

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN N. B., JANUARY 29, 1902.

# INTERESTING EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF SAINT ANDREW'S CHURCH.

The Story of Its Early Organization in the Days When St. John Was Known as Parr Town—Its History Dates Back to the Year 1783—The First Elders and Other Officers.

About the year 1783 this Presbyterian congregation in the City of St. John, met for the purpose of organizing and taking such steps as might be necessary for securing a place of worship. A committee was appointed who applied to the governor for a grant of land for such purpose. In answer to this application they received the grant of a lot which is now known by numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 on the north side of Queen street, between Sydney and Carmarthen.

The grant is dated June 29, 1784, and was issued under the great seal of the province of Nova Scotia, by which province St. John was under the name of Parr Town. Service had been held from time to time in the meeting house erected on the lot on which Mr. John McMillan's house now stands on Queen street. The Rev. Dr. James McGregor, Rev. Jas. Weddall, and other ministers giving temporary supply. In 1814 it was thought that the ground was not so conveniently situated as it ought to be for church purposes, and a committee was appointed to proceed with the erection of a building.

The committee consisted of Hon. William Pagan, Hugh Johnson, Mr. John Currie, James Greer, William Campbell, William Donaldson, John Paul, John Reid, Robert Robertson, Laughlin Donald, late mayor of St. John, being secretary to the committee. They bought the ground on which the church now stands, and on March 21, 1814, it was conveyed to them by John Landless, farmer in consideration of the sum of £220 paid therefor. Subscriptions were at once made towards the building fund by Presbyterians then in St. John, which was supplemented by three subscriptions of £100 each, given by William Cripps, James and Henry Cummings, all of Liverpool, England. On January 20, 1815, the building being completed was opened by Rev. Dr. Weddall, father of the late Dr. Weddall who for many years was an elder of the Kirk and preached the first sermon in the new church. The first regularly appointed minister was the Rev. George Burns, who had been an assistant minister in Aberdeen, Scotland, a young man of 26 years of age and a doctor of divinity. The degree was conferred upon him by the University of St. Andrews on the eve of his departure to this country, and the new Kirk was called St. Andrews in compliment to Dr. Burns's alma mater.

Dr. Burns arrived in St. John on Sunday, May 25, 1817, and on that day preached in the Kirk, choosing for his text the first verse of 122nd Psalm: "I was glad when they said unto me let us go up into the house of the Lord." He was accompanied among others by Alex. Lawrence, father of the late J. W. & G. Lawrence of this city, who had been a preacher to the Kirk. The first elders of the church were Hon. William Pagan, William Campbell, Hugh Johnson, Mr. Robert Robertson and Robert Reid. Mr. Pagan seems to have been largely instrumental in the building of the Kirk. He was the first president of St. Andrew's Society at St. John. He died at Fredericton on March 12, 1819.

From the first time that the Kirk was opened, the annual collection for the poor was taken up, previous to 1821 the collection was made on New Year's day, but it was then decided that thereafter the first Sabbath of the year be fixed as the most suitable time for making this collection, and that day has been set apart in each year for that purpose. Rev. Dr. Burns continued his ministry to September 1, 1831, when having received a presentation from St. Andrew's University to take charge of Tweeds Muir, Peebleshire, he resigned, and returned to Scotland. He continued to that charge until 1843, when he joined the Free church and was appointed minister of Corstorphine, where he remained until his death which occurred in Edinburgh February 5, 1876, at the ripe age of 86 years. Dr. Burns was a man of solid requirements, of great, good sense, and earnest and unaffected piety, in his prime he was the accepted preacher, and a faithful pastor, and to the last he retained his interest in life and its out-goings. He was the author of several volumes of sermons and other works of religious nature. During the vacancy, the Rev. Donald Allan Fraser, as supply, ministered to this congregation until February 4, 1832, when the Rev. Robert Wilson was appointed by the colonial committee, pastor of St. Andrew's church, to enter upon the discharge of his duties.

In the Spring of 1832, the legislature passed an act vesting the property and emoluments then held by the minister and elders, in trustees to be annually chosen by the congregation, and should hereafter happen by death or removal of the minister. In January, 1833, Rev. Mr. Wilson, of St. Andrew's church and the other members of the Kirk of Scotland, met in Fredericton and formed the first presbytery in the province.

