

## FOREWORD

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The early history of our Church in Brantford was for a long time unknown. There were apparently no records; in fact, in "Stone's History of the County of Brant" it is said that "Concerning the persons and history of this Church there is no record to give interesting facts and data," and it might reasonably be assumed that they were lost in the fire which burned up the first frame church on Dalhousie Street in 1864. But fortunately there has recently been returned to us the first Brantford church register, commencing with the year 1841, which had also been used up to the year 1860 as the register of the Congregational Church at Newmarket by the Rev. Mr. Baker, who left Brantford Church for Newmarket in 1850, where he acted as pastor till 1861.

This book also contained in it another paper-covered volume giving the minutes and records of the Sunday School at Brantford from June 1828 to June 1830. At the request of a church meeting the writer was asked to prepare from these records a history of the Church. The work became very interesting as he sought for notices of the Church and its founders. He has ventured to enlarge the original scope of his instructions and to add matters of interests which seemed to illuminate the subject. Upon some of these there may be honest differences of opinion among his readers, but he has set them down as they appeared to him, hoping to have wilfully written nothing to hurt those who differ from him. He is well aware of the imperfections in style that will be found in the book, but he hopes that an honest attempt to preserve the early history of the Church, to show its close connection with very famous British Independent Churches, and to extract it from very scanty records, will be appreciated by his fellow-members, his readers, and his successors, who may hereafter with greater skill rewrite it from fuller materials.

He acknowledges with pleasure the assistance and information he has received from many friends, including Miss Wilkes, Mr. Henry Symons, Mrs. Hartman, Mr. G. Taylor, of this city, Mr. H. Baker of Birmingham, and other members of the Brantford Church. No doubt many omissions will be noted, more especially those that relate to the mission of the ministry in the church, but tolerant critics will realise that it is difficult to condense the work of a hundred years into a hundred pages. I have, however, asked the aid of Mr. Symons, Mr. R. Kerr, Miss Hollinrake, Miss Ritchie, Mr. Dixon and Mr. Cole to deal more fully with matters I have just touched upon. Their contributions will add to the historical value of the work, as they show that our Church owes its life and being to the patient labors of hundreds of tireless workers in and generous givers to the Master's service. It was not one or two good men and women only who built our historic Church, but the unceasing care of four or five generations of members who have never suffered the Pentecostal flame to expire or the Good News to lack preaching since our founders crossed the Atlantic ocean one hundred years ago this summer.

JOHN ROBERTSON.

31 Ontario Street, Brantford,  
June, 1920