

CHAPTER I

Origin and Organization.

In the year 1854 the municipality long known as Bytown was advanced by act of incorporation to the dignity of a city, under the name "Ottawa".

Her Majesty Queen Victoria, three years later, was pleased to select Ottawa to be the seat of Government of the United Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. The royal choice was ratified by the Canadian Parliament in 1859, after which the erection of suitable buildings for the accommodation of public business was undertaken forthwith.

Thus the youthful city had every prospect of rapid and permanent growth and the work on the Parliament Buildings brought immediately a large influx of population.

At this date Presbyterianism was represented by two congregations which took their names from their respective places of worship, one being known as St. Andrew's Church, corner of Wellington and Kent Streets, the other as Knox Church, near the corner of Daly and Cumberland Streets, on the site where St. Paul's Manse now stands.

Though of the same order, these congregations owed allegiance to different ecclesiastical bodies, the former being connected with the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland; the latter in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the sole difference between them being that one officially acknowledged derivation from the established Church of Scotland, whereas the other did not.

The incoming population contained a fair proportion of Presbyterians, and the existing churches were soon found too small to meet the increasing demand for accommodation.

In 1860, Knox Church from which Bank Street Church is an offshoot, resolved to meet the situation by enlarging the capacity of their building by fully one third. The relief thus obtained was happily not of long duration, and various plans of further enlargement soon came to be earnestly discussed.