

1819 - 1919

One Hundredth

Anniversary

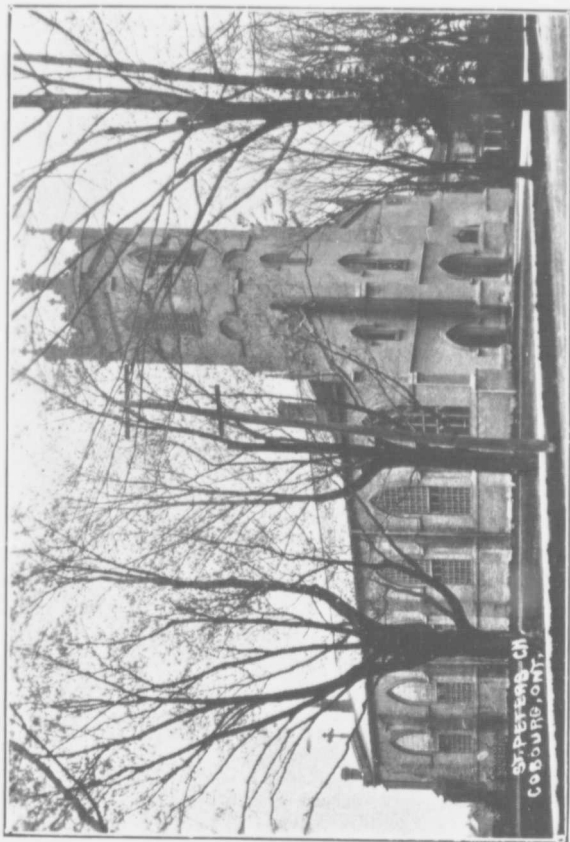
of

St. Peter's Church

Cobourg



January 26, 1819 : January 26, 1919



ST. PETER'S CH.
COBURG, ONT.

RECTORS

WILLIAM MACAULAY

1818 - 1827

ALEXANDER NEIL BETHUNE

1827 - 1866

ARCHDEACON OF YORK

BISHOP OF TORONTO

1867 - 1879

CANON WALTER STENNETT

1866 - 1889

CANON ALBERT WARBURTON SPRAGGE

1889 - 1914

FREDERICK JOHN SAWERS

1915 -



THE RIGHT REVEREND J. F. SWEENY,
Bishop of Toronto

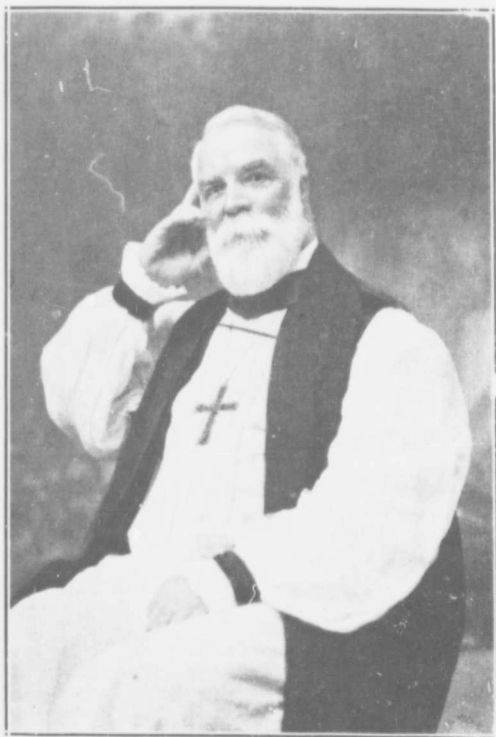
Historical Reminiscences of St. Peter's Church

IN the year of Our Lord 1818 the Reverend William Macaulay, incumbent, held the first service in this district. He extended his occasional ministrations to the utmost bounds of the Newcastle district, East and West. In this year services were held in the Court House at Amherst (the present site of the House of Refuge). This was a small antiquated wooden building.

