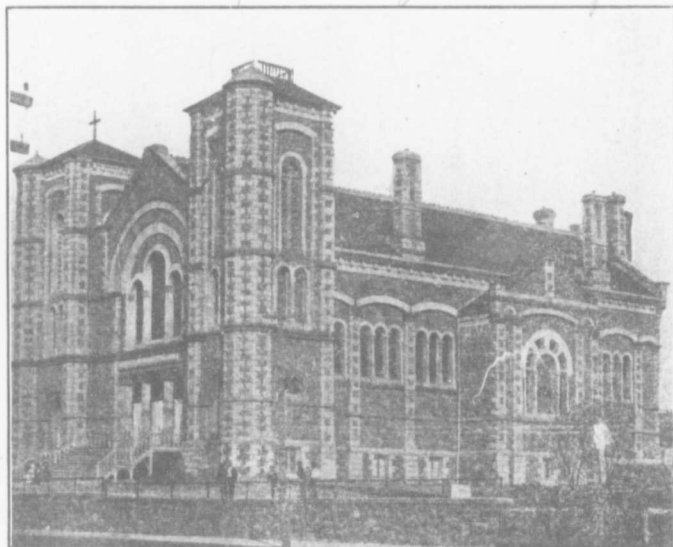


In Penetanguishene

Old and New

(A brief history of the Jesuit Memorial
Church and parish of Penetanguishene.)



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In Penetanguishene, New and Old



VIEW OF PENETANGUISHENE TAKEN FROM COPELAND'S MILL

There are in every country places which, on account of the events that transpired in them and their neighborhood, and also out of the traditions of the past which centre around them, offer a special interest to the student of history and the antiquarian.

Penetanguishene, not only in its early history, but also in the origin of its second existence has the privilege to be one of those places.

The purpose of this Booklet is to give a brief history of the Jesuit Memorial Church and Parish of Penetanguishene from its origin down to our days.

Touaguainchain--1615-1634

The Hurons lived in populous villages between the Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe, and were said to number at a time over thirty thousand people.

An attempt to establish a mission among them was made in 1615, by the Recollet Fathers Joseph Le Caron with Nicholas Viel and Brother Sagard, who from Quebec journeyed up the St. Laurent and the Ottawa, across Lake Nipissing, down the French River, and through the Islands along Parry Sound, until they landed at Otouacha, at the mouth of Penetanguishene Bay, on what is now the Triangle Reserve opposite the north side of the present Asylum. Later Fathers Joseph de La Roche D'Aillon, a Recollet, and the Jesuits De Breboeuf and Anne de Noue landed also at Otouacha.

The efforts of the missionaries proved of little avail as they were strongly opposed by the medicine men, and the natives thought that all troubles, sickness and ill-success in hunting and war were due to them. Father Nicholas Viel and a young Christian, Auhaitic, when on their way back to Quebec were purposely drowned by their Huron companions at the place called until to-day the Sault au Recollet.

Champlain who passed through Touaguainchain, near Penetanguishene, relates an item which might prove of some interest. "And on August 12, 1615, the Reverend Father Le Caron celebrated Holy Mass and set about erecting a Cross near by a little dwelling house apart from the village, which the Indians had built during my sojourn there."

This was the first Mass said in what is now the Province of Ontario, and the spot lay in the present parish of Lafontaine, Simcoe County—Tiny, Lot 20, Concession XVII. Thus 1915 will be the three hundredth anniversary of this memorable fact.

In 1629 the Mission was abandoned. After the taking of Quebec in 1629, Canada remained in possession of the English until it was ceded back to France, March, 1632.

1634-1650

It was two years later, 1634, that the missions among the Hurons was resumed by Fathers De Breboeuf, Daniel and Davost, who journeyed from Quebec to the Huron Country in canoes with a

party of savages, and after a long toilsome passage landed at Otonacha, on the Penetanguishene Bay, August 5, 1634.

At the village of Toanche I., about a mile distant from Otonacha, they received the hospitality of an Indian Chief, and there the first Chapel and Mission House were erected.

In the following years, other Chapels and residences for missionaries were built in Ihonatiria, at the head of the Thunder Bay ; then in Ossossane, at Dault's Bay, below Perkinsfield ; and at St. Joseph II. ; near Mount St. Louis.

