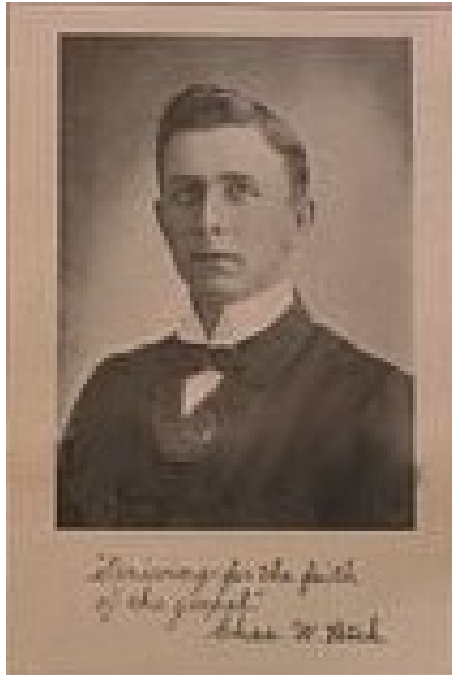


Charles W. and Ada Petch



Charles Wesley Petch, son of Reuben Petch and Julia Ann Saunders, was born 6 Dec 1878 Griersville, Ontario and died 27 Apr 1938 Charlton Station, Ontario. Buried Charlton Public Cemetery, Temiskaming Co., Ontario.

Married Ada Mae Elford, daughter of Peter Elford and Elvira Parker 5 Jul 1899

She was born 1 May 1879 and died Sep 1960. Buried Charlton Public Cemetery, Temiskaming Co., Ontario

He attended the Nashville Bible School 1899-1900, 1900-01 and 1902-03

She attended the Nashville Bible School 1899-1900

See references in *The Bible Student* and early issues of the *Gospel Herald* by and

about C. W. Petch

Ada May Elford [1888] Immersed in Euphrasia married to Charles Petch meets with the church in Griersville

The Meaford Journals, 1848-1998, p. 42

1896

Charles Petch Baptized October 4th 1896 by Wm [?] Richardson married Ada May Elford gone west.

The Meaford Journals, 1848-1998, p. 46

ANNUAL JUNE MEETING, O. E. Tallman

The Annual June Meeting of the Disciples of Christ in the Niagara District, opened at Fenwick on Saturday afternoon.

L. E. Huntsman officiated in the afternoon, and short talks were given by Bros. Geo. Gamble and J. Dean, of Fenwick; Wm. Forester, T. T. Reilly and Jas. Stewart, of Toronto; John Yake, of Stouffville; O. E. Tallman, of Smithville; Ellis Claus, Valdosta, Ga; Chas. Claus, St. Catharines; Chas. W. Petch, Selkirk; S. M. Jones, Beamsville; and W. F. Neal, Meaford.

In the afternoon, Bro. Chas. W. Petch spoke to a good audience from 1 Chron. xxix. 1-19, "Comparing the tabernacle and the church," after which Bro. S. M. Jones made an appeal for aid in building a church-house at Fenwick. Bros. T. T. Reilly and D. H. Jackson led the song service.

The Bible Student, July 1904, p. 3

The Church at Carman [by] W. Eatough

A list of meetings following show that the best available help was secured from

the beginning, 1892 Brother Harding, 1892 Brother J. W. Hines (20 additions), 1893 Brother Paul Hayes, 1894 Brother E. A. Elam, 1895 Brother Madison Wright, 1897 Brother J. A. Craig, 1898 Brother A. Foster, in residence till 1903, 1900 Brother Roberts, 1964 Brother W. D. Campbell, 1906 Brother M. Watterworth, 1906 Brothers S. Jones. Among other helpers may be mentioned Brethren Hugh Rogers, 1899, Brother C. W. Petch, Brother P. Crossley, Brother C. Montgomery.

Gospel Herald, Mar. 1941, p. 10

The subject of this sketch, Bro. Chas. W. Petch, was born near Meaford, December 6th, 1878, and is 28 years of age. He was raised in a pious Methodist family and was baptized at Meaford at the age of 17. In July, 1899, he was married to Ada M. Elford, an exemplary Christian girl, whose influence as a self-sacrificing and loving wife has greatly aided him in his struggle to gain an education and prepare himself for his life's work. Four sweet babes have since blessed and brightened their home.

