknowledged Him as her Lord, willingly giving her life for His service anywhere.

This friendship between John and Joan ripened into a deep affection. As no 'directions' seemed to come from 'above.' John sailed back to his mission field in the following July alone and with no understanding reached concerning their future, other than that they both desired God's Will for their lives.

John then spent two years in sole charge of the territory before another missionary recruit joined him in the person of the Rev. Tom Daulby. Of his coming to the North John wrote in his diary after receiving a radio message from the Bishop,

"February 1942, Fort Ross. Regarding Tom Daulby's coming 'him whom He hath chosen will He cause to come'¹ seemed very appropriate and reassuring in my reading last night."

Not until 1943 did John Turner feel that it was God's will that he should ask Joan Hobart to share his life in the North. During the past three years Joan had completed her missionary training at the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Training College for Women at Bristol and had begun her nurse's training at the East Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital.

In June 1944 Joan started on the long and hazardous wartime journey into the North. The wedding took place on August 29 at Pond Inlet. Perhaps Joan's personal description of that happy day could be appropriately included here.

"September 3, Pond Inlet. At midnight on August 28, 1944, I was in my cabin on the R.M.S. *Nascopie* reading *Daily Light* for the 29th for we were expecting to reach Pond Inlet within a few hours from that time. God's Words are always true and apt but it would have been difficult to have chosen anything more suitable for that long-looked-for day. The first quotation being, "*Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he*", and the last, "*O fear the Lord ye His saints for there is no want to them that fear Him*". By 3 a.m. we had dropped

¹ Numbers 16. 5

anchor, so I dressed and went out on to the deck. The beauty of the morning and of the scenery was indescribable. The sun was just rising over the snow-capped mountains at the back of the Post, the air was frosty and invigorating and the deep blue sea was unruffled by any wind. This glorious morning was a forerunner of a wonderfully fine sunny day which proved to be the warmest and most perfect of the whole summer. Is it true that "*the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord?*" It wasn't long before Jack had come on board and we met again after just over four years. It was the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes.

We went ashore almost immediately as there was much to relate and to see. I met the Rev. Tom Daulby, Rebecca and the Eskimo helpers. It was hard to believe that it was so early on my wedding day and therefore so unconventional. The sun was high in the heavens and the air warm and bright. Occasionally I would pick up my ears as I heard the 'alert' siren—only to find out later that it was the wail of the dogs. The ceremony was to be at 10 a.m. Jean Greenlaw (my bridesmaid) and I went up to the Mission house to get dressed. We were escorted by a few of the male passengers who carried our suitcases and the wedding cake. The latter being borne like a coffin, as it was packed in a large cardboard box and was held aloft at shoulder height on a small sledge. As may be imagined there was much mirth!

Now for some kind of description of the wedding. The folding doors between the kitchen and the dining-room were thrown open and the witnesses sat closely packed together on chairs along one side of the room, leaving a very narrow passageway on the other side so that I might enter from an adjoining bedroom. Thus the 'aisle' was from one end of the room, past the stove to the table under the window in the centre of the end wall! When everything was ready Jean preceded me and Mr. Anderson (H.B.Co. District Manager) waited at the door of the bedroom till I was ready to be led to the top of the room where Jack, Tom, Jean and Hugh Longfield (passenger friend and best man) were waiting. Actually there were two Royal Canadian Mounted Policemen *in the chancel* as well because of lack of space. After the service the necessary folks adjourned to the aforementioned bedroom where the register was signed, then we returned to the larger room for the reception."

Joan proved a wonderful companion to her husband, entering fully into his life and work. In their short life together she learned to love the Eskimo,

travel with her husband on short sledge trips and live in igloos, take Eskimo service when he was absent for months on end, and attended to the medical needs of her native visitors as well as tend to her home.

In June 1945 a daughter came to bless that home located 800 miles away from the nearest doctor, and Joan wrote in her diary :

“On June 4 at 10.15 a.m. our daughter June Mary was born. At birth she weighed eight pounds and continues to progress according to schedule although she seems disinclined to sleep for the prescribed length of time. To her parents she is a gift from the Lord and a potential ambassador for Christ. To Pond Inlet she is a record-maker being the first white child to be born here and the only one in residence. To the Eskimo she is of great interest and amusement.”

In the summer of that year this happy family moved to the little two-roomed house at Moffet Inlet situated seventy miles away from the nearest white man, and Jack now attended to the more westerly natives of the district and concentrated on his literary work. In September 1946 Barbara Grace was born, and they were all very contented enjoying life to the full, finding satisfaction in daily service to the Eskimo, and one another, and never feeling isolated or lonely. They had the assurance that they were working with their Lord and Saviour, knowing that they were where He had placed them.

“I am with thee . . . in all places whithersoever thou goest.”¹

“As thou goest step by step, He shall open up the way before thee.”

¹ Genesis 28. 15

"I WILL SAY TO THE NORTH, GIVE UP"

A 'CASE' AGAINST MISSIONS—THE MISSIONARY'S ANSWER

CHRISTIAN missionary efforts do not necessarily receive the support of all people even from within the limits of Christian congregations. There are authors who are frankly critical of such endeavours. A good example of such opinions is included in *The Queens (University) Quarterly* of Spring 1944, in an article entitled "When God came to the Belchers'" by Alan Sullivan. In this well-written article the author composes his contribution around some unfortunate happening in those islands where 'religious murders' are reported to have taken place. At that time certain men and women called themselves 'God', 'Jesus Christ', 'Holy Spirit' and 'Satan'. These natives had had no pastoral oversight for almost sixteen years and, in the opinion of one who has had experience with such native peoples, the first cause of these events does not necessarily lie in religion. It is incredible that in these days of 'advanced learning' it is still possible for men to accept events on their face value rather than seek their true origin. That these people should use religious terms to excuse their conduct does not necessarily imply that they are religious people. It is hoped that one day those unfortunate happenings in 'the Belchers' may be fully understood and the real cause of the evil brought to light. Alan Sullivan, in his presentation of these events, concludes in this way :

"What then are mentalities like these (Eskimo) capable of absorbing from our conflicting philosophies, our too numerous rival creeds? Under our conditions of living these northern tribes sicken and die. They are congenitally allergic to what we call civilization and the impact of any religious subtlety shakes their reason. They cannot discern fine shades of difference. A thing is black or white.

That some divinity should have appeared on earth cycles ago has no significance to folk who are without consciousness of the past and have no vision of any future save a cessation of the struggle of today. Who are we to question their immorality? Their battle is for life only and it has been the harder since the white man came with gunpowder, liquor and disease.

Ages ago by mastery and occupation the forerunners of Peter Sala made the far Arctic their own fronting the Lord of the North with spear and bow. We are but newcomers in these solitudes.

Today they ask little more than that they be left alone in the bleak wilderness they know so well. Why, then, should we violate the austere seclusion of these spartan lives?"

