The Baldoon Mystery



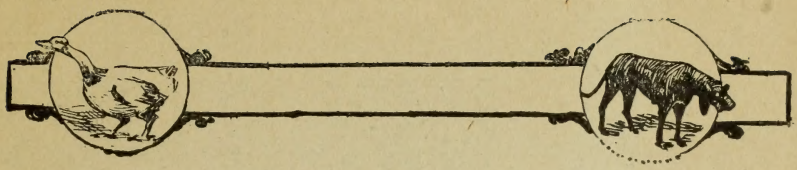
Baldoon, Haunted House, On Snye Carte River, Near Wallaceburg, Ont.

WIERD AND STARTLING

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Locating the Burial Place of the Great Indian Chief Tecumseh on St. Anne's Island in 1910, under the guidance of Matt Fisher. The bones were afterwards claimed by the Indians, and their whereabouts unknown to white men.



After being urgently requested by numerous friends, we have consented to again publish the book entitled "THE BELLEDOON MYSTERIES," a book beyond doubt, the greatest mystery of the age, and there are still men living who can and will testify to the truth of these wierd and incredible incidents, men of stirling veracity, who are willing to take their oath as to the correctness of the great mysteries.

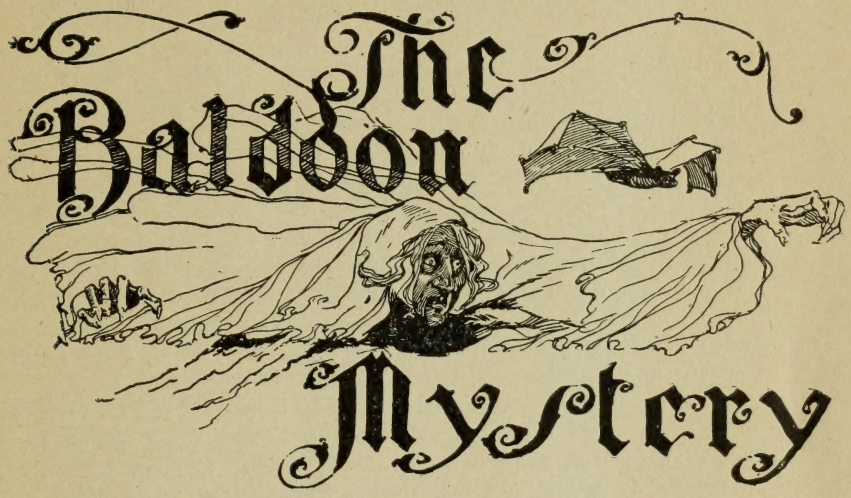
The third edition published by W. Colwell, Wallaceburg, the owner of the copyright, being exhausted, hundreds of people have pressed us very hard to republish a fourth edition and we consented, knowing as we do the earnest desire to again read the narratives recorded in this volume, and every word has been sworn to by eye witnesses.

W. COLWELL, Publisher.

The following events all occurred in the years between 1830 and 1840.

All the events which are recorded in this volume, took place within a few miles of Wallaceburg and are still fresh in the memory of a number of residents on the Snye Carte and St. Clair Rivers.

Copies of the Belledoon Mysteries are on sale, wholesale and retail, at Colwell's book store, Wallaceburg. Price 25c. per copy ; price by the dozen or hundred copies made known on application.



By Neil T. McDonald

"Come roam with me the unsettled forest through.
Where scenes sublime shall meet your wandering view ;
The settler's farm with blazing fires o'erspread ;
The hunter's cabin and the Indian's shed ;
The log built hamlet, deep in wilds embraced ;
The awful silence of the unpeopled waste."—Anon.



THE broad and beautiful river St. Clair sweeps with majestic force between the great inland seas, Lake Huron, and Lake St. Clair, and at about 30 miles from its source, a tributary stream called by the early French settlers, Channel Ecarte, winds its way into a low-lying tract of country which at the period of which I write, was a desolate region of marsh and forest, with here and there a cleared settlement.

In 1803 the philanthropic, but unfortunate Lord Selkirk, racked by home troubles and inspired with visions of the establishment of a second Eutopia, resolved to found a second colony that should be the means of restoring his own

shattered fortunes, and at the same time be a blessing to his dependents, whose lots as in common in many old English and Scottish families, were bound up in their Lord's interests.

Actuated by these motives, he set out on an exploring expedition through Canada, and after various adventures, decided upon settling the vast waste lands through which this Channel Ecarte' flowed.

Having secured the land the adventurous nobleman sent for his followers, who were anxiously waiting his commands in their homes in Argyleshire. But when the "Clans were gathered," the adieus spoken, the pain of leaving their fatherland borne (for few people are more patriotic than the Scotch) the little band of pilgrims found themselves met with a serious obstacle to their exodus. The war between France and England was then raging, and when the unfortunate party reached the small seaport town of Kincubright they found that the voyage across the Atlantic was attended with too many risks to be attempted, so they scattered themselves among the neighboring peasants and with that vast power of adaptability that marks the canny Scots managed to make both ends meet during a year's unexpected sojourn in a strange city.

In 1804, however, they successfully crossed the vast ocean and after weeks of weary travel across the pine clad slopes of Ontario, found themselves at the long looked for mecca of their pilgrimage.

There are fewer points of history more fraught with interest to the thinking minds, than the stories of the first European settlers in the Western World, whether we peruse the adventures of a vast body like the wandering Hugenots, or the daily experiences of a family of roving emigrants, the tale of human fortitude, endurance and successful encounter of difficulties is ever new to us.

But, notwithstanding all this unexpected delay, Lord Selkirk's preparations were hardly in a state of completion, when the horde of needy ones reached the scenes of his labors. The rough log houses were not ready for their inhabitants and for weeks they had to dwell in tents during the inclemency of an incipient Canadian winter. Is it strange then, that as a contemporaneous writer naively observes "most of the heads of families died off the first year"

According to Lord Selkirk's arrangements, to each family was reserved a homestead of fifty acres, and thus began

the fortunes of many, who in after years of prosperity attained all the comforts of life and some of them considerable affluence. In future days the town of Wallaceburg was to rise among them, and a thriving community mark the results of their years of arduous labor.

The worthy founder reserved for himself nine hundred acres and built a residence for his agent, which he called Belledoon, or as it was afterwards pronounced Baldoon, a name that attached itself eventually to most of the outlying settlements.

A mile or two more westward than any of these settlers, one sturdy emigrant built himself a large frame house on the Channel Ecarte. This was Daniel McDonald, who after years of honest industry, found himself at the head of a prosperous family, and doing well in the world.

Among other children he was blessed with a son, John T. McDonald, who inherited all his father's habits of industry and staid demeanor. Merry was the time, however, when John was old enough to marry, and a second frame house had to be raised to accommodate the youthful couple. This house was the scene of the Belledoon Mysteries.

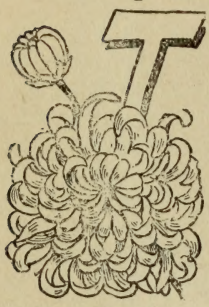
Here for a time John and his wife lived happily, and in their turn heard the sweet prattle of children on their door steps, but it was a Fool's Paradise, for they were presently to awaken to a series of mysterious persecutions of unparalleled significance.

It is necessary for the proper development of the thread of this story, that attention be called to another family residing in the neighborhood, whom, as I do not desire to implicate by name, I will for the sake of identification, designate as the people of the Long Low Log house. This family consisted of an old woman, her two sons and one daughter. They were not nice people, but were remarkable for a sullen, resentful air, and made few friends. There are few faults less easily condoned for in a sparsely settled neighborhood, than unsociability, and it is not surprising that in the course of time the people of the Long Low Log house were not the most popular in the little community.

Young John McDonald had secured a piece of land which was coveted by these people, who approached him with offers of purchase. These he steadily refused and to this obstinancy on his part he, rightly or wrongly, as the reader may himself decide when he has perused these pages, owes all the miseries he endured during the terrible enactments at the time of the Belledoon Mysteries.

CHAPTER II.

If sweet content is banished from my soul,
Life grows a burden and a weight of woe—Otway



HEN spring came after the long winters and each recurrent season saw the frugal Scottish families living in increasing happiness. They had few cares. The earth yielded its increase to their daily labors and they were united by those holy ties of family clanship that they had brought with them from the land of the heather. They were strict Baptists of the old Covenantish character, determined, steady and little likely to be lead away by freaks of the imagination. Regular religious services were held in their homes and now and then, as was the custom in those days, an itinerant preacher found a glad welcome in their humble homes. Thus caring little for the great world beyond them, they tilled the land, and enjoyed their well earned rest and lived in a state of blessed uneventful peacefulness. But soon the fair scene that surrounded them was to be blasted by a desolation of indescribable severity. We are told that the sailor watches in the distant horizon the cloud no bigger than a man's hand, that comes upon him with gathering force, and at last in the massive grandeur of the storm, breaks upon his devoted head. So this innocent family saw signs and potents that gave them warning of the terrors that were to come.

In those days the good wife of the family weaved the homespun cloth that should cover the backs of her husband and sons, and the daughters of the family were adepts in stringing the yellow straw into hats that should ward off the blazing sun in the harvest field Many a merry party were gathered in the barns in hat weaving days, and the industrious maidens were never behind hand when any act of industry was to be performed.

One day the men went off to their farm duties and the young women of the united families started off to the barn to pick and prepare the straw for their afternoon's work. There was a glad party of innocent girls full of frolic and happy as birds on that bright summer's day. The rafters of the old barn rang with many a youthful laugh. The barn was built of logs, and inside had poles laid across from side

to side overhead, forming a kind of loft upon which the flax was thrown.

As the girls sat chatting and working, they were startled by the sudden displacement and fall of one of these poles, right into their midst but striking nobody. When the first surprise was over, the circumstance was forgotten and attributed to some natural cause. Suddenly there was another crash and down fell a second of these poles. This time, fully aroused, they instituted a vigorous but vain search, for notwithstanding all their efforts, they could find nothing to account for the incident.

With some trepidation they resumed their labors and a long respite from annoyances occuring, they were again drifting into their merry mood, when with a loud noise, a third pole came thundering unto the floor. This time, thoroughly frightened, they took to their heels and fled precipately into the house. "What could it be ?" Their conjectures were various, and each tried to reassure the other with an assumption of ease by no means honestly felt. But the household duties called their attention and they became absorbed in their work.

While thus engaged, they were startled by a crash of glass and a leaden bullet fell at their feet on their floor. It came through the window and dropped easily like a spent ball. "What a shame !" said one, thinking that some hunter had carelessly fired in the direction of the house, "people ought to be more thoughtful for others' safety, one of us might have been hurt." Hardly were the words spoken, when another bullet followed the first and barely had the terrified girls got over the shock of the occurence, than a shower of them came through the windows in the same way The young ladies fled to the house of a neighbor, not daring to remain at home. In a short time, Mr. L. A. McDougald, of Wallaceburg, to whom the present writer is indebted for a most interesting account of the circumstances, came along and persuading them to return, found the deserted house in the state they had described. Each bullet had bored a hole through the panes of glass as though it had been violently shot from a gun and yet had dropped harmlessly and quietly on the floor.

When John McDonald returned to his home and found his women folks in such trouble, he was visited with a fit of melancholy, as though by some sensitive pre-science he could foresee the miseries his devoted family were about to

endure. For days nothing else was talked about in the neighborhood. Persons begged these bullets as curiosities and carried them away with them to distant parts of the country. It was a nine days' wonder and some thought every member of the family quite prided themselves on the notoriety they were attaining.

One night about midnight, John McDonald was awakened by his wife with the exclamation, "Hark! there is some one in the kitchen."

Then followed the slow, steady tramp of marching men, backwards and forwards with measured hollow tread. Then stillness. Then again the tramp, tramp, tramp!

