

The Autobiography of Joseph Crandall

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Documents

The Autobiography of Joseph Crandall

In 1853 the Reverend Joseph Crandall, venerated patriarch of the Baptist denomination in New Brunswick, began a series of letters to the *Visitor* (the baptist newspaper edited in Saint John by I. E. Bill) retelling the story of his life and experiences. The letters apparently were never published in the paper, although they have been summarized and quoted *in extenso* by several Baptist historians, including the Reverend Bill in his *History of the Baptists*. A copy of the letters remains in the Maritime Baptist Historical Collection at Acadia University and deserves reprinting in full. Crandall's account represents a fascinating illustration of the "spiritual autobiography," a literary genre which has only recently begun to be recognized as of great importance and interest to students of literature.

In its manuscript form, Crandall's "autobiography" covers only a fragment of his life. It ends in approximately 1810 and is only of limited historical significance, since it was written so long after the events it describes and was not intended as history, though its copyist so labelled it. Crandall's memory was fairly accurate despite his age. The events and people he describes are usually identifiable and in proper chronological place, although Crandall's recollections do not seem very precise and contribute little new information to our knowledge of the Maritime Provinces and especially New Brunswick. The fragment ends before the most important incident of Crandall's life for the secular historian — his election and subsequent resignation from the New Brunswick House of Assembly in 1818, when the Assembly in effect expelled him by passing legislation forbidding clergymen from sitting in the house. Obviously Crandall's own account of this incident would be of great interest. But one suspects that even had Crandall taken his account to 1818, he would not have revealed much of the incident; he does not mention James Innis' imprisonment for illegal performance of marriages although Innis appears prominently in the account and went to gaol within Crandall's chronological limits. Secular history was not Crandall's aim.

What Crandall intended in his letters was the glorification of God by

couching his own life in terms of his personal relationship with God. Thus the shape of Crandall's autobiography consciously parallels and incorporates the stages of conversion recognized by most dissenting Protestant denominations of Calvinist origins (commonly called "Puritans"). These stages were Christian knowledge, based upon church attendance, family worship, and catechism; conviction, a perception of the helpless and hopeless condition of the individual; grace, a will and desire to believe in and accept God; combat against doubt; and finally, some personal confidence of God's favour.

Crandall thus opens his account by demonstrating Christian knowledge from his mother and father merging into conviction: ". . . in the midst of all my sinful career I always had a tender conscience." Then came grace ("I saw the way of salvation was God's work and not mine"). Crandall's combat of doubt consisted largely of concern over whether he should preach. But since the only qualification for preaching assumed by Maritime New-Lights was conversion, his doubts were obviously directed at the larger issue. Once decided on his vocation, Crandall had reached the stage of confidence, and most of the remainder of his account deals with his preaching activities. But confidence, quite properly, was not absolute, and he experienced recurring doubts (" . . . under these depressing fears, I decided that I would preach no more."). Even after the doubts disappeared, one could not fall into the sin of pride. This Crandall avoided by directing the remainder of his account to the celebration and thanking of God for his blessings.

In the course of the celebration of thanks, Crandall includes most of the stereotyped incidents familiar to Puritan autobiographical literature: the doubter converted, the death-bed conversion, the personal and miraculous recovery from illness, the successful revival with many converted. These events actually happened to Crandall, but so undoubtedly did many more. He chose (perhaps remembered) his incidents in terms of the larger pattern. Thus, although Crandall ended his account around 1810 with a long career still ahead of him, his autobiography was, in a sense, completed. He had, in terms of the stylized format of accounts of conversion, reached the limits of the genre and said what had to be said. To continue further would have been presumptuous, almost blasphemous. Crandall had written, quite properly from his point of view, not an account of the outer man, but of the inner one. The spiritual nature of the narrative undoubtedly explains the fact that Crandall mentions his wife only to note the marriage. Mrs. Crandall was not relevant to his spiritual state.

One point worth noting about what is very definitely and consciously an account shaped within a pattern is that Crandall does break from the genre to some extent in terms of his awareness of and sensitivity to place. The form did not permit much flexibility, but Crandall manages to convey some sense of the beauty of the Maritime landscape which he obviously felt very strongly. This, one might properly note, helps to make Crandall's account more than

simply an example of a genre, but rather an unmistakably Canadian illustration of it.

The editor has reproduced the original with as little change as possible but has placed some additional information in footnotes. He is grateful to the Library of Acadia University for permission to reprint the account.

J. M. BUMSTED

Dear Brethren:

I was born in a place called Tivertown in Rhode Island. My parents Webber Crandall and Mercy Vaughan, emigrated from that country to Nova Scotia about one year before the revolution. The country was extremely poor, and but thinly settled. The inhabitants were poor and there were no schools there at that time. When I was ten or twelve years of age I was sent from home. The woman with whom I lived taught me to spell a little. Afterwards I attended an evening school for about three months. I think the Holy Spirit moved on my mind when I was quite a young lad. One Sabbath morning, my mother called us all in and reproved us for being at play on the Lords day; she read the Bible and wept and, although I cannot remember all she said, some of her words and her solemn looks were never erased from my mind. When about thirteen years of age I was called to the death bed of my mother. I was much alarmed to see my beloved mother so pale and deathlike. She said to me, "that she had sent for me to hear her last farewell". She said "she was going to leave us all and go to her Saviour where she would be happy". After some time she looked earnestly at me and said "Joseph, the Lord has a great work for you to do, when I am dead and gone". I believe my dear mother was under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and is now with her precious Saviour in Heaven.

