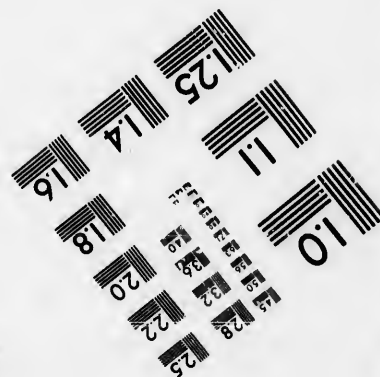
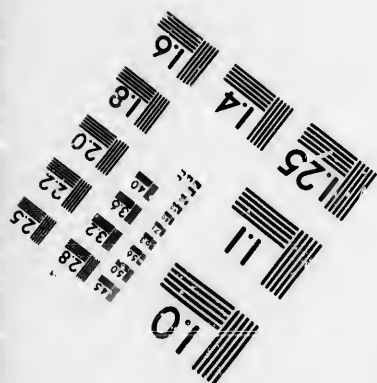
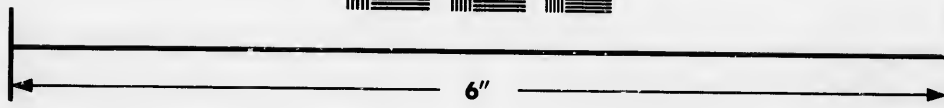
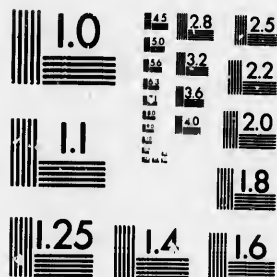


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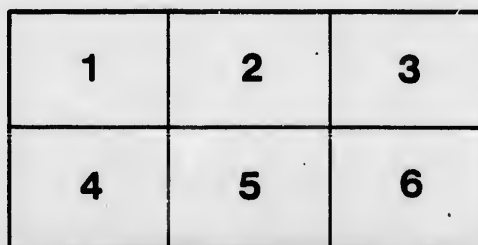
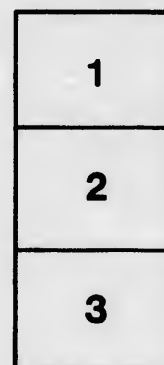
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..... HISTORY OF

The Oldest Methodist Church in Western Ontario

BEARING THE GRAND HISTORIC NAME, "QUEEN'S AVENUE."

The Parent Tree of London Methodism.

A Glance Over Fifty Years of Progress.

Men at the Helm Twenty-five Years Ago.

A Long Line of Pastors Who Have Been in Charge.

Methodism in London and suburbs has for more than half a century had for its great centre what is known from one end of Canada to the other as the Queen's Avenue Methodist Church, a name adopted some years ago, when North Street as the cognomen of that spacious, map-lined highway was discarded. This congregation has from the first been the centre of wealth, influence and enterprise, the possession of such vast resources of vitality making it the parent vine from which others have been developed, under circumstances that soon rendered them self-supporting and strong. The splendid edifice that stands, crowned with a lofty spire, at the corner of Queen's and Park Avenues, which, with Wesley Hall, the \$9,000 organ and other appointments, is valued at from \$45,000 to \$50,000, seems a long remove, as indeed it is, from the modest "roughcast" in which a few pioneers worshipped after the manner of John Wesley on Ridout Street. It is, moreover, a great advance on the more pretentious frame erected at the southeast corner of King and Talbot Streets, now occupied by a hotel, and its successor, the Richmond Street Church, on the east side, a few rods south of Dundas, where, about 1849, the Rev. John Carroll, whose name is a household word among the older Methodists, occupied the primitive pulpit and laid the foundation of the cause which soon fixed itself permanently upon North Street. Space would not suffice to recount the names of all the laymen in connection with the congregation whose time and means were in the past so liberally given in aid of building new local churches, and in furthering Mission, Sunday School and Educational Work. Many young ministers performed their early work in connection with the circuit under the direction of the Superintendent, who exercised a fatherly care over the little causes that grew up on St. James and Pall Mall Streets, in Petersville, on Adelaide Street, in London South and elsewhere. A great deal of the preaching in these places was done by the "young man," under the North Street "Superintendent," but he was the responsible person for the circuit and did his share of the mission work. The old Richmond Street Church in which Father Carroll, Dr. Evans and others held forth, did not keep pace with the congregation, and under Rev. Wm. Pollard, the North Street Church came into existence. The lot was bought from one Anthony Pegler on January 13th, 1852, for £700. On March 9th of the same year a Trustee Board meeting was held, consisting of Messrs. Sam Glass, Geo. Tyas, John Elson, S. Peters, S. McBride and S. Screaton. Rev. Bro. Pollard presiding, when it was decided to erect a church on the site purchased. On April 9th, the Board decided to engage Mr. Hodgins, a Toronto architect, who received £100 for drawing plans, superintending the work, etc. On June 26th, Wm. Ellis was awarded the contract for the excavation at £39 15s., and in January, 1853, the tender for brick work was let to Screaton & Grant the carpenter work to Geo. Watson; the glazing and painting to John Bonser and the plastering to Mr. Tibbs. According to a minute in the secretary's books Mrs. Raymond was engaged as organist in November, 1853, and in July, 1854, the trustees fixed the yearly rental of pews and decided to sell them by auction to the highest bidder. Samuel McBride received the important appointment of pew steward and collector of rents during the same month. The time at length arrived when the all-important work drew to a successful close and the church was opened for public worship on July 16th, 1854, the collections of

