

CHAPTER 5

New Families

Shortly after the coming of the railroads to Bellview, many people and new families were attracted to the general area and consequently were responsible for and contributed to the popularity and prosperity of Bellview.

About the year 1919, the business segment, as well as the social, welcomed some new families from the northern part of the county. Business men, Ab Blackburn and the Dafoe family moved in, along with the Tivey's and the Bristol's.

The local school welcomed the younger generations, Gerald Bristol and

Harold Blackburn, while Nora Blackburn and Lena Tivey, two very attractive young and personable ladies were the recipients of the admiration of the not-so-young gentlemen of Bellview.

Lena was a most welcome addition to the staff of the old country store. Her personality and ability was obvious and made her a favourite with the public. After a few years of serving the community, she became acquainted with and married a prominent local gentleman, making herself a permanent resident, where she left her mark for posterity and hopefully for many generations to come.

Nora Blackburn was a devoted railroad fan and as such became acquainted with an aspiring young night operator at the station. It was obvious they were meant for each other and the ensuing marriage was no surprise. Residents remarked of the pair, "What a handsome and charming couple they make!"

Harold Blackburn with his classy black horse and saddle were the envy of the local boys. Many of them eventually got to ride for the first time in his one-horse democrat or on his snappy black horse, sitting in the best saddle in the county.

Gerald Bristol and his mother adapted quickly to their new environment and were very happy in their comfortable apartment, in what had once been the country store and post office in the part of the hotel. Likewise, they were exposed to the excitement of the railroads in the busiest hamlet in the county. The church, the Sunday School, as well as the local community clubs, were not long in making them welcome. Gerald Bristol, usually called Jerry by his many friends, had a special friend at the railroad station in the person of J. F. or Jack Baker, the station master.

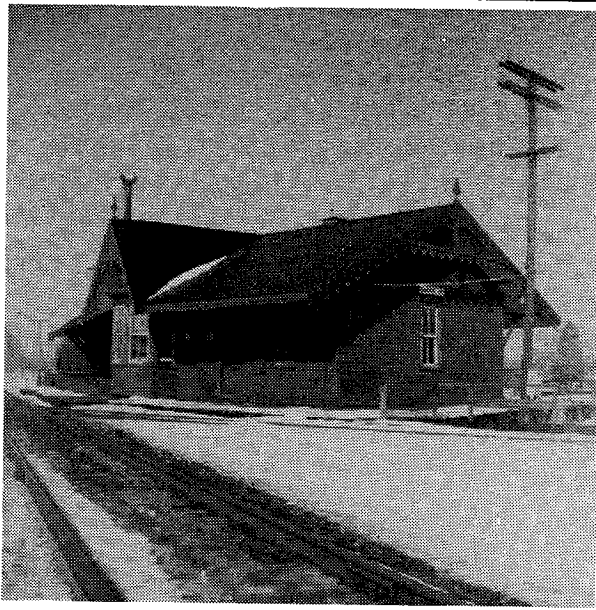
Jack Baker was everyone's friend. His personality was magnetic and his attributes were many: Sunday School teacher, choir leader and music teacher. His fingers were adept at the piano and violin and when it came to the morse code, sending or receiving a telegram, he was a professional. He referred to it as talking with his fingers. Many of the younger operators got their first lessons from Jack Baker. He loved his station duties with a passion, a good family man who always had the time to help others.

Gerald Bristol spent most of his spare time around the station with J. F. Baker, his special friend. It was no surprise that he became a railroader and as such was a proficient one. His years of service and merit badges were well earned and a record to be proud of.

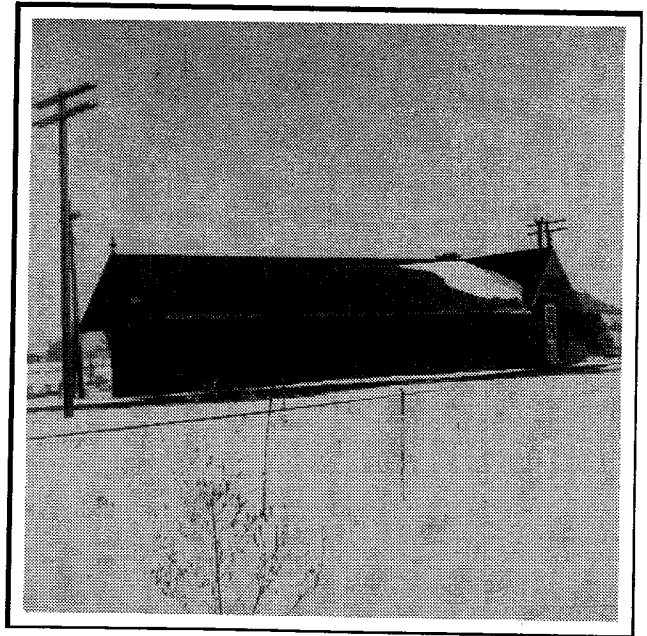
Jerry, as he was usually called by his many friends, was a good student

in school days and was well liked by his teachers. One special teacher, who held more attraction for Jerry, was presented occasionally with an apple. For this, he was chided by the other pupils and adopted the name of teacher's pet. This ridicule may have had some influence on Jerry's destination. A few years after school days, he married a teacher. It was a harmonious union. Emma and Gerald were good for each other. Posterity was assured for many years and Jerry, still, a teacher's pet.