I recollect one day a couple of strangers came to the house where I was living. They talked of a strange man that was preaching in Windsor and adjoining places; he preached in the night, and people were becoming crazy and talked about their souls. My father had heard this man preach and as he happened to be there at the time he explained to the strangers that this preacher Henry Allin was a "New Light" and that the "New Light" were the people of God for they were Christians and that none could go to Heaven unless they were converted.

Some time after this Mr. John Sargent came to Chester, he was called a "New Light" preacher: then came Handly Chipman and Harris Harding. Their arrival was followed by a great excitement among the people, quite a number professed to be converted, among the number being the Vaughans, the Floyds, and many other families followed the new preacher. Some young people about my own age professed to be converted, and although I attended all the meetings and

fully believed it was the Lords work. yet my heart was hard and unmoved and I thought at the time that the Lord had left me to perish in my sins. and justly too. for I was one of the greatest sinners on earth. From that time I became more hardened in sin and was often in despair. sometimes I wished I had never been born. My parents were now both dead and I was left a poor orphan boy in an unfriendly world. For five years I continued wandering down the broad road to ruin: with heedless feet I madly trod the path to endless woe. and would have sunk in firey flames. but mercy interposed. In the midst of all my sinful career I always had a tender conscience. Two kinds of evil I detested. viz. drunkenness and thieving. And Oh! how thankful I ought to be to the Lord who kept me back from even these heinous sins.

The people with whom I lived told me that I had no soul. because I was not sprinkled in my infancy. I thought I ought to be like other people. so I went to a venerable old Presbyterian minister and he kindly performed the unscriptural act for me.¹ I must have been nearly fourteen years of age when this took place. and I came home from the meeting house supposing I had done some wonderful deed (This affair took place before the new ministers and reformation previously mentioned came.) Otherwise I would have better understood my duty.

Some time after this I left Chester and went to Liverpool. N.S. where I remained two years — was employed at this place in Cod fishing. My life in Liverpool was exceedingly sinful — From Liverpool I returned to Chester. from there I went to Falmouth and then to Newport — was engaged for a time in freighting lumber from Shubenacadie to Windsor. About this time there was to be a meeting of the Christians from different parts of the country. David Vaughan had promised that the schooner in which I sailed should carry the pilgrims to Onslow. After some hesitation I consented that they should be carried with us. but my cousin John Vaughan refused to go. We left Newport on Friday and reached Onslow on Sabbath morning. The next week I collected a number of young men and we went down the bay to have a regular pleasure sail. we returned on Saturday and Sabbath morning I went to the meeting which was held at the house of Mr. Philip Higgins. I cannot say that I had any great anxiety about the meetings. except my desire to see Harris Harding who was high in my esteem since the time of the reformation at Chester. When I entered the house. the glorious majesty of the Divine Being appeared to open before the eyes of my understanding (I beheld no object with my bodily eyes) and I saw myself justly condemned to endless misery. I saw no way of escape until suddenly a glorious light shone from the excellent Majesty and I saw the way of Salvation was Gods work and not mine. I felt as I had never felt before. although amongst strangers. I could not hold my peace. My hard heart was at last. **broken.** and I had such

1 The "venerable old Presbyterian minister" was John Seccombe.

a view of a perishing world lying in ruin as I never could express. To the great surprise of all present I began to speak and try to tell what I felt and saw. My mind was completely absorbed in the solemn and marvellous scene. It appeared to me that the whole human race lay in open ruin and were altogether at the disposal of that Holy Being whose bright glory had so overwhelmed my soul. I saw mercy so connected with the justice of God, that they were both one, that what God had done in the person of Christ was alone sufficient to save all that came to God for mercy through Jesus Christ. I felt that the whole world ought to know what I felt and saw, for indeed it appeared of more importance to me than the whole world. I continued speaking (as the people told me afterwards) for more than an hour, for I could not hold my peace, for it was a stream of living water flowing into my soul and then bursting forth like a stream from an overflowing fountain. The work of sinners lay before me, like a broad field to which I could see no end. When the scene had passed over and I looked around me, the two ministers, Joseph Dimock, and Harris Harding were weeping and many more were weeping with them.

The next day we embarked for Newport where we arrived in safety: this was in July 1795. I spent that summer in Newport, but O how changed the scene, the *world* had no charms for me now. There was no preaching in Newport, that was in touch with my experience, excepting, once in a great while Elder Manning came and preached, and that was like cheering cordial to my despairing spirit, for I had no comfort unless I was praying or exhorting, which I did whenever opportunity offered.

