

"East Point" P. E. I. Baptist Church.

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Over ninety years ago some of the first settlers of this place left their native homes in Scotland and emigrated to this fair Isle of the Gulf. They were soon joined by others who too left the "land of the heather." Here they had to clear away the trees of the forest and make homes for themselves. They had to toil hard and endure great privations, eating their bread with the sweat of their brow. Their religious sentiments were not those of Baptists, for we find that most of them had been sprinkled in their infancy. This practice was continued by them till the year 1823, when by this time they seemed to understand the Scriptures more perfectly, and allowed their infant children to grow up to years of understanding. They had not many of the gospel privileges which we enjoy in this our day, they were few and far between.

After a time we find some of the pioneer ministers of the gospel visit this eastern part of our Island. Here the people had no regular house of worship, yet we find them ever ready to meet in their dwelling houses, barns, etc., to attend the preaching of God's word. The seed of the kingdom thus sown was destined to bring forth fruit. We find the first fruits manifested were in the cases of two neighboring women, viz. Mrs. John Kennedy and Mrs. James McDonald. They are anxious about their soul's salvation, have no one to talk to them and point them to Jesus, who alone can heal the sin sick soul. Mrs. Kennedy proposes to go on a journey on foot to Lot 48, that she may have a talk with the late Rev. Alex. Crawford and hear him preach, hoping that he may show her the way of salvation more clearly. Mrs. McDonald tries to persuade her not to attempt the journey; but finding Mrs. Kennedy is fully bent on going, she volunteers to accompany her.

They leave their homes and begin the long and tedious journey, at times they have to travel through the forest with only a blazed foot path to follow. The first evening they get to North Lake, after having quite an experience in a thunder storm, having had to take shelter under a large tree. They remain over night at the home of the late Jas. Baker, Sr. Next day they follow up the north side till they reach St. Andrews, here they are kindly and hospitably entertained at the home of the late Bishop McEachern. The third day they reach their journey's end.

After spending a few days at Lot 48 with Christian friends, and hearing Mr. Crawford preach, they decide to return to their homes. Mr. Crawford proposes to accompany them to East Point. He procures a horse, and while two of them ride on horseback the other follows on foot, and so on alternately. When they reach Three Rivers after much hardship and fatigue, one, Mr. McLearn, who has a sail boat, kindly offers its use and his own service in bringing them to the port of their destination.

Next day they set sail, with a propitious breeze; they glide along nicely till near Souris, when they encounter adverse winds, and a storm compels them to seek shelter in Souris harbour.

The following day, the storm being past, they weigh anchor, wind favourable, they arrive safely in port; and our heroine women are welcomed home. Mr. Crawford finds that the Master has a work for him to do, souls need to be saved. Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. McDonald are rejoicing in having found the pearl of great price, and are fully decided in following the Saviour in the ordinance of baptism. They find even those near and dear to them are opposed to their taking such steps, saying they should be a disgrace to their families if they should do so. All such persuasions were in vain. They are baptized by Mr. Crawford at South Lake. They go on their way rejoicing and are anxious that others should come and make their Saviour their Saviour too.

Shortly after this, Rev. Joseph Allan, an Evangelist visits this place. His labours are blessed, and a number of those who afterwards became the constituent members of this church are baptized by him.

Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. McDonald rejoice in seeing their husbands converted, their prayers being answered. When asked, if they were now satisfied, their answer was, no, how can we, while there is one around us out of Christ. Prayers ascended and mercy drops fell. The heralds of the Cross visited the place from time to time. New born souls rejoiced and willingly followed their Master so the number of baptized believers increased.

On Saturday, Jan 6, 1832, at a meeting held to consider the propriety of building a house of worship, an agreement was made with the late Donald McDonald and John Stewart, signed in the presence of the late Alexander Fraser, for a plot of ground whereon to build said edifice, and also a burying ground, with road from the main post road to said piece of ground. It was then unanimously agreed that a suitable building be erected. Sixteen took shares while others contributed according to their means.

This was quite an undertaking for our forefathers. None of them had much of the riches of this world. They had to toil and struggle hard in order to secure a scanty living. Yet they had a will to work, and where there is a will, there is always a way. Timber was more plentiful then, than it is now. Though there were no saw mills to saw the timber into boards, shingles and other kind of

stock required, yet we find the people knew how to use the broadaxe, the pitsaw, the poudaiger and a few carpenter's tools which they had brought from Scotland. Little we know of the hardships and disadvantages which they had to encounter; but we know perseverance overcomes many difficulties. After one year and six months the building is finished and ready for the worship of God.

