AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE FIRST HILLSBORO BAPTIST CHURCH.

BY REV. W. CAMP.

Read before the N. B. Eastern Association, and published by request of that body.

In May, 1763, a few years after the taking of Quebec by the English and in the same year in which the "Treaty of Paris," was signed at Paris, which marked the close of "The Seven Years' War," six German families left Pennsylvania to settle somewhere in a northern climate. "They sailed in a sloop commanded by Capt. Hall. After a long and wearisome passage, they arrived at a place now called Hillsboro, July 1, and landed at a small creek on the north side of Gray's island."

Among these adventurers was a family by the name of Steeves. Hendrick Steeves and his wife, Rachel, had seven sons—Jacob, John, Christian, Frederick, Lutrick, Henry and Matthias—names still cherished among the Steeves and given to present generations.

Mr. and Mrs. Hendrick Steeves, with their seven sons, stopped at Hillsboro, built a log house and made this their headquarters.

The sloop after landing the Steeves family, proceeded up the Petitcodiac to a place afterwards called "The Bend," and later Moncton. Here the remainder of the party was landed. The names of these families were Jones, Trites, Ricker, Lutz and Somers. After this the sloop left on her homeward voyage promising to return the next spring.

The Steeves family at Hillsboro began to clear land and make for themselves a home. As the season was so late when they arrived to sow grain they planted a few turnips, and contented themselves by fishing and hunting and making preparations for the coming and untried winter. When the winter came it was cold and stormy, and seemed extremely severe to those accustomed to a warmer climate. They looked forward to

THE COMING OF THE SPRING

with great hopefulness. Soon the snow and ice began to melt, the forests were clothed in green robes and June, with her warm and gentle breath stirred new life in this lonely and discouraged family. Eagerly did they now look for for the returning sloop, but were doomed to disappointment. The summer passed, the autumn with its beautifully tinted leaves came, and the winter with its biting blasts returned, but no vessel arrived to cheer these isolated settlers. After the first winter the most trying times in their experience came. Their provisions were about gone, and there was no place to procure more; the remainder of the seed they brought with them they had just planted; and no vessel came to supply their growing needs.

What they passed through the second summer and winter, hoping against hope that the sloop would return; and then at last giving up all hopes of her coming back. Manfully and heroically meeting the difficulties which arose when they had only a few turnips and such fish and game as they could procure—all this can be better imagined than the stern facts can be recorded.

But meeting isolation, loneliness, cold winters and scarcity of food, this noble family struggled on with a cheerfulness, a perseverance, a hardihood and a heroism that characterize only the truly great. Such manly conduct in the face of discouraging and trying surroundings deserves a place in the history of the early settlers of this province. And be it known that these pioneers building houses, clearing lands and constructing dykes to keep out the Petitcodiac from their marshes did not toil without the inspiration of a preached gospel.

Henry Steeves, the sixth of the seven sons, began, about 1795, to preach the gospel to the people. Thus until the organization of the church he kept alive in the hearts of those who came to hear him the fires of faith and love towards Jesus, and made their lives all the brighter and nobler by holding up to them the inspiring and

HELPFUL LIFE OF CHRIST.

At the close of the Revolutionary War many of the troops came from Fort Cumberland and settled along the Petitcodiac river. Among them was a man by the name of Jacob Beck, known as the "king's baker." Henry Steeves married Mr. Beck's daughter and settled on his father's farm. He wrought with his hands six days of the week, tilling the ground, and on the Sabbath read from his German Bible and expounded the Word of God to his hearers. Thus until 1822 this man taught the people the love of God in Christ. An old man now living informs the writer that he, when a lad, heard Mr. Steeves speak to the people the precious things of the gospel. There was a house of worship standing on the same spot where now the village church stands. It was here Henry Steeves preached or exhorted from Sabbath to Sabbath. Some time after the First Hillsboro Baptist church was organized this building was removed and came into the possession of the Methodists. Another large building was put on the spot. This in time was removed and a third still larger edifice built here. This is the present beautiful structure which commands the old and memorable hill. Until the arrival of Father Crandall, in 1822, Mr. Steeves was the only minister in this neighborhood, save, perhaps, an occasional itinerant preacher.

Mr. Crandall, directed by God, visited what is now known as Hillsboro. Shortly after his coming the Spirit of God began to move upon the people.

Mr. Peter Janah, now an octogenarian, gives the writer a vivid picture of a baptism which took place on the 6th of October, 1822. He claims to have been present at the organization of the church. He was then a boy of 18 years.