In 1836 the congregation of St. Andrew's had increased very largely, and it was decided to establish a congregation in connection with it somewhat in the character of a Chapel of Ease. Accordingly, four trustees and other members of St. Andrew's church, purchased a lot on the northwest corner of King square, the first trustees of which were: John Robinson, Thomas Walker, John Wilson, Hugh McKay and John Wishart, and shortly after the Rev. Mr. Andrews, of Scotland, came out to take charge of that congregation. The congregation thus founded is that still known as St. Stephen's, now worshipping in this city, presided over by Rev. Dr. Fraser.

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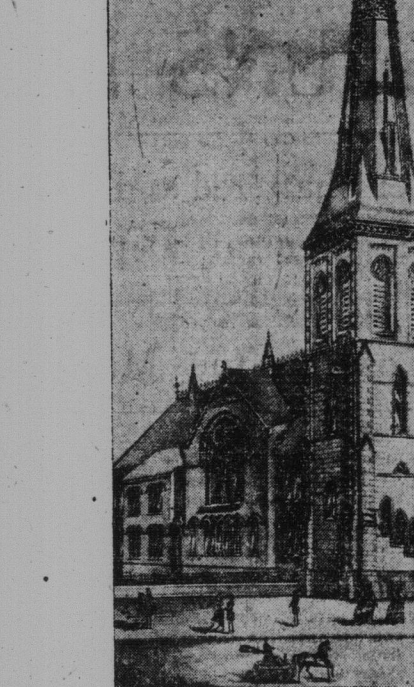
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Saint Andrew's Church.

The Presbyterian churches in Canada were united in 1875, and by the constitution of St. Andrew's church only those ministers who were in communion with the church of Scotland could be elected pastors, and therefore it was expedient in view of the approaching vacancy, the great part of the buildings of the city, including the Kirk, were totally destroyed by fire.

For a fortnight previous to that memorable day the Kirk had been undergoing repairs; it had been entirely repainted and beautified. The contractor finished his work at noon and at 4 o'clock the building was a mass of ruin. For several months previous to the fire the ladies of the congregation had been engaged in sewing and making fancy articles in view of having a bazaar or fancy sale to raise money to form a nucleus for a building for a new edifice. This, together with the three memorial tablets erected in memory of the Hon. William Pagan, William Campbell and Rev. Dr. Donald, the pulpit, the Bible (the gift of the late Mrs. James Lawton), and the solid silver font used for baptismal purposes, were totally destroyed. Fortunately the communion service of solid silver which was the gift of the Earl and Countess of Dalhousie, in 1818, were in the vault of the Bank of New Brunswick, and were saved. Most of the records and papers of the church were saved.

On the first Sabbath after, services were held in the hall of the Mechanics' Institute. At the close of the service a collection was taken up for the members of the congregation who had been burned out, and who required assistance, and a meeting was held at which a committee was appointed to visit all whose homes had been burned and see that they lacked nothing. The homes and places of business of three-quarters of the congregation were destroyed in that fire. Three members of the congregation: Capt. Frith, Joseph Bend and Mrs. Reid lost their lives in the fire. On the 26th day of June, five days after, it was agreed by the congregation, at once to take steps to have a suitable place of worship erected on the site of the old Kirk. The building committee after having plans submitted to them selected the design submitted to them by Langley, Langley & Burke, of Toronto, and the present comfortable and beautiful edifice was erected at a cost of over \$70,000, in which the congregation now worships.

The Rev. William Mitchell resigned his charge on the 14th day of March, 1882. He was succeeded by Rev. Thomas G. Smith, D. D., of Kings in Ont., who was duly inducted pastor on the 15th of May, 1882, and after a pastorate of three years tendered his resignation to accept a charge in Wyono, Wisconsin, and on the 18th of September, 1884, Rev. L. G. Macneill, of St. John, was inducted pastor, and has continued to minister to that congregation with great acceptance ever since.

The present office bearers are as follows:—Session: Rev. L. G. Macneill, moderator; Judge Forbes, elder and session clerk; James Kennedy, A. L. Law, J. W. A. Tufts, Jos. K. Dunlop, George Robertson, F. H. White, John L. Wilson and W. C. Whitaker.

