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CARROLL, JOHN SALTKILL

(he never used his middle name), Methodist clergyman and author; b. 8 Aug. 1809 in a fishing hut on Saltkill's Island, Passamaquoddy Bay, N.B., the elder of twin sons of Joseph Carroll and Molly Rideout; m. in 1833 Beulah Adams of Perth, Upper Canada, and they had one son; d. 13 Dec. 1884 at Leslieville (now part of Toronto), Ont.

**MY BOY LIFE,
PRESENTED IN A SUCCESSION OF TRUE
STORIES,**

BY
JOHN CARROLL, D. D.
"The child is father to the man."
—Wordsworth,

A BOOK FOR OLD OR YOUNG.
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1882.

TO
ALL THE SELF-MADE MEN
(both lay and clerical,)
IN OUR WIDE CONNEXION;
and to all
THE NOBLE BOYS,
WHO INTEND TO BE
SUCH MEN AS ARE MEN
IS INSCRIBED,
WITH
SENTIMENTS OF PROFOUND CONSIDERATION,
BY
THE HUMBLE AUTHOR

CARROLL DESCRIBES HIS FAMILY'S JOURNEY FROM FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK TO QUEENSTOWN, UPPER CANADA IN THIS 1882 BOOK

"... till at last, through my mother's persuasions, he resumed his own proper business in Fredericton, and a pretty home was bought, and through her economy money enough was saved to pay for it. During the time the family resided there was the one green spot in their domestic life, the only oasis in a wide, dreary desert But, alas ! that was not to last ! From the Masonic lodge he and others would adjourn to the tavern. There, while mellowed into maudlin generosity, he was induced to become responsible to a large amount for a brother mason — that brother failed without securing father; father seeing the storm rising, under cover of coming to Upper Canada to look after securing the claims he had for services rendered to the British Government for land, stepped out of the way, and dear mother and her four eldest boys, the youngest only four years of age, were left to face the tornado, which swept all away.

He was gone two years and five months, during which, though the second eldest boy lost his sight during the time, mother maintained herself and children in tidiness and comfort. Nor was her husband's return, though he vaunted a grant from Gov. Simcoe for a thousand acres of land in his pocket, anything but a source of anxiety to his wife and hapless boys.

Oh ! drink, thou art a demon, and thy name is legion! Several years longer residence in New Brunswick added two more boys to the family, and brought down our history to the spring of 1809.

Then it was resolved to remove to Upper Canada to locate and settle on their thousand-acre demesne. In a boat they descended the St. John River to the Bay of Fundy; but they must perforce remain in the fisheries in Passimaquody {sic} until the four eldest boys, Joseph, James, William, and Thomas, could earn money enough to enable the family to complete their journey to the much anticipated land of promise.

Father always located his hapless family in some out of the way place, and on this occasion he put them in one of the three only huts on the islet known as Saltkill's Island, so named after its owner, John Saltkill, a bachelor Quaker, who had obtained a grant of it for services during the Revolution, my mother in imminent nearness to a confinement. There twins were born, of which two I was the eldest. There was just one family on the island besides ourselves, a Mr. Isaac Clarke and his wife. The circumstances of our birth are described in the next section. I was named John Saltkill after the proprietor, who wished to keep me and make me his heir ; and my mate was named Isaac Clarke after the other resident — christening there was none....

... At least, so said my parents, for often and often I heard them dwell on the

wearisome details. Some reference to those details is necessary as a connecting link between my first sketch and the second. When the infants were only three weeks old, as a necessary first stage of our intended removal to Upper Canada, father transferred his family in some sort of boat from Saltkill's Island, near the Province line, to Campo Bello Island, just beyond the American line ; so that I barely escaped being born a citizen of the United States ; but " a miss is as good as a mile," and with the Britisher sentiments in which I was brought up, I was exceedingly glad of that miss, and was none too well pleased, when I became old enough to know the facts, that I so early inhaled the air of Yankee-land — a land the inhabitants of which my Tory father persisted in calling ", rebels."