the day amounting to £50 15s. Rev. Dr. Evans, took one of the services on that memorable occasion. Rev. Mr. Pollard, who was in charge during the building of the edifice, left about the time of opening or before, and was succeeded by Rev. Wm. Wilkinson. In the year 1856 came the Rev. J. Douse, and a couple of years later the Rev. Dr. Cooney, a remarkable man in his way, as some of our readers may remember. The St. Paul's peal of chimes were wont to ring out their music across the street while the Wesleyan services were in progress, and one morning Dr. Cooney stopped to inform the congregation that the only pleasure those bells ever gave him was when they stopped ringing. In 1860 Rev. G. R. Sanderson became pastor. After a continuous, active, ministerial service of 52 years he was superannuated at the London Conference of June, 1888, held in the same old edifice, and he is now in his declining years a member of the congregation over which 28 years ago he presided as pastor. Though on the retired list, he still answers numerous calls to fill pulpits in the city and elsewhere.

Following Rev. Mr. Sanderson in the North Street pastorate were Rev. R. Jones and Rev. John Potts (1863), Rev. J. H. Bishop, Rev. W. J. Hunter, Rev. Dr. Elliott, Rev. Wm. Briggs, and about 1871 Rev. Dr. W. Jeffers, Rev. Jas. Hannon, a late president of the Guelph Conference, succeeded Dr. Jeffers, and then came the Rev. James Graham, that sturdy, out-spoken, quick-witted preacher whom the London Conference last summer placed in the president's chair. The Rev. John Philp was the next regular occupant of the Queen's Avenue pulpit, and since leaving here he has held the leading pastorates in Canada, including Great St. James of Montreal. An eloquent and magnetic preacher, Rev. Leo Gaetz, followed him, but the strain of the work on his nervous organism proved too great, and he sought restoration by outdoor enterprise on the great plains west of the Rocky Mountains, where he is proving a successful pioneer farmer. He is an eloquent advocate of the far Northwest. Rev. R. J. Treleven, a successful young minister, followed Mr. Gaetz.

Among the trustees of the church who held office were Messrs. Peters, Tyas, Abbott, S. and W. McBride, Screaton, Lawless, Elson, Garrett, A. Johnston, Ware, M. Anderson and Leary. Passing on down to November, 1872, Messrs. Thos. McCormick, Geo. Robinson and A. B. Powell were added to the Trustee Board, and about that time the resolve was made to erect the brick school-room in rear of the church, which cost some \$13,000, and was popularly known as Wesley Hall. In 1873 the old Methodist Cemetery east of the city was sold, and a new plot west of Petersville having been purchased, the Mount Pleasant Cemetery Company, an organization distinct from the church, was organized. In October, 1874, the late Wm. McBride resigned the secretaryship of the Trustee Board, and Mr. A. B. Powell was chosen to fill the position, and has acted in that capacity ever since. Thos. Green, R. J. C. Dawson and Jas. Eaton were chosen trustees in 1874. Mr. Dawson has been recording steward since Mr. George Robinson resigned the position. Among the incidents of 1878 was the resignation of Mr. S. Screaton from the position of choir leader, after a quarter of a century's faithful and valuable aid in the service of song. In the same year Wm. Glass was chosen as a trustee in place of his father, Mr. S. Glass, deceased. Among other worthies whom the

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church has lost by death were S. Peters, Wm. McBride (drowned in the Victoria disaster), John Elson, Geo. Tyas and Jas. Coyne. Messrs. John Green and Geo. C. Gibbons were chosen trustees in 1883.

About the end of 1880 important improvements, destined to revolutionize the interior of the church, coupled with the introduction of a \$9,000 organ, built by Warren, of Toronto, were resolved upon, and the next year saw all this accomplished before August, involving an outlay of \$15,000. The reopening services began on Friday, August 5th, 1881, those taking part being Rev. Leo. Gaetz, the new pastor, Rev. Dr. Nelles, of Victoria College, and others. Dr. Verrinder, the organist, giving a grand concert at night. On Sunday, August 7th, Rev. Dr. Nelles and Rev. Dr. Hunter, then of Toronto, preached, and on Sunday, August 14th, Rev. Wm. Williams and Rev. J. A. Murray.

We continue the history of this old church by adding the following historic events which took place in its history from August 14th, 1881, to the date of laying the corner stone of the new edifice, on the corner of Dufferin Avenue and Wellington Street. This history, though brief, covers some important events in the history of the above named church.