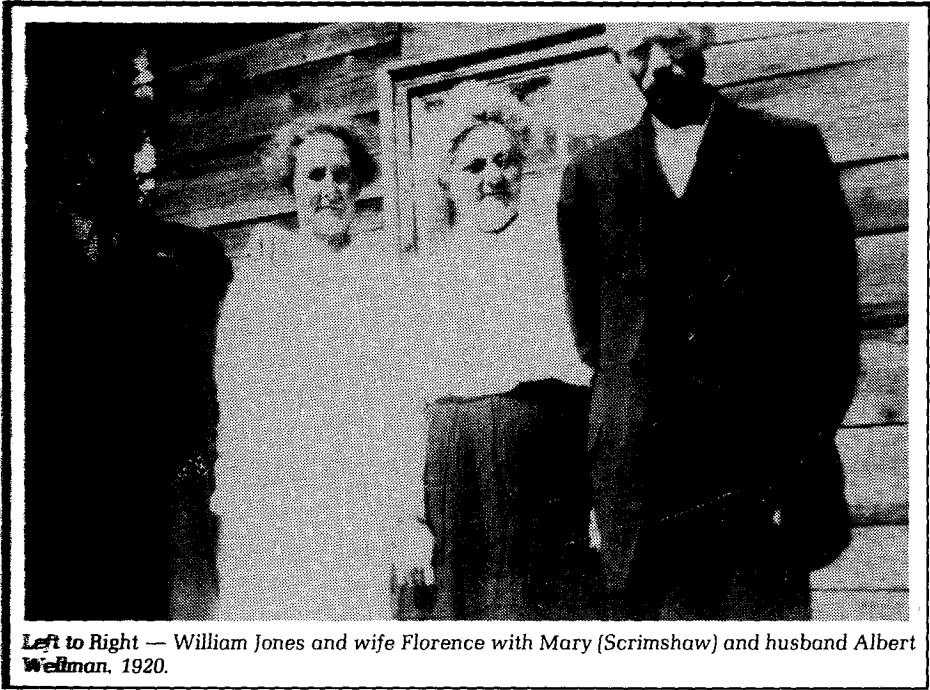
As Bellview prospered, so did the families. The new faces brought more new faces and their posterity continues long after the death of Bellview.



Station in 1970 when it was then called Bonarlaw.



CHAPTER 6



Left to Right — William Jones and wife Florence with Mary (Scrimshaw) and husband Albert Wellman, 1920.

Friends of the Rapids Albert Wellman 1856 - 1928

At birth and spending some of my younger years within a half a mile of Albert's farm, I recall him driving along the road with a team and wagon and getting a ride with him occasionally. Because he stopped to give this small child a ride, his importance left its mark. Whatever happened between us then, lasted for both of us. He left me the memories, cherished and eagerly kept with me.

In retrospect, I know that idolizing him as a boy made me a better man. He spoke very little to me then, but what he said he meant. No wasted words here. There was something in the silence that was binding and our

friendship grew.

As the years went by, we seemed to have more to talk about and I knew I was a good listener. Physically, he was a strong man and very knowledgeable as well. Other than his family, his horses, his farm and his work, he had another love; the river, often referred to as the rapids. Here begins the essence of the story extolling the attributes of an old and respected friend, and the important part my friend Albert played in the progress and the popularity of Bellview, or the Diamond as he sometimes referred to it.

The rapids or the river were within walking distance of Bellview and many people, young and old, got there by this means before the coming of the road and eventually the cars.

Albert had one of the first buildings along the river at the foot of the rapids and with considerable admiration, usually referred to it as the camp; well equipped, dishes, stove and bunks and a boat. Mudcats fried in fresh country butter in an iron frying pan over an old wood stove, golden brown, with bread and tea, prepared by Albert the cook, made a meal never to be forgotten and truly fit for a king.

There was no better riverman or fisherman than Albert. He knew where to find them and how to catch them. He was also conservation-minded.

“Throw the little ones back, if they are not damaged.”

“Don’t catch any more than you can use.”

“Don’t let them die in the boat, then throw them out.”

These were some of the rules he abided by. He could skin and clean mudcats better and faster than anyone the writer ever knew.

As a riverman, there was none better in his time or since. He had an uncanny God-given ability to row up the river against the swift-running water of the rapids, no matter how dark the night, a feat few would even try in daylight.

Considering the things I knew and learned about from this gentleman, I always believed the same power that guided him through the darkest night was watching over him when a train separated and killed his two friends and servants. While delivering a load of lime, a fast-moving train separated his horses from the wagon he was sitting. He was well shaken up, but miraculously was spared.

The attraction of the rapids, reputation of the riverman and Albert as a fisherman, were responsible for the escalating interest in Bellview. It was

to here, the ardent fishermen and sportsmen came by train from distant places, and took whatever transportation was available to get their luggage and equipment to the nearest point to the rapids. The last five-hundred yards was on foot along a well worn path through rough terrain.

The next noticeable influx of traffic other than local and horse-drawn was the appearance of a prestigious-looking automobile at the end of the road. The name on this one was Cord, not Ford, as the few local cars were called. The gentlemen arriving in this vehicle were from an affluent section of the big city, more than one hundred miles distant. Professionals or business men, sometimes referred to by local people as the millionaires, arrived here. Names that come readily to mind are Dr. Cullet, son-in-law Dr. Sprinkle and a business man, William Riddle. These gentlemen and their visiting friends and relatives were good for the prosperity and popularity of Bellview. Daily visits were a ritual, getting their mail from home, sending and receiving telegrams from the railroad station, and meeting friends arriving by train. Most enjoyable of all was shopping at the old country store. About this time, the increasing popularity of the river was responsible for a few new buildings appearing within sight and sound of the rapids.

There were regular summer visitors from across the border. Joe and Anna King had a log cabin built to their specifications. Born in Ontario, their last address was Malden Street, Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. This was only the beginning. Crow River, Callaghan's Rapids and Bellview were names that needed no commercial advertising. Other words often mentioned then relative to the river were the Back Channel, the Sheep Wash, the Big Bay, the Caves, Birch Island, Bull Rock, Gray's Landing, Grape Island, the Drowned Lands, Alan's Mill, and Albert Wellman, the riverman and knowledgeable guide.

The crows, wise birds that they are (possibly knowing the river was named after them), often showed their disapproval of the invasion of what had been their domain for centuries by homo sapiens. A committee of ten or twelve would voice their feelings in unison in the distress key.

