

THE BIOGRAPHY
OF
ARTHUR C. CUSTANCE

A CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD OF
SCIENCE

by Evelyn M. White

DOORWAY  PUBLICATIONS

The Biography of Arthur C Custance, a Christian in the world of science.
White, Evelyn M., 1926-
©2007 E.M. White

Edited by R.Gary Chiang, Dept. Biology, Redeemer University College,
Ancaster, Ontario, Canada, L9K 1J4

Copy-editing by Marie Stevens, Redeemer University College.

Cover Design by Chris Cuthill, Dept. Art, Redeemer University College,
Ancaster, Ontario, Canada, L9K 1J4

Text formatting, digital enhancement and captions of photographs by
R. Gary Chiang.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form
without written permission from Doorway Publications, 38 Elora Drive,
Unit 41, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L9C 7L6.

Doorway Publications is the publishing division of the Arthur C.
Custance Centre, a non-profit organization which seeks to preserve,
promote, and re-publish the written works of Arthur Custance and to
stimulate study of the Bible in the light it receives from, and contributes
to, the whole field of knowledge by means of publications, electronic
media, and education.

ISBN:0-919857-74-4
National Library of Canada

Printed in Canada

Books by Arthur C. Custance:

Without Form and Void	(1970)
The Doorway Papers Series:	
Vol. 1: Noah's Three Sons	(1975)
Vol. 2: Genesis and Early Man	(1975)
Vol. 3: Man in Adam and in Christ	(1975)
Vol. 4: Evolution or Creation?	(1976)
Vol. 5: The Virgin Birth and the Incarnation	(1976)
Vol. 6: Time and Eternity	(1977)
Vol. 7: Hidden Things of God's Revelation	(1977)
Vol. 8: Science and Faith	(1978)
Vol. 9: The Flood: Local or Global?	(1979)
Vol.10: Indexes to the Doorway Papers	(1980)
The Sovereignty of Grace	(1979)
The Mysterious Matter of Mind	(1980)
The Seed of the Woman	(1980)
Journey Out of Time	(1981)
Two Men Called Adam	(1983)

THE DOORWAY PAPERS

By Arthur C. Custance

- 1 Who Taught Adam to Speak?
- 2 Longevity in Antiquity and Its Bearing on Chronology
- 3 How to Evaluate Commentaries on Genesis
- 4 The Problem of Evil in God's World
- 5 Origin of the Nations: Genesis 10
- 6 Some Hebrew Word Studies
- 7 Convergence and the Origin of Man
- 8 What Language Did Adam Speak?
- 9 The Supposed Evolution of the Human Skull
- 10 The Place of Art in Worship
- 11 The Time Gap in Genesis 1 between Verses 1 and 2
- 12 Medieval Synthesis: Modern Fragmentation
- 13 Striking Fulfillments of Prophecy
- 14 Personality: Before and After Conversion
- 15 The Virgin Birth and the Incarnation
- 16 Three Trees: And Israel's History
- 17 How Did Jesus Die?
- 18 Flood Traditions of the World
- 19 The Relevance of Cultural Studies to Scripture
- 20 The Earth Before Man
- 21 Is Man an Animal?
- 22 Establishing a Palaeolithic IQ
- 23 The Reason for God's Silences
- 24 Genealogies of the Bible
- 25 The Nature of the Forbidden Fruit
- 26/27 The Harmony of Contradiction
- 28 How Noah's Three Sons Influenced History
- 29 A Framework of History
- 30 The Week of Creation
- 31 The Omnipotence of God in the Affairs of Men
- 32 Cultural Progress: From Low to High

- 33 The Face of Fossil Man
- 34 Belief in One God or Many Gods: Which Came First?
- 35 The Universe: Designed for Man?
- 36 One Man's Answers to Prayer
- 37 Time and Eternity
- 38 The Nature of the Soul
- 39 Genesis Confirmed by Archaeology
- 40 Evidence of Man's Fall Throughout History
- 41 The Flood: Local or Global?
- 42 How the Trinity is Revealed in the Old Testament
- 43 The Originators of Technology
- 44 Scientific Determinism: Divine Intervention
- 45 Genesis and Fossil Man
- 46 The Necessity of Jesus' Resurrection
- 47 The Subconscious and the Forgiveness of Sins
- 48 The Realm of Nature as Part of the Kingdom of God
- 49 The Image and Likeness of God in Man
- 50 In the Sweat of Thy Brow
- 51 Did Cain Marry His Sister?
- 52 What If Adam Had Not Sinned?
- 53 The Survival of the Unfit
- 54 What is in a Name?
- 55 Why Noah Cursed His Grandson Instead of His Son
- 56 When the Earth was Divided
- 57 Handicaps: Hindrance or Help?
- 58 The Compelling Logic of the Plan of Salvation
- 59 The First and the Last Adam
- 60 The Christian: A New Species of *Homo Sapiens*
- 61 How Living Things Adapt to Their Environment
- 62 Christian Scholarship: A Protest and a Plea

THE DOORWAY PAPERS ARE
AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET AT:
www.custance.org

Acknowledgments

To write a biography seemed like such a simple task. At the urging of Arthur's friends and fans who wanted to know more about this man, I reluctantly put pen to paper. That was three years ago. It has been a journey for me, of discovering depths in a person I thought I knew, of discovering much about myself.

I have been encouraged, corrected, and sustained through draft after draft until the final one barely resembles the first! I am very grateful to friends for reading and editing these drafts, specifically members of the Advisory Board for the *Arthur Custance Centre for Science and Christianity*. But I am grateful to Dr. Gary Chiang for his editorial help. I am especially grateful because as a true friend and critic Gary did not spare me nor let me quit. He has contributed valuable insights into events and character that had escaped me, but which have made this biography much more meaningful.

Thanks is also due to anonymous friends who made the actual printing of this biography a reality by providing the necessary funds.

Yet in the final analysis, my thanks go to the Lord Jesus. Believing that He is behind all this, moving His saints to do their part, I acknowledge His strengthening power for this venture. To Him all glory belongs, for it is true that Arthur Custance, the subject of this biography, was God's "workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance" (Ephesians 2:10).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	ix
Acknowledgments	vi
PREFACE	1
Chapter 1	
ARTHUR C. CUSTANCE: A Cameo	3
Chapter 2	
England: His Heritage	9
Chapter 3	
Canada: Survival in a New Land	25
Chapter 4	
University Life: Conversion and Ministry	37
Chapter 5	
The Depression Years: Lessons Learned	51
Chapter 6	
The War Years: Finding the Lord's Will	63
Chapter 7	
Postgraduate Studies: Opportunities of Service	79
Chapter 8	
Turning Point: The Dark Night of the Soul	91

viii

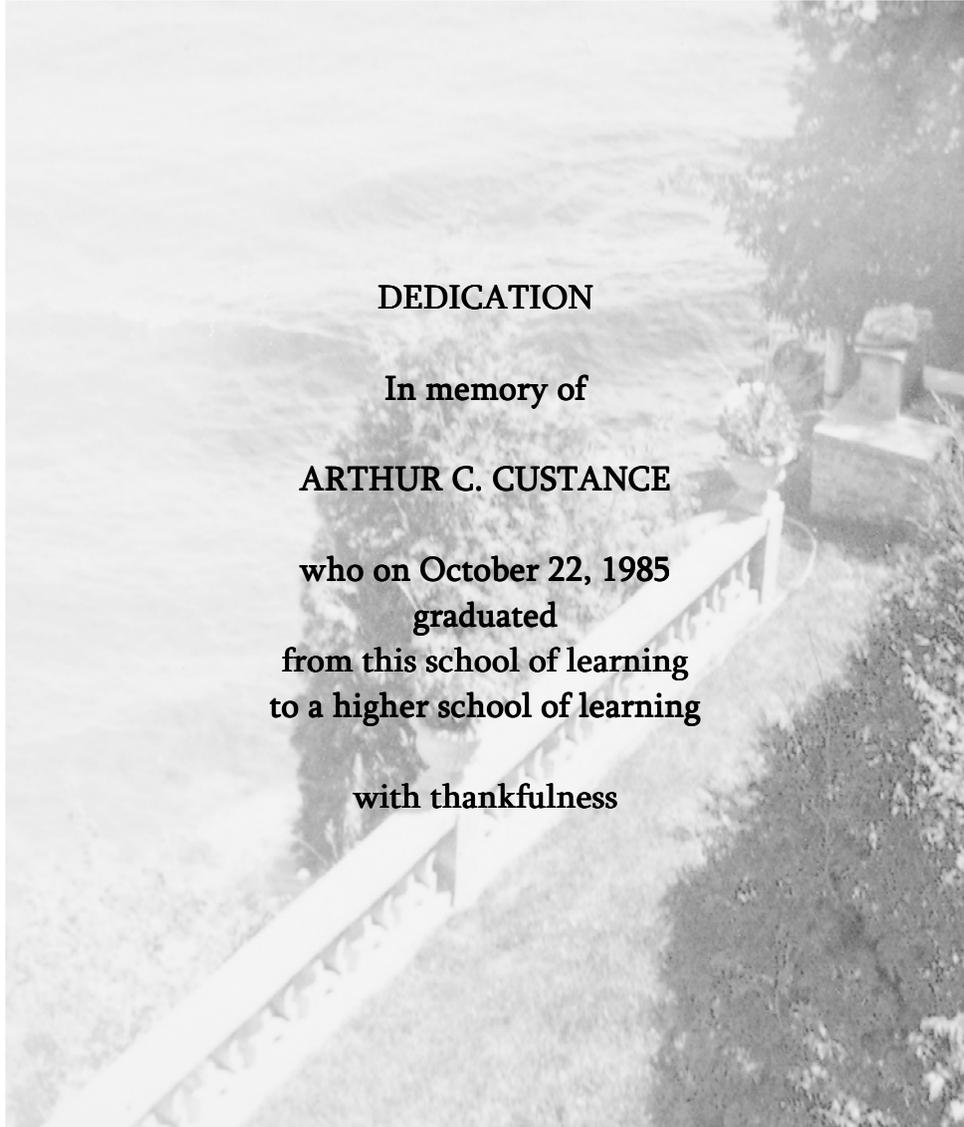
Chapter 9	
The Research Scientist: His Niche in Life	99
Chapter 10	
His Avocation: The Doorway Papers	111
Chapter 11	
Retirement:	
The Blossoming of the Writer and the Publisher	121
Chapter 12	
The End of the Journey: The Man	135
INDEX	145

DEDICATION

In memory of

ARTHUR C. CUSTANCE

**who on October 22, 1985
graduated
from this school of learning
to a higher school of learning
with thankfulness**



x

PREFACE

I once read a book entitled *The Reluctant Missionary*. Well, this book is written by a reluctant writer. Why am I reluctant? Because I know that Dr. Custance, of whom I write, would not approve of this book. His life, in his own view, was not an exemplary one. Any “success” there might have been was certainly by the grace of God, and therefore Dr. Custance would take no credit. All honour would be due to God.

In light of Dr. Custance’s likely disapproval and this writer’s reluctance, why was this book written?

Sometimes the authenticity of what is written is confirmed by knowledge of the circumstances that produced it. Childhood background and training, circumstances of schooling and career, personal relationships, experiences good and bad, even the times and events occurring in the world around us – all these shape and influence our thoughts, attitudes and beliefs. Knowing these things about Dr. Custance may make what he wrote more meaningful to the reader.

But who could undertake this task? None are living who knew Dr. Custance through all the stages of his life. I was associated with him in the last thirty years of his life, sharing in his successes and disappointments. Since his life story will be forgotten unless put to print, I overcame my reluctance.

And I am glad that I did for I thought I knew this man! I have been able, through contact with relatives still in England, through

the many letters he kept and his diaries, to piece together his earlier years. I came to the conclusion that, in spite of his own personal assessment, his life *was* an exemplary one, an example of a life of faith, a faith that grew. It moved from simply experiencing God's intervention to experiencing God as a Friend, and entering into *His* purposes. Faith is not a static thing. It is a lifelong process of development – and this can be seen in the life of this one man.

But there is another reason I'm glad to have written this biography, for I thought I knew God! By seeing how God led Dr. Custance through the various stages of his life, I have come to perceive more fully the gracious and patient sovereignty of God.

Dr. Custance was overwhelmed by the wisdom and power and loving care of God in all His creative and redemptive work, which is filled with extravagant grace and unlimited mercy. For that is how Arthur Custance experienced this God.

I want you to meet this man who opened doors to glorious vistas of the splendour and majesty of our God and Saviour. I am deeply thankful for Dr. Custance's insights and knowledge, exemplified in his life. His life and writings have influenced and enriched my own life immeasurably.

It is my prayer that you, the reader, will also come to know and love more deeply this very approachable, yet mysterious and glorious God who meets us where we are, a God who is truly a very present Friend. If this happens, then Arthur will rejoice – and I may be forgiven.

Evelyn White
Spring 2007

Chapter 1

ARTHUR C. CUSTANCE: A Cameo

This is a book of the life of Arthur C. Custance, a British-born Canadian who was unusual in his many roles as a teacher, an evangelist, a scientist, a philosopher, and a theologian. He was a true Renaissance man: an aristocrat yet a pauper, a man of science and of liberal arts, a man of reason and of faith, a man who saw that all aspects of life and knowledge could be reconciled into a harmonious whole.

Yet, it will be as a writer, as a Christian writer, that Dr. Custance will be best remembered. His sixteen books cover a very wide range of subjects from the sciences, including archaeology, ancient history, linguistics, civilizations and cultures, to the historic creeds of the Christian faith as relating to origins, to Christian faith, and to Christian life. They are noted for clarity of thought and for broad scope of knowledge, as well as for sound scholarship and biblical orthodoxy.

His sphere of influence was primarily in Toronto and in Brockville, but during one year it extended to universities in Manitoba, Quebec and the Eastern United States. It was mediated through lectures, Bible study groups, conferences, and weekend

retreats. When, in later years, he put what he had spoken into writing, his influence spread beyond North America. Since his death, the posting of his works on the Internet has made him known worldwide.

Dr. Custance was a learned man. He had thirteen years of study mainly at the University of Toronto, where he earned both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts degree. His education included languages, both the classics and ancient middle east, as well as physical and cultural anthropology. In 1958 the University of Ottawa granted him a Doctor of Philosophy (Education), his thesis being in Anthropology as it related to the education of scientists and technicians. He never stopped learning, curious as he was about all kinds of things.

Initially, he had worked as an engineer in a variety of fields. For fifteen years (1955-70) he was a research scientist with the Defence Research Board of the Canadian Government in laboratories near Ottawa, Canada's capital. He had several inventions to his credit, principally in designing and improving equipment worn by soldiers. He was considered the world's leading expert on human thermoregulation, and in 1972, he was listed in *American Men of Science*. He was greatly respected by his colleagues, both as a competent scientist and for his Faith.

Above all, Dr. Custance was a devout Christian, an evangelical. His passion was helping people to integrate their faith in every area of life. In his early years he worked chiefly through St. John's Anglican Church in North York, Toronto, and in the University of Toronto through InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. In later years, he contributed significantly to the ongoing creation/evolution debate on origins, both as a speaker at conferences and as a writer submitting articles to journals.

During his career as a research scientist, he wrote and published *The Doorway Papers*, an avocation which became his full time occupation in retirement. He wrote as a qualified scientist,

but he also wrote as a theologian. In his hands the two perspectives, the scientific and the theological, became as one. He did not make the mistake of falling into the dualism of secular and sacred, for he believed that “an established fact is as sacred as a revealed truth.”

Arthur Custance avoided another kind of dualism seldom recognized, a dualism that separates the heart and mind, of knowing but of not worshipping. It is one thing to know *about* God but another thing to know and worship God. For Arthur, learning led to worship of the Creator, and worship led to a desire to learn more about the One worshipped.

There was a wholeness about this man, a oneness of heart and mind. His love of God and communion with God enveloped him in a shalom and deep joy. It permeated his writings, as it did his life. To meet him in person was to sense some quality that was elusively undefinable yet authentic. This “something” gave authority to his speaking which, in turn, was supported by the integrity of his life.

I first met Arthur Custance in the fall of 1954 in Montreal at Student House, on Peel Street, owned by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. It was home to out-of-town first year students from around the world. Mrs. Jordan, who presided over this three-story house and was known as “Mamma J,” provided a homey atmosphere for those far from family. She, herself, was from the West Indies. That year her son, who was studying medicine, was president of the McGill chapter of IVCF. On this warm September evening he had summoned members to Student House to pray for the upcoming “Mission at McGill” and to meet Mr. Custance, the speaker sponsored by InterVarsity in this unique ecumenical effort of the Protestant groups on campus to bring Christ to students.

It was my first visit to Student House. Being the IVCF Staff Member for High Schools in Eastern Ontario and Quebec, I was

assigned to assist our missionary. I didn't know that much about the Mission to Universities itself, but I was acquainted with the cities involved (Montreal, Ottawa, and Kingston) and some of the people with whom he needed to meet. Over the next five months I observed this man who could meet people easily, whether student or professor, business person or professional.

Mr. Custance was a rather short man with broad shoulders (yes, he did play on the soccer team when at the University of Toronto) and with hands that looked as if they were used to manual work. He was neatly dressed in a blue blazer with a crest of the University of Toronto on the breast pocket, a white shirt with cuff links, and a tiepin. His manner was quite British and somewhat reserved, yet his warm friendly smile put people at their ease. He was quite unassuming, part of the crowd.

It was at the podium, lecturing, where he shone. Always meticulously prepared, he spoke in a quiet, unhurried manner with a genuine conviction that captivated the audience. He held his listeners' attention by his ability to develop his arguments logically through a wide breadth of knowledge. His analytical mind and clarity of thought cut through many a Gordian knot, those problems that are so persistently perplexing.

Afterwards, there were many who wished to pursue the subjects further with him. Though he interacted well with groups, he was at his best on a one-to-one basis. His ability to discern needs and his undivided attention gave students the confidence to talk about their problems, whether about academic studies or about the Christian faith and life. Equally influential was his praying. His prayers, which were always reverent, gave the impression that he was speaking with a Person whom he knew intimately as a good friend. He spoke as a trusting child would with his beloved Father.

The effect of his prayers on me, personally, was profound. At that time I was most discouraged with my work, coming to the

conclusion that I really wasn't a leader and thus in the wrong place. Worse, though, was the feeling of "deadness" in my spiritual life. I struggled with the nagging thought that maybe I wasn't even a Christian. At any rate, I planned to stop being a Christian (as if one could!) and return to nursing. But then I met this man, this vital Christian, to whom God was so very real. As I followed him on the campuses, a desire grew in me to find this authentic life.

Many who have heard him speak and/or have read his books testify to what I have said above. Young and old alike, whether student, minister, teacher, housewife, or professional, speak of horizons being expanded, of finding a meaning to life that satisfies both mind and heart.

But who was this man? How is Arthur C. Custance to be classified? Where does he belong? We like labels. Labels identify things and people. They are helpful in filing information and people, enabling retrieval later at a more convenient time. Writers are usually classified by their field of expertise. But what if there is no adequate label or appropriate file? Dr. Custance as a research scientist was indeed an expert in his work in human thermoregulation, but this label is only meaningful to those in that field of inquiry.

Perhaps Mark Kalthoff, in his Ph.D. dissertation (1998) on the history of *The American Scientific Affiliation*, hit upon the best "label." He called Arthur a "polymath," that is, one of great and diversified learning, a generalist. This label is in contrast to a specialist, the expert who knows a great deal about one subject and very little about any other subject, whereas the generalist strives to become competent in several fields in order to make connections with other disciplines. C.S. Lewis and Francis Schaeffer were of this genre. Dr. Custance's writings have been ranked with those of

these two men, yet his name is largely unknown to academia, either in the sciences or in seminaries.

This story, then, is not a “success” story as the world might count success, even within the Christian community, for fame was something that Dr. Custance neither strived for nor obtained. Instead, this story is about an ordinary Christian who had an extraordinary relationship with his God and Saviour, a relationship about which he wrote with insight and clarity.

In the words of Lester Pipkin, former president of Appalachian Bible College, who heard him speak publicly and conversed with him privately, Dr. Custance was a “rare man.” How did this come about? What were the influences and events that shaped his life and his mind?

To find answers to these questions, please read on!

Chapter 2

England: His Heritage

If you had heard Arthur speak, you would know he was English, for in spite of the fact that he had been in Canada since he was 18, he never quite lost his British accent. He considered himself a Canadian and really loved this country, but he retained his Englishness.

Arthur's roots were in an England that was very Victorian, especially with respect to his family. He was born on September 24, 1910, son of James Custance and Winifred Emma Custance (née Parry), near the city of Norwich in the county of Norfolk on the east coast, some distance inland from the marshes of the North Sea. London was due south about 115 miles. I never heard Arthur speak of London in connection with his childhood, but he did talk about Shrewsbury in Shropshire, a town located close to the Welsh Border, a trip of about 225 miles from Norwich. As a youngster, Arthur and his family holidayed in Shrewsbury. After his parents separated, James Custance moved there permanently; Arthur eventually joined him. It is not certain when or why this separation occurred, but it may have occurred before Arthur became a teenager. Arthur, along with his older sister Ruth (b.1907), and his

much younger brothers, David (b.1917) and Nigel (b.1919), lived in this geographic area until he was 18 years old.

These years were overshadowed by the Great War of 1914-1918, a terrible war which saw the loss of many of England's young men. Arthur's father was a private in the 16th London Regiment (Queen's Westminster Rifles). In 1917, when Arthur was seven years old, James Custance was admitted to the Military Hospital on Grove Road, London, where he underwent three operations for varicose veins. This medical condition excluded him from any further war service.

Arthur had plenty of relatives, especially aunts and uncles. His grandfather, the Rev. Arthur Clement Custance, and grandmother, Emily Corrie Chase, had nine children. There were four uncles: Myles, Denys and Martin, who were married; and John, who was a bachelor teacher and wrote music. None of his father's sisters married, perhaps due to a lack of suitors since so many young men had been killed in active service. These sisters, Gertrude, Mary, Margaret and Grace, continued to live in their father's house.

Arthur particularly remembered Auntie Gertrude, a nurse who served in World War I. She said to him one morning at breakfast, "You may have butter OR jam on your toast but not both." Rationing of foods had become necessary. After the war, she was often called out at night to tend to the sick in the village. He spoke of Auntie May and Auntie Margo, his nicknames for Mary and Margaret. He made no mention of Auntie Grace, though family pictures indicate that she became a nun.

Arthur had cousins, but probably due to the isolation of boarding school and the fact that he left England when he was 18, he didn't know them well. It wasn't until the late 1960s that Arthur and his first cousin Eric (son of Uncle Denys), who was a year younger than himself, became acquainted. The circumstances that brought these two together are rather interesting. In 1953, Arthur's father sent him a little snuff box, a family heirloom. It sat empty on

his desk and, in quiet moments, Arthur contemplated the unknown ancestor who once used the box for snuff.

When, in 1967, he wrote a Doorway Paper entitled "Genealogies of the Bible," he introduced it with this personal illustration:

When we were children, we used to use snuff and I still recall how remarkably refreshing it was. It was somewhat like opening a window and getting a sudden, exhilarating breath of completely fresh air blowing away all the mental cobwebs. I don't know quite why it went out of fashion: perhaps it came under some Drug Act. This little snuffbox is made of whale bone, and on the lid it has a small silver plaque with my initial and name on it: "A. Custance." But it is not really my name, because underneath that is the date: 1766.

I often used to wonder who this forebear was and, not unnaturally, assumed that his first name was, like mine, Arthur. But then a few years ago, as a result of an odd circumstance, some of us Custances began to try to re-establish the lines of relationship between different members of the family in England and Canada and the United States. In due time the genealogy was completed without any breaks backward some five hundred years. In this genealogy there appeared the original owner of my little snuff box. But unfortunately his name was not Arthur! His name was Adam (1713 -1782).

Arthur had discovered that his cousin Eric was already tracing the Custance genealogy. Even cousin Eric's son, Nigel, became involved. Eventually, they could trace the line with certainty to 1510, and possibly even to 1066. Their surname may have originally been Coutance. It is believed that a Bishop Coutance came to England from Normandy in the north of France with

William the Conqueror, entering England on the east coast from the North Sea. According to the Parson Woodforde Society, the Custance name could have been derived from ‘Constantia or ‘Constance’ or from William de Cusancia, a parson of Northrepps and Southrepps (in Norfolk) in 1315. These connections are rather tenuous and uncertain, but they do stir the imagination...

The Custance name is definitely associated with Norfolk at least as far back as 1510 when the birth of a Robert Custance was registered, born to a family of yeomen (farmers). The Custance name is well known in this region, and a great deal was written about a “John Custance,” who was born 1749. John Custance figured prominently in *The Diary of Parson Woodforde*, rector of the Anglican Church in Weston Longeville which was a town not far from Norwich. Parson Woodforde recorded the events and activities in the minutest of detail from 1776 to 1803. His diary is as famous as *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, and these two diaries together give a picture of rural and city life in England in the eighteenth century. Parson Woodforde describes his visits with Squire John Custance in his stately home, known as Weston Hall. He gives a lively picture of the squire’s family life, of his interest in church, and of his concerns for the welfare of the villagers.

Arthur was not a direct descendant of this Squire John Custance, but both Squire John’s family and Arthur’s family are descendants of that Robert of 1510. Squire John Custance’s line is through Robert’s eldest grandson, William (1632), while Arthur’s line is traced through the fourth grandson, also named Robert, who was born in 1639. This Robert had a grandson born in 1713, named Adam Custance—the original owner of the snuff box. Adam’s great-great grandson was Rev. Arthur Clement Custance (1843-1916), Arthur’s grandfather.

While Arthur’s first name came from his grandfather, his second name, Chase, came from his grandmother, Emily Chase

Corrie. The Corries could trace their line back to Robert the Bruce of the Scottish Royal House.

Although I don't recall Arthur ever speaking of his mother's family, the Parrys, we have a glimpse of his maternal great-grandfather from a letter sent to him by Arthur's mother, Winifred, written in the early 1940s. In this letter Winifred enclosed a photo of her grandfather with this description:

A gentleman by birth, he fought in the Crimea, I believe in the ranks (am not sure). His handsome appearance is his ruin. He returned home wounded and took violently to drink and died young, leaving two sons -- my father and his brother, who also died young. Nothing more of his history or ancestry is known. His face and bearing tell the tale.

Winifred's own father was an artist who would "execute just as beautiful a design for £2 as for £5. You see, first an artist, secondly a materialist. And he died poor." She felt that Arthur owed much to her father, "from whom you derive a lot of your ability and courage."

Arthur's mother had not had an easy life. Born to and raised in an upper class English family, she found it difficult to cope with the changing economies and class structure. We do not know the specific events that influenced her life, but from a letter she likely wrote in December 1936, we know that she was acutely affected by these changes. As she commented to Arthur, "when you were born Grandpa Custance was affluent. Then came the Great War – death duties – which has ruined so many great families."

In spite of the shadow of the Great War that dominated life at that time, Arthur's childhood memories were not of gloom. He was sufficiently isolated from the war to experience a carefree, sunlit youth. The family lived in a good sized house known as The Beeches. There were holidays by the seaside at Brighton, where

Arthur remembered playing in the sand. The sea fascinated him. It was during such holidays that his mother sought to instill proper manners and etiquette into her young son, telling him how to seat a lady at a table, for example. She called him her "little man." And his name for her was "Muz" – a name she liked very much.