On the banks of Weldon Creek, about three miles from the village, there gathered, one Sabbath day, a few settlers to witness the sacred ordinance of baptism administered to several candidates. It was not the first baptism the people had seen. There may have been one or two scenes like this before. What is now a pleasant half hour's drive amid beautiful trees and along beautifully cultivated fields, and by neat and pretty houses, was then a tedious journey over stumps and stones. And where now in Hillsboro and Salem are large farms with delightful and pleasant homes then there were isolated clearings with here and there a dwelling.

The octogenerian above referred to says that at this time, seventy-one years ago, there were but five houses at the "Bend;" and from Edgett's Landing to McLatchy's in Weldon only fourteen houses. But to return to the scene on the banks of the Weldon Creek. It was the 6th day of October, 1822.

REV. JOSEPH CRANDALL

stood with several happy converts who were about to follow their Saviour in His own appointed ways. And there amid autumnal foliage, with God, and angels and men as witnesses, this little band of believers put on Christ by public obedience to His commands.

After this service was completed they went to a barn a short distance from the spot and there organized the First Hillsboro Baptist church. This barn was owned by Henry Steeves, grandson of the preacher and one of the first deacons of the church. A man by the name of Robert Smith, a good singer, who was present from the Salisbury church and whose home was in Pollet River, at Mr. Crandall's request read the articles of the Baptist faith; and those who were baptised that day, together with others who had been baptized previously—perhaps ten or twelve in all—formed themselves into a New Testament church. The names of some of them were: Michael Steeves, Patrick Duffy, Eunice Duffy, William Duffy, John Steeves, Peggy Steeves, Jennie Gross, Vinnia Taylor, William Gross, Mrs. Peter Hopper, and perhaps others.

Christ was born in a manger and cradled upon straw. If the barn was not too low for the son of God it was not too mean and humble a place to witness the organization of a church of His. What a quaint scene! On the bare floor, surrounded by fragrant hay solemn obligations were assumed and sacred pledges given, which are now recorded in God's Books. One can imagine the love and affection which bound together that little band of pioneer men and women, who could conquer the wild forests and compel the earth to yield her increase, all the more heroically and successfully by cherishing in their hearts the religion of Christ and maintaining a visible church of our Redeemer in their midst.

To the unconcerned this must have appeared as a delicate plant soon to wither and die; but the sturdy nature of the pioneer was in the organization, and it soon proved itself to be no "reed shaken in the wind," for toward Christmas this little band had grown to seventy-seven—thirty-seven of these bearing the name of Steeves.

It is but fair to state that no church record has been preserved with reference to the place of the

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH,

and that some of the members hold that the tradition I have described and verified from the memory of an old man is incorrect. Those who do not think the church was organized at Salem believe the organization took place in the village in the first building standing where now the village church stands.

The writer has presented what he believes to be the facts. It is recorded that an association was held with this church the next summer after its organization, *i. e.*, in 1823. "In 1824 one of the members, James Wallace, was licensed to preach. He had to improve his talents without the aid of schools and colleges and with but a few books. Towards the close of 1834 there seemed to be a subsiding of the first enthusiasm. Doubtless the truth was penetrating beneath the surface, effecting a work of which they were hardly conscious. Memory says that the first deacons were Henry Steeves, David Steeves and Elijah Milton. Joseph Steeves was clerk in 1824, and Isaac Gross was appointed to that office in 1832."

In 1834 Rev. Wm. Sears became pastor of the church, giving three-fourths of his time. He had preached to the people before, but now became their regular pastor. From 1834 to 1838 no remarkable events occurred, but the work of God continued. Members were received and baptized—not many at a time, but a few frequently. In 1840 Pastor Walker, from the Hopewell church, visited them. This sister church was organized in 1818. After this visit the church seems to have gained a new life. The country all about felt her influence. In 1841 a sister comes all the way from Middle Coverdale to confess her Lord and to receive baptism. In 1843 Patrick Duffy was licensed to preach. In 1844 James Wallace became pastor of this church. In 1845 William Gross was elected as a deacon of the church. For a few years the church seems to have been in a depressed state. But in 1848 Alexander McDonald and John Francis arrived from Wales and for a time preached and laboredwith good success.

MANY WERE CONVERTED,

the work extending to Baltimore. Among those converted at this time was James Irving, who afterwards became a preacher of the gospel, and who for some eighteen years held the pastorate of the Baltimore church, leading many precious souls to Christ.

