

Circle Of Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

December 20, 1899

Dear Hostess:

Will you kindly permit an Outlander to join your charming circle? But please do not laugh, G.C., if my English is a little bit crude. I am only eighteen years old, and trying to improve it, if slowly, because I have very little time, being a farmer's daughter, with plenty of work to do.

My father takes the Family Herald and Weekly Star, and we like it very much. Now, I always read the war news first, for I know no rest till I have seen how the British are getting on in the war with the Boers. I hope they will be victorious; indeed, I can not believe it will be otherwise.

I am unlike my forefathers (the Vikings), who liked nothing better than warfare, for I am wishing the nations would settle their quarrels by other methods than these dreadful wars.

Will you please tell me, dear Hostess, whether stenography can be successfully learned at home, by the correspondence method, as some schools offer to teach by? I enclose a two-cent stamp for a book, please send me "Lorna Doone," if you have it in the library?

With all good wishes to you and GC.

Manitoba Icelander

Icelander's English is by no means crude. I hope she will write again. Will not some of the stenographers in the Circle correspond with Icelander and give her the desired information? I doubt if one could become an expert stenographer by studying without a teacher, though undoubtedly great headway can be made by private study and practice.

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

February 28, 1900

Dear Hostess:

I live near the lovely Turtle Mountains of Manitoba. In the summer they are beautifully dressed in living green, the wild morning glories climb and trail over every shrub and bush, but alas! they are all gray now. The wild hops are so thick one can hardly climb through the flowers, hundreds of different kinds. The prairie was very lovely last summer. I am very fond of the orange lilies. They are like soldiers standing ready for battle in all their glory. The winter is very mild here, hardly snow enough for sleighing. My favourite poem is Longfellow. I never tire reading his poems. Don't you love him, too, mine Hostess? I am very fond of music. I can play a little on the violin and piano. I am also fond of reading and painting. Of course, I find plenty of other work to do, and I like any kind of work, even tending horses, being passionately fond of them. I have some reading matter I could send to someone who would like it.

Manitoba Tom Boy

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

April 4, 1900

Dear Hostess:

I am a farmer's wife, living in East Assiniboia, in the far-famed Moose Mountain country. I came here from Ontario nearly eighteen years ago with a small family; neighbours were few and far between. How often in the first year, I longed for a sight of some of my friends and old neighbours, no one but my Maker and myself know. Imagine being sixty miles from a Post Office for over a year! We had church, but no schools for a long time. But hope, grit, and work, will do wonders sometimes. Now the country will soon be filled up, and neighbours are close to each other. There are schools all over, we have everything we need but a railway, and it is nearly in sight; we expect it through here in early summer. We have a vast country and it is rightly called the garden of the North-West; it is a prairie with beautiful bluffs starting up here and there. The Moose Mountains are not high, they consist of hay meadows, lovely little lakes, bluffs,

sloughs, and bush. There is a larger lake called Fish Lake, with lots of fish in it; in the summer people come from a distance of one hundred and forty miles for an outing, fishing, boating, and berry picking. There are two Indian Reserves in the mountains. The red men are getting civilized now. Dear Hostess, how I enjoyed the motto for the week and your weekly talks, and the letters of the company! How many uplifting thoughts and helps for the home. How sad it is that so many noble lives are lost on the African plains; how many desolate homes, heart broken mothers, and vacant chairs will be left! So many of our own Canadians that went so nobly will never come back! I hope the war will soon be over.

I could send Sabbath school papers and other reading matter to the needy if I had their addresses. I noticed in August 30th of last year, Nita, Gaspé, a shut-in requesting reading material. If I had her address I would write to her and send her reading if she would like it; also to Hetty, of Manitoba, or any other needy one. I would like Hertha, of Gaspé, to write to me. I have been acquainted with Weary Mother for a long time, we very often visit each other. With best wishes to you and all Good Company.

Northwest Territories Pearl

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

March 28, 1900

Dear Hostess:

For some time I have been desirous of joining the G.C. Circle. It was four years last November since we left England, and have been a constant reader of the Family Herald and Weekly Star for over two years and enjoy reading it very much, especially the G.C. Circle.

When we left England I thought we were leaving behind the only country I ever should love, but since coming to this country I have changed that opinion, for I have found in this new land a condition which I have never dreamt of, for here in this western country there is a beauty and a vastness which can scarcely be comprehended by those who have not seen it, and the scenery is so different from that in England.

My father settled in a beautiful part of Alberta, where the country is park-like in appearance, and in the summer the trees and flowers are simply lovely, so we like our new home very much. I am at present staying with a married sister in Southern Alberta, who has been the sweetest little girl I ever saw. The place is about one hundred twenty miles from home. Here I have a charming view of the Rocky Mountains, whose hoary heads are often seen far up above the clouds. These mountains are beautiful in winter, looking like sentinels clothed in ermine robes, or the ghosts of King Borea's host mounting guard over Alberta.

Sometimes warm winds come across the Rocky Mountains which are called "Chinooks." During these warm spells it is pleasant to ride or drive, and I wish dear Hostess, you could join me in a run over the prairie, and see the nice fat cattle and horses which run at will here among the foothills of Alberta. Perhaps some other time I may tell you more of doings in Alberta.

With good wishes for yourself and all the G.C. Circle.