Knowing my sensitiveness to any aspersion on my loyalty, when my brothers wanted to tease me, they need but call me " Yankee! " to put me in a rage. My next oldest brother had a trick of doing that, much to my annoyance. I had a way, however, of turning the tables upon him; he had one vulnerable spot : he was a seventh son, and his father used to call him "Doctor," of which the little fellow would have been very proud, but for an unlucky surname he involuntarily received. On our voyage he had the misfortune to fall down the hatchway into a large pan of batter ready prepared for a breakfast of pancakes, from which immersion he received the cognomen of " Dr. Batter; " and when he annoyed me beyond endurance by calling me "Yankee" I generally silenced his battery, by telling " Dr. Batter" to shut up — I might say, that the juvenile physician's invariable prescription, when asked for advice, was a "bread and milk poultice."

Our passage from Campobello to New York, in a small sailing vessel, heavily laden with plaster of Paris, was a very rough one. The waves ran mountains high, the decks were drenched with salt water, and the hold was flooded nearly all the time. The poor weak, mother suffered much ; and as to us infants, it was said the briny baths to which we were subject, chafed the skin off our tiny bodies, and made us as red as a couple of boiled lobsters, which we very much resembled in size and otherwise.

Friends found in New York solaced the family- somewhat for a short stay ; but we soon embarked in a sloop on the Hudson for Albany; which, though crowded, was a slight improvement on the first stage of our journey. At Albany, father hired the horses and waggon of a farmer, whom he met in the market, by the name of Cantield, a Methodist, who proved a good man, (who I surmise, for certain reasons, afterwards became a travelling preacher), to drive us forward, through the long length of the " Empire State," from its Capital to the Niagara Eiver, the dividing line between New York State and Upper Canada. It was a terrible journey to a person in my mother's circumstances.

The narrow box of the waggon was crowded with some effects, which mother had brought from her father's affluent home, when she left it first, and had not parted with, but which she clung to with tenacity to the end. The twins and the next two youngest boys rode in the waggon Tom, always a good nurse, must have often ridden, to relieve his mother of the infants. Ever faithful and sympathising Joseph walked on one side of

the waggon and William on the other. James, always a favourite of the old gentleman's accompanied his father, who walked on ahead, under pretence of pioneering and preparing the way which largely consisted in testing the liquors at all the dram shops on the road. It is but just, however, to say, that his story-telling and song-singing capabilities constituted the key which unlocked some hearts toward us. So also his knowledge of Low German which he spoke fluently, having learned it when a youth in Pennsylvania, stood us in good stead.

Once the waggon had stopped for the night at a Dutch tavern in the Mohawk Valley; the babies were very cross and the people looked very glum ; and mother, who had ridden all day in a springless waggon over logs and stones innumerable, was ready to faint with fatigue. A gloomy night seemed in store for her. But when father came in and accosted the people in Dutch, all was changed ; the old Dutch landlady wore a pleasant smile ; one stout Dutch girl took one baby, and another girl took the other ; and mother was ensconced in the rocking chair, received a good supper, got early into a soft bed, and had one good night's rest.

We passed through Schenectady, and the incipient villages of Auburn, Cayuga, Canendagua, Onendaga, Batavia, &c., now more cities than anything else ; but the country as a whole was new, and a great part of it a howling wilderness. Mudholes were countless, and sometimes nearly bottomless; the family avowed that sometimes all that was visible of the horses were their heads. The greatest difficulties and sufferings were encountered in the Tondawanda Swamp, of far famed length and depth. Mother's memories of its holes and causeways were excruciating.

The Americans are proverbially inquisitive, and in their then ruder state they were especially so. With patriotic zeal to secure settlers, they were anxious for us to stop in the country, and wished to know "Where we were going? " Through all the earlier stages of the journey, father answered, " The Holland Purchase." This was true, for we were going there — though much farther. His answer served its purpose until we passed beyond the " Purchase," when something else had to be tried; what it was I never learned. At length, our almost interminable journey drew towards its close, and our American Cousins learned we were going to Canada to augment the number of King George's subjects. We infants were only six weeks old when we reached our journey's end.

We crossed the rapid Niagara with such facilities as the backward civilization of the day afforded, and spent the first winter in Queenstown. From there we removed to the Ten Mile Creek, living both at the " Lower Ten " and then at the " Upper Ten," consuming in all, I suspect, the best part of two years. Just as we were preparing to leave the place, the greatest possible affliction fell on our hapless family, which I assign to a section by itself. "