Many people may have read these words, including Church people and their friends, university graduates and undergraduates, among whom may be some who are impressed and begin to doubt the wisdom of missionary

work amongst primitive peoples. Of course such doubts are quickly dispelled by a consideration of the beneficent gifts of true Christianity both to our own civilization and our country today. Perhaps the best answer to the legitimate question raised in the article is given in the diaries of John Turner, who loved the Eskimo and gave his life in their service.

“ July 20, 1941, Sioralik. I think that I mentioned last Fall in this letter that I feared that Tategak's old mother was not likely to live very long, and on my return this spring I learned that she had been very sick with a very nasty bodily hæmorrhage and discharge, and was still unable to get up, though she was somewhat better. This is perhaps the chief reason why I invited them along here. Not that one can do very much for the old lady physically but it is good to dispense spiritual 'potions'. I do feel that the poor soul has a fairly clear grasp of spiritual things . . . especially of the Lord's Atonement and her own personal need. The other evening she said she felt she wanted Jesus to take hold of her and not let her go. It was good to see the expression of joy and gratitude on her face when I gave her the assurance she longed for from Isaiah 41. 9-10, 13-14, etc., '*I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee—I will never leave thee*'. She has a great deal of pain and weariness and the devil is continually seeking to depress her . . . It is good as well as humbling to witness her simple faith and one prays that if it is His Will He will spare her continued suffering and grant her an abundant entrance into His Kingdom. A little time back I baptized her and also her daughter . . . (A week later) Our prayers have been heard at last; the poor lady's suffering is past (she chose the name 'Dorcas' at her baptism). During Sunday and Monday she was unable to keep down any nourishment and she had considerable hæmorrhage. This of course reduced her strength rapidly. On Monday, considering her weakened state, I thought it might be better to have an evening service here rather than in the tent as usual. She said, however, that she would like us to have our gathering there and that she might join in. Our service was made extremely brief. I again gave her that comforting promise and told her to keep Jesus always in her thoughts and speak with Him. She assured me He was continually in her thoughts. We had prayer and then she chose a hymn which goes to the tune of "We love the place, O God", and is a prayer to the Holy Spirit to remove the darkness from our hearts and enlighten us, and continues,

'Thou knowest my great sins,
Reveal to me the Blood of Jesus,
Abide with me, Thou art my help,
Guide me while I remain here.'

She thanked me warmly for what little I had done for her, bewailing her own sinfulness. After we had left her she asked her daughter to read over again to her John 3. 16 and here she cast her last anchor. It was sufficient and held to the last. Clinging to this promise she frequently broke into prayer and her last audible word was "Father". Without doubt she had come to Him and it is even more certain still that He did not cast her out.¹"

"February 13, 1943, Arctic Bay. Yesterday I heard two items of sad news. First, I heard of the death of my late travelling companion Erkoak. Erkoak was a very fine type of Eskimo and there seems to be ample evidence that he was a sincere believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Last spring he was nearly lost at the floe edge when he was hunting. Now I hear that only a few months later he died. Apparently he was safe on the Rock of Ages for he told his relatives not to weep for him for he was going to the Lord Jesus. He was only young and a fine big fellow. His father is another very upright, humble and sincere believer. He has known much trouble but his faith has remained unshaken. The other item of news was perhaps even more pathetic. Ooraiyok, the eleven year old little son of Amaroalik (another travelling companion who went with me to Fort Ross in 1938), perished less than a week ago.

He and his father had been away to their traps beyond Cape Crawford and were asleep in their snow house when a very hungry bear, regardless of the dogs, attacked their store to get at some seals. In doing so apparently the bear broke a hole into the house. In a panic the father and son fled into the night. It was blowing hard and cold but they managed to keep themselves from freezing. In the morning the father suggested going back to the snow house but the poor boy was so scared that he begged the father to make for home. The father gave in to the lad and they started to walk into the Post. In milder weather they may have succeeded without much difficulty but the temperature went down to about -50° F. and there was a heavy wind with drifting snow. The boy's strength began to fail after about thirty-five miles, for they had no food. The father tried to carry the

¹ St. John 6. 37

lad finally but it was against the wind and he could not get along. They were not far from an old snow house but the poor lad did not live to reach it. Amaroalik struggled into the Post but his face and hands were badly frozen. He still looks very worn. He told me that Ooraiyok gave him a message for me—"Tell the teacher I will be coming to meet you both with Jesus when He comes". God grant that we may meet him among the redeemed on that great day."

"January, Milne Inlet. Akomalik and his family started off with us and took a bit of our load. We parted company at about 5 p.m. on Friday night. Parting was not easy. In spite of occasional differences of opinion with poor old Akomalik, there has always been an affectionate regard for the one who has stood by us so staunchly since the commencement of our work at Pond Inlet thirteen and a half years ago. Not one bit less is our affection and gratitude for Angnawyak. No one could have served us more faithfully than she has done. Sometimes her efforts at housekeeping might not have earned the approval of the more sophisticated, but we have always appreciated her faithful service, service that has ever considered the job in hand more important than its reward. As we said good-bye Angnawyak slipped a little note into my hand. I read it when we camped that night. She had written, 'I am extremely grateful and I shall never forget—I shall want to see you again. I don't want to forget God's Words. Yes, if Jesus tarry we shall see each other again'. Thank God for these two helpers! May He reserve a glorious place for them in His Kingdom!"

"May 1942, Pond Inlet. There were many Eskimo at the Post and I had not been there long before several came asking for baptism. As always, I gave them all strong warnings regarding making these solemn vows lightly. All affirmed that they did mean to follow the Lord wholly, so nine were baptized last Sunday. Among these was a young lad of 13 or 14. He is keen and I did not doubt his sincerity. He chose the name of Mark."

"November, 1942, Pond Inlet. Several visitors as well as two young girls at the post (one of the latter was Akomalik's little grand-daughter) came asking for baptism recently, and last Sunday nine were baptized. Beforehand I had had some very happy times with them over the Scriptures. I do feel that they all had a fairly good idea of the step they were taking and of its responsibilities."

“ July 1943, Moffet Inlet. Yesterday the Lord gave me also another great encouragement. It came in the course of a casual conversation with a visitor. You may remember that I mentioned last year a young lad whom I met near Igloodik on trail and who was lost shortly after in a boating tragedy. The boy's step-father, who was here yesterday, remarked that the boy on his arrival home passed on to his folk the message I had given him and produced the reference in the Bible. I told the step-father, ‘ You must be mistaken. It must have been a message I had given to other Eskimo and which he had heard from them’. (For I only met the boy during the day for a few minutes, and we did not camp together.) ‘ No,’ replied the step-father, ‘ it was the message you gave him and his companion yourself when you met on the trail.’ I remembered kneeling in prayer with them, but I had quite forgotten the fact that I had given them a message from the Word. The lad had apparently remembered every word and passed the message on to others. Coming at a time when many facts would seem to imply the opposite this certainly seemed to be the Lord's reminder that ‘ *Your labour is not in vain in the Lord*’ and was a great encouragement.”