Arthur remembered how his mother loved Christmas. Winifred made up baskets that she and the children then left on the doorsteps of the villagers and skipped away before the door was answered, laughing and feeling like elves! She was a fun-loving person and a good storyteller. Later, when he was in Canada, her letters to her "little man" were really stories. Some of these letters can still be found in Arthur's personal files.

Arthur's father, James, spent most of his days playing golf, when not at the bank (Lloyds Ltd.). Indeed, banking must have taken second place, for he was the county's champion amateur golfer several times over. He had golf clubs made for both Ruth and Arthur when they were around 10 years of age.

As a young child, Arthur often visited his grandfather, whom he remembered as "he of the booming voice." Grandfather, the Reverend Arthur Clement Custance, was an impressive figure, especially to a small boy. Standing at the head of a long table serving dinner, he would point to several covered silver dishes and boom, "Now, Master Arthur, which one will you have?" An impossible question. How could anyone choose without knowing what was under the lids?

His grandfather's house was quite large, which seems to have fascinated Arthur. There was a very large kitchen with a fireplace in the 'downstairs' and, in the hall leading to the kitchen, there was a long row of bells, one for each room 'upstairs,' which rang when someone wished service. Sometimes, though, the bells would ring mysteriously – by passing ghosts, maybe? Such stories abounded. And there might have been plenty of ghosts – if you believe in such things – for the family had been in the area since 1510.

The only shadow in his childhood was school. For those of the upper class this meant boarding school, known in England as “public school,” though it is really private school. At the age of 6, Arthur went to a prep school called Millmead. Ruth was sent to a convent. He remembered well the sick feeling he’d get when the last day of holidays came. Goodbyes said, he boarded the train and, as it pulled out of the station, he watched till the family on the platform became little specks. Arthur recalled suffering quite acutely from homesickness and was grateful for the sympathetic kindness of the school nurse.

In 1922, he graduated from Millmead School to Woodbridge Grammar School in Suffolk, just south of where the family lived. School, as at all such boarding schools, was strictly regimented. Even sports, particularly cricket and soccer, were taken as seriously as the subjects of the classroom. Athletics did not merely provide exercise and competition but taught students how to win and lose with true sportsmanship – “playing the game.” Each day started off with Chapel and ended in the study halls for homework and assignments. Even in the dining hall, etiquette was taught by the master who sat at each table. The students “learned” how to leave a clean dish, even when it held what they called “spotted dick,” a sometimes unpopular gelatinous pudding made of shredded suet. Much of it was slipped into envelopes, into pockets, and taken out of the dining hall to be disposed of later, right under the nose of the master. Well, it is possible he knew but chose to ignore. Maybe he didn’t like spotted dick, either!

On Sunday afternoons there were walks with the rector and perhaps a master or two. These Sunday walks provided the boys with more than exercise, for as they walked they observed their surroundings. They learned the art of conversation by discussing what they saw, or literature, or even the state of the country. This activity often afforded the rector opportunities to talk personally, though casually, with each boy about his spiritual life. Many a boy

was positively influenced by this personal interest. It was a model that Arthur later followed in his work with young people, not only in churches but also in universities.

Discipline was strict. The philosophy was "Spare the rod and spoil the child." The shadow of a caning did curtail misdemeanours to some extent, but it didn't deter the daredevil, who sometimes implicated the innocent. There was a code of honour to which each boy aspired when caned. Some masters didn't hit very hard and struck randomly, but others laid the cane smartly and repeatedly where it hurt the most. Boys would gather outside the door and count the strokes, ready, when the afflicted boy emerged, to congratulate if he hadn't cried out or to console if it had been a stiff caning. Of course, there was rejoicing if a certain bully got what he deserved. Arthur told me he had been caned. He gave no details as to why, nor whether he had endured it stoically.

Arthur suffered much at the hands of a school bully until, one day, he suddenly turned to face up to him and, to his own surprise, trounced him! He became the hero of the many boys who had been terrorized. Arthur was also known as the storyteller. In his dorm, after lights out, the boys would call out, "Cussie, tell us a story!" His ghost stories were so real that the boys were almost too scared to go to sleep – a delicious feeling.

School was bearable because in no time there would be a long stretch of holidays with family, sometimes at The Beeches in Norwich, sometimes in Shrewsbury. It was usual for aristocratic families to have several residences. For the youngsters, the special attraction at Shrewsbury was sliding on tin trays over the blueberry bushes, which can be slippery when dry in the fall. This was quite as much fun as tobogganing is here in Canada.

One of the "deficiencies" of the English boarding school was that it did not strengthen family ties; beginning at a very early age, children spent more time at school than with family. All had not

been well in the Custance home, and as noted previously, Arthur's parents separated before Arthur graduated from school. I was never made aware of all the circumstances that surrounded the relationship between Arthur and his mother, but one summer day at The Beeches, when he had just become a teenager, Arthur was walking with his mother and Nigel, his youngest brother. He parted from them, went to the railway station and asked for a ticket to Shrewsbury. "Certainly, Master Arthur," said the ticket agent, asking no questions, simply charging it to his father's account. Sadly, Arthur never saw his mother again, though they did write occasionally to each another when he emigrated to Canada.

It was his sister, Ruth, who told him of their mother's death, a very sad event. It is hard for us to realize just how the social upheaval after the first Great War caused such poverty among many of the aristocratic families. Winifred had difficulty dealing with changes in society, and became very bitter, pro-Hitler even, and "anti" everything that was British. She alienated herself from the family, and eventually came to live in a little hut on the edge of the cliffs just outside Brighton. Ruth lived only an hour away and did visit, though by that time her mother was quite deaf. Although Ruth was concerned for her mother, she found it very hard to establish a warm relationship with her.

Not having heard from her for some time, Ruth became alarmed, especially when it came to her attention that her mother had not claimed her allowance. "I went to the police—who would do nothing so soon—said she would turn up." But when another month went by without any news, Ruth went to Scotland Yard. They found that her mother's body had been taken from the sea two months before. No one had known who she was. Ruth identified her by a locket with a photo found on the body. Ruth commented to Arthur:

Poor little soul. We did think that she meant to end her life some day – and this was how she chose. It's such an utterly desolate end to such a life. She had so much personality, and wit, and was very gifted. Much of her difficulties were due undoubtedly to her marriage. Nigel and I feel terribly to blame for not really loving her more. We tried to help, but without real affection failed...

She always thought far more of you than of any of us. She said you had the brains of the family. She never criticized you.

It was even sadder because, shortly thereafter, Winifred's brother died and left her money that would have given her some financial security. It is difficult to ascertain the date of Winifred's death, but it was probably in 1951.

In 1953, Ruth wrote to Arthur to tell him that their father had died on October 14. Again, it is a rather sad story, for James had also alienated his family. He did not encourage Ruth's occasional visits nor her attempts to keep in touch. David, Arthur's younger brother, had lived with his father until he went into the Air Force, but did not associate with him upon his return. Nigel, Arthur's youngest brother, never did know his father. At the time of his death, Arthur's father had six grandchildren living in England, but he never took interest in any of them. Nor was he ever persuaded to spend Christmas with any of his children. In later years he did have a circle of bowling friends in Shrewsbury and they persuaded him, finally, to leave the flat at 8 Dogpole, where he had lived some 20 years, and to take a room since his rheumatism had quite incapacitated him. His landlady took good care of him. That October, he was not feeling at all well for a few days and finally went into the hospital. A few hours later he died of heart failure.

The hospital could not find the address of any of his family. However, the next day a letter of Ruth's, written two weeks before, was found. Due to the delay in finding a relative, the hospital had

arranged the funeral, but fortunately Ruth was able to be present. She then had the task of taking care of his very few belongings and clearing up the last of his debts.

It was Ruth who really tried to keep the family together. It isn't clear how her correspondence with Arthur started, but he must have written at least in late 1935 telling of his sojourn in Coxby, Saskatchewan, as an interim pastor, of his marriage, and the arrival of their son. She seemed surprised and wondered if he was ordained, for she certainly did not remember him as being religious.

Ruth was a remarkable person, quite intelligent with a great sense of humour and wit. She wrote well, though her penmanship is difficult to decipher. Eventually, she became the matron at Whitehall Chase, a home for retirees, parsons needing a rest, and those who needed healing of the spirit. It was a great joy to Ruth when Arthur visited her here during one of his trips to England on government business, for they found that they shared a faith in God.

In 1967, she became ill and was forced to take an extended rest. "It's a queer feeling," she wrote that Easter, "to suddenly find one's life's work finished." Yet she was hopeful that the year's rest would restore her health. At the same time, she was very thankful for the privilege of having been allowed to serve at Whitehall Chase for 14 years. She had so enjoyed the work there.

It was Arthur's youngest brother, Nigel, who wrote to him "with great sadness" that Ruth had suffered another heart attack and died quite peacefully on June 9, 1968. Without Ruth, this family failed to keep together. Although Nigel and Arthur did continue to correspond a little, it did not last, since Nigel himself became quite ill, an illness that dragged on for years. He died sometime in the seventies.

As for Arthur's other brother, David served in the Middle East during World War II. When he returned to civilian life, he found

it tame after his sojourn with the Arabs, whose culture and way of life he had found very stimulating. He married a Dutch girl, Veronica, and they had two children, Trudy and James. David and his family came to Montreal in 1961, and Arthur was able to visit them there. He enjoyed being called “Uncle Arthur.” But David didn’t stay long, and he and his family returned to England in 1962. Unfortunately, Arthur lost contact with David and his family, who seemed to have simply disappeared.

Arthur’s life unfolded quite differently from that of his sister and two brothers. The key reason for this difference was his immigration to Canada. This fateful move wrenched him from the class-conscious, heavily ‘protoled,’ English aristocratic society to a land devoid of culture, but full of promise.

In our modern world of rapid communication and travel, it is fascinating to see how Arthur’s immigration came about. In part, it could be viewed as Arthur’s own doing, since he took for granted the privileges he was born into and failed to appreciate how society was changing. But in this story we see the Holy Spirit gently preparing and directing his servant away from one path onto another. This new path led to a rich and full relationship with the Lord Jesus, a relationship that might not have developed if Arthur had remained in England.

Arthur was, in his own words, a rather “indifferent” student. At an early age, students were taught Latin and the classics. Somehow the myths stirred Arthur’s imagination—like the story of three old men who had only one eye between them, passing it from one to the other. He spoke of the men’s agony and frustration of having to wait for the eye in order to see what the one who had the eye was talking about! He also remembered his woodworking class. He had chosen to build a canoe, and the day came when it was to be launched in the school’s swimming pool. Unfortunately, the canoe promptly sank in front of the assembled

crowd, though thankfully without loss of life. In spite of that misadventurous beginning, Arthur always enjoyed working with his hands, and his later enterprises were much more successful.

What the English public school system did for Arthur was significant, even though his school reports were not so impressive. Those years may have instilled some knowledge in him but what was more important was the system's character-building code of honour. Arthur developed a strong sense of duty and loyalty, of being true to one's promises, of keeping a 'stiff upper lip' and of 'playing the game.' Throughout his life, Arthur's character was marked by all these qualities, though not always to his own benefit, often being misunderstood in this land unaccustomed to such codes.

Arthur was nearly 18 years old when he came to the end of public school. It was time to sit for the Oxford and Cambridge exams, which determined a person's eligibility for university. He failed – not just for one university, but three! But it didn't worry Arthur too much – until the day his father called him into the drawing room. Uncle John was there, too.

"Arthur," his father began, "what do you plan to do?"

Do?? The unexpected question reverberated in his head. He felt sick to his stomach. He hadn't intended to 'do' anything, that is, any more than his father, who Arthur had assumed spent his days playing golf.

It was a worrisome time for his father. What could this son of his do, anyway? The solution came in a form that wouldn't have been thought of even in one's wildest dreams. A year or so before this, a group of gentlemen had come to Woodbridge Grammar School. The boys were made to pass before them and show their hands. One gentleman said, as he inspected Arthur's hands, "Yes, a good square hand." This seemed to be a good sign, though Arthur had no idea for what.

It turned out that the gentlemen were representatives of the British government. The government had devised a scheme specifically to “improve agriculture and bring culture to the colonies.” They were looking for public school boys with talent, left unspecified, to undertake this task. Each province in Canada was to be assigned a man. For reasons unknown to Arthur, he was chosen as a candidate.

In this grandiose scheme of bringing civilization to the untamed colonies, each man was to be equipped with a tract of 800 acres of land on which laboratories would be built for research in agriculture. At the same time, culture was to be introduced to the inhabitants, though just what this was and how it was to be done were not spelled out. But before actually acquiring the land and the buildings, it was felt that in order to get a feel for their task, the young men should be sent out to a Canadian farm as a hired man where they could learn the art of farming from the ground up, as it were.

In this instance, however, you might wonder at the wisdom of the government. It would seem that an agricultural project should require some knowledge of the subject from the appointees. Often squires did have good farms and were innovative farmers – not the Custance family, which mainly produced parish priests and naval officers. Whether Arthur had the talent the government was looking for is not certain since the entire experiment never came to full fruition, due in part to the crash of the stock market in 1929 and the subsequent Depression. The first step of sending the boys to work as farm hands, however, did come to pass.

The project was not without precedent, as Arthur was to discover decades later while working with the Canadian Defence Research Board at Britannia Bay, west of Ottawa. The notion of bringing culture to the colonies had, in a sense, been attempted and accomplished in this region a century earlier, by the illustrious London merchant and soldier, the Honourable Hammett Pinhey.

His history, and that of the community, is recorded by Harry and Olive Walker in a very entertaining book, *The Carleton Saga*. Pinhey built a three-story stone mansion in the wilderness; he and his family were the only civilians in this army-officer colony on the river front. To this community, England was more than a name or far-off geographical location: it dictated a mode of life and a code of conduct. When they invited each other to dinner, as noted by the Walkers,

...it was always by a formal notice carried by a servant through the forest trails. 'General Lloyd presents his compliments to Captain Street', or 'would Captain Weatherly do Captain and Mrs. Monk the honour of dining with them this evening.' And they always dressed for dinner.

On his lunch hours at the Defence Research Board, Arthur often came upon the ruins of an old church at Pinhey's Point on the banks of the Ottawa River. He found it nostalgic to walk through these ruins.

It is not clear just who contacted whom, but Arthur was signed up for Ontario. His father heaved a sigh of relief and outfitted him with 10 tailor-made suits but little else that was suitable for a farm labourer. Neither father nor son seemed to be concerned about what this adventure would entail. This lad, about to become a hired farm hand, had never even had to polish his own shoes, let alone do any serious hard work. This was hardly an auspicious beginning. But at this point, Arthur was unaware of the demands and set out with a light heart.

It proved not only to be an adventure, a new beginning, but also a definite break, a break with the past, with his family, with all that he knew. Things would never be the same again. Little did he realize how life would change for him, indeed that the life he was

leaving behind in England would also be changed forever. The Great War of 1914-1918 had set afoot changes in the whole society that severely challenged the class system, with its wealth and privileges. But youth is always full of hope and confidence. Arthur didn't waste much time thinking about what was ahead; he had instructions as to his destination and that was enough for him.

Thus, with his steamer trunk of belongings, this young man set out to begin his new life. Before sailing Arthur met with Kathleen, a girl whom he liked. They exchanged diaries, in which each would write and then return to the owner at their next meeting—a custom of the times among young people.

So, on February 16, 1929, a rather cold time of year to travel, this lad of 18 boarded the Cunard ship, *Andania*, at Liverpool for the voyage across the Atlantic. It turned out to be quite fun, for he played table tennis with a Latvian girl, a reputed champion, and beat her! It was an otherwise uneventful trip, and on February 29 they landed at Halifax. From there he took a train to Montreal. His only memory of Montreal was that in the cold weather the plastic lining of his raincoat cracked and shattered into little pieces.

He really was quite unprepared for this new land that, as he was to learn, was so different in many respects from his homeland. In Montreal, he was immediately put on another train. It chugged across the Quebec border into Ontario through a countryside blanketed in white.

Chapter 3

Canada: Survival in a New Land

Though Arthur had often travelled by train in England, this was a much longer trip, and the scenery was certainly different. The train headed west along Lake Ontario then, turning north passed through Peterborough and Lindsay to arrive at a little milk station called Bobcageon. Arthur arrived at 2:00 in the morning. He was met there by his employer, Cortland Switzer, who helped him load his steamer trunk onto the sleigh. Off they went to the jingling of the horses' harness, the stillness of the night uninterrupted by little conversation. When they arrived at the house, Switzer took Arthur up the back stairs to a little room, said, "Be at the barn at five," and left.

Arthur surveyed his room with its sparse furnishings and promptly fell into bed. Somehow he woke up at the appointed time. He arrived at the barn dressed in one of his suits, complete with cuff links, and wearing tan and white brogues, walking shoes quite fashionable for young men in England at the time. The farmer surveyed him.

"Can you milk a cow?" he asked.

Arthur stammered something in reply and the farmer said, "Well, there's a pail. Grab a stool and take that cow."

Arthur looked at the piece of filthy log with a leather strap nailed to it. He picked it up gingerly and sat down at what he hoped was the correct side of the cow. A tentative squeeze of the cow's teat did produce a squirt of milk. Subsequent squirts went everywhere. The trick was in some way to direct these streams into the pail and to keep the cow's foot out of the pail, for she kicked to show her disapproval of this inept hired hand. Eventually, all the cows were milked (Arthur only managed one) and they went up to the house for breakfast.

One tailored suit was ruined. The next morning another suit was ruined. Finally, the farmer's wife suggested that Arthur be taken to town and outfitted with coveralls.

On Sunday the hired man on the next farm, a Scotsman, came to visit Arthur. They were in his little bedroom and the Scotsman took the liberty of opening the wardrobe. Surveying the tailor-made suits, he said, "Ye canna want all these suits," and offered to take most of them off his hands for the sum of \$10.00. Arthur had no sense of the value of things. Not even in England had he been concerned with the cost of things nor even aware of the need for money. The Scotsman got a good deal.

The chief occupation in winter, apart from taking care of the livestock, was obtaining next year's supply of firewood. Soon after breakfast, Switzer and Arthur set out for the woods with a team of horses and sleighs. A variety of trees was selected. Maple and oak made good, steady fires. Cedar and pine were quick burners, but didn't last or give very good heat. Elm burned for a long time, good for maintaining fires through the night, but it was a tough, gnarled wood that was hard to split into small enough chunks to fit into the stove or fireplace.

There was a science, a knack, to felling a very large tree safely. Arthur became quite proficient and could fell a tree in any desired

spot. Then began the hard work of lopping off the branches, wrapping a logging chain around the log, skidding the log out of the woods by horse, and loading the log onto the sleigh. All this hard work produced enough body heat that Arthur didn't really feel the cold sub zero (Fahrenheit) weather, even if there was a biting north wind. Mrs. Switzer packed thick sandwiches amply slathered with bacon grease. They tasted fine and certainly supplied the calories for the needed energy. There was satisfaction in seeing the yard at the homestead fill up with these thick long logs.

Later in the spring, before work on the land began, these logs had to be cut into smaller lengths. When only the man-powered crosscut saw was used, this task was labourious. But a large, powered circular saw could do the task in one day, depending in part on the number of men present. These woodcutting bees were a co-operative community effort with each farmer assisting his neighbours in return for their help.

But this was not the end of the process. These smaller blocks of wood were left to dry in the summer sun. During the long summer evenings, these chunks were split into even smaller pieces and left to dry further. By fall this heap of firewood was neatly piled into the woodshed, the promised security of a warm winter. Hard but satisfying work.

For this work, Arthur had bought his own ax, which he used right until his last days, splitting wood for the fireplace at The Terraces, his retirement home. He really enjoyed splitting wood, swinging the ax at a particular angle and then deftly turning the blade just as it bit into the wood so that it split easily. That old ax has had several new handles over the years, but always the same blade. I still have it. He later discovered that the swing of an ax spoiled the swing of a golf club.

Under this programme, through which Arthur came to be swinging an ax on a farm, it was understood that a British

Government official would visit the boys on a regular basis to see about their welfare. Someone did come to the Switzer farm to see Arthur that spring of 1929, with the result that Arthur was transferred to Almonte in the Ottawa Valley, some 200 miles to the east. The reason for this move is unclear.

He was in time for the spring planting on Mr. Munro's farm. His one vivid memory of this farm was encountering a black kitty that had an unusual white stripe down its back. He advanced toward it, not knowing the skunk's awful power. His clothes never lost the smell, despite the application of numerous remedies, and in the end had to be buried. It gave him a healthy respect for these animals, which are unknown in England.

It does not appear that any official ever checked on his welfare again. After the crash of the stock market in 1929, Arthur was abandoned by the British government and left to fend for himself. Sometime in 1930, he moved again, but there is no indication why this move was made.

This time Arthur moved about 150 miles southwest to Centreton, a small hamlet just east and north of the town of Cobourg on Lake Ontario. It was close to Rice Lake, not far from the summer resort village of Roseneath. There he worked for Bill Rogers, who specialized in beef cattle. Bill had two farms. One of the tasks of the hired man was to ride over to the second farm to care for the cattle there.

Arthur learned to ride horseback, which he thoroughly enjoyed. He loved horses. He said that no one was ever alone with a horse, a responsive companion. Once, he was thrown off his horse and it returned to the barn, riderless. The farmer went looking for the rider and found him somewhat groggy but without a single broken bone.

Arthur had a way with horses. Once, just after a team had pulled a wagon load of grain into the barn, the floor gave way and the horses were hung by their harness. Arthur was able to quieten

them and, in spite of their flailing legs, to cut the harness and to rescue them.

That winter, Arthur had bought a pair of skis through Eaton's mail order catalogue—just two slats of wood curved at the front end with straps for the boots and a pair of poles. He taught himself to ski, but the resultant tracks, which looked as if made by an impossibly narrow sleigh, caused some curiosity among the villagers.

On one occasion, his skiing proved to be more than just a sport, serving in an emergency when the farmer's baby became quite ill. Over the phone, the doctor diagnosed the illness and prescribed a medicine. But how would they get the medicine? There had been a big snowfall with winds that had caused huge drifts, making the roads quite impassable, even for a horse. So Arthur offered to ski to the doctor's house. It was late in the evening when he set out for the doctor's, which was several miles away. It was a brilliant moonlit night, though the shadows proved to be deceiving. At one point where he thought there was a slight slope, he suddenly fell about thirty feet, landing safely in a snow bank. Somewhat shaken, he continued on to the doctor's house, returning with the medicine. The baby was soon well, and the family was very grateful to Arthur for his help in their time of need.

Arthur enjoyed working on this farm and learned many things that proved very helpful to him in later life. At one point Bill planned to build a barn, and Arthur was given the task of laying out the foundation, levelling the land to the required measurements using only a horse and scraper. Bill was impressed with Arthur's skill and accuracy although Arthur had no previous experience. On this foundation a 60-foot high building was constructed with enormous cross beams that had to be hoisted into place with no more than ropes, pulleys and muscle power. The final task was putting on the hip roof, which required a co-

operative effort. The Rogers held a barn-raising bee in which the whole farming community took part.

Once the task was completed, it was time to celebrate. The women provided a feast set out on long picnic tables under the trees. Arthur recalled that at one table everyone happened to sit on the same side, and without anyone on the other side, the table suddenly tipped. There was a scramble to catch the food and the dishes.

The highlight of the barn-raising bee was to have a barn dance on the new floor. What better way to make sure it was solid!? All this activity was a new experience for our young farmhand, initiating him into the ways of the young men and women in this new land, so different from what he had known. Truth be told, he knew very little about girls, having attended a boy's school all his life. He had left England just when young men entered the social world of debutantes.

Roseneath had a small Anglican church but no resident minister. Student ministers from Wycliffe, the Anglican College at the University of Toronto, filled in as pulpit supply each summer, gaining very practical experience in their profession. The student that summer was Herb Deering. This young man called on the Rogers family to see who would be coming to church. He heard Arthur's English accent and asked if he would read the lesson on Sunday. He did so, and on several subsequent Sundays. Roseneath was a popular vacation spot for Torontonians. Some of the elderly lady visitors were very pleased with this young man reading the lesson in such a good British accent.

But they might not have been so pleased if they had seen and heard him later in the afternoon. Hired men had no days off since cows had to be milked twice every day. Usually Sunday afternoons were their only free time. Arthur often spent this free time with the neighbouring hired man, also an Englishman. He and Ted Simmonds would climb the farm's windmill and, from that height,

sing some rather bawdy songs at the top of their voices. Both boys had good singing voices. Arthur had sung at school back home and had acquired a repertoire of songs, apart from sacred ones, that had jolly tunes and a few questionable lyrics.

Ted had found a book at his farm about an Irish immigrant girl who had come in the early 1800s to “Muddy York,” as Toronto was first known, working as a domestic for Dr. Reid’s family. She was converted to Christianity and this book, *An Irish Saint: The Life of Ann Preston (Holy Ann)*, was a record of the many answers she received to her prayers. Ted had read it and was deeply moved. The next Sunday he brought it to Arthur, who read it and was equally stirred. They both agreed to see whether they, too, could get such answers to prayer. Arthur was quite serious about undertaking this experiment.

His early prayers were like a test – he wanted to find out if God was really there. One of his tests involved a bicycle that he used to ride over to Bill’s other farm. The country road he took had a section along it that cut through a hilltop that was all sand. Now, it was almost impossible to ride through that two-hundred foot section. But one day, as he came up to it on his bicycle, Arthur said to God, “You can keep me on this bicycle.” He took his hands off the handlebars and rode straight through it! He had a sense, he said when recounting it in later life, of “being supported on either side by what I then supposed must have been angels.”

Later, he had an experience where it seemed that God took the initiative, answering him even though he hadn’t prayed. One of his responsibilities during the winter was the feeding and watering of some 90 Poll Angus black steers, the wildest critters imaginable. He used to pray that God would keep the herd together when he drove them down to the running stream to get a drink. Once they were penned up again it was important to make sure that all three barnyard gates were securely closed. One winter day, when he

was about 150-200 yards from the last gate, something unexpected happened. He recorded the event in his diary:

I suddenly heard my name called very distinctly. I stopped for a moment, wondering who had called, and then went on again down the road, only to be called again. This time I turned the horse around and looked toward the barnyard and saw, to my grief, that I had not properly closed the gate and that it had swung wide open. I quickly asked God to keep the cattle in until I could get back to it and galloped my horse as fast as he would go. The cattle simply stood around, looking at the open gate but made no move to pass through it. I soon had it closed and all was well. But there was no one there who might have called my name. Yet had it not been called, the cattle might have been all over the countryside by the next afternoon when I would have revisited them.

Arthur was so very thankful and pondered what this might mean. He had not spoken any prayer, but God Himself had spoken to him! How else could he account for hearing his name? What kind of God was this?

His prayers began to change. He recorded the following incident, which occurred sometime in the winter of 1931 while he was skidding logs.

I had a beautiful little mare whom I knew well and had a real affection for. Queenie was willing and fast. Through my carelessness I allowed her, pulling for all she was worth and at some speed through the underbrush, to run the end of the log she was dragging against a tree-stump almost buried in the snow. The log stopped instantly and, unfortunately for her, the

traces [harness] did not break. The sudden shock was too much for her chest muscles, and she tore them so badly that the vet subsequently said she would never recover.