What has been written about Bellview and the rapids in that era of time was not only historical and factual, it was the nucleus or well fertilized embryo of what was yet to come. When the potential of the river and the rapids became increasingly more obvious and the modern access road replaced the well trodden path, only an aerial picture from about six hundred feet above could adequately describe and show what has evolved.

Since the first camp at the rapids which was like a second home to Albert Wellman, a community of about forty homes has developed. The fluctuating population of both permanent and seasonal residents live in harmony with each other and nature.

A topographical description would describe it as being remote but not isolated, modern conveniences, but unspoiled by progress. Tranquility and serenity are words often used by residents when describing their domain along the river and near the rapids. The sentimental feelings that Albert Wellman had for that place seventy-five years ago have been obvious, reiterated and echoed many times by others who have spent one night, before or since that time, within hearing distance of the rapids.

Joe King from Chicago, who spent the summer seasons here in his own log cabin, once said he hoped heaven was like this.

His charming wife, Anna, said the sound of the rapids at night, just before she went to sleep, reminded her of the lullaby her mother crooned to her while rocking her to sleep when she was a little girl. Often when at home in far-away Chicago she had dreams and on awakening, looked around believing she was once again at the cabin near the rapids.

The alluring appeal of the rapids to humans was also responsible for the presence of big muskies in the deep water at the foot of the rapids.

An ardent fisherman and student of geology once pointed out and described in detail when the water was at its lowest and more visible, how the depression caused by the rushing water had created a trap for the various aquatic bugs, worms, tadpoles and minnows that had ventured too close to the cascading water. They were temporarily trapped and were the reason for the small fish being there as well.

Ardent fishermen know from experience that the big muskies are wary and find it necessary to lure them to the gang hooks by means of the artificial minnow, the feathers, the shining brass spoons, the wobbling frog or mouse. There is however one lure that never fails and that is the abundance of small fish. Thirty or forty pound muskie prefers a nice live small fish to anything artificial. When the water level at the foot of the rapids was ideal, the reports of the catches and the sighting of big muskies made fishing at the rapids very popular.

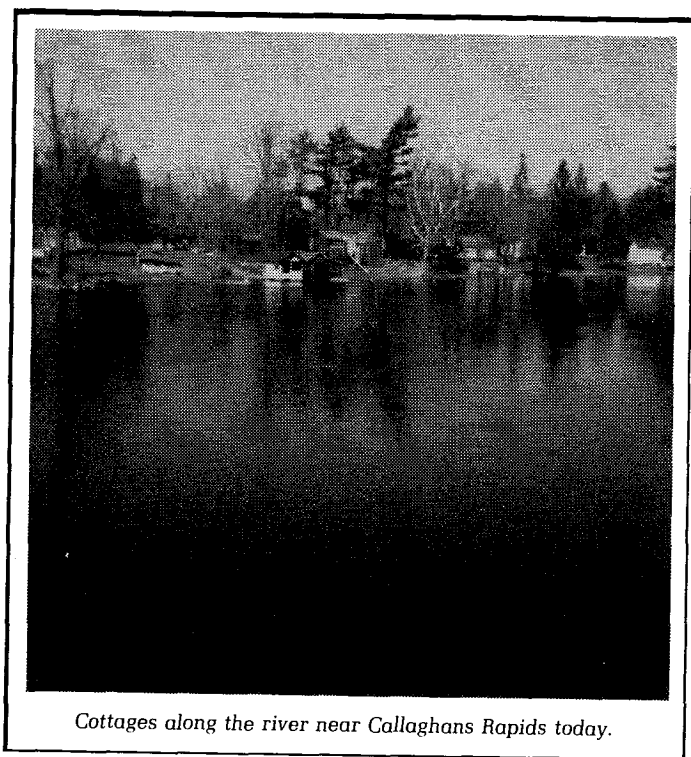
And so Albert, old friend, I never went mudcat fishing very often after you left. The camp was never the same. The rapids don't have the same appeal. The new dam makes the water a little higher. The mudcats are scarcer and the good holes are harder to find. Some parts of the river still

look familiar and I believe we would think twice about using the water to make our tea. I will never forget your uncanny ability to row up the river against the current, no matter how swift the current or how dark the night.

If we were coming up the river now on a dark night, we would see lots of lights on the shore, instead of your camp being the first and only. It is like the old Indian said, "White man have many camp long river now."

In this farewell message to you, Albert old friend, even though it is by telepathy, it is somewhat distressing to have to report that the Bellview we all knew and loved is dead and buried. First it was the epidemic, once aptly named tear down and wreck. Then it was murder, with no concern or respect shown for those to whom it meant so much. No more meeting old friends at the station or seeing them off to the big city after fishing season. No more friendly chats with neighbours, while shopping in the old country store.

The first-time visitor now viewing what was once Bellview, the scene now depicting naught but jungle and desolation, would never believe nor could one visualize that the hotel, the old country store, Station Road, the sidewalk and the station had often hosted as many as two thousand persons in twenty-four hours. This included both transient and local people.



Cottages along the river near Callaghans Rapids today.

CHAPTER 7



Callaghans Rapids still holds the ghost of Billy Bayette's friend.

The Rapids

The human interest in the rapids was not always the same. Many people could watch and listen for hours, yet could not find words that would adequately describe what they saw and heard.

"In high water time, the rapids seem to challenge me," said one athletic young gentleman, who was a good swimmer, diver and canoeist. Courage finally came to him and he was successful in his first try with his canoe. He did say after that he would never try it again and advised others never to accept any challenge from the rushing white waters.

A few years later, two strong, young men spent several hours dragging a

flat-bottomed boat up stream, when the water was at a lower level. Armed with oars, paddles and a river driver's pike pole, the two would-be voyageurs set out to conquer the rapids. The unexpected drinking of the clear white water, the bruises, the hurt pride and dignity were minor compared to what might have been. The boat was reduced to kindling wood. The pike pole and one paddle was all that was ever retrieved.

"Never again for us." That final comment seemed a sensible one, as the sparkling waters rushed on to tease another to accept their challenge. These two knew their defeat.