“ January 1942, Fox Basin. One son, about 14 years old, was living with other folk and last spring he was very sick and at that time he broke all connection with the Church of Rome. He does not at all fear the wrath of the priest, though, as elsewhere, the priests here try to rule their flock with a rod of iron. I saw this lad at a camp and I fear he looks as though he had T.B. When we left he rode with me for a time. He told me that when he went back to the camp he was going to pray for me and then said he was going to sing. With a loud voice, though not always in tune, he sang one of our choruses—

‘ In all thy way acknowledge Him,
and He shall direct thy paths.’

He seemed most keen to hear our message. May the Lord lead him on in the knowledge of Himself.”

“ May 1947, Moffet Inlet. The following weekend we had our special gatherings and there were 120 Eskimo here. It was nice to have Tom Daulby here but we were really crowded with our four selves, Rebecca and Mary. On Sunday we had twenty candidates for baptism and one young man renounced the Church of Rome into which he had been baptized as an infant. For the latter we had to prepare a special

form of service. There were a number of others asking for baptism but we felt led to ask them to wait for a time."

Joan includes in one of her letters a revealing incident which should be of interest to students of Eskimo life and culture.

"I feel I cannot leave out an incident told by an Eskimo when he was in the other day. The last time he had come in to the Post to trade he had said 'good-bye' and left in the usual way, but instead of getting to his camp in two sleeps he was caught in bad weather and took seven! For six nights he had slept out in the open not building a snow house, hoping to arrive home the next day. His dogs got weaker, and one by one unable to go on, so all except one had to be shot. In the end he abandoned his sledge and load, just putting essentials on a skin to drag along but still he was unable to see the way. At last he thought to pray about it asking the Lord to reveal the way enabling him to get home. Then it seemed that the cloud was raised, the sky cleared, he recognized the landmarks and was able to traverse the last few miles to his camp. How near he was to passing his camp and becoming lost or perishing with hunger we do not know, but you may imagine the joy and gratitude with which he tells of the Lord's wonderful answer to prayer and his deliverance. We believe that this will be an incentive for this man to go on with the Lord. Even if we are at 'wits-end corner' and then call upon Him, yet the Lord never fails us. '*They shall not be ashamed who wait on Me.*'"

The results of Canon Turner's ministry are unmistakably clear and can doubtless bear the closest scrutiny of either scholars trained in the ways of men, or those who want merely to be critical of the missionary endeavours of the Christian Church. Surely the old Eskimo woman's letter to the missionary after thirteen-and-a-half years of unremitting service is a sufficient answer for all time.

"I am extremely grateful and I shall never forget—I shall want to see you again. I don't want to forget God's Words."

Had not our Heavenly Father again fulfilled his promise to his servant?

"*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*"¹

¹ Psalm 2. 8

PART IV

THE MAN—and HIS PROMOTION

“As for God, His way is perfect”—*Psalm* 18. 30

“No toiling yonder, and no weariness,
No disappointments and no more distress,
The future bright, the past all understood,
We'll see that all the way He led was good.
No partings yonder, and no sad goodbyes,
No pain, no sickness, and no weeping eyes,
But best of all, my Saviour I shall see—
No cloud shall come between my Lord and me.”

Author unknown, John Turner's Diary, November 1940

CHAPTER 17

"INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE...
OF THESE MY BRETHREN"

THE ACCIDENT—THE RESCUE—ARRIVAL IN WINNIPEG—UNTO CHRIST

THE annual ship for 1947 had arrived and left Arctic Bay, and the Turner family returned to Moffet Inlet in their whale-boat with all the supplies that they could safely load. John was anxious to get back to translation work, and also he was in difficulties over dog food. He had written in his letter home :

" July 1947, Moffet Inlet. As a result of the Eskimo staying around so long I was not able to do much seal hunting this spring. As Tom left four dogs with me, and I have three pups of my own as well as the older dogs, I have sixteen dogs to provide for during the coming winter. At the moment I have less dog food on hand than I had at this time last year. Then I had fewer dogs, but undoubtedly the Lord will provide. Having no helpers except Rebecca means that we have more to do ourselves, but we can manage quite well."

The next week after their arrival at the Mission was spent away from home hunting in the Inlet. David Tongalok and family, who had cared for John's dog-team while the missionary's family was absent in Arctic Bay for ship-time, was taken by boat to a nearby lake for fishing. As the weather was poor it was not until the following Saturday evening that the party returned to the mission house. During the next few days the weather continued to be unfavourable and John undertook some tasks indoors. Their crowded quarters necessitated the preparation of the upstairs loft as a bedroom, and he endeavoured to insulate it for this purpose. How useful this spare room was to be in but a few days !

On Wednesday morning, September 24, John read in his *Daily Light*, "*It is good for me to draw near to God*".¹

The weather that morning was still unsuitable for outside work, so he continued with his jobs within the house. Two young Eskimo girls, Rebecca and Elizabeth, were outside breaking up ice, and carrying it indoors in buckets, to replenish the dwindling fresh water supplies. They saw a seal in the shallow waters near the shore, so this good news was shouted to John as he worked upstairs. He hurriedly grasped his .22 rifle, which only a few days before he had mentioned as needing some attention, as a part was loose, and hastened outside. On returning he met young Elizabeth as she came through a gate to the children's enclosed playground placed around the house. With his usual concern for others he slipped his rifle under his left arm, and helped her carry the heavy bucket of ice up the three steps. In some way or other,

¹ Psalm 73. 28



The rugged countryside around Moffet Inlet



The crew of the R.C.A.F. Dakota *The Blizzard Belle* manhandling the plane in preparation for the final take-off from Moffet Inlet



The combined Army-Air Force Rescue Team together with Mrs. TURNER and her two children and REBECCA

Left to right, back row: F/O BOB RACE, pilot, F/O C. C. McMILLAN, navigator, F/Lt. A. B. MORABITO, wireless operator, Cpl. L. HAWKINS and Sgt. E. SWINFORD, crewmen
Front row: F/O M. O. MOORE, co-pilot, Sgt. H. C. COOK and Sgt. W. W. JUDD, paratroop signalmen, Capt. G. D'ARTOIS, commander of paratroop expedition. *Missing:* Capt. R. WILLOUGHBY, paratroop medical officer, Cpl. J. P. RAE



Flying Officer BOB RACE, pilot and captain of *The Blizzard Belle* ; Captain GUY D'ARROIS, commander of paratroop expedition ; and Captain ROSS WILLOUGHBY, Army paratroop medical officer

while he was still on the top step the trigger of his rifle was released. Maybe it caught in a buttonhole or in the zipper of his coat, or possibly the rifle slipped and hit something. The bullet, which was discharged vertically, wounded his upper lip, tore through the inner nasal bones to fracture the base of his skull, and transversed the right side of his brain. He fell backwards down the steps into the snow. It was probably at this time that, on the corner of the top platform, he bruised badly the base of his spine.

The first intimation that anything was wrong came to Joan when Sarah, David Tongalok's wife, came into the house and cried something which Joan could not understand. Sensing trouble, Joan ran to the door to find John unconscious on the ground, and bleeding profusely from the mouth. At first it was hard for her to believe that he had received any gunshot wound for the only sign that she could see was a small puncture in his upper lip. During the succeeding fifteen to thirty minutes while her husband remained unconscious, Joan threw bedding and a mattress down the stairs and prepared a bed on the floor of their little study. At this time she was expecting another child in just over three months, but with the help of the Eskimo she managed to carry the Canon to this couch prepared for him.