Needless to say, I felt brokenhearted, for it was really my fault and needless to say, the boss was more than a little displeased. We managed to get Queenie back to the stable and into her stall. The vet said, "If she ever lies down, she'll never get up. The best thing really is to shoot her." I asked the boss if he would leave her for one day. After quitting time that evening, I went down to the stable and put my hand on her breast and asked God if He could heal her. Queenie was motionless, being reluctant to move at all because of the injury.

In the morning I went down before breakfast to see whether she was still on her feet. She was not only on her feet, but actually eating hay. She moved over a little as I went in beside her, and though she hobbled she didn't seem to be in pain. Naturally I told the boss about it at breakfast, but I don't think he really believed anything had happened except that he was surprised she was still standing.

Well, to make a long story short, three weeks later Queenie was hitched up to a cutter and took the boss's children to school. She was never again used for logging, but there was no evidence in the subsequent months that she had suffered the slightest permanent injury.

Arthur was very thankful, for the injury had been his fault. He was really beginning to believe that prayer was worthwhile, and that someone was there.

Life on the farm was quite routine and uneventful, though one fall Arthur enrolled in a correspondence diploma course from the L. L. Cooke School of Mechanical Drafting in Chicago. Studying by lamplight in the evenings, he learned to use drafting instruments,

which was the source of much curiosity and amusement to the young children in the family.

In the spring, another hired hand, a Native Canadian named Moose, appeared out of the blue. Moose would come and go as he pleased, and was accepted as belonging in a kind of unattached way. To Arthur, Moose's most memorable act was taking apart a broken-down car that was left on the farm, and putting it back together again. He had parts left over, but the vehicle still ran quite well.

Nothing much happened to break the routines: early rising, the hard work, and fatigue. Yes, there were square dances but not much else. Arthur was beginning to feel trapped, unable to see anything ahead except more bone-tiring work. He had learned much, and it would all be useful in the future. But he knew one thing for certain: he didn't want to own a farm, even though that had been the original intention in coming to Canada.

The next summer, the student minister, Herb Deering, came again. He was intrigued by Arthur.

"What are you doing here? Don't you want to go to University?"

Arthur didn't know. Nothing more was said. Then on the first Sunday in September, Herb said to him, "What are you doing here? Why aren't you up at the university? Your name is on a room at Wycliffe." This was a residence connected with the Anglican Wycliffe Theological College, a part of the University of Toronto.

Well, nobody had thought to inform Arthur. Had Herb applied for him? Certainly, it was a surprise to Arthur, but it didn't take him long to realize that this could be his escape. In the morning he gave his notice to the farmer, packed his few belongings, took his

wages, hitched a ride with Bill, who charged him for the trip into Cobourg, and caught a train to Toronto.

Now a new adventure opened up for him. It was a good-bye to farm life, without regrets. The hard physical labour had developed his slender frame. He had learned how to use the tools at hand. Living close to nature had helped him to appreciate his surroundings in a new way, an appreciation that deepened as the years went by. Always he revelled in the quiet dew-stained dawns or the beautiful flaming sunsets, the driving rain and crash of thunder claps or the silent blanketing of the countryside with a covering of beautiful white snow. He had learned much.

But Arthur looked forward to the city and to this new experience in life, though he had as little idea of what was involved as he had had of farm life when he had embarked on that adventure three years before. All the experiences of those years were to benefit him in the rest of his life, experiences in survival and providing for daily needs. But perhaps most important at this point in his life was the growing conviction that there must be more to life than mere survival.

Chapter 4

University Life: Conversion and Ministry

Thus in the fall of 1931, just as he was turning 21, a fresh chapter in Arthur's life began, a quite different one from being a hired hand on a farm. He was now a student, enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts program at the University of Toronto. At first life was wonderful! No more chores! No getting up at five in the morning! Now there were new schedules to learn, books to acquire, new people to meet. Life had the familiarity of his schooling in England, but with a significant difference; instead of a bed in a dormitory, he now had a private room.

Then an unexpected dark cloud appeared before the end of September. Arthur was called into the Dean's office. The Dean was somewhat embarrassed. He said that there was a matter of fees, of tuition. How, and when, did Arthur intend to pay?

This news astounded Arthur. He had no idea that this would cost him money. The Dean, in turn, was surprised to learn that Arthur had little connection with his family back home. This was a serious situation, and the Dean gave Arthur until the end of the month to come up with the required funds.

You could imagine how puzzled, if not distraught, Arthur must have felt. He did not know what to do or where to turn. Fortunately, a few days later, the Dean again called him into his office. This time he was all smiles. A delegation from the British Medical Society had announced that they wanted to give a scholarship to some worthy student, good for three years, depending on grades. Could the Dean recommend a student? Without hesitation, he named Arthur, and the Society awarded it to him on the strength of the Dean's word. Thus, miraculously, the crisis was resolved.

Along with this new experience of university life came new friends. These friends were Christians who "took him in." Nobody doubted that he was a Christian for he had such specific answers to his prayers. Yet Arthur knew deep down inside that he wasn't like them. They were different—fun-loving yet serious people, with a sense of purpose about them which he admired.

Early that Fall, three maiden ladies, all daughters of British aristocracy, took an interest in this "Custance boy." How they met Arthur is unknown, but the Misses Amy Clarkson, Agnes Carpmael and Alice MacMahon, who were all devout Christians, took him under their wings. They decided that Arthur should teach Sunday School. To this end, they converted the upper floor of the coach house on their property into a very nice room, complete with Persian carpet and Chippendale furniture, and invited the sons and daughters of the "up and outs" of high society (as opposed to the "down and outs" of low society, a phrase perhaps coined by Arthur). Arthur proved to be an enthusiastic teacher, even making slides for illustrations. Teaching Sunday School was a challenge to Arthur, with the teacher learning as well as his pupils.

He was enjoying this new university life. An arrangement had been made (perhaps by these ladies, on the strength of his slides for the Sunday School class?) whereby Arthur studied drawing

under an artist named Arthur Lismer, who was a member of the Group of Seven, Canada's most famous landscape painters (ca.1920-1933). These drawing classes also included the use of nude models.

In the spring, when many students turn to antics as a distraction or relief from studies, Arthur found himself the subject of some good-natured pranking. Some of his nude drawings mysteriously appeared on display in Hart House in the University of Toronto. The pranksters charged the unwitting Arthur with indecency. He was defended by a medical student who said that "the line has to be drawn somewhere. After all, this is Art for Art's sake!" Though no harm was done, Arthur felt a little bewildered by the events, being unaccustomed to this facet of university life.

No doubt these art lessons sharpened his skills, especially with a pencil. He did try using oils and water colours but found it much too slow. He did not consider himself an artist since he couldn't, when faced with a blank piece of paper, come up with a picture. Yet he did so regularly. He could draw a chair from any angle or perspective. It was an asset in his work, for he could draw what he was planning or designing. He was also intrigued by faces. His bedroom wall was covered with some 25 pencil drawings of people from all walks of life, famous and ordinary, past and contemporary. His favourite portrait was one of Einstein. Arthur felt that he had captured Einstein's curiosity, his inquisitiveness, which gave Einstein's face a boyish look. Another favourite portrait was of Julie, which he drew from a 1958 photograph. She was one of seven surviving Terra del Fuegians, who in 1870 numbered twenty thousand. He was intrigued by her eyes and wondered what was she thinking.

In no time, the school year drew to an end. Arthur felt quite confident about his academic success. Thus he was surprised to find himself nearer the bottom of the class than the top. Still, he had done well enough to hold on to the scholarship. Once again,

he felt adrift, seeing no purpose in all this studying, even if it was better than life on the farm. There seemed to be no point to life.

The summer loomed before him. What to do? He decided to write a note to the girl left behind in England: "Dear Kathleen: If you still feel the same, send me a perfumed letter." And by return mail a perfumed letter arrived!

So Arthur headed for England on foot. With just a knapsack containing simple toiletries, wearing shorts (it was May) and with a little money in his pocket, he headed for Montreal, some 300 miles to the east. He was able to hitch a ride to Bowmanville, about 50 miles east of Toronto. Then it was time for a meal. Restaurants weren't as plentiful in those days as they are today. The effects of the stock market crash of 1929 were now being felt. Unemployment abounded in 1932. Many men had become hobos, riding the rails, wandering about the countryside looking for handouts. People no longer answered their doors readily. Arthur knocked on a door. It was opened by the housewife and her little daughter. His offer to draw the little girl's portrait in return for a meal was accepted. The picture turned out quite well and the meal was satisfactory.

Out on the highway once more, he was fortunate to hitch a ride as far as Brockville, the half way point, and slept that night on the banks of the St. Lawrence River. He woke up a little damp the next morning but, again, he was fortunate in hitching a ride with a man headed for the same destination as himself, Montreal. The driver was tired and asked Arthur to take over for a while. When they finally arrived in Montreal, the man asked Arthur where he was going.

"To England," he replied.

"But where are you going to spend the night?"

He didn't know. So, rather cautiously, the man offered to let him sleep in the car, with the understanding that he must be gone by early morning.

Arthur intended to work his way across the Atlantic on a cattle boat. Down at the docks in Montreal harbour, he asked directions for such a job. People quickly shushed him up because this manner of travel was not exactly legal. Nobody would help him. So he wandered up to Sherbrooke Avenue, a main street. In front of the Sun Life Building Arthur saw a moving van unloading furniture. His offer to help was accepted and he worked hard the rest of that day.

As the caretaker of the building was locking up, he noticed Arthur and asked him a few questions. Upon hearing his story, the man invited him to share a meal with him and his wife. After a bit of hesitation, this caretaker allowed Arthur to sleep in the boardroom of the Sun Life Building, but only on the condition that he must be out early in the morning.

Well, somehow the next morning Arthur was discovered and was ordered to appear before the president of the company. He presented himself to the president's secretary who looked him up and down critically (still in his shorts), not sure if he should be admitted. Enquiring of the president whether he wanted to see a young man named Custance, she was told, "Show him in."

After a period of questioning, this important gentleman was assured of Arthur's identity, and was quite intrigued by his story. The president then grew thoughtful. He had a stateroom reserved on a Cunard liner scheduled to leave that very day, but was unable to go. If Arthur could get a passport, then he would give him his place. All he asked was that Arthur promise to return on a Cunard liner. The caretaker and his wife, pleased with this turn of events, helped Arthur get the necessary papers.

And so that same evening, Arthur was aboard ship bound for England, staying in a first class stateroom. Each night the steward washed Arthur's only shirt. He was popular in the dining room, invited to sit at several tables; he even emceed evening programs. He made friends with another passenger who, just as they were

landing in England, managed to persuade Arthur to part with his few dollars. He was left without enough money to so much as make a phone call. Finally, however, he did get in touch with his father, who refused to believe him to be his son and demanded that he show himself to Mr. Guinness, a family friend. This gentleman rescued him, outfitted him with clothes, and took him around to the clubs, somewhat like a tamed bear on a chain, showing him off as someone who had safely returned from the colonies after dodging Indian arrows.

Yes, Arthur did meet with Kathleen, but it was not the same. They parted friends, however. Arriving in Shrewsbury, he found his father sick with worry, fearing that his son had been deported. Like any other summer vacation from school, the summer flew by. He returned to Canada via the *Alaunia*, a Cunard ship as promised, only this time in third class.

His second year at university started off much the same as the first. About November, Arthur was introduced to a missionary who was visiting in Toronto. He talked with Arthur about the salvation of his soul. When telling me of this momentous meeting, Arthur had no clear recollection of what the elderly gentleman said, nor what was prayed. He only knew that when he arose from his knees, he was a different person. When he went through the cloisters of the university to the dining hall, it seemed to him that the sky was bluer, the grass was greener, and the whole of creation was singing!

It was indeed a crucial day. Arthur had become a new creation in Christ Jesus. It was an exhilarating experience! Later, when speaking of this experience, he said, "It was like I had been picked up and placed in the hub of a wheel and all the spokes began to make sense." He suddenly wanted to know everything, to study all things in the light of this new understanding of God. Now, at

last, he understood his friends, friends who not only had a purpose for their lives, but such enthusiasm and real joy.

He had become spiritually alive. He was a changed person with a heightened sense of his surroundings. The most noticeable change, though, was the direction of his life. He was now highly inclined toward, and capable of, great study. From that day on, he became a student, a scholar, especially of the Word of God.

Immediately upon his conversion, Arthur had an insatiable appetite to really know the Bible. From his childhood he had heard the Bible read in the Anglican Church, the church in which he had grown up. Every Sunday the readings were from the Old Testament, the Epistles, and the Gospels, as well as the Psalms, yet it was largely an unknown book to him. What he did learn from the Church of England was a reverence for God, though it had little impact on him personally during those early years, other than giving a certain rhythm to life; Church was the focal point, whether at home or at school.

This new appetite was nourished when he began to fellowship and “break bread” with a group of believers known as the Plymouth Brethren. These Christians were very earnest and, like the Bereans (whom the Apostle Paul visited on his second missionary journey), searched the Word diligently. From them he learned to let the Bible be its own interpreter. This attitude towards Scripture never left him and was foundational to his development both in theological understanding and in Christian character.

Arthur also continued to attend Bible studies on campus in which so many of the friends he admired were active. These studies were sponsored by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF), an organization which recognized the importance of nourishment for growth in the Christian life. IVCF recommended booklets prepared by Scripture Union (a British organization still in operation) with passages of Scripture for each day. A suggested form of study was to use notebooks in which to write answers to

questions to be asked of each passage: Where, When, Who, What, and finally, What does this passage say to me? It was an excellent way to make a student read intelligently and thoughtfully. Equally important was corporate prayer, the DPM—the Daily Prayer Meeting. These disciplines, encouraged by IVCF, gave its members a daily pattern that became, for Arthur, a habit for life.

Equally important was InterVarsity's conviction that the Bible was the Word of God. By contrast, the skepticism currently in vogue on campus, especially among members of the SCM (Student Christian Movement), saw the Bible as no more than a myth. Years later, in conversation with Peter Haile, an IVCF staff member for the New York area, Arthur asked him if he ever had doubts about the Bible being the Word of God. Peter said, "Never." And neither had Arthur had any doubts. This complete confidence in the truth and trustworthiness of the Scriptures was a hallmark of Arthur's life and it permeated all his writings.

In these study groups, Arthur met people from every denomination. He was influenced by peers like Stacey Woods, Arthur Hill, Cathie Nicoll, and by stalwarts of the Faith, like Noel Palmer, minister at the famous Peoples Church situated near the University. His horizons were being broadened so that he began to see the immensity of the grace of God.

And then it was summer again. The year was 1932. An entirely new experience presented itself to this very young Christian. He was commissioned by the Fellowship of the West, a branch of the Anglican Church, to serve as a summer preacher for a rural Anglican church at Coxby in Saskatchewan, a small farming community in the parkland of Prince Albert, an area considerably north of the capital city of Regina. For three years a severe drought had been sweeping the Prairies, and this community had been hard hit. Hot, dry winds had blown the topsoil away in clouds. Unable to grow wheat, the farmers were cash-poor. Things were

beyond their control and the community felt discouraged and hopeless. There is no doubt that his three years of farming in Ontario helped Arthur to understand their way of life—an apprenticeship which perhaps providentially prepared him for this experience.

Whether his sermons addressed this problem is not known. But, by midsummer he himself was dissatisfied, for no one seemed to understand about this new life in Christ. It was then that he prayed and promised the Lord he would preach the Good News very clearly. This he did, with some trepidation. It wasn't long before one and then another, and then some more, were touched by the Lord and became Christians. Arthur began immediately to teach them about the Christian life. As August drew to a close, the people tried to persuade Arthur to give up the idea of school and to stay on at Coxby.

And Arthur was persuaded to stay, not just by the people, but also by a girl who had come to the community that summer. She had been sent there by the Canadian Sunday School Mission. Lillian Meisner, who hailed from Lunenburg in Nova Scotia, had been a Christian for some years and had just graduated from Winnipeg Bible School in Manitoba. This girl of slight build and medium height with bobbed brown hair was talented in playing the piano, and she had a great love for children. Lillian had grown up on a farm and so she, too, understood farm community life. There was good attendance at her daily Bible classes, and several children had responded to the Gospel.

These two young people were drawn together by their common concern for these new converts. It seemed to both of them quite irresponsible to abandon such new babes-in-the-faith. Thus, school seemed rather unimportant in the light of the community's need for teaching, though Arthur's spiritual mothers in Toronto did not approve of his leaving university. Nor did they think that this girl was the right person for him. Neither did two different

ministers think this a good union, especially on such a spiritual crest, though finally a minister was willing to marry them. The day was November 7, 1933.

It didn't seem hard to Arthur to give up university, for he could not see where it was leading, and now he was involved in a rewarding ministry, and here was a girl who shared this vision. To marry and stay in Coxby seemed to be what the Lord was asking of them. The people were delighted. Dick Ellison, who had a large ranch, had become a Christian under Arthur's ministry, and he gladly gave them a corner of his property near his own house. Here Arthur built a one-room log cabin. Church services continued to be held, along with weekly Bible studies and teaching. The students were willing and learned eagerly.

That winter was a good time. But it was also a hard time. These very harsh circumstances were, in the providence of God, further training ground in lessons of trusting God for survival, of learning how to pray.

It was a very cold winter, so cold that one night the hot water bottle froze in the bed. The effects of the Depression were, Arthur said, "unbelievably severe. We were reduced to living on bread and porridge, occasionally some apples to make into a sauce and upon even rarer occasions a few potatoes." Food was scarce, yet the Lord provided in some remarkable ways—as He did for their Christmas dinner that year, which Arthur recorded in his prayer journal:

Just before Christmas we had received a gift of four or five potatoes and a few apples. They did not seem to be the makings of a traditional Christmas dinner, but we were thankful. A morning or two later, I looked out of the window and saw a flock of prairie chickens fly over an orchard which was between us and a very near neighbouring farmer, Richard Ellison, with whom we had wonderful times of fellowship.

One of these birds for some reason landed in an apple tree while the rest of them flew on.

We had no means of shooting it, and I'm not much of a shot anyway. Moreover, it was at least two hundred feet away. But it was clearly visible because there were no leaves on the trees. I thought it just possible that I could run across to Dick Ellison's house without disturbing the bird and get him to try to shoot it for us. However, as I opened our door, Dick's hired man, Fred, happened to come out on their back porch at the same moment.

I signalled to him and pointed across the orchard to the prairie chicken, still sitting well exposed on a branch. He caught on immediately, disappeared quickly, and returned with a rifle. Though he told me afterward that he too was not a particularly good shot, he succeeded in shooting it straight through the head. It dropped without movement: when we picked it up, it proved to be one of the biggest prairie chickens I have ever seen. And so we had our Christmas dinner of roast potatoes and prairie chicken and baked apples.

To Arthur, this was pure goodness on the Lord's part, since it involved a whole series of events:

"I only 'happened' to look out the window, and it only 'happened' that one bird stayed behind for some reason, and it only 'happened' that Fred came out on the back porch at that very moment, and it only 'happened' that he shot it in the head and left its body unmarred in any way. Or did it merely just 'happen'?"

This goodness of the Lord occurred not only in these Depression years but throughout his life. Nothing just "happened" whether for good or ill. In all circumstances Arthur perceived

God's hand, either as warning or as grace. And he was always unceasingly thankful. The lesson he learned that winter was foundational.

This beginning foundation was further solidified that year in Coxby. It could be questioned why the Fellowship of the West would send a young man, not yet a year old in the faith, to a northern Saskatchewan community far from any spiritual guidance or support. It did not seem wise, in human terms. Yet it was just where God wanted Arthur to be! Even the circumstances were of divine ordering. The Depression was severe. There was little or no work and very little food. What Arthur did have was time, lots of time. This is what happened that winter, described in Arthur's own words more than forty years later:

It was marvellously quiet, and, since I had come to know the Lord only about a year before, the Bible was largely an unknown book to me and I had a wonderful opportunity to study it. That winter I went eight times through the entire Bible and worked out, almost entirely on my own, a personal systematic theology. I shall never regret the cold or isolation. It was a golden period of my life in many ways, and an enormous privilege.

Each reading revealed to him new connections and relationships. And, as he went, he underlined and wrote all over his Bible. Arthur became very conscious of the awesomeness of God's great plan of redemption. He continued:

One afternoon stands out in my memory as a time of glorious apprehension. I knelt down on a small rug which a friend had made for me out of overcoat samples, and I opened my Bible that lay on the bed before me at John 15. I have always loved to study on my knees. I still have my bed lighted

specifically for this purpose—and what better attitude could there be for studying the Word of God? I read meditatively with pencil in hand, marking things as I went, and in due time I came to John 15:16: “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” The words seemed to stand out from the page and this tremendous truth flooded my soul. I seemed to be kneeling in the silence of eternity and hearing the words inwardly for the first time, though it was by no means the first time I had read them. I was quite simply overwhelmed. He, the Lord Jesus Christ, had chosen me; not I Him. I had always assumed myself to be the one who had acted. It was I who for some reason had felt a need and sought the Lord to fulfill it. I was the one who had taken the initiative. . . . Here, suddenly, I was jolted into the realization that it was not I who had decided for the Lord; the Lord had decided for me!

As I knelt before the Lord after hearing these wonderful words, in a manner of speaking, for the first time, there was instantly born in my mind a first real intimation of man’s true nature and of the sovereignty of God’s grace. And I spent the remainder of those winter months reading nothing but the Word of God and constantly finding in it reflections of the wonderful truth of his sovereignty in our salvation. This became the rock upon which over a period of some forty years I thereafter built the edifice of my theology.

The building of that edifice of theology began immediately as he prepared studies for the new converts in Coxby that winter. Without benefit of library books or commentaries, he constructed his theology, simply using Scripture to interpret itself. It was consolidated as he then prepared to teach the new converts. They were eager students and grew in their faith, along with their teacher.

The value of that winter in the West was that, having read the Bible through eight times, the words of God and the ways of God were firmly planted in his mind and heart. It was a ready reference at all times in conjunction with whatever he might be studying. Throughout his life, he always studied everything in the light of the Scriptures.

In the spring of 1934, the outlook was bleak. Sandstorms and drought continued. There was no work at all, for anyone. Arthur and Lillian were, in a sense, a burden to the community. Thus, they decided to return to Toronto.

Chapter 5

The Depression Years: Lessons Learned

The Depression was quite severe all over Canada. Perhaps the Prairies suffered the worst, but Ontario also struggled. The Custances arrived in Toronto only to find a large number of unemployed people there, too. Failing to find much work, the fall looked dismal indeed.

It wasn't easy for this married couple to find their place. Lillian's rural background did not prepare her for the university world her husband inhabited. She was not a reader and so did not share his academic interests. But she always supported him in his speaking engagements and was, Arthur said, his best advertiser.

Her own mother had died in the summer of 1912 when she was just over seven years old and thus, at a very young age, she had kept house for her brothers and her father, a man with a wicked temper. Yet she had great strength of character and was not swallowed up by the circumstances of her life. Just when and how she became a Christian is not known but she, determined to follow the Lord, went to Bible school in Winnipeg, and from there she was sent by the Canadian Sunday School Mission to Coxby in Saskatchewan where the two met.

The move to Toronto brought many changes to her life, a life that later would involve many more moves, but she had stamina. She was as industrious and resourceful as Arthur was, supporting him wholly in the efforts to keep body and soul together during those long dismal years of the Great Depression.

In the following years, the lessons learned in the West were greatly reinforced by their constant need to trust God for basic survival. Answers were so specific and so dependable, often arriving just in the nick of time, that a prayerful attitude of heart and mind became a habit even when there was no such desperate need. Indeed, it developed into a communion, like that of a child with its Father, about everything in life, a comfortable relationship.

In those days rent for a two-room apartment was \$10.00 a month, milk five cents a quart, eggs not much more. But even these sums were enormous when there was no income. Prayer was their only resource. Time after time, the Lord proved his faithfulness.

In the providence of God, Arthur was able to resume studies at the University of Toronto in the fall of 1934. His mothers-in-the-Lord had not forgotten him. Convinced that he should never have left university, they offered to pay his fees. Miss MacMahon and Miss Carpmael, especially, made great sacrifices throughout his undergraduate years, for they regarded him as a very dear son. Arthur was grateful beyond telling, both to them and to the Lord.

Though this took care of the schooling, there remained the matter of daily living. The university helped out by giving him work in the library where he learned how to repair and rebind books. In later years, whenever he obtained a second-hand book, he made it his own by repairing and restoring it. He loved books, even the feel of them in his hands.

Arthur also found some work outside of the university, and in this, he witnessed the faithfulness of God. In the spring of 1935, Arthur recorded the following incident in his prayer journal:

I managed to get a job dispensing blocks of ice from a small ice station – one of many scattered around the city of Toronto. A 25 lb block of ice was 6 cents and a 50 lb. block was 11 cents. I don't know why the odd figure. But it was very important always to have coppers [one cent coins] for change, for there was considerable competition. Not to have the change could mean the loss of a number of early sales and a low tally for the day, and in those times one's job was in jeopardy constantly.

On this particular morning, I had no personal resources and the small change kitty we were allowed to retain from the previous day had somehow ended up with no pennies [also known as 'coppers'] either. I went to a local store but they could not afford to let me have any. I sat down at the ice station a little troubled but decided to pray about it. Almost immediately, the storekeeper sent his son across with 5 coppers just received unexpectedly. Then a man came up for 50 lb. block of ice, the first customer that morning, with 6 coppers and a nickel. The next customer came for 50 lbs., and he had 6 coppers and a nickel. This was really exceptional because most people only had small iceboxes.

Imagine my surprise when a third customer came for 50 lbs., and handed me 6 coppers and a nickel. It is scarcely believable but the next customer, the fourth man in a row, did precisely the same thing. So I now had 29 coppers!

I never recall this little incident without thinking of the Flood for some reason. But more seriously it does make me think of the words in the original Greek of 2 Corinthians 9:7 which quite literally could be translated, "God loves a hilarious giver" – because He is one Himself!

Another time, Arthur got some work from the city of Toronto, joining a work gang building Bathurst Street. They were just a group of men with nothing more than pickaxes. One day, the man

behind him swung his pickax with enough force to break stone. It caught Arthur's sweater, ripping it right off his back. It was a close call. Both men were sent home to recover from it.

The need for work became more acute with the arrival of a son on October 17, 1935. He was named Nigel Hambleton Custance. Another son, David, was born a couple of years later. There is no record of the date of birth, and he only lived a few short hours. Lillian herself, after this birth and death, spent some time in hospital and recovery of health was slow.

Even though he did land some jobs, for the Lord heard their prayers, Arthur was forced at one point to join the bread lines. He felt very depressed and ashamed. It was 1937, and there was no sign of the Depression lifting at all. People were desperate, including Arthur.

He wondered if he should return to England. Yet he was uncertain since his mother's letters mentioned tight financial conditions. She had moved into very small quarters since there was very little money, though she did insist on keeping her little dog, Snowball. She was obsessed about money and kept telling Arthur not to sell his brains cheaply. She did not encourage him to return to England for, at 25 years of age, she said he was getting too old to secure a good job!