The rapids were not only mysterious, they had many temperaments, ominous at times and a power to be reckoned with. They could lull a grown man to sleep day or night or could transmit what seemed like warning signals of impending danger making sleep almost impossible.

Many and varied were the words used by others to describe their first impression of and what the rapids exemplified to them.

When thinking of the rapids, the first words that come to mind are thundering waters or Kakabeka, as the Indians called them. Like the legends, it is easy to associate the spirits with the physical forces of nature and they are obvious at Callaghan's, where nature or evolution was responsible first for the little rapids and later for the big rapids or possibly the opposite sequence.

Bellview is gone, destroyed, by man, but the rapids are invincible and will be there for the infinity of time and hopefully history will record them as being part of what was once Bellview. The physical attraction of the rapids was always obvious to humans during the daytime and was phenomenal and memorable.

With the coming of darkness, there were other curious spectators as well as some being present purposely. A boat anchored in the deep water at the foot of the rapids, equipped with a powerful battery-operated spotlight, showed two men some of the night visitors. First a mother bear and two cubs fishing in the shallow water; along the shore a doe and a fawn; on the opposite shore having a drink of the cooler running water, a mother coon with three babies on a partly submerged log; an owl in the big tree on shore had a ringside perch doing sentinel duty, his presence quite audible to his audience. The many bullfrogs and the pair of loons in the bay added their voices to the night sounds and mysteries of the rapids. All appeared to be aware of the unusual and attracted to the light.

Isaac Neal was a man who had always loved nature, the outdoor life, the

woods and the river. When he first became acquainted with the rapids as a boy, he thought they were awesome. Later it became a fascination. It was only after he had heard the stories about the legends and the spirits of the white rushing waters from an old man that he realized and believed there was something about them other than sight and sound and spent many hours watching and listening for the unknown.

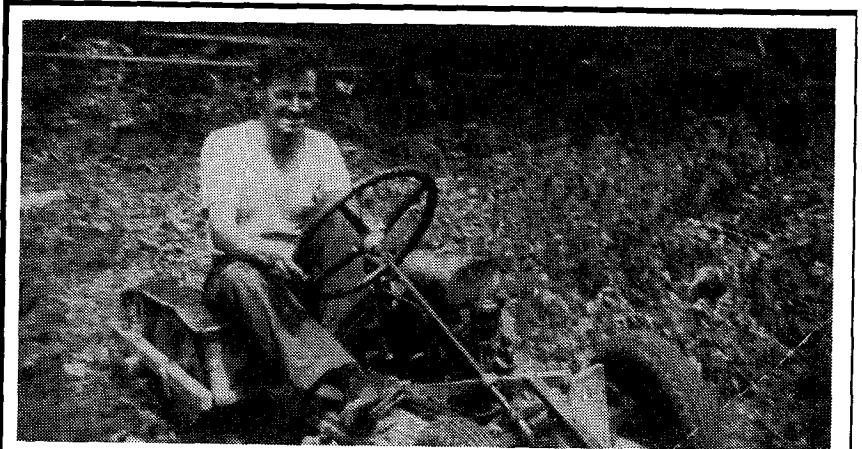
Fifty years later, when he returned to Bellview, the first place he visited was the rapids. The magnetic attraction was the same as he had experienced as a boy. After sitting in his old familiar and favourite spot for an hour, the hypnotic effect of the rushing white waters and the sounds still prevailed.

Billy Bayette was a Marmora native and had worked on the log drives in his younger years and told an interesting story concerning an incident at the rapids. One of the men had asked the foreman to be relieved of his job before they came to the rapids, saying he would join them again at Gray's Landing, further down river. When asked why, he answered solemnly.

"Because the devil is in them there rapids," was his fearful prediction.

When his request was not granted, he reluctantly carried on and was killed on the rapids. One man stayed with the body while another went for the coroner. After his arrival and investigation, the victim having no known relatives, permission was given to bury the body nearby. About one hundred yards east of where he was killed, his body was buried.

Billy Bayette came back fifty years later to look after Joe King's new log cabin for the winter months and from a window could see the now big tree that marked the spot where his friend was buried. He still insisted that from time to time, in the dark of night, he could still hear the same hysterical voice calling for help and wondered if the devil was still after his buddy's soul.



Emerson Reid - 1940 - drove his invention to the station and Bellview selling de Laval products, without the requirement of license plates.

CHAPTER 8

Riding the Stage

David Wilson Hulin, his horses, his vehicles and his dedication to the services he provided were as important to Bellview as was the Diamond and the railroads. Occasionally, he was referred to as Whit, but from the first introduction to him at 9 years of age, he was always Mr. Hulin to me. I had never thought of him as having any other name.

Hauled by a team of horses, whether summer on wheels or winter on runners, the stage delivered the mail from Stirling to Marmora, with drop-offs and pick-ups along the way from Sine, Harold, Spring Brook, Bellview and Marmora, then back it travelled again over the same route, later in the

day.

We lived about 3 miles south of Marmora and I got to know Mr. Hulin at a very early age. I got to know about the time he was due to pass our place and tried to be at or near the road when he came along. If he had a passenger, he didn't stop, unless I signalled to him, but he always waved at me. I returned the greeting eagerly. The mail was the most important reason for the stage to be on time and to go every day. Although it also delivered fresh-baked bread, unwrapped and packed in wooden boxes, from Marmora to the stores along the way at Bellview, Spring Brook, Harold and Sine. My mother often sent to town for something she needed through the week. It was on one of these occasions that Mr. Hulin asked me if I would like to go along for the ride.

My mother's name was Elizabeth, though most everyone called her Lizzie, but not Mr. Hulin. He had known her when she worked at the store in Bellview.

"Tell Elizabeth, I will see her on the way back from town," Mr. Hulin directed to me.