In the autumn of that year I returned to Chester and remained for some time there. I united with the open communion Church under the pastoral care of Elder Dimmock. My uncle Vaughan with whom I was living was deacon of the church. At this time my trials were great, whenever I saw a number of people collected, My heart would move within me, after the preaching I would pray and exhort, but this did not satisfy my mind. I was in great trouble at times. Some of the christians said I was called of God to preach, others said, "That poor illiterate boy, preach indeed! It is a shame to think of such a thing". And I must confess that I thought at the time that the ones who opposed it were about right in the matter. But I had no rest. I dare not go back to my former pleasures, they seemed like thorns to my soul. Later, in that same year, I was lying in my bed one sabbath morning, thinking deeply over a strange dream I had had in the night, part of which I will here relate — I dreamed that I was standing by a broad stream of smooth water, thousands of men and women were floating down the stream, in a standing position with their heads and shoulders above water, they seemed quite unconscious of their danger. I watched them until they reached the cataract below, when they suddenly disappeared. All below the rocky caract was dense darkness. I also saw in the dream a man with a long pole and a

bow on the end of it; he came to me and told me to wade in and save all the people I could. I thought in the dream that I did so and all that I could throw the bow over I led to a delightful bank covered with green grass and beautiful flowers, and there they united in singing the praises of God in a delightful manner.

In musing on this strange dream the 28th chapter of Matthew came to my mind and when I came to the two last verses I was struck with a great surprise. Had I been present when John baptised the Saviour and stood on the bank of the Jordan and witnessed the whole scene I could not have been more convinced from that time. I have never since had one doubt about my conversion nor mode of baptism. That same sabbath day I was buried with my Lord in a watery grave by Elder Joseph Dimmock. In November of that year Elder Harding came to Chester on his way to Liverpool and invited me to go with him. I went, thinking I might be of some use to help him convey his luggage. When we arrived at Liverpool, there was no small stir among the people when they heard of the professed conversion of that wayward boy Joseph Crandall and that he had come to exhort young people to turn from their evil ways.

As it was early in the week when we arrived, we held a number of meetings before the Lords day, but nothing special transpired. On the Sabbath we met in the meeting house. Elder Pasant [Payzant] preached in the morning and Harris Harding prayed and exhorted. In the afternoon Elder Harding preached and when done called on me to pray. I had not expected to be called upon and felt much cast down in my mind, but I thought it would seem very unkind in me to refuse when invited to pray; besides, I felt a great want in my own soul, it seemed as though a dark gloom of spiritual death surrounded me. But when I commenced to pray the scene changed, the light of heaven shone into my soul. How long I prayed, I know not, but when I opened my eyes and looked around all was changed, the two ministers were weeping in the pulpit and the whole congregation seemed to be melted down under an awful sense of eternity.

From this time the work of the Lord commenced. The two ministers said I had a special call to preach and on the next Lords day they insisted on my ascending the pulpit. But Oh! how I trembled, my great fear was that I was not called by God to the work of the ministry. But when I began my fears all left me for a time. I spent the winter in Liverpool, travelling on to the westward and in all the back settlements, until about the 1st of March, when I set out to return to Chester, where I arrived about the middle of April. While in Liverpool I endeavoured to persuade all to receive the gospel. Many professed religion, but how many were truly born of God I cannot tell.

On my return to Chester I went to the meeting on Lords day; as their preacher was not at home they made a practice of holding prayer meetings during his absence [sic]. They had heard of my preaching, some were of-

fended and blamed Elder Harding. Others were glad, and the two deacons of the church were among the latter number. They finally decided to invite me to preach. Here I was among my old wicked companions, the trial was indeed great. But if the trial was great, the blessings were far greater, for at the close of the meeting those who had opposed my preaching, were the first to come forward and bid me God speed.

From Chester I went thirty miles through the wilderness to Windsor, there I was kindly received by Mr. McLafchey a pious christian man, who proved a constant friend to me during his life. I held meetings in Windsor, Falmouth, Horton, Cornwallis, and Newport. There I met with Edward Manning who treated me with the kindness of a tender father. In all these places where I held meetings, I was most kindly treated and listened to, as I thought, with approbation, and I am led to believe that the Lord was pleased to bless my labors for the good of many souls. Some time in the month of August I left these places and went to Onslow, the place where I had first opened my lips in the name of the Lord. There I continued until the last of October, laboring in about the same manner as heretofore, with about the same success.

From Onslow I went in company with Mr. Thomas Lyons to Amherst. We made it our home while there at the house of W^m Freeman Esq. by whom I was ever after, treated with marked friendship. Many times after I have found a welcome home with him in Amherst. Elder Samuel McAuley's [McCully] conversion was somewhat remarkable. He, like myself, was then a young man, and having received a special charge from his father not to go to any "New Light" meetings (as they were then called) said to a Mr. Lushy that he would not go. But the old gentleman replied "Why, Sam, ye are not bound to believe what the lad says." So he went with the family to meeting, and when the words of the text were announced — "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me —" it proved a word in season to the young man, and some years later I baptised him in the Maccan river and ever after felt towards him as Jonathan did to David. Our union was strong and steadfast.