The first parish register was begun in January, 1819, and on the front page these words are written: "Register of the Parish of Hamilton, District of Newcastle, Upper Canada." The first entry in this book is as follows: "Baptized at Hamilton, 26th January, 1819, James Tigart, son of Francis and Elizabeth Tigart, William Macaulay."

The first pages of the parish register show the large amount of country covered by the first incumbent in his ministrations. In the year 1819 children are baptized at "the carrying place, head of the Bay of Quinte." Entry is made of baptisms at Belleville, "where as yet there is no register." The sacrament of Holy Baptism is administered at Presqu'île and in the "Rice Lake country."

One notes with great interest the signature of "John Strachan, minister," as officiating at a wedding at "Cobourgh," 28th January, 1821. This is the first Bishop of Toronto, and the founder of Trinity College, after whom Bishop Strachan School in Toronto is named.



THE RIGHT REVEREND W. D. REEVE,
Assistant Bishop of Toronto

In the year 1820 one sees that people attained to a very ripe age, just as so many do in our town to-day, for there is the record of the death of William Aeker, aged 100.

On August 28th, 1819, four acres of ground, where the church and Rectory now stand, were given "solely for the use of the Episcopal church and its appurtenances" by John Spencer (the grandfather of Mrs. John Daintry) to Robert Henry and Walter Boswell, Church Wardens, "and their successors in office forever, for a consideration of the sum of ten pounds of lawful money. The Glebe lands were given by the crown for the Rectory of Cobourg on January 18th, 1836. The building of the first St. Peter's church on the present site was commenced in the spring of 1820, and it was opened on Christmas Day of the same year. The building was of wood, 56 x 42 feet. About ten years later the north end of the church was extended nineteen feet, and a few years after this (in 1833) side galleries were added. In 1844 a tower of brick with lobbies and spire was built. The present large brick church with stone foundations and facings was erected outside and over the old church while the latter was still used for service. The new church was opened for divine service on October 15th, 1854, sixty-five years ago.

In the year 1827 Alexander Neil Bethune was appointed to take charge of the parish of Cobourg. His name appears in the parish register in May, 1824, as "minister of Grimsby, Upper Canada." It gives one some idea of the extent of a Bishop's jurisdiction in these early days when it is noted that Mr. Bethune was appointed by the Lord Bishop of Quebec, who also officiated at confirmations some years later. The following is found in the parish register, dated June 8th, 1827: "By license and authority of Charles James, Lord Bishop of Quebec, the Reverend Alexander Neil Bethune, formerly of Grimsby, U.C., was appointed to the mission of Cobourg, District of Newcastle, U.C." The ministration of Mr. Bethune in the parish of Cobourg lasted for forty years.

There is the record of many who acted as curates in the parish, among them: Rev. J. Wilson (afterwards



VENERABLE ARCHDEACON ALEXANDER NEIL BETHUNE

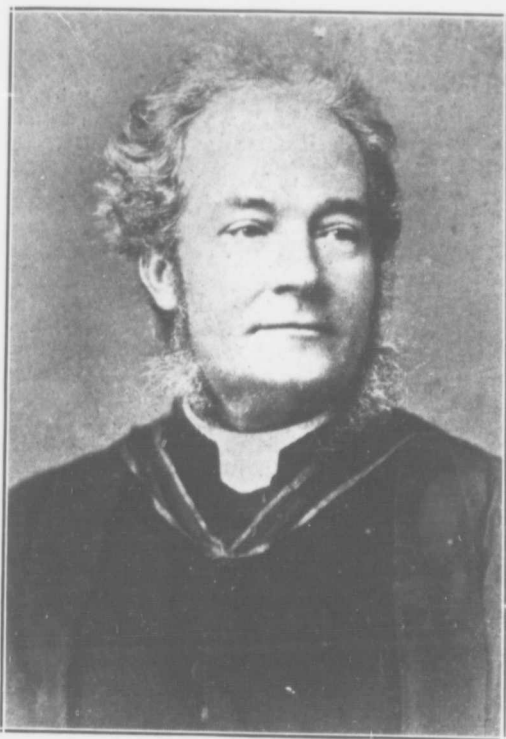
1827 - 1866

Archdeacon Wilson of Grafton), C. Ruttan, J. B. Worrall, E. Grasett, E. Patterson, A. MacNab, H. B. Jessop, W. A. Johnson, J. W. R. Beck (afterwards Rector of Peterboro), C. E. Thomson, Septimus Jones (afterwards Rector of the Church of the Redeemer, Toronto), H. W. Birtch, C. J. S. Bethune (the son of the Rector, afterwards headmaster of Trinity College School in Port Hope, and now in Guelph), C. J. Magill, H. J. Coach-
afer.

