

# On the Move



A BIOGRAPHY OF LORENZO  
AND CONSTANCE STANTON

EVA TWYMAN

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ART WORK BY LORRAINE STANTON

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## INTRODUCTION

Memories and research from different members of the family make up this story. There are also some very interesting rambling notes from Constance Stanton written in her early nineties.

If anyone was to suggest that bringing up a family in our parents' day was a sinecure they would be wide of the mark. As mother wrote, "We had much poverty, some prosperity, were often away from home and travelled thousands of miles (seldom easy in the first quarter of the twentieth century) but we had loads of friends and always put God first. Jesus Christ was very real and often we felt unworthy of His grace so freely given. Will happily be going home soon and look forward to meeting all our loved ones in heaven and hopefully you too."

In our deliberations concerning the family history we have concentrated on the facts and recollections directly concerning mother and father rather than members of the family.

From the union of two very interesting people came fourteen children. Interesting in their own way too. Some have been more like their father than others. None has been better known than he was. Few travelled more widely, or served such a variety of causes ministering to the less fortunate. Not one of their children has lived in more different houses in New Zealand and foreign countries. But no one loved New Zealand better than mother. Without a doubt not one has worshipped or ministered in such a wide variety of churches. Both began life as Methodists, and for various reasons met later with Apostolic, Baptists, Brethren, Holiness, Mission, Presbyterian and Salvation Army congregations. Creed was little to this couple; godly living was everything. None of their family persuaded more people to give to missionary enterprises. Father believed and preached that men would be judged by deeds done and gifts given in their lives; so he determinedly spent or gave away every penny he earned or had, except his home. At fifty years of age, when he had worked hard to establish a thriving business, he sold all, giving half away immediately.

None of the family became as authoritarian as father, yet most got a fair share of his leadership and organising ability. Undoubtedly all the children of this marriage chose a partner to balance any inherited weaknesses. Many were not musical, but had the good sense to gain very musical partners. Some were argumentative and a shade intolerant, but like our wise father, married more easy-going mates like our charming mother.

It was a marvellous heritage. Like the Psalmist of old we can all say, "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places", and "Their children shall rise up and call them blessed."

## THE BUSINESS

Perhaps it was no coincidence that printing and retailing came to play an ever increasing part in the lives of four generations of Stantons. John Shepherd started his working life as a journalist and printer, and his wife Sarah's family were retailers. This happy combination of talents and training were used first in the store at Fort Albert, and later passed on to some of the Shepherd family, then to many of the Stantons.

When Constance and Lorenzo started the business of L.O. Stanton and Co. it carried on a family tradition. After Lorenzo sold the business to his sons, it expanded rapidly. Like a strong tree, it grew larger, and branched out. It continues to do so throughout New Zealand. Percy and his family were the first to branch out and now operate a thriving wholesale and retail stationery business in Hawkes Bay.

Recently, after the death of Albert, the oldest son, and for many years the managing director and driving force in the business, his son Keith has branched out. With the help of Albert's family he has purchased the Industrial Stapling section of the business.

A number of the family have been prominent in the affairs of the parent body for the stationery trade in New Zealand. Edwin was N.Z. President of the Stationers' Guild. In recent years some of the younger men have been engaged in the Guild affairs. At a recent Stationers' Conference there were fifteen Stantons present. After a capable address on business management and budgeting by Terence Stanton, the Managing Director of a large N.Z. stationery manufacturing business said, "If I were starting in retail stationery I would hire Terence Stanton as adviser and financial manager." So the old tree not only put down good roots; it also sends out strong branches.

A dissertation on the Stanton family written by Hugh Chisholm on the occasion of a reunion in Taupo, January 1972 -

"In the year that Queen Victoria died, there were Shepherds abiding in Port Albert. One of them was a comely lass, named Constance.

And there came to her a vision, a young man, Lorenzo Dakleith Stanton, son of Levi, who was fair to look upon, but weak, withall. Once he got rid of the "withall" he became strong with long flowing tresses growing from his chin.

The heart of Constance went out to him, and proceeded to make his life uncomfortable, taking him on journeyings for which his training had not prepared him.

One day, they entered into a boat to cross to the other side of the estuary to avoid the crowds that always followed him. And suddenly a mighty storm arose, and waves tossed the boat about making Lorenzo sore afraid. The wind tore at his frail body and whistled through the rigging. He called out in anguish, "Save me, or I perish!" Constance gave him some bicarbonate of soda and immediately, the wind was stilled.

And it came to pass that Constance said one day, "Lo (which being interpreted, means Lorenzo Dakleith), I love you." He accepted this as his due, and soon she left the fold of the Shepherds and married Lorenzo. And in her private vows, she said, "Where thou goest, I will go." So for over fifty years, they lived and worked together.

In journeying often, in fear of Model T Fords, a night and a day they spent on the Limited, in hunger and want at the Wellington Mission, beset on all sides but never downhearted. All these problems, theirs and others, only strengthened their love for each other and their family.

The story of the family was in this wise. Lorenzo and Constance begat Albert, begat Dwight, Percy just happened, begat Wesley. And lo, a girl arrived and Lorenzo jumped for Joy, and shave off his beard again. He hoped he had finished with the begottens and had now started on the mis-begottens. Constance decided to hurry up the annual events and informed her master that twins were due. This news delighted him, and he would gaze fondly at Constance, full of Grace and Ruth. Both

looked upon each new arrival as a gift from God. They used Biblical names or those of famous people for their children. Dwight after Moody, Wesley after John Wesley, Percy after giving up hope, Norman after Kirk and Fletcher after James. Olive was named after the branch of peace, the piece de resistance, which being interpreted, makes interesting reading. When child bearing days were over, Constance, in hope, changed her name to Connie.

The family were ruled in a patriarchal manner, sternly but with love, and rules were bent in a matriarchal manner.

Dwight was always Moody, but his father would only need to say, "Dwight, when thou wast under the fig tree, I called thee." And Dwight would remember and be moved.

And it came to pass that one day, Connie called her eldest Daughter Joy and said, "Half of my family I give to you as I go with your father to a far country." And so it was that Joy looked after five of the family. And when her parents returned, they said unto her, "How many children did we leave with you?" And Joy replied, "Five." And father said, "How many do you have now?" And proudly Joy said, "Five." And the parents said, "Well done, thou good and faithful daughter. Thou shalt have dominion over them for many years to come."

And this is the Genesis of the Stanton Family Camp at Taupo. Exodus will be completed by Friday, Numbers will increase, and there is bound to be another camp, but the Revelation will be at a later date."

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