From Amherst I went to Sackville, where I found a people who received me with open hearts and hand. There were many "New Lights" there, but I think there was only one in that whole Parish who had been immersed. Here I held many meetings and felt myself thoroughly at home. From Sackville I passed on to the Petitcodiac river, holding meetings in all the different neighborhoods. In this section I found many christians, many of them noted for their piety and public speaking. Brothers Christian and Henry Steeves, held meetings in the different settlements and exhorted the people, and the Lord was evidently with them there. I remained there until spring and then returned in a Schooner to Cornwallis.

There I met again with Elder Manning who had become pastor of the Congregational Church at that place. It was at this time that I first made the

acquaintance of Brother and Sister Bill, at whose house afterwards Brother Manning and I often preached. Those aged pilgrims then were fast ripening for immortality. There we saw the infant son, Ingram, in his cradle. He was the subject of many prayers, which the Lord has graciously heard and answered (He is at this presne time of writing Pastor of Germant [Germain] St. Baptist Church, St. John.) After spending two months in Cornwallis in company with Elder Manning, I returned to New Brunswick by way of Parsboro, preaching as I went at Maccan, Amherst, and Sackville, until I came to Salisbury where I was married to the eldest daughter of Mr. Jaimy Sherman. I then began to think I must provide a living for us and went and settled quite in the wilderness. 'Twas then my troubles of mind became almost overwhelming. I thought there was a possibility that I had deceived myself, and if myself, then others. Under these depressing fears, I decided that I would preach no more. I went to work on a new farm with the determination to live like other people. The people used to meet on the Lord's day and I could not stay at home and when at meeting and urged to conduct it I could not deny. I continued about eighteen months in this way, till one Sabbath morning I attended a meeting at Pollet River, about three mile from my home. There the cloud of darkness that had for so long obscured my mind, disappeared and the Lord so blessed my speaking that a number of the people were brought to cry to the Lord for mercy and the meetings continued for several days. Oh it was wonderful to see groups of people at the midnight hour, returning home from the meetings with their torchlights, and making the wilderness echo with the praises of God. Truly these were happy days. This work spread through all the land in different directions. The doctrines preached were — Man's total depravity by the fall of Adam, Salvation wholly and alone through the Lord Jesus Christ, Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and Sanctification progressive obedience to the Lords commands, which led believers to follow Christ in an immersion in water, then to unite in Church fellowship according as the Lord had ordained, that his children should be holy and walk before him in love. The Lord so blessed his own word, that a number of the Christians drew up a letter to the churches in Chester, Horton, and Cornwallis asking them to send their ministers to Sackville, to set me apart to the work of the ministry.

In response to the letter of my people, the ministers came and a church was organized on gospel grounds, with the exception, that unimmersed Christians might commune. The ministers who were present at my ordination (and I cannot think of these holy men of God or write their names without feeling a holy awe resting on my mind) were Edward Manning, Joseph Dimmock and Theodore Harding. After the ordination Bro Harding remained with me for a time and we passed over the ground where the Lord's work had prospered. I continued to travel through the Settlements [of] Sackville, Salisbury, Moncton, Coverdale, Hillsboro and Hopewell. I also went into

Nova Scotia as far as Parsboro and all the different neighborhoods, preaching often in poor log houses, where I experienced the truth of the Lord's word "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." After the work seemed to cease I felt my mind sink into a state of great darkness, my food seemed tasteless, my sleep departed from me.

I had heard Elder Manning talk of his trials on the River Saint John and I at one time felt that I should like to go over that ground, but this anxious desire had left me, and I felt like one lost as to where my path of duty lay. However, I decided to go to the River Saint John. It was now midwinter and how to get there I could not tell, but it seemed, by going there, was the only door of hope, open to my troubled mind. But as the Lord ordered it I found a young man going that way on Snow Shoes. So I rigged up a pair and went along with him. We started from Sackville about the last of January in the year 1809². Not being much accustomed to snow shoes, I was often much fatigued, but travelled on, preaching as I went in all the villages until I came to Norton. Here I found an old pilgrim, Brother Ennis. He had been converted in the army, and was a soldier of Christ. He preached in his own house, he was a man of native talents and had a fair education for those times. I held several meetings and found many kind friends. Brother Ennis then accompanied me on his snow shoes, through the wilderness to Bellisle. There I stopped at the house of a kind man, Mr. Gillis, and preached in the evening, but I was so fatigued that I could scarcely stand. I learned afterwards that one precious soul at least was brought to the knowledge of Christ on that occasion. I preached several times in that place and a goodly number were brought to a knowledge of the truth. Among the number was that good brother, Deacon Drake. There I found friends ready and willing to convey me on my journey to the River St John in a sleigh on the ice.