His father's letters were much less frequent. In December 1933, he had written that David (Arthur's brother) and he would be spending Christmas alone: "I am gradually getting out of the woods with debts and hope to be able to have home comforts before many months are gone."

How could Arthur and his family go back? Would his own family welcome him? He had been abandoned by the British Government. Perhaps his family would abandon him too. There was a further worrisome thought: Had God also abandoned him? For the heavens were as brass; there was no word from the Lord.

God had provided for their needs, often on a daily basis. Until now. The situation was becoming quite desperate. In his desperation to find some kind of definite direction, he randomly opened his Bible and, in a quite unorthodox way, put his finger on the open page. There he read these words: "Stay in the land, and verily you shall be fed" (Psalm 37:3). And indeed, it was as if God had spoken! Arthur took Him at his word and abandoned the idea of returning to England. Not only from that moment, but throughout the years, the Lord remained faithful to his word, even though there were times when it was nip and tuck.

Arthur never doubted that God meant that promise for the duration of his life. He would have liked to retire in England, yet hadn't the Lord told him to stay in Canada? Canada, he felt, had indeed been good to him.

The Lord's provision that spring of 1937 was immediate, though in actual fact God had been for several years bringing it about. Help came through InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF), the organization that had been so helpful nourishing his new life after his conversion.

IVCF had been established in late 1928 by Howard Guinness, sent out by the British IVCF at the entreaty of Dr. Bingham, of Evangelical Publishers, in Toronto. Howard had, in that year, visited universities right across the country. As well, he had been insistent that a camp should be started that very first year. He was cautioned that camping in Canada is a complicated affair. Undeterred he said, "It is now or never." His only concern was *where* the camp ought to be located.

"That's easy," said the friend, pulling out a map, "there are 500,000 lakes in Ontario. Try the Huntsville area."

By March of 1929, Howard found beautiful Doe Lake, surrounded by groves of silver birches. He did discover, however, that camping here was not the same as in England. Yet, this enthusiastic ball of energy, who trusted in the God of the

impossible, managed within two months to gather staff, supplies, and campers for three two-week periods, hosting about 20 to 30 boys each time.

The Canadian IVCF is unique in that its work is not only in universities but also in high schools and summer camps for boys and girls. All three aspects, which in England were under separate organizations, were combined in Canada's IVCF from its very inception.

In 1937, the Toronto IVCF Board had acquired land near Huntsville in the Haliburton area of Muskoka on Clearwater Lake, a very deep lake that was two miles long, north to south, and one mile wide, east to west. But the land on the steep hills, dropping down quickly to the shoreline, was all virgin forest. They were faced with the gigantic task of converting this area into a camp site. That summer, Charlie Troutman from the Chicago IVCF office took a work gang to the site and, by the time university opened, a road had been cleared through this thick wood—no easy task. Arthur, with his ax and woodsman's skills, was a valuable member of this team.

Arthur was there the next May, not a favourable month, really, since the pesky black flies, which give very nasty bites, swarmed by the thousands. Later in June, the menace was mosquitos. The gang worked hard building a cookhouse, platforms for the mess tent and for the campers on the hillside, canoe slips down at the waterfront, and a lodge with a huge fireplace. All were connected by paths. Sanitation was taken care of by outhouses known as *kybos* (meaning "keep your bowels open"). A huge bell, with a peal that resounded through the forest, was suspended between two big trees by the cookhouse and mess tent, announcing meals and other lesser important events. It was a rush to get this site ready for the opening day of Boys Camp, but ready it was on the first weekend in July.

Early the next spring, work began further around the lake, at the north end, on the construction of a girls' camp, which again

was to be ready for a July 1 opening. Arthur recalled the frantic scramble the last evening before the influx of campers. On that last night, the groceries, delivered by truck to the low end of the lake, were loaded on a raft made of canoes lashed together. In the stillness of the night, this precious load was paddled across the lake without incident. Another year a piano was ferried by the same method. These events were memorable because Charlie Troutman played his marimba as they plied their way across the calm lake, the gentle melodies of the music echoing under a dark sky brilliant with stars.

Another significant construction was Chapel Point, an outdoor church on a point of land midway between the two camps. In this outdoor cathedral under the arching, leafy trees, the worshippers, sitting on wooden benches perched on uneven ground, were surrounded by evidences of the Creator. On Sundays, both camps met there for a worship service, the boys pretending they weren't a bit interested in the girls while the girls definitely were interested in the boys.

These camps, known as Pioneer Camps, are still very popular today. There was a good waterfront at each camp, supplied with jetties, diving towers, and slips for the fleets of red canoes. Pioneer Camps are noted for their regattas with competitions in swimming, canoeing, and sailing. Arthur was an instructor in sailing and canoeing. His camp name was Mr. Chips, the man who made the chips fly with his ax. But he was most famous for his ghost stories, told around a campfire or sometimes in the Lodge with a fire roaring in the fireplace.

Each spring, Arthur was part of the crew that opened up the camps for the summer and did much-needed construction work. Lillian worked in the cookhouse, a very demanding and tiring job. Thus, summer employment was now assured. While this work assured survival, it was much more than that, for it meant that Arthur's family accompanied him and so escaped the heat and

confines of city life. It was here that some lifelong friendships were made. They looked forward to it every spring—in spite of the clouds of mosquitoes and black flies.

When Arthur had returned to university in the fall of 1934, after the interlude in the West, he brought a more mature mind to his studies. He knew the Bible thoroughly, and he believed it implicitly to be the touchstone of ALL truth. He threw himself into his studies, and he studied and read far beyond the class requirements because he wanted to know more. He was excited by his discoveries, branching into archaeology, architecture, and the fine arts. In 1937, he switched to a course in Biblical and Oriental Far Eastern Languages, including Cuneiform. This class of two students was the largest in North America.

His notebooks were more than simply the notes of lectures and his synopses of books read on the subject (not always required reading) since, interspersed within the notes, he typed in red his own conclusions and thoughts. These books of notes and commentaries were further complemented by pictures or his own drawings, illustrating all kinds of building techniques, inventions, architecture, even drawings of the primitive people he was studying. Sometimes, though, the doodlings in the margins were more likely the faces of fellow students, maybe even the professor. They can be seen in the Arthur Custance Collection at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, Canada.

It is perhaps significant that though his early Christian experience had been shaped by fundamentalists, he had not shared their anti-intellectualism, their distrust of higher education. Nor did he fall prey to the evolutionary philosophy so prevalent in universities. This was due in part to the fact that Arthur was at the same time reading British writers, which helped immensely to direct his thinking toward Christian scholarly views. This literature was written in the 18th and 19th centuries when

discoveries of primitive cultures and the miracles of the industrial revolution were abounding and when many scholarly writers interpreted this new knowledge in terms of their Christian faith.

Arthur was greatly influenced by men like Hugh Miller (*Testimony of the Rocks*, 1874), whose writings he found to be filled with paragraphs of great literary beauty because the writer's mind was not merely filled with factual knowledge, but with insight into the message which this knowledge conveyed to his devout soul. Concerning the origin and antiquity of mankind, Arthur read with appreciation James C. Prichard's five volume treatise, *The Physical History of Mankind* (1836), which included many wonderful watercolour illustrations. He valued George Rawlinson's *The Origin of the Nations* (1878), and many others. He avidly read the *Illustrated London News*, which reported the latest findings in archaeology, and his personal library includes a big file containing clippings from this magazine.

By the late 1800s, the challenge of Darwinism to the Christian faith had alarmed these Christian scientists in Britain. In 1868, they formed a learned society, The Victoria Institute, and presented papers which were published as *The Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, with the express intention to meet this serious challenge. They felt it wasn't sufficient to merely oppose the evolutionary interpretations, but at the same time to give an alternative interpretation, one that showed how these facts were actually in harmony with biblical truths. Arthur resonated with this attitude. His notebooks, even in undergraduate days, reveal outlines of alternative interpretations, showing a harmony between his faith and the disciplines he was studying.

In 1938, he conceived of the idea of creating a Canadian society similar to the British Victoria Institute. With the help of a group of friends, a constitution was drawn up with the objective of "investigating in reverent spirit important questions of Philosophy and Science, especially those bearing upon Holy Scripture, meeting

monthly for the purpose of reading papers, with discussion." This society was named The Kelvin Institute. The membership fee of \$1.00 (50 cents for associate or corresponding members) included copies of papers given at these meetings. The British Society showed much interest in this fledgling offspring in the Colonies.

The Institute files for the year 1939-1940 indicate that there were 18 regular members, 12 corresponding members (from England, the USA, and Canada), and 2 honorary members (both from the USA). It should be noted that a third of the members were women and that they, too, gave papers before the society. The topics were quite scholarly. Sadly, the society was short-lived, coming to an end in 1941 because of World War II. Yet its influence can be seen in The Doorway Papers, for they reflect subjects that were presented (or proposed) for discussion at the Kelvin Institute.

Arthur always compared the data of the classroom with the data of the Bible, seeking to understand where there was disagreement. Sometimes he found that scientific information threw light on biblical passages and sometimes the Bible threw light on the significance of the scientific data. In this way, his analytical mind saw nuances that often dissolved disharmonies.

These connections seemed so obvious to him. They delighted him and stirred his awe and wonder, causing him to bow in praise and thankfulness. Not only was his mind informed with knowledge of the world, of God, and of his own life, but he found his spirit and his heart and emotions stirred in an expression of worship. It gave him a unity of mind and heart, a great sense of wholeness. He found joy and satisfaction in sharing his discoveries with students who were troubled by disharmonies and conflicts.

Arthur studied with great enthusiasm. He was an independent thinker and, in spite of his Christian orientation, he received very good marks in anthropology and archaeology. He received his B.A. in the spring of 1939, but what advantage did a B.A. give a young

fellow looking for employment? The Depression, now in its tenth year, showed no signs of breaking. Hopelessness pervaded the air. Surely something would happen, and would happen soon.

Dark clouds were appearing that boded ill, but that was on another continent. Nazi Germany, under Hitler, was marching across Europe with fearful cruelty that paralysed any opposition. Finally, in early September 1939, Britain declared war on this menace. Canada supported England in this decision.

Suddenly everything changed. Hundreds, thousands, of men flocked to the recruitment centres. Now there was something for the unemployed to do. A new hope arose, dispelling the spectre of the hunger and hopelessness of the Depression years. People began to work in munitions factories, men to train in the army. The country became cheerfully enthusiastic, expecting to soon settle things in Europe, believing that this war would be a short interlude with the prospect of a better future. Arthur, too, entered into these new prospects with relief and enthusiasm.

Chapter 6

The War Years: Finding the Lord's Will

It was Arthur's intention, after graduation in the spring of 1939, to continue that fall in an M.A. program. But when war was declared in the fall it was natural that he should think of serving in the navy, since the Custance family boasted admirals. One such person, Admiral Sir Reginald Custance, had even written three books on sea power in theory and practice. In actual fact, Arthur knew very little about the sea. Nonetheless, in high hopes, he applied to the British Navy, counting on the prestige of the family name.

However, he received a stinging letter of rejection, despite his name, because, they said, he was no longer a British subject. He was advised to apply to the Canadian Navy. He did, but was refused here, too, since his knowledge of engineering and of metallurgy were both essential in the production of munitions on the home front. With the Navy door definitely closed, Arthur's hopes of a life of adventure overseas disappeared. He later learned that his youngest brother in England, Nigel, a member of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve, was immediately called to active duty and was engaged in the dangerous work of mine sweeping on the East Coast.

So in the fall of 1939, rather than a life at sea, Arthur continued to work on his Master's degree and also took an extension course in metallurgy. In the spring of 1940, he obtained an honours M.A. in Ancient Eastern Languages, in the Classical Department.

He was immediately hired by Research Enterprises Limited (REL). This Crown Corporation manufactured firing control instruments. An essential component of these instruments was the glass through which the gunner found his target and aimed the gun. His accuracy depended on glass that was free of any kind of distortion. To find such a piece, a very large block of clear glass, produced on the premises, was struck, shattering it into many pieces. From the many planes presented, Arthur learned how to choose suitable pieces free of distortion. These were then fitted into the firing mechanism. Arthur was intrigued by the shapes of rejected blocks, for they often made interesting 'sculpture' pieces. He had a few such pieces in his home.

He enjoyed his work at REL. This corporation had become very large in a short period of time. Arthur initiated a news sheet called *The Bulletin* to encourage community spirit. It was a mimeographed sheet with a circulation of 60, just for his own department. Its success was immediate, and he was asked to include the whole plant. Thus, he found himself the editor of a large house organ, named *Point of View*, with a circulation of 2200. It proved to be a great morale builder, and the magazine received much recognition and applause.

Arthur left REL on December 31, 1942. His salary had been \$200.00 per month, a sum that seemed almost extravagant after the poverty of the Depression.

Immediately in January 1943, he began work for the Otis Fensom Company, in Hamilton, where he was put in charge of materials for the production of the Bofors Anti-aircraft Gun, a position which called into use his knowledge of metallurgy. All kinds of metal sheeting of various thicknesses were required.

Interestingly, he found that blind people were extremely accurate in sorting out sheets of metal according to size, since their fingers were sensitive to very small differences, even as much as a millimetre. He left Otis Fensom at the end of 1944, as the war effort began to wind down.

He soon found employment with the Murray Jones Consulting Firm. One assignment was with the Massey Harris Company in their Brantford plant, where cream separators, used on dairy farms, were manufactured. His task was to do a time study of production methods. The war had taught that time had to be used efficiently. It must not be wasted since 'time was money.' Arthur discovered that one of the separator's parts, the centrifugal bowl, was made by a labourious method that employed several elderly men. A new era was being ushered in, and Arthur could see that his study would be the death knell for this paternalistic system. Sensing the consequences of his recommendations, Arthur felt a little sad.

Then his firm was awarded a challenging contract with Marathon Paper Mills in Northern Ontario, on Lake Superior. In the spring of 1943, when this mill was being built, a huge machine had been moved into place on the second floor. It had broken through the floor, placing stresses on the whole building in every direction. The firm was hired to calculate, and recommend, the best way to restore the building. It took two engineers, one being Arthur, a whole year to complete these calculations, working only with the building blueprints. What intrigued Arthur about this employment was that all the work was done from the Toronto office, without ever visiting the site. He was left to wonder how, and even if, the restoration ever took place.

While gainfully employed with these different firms, Arthur and his family had been worshipping at St. John's Anglican Church in North Toronto since 1936 or so. At one point when the

Young People group lacked a leader, Mrs. Robinson, an influential woman with several sons, prevailed upon Arthur to take the church's young people in hand. He accepted the challenge.

Members were between the ages of 18 and 23, just out of high school and likely studying or starting careers. They met in the Custance living room every Sunday afternoon to listen to a talk given by Arthur, followed by discussion. Then they ate their sandwiches and all attended the evening church service. The group had, on average, 60 members.

They had fun. They held progressive dinners involving parents and church members; put on plays, often writing the scripts themselves; and, in the spring, put on a banquet for parents. But each person was responsible for inviting and taking care of someone else's parents, not their own. There were games, excursions for which they sometimes rented a streetcar for \$12.00, campfires, skating, tobogganing, bowling, socials, etc.

But Arthur became discouraged, for none of the youth seemed to understand the Gospel or the Christian life. Maybe it was time to stop. He decided to ask the Lord for direction.

Shortly thereafter, Harry Robinson, a prominent member of the Young People's group, came to realize what it means to know the Lord. Here is the account as described by Arthur many years later in book *Sovereignty of Grace*:

One of our young people with whom I had been dealing for four years, and who was yet unsaved, climbed on the streetcar at the limits of the north end of our city to make the long trip (about eight miles) downtown to a place of summer employment. On the streetcar it happened that there was another young person who loved to argue but seemed totally impervious to the Lord's claims and quite unaware of his own need of a Saviour. He fancied himself something of a sophisticated philosopher. My friend sat down beside him, and

at once got into an argument with him about the way of salvation, though my friend himself had yet no assurance of his own salvation. Apparently the argument continued unabated until they both got off the streetcar half an hour later and went their own different ways to work.

At the end of the day, in the providence of God, both men caught the same streetcar back to the north end of the city and found seats side by side! In view of the enormous numbers of people coming out of work at that time in the evening, this was an unusual circumstance indeed. Needless to say, they picked up their former argument immediately.

That evening, after supper, my friend phoned me and said, "I'd like to come over and see you. I think I know what you've been trying to tell me." And within half an hour we went for a walk together and there was no doubt about it. He knew the Lord..." (p.283)

At the morning service that next Sunday, Harry read the lesson. He began, "Last week, I became a Christian, and with this new understanding, I now read the lesson." The congregation was electrified by this speech.

One after another came to see Arthur in the next few weeks, many becoming Christians. Arthur had his answer from the Lord. Now the real work of teaching them began. These young people became a force in the church and were very active members. Many of them joined the Armed Forces, women as well as men, and some did not return. A large number of them became ministers and missionaries.

For ten years, they met in the Custance's home for Bible discussion on Sunday afternoons, worshipped together, worked together in the church, played together, and got to know one another. He gained their respect and trust, and they told him their doubts and problems in reconciling the faith they learned in

church with what they were being taught at university. Evening after evening was spent with individuals, helping them sort things out, introducing them to the Lord and then discipling them in their Christian walk. It was very time consuming, but so rewarding to see them find joy and purpose, to become alive. It was where Arthur's heart was, and he spent every free moment with them, for these young people had become his family.

His friend and mentor, Dr. John R. Howitt, a devout Anglican, was as concerned as Arthur about the plight of Christian students entering university, unprepared for the anti-Christian philosophy they would encounter there. He had, in 1936, written a little booklet entitled *Evolution: Science Falsely So-Called* (the title being a quote from 1 Timothy 6:20). It was a compilation of quotes from scientists who did not believe in the current evolutionary interpretation of science. It was written specifically "to help the student who, on leaving a Christian home for the university, is overwhelmed with the doctrine [of evolution] when he meets it and who has no one to whom he may turn for light." He revised it constantly to keep it current, enlisting Arthur's help. Dr. John was working on the 20th edition at the time of his death in 1985.

Dr. Howitt had joined an organization in the United States that had similar concerns about Christian students entering university. In fact, the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA) was writing a handbook for the same purpose. But they were having difficulty finding qualified men to write the various chapters. Dr. Howitt suggested to Dr. Everett, the man in charge of the handbook, that Arthur Custance, a "very erudite young engineer and student of biblical languages" was the man who could write the chapter on anthropology. "I regard him as quite brilliant," explained Dr. Howitt, "and he is absolutely sound in the faith." Thus, in 1943, Arthur was offered the anthropology assignment. He gladly

accepted, submitting a 28-paged manuscript, plus at least as many pages of references and quotations.

At the same time Arthur was asked to review a paper on biology that had been submitted for the handbook. After reading it, he felt the paper was simply a critique of evolutionary theory but had offered no alternative. Furthermore, he suggested that what the ASA should be producing was not a handbook, but a new biology, a new geology, a new anthropology, etc., which would be from a Christian standpoint. He, in his own paper, had attempted to provide a Christian view of anthropology, an alternative to that given in the classroom.

Now, the ASA's intended approach had been only to identify and diffuse difficulties arising in the classroom that might undermine a student's faith. But the referees found that Arthur did no such thing! He stated frankly that modern anthropology and the Bible could *not* be reconciled because anthropology affirmed the antiquity of man, an antiquity which did not fit with the Genesis account. And, secondly, anthropology assumed an evolutionary history of humankind from a bestial beginning, an origin that clashed with the biblical statements of humankind's creation "in the image of God" followed by an account of the blossoming of civilization within a few generations. Thirdly, and apart from Scripture, the evolutionary theory was not even borne out by history, nor by studies in either cultural anthropology or archaeology.

Everett, in a letter to Arthur, noted that the severest criticisms of his paper came from those whose fields were allied to anthropology and, accordingly, reliance had to be placed upon their opinions. "It appears that your manuscript is not suitable for the handbook, at least without serious revision. As this revision would have to delete your major thesis, are you interested in changing it?"

In his response to Everett, Arthur acknowledged he had hardly expected such severe, even hostile, criticisms – particularly since the Department of Anthropology was quite aware of his views and yet had granted him his degree. He defended not only his lengthy references and quotations as necessary to support such a thesis, but also his criticism of the current interpretations of anthropologists. He wrote:

It is here that I believe the whole trouble arises. Personally I accept the Word of God from cover to cover as verbally inspired. To me it is the Touchstone of Truth. It is truth, and does not require to be proved, as the criticisms would suggest. I took it as a starting point, and then tried to reconcile the findings and speculations of modern anthropologists with the truth.

There is no doubt that he felt unduly rejected and disturbed because the reviewers did not fully appreciate the consequences of conciliation to modern science. It was a question of either squaring the Bible with science (the reviewers' position) or squaring science with the Bible (Arthur's position). The severest points of divergence were the matters of chronology and of development. Was mankind millions of years old? Did everything evolve from lower to higher complexity? These two points Arthur later developed into books, showing how God's plan for humankind's redemption is destroyed if these evolutionary positions are taken.

In view of the criticisms and the impossibility of such a revision of his manuscript, he felt it only proper to withdraw the paper. Though he did not intend to remove his name from membership on this account, he offered to do so if they should feel it the best thing under the circumstances. Everett immediately replied that he was a valued member, for he acted as a "restraint,

warning of pitfalls, as well as one who points out new approaches.”

His friend, Dr. John Howitt, or Dr. John as he was affectionately called, advised him to not become discouraged nor to “give up” since “great blessing will come to you if you accept the criticism bravely.” He suggested that the great value of criticism is discovering “the amazing and wholly unexpected slants people will take of one’s work—to see ourselves as others see us. It is a secret and confidential self-revelation which is of tremendous value.” Nevertheless, Arthur did not renew his membership.

Several years later, however, in 1953, he rejoined the ASA and attended the Annual Conference, which he greatly enjoyed. But once again, he was disillusioned, indeed horrified, when a report came into Dr. John’s hands of an unofficial meeting in New York of some ASA members. These members felt the Affiliation’s task should be to develop a Christian philosophy of science, a task scientists knew better how to do than theologians or philosophers. This Christian philosophy would allow them to remain scientifically respectable by incorporating popular scientific beliefs, such as the theory of evolution, into their interpretation of Scripture. Arthur felt that they were placing scientific respectability above religious commitment. But more serious to Arthur was their failure to realize that, in many cases, theology must decide the issue, not scientific fact. There was confusion, he felt, as to the role of reason and of faith.

Arthur was fully convinced that their approach was wrong, and he was dismayed by its entrenchment. Clearly, the ASA was not an anti-evolution club. Rather than oppose evolution, they chose simply to ignore it.

So Arthur once again departed from ASA, but Dr. John stayed on, in spite of feeling out of step. The president, Dr. Harold Hartzler, urged them to stay, saying, “we need men like you with

convictions.” Dr. Howitt acquiesced, “even if I serve no other useful purpose than that of being a thorn in the flesh,” which he did until his death in 1985. Though both men were convinced of the need to stand for their biblical convictions against this rising tide, their *modus operandi* differed. Dr. John called himself a joiner who didn’t want to rock the boat too severely, but to maintain a steadying presence. Arthur, on the other hand, was a protester, warning that the ship was dangerously off its true course. Arthur was unwilling to go along for the ride.

Arthur was not the only one with misgivings as to the direction of the ASA. Another member, Henry Morris, who like Arthur took the Bible as the touchstone of truth, branched off and developed Creation Science, an organization that took the creation week in Genesis literally to mean seven days of twenty-four hours each. Arthur was not happy in either camp, though he was asked to write articles, and did, by both groups and to take part in creation/evolution debates. So far, the battle was either to oppose or to ignore evolution, and this latter choice, in his view, really meant joining the enemy. Perhaps, in the end, the ASA did ‘win,’ since for most Christians in academia, even in Christian institutions, theistic evolution appears to be the origin theory of choice.

Hitherto, Arthur’s theology and worldview had been honed in his discussions with the Young People at church and in his work with IVCF students. This interaction with the ASA was in the public arena and with peers. While it greatly refined his beliefs and his stance on the creation/evolution debate, he increasingly found himself in an isolated position, for he was not comfortable in either the ASA group nor in the Creation Science group. Was he the only man in step? What was the meaning of the things he was discovering in the Word of God and in God’s world? He felt quite unsettled, and, except for Dr. John, quite alone.

The war ended with great celebrations in May 1945. Canadians had distinguished themselves, especially on D-Day in June 1944. But it was not easy returning to civilian life. Servicemen did not seem to fit in. Not only were they changed people, but they had returned to a changed society. Women had entered the work force while, at the same time, managing the home in the absence of their husbands. This new freedom changed the dynamics of family life. No family was without loss and sorrow. Life would never be the same.

Yet a new era of prosperity had begun, a wonderful prospect for those who had been through the ten difficult years of the Depression. In those days before the war, jobs were very scarce and it was hard to secure one that would provide enough money for food and shelter. Any job was welcome. But now, in 1946, things had changed. In the plethora of available work, it was not a question of money so much as a question of meaningful work. For Arthur, working at Murray Jones Consulting Firm was not as meaningful as his work in the evenings with the Young People of St. John's Anglican Church in North York.

By the summer of 1946, he felt caught in a dilemma, for he had two commitments pulling at him, his work at Murray Jones and the Young People. He couldn't do both. So he quit his job and committed himself to the Young People. He also decided to build a house! He made it an opportunity to involve them, always teaching by word and by life.

Thus, the Custances sold their house on St. Germaine Street in Toronto, which they had owned since 1940. It had been the longest time they had ever had the same address. Arthur had found a wonderful piece of land in Lansing, in what was then north Toronto. The narrow lot was situated on a cliff overlooking the Don River. Here he built a house of his own design with his own hands and the help of the young people. It was a two-storey house, featuring three bedrooms, a study and a finished basement with a

rumpus room. The living room with its fireplace and bay window faced south. The dining room was panelled in dark wood with Jacobean furniture. A long slightly curving driveway led to the garage and house. Beyond it stretched the lawn to the cliff – with no fence! On the edge of the cliff was an oak tree on which Arthur built a swing that swung out over the abyss below. It took some courage to swing high. The view was spectacular. They called their home Oakwynds.

The house was completed within the year. The land had cost him \$600.00 and the building \$3700.00, as he had done most of the labour himself, even mixing the cement, and with the help (not always helpful) of the young people. But money had now run out. Clearly, he had to find work.

So, in the spring of 1947, he returned to the work force and was hired by Henderson Lighting Co. as product engineer. A new kind of lighting, the fluorescent tube, had been invented. Arthur designed vertical fluorescent lighting fixtures, the first in the city, which were installed in banks. He spent three years here, using his creative talents.

A question, however, kept nagging him: was this all that the Lord wanted of him? Was there not something more meaningful, some kind of full-time ministry? Now that he had returned to the work force, Arthur had much less time to spend with the Young People. He missed this vital connection of sharing his knowledge and helping calm doubts, of seeing faith and understanding grow.