Board of trustees:—Dr. P. R. Inches, P. McNair, Rev. L. G. Macneill, Rev. A. D. Blair, R. M. Magee, R. K. Cameron, A. D. Smith, J. B. Magee, and C. S. Everett.

Photographs of all the ministers who occupied the pastorate of St. Andrew's church are now hung in the vestry of said church, save that of Rev. R. Wilson, and Judge Forbes is in correspondence with members of his family, when the gallery will be completed.

The Irish Question FURTHER DISCUSSED. Various Remarks in Parliament—Ejection in Donegal.

London, Jan. 24.—T. P. O'Connor (Irish Nationalist), made a strong fighting speech in the house of commons today in support of John Redmond's amendment of yesterday to the address in reply to the speech from the throne at the opening of parliament. He was frequently cheered.

Mr. O'Connor made a special point of the recent reception of the Irish delegates in the United States by President Roosevelt who, he said, was in thorough sympathy with the Irish movement, and by the Canadian premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who, he added, held the same views.

The Right Hon. J. Atkinson, attorney general for Ireland, admitted, in the course of a defence of the government, that there was no serious crime in Ireland and that violent crimes there had never been at a lower ebb, he said, but intimidation and conspiracy necessitated the enforcing of the coercion act, because the law had been taught that intimidation and conspiracy were not crimes.

John Morley (Liberal), asserted that he would vote for any motion entailing a proposal to confer upon the Irish people the same right to govern themselves as Great Britain had given her colonies. John Redmond's amendment was rejected by a vote of 237 to 134.

Belfast, Jan. 24.—According to the Irish News an effort will be made to clear Tory Ireland off the northwest coast of Ireland, and that violent crimes there had never been at a lower ebb, he said, but intimidation and conspiracy necessitated the enforcing of the coercion act, because the law had been taught that intimidation and conspiracy were not crimes.

Since the truthfulness of Lord Cranborne's statement must be taken for granted, it would seem that the British government performed a valuable act of friendship at a juncture of our national history that might otherwise have become critical.—Philadelphia Record.

of the congregation who had been burned out, and who required assistance, and a meeting was held at which a committee was appointed to visit all whose homes had been burned and see that they lacked nothing. The homes and places of business of three-quarters of the congregation were destroyed in that fire. Three members of the congregation: Capt. Frith, Joseph Bend and Mrs. Reid lost their lives in the fire. On the 26th day of June, five days after, it was agreed by the congregation, at once to take steps to have a suitable place of worship erected on the site of the old Kirk. The building committee after having plans submitted to them selected the design submitted to them by Langley, Langley & Burke, of Toronto, and the present comfortable and beautiful edifice was erected at a cost of over \$70,000, in which the congregation now worships.

The Rev. William Mitchell resigned his charge on the 14th day of March, 1882. He was succeeded by Rev. Thomas G. Smith, D. D., of Kings in Ont., who was duly inducted pastor on the 15th of May, 1882, and after a pastorate of three years tendered his resignation to accept a charge in Wyono, Wisconsin, and on the 18th of September, 1884, Rev. L. G. Macneill, of St. John, was inducted pastor, and has continued to minister to that congregation with great acceptance ever since.

The present office bearers are as follows:—Session: Rev. L. G. Macneill, moderator; Judge Forbes, elder and session clerk; James Kennedy, A. L. Law, J. W. A. Tufts, Jos. K. Dunlop, George Robertson, F. H. White, John L. Wilson and W. C. Whitaker.

Board of trustees:—Dr. P. R. Inches, P. McNair, Rev. L. G. Macneill, Rev. A. D. Blair, R. M. Magee, R. K. Cameron, A. D. Smith, J. B. Magee, and C. S. Everett.

Photographs of all the ministers who occupied the pastorate of St. Andrew's church are now hung in the vestry of said church, save that of Rev. R. Wilson, and Judge Forbes is in correspondence with members of his family, when the gallery will be completed.

The Irish Question FURTHER DISCUSSED. Various Remarks in Parliament—Ejection in Donegal.

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