I next put up with Mr and Mrs Case! Mrs Case was the only person that I found on all my way from Salisbury to this place who had been immersed. This dear sister received me joyfully and arose after the sermon and bore witness to the truth of the gospel. She contributed to my support and caused others to do so, as well. From this place I passed on to Mr. Stephen Potter's, who was keeping a public house and just at the time giving a series of Balls, his musician being a blind fiddler who made a living in that way. However, as Mr Potter, had myself and friend as guests, he invited me to preach in his house, which I did, and am happy to say it was the means of breaking up the "frollicking." The poor blind fiddler came to me next day in dire distress. I told him, he was fulfilling the words of our Saviour, "The blind was leading the blind," and they would all perish together. He could play no more. From that place I passed on to Waterborough, New Canaan and preached many days at that place. Many persons here had congregational principles. A

2 This date is wrong. It should be 1000, not 1809.

very Godly man was their leader. Elijah Easterbrooks, by name; he was absent during my visit. Before I left this place I saw the spirit of the Lord was moving on the minds of the people. One or two had found mercy. I passed on up the river from this place, until I met a Mr. Gale, who was coming after me to preach a funeral sermon. I attended the funeral and the day following preached again. The Lord wrought wonders in that place. It was called Kings-clear. On the Lord's day a pious woman asked me how she should proceed in order to be immersed. I pointed out the way, and announced that sister Cole would be immersed at ten o'clock the next day at a certain place. Long before the hour arrived people came in from all directions for many miles around. The ice being open the candidate related a clear experience and was immersed. When we came up out of the water, two men came forward and related what the Lord had done for their souls. We could not leave the water until fourteen happy converts were immersed in the same manner as our Saviour. Truly this was the Lord's work. Four or five hundred people surrounded the watery grave and it was wonderful to see the young converts going around among the people as they came out of the cold water, praising the Lord and exhorting others to come and embrace the Saviour. Surely this was the beginning of good days, the work of the Lord spread in every direction. As they returned from the meeting they said the bible was altogether a new book to them. I remained on the river above Fredericton, preaching and immersing believers, proceeding as far as Woodstock.

About the last of May I came down the river to Waterborough. The low lands were all inundated and I could not see how the Lord's work could be carried forward just then as the people could not attend the meetings. Then I began to think it was about time for me to return home. We landed at brother Marsters and soon the boats came in loaded, with anxious inquirers asking about the reformation up the river, for they had heard about such numbers being immersed, that many had been lead to read their bibles, and were prepared to yield obedience to the Lords commands. And in that room in an hour or two after my arrival, the Lords work commenced, and a number rejoiced in the Lord. It was wonderful to see the aged, the middle aged, and the youths relating in the language of the Holy Scripture, what the Lord had done for their souls. Brother Elijah Easterbrooks their leader a Holy man of God led the way, and the whole society followed in the holy ordinance of immersion. At the second conference many related their experience. An aged man arose from his seat, it was Esquire Easty an old New England Congregationalist, rooted and grounded in the old puritan practice of Infant sprinkling. He was a man much beloved. He said to me: "I see you are going to break up our church." I said to him, Sir, if your church is build on Christ, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. He said "Do you not call us a church of Christ." I said to him: I consider you are a company of pious christians, but not walking in the order of the gospel as commanded by Christ. He arose

took up his hat and went out. saying "his parents had given him up to the Lord in infancy and from that he would not depart." As he was passing out I said to him: Squire. I have one word to say to you. The Scribes and Pharisees rejected the counsil [sic] of the Lord against themselves. not being immersed. Next morning being the Lord's day. we met at the water side at 9 o'clock. There was a great host of people assembled. to see the effects of the new religion and to my great surprise. the old gentleman. who was determined "never to depart from his infant sprinkling" was the first to yield obedience to the commands of Christ. Such a day of the Lord's power was I believe rarely witnessed on earth. There was about thirty immersed at that time. This meeting did not break up until after the sun had gone down. And it was truly solemn. and delightful as well. to hear the praises of the Lord sung by great numbers of happy converts. returning home in their Boats from the solemn scene. The work of that day I can never forget. The clear setting sun. the broad expanse of smooth water spreading over a large extent of land. the serenity of the atmosphere. the delightful notes of the feathered songsters and the solemn tone of the hymns from the many happy voices. presented to me an emblem of the very presence of God. It seemed as though the very Heavens had come down to earth and I was on the brink of the eternal world.

Next day I passed over the river and at 8 o'clock in the morning immersed a number that came into liberty the day before. Among this number was brother Jarvis Ring. After that I bade them farewell proceeded down the river seven miles. where I had made an appointment to preach. Much to my surprise. a large number of the dear young people followed me down in boats and endeavored to persuade me to return with them. Thence I proceeded to Long Island and spent one Lords day there. preached several times and immersed quite a number. some of whom had experienced a change some years before.

Soon after I came on the river. dear old Sister Case was greatly rejoiced to see her husband and children come into the gospel order. From this place I went with the Postman in an old Bark Canoe to the city of Saint John. It was a perilous trip. when crossing Grand bay when far from land. the frail bark was near overwhelmed in water. But the hand of an Almighty Sovereign who rules the waves brought us to our desired port. In the city I found a number of pious christians and among the number was an old lady and gentleman who treated me with as much kindness as if I had been their own son. Mr Blakslee and Mr Leavitt provided me with a place to preach. I remained in the town three weeks. and then returned home by water. having been from home. from the last of January till the last of June. During my five months from home I was kindly treated on every side and was able to pay all my little bills necessary for the maintenance of my dear wife and child. And here I must stop to notice the kindness of a gentleman. by name Stephen Milledge.

who willingly supplied the needs of my family during my absence, and when I went to pay him and express my gratitude, he was loath to take the money, and would actually only take a part. I mention these matters as marks of the watchful eye of God over me and mine.