“On Sunday, 14th of September, 1828, at a confirmation holden by the Lord Bishop of Quebec, sixty-eight person were confirmed, and on the same day the church of Cobourg was consecrated by the Lord Bishop by the name of St. Peter’s church, as well as the burying ground attached to the said church.”

The following interesting account is taken from the “Historical Reminiscences of the Town of Cobourg for the Past Hundred Years”:

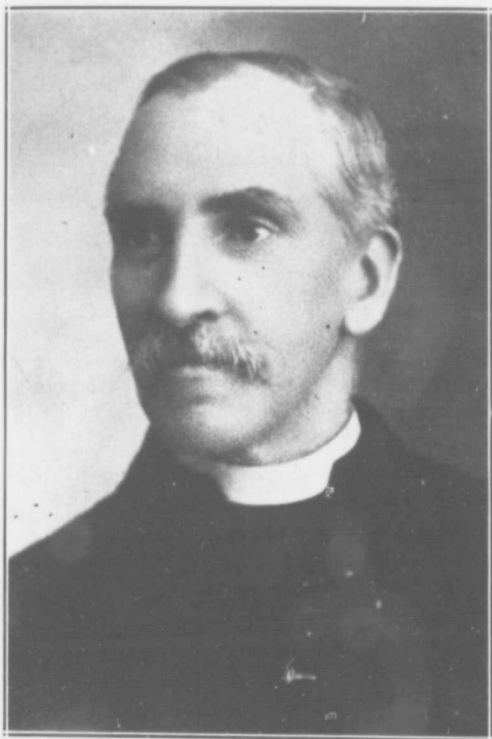
“In the year 1818 the parish of St. Peter’s, Cobourg was created by the appointment of Reverend William Macaulay, and in the late Bishop Bethune’s “Memoir of the Right Reverend John Strachan, D.D., LL.D., First Bishop of Toronto,” it is stated that in 1820 the only clergymen of the Church of England between Toronto and Belleville were one at Cobourg and one in the township of Cavan. At their inception these parishes were in the vast diocese of Quebec—the territory now represented by the Provinces of Quebec and Ontario—the Bishop was the Right Reverend Jacob Mountain, and his See was at the city of Quebec. As a further proof to our younger people that the progress of this country in so short a time has been wonderful, it may not be amiss to state that in that year, 1820, there were only sixteen clergymen of the Church of England in Upper Canada, outside of the village of York, now the great city of Toronto. Mr. Macaulay’s congregation laid the foundation of their church building in the fall of 1820. It was placed where St. Peter’s now stands, was a plain, unpretentious, wooden structure, but in due course was changed from wood to brick, was several times enlarged and remodelled to suit the growth and improved tastes of the congregation, till it became