Much of Arthur's work with the Young People revolved around the problem of reconciling their faith with what they were being taught at university. But he soon discovered that this wasn't the only problem these Christians faced; a deeper and more serious problem, because it was so personal, had to do with the inner life of the Christian. While their salvation and faith in God was not in question, their understanding of the Christian life, and even of

God, was still at a Sunday school level. Their minds were being stretched and challenged in their university studies, but there was no such comparable stretching regarding the spiritual life by the Church, either in sermons or in continuing study of the Bible. This failure to develop a mature Christian mind resulted in a Christian life that was stunted, leaving an inner hunger, an unease, which haunted some students. Where was truth? Who or what should they believe?

Arthur understood them, even though when he had encountered the same discrepancies, he had handled them differently. He knew the Bible thoroughly, having studied it that one winter out west, and in the light of that knowledge, he studied the data of the classroom seeking to understand where there was conflict or disagreement.

As noted previously, Arthur was disappointed in the direction the ASA had taken. Nor was he happy with the stance of those who had taken the opposite direction, Creation Science. In this creation/evolution controversy, the battle lines were sharply drawn, with a deep chasm between. There was no meeting of minds, it seemed, and it became an *either/or* situation. Part of the problem was due to the fact that in any discussion the basic premises of each side were never recognized. There was, therefore, no open acknowledgment that one party relied on the fact of the supernatural which the other party denied. So how could there be meaningful dialogue? Each was shadowboxing with the other, with no real encounter between the two.

Furthermore, it was becoming clearer to Arthur that neither side had *all* the truth but that each side had truths that the other side needed. For he had found that when the Bible is made the touchstone of Truth, then sometimes scientific data shed light on Scripture, and sometimes the Bible sheds light on scientific data. The debate becomes not a matter of *either/or* but a matter of *both/and*. As Arthur himself put it:

When I affirm that an established fact is as sacred as a revealed truth, this is not intended to imply that revealed truth has priority over established fact or that established fact has priority over revealed truth. Both are valid and necessary.

There is, then, a *tertium quid*, a third alternative to the *either/or* choice. This alternative took shape in his own thinking as he dialogued, though less and less, with peers in the ASA and Creation Science, but most significantly as he listened to students and as he spoke at IVCF meetings.

InterVarsity was keenly aware of this problem, endemic in all universities. Just how InterVarsity could meet this need was a subject of many conversations between Arthur and Stacey Woods, General Director of IVCF in North America, a man of great vision and energy. Stacey listened to what Arthur thought InterVarsity should do, based on his own experience as a student himself and with students. Arthur recommended the appointment of a roving staff member specifically to meet students in a very personal way through weekend retreats or week-long missions.

Arthur set down the requirements of such a position in a letter to Stacey in January 1948, but ended it by saying, "only count me out as an applicant." He admitted that he constantly felt a call to this kind of work. He knew he had the resources. Yet "every time," he confessed, "I visit the IVCF office or yourself to initiate the first step, I always feel a peculiar sense of 'not meeting' the situation somewhat." Stacey was not satisfied with that answer. Stacey, of course, knew the position should be filled and that Arthur was the man. However, due to financial problems, IVCF could offer no such position at that time.

Because of Arthur's restlessness, the Custances sold Oakwynds in 1949 and bought a plot of land on Long Lake in Muskoka's cottage country, not far from Huntsville and the Pioneer Camps

that they knew so well. So once again, he was building. He designed a rustic cottage with a bedroom and an “end” bedroom with bunk beds. There was a dining room, a kitchen, and a living room with a heatilator fireplace (Arthur always had fireplaces in his houses.) The cottage was on a slight elevation, overlooking the lake, facing the west so it was appropriately called Sunset Cove. Though it meant Arthur spent the weekdays in Toronto and commuted to the cottage on weekends, it was a wonderful place for the family to spend the summers.

But the cottage was only a summer residence and did not provide a permanent home. This created an unsettled feeling, especially for Lillian. Thinking a change would be good, the family decided Lillian and Nigel should spend the winter in Lunenburg where she grew up. The family made the trip to Nova Scotia by car and, in answer to very specific prayer, found just what they had hoped for: a house with a piano and a view of the sea! Arthur went back to Toronto.

During this temporary separation, Nigel’s first letter, addressed to “Mr. Chips (dad),” reported that “in swimming I can only swim like a fish, and float like a log, but I am learning slow but sure to dive like a seal.” Later, he received this precious letter from Nigel who was obviously learning French:

*Dear Daddy,
I wish to thank [you] very much daddy, for the nice birthday (fete)
present you sent me. The last six years have been the best because when
I was (huit) years of age I became a Christian. Well, its school time
now, so Cheerio*

Love Nigel

Lillian and Nigel returned from the East and spent the next summer at Sunset Cove. That fall, in 1950, they sold the cottage and moved to Willowdale, where they lived until 1954. Arthur continued to work at Henderson Electric. But he was waiting for

direction from the Lord, for some kind of meaningful life work. He knew what he would like to do, what he was capable of, and what he seemed suited for: some kind of work with students. His aptitude had been proven. He and Stacey Woods talked about what was needed, but IVCF had no positions available, except volunteer work.

As the years dragged on with nothing in sight, Arthur felt perplexed and discouraged, maybe even a little resentful. What did the Lord want of him?

He reflected on his past experiences. He had been surprised by the magnitude of the creation/evolution controversy, for it posed no theological nor scientific difficulties for him. He had been able in most cases to resolve apparent contradictions between the Bible and the classroom by taking Scripture to be the touchstone of truth. If no resolution was evident at that moment, then prudence demanded waiting for further light. Either what was so certain in science would prove not so certain (a recurring refrain in scientific writing is "We now know..."), or the meaning of Scripture itself would become clearer through some new discovery in history or in word meaning.

Yet the opposition, even of Christians, to his approach to the problems was so persistent that he did consider his knowledge might be inadequate. Perhaps he should pursue a Ph.D.? This could also give him some authority, some standing, at least in the eyes of academia. But in what field? Since origins was at the centre of this debate, it seemed wise to pursue it in anthropology, a subject he had already studied extensively.

With nothing else in view, he decided, in 1951, to return to the classroom. It was a momentous decision that would eventually change the direction of his life and, indeed, the man himself. It was a costly decision financially, but risks had never deterred him before. He faced such challenges with careful deliberation and determination.

Chapter 7

Postgraduate Studies: Opportunities of Service

Arthur returned to the University of Toronto and discussed requirements for a doctorate in anthropology with Professor McIlwraith, head of the department. It was in one sense an historic moment for the department since Arthur's application for a Ph.D. was the department's very first one.

On the basis of the excellent marks of his undergraduate and Master's work, the work he had done on his own for the past ten years, and his mature age, special arrangements were made for him to complete in three years what is ordinarily covered in seven. The department reserved the right to remove him from the program should at any time his progress be judged unsatisfactory.

And so, in the fall of 1951, he registered as a graduate student with a major in anthropology. It included five courses plus two minors: one in zoology and the other in art and architecture.

Ironically, in the summer of 1952, the door to work which he felt called to do, and which had seemed so definitely closed, had now opened up. In the spring of that year, Stacey Woods, general director of IVCF, had written to him, "I believe that with the ability

that God has given you, He could greatly use you as a speaker at certain InterVarsity weekend conferences.”

So it was that Arthur spent the month of August at Campus-in-the-Woods, a beautiful, rocky, wooded island in Lake of Bays in Muskoka, which was reached by a half-hour boat ride. Once on the island, there was little chance of getting away. It gave a tremendous sense of being in another world “far from the madding crowd” and all responsibilities. One was free to concentrate on thinking about life, about God, about values and meaning.

There were two sessions that August for executive members of local IVCF chapters from Canada and the United States. In each two-week period Arthur gave lectures in the mornings. There were other speakers, too. There was time to play and to have conversations with these future leaders-to-be. He recalled one instance when he spontaneously gave his sweater to a black student who was feeling cold. This act overwhelmed the student, to think that someone of standing would lend him something so personal. He had been treated as an equal without any condescension, and it proved a turning point for him in his Christian life. There were many such rewarding experiences that summer.

At the end of the summer Arthur entered his second year of postgraduate studies. He was registered in a doctoral program in the Department of Anthropology with the tentative subject of his thesis being “The Relation of Science and Invention Among non-Literate Peoples.” That year he carried a major in social anthropology with courses in the building of cultures, anthropological theory, applied anthropology, archaeology, and ethnology. His minors were culture and personality and two languages, French and German.

In spite of the fact that he himself was beginning another year of studies, he accepted another assignment from IVCF. Thus, on

the weekend of September 12-14, 1952, Arthur was off to Des Plaines, a camp just outside of Chicago. This retreat, to which only professors and graduates were invited, was a new venture for InterVarsity. It was an attempt to consider, as David Adeney, regional secretary for the Midwest, said, "the Christian faculty member's relationship to the Christian fellowship on the campus," and to consider the role of graduates either on campus or living in the same city as volunteer support staff.

It was a subject that Arthur had thought about for some time. While IVCF was primarily for the undergraduate, Arthur saw that there were the same kinds of needs amongst those pursuing graduate and doctoral studies, both for fellowship among Christians and for a way to evangelize the non-Christian graduate. Another area that needed to be addressed concerned international students, for most of them were eager to visit American homes and not be limited to an institutional glimpse of America. Since often they were older and more mature than the undergraduate, contact with graduates was seen to be of great benefit.

Thus, the Graduate Christian Fellowship was formed to undertake these roles. Yet Arthur's vision for such a Fellowship was much broader:

"to stimulate a greater measure of intellectual exploration of science and philosophy and of the arts in the light of those essential keys of knowledge supplied explicitly and implicitly in the Word of God. This must in time have the effect of marking out new lines of inquiry within the Word of God and give a fresh impetus to Bible study."

It was the kind of thing he himself was to do later in *The Doorway Papers*.

What made that conference a success was Arthur's ability to open up implications of how both secular and biblical knowledge

reflected on the other, followed by a challenge and stimulation of the attendees' own thinking. One attendee, John Alexander, Head of the Geography Department at the University of Wisconsin, said the talk on worldviews "extended the horizon of my thinking with certain goals in mind for the next twenty years." Incidentally, Alexander became general director of IVCF-USA in 1964. Copies of this particular talk were requested and subsequently appeared in the April 1953 issue of the IVCF magazine, *His*. Moreover, Arthur himself had found the conference to be a blessing personally, and he felt more confident than ever that "the Lord really has a great task for the Fellowship to perform."

Invitations to conferences and speaking engagements kept coming, and he could not refuse. One wonders when he studied since his preparation for such talks was quite meticulous, both in content and of himself in prayer. Three weeks after the conference in Des Plaines, in October 1952, he was at Camp Pinnacle in New York State meeting with students from universities in Albany, Troy and Schenectady.

Basically, Arthur's messages revolved around three main themes that he felt were particularly applicable to the Christian student. The first, titled "The Renewing of Your Mind," was a careful analysis of what really happens to the mind of a person when he or she becomes a child of God, and what in God's view is the really important thing about university training and the place of reason in Christian thinking. The second, tentatively titled "Fruits which Remain," answered the penetrating question, "What does God really require of us?" or, as Arthur sometimes summed it up, "God is not interested in making executives but saints." The third, titled "The Secret of Victory," dealt with living an authentic, victorious Christian life. This included a careful consideration of the meaning of *sin* and *sins*. The former is original sin, a condition of sin that marks all humans as a result of Adam's first act of disobedience. This sin is inherited, like a disease, by every

descendant of Adam, and *sins* are the fruit of that root of disease. These themes, Arthur felt, were basic to living authentically as a child of God, whether as student or in the work force.

Since the numbers attending this conference were not large, it was quite personal, resulting in continued discussion both during the conference and later through correspondence with some, which Arthur always found rewarding, though time-consuming. At this conference his messages, the organizers said, "strengthened a number of young Christians who previously had not really considered just how important Christ is in their lives. It has also helped the older Christians realize that being fruitful includes a lot more than just good works."

Then Jim Nyquist, IVCF staff member for Eastern New York area, invited Arthur to be the speaker at a Christmas conference he was planning for international students to be held near Boston, from December 23 to 28, 1952. This Arthur could not refuse, for it was part of his vision for the Graduate Christian Fellowship. The invitation to overseas students was quite frank: "Since Christianity is important in the background of American culture, we know you will be interested to get an insight into this phase of American life." Around 35 people attended, 15 being international students. It was a challenge to present Christ to those of other cultures and worldviews. Arthur thoroughly enjoyed this interaction.

The enthusiasm generated in all these meetings among students, and in IVCF staff members, resulted in a great desire to hear him again. He was constantly asked if he would be available for a day talk, a weekend, a conference. These were great temptations! But he did have to study. However, he did accept an invitation from the IVCF group at the Ontario College of Education in Toronto for weekly noon hour talks in January and February of 1953.

Though there were invitations from the United States for spring and summer conferences, little materialized since such

arrangements were now handled regionally. This lack of direction in the United States office was, in part, due to the resignation of Charles Troutman in April. In a letter dated September 17, 1953, Stacey admitted to Arthur, "We are going through deep waters in many respects down here."

That summer, in lieu of camp work, Arthur was hired by *The Evangelical Christian Magazine*, which was not prospering, to advise on how to rejuvenate it. His careful analysis resulted in a proposal with "new looks and new content." Some of his ideas were adopted and the magazine prospered, though it was finally sold in the 1970s. At the request of the editor, Jim Hunter, Arthur continued to contribute articles, especially in the science section. They were written in a popular style suited to the Christian audience, though this proved to hinder him later in his pursuit of his Ph.D.

In the fall of 1953, he registered for his third year. His major remained the same, with minors in culture and personality, physical anthropology, Greece in the bronze age and Mediterranean archaeology. Arthur continued his study of French, but switched from German to Spanish. He also added an interdepartmental course in communications. It was a heavy load but one that Arthur took on with zest. At no point did he come to the conclusion that the information he was learning in these courses was necessarily in conflict with Scripture.

The department, it seemed, was pleased with his progress, as judged by a letter sent to Arthur on May 29, 1952, in which McIlwraith reminded him that he had undertaken a difficult task in coming back to academic discipline after a number of years of "what I might describe as 'free lance' reading and thinking." He and his colleagues, he said, "have all been impressed with your thoroughness, willingness to learn, and sound academic attitude." McIlwraith's report to the School of Graduate Studies in April 1953

stated that Arthur had obtained a mark of 86% in anthropology and that "Custance did extremely able and ingenious work throughout the year." On a copy sent to Arthur himself, the professor had appended, "Thank you, both for your work and your co-operation in this course."

At the beginning of his third year, Arthur had been given a minor appointment by the department, which was both an honour and a burden. It did help somewhat with finances, but it ate up much precious time that was needed for his daunting load of studies.

However, Arthur did accept an invitation from Peter Haile, staff member for IVCF, to be the speaker at the Christmas retreat for international students, held again in Boston. He almost didn't get there! He travelled by train to Montreal where he had to change trains. Here he was directed by a railway man to the sleeper train to Boston, waiting on the tracks. He was early. After a lapse of time he suddenly realized no one else was getting on the train. He quickly gathered up his belongings and, dashing into the station concourse, ran into the same railway man who had directed him in the first place. Recognizing Arthur immediately, the man exclaimed, "You are the man going to Boston! Didn't you hear them call out a different platform?"

He hadn't. Without any explanation, the railway man said, "Follow me."

It turned out this man was in high places and, feeling somewhat responsible, he made some quick phone calls. Arthur was put into a taxi with a police escort that whizzed them through the Montreal evening traffic, over the river, and out into the country. At a crossroads the train slowed down. People had their noses pressed against the windows wondering why the train had halted in the middle of nowhere. Arthur swung aboard and the train started up as he inwardly thanked God for this timely intervention.

This Christmas conference for international students was a smaller group, with 11 fellows and 6 girls, but a greater variety of countries were represented: Japan, England, Columbia, Greece, Honduras, Indonesia, Puerto Rico and India. Amongst Arthur's papers remains a tattered page listing their names amidst indecipherable notes. While there is no record of his talks, we do know it was a wonderful five days for Arthur, sharing the faith with so many from other cultures and backgrounds. Arthur had an uncanny ability in establishing rapport with students, whatever their language or status.

After his return from the Christmas conference in Boston, Arthur became ill and was incapacitated for about a month, missing a number of lectures, in particular his communications course. It became necessary, he wrote to a friend, to take various aids to "enable me to sleep at all at night." It was small wonder that he had difficulty sleeping, for he was trying to compress into three years what usually required seven.

But he had done well over the three years so that, in March of 1954, it was decided he should now try the comprehensives, both written and oral, which are required before permission can be granted to present a thesis. He wrote some 90 pages in 13 hours of written examinations. "The results," he wrote in his personal journal, "were quickly evident from the fact that various individuals in the anthropology courses immediately afterwards began to offer congratulations. Since I had not myself made any forecasts, such congratulations evidently arose from assurances of other department members."

Even Professor Carpenter, who had been very critical of Arthur, said, in the presence of another student, "You had some remarkable answers . . . you are to be congratulated." Two days later, in the coffee shop with a group of students present, Professor McIlwraith said, "Custance, I think we'll have the orals next

Monday. You have no need for sleeping pills meanwhile. They [the Orals] are really very unimportant.”

The orals were set for the Wednesday. There were three examiners: McIlwraith, Emmerson, and Carpenter. He was asked, among other things, why he slanted his interests towards the nature of man, if he was so interested in the physical origins of man. He replied that he felt the origin of man and his physical make-up were related to his nature. “If he is merely a ‘nothing-but’ animal, then any study of animal behaviour would throw light on his nature, but if he is not, then the study of animal behaviour will not be conclusive.”

Arthur, sensing tension and confusion among the examiners, began to feel that his answers were not quite satisfactory. In his journal he described what happened just before he was asked to leave the examination room, when Dr. Carpenter asked a final question:

“Do you believe Adam and Eve were real people?” he asked angrily.

“Yes, I do.” I believe it was said simply and quietly – without any hostility or defensiveness.

Then Carpenter said even more angrily to McIlwraith, “If you intend to put through a man for a Ph.D. who believes this kind of crap, you have my resignation right now!”

Perhaps this confrontation with Carpenter was inevitable, for in undergraduate days, he and Arthur had locked horns on a number of occasions. Once, when Carpenter was explaining the survival of the fittest as being due to the fact that the tiger was able to catch his prey because his legs got longer and longer, Arthur wanted to know how it was that the prey had also survived. Another time, Carpenter had said, “Of course nobody believes in the resurrection of the dead.” Arthur’s hand shot up. “Just for the

record," he said, "I do." Several students came to talk with him afterwards.

Later that Wednesday afternoon of the orals, Arthur asked Dr. McIlwraith when the results would come out. He said, "Well, it is a serious matter. We are to have a further departmental meeting tomorrow. We want to be sure we know what you know and what you don't know. We will let you know."

Friends were shocked by this turn of events. Many saw it as a clear case of discrimination, that the university had refused to award him his Ph.D. because of his religious beliefs. They urged him to take it to the papers and make it public. But his ever faithful friend, Dr. Howitt, advised otherwise: "The Lord will avenge. Leave it to Him." Wise advice, which Arthur heeded.

In a letter dated March 31, McIlwraith said the results of the comprehensives were inconclusive, finding weaknesses in certain areas of knowledge. Such deficiencies, he said, could be remedied by specified assignments. But until the satisfactory completion of these, the "result of your comprehensives is deferred." These deficiencies were also evident to Arthur himself, and he willingly accepted their decision. What was more problematic was the fact that, in the course on physical anthropology, Emmerson had given him a mark of 65%, falling just below the required 66%.

Arthur's communications course was also in question. Carpenter had written a letter to Arthur demanding an explanation for "excessive" and "unexplained" absences from this course. Arthur had replied immediately, explaining that due to illness that past January he couldn't attend every class and chose to miss the communications one. But he also asked that the letter be accepted as a petition for permission to repeat the course. Having received no reply from him, Arthur went to see Carpenter in his office.

In this interview, Carpenter made reference to an article which Arthur had written for the *Evangelical Christian* entitled, "The Fall

was Down Not UP!" It had come to the attention of the department. They found this interpretation of the "facts" quite disturbing. Though McIlwraith at first felt that Arthur's extracurricular activities should have no bearing on his academic life, Carpenter had no such feelings. He declared that because of it, "I will fight your Ph.D. to the last ditch."

Further discussion only emphasized their differences. Even though Carpenter did relent a little, Arthur said, "I can see, Ted, that our differences are so fundamental that we might as well agree to disagree. I would not wish to surrender my freedom to write what I feel is true, for the sake of assuring myself of a Ph.D. I shall quite seriously consider dropping the whole subject."

In a letter to McIlwraith, written April 29, 1954, Arthur mentioned these differences with Carpenter, noting that Carpenter thought they might be grounds upon which he ought to be disqualified. McIlwraith had little choice but to concur with Carpenter. Arthur acknowledged the dilemma by saying, "I can also see your point of view, for I realize that the department does feel responsible for the stature of the graduates it turns out."

The discussion dragged on, as McIlwraith tried to find ways to salvage the situation. It was becoming increasingly apparent to the department that no amount of prescribed study would change Arthur's views. It wasn't that Arthur's knowledge of the subject was inadequate. Rather, it was that his interpretations differed diametrically from theirs, and unless he changed his views to theirs, they could not grant him a Ph.D. It was wise to end it now, and so McIlwraith concluded his letter, "My own judgment is that with your range of interests outside the field of Anthropology – interests of a very desirable nature, but not of an anthropological nature – I believe that you would be well advised not to attempt the Ph.D."

Thus, on May 26, 1954, the quest for a Ph.D. at the University of Toronto ended. Here he was, at the end of three years, with no

higher degree, and no money, just when the prize was almost within his grasp. This occurred through no fault of his own, except that he would not abandon his faith in order to meet the department's requirements. The door had closed with a definite finality on that dark day.

What now? Doors kept closing, doors that Arthur felt sure the Lord had opened in the first place. There seemed no 'outlet' for his thoughts or abilities. Everything seemed to lead to a dead end. There seemed to be no "place" for him; indeed, he felt that there was no point to life, nor even to his marriage. He was driven to search the Scriptures and to plead with God, because the usual "answers" to these questions were not, for him, satisfying. Surely the door with InterVarsity was the right one, but how long before it would open, Oh Lord? How much more patience was required?

Arthur could not know that, in the providence of the Lord, more training was yet required before he could undertake his ordained task.

Chapter 8

Turning Point: The Dark Night of the Soul

The termination of the Ph.D. in May 1954, was a severe blow. With little enthusiasm, Arthur set about picking up the threads of his life. Needing to find work to support his family, there was a glimmer of hope that there might be work with InterVarsity, similar to the work he had done previously. That glimmer of hope became a reality when Arthur received a letter, dated June 14, from the Canadian General Secretary of the IVCF, Wilber Sutherland:

The Executive of the Board of the IVCF of Canada has recommended to the Board that you be appointed to travel as a special representative of the IVCF among university students during this next year September 1, 1954 to August 31, 1955.

Arthur happily accepted the appointment, feeling that “the time seems to have come now to put into the Lord’s service some of the results of the past years of preparation.” And thus began this new career, his calling.

Arthur’s work began not in September but almost immediately. In March, Jim Nyquist, IVCF staff member in the Eastern New

York area in the States, asked Arthur to speak on the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures to students at the 1954 summer session to be held at Campus-in-the-Woods. On receiving Arthur's letter of acceptance, Wilber wrote to him enthusiastically about the summer plans:

I believe that Jim is not so anxious to have the students well versed in apologetical discipline . . . as that they might become utterly convinced in their own experience. . . of the Scriptures as the Word of God.

I always feel that there is a danger in students just looking at this matter from an academic viewpoint and that unless God speaks to them through the Scriptures even as it is being discussed they will end up with dry bones which may eventually prove more dangerous than helpful.

Arthur immediately worked out a series of ten lectures on the back of the letter, covering it with big ink blotches, so great was his enthusiasm for this task. (Arthur did not like ball point pens, for in his view they gave no character to writing. He used a fountain pen, grinding down the nib on the whetstone at a slant, which gave his signature its characteristic unique touch.)

This work at the Campus-in-the-Woods involved a two-week session in July, and another in August, in which Arthur addressed the leaders of the student groups of IVCF on "The Authority and Inspiration of the Scriptures." Between these two sessions was a 10-day session for faculty and graduates. Arthur challenged this group with fresh perspectives on the Articles of Faith as they relate to our redemption, a theme he later elaborated in his book, *Seed of the Woman*.

The summer of 1954 ended, but left little pause. Arthur had joined the IVCF at a very historic moment, for 1954-55 was the

Year of Mission to University Campuses, led by Canon Charles Raven from England.

The origin and history of these missions are interesting. After World War I, a group of veterans, one of them being Charles Raven, was inspired to organize the first evangelistic university mission, believing that another dimension, a moral one, needed to be added to the education of future leaders. Thus began the Cambridge, England, tradition of holding missions every three years so that the Gospel would be presented to every student by the time of graduation.

Yet within 20 years, another disastrous World War occurred. In 1953, when Canadian veterans of World War II had graduated from university, they also came to the conclusion that education of the mind alone was not enough, and proposed a similar evangelical mission for Canadian universities.

It was not a new idea in one sense, since over the years different denominations on campus had held evangelistic campaigns, hoping to bring the relevance of faith to education. But their scope and appeal were limited. In 1954, a truly united ecumenical effort was launched when seven of the Protestant clubs agreed to coordinate their work in a mission to universities, reaching numerous campuses in Quebec, Ontario, and Manitoba. Most of the missionaries, as the speakers like Arthur were known, attended them all.

It was appropriate that they should invite as the chief missionary Canon Charles Raven, the man who had envisioned the original Cambridge Mission. He was assisted by people of wide experience representing a number of different disciplines and organizations. These included Dr. R. Pilkington, a physician in genetic research at Cambridge, England; Mrs. Donovan, involved in the Student Christian Mission (SCM) and wife of an Anglican priest; Rev. Ed Nicholls, also very active in SCM; Dr. David Hay, a Scotsman who taught at Knox College (The Presbyterian Church

in Canada) at the University of Toronto; Rev. K. I. Koshy of South India who was involved with the Canadian Council of the World Council of Churches; and Arthur Custance, who represented the IVCF. As described by the McGill campus newspaper, Arthur was an engineer with an education of the "Heinz" variety. Their pictures and qualifications appeared in the *McGill Daily*.

The daily schedule for the week-long mission was intensive from morning until late evening. The main addresses by Canon Raven, given in a large auditorium at 5:00 p.m., were supplemented by lunch hour lectures by each missionary on varying subjects. The missionaries made themselves available to students at meal times, in the afternoons, and in the evenings, whether in groups or individually. This very full week was a typical schedule for all the universities they visited, though some were better organized than others.

That September, Arthur was immediately faced with a mission at Carleton University in Ottawa, followed by a Thanksgiving weekend for international students, also in Ottawa. In late October to mid-November, missions were held at Sir George Williams College in Montreal and at MacDonald College, a part of McGill University situated on the western edge of Montreal Island. This was followed by a two-week mission at Queen's University in Kingston. The year ended for Arthur with attendance at the huge mission convention, held December 24 to January 1 at Urbana, Illinois.

The year 1955 began with a two-week mission at McGill University, Montreal, followed in February by one at the University of Toronto. The last mission, in March, was at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. This proved to be a daunting schedule.