Their conversation led to the beginning of a happy and memorable relationship with Mr. Hulin. With my mother's consent, it was arranged that any Saturday or holiday, that I had my chores done, I could ride the stage to town. My mother, Elizabeth, laid down some very strict rules about behaviour any time I was talking to Mr. Hulin or any time I was going to town on the stage.

"Make sure your hands and face are clean."

"Don't make a nuisance of yourself."

"Pay attention to anything he says to you."

"Help him any way you can." These were some of the rules that helped make my riding on the stage a very important and memorable event in my younger days.

Riding on the stage and sitting on the driver's seat was something to brag about to my school chums, but holding the horses while the stage driver made a delivery along the way, was something else! Most all country-raised boys were well acquainted with horses from an early age. I had often driven a team when my father was present or a driving horse when my mother was along.

It was the thrill of a lifetime when Mr. Hulin asked me if I would like to drive. I know I adapted very well. He sat quite close to me for a few times. The horses were well trained and would move over to their side of the road

when meeting an approaching team and wagon. However, they were a bit spooky when meeting any of the very few cars on the road and it was only then that he took the lines. After a few rides to Marmora and several to Bellview from our place, he seemed to have more confidence in my ability to drive and paid less attention to me. Several times I noticed him leaning back with his eyes shut. He had a habit of humming quite loudly when he was relaxed. I didn't know many of the boys my age around Marmora and preferred to go to Bellview where I knew all the school children along the way. On Saturdays, they were usually around the general store at Bellview or on their way to or from the store and post office. For as long as I can remember, there seemed to be some special attraction or interest with the coming of the mailman. Because he was usually right on time, a welcoming crowd of both young and old was not unusual, unlike the stage coaches of the old west. We did not come galloping into town, but I thought it was just about the most important thing that could happen to me, the times I drove the horses up to the store platform and held the lines while the mail, the parcels and the bread were unloaded.

I was present with Mr. Hulin twice when he delivered a very important message. The first time his mood indicated it was a sad message. He spoke very little that day when we stopped at a house. I held the horses, while he told a mother her son had been killed in action overseas. I was also present and drove the horses the day he delivered another message to the same mother. I knew he was in a happy mood that day, because he was humming and paid very little attention to me or the horses. He seemed even happier after he had delivered the message. It was a message that was being repeated the whole world over.

"The war is over!"

Mr. Hulin, a gentleman and a good horseman, didn't consider his horses as his servants. Their care and welfare came first. He considered them as his partners and they, as well as himself, were responsible for the mail being on time come rain, shine, snow or blow. Here was a dedicated public servant, who carried out his obligations to those he served, with great pleasure. In those days, the people living along the stage route didn't go to town as often as they do now. Many were the times, when they took advantage of the stage driver's good nature and his willingness to do things for people living along the route. These were services which his job did not call for.

"Pick me up a bottle of liniment."

“a couple pound of nails.”

“a roll of black fence wire.”

“a plug of tobacco.”

“a gallon of coal oil.”

These were a few of the many items he not only had to shop for, but had to stop and deliver. When schedule was important, these tasks were time-consuming, but he always seemed to have a minute or two to pass the time of day, with young or old.

“How’s that new baby at your house?”

“Did you pass your exams?”

“What do you call that new colt?”

“How’s Isaac’s poison ivy?” (Isaac was a railroad section worker, who had a serious problem with poison ivy every summer, during the mowing season.)

These were but a few of the family events and problems of those who lived along the route of my friend, the stage man. He was not only aware of their problems, but genuinely concerned about them.

So Mr. Hulin, the mail still goes; not always on time and the only horses that are involved now are the ones under the hoods of the cars and trucks that haul the mail and if the snow got as deep now as it did in our days, the mail wouldn’t go at all.

I have driven many horses since those days, but none have given me the thrill and the pleasure as did driving those on the stage coach from Stirling to Marmora. I have been able to find a stamp depicting the mail being delivered by a stage coach, but if I ever do I will try to have it enlarged, put your name on it and hang it among my most memorable souvenirs or in the post offices you once serviced.

CHAPTER 9



George Wellman received a high honour as winner of the silver plate from the Queen's Own Rifles during a competition.

Top Guns

For the past decade, the words "top guns" have been used quite frequently as a slogan or an eye catcher, to advertise certain professionals in their chosen vocations and has apparently been quite well accepted.

The same words were used more than a century ago when a man's reputation with the hand gun was such that his services were sought by other parties, to exterminate another so-called top gun.

These incidents were of course unlawful, but the participants had spent a lot of time and ammunition to be called a top gun. With hours of practice,

good eyesight, calm nerves and a steady hand, the title could be earned. Bellview had a few top guns and the place to make them in the early 1920's.

Situated about a mile and a half south-west of Bellview and south of the twelfth concession of the township was the rifle range.

Sponsored by the Canadian government, who supplied the well known high-powered Lee Enfield Rifles and the ammunition, the club was organized and supervised by some well known local gentlemen. They gave freely of their time and patience, seeing that the strict rules of safety and sportsmanship were adhered to. Well deserving of honourable mention here are those who are now gone, but not forgotten; John McKeown, William A. Bateman, William McInroy, George Eastwood, George Thompson and Chris Burkitt, who was in charge of the rifles and the ammunition, a position that required attention, supervision and responsibility.

The location of the range was such that there were no safety problems, when using the high-powered rifles on the two hundred, three hundred, five hundred and six hundred yard ranges.

The pit for the target markers was dug into a gravel hill and the spotters were well below the target and out of danger of any stray bullets.

The club, and the sport it represented, attracted members from various parts of the county. Other than the gentlemen already mentioned, there were those whose dedication to practice earned them the opportunity to compete with the best in the country. Local members of the club, just to name a few, were John Wellman, George Wellman, Fred Mack, Percy Downey, Charlie Gordanier, Dick Reynolds, Gordon Webb, and Tom Prest.

Known recipients of the beautiful engraved silver plates were John Wellman, Will Bateman, William McInroy, and George Wellman, in the year 1925 for the highest points scored in stiff competition at the Bellview range.