Driven to desperation of bravery by the startled cry of his little child, who slept in a room off the kitchen, the terrified father rushed to the apartment and flinging open the door, found———nothing; nothing but the empty room with no apparent displacement of a single article in it. This event occurred in the summer of 1829 and for three successive years this afflicted family were to be the victims of many such manifestions.

At first nothing worse than the tramping occurred to trouble them. But that in itself was bad enough. Fancy lying awake every night expecting ghostly sounds to come. Now hearing them thundering up to your very door, now dying away in the distance, expecting each moment to see some vision of unwonted terror. Fancy walking across the rooms of this house and hearing the heavy footsteps behind you, and following you, and turning around to find nothing, as those poor women of this household did hundreds of times. Other manifestations soon, however, began to appear to vary the monotony of these family horrors.

The throwing of bullets through the windows was now almost of daily occurrence, till every pane of glass was broken and John sought the simple barricade of some strong inch boards. Still the mysterious shower came, with this difference, only that whereas the bullets perforated round holes in the glass, they passed through the boards without leaving a mark.

Then stones began to plague them in the same mysterious manner. By this time the whole country round was excited by the disturbances, and strangers came to make inspections for themselves, but none could give any satis-

factory clue to the mysteries, in fact, all who came, gentle and simple, went away appalled and thoroughly convinced that they were occasioned by supernatural influences.

One day a happy, rollicking daring fellow named Neil Campbell was one of these exploring visitors. He was very merry over the reported manifestations and declared himself perfectly able to combat all the ghostly trickeries he could encounter in that house.

Hardly were his boastful words spoken, when a heavy stone dashed through the window and struck him on the breast, not to hurt, but the blood left his cheeks and beads of perspiration bedewed his brow. He was as pale as death and trembled in every limb. At length he took the stone and cast it into the river. In a few minutes it fell again at his feet in the room. Never was skeptic more assuredly convinced that there was something in it beyond his power of comprehension. From that time Neil Campbell was a most interested witness in all that occurred in this house of mysteries.

CHAPTER III.

"The mysteries took such strange fantastic shapes,
That men would laugh e'en through falling tears."
—Henderson.



GOING as scores of other persons did, to gratify his curiosity, Wm. F. Fleury, now of St. Clair, was a witness of one of the strange ghostly vagaries of the haunted house. He saw a little child of a few months of age, lying in a cradle. Suddenly, without any apparent reason, the cradle began to rock violently until the infant was nearly tossed out of it. It was with the greatest difficulty that he and John McDonald could hold it still until the mother, actuated by a maternal fear for her babe, took it up in her arms.

Several witnesses bear testimony to equal extraordinary events, some of them, wer it not for the anxiety of the afflicted family, grotesquely humorous.

The dishes of water would rise of their own accord from the table, the tongs and shovel bang against each other on the hearth, the chairs and tables fall over with a loud crash, and even that sober domestic creature, the kettle on the hearth, would toss off its lid, tip over on one side, and suddenly, as if seized by unseen hands, dash itself in a paroxysm of fury on the floor. An Indian knife, with a blade ten inches long, was violently dashed against the window frame and its blade stuck fast in the casement.

As the Channel 'Ecarte and the parent stream, the River St. Clair, abounded in fish, it is not surprising that most of the early settlers took advantage of the abundant supply of nature to give them food. Consequently one out of eight or ten families was in possession of a seine for the purpose of dragging the river. In those primitive days there was no market for such delicacies, but the happy possessor of a net was repaid for the fish he supplied to his neighbors by many little acts of responsive kindness that more than made up for his trouble. John McDonald, always to the fore in the world's gear, had one, and prided himself no little in its possession. In the presence of several witnesses, whose names are attached to the affidavits as found in the appendix of our little volume, a shower of lead sinkers, as torn from a seine, was thrown into the McDonald house. On seeking the net, they were found to have been detached without the breaking of a single thread, although the most deft hands of an accomplished fisherman could hardly in hours of labor accomplish the same results. These rings of lead would be cast on the floor. Members of the family and visitors would pick them up and fling them into the water, and in a minute's time, dripping with water, they would fall again at their feet.

One witness bears testimony that she saw a piece of soap fly from its usual place and violently strike one of the McDonald children on the back.

Mr. Alexander Brown, a Methodist class leader and a man of considerable respect, now residing near Chatham, bears testimony to one of the drollest of these manifestations. Mrs. McDonald gave a favorite dog the mush pot to lick out. Hardly had the unfortunate beast taken a mouth

full when the ladle flew out of the pot and began of its own accord to belabor the poor animal, which ran out yelping into the field. The ladle returned to its pristine duties, but the dog, we are told, disappeared for several days. It was found sometime afterwards in Michigan and nothing could ever induce it to return to Canadian shores again.

One night, the disconsolate family were sitting in mournful conclave over the annoyances from which they were suffering, when there came a knock at the door, and Mr. McDonald, on opening it, found a stranger from New York, who demanded hospitality, a request that in happier days, had never been refused to wayfarers by the good natured Scot. This time, however, he hesitated, and at last being pressed, told his visitor frankly the state of things. Nothing daunted, the stranger said that such a mystery would lend an additional zest to his night's entertainment, and McDonald reluctantly consented to his remaining. A guest in those days was all the more welcome in a genial way, as current events were not very stirring and his presence was universally considered a God-send. But tonight the host was wrapped in a sorrowful mood, and little inclined to be entertaining. However, the stranger cheerily entered and laughingly said: "Guess I shan't come across anything worse than myself." As he spoke the gun in his hand exploded, and another gun belonging to John McDonald, then standing upright in a corner of the room also went off with a loud explosion. After this the two guns moved about in various directions, and evaded the grasp of the excited owners. So many things did the New York man see in the McDonald homestead that he pursued his journey next morning a sadder and a wiser man, carrying to the metropolis a long account of the curious tidings, so that many persons wrote and several came to make their investigation.

There was at that time a peddlar named Patrick Tobin, who resided at Chatham, and travelled through the country with simple wares that in those days were not every day procurable. He was in the habit of staying over night at the farm houses, and generally sought the hospitality of Mr. McDonald when in the neighborhood. On counting his money on one of these occasions before resuming his journey, he missed twenty half-dollar silver pieces. Being perfectly assured of the honesty of his entertainerss, he

told them of his loss, whereupon they informed him that frequently articles were missed and reappeared, and advised him to wait patiently for results. This he concluded to do. During the breakfast hour a sharp ting, was heard on the window pane and one of the silver pieces fell onto Mr. Tobin's plate, followed in a few minutes by eighteen others, one by one. The twentieth did not make its appearance for a time and the terrified peddlar gathered his money together beating a hasty retreat, and generously telling the children that if it returned, they could keep it.

One gentleman, well known in the neighborhood, Mr. Jas. Stewart, on visiting the house, made the observation that he had read of a case in Scotland where an empty bucket went of its own accord to a well and came back full. The McDonalds said that no such occurrence had taken place in their house, whereupon a pint cup of water that stood on the table rose from its place and went around the room through the air and coming back emptied itself on the floor before them.

CHAPTER IV.

Such unheard of prodigies hang o'er us,
As make the boldest tremble—Young.



the cessation of the occurrences that I have detailed in the last chapter, which were, however, only the precursors of more distressing events that plunged this unfortunate little family into the direst afflictions, little balls of fire began to float in the air, and settling in various parts of the house, set it on fire. Fires would break out, too, in every room in the house in the most unaccountable manner. Little bundles of cobwebs, flax, clothing and other combustible things were found constantly, and the harrassed family found the greatest difficulty in subduing the flames. The back log from the hearth would be dashed into the middle of the room, scattering sparks in all directions. Closets which no one

could reach without passing through the main sitting room, were found to be receptacles for small bon fires made by unseen hands. Cotton batting was found ignited beneath the clap boards, smoke came frequently from the walls and the family were kept for days in a state of wondering excitement.

At last one day the crisis came. Worn out with anxious watching, the unhappy man was becoming desperate, when flames burst from a dozen sources in his dwelling. No time to save his household goods; the fire razed his habitation to the ground. Not even his coat was saved, and he saw the home to which he had so lately led his happy bride, bouyant with future hope, strewed to the winds in ashes

Mr. L. A. McDougall, of Wallaceburg, thus graphically describes the scene: "The first house that was consumed was John T. McDonald's. I was going up the river in a boat that morning in company with James Johnson, Sr., and William Fisher. When we were opposite McDonald's place we perceived that John's house was on fire, but as we were some distance from it we saw that it would be gone before we could reach it. The family were at breakfast yet and had not discovered the danger. Mr. Dan McDonald's house was nearer to us, and as they saw the fire they hailed us and asked us to assist them to carry out their furniture as they expected their own habitation would soon be in flames. We landed and helped them to carry out everything. In the meantime John's house and barn were reduced to ashes together with all they contained, the family barely escaping with their lives. He came up to us without his coat, saying that the clothes he had on were all they had saved.

Utterly broken down by the consummation of this disaster John fell sick and it needed all the consolation and care of kind friends to rally him into sufficient strength to bear his coming troubles. His misfortunes created universal sympathy. People flocked from far and near to encourage and offer him assistance. Hundreds too, prompted by curiosity, visited Belledoon and the mysteries became the theme of conversation and conjecture even in the Eastern cities.

These kind expressions of feeling ameliorated John's

suffering and he manfully strove to redeem his misfortunes. First a home must be found for his houseless little ones. Notwithstanding the general opinion that wherever the unhappy man went these persecutors would follow him, several friends invited the striken family to share their roof.

It was decided at last that a temporary habitation should be found in the house of his brother-in-law, into which the family was at once removed. Surely enough, hardly had they taken possession of their new quarters than the smaller annoyances began as briskly as ever, until there seemed every probability of them culminating in the same disastrous manner as they had in John's own house. Fresh quarters were sought, and again the disturbances followed them.

At one place in which they found refuge, as testified by Mr, Isiah Brown, of Chatham, Ont, a singular occurrence took place. In those days big log fires were built in open hearths—comfortable, cheery, companionable fires that served to light as well as heat; the spacious old fashioned "keeping-room." One such was in the house at which McDonalds were sojourning. In place of and-irons, large stones were used on which to build the fires. One day when Mr. Brown was visiting the place, one of these stones flew from its place and dashed through the door, smashing a panel to splinters and scattering the fire all over the floor. As this had happened in the McDonald house before it was burned, it did not much surprise them, but it seemed to have made a serious impression on the minds of the host and Mr. Brown. The latter gentleman was so awed by such an unnatural occurrence that in years afterwards he speaks of it with a shudder.

Was ever a family so afflicted? Their house burned to the ground, all the little gatherings of their married life, those innumerable trifles that make home so dear—scattered to the winds in ashes, their spirits broken with continued unrest; and now it seemed as if the cause was to follow them, and that wherever they went the ghostly afflictions would dog their footsteps.

We are told that in the old Bible days the leper was driven from the tents and cities into the wilderness, forbidden to drink of the stream that flowed by human habitation, to cross the pathway of a fellow creature or to speak

to a living soul. But in this instance the curse fell not only on the hapless man, but on his children, and wherever he went he seemed to carry it with him. The continued dropping of water will wear away the hardest stone, and the perpetual recurrence of the small persecutions with with this family was afflicted were enough in themselves to drive them to distraction, but it must be remembered that in addition to all this they were harassed by the expectation of some greater calamity.

CHAPTER V.

Wonders and mysteries and marvels strange
Rain on us thick as leaves in brown October.

—Barton



S it became apparent that John McDonald must seek a new resting place for his family, for it was hardly to be expected that a friend would take upon himself so much annoyance, it was arranged that the young couple with the three children should go to live with old David McDonald. When all other doors are shut against us, no matter how great our troubles, the father's hearth is ready to receive us. So they moved into the black frame house on the bank of the Channel Ecarte.