Since Arthur had not been involved in the initial planning of these missions, he had to work hard to get to know not only fellow missionaries but also the IVCF students on each campus. He was

helped by other staff in making initial contacts. It was here that I first met Arthur. As already alluded to, it was my responsibility and privilege as the Inter-School Christian Fellowship (ISCF, a counterpart of the IVCF in secondary schools) staff member for Eastern Ontario and Quebec to help with the missions held from September to January at the universities in Ottawa, Montreal and Kingston. As Arthur and I shared and prayed together during these months, I had the opportunity to watch him at work.

Arthur had a relaxed way about him giving the impression that he was never in a hurry. This made him approachable. He always paid serious attention to the one with whom he was talking, engendering trust that led to the revealing of deeper questions and puzzles in that person's life. Being in his presence, one sensed that here was a very real and vital Christian. When he prayed, it was as one who talked with God as with a friend. It was an electrifying but wonderful experience.

Right at the beginning of this Year of Mission, he made an impact – not campus-wide, though his lectures and groups were usually well attended, but in individuals in a personal way. Typical was the testimony of one student at Carleton University that September who met him in a session with an SCM group. George Slater was impressed with Arthur's clarity of thought and his intellectual credibility, but above all he remembers him as a humble man. These impressions impacted his own life. There were the same kind of reactions at each Mission.

It was a heavy schedule, during which Arthur met many new people and encountered new situations. Even though there was, in a sense, a repetition of lectures, Arthur always found that he must prepare himself for each occasion as if it were entirely new to him. Only in this way could he bring a freshness and conviction to the talk, and this gave an authority to his words which opened the way to deeper personal talks with individuals.

The year had begun with high hopes. It was exciting for Arthur—meeting important people in academia, talking with questioning students, stimulating those who had no purpose, working and praying with dedicated staff members and student leaders. Already invitations were coming in for speaking engagements in the spring, camp in the summer, and weekend conferences for the fall. Such popularity did seem to indicate that this was indeed the work for him. It seemed as if this hopeful and exciting door was now opening after all, as if this was where he should be.

Still, Arthur struggled with his new role as a popular speaker. Certainly, there was an appeal to being in the limelight; it was rewarding to arrive on campus to see posters with his picture on them, announcing his arrival. But, as each week ended, those same posters were torn down to be replaced by next week's main attraction. He felt discarded, but more troubling to him was the sense that he was making only a passing impression upon the students he spoke to.

Arthur began to feel as if he was on the fringe of things. Since his contribution was of such short duration, he never really saw things through to completion. He did have an almost instant rapport with the students he met, as he had had with the Young People of St. John's Anglican Church in Toronto. But the work at St. John's, of leading individuals through their difficulties and doubts over weeks and even years, was in sharp contrast to the fleeting and incomplete contact he had with students for a few hours after a talk. Even a weekend retreat or conference, while providing more time without too much distraction, still did not have the same impact as living in community, as was the case at St. John's.

Exhilarating as this new work was, Arthur did not feel at ease. He had a sense of never having enough time, of never quite getting to the bottom of things with students. It was a patchwork job. All

the travelling and constantly meeting new people, but never really getting to know them, was quite unsettling. What had seemed to be so right, what he had thought the Lord had prepared him for, did not seem so right any longer. This work was not so satisfying after all. It was not something that he would want to dedicate his life to.

So at the end of March 1955, he handed in his resignation to Wilbur Sutherland, effective for the end of April. It was accepted.

The future, however, looked bleak. For now the door with InterVarsity was closed, and that by his own initiative. He didn't seem to belong anywhere. Like Elijah, he had been zealous for the Lord, but to what purpose? He felt utterly alone. Even God seemed to have turned His back and was deaf to his pleadings for some kind of calling that would give meaning to life.

It seemed that slowly the Lord had stripped away all the props. Most of his life had been full of activity – studies, speaking engagements, organizing, spare evenings spent talking with young people individually. One by one, these activities evaporated and he became aware of a loneliness deep in his very being, a loneliness that he had been running away from.

The darkness closed in, even deeper than at the time of the loss of his Ph.D. It was one thing to know that the darkness was due to circumstances beyond one's control, but to know that the enemy was within was another matter. His whole life paraded before him as one failure after another until he felt utterly worthless.

He did not doubt God's faithfulness, nor His Word, even when it seemed that God was deaf and unheeding with respect to his earnest entreaties. He rested in the knowledge that it was God who had chosen him, not he who had chosen God (John 15:16). This knowledge kept him sane as he waited for guidance from the Lord. The darkness was very deep. And painful, all pervading, and seemingly unending.

Outside it was spring, but in his heart it was winter: cold and dark and hopeless. Like David, he cried out to the Lord, pouring out his complaint to Him until “my spirit grows faint within me” (Psalm 142:2). It wasn’t just that the future was hidden. What was more painful was that no one stood with him, no one walked with him. Even his closest and faithful friend, Dr. John, failed to comprehend his deep distress and alone-ness. It was an experience described so poignantly by David (Psalm 142:4 KJV):

I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me. Refuge failed me; *no man cared for my soul.*

It seemed almost unbearable. Even so, a verse in Isaiah 50:10 did give him some comfort and courage:

Who among you fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of his servant? Let him *who walks in the dark*, who has no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and rely on his God.

Thus he waited, somewhat stilled in his heart.

Chapter 9

The Research Scientist: His Niche in Life

The effect of this dark night was profound. Whatever confidence Arthur had in himself, in his abilities, was gradually replaced by a greater confidence in God. Arthur now began to recognize in a new way God's sovereignty of grace in his life, His utter trustworthiness even in the dark places. A new kind of communion with his Father was developing. Another significant mark resulting from these experiences became evident in the fact that he was no longer so opinionated. Even though his convictions were just as strong, even stronger, he now voiced them in a gentler, humbler way.

There was nothing else for Arthur to do but wait upon the Lord until His light pierced his darkness, showing him the way to go. The Lord did not keep him waiting much longer, since the basic work of the dark night had been accomplished.

It was in May 1955 that an unexpected offer came from the Defence Research Board of the Government of Canada. In the previous year, quite unknown to Arthur, a government official had come to the University of Toronto in search of a man with

engineering and anthropology. "Custance is your man," McIlwraith had responded immediately.

Certainly Arthur had one required qualification: anthropology. His academic engineering credentials were not impressive. He had taken a correspondence diploma course in mechanical drafting and an extension course in mechanical engineering in the B.Sc. division of the British Institute of Engineering, completing only 85% of the course work, and an extension course in metallurgy at University of Toronto in 1940. His engineering experience during the war years was more impressive. His qualifications were sufficient, however, for the Department of National Defence to proceed with the task of clearing him for top-secret level work. The investigation took over a year. But the offer came just when Arthur was at the end of the road again.

The Government offer did not appeal to him, since he had always envisaged life in a more-or-less academic setting. Reluctantly, he went to Ottawa for the interview without much hope. But when he discovered what was involved, the position did intrigue him, and so with nothing else on the horizon, he accepted. He was hired as Design Engineer, Prototype Engineering Group, Protective Clothing Section, at Shirley Bay, just west of the city. He began work immediately, taking rooms in a private home.

Acceptance of this position meant moving to Ottawa and this involved another decision. For over twenty years Arthur and Lillian had shared much together and had experienced the constant mercy and care of the Lord in providing for their needs. In spite of these common experiences, however there were "differences that were painfully 'felt' when together," as Arthur put it. That May he wrote a long letter to her. "I do not seek to change our relationship. I respect you for all that you are. You stand head and shoulders above the great majority of my other friends." He confessed that "when I am away and we talk on the telephone we are united spiritually but when we are together it

seems to create a tension of a peculiar kind. The love that binds two together is not based on reason: it just 'is' or isn't."

Separation in residence seemed to offer some release and so since her friends were in Toronto, Lillian continued to live there. He would not abandon her completely. What he could give her was protection, sympathy, affection, care, Christian love and understanding. And this he did, sharing what they did have in common, though with time this became less and less. Even when Lillian moved into a retirement home in the 1970s, this link by letter and phone was maintained to the end of his life.

Arthur moved permanently to Ottawa in 1955. Their son, Nigel, was already employed and living on his own. When Nigel became engaged to Sylvia Harding, Arthur wrote a "father-to-son" letter about married life. It didn't discourage Nigel! The wedding took place in Toronto on September 17, 1960, and Arthur gave his blessing to the young couple. They visited him on the long weekend in May of 1964, and again in November, this time with their cat. When they came in 1965, Nigel helped his father with his piano lessons. Arthur had always wanted to play, but he didn't continue long enough for it to become a pleasure. Nigel and Sylvia visited again in January and in July 1966. After this, there were no more visits but a connection was maintained.

Thus, in May of 1955, at the age of 45, Arthur began a wholly unforeseen path: a career as a research scientist. It was a career that was challenging and stimulating, using to the utmost his creative imagination and his analytical abilities.

The government's expectations were amply met. Even before the first year was half completed, Arthur had solved a nagging problem with the face gas mask which in the Arctic caused the eye pieces to become fogged up or frosted, literally blinding the soldier. Arthur tackled the problem enthusiastically, and in less

than six months he had designed a nose cup that prevented this from happening.

It was so notable an achievement that Arthur was the guest speaker at the December 1955 annual Defence Research Board (DRB) Symposium held in the ballroom of the Chateau Laurier. Here he addressed some 3000 people, including top military brass, scientists, and even members of parliament. He was quite at ease in this kind of situation.

The next problem assigned to Arthur called upon his knowledge of physical anthropology. In outfitting a soldier with combat gear, finding the right fit of gas mask was a hit-and-miss method. It sometimes involved opening all three sizes (small, medium and large) before getting the best fit. The time involved in not only fitting the soldier but then in repacking the unsuitable ones was considerable.

In order to ensure a tight but comfortable fit of respirators, Arthur needed a topographical map of a soldier's head and face, showing the relative position of main points, such as eyes, nose, mouth, and ears, in relation to the contours of the face. He spent several months at an army base in Kingston where a team carried out head measurements. Arthur and his team were familiarly referred to by the soldiers as the "head shrinkers." The method used was quite painless, but it did have one serious drawback: lipstick was used to mark points on the soldier's face. This 'hazard' was reported in *The Kingston Whig-Standard* newspaper for July 24, 1957:

"Some of the men may have trouble explaining lipstick stains to their wives," Major Nash admitted, agreeing that telling your wife you got lipstick stains on yourself or your handkerchief by having your face mapped was probably the "worst story you could tell her."

From the data gathered, Arthur developed a device, known as a sizing metre, which quickly proved to be most efficient in finding the right size for any soldier, saving many man hours in the task of outfitting a soldier for combat.

From this same data, along with similar data for the American soldier, Arthur carved two plaster heads, one representing the average American soldier's head and the other representing the average Canadian soldier's head. The contrast is surprising and, of course, piqued the anthropological mind of the carver as to why this should be.

Once again this achievement meant Arthur was the main speaker at the DRB Symposium in December of 1957. This honour was accorded to him in 1959 and again in 1961, when he reported on his work in designing protective clothing for the combat soldier.

It was clear to the department that here was a valuable man, and it seemed most desirable that he should have a Ph.D. Dr. Harry Sheffer, Superintendent of the DRB, encouraged Arthur to pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Ottawa. Here he was interviewed by Dr. R. Shevenell, a professor of Psychology whom Arthur came to greatly admire. They offered him a Ph.D. in their Education Department since they didn't have an Anthropology Department. But they did require some subjects he didn't have. So in 1957-1958, Arthur took Thomistic psychology, experimental psychology, methods of research, and advanced statistics, passing with marks that permitted him to proceed with his thesis. That summer the DRB gave him time to write his thesis. He was provided not with an office but with a tent on the grounds of the DRB and a typewriter. It was a quite pleasant arrangement. By fall his thesis, "Does Science Transcend Culture?" was completed. It was illustrated with photographs as well as a number of his own drawings.

It was, of course, the thesis that he would have written at the University of Toronto, only now he added a chapter showing how this information should influence the education of scientists and of technologists, which made it a suitable thesis for the Department of Education. One of his supervisors remarked that the new ideas presented in that thesis were enough for three Ph.D.s! Thus, in the spring of 1959 he was awarded the Ph.D. *cum laude*, earning the right to be called Dr. Arthur Custance. He was 49 years old.

There was celebration at the DRB. Arthur's colleagues were cognizant of his thesis since, once a month, seminars were held where the scientists were encouraged to give talks on any subject unrelated to their work. Arthur was a frequent speaker and his wide-ranging interests challenged and stimulated his colleagues. Often his subject was material basic to his Ph.D., themes which were well received. Dr. Sheffer was sufficiently impressed that he ordered 100 copies to be printed and distributed within the department.

In July 1959, Dr. Custance was named Head of the Human Engineering Group, and a new phase of his work began. The combat soldier and other service personnel needed clothing that would protect against gas and chemical warfare, radioactive fallout, and the like. But impermeable clothing has very real hazards, not the least being fatal heatstroke that can occur suddenly within minutes. It was already known that at a temperature of 90° F and without some artificial means of cooling, the length of survival time is only about 20 minutes. The prospects for the soldier were limited. He could die either from radioactive fallout or from heatstroke.

For this assignment, Arthur first of all needed to learn all he could of medical physiology pertaining to the human thermoregulation system. Thus in the spring and fall of 1961, he

monitored a course in medical physiology as a guest of the University of Ottawa.

He was given a laboratory equipped with weigh scales, treadmills, and other paraphernalia; a technician, Stan Cottrell, to help with experiments; and a seamstress, Jeanette Whalen, to alter clothing. Since the sweating mechanism in humans is unique, experiments using animal subjects would be useless. Thus, subjects would have to be humans, a serious proposition requiring the design of effective but safe experiments as well as the presence of trained personnel to deal with possible emergencies, like heatstroke, which can prove fatal very quickly.

His subjects were soldiers who volunteered for this duty. Soldiers are not known for bravery when it comes to needles and such medical procedures, but Arthur established a good rapport with them, so much so that some re-volunteered. Of course, an added incentive was the extra money which appeared in their pay cheques as physiological pay. For some, this money even helped to pay for a new car. It was a known fact that the newest cars in the parking lot belonged to soldiers and maintenance people. The old cars belonged to the scientists.

From the literature, Arthur discovered that many methods had been tried to study human thermoregulation by measuring perspiration, but collecting the sweating fluid was declared an insolvable problem. It couldn't be done, according to the best brains in military circles concerned with this problem in both England and the United States. This did not deter Arthur, however.

His task was complicated by the fact that there are some 3000 sweat glands situated all over the body. It was further complicated by the fact that there are different types of sweat glands that are activated by different stimuli, such as physical work, mental activity, emotional sweating, each with very specific glands and sites in the body. All types needed to be measured since one can

affect or trigger the other; for example, getting hot might cause emotional and mental stress.

Arthur designed a self-balancing scale for weighing human subjects that gave the exact amount of fluid lost by sweating after running on a treadmill under a variety of conditions. The sweat passed through a specially designed miniature box placed in the small of the soldier's back. The amount of air required to keep the box dry was recorded in a graph that, when analysed, gave the important information. As reported in the *Canadian Press*, "Dr. Custance's invention appears so simple it is hard to believe nobody thought of it before." The data was printed out, producing graph after graph that looked like cardiac ECGs. These graphs, with their peaks and valleys, were analysed for their significance. The invention was patented under the name "The Custance Sudorimeter."

This Sudorimeter became the basis of his research work on heat control (thermoregulation) in the human body under a great variety of conditions that a soldier might meet. Different types of clothing were tested concerning the heat load they imposed on a subject under light and heavy exercise, in different environmental temperatures, with or without a mask. Arthur studied the difference in energy cost (and therefore heat production) between road and treadmill exercise.

His findings in all these experiments became known to other military establishments and he visited similar laboratories in England at least twice and was in constant touch with the United States counterpart in Maryland. He had made important anatomical and neurological discoveries. He became known as *the* expert in human sweating. And so it was that his name appeared in *American Men of Science* in 1971, even though he was Canadian. This was quite an honour.

On June 20, 1969, he received recognition as an inventor by the Canadian Patents and Development Corporation and was given a

certificate and a lapel pin bearing the Inventor symbol. It was only given to *bona fide* inventors to whom a patent or patents had been issued and whose inventions the Corporation had actively promoted for licensing. Arthur proudly wore this lapel pin. He felt quite honoured, though at the same time humbled by it, for he did not think what he had done was unusual – simply all in a day’s work, so to speak.

Arthur was intrigued by mental sweat, and since the sites of mental sweating are very specific and small, notably the balls of the thumb and fingers and the forehead, he invented a miniature device that fitted the thumb to measure the level of mental activity. When he demonstrated its use on himself, the needle hit the top of the scale. But for me, it seemed to barely move, indicating very low mental activity. It was discouraging. But then I performed much better when there was no hand lotion on my thumb!

Arthur was also intrigued by the finding that the Sudorimeter could measure very low levels of brain activity. Even breathing produced a measurable amount of insensible perspiration. These discoveries had possibilities, as reported in the *Ottawa Journal*, October 1, 1959:

An instrument for the continuous measurement of thumb-sweating can indicate when a person is dozing, is asleep, waking up or is awake.

Consequently it could tell a doctor applying an anaesthetic when the patient was “under” or recovering consciousness. In fact, the device itself could control the amount of anaesthetic required by the patient.

In somewhat the same way, through the use of small models of the instrument, hospital staffs could keep charts on how patients sleep.

Dr. Culance in his laboratory here showed a reporter a refinement of his instrument in which the sweat-measuring

instrument rings an alarm or flashes a warning light to indicate a subject is falling asleep. One possible use would be for truck drivers on long night hauls to ensure their wakefulness.

Similarly, the instrument could indicate when a person in an aircraft was passing out from lack of oxygen and automatically supply the needed oxygen.

This Canadian Press Report appeared in newspapers right across the country from Halifax to Edmonton (it never made it over the Rockies) in both English and French papers. He received 13 newspaper clippings with this additional comment from C. A. Pope, Public Relations Officer of the DRB:

May I congratulate your recent Television appearance. It went off very well—not only did the equipment work according to plan but your very forthright answers to questions were a joy to hear. Hearty congratulations!

That television appearance on the CBC's evening show, *Tabloid*, had indeed gone well. Before airing, there was considerable banter about word usage; "sweat" was unacceptable over the air waves, but "perspiration" was permissible.

While Arthur himself did not pursue any of the possible applications of the Sudorimeter described in the newspaper article, it is not known if anyone else did. The original Sudorimeter was a big, rather clumsy suitcase that today could be miniaturized electronically.

In the spring of 1967, Arthur was consulted by Canada's Peace-Keeping Operations concerning the difficulties often experienced by peace-keeping forces stationed in areas that have distinctly different cultural traditions from our own. Drawing on his knowledge of cultural anthropology, he was able to pinpoint subtle differences that, if not recognized, can have serious

consequences, hindering or even jeopardizing the peace-keeping mission. Thus, it was important that the soldier realize that our system of values is not necessarily shared by other peoples and, furthermore, that their views of life are as valid as our own. His paper, "Culture Conflict in Peace-Keeping Operations," explained some of these cultural differences, illustrated with some appropriate and humorous slides. It was so well received that Arthur was invited to present it to the whole military establishment as the opening address at the DRB Annual Symposium in December of 1968.

But in spite of the success of his work, Arthur had made up his mind to take early retirement at the age of 60. The department, however, did not let him go easily. But no inducements could persuade him to stay. Nor would he consider being a consultant, available for his expertise, since it would mean keeping up with developments if he were to remain knowledgeable. He made a very clean and complete break.

His departure was noted in *The Reporter* (the DRB's official newspaper, May/June 1970), describing him as "this colourful and unusually interesting professional staff member" who is "an artist, anthropologist, idea man and public speaker of great interest and appeal." So ended his career of fifteen years as a research scientist.

McIlwraith had been right: Custance was the man that DRB needed. He had fully justified McIlwraith's confidence, and he had more than fulfilled the expectations of his employers. For himself, his mind had been stretched into new territory, his creative abilities had been exercised, and he had made many exciting discoveries.

Here he was, at age 60, a research scientist of renown. Surely research work was the proper place for this man of curiosity and imagination, this very practical and inventive man. It was

something he had not foreseen or even thought of doing, yet it was so right for him.

However, alongside this career which so suited him, he had not quite lost touch with what had previously seemed to be his calling, helping young people develop their Christian life. He had never lost sight of it. It emerged, concurrently with his scientific career, in an unforeseen form: an avocation.

Chapter 10

His Avocation: The Doorway Papers

Throughout his scientific career Arthur had, in fact, been leading a double life. He was not only a research scientist, but also the author and publisher of The Doorway Papers. These monographs began in 1957 with a proposed list of 60 titles on biblical studies. Although some novel topics were included, these scholarly essays represented for the most part new approaches to old issues. They appeared at fairly regular intervals until, fifteen years later in 1972, all 60 papers had been written. This was a truly notable achievement. How had this come about?

In 1955, just as he was beginning his career as a scientist, Arthur realized that the door to any further work with university students was definitely closed. This he accepted. During his undergraduate days, he had made unique connections to tie together knowledge and revelation harmoniously, and these connections later served as themes presented at retreats and conferences. The interaction with students in many different settings honed and extended his understanding of, and insights into these connections. Somehow, he felt, the knowledge gained from these experiences needed to be consolidated, and preserved.

He just couldn't let it be thrown away. But what other avenue was available?

Perhaps he was meant to write. He could see the importance, even the necessity, of committing to paper the insights he had been granted. The act of writing would force him to organize the many threads of his thinking into an integrated whole. And there was this added advantage: writing would far outlast his voice. The pen would be more effective than the person, in terms of duration and audience, for the printed page could reach people worldwide for years and even centuries to come, if the Lord so desired. The idea appealed to him.

Yes! He still had the notes of the talks given on Sunday afternoons in their North Toronto living room to the Young People on a wide range of subjects relating to the Christian walk. During undergraduate and graduate days he had actually written alternative views to the evolutionary ones. He had the notes of lectures at Campus-in-the-Woods on the authority of the Bible, and the talks given to graduate students on worldview and the wholeness of the Christian life. The material was all there. So much material! It would be a mammoth task to organize it meaningfully, but he was convinced it had to be tackled.

But how could this be done? He would need someone to help him, he realized. But who? He had never quite forgotten that ISCF staff member with whom he had worked during the mission to universities in 1954, Evelyn White. He found me, now in nursing, for I had resigned from ISCF in August 1955 and had taken a position at the Cornwall General Hospital, south of Ottawa, on the St. Lawrence River.

His plan, he told me, was to write short essays on a variety of subjects which would be issued periodically, though to whom wasn't yet clear. The possibilities appealed to me, too, though it meant I had to acquire skills in taking dictation and in typing.

Thus, after much discussion and prayer, I moved to Ottawa, taking a position at the Grace Hospital in the spring of 1956.

That summer, a vision was born that became an avocation with unforeseen consequences. For the next fifteen years this was our passion each evening after the day's work, for we both continued full time professional work. It began with great enthusiasm and energy.

In an effort to bring some order to the mass of material, we drew up a list of 60 titles, randomly, without thought as to their sequence or relatedness. These titles covered many subjects, from language to prayer, genetics to God's sovereignty, origins to creeds. As he explained in a brochure developed the next year, his intention through these papers was not to provide final answers. Instead these papers were to be exploratory, designed to invite further exploration. Having for twenty-five years carefully examined the biblical records themselves (in their original languages) and the light they receive *from*, and contribute *to*, the whole field of modern knowledge, Arthur was fully persuaded that "Scripture had nothing to fear, and everything to gain from the closest examination possible."

Since each paper was complete in itself with no overriding theme connecting them together except perhaps the Bible, the unifying factor would have to be a descriptive, inclusive title with a distinctive cover. And so it was, that the title, The Doorway Papers, and a line drawing of the University College doorway in the University of Toronto, which Arthur had drawn years before, inspired each other. As he explained in the brochure,

The half open doorway which appears on the cover of each Paper is from a pencil drawing by the author. It is the Main Entrance to University College in the University of Toronto, Ontario.

It is symbolic. *The Doorway Papers* are intended to be explorations of old issues about which there is plenty of room for disagreement. We are not making any claims for finality – so the doorway is left open. . . .

We desire only, by opening up fresh views, to contribute light to minds of greater precision who may thus be enabled perhaps to hit upon the exact truth.

The doorway drawing made an attractive cover, although the colour, black lettering on grey, was not exciting by today's standards. But all this printing was done by Arthur and me, and presentation gave way to practicality as we faced the challenges of self-publication. The size, a sheet of paper folded in half, was easy to handle. Since each paper averaged 40 pages, that is, 10 sheets of folded paper, staples provided an inexpensive binding.

Arthur had bought a proportional typewriter that justified the text on both margins. It was rather labourious, for it required typing the text two times, the first to determine how many spaces needed to be added or subtracted to justify the line, the second to do it. A camera-ready copy of the text was made in this way, and then taken to a small printing company owned and operated by Brian Tyrell. He delivered to us 300 copies of each sheet, with its 4 pages of text, which we collated with the cover, then folded, stapled and trimmed. Arthur had designed a stapling machine and also a mechanism to fold the pages into a neat, easy-to-handle booklet. He had also acquired a guillotine, a rather big and sharp paper cutter.

But now who was going to read them? How would people know about these Papers? Arthur approached the ASA (American Scientific Affiliation) and received permission to use their membership list. Upon completion of each paper, a notice with an abstract and ordering information was mailed to this list.

It was really a daunting operation, but in our enthusiasm and inexperience, we had not realized just how daunting it would be.

The first titles chosen did not require research and so were dictated in short order. By June 1957, the first two papers were ready: "Who Taught Adam to Speak?" (no.1) and "Longevity in Antiquity, and Its Bearing on Chronology" (no. 2). A notice with abstracts of the two papers was stuffed into 500 envelopes addressed by hand, since we thought this made them more personal and more likely to be opened than dumped immediately into the wastebasket.

But just before mailing them, Arthur wondered if this venture was what the Lord intended or if it was merely his own idea. In his daily devotions he used a little book called *Daily Light*, a collection of verses for morning and evening of each day, without comment. He read the morning portion for June 9: "Take this child and nurse it and I will give you your wages" (Exodus 2:9). That was enough assurance to proceed, and in faith the letters were posted.

The first sale was Paper no.1 to a friend at work. Arthur framed that very first payment, and it is still in its frame! Every evening we walked to the post office along the scenic Rideau Canal with anticipation. The response was gratifying, though not overwhelming. Encouraged, we went on to the next papers.

One year later, in the summer of 1958, Arthur designed an attractive brochure with abstracts of the ten papers now in print. Three years later, in 1961, a second brochure was issued with abstracts for 20 papers. Yet, it wasn't until the end of 1962, now with 25 titles, that we actually operated in the black, even though we had cut back from 300 to 200 copies of each paper. Pricing was not realistic, but we feared too high a price for a small booklet would discourage buyers.

Production was uneven since Arthur, in his double life, was sent on professional duty to England and to conferences, as well as

to some speaking engagements. He also was asked occasionally to write for some Christian journals.

Response, too, was uneven. We had expected the mailing list would grow exponentially. We had expected that each reader would be interested in every subject, just as Arthur was. But the fact was that the mailing list actually decreased. Readers who were interested in one subject only were lost as we purposely varied the subjects. Some titles attracted few readers. But there were many loyal customers who bought every title, even though beyond their interest, expecting new insights as Arthur wove Scripture and Science together so that each illuminated the other.

