

St. Paul's Church

ST. PAUL'S is the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the city of Hamilton. About 1830 a few of the Scotch families in the Gore District, were moved to hold worship regularly on Sunday in one another's houses. When their numbers grew they held services in the old Court House. In 1833, Rev. Alex. Gale became their minister. The new congregation was called St. Andrew's. Soon after his settlement a frame church was built on the corner of James and Jackson streets, on a lot presented to the young congregation by the late Peter Hunter Hamilton. This building was once, if not twice, enlarged. In 1844 the disruption that had divided the Established Church in Scotland was felt in Canada. The minister of St. Andrew's, with a section of the congregation, went out and formed Knox congregation. In Autumn of 1854, during the ministry of Rev. Robert Burnett, the corner stone of the present Gothic structure was laid by the late John Young. Difficulties arose in 1870, whereby the Church was not only closed but actually sold to the James Street Baptist congregation. In 1873 the Church was bought back again, and by permission of Presbytery was named St. Paul's. John Young, John Riddell, Judge Logie, John Brown, Thos. C. Kerr, members of old St. Andrew's, became personally responsible for the heavy mortgage. In 1878 Matthew Leggat, James Hutchinson and William Black took over this mortgage on behalf of the congregation. From that day of sore distress the congregation has continued to prosper without any serious hindrances. For nearly fifty years continuous services have been held in this stately edifice. Every lover of Gothic architecture admires St. Paul's. Its pointed arches, suggesting the upward meeting of the boughs of the forest, its many floriated pendants and finials reminding us of opening and opened flower buds; its numerous quaterfoils symbolizing the fan-spread petals of a blossom—its half-hidden trefoils, fashioned after the clover-leaf—all unite in making it a poem in stone. May the congregation continue to have many loyal hearts and noble spirits who shall delight in preserving, and in enriching this fine Gothic structure.