For some weeks they were undisturbed. A little cheerful society was sought as a means of dispelling the gloom and after a time people were found who were not afraid to stay with them. A young lady relative was one of their most appreciated guests, full of life and spirits herself, she, by her cheerful way, shed sunshine all around her. One day the young lady and Mrs. McDonald were in the garden alone when they saw lying on the doorstep, basking in the sun, a beautiful little black dog with long over lapping ears and silken coat. "Pretty creature!" said the girl, "where can it have come from," and she endeavored to coax it and keep it until the owner was heard from. To this they agreed and the two together approached the house calling the dog by pet names to them. As they approached, it ran round

the corner of the house whither they persued it, each taking a side of the dwelling in their course, when they met at the rear, what was their amazement to find that neither of them had seen the dog. It was gone. They returned to the front, commenting on the peculiar disappearance and regretting the loss of so pretty a creature. Presently Mrs. McDonald's attention was called by the young lady to the eavetrough, and there, to her surprise, she saw the little dog lying with his head hanging over the side of it and its tongue lolling out of its mouth. The house was two storeys high and there were no means of reaching the roof from the upper floor. When the men returned, accustomed as they were to the marvelous, they rediculed the idea of this mysterious doggie, but the same creature was seen again and again by creditable persons whose evidence will be found in the appendix.

This extraordinary occurrence was followed by the usual annoyances with which the younger McDonalds had been persecuted in their own home. The fearful tramping was heard day and night. The furniture moved about, and heavy cupboards fell to the floor with a loud noise. Bullets broke through the windows of the up-stairs rooms, but not through those of the lower storeys. Stones were flung from the bed of the river into the house, marked, cast into the river and returned.

The worst calamity, however, was the terrible mortality that broke out among the stock. A fine pair of oxen dropped dead in the field. The hogs sickened and died. Horses fell dead in their stalls. Even the poultry drooped and died. Concerning the latter, it was noticed that if even a hen laid an egg, she was sure to die forthwith.

A peculiar incident that had great weight on the mind of Mr. McDonald, occurred about this time. The old woman, who lived in the Long Low Log House, solicited old Mr. McDonald's sister to weave her a piece of carpet. She was told that there was so much trouble in the house she would not attempt an extraneous work.

"Nay, but," said the old woman, "no trouble will befall your house while you are engaged on my business." Again and again she repeated the asservation until it was determined that a trial should be made, and sure enough,

as long as the carpet was being woven, they were undisturbed. Such a relief was indeed a luxury. Rest had for a long time been a stranger to them, and now for a few days there was perfect rest. An old writer pictured heaven as a place of utter rest, perfect ease of mind and body, These people for a short time experienced the blessing of perfect peace. But it was not to last. As soon as the cloth was restored to its owner the noises and trouble began as lively as ever.

Captain Lewis Bennett, an officer in the British army, hearing of the mysteries, visited Belledoon in company with Mr. John Jones of Corunna, with a purpose of thorough investigation. He reported that he saw the furniture moving about, especially the iron articles which were disturbed with loud noises. His own gun exploded without any apparent agency. Bullets were cast into the room which Captain Bennett picked up and put into a shot belt. This he tied with a string, and wore it over his shoulder. Nevertheless it would in a few minutes be empty, and the bullets would fall on the floor dripping with water, as though having just come from the river.

He saw a little babe of John McDonald's lying in a cradle asleep. Suddenly the infant began to scream as though in pain. In vain they sought to pacify it, and its cries were redoubled. Underneath the child was found a hot stone—so hot that when they threw it into the river the water sizzled. In a minute the stone was thrown into the room, and this act was repeated several times.

The house, too, frequently rose at either end from one to three feet from the blocks, terrifying the unfortunate occupants.

In those days a shoemaker, like a preacher, was itinerant. He generally made his headquarters at one farm house and having cobbled up all the boots of the neighborhood, would take up his bench and walk into another district where his services were needed. One such son of St. Crispin, who had long been accustomed to make his temperory home with Daniel McDonald, now came and expressed himself as perfectly content to share with them the dangers by which they were surrounded. So he manfully set up his bench in a room off the sitting room and went cheerfully to work. His first trouble eas that his lap-stone would take

upon itself the most remarkable feats. He would lay it by his side and in a moment it was gone. Then it would return dripping with water as through thrown by unseen hands to his side. All this the cobbler bore patiently, but when the hob-nailed boots that had come to him for repair took to making peregrinations round the shop of their own accord, he gave up his job in dismay.

So notorious became the mysteries, that at last the authorities from Toronto, fearing that they would tend to propagate superstition through the people, sent properly qualified persons to take measures to put a stop to it all. The first thing done was to insist on the entire removal of the McDonalds from the premises. Accordingly both families went in temporary quarters on the bank of Running Creek. But these steps did not in any way facilitate matters, for the McDonalds not only carried their plague with them, but their deserted homestead was as seriously visited as ever it had been. Many reputable persons, in their absence, went to keep watch and all returned the same unsatisfactory report of what they saw.

Mr. L. McDougald, of Wallaceburg, as one of the most intelligent, may perhaps serve better to quote from. This gentleman says: "My father and Mr. John McNeil volunteered to watch the house of Mr. Daniel McDonald. As they sat talking, they saw smoke issue from a small closet. On examining they found a fire nicely built on the floor with corn cobs and coal. There was but one entrance to the closet, and no one could have gone in without their knowledge. They extinguished it, but soon smoke began to come from the wall. They tore away the laths, and plaster and there found another fire similar to the one in the closet, And so it continued for some time, as fast as they extinguished it in one spot, it broke out in another, till Mr. McDonald remarked that whatever had power to do this could also if so minded throw the house down upon them, so that it was better to leave the place to its fate.

Meanwhile the McDonald family had carried with them the annoyances to Running Creek, and it was resolved to return to Belledoon. The law officers had gone away utterly at a loss to account for the mysteries or how to offer any redress. Accordingly the two families came back to the farm.

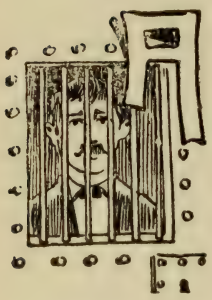
But they did not dare to take up their residence for a time in the house, preferring to gather all the old sails they could from the neighborhood and rig themselves out a tent. This was all very well. They were constantly kept on the alert in putting fires out in the deserted house and outbuildings, it is true, but they felt more secure than when living indoors. But a Canadian winter is not exactly a climate best qualified for a camp-out, and with the first fall of the snow, the sufferings of the old people and infants were so intense that even a haunted house was preferable. Whilst living in the wheat field several strange manifestations were made.

Clothes taken from the deserted house and placed in barrels became ignited and began to smoulder away. Even single garments when hung out to dry after being saturated with water would take fire. Mr. McDonald and his men one say saw a bundle of sticks fly through the air and drop on the roof of the barn, which immediately caught fire. This was repeated. Almost every hour fires had to be extinguished in the house and outbuildings. On the third day, notwithstanding their efforts, the barn was burned to the very ground and with it all the grain. However the neighbors were good, and even strangers, pitying the distressed condition of the family, made things as easy as they could for them and replenished their losses in some small degree. But winter knocked the tenting plan on the head, and the family sought shelter indoors, Daniel in the old homestead and John in the log cabin. ...



CHAPTER VI.

"Live you? or are you aught
That man may question."—Shakespeare.



MONG the persons most interested in the peculiar events of daily occurrence at Belledoon, was one Mr. Robert Barker, a gentleman of some considerable attainments, who kept a school in Bay County. He had read much on the subject of Witchcraft,, and being of a moody temperment, had drifted into a belief in supernatural agencies effecting the ordinary lives of persons. The case of the McDonalds offered him an admirable opportunity to confirm the opinions he had formed from the peculiar style of literature he had effected. Accordingly he took up his residence at Belledoon and gave up his entire time to investigation. His experiences soon convinced him that the mysterious happenings came from supernatural agencies. He saw most of the phenomena with his own eyes, and drew his conclusions accordingly. Following out the old established custom of banning the evil spirit that was supposed to cause all the trouble he wrote on a large placard: "I COMMAND YOU TROUBLESOME SPIRIT TO LEAVE THIS HOUSE, IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY GHOST." In addition to this he nailed upon the door a horse shoe.

Poor Mr. Barker's exorcisims had no apparent effect upon the spirits, but they succeeded in rousing the ire of the British authorities, who since they gave up the amiable practice of burning old women by act of parliament, have had the strongest objection to the luxury of witchcraft being indulged in by the people.

One day whilst Barker was sitting in consultation with the McDonalds, word was brought that Constable George

Barnshaw was on his way to arrest him. The pedagogue, who had bravely dared the mysterious spirits, turned pale at the vision of a minion of the law armed with a warrant for his apprehension, and ignominiously fled to the recesses of Black Creek. Here for a time he thought himself safe, but confronted by the muzzle of a loaded gun in the hands of the enterprising Burnshaw, he wisely resolved that discretion was the better part of valor and gave himself up into the hands of justice. The next day he was taken, manacled like a common felon, in a canoe to Windsor which was the nearest place where a court could be held. Here he was cast into jail and kept for six months before being called for trial. During this period the poor fellow suffered severely. Beyond the indignity of a man in his position, he was made to associate with the vilest evil doers of the frontier district, he was half starved. His clothes were covered with vermin, and when he stood up for his trial few of his friends could recognize in the emaciated skeleton before them the once stalwart figure of the benevolent schoolmaster. His sufferings had been increased during his captivity by his racking anxiety as to what would become of his family during his confinement. The neighbors from far and near gathered to hear his trial. It was then found that no action at law would be, as Mr. Barker had received no fee for his services. What consolation had he for his months of suffering, his blighted prospects and ruined business? Nothing beyond the gratification of knowing that His Most Gracious Majessy the King pardoned him for doing nothing at all, and told him not to do it again.

Mr. Barker went to the Eastern States to repair his broken fortunes and has never since been heard of by his western friends.

Some Catholic friends now advised Mr. McDonald to have recourse to the clergy of that chprch. Accordingly an appeal was made to the Rev. Father Troyer, of Longwoods who responded to the call, although the McDonalds did not belong to his church. The reverend gentleman, to make his operations more sure, took up his quarters in the house and stayed there for a whole week. But prayers, ceremonies and priestly admonitions were unavailing. The good father suggested that it might be a visitation of God for some crime

committed by old McDonald or some member of the family before coming to this country, and urged a confession and repentance. But he was met with the assurance that there was no evil deed to atone for. Father Troyer returned to his Cure as wise as he came, and much disappointed at having been unable to afford the McDonalds relief.

Then came a professor of spiritual eccentricities in the shape of an Indian Medicine Man. This nomadic adventurer claimed that he could find out all about the mysteries and how they came to pass, and could put an effectual stop to the annoyances. He said that he was able to do this by means of a secret, handed down from generation to generation of his tribe ; that the mischief lay in a composition of horribles (amongst them being fifty human tongues) and that upon a certain day, he would, by power imparted to him, command the kettle, which was buried under a certain tree he pointed out, to come forth One penalty he assured them would be his for daring to disturb the unholy incantation—instanteous death. Yet he affirmed that with that deed of mercy his spirit would leave his body and seek its reward in the limitless fields of the happy hunting grounds.

Ready to cling to any straw, the McDonalds put faith in the red man's promises, and on the day appointed two hundred people were assembled to witness the Indian auto de fe and the blessed ceremony that was so much needed.

The Indian, however, never put in an appearance. Perhaps he had lost the secret, or probably he was not quite prepared to quit the certainties of this humdrum life, even for an eternity of countless buffaloes and innumerable scalps.

The disappointed party proceeded to dig up the tree, but found nothing. In fact it was generally acknowledged that public opinion tended to credit the Medicine Man with too great an adeptness in tricks that were wary.

CHAPTER VII

"E'en in our darkest hours comes bloseed hopes."—Grower.



H E longest lane" says the old proverb, "has a turn in it, and to the darkest cloud, there is a silver lining." So though almost worn to death with their persecutions the McDonalds were destined at last to err towards the end of their afflictions.

