

**St. James' February, 2008 Newsletter**  
**Many Mini Ministry Mysteries**

**Capt. E. Shelton & Mary Ellen (nee Thomson) Andrews**  
**& Florence**

**Did you know.....?**

There are two, centrally located, adjacent windows on the South side of the sanctuary that are etched with the words from John's Gospel: *'God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son...'*. The first of these two stained glass windows is titled: *'The River dividing into Four Streams - Symbols of the Gospels'*. The dedication plaque reads:

To the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of  
Captain E. Shelton Andrews  
Mary Ellen Thomson Andrews  
Florence Andrews

Florence Andrews gave this window in memory of her parents. She was an active parishioner of St. James' and a member of the A.C.W. March Circle. During the 1930's she led the Senior Girl's Auxiliary Group. This was only one of many abilities she shared over her lifetime. The Rev. Bruce Rathbone officiated at her funeral service at St. James' on April 21, 1984. It was requested that Memorial donations be given to St. James' Restoration Fund. The destructive fire had occurred in February of 1982.

The Andrews family; including Florence and Marshall, two of their seven children, is named in 'The Book of Remembrance - Pioneers of St. James' Anglican Church - 1907 - 1939'.

Both Shelton and Mary Ellen were not only pioneers of St. James' since 1909 but also pioneers of the Saskatoon Temperance Colony. Mary Ellen gives St. James' a unique connection with Grace Westminster United Church. Grace Fletcher, after whom that church is named, was Mary Ellen's older sister. Another of Grace Fletcher's sisters, Allie Thomson, was a close friend and bridesmaid of Maud Bate, another St. James' pioneer. Mary Ellen Thomson came to the Temperance Colony from Bruce County, Ontario in 1885 with the Fletcher family to help tend their four children. She was a youthful 20 years of age. Her intention was to only stay for a few weeks in the 'Great North West'. Grace's maid had, on hearing of the Riel Rebellion, begged off coming to the Saskatoon settlement. Mary Ellen was asked to come in her place. She was intrepid enough to gain her father's permission to take on this venture. Mary Ellen was one who toughed out the hard times to become one of the 'Old-Timers'.

In 1955, Mary Ellen was chosen by B'nai B'rith to be Saskatoon's 'Citizen of the Year'. She was then 91 years of age. The tribute to her read: 'It is fitting that in this our Golden Jubilee Year, we honour someone who was a friend when friends were needed. Her door was always open to the traveller and she was always there to help friends and neighbours. In the May 28, 1956 Star Phoenix tribute to her, following her death, it was noted that she was one of the original members of St. James' and the Emmanuel College Guild as well as being active in many other community endeavours. Her funeral service was held at St. James on May 30, '56. The Rev. E. Crowther was the officiant.

The July '55 issue of the magazine – *Chatelaine*, ran a feature: *The Incredible Pioneer Women of the West*. In the article Mrs. Andrews recalled, "I had a wonderful time in those days." She enjoyed having many beaux and taught all the young men for miles around how to dance.

Romance blossomed when she met Captain Shelton Andrews at one of the colony dances. Shelton and Mary Ellen were the second couple of the Temperance Colony to be married. Within a year of meeting they were wed. Because there was no protestant clergyman in the colony at that time, they undertook a three-day trip in frigid weather to Prince Albert to have the marriage ceremony performed by Mr. Williams a Presbyterian Minister. Though it grieved him, the Captain gave the pastor a 10-dollar bill! Mary Ellen's ring was made from a gold coin supplied by the Clark's Crossing telegraph operator, Malloy. The account of this arduous yet joyful venture is found in [The Narratives of Saskatoon.](#)

Captain Andrews achieved his title by earning his captain's papers. He was a 13-year veteran of the high seas. His ancestral and childhood home was St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Shelton was a descendent of the Rev. Samuel Andrews who was a pioneer of New Brunswick. In 1706, Samuel founded the town that bears the family name, St. Andrews, and he also established the Anglican Church there! Shelton became a steamboat captain on Lake Winnipeg when ill health necessitated a move inland. In 1884 the Temperance Colonization Society hired him to run a shipload of lumber and other materials down the S. Saskatchewan River from Medicine Hat to Saskatoon. The shifting sandbars caused endless grief. The 'May Queen' eventually got to Saskatoon but was abandoned as a lost cause. Despite or because of the fact that the TC Society couldn't pay him, Captain Andrews stayed and homesteaded making his claim in 1884. His land was just South of where St. Paul's Hospital is now located. His was the first house built on the West Side of the river. After their marriage in March of 1886, he and Mary Ellen lived there until 1907 when for a short time they moved to Victoria. On their return in 1909 their home was at Melrose and 11<sup>th</sup> Street overlooking the river. The red brick house saw many social gatherings and dances over the years.

During the Riel Rebellion in 1885, Captain Andrews became commander of Saskatoon's home guard and also served on the "Northcote" transporting troops across the river. For his services on the Northcote he was given a commemorative 'Northwest Rebellion' medal. He was also paid \$20 for his service. To the Captain's chagrin it was given as a cheque that he couldn't use. No one in the colony had \$20 cash!

In 1986, The Saskatoon Meewasin Valley Authority dedicated an Emergency Boat Launch in Captain E.S. Andrew's honour. His 91-year-old son, Marshall, unveiled a plaque that told the Captain's story.

The Andrews were parishioners of St. James'. Captain Elisha Shelton Andrews had deep Anglican roots. Mary Ellen's family were strong Methodists. The ministry of Christ's church being a constant in one's life is evident. The dedicated window is a witness to that constancy. Captain E. Shelton & Mary Ellen Thomson Andrews led full adventuresome, eclectic, hopeful lives in the church and the greater community. They kept the faith and ran the good race.