Little is known of the church's prosperity from 1848 to 1860. These are proofs, however, to show that this was not an uneventful period. During these twelve years no less than three churches sprang from the First Hillsboro. The Second Hillsboro was organized at Dawson Settlement in 1852. The Third Hillsboro at Demoiselle Creek in 1855, and the Fourth Hillsboro at Baltimore in 1857. Mr. James Newcomb, a graduate of Acadia College, taught a high school and preached for the churches of Hillsboro for some little time. Afterwards, in May, 1849, he and Patrick Duffy were ordained to the gospel ministry. Both of these men did valiant work for God and died loved and honored by all who came under their kind and Christian influence.

In 1852 Rev. John Hughes became pastor of this church. Before his coming among the people the church was threatened by division. Under his able and wise ministry the different opposing elements were brought together and the work of the Lord carried forward with great success. He remained until about 1861.

In 1860 steps were taken to provide for the first instrumental music. Record is also made of a gracious revival during the winter of '61, when many souls were led to Christ as the result of special meetings. No less than twelve ministers assisted in this work. The name Salem was given to what was then called "The Back Settlement" in 1861.

In 1862 Rev. Levi Marshall had charge of the church for a short time.

In 1863 Rev. James Austen Smith accepted a call to this church, and for four years continued his indefatigable labors with the people. "During his ministry at Hillsboro, a revival of mighty power aroused the church, and called a large number to participate for the first time in the blessings of redeeming love." In the winter of 1863 this revival took place, when there were added to the church 155 by baptism and thirteen by letter, making in all 168—the largest ingathering at any one time during the history of this church. In 1865 the Salem house of worship was opened. About this time the present edifice in the village was built—it being the third building standing on this spot. In 1867 Rev. W. T. Corey was called as pastor of the church. During his pastorate of some eleven years, the village church building was finished and dedicated. Mr. Corey's pastorate was a successful one. Many were added to the church and

THE WORK OF GOD PROSPERED.

It was during this pastorate that regular preaching services were held in Weldon, where now there is an "upper room furnished" and set apart for the worship of God, and where regular prayer and preaching services are held.

In 1876 the Valley church, the fourth and last child, was organized. A church building was already built in that part of Hillsboro, and services had been held here. Now this became the home of one of the most active churches in the county. And be it said with gratitude to God, that these four daughters have, from the very first, maintained a character worthy of a New Testament church. They have cherished the pure gospel and built up a strong membership, and have done a work for God that eternity alone will reveal. And so they have given their mother church every reason to be grateful for their existence and proud of their useful career. And now she looks upon them as loved children who have grown up to womanhood and settled for themselves, and rejoices that they have settled so well.

In 1878 Rev. C. B. Welton became the pastor of this church. During his pastorate a large and burdensome debt was removed and many souls added to the church.

In 1880 the convention of the Maritime Provinces was held in this church. These meetings are still cherished in the memories of a large part of the church members.

Rev. J. C. Bleakney was called to the pastorate in 1883. His stay, though short, was one of great helpfulness to the cause. During the summer of 1884 Evangelist Chubbuck visited Hillsboro and held special services. Some eighty were converted and united with God's people.

The present paster, Rev. W. Camp, began his labors with the church March, 1886. During these past seven years the church has greatly prospered. About 153 have been baptized and 38 received by letter. Large sums of money have been raised to purchase a parsonage, repair and paint church buildings, and remove indebtedness. The benevolent offerings of the church have more than doubled in these years. The church is united and prosperous. The people have every reason to thank "God and take courage."

Last October the church celebrated her seventieth anniversary. For four days religious services were held. On the evening of October sixth, after devotional exercises, a short historical record of the church was read. Then followed addresses from former pastors. On the evening of the seventh addresses were delivered by pastors of invited churches. October eighth there was held an old-fashioned conference meeting. The ninth being Sunday, three services were held. Preaching services morning and evening. In the afternoon was the "roll call" and special "thank offering." On this occasion 202 answered to their names, and $91 was taken as the thank offering. These services were much enjoyed by the people and the life of the church was quickened.

Beginning with ten or twelve members the church has grown until twelve hundred and twenty-five have come into our fellowship. It has become the mother of four living, active and flourishing churches. Many of those who were baptized into the fellowship of this church are now laboring for Jesus in different parts of the world. There are at present 436 members, and hundreds have gone triumphantly to heaven. Only the faintest outline of the history of this people has been given in this summary. Facts interesting to the church members, but not so interesting to this body, are withheld. Only the briefest record has been kept from time to time, and unfortunately part of that is gone. But from what facts are available and from what memory can furnish we have many reasons for believing that the First Hillsboro Baptist church has done a great and good work for God and perishing souls. Only eternity can reveal all that has been accomplished.