THE REVEREND CANON WALTER STENNETT

1865 - 1889

what we see to-day, an imposing and venerable pile. In the same year—1820—Mr. Macaulay was appointed chaplain of the Legislative Council of Upper Canada, in succession to the Reverend John Strachan, who resigned the chaplaincy on being made a member of the same Council. Mr. Macaulay filled the incumbency with great acceptance to the congregation till 1827. Then he was succeeded by the Rev. Alexander Neil Bethune. It would be impossible to say too much in praise of Mr. Bethune. He was an ideal Church of England clergyman; high minded; of lofty character; unobtrusive. Holding firmly to the tenets of his own church, and contending earnestly for what he considered its rights he yet was tolerant to a degree of the opinions and beliefs of others; he guided and controlled his congregation with a tact which was never at fault; his piety called forth the deepest veneration from his people, and the highest respect and good-will from all other denominations in the community. His incumbency was a long and very useful one, and his influence for good in the town and surrounding country was such as even the present generation should be thankful for. Not only was Mr. Bethune a good man—he had natural abilities of a high order and was a ripe scholar. Both as a school-boy and as a student of Divinity he had been under the tutelage of the Reverend Mr. Strachan, was the life-long friend and admirer of that eminent divine, was one of his most valuable and trusted assistants in his great work of building up the church in Upper Canada, was elected his Episcopal Coadjutor in 1866, when years and toil had robbed the aged Bishop of his strength and energy, and on his death in the following year succeeded him in the Bishopric. "The Church" newspaper was instituted in May, 1837, in the interests of the Church of England, and for many years Mr. Bethune was its editor, and as such he was the stout and able, though temperate and courteous, champion for his church in the politico-religious controversy which in the later 30's and in the 40's raged around the great question of the Clergy Reserves. In November, 1841, Mr. Bethune was appointed Professor of Theology in the Diocese of Toronto, and from that



THE REVEREND CANON ALBERT WARBURTON SPRAGGE
1889 - 1914

time till the establishing of Trinity College, eleven years afterwards, he conducted the Diocesan Theological College at Cobourg."

The Venerable Archdeacon Bethune was elevated to the Episcopate in 1866, and was succeeded by the Reverend Canon Stennet as Rector. During Canon Stennett's tenure of office for twenty-three years, a new chancel was added to the church, the memorial tablet in the Chancel recording the fact that this was done as a memorial to the work of Archdeacon Bethune, the present organ was put in, and the Rectory was built. The beautiful reredos in the chancel was given by Archdeacon Bethune's family in memory of their father.

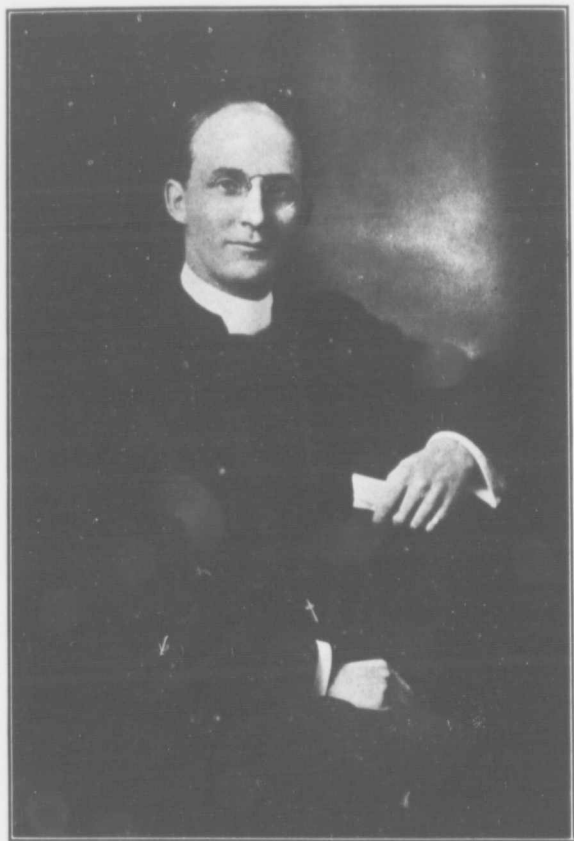
A beautiful stained-glass window in the chancel testifies to the esteem and affection with which Canon Stennett was regarded by the congregation.

The parish register gives the names of those who were curates in the parish, in addition to those mentioned before: E. H. Cole, G. J. Everest, E. C. Bower, J. W. Forster, W. Reiner, James Roy; and in later days the following will be remembered for their ministrations: H. A. Ben-Oliel, A. L. Reed, W. H. Bayley, T. F. Summerhayes, Edmund Greaves, H. R. Mockridge, and R. S. Tippet.