Most men's minds were more or less imbued with superstitious ideas in those days before people had become so dreadfully scientific or so properly orthodox, as they are now. Consequently we are not surprised to find that the Rev. McDorman, an elder in the Methodist church, was inclined to put forth in a healing power that was not strictly according to the character of his church tenents, but which, he believed would, under the blessing of God, prove efficacious.

This gentleman was on one of his itineraries, and, as was customary, stopped over with Dan McDonald, who seems, despite all his afflictions, to have kept open house for all good travellers. After some hesitation the worthy elder told Daniel that he knew of a doctor who had a daughter gifted with second sight and the mystical power of stone reading. McDonald, impregnated from childhood by such old world lore that seems part of the Caledonian constitution, greedily listened to this new prospect of assistance. He implored Elder McDorman to reveal to him the whereabouts of this gifted child. At last the elder said

"It is a long and wearisome journey from here, and perhaps it is wrong to seek such aid, for I cannot think that good can come of an evil agency, but if you desire it, I will myself accompany you to the doctor's house."

With many expressions of gratitude, the delighted McDonald took him at his word. The preparations were made for the journey, and with their guns slung over their shoulders they mounted their nags and set out.

It was no little undertaking. The road lay across vast marshes and almost impenetrable woods even at the best, but an Indian trail. More than one day must be spent on the journey. On the second night they approached the Long Woods, which were about twenty-five miles across without any sign of human habitation. To avoid the heat of the day, and as the moon was shining brightly in the heavens, they resolved to cross this forest before morning.

It was a gloomy ride. The tall trees waved in the gentle night breeze and moaned a meloncholy dirge over the weary travellers. Now and then a huge white owl would startle their horses with their shrill "to whit ! to hoo !" or a wolf would yelp in the distant underwood. Suddenly, as they approached a small clearing and the silver rays of the moon fell full upon them, they heard the heavy tramp of a vast multitude coming toward them. Inarticulate voices came to their ears, the crashing of boughs, and snapping of twigs were heard, and then the rush as of some great host came upon them. But they could see nothing. Poor McDonald's hair stood on end and his teeth chattered with horror. The brave elder, who never for one moment during that eventful night swerved from his self imposed duty, struck up in a loud voice a hymn, and bidding his companion follow him, flunged into the dark thicket on his way forward. Then they heard, as it were, another multitude which seemed to meet the first in mortal combat. They heard the groans of the wounded and the shrieks of the dying. Then for a time all was still. Close to them from some thicket would come the cry of "Murder ! Murder ! Help ! Help !" until the sounds died away in the distance as though uttered by some one in extreme peril.

"Fear not," said the plucky elder, and trolled out another hymn, which if it lacked strict musical qualities made up in volume for its deficiencies. At last the terrible night was over. Morning dawned and the jaded men and beasts rested in the peaceful sunshine. Never did McDonald forget the terrors of that night. Years afterwards he would start from his sleep, having heard in dreamland all the fell cries over and over again.

With another day's journey they reached the doctor's residence, having come across the wild country more than eighty miles. The doctor received them hospitably, and

having been told of their mission, introduced them to his daughter, a striking looking girl of fifteen years of age. Her complexion was sallow and unwholesome, her form fragile and her eyes had a wierd, far-away expression, but when excited, gleamed with a latent fire. She spoke simply and unaffectedly of her gift of second sight, seeming to take it as a matter of course. The stone, she said, her father had picked up in the field and was by some called the moon-stone. She told them that any attempt on her part to decipher mysteries by aid of the stone was always attended by great physical prostration and much mental agony. Therefore she had resolved not to use her powers unless under very extraordinary circumstances.

In plain humble words—eloquent because earnestness is always eloquent—McDonald told his story of long protracted suffering. She listened pensively, then turning somewhat suddenly she asked him: "Did you ever have any trouble about a piece of land?" "Not exactly trouble," McDonald replied. "Did not some of your neighbors desire to purchase a portion of your land, and did you not refuse them?"

"That is true," he said, a light breaking in upon him.

"I see," she said, leaning back in her chair and assuming a wan, painful expression, "A Long, Low, Log House." Then she gave an exact word picture of the inmates, so accurate that Mr. McDonald listened in wrapt wonder. Their features, hair, eyes, forms, and even small personal peculiarities were all detailed.

"I will look into the stone for you," she presently added in a subdued tone. Then the maiden retired to her chamber, and after three hours returned with a worn look as if suffering from acute irritability. It was some time before she could sufficiently control her emotions to speak.

"While I was looking in the stone I saw fire. One of your outbuildings was burnt to the ground just two hours ago." Look at the clock," said the practical elder, we are now eighty miles from Belledoon, and I shall have much faith in her if this is true."

Exactly at the hour mentioned, one of Mr. McDonald's barns was burned to the ground, as they found on their return home. But to continue the interview. "Have you," said the stone reader, "ever seen a stray goose in your

flock." McDonald thought a moment, and then replied in the negative, and after more reflection, said that he had seen a goose that did not belong to him, and that he had once shot at it.

"Yes, but it escaped "

"Of that you may be certain," was the decided reply, "No bullet of lead would ever harm a feather of that bird"

"Ah !" he said, "how is that."

"Because in that bird is the destroyer of your peace. Taking the shape of that bird, is your enemy."

"With a leaden ball ? asked the girl.

"What shall I do ?" asked McDonald.

"You shall mould a bullet of sterling silver, and you shall fire at the bird. If you wound it, your enemy will be wounded in some corresponding part of the body. Go and be at peace."

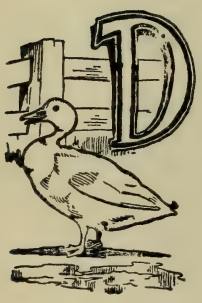
The homeward journey was made in much quicker time and with lighter hearts than by which they came, for both the elder and Mr. McDonald seemed convinced that something would come out of this extraordinary promise, notwithstanding their repeated ill luck.

Nature itself seemed more enjoyable. To McDonald the birds seemed to sing with a sweeter melody, the air seemed fraught with more fragrance than usual, and the sun had a gladder, pleasanter brightness. Nothing could induce the canny Scotchman to cross the long woods at night time, however, so they made their beds beneath the trees on the other side of them and waited for the blessed morning to resume their journey, and ere another night came over them they were safe in the old frame house in Belledoon.

One may imagine with what eagerness McDonald awaited the coming morning and what cautious enquiries he instituted respecting the strange stray goose. His children he found were well acquainted with it, and informed that it had a dark head, almost black, and two long dark feathers in either wing, that it was noticeable for making a perpetual noise and for its continual restlessness.

CHAPTER VIII.

What are these
So withered and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants of the earth,
And yet are on't. Shakespeare.



DARKNESS had hardly been dispelled by the beautiful rays of old sol before McDonald crept from his bed in the morning and proceeded to the river side, where he gladdened his eyes with a sight of his enemy so soon to come into his power. Then he went to the house of a neighbor, and in the first hours of daylight melted the silver which he must mould into the bullet that should cure his woes.

It was all over at last, and with a chuckle of satisfaction he returned home and took his seat at the breakfast table, in a merrier mood than he had enjoyed of late years.

All in vain his wife and little ones sought to share his secret. "Wait and see" was all he would say to them. The little ones, ready to take hope at the faintest glimpse of sunshine, soon evinced a cheerful aspect, and even the careworn mother forgot her wonted miseries. It was in fact the happiest meal that had been partaken of in that house for many a long day.

The morning was a glorious one as John McDonald took his gun loaded with its precious charge, over his shoulder. His object was to call on some old neighbors to take them with him to the scene of his emancipation.

The river lay calm and beautiful before him, and between the trees he could catch a glimpse of the glorious St. Clair with here and there the large white sails of some big barge gliding over its waters.

What a world of hope was in this man's bosom as he gazed on the prospect before him. Here was the beautiful river and the fruitful fields, there the long line of woods, stretching for miles into the distance, and as dark blots in the beautiful landscape, the charred remains of his burnt homestead, the ruin of his barn and outbuildings and the mounds, where lay burned his dumb oxen and cattle.

If this could change. If he could awaken from this nightmare of horror, if peace would settle on his hearth, if his children could play as they used to do without the ever constant dread of something, they knew not what, if he could renew his former strength and go forth to his daily toil with manly vigor, if the pleasant evenings of old would come back again, when with pipe alight he sat under the old apple tree.

And he clasped his gun with a firmer grip as he thought that even these blessed things might be. Only a bit of silver, what virtue was there in the precious metal that even the powers of darkness should be controlled by it, and if he should fail? His heart sank as he thought of this, and yet, one glance back at the tender, truthful eyes of the stone-reader and he felt assured. Hers was not a lying face. Could an imposter have assumed such earnestness? She had been to him as one inspired, and now he believed in her.

With such pleasant self communings he reached the house of the first neighbor, and begging him to accompany him, hurried on in search of others. Soon the party was made up and they wended their way to the river. Not one word of explanation would he give them, but he said he desired them as witnesses, and they followed him with their curiosity thoroughly aroused.

A brisk walk brought them to the bank. Here McDonald pointed to a flock of geese that lay beyond them on the bosom of the river.

"See that one with the black head." whispered John, hoarse with excitement. Then he drew a bead on the doomed bird. For one moment the bright barrel gleamed over the hanging bushes, and a report stunned the excited listeners, and the strange bird, giving a weird cry, like a human being in distress, struggled to make its way to the reeds with a broken wing.

When they saw McDonald's excited air, they believed that he was certainly crazed. Wounded an old gray goose, and showed such joy at his marksmanship. Yes, they were sure that his troubles had upset the balance of his reason, when they saw his wild gesticulations. Moreover he would then condescend to no particulars and left them in serious doubt about his sanity.

But when they were gone, he had another mission which must be performed alone.

With a determined look he turned his footsteps towards the marsh, beside whose damp unwholesome reeds the Long Low Log House stood.

One little pause at the wicket and the next moment he stood on the threshold of the building. One anxious look revealed all.

There sat the old woman who had injured him, with her broken arm resting on a chair, and her withered lips uttering half ejaculated curses.

When she saw him she shrank back and John McDonald knew that the silver bullet had found its billet.

CHAPTER IX.

Now sinking underneath her load of grief,
From death alone she seeks her lost relief

—Young.

HAVING removed the cause of the trouble little more remains to be told. Whether John McDonald was right in his conjectures or not, it is not the compiler's duty to decide, certain it is that he and all his friends attributed all his troubles to the agency of the woman of seemed to corrobate this belief. From the Long, Low Log House. One thing the time that the bird was shot and the woman wounded, no spiritual manifestations were ever heard of in the McDonald family, and peace reigned supreme in the wood slopes of Belledoon.

Again the farm was stocked and the barns were filled with the golden grain. Once more McDonald drew his seine

across the Channel Ecarte, and the maidens wove the yellow straw into hats unmolested by obnoxious influences. The domestic articles of the house retained their proper equilibrium, and the dogs ate their mush without the corrective iron ladles. The great stoves did their duty in the capacious hearths and never showed the slightest attempt at locomotion and the old cobbler mended his shoes in peace and quietness.

Not so, however, with the people of the Long, Low Log House. The old woman suffered intense pain from her wounded arm, and never was able to sit down without retributive pains racking her whole body until at last death relieved her from her intense suffering.

It is said that on her death bed she expressed a wish to see John McDonald, but her children refused to carry her message.

Only one cloud came to overshadow the happiness of the McDonalds. In after years a son died and the widow was persuaded or coerced, as the McDonalds claim, into a marriage with one of the woman's sons at the Long, Low Long House.

In winter time the hearth of many a farm house has seen gathered around it the lads and lasses, telling half in awe, and half in jest, the strange story we have related.

That such things may point a moral is most true, and that they should not be forgotten as time flies over our heads, we have recorded them in printed form. We make no remarks on the wonders we have recited. We simply tell the tale as it was told to us, and leave our readers to wrestle with the strange events of the BELLEDOON MYSTERIES.