John Wellman is a gentleman, a sportsman and a modest man, reluctant to discuss his own ability with the Lee Enfield, but quick to help and praise others at the local range.

John's record here took him to Ottawa, where the competition was considerably more competitive. His performance at the country's capital was the last hurdle and the one that sent him to compete with the best in the country, at Long Branch. His record there proved, beyond a doubt, he could shoot it out with any of them.

This writer, having known John for as long as he can remember anyone, sincerely believes this gentleman now approaching his ninetieth birthday,

would make a good showing today on any rifle range, if he were handed a Lee Enfield. Given ten practice shots to line up the sights and adjust the wind gauge to suit the prevailing atmosphere, the calm nerves, the steady hands, and without the aid of glasses, his score would not only make him a top gun, as they called them almost a century ago, it would be a world record for a man his age.

William A. Bateman, referred to usually by his many friends as Will, a well known sportsman and a gentleman who the writer always considered as being a special friend, was a well respected figure at the rifle range.

Two of his buddies who were considered as good marksmen, often said Will Bateman was the best shot in the county at a four-legged running target; referring to the red fox or a deer, being hounded by two or three bugle-voiced hounds, reaching speeds of about twenty-five miles an hour.

For the fox hunter, 'dog music' was responsible for the excitement of the chase and the reason for the rapid rise in the hunter's blood pressure. When two or three hounds were on the trail of a fox all would bay, as a musician would say, in a different key at the same time.

Will Bateman not only loved the hounds, but the dog music told him several things that to an inexperienced hunter seemed almost weird.

"They are cold trailing now."

"They have jumped him." (Meaning, arrived at the place where he had spent the night.)

"They are circling."

"It's a female." (Females are usually reluctant to leave the general area where they have had their babies.)

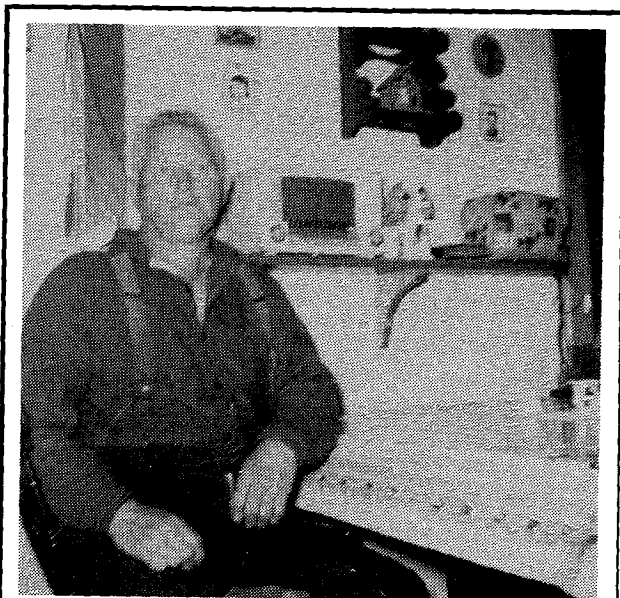
"They have left the county." (That was a male fox from a long way off looking for a mate.)

"They're heading this way. Head for your watch and keep still when you get there."

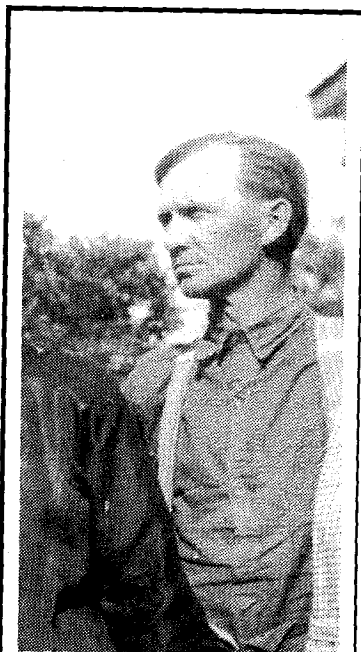
These were just a few of the many things the dogs told this gentleman and friend, who in turn gave the rest of the hunters the clues that helped make the chase more exciting.

When the fox came within range of W. A., whether loping or making ten feet at a jump, it was the end of the trail. This top gun had won again.

Will Bateman's performance and sportsmanship on the rifle range, competing with the best, was impressive. His name on the silver plate was that of another top gun, worthy of that reward, from the rifle club and range at Bellview.



John Wellman won the silver plate and was 'Top Gun' with the Queen's Own Rifles and Bisley Team.



One of Bellview's 'Top Guns', Will Bateman — 1884-1935.

CHAPTER 10

The Night Riders

Bellview had its wisdom club for many years so named as the result of their age and knowledge of the history of the community. Their meeting place was either in the old country store or the sitting room in the hotel.

The Night Riders were a make-believe gang of desperadoes, the qualifying age of members, teens only from 13 to 19. They had permission from a local farmer to build a log cabin on top of a hill in a secluded area of his bush.

The Night Riders originated shortly after the cabin had been built,

when one of the members arrived on a black horse and wearing a mask after dark.

After dark names were changed. Their real identities were never used. There was Frank and Jessie James, Buffalo Bill and Billy the Kid, who had become the idol of the younger generation at the age of 17. This Billy was ambushed and shot by a jealous friend. There was Robin Hood who robbed the wealthy and gave to the poor.

The Night Riders were all armed after dark. Only cap guns and water pistols were allowed. Despite being armed after nightfall, they were by no means brave. When the porcupines chewed on the logs and the skunk invaded the woodchuck's den under the cabin, nobody would venture outside.

In the daytime, summer or winter, they were all good boys; helping farmers with their crops in the summer; wood cutting in the winter; maple syrup making in the spring; anything to earn a dollar.

All money earned was never discussed with or disclosed to other members. After dark cash that was used for any purpose around the camp had been acquired by Frank or Jessie holding up a bank or the old country store. Freshly baked bread always indicated a hold-up of the stage operating from Marmora to Stirling, yet had been a donation by a thoughtful mother. Tom Sawyer's donation came from his seasonal job, helping the farmers while washing the stables. Robin Hood didn't steal, but he took donations from the gang and gave it readily to the less fortunate and there were many in that category.