After the passing away of Canon Stennett, the Reverend Albert Warburton Spragge, of Newmarket, was appointed Rector in 1889. Canon Spragge was Rector for twenty-five years, and his people speak of him in terms of affection. During his incumbency the interior of the church was remodelled, the side galleries were removed, the square pews were replaced by oak seats, and new stained-glass memorial windows were put in. The church property was enlarged by the purchase of the corner lot, and the commodious Sunday School building was erected. A mortuary chapel was also built in the cemetery.

To mark the jubilee of the opening of the present church, in 1905, a memorial chime of ten bells was placed in the tower.

The present Rector, the fifth in one hundred years, was appointed on February 1st, 1915, coming to Cobourg from St. Luke's church, Peterboro. Many beau-



THE REVEREND FREDERICK JOHN SAWERS
1915 -

tiful memorials have been added to the church since this time. The handsome stained-glass window in the Chancel is a memorial to Canon and Mrs. Spragge, erected by their four sons. The choir stalls were given by the congregation in memory of their former Rector. The oak pulpit with artistic carving and figures was given in memory of Gertrude Ellen Osler by her husband, J. E. Boswell, who also gave the reading desks in memory of his son, Ernest, who paid the supreme sacrifice in the war. Mrs. Roe Buck presented the Bishop's chair in memory of her brother and sister. Mrs. (General) Charles Fitzhugh gave the communion rail in memory of her sister. Mrs. F. N. Black presented the clergy sedilia. These beautiful gifts complete the furnishings of the Chancel in quarter-cut oak.

The last memorial to be dedicated was that of the handsome font of Caen stone with marble pillars, given by Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Wilgress in memory of their only son, George, who gave his life for his country.

The church has many beautiful flags, among them the regimental colours of the old 40th Regiment, given in 1866, and the regimental colours of the 139th Battalion, of which Lt.-Col. Floyd was commanding officer. The service flag with 128 maple leaves given to the church by Mrs. Clive Pringle, is a remembrance of the number of men from this parish who enlisted in the war, twelve of whom have been called upon to pay the supreme sacrifice.

As a permanent memorial of the 100th anniversary, the Vestry approved of the plan to join the church and the parish house, thus making one building. Plans have been drawn up for this, and a large sum of money promised. It was decided, however, that it would be more patriotic to await the conclusion of the war before attempting to carry out the project. Now that the war is over, how thankful we are to be able to write these words, it may surely be our hope that steps will be taken to complete the building as a suitable memorial of the hundred years of eventful history of St. Peter's church.

ST. PETER'S CHURCH OFFICERS

Rector—Rev. F. J. Sowers.

Church Wardens—D. Denton and B. R. Heaslip.

Lay Delegates to the Synod—J. W. Bickle, E. H. Osler, H. Boggs.

Vestry Clerk—C. R. Gummow.

Advisory Committee—The Rector, Wardens, Lay Delegates, A. J. Armstrong, D. H. Burn, F. H. Bentley, A. E. Cruikshank, John Dick, W. H. Dundas, Col. Floyd, C. W. Field, C. R. Gummow, E. W. Hargraff, A. J. Hewson, W. W. Hooley, Wallace Halle, R. G. Holdsworth, A. L. Jex, W. F. Kerr, W. J. Macdonald, A. W. Middleton, J. F. McCullagh, E. H. Osler, A. B. Roberts, J. W. Spragge, W. L. Sjostrom, W. H. Smith, G. W. Taylor, Nelson Tait, E. Vivian, Herbert Wicks, Dr. Willoughby, E. J. Wormington.

Sidesmen—Alfred Leetham, Fred Bentley, G. W. Taylor, Sidney Rorabeck, C. W. Field, Herbert Wicks, Lisle Wark, C. D. Harcourt, A. W. Middleton, W. H. Smith, J. W. Spragge, D. H. Burn, Col. W. H. Floyd, M. A. Hewson, J. F. McCullagh, P. Bradbury, George Osland.

Organist—Miss K. Warner.

Superintendent of the Sunday School—East End: W. L. Sjostrom; West End: Miss Eyre.

Sexton—George Waller.

Sentinel-Star Print