APPENDIX.

STATEMENT OF M. L. BURNHAM

In the years 1829 and 1830, being then about sixteen years of age, I was living with my father on the St. Clair

river and attending school in Wallaceburg, passing the home John T. McDonald twice each week, and frequently stopping during these strange occurrences to satisfy my own curiosity. John T. McDonald was one of the many settlers that came over with Alexander Selkirk in the year 1804, some of whom settled near Wallaceburg and along Bear Creek, and nothing happened to mar this peace and quietness until about November 1829, when McDonald's trouble commenced. John lived with his father until he was married, when he removed to his own house about one-fourth of a mile from his father's frame house, which is now standing on the banks of the Channel Ecarte. About this time the bullets commenced coming through the windows, breaking a small hole in the glass and rolling on the floor, but hurting no one, although, as can be easily surmised, they were at times terribly scared. This continued up to the time the house was burned. But a short time after the house burned, the barn was also consumed. They were both set on fire by the strange influence and apparently without the aid of any person ; fire would start up in different places at the same time, and when this was extinguished, it would start in other places, and so on until January 1830, when the buildings were burned to the ground. John then moved his family to his father's house but no sooner there than the balls commenced comingthrough the windows until all the glass was broken, even to that over the doors, ; and there was a corner cupboard with glass doors, and balls came out of the cupboard breaking the glass doors. They picked up these balls, marked them, put them in a leather shot bag, tying a string around the mouth of the bag, hanging it upon the chimney, and these same balls would immediately come back through the window. Then they threw these balls into the Channel Ecarte where the water was deep and in a short time these same balls would come back through the windows. About this time the old man's barn was burned with all its contents, and being in the winter, it left the stock without feed. The matter now became exceeding,y troublesome, as the family had to watch all night for fear of being burned in their beds as the house was set on fire a great many times, both in night and day, but with the aid of

friends they managed to save the house. At this time large number of people came to see how the matter was carried on, and without exception, it was said to be the strangest thing they had ever seen. Nearly all laid it to some supernatural power, and none undertook to account for it in any other way. At this time everything in and about the house seemed under the influence, nothing in the house could be kept in place; the shovel and tongs would run about the floor as would other things about the house. The cooking was done by a large fire place, and it was extremely difficult to keep anything upon the fire. The old Dutch oven would empty itself, making it extremely hard to get enough material cooked to satisfy their hunger. One thing seemed strange, throughout the whole proceedings no member of the family sustained any bodily harm, although missles would come into a room where they were congregated twelve or thirteen persons. The only object of the persecutors seemed to be to worry the people and destroy their property. They had a house and two barns burned and nearly all their stock died. If any of the stock had young, they died. If a hen laid an egg, the hen would die, and the same uncertainty seemed to hover about everything. All the conventional preventatives such as placing a horse shoe over the door, etc., was tried without avail. The idea that inanimate things could move around and through hard substances without any visible person to propel them, is difficult to solve, nevertheless it is true, as they have been seen by the writer and other living witnesses, and the strongest disbelievers, have had to say it was something they could not account for.

About the first of March, 1830, McDonald heard through the writer's father that there was a doctor living in the township of Wallingham who understood some of the workings of such things, and McDonald thought he had better go and see him as he was a very worthy man. The country at that time was almost wholly unsettled and he had to go through what was known as the Long Woods a distance of thirty miles without a house. While riding along he was beset with clubs and stones, as if his errand was known by the evil one. He told the doctor his troubles, who told him that he would go and find if possible the cause of it. They started, and strange to say, they experienced no trouble on

the way home. When they arrived at home, the doctor took a small stone out of his pocket and looked at it and said: "Oh, I see, I see, this is a new way they have of making people suffer." He then said : "Mr. McDonald, they will not disturb you to-night." This was Friday evening, and the doctor came up to my father's, S. H. Burnham, on the St. Clair, as Mr. Burnham was an old neighbor of the doctor's in the township of Walsingham. The doctor stayed at father's until Monday, and said they would do nothing then, but they might try once more, and while the family was gone to the church on the Sabbath, the house was left alone, as there had been no trouble since Friday, but when they returned the table was upside down and all the dishes in the bottom and the Bible open on top of them. Nothing further, has to our knowledge, happened to disturb the families who have since rented the farm.

The doctor told father what was being done and who was doing it, and said if they did anything more, they would be punished with death. My father then wanted to know what had caused the trouble and the doctor said it was about land. Be it understood that the doctor had never been in this part of the country before nor had he ever known any of the members of the McDonald family, nor that such a family existed, until McDonald told him of the trouble he had been having and which had been caused by the interference of some person or persons unknown to him and of whom the doctor soon told him. I mention the facts about the doctor to show that he had no knowledge of the affair before going there. This matter can only be ascribed to some supernatural agency. We read in the Bible that there were witches in the time of Solomon, abd that they were troublesome, for at one time, Saul ordered that all witches and wizards throughout his kingdom should be put to death. The mystery connected with this affair is not in the cause, but the question is this : How can these things be carried on and no person seen engaged in any way, at any time, or in any place ?

What I have written about this matter is true, for I was present at a great many of these performances, and actually saw them carried on without being able to give any

reason for them. They were carried on day and night, to the great discomfort of the family and those with them. Many strangers came to spend the night and witness these things which were worse at night and required more watchers to keep things in their place and attend to the fires that were being set about the barns and house. The barns were finally burned, and some of the visitors were so frightened at what they had seen that they were glad to get away from the place. I have described but one-hundredth part of the acts that were performed there, but enough has been said to convince the most skeptical of all the unbelievers of the Bible that there is something about it that cannot be accounted for or throw any more light on the matter than the information which we get from the Holy Bible.

Now, anyone having any scruples or doubts about the matter can get any desired information from the writer concerning it; or if they wish to ask any questions concerning the characters of the families concerned, the writer knew them before the affair commenced and since, and never knew or heard that they were guilty of any crime, but were always much respected. One of the family was a magistrate, and most of them belonged to a church and do to this day. I will now close my account of the affair, as there are other witnesses beside me.

M. L. BURNHAM.

STATEMENT OF RE RE-NAH-SEWA

On returning from hunting, to my surprise, John T. McDonald's house was all burned. There had been about thirty men there. The house was set on fire by unknown hands. I stopped there four days watching his father's house, and I saw it set on fire a great many times, but we always had plenty of water on hand to put the fire out. I saw the balls come through the windows and I would tie them in a small bag, which was watched by about thirty men, and in a few minutes we would examine the bag, and to our surprise not a ball would be left in it. I also saw the lead that was taken off the seine without a thread of the seine disturbed

and the ring as it was on the seine. The trouble was caused in this way—J. T. McDonald purchased a piece of land which the disturbers wanted to purchase and these are the steps they took to have revenge on him. I saw his corn and it did not grow more than a foot high that year, and his crops were all destroyed by them. We called them wild Indians in our language and we believe they made their abode in the prairie southeast of the house on the farm. We were aware of their doings and tried to tell him what we knew about them, but could not understand each other's language. My age is now seventy-four years, which would leave me twenty four years old at that time. Ue Re Nah Sewa.

STATEMENT OF SOLOMON PAR-TAR-SUNG.

I was r?turning from hunting, when I got to Mr. J. T. McDonald's ulace, and there was great excitement. About thirty men were watching the house and putting out the fires about it. I was there when the house was burned. It had been set on fire thirty times in less than three hours. A small coal of fire, about the size of a hickery nut would drop in any part of the house and a flame would kindle instantly. There was no fire used in the house, and we had water ready to put on the coals the instant they dropped. It would take fire on the wet floor the same as if it were oil, until it was drenched with water. It got the start of us in spite of all we could do. The people had some flax up-stairs, which they used to make clothes of, and we suppose it got the start of us in the flax tow. We were on the run all the time I was there and were nearly exhausted. There were also a large quantity of corn up stairs and a great many other things which could not be saved. We are satisfied that what you call witchcraft we call wild Indians, and that they have their abode in a small prairie on the same farm, but could not be seen at any time. There was a cross breed among us that told us they could not raise any crops where they had their abode for three or four years, until they left there. I saw it myself. In six years after that I was there again and then they began to raise

crops again. We are satisfied that all this trouble was that John T. McDonald purchased the same farm that the wild Indians wanted, and to have revenge on him, they took these steps to destroy his property.

My age is seventy-five years. I was twenty five years old at the time these things occurred.

This is my true statement.

Solomon Par-Tar-Sung.

STATEMENT OF PETER B. APPLETON.

I was often at McDonald's to watch the house and put the fires out, as it would sometimes be set on fire forty or fifty times a day. There was always a great many people there. They came from far and near for nearly two years to see for thenselves, and would go home satisfied that it was more than they could comprehend. They would tell their neighbors and friends what they saw, and their neighbors, satisfied that they were reliable parties, would go and see the great mystery and would then tell their friends, and in this way it made a great commotion. I saw the gun balls come in through the windows, making the hole the size of the ball. I took them up and put a private mark on them and threw them into the Channell Ecarte, it being about thirty-five feet deep, and in a few minutes the same balls came back through the windows having the same mark I put on them. I saw the mush pot chase the dog through a crowd of people, and the mush stick handle itself on the dog the same as a person would use it and the dog ran nearly wild. He took to the woods and he had not been seen for two months, but when he was found he was up in the crotch of an oak tree. How he got there no one knows, and he may be there yet for all I know. I was once at Mr. McDonald's about twilight, when a stranger called and wanted to know if he could stop there over night. Mr. McDonald told him he was welcome to stay over night, "but" said he, we have trouble here and I think it is my duty to tell you, and if you can stand it you are welcome to stop." The traveller, having a gun in his hand, thought it would be

protection enough for him, and thinking McDonald wanted to put him off, he said, "Oh, I have heard spook stories before, and if that is all, I will chance that." He hadn't the words out of his mouth before his gun began to dance in his hand. He grabbed it with both hands, but it snatched itself away and it and Mr. McDonald's gun danced the "French Four" all over the floor. Each gun fired three rounds while dancing. The stranger, all this time was apparently a dead man. He put me in mind of a great many who made light of anything. "Oh, they say, it is only imagination." If they would see half what the traveller did, perhaps they would order their coffin at once. after getting over his fright, he did not know whether to stay or go and chance some other house. He thought if he went, he would stand a poor chance alone, if his gun should take to dancing again, so he concluded to stay over night. It seemed like a whole week till morning. He went home to New York and told there what he had seen of the Belledoon Mystery. It was but a short time before a great many came from New York to see for themselves and they, like all the rest, were satisfied that it was a mystery beyond their knowledge. They all seemed to feel sorry for Mr. McDonald and I would hear them say that they would give half what they were worth, if they could only find out who the parties were who were doing the mischief. This trouble would follow the family wherever they went. After the house was burned they went out in the field and put up a tent the best they could and it followed them there and everywhere they went, until Mr. McDonald after investigations, found who the parties were and shot the old witch with silver and it killed her, and put an end to the trouble. As for Mr. McDonald's character, I have only to say that I have known him for many years and always knew him to be an honest man.

Peter B. Appleton.



STATEMENT OF ALLEN M. McDONALD

This is what I heard my father, John McDonald, say he strange things happened and he saw a stone come in through the window and strike a man by the name of Neil Campbell in the breast. Mr. Campbell, being an unbeliever in such mysteries, said in a bragging manner, 'Send us another ball, old fellow, and I will catch it." No sooner said than another stone came through the window and struck him in the breast with such force that it stunned him. He was glad to say that that was enough, and stood, apparently breathless, and pale as a corpse, and he was satisfied that there was no fun in catching balls in this manner, and like many others, went home convinced that it was no humbug.