In 1967, just 10 years after the inception of the series, five titles (nos. 11, 13, 33, 55, and 59) were reprinted. Interestingly, these titles, upon analysis, gave us an indication not only what subjects were most popular, but also insight into the type of readers we were attracting. Origins was of high interest, but this interest was divided between the scientific point of view and the biblical point of view. Most readers, from either point of view, took the Bible seriously.

By the summer of 1970, thirteen years after the inception of the series, 45 papers had been written. Then came Arthur's retirement from the DRB, and in the next two years the remaining 15 papers were completed. An index was also compiled (no easy task) in 1966 for the first 30 papers, and one in 1972 for the last 30 papers.

Throughout these fifteen years, from the inception in 1957 to completion in 1972, every customer was considered a friend, though some sales were just that: a business transaction. Customers were from all parts of the world, such as Angola, Argentina, China, Ethiopia, Finland, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Yugoslavia, Korea, Norfolk Island (a tiny speck in the Pacific Ocean, and the customer's name was Custance!), North Borneo, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, Venezuela, and Zambia, affording Arthur an extensive stamp collection.

Yes, the number of responses was disappointing in some ways, but in reality it was all we could handle. For well over 25 thousand papers were sold. The Lord never failed to give us our wages. Bills were paid. What the Lord did not promise was a large continuing response.

It had been a lot of work, for it involved not only the writing, which is enough in itself, but also the actual production, marketing, and sales. Except for the last two years, all this was done after-hours since we still had our careers. Yet it did not seem onerous, most times, for it was a labour of love unto the Lord.

There was something very fresh about Arthur's early writing, marked by a certain spontaneity and enthusiasm of one who has discovered a truth that must be shared immediately. In contrast, his writing in the later papers took on a more mature and scholarly style.

The Doorway Papers are truly unique. Taken together, they represent a worldview reflecting the author's attitude that all reality is one harmonious whole. It was the attempt of one individual to draw together into a kind of organic unity the Christian faith with the results of research in many of the major areas of knowledge. As one reader, William Thompson, a systems analyst in Maryland said, they are "a major, and unique, contribution towards reconstructing a world view of a uni-verse, not the multi-verses of the modern synthesis."

During these years, Arthur had not lost touch with developments in both the scientific and the Christian worlds. Increasingly, he was not comfortable with the *either/or* stance that developed into the creation/evolution controversies. Like Thomas Aquinas, he viewed theology as the "Queen of Sciences," so that all knowledge should be scrutinized in the light of Revelation. Like Isaac Newton, and many scientists of that era, Arthur believed that God spoke through his Word, the Bible, and through his Work, as seen in the world around us. Both Word and Work, being equally

valid and necessary, must be integrated. Arthur's position of a *tertium quid*, a third alternative, became clearer to him as he wrote The Doorway Papers. Again, he made a very careful statement regarding the Bible as the touchstone of truth: the Bible, in its original languages, is to be studied in the light it receives from and contributes to all humanly acquired knowledge.

Arthur became quite concerned about the wide chasm between scientists and theologians. As he put it, "Nothing quite equals the ignorance of the average scientist about theology, except perhaps the ignorance of most theologians about matters of science." He was distressed that Christian authors blithely made comments that put serious question marks on statements made in Scripture that had been believed by the Church since its inception. These authors did not seem to be aware of the contradictions and the confusion it caused among Christian readers.

Though he did not like confrontation, Arthur could not keep quiet about this. He took to task fellow anthropologists who casually put the origin of humankind in the dim and distant past without realizing what this did to the first chapters of Genesis and, indeed, to the whole plan of redemption. He felt this was quite irresponsible. In his correspondence files are the many letters that he and a noted anthropologist, Jim Buswell, exchanged on this matter of human origins, of whether the Christian faith is destroyed by the acceptance of scientific interpretation as truth. But neither convinced the other. Arthur even wrote to editors of magazines who printed Jim's articles, again without any satisfactory conclusion. The authority of Science held sway, even in Christian magazines and journals.

But this wasn't all that occupied Arthur during these years. In 1959, he acquired a cottage property on the St. Lawrence River, just west of the city of Brockville, which was about an hour's drive southwest of Ottawa. It was a small property that extended from

the road to the St. Lawrence River, a drop of approximately 80 to 100 feet. There were three levelled areas or terraces in this drop, and each was reached by a series of steps. The descent from the road 'up top' to the front door, located on the first terrace, was reached by a 40-foot length of steel staircase; a few feet down, led to the next terrace; another drop of 10 to 12 feet deposited one on the last terrace. This terrace was still 10 to 12 feet about the water's edge. Once again, over the next ten years he designed and built a house that transformed the one-room cottage into a two-story building, which was appropriately named The Terraces.

Designing proved an outlet for his creativeness, and the actual building was a welcome change from Ottawa, whether at DRB or writing papers. The river provided recreation both summer and winter. Arthur's cottage provided a change of pace, a way to relax, that was refreshing.

First and foremost during these years, of course, was his research work with the government at the DRB. Yet of equal interest to Arthur was his avocation, and he had worked just as hard at it. The year 1970 brought to a close his double life as career scientist and writer/publisher; the latter he felt to be the more important work. It was the reason why he was ready to retire from DRB, even though that work had been rewarding in its own way. What had been an avocation was now to become a full-time career.

Perhaps, from God's point of view, the most valuable result of those 15 years as a research scientist was the development of Arthur's writing skills. Scientific journals have rigorous standards requiring articles to be written clearly with an economy of words, a succinct title, and an abstract stating the contents briefly. Scientific writing taught Arthur accuracy and precision, and he developed that sound scholarly thoroughness which was characteristic of his later works. His career as a research scientist

had been the training ground for the next phase in his life as a full time writer and publisher.

In June 1970, Arthur left DRB forever, without regrets. He looked back on those years with thankfulness and some nostalgia, for research work had been his niche, taxing his ingenuity and his imagination. He had enjoyed the camaraderie of fellow scientists. But retirement with the prospect of studying the Word of God undistracted was anticipated with joy.

Chapter 11

**Retirement: The Blossoming of the
Writer and the Publisher**

When Arthur said goodbye to DRB and Ottawa, he made his home at The Terraces. At this time, I retired from nursing to assist Arthur with his writing and publishing. By then, Arthur had expanded The Terraces so that it was possible for me to join him there. It was a wonderful spot, conducive to writing. His study on the second floor had a bay window on the south side and more windows to the west, giving a panoramic view of the river. Surrounded by displays of the many moods of the river and the sky, entertained by the birds at the feeding station in fall, winter and spring, and visited by chipmunks as we ate our meals on the various terraces in the summer, we were constantly aware of God's awesomeness and grandeur. To realize that the One who created all this had also chosen us and made us members of His family by adoption heightened our sense of belonging to the whole universe in a very special way.

Though there was much work in maintaining this little spot of paradise, it was a nearly perfect place. It did have one drawback: there was no access to a university library nearby, nor were there

peers with whom to discuss matters. Arthur was therefore forced to work in isolation, though in some ways this allowed him to proceed unhindered.

The first two years of his retirement, as noted, saw the completion of what had been Arthur's avocation, *The Doorway Papers*. But this did not occupy all his time and energy. That first fall and winter, he gave a lecture series of 24 lectures every Tuesday evening from September to March (1970-1971). The series was titled "The Universe: Plan or Accident?" The advertising pamphlet described Arthur's topic: "The Christian faith is a logical and coherent system of beliefs which are in no way contradicted by anything that has been firmly established by modern scientific and historical research."

The lectures were held in the Presbyterian Church in Brockville, with an average attendance of 180. Many attendees never missed a single session. These people were cross-denominational: Anglican, Baptist, Christian Reformed, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, United Church, and Wesleyan Methodist. Every week Arthur invited an attendee to come to his home for an evening of fellowship and further discussion. Some wonderful friendships were forged.

Then he changed the format from public lectures to seminars by invitation, held in his home. Participants were assigned essays and exams with very serious and penetrating questions. In 1975, sixteen attended the first one, on the biblical view of the nature of man, as created, fallen but unredeemed, and redeemed. Two years later the subject was Calvinism, including the doctrine of the predestination and election, with fifteen attendees. These studies contributed foundationally to the book, *Sovereignty of Grace*.

Arthur also visited California on two occasions. Gerald Gooden, a longtime friend through *The Doorway Papers*, and Librarian at Biola (Bible Institute of Los Angeles), invited him to be one of several speakers at the Annual Torrey Conference in

January 1973. In the mornings he spoke to students, mostly on the subjects found now in *Noah's Three Sons*. Their questions, and interest, were valuable to Arthur. In the evenings he spoke in area churches even as far away as San Jose. This was a rewarding visit, for here he met a professor, prepared of the Lord, who asked Arthur to "help me in" to the Kingdom of God. That marvellous miracle of new birth happened. This child of God, Elihu Carranza, and his wife Sharon became very dear friends.

On another evening at First Baptist Church in Hemet, California, Arthur met Chuck Asbell, a scientist, and Clarence Cree, a bibliophile, of nearby Riverside. Their friend, Russ Schaeffer, a writer and teacher, had lent some of The Doorway Papers to Chuck in the early 1960s, "whereupon I became hooked," and started corresponding with Arthur. Chuck and Clarence had come to Hemet to meet Arthur in person and to invite him to speak at a conference they were planning at their church in Riverside.

At the same time, up in the Bay area of San Francisco, a group of keen men at Peninsula Bible Church had been reading The Doorway Papers since 1962. This very active church, under the leadership of Ray Stedman, had established The Discovery Centre, a training place for pastors who spent three weeks attending lectures and completing practical assignments. The Centre invited Arthur to come and speak to them. Arthur was able to plan a visit to both places in California in one two-week trip in February 1974.

Arriving first at the Discovery Centre, Arthur spoke to interns about the First Adam and the Fall, about the Virgin Birth and the Incarnation, and the death and resurrection of Jesus. On Saturday morning the staff requested a discussion of *Journey Out of Time*. The evening addresses were for the general public on topics pertaining to the Christian life and walk. These were very well attended.

Oddly, Arthur did not find it easy to establish rapport with the interns. He was disappointed in their response to the great truths of which he was speaking. Ray had sensed this and in a letter said, "You must not feel that your meetings here were a disappointment to us. They were far from that indeed! It is true we had not anticipated quite accurately the nature of your approach and so perhaps asked you to do something that you were not quite fully ready to do."

Another letter from a senior pastor suggested that the major problems came from "a lack of understanding, due to cultural and background differences. Also, for my own sake I must say I often failed to follow your thinking . . . [and] the problem some of us have in dealing with such abstract and abstruse subjects." But he concluded, "Yours is a very gracious portrayal of Christ's life being manifested, so it would be hard for us not to love you."

Arthur had a different experience at Riverside. Here the flyers announced the theme of the lectures as "Man's Place in the Universe." Arthur introduced the series this way:

To explore the way in which God so appointed the workings of his created order that He might uniquely display his LOVE, by an act of sacrifice that would be comprehended by a creature specially created with just that capacity.

God's plan for man's redemption involves hard-nosed FACTS set in a framework of sober history.

In this setting, Arthur was more at ease. These students studied the Bible diligently, knew it well, and were ready to follow his teachings. They appreciated the fresh insights he was presenting that gave depth to the wisdom and power and love of God manifested, in his plan of redemption. Arthur felt the joy of shared understanding and of worshipping and praising God together. He returned home refreshed, though tired.

From these experiences in California, we concluded that such a series on the topic of redemption had far too many threads to be developed and held together in a short space of one week unless the hearer was already cognizant of much of these threads. For those who had not thought much about redemption, more time was required to develop all the issues. In a seminary it would occupy a semester, at least.

For two years (1974-75), Arthur taught cultural anthropology at the Brockville Campus of the St. Lawrence College of Applied Arts and Technology. It was an evening course of 3 hours for 16 weeks, advertised as “a study of the social organization, value systems, patterns of behaviour, and technological and artistic achievements of non-western societies, both primitive and highly civilized, ancient and modern.”

Both years had 10-15 registrants, again from all walks of life – lawyers, physicians, accountants, insurance brokers, teachers, retired persons, writers, and lay people. Arthur was able to draw out the best from each one, even though their abilities were so varied, without losing the interest of any participant. This comment about that course appeared in the local newspaper, *Recorder and Times* (November 15, 1975), in a letter to the editor:

The entire class remained motivated from the beginning to the end of the course. It was easy to be this way when someone as knowledgeable, interested, interesting and so monumentally human as Dr. Custance was teaching this particular class. We admired him and will love him forever.

“That Class”

“That class” gave him a dinner in appreciation of what they had learned.

By the end of the 1970s, speaking engagements became rarer, with few in the 1980s, though Arthur continued to receive

invitations. He just knew it wasn't possible to write and speak at the same time. For the two activities are not at all the same. In speaking, one doesn't actually need to finish sentences, the thought often being completed by body language or using pauses effectively. When writing, emphasis is achieved by saying the same thing in another way, by the use of italics, and by paragraphing. Quite a different process.

The differences between communicating physically and literarily becomes clear when listening to tapes of spoken messages which, of course, do not indicate body language. When tapes of his evenings messages given at Peninsula Bible Church in 1973 were sent to him, asking him to fill in the gaps and incomplete sentences, Arthur didn't really believe he had spoken like that! He was rather indignant, and he ignored the request, I'm sorry to say.

Actually, lectures had served a very important task, for the speaking and the ensuing discussions refined the writing. Yet, as demanding and creative as this writing and rewriting was, the really hard work was in finding, and persuading, publishers to publish what one has written.

This hard work is well illustrated in the trek of Arthur's first book, which resulted from his Hebrew studies. From 1948 to 1969 the manuscript entitled, *Between the Lines: An Analysis of Gen.1:1-2*, was submitted to and rejected by many publishers. One obstacle that made publishers hesitate was the fact that this manuscript contained a great many Hebrew and Greek characters, a nightmare to typesetters. Arthur had both a Hebrew and a Greek typewriter with which he was able to produce a camera-ready manuscript. When Bob de Vries of Zondervan Publishing House visited in 1970, he offered to publish it but was unwilling to pay for this camera-ready copy, which would have saved them much money in typesetting and proofing costs. Arthur refused his offer.

It was then that Arthur decided the only way this book would get published was to do it himself! By the fall of 1970, Arthur took this camera-ready text, now titled *Without Form and Void*, to Deyell Co. in Lindsay, Ontario. In a few weeks we had 1000 copies in hard cover.

Getting a book printed is a comparatively easy task, but selling it is quite another matter. How do you let people know about it? Where are they? The marketing and advertising is the big cost. Here we were, with a thousand copies but without the wholesale contacts that most publishers have or the resources for advertising. The book sold slowly, but it did sell steadily.

It did get some publicity from Dr. John C. Whitcomb, Professor of Old Testament and Theology at Grace Theological Seminary in Winona, Illinois. Though he criticized it unmercifully, he did admit that it was *the* definitive work on the Gap Theory, a theory of origins which recognizes a time gap of indeterminate length between the first and second verses of Genesis 1. That proved to be good advertising, even if not *his* intention. We found that word-of-mouth is the most effective advertising. It is also inexpensive, an added bonus, though uncertain in some respects.

Meanwhile, Bob de Vries of Zondervan knew there was valuable 'stuff' here, and he was back again in 1973 to talk about The Doorway Papers. Arthur did an excellent job of presenting the 60 papers as a ten volume set to be known as *The Doorway Papers Series*. A contract was signed. While the first volume appeared in 1975, it wasn't until 1980 that the last one appeared. As a result they sold unevenly. The publishers had encountered an unforeseen problem: Custance was not known. He was not a conference speaker. He was not in the public eye. They had difficulty marketing such an unknown commodity.

Interestingly, sales of the first volume (*Noah's Three Sons*), were greatly helped by a TV appearance organized by Ian Taylor, co-producer of a Toronto-based television program called 100

Huntley Street. Ian had in mind an emphasis, of “teaching God’s Word to what is very largely an established Christian viewing audience, with the purpose of demonstrating the truth of God’s Word.” This would include, he added, “the scientific evidence for creation.” Ian was familiar with *The Doorway Papers*, and asked Arthur to appear on the program with a specific assignment: “Would you be willing to elucidate to a Christian viewing audience how it is possible that all the races and nations originated from Noah’s three sons?”

Arthur received this letter in early March 1978, and deliberated long and hard, for he could see many problems, especially concerning the scientific evidence approach, for there were so many interpretations of this evidence and even of the Bible itself. Did Ian want to be controversial? Arthur pointed out that *Noah’s Three Sons* was a big book and “to cover this material in 20 to 25 minutes would seem to me an almost impossible task, but I suppose it could be attempted.” Arthur reluctantly agreed to two sessions, and worked hard on a script of questions and answers for the interview-type presentation that this appearance would involve.

The show was taped in Toronto on June 19 and 20. He looked forward to this experience, a bit nervously as he had not yet talked with the host, David Mainse. Arthur met David just before the first session, while Arthur was in the make-up room. It soon became apparent to Arthur that David had not had a chance to read the script! This was devastating to Arthur because he had orchestrated the questions in such a way as to reach a desired conclusion within the time limits. David was so intrigued by what Arthur was saying during the interview that his questions came spontaneously and at random. Arthur could see no logical order and tried hard to get it back on track. He never did get it back to his satisfaction.

In January 1979, prior to the airing, Arthur received an edited transcript of his two sessions. They didn’t resemble anything of

what he had planned. He was so disappointed, even disgusted, that he would not watch the airings, for to his mind the objective had been entirely botched. Maybe Arthur's opinion of this event was clouded by his lack of experience with this new technology, so different to the academic style he had become familiar with. For according to the viewer response for audio cassettes, these sessions were very well received. His "two programmes drew in 37% of the total mail response for that season." The sales of his own book soared and far surpassed any of the other volumes in that series.

The success of having secured Zondervan as a publisher gave Arthur great hope for the other manuscripts that were nearing completion. Their contract demanded first rights to any subsequent books that Arthur might write, but in 1977 they waived their rights to *Sovereignty of Grace*, suggesting in January of 1979 that we contact Paedeia Press (of Calvinistic persuasion), located in St. Catharines, Ontario. Arthur submitted a copy to them. In early February they "agreed in principle to proceed with its publication" but wanted to discuss a couple of issues, recommending changes which Arthur felt destroyed his thesis. We seemed to be at an impasse.

Nothing was heard from Paedeia Press. Arthur decided to contact Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company (Philadelphia) so he phoned Charles Craig, chief editor. It was a surprising conversation. For Craig had on his desk a manuscript entitled the *Sovereignty of Grace*, sent to him by Paedeia Press, but it was missing the title page and so he did not know who the author was. Things moved quickly, and the book was on the market before the end of 1979. The book received mixed reviews, though on the whole quite favourable. The book sold well enough that a reprint was required in 1983.

Bob de Vries of Zondervan, however, wasn't the only one who saw Arthur as a gifted writer. Arthur was approached in 1976 by

Probe Ministries, a unique campus ministry based in Dallas, Texas, to contribute to their Christian Free University Curriculum. Thus, in 1978, Charles Thaxton and Jimmie Williams made a visit to The Terraces to discuss a book on the subject of the mind/brain problem for the psychology discipline. The book, titled *The Mysterious Matter of Mind*, appeared in 1980. The reviews were good and it sold well.

So now three of Arthur's books were in print: *Without Form and Void*, *The Mysterious Matter of Mind*, and *Sovereignty of Grace*. But it was *The Physiology of Redemption* that he felt was most important. The history of its publishing is quite a saga, beginning in 1978.

Having failed to interest publishers, Arthur turned reluctantly to subsidy publishing. Discussions with Exposition Press in New York suggested that subsidy publishing was a viable route, though it would cost \$14,000. Our own resources totalled \$8,000, so we asked direction from the Lord by setting out a fleece as Gideon had done: if sufficient money was received within a stated time, then we would take this as a sign to proceed with this kind of publishing. We appealed to friends of The Doorway Papers who, within two months, responded magnificently. We felt that God was certainly leading us forward.

But then roadblocks began to appear. The originally quoted estimated cost had doubled. This was in clear contradiction of our covenant with the Lord. It was with some difficulty that the book manuscript was returned to us.

Arthur was troubled by this impasse, feeling that there must be some reason that things had turned out this way. He wondered if the book might possibly contain some seed of heresy, as it were, that he had not recognized. He went over the manuscript again with a fine-toothed comb and was convinced the truth had not been compromised. Having money in hand, we decided to publish the book ourselves.

In analysing the printing process, it was clear that the biggest problem was the typesetting. There were typewriters that facilitated this. So, having the money in hand, we decided to publish it ourselves.

We purchased an IBM Electronic Selectric Composer, a primitive word processor by today's standards. It had a memory of 2 pages only, which could not be saved. Alternate sizes and italic and bold fonts were achieved by manually changing golf ball-shaped printer heads. The Composer was delivered in late December, 1979. Four months later, a camera-ready copy of 620 pages had been completed.

Arthur renamed the book *The Seed of the Woman*, thinking that the former title, *The Physiology of Redemption*, though quite descriptive of the theme, sounded too much like a textbook. It was sent out to the printer in May 1980, and by the end of June, we had 3000 copies in our hands.

This book pointed to the enormous tragedy of death, but did not explore questions about what actually happens at the moment of death when our personhood is torn apart. Where is the spirit? What is our condition until the day the body is resurrected?

Arthur believed that answering these questions required a thorough understanding of time as opposed to eternity, as well as a thorough understanding of what constitutes personhood. His answers to these questions led to his next book, *Journey Out of Time*. This book was a delight to write. It increased his own anticipation and joyous expectation of that final journey when we exit from this world of time and space and enter the world of eternity. It sold quite well.

His last book, *Two Men Called Adam*, was born out of sorrow. It was sparked by the evolution/creation controversies, and debates about human origins. Arthur felt strongly that it was pointless to talk about human origins until human *nature* was defined. Furthermore, the necessity of such a nature is

predetermined by the method of redemption, for it hinges on humankind's physical constitution. Conceding to evolution the origin of the human body, even while insisting on the divine origin of the human spirit by direct creation, is tantamount to destroying the created nature of humankind.

Yet most distressing to him was the fact that many *Christians* do not realize *why* it is so damaging to the Christian faith to allow for the evolution of man's body. To do this, he said,

. . . is to divorce the Incarnation from its redemptive purpose and to reduce the life and death of Jesus Christ to one of tragedy rather than triumph. His virgin conception and his bodily resurrection become meaningless, since there is no rational necessity for either of them.

The book appeared in 1983. Its sales were slower, perhaps because once again, the book had so many threads of evidence that must be developed and kept in mind all at the same time that it was difficult to keep the focus.

In reality, the book is about more than origins. It is about the nature of humanity as seen in the First Adam and his descendants and in the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. It is a study of fallen man, unredeemed and redeemed, and of unfallen man. It is about how the Second Adam, *through his physical body*, redeemed the children of the First Adam. Failure to understand these things greatly diminished, Arthur felt, the Christian's joy and the glory of God.

More than a decade after Arthur's death, this book was adopted as a required text for a university-level interdisciplinary faith and science course studying the philosophy of evolution in academia. The supply was quickly depleted, and two new editions, one in 2002 and another in 2004, were printed to meet the demand. The most recent edition includes the additional notes Arthur had

inserted into his master copy – changes, I believe, that he would have made had he had the opportunity.

Though *Two Men Called Adam* is Arthur's last published work, he had many more planned and in progress. He had at least five more in mind. He never stopped, until he was stopped in his tracks, quite literally, one day in October 1985.

But for whom was he writing? This was a perennial problem. He struggled to avoid both writing above his readers and talking down to them. He did realize his books were limited in their appeal. He wrote:

Not everyone will want to know about such things and certainly no one needs to be concerned about them. For it is by no means essential for anyone to know how he is saved in order to be saved. But if he does have a desire to explore the ways of God, then the means of doing so are becoming increasingly accessible year by year.

His writings, he said, are for those who desire to understand the unknowable mysteries of our Lord and His ways as fully as our finite minds are able. After all, the Lord had made us with capabilities to comprehend what He has revealed of His majesty.

It was Arthur's intention to stretch his readers' minds and to glorify God.

Chapter 12

The End of the Journey: The Man

Arthur had suffered from angina for some years, experiencing pain especially when climbing stairs. And there was a lot of climbing at *The Terraces*. He installed an outside chairlift which extended the length of the steel staircase, and this allowed him to go for walks on the level at the top of the property. Medication kept the problem under control. Except once it failed.

It happened in 1983 on a bright Sunday morning in November. I heard him get out of bed, and then there was a loud thump. I was suddenly galvanized into action, rushed into his room where he lay flat on his back, his eyes rolled up. I instinctively pounded his chest, and in a few moments was relieved to see all his limbs move.

“Where am I?” he stammered.

He walked to the study, and I got a cup of tea for him. But before he had drunk much of it, he slumped over, losing consciousness. I realized this was serious, and called the doctor and the ambulance. A pounding of his chest revived him once more before the paramedics arrived. They walked him down the hall, out to the chairlift, and into the ambulance. Off to the hospital they raced, with sirens sounding. I followed, arriving at

Emergency as he was being wheeled in. I heard him say, "Hi Joy" to the admitting nurse, a friend of ours. He was whisked off to a room and hooked up to a machine. Arthur suffered several more cardiac arrests before he was stabilized. It was early afternoon before I was allowed to see him. He was quite talkative and wanted to know how he came to be in the hospital. He asked me to bring him his books and the manuscripts with me that evening.

Arthur recovered quickly and he was home in a few days. But he had no recollection of that Sunday morning, only knowing of the events as recounted to him. The experience intrigued him from a physiological point of view, especially his amnesia. Later, he wrote a treatise about memory formation.

At the time, Arthur was working on another *magnum opus* in which several of the Doorway Papers with a common theme were to be linked together into a reasoned and defensible thesis. *The Seed of the Woman* is such a work, for it integrates several Doorway Papers on the theme of the Plan of Redemption. This new book was to be an expansion of *Noah's Three Sons*, the first volume in *The Doorway Papers Series*. He wanted to show not only what had happened *before* the Flood that had necessitated such a devastation and a new start with only eight survivors, but why the events recorded *after* the Flood were necessary in the economy of God to ensure that His great plan for humanity's total redemption would go forward. A great deal of research had already been done, but putting it all together into a reasonable thesis showed that some weak areas needed more work. It was a bigger undertaking than anticipated.

The winter of 1985 seemed quite unproductive. Arthur did feel that his mind was never as sharp as before those cardiac arrests. This *magnum opus* didn't seem to be getting anywhere. He felt somewhat discouraged. So, in the summer of 1985, for a change of pace, he decided to build a garage. He had always loved working with his hands, and this project was a welcomed activity.

I recall going with him in late June to the township office to procure the building permit. He knew the gentleman there rather well, for this wasn't the first building permit he had requested. Arthur did not suffer petty officials graciously, so I wondered why it was taking him so long. When he emerged from the office, he simply said, "Well, we had a very good talk." He paused. Something more awesome than talking about the Lord had occurred. In a subdued voice, he explained that he hadn't even felt annoyed with the man, though he still had the same petty attitude. It wasn't that Arthur had had to suppress annoyance. It just wasn't there, at all! And he was rejoicing because that 'weed' no longer had a root. This surely was victory. It was, to him, a source of wonder, of joy, for days.