After receiving a good public school education, Bro. Petch spent two months at Meaford High School. Soon after their marriage, he attended the Nashville Bible School for two sessions, and the Carman Bible School, Manitoba, one session. During this time he completed a six years Bible course and followed other studies as would best fit him for his work. He loved to study and still has a desire to return to school but the work has so demanded his time that he has not had opportunity.

Bro. Petch labored in Manitoba a year and four months in all, at Selkirk, Ont., for near two years; afterwards at St. Catharines, for 20 months greatly edifying

the church and increasing the members by one half. From there he moved to Fenwick where he expects to make his home for some time. During the past winter he preached some at Tintern, closing a successful meeting there this spring with six additions. On June 9th he began a meeting at Griersville, his home congregation, which resulted in adding eight to the One Body.

Bro. Petch will hold meetings at Woodgreen and Beamsville during the summer. He has given special attention to teaching the church and has shown ability as peacemaker among brethren.

The Bible Student, July 1907, p. 1

The Church in Carman, Man.

The church of Christ at Carman, Man., first met to break bread in the home of Bro. G. W. Saunders in the summer of 1889

... Many brethren could be mentioned, but to name only a few who have contributed in a fine way to the work here: Bro. C. G. McPhee, Bro. D. A. Sinclair, Bro. Jack McElroy.

Gospel Herald, Oct. 1964, p. 7

The Horse Creek District [by] J. C. Bailey
Brother Charles Wesley Petch, was the son, as his name would indicate, of devout Methodist parents, but having heard the gospel rendered obedience thereto. He married Ada, one of the Elford girls. Brother Petch came to the Horse Creek District in 1919 and held some meetings in the Patriotic schoolhouse. Brother Petch returned in 1928 and held meetings in the Lark Hill school. A number obeyed the gospel during this meeting. Brother Petch labored in this district for some time. Another meeting was held in Patriotic

school house and a number rendered obedience to the gospel.

In 1931, Brother Petch held a meeting in Varsity school house which resulted in eight baptisms.

How the Church Began and Grew in Saskatchewan, by H. A. Rogers and others. Ft Worth, Texas: Star Bible Publications, 2005, p. 80-81

The Early Days, by Wilfred Orr

Bengough: The work in Bengough began with a meeting held in the Lambton schoolhouse in the winter of 1931. Bro. Bailey and Bro. Charles Petch both held meetings and two or three debates. . . .

Horse Creek: . . . In 1928, Charles Petch, the brother-in-law of Bro. Elford, held meetings with the result that Bro. and Sis. Mervin Goodwin, Bro. and Sis. Robert Tetreau, and Bro. and Sis. Joe Bourdage were baptized.

How the Church Began and Grew in Saskatchewan, by H. A. Rogers and others. Ft Worth, Texas: Star Bible Publications, 2005, p. 100, 202

Western Christian College, by Lillian M. Torkelson, North Weyburn, Saskatchewan

In the spring of 1931 a young school teacher eager to study the Bible more thoroughly than could be accomplished in the weekly Bible class suggested to Wilfred Orr that they organize a three week summer Bible school.

The result was the first Vacation Bible school conducted by churches of Christ in western Canada and some brethren have said in all of Canada.

Brother and Sister Wilfred Orr and

baby Harold moved into a cook car so that their home at Minton, Saskatchewan, could be used for classroom, kitchen and dining room. Classes began on July 13 with Wilfred and Pearl Orr, Charles Petch, J. C. Bailey and Lillian Torkelson as teachers.

How the Church Began and Grew in Saskatchewan, by H. A. Rogers and others. Ft Worth, Texas: Star Bible Publications, 2005, p. 111

Charles Wesley Petch [by]Shelley L. Jacobs

Charles Wesley Petch was born December 6, 1878 and was baptized at Meaford, Ontario in 1896 by William Richardson. In 1899 he married Ada May Elford, and from 1899 - 1902 they attended the Nashville Bible School in Nashville, Tennessee. He also attended the Carman Bible School for one term, possibly 1901 - 1902. (The first Carman Bible School ran from 1897-1902).