The natives were then called into the kitchen for prayer, and kneeling down David led his family and the others present to the Throne of Grace, and Joan prayed with her husband. Fortunately John retained perfect sight except for two black eyes, and perfect hearing, understanding, and power of reason. His speech was, however, muffled and indistinct for some days. He was not conscious of any actual head injury, although he was kept uncomfortable by pain and frequent hæmorrhage. The badly bruised base of his spine troubled him in an almost unbearable manner.

David Tongalok, although he had never handled the mission motor boat (so well named *Ebenezer*¹), agreed to go to the Hudson's Bay Company's Post, seventy miles north at Arctic Bay, with a message and an appeal for assistance. The weather had calmed by 7 o'clock in the evening, and he set out in an endeavour to help the missionary, whom he had grown to love so dearly.

Mr. John Cormack of the H.B. Company hurried southwards in his motor launch but could not arrive until the 28th. In the meanwhile Ed. Jordan, of the radio station there, transmitted the emergency appeal for help to the Department of National Health and Welfare at Ottawa, and the Offices of the Diocese of the Arctic in Toronto.

Joan summoned all the knowledge she had gained during her nurse's

¹ "*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*", 1 Samuel 7. 12

training, and, using drugs from a small emergency kit that John always carried, worked and prayed that she might keep her weakened, partially paralysed husband alive until help arrived.

As soon as John Cormack arrived John Turner heard his voice and summoned him to where he was lying on the floor, to apologize for not welcoming him properly and for the trouble which he was causing. The H.B.C. Factor efficiently assumed control of the situation, and proved an invaluable companion and friend. He had brought two Eskimo with him, and he set them (together with David Tongalok and his two sons) to empty the store house of all its contents and prepare it as an habitation for any help that might come from civilization. The whole Turner family had previously used this storehouse as a 'summer cottage', and it had proved quite comfortable. The walls had already been lined and insulated. A coal-burning stove was installed, wash basin placed in position, and bunks, tables and chairs assembled.

The hours and days dragged on and time seemed interminable. John's condition was undoubtedly critical. His spine now pained him continuously, and was being aggravated by bed pressure; but he was too heavy for Joan to lift, and the Eskimo were afraid. Would help arrive in time?

On September 30, 1947, the Department of National Health and Welfare made contact with the Department of National Defence stating that immediate aid to the missionary was required. The Army and Royal Canadian Air Force set up a combined rescue squad of four paratroopers and a flight crew for a Dakota aeroplane. The latter was at first named *Snowbird*, but before the rescue was accomplished it had been renamed *The Blizzard Belle*. Col. Graham Rowley who, when travelling in the Arctic in 1936 with the British and Canadian Arctic Expedition, had been befriended by John Turner and had stayed at the Pond Inlet Mission for some days, was at the time stationed at Ottawa and was called in for conference.

The forces were faced with difficulties, for Moffet Inlet was situated in a practically unmapped district. They had no knowledge of the terrain or of land marks that might guide a rescue party in their journey. Moffet Inlet is 1,700 miles north of Winnipeg, situated in most rugged country 400 miles within the Arctic Circle. It was impossible to despatch an aeroplane and crew on such an errand without adequate knowledge of their objective and reasonable chances of success.

Graham Rowley remembered that the author of this biography had lived both at Pond Inlet and Moffet Inlet, and telephoned from Ottawa to Toronto to see if I could help.

In a remarkable way during the past summer, after years of travelling and being away from home, I had been setting my house in order and had sorted all northern photographs, and destroyed many other papers. While a group of old records were burning in the hearth I noticed some old sketch maps of the Northern district and quickly rescued them from the blaze thinking that sometime perhaps they might be useful. On September 30 when the call came from Ottawa all the maps and photographs needed by the rescue team were ready.

An overnight train trip took me to Ottawa. An early morning conference at Air Force Headquarters with both Air Force and Army officials brought the decision to attempt the rescue. The orders were issued and special planes laid on for my trip to Western Canada in order to 'brief' the rescue team before they left on their difficult assignment.

Not until nearly midnight did I arrive in the briefing room of 'Operation Canon'. All available chairs were filled with Army and Air Force personnel, and as photographs and maps were projected on to a screen, I lectured on the trip, the terrain, the natives, climate and clothing. Far into the night the men asked questions. Afterwards I was free to have my first meal for many hours.

Next morning, in the very early dawn, the great aircraft was wheeled into the open air. Every available space was loaded with equipment, which included a large radio set weighing many hundreds of pounds, and many other articles which were to be dropped by parachutes at Moffet Inlet. There was a final opportunity of shaking hands with the members of the courageous rescue team: F/O. Robert Race, of Edmonton, pilot; F/O. R. C. Moore, of Rockhaven, Saskatchewan, co-pilot; F/O. C. C. McMillan, of Melfort, Saskatchewan, navigator; F/L. A. B. Morabito, of Creston, B.C., wireless operator; L.A.C. J. P. Rae, of Cupar, Saskatchewan; Sgt. L. Hawkins, of Winnipeg, Manitoba; and Sgt. K. Swinford, of Toronto. Accompanying them as the jump quartette were Capt. L. Guy D'Artois, O/C detachment; Capt. Ross Willoughby, M.D., of Toronto; and Signals Sergts. W. W. Judd and A. R. Cook, of Calgary. They were a brave group composed mostly of men who had proved themselves in the lines of battle as capable, resourceful and ready to face any difficulty or trial. In the grey dawn of that cold October morning (October 2) the heavily-laden plane rolled into position and then with increasing speed moved along the runway before slowly and doggedly climbing into the overcast. Our hearts beat more freely then, for the plane was loaded to capacity and it had been with some concern that these initial stages had been watched. The adventure had only just begun, and before these brave

men were to be able to report to their Senior Officers the successful conclusion of 'Operation Canon' they were each one to be tested to the uttermost. The Canadian public was now fully aroused to all that was happening. Maps, photographs and feature articles appeared in the daily papers, news bulletins and reports were repeated on the radio broadcasts.

The plane sped northwards first to Fort Churchill, Manitoba, where final Arctic clothing was procured. All radio stations in the Northland were alerted on a 24-hour basis. Then the crew launched out into the cold, bleak, and grey-lined skies of the North. A landing was made at Southampton Island on October 3, and on the next day the final dash for Moffet Inlet began.

As Moffet Inlet is situated north of the magnetic North Pole the magnetic compasses were valueless to the aircrew. Lakes and rivers were mostly frozen over and snowswept, rendering them useless for 'pin-pointing'. The maps provided were not drawn to scale, and many other difficulties confronted the navigator. For three-quarters of an hour the plane moved above Moffet Inlet, but fog, and unfamiliarity with the land, hindered the aircrew, and they could not find the little mission house.