What inspiration is afforded by the study of the history of God's people! How we see His hand in all the years moving, guiding and overruling all things to His glory and for the good of His people. What an inspiration to every church to make a good record—to live in harmony, fellowship and love! And what an inspiration to every member to live for the glory of Christ and the highest good of one another!

To the church and to the members of the church God is calling in all generations for earnest, God-fearing, consecrated and holy living.

—Wright Bleakeley, merchant, 283 Washington St., Oak Grove, Malden, Mass: "During the last five years I have paid out many dollars in the vain effort to find relief. My last venture was on that deservedly famous remedy known as K. D. C., which, I am happy to say, worked like magic, relieving that terrible distress after eating. I am still taking it, and gaining every day. It affords me great pleasure to add my brief testimonial to the merits of that king of dyspepsia cure."

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REPORT OF THE CONVENTION'S COMMITTEE ON THE STATE OF THE DENOMINATION.

Twelve young men have been ordained to the Christian ministry since the last meeting of this Convention:

G. C. Crabbe, Cape Tormentine, N. B., August 29, 1892.

J. E. Whitman, Albany, N. S., September 28, 1892.

F. N. Atkinson, Apple River, N. S., November 3, 1892.

C. W. Sables, Campbellton, N. B., January 3, 1893.

J. D. Spidel, North River, N. B., December, 1892.

H. G. Estabrooks, Andover, N. B., January 3, 1893.

Joshua Goodwin, Shediac, N. B., December 29, 1892.

Ralph Gullison, Beaver River, N. S., February 3, 1893.

Henry Carter, Springfield, P. E. I., March, 1893.

J. W. Rutlidge, Mahone Bay and North-west, N. S., April, 1893.

J. H. Davis, Lower Economy, N. S., July 12, 1893.

J. B. Champion, Alberton, P. E. I., July, 1893.

The number ordained this year is the same as that of the previous year. Five churches, one at each of the following places, have been organized: Marysville, N. B.; Springfield, N. B.; Canterbury, N. B.; Country Harbor, N. S.; St. Leonards, Madawaska Co., N. B.

A new house of worship has been dedicated at each of the places here named, making ten in all: Grand View, P. E. I.; Lower Hopewell, N. B.; Port Clyde, N. S.; Clyde River, P. E. I.; Port Elgin, N. B.; Bass River, N. S.; Greenfield, N. B.; Cape Tormentine, N. B.; Truro, N. S.; Doaktown, N. B.

In the report of the state of the denomination, last year, attention was called to the following important considerations: The number of church members—non-resident, and a suggestion that a column be added to the blank form of the church letters for the number of non-resident members beyond the bounds of the Convention, the zeal and soundness in the faith of ministers and members, the activity and devotion of the women and young people in our churches, the importance of the associations becoming more practical in their work, the good that may be done by the district committees and quarterly meetings, and our dependence for success in all our work is on the Holy Spirit.

Your committee would now emphasize these features of the report of last year, and submit some additional facts and suggestions for the prayerful consideration of this body.

Last year, after deducting the non-resident members, the total membership was 36,468. A corresponding deduction for 1892 gives a total resident membership of 36,831—a gain of 363. The total members, resident and non-resident, for 1892, were 43,994. The total non-resident members were 7,163. These were distributed among the associations as follows:

MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATIONS.

	Resident.	Non-resident.
N. S. Western,	11,187	2,688
N. S. Central,	8,947	605
N. S. Eastern,	5,560	913
N. B. Western,	4,930	1,169
N. B. Southern,	4,600	634
N. B. Eastern,	6,296	820
P. E. Island,	1,893	303
African A. N. S.,	581	29
	43,994	7,163

The statistics for the past year cannot be given in full till after the reports of all the associations have come in. Facts, however, reported by one association may be taken as an index of the state of the churches as a whole. Twenty-two churches of this association reported, in respect to the number of church members attending and taking part in the prayer meetings, that one-sixth attended and one-tenth took part.

At this rate, of the 36,831 resident members only 7,166 attended prayer meetings, and only 4,800 take part in them. This is sad, indeed. The letters to this association also say that very few churches answer the question about the number of households in which family worship is observed.

The mission of such statistics is to indicate to the churches their spiritual state. They prescribe no remedy; that is to be sought from another source. It is quite clear, that in devotional piety and brotherly fellowship, our churches are far below the standard of the New Testament. Have they not also fallen away from the state in which they were found in their early history? The intelligent piety of individual church members underlies all our work as a denomination. We may have faithful men to manage our missions, educational institutions and other benevolent enterprises; The ministry may be educated and the church members intelligent and respectable, and both sound in doctrine, the Lord's day services attractive and well attended, but if personal piety is lacking, weakness will be the certain result; and all organizations and agencies, however perfect and efficient, cannot develop a large and healthy benevolence in the absence of consecration that comes of personal religion. The rapid increase in numbers cannot be expected. Barrenness will prevail. When Zion travails she brings forth sons and daughters. This being granted, our only hope is in a general return to the standard of piety, laid down in the New Testament, and seen in the lives of the apostles of Christ.