In 1634, the Fort Ste. Marie, on the river Wye, near Midland, became the headquarters of the missionaries, who for fourteen years labored among the Indian tribes. Out of the twenty-nine missionary priests who worked in Huronia, eight suffered death at the hands of the enemies.



MARTYRDUM OF BREBROEUF

In 1649, general hostilities broke out among the different Indian tribes ; the Missions were destroyed, and the Hurons were scattered far and wide. At the present day there are but three groups of Indians of Huron stock extant. One at La Jeune Lorette, near

Quebec; the second in the neighborhood of Sandwich, Ont.; and the third on the Wyandot Reservation in the state of Oklahoma, the late Indian Territory.

Two names will always be remembered in connection with these Huron missions, those of Fathers Jean De Breboeuf and Gabriel Lalemant. These men refusing to abandon their helpless flocks, fell victims of the hostile nations, the Iroquois, and were subjected to the most fiendish tortures before death ended their sufferings, March 16 and 17, 1649.

The spot where they suffered and died is on the 7th Concession of the Township of Tay, about 16 miles from Penetanguishene. Christophe Rehnault, who was then at the service of the Jesuit missionaries states that himself helped in transporting the bodies of Breboeuf and Lalemant from the place of their massacre to the Fort



FATHER DE BREBOEUF

St. Marie, and that there they were buried on the Sunday, March 21, 1649.

When definitely the Fort St. Marie had to be abandoned, May 1649, the bodies of the two missionaries were unheated, the bones were cleaned and dried, wrapped in silk and taken to Quebec. The skulls of Fathers De Breboeuf and Lalemant together with a few bones are at the Hotel Dieu of the Precious Blood at Quebec.

After the destruction of the Huron Missions, 1650, and the dispersion of the Hurons, the country remained uninhabited, except by an odd Iroquois here and there, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, 1827, when properly speaking, the missions of Penetanguishene begin.



INDIANS OF TODAY

Penetanguishene

The Parish and the present Church of Penetanguishene, old Touagainchain's village and a residence of De Breboeuf, are popularly known as the Jesuit Memorial Church and Parish. The name is well applied ; for the banks of the Penetanguishene Bay have seen the birth of both the Old and New Missions ; on them, Le Caron, Breboeuf and their companions landed and erected the first Chapel. Since the dispersion of the Huron nation, Penetanguishene having been the first settlement, the first port established in the former Huron Country, the seat of the first Church, the residence of the first priest who for many years used to attend the whole district from the Narrows of Lake Simcoe to Owen Sound, forms the connecting link between the past and present. The old mission seems to have continued, or at least was first revived in Penetanguishene, which has thus become the heir and representative of the past.



GEORGIAN BAY ISLANDS ADJACENT TO PENETANGUISHENE

Settlement of Penetanguishene 1818

After the war of 1812, by negotiations and arrangements consequent of the treaty of Ghent the boundary line between the United States of North America and the British possessions, was determined and fixed by special commissioners.

The line passing through the centre of Lake Huron in the direction of Sault Ste. Marie. was drawn, so as to include Drummond Island in the territory of the United States.

But the Drummond Island was a naval and military British post and this had attracted to it, traders of all kinds, with their attendants, servants and a considerable number of Indians who all enjoyed and needed the protection of British arms.

The time arrived when the Island had to be transferred to the United States. The settlers had the option to remain on the island, where their lands and holdings would be secured to them under the American flag. Lands were promised to them if they would remove to British territory.

The Merchants and Traders had been for years particularly anxious to obtain, instead of the Lake Erie route for their goods one unconnected with American territory. The route by the way of Lake Simcoe and the Georgian Bay, to the posts further west had been recommended to the authorities, and Penetanguishene was selected as a favorable location for a naval and military post.

Hither then, the troops and navy received orders to go, and they landed in the Fall of 1827, at what is now the Reformatory Point. The civilians followed them only in the following spring 1828, and remained at the Point for about a year and a half, when they moved, where now the town is. The Indians that came from Drummond Island were settled, at least the bulk of them, first at Waubaushene, then at Coldwater and Orillia, then at Beausoleil Island, though some went also to the Nottawasaga besides those that were on the Penetanguishene Bay; then, finally, a few years later, they were mostly placed on the new Reserve on Manitoulin Island.