Here we would record the death of Mrs. James McDonald. She did not have the pleasure of seeing this house of worship completed, for God took her home to be forever in that upper mansion, singing the praises of him who had redeemed her with his blood. Her mortal remains are the first to be buried in the new cemetery. A wooden slab is erected at the head of the grave, the letters of the inscription being cut with a pen-knife and painted white, the work of Mr. Williams, a school teacher. In our young days often we stood at the grave and read the inscription. There we felt as if the silent sleeper spoke with an audible voice while we read the verse thus copied.

"Remember friends as you pass by
As you are now, so once was I;
As I am now, so you must be,
Prepare for death and follow me."

On Friday, July 12th, 1833, the East Point Baptist church was organized in this place by the late Revs. John Shaw and Samuel McLeod. The names of the constituent members were as follows, viz. John Kennedy, Mrs. J. Kennedy, James McDonald, Duncan Stewart, Mrs. D. Stewart, Duncan Robertson, Mrs. D. Robertson, John McGregor, Mrs. J. McGregor, Mrs. McVean, (widow,) Alexander McVean, David McVean, James McVean, Alexander Fraser, Alexander Cameron, Mrs. A. Cameron, Mrs. Lorimore and Mr. Bishop. Deacons and other church officers duly elected and installed in office. Preparations for the coming Sunday were attended to, David McVean is dispatched to Souris for wine to be used at the Lord's table.

Sunday, July 14, 1833, was a "Red Letter" day for the East Point church. Their church edifice was dedicated to the worship of God. The pulpit was filled by Revs. John Shaw and Samuel McLeod. A sermon being preached, the dedication prayer offered, the church for the first time surrounded the Lord's table in commemoration of His dying love.

We have now the people meeting in their house of worship which we will call No. 1. The men sat on the north side of the house for the south side was given over to the women. Small boys sat with their mothers, and it was a "red letter" day when the small lad was graduated to the men's side of the house. The poor were not forgotten, for we find a collection box was provided and placed in a conspicuous place near the door, into which the people dropped their offering. This box was opened at stated times and divided among the needy.

July 21st, 1833. Six are added to the church by baptism. Rev. J. Shaw became pastor of the church, giving part of his time here while he gave the other part to the church at Three Rivers, making his regular preaching tours. He had to travel on horseback, no roads for carriages, and worse still, no carriages for roads. He knew nothing of the comfort and pleasure of riding in the covered carriages of the present day. Through storm and sunshine, all alike, he seldom or ever failed to fill his appointments. Through his preaching many were being blessed who will be as stars in his crown of rejoicing on that great day.

A number of the pioneer ministers of the neighboring provinces visited this place from time to time preaching the gospel, their labors were blessed, the church revived, her cords lengthened and her stakes strengthened.

In the summer of 1843 the Gaelic people who understood the English imperfectly, complained of the existing practice of preaching so much in English, whereupon, (at a meeting called for the purpose) it was unanimously resolved that the first weekly service after the pastor's return, be in Gaelic; and to continue in Gaelic and English alternately during the week when on the South Side, preaching always in English at North Lake. On Sunday to speak the English at the forenoon service, and at the Lord's table to make use of the English first and the Gaelic last, and on the next Sunday to use the Gaelic first and the English last at the Lord's table, and so on in turn.

In the summer of 1850 the late Rev. Edwin Clay, M. D. spent some few weeks with us in conjunction with our pastor holding special meetings. The church was revived and sinners were converted.

In the summer of 1857 Revs. David McKeen and Wm. Hall visited us, when a number were converted and became followers of Christ.

At a Quarterly Meeting of the churches held here Feb. 20, 1863, Revs. M. P. Freeman, M. Roes and Pastor Shaw were the only ministers who attended. At the evening meeting Mr. Freeman preached from Hosea 10: 12, "It is time to seek the Lord." On Sunday forenoon he preached from Jer. 17: 9, "The heart is deceitful." In the afternoon Mr. Ross spoke from Gen. 4: 10, "What hast thou done?" On the following Tuesday evening Mr. Freeman spoke from Matt. 7: 13, 14. Next day Mr. Freeman and Mr. Ross left here for Uigg Baptist church where they held special meetings which are blessed in the conversion of sinners and additions to said church. The good seed sown here, was followed by the ingathering of precious souls and reviving of the church.

Dec. 21, 1837, a public meeting was held at this date to

consider the propriety of building a larger and better house of worship. After the matter had been fully discussed it was unanimously resolved that the building be 33x48 ft. Work to go on, as ways and means are being provided, so that when completed, there would be no debt on the house. Thirty-six enrolled their names as shareholders.