Yours in the Lord

(Rev.) Joseph Crandall

Dear Brethren:

Salisbury June 22nd 1853

Through the great mercy of God, I am yet spared to furnish a further account of my poor labors in the Lords Vineyard. After remaining and preaching in the County of Westmorland for a time, I attended the Association in Nova Scotia, and then with Brother Harding proceeded to Yarmouth and around the coast as far as Barrington. We preached in all the different Towns and Villages. In Barrington we immersed about twenty believers and organized a Church. We both engaged in immersing those happy children of God and left them rejoicing in the Lord. On my return to New Brunswick I was accompanied by Brothers Edward Manning and Theodore Harding. We passed on from Sackville after preaching a number of times there, to the River Saint John, preaching as we went, in all places where opportunity offered. And we found much pleasure in this travelling together. Brother Manning was an excellent councillor. When we arrived at Waterborough, we found the christians in a happy state of mind, with brother Easterbrooks preaching with the power and love of an apostle. They had sent by me, for the ministers to come and set apart Bro Easterbrooks to the pastoral care of the church. The ordination was numerously attended. The candidate appeared like a star of the first magnitude. After the ordination Bro Manning passed up the river confirming the churches. Bro Harding and I came back to Norton where we organized a church and ordained Bro. Ennis to the work of the ministry. We immersed a number of believers in different places as we journeyed back to Westmorland. Brother Manning came down to St. John City and immersed a number of believers there and I think formed a church.

After my return home I continued to preach from Parrsboro in Nova Scotia to the Kennebecasis in New Brunswick, taking in all the different localities. In Sackville and Salisbury I spent much of my time and I think before two years had passed away these two churches had increased from 18 immersed when I was ordained to over 100 in each place. Thus I labored on from year to year. Many extraordinary displays of the Lords power I witnessed in those days.

Not long after my return from Saint John, I visited New Canaan. A man

and his wife came fifteen miles through a dense forest, not even a marked tree to guide them. They heard of the Lords work and their souls were in great trouble. That was the means of opening the way for visiting that part of the country. I immersed those two disciples [sic] and a great number beside in that place. O! what happy days I then enjoyed. Truly the wilderness blossomed like the rose. All that (now) beautiful village of Butternut Ridge lying between Petitcodiac and New Canaan, was a dense wilderness in those days, through which I used to pass to proclaim the joyful news of Salvation through the blood of the Lamb. At the commencement of our revivals in Salisbury, there was a pious man in the neighborhood, William Linton Esq. who would not come to hear me preach on account of the ordinance of immersion. But the Lord converted all his children, and when he observed the change in them, he ventured one Lords day to come to meeting and at the close invited me home with him and showed me great kindness. Said he was glad to see such a decided change in his children: but hoped I would not persuade them to go into the water, for said he "You are Killing yourself." I told him it was not my custom to persuade people to go into the water, but I persuaded them to read the Lords word. "Oh!" said he, "that is right I will not forbid them but give them advice." The Lords work prospered and they were all immersed one only son and three daughters. William Linton Jr (the son) was one of the most upright and spiritually minded christians I ever met. He was soon chosen deacon which office he held till the Lord called him to his Heavenly reward. He left to mourn their heavy loss, a highly esteemed widow and three amiable daughters who were among my choisest and best friends. The aged Esquire often combatted me about the "infant exclusion" as he termed it. 'till one day I said to him, we will dispute no more on that subject until you can show me some portion of Scripture where one person was baptised on the faith of another, for according to the word of the Lord "Without faith it is impossible to please God" and we know that a child has no faith, and I know of no command for infant baptism on the faith of the parent or Minister. This ended all our controversy: he was indeed a convicted disciple! he was a very good English scholar with a fair knowledge of Latin. He had an excellent christian wife who had been bowed almost to the ground with Rheumatism. The Lord opened her understanding and gave her a clear view of the gospel order, and when she came up out of the water she seemed like one arisen from the dead. One year later the old Esquire while standing on the bank of the river, said in the presence of a great multitude "for more than twelve months I have been convinced that there was not one single word in all the bible for sprinkling or pouring on infants and yet tradition was so strong that my stubborn heart would not yield. But now I come at the eleventh hour to obey my Lord and master. Thus we led the old English seceder into that ordinance practiced and commanded by the holy son of God.

Some time after this I felt much inclined to travel and visit strangers.