MAGAZINE ISLAND TAKEN FROM EASTERN SHORE

First Missionaries

Two traders were living on the Penetanguishene Bay —George Gordon and Corbiere. A few voyagers, deserters from the service of the Compagnie de La Chine, or North West Company had found their way there—Thomas Leduc and Joseph Messier—both well-known here, one of whom—Messier—was still living in 1891 at the age of about ninety; though, to hear his adventures you would have been inclined to think that like cats he had seven lives.

In those times there was no resident missionary priest in Drummond, to attend to the spiritual wants of the people; and more than seven years elapsed before one was sent to reside permanently at Penetanguishene.

In the meantime the people were visited at long intervals on the island by missionaries among whom may be named Father Crevier of Sandwich, who went about once a year; and Fathers Badin and Ballard. Had not the Jesuits been suppressed or banished, the Indians, and settlers and voyagers of the west would not have been deprived thus of spiritual instructions and consolations.

In 1832, in the month of February there were great rejoicings in Penetanguishene. Bishop McDonnell of Kingston, accompanied by Father Crevier had arrived but only to remain a few days. Mass was said with solemnity, instruction was imparted and there were

as usual, on such occasions, confessions, communions, baptisms and marriages. I do not know whether there are any records of this visit kept in Kingston or elsewhere but the records of the parish here, date only from 1835.

In the interval, between the visit of Bishop McDonell and the arrival in the Fall of 1833 of Father Dempsey, one Father Collins or Cullen came to give a few days retreat to the people and another priest visited the place but said Mass only one Sunday. At last the hopes of the Catholic people were fulfilled and their prayers answered; they were to have a resident missionary priest in the person of Father Dempsey who was coming from Glengarry, but their joy was of short duration. About two or three months after his arrival Father Dempsey was seized with a sudden illness and died of it at the Bergin's about seven miles this side of Barrie.

But what was the religious life of the people here, and on Drummond Island and how was it kept up?

Revol and Gordon

About the year 1818 or 1820 there came to Drummond Island three Frenchmen. One of them was Revol, a merchant (sometimes he is called Revolte or Ravalte, but he signs his name distinctly De Revol.) Revol had made a course of studies and by his letters as well as by his labours he proved that his attainments were above the average. He acted as lay-missionary and was instrumental not only in preserving the faith among the Catholic portion of the people but also in spreading it around him.

I cannot better make him known, as he deserves, than by giving extracts from the letters of some of his friends and of his own. From the letter of one P. Joseph Lacroix, who removed to Montreal and from his own letters. Revol left Penetanguishene in July 1833 for Montreal, where he was employed as steward in some religious community and afterwards had the same position in Chambly College, then in a flourishing state.

Mr. Gordon, who enjoyed a greater consideration than the rest around, and was then natural leader or representative, wrote to

Lacroix, upbraiding him for having been the means of enticing friend Revol away to Montreal and making him responsible for all evils coming from it to the great detriment of the people. Lacroix answered: "That is to his honor and praise. He has left you a good example; endeavor to imitate him. Your faithfulness in your duties to God will induce the rest to follow your steps and will remind them of him whose departure grieved them so much. You know that only his constant exemplary life in your midst and his zeal and labors to instruct the people and teach them the way to heaven has gained him the universal esteem not only from Catholics but also from those who are opposed to our religion. They could not help regretting him and appreciating his zeal and worth."

In answering Mr. Gordon who had written to him to invite him in his name and the name of a great number of settlers, Revol says: "I can now that I am far away from you and them tell in all truth that I have spent ten years with them almost exclusively occupied with their happiness. They know as well as you that I passed more time occupied with the affairs of their salvation than my own business. I had a kind of pride to see them give up their bad habits and live as Christians and to effect this I spared nothing—care, vigilance, trouble, labour, money. I was prodigal of all etc."

