

***The Founding
of Centenary
Church***

In 1866 the population of Hamilton was 25,000. Over one-fifth of this number were Methodists and Church accomodation for them was entirely inadequate. No central or prominent Church edifice properly represented its numbers such as the Presbyterian Church, notably, possessed in its fine St. Paul's, Central and McNab Street Churches. The financial ability of the Methodists being in proportion to their numbers, and a new Church enterprise being both reasonable and necessary, Centenary Church was planned and its foundation laid. The fact that 1866 was the centenary year of American Methodism, just one-hundred years having elapsed since Barbara Heck and Philip Embury collected the first Methodist congregation in New York for public worship, naturally suggested the name of "Centenary".

At the time of its construction Centenary Church was considered one of the finest and most commodious Methodist Churches in the Dominion, and while its exterior may now be regarded as somewhat old-fashioned, the interior is very little surpassed for comfort and suitability. The Trustees who undertook the burden of erecting the Church were:—Edward Jackson, Dennis Moore, Dr. Roseburgh, W. E. Sanford, F. W. Watkins, Sr., William Boice, Edward Gurney, Sr., with the Rev. Nathaniel Burwash as Secretary of the Board.

***Formal Opening,
May 10, 1868***

The opening of the Church in 1868, one year after Confederation, took place on the 10th of May. At the morning service Rev. Dr. Samuel Rose opened with Hymn 738 in the old hymn book "How pleasant, how divinely fair, O Lord of Hosts, Thy dwellings are". The Rev. James Elliott, President of the Conference, led in prayer and Rev. Dr. Rice read the lessons, 7th Chapter of II. Chronicles, 48th Psalm and 2nd Chapter of First Peter. Rev. Dr. William Morley Punshon was the preacher, and his sermon was based on Hebrews 12, 18-22. "For ye are not come unto the