Accordingly I went to Saint John and embarked for Eastport. Here I found myself quite among strangers, but was kindly received. I met with Elder Isaac Case and we preached alternately for a number of days. I then visited Campobello and other ports and then travelled on foot to Machias, preaching in many places in this section. I was kindly treated at the homes of Mr. Silby, Captain Wilder and many others. Travelled through the wilderness I think about thirty mile accompanied by a Captain Mack. He poor fellow had many falls on the way and broke a finger, but he was so engaged in telling his experience and adventures, that after I had set his finger and bound it up he went on with the narrative as though nothing had happened. I think he was a good christian man. We arrived in the evening at a Mr. Scotts and it was here I met for the first time my (now) much respected friend and Brother Mr. Solomon Hersey, who treated us with great kindness, as did also Mr. Scott and wife. Here I preached several weeks and immersed a christian woman, who had been long confined to her house and a great part of the time to her bed. In Machias I found a christian sister, Mrs. Foster. She had made a vow to the Lord that if she lived to see a Minister of the Lord, she would obey the Saviour's command to be immersed. At the close of the meeting held in her own house she related a satisfactory experience, and the next morning, being the Lords day, she performed her vows. This was in January when the weather was extremely cold. In the morning she said to me "I fear you have no fellowship with me, you have said nothing about my going forward in the ordinance." Why surely said I — you would not think of going into the water on such a cold day and you so feeble. "Are you afraid" said she. By no means I replied. After the meeting, the ice having been opened by orders of her kind husband, we descended into the watery grave and I immersed her in the presence of a large number of people — most of whom, were of the congregational order — She was the first person immersed in that Town, many said she would surely die, and that I ought to be hanged. But to their great surprise, the next day she rode out with Mr Foster and visited many families a thing she had been unable to do for many years.

From Machias I continued on west to Columbus, being carried there on horseback, through the kindness of a Mr. Stout. There I met Elder Daniel Merritt, a very learned, holy, humble minister of Jesus Christ. I had read his sermons and admired them. But when I heard he was in the place and had appointed to preach just across the street from where I was going to preach. I thought it would have been better for me to have stayed at home for I felt this great man of Science and Literature would look upon me as a poor ignorant young man. But how agreeably was I surprised when I met him, at once he appeared like a brother and father to me. He said he had given up his appointment and was coming to hear me, and I could not move him from his purpose. After the sermon he arose and spoke of my discourse in high terms, which greatly surprised me. Then he turned to me and said he had come

to that place by order of the association to visit the church and preach and administer the Lords Supper and cordially invited me to join him in these duties, to which I consented. He did not inquire for my credentials for indeed I neither had nor needed any. The people told me that in many cases the first marks of an imposter was his show of recommendations. I stayed and preached with this dear man of God for several days. We preached, turn about. The day we parted (we were on the way back to Machias) it was my turn to preach. When the service commenced, the people began to weep and sob through the whole congregation. I was surprised to see the minister also wonderfully affected. After I had done speaking he arose and said "You may be surprised to see me so much affected. So I will make known to you the cause." "Five years ago I passed through this place and there was no door opened to have the gospel preached and I prayed to the Lord that I might live to see the day when these people should have the gospel." "When you my brother, began to preach and I saw the effect. I felt that my prayer was answered, and the sound of Salvation affected my heart."

In parting from this man of God I asked him if he thought I would be justified in improving my learning, if I had means to do so. His reply was: "I believe it would be only a waste of time: the classics were good in many respects, but he had not received one new idea from the Knowledge of the languages." "Go on my brother" said he "the Lord is with you." The days spent in the company of this holy minister of Christ cheered and comforted my mind. I returned to Machias and preached and the longer I stayed, the greater became the numbers who attended my meetings. But here I contracted a severe cold and my friends thought that I could not recover but I had taken many colds before, preaching in the evening and going out into the night air. However I thought it was my duty to see my dear wife and children and accordingly I sett out in a sleigh drawn by one horse, two kind friends attending me to Captain Westers at Dennisville. I felt much better and was persuaded to preach twice it being the Lords day. That night I was taken with a violent fever and thought I could not live 'till morning. Then came two men from Machias who told us that the man whose house I had left the day before had suddenly died from cholera. This was sad news to me: for this kind man was dear to my heart. I lay in bed thinking I should never see my dear ones at home again in the flesh. But I was enabled to say "Thy will be done." All on a sudden it came into my mind to cause a chicken to be boiled thoroughly, and drink freely of the broth, this was from the Lord, for I recovered on that day.

I proceeded to Eastport and preached a number of days there, and many pleasant interviews I enjoyed with christian friends. One day a man called on me to visit a young married woman on her deathbed. When I entered the apartment where the sick woman lay I was much surprised to see so young and beautiful a woman on the very verge of death. The liniaments of her face plainly showed that the work of death was there. As I approached her

bedside. she said: "Sir, do pray for me. I asked her name and where she had lived and if she had ever heard the gospel. She said, "Her home was in Horton. she had sat under the ministry of Mr Harding and that she was the daughter of Mr Dewolf." I asked her if she thought she had ever experienced a change of heart. "O!" said she "I thought I did — but I have been so great a sinner. I fear there is no mercy for me." I said to her do not depend on my prayers look directly to the Saviour, for he is able to save all that come to God by him. She replied, "I know he is able but I fear he is not willing." I fell on my knees and my heart arose to him who has said: "Call on me in the day of trouble and I will deliver thee." After I arose she reached out her trembling hand and said: "O the Lord is both able and willing to save me." And surely I can never forget the change in her countenance. it was heavenly. and in a few minutes she expired, and I have no doubt was carried by angels to behold in the light of eternity that lovely Saviour who had saved her from the power of the second death. From this house of mourning I returned to the house of Deacon Hardins and lay awake musing nearly all night on that solemn scene. and if I could believe that the spirits of departed saints could remain on earth after death. I should think her spirit was with me. Such a night I never enjoyed. it seemed as though the room was filled with holy beings. This scene can never be erased from my mind.