Next he saw a stone, about the size of a hen's egg, and muddy out of the river, come in through the window, and roll on the floor. He picked it up and in a moment, another stone came, as above. Next he was there when one of the buildings was burning and saw on another building near the one that was burning, a large black dog sitting there and watching the fire, when all at once he disappeared, and no one could tell how he went. Next a large stone came down the fire place with such force that it bounded up to the ceiling and dropped on the unbeliever's head. He said it hurt enough to convince him that there was more truth than poetry in what he had heard, and like many others who went did not believe in witchcraft, went home convinced that the handcuffs were off the old fellow, and this was the devil's work. He next saw the McDonald house set on fire fifty times in one day and helped to put it out every time. Not a spark of fire was to be seen about the house, onny when the fire broke out and then about fifty men were ready to put it out instantly. Next he saw an iron kettle rise off the fire place and fly across the room full of boiling water and never spill a drop, and the lid of the kettle blew off and struck the window casing with such force that it left a mark of the lid a fourth of an inch deep, which could be seen for thrity-five years after it happened. I have seen it myself hundreds of times. Again I saw an auger, which was hanging on a nail, blow across from the room, and strike

the bed post with such force that it coiled around the post, so that it buried the thickness of itself in the post and the print of the auger could be seen for years after. The next is what John T. McDonald told my father about how he found out who it was that was troubling him. A preacher by the name of McDorman, told McDonald that he would go with him ; he would take him to a man by the name of Tryoer, who had a daughter who could solve any mystery a person desired her to.

McDonald and the elder went to see her, and on the way he said he never heard such fearful noises as he did then. They had to go over what is called the "Longwoods Road" which is twenty-five miles long. Right in the heart of the woods there was a noise like people driving cattle, and noises like fighting and cries of "Murder ! Murder ! Murder ! help ! help ! help !" and the night, being fearfully dark, he said he never had such a fright in all his life. It seemed more like a week than a night, and the hair of his head stood straight up, and he thought several times he would with fear, fall off his horse—for people in those days travelled on horse back—and the largest part of the night's journey was on an Indian trail. McDonald said that the elder was singing as happy as could be and he told McDonald to pay no attention to the noise, for he said it was the parties who were troubling him for they knew where and for what he was going and they wanted to frighten him back, so that they would not be exposed. He encouraged McDonald the best he could for the elder had the courage of a lion and feared neither the devil or any of his imps; and I believe if there were such courageous ministers on the walls of Zion, there would not be so many wicked people in the world. When they arrived at Dr. Tryoer's, they found his daughter at home and told her what they had come for and she told them she could give them the desired information, after looking through a stone, which her uncle had found in a field while ploughing, as she did not like to look into it as it always frightened her, so that she always had a spell of sickness. McDonald begged of her to look into it and tell him who the parties were, and the cause of his trouble, and with this he would be satisfied. The doctor finally persuaded her to look into the stone, and on doing so the first

question she asked was: "Did you buy a piece of land previous to this trouble?" Mr. McDonald said yes. She then described the members of a certain family and asked if this family did not live by this land that he had bought. He answered yes. "Did this family want to buy it of you" Yes. "And you would not sell it to them?" No, for I didn't buy it to sell, I bought it to keep for the family. She then told Mr. McDonald everything that had happened and told him that one of his buildings had burned two hours previous, and they being eighty miles from home set down the time and found on going home that she had told to a minute. She then asked him if there was not a stray goose, with a black head and part of one wing black, with his geese. He studied for a moment and said that he remembered seeing a goose of that description, but he thought it was one of his own. She said: "No, that is the old woman of the family mentioned, and she was the old witch. She turned herself into a goose and she was the one that brought up the balls from the river bottom that were marked and thrown into the river." She then told him that if that goose was there when he got home to put some silver in his gun and shoot it, and if he hit it, it would disappear and he could not tell how, but the next day to go to this family's house, and he would find the old woman wounded by the silver he had shot her with the day before. He done so and found her wounded in the arm. He asked her a few questions in reference to the trouble, but she would give him no answer, for she knew that they were exposed. McDonald then went home and was troubled no more, but the old woman never had a moment of peace until she died. If she sat down she would jump up and say she was sitting on a hot grid-iron. She suffered for her bad deeds in various ways. McDonald had nothing left but his land, as his stock had all died and his buildings all burned. In reference to his character, I can truthfully say that I knew John T. McDonald for more than thirty-five years, and I never heard anything amiss with him or his family. He was in good standing in the Baptist church for many years to my knowledge.

Allen M. McDonald.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE MYER.

I have heard a great deal about the Belledoon Mysteey, and have seen many of these strange th ngs, and as you wish me to tell what I know of the affair, I will do the best I can, Had I been asked for a statement some years ago I could have given you a better one, as this happened about fifty years ago, and I am now an old man with a fast fail. ing memory. However, I distinctly remember of seeing a fish seine of Mr. McDonald's hanging on the fence, having the lead on it, and in a few minutes this same lead came in through the window. On examining the lead we found not a scratch on it and it had the same shape as when on the seine. Not a thread of the seine was broken, and it was impossible to tell how the lead had been taken off. On coming through the window the hole in the glass would be the same size as the leads, and we would take these leads and put different marks upon them, no one knowing the other's mark, and throw them into the Channel Ecarte, which was between thirty and forty feet deep, and in a few moments they would come back through the window with the same marks, and each man stood ready to swear to his own marks. Gun balls were also seen coming in the same way. I saw the house take fire in several places at once and there was not a spark of fire used in the house. There were always plenty of men to watch the fire, for they, like myself, had come to witness these strange th ngs. Many advised McDonald to send for the Roman Catholic Priest, as he said he could stop such performances. He sent for him and I was there when he came. He sprinkled holy water all over the house and read a book which he said would drive the devil away, and done many other things, but to no effect. He said the devil was more than a match for him that time and he had to give it up. I was well acquainted with the priest and he told me this was beyond his comprehension.

There was a school teacher named Robert Barker in the neighborhood who seemed to be very busy, pretending that he could stop these actions. At last it was the public opinion that he had a hand in the affair. On part of the farm McDonald could not raise any crops. Here he would sow grain which would grow about six inches high, then stop, and it would neither wilt nor grow more. Others besides

me saw the crops, and it was suggested that the devil had his headquarters there. There was also a strange goose seen swimming up and down the river, always alone, quacking as if it were lost. It had a black head and one of its wings were partially black, the rest of its body being grey. I certainly felt sorry for McDonald as I had known him a great many years before this trouble, and I can truthfully say I always knew him to be an honest man. My age is 76.

George Myer.

STATEMENT OF MR. E. A. BEARTSLEY

I am not personally acquainted with the Belledoon Mysteries but tell you this as told by John T. McDonald, who owned and lived in the house where the trouble occurred. I lived in that place for three years and during that time was well acquainted with him and knew no harm of him. He and many of the neighbors told me that the guns would fire and the balls roll over the floor. They would pick them up and throw them into the Channel Ecarte and in a few minutes they would come back. The dishes would come out of the cupboard and roll upon the floor without breaking. Crashes would be heard like the tearing of boards off the house, also sounds like the pounding of hammers and the buildings were set on fire. McDonald said that there was a stray goose with his flock, which he shot with silver, after that the trouble ceased Many other things they told me which I cannot call to mind. Mr. E. A. Beartsley.

STATEMENT OF MRS. LIONEL STEWART

I tell you here what my mother told me. She used to work a great deal for Mrs. McDonald and was there a part of the time that this trouble was going on. She saw gun balls come in by the score, saw men take them and throw them in the river, and in a few minutes the same balls would come back through the window. She saw the cattle drop dead, saw his house, barn and other buildings burn and could not tell how the fire was controlled, but was satisfied

that it was by some evil persons. One evening she and Mrs. McDonald was sitting in front of the fireplace and Mr. McDonald and brother were lying on the bed to take a little rest while they had a chance, when, all at once, a large black log rose out of the fireplace, passed over their heads and fell to the floor behind them. It was all on fire and she screamed with fright, when the two men jumped up and put the log back in the fireplace. Mrs. McDonald was so frightened she could not stir. It was almost impossible to do any cooking, as the pots and kettles would dance all over the house and everything would be in motion. She said there was a strange goose with McDonald's flock, with a black head and part of one wing black. They thought it strange that it should come so often. It would swim up and down the river all alone until it found the flock which it would stay with for some time and then go back again, but when McDonald shot the goose with silver the trouble ceased, for this goose was the old witch. I have known John T. McDonald for forty years and never knew or heard of anything amiss with him or his family, but always knew him to be an honest, hard working man. Mrs. L. Stewart.

STATEMENT OF WM. STEWART.

At the time of this trouble, I lived about three-quarters of a mile from the place and was present and seen for myself many of these strange things. Mr. Alex. Brown, with others, took a number of lead balls that came in through the window, marked them, tied them in a bag, and dropped them into the centre of the Channel Ecarte, in about 36 feet of water, and in a short time the balls came back through the window. I was present when the barn was burned and also when a man by the name of Harmon was preaching there. At this time a large stone came right through the door, breaking out one of the panels and rolled in front of the minister. The stone apparently had come out of the water. A search was made about the house, but no person could be seen. I also saw a loaf of bread move

off the table and dance around the room. The owner of the house, John T. McDonald, I know to be a very respectable man. William Stewart.

STATEMENT OF ABRAM RIKEMAN.

I lived on the river Thames at this time and a man by the name Clark went from our neighborhood to witness some of these things. McDonald told him if he would, he would pay him well, so he took it into his hands, but used such language that the authorities arrested him and put him in Windsor jail, but by some means he made his escape to the United States and there he died. Elder McDorman, while at McDonald's, picked up a piece of lead which had come in the window, put a private mark on it, threw it into the river and went into the house and when he was there a piece of lead came through the roof and ceiling and dropped at his feet. On examining it he found it was the same he had thrown into the river a minute before. The doctor took it home to show his wife and neighbors and I saw it. I also saw John T. McDonald and Dr. Troyer when on their way to this house. McDonald had heard that the doctor could stop such troubles. They stayed all night at Capt. Arnold's, our nearest neighbor, and we went over to see what he had to say about the mystery, for we were very much interested. The captain asked the doctor what he thought about the trouble, and he said that there was one more building to be burned before the trouble would be stopped. The captain said "Why not save the building?" and the doctor answered: "It is not for you or any one to know that part of the story." Capt. Arnold's wife then asked the doctor if he could see anyone after they were dead. He said, "I can and so can you if you like." She then said she would like to see her mother who had been dead for years. The doctor gave her his hat and put it over her face and looked into it and she would see her mother. She done so and took the hat from her face and began to cry bitterly. The doctor asked her if she had seen her mother and she said she had and it made her weep she looked so natural.

What I have stated here, I was witness to and much more that I have forgotten, it being about fifty years since it took place. I am now 68 years old. Abram Rikeman.

STATEMENT OF MRS. BABISON.

My husband was at McDonald:s and saw the cattle drop dead and the oxen would die while at work and the hens while on their nests, and all his stock die in the same manner. Every building he had on his farm burned and two of the barns were filled with grain. There was a shoemaker at McDonald's doing the family shoemaking—for that was the way people had this kind of work done then—and my husband saw the shoemaker sharpen his knife on a stone and lay it on a bench beside him. In a few minutes he wanted the stone again and turned around to get it, but it was not to be found, and in a few minutes the same stone came through the window out of the river. Next he saw the house raise about four feet from the blocks, first on one end and then on the other ; then one side, then the other, and when it came down on the blocks it would shake badly enough to break everything to pieces, and while the house was rocking, black ravens were flying to and fro, and the people thought they were the devils that caused the house to rock, so they got guns and shot at them, but no one could kill them. The house was very strongly built. It was 32 x 50 feet, with 20 foot posts. It was all built of real heavy oak posts, beams and girths, and it was certainly wonderful to see it rock in this way. He saw lead balls come in through the windows. which he marked and threw into the river and in a few moments they would come back again, bearing the same marks. While a building was burning he saw a large black dog sitting on it, and the people thought it would be burned, so they threw sticks at it, and it would turn and show its teeth at them as if it did not care for them. It then disappeared in an instant and no one could tell how or where it went. My husband went to see these things for himself and this is what he told me. He saw much more that I cannot remember. I have known John T. McDonald for a great many years, and know him and his

family to be honest, and he is in good standing in the Baptist church. My age is 45 years. Mrs. Thos. Babison.