The mission is situated on a tiny spit of land, about seventy yards wide, jutting out into the Inlet from a base of 600-foot cliff. It was obvious that this boulder strewn neck of land, surrounded with freezing salt water, was no place to drop supplies and men, but it had been decided that some small lakes about six miles inland might be the safe dropping area.

On Saturday, October 4, Joan awoke at 6 a.m., and when she looked out at the weather her faith nearly failed her. How could a rescue plane possibly come in such circumstances? But before midday, as she sat holding her husband's hands, they heard the plane pass overhead, though visibility was too poor for it to be seen. As she continued to pray, those awful questions kept coming. Would they return? Would they be able to sight the mission? Would they be in time? Now at times his breathing was poor and John was showing the first signs of diaphragm spasm. Quite suddenly the sky around the mission opened up, the weather cleared, and, as the airmen said in their report, "through a hole in the fog" the mission was sighted. Can there be any doubt that God answers the prayer of His children?

The great Dakota aircraft flew lower, and swooping over the mission house dropped the following note and panel code :—

"We are to help Canon Turner. It is proposed to parachute a small party including a medical officer for this purpose. Owing to the ruggedness of the ground men cannot be dropped safely near the mission but we intend dropping the less fragile stores at the mission and the men and other equipment in the deer country.

Divide your Eskimo into two parties. Keep one party at the mission and send the other to the top of the cliffs to go to the aid of the party when they drop. Please acknowledge by signalling a reply to this question with the panels attached.

Are we still in time to be of help ?”



Yes



No

The aircrew reconnoitred the surrounding country for a suitable spot to drop the men and then flying over the mission and looking down they saw the one panel lying on the ground. They were in time to help. *Daily Light* for that day says,

“ *And they helped David . . . for they were all mighty men of valour.*”¹

The paratroopers buckled on their harness and strapped on their steel helmets. A large 250 drum of gasoline floated earthwards to test the strength of the lake ice, and when all was ready generators, food, tents, sleeping bags, weapons, ammunition, packboards, cigarettes and medical stores dropped from the skies. Sgt. Judd jumped first, carrying a portable radio set, followed by Capt. D'Artois, Capt. Willoughby and Sgt. Cook. The doctor narrowly missed serious injury when he landed almost among the rocks strewn along the edge of the frozen lake. Sgt. Judd by means of his portable radio informed the captain of the aircraft that all had landed safely, and the little group on the lake watched the aircraft grow smaller in the distance and finally disappear.

Capt. D'Artois headed overland for the mission and was soon met by an Eskimo who had been sent to guide him across the difficult country. The rest of the party proceeded to the coast to be picked up by boat sent out from the mission. Perhaps extracts of the Service's Report on 'Operation Canon' will best describe the work of the next few weeks.

“ October 4. On arrival Capt. Willoughby examined the patient. Canon Turner's left side was completely paralyzed and there was a large bed sore on his lower back. Treatment which then commenced, and continued throughout the seven-week period, consisted of regular dressing of the bed sore, administration of penicillin every three hours, day and night, as well as administration of Sulpha Drugs and general nursing care. Capt. Willoughby arranged to carry out the necessary treatment each night, being assisted by day by Mrs. Turner.”

¹ 1 Chronicles 12. 21

"The mission house is eleven feet by twenty-four feet and contains two rooms. This was occupied by the patient, Mrs. Turner, their two children and one Eskimo girl. Capt. D'Artois decided to use a shack ten feet by seven to house the team and store equipment and supplies. Living conditions for the seven-week period were primitive."

"October 5. With Mr. Cormack, Capt. D'Artois and the two sergeants returned to the dropping zone. There they collected the widely scattered equipment. A tent was then set up and the No. 58 wireless set put in operation. The large number 52 set was tested and found to be out of order. Throughout the afternoon and night until 6.25 a.m., October 6, the signal sergeants worked without rest or sleep in an attempt to repair the damaged set."

"October 6. All this time a dozen radio operators from all stations in the North were listening for signals from Moffet Inlet, but none was heard.

On the suggestion of Mr. Cormack and the advice of Capt. Willoughby, Capt. D'Artois decided to move the patient and his family to Arctic Bay, seventy miles north. Accommodation and medical facilities were better there."

"October 7. Rough weather prevented the departure and nearly wrecked the mission motor boat."

"October 8. The aircraft circled the mission and made contact through the small radio set. Medical report and requests for needed supplies were transmitted to the plane."

"October 9. The motor boats were loaded and a stretcher fashioned for the patient. The Canon's boat was launched but weather prevented departure. The trip was attempted next day but bad ice conditions, failure of the boat's engines, and the patient's long exposure compelled the abandonment of the voyage, and the whole party returned to the mission at mid-afternoon on October 11. This was a bitter disappointment to all."

It was probably this attempted trip to Arctic Bay that revealed to the men of the armed forces the mettle and make-up of the man they had come to help. Lying on but two thicknesses of skins placed over wooden cross bars, they attempted to carry him. His whole side was paralysed, his back abscessed, and he was entirely incapacitated and in pain. To reach the boat as it lay off shore the men slipped and stumbled over the rock-strewn land before breaking through the shore ice, and wading into the already freezing sea to place him into that small 30-foot boat. From Friday morning until Saturday night the

wounded man lay in this uncomfortable position. The size of the boat and the compass of its load prevented any real nursing and but a small degree of assistance being rendered. The temperature was now well down and the spray was freezing on the sides of the boat. Yet John never once complained. When the party returned to the mission, dejected and disappointed, as they lifted him back into the house, they felt constrained to say to him, "You've got what it takes", and in reply he smiled back at them.

The Service's Report continues :

"October 12. It had now become necessary for the doctor to operate on the patient's bed sore which had become gangrenous. Although it was not possible to administer an anaesthetic, the Canon displayed remarkable courage and stood up well under the ordeal. The operation lasted about twenty minutes."

"October 14. Capt. D'Artois decided that an attempt must be made to move the damaged No. 52 radio set from the dropping zone to the mission where efforts to complete repairs could be made more conveniently. On reaching the dropping zone, the commander and two Sergeants strapped sections of the four hundred and fifty pounds set to packboards and commenced the journey back. The rough country and heavy loads proved formidable. A slip or fall on the rocky hills might mean irreparable damage to the set. The last portion of the trip was made at night in a blizzard and was climaxed by a descent down a 600-foot cliff. On arrival, although worn, the team stripped the set."

"October 15. Was spent in attempts to repair the radio set. Further attempts at repairs were made the following day without success."

"October 16. The plane circled the mission again and dropped supplies. Another radio set unfortunately missed the safety of the dropping zone and broke through the shore-ice and was badly damaged by salt water."

"October 18. By using parts from various radio sets the rescue team managed to establish their first contact with other radio stations."

"October 18-November 22. Capt. D'Artois carried out reconnaissance trip in search of a suitable airstrip. Before the ice made on the sea he walked on the land, or used the boat. Later he travelled by dog team and sledge. One occasion the Captain fell through the ice, but he was pulled to safety by an Eskimo boy and

returned to the mission to change his clothes before setting out once more."