After staying at Eastport some days I embarked and arrived safely in the city of Saint John, where I remained for ten days. Then I proceeded on home having been absent about five months. The Lord had watched over my dear wife and children. The church had kept up regularly meetings by prayer and exhortation. I was received by the brethren with joy, they being satisfied that I had been absent on the Lords errand.

While in the State of Maine I was called upon to defend the doctrine of open communion which I found impossible for me to do, as I had determined to preach nothing that I could not back up and support by Scripture. In June in this same year I visited the Church in Chester. The churches then were all on the open communion plan and I was counted one by myself, because I could not administer or partake with professors who had not been immersed.

The next association I think was held at Cornwallis and the churches of Chester and Yarmouth continued on the open communion plan, but all the others had united on the strict communion plan. At this association the churches united in forming a "Domestic Mission" and Brother Munroe and myself volunteered to travel to the Eastern part of Nova Scotia and accordingly I set out on a mission of ten weeks. In prosecuting my mission in Eastern Nova Scotia, I called upon a gentleman and presented my letter of commendation from the association and requested permission to preach in the Court House. He said "my calling was to the destitute, and they were not of that description." I told him I was informed that there were many people in that place who would be glad to hear the Gospel. He replied "You have come to

make a *scism* in the church." I inquired. Sir what do you call the church? "Well," said he "I have not attended to these affairs." I saw he was not disposed to grant my request. so I passed on in Company with a merchant. who invited me to his house. On my way I called at the house of a Churchman and asked for a drink of water. The gentleman was very anxious to learn who I was and for what purpose I was travelling in that country. I told him I was a minister of the gospel and wanted a house to preach in. He asked me to what church I belonged. I said to the Church of Christ. the most ancient and most honourable church in all the world. "Ah! said he. "I never heard of that Church." I replied. it would be well for you to be informed about it. for it might be to your advantage. "I belong to the church of England." was his reply. Then said I the difference in our church is. that the head of your church is in England and the head of mine in Heaven and all true members of my church go direct to Heaven when they die for Christ informed his disciples "I go to prepare a place for you." Much conversation passed between us. and he told me I was at liberty to preach in his house. with the understanding that he should continue to be a churchman.

I pursued my journey in Company with the merchant and when we arrived at his home. I found his wife to be a pious Methodist lady and I was treated very kindly. The next day I returned and preached at the house of my friend the Churchman. to a very respectable congregation. Many were deeply affected under the preaching of the gospel. I learned that there were many christians in the place. The Heavenly minded Joseph Dimmock and several Methodist ministers had preached there and the Lord had blessed the word among the people: at the close of our meeting many of the children of God came to me and gave me a cordial welcome to the place. I remained in Manchester about ten days. preached as often as once every day and twice on Lords day. I found myself amongst a spiritual minded people. principally Methodists and "New Lights." we enjoyed many happy meetings together. Saints were comforted and sinners were awakened. I considered this place at that time a delightful part of the Province. The harbor was one of the most commodious I had ever seen. clear of shoals and rocks or ledges. extending into the country several miles and guarded by the land on all sides. The harbor yielded an abundant supply of fish to the inhabitants.

My time having nearly expired. I rode to the head of the harbor. where the merchant previously mentioned. had made an appointment for me to preach among the Roman Catholics. And a more attentive audience I never addressed. The next day I rode to Antigonish. intending to make no stop until I reached home. but passing through the Village I called for refreshments. While at dinner the man of the house came in and would be informed who I was and where I was going. He said he had a brother a Baptist minister and I must not leave the village without preaching. In vain I urged the necessity of pursuing my journey. He insisted on my going with him to see some of the

people. I finally consented and in my visits found many friends that I had known some years before, who were much rejoiced to see me. The day following being the Sabbath I preached to a large congregation, composed of Protestants and Roman Catholics. My subject was the new birth; deep solemnity pervaded the assembly and near the close of my discourse one woman seemed deeply affected. This occasioned no little excitement some whispered to her husband to take care of his wife, but he was equally concerned about his own soul and consequently knew the cause of her weeping. She soon began speaking of love to the saviour, said she had left her parents and the christian people in Liverpool, had come to that strange country and there the Lord had sent his servant with the message of the gospel. She exhorted those around her to embrace the Saviour. Most of the people were much affected, but some of them left the house greatly alarmed. This woman's husband with many others shortly obtained peace in believing and a christian church was established in the place. I have been informed that many dated their religious awakening from that meeting. I soon after parted with those kind friends to meet them no more until I shall meet them at the Judgement seat.

Affectionately yours

(Rev) Joseph Crandall