In another letter, when Mr. Gordon was discouraged, seemingly abandoned by the clergy of his own church, Revol writes: "Remember that for five or six years on Drummond Island, I, as well as any other, that did not see the face of a priest, was annoyed and obstructed in my work perhaps by the same power that now is trying to make you lose all courage and embrace error. Did I despair? And oh how handsome was my reward! Every idolater among Indians becoming a Christian! Every Canadian and "Metis" returning to sentiments worthy of his baptism and religion flourishing where vice alone seemed to have temples and followers etc. etc."

We see by his letters that regularly every Sunday and Church Holy Day the Christians met for prayers and he exhorts his friends Gordon and Des Chenaux to keep up this practice for themselves and to take all means to keep the others faithful to it.

The Log Church 1832

It must be in 1832, after Bishop McDonell's visit, that the Catholic congregation under Revol's direction commenced the building of the first church. It was a small log church, erected on Robert street with the old cemetery around it. It did duty until the year 1860 when it was replaced by the frame church, the second church that now has given way to the Memorial Church.

Revol's letters from Montreal show that it was not altogether completed in 1833. I may relate an incident connected with it that throws light on the Post Office's management in those early days. Revol had a friend at La Cloche Island,—Mr. Beau; he wrote to him for assistance; his appeal was not in vain; friend, Mr. Beau sent him a draft for fifty dollars on the Company of La Chine—that is the North West Company. The letter reached Penetanguishene after Revol had left for Montreal. Friend Gordon was requested to have it cashed and the money used according to the intentions of the donor. But the letter was forwarded to Revol at Montreal in July 1833. Not receiving it, Revol wrote to the Postmaster at Penetanguishene, Mr. Richardson, requesting him to make enquiries at Newmarket and York (in this way he always designs Toronto) and at last, in Montreal Post Office he learns that his letter was sent to the Dead Letter Office in Quebec.

Revol left Penetanguishene in 1833, leaving his friends in desolation, induced by his friend Jos. Lacroix, and also seeing that his efforts and sacrifices for the people, since they had left Drummond Island, were appreciated comparatively only by a few. He used to thunder against drunkenness, against going to the canteens and to dancing assemblies, and all the evils resulting from such habits and dissipation, and having to think of his own salvation, he resolved when better opportunities would offer themselves to embrace them.

Still Revol did not forget his Penetanguishene friends. On his way to Montreal, he called on Bishop McDonell at Kingston, urging him to send a resident priest to Penetanguishene. He even applied to Bishop Lartigues at Montreal and to the Archbishop of Quebec, although Penetanguishene was not in their territory. It was likely

due to his pressing solicitations that Bishop McDonell sent Father Dempsey to attend to the congregation here. And at last he had the great pleasure to announce to them in July, 1833, that Bishop Remi Gaulin, the Coadjutor of Bishop McDonell, was to pay them a visit in September of that year and that a priest was just ordained that was destined for the missions of Penetanguishene. And truly in the beginning of September, 1835, the friends of Revol were happy to welcome in their midst Bishop Gaulin.

The first Book of Records was commenced by Bishop Gaulin in that visit. The records are written in the French language. The first entry in this Book is the Baptism of Edward Rousseau, son of J. Baptiste Rousseau and Julie Lamorandiere. The sponsors were Charles Lalonde and Sarah Colombe. The godmother is still living here. Bishop Gaulin entered the records of 31 baptisms of children between 8 days and 4 years old.

Rev. Father J.B. Proulx-1835-1837

The Priest announced by Revol did not delay. It was Father J. Baptiste Proulx. We infer from the Record-Book that he received his mission from Bishop Gaulin, the 27th of October, 1835, and the first entry made by him is on the 10th of November, when he baptized Sally, Ann Preston and Rosalie Preston likely brought to him from Medonte.

A singular thing is noticed in the entry of some marriages. It was then the practice of the Church, to accept the mutual consent of the parties, the natural contract, as a binding and valid marriage, literally "until death does part," and not to repeat the ceremony or renew the consent. Still it was thought the proper and decent thing to do to have the ceremony of marriage repeated. Seven of these are mentioned in the Book of Records to have taken place at the same time. But unfortunately one page of this Record-book having been torn out is missing, and the heading which might have explained matters was written on the missing leaf. The practice of the Catholic people, we see, was to get married before four witnesses. Bishop McDonell, in 1832, repeated or simply blessed a great number of marriages. I have seen myself a certificate of marriage given by Father Crevier, to the effect that he had married lawfully

two parties who had been married without the presence of a priest. Was it to make these marriages valid in law? Or did the Priests consider them of doubtful force? Or was it to prevent the parties of leaving each other and contract some other unions on the plea that their marriage not having been solemnized regularly, could be dissolved at will. We can only surmise the reasons that impelled them to repeat the ceremony. The first entry of a marriage is on January 5th, 1836, when Paul Chagaichi was married to Marie Essena, daughter of Chief Jean Essena.