STATEMENT OF MARGARET JOHNSON.

In 1803, Lord Selkirk came to America and was to be followed by a party of Scotch emigrants from Argyleshire, in the highlands of Scotland, but, owing to the French war they were detained in a town called Gilcutbright. In 1804 they came to Canada and settled on a tract of land that he had bought on the river Sydenham, near the town of Wallaceburg, in the Township of Dover, County of Kent. Lord Selkirk reserved a farm of 900 acres, which he called Belledoon. He built a house for his agent, Mr. McDonald, from Toronto, and sent men on from Toronto to build houses for the emigrants, but when they arrived the houses were not finished and they had to live in tents for some time. The change was so great that it caused a great deal of sickness and most of the older people died the very first year. The next spring the remainder settled on their farms of fifty acres, which they cultivated for several years, but the land being low and wet, they could not make a living on it, so they bought elsewhere. One large family by the name of McDonald, settled on the Channel Ecarte, two miles from the St. Clair river. His family settled around him, his eldest son John, living on the adjoining farm. On day in the year 1829, while absent from home, his family were seated at the breakfast table, when a gun ball came through the window and rolled across the floor. They supposed some one had fired a gun, and looked out, but could see no one, and from that time commenced what people call witchcraft. The family left and went to his father's, and it soon commenced there. He sent for John and when they came back home again, but still the balls came in again and broke nearly all the glass in the house, then came small pieces of lead and stones. They went to several houses but it followed them wherever they went. This continued at intervals for nearly a year. It was set on fire upstairs, and the inmates being down stairs, the fire got such headway before they saw it

that the house was burned down. They went back to his father's again, but it soon commenced there. This was a large two storey frame house, and it was set on fire five times in one day. They moved everything out of the house and saved it, and it is standing yet. All of the outbuildings, with the barn full of grain, were burned. Things would move around the house, when no person was to be seen. It continued for nearly two years and then stopped. Hundreds of people came from far and near and watched, but never could account for it. Nothing has been found out about it to this day. They were a decent and respectable family and all church members. I was born in Scotland, on Feb. 1st, 1797. Margaret Johnson.

STATEMENT OF WM. S. FLEURY.

It was rumored that there was a great mystery going on at McDonald's, and I, like a great many others, went to see for myself. I saw stones and brick bats coming through the doors and windows, making the hole whatever size the article was that came in. Parties would take these same things and throw them into the river, and in a few minutes they would come back again. I saw a child lying in a little cradle, when the cradle began to rock fearfully and no one was near it. They thought it would throw the child out, so two men undertook to stop it, but could not, still, a third took hold, but stop it they could not. Some of the party said, "Let's test this,'j so they put the Bible in the cradle and it stopped instantly. They said it was a fair test

The gun balls would come in through the windows and we would take them and throw them into the river, which is about thirty feet deep, and in a few minutes they would come back through the windows, so we were satisfied that the evil one was at the helm. I saw the house take fire up stairs in ten different places at once. There were plenty to watch the fires, as people came from all parts of the United States and Canada to see for themselves. Not less than from twenty to fifty men were there all the time. The bedsteads would move from one side of the room to the other, and the chairs would move when some one was sit-

ting on them and they could not get off. They thought the devil was going to take them, chair and all. I saw the pot full of boiling water, come off the fire place and sail about the room over our heads and never spill a drop, and then return to its starting place. I saw a large black dog sitting on the milk house while it was burning, and thinking it would burn we threw sticks at it, but it would not stir, but all at once, he disappeared. I saw the mush pot chase the dog that happened to come with one of the neighbors, through a crowd, and the people thought the devil was in the pot. It chased the dog all over the house and out of doors, and the mush stick would strike it first on one side of the face, and then on the other. The dog showed fight, and turning around caught hold of the ring in the stick, which swinging, would strike him first on one side of the face and then on the other. It finally let go of the dog's teeth and went back to the pot. I was acquainted with Mr. McDonald and knew him to be an upright man and in good standing in the Baptist church.

This is my true statement of what I saw.

Wm. S. Fleury.

STATEMENT OF MRS. S. STEWART.

As I had heard much of the mystery, I called on Mr. McDonald's to see for myself. I found the family at breakfast in company with Mr. Barker, who had come for the purpose of putting a stop to the mischief which was being done by the unknown hand. I had only been seated for a few minutes when the frying pan hopped out from a small place between the corner of the room and a large cupboard, and fell to the floor about twelve feet from the place from which it started. Mr. Barker picked it up, asking where it came from. No one answered and he replaced it in the corner. I knew Mr. McDonald to be a respectable man.

Mrs. J. Stewart.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS BURGESS.

Living at New London at this time, I like many others, heard much that I supposed could not be true, so I went to see for myself. When I got there I found both the front andk doors opened and no one in the house. I stood a few minutes looking around to see if there was any truth in what I had heard about the place. All at once the two wooden andirons that were in the fire place rose up to the ceiling and one lodged on each side of the house. I saw all that I wanted to see. I was much frightened, but after a while picked up courage and looking out the back door I saw a number of people out by the wheat stacks, for they were on fire, so I called to them and told them about the fire in the house and then left. I was convinced that what I had heard was true. I was well acquainted with Mr. McDonald, who was an honest,upright man and a member of the Baptist Churchf . . Thomas Burgess.

STATEMENT OF WM. FISHER.

The first I knew of the Belledoon Mystery was the burning of the house and the cleaning and clearing away of the ruins. I have seen the lead balls and stones come into the house, and also seen them draw out the dead cattle, hogs, and hens, but the last that I remember seeing or hearing of was the burning of a barn full of grain. In regard to John T. McDonald, I have known him as long as I have recollection and knew nothing nor yet have I heard anything against his character. Wm. Fisher.

STATEMENT OF ANGUS McDOUGALL.

As near as I can remember, it was in July 1830, I with my parents were returning home from the river St. Clair. Landing at the tailor's, we went into the house, and were there but a few minutes when the alarm of fire was given by parties threshing in the barn, and the first I saw of it, the roof, which was of straw, was all on fire and no one could account for it. The stable was burned to the groubd. After this my parents went frequently to the place to

watch with the people, always telling us on their return of what they had seen and heard. They said the lead balls would begin coming in about three o'clock in the afternoon and continue in the evening, apparently through the ceiling and the side of the house, without leaving any marks, but when they came through the windows, the glass was broken. I have always lived in the same locality with these people and never knew aught against them, but knew them to be respectable, honest, religious people.

This is a true statement of what I know.

Angus McDougall.

STATEMENT OF MRS. ELLEN BROWN.

I distinctly remember the Belledoon Mystery, as it is called. I was living with Daniel McDonald at the time he married old Mr. McDonald's daughter, and I used to be back and forth to the old folks' house. I saw the barn burn and was in the house when the fire was discovered under the bed and no person was near it. I saw the dishes move from the cupboard, and other mysteries, too numerous to mention. Stones came through the windows, all wet as if just out of the river. I was born in 1818. Mrs. Ellen Brown.

STATEMENT OF JAMES JOHNSON

During the years 1829-30-31 I lived within three miles of John T. McDonald's, and I used to go and see the balls come through the windows. Being young, it was great sport for me. I wore a Scotch cap at the time and I would gather the balls in them and take them home, and tell mother about the witch balls, as they were called. She would make me throw them away, for she said the witches would come and take me with them. I said I would like no better fun. We used to see a strange goose with a black head and part of one wing black, swimming up and down the river, always quacking as if it were lost, but after McDonald shot it the mystery was solved. I have seen the furniture fly in all directions and the mush pot chase the dog from Canada to the state of Michigan. The pot had

been absent for three days, and in four weeks we heard that the dog was found four miles west in Michigan and it never came back to Canada. Mr. McDonald used to trade at my father's store and was always upright in all his dealings. My age is sixty-two.

James Johnson.

STATEMENT OF DARIUS JOHNSON.

My father had heard from reliable parties, a great deal about this mystery, which he thought could not be true, so he went to see for himself and returned perfectly satisfied that what he had heard was true. He saw the balls come in through the windows by the score while no person could be seen outside. The cattle, which were seemingly well and hearty, would drop dead without a struggle. The pots filled with boiling water, would fly off the fire place, and pass over the people's heads, without spilling a drop, and then, return to their place over the fire. The people were afraid to go into the house. He saw a large black dog sitting on the roof of a building, which was on fire, and they tried to knock it off, but it would bark and show its teeth as much as to say "mind your own business." It stood there until surrounded by fire, when it disappeared instantly. My father was well acquainted with Mr. McDonald, and he said he was a hard working, honest man, and in good standing in the Baptist church.

Darius Johnson.

STATEMENT OF VICTORIA HATHAWAY

I was ten years old when I first heard of the Belledoon Mystery. My brother-in-law brought me one of the bullets, which was marked, to our house, and he said that things would seem to come up through the floor and shape themselves into different forms, sometimes that of an Indian, sometimes that of a white man, but more often a large black dog. At times the cabbage from the garden would come down the chimney. At night terrible noises would be heard, which were so annoying that they could not sleep.

Victoria Hathaway.

STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH SHEPLEY

I, like hundreds of others, having heard much of this mystery, went to see for myself, and, to my surprise, saw specie coming down through the ceiling. It dropped upon the floor and some of the people picked it up, but what was done with it I could not say. Mr. Alexander Brown, a noted classleader in the Methodist church, told me he saw them give the mush pot to the dog to eat out of, and to save his neck he could not catch it. It hopped all over the house and the people had to get out of the way. Mr. McDonald and I were children together and I know him to be a good honest man. My age is sixty-five. Elizabeth Shepley

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STATEMENT OF H. DRULARD.

I went with my father to see what was going on at Belledoon for I was young at that time. We saw a pot rise from a hearth and chase a dog outside and all around the yard. It could not get away from the pot, for it would hit the dog and he would yell and howl with all his might. I saw an old fashioned butcher knife pass through a crowd of fifty men and strike into the wall the whole length of a ten inch blade. This happened in 1830. H. Drulard.

STATEMENT OF JANETTE MILLS.

Dougald McDonald, my brother-in-law, told me that while he was at McDonald's, watching fire, some of the plaster came out of the side of the house and flew at him with great force, as if it wanted to strike him in the face, and then went back to its place in the wall. No one could have told that it had been out of the wall. The tea kettle flew off the fire place at him, and boiling water flew all around him but did not touch him. The ceiling raised up towards the roof and came down with such force that he thought the house was crushed to pieces, but he was not to be frightened. I was well acquainted with Dougald, and knew what he said was true, also with John T. McDonald, and I can very truthfully say that he was an honest, upright man. My age is fifty-five years. Jeanette Mills.

STATEMENT OF O. WESTBROOK.

As near as I can recollect, by information which was reliable, this happened about the year 1833. I was, at that time, living in the state of New York. I came to Michigan in the month of May, 1834, and my now deceased brother, Ebenezer Westbrook, who had lived a long time, and in fact was one of the first settlers of Algonac, told me that he had heard so very much about this mystery, that he went over there to see if he could find out the cause, but came back unable to account for it in any way. He heard all kinds of noises while there, and bullets, stones and other missles came through all parts of the house, and they picked some of them up, marked them, and threw them into the Channel Ecarte, and in a few minutes they would come with great force through the house again. Guns fired and balls of fire were seen flying through the house, and it was most frightful to remain there. I knew Mr. McDonald and would say that he is a man of truth and veracity. About the year 1833, my father sent me to mill, at the mouth of Bear Creek. I was then about fifteen, and this is how I came to know McDonald at first. My brother told me that the pots and kettles would come out upon the floor, and dance, and jump around, while at the same time music and other noises would be heard. O. Westbrook

STATEMENT OF L. A. McDOUGALD.