Petch preached in Ontario for about twenty-five years before moving west. He lived in a number of towns in that province, including Selkirk, St. Catharines, Fenwick, Stouffville, Pine Orchard and East Toronto. During that time he held protracted meetings in most of the congregations in Ontario.

His work in the west took place primarily in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In 1904, Petch traveled and preached at a number of locations in Manitoba, including Cyprus River, Pine Creek, Grange, Carman and Almasippi. At that time he noted that the west was a vast field waiting to be harvested and encouraged others to become involved in the evangelization of the west. In 1927, he relocated to Winnipeg, Manitoba and worked primarily for the Winnipeg congregation. He also spent short periods of time in other areas and held protracted meetings in Carman, Cyprus River and Peguis Indian Reserve.

Petch's work in Saskatchewan focused primarily on the Horse Creek District, where Petch's brother-in-law, Russell Elford, had homesteaded. Petch had held a meeting at Patriotic School House in the Horse Creek area in 1919 with no response to the gospel. In 1927 and 1928 he returned to hold protracted meetings. The first baptisms in the area took place in 1928 when three of Elford's children were baptized: Clifford, Chester and Pansy. Two neighbours, Robert Sinclair and his sister Mary, also obeyed the gospel at that meeting. Petch relocated to Horse Creek in 1930 and remained there until 1932. He established four congregations in the area which were named for the schoolhouses in which they met: Patriotic, Varsity, Lark Hill, and Pebble Hill. During that time he lived with the Elford family and worked to build up the congregations in that area. He taught weekly Bible studies that moved from house to house among members of the congregations. Two of the studies were textual studies of the books of Hebrews and Revelation. In January 1938, the *Gospel Herald* reported that the Horse Creek congregation was known by the brethren in the province to be one of the strongest, or perhaps the strongest congregation in Saskatchewan. Seven preachers had gone out from that area and three congregations were established as a result of his work.

Petch's niece, Pansy Elford Bien, recalled that Petch was a kindly man who preached with a strong, clear voice. He used charts that were made from white cotton sheets and were printed with India ink. When he preached, his lesson was outlined for the audience so that they could see and better understand his message. She also recalled his amazing knowledge of scripture, for which he was known. She and her siblings played a Bible quiz game with their Uncle Charley - they read a scripture out loud and he responded by telling them where it was

found. If a scripture was found in two places, or had a wording similar to another verse, he would reference both of them. The children thought that he cheated because he was always able to answer their questions, so they hid under the table with their Bibles. Thus, they ensured that he couldn't see where they were finding their scriptures!

Petch was also involved in other works in Saskatchewan. He held protracted meetings in a number of small communities including Ogema, Bengough and Minton. Along with Lillian Torkelson and Wilfred Orr, Petch planned and taught at the Minton Bible School, the first summer Bible School to be held in Saskatchewan in 1931. Students came from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the northern United States for three weeks of concentrated Bible study. The girls stayed in tents and the boys stayed in a dormitory of sorts. Mrs. Petch assisted in caring for the students. Lillian Torkelson, in *Radburn's Memoirs*, described Mrs. Petch as "the camp mother -- scolding those in mischief, devotedly caring for those temporarily sick, and advising us on a thousand and one details."

References to Petch's work in western Canada can be found in American restoration periodicals. In July 1927, Petch wrote a letter to the *Gospel Advocate*, entreating American preachers to come to Canada, as western Canada was a "vast field for labour." Occasional reports of his work in the west can be found in *Word and Work*, an American periodical edited by R. H. Boll.

Petch was a prolific writer of articles for Canadian restoration periodicals." He wrote numerous series of articles for the *Bible Student*, which was edited by H.M. Evans and published in eastern Canada from 1904 - 1913." He also wrote for the *Gospel Herald* from the time of its inception in 1936." The first series of articles was a Bible study on

the book of Hebrews, with one lesson published each month." The second series was the book of Galatians." Unfortunately, Petch passed away during the publication of the second series, but the series was brought to completion following his death." His last article in the *Gospel Herald* was published in September 1938."