Father Proulx was moved by the spiritual destitution of the Indians and did not neglect them. You can see on February 21, 1836, this entry: On February 21, 1836, the undersigned priest had baptized the following adults: 1: J. Baptiste Mannacolg. 2: his wife Sophie Wabidjigigoc; their three children Sudanoudjiung, Wabatick, Tinitagaii, and others. On the first of July, in eight months, he had conferred baptism on more than 125 persons, the majority being Indians, a large number of them adults, and consequently only after careful instruction and preparation. We see that in July, 1846, he was in Sault Ste Marie and at the Island of the Courte-Oreille (Manitoulin), where Indians from La Cloche and French River came to meet him for instructions and Baptisms. Nearly 100 were baptized at the end of the year.

Father Proulx wishing to devote himself exclusively to the Indians obtained a priest to reside in Penetanguishene. Father Amable Charest from St. Ann, Batiscan, of the district of Three Rivers, was sent to him and arrived in the summer of 1837. The first entry made by him is of the baptism of Ovide Benjamin Lafreniere, on the 9th of July, 1837.

Father Proulx paid flying visits to Penetanguishene in the following year, as is seen from the Records. Then his name does not appear until 1845. He had gathered together a large number of the Indians that were living on Gloucester Bay, and obtained for them a good reserve on the great Manitoulin Island. In the year about 1845, in his desire to secure for the Indians the benefit of a less precarious attendance than the one that could be given by the secular clergy, he obtained the service of a Corporation, a religious order of

Priests, to take the Indians in charge. Of course, these were the Jesuits, who like the Phoenix had revived from their ashes. And any one who had visited Wilkamikong with its church and schools and the general progress of the Indians, may judge how wise and beneficial was the transfer. The Jesuits always in quest of some good to do have had the charge of the whole North shore from the mouth of the Severn River to the western extremity of Lake Superior; attending, consoling, instructing both the white man and the darky Indians. They come still in the vicinity to attend to the spiritual wants of the Indians at Beausoleil, and Christian Islands.

Father Proulx was given the charge of a parish at Oshawa, and then was called to Toronto where you may have seen his tall and noble form and you may have had occasion in conversation with him to admire his courteous manner and gentle disposition. Once or twice more, he came back to Penetanguishene. His spiritual children, the Half-breeds, were glad to see him. The good Father gives a little anecdote that illustrates one of the characteristics of the Indians and Half-breeds. They had no idea of figures nor of time reckoning. Seeing one of them at the church-door, one he had married about 45 years previously, and who used to accompany him on his journeys, and addressing him: Well, Charlie Langlade, how old would you be now?—Oh! I do not know for certain, but I should think that I would be 40 years old by now. And ten years afterwards Langlade died nearly an octogenarian. Not long after,



AMONG THE ISLANDS OF GEORGIAN BAY

that noble priest Father Proulx was attacked with that dreadful disease, cancer, and died in Lower Canada, among his relatives.

Rev. Father Charest 1837-1854

Father Charest who succeeded him in Penetanguishene, though he had not the care of the Indians, had an arduous task before him. Arriving at Penetanguishene in 1837, he remained in charge till the beginning of 1854. It was the time of immigration, when new settlers were passing through the front and settling in the backwoods. The district under his charge was immense. It extended to the Narrows in the South East and to Owen Sound in the South West. In reading the Parish Records you follow Father Charret today in Penetanguishene, tomorrow in Coldwater, next day at the Narrows, then suddenly in Medonte, Flos and Barrie. There was then a large advent of French Canadians to Penetanguishene and in Tiny, making what is called the French Settlement, now Lafontaine. The first settlers came from the place of Father Charest, Batiscan and Ste. Anne de la Perade. The immigration occurred in 1841 and continued until about 25 years ago, when timber was nearly exhausted and the country nearly filled. Then some of the settlers and of their children emigrated to the North West, Minnesota, Dakota and Manitoba. The French Canadians from the Penetanguishene district retrace their origin mostly to Batiscan, Ste. Anne de la Perade, Joliette vicinity, St. Anicet, Huntington County and St. Polycarpe in the county of Soulanges, with a sprinkling from Gaspé, Quebec.