"November 3-13. For eleven days this officer camped at a lake some 23 miles south of the mission, where a suitable landing strip had been discovered. During this period a blizzard prevented an Eskimo from reaching him with fuel for his stove and lamp. In addition a high wind smashed the tent pole and he was forced to live for two days without either light or heat. He was compelled to remain in his sleeping bag for two days until the storm blew over."

"November 17. The aircraft took off from Southampton Island for Moffet Inlet but bad weather terminated the flight."

"November 21. A safe landing was completed on the lake. The patient and rescue team proceeded to the plane by means of dog teams and sledges and after a delay of some hours by reason of bad weather the *Snowbird*, now named with good reason *The Blizzard Belle*, took off and headed southwards."

Throughout those last few weeks before the evacuation took place, John Turner did his utmost to help everybody. When necessary he interpreted for his rescuers, and tendered his advice. Natives came to see him, or wrote to him; and, when necessary, by using Rebecca as his secretary, he answered them. Each Sunday the natives held their service in the kitchen, and he lay in his study with the door wide open. On the last Sunday he even tried to play the concertina with one hand, and when this proved impossible his beloved people sang all the louder for him. On the day they were to leave the Eskimo gathered near his sick bed. John said his last prayers with them, as with bowed heads and tear-filled eyes they stood around him, and they committed each other to God's keeping.

Then Pewatok, who had so often accompanied 'Mikeneksak' in the blizzards, through the deep snows, across the rough ice, and on the moving ice, and had so often gone hungry with him on the trail as they searched the barren wilderness for the 'lost sheep', drove his beloved companion on that last sledge journey to the waiting plane.

The group of natives watched as with a roar in the dark night the giant aircraft gathered speed along the flare path and climbed into the sky, bearing into the clouds their devoted advisor, teacher, missionary and friend.

Dr. H. M. Speechly wrote the following eye-witness account of the arrival of *The Blizzard Belle*, and subsequent events in Winnipeg, for the *Canadian Churchman* of March 4, 1948 :—

“The Return to Winnipeg

The first hour south was flown in overcast at 6,000 feet, but rising to 10,000 feet the pilot found clear star-lit sky yet so cold that he decided to stay at Coral Harbour overnight as the passengers were tired and cold. At 7 a.m. on Saturday morning, November 22, *The Blizzard Belle* left for Winnipeg, a non-stop flight of 1,130 miles. By midday the radio advices in Winnipeg pointed to the early afternoon for their arrival at Stevenson field, but later 5 p.m. was quoted. Long before that a goodly crowd of R.C.A.F. and Army officials and personnel, a swarm of Pressmen, the wives and relatives of the crew, assembled together with Mrs. W. C. Folliott, the ready hostess of the Turners, Archbishop Sherman, and the two administrators appointed by Bishop Fleming, the Rev. Canon F. Glover and the present writer, all eagerly awaiting *The Blizzard Belle*. At 5 p.m. all turned out of the hangar. The sun had set; the recent snow sparkled brightly with a bluish radiance; the moving and stationary signal lights gave colour and brilliance to the scene; and at last, long last, away north the port and starboard lights of the plane appeared moving so slowly inward. Just then a commercial T.C.A. plane hurried south across our vision. At last *The Blizzard Belle* dipped to land on the tarmac and deliberately rolled up in front of the keenly expectant crowd. What a moment! Why so silent—not a cheer? No, our hearts were too full of thankfulness to God, of pride that such a man with such a wife had been so grandly rescued by so gallant, so intrepid a team of brave men. We could only put our feelings under severe control. The doors then broke open revealing the happy smiling faces of the tired young crew. Quickly amid Press flashes the stretcher bearing the wounded Canon was unloaded and taken to Winnipeg General Hospital; and Mrs. Turner with her family was whisked away to a comfortable home; strangers, unknown to Winnipeg, but at once embraced by sheer loving kindness, had become honoured friends. It should be understood that Canon F. Glover and the present writer were appointed by Bishop Fleming as Administrators, the former for all hospitality, the latter to arrange medical care and hospitalization, as well as at a later date to organize the ‘Turner of Moffet Inlet Fund’.”

“The Battle for Canon Turner’s Life

November 22–December 9, 1947

This was fought out by a picked team of surgical, medical, nerve bio-chemical, and X-ray specialists, with three nurses every 24 hours.

All the newer drug aids were employed including streptomycin. No expense was spared. The hospital authorities were completely co-operative. The Canon's left side remained paralysed; his temperature fluctuated considerably; but till the last three days he was conscious enough to recognize people and talk a little. As in the Arctic so in the hospital, the staff and nurses felt a deep respect for Canon and Mrs. Turner. Medical attention was also given to Mrs. Turner by three specialists. She had stood the strain wonderfully well. The post-mortem examination of the Canon's brain and spine showed so much injury to brain tissue and inflammatory infection at the base of the brain that recovery was impossible.

His body was laid in St. John's Cathedral cemetery where many gallant missionaries to the North also are laid."

The people of Winnipeg were so kind to Mrs. Turner, her babies and her Eskimo ward. The friendship and fellowship in Christ's service started so spontaneously in the days of 1929 had been nobly carried on through the years, a fact duly witnessed in John Turner's Diaries.

"October 1941, Moffet Inlet. Though B.C.M.S. was unable to send the usual case of woollens, etc., the Canadian Church through various branches of its 'Woman's Auxiliary' had responded magnificently and supplied our needs—again—Thank God!"

"February 1942, Fort Ross. Awaiting my arrival here I found a number of bales kindly sent me by the Woman's Auxiliary of the Church of England in Canada."

Each year these gifts of love and devotion had aided the missionaries in their labours, but now while in depths of personal need and distress the Woman's Auxiliary, with deep understanding, took Joan and her loved ones to its bosom and softened the harshness of those days with love.

"Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

CHAPTER 18

"AS FOR GOD, HIS WAY IS PERFECT"

AN old colleague and prayer partner of John Turner sat in his study listening to the evening radio reports on his friend's condition on December 8. The report was not favourable, and as he bowed in prayer he read *Daily Light* for the evening as they had so often done during their ventures of faith together. He read :

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return . . . One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet . . . The Lord Jesus Christ . . . shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."¹

He realized that the Lord had kept His Covenant with His servant to the very end. There now seemed no place for sorrow but a glorious sense of the Divine will. John had gone next morning, and again *Daily Light* spoke reassuringly,

"We are confident . . . and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord . . . with Christ ; which is far better."²

Oh, the joy there must have been revealed in Heaven that day as this faithful servant joined the hosts of the redeemed, for the Psalms set for the day on which John Turner was injured, say

"right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."³

Surely these promises are a fitting answer to the question—Why?—that has been in the minds of so many people.

It is only when the alabaster box is broken that the house can be filled with the odour of the ointment, and the fragrance of this earthen vessel, which was a sweet savour of Christ and of Life, is not necessarily diminished by so sudden and unexpected a call home.⁴ A Church of England clergyman from Ontario, Canada, writing to the B.C.M.S. and enclosing a subscription said :

"We are deeply grieved at the death of Canon Turner. All Canada followed the radio reports of the heroism surrounding the attempted rescue, yet I knew that it was no more heroic than his own twenty years of devoted service to His Saviour in the Arctic. As the co-pilot

¹ Genesis 3. 19 ; Job 21. 23 ; Philippians 3. 21

² 2 Corinthians 5. 8 ; Philippians 1. 23

³ Psalm 116. 13 (P.B.V.)