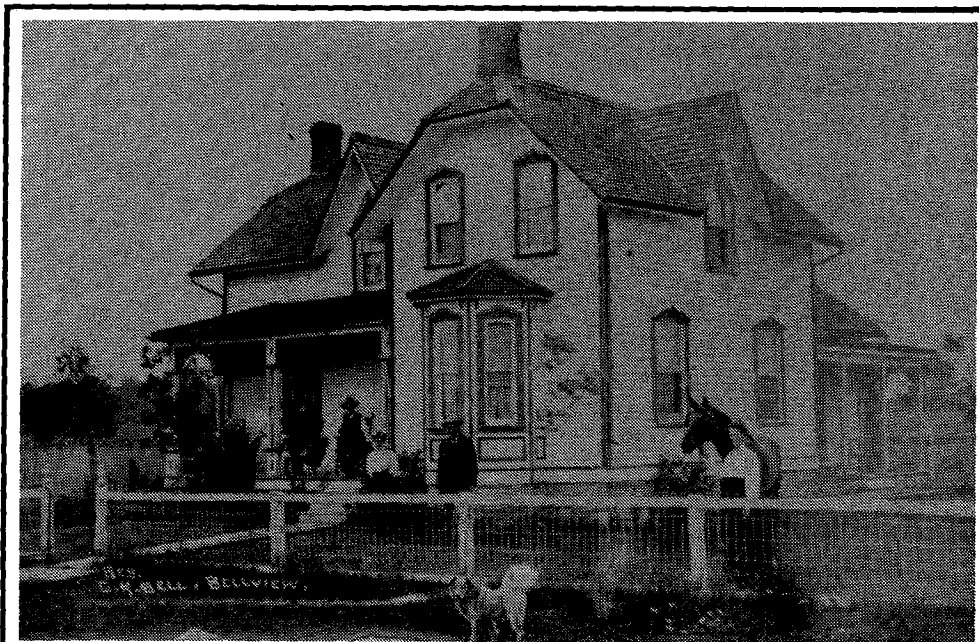
Halloween for the Night Riders was different than for the most of the young people of Bellview. They did wear masks for the purpose of observing those who were doing mean things to the old folks and trying to prevent such incidents, as upsetting back houses and rain barrels or taking farmer's gates off.

They did not identify the perpetrators, but were around the next morning to help restore things as best they could. Looking back to the hardships of those times the writer believes the Night Riders had been simply comparing the good with the bad. When help was needed by the farmers or those who had had some unfortunate experience, they were always available and when the chores were done at home their mothers knew where they were at night, which must have been gratifying.

Their make-believe exploits had been harmless. Within sight and sound of the trains and stage they had robbed, lived a gang of the worst

desperadoes of the 19th century. None had ever been charged or faced a judge for any reason.

Bellview had always been patriotic and proud of it in World War One. Many sacrifices were made by young and old to help those in the armed forces. History has recorded the names of those who made the honour roll and those who paid the supreme sacrifice. Many had been from Bellview. One who did not return had written a letter to his mother saying they weren't fighting for their country; they were fighting for the good life in Bellview. In World War Two many names on the records had given Bellview as their birth place. The writer believes any one of the Night Riders would have been proud to have fought for the good life in Bellview.



The Bell House

Built by John A. Bell and George K. Bell in 1875. The photo shows, left to right, John A. and Mrs. Bell, Donald and Margaret Bell. Photo taken in 1900. Margaret's favourite horse, "Harry", named after her favourite Scotsman Harry Lauder, as well as "Scotty", the dog and family pet.

CHAPTER 11

The Bell House

The queen in her palace with the king and all her loyal servants could not have been happier in her royal domain than was the gracious lady, Mrs. Margaret Bell. My mother's association with the Bell's as friends, before and long after I was born, was no doubt responsible for my knowing, admiring and having the lady as my friend.

In my younger days, I always thought of her as a queen and as such, she too, had her king or consort, her dogs and her horse, but most important of all, she had her mansion. Despite all the good things she was surrounded with, there was just one thing missing in the family circle. With time

running out, it looked hopeless, but her prayers were answered and she was blessed with an heir apparent.

Shortly after, he was named John Alan. John was a little older than me, but as boys we played together a lot, mostly at his place and there never seemed to be any difference in our ages.

In public school days, it was the same. I spent many happy hours at this place, playing with his toys and games. He always had many things that other boys never had. It was during early school days that I began thinking about Mrs. Bell as I did my mother. She always treated me the same as she did John and a few times she took my part when John got to bullying me.

At about ten years of age, I made my first business deal with Mrs. Bell. I was to pick a quart of ripe wild raspberries, deliver them to her house, for which she paid me twenty-five cents, as well as the following Saturday, I was treated with a piece of raspberry pie and whipped cream. I honoured that commitment for several years after and was not only happy, but proud to do so, even when I was no longer a boy.

John Alan arrived at a time when most parents would be looking at their grandchildren. Consequently he was pampered and spoiled by doting parents, who lived long enough to witness his dominance in their social environment.

No one knew John better than I did. He was always the instigator of unusual pranks, whereby he was actually able to have the last laugh, with no apparent involvement. One never-to-be-forgotten episode took place shortly after his spending a Saturday with me, when we witnessed cattle dehorning operations at our place and my grandfather's farm.

It was customary in those days for a man with the proper equipment to go around the community removing the horns from the young cattle stock, usually during the winter months when bleeding was minimal and no flies to further aggravate them. About one week later, another friend and I were visiting at John's place. With Mr. & Mrs. Bell in the store, we had the house to ourselves. When the conversation turned to dehorning, it must have triggered a thought in John's mind as he described the procedure to my friend. Because boys' hair was allowed to grow considerably longer during the winter months, it made a good prop for our part in staging the demonstration.