In 1854, Father Charest went to Three Rivers, where he died.

During his pastorate, Father Proulx and the Jesuit Fathers, when in charge of the Indians in Manitoulin Island used to come to Penetanguishene to attend to the Indians of the village and its neighborhood. Thus it is that Fathers Durauquet, Fremiot, Point, Hanipaux, Ferard, Nadeau, have visited Penetanguishene.

1854--1860

On the departure of Father Charest, Father Fremiot remained in charge from March to May 1854, and then Rev. Father Claude Ternet

was appointed pastor of Penetanguishene on the 10th of June 1854. In the meantime the mission was divided, and Father Ternet's ministrations were confined to the townships Tiny and Tay and parts of Flos and Medonte with churches of Penetanguishene and St. Croix.

As Father Ternet, who was from France, did not speak English, the neighboring priests used to visit Penetanguishene to attend to those who spoke that language only ; and thus we see Fathers Flannery, Synnot, Hobin, Vincent, Mahoney, Walsh pay flying visits to the Penetanguishene missions.

On Father Ternet's departure, in 1857, Rev. Father Jamot, then in Barrie, seemed to have been in charge of Penetanguishene, until a successor to Father Ternet was appointed in the person of Father Lebandy, another French Priest, who came in October in 1857 and remained a pastor until April, 1860.

In 1861, the Mission was again divided, and Father L. Gibra was appointed to take charge of St. Croix at Lafontaine, Oct. 1861. The first church at St. Croix was built in 1856 and blessed in December of the same year by Father Ternet, as we see in the baptismal Records of Penetanguishene. The other church, as it stands to-day, 1912, was built in 1876.

Rev. Father J. P. Kennedy 1860-1873

In 1860, Father J. P. Kennedy, born in Toronto, was appointed P. Priest of Penetanguishene and also Chaplain by the Reformatory for boys established in the military grounds of the Government of Canada. The first church of Penetanguishene was a small log church,—31 x 32—erected about 1830, by Mr. De Revol on the lot now occupied by the Town Hall, 1912, and which lot had been given by one of the half-breeds, Pierre Giroux.

In 1861 Father Kennedy built on the same grounds the frame church that did service until the Memorial Church was built. A church having been built in Waubaushene, Father Kennedy's mission was restricted to Penetanguishene, the eastern part of Tiny, the township of Tay with the chaplaincy of the Provincial Reformatory. It was during his pastorate that the several saw-

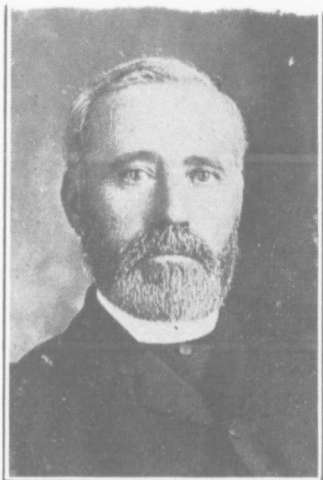


FATHER KENNEDY'S CHURCH

mills, especially in the township of Tay, at Port Severn, Waubausheae, Sturgeon-Bay, Victoria Harbor, Midland, commenced or increased their operation, giving birth in those places to villages who have increased considerably afterwards. Father Kennedy labored faithfully in his arduous missions until his death, June 25th, 1873, when in a generous attempt to save a young lad who had fallen overboard in the Georgian Bay, he was unfortunately drowned.