On August 31, Arthur's beloved friend, Dr. John Howitt, died in his 93rd year. Born February 29, 1892, he used to joke that he hadn't had many birthdays and so was really not very old after all. In his last year he had felt the burden of life and was ready to go home. But for Arthur it was a great loss. "He was the most loyal and constant friend and counsellor. He saw me through a number of very severe crises over a period of 50 years, always with patience and wisdom."

Dr. John was a very Victorian gentleman, courteous, dignified, but full of good humour. His nephew, Dr. John Stewart, accompanied him in the latter years to every ASA conference, even in 1984, though his deafness, he confessed to Arthur in his report of the proceedings, meant he missed a lot. He enjoyed meeting with old friends; albeit, there were fewer and fewer each year so that he felt almost a stranger. Yet he was greatly respected for his unwavering stance against evolution and for his jovial good humour.

Dr. John faithfully read every paper, which he called Sputniks, as they were issued. His comment on "Medieval Synthesis: Modern Fragmentation" (no. 12), was to the point: "... good up to

page 45, then I felt as though you were tired out when you wrote the last half. Perhaps you were. Up to 45 I marked section after section but after that scarcely a mark. But the Introduction was very fine and I think it should have gone at the end as a conclusion." Or he might simply say, "I missed the point," or "I can't see your reasoning."

Arthur felt the loss keenly, for it had indeed been a most wonderful friendship. He had good memories upon which to reflect.

I recall a walk we had taken shortly after Dr. John's death. It was a beautiful autumn day, with brilliant sunshine, and the coloured leaves stood out against a very azure sky. He reminisced, "There are many more things I would like to write [We had made a list of them]. But," he continued slowly and thoughtfully, "I think I have written all that the Lord intended me to write." Still, he wanted to write more.

On September 24, 1985, he turned 75. We organized a surprise party. And surprise him we did! Many friends, over 50 of them, came to wish him well. There was Maurie Proctor, the irrepressible Irishman, and his wife Marion. Their company always meant laughter, though Arthur felt keenly the lack of fellowship in the Lord. Several guests had met Arthur in Bible studies at a time when their doubts about the Christian life were strong, but through the years their faith was restored, like George Verbaas, a dedicated sailor and great friend. Another guest was neighbour Roger Donor, a dentist, with no active faith, though he had come to a study at *The Terraces* one winter.

There was Hal Lochrie, an insurance man, who first heard Arthur at a Kiwanis meeting at a time when he was searching for meaning in life. "He would make a claim," Hal reminisced, "and then bombard you with so many facts and evidences that he left no doubt in your mind that it must be so." Arthur was quick to see what was behind Hal's questions and invited him and his wife

Ruth to visit. They came on Friday evenings. Hal recalled “sitting in front of his famous fireplace and how he would astound me with his captivating sincerity and knowledge.” Several months later, on Friday, January 30, 1975, “the Lord rewarded his [Arthur’s] quiet patience by opening my understanding of 2 Corinthians 5:21 and I understood for the first time that Christ died for me.”

But that wasn’t the end of it, said Hal. “He did not hang you out to dry after you were converted but got you started exploring your faith as soon as possible, and he set me up with a beginner’s library of commentaries and Bible helps to get me started. Then, for the next 5 years or so, we would either talk on the phone or meet in person at least once a week.” Hal admired Arthur for his love for the Lord and his total commitment to the literal interpretation of Scripture. But then after a pause, and with a smile, he added “No one is perfect, of course, and Dr. Custance had a penchant for precision, which, while an asset to his work, it made relating to him a little difficult at times because he expected the same precision from you when discussing a topic.” Theirs was a good and enduring friendship.

Arthur felt a special kinship with Ben Klumpenhower, a strong Calvinist with an inquisitive and intelligent mind, who walked with the Lord. He particularly rejoiced in the story Ben told him of an experience which happened one day when he was communing with the Lord in the cab of a Caterpillar machine as he shoved garbage around at the town dump.

Out of the corner of my eye I spied a five dollar bill, and immediately jumped out of the cab to retrieve it. Suddenly I realized that for this money I had, in the middle of a sentence, turned my back on the King of Kings without even an ‘excuse me.’ I was sorry and told Him so as I tore that bill into little bits. He was worth far more to me than that.

This was a man, Arthur thought, who had his priorities straight. He was grateful for all these friends with whom he had shared so much and who had made his retirement years so meaningful. The glow and warmth of those expressions of friendship that day remained with him as we continued building the garage.

It was wonderful weather and we built up the foundation with heaps of collected stone, then poured the cement floor. We prepared the 2X4s for the walls. The third weekend in October was a barn-raising event when friends came and raised the walls and roof. They would have done more, but at noon Arthur suffered a great deal of pain, which he dismissed as angina that would soon subside with rest.

He seemed to improve as the pain subsided somewhat on Sunday, and the next day we walked up top in the sunshine. My sister arrived for a holiday. On Tuesday, George Hudson, a friend in Brockville, came to help Arthur shingle the roof. Lunch was a little late. As we were talking at the end of the meal, in the middle of a sentence, Arthur “left.” He suddenly just ceased to be—instantly. The Lord had taken him.

The ambulance came but it was too late. In actual fact, Arthur had suffered a severe heart rupture at noon on the previous Saturday and though the pain was severe he did not think it required medical attention. But by Tuesday the pressure of the blood accumulating in the sac around the heart forced the heart pump to quit.

That Friday, a memorial service of thanksgiving was held in Brockville. Having worked with Arthur for 30 years, and knowing well the Scriptures that were most meaningful to him, it was not a difficult task for me to select the hymns and scripture readings. What better hymn than “Great is Thy Faithfulness” to reflect Arthur’s experience of God throughout his life, or “The Church’s One Foundation” to speak of his conviction of the sovereignty of

God! Singing the last hymn, "Praise the Saviour ye who Know Him," we felt as if Arthur was passing the torch to us. We listened to selected Scriptures that were so meaningful to him:

You have not chosen Me but I have chosen you. John 15:15,16

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Timothy 1:15

Giving thanks unto the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:12-14

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faithfulness of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full.

1 John 1:3-4

In 1981, Arthur had written in his book *Journey Out of Time*, a postscript of his expectation of this journey:

Let me close with an expression of personal faith. Paul tells us that "Christ in us is the hope of glory" (Col.1:27). I am convinced that this is true, almost inconceivable though it is. I cannot examine my own soul without despairing of the state

of it. Though I have walked with the Lord for almost fifty years, I do not yet see—except upon very rare occasions and then only in a very tentative way—that I am a better person than I was when I first became a member of the blameless family of God. Yet those few brief moments of clearer vision assure me that there is indeed a seed of new life that is bearing everlasting fruit in my heart as the Lord Jesus Christ, my Saviour, finds ways and means to re-form (one could almost say re-incarnate) Himself in me as a new creation (2 Cor.15:17). For this is the source of my new life (Gal.2:20). This, and this alone, is my hope of glory: Christ in me. It is the assurance of Paul and it is the hope of every child of God.

When I find myself in his wonderful presence, it will not be as a miserable wretch, apologizing before God for my ragged soul that would seem scarcely worth the price of its purchase. No, it will be a glorious new me! It will be a perfected spirit (with all that belongs to the old sinful self buried and done with for ever) re-united with a resurrected body made like unto his “glorious body” (Phil.3:21) to form in some wholly satisfying way a new yet identifiable Arthur C. Custance. But because that name represents the old person and not the new, that name, like the old person it represents, will no longer be used or even remembered. I shall have a new name (Rev.2:17). This is the promise of eternity . . . a glorious new nature worthy to behold the Lord in his glory and to form a part of his royal court.

Meanwhile, I do not look for the Lord’s return and the glory that shall be revealed as an event coming long after I depart from this scene. I look for it the very moment I am called home to be with Him. And I have every confidence of joining Him with all the saints who have gone before me and with all who shall come after me. This is my expectation: and this will be my fulfilment. What a day of rejoicing that will be!

He had looked forward to this event with increasing anticipation, for he was tired, tired physically and tired of the battle of life. But he did not ever tire of studying the Word of God. This was meat and drink to him. He never ceased to marvel at what God had to do to make our redemption possible, a redemption planned even before the world began. It caused him to bow and worship the God of wisdom, power and love, and it was his joy and privilege to proclaim it through his pen.

I recall a Sunday afternoon, probably in the spring of 1985, at The Terraces when we were having tea with friends, sitting in the room called "the bridge" overlooking the St. Lawrence River. Our dear friend, Bill Whiteside, was saying in his Irish lilt what a saint Arthur was, and what a blessing he was to us all. Arthur, of course, was not comfortable with this conversation and was looking at the floor. Suddenly, looking straight at Bill with those piercing blue eyes, he said,

"Then, Bill, I have deceived you."

And Arthur meant it, believed it. He was unwilling to think of himself in terms of a saint because sin was too much a reality still, even though he found tremendous comfort in the statement that "there is NOW no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

Yes, he was a gifted man, but he knew his gifts were from God. All through his life, in the dark places and the joyous ones alike, he truly loved God with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength and with all his mind.

INDEX

Adam (and Eve)	83, 87, 114, 123, 132, 133
Almonte, Ontario	28
Alexander, John.....	82
<i>American Men of Science</i>	4, 106
American Scientific Affiliation (ASA)	68, 69, 71, 72, 76, 114, 137
Amnesia	136
Anglican Churches	
Coxby	44
St. John's	4, 66, 73
Weston Longeville	12
Wycliffe	30
Anthropology	4, 60, 68-70, 78-80, 84-86, 88, 100, 102, 103, 108, 125
Aquinas, Thomas.....	117
Asbell, Charles (Chuck)	123
Beeches, The	13, 16
Bees (wood cutting)	27
Bible	4, 8, 11, 43-46, 48, 49, 52, 55, 58, 60, 67, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 78, 81, 112, 113, 116, 117, 123, 124, 126, 128, 138, 139
Bible discussion on Sunday afternoons	67
new appetite	43
Arthur believed that God spoke through	117
data of the classroom vs	60
genealogies of	ii
randomly opened	55
Bobcageon, Ontario	25
Bofors Anti-aircraft Gun	65
Brockville, Ontario	4, 40, 118, 122, 125, 140
Buswell, Jim	118
Cambridge Mission	93
Campus-in-the-Woods	80, 92, 112
Canadian Government	4
Canadian Patents and Development Corporation	106
Careers, college	66
Careers, Arthur and Evelyn's full.time.....	117
Carpenter, Prof. Ted.....	87
Cattle boat	41

Centreton, Ontario.....	28
Christian	3-8, 38, 43-46, 51, 55, 58-60, 66-69, 71,72, 74, 75, 77,80-84, 88, 93-95, 101, 109, 112, 115, 117, 118, 122, 124, 128, 130, 132, 138
Arthur's early Christian experience	58
Christian life	38, 43, 66, 80, 109, 138
Christian philosophy of science	71
Christian walk	112
Chronology	ii, 70
Conferences	4, 71, 80, 82, 83, 84, 96, 111, 115, 123, 127, 137
Confrontation	87, 118
Coxby, Saskatchewan	18, 44-47, 49, 52
Creation/evolution	4, 72, 75, 78, 117, 131
Custance, Arthur	
Amnesia.....	136
Avocation	5, 109, 111, 113, 119, 122
Birthday	77
Conversion.....	37, 43, 55
Heart condition (angina).....	135, 140
Immigration.....	20
Inventions and designs	4, 58, 74, 106, 114
Memorial service.....	140
Metallurgy (study of)	63-65, 100
Mind (nature of his).....	5, 6, 49, 58, 60, 103, 109, 136, 143
Ph.D.	7, 78, 79, 84, 87-89, 91, 97, 103, 104
Publishing.....	121, 130
Research scientist (work as)	4, 5, 7, 99, 101, 109, 111, 119
Scholarship (awarded).....	38, 40
Writing	4, 66, 68, 78, 92, 112, 117, 119, 121, 126, 133
Custance, David (Arthur's brother)	10, 18-20, 54, 81, 93, 97, 98, 128
– Eric (Arthur's cousin).....	10, 11
– James (Arthur's father).....	9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 59
– John (Arthur's uncle).....	10
– Squire John.....	12
– Lillian Meisner (Arthur's wife).....	45, 49, 51, 54, 57, 77, 100, 101
– Nigel (Arthur's brother).....	10, 17-19, 64
– Nigel (Eric Custance's son).....	11
– Nigel (Arthur's son).....	54, 77, 101

- Ruth (Arthur’s sister).....10, 14, 17-19
- Winifred (Arthur’s mother).....9, 12-14, 16, 17, 54
- Darwinism 59
- de Vries, Bob 126, 127, 130
- Deering, Herb 30, 34
- Department of National Defence (Canada) 100
- Defence Research Board of Canada (DRB).....4, 22, 99, 102-104,
109, 116, 119, 121
- Doorway Papers i, ii, 5, 60, 81, 111, 113, 117,
122, 123, 127, 128, 130, 136
- Dualism 5
- Education 4, 58, 84, 93, 94, 103, 104
- England 1, 9-12, 14, 18-20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28,
30, 37, 40-43, 54-56, 60, 61, 64, 86, 92, 93, 105, 106, 115
- Evangelical Christian Magazine* 84
- Evolution i, ii, 4, 68, 71, 72, 75, 78, 117, 132, 137
- Firing Control Instruments 64
- Gap Theory 127
- Genesis i-iii, 69, 72, 118, 127
- Graduate Christian Fellowship 81, 83
- Great Depression 22, 46-48, 51, 52, 54, 61, 64, 73
- Heads (soldiers), carved 103
- Henderson Electric Company 78
- Hill, Arthur 44
- Hired hand 33, 37
- Horses 26, 28
- House 5, 6, 10, 12-14, 25, 26, 29, 38, 39, 46,
47, 51, 64, 73, 74, 77, 119, 126
 - Grandfather’s house 14
 - House with a piano 77
 - One-room log cabin 46
 - Ski to the doctor’s house 29
- Howitt, Dr. John 68, 70, 71, 88, 137
- Huntley (100 Huntley Street) 128
- InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) 5, 6, 43, 44, 55, 56, 72, 76,
78, 80-83, 85, 91, 92, 94, 95
- Journey Out of Time* i, 124, 131, 141

Kelvin Institute	59, 60
Lewis, C.S.	8
Lochrie, Hal	138
<i>Magnum opus</i>	136
Mainse, David	128
Marathon Paper Mills	65
Massey Harris	65
McIlwraith, Prof.....	87
Mission	6, 45, 52, 92-95, 108, 112
Cambridge Mission.....	93
Canadian Sunday School Mission.....	45, 52
Christian Mission at McGill.....	5, 93, 94
Mission to Universities.....	6, 94, 95, 112
Year of Mission to University Campuses.....	92, 95
Morris, Henry	72
Mothers-in-the-Lord	52
<i>Mysterious Matter of Mind</i>	i, 130
Nature, human	ii, 49, 87, 122, 132, 142
Navy	63, 64
Newton, Isaac.....	117
Nicoll, Cathie	44
Nyquist, Jim.....	83
Origins, human	3, 4, 78, 87, 113, 116, 118, 127, 132
Otis Fensom Company	65
Palmer, Noel	44
Pioneer Camps	57, 76
Pipkin, Lester	8
Plymouth Brethren	43
Prayers	6, 7, 31, 32, 38, 54
Preston, An Irish Saint: The Life of Ann	31
Probe Ministries	130
Publishing Houses	
Presbyterian and Reformed.....	129
Paedia Press.....	129
Zondervan.....	126, 127, 129, 130
Raven, Canon Charles	92-94
Robinson, Harry	66

Rogers, Bill	28-30
Roseneath, Ontario	28, 30
Schaeffer, Francis	8
Schaeffer, Russ.....	123
Scholarship	iii, 3, 38, 40
<i>Seed of the Woman, The</i>	i, 92, 131, 136
Skiing	29
<i>Sovereignty of Grace</i>	i, 66, 99, 122, 129, 130
St. Lawrence College, Ontario	125
Sudorimeter	106-108
Sun Life Building	41
Survival of the fittest.....	87
Survival, soldiers'	iii, 25, 35, 46, 52, 57, 104
Switzer, Cortland	25-27
Television	108, 127, 128
<i>Tertium quid</i>	76, 117
Thermoregulation	7, 104-106
Thompson, William.....	117
Troutman, Charlie	56, 57, 84
<i>Two Men Called Adam</i>	i, 132, 133
Tyrell, Brian.....	114
Universities	4, 6, 15, 55, 56, 58, 76, 82, 93-95, 112
Victoria Institute	59
Victory	82, 137
White, Evelyn	2, 6, 24, 25, 28, 34, 112
Williams, Jimmie	94, 130
<i>Without Form and Void</i>	i, 127, 130
Woodforde, Parson	11, 12
Woods, Stacey	26, 44, 76, 78, 80
Word of God	43, 44, 48, 49, 70, 72, 81, 92, 120, 142
World War I	10, 93
World War II	19, 60, 93
Worldview(s)	72, 82, 83, 112, 117
worship	ii, 5, 57, 60, 142
Zondervan Publishing House	126, 127, 129, 130



The family of Rev. Arthur Clement Custance (Arthur's paternal grandfather), Binbrook Lincs, 1896. Back row: Myles, Mary, Martin, Margaret, James (Arthur's father), Gertrude. Centre: Emily Corrie (née Chase), Arthur Clement. Front row: John, Grace, Denys.



Sister Grace Custance
(Arthur's aunt), Christmas,
1912.



Gertrude Custance (Arthur's aunt),
from a postcard sent to David,
date unknown.



Left: (?) Parry, Grandfather of Winifred Custance, 1836.
 Right: possible self-portrait of Winifred (Arthur's mother) signed, "Muz.,
 9/9/34. A happy birthday to my darling son."



James (Jim) Custance (Arthur's father).
 Left: golfing mates (James is in the middle), 1935.
 Right: James in retirement .



James Custance with children David, Ruth, Arthur (in his early teens). Missing is his wife, Winifred, and their youngest son, Nigel.



David and Nigel Custance, Arthur's younger brothers.



Ruth Custance, Arthur's
older sister, 1945



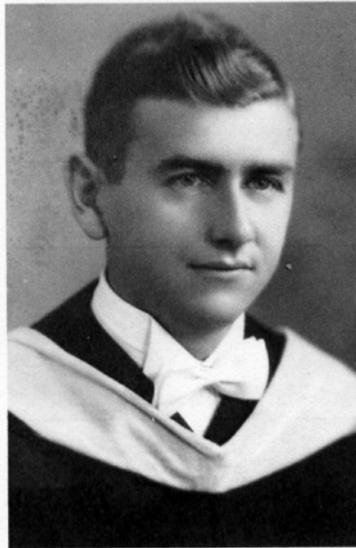
David Custance, Arthur's
younger brother, 1945



Postcard of Whitehall Chase where Ruth was hostess, 1961. Addressed to David Custance c/o 19 Station Rd, Hockley, Essex. Reads: "I have lost your new address. Please send by return! (Would the lady living at 19 very kindly forward this? Please.) Ruth"



Arthur visiting his brother David's family in Montreal, Canada, about 1960. Upper left: Arthur and sister-in-law, Veronie. Lower left: David, Trudy, Veronie. Right: Veronie, Trudy, Jamesie.



Three men used by God to direct Arthur in his Christian walk. Upper left: Herb Deering, who asked Arthur to read lessons for him at Roseneath Anglican Church when Arthur was a young farm-hand. He encouraged Arthur to leave the farm and go to the University of Toronto. Upper right: Tom Isherwood of Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, who introduced Arthur to his first scholarship and recommended that Arthur go to Coxby. Lower left: Stacey Woods, director of IVCF in Canada, who recommended Arthur as a speaker for conferences.



Working the fields in the Canadian prairies, 1933. Arthur is the person standing in middle (without a hat).



Above: Chapel at Coxby, Saskatchewan, 1933.

Right: Drawing by Arthur dated June 12, 1933, when he and Lillian left Coxby. Likely a portrait of Lillian.





Nigel Hambleton Custance (born 1936). Upper left: with his mother (Lillian) and father (Arthur). Upper right: approximately 1 year old. Lower left: approximately 10 years old. Lower right: with his wife, Sylvia, 1969.



The Woodsman, 1936.
Arthur used his axe skills to help clear land for the first Pioneer Camp grounds in Muskoka, north of Toronto.

The Archer, 1936.
Silhouette of Arthur.
Archery was one of Arthur's favourite past-times





Above: University College Soccer Team, University of Toronto, 1935. Arthur in front row, first on right. Picture was taken in front of University College and the doorway used for the Doorway Papers logo is partially visible between persons 4 and 5 from left in back row.

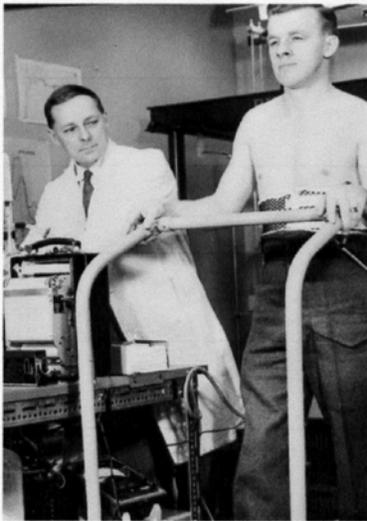
Left: Arthur's graduation picture, M.A., M.R.A.S., M.V.I., 1940. (Master of Arts; Member of the Royal Anthropological Society; Member of the Victoria Institute)



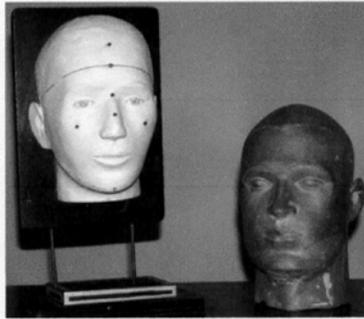
Two of the homes Arthur Custance designed and built. Upper: Oakwynds (Toronto, Ontario, 1946-47). Lower: Sunset Cove (Muskoka, Ontario, 1949).



The Terraces, Arthur's home in retirement. Upper left: view of house from the St. Lawrence River. Upper right: chair lift and stairs used to access the road above. Centre: west side of the house. Bottom: garage and chair-lift shelter on road level. St. Lawrence River in background.



Arthur working on the problem of protective impermeable clothing in his capacity as a research scientist for the Defence Research Board of Canada, Ottawa. Physiological research with soldiers outdoors (above), and in the lab (left).



Arthur's work to properly fit soldiers with gas masks required him to measure the facial contours of soldiers and to construct models based on the average face. Upper left: some finished models behind one being constructed. Lower left: completed product of unfinished head above (white head). Right: Arthur in a device used in his gas mask work.

Queen's Christian Fellowship
invites you to hear

Mr. Arthur C. Custance, M.A., F.R.I.
discuss

"THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MAN"

Nov. 22 - 26 each day at 4:30 p.m.

MON. The Necessity of Bias.
TUES. The True Nature of Human Nature.
WED. The Formation of Personality.
THURS. The Formation of a new Personality.
FRI. The Great Gain of Being a Christian at University.

McLaughlin Room, Student's Union
each day except Tuesday

Tuesday - Room 201, New Arts Bldg.

As a missionary for the IVCF, Arthur presented a series of talks to the student bodies of various universities. This poster advertises these talks at Queen's University, 1954.



THE FIRST FOUR VOLUMES OF THE ACCLAIMED "DOORWAY PAPERS" SERIES NOW AVAILABLE IN A SET!

As in all Dr. Arthur Custance's volumes, the intricate weaving of scientific fact with Scripture proves to be a fascinating and provocative journey into the historical interpretation of man's development! Each volume is attractively and uniformly bound in durable, colorful hardcover bindings! No. 10662, \$34.80 per set (save \$1.00).

Evolution or Creation? No. 9467, \$8.95
Genesis and Early Man. No. 9465, \$8.95
Man In Adam and In Christ. No. 9466, \$8.95
Noah's Three Sons. No. 10660, \$8.95

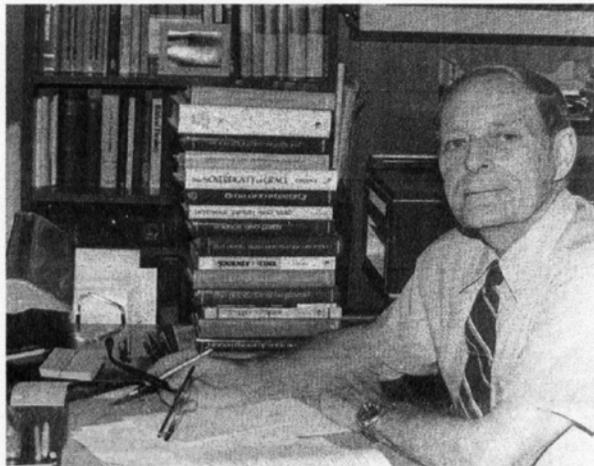
Arthur decided to put to print many of the ideas from his talks, and did so by publishing short booklets known collectively as *The Doorway Papers Series*. As noted in the advertisement above, these papers were published in book form by Zondervan. This advertisement appeared in 1975.



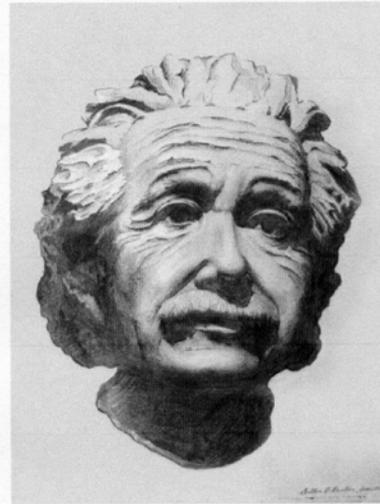
Arthur lecturing at the First Presbyterian Church, Brockville, Ontario, 1970 or 71. This lecture covered the continuance of the germ plasm. Diagrams on the board (left picture) can be found in Arthur's last book, *Two Men Called Adam*.



Arthur viewing his line drawing of the doorway of University College (University of Toronto) on display in the Brockville Public Library, 1973.



Newspaper photo in *Brockville Recorder and Times*, Nov. 7, 1983. Caption reads: Dr. Arthur Custance is seen at his home, with 16 volumes of mind-expanding books he has written and published piled on the desk beside him. (Staff Photo by Betty MacDowell)



Arthur enjoyed working with pencil, and produced many line drawings. Pictured here are four examples. The drawing of a sculpture of Einstein (lower right) was one of his favourites. His many drawings are housed in the Custance Collection at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario.



Arthur with Dr. John Howitt, a faithful and loyal friend for over 40 years. Picture taken in Toronto, February 1982, during a celebration of Dr. Howitt's 90th birthday.



After Arthur's death, a number of his dedicated friends assisted Evelyn White (far right) in continuing his vision and ministry. Three men in particular were George Verbaas (second from left), George Hudson (third from left), and Hal Lochrie (fourth from left).



Arthur Custance working at his desk in his library at The Terraces, October, 1982. Evelyn White, his administrative assistant for thirty years and author of this biography, is pictured standing beside him. Photograph taken by Roy Paul who served as chair of the Arthur Custance Centre until September, 2012.