⁴ St. John 12. 3 ; 2 Corinthians 2. 15

of the rescue plane said to a reporter in telling of the little house where they found Canon Turner and his wife and children and band of Eskimo. 'There was Love.' And although he rests now in the light perpetual of His Lord . . . Perhaps one of *my* boys may be an answer to his prayers."

Eternity's Dawn has broken for John Hudspith Turner in the glorious presence of His Saviour. No longer do the cruel biting winds tear into his flesh, or the cold drifting snows blind his vision. No longer can fatigue destroy his vitality, or cruel sinful men belittle his beauty. He rests from his labours. His work he did well, and his diocesan bishop's tribute is a fitting summary of his life and witness :

"The death of Canon J. H. Turner is an irreparable loss to our Canadian Church and to the Diocesan of the Arctic in particular. No missionary since Dr. E. J. Peck has gained such a mastery of the Eskimo language, few have equalled Canon Turner's ability as traveller by dog team, and none have surpassed him as an evangelist amongst the people of the Polar North. He loved the Eskimo because he had a burning passionate loyalty and devotion to Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and King. The poet Lowell would have classed him as a man of the plain heroic breed. He went to the Arctic because he believed he had God's end to serve, a Master to obey, a course to take."

John Turner fought a good fight, he finished the course, he kept the Faith,¹ but the task in Arctic Canada remains unfinished, and the cry of the ages comes yet once again from the Throne of His Glory :

"WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US ?"²

¹ 2 Timothy 4. 7

² Isaiah 6. 8

APPENDIX A

THE SLEDGE JOURNEYS OF CANON JOHN H. TURNER, 1930-47

<i>Year</i>	<i>Route Adopted</i>	<i>Approximate Mileage</i>
1930 (Spring)	Pond Inlet—River Clyde—and return	720
1930-1	Local trips in the Pond Inlet district	200
1931-2	From Pangnirtung to Padlik	350
1932-3	Pond Inlet—Arctic Bay—Igloolik—Pond Inlet	970
1933-4	ON FURLOUGH	
1934-5	Pond Inlet—Arctic Bay—Igloolik—Pond Inlet	970
1935-6	Pond Inlet—Pangnirtung—and return	1,700
1936-7	Pond Inlet—Arctic Bay—Igloolik—Repulse Bay—Igloolik— via land crossing to Pond Inlet	1,760
1937-8	Pond Inlet—land crossing to Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet— Igloolik—Repulse Bay—Return to Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay— Prince Regent Inlet to Fort Ross—beyond Fort Ross—and return to Arctic Bay and Moffet Inlet	2,510
1938-9	Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet—Igloolik—Repulse Bay—over land to Committee Bay—Lord Mayor Bay—Fort Ross—Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet	1,970
1939-40	ON FURLOUGH	
1940-1	Pond Inlet—Clyde River—overland to Igloolik—Fort Ross— Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet	2,400
1941-2	Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet—Agu Bay—Igloolik— Akonerk—Igloolik—Jens Munk Island—via Gifford River Moffet Inlet—via land crossing and Prince Regent Inlet— Elizabeth Harbour—Lord Mayor Bay—Spence Bay—King William Land—Fort Ross—Moffet Inlet—via land crossing to Pond Inlet—River Clyde—return to Pond Inlet to await ship	3,800
1942-3	Local Pond Inlet trips—Pond Inlet—Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay—Fort Ross via land crossing—Elizabeth Harbour—Lord Mayor Bay—Fort Ross—Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet—various trips to Arctic Bay	2,500
1943-4	Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay—Moffet Inlet—via land crossing and Prince Regent Inlet to Fort Ross—Moffet Inlet—Arctic Bay— Moffet Inlet—Pond Inlet	1,750
1944-5	MARRIED AT POND INLET—Arctic Bay—Fort Ross and return to Pond Inlet	1,600
1945-6	Moffet Inlet—NO TRAVELLING OWING TO DOG DISEASE	
1946-7	Moffet Inlet—Fort Ross via Prince Regent Inlet—return via the land crossing	1,100
TOTAL APPROXIMATE MILEAGE		24,300

Note: The Northern traveller usually follows the coast line, or may utilize various land crossings along valleys or river courses. Eskimo camps may be situated many miles either side of a 'direct route', but must be visited. The above figures are therefore very approximate, and have been kept as conservative as possible. The mileage for 1941-2 is equal to that between Toronto and Felixstowe.

APPENDIX B

GOVERNMENT AWARDS TO MEMBERS OF 'OPERATION CANON'

On July 30, 1948, the Defence Department of the Canadian Government announced eleven awards to those who took part in 'Operation Canon'.

The George Medal

CAPTAIN LIONEL GUY D'ARTOIS, D.S.O., of Rivers, Manitoba, and Montreal, commander of the paratroop expedition.

Capt. D'Artois travelled hundreds of miles on foot, looking for a landing spot for the rescue plane. Once he fell through the ice, and finally camped on the proposed site, twenty-three miles distant, for eleven days, to gather data for weather reports to guide the air crew.

FLYING OFFICER ROBERT CARSON RACE, of Hilliers, British Columbia, and Winnipeg, pilot of *The Blizzard Belle*.

F/O. Race made four return trips, each longer than 1,000 miles, "in the face of unpredictable and severe early winter storms" and with the minimum of weather and navigational aids.

Member of the Order of the British Empire

CAPTAIN ROSS W. WILLOUGHBY, R.C.A.M.C., of Rivers, Manitoba, and Toronto, paratroop medical officer.

Air Force Cross

FLYING OFFICER CLIFFORD C. McMILLAN, of Saskatoon and Winnipeg, who "displayed skill of the highest degree as a navigator".

British Empire Medal

SERGEANT HOWARD C. COOK, of Calgary, who, amongst other duties, helped manhandle a heavy section of signals equipment down a 600-foot cliff at night in a blizzard.

Air Force Medal

CORPORAL JAMES PATERSON RAE, R.C.A.F., of Cupar, Saskatchewan, who made the four "extremely hazardous" return flights and worked devotedly in sub-zero weather to keep the plane in shape.

King's Commendation for Brave Conduct

SERGEANT W. W. JUDD, of Port Arthur, wireless operator.

King's Commendation for Valuable Services in the Air

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT ANTHONY B. MORABITO, D.F.C., of New Westminster, British Columbia, wireless operator.

FLYING OFFICER K. O. MOORE, D.S.O., of Vancouver, co-pilot.

SERGEANT K. C. SWINFORD, of Toronto, crewman.

CORPORAL L. D. HAWKINS, of Winnipeg, crewman.

APPENDIX C

An extract from a Calgary newspaper, December 10, 1947: by kind permission of Canadian Press.

