

It may be interesting to many of our friends to know the past history of the Society as regards the premises it has at different times occupied.

The York Bible Society was organized at a meeting held on 3rd November, 1828, and Mr. E. Henderson, Jun., was appointed Depositary for the sale of Scriptures. Mr. Henderson, we believe, carried on a general business, and simply gave room for such small stock of Bibles and Testaments as was considered sufficient for the needs of the then town of York and vicinity; exactly as is now done in the numerous local depositories of the Society throughout the Province. His shop was situated on King Street; but we have not been able to ascertain its exact position.

A little more than three years after this date, the Upper Canada Book and Tract Society was organized (10th January, 1832), and Mr. Henderson, having meantime resigned the Depositaryship of the Bible Society, the two Societies came to an agreement and appointed Mr. Robert Cathcart as Depositary for both. Mr. Cathcart's place of business was at 147 King Street (there was no King Street East and King Street West in those days), at the corner of the old Post-Office lane, more recently known as Leader Lane, in fact in the building very recently vacated by Messrs. George Harcourt & Sons. The stocks of both Societies were comparatively small, and were simply given shelf-room in Mr. Cathcart's shop, along with his own goods, which were chiefly dry-goods. The present worthy Treasurer of the Upper Canada Bible Society, the Hon. William McMaster, was for a time in Mr. Cathcart's employment, and from that early date commences his intimate connection with the Bible Society, first as Minute Secretary, and afterwards as Vice-President and Treasurer, which has continued with so much advantage to the Society until the present time.

The business of both Societies continued to increase, however, and when Mr. Cathcart in May, 1839, resigned the Depositaryship, the Societies resolved to rent suitable premises and engage some person to give his whole time to the business. Premises were accordingly rented at No. 23, afterwards No. 47, Yonge Street, only a few doors south of the present premises, and Mr. James Carless was appointed Depositary. These premises were occupied by the Societies for fourteen years, but Mr. Carless continued in the Societies' service for nearly thirty years.

In 1852, the lease of the premises then occupied being about to expire, and a largely increased rent asked for any renewed lease—the business of the Societies, moreover, having greatly increased—it was resolved to purchase the premises now occupied, which were for sale, and refit them for the use of the Societies. The amount paid for the building was £750, which was at first borrowed; and in December of the same year an appeal for contributions was made by circular “to the friends of the Upper Canada Bible Society and the officers and committees connected with its various Branches,” setting forth the need that had existed for enlarged premises, the favourable bargain they had been able to conclude, and the fact that Mr. Jesse Ketchum, who was the owner of the ground on which the building stood, had agreed to grant a long lease at a very low rent. The Societies, at the next meeting of Parliament, obtained Acts of Incorporation.