Robert Sinclair, founder and editor of the *Gospel Herald*, had written in January 1938:

Brother Petch taught me the truth and baptized me nine years ago, and since that [time] I have loved him and considered him one of the best teachers I have ever met. He knows the Bible better than anyone else I know, and has done a great work for the Master. Let us pray that he may be spared for many years of preaching and building up the New Testament church.

Unfortunately, this prayer was not answered. Petch's life was cut short when he died in a farming accident on April 26, 1938 at the age of 59 years. The high regard in which he was held was expressed in the letters of sympathy that were sent to Mrs. Petch at the passing of her husband. Some of the letters were published in the *Gospel Herald* along with the obituary in May 1938.

Thomas Tait wrote on behalf of the congregation in Glenvale, Ontario, which was the last congregation to hear Petch preach.

Our loss cannot be compared with yours. However, to us there is the feeling that a true friend has gone. No day was too stormy to prevent his coming that he might minister unto us. He gave of his best in attempting to understand our needs and meet them. Mr. Petch has the fullest respect of each one of us.

The untimely death of Charles Petch was a great loss to the Churches of Christ in Canada. He was an exceptional teacher and

preacher, a writer, a tireless worker for Christ, and was not unfamiliar with sacrifice for the sake of the gospel. He was a pioneer preacher in the truest sense, and his work has left a significant impact on Churches of Christ in Canada.

Sources:

"Chas. W. Petch, Evangelist," *The Bible Student* 4 no. 7 (July 1907), 1. Robert Sinclair, "Our Canadian Preachers," *Gospel Herald* 2 no. 11 (January 1938), 6. "The Passing of Brother Charles Petch," *Gospel Herald* 3 no. 3 (May 1938), 6-7. Charles W. Petch, "Manitoba News," *The Bible Student* 1 no. 9 (September 1904), 3. "News and Notes," *Word and Work*, various issues." - Regina, SK

Gospel Herald, Feb. 2007, p. 8-9

The Passing of Brother Charles Petch

Charlton Station, Ontario, April 29/38.—I am here in a very sad mission. Wednesday morning, April 27, we received a phone call that Bro. C. W. Petch had been killed, so we left at once for the North.

The passing of our Brother C. W. Petch, will be a great loss to the cause of Christ, in Ontario. He was accidentally killed on April the 26th, by being crushed under the wheel of a wagon. He lived a few hours and was conscious to the end; his wife and son Donald being with him.

He was born December 6, 1878, near Meaford, Ontario, baptized by Bro. W. Richardson at Meaford in 1896. Since then he has been in the Body of Christ, and has labored as evangelist for churches all over Ontario and Western Canada. For the last four years he has been here in Northern Ontario doing real pioneer work on virgin soil, enduring hardships few of us know anything about in carrying the gospel message to the people that know it not. I am sure there will be much fruit from this work in the days to come. He leaves a wife; two

sons; 3 daughters and 3 brothers. Funeral service was held in the United Church building, where a large group of friends were gathered. The writer conducted the service assisted by Brother Amos Beavers, of Charlton. Our sympathy and prayers go out for the bereaved ones and command them to the care of Our Heavenly Father.

Your Brother in Christ,
Alex W. Stewart.

On Tuesday, April 26, just before dinner time, he hitched a team of colts to the wagon intending to start some work in the yard which he could finish in the afternoon. While working around the wagon the colts started to run. He jumped for the lines, but slipped and fell under the loaded wagon. He rose to his knees, but was not able to stand. Sister Petch came out, also two neighbours who were near. They carried him in and sent for his son Donald, who arrived at 3, and for the doctor who had 15 miles to come, and did not get there till 4. The doctor had very little hope that he could get better, as his ribs were broken and he was bleeding inwardly.

Before he passed away, he spoke of all his children, and of how much he loved them all. He died with a beautiful smile on his face. Every one said he looked so at rest.

His son, Philip, with his family, and his daughters, Emma and Viola went to the funeral, also Donald who was in the district.

Brother Stewart, preached the funeral sermon, and Brother Beevers assisted. "Jesus Lover of My Soul", "There's a Land That Is Fairer Than Day," and "Gathering Home" were sung, besides "Christian's Good Night", as a solo by Brother Stewart. Brother Stewart spoke at length of the great work Brother Petch had done, and especially of the pioneer work in the North and West. But he said that if Brother Petch could speak

to us he would say, "Speak to the living." Brother Stewart then gave a talk to the living, taking as a text II Cor. 5th chapter.