The following winter, scantling, boards, shingles, etc., are provided. After the cold blasts of winter are past and the warm days of summer are come, the masons and carpenters may be seen at work. The building thus begun (though slow yet sure) soon assumes shape and goes on steadily, till at last, after six years in building, it is finished. Church Edifice No. 2.

Feb. 14, 1864, this is the last Sunday in our old house of worship; the day being fine a goodly number attended. Our pastor being absent, it devolved on the late Deacon A. Fraser to take the lead of the meeting, as our good Bro. A. Scott senior was also absent, being on a mission to St. Peter's Bay. Bro. Scott for many years displayed much talent in the preaching of the Gospel both at home and in other fields. At the aforesaid meeting Dea. Fraser took for his text John 17: 24. Spoke very affectingly, the tears running down his cheeks while he entreated sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

Monday evening would have been our regular weekly prayer meeting, but for the sake of having Bro. Scott at the meeting, it was postponed till the following evening, Feb. 16, 1864, when Mr. Scott gave a good report of the Master's work, where he had been. We enjoyed the meeting very much. Here we were met for the last time in our old place of worship, where prayers had often been offered at a throne of grace, and showers of blessing descended. Here we often found it good to wait on the Lord. Here for over 30 years the watchmen on the walls of Zion shunned not, to warn sinners to flee to the "City of Refuge." Now we leave our old house of worship No. 1, and repair to our new one No. 2.

Sunday, Feb. 21, 1864, at this date it had been arranged that our Pastor Rev. J. Shaw and Rev. J. Davis of Charlottetown would be at the opening of our new house of worship. But owing to a heavy snow storm, they failed in getting here. The people being assembled, no ministers having arrived it devolved on Dea. Fraser and Bro. Scott to take charge of the services as they had been wont to do. Prayer and praise are now lifted up to the Master of assemblies. The dedication prayer is offered by Bro. A. Scott. In the afternoon Sunday school, attendance 50 scholars.

On the following Sunday Feb. 28, 1864, our pastor is with us. A prayer meeting is held in the forenoon. In the afternoon preaching by pastor, who is the first to occupy the pulpit of our new house of worship, text John 4: 24, which was divided into three parts, viz. "The Object of worship, the worshipper and the worship."

Sunday, Mar. 6, 1864, preaching in the forenoon by pastor, text 2 Cor. 5: 20, last clause. After which the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was administered.

Sept. 3, 1874, Rev. D. G. McDonald an evangelist under the H. M. Board visited this church and held a series of revival meetings. The text of his first sermon was "Ask and ye shall receive." The meetings continued over six weeks. A wave of revival grace swept over the whole community north and south. It was a time of refreshing, over eighty were added to the Church by baptism and four restored.

Nov. 16, 1874, our pastor, Rev. J. Shaw, having tendered his resignation some months previous to this date now urged upon the church to relieve him of his charge, when it was unanimously resolved that his resignation be accepted and a donation of one hundred dollars presented to him. During his pastorate of over forty one years, two hundred and ninety members were added to the church. Mr. Shaw died in the summer of 1877. Church without a pastor for nearly two years, when Rev. J. A. Gordon settled here, Sept. 24, 1876 and after a pastorate of over four years resigned Oct. 18, 1880. Additions to church during his pastorate were forty five.

Oct. 9th, 1881. At this date Bro. R. B. Kinlay settled here as pastor and was ordained to the gospel ministry. Dec. 27, 1881. After a pastorate of nearly four years he resigned Sept. 13, 1885. Twenty eight additions to church.

Bro. A. A. McLeod accepted the pastorate of this church June 27, 1886, and was ordained a Minister of the gospel Sept. 30, 1886, resigned his charge June 1st, 1887.

Rev. R. H. Bishop became pastor Sept. 2nd, 1887, and remained with us for nearly five years. During his pastorate thirty eight additions to church.

Bro. A. C. Shaw, lic began his labors with us May 11, 1894, and was ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry, Nov. 13, 1895 and resigned his charge Aug. 9, 1896. Twenty-eight added to church roll. Rev. E. A. McPhee settled as pastor Oct. 18, 1896 and remained with us till June 30, 1900. His ministry was blessed, twenty-one added to church membership. Rev. J. W. Gardner began his pastoral work Oct. 15, 1900, during which time eleven have been added.

During the seventy years of the history of the East Point church, 205 names were enrolled on the Church Record during the years we worshipped in our first meeting house, and 293 while in our second, making a total of 498 to present date Dec. 6, 1903. Seventy-six of our church members died during the last forty years.

The deacons of our church who have gone home, are as