

Historical Sketch of Knox Church, Palmerston.



ANY interesting stories have been written and told of the early settlement of Wellington and Perth Counties. It may be said that the difficulties encountered and overcome in the settlement, clearing and development of those portions of Minto and Wallace Townships, now within the jurisdiction of Knox Church, Palmerston, were similar in all respects to what has been recorded and told of the whole of that valuable territory known as the "Queen's Bush."

About the year 1850 the first settlers began to arrive in the neighborhood of what is now the Town of Palmerston. These settlers were in most cases young men and women who, lately united in marriage, had faced the great task of clearing what was believed to be fertile soil, to make for themselves homes that would in the coming years be valuable agricultural areas bringing in rich returns for the labor spent in their development. In the great majority of cases the only capital possessed by these young people was strong constitutions and stout hearts. Those settling in the immediate vicinity of Palmerston were mostly from Scotland and the North of Ireland or were of Scotch and Irish parentage. They had been brought up in a religious air and had strong desire to have the benefit of church services. For the first ten years the opportunities for public worship were few, occasionally a student would come through during the summer months and worship would be conducted in the log houses of the settlers at convenient points, and occasionally they were able to attend church at Harriston, where the Presbyterians were in greater numbers and had a settled Minister.

In 1862 some twenty-seven Presbyterians from the Townline east and west of what is now Palmerston, from the 10th and 8th of Wallace and the 2nd of Minto, decided to ask the Presbytery of Guelph to form them into a Congregation and erected a log Church on the farm of Thomas McComb about half a mile west of the present Church.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Guelph, held in Guelph on the 23rd day of October, 1862, the application was received from the members of the Church residing in the territory already described, asking that they be formed into a