As near as I can recollect, it was some time in the year 1829' that, being on the way to Algonac, I called at the house of Mr. Duncan McDonald.

I knocked on the front door, and not receiving any response, I went round to the back of the house, but no one was visible about the premises. I then observed that the windows were broken in many places, and in a peculiar manner as if riddled with bullets. Wondering what could have happened, and why the family were all absent, I concluded to go to the next neighbor's and seek information. Upon arriving there, I found the women of the McDonald family and they told me the following extraordinary story:

Up to this time nothing out of the common run of events

had ever occurred to disturb the peace of these people who were held in esteem by all who knew them, being respectable, industrious and good neighbors.

Upon this eventful morning, they informed me, the male members of the family having departed to their various occupations, three women were engaged in an out house, picking or selecting straw for making hats. The out house was built of logs, and inside had poles laid across from side to side overhead, forming a kind of loft upon which some flax was thrown. As they sat talking at their work, one of the poles suddenly dropped down in the midst of them. This, however, elicited no great surprise as they supposed it to proceed from some natural cause, though they could think of nothing that was likely to disturb it at that particular time. After trying in various ways to account for it, they gradually turned their minds and conversation to something else, when suddenly another pole came down. They now searched the loft and the premises to find some cause for its fall, but they could discover no person or thing that could have caused it, and again the circumstance passed from their minds, and they were talking upon some other subject, when a third pole came down upon them. This time they fled to the house, after again searching the place and finding nothing. As they stood talking and wondering at this strange event, a more wonderful manifestation commenced. Small balls of lead about the size of musket balls, came through the glass of the windows at short intervals. These balls seemed to strike the glass from the outside with sufficient force to break an entrance, when they dropped to the floor and rolled along remaining in sight. The women returned with me to the house, where I found all as described, and I picked up one of the balls and carried it with me to Algonac, where I showed it to Squire Smith, telling him the strange story. I may say here that I have been present when balls came through the windows. I and others have picked them up, putting a private mark upon them and thrown them into the river, and in a short time the same balls so marked would come back through the window. At other times stones would come, wet, as if they were just out of the bed of the river.

After the windows had been all broken they nailed boards over them, but the balls came in just as before, only they

left no marks on the boards as they had done on the glass.

At times every inanimate thing about the place seemed to be endowed with life, and would move about in the most unaccountable manner. I went there and found some of the men engaged in building a milk house. They told me that they had been much annoyed that day. The chisels, saws and other tools would suddenly leave them, go into the house and return again without the agency of human hands. Some of the things that happened were fantastic enough to provoke a laugh, were it not for the remembrance of what had been inflicted upon these people by the same agency.

When the family took off their shoes at night they would frequently start off and walk around the room, and once when an old woman was smoking the pipe left her mouth.

There was at this time a peddler named Patrick Tobin, who resided in Chatham. He travelled through the country, and from him the farmers obtained most of their supplies. It was his custom to stop at Mr. D. McDonald's, it being the largest house in the neighborhood. Upon counting his money one morning before resuming his journey, he was surprised to find that nine or ten dollars were missing. He had it the night before and it was all in silver half dollar pieces. Being well assured of the honesty of the family, he informed them of his loss. They advised him to wait a while and see what would turn up, as things disappeared and reappeared very often. Accordingly while they were at breakfast a sharp "ting" was heard against the glass of the window, and one silver piece came flying into Mr. Tobin's plate ; a short pause and then another came, and so on till the whole amount was returned except one piece, whereupon Mr. Tobin gathered up his cash and left, telling them that when the last one came they might keep it. This was the beginning of those mysterious manifestations which continued about a year and were witnessed by hundreds of people who came from far and near, attracted by the report of these wonders.

During this time I met someone of the family nearly every day, and nearly every day some new event would be related.

One time I was persuaded by one of the boys to go and spend the night with him, being always anxious for com-

pany. We retired in an upper chamber, but not to rest, for the bed rocked all night with the gentle undulating motion of a wave of the sea. My companion told me that this was a common occurrence, and they had become so used to it that they did not mind it much. He said that at times they would hear a rumbling noise over their heads as if some heavy body was being rolled from side to side.

At another time—but this was towards the end of the disturbance—I was passing the house of Hector McDonald when I observed that one of the panels of the door was knocked out. As people were by this time always on the alert to hear of any new wonder, I stopped and entered. The owner of the house was engaged in making shoes. I enquired what had broken his door, and he pointed to a very large stone lying on the floor. H said the stone was one of a pair that had been used in the fireplace to serve the purpose of andirons for holding the wood. While he sat at his work, it came flying through the door, taking out the panel in its course. How it went out he could not tell, as had not noticed its absence till it returned. But he was sure it must have gone out of itself, as no one could have done so without his knowledge. So accustomed had they become to this kind of thing that he had not troubled himself to stir from his seat or disturb himself about the matter, but left the stone lying where it fell.

Mr. James Stewart visited the family, being desirous to see for himself if there was any truth in the reports that he had heard. They told him of many things that had happened.

As they sat talking, Mr. Stewart remarked that he had heard of a case in Scotland where an empty bucket went of itself to the well and came back full. Some of the family answered that it had not happened there yet; whereupon a pint cup of water that stood upon the table rose from its place and went round the room through the air, and coming back emptied its contents upon the floor before them. But all these annoyances were nothing to what came after. Fire began to break out in their homes in the most unaccountable manner, and the utmost vigilance was necessary to prevent their burning. They were obliged to keep watch night and day, not daring to go to sleep lest they

should be burned in their beds. Some one was always left on guard while others slept. One day the fire broke out in the barn of Mr. Duncan McDonald. All the family rushed out to save it. The old man being lame was behind the others. Just as he went out it suddenly occurred to him that it was not safe to leave the house alone, so he turned back. Though he had been gone just a moment, he found the back log from the fire place under the bed and the live coals scattered all over the floor. The first house that was consumed was John T. McDonald's. I was going up the river in a boat that morning in company with Jas. Johnson Sr., and William Fisher. When we were opposite the McDonald place, we perceived that John's house was on fire, but as we were some distance from it, we saw that it would be gone before we could reach it. The family were at breakfast, and as yet, had not discovered the danger. Mr. Duncan McDonald's house was nearer to us, and as they saw the fire, they hailed us and asked us to assist them to carry out their furniture as they expected their own habitation would soon be in flames. We landed and helped them to clear the house.

In the meantime John's house and barn were reduced to ashes, together with all they contained, the family barely escaping with their lives. He came up to us without his coat, saying that the clothes he had on were all he saved. A woman named Mrs. Ann McDonald, who was in the house at the time, said that there was a board leaning against the fence before the door, and when she ran out upon discovering the fire, she saw a large black dog run up this plank to the top of it, where he disappeared.

My father and Mr. John McNeil now volunteered to watch the house of Mr. D. McDonald. They accordingly remained there and the family sought shelter elsewhere. As they sat talking they saw smoke coming from a small closet and on examining they found a fire nicely built upon the floor with corn cobs and coals. There was but one entrance to the closet and no one could have gone in without their knowledge. They extinguished it but soon smoke began to come from the wall. They tore away the laths and plaster and there found another fire similar to the one in the closet. And so it continued for some time, as fast as they quenched the fire in one place it broke out in another, till Mr. McNeil

remarked that whatever had power to do this could also, if so minded, throw the house down upon them, so it was better to leave the house to its fate. Accordingly they went away and the house is shut up, but strange to say, when left to itself, the fire ceased, and the house is still standing.

There was at this time in the neighborhood a school teacher named Baker. He attributed these disturbances to witchcraft, and determined to put a stop to it by spells of his own. He accordingly commenced a series of proceedings against the witches, such as writing letters, and placing them over the door, etc. But as in the then existing state of British law, dabbling in witchcraft was forbidden, he was soon arrested and placed in Sandwich jail. However, when he was tried he was acquitted. After the fire a severe plague broke out among the cattle, fowl and domestic animals on the place, and these much persecuted people were nearly driven to ruin. Some of their Catholic neighbors advised them to seek advice and assistance from some Catholic clergyman. Although not of that religious belief themselves, they concluded to do so. They therefore applied to Rev. Fr. Troyer, of Longwoods. He came and remained a week with them. At the end of that time, he appeared to have become convinced that the disturbances were really caused by some supernatural agency. He thought that it might be a punishment sent by the Almighty for some secret sin, and exhorted them if they knew of such to confess and ask pardon of God. Or if they had wronged any person, to make restitution. They, however, denied all knowledge of any crime. He suggested that it might have been something that the old people had done, even before leaving their own country. This was to John T. McDonald, but he said, "If so, I know nothing about it." The good father departed without being able to render them any assistance.

At length the family abandoned the place, and came to live with a relative, Mr. Daniel R. McDonald. But the very same trouble followed them there and continued as bad as ever. I will mention one occurrence, one of many, of which I have heard. One evening a stranger came to the door, and asked to stay all night. He was told that he was welcome, but at the same time they informed him of the annoyances to which they were subjected and which were doubly dis-

agreeable to anyone not accustomed to them. The stranger nothing daunted, expressed his desire to stay and seemed rather gratified at the prospect of witnessing something wonderful. He carried a gun, and as he stood by the door he leaned upon it and looked curiously around. There was an old rusty musket standing in the corner and as the stranger looked about it left its place and came out on the floor before him, remaining upright until it arrived there, and standing for a moment, fell over. The stranger's curiosity was now fully satisfied and shouldering his gun, departed. These things I have heard from good authority, and I have seen enough myself to convince me.

Finding it was the person and not the place that was haunted, they returned to the farm and for a time camped out in the fields. After a time, however, John T. McDonald moved into the old house, which had been left for the new one that was burned, and his father, with the rest of the family, again took possession of their desolate homestead.

On Sunday there was preaching at Mr. Duncan McDonald's, as in those days we had no churches hereabouts and this was the the largest house in the neighborhood. John's family had come up to his father's to attend the sermon, leaving his house locked up. After the services were over, I, in company with others, proceeded up the road towards home. We had to pass John McDonald's house, and a young girl, who had been brought up in the family, named Jane McDonald, walked along with us in the same direction. When we arrived opposite the house, she turned and opened the door to enter, but started back with an exclamation of fright. I immediately turned and entered the house. A curious sight met my view. Every article of furniture in the house was piled in a kind of window, which extended cornerwise across the room. A space of a couple of feet was left in the centreof the pile and the family bible was opened and turned down on the floor. I lifted the book and in doing so closed it, for which I was sorry for afterwards, as it was thought by many that had we read the sacred text at the place where the book was opened, we might have discovered some clue to the mystery.

And now came an Indian who boasted that he was the cause of it all. He said he worked these spells by means of a kettle which contained a mixture composed in part of

sixty human tongues (a venomous posset, no doubt, if they were like the tongues of the present day.) That the said kettle was buried under a certain tree, which he pointed out. That the secret had been handed down to him from several generations, and that upon a certain day, he would command the kettle to come up, and it would do so, uprooting the tree in its course. He said that when he had done this, the disturbance would cease, and he would immediately die, as this was the penalty attached to revealing the secret.

On the day appointed about two hundred people were assembled to witness his proceedings, but he failed to put in an appearance. The assembled multitude then proceeded to dig up the tree, but found nothing. I never heard what became of the Indian.

L. A. McDougald.





WALLACEBURG VILLAGE BAND 45 YEARS AGO

Reading from Left--Lyman Bowers, Lewis Martin, John Lillie (deceased), James Purser, Henry McIntyre (deceased), Chas. W. Martin, Thomas Forhan (deceased), Wm. N. Ayres Jr., Richard Fish, Dr. Alex. Fraser, Andrew McCarron, Wm. N. Ayres Sr.



WALLACEBURG ON THE RIVER SYDENHAM