Rev. Father T. F. Laboureau 1873

Father Proulx, the first regular pastor of the place, was sent in charge of the mission until a new pastor was appointed in the person of the Rev. Th. F. Laboureau, Sept. 23rd, 1873. The Rev. Theophilus Francis Laboureau was born in the diocese of Dijon, in the old province of Burgundy, France. He was called to Canada in 1858 by the late Bishop de Charbonnel. He was ordained priest in January 14th, 1866 in Montreal for the diocese of Toronto. After a few years passed in different missions, St. Catharines, Smithville, Thorold, Niagara, and Caledon, he was appointed to Penetanguishene in September 1873 and remained its pastor ever since until September 1905 when he resigned and retired to the House of Providence, Toronto, afflicted as he was with acute paralysis.



REV. FATHER LABOUREAU

The present brick residence or presbytery was built in 1875 by Rev. Fr. Laboureau. Four years later, January, 1879, the Reformatory was detached from Penetanguishene mission, and a chaplain was appointed having the exclusive charge of the boys of the Institution.

The population in the several villages around the saw-mills having increased, and the people bearing with little patience to have to attend Mass in private houses, and in fact to be deprived, except in such places, of the opportunity to assist at Mass, Father Laboureau, in 1881, undertook the building of churches in Midland, Victoria Harbor, Port Severn and Waubaushene where the church built in 1861 was already inadequate to the requirements of the people. All these churches were finished in the same year, 1881. The Church of Midland was blessed in January 1882 by his Lordship Bishop O'Mahoney. The Canadian Century, January number 1911,

had a recollection signed Wm. Steers, telling of the difficulties of the Midland Catholics to have Mass previous to 1882. Mayor McFarlane was severely censured by his brethren for having lent the key of the Orange Hall to Father Laboureau for Sunday services.

Until 1882, the church lot at Penetanguishene was used for a cemetery, when it became necessary to purchase land for another. Four acres were bought from Hormidas Gamelin and Thomas Leduc, at a convenient distance from the church. By delegation of His Grace of Toronto, Rev. Father McBride, assisted by the Pastor, blessed the new cemetery in July, 1882, amid a large concourse of people.

The work to be done in the mission of Penetanguishene having considerably increased, in October 1882, a curate, Rev. Michael Jeffcott was given as help to the Parish Priest. He was succeeded in July 1883 by Rev. Father Patrick Whitney, who in October had Rev. Father John Lynett as successor. Other priests who worked in Penetanguishene under Rev. Father Laboureau's direction were the R. R. Ch. Cantillon; J. Grant; J. T. Kidd; J. Minehan; Ph. Brunelle.

In November, 1883, the mission of Penetanguishene was again divided; Port Severn and Wyevale only remained attached to it. Midland as Headquarters with Waubaushene and Victoria Harbor were formed into parish with Father John F. Lynett as first resident Pastor.

In 1884, Father Laboureau obtained leave from His Grace Archbishop Lynch to commence a new church. As Penetanguishene is the point around which centered the traditions of the Huron missions, and the first mission reestablished in the old Huron country; thus being the connecting link between the past and present, it was proposed to erect a Memorial Church as a fitting monument to those holy and noble men, De Breboenf, Lallemand and their companions, to recall to the present and future generations the memory of those men whose self-sacrificing lives, arduous labors and heroic death form one of the brightest pages of the history of Canada.

Father Laboureau, prepared for the work and after visiting friends in 1885 for funds, the corner-stone was laid by Archbishop Lynch in presence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, the Hon.

J. Beverley Robinson and of a large concourse of Ecclesiastical and Civil Dignitaries on September 6th, 1886.

Progress on the church went slowly, owing to lack of funds; however it was roofed in, in December 1890 but it remained unfinished until 1902, when it was opened for the congregation and blessed by the Most Rev. D. O'Connor of Toronto, assisted by the Right Rev. R. O'Connor of Peterboro and the Right Rev. F. P. McEvay of London.

The church occupies the most prominent place in the old historic town. It is of rock-faced granite and field-stones, trimmed with Red Credit Valley stone and white Nottawasaga Sand stone. The style is the Modern Romanesque. The interior dimensions are 137 feet long by 45 feet wide and the building is capable of seating one thousand people. The walls were finished in water-color pink tinted, presenting a beautiful appearance.