Alberta Fawn

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

August 18, 1900

Dear Hostess:

I have been a reader of your beautiful circle for some little time, and think it is a blessing to a great many of the poor, and I am about to ask you for help also. I am a very poor woman, so poor that the stamp and paper with which I write this letter were given to me by a kind friend. I live with my husband on a farm some miles from town and have most of the work to do, for my husband is almost helpless, having hurt his back some time ago lifting logs. It is hopeless to look for his full recovery for he will always be in the same helpless state as at present. What I ask of you, dear Hostess, is clothing, partly worn of any kind, as we cannot afford to buy any and it is quite cold here just now. I would also like reading matter or old novels of any kind for my husband, as that is about all he can do. I will now close, hoping, dear Hostess that I am not asking too much.

Alberta Emma Rose

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

August 18, 1900

Dear Hostess:

May I become a member of your friendly G.C. corner? I have read the letters for over two years, and I have enjoyed them very much. I live in the North-West and I love the great prairie, but sometimes tire of it and long to be in the city. We used to live in a large town before coming out here. So many of our friends have left for South Africa: nearly all were in the Mounted Police. My brother has joined the Strathcona Horse. I do long for this war to be over, as so many homes are desolate with the loss of loved ones.

I have one of the best of husbands and two little children, the oldest a girl and the youngest a boy. I saw that English Emma would like magazines. I have a few I can send her if she will send me her post office address. We live on a detachment a few miles from town, on a river bottom. It is very pretty in summer, as there are so many trees and bushes. The Old Man's River runs about twenty yards from the door, and the Porcupine Hills are just a few miles away. Overlooking them are the mountains, and they look so majestic.

I close, dear hostess, with best wishes.

East Wind

I must have seen East Wind's brother while watching the Strathcona Horse parade on the day of their visit to Montreal. We were very proud of the fine "little regiment," as Lord Strathcona calls his gift to the Empire.

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

December 12, 1900

A letter like the following makes very cheerful reading at this season of the year when appeals for assistance are so numerous.

Dear Hostess:

Will you kindly send me two or three addresses of people living in either Manitoba, Assiniboia, or Alberta, to whom we could send partly worn clothing or stockings. We have a quantity of such articles which could be cut down and made over for children. If the people whose addresses you send are too poor to pay carriage, please let me know, also the number of persons in the families.

I am now very sorry we had not thought of doing this before. It seems an excellent plan. I enclose a letter-card for reply.

Northwest Territories E.M.T.

E.M.T.'s kind request was acceded to with alacrity. I thank her sincerely for her benevolent intentions, and hope her beneficiaries will duly appreciate her generous offers of help.

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

December 12, 1900

Dear Hostess:

I wrote to the G.C. Circle some time ago, but as I was not a subscriber to the Family Herald at the time I suppose I could not be admitted as a member. Since then a kind friend has sent in a subscription for me, so I venture to write again. Seeing in your column week after week how many of your correspondents are so kind and helpful to the needy ones, I hoped perhaps when others worse off and needing help more than I do have their wants supplied some kind friend would take an interest in me and give me a little help. Like very many more in this country, we had a very small crop, and most of that spoiled with the excessive rain. We have no wheat to sell,

nor seed for next year, and only enough for our grist and chicken feed. Having six little girls under twelve, I am at a loss to know how to get them some warm clothing for this bitter weather, and should be so thankful if anyone would send me any warm clothing. I am handy with my needle and used to make over-clothes, so should be so glad of anything. My elder girls have each had a good warm coat given them, but I should so like warm hats or hoods: in fact anything will not come amiss. I wish I could apply to that member who so kindly gave her suggestions of making bed quilts for poor ones, for I am much in need of bedding. I would gladly help anyone if I had the means. You cannot think how it hurts me to have to ask strangers for help, but you enter so heartily into the joys and sorrows of your correspondents that I feel sure, if possible, you will mention my case to some of your wealthy members. Christmas is near now, but we shall have no little feast for the poor children, for we have to do without luxuries of all kinds this year. I hope you will forgive me for bothering you with my troubles, but I do not know who to turn to in my distress. I am unable to pay freight on any parcel, but anything sent to my post office address will reach me, as the station joins the office.

Manitoba Late Comer

Will not some kind members in Manitoba befriend Late Comer? It would be easy to make a warm hood for a child out of a small remnant of dress material, lined with flannelette. A little petticoat, nightgown, or mittens would not cost much, and a few such gifts from various sources would make an appreciable difference to Late Comer whose address I will gladly send to enquiring members. I will ask Prairie Chicken to put her on the list for a quilt.

Good Company, *Family Herald and Weekly Star*

July 31, 1901

Dear Hostess:

Will you please thank Doris for her kindness in sending me some reading matter? I ought to have written before, but I am kept too busy, and the mail only comes once a week. I have also received some Ladies' Journals and nice pictures. I don't know if I have to thank Doris for them

too. It is very nice of the G.C.C. to take so much trouble for strangers. I especially appreciate it, as in this part a Scandinavian is looked down on as something inferior. I once heard a remark made by an Englishman that he would as soon shoot a Scandinavian as an Indian. I suppose he thought they both belonged to some other race. I have a nice friend among the English here, but for the most part they would as soon dream of associating with the animals as with us. I don't think they really know how they hurt one's feelings. What a bright lovely world this would be if there was more kind women, dear Hostess. You seem to have a kind word and a helping hand for anybody that comes in your way. God grant you many years to go on with your noble work. I have the hope of one time meeting you to tell you all the help and kindness you have given us in your weekly talks.

Manitoba Sour Grapes

Source: *Family Herald* and *Weekly Star* (April 4, March 28, and August 19, 1900).