Assuming the essentials of prayer and faith on the part of believers, and the gift of the Holy Spirit on the part of Christ, the return to primitive devotion can come only by ministers and church members, first, feeling the burden of responsibility upon them for the large numbers in all our congregations who are still outside of the churches and out of Christ. Once let each church and its minister realize that about two-thirds of those who worship with them under the same roof every Lord's day are still in their sins and exposed to eternal banishment from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, and then bow themselves unitedly to the holy task of rescuing them from this impending doom, and the work of enlarging prayer meetings and inducing all the members to take part in them has been accomplished. But this is not all. Benevolence will flow in larger volume; ministers and missionaries in greater numbers will be raised up, and movements in every direction, in which the Spirit leads, will be seen on every hand.

To bring this about times of special prayer and fasting by the denomination, and the churches singly are suggested. Let the pastors preach about it, and the social meetings discuss it and pray over it.

Ministers who have special gifts for the work of arousing the churches and gathering in converts, should be employed as far as possible. Let all this be done and the inspiration of it will be felt by our missions, Christian schools and all the agents and agencies now employed by us for doing the Lord's work. A general revival at home will beget a corresponding revival in the foreign mission field. Hitherto the spirit of converting grace, like local showers, has fallen on a church only here and there. Let a general revival be sought. Why not?

E. M. SAUNDERS,
Convener of Committee.

Literary Notes.

The Treasury of Religious Thought for September is a very superior number in every department. The original and selected articles are of the first order, both in thought and style, and admirably adapted to the requirements of its readers. Prof. D. Steele, of Philadelphia, takes the first place, and his portrait, sermon, view of the church and sketch of life make an honorable record for any man. Dr. Maclaren has a full sermon on "The soul's thirst and satisfaction." Dr. Frech an excellent one on "The Christian's gain by death." All Dr. J. T. Duryea's many friends will enjoy reading his sermon on "Paul and Silas experiences in prison. Sermonic Thoughts are by Bishop Wilson, Dr. Eaton, Rev. P. T. Monod, D. L. Moody and Prest. T. D. Dwight. Under Living Issues Pro. P. Schaff sketches The Pulpit of the Middle Ages; Dr. J. Hall, The Pulpit and The Times; Prof. Schodde, The Jewish Apocalypses; and Dr. J. D. Steele, The Problem of the Gospels. The Education of the Jesuit, and the Defence of The Sabbath are notable articles. Editorials treat of Exploded Theological Theories, Pastor Pius the People; Aggressive Work; Definite Teaching; Work and Rest; "All Things to All Men." The whole number is overflowing with good things. Yearly subscription, $2.50; Clergymen, $2.00; Single copies, 25 cents.

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Tobacco vs. Messenger and Visitor.

We received this week a remittance of one dollar from a good brother, who orders the discontinuence of the MESSENGER AND VISITOR because of his poverty, etc. While this brought to us tidings that awakened our regret and sympathy for the dear brother and his family, it also brought an aroma of tobacco, which is very suggestive of—we will finish this sentence at another time.

—Dr. Webster says on the subject of "Eyesight:"

1. Do not allow light to fall upon the face of a sleeping infant.
2. Do not allow babies to gaze at a bright light.
3. Do not send children to school before the age of ten.
4. Do not allow children to keep their eyes too long on a near object.
5. Do no allow them to study by artificial light.
6. Do not allow them to use books with small type.
7. Do not allow them to read in a railway car.
8. Do not allow boys to smoke tobacco.
9. Do not necessarily ascribe headaches to indigestion; the eyes may be the cause.
10. Do not allow the itinerant spectacle vendor to prescribe glasses.

The Cholera Scare.

Boards of Health are appealing to the people to assist them in having all premises thoroughly cleansed, and it is hoped the response will be general and hearty. It is also the imperative duty of every person to have their systems thoroughly cleansed, purified and invigorated. The cheapest and most effective method is to take a thorough course of Hawker's Nerve and Stomach Tonic and Hawker's Liver Pills.

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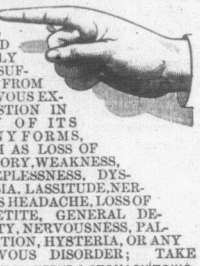

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