At the opening of the church 1902, the Main Altar was presented by Mr. Alp. Tessier and at Easter 1908 he also presented the Pulpit. The pews were placed in November 1904; the Sacred Heart Altar in 1906 and the B. Virgin's Altar at Christmas 1907. Most of the Memorial windows in groups of three were in place at the opening of the church; the Assumption and St. Patrick's were placed later on, in the transepts while the large one, over the front entrance was added in the summer of 1910. Altars, windows, statuary, are all private donations.

1906--1913

After Father Laboureau's resignation in September 1906, as no appointment was made, Rev. J. T. Kidd was left in charge of the parish until June 15th, 1908.

Formerly the school of Penetanguishene was a Union School of Catholics, and Protestants. Later, Protestants asking for a Separate School the brick Public School was built for the use of Catholics. A large addition was added to it in 1907.

The C. M. B. A. was established March 1888; The C. O. F. in September 1902; the Union St. Joseph 1910; the K. of C. in 1912. The League of the Sacred Heart in 1890; the Holy Rosary in 1906; the sodality of the Blessed Virgin in 1908; the Altar Society in 1908.



REV. FATHER H. BRUNET

In June 1908 the Rev. Father Kidd was appointed as Secretary to the new Archbishop McEvay of Toronto. To replace him the Rev. H. Brunet then of the diocese of Kingston was sent to Penetanguishene.

On October 22nd of the same year Father Laboureau passed away at the age of 71. His remains were conveyed to Penetanguishene. During the funeral ceremonies all places of business, the mills, factories were closed and from all the country surrounding came hundreds to pay a last token of respect to their old friend who had done missionary work in their midst for 33 years. His former parishioners wished to have a worthy memorial of their pastor placed in their beautiful memorial church and on January next 1909 three bells in his honor were blessed by Archbishop McEvay. The bells weigh respectively 1500 lbs., 800 lbs. and 475 lbs. They were erected by the Paccard Bell Foundry, France, at the cost of \$1400.00. By their side in the tower is the old bell; tradition says it was found on the shore of Christian Island some forty years ago; its weight is between 80 and 90 lbs. and it bears in relief on its side the date 1799.

On the same day January 1909 the Archbishop dedicated the Stations of the Cross and other groups of statuary the cost of which amounted to \$1200.00.

On February 6th 1910, the Pipe Organ, built by the Mathew Church Organ Co. and placed over the main entrance in the choir gallery was blessed by Rev. Father Kidd then Chancellor of the Diocese. Towards the organ fund, over \$1800.00 had been collected by means of Garden Party and one day's wages envelopes.

Several beautiful and costly paintings which represent the life of Christ or traditions of the Catholic Church, have been added to the decorations of the walls. One large painting in the Sanctuary depicts very vividly the death by torture of the first Pioneers De Breboeuf and Lalemant. The memory of these first missionaries is so linked with Penetanguishene and the Memorial church that the Parish Priest finds occasionally in his mail letters and petitions addressed to "the Rev. Fathers De Breboeuf and Lalemant, Penetanguishene.

Under the auspices of these heavenly protectors, the parish increased considerably; and in January 1909, it was found necessary to have a Priest to reside permanently at Perkinsfield and attend to the western part of the population.

The Congregation still numbers 2700 souls in about 500 families. Twelve of these have a German name; about ten are of Irish descent; over sixty have a mixture of French and Indian blood; and four hundred families are of French Canadian origin.

The Sunday Catechism is taught to an average of 300 children by 17 teachers. Christian doctrine is also imparted on week days by the Pastor in the church to the town children, and in a Chapel-Boat to pupils living on the other side of the Bay.

In the last four years Baptisms averaged 115 a year, Deaths 45, Marriages 25. Over twenty-one thousand Communion were received in 1912.

It has been seen that as of old the little landing place of Otouacha at the mouth of the Bay was the starting point of the celebrated Missions of Touanche, Shonatiria, Ossosane, St. Mary's . . . so in our days Penetanguishene has been the origin of the flourishing missions and Parishes of Lafontaine, Perkinsfield, Stayner, Collingwood, Owen Sound, Phelpston, Barrie, Orillia, The Severn, Waubaushene, Victoria Harbor, Midland, etc.

True is the word of Tertullian: "The Blood of Martyrs is the seed of Christians.

March 16, 1913.

H. B.

264th anniversary of Father De Breboeuf's death.

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