

A Tribute
TO
Hon. E. C. Manning



On the Occasion of His
50th Birthday Party
September 30th, 1958

Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium

By
Hon. A. J. Hooke



The Premier's Fiftieth Birthday

On 20th day of September
In year nineteen 'undred and eight
A stork 'oo were working near Carnduff
Dropped bundle at Manning's front gate.

They rushed out and unwrapped the package,
To look at the tiny wee dear;
They 'ad to look twice just to find 'im—
Crops were short in Saskatchewan that year.

'is Dad 'e were madder than blazes,
'e felt like a bit of a dunce;
't'were female that 'e were expecting—
'e'd already done this thing once.

'is Ma said she thot they'd best keep 'im,
So reluctantly took 'im indoors;
'Cause in time 'e might 'elp wi' the 'ousework,
And p'raps 'elp 'is Dad wi' the chores.

'e grew up as any young farm kid;
'e were expert at skinning a mule;
W'en weather were good 'e were farming,
And w'en it were bad, went to school.

'e read everything 'e got 'old of—
'is life it were one round of toil;
'is lamp always burned beyond midnite;
'e kept 'is Dad broke buying oil.

'is favorite book were 'is Bible
And w'en 'e were still in 'is teens
Decided 'e'd like to be preacher,
Tho 'e'd scarcely a dime in 'is jeans.

One Sunday this kid fooled wi' dials
On radio in 'is farm 'ome,
W'en in came a voice from Calgary
That shook the young lad to the bone.

'e made up 'is mind in a jiffy
That to Calgary 'e would proceed,
And 'e'd learn to preach sermons like that man—
'cause religion is wot people need.

Next morning 'e said to 'is mother:
"I'm going out west pretty soon";
So 'e packed all 'is worldly belongings
And was out on the 'ighway come noon.

'e stuck 'is thumb up like this 'ere
And truck driver pulled to a stop.
Young Ernest crawled right in beside 'im
And waved to 'is mom and 'is pop.

'e stuck baggage in glove compartment
And settlin' back in the seat,
Said, "Driver, by gum I feel lucky,
I'm sure this beats using my feet".

They rumbled down 'ighway together;
Young lad swallowed lump in 'is throat.
'e said: "I don't like to leave parents—
Me Dad will now 'ave to milk goat".

They landed in't Calgary next morning
And Ernest were anxious to start
To study the lesson 'e'd come for
That were taught by that man Aberhart.

'e met that strange man the same morning—
It seemed that fate beckoned those two;
'twere a great day for young Ernest Manning—
And a grand day for Alberta, too.

It seemed they 'ad nothing in common—
Just a teacher and pupil as yet;
But before the next decade were over
The 'ole world 'ad found out that they'd met.

T'old chap 'ad good sense of humor;
'e said: "Wot a great team we'll be—
'cause I weigh two 'undred and fifty;
Wot do you weigh? — one 'undred and three?"

At that remark Ernest were flattered—
As a matter of fact 'e felt fine;
'cause 'e'd weighed on 'og scales day previous
And remembered 'e'd weighed eighty-nine.

'e soon showed wot stuff 'e were made of—
'e'd come there determined to pass;
So 'e buckled right down to 'is studies
And soon 'e were top on 'is class.

'e took study like duck takes to water;
And each nite w'en lessons were thru
'e went and took part in choir practice
'cause 'e liked yon pianist, too.

The time came to preach 'is first sermon;
Excited, 'is 'ymnal 'e took
'e said: "Turn to nine 'undred fifty"—
There were only nine 'undred in book.

The pianist came to 'is rescue;
She played 'ymn that everyone knew;
So 'e 'ad time to gain 'is composure
Before congregation were thru.

This act of the pianist done it;
Thinks Ernest: "She's in love wi' me;
I'll ask 'er to be Mrs. Manning
The first time I take 'er to tea".

The next night 'e took 'er to cafe;
'e ordered some tea and some cakes;
But sat there so utterly tongue-tied
'e couldn't find words wot it takes.

But she knew just wot 'e were thinking
And decided to play 'ard to get;
And if Leap Year 'ad not come just after
'e might 'ave been bachelor yet.

'e 'adn't much time for 'is courting—
It seemed there were too much at 'and
That 'ad to be done for our people
W'en poverty stalked thru the land.

'twere during depth of depression
While thousands were seeking relief
'e set out to find a solution
To 'elp these poor folks in their grief.

Wot 'e done is recorded in 'istory
As 'e tackled the problems 'e met,

And the year '35 is a milestone
Albertans will never forget.

And the year '43 is another
'oo's blessings we've all 'ad a share,
'cause that's w'en this lad from the prairie
Stepped into the Premier's chair.

'e's paid off the debt of this Province
And still 'as a lot in the sock
Until the affairs of Alberta
Are solid as Gibraltar's rock.

But some 'oo don't know 'im as we do
Say: "Wot a staid fellow is 'e!"
Well, that I shall 'ave to agree with—
'e's stayed Premier since year '43.

But, frankly, 'e's really quite 'uman—
Just call at 'is farm and you'll see
'e's often on tractor till midnite
Or in back yard planting a tree.

You may catch 'im reading the funnies
W'enever 'e wants to relax,
Or playing a tune on 'is fiddle—
You may think 'e's sharpn'ing an axe.

In all, 'e's a wonderful fellah,
A dutiful 'usband and dad;
While Canada's 'ad some fine statesmen
A better she never 'as 'ad.

It seems all the world loves a fighter
Providing 'e fights for wot's right;
And just such a man is our Premier
That's why we are all 'ere tonight.

To honor a wonderful leader
'oo's praises so many 'ave sung;
So 'ere's 'appy birthday to Premier—
A man 'oo's just fifty years young.

It seems all the world's in a muddle—
'opes of peace are beginning to slip;
But Albertans 'ave no need to worry
With Ernest Manning the ship.

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