With our hair all wet and twisted up, it resembled the horns on cattle; one on each side, just above the forehead. With his mother's scissors replacing the dehorning shears, John assumed the identity of the man who went around dehorning cattle. With a few warmup snips, like the professional, the imitation commenced. Then presto! We were dehorned, close to the scalp, just above the

ears. It was not until the hair was swept up and the scissors put away, that John brought out the mirror and the laughing began.

As his mother's footsteps approached the front door, my friend and I managed to get our caps on and made a fast exit out the back door. As usual, John had the last laugh. What started out as a joke, did not end with one for us that night. Though I had managed to escape to the confines of my room that night, the next morning at the breakfast table, my mother learned the fateful events of our folly.

In addition to the misery, my friend and I were supposed to be bearers at a funeral for a neighbour's little boy that day. When my father got a look at me, I received punishment to the rear flanks. Later he trimmed my hair as best he could and further punishment was demanded. I was not allowed to go to the funeral. My friend was reprimanded in a different way. With the rest of his hair cut off, he went to the funeral. There were some remarks made about rushing the season for that kind of hair cut.

One of the meanest tricks John was responsible for during school days had to do with a game we played at school in winter, usually on days when the snow was ideal for making snowballs. We would take turns standing up against the wall at the rear of the school, where there were no windows. With our arms crossed and our foreheads cradled therein, we made a perfect target for the ten or twelve who were lined up about twenty feet back, armed with snowballs and taking turns at throwing. When the target was hit, the victim turned around and had to identify the marksman. If he did, they changed places. If not, he had to stand there until he did.

Ordinarily, it didn't hurt too much, but my friend John arranged things whereby once again he had the last laugh. On the way home from school, he picked up some small stones along the side of the road that were showing up with the spring weather. He put one in each snowball he made, then left them on the back porch where they froze solid overnight. By noon the next day the snow was ideal for a game and John was on the firing line with special ammunition. They were round, hard and more accurate and they did hurt. Several of the boys got it in the rear end or the back of the head, but the marksman was never identified. That was the last game of the season.

It was not until later that we discovered the malicious prank when someone broke one open and found a stone. John had brought them to school in the morning and buried them in the snow near the firing line.

I had one fight with John that ended up with two bloody noses. We had a raft in a pond along the railroad track and had taken turns at paddling around.

With me on the raft and John on dry ground, it was an ideal setup for him to upend an old railroad tie into the icy water and soak me from head to foot. John didn't have the last laugh this time. The fight was a draw, but the friendship lasted for a long time after.

I was the first one he called for when he needed a friend and I was happy to oblige.

Mrs. Bell's main interest in life centred around her house and her horse. Arranging the furniture and the pictures on the walls seemed to be an obsession with her. As an interior decorator, there was none better and when showing the results of her planning and changes to friends her admiration for her home seemed to create a glow in the room and an imaginary halo around her smiling face.

Being in any room where this lady was showing the results of her latest transformation, would certainly make anyone feel they were in the presence of a most unusual lady.

When she realized her hopes and plans for the future would never be, she gave up the will to live and died of a broken heart.

The passing of Margaret and Donald Bell marked the beginning of the end of a dynasty, covering four generations of a family, dreams and hopes for perpetuity.

Several years later, while looking for some answers as to why certain things were taking place, I was surprised to learn that the estate of my friend had never been probated. I could only ponder what her last wishes might have been for her mansion.

It was however some consolation thinking that she did not have to watch the demolition and eventual burial of the remains.

I believed then and still do; this house did not have to be demolished nor should it ever have been. This was not the result of the epidemic that was apparently prevalent, but it was well planned, premeditated murder. I wondered then, if the perpetrators got any personal gratification for the part they played in this unusual event. Once again the picture says something better than the writer can.

Many others held sentimental feelings for this house that could not be replaced today. It was in this house that I first listened to a radio. Here, I first saw and listened to a Victrola; where I first saw and touched the keys of a piano; the first telephone; the first electric light; the first polished hardwood floors and two matching archways; a wood-burning fireplace and a coal-fired furnace in the basement. The tea kettle and teapot always warm on the kitchen

stove, exemplified hospitality in a very special way, for all who came to the door.

The Bell house and the gracious lady who lived there were well-known by the boxcar travellers on the many trains that crossed the Diamond in Bellview. They, as well as the foot-weary hoboies and tramps walking the roads, seldom failed to take advantage of the generosity and personality of their benefactor who supplied them with sandwiches, cookies, tea and always the brown bag for the road, with usually an apple and an orange and more goodies tucked inside. The longest passenger train that ever passed through Bellview could not accommodate the many strangers that Mrs. Bell had befriended. She always referred to them as her travelling friends. Believing that not one of them would ever forget her or her house as long as they lived, gives me great pleasure.

If as an orator, I were to eulogize this lady, the rhetoric would not be exaggerated. Any indication of praise or eloquence would not have been what she wanted. In lieu of the many complimentary things I could have put in speech or writing, three words say it all, "A perfect lady."

What she lived for and believed in is my assurance that the one she looked up to for guidance has rewarded her for her faith in him.

Recalling the words in the New Testament, "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

I conclude my eulogy to my friend on a happy note. "Mrs. Bell, no one will ever tear this mansion down."

The Bell Families, honourable and dedicated people, were proud of this house and what it stood for. There had been many sacrifices made by three generations to build and maintain it to a degree that made it a welcome asset to Bellview and the surrounding community.

The construction and design of this house, as well as the landscaping, were such that with ordinary care would have withstood the ravages of time for centuries to come and would have been monumental to the dreams and aspirations of the Bell family. It is quite evident this was not to be.

It is however preposterous to believe that any so-called body of men could or would decree that it should be removed from its birthplace. Comparing the scenery that has displaced it must surely disturb the conscience of those who are responsible for this present situation, for those who pass it now look the other way and remember.



*Donald and Margaret Bell with third generation John Alan Bell.
Photo taken 1920.*