He left his heart behind**RESCUER PRAISES WORK DONE BY CANON TURNER**

"There aren't many men up to the calibre of Canon Turner, and I don't think I'd be wrong in saying that he left his heart behind him."

This tribute to Canon John Hudspeth Turner, Anglican missionary at lonely Moffet Inlet, on Baffin Island, was paid by Sgt. Howard Cook in a letter to his parents Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Cook, of Calgary, which arrived in Calgary on Monday, the day before Canon Turner's death in Winnipeg. Sgt. Cook was among the para-rescue crew which assisted in the evacuation of the Canon.

The clergyman spent 20 years on Baffin Island. "The Eskimos in his district are very good and don't smoke or work on Sundays", Sgt. Cook wrote. "They think the world of Turner, and the parting was a sorrowful one."

"The Canon had a device consisting of a bicycle wheel, seat, and small friction generator running off the wheel. In front of the bike contraption he had a podium. Thus he used to pedal the 'bike', charge his batteries, get his exercise, increase his knowledge all at the same time. The Canon shunned modern manufactured conveniences and used to improvise his own. He said he wanted to be as self-dependent as possible."

Canon Turner had many ingenious devices for hunting seal, Sgt. Cook stated. He made his own fish hooks from tin and ivory. He fashioned a door bell from a sardine can, key, and a home-wound coil. He had a six-volt charger, and wired his small house for electric lighting.

Mrs. Turner arrived in Baffin Island only four years ago. Following the accident she used to sleep at the foot of the Canon's wooden makeshift bed.

"Water is a real problem in that country, and in winter they have to find and melt old ice and snow. In summer, it's even more difficult, as they have to climb over large hills and get the water from fresh-water lakes."

"It is rather fortunate we got out when we did, as the daylight hours were getting rather short. Another week and it's likely we would have had no daylight at all. Then we may have had to face the prospects of remaining there until next summer."

APPENDIX D

THE TURNER MEMORIAL APPEAL

"John Turner acquired the Eskimo language to a remarkable degree of accuracy and was in the period of his greatest literary accomplishment when his accident occurred. He had prepared a number of Old Testament books for publication, revised the existing Eskimo New Testament, translated many new hymns and a remarkable number of scriptural choruses, and had almost completed the translation of the Book of Common Prayer." (Chapter 9)

What more fitting memorial to Jack Turner's apostolic labours could be devised than the perpetuation of his work by the publication of the Old Testament Scriptures and the Prayer and Hymn book, which may both be used of God to build up and strengthen the Eskimo Church?

In Canada the memorial has taken the form of a generous response to the appeal for \$20,000 to assist Canon Turner's brave widow and his three little girls, one of whom, Faith, was born a few weeks after his death. While the B.C.M.S. naturally accepted an obligation to maintain Mrs. Joan Turner and her little ones, this generous fund has greatly assisted the Society in its financial responsibility. The fund was started by the indefatigable efforts of Dr. H. M. Speechly and Canon Glover of Winnipeg, nobly assisted by Mrs. Bildfell, and is known as "The Turner of Moffet Inlet Fund."

In Great Britain the Turner Memorial Appeal is for £1,000 to help in the publication of Canon Turner's literary work, and further the task he had begun, through the agency of his brother, the Rev. Arthur Turner of Pangnirtung, and the Rev. Tom Daulby of Pond Inlet, under the lead of the Bishop in the Arctic.

The Ryerson Press of Toronto has undertaken to secure the necessary Eskimo type and the British and Foreign Bible Society (of Canada) has undertaken the printing of the Old Testament books. The appeal, therefore, is to make possible the publication at the same time of the Prayer Book and Hymn book, and for two typewriters, with Eskimo characters, to be placed at Pond Inlet and Pangnirtung, to make possible the duplication of other translation work that may not be printed immediately.

Any sums received over and above the initial £1,000 required will be devoted to the perpetuation in print of Canon Turner's labour of love in the Gospel.

Gifts marked "Turner Memorial" may be sent in Canada to The Church House, 604 Jarvis Street, Toronto, and in Great Britain to the B.C.M.S., 96, Victoria St., London, S.W.1.

A. T. HOUGHTON,

General Secretary.

APPENDIX E

THE ARCTIC MISSION OF THE BIBLE CHURCHMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

It was in 1925 that the Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society stepped into the Arctic field "to save from decay the work nobly carried on by the Rev. Dr. E. J. Peck and the Rev. E. W. T. Greenshield in earlier years". At first work was undertaken at Port Harrison on Hudson's Bay, and at stations in the south of Baffin Land, but latterly the work has become confined to areas further north and only on the Island itself.

The two mission stations at present staffed are at Pangnirtung, where Canon Turner's brother—the Rev. H. Arthur Turner—and his wife and daughter live, and Pond Inlet, probably the most northerly mission station in the British Empire, where the Rev. Tom Daulby and his wife, a recruit, are at work. Canon Turner's post at Moffet Inlet is at present vacant, and a small outstation for use on occasional visits is at Fort Ross on Somerset Island.

At Pangnirtung, where there is a Government-aided Diocesan hospital of which Mr. Turner is chaplain, there is a more settled population and regular schooling is given to young and old in the evening hours. But in these vast and practically uninhabited spaces it is the work of the pastor which is continually to the fore, and even one soul becomes of supreme importance.

This small but important mission—for "to every creature" must the Gospel be preached—is entirely manned and financed by the Society, but as a Church of England Society its work in the Arctic comes within that of the Diocese of the Arctic and each ordained missionary serves with the Bishop's licence.

APPENDIX F

THE BIBLE CHURCHMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY AND ITS WORK

The Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society was founded twenty-six years ago to provide for the Anglican a sphere of service thoroughly Scriptural, Evangelical and Reformed.

In Bristol it maintains two colleges, for men and women. Both not only train the Society's missionary candidates, but also are fully recognized by the Church authorities; one as a theological college for preparation for ordination to the Home Ministry, and the other for preparation for the Inter-Diocesan Certificate of the Central Council for Women's Church Work. Over 210 men have been ordained, nearly 150 for the Home Ministry, and more than fifty students are now in residence at both colleges.

Over 340 missionaries have been sent to the field during the years, and more than £1,300,000 raised to maintain the work which, though on a small scale, and in many places of a pioneer character, touches great diversities of needs and opportunities, from the Arctic to the Equator, and from Canada across Africa to China. The main fields of operation are in French Morocco and Tangier, Kenya and Uganda, Ethiopia, India (Central and United Provinces), Burma (Upper, Shan States, Rangoon and Arakan), and West and South China. In addition there is the small Arctic mission, three missionaries to the Canadian Indian Reserves are financed, and there is a small hospital in South-East Iran.

The Society's emphasis is strongly upon direct evangelism, but it maintains six hospitals (three others having been destroyed in Burma during the war) and numerous dispensaries, schools in East Africa, India and Rangoon, and Bible Schools which God has singularly blessed in Ethiopia. The Society has also had the privilege of contributing to the pioneer translation of parts of the Scriptures in the Arctic, East Africa, Arakan and South China (amongst the illiterate Tais).

Fuller details may be obtained from The General Secretary, The Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society, 96 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

