

family to Canada in 1820. His more than average natural talent had received some culture in the school of the Haldanes in Edinburgh. He taught school in Scotland, and when he came to this country engaged in the same occupation at Cote St. Paul, in the vicinity of Montreal. Not long did he continue that calling, God had another place and another work for him, which he indicated in his own time and way.

In 1817 and 1818 a few families of Mr. McPhail's countrymen crossed the Atlantic and settled in the rear of the township of Chatham, in the Province of Quebec. With an extensive country before them, the greater portion of which was unsettled, why of all others they should choose that unpromising place is not easily determined. Perhaps its resemblance to their native highlands influenced their choice. Also some of the land was free grant, and what was not could be purchased for very little, though for agricultural purposes dear at any price. It was, too, perhaps as far in the woods from settlement as they cared to go. In their new home were no schools for their children, nor means of grace, other than their Gaelic Bibles. Among them were godly people, who deplored more the destitution of gospel privileges than the hardships and poverty which were the common lot. They knew Duncan McPhail was at Cote St. Paul, and two of their number travelled fifty miles, no trifling journey at that time, to induce him if possible to resign his school and settle among them in Chatham. They wanted him not to teach school but to preach, as God would give him ability, the gospel of Christ. Remuneration for this service was not thought of, nor mentioned on either side. The state of the community made such a thing impossible, even had the people considered it a righteous duty, which they did not.

The visit of these brethren; their representation of the religious destitution in which the rising generation were growing up: the need and desire of the people for a preached gospel; the urgent persuasions of the men, were regarded by Mr. McPhail as the voice of God calling him to a new service. Though it was relinquishing ease and comfort for himself and family, at what he believed the bidding of duty, he resigned his school and took his household to Chatham. He purchased land with more rock on its surface than it had soil to till: more fertile of interest