

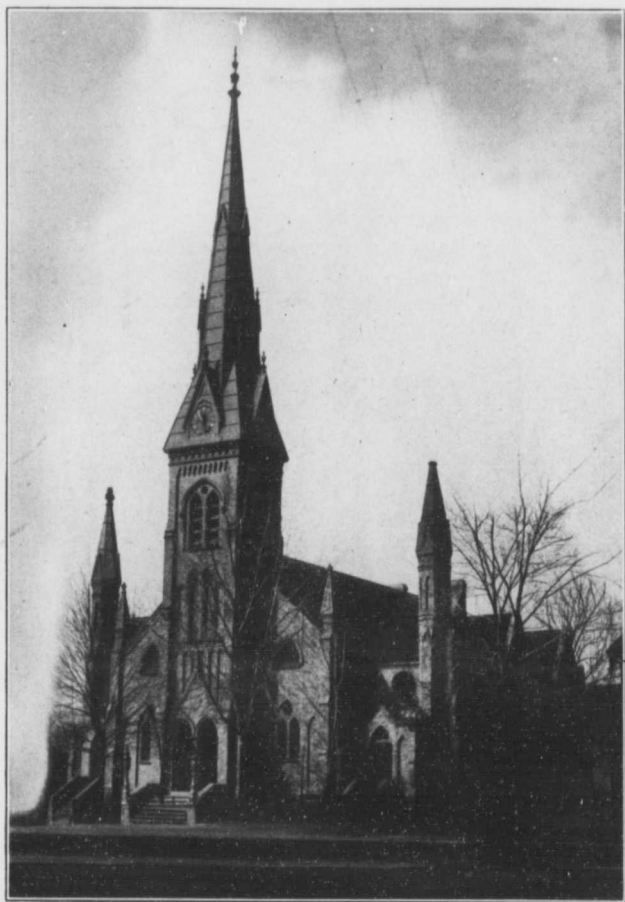
1918

79

St. Andrew's
Church
Sarnia



1843-1918



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, SARNIA



DEDICATION.

TO

THE OFFICE-BEARERS, MEMBERS, AND
ADHERENTS OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH,
SARNIA.

(LIVING AND DEAD)

WHOSE LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH OF
THEIR FATHERS MADE POSSIBLE THE
FOUNDING OF THIS CONGREGATION; AND
WHOSE CONTINUED LOYALTY AND LIBER-
ALITY HAVE UPHELD THE SAME FOR
OVER THREE QUARTERS OF A CENTURY.

AND

IN RECOGNITION OF MY PREDECESSORS
IN ST. ANDREW'S PARISH AND PULPIT, TO
WHOSE ABUNDANT LABORS