After Mr. Gaetz had closed his pastorate in the church, he was succeeded by the now sainted Rev. D. G. Sutherland, M.A., B.D., to fill the pulpit for three years, and who had won, by his strong mental powers and Christian life, the hearts of the people. After his pastorate the Rev. J. G. Scott received the appointment as pastor, who spent three years as pastor of the church. During the time of Mr. Scott's pastorate the Rev. George Boyd, of Newfoundland, paid a visit to our city in connection with the Missionary Committee of the General Conference. His manly deportment captured the hearts of the official membership of the church; he was requested to take a Sabbath service during his stay, which he did. It proved to be a day long to be remembered in the church. As soon as the brethren could put the machinery in motion, a call was extended to the now sainted Boyd. The Transfer Committee having transferred him from Newfoundland to the London Conference, he was duly appointed as pastor. Great growth and spiritual fervor marked every department of the church during his pastorate. His thoughts were not only for the larger church, but he looked out on the surroundings with a view to directing and establishing other interests. He was the cause of establishing two smaller churches, one on Richmond Street and one in Kensington, West London, each of which has lived a vigorous life. In the midst of his many labors and toils he sickened and died. The hearts of the people were crushed and saddened, but while God buries His workmen His work still goes on. The remaining part of his pastorate was filled by Mr. Marshall, student from Victoria College.

At the next Conference meeting the Rev. J. W. Annis, M.A., was appointed to this charge as pastor, but it was not the will of the good Lord to destine him to fill the important place to the end of his term. Being in rather delicate health when he came to the charge, he also sickened and died, much regretted and much thought of.

One important and never to be forgotten event a few weeks previous to the death of the late pastor, Rev. Mr. Annis, was, on the morning of February 2nd, 1895, the old church took fire and was burned to the ground, the only part remaining of that historic edifice was the darkened and dismantled walls of the once stately and historic church. Many were the sad hearts on that Sunday morning after the fire, as people wended their way to worship as formerly, but found no church. A meeting of the officary

of the church was at once called to provide for the congregation and to get some place for them to worship in, when they decided to engage the Opera House as a place to hold divine service, and the City Hall as a place of meeting for the Sunday School and Class meeting service of the church, and Somerset Hall as a place to hold Thursday night prayer meeting.

We now turn a page over and make reference regarding the Trustees of the church. It was thought proper in the wisdom of the Board to add a number of young and active men to its number; on November 28th, 1890, W. R. Hobbs, S. W. Abbott and Wm. M. Spencer were appointed trustees of the church, and on December 12th, 1891, Geo. T. Mann, D. C. Hannah, L. Ingram, and S. Glass were appointed trustees. No event of any account took place in the history of the church from the date just given above until September, 1892 when the true and noble Thos. Green closed his eyes in death. He had been trustee for a number of years and filled the position of treasurer and pew steward for a long term of years. We now follow on for one more year, when the kind, loving and sympathetic Sheriff Glass was called to his reward, in October, 1893, he having been appointed trustee a number of years previous, to succeed his father, the late Samuel Glass. To replace these two worthy men, on November 17th, 1893, J. H. Chapman and Chas. H. Ivey were added to the trustee board, and thus to complete the number, making a full appointment as the discipline of our church provides, Mr. D. S. Perrin, one of our honored members, was appointed to fill the place of one who had resigned.

We must not close without referring to the fact that we find ourselves to-day, as a church, well manned and well officered. The London Conference accepted the transfer of Rev. Geo. Daniels, M.A., Ph.D., of Manitoba Conference, and have appointed him pastor of our church, and to-day he with others takes his place as pastor of this church, directing his part of the programme of the ceremony of laying the corner stone, which is to be laid by Samuel McBride, one of the oldest trustees of the church, and one of the men whom we all delight to honor.

We cannot leave this subject without making a passing allusion to one of the important figures in connection with the closing history of this old church, viz.: A. S. Abbott, Esq., late City Clerk of our city, who filled for so many years of useful life and loyal work as Trustee and Church Steward, having reached the advanced age of 84 years, he can now well afford to transfer his official place in the church he so much loved, and whose history he helped to make, to younger men, especially to those of his sons who are taking a strong and important place in the work assigned them as officials in the church where they have spent the greater part of their lives. This history would be incomplete without a word or two of praise and thanks to Rev. Dr. Sanderson, who has given untiring attention to the work of the church since the death of the late pastor, Rev. J. W. Annis; neither can the officers of the church forget to thank the Rev. Mr. Gandy, late Chairman of the London District, for his many labors in attending the various meetings of the different Boards, who always rendered wise and judicious advice in the recent crisis of the church. We now close by recognizing the earnest and thoughtful services of the Rev. Mr. Kennedy, who has acted as pastor, by visiting our people since the death of the late pastor. We conclude this history by hoping for a bright future of the church, whose corner stone is laid to-day, on this 30th day of July, 1895.

London, July 30th, 1895.



