

## Chapter 11

### *THE LETTER OF STANDING*

It was during that first year in Toronto that the most amazing events in our lives began to come together, though it became evident that the Lord had planned it all many years before, and had a purpose even beyond that time.

I soon realised that there was little future for me at the French School where prospects of a livable salary were low. However, to teach in the Canadian system I would need to have my British credentials recognised so that I could apply for a "type B" teaching certificate. But how to do that ?

No one at the school seemed to know, but I remembered that ten years earlier, when applying for the position at Danforth Technical College, I had sent photocopies of my degree and teaching certificates to an office on Bloor Street, Toronto.

"Does anyone know of an education office on Bloor St.?" I asked my colleagues.

"Well, the education department of the University is there" suggested one.

So it was that, at the end of afternoon school, I drove downtown to Bloor St., found a short-time parking space and entered the building which housed the University Education Department.

The ground floor was deserted and dark, except for a single room at the end of a long corridor. A young man was standing at the door, talking to an older man who was rising from his chair as I reached the doorway. I soon realised that the office belonged to the younger man and the senior was an honoured visitor.

When I explained my reasons for being there, the younger man told me that I should have been at the Mowat Building on Bay Street, several blocks away. I thanked him and was about to leave when the older man stopped me with a question.

"Why did you come here?"

I explained that ten years earlier, while applying for another position, I had needed to send my credentials to an office on Bloor Street - and I thought this might be it.

"Maybe you wrote to my office" he said, and, taking my arm in his, he began to lead me back along the dark corridor toward the entrance.

I wanted to get away to go to the Mowat Building, but could not pull away as he seemed so fragile he might fall without my support! He led me out of the building, across the four-lane, busy Bloor Street and up several steps into the building opposite. I wondered who this man was as we were saluted by the doorman and acknowledged by everyone else before we entered the 'inner sanctum' of that building.

"Sit down here" he said, indicating a plush armchair at the desk, "while I go and look for your letter"!

He was gone less than a minute before he returned in triumph with my original letter of ten years earlier pinned to a copy of his reply. I was dumbfounded! I had been in the wrong building, led to the wrong office, in order to meet the 'divine appointment' God had planned ten years before.

He then repeated to me the directions which the younger man had already given, writing on a note pad as he spoke.

"Ask for Don Anderson when you get there, and give him this" he said, passing the note paper to me.

I thanked him and left the room, aware that the time was passing and offices would soon be closed. As I raced to my car - already parked overtime, I tried to read what he had written to Don Anderson.

"Dear Don" it read, "please look after Mr Evans for me. It appears he is eligible for a Type A Specialist Teachers' Certificate".

The notepaper was headed, "Prof. Carlisle, Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education, Toronto".

My surprises for this day were not yet over. I arrived at the Mowat Block on Bay St. just as they were closing the doors. I rushed up to the floor where, according to the doorman, applications for letters of standing were processed. Entering, I quickly stopped with dismay. There was a counter about fifty feet long with people lined up in front of it, three deep. I was beginning to think that it would be midnight before I left there, when I was suddenly bumped into by a man leaving a washroom on my right. He apologised and then added,

"Can I do anything for you ?"

I told him I wanted to see Mr Don Anderson.

"I'm Don Anderson" he replied!

I gave him the note and was led into his own office. He introduced me to his secretary, a Welsh girl, with instructions that she was to "look after Mr Evans".

I was home in time for early supper rejoicing in the marvelous ways God had led me that day.