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HOW THEY ENTERED CANAAN
(A Collection of Holiness Experience Accounts)
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

THREE FERGERSONS
(Harry Fergerson, Mother Fergerson, and Ed Fergerson)

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Ed Fergerson's brother Harry died of enlargement of the heart and was afflicted for four or five years previous to his death. He too, was a very devoted Christian from a child, and when Bros. Smith and Niles came to Mt. Vernon and preached holiness, Harry began seeking the experience, and he was so anxious to get the genuine from God he went through several different meetings without getting just what satisfied him. In the year 1893, Sister Bertie Crow held a meeting in a hall in Mt. Vernon, known as Brumbaugh's Hall, in the month of October, and on the 17th day of the month in the evening service, Harry prayed through and got the satisfying portion. From that time had an experience no one doubted.

I'll here quote a small portion of a note he wrote the same night he was sanctified after going out to the country home and going into his mother's room and embracing her in his arms and saying, "Oh, mama, I am sanctified and I never was so happy." Then kissing her good night, went up stairs to his own room and wrote the following: "Thank thee dear Lord for sanctifying me, after going to the altar twenty-one times. Now dear Lord, keep me saved and bless me and help me to point others to the dying Lamb." This note with more to it, was found in his trunk after he went to Heaven, and was read by the minister at his funeral; it was sealed in an envelope and these words written on the outside of the envelope: "Don't open until to glory I go, then you can open it."

This note is put in a frame with the envelope and hangs in his mother's bedroom today. He lived a victorious life and died a triumphant death, begging his mother not to grieve for him. He said he was going to live with Jesus and would be waiting for his dear ones. He shouted the praises of God to almost the last breath and went to be with God on September 29th, 1894.

His parents claimed the experience of holiness, but his mother after seeing his life, after he was sanctified, proved to her she wasn't satisfied with her experience, and as she approached her home from his funeral, the home looked so empty and lonely without Harry in it she said in her

heart, "Oh Lord, how can I go into that home and live without Harry." God seemed to answer clearly and say, "If you had the experience Harry had you could live anywhere." Then came the gushing response from the deep of her heart like this, "Oh Lord, I must have it" and from that moment before she even got out of the vehicle, she began to cry to God in her heart for the experience of entire sanctification. For two weeks she wrestled, Jacob-like; her friends rallied round her and said she must not stay much alone; but how she improved the hours she had alone with God, no one else knows but God. Oh those dark days of dying out to sin and self, to the world, and opinions of people, and being completely crucified with Christ. Oh, how we praise Him because He can do "exceeding abundantly above" what we ask or think."

The year of 1893 was the first year of the Bonnie camp meeting. L. L. Pickett was the leading preacher. Harry's body was laid in its last resting place, like his brother Ed's [was later laid to rest], on Sunday afternoon, before the Bonnie Camp opened on Friday following. When the camp closed, L. L. Pickett sent an announcement to Mt. Vernon that he would preach in Brumbaugh's Hall on Monday night. Father and Mother Fergerson were among those who heard him and he preached from the text, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification," and that text went through Mother Fergerson's heart as she has often expressed it, like a locomotive engine, completely breaking that old stony heart.

The hall was crowded and there was no chance for an altar service. At the close of his good sermon, Bro. Pickett said, "Let's rise and sing, and have a good handshake." Father Fergerson in his usual quiet way expected Mother Fergerson to start first, but she failed him that time, and he said to her, "Come on and let's go," but she said, "I can't walk." He said, "Oh, yes you can," and took her by the arm and urged her. They started toward the altar where the preachers were, and she says she started and a blank seemed to come over her and the next thing she knew she was on her knees in the altar, the preachers and saints all about her trying to instruct and help her.

Bro. J. J. Smith said to her, "You want God to sanctify you, don't you?" She said, "Yes," and then he said, "You believe He can do it don't you?" She said, "Yes," then he said, "Well, don't you believe He does do it?" and she said, "Yes," and oh how light and beautiful and sweet everything was, and how she seemed to go up a thousand miles in her soul; how clear it was that the blood of Jesus did cleanse and sanctify her soul. She is old and nearing the end of life in this world now, but the best of all is the blood of Jesus still cleanseth her soul from all sin now. She was sanctified on Monday night, the 15th of October, 1894.

We will now return to the main subject of this little sketch. Ed was saved in February preceding Harry's going to heaven the following September, and when Harry left us Ed shouted all around the house. It seemed like he could hardly stay in the body, he was in such a happy frame all the time. He often said that God must have done something extra for him, and he [mistakenly] believed that God had sanctified him when he saved him."

His mother being sanctified on Monday night (that was his night to be in Howell). So, he missed being in the service, but his mother went into Mt. Vernon and to Ed's home on Tuesday to be there when Ed got home. His train arrived about three o'clock and when his wife said it was about time for him to come to the house his mother went out to his front gate to watch for him. Here he came with his lunch-bucket in hand in his usual hurried way, and as he neared his home and

looked into his mother's face he said, "What's the matter, mama?" She said, "Oh, Ed, the Lord sanctified me last night." He rushed on in the house and said, "Come on in here and tell me about it."

She began to try to tell him what she could and he stopped her by saying, "Is there any meeting tonight?" His mother said, "Yes, an old lady had meeting given out for her to lead, but the preachers are all gone." Then he said, "Well, I am going, and get sanctified tonight. I thought I was sanctified but now I don't think I am, but I will let God sanctify me tonight."

The sister held the services and he and his wife went and the sister made an altar call, and he went forward, because that was what he went for. Of course he got the blessing and got such an overwhelming blessing that he did not stop shouting when he came down on the street and started home, but gave one of his good, happy Hallelujahs, to the top of his voice, right on the street in Mt. Vernon.

The night watchman heard him and came running down the street and met him and asked what was the matter. He shouted again, "Glory to God! I am sanctified," whereupon the watchman, turned and ran away from him, as fast as he ran to him, as though he was afraid of him. His little wife did not run from him; she was with him and clung to him, for she realized the more salvation he and she both got, the higher the tide of happiness rose in their home.

If you have noticed in reading these broken fragments, Mother Fergerson and her two sons were all sanctified around the same altar, but Harry was sanctified and safe in heaven before his mother or brother were sanctified. Mother Fergerson was sanctified on the 15th, Ed on the 16th and Harry on the 17th, all of October, but Harry a year previous to the others.

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Source: "E. A. Fergerson Warmly Remembered" by William B. Yates

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THE END