Brother Petch was mentioned in the meetings at Cape Rich, Collingwood, St. Catharines Radio broadcast and Meaford, where they had a second memorial service for him. He was also mentioned at Winnipeg and Carman, Manitoba, from where brethren sent sympathy to the bereaved.

Besides Sister Petch, formerly Miss Ada Elford, Brother Petch is survived by two sons and three daughters: Philip, at Meaford, and Donald of Cobalt, and Mrs. Raymond Pratt, Stayner, Mrs. Alex Preston, Newmarket, and Mrs. Dryden Sinclair, Carman, Manitoba.

He was the son of the late Mr. And Mrs. Reuben Petch, Griersville, and was born and raised in the Meaford area.
Gospel Herald, May 1938, p. 6

Carman, Man.
April 30, 1938

Dear Brethren:-

Our hearts were made very sad this week when we heard of the passing of Brother Charles W. Petch of Charlton Station, Ontario. ...

I know that I shall not forget Brother Petch, for it was during one of his meetings in southern Saskatchewan that I decided to give up the ways of the world and become a Christian. His hands that are now stilled in death were the hands that buried me with the Lord in baptism. Since that time he has assisted me in studying the Bible. Not once did he tell me he was too busy to answer my questions. His understanding of Greek and his thorough knowledge of the Bible enabled him to be an excellent teacher.

In 1930, Brother Petch performed the ceremony that made his daughter Eva, my

wife. During the summer of 1932, we visited him in Ontario. We travelled together among the churches there. He was always the same. He lived the righteous life of a Christian seven days a week.

Whatever good my feeble efforts accomplish, will be indirectly the result of some of Brother Petch's labors. I know a number of others who could join me in making this statement. Surely there will be many stars in his crown.

...

Brotherly,

D. W. Dryden Sinclair

Gospel Herald, May 1938, p. 6

Sister Ada Petch

The church at Sundridge has suffered a distinct loss in the passing of its oldest member. Sister Ada Petch, whose earthly pilgrimage was fourscore and five years, was called home to rest from her labors on the 15th of May. Ada Elford was born on the first day of May, 1879, being the daughter of Brother and Sister Peter Elford of Meaford, Ontario. At the age of twelve years she was "born again" by her obedience to the terms of the Gospel, and she never wavered in her service to God. Throughout her long life she was an example and inspiration to many. She was married to Charles W. Petch in July 1899 and five children were born to this union: Emma (Mrs. Reynolds Pratt) of Charlton, Ontario, Philip of Meaford, Ontario, Viola (Mrs. Alex Preston) of Sundridge, Ontario, Donald of Markdale, Ontario, and Eva (Mrs. Dryden Sinclair) of Wichita Falls, Texas. These all remain to mourn the passing of a dear mother. Truly they sorrow, but not as those who have no hope. There are also twenty-four grandchildren and sixty-one great grandchildren.

Sister Petch was the wife of a gospel preacher. Most of their labors in the Lord's work were carried out during the early, lean

years when preachers were poorly supported, and Brother and Sister Petch were no strangers to long hours of hard labor that they might supply that which was lacking on the part of their brethren. Sister Petch was a good help-meet for her preacher husband. She followed him gladly where opportunity called even though it meant separation from home and loved ones as well as material sacrifice. She willingly shared the loneliness that is known only to a preacher's wife, as well as the hardship, the privations, the anxieties, and the work. She also knew the crowning joys and satisfactions, the hopes and the abiding friendships that are found only in this great work. Charles and Ada Petch were well known throughout all of Ontario, but much work was also done in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Montana.

Sister Petch was predeceased by her faithful companion in 1938 as the result of a tragic accident. Since that time she has walked the roadway of life alone. Now she is gone but her life will continue to inspire those who knew her to greater faith and service.

Funeral services were conducted, May 18th, in the Sundridge community centre. Brother Clyde Lansdell preached the sermon. Brethren Gordon Dennis, Brodie Harrell and Jim O'Neal assisted. Burial was in the family plot at Charlton. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13).
—Jim O'Neal

Gospel Herald, July 1964, p. 17