

History of St. Andrew's Church, Blyth

FROM ITS FOUNDATION TO THE JUBILEE, IN OCTOBER, 1910



THE HISTORY of a congregation extending over many years is naturally fragmentary and perhaps imperfect, especially in the earlier part of it.

The history of our Church dates back to 1854, although for a few years prior to that services were held at the home of Mr. J. B. Taylor on the 9th Concession of Morris. In 1854 an attempt was made to organize a congregation and to build a place of worship. To this end a Board of Management was appointed consisting of J. B. Taylor, Kenneth McBean, Thos. Ritchie, John Laidlaw and Walter McGowan. Only one of these, the last named, is still living. Further, a Building Committee was appointed, viz.: Andrew B. and James Stewart, Malcolm Campbell, Walter McGowan and H. Richmond. Of these only Henry Richmond is living within the bounds of the congregation, and Walter McGowan has his name still on the Communion Roll although living for the present in Vancouver.

For three years services were held in Kenneth McBean's barn, opposite church sheds, and in a building on the corner where Mr. Anderson's store is at the present time. These services were conducted by Messrs. John Rennie, McKay, McRobbie and others.

On October 11th, 1857, the first Communion Service was held, the Presbytery sending Revs. Sutherland and Rennie

to conduct the service. The service was held in the building where Mr. Anderson's store now stands. On that occasion 44 names were placed on the Communion Roll. Of those names only two are in our congregation now, viz.: Mrs. George McGowan and Mr. Walter McGowan. Five others are still living as far as known, viz.: Mr. and Mrs. James Stewart, in Winnipeg; Mrs. John Laidlaw, in Vancouver; Mr. James McKinnon in Alberta; and Mrs. Charles Rodgers, in Wawanosh, a member of the Auburn church.

In connection with that service a number of children were baptized, the first name on the roll being that of William Laidlaw, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Laidlaw. Doubtless there were other baptisms in the congregation prior to this date, but the records of them are elsewhere.

The question of a permanent church building still engaged the attention of the people. Different sites for the church were proposed, viz.: a site on John Laidlaw's farm, opposite where Robt. Cockerline now lives; a site just East of J. C. Stewart's residence; also one on the East Wawanosh side of the village; but finally in 1858 the church was begun which used to stand where the graveyard now is on Dinsley street. It was not until September, 1859, that the church was dedicated. The preacher on that occasion was Rev. David Allan. The sacraments of Baptism



THE FIRST CHURCH