

Extract from

the author

PRIVATE INTERVIEW given to ~~Elle May Walker~~ by Mrs. Robert Turnbull
(nee Annie McKernan)

Mrs. Robert Turnbull (nee Annie McKernan) was born in 1873 in Ontario. Her uncle James McKernan came to Edmonton with the Royal North West Mounted Police in 1874. He was a young boy then and remained here for three years. When he returned to Ontario ~~he~~ told his brother, (Robert McKernan) her father, of the wonders of the West. The following ^{year} Robert McKernan moved with his family (1877) ^{and} came ^{back} with James McKernan to the West. They brought with them the first telegraph wire from Winnipeg. This wire was put up, as she remembered it, from tree to tree and only where no trees could be found were poles erected. Her father bought his first farm from an Indian called Emlaw, which was on the South Side. She remembers only fragments of the trip when they came to Winnipeg by train, Then they took Red River carts to come to Edmonton. They settled in Hay Lakes for a year and a half. They were four children in the family then. Then they came to the farm near Edmonton, which is now known as the McKernan Lake district.

In 1885 her father came from town where he had heard from the carrier about Indian trouble at Wetaskiwn, and tho' it was ten o'clock at night, the children were wakened and they drove to the Fort. ¶

"We children thought it was a great lark, actually we had no fear of Indians. We knew them as peaceable, friendly people, though they were touchy and easily offended. There was about seven of us children then. We got to John Walters place very late and we stayed over night there until the next morning and then crossed in the ferry, The Fort was filled with tents that had been put up for temporary shelter of settlers. It was the busiest ^{and most crowded} place you ever saw."

She remembered that Dr. Verey was in the Fort at the time and that his children, four in number, two boys and two girls, Kitty and Fanny were twins.

"My brother had to go back to our farm every day to milk. He brought back the milk and mother churned and carried on much the same as at home. We remained in the Fort for about three weeks and all the while men picketed the place,

One night there were shots fired over from the south side of the river and it stirred up suspicion against Lawrence Garneau, and he was subsequently locked up for a period of time. She said that Mr. Garneau was quite a fiddler and was in great demand at dances. Mrs. Garneau was fair and she believed she was Norwegian. Mr. Garneau met her at St. Boniface when he was on one of his freighting trips. She was an admirable housekeeper and their house, which stood at the corner of Saskatchewan Drive and ~~111~~ eleventh street was as tidy and neat as a pin. Her floors were scrubbed white at a time when there was no linoleum, paint or wax, to keep things clean easily.

She recalls the first school house very well. She said it faced East. She said the first teacher was Mr. Harris who was only there a year and then he died. She remembers Mr. Stiff and then there was Mr. Secord. ~~Mr. Secord~~ She remembers that Mr. Secord was a very harsh disciplinarian.