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

Vol. I -- Named Accounts

**JAMES MUDGE**  
(Methodist)

I was born at West Springfield, Mass., April 5, 1844, my father -- also James -- being a member of the New England Conference, of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Having been baptized in infancy, and brought up piously inside the fold from the beginning, in accordance with the ideas implied in that ordinance, I was always accounted a very good boy, and my conversation, which took place at the age of twelve, in a quiet revival in the little village of South Harwich, Mass., September, 1856, was not attended by any violent emotions. It was simply a determination, under the gentle stimulus of the special interest attending the revival, to take up publicly the position and perform the duties of an openly avowed Christian believer. Such I became. I joined in full the old Common Street Church of Lynn, Mass. (whither I had gone to prepare for college), on my thirteenth birthday, April 5, 1857.

I faithfully attended to all Christian duties, speaking and praying in class and prayer meetings, from which I was never absent, and serving as librarian in the Sunday School. I did not falter for a day, or so much as once think of turning back, and my joy in Jesus steadily increased as I came to know Him more.

Before long, however, as I continued my school life and church life, I began to find that there were certain things hard to do, and for the doing of which involved in talking personally about religion with my classmates, and I fell into the indulgence of a few doubtful practices in reference to which my conscience was not wholly at ease. I found myself sliding into a state of halfway service, a state wherein I was conscious of being only partially consecrated to God.

Happily I took alarm, after a little, and seeing clearly that there was no permanent peace or power to be had except in being decisively one thing or another, my mind became greatly exercised on the subject of full salvation. From reading a good deal about this, and hearing it much spoken of at my home and elsewhere, I came to have a strong desire for its attainment. So when I

went, in August, 1860, to the annual campmeeting at Eastham, on Cape Cod, as I was accustomed to do from year to year, it was with the earnest hope that I might receive this great blessing.

But Monday evening, August 13, the last night of the meeting, came without my having reached anything very definite. I had consecrated all, to the best of my ability, but had failed to apprehend that further necessity, the simple step of appropriating faith. The Rev. Charles Nichols, in a private conversation, made this matter plain, and so broke the last link that bound me to the old life. Silently and alone, as I bowed in prayer under the oak trees, I firmly made up my mind to take God at His Word. I determined that for the future, relying entirely upon His strength, I would bear every cross and be a whole-souled Christian. In a prayer meeting at the tent, between nine and ten that night, I made open avowal that the blessing I had sought was now obtained, claimed by simple faith. I felt no sudden, overpowering bliss, but a deep peace as of the conflict over and the harbor gained.

It was certainly a turning-point in my life from which dates a distinct and decided change in my experience. I returned to school a different individual. There was no more shirking of duty. I implicitly obeyed whatever I felt to be the orders of God. I bore clear and frequent testimony to the full salvation with which God had so wonderfully enriched my soul. At college (Middletown, Conn.), whither I soon went, 1861, I took a leading part in aggressive religious work and in promoting the highest type of spirituality.

My steps have been forward from that day in August, 1860, to this. Each year, without exception, has been an improvement on its predecessors. There has never been anything that could be called a period of lapse or backsliding. Nevertheless, after a time, both while in college and subsequently, I gradually became aware that the work performed upon me at the second blessing above described, was not so deep and thorough as I had supposed. I was conscious of feelings which looked so suspiciously like ambition, envy, jealousy, impatience, pride, discontent, and selfishness that I could not feel perfectly at ease about the matter.

The theory in which I had been trained taught that all these things had been entirely removed at the aforesaid second blessing, and that what I felt now were only infirmities and temptations. I tried to think them so, but when I was most candid and honest with myself the explanation failed to fully satisfy me. In short, I grew more and more convinced as the years went on, that in my case at least (and it seemed to me also in the case of nearly if not quite all others I met), after the second blessing there was need of further consecrations from time to time, deepening, extending, and perfecting the work. In other words, I felt and saw that the sanctification wrought at conversion and at the second blessing was in both cases entire up to the light then given, and no further. Perfect light was not given either at one time or at the other, and hence as the light subsequently is increased a subsequent corresponding work in the heart remained to be done.

It is on this line that my experience has steadily and gloriously progressed for the last twenty years. There has been no year when it has not gone forward, but there have been some years of unusually marked advance, some seasons of very rich revelations of God's presence and power. One such year was that in which I went as a missionary to India, 1873, laying upon the altar all the fond ambitious dreams and hopes of life, all the delights of home and friends and native land, in a

far more thorough way than ever before; a way not possible to me before, because the actual pinch and stress of the practical test had not previously been brought within my reach.

Another such season came during my last full year in India, 1882, then, owing to some very bitter trials, a fuller disclosure was made to me than ever before as to some remains of the self-life needing further attention. Sunday, July 9, 1882, alone in my room at Shahjahanpore, God gave me such a baptism of love as I shall never forget to all eternity. The availableness of God and the loveliness of man were manifested to me in a way indescribable, and the effect upon my life ever since has been very marked. During the past six months there has been almost as wonderful a development of faith as there was of love five years ago. Unseen things are now far more real than ever before. There is an intensity and fullness of spiritual life before unknown, a settling down more thoroughly into Christ and a putting Him on more completely; a greater oneness of will with God and a more exact conformity to His image as well as more simplicity and more humility. If I am asked whether I consider that all these graces are now perfected in me, and that the self-life is absolutely dead, no minutest trace or smallest particle of it any more visible to the all-penetrating gaze of the great Searcher of hearts, I reply, I cannot tell. I have thought so at various times. But when keener tests were brought to bear I found reason to believe that a little of self still lingered, calling for further purification. Thus it may be now. I know that to me but one thing seems desirable or valuable in heaven or earth, and that is the will of God. And every thing which comes to me I welcome as God's will for me. So far as I am any way conscious, my whole being, without the slightest reservation or hesitation, goes out after Him and abides in Him. Loving only what God loves, and willing only what God wills, I find no room for disappointment, but only for delight and thanksgiving in all He sends me. This is surely the land of Beulah, if not something more. It is, indeed, heaven begun below. "For to me to live is Christ."

JAMES MUDGE, EAST PEPPERELL, MASS., April 5, 1887.

Source: "Forty Witnesses" by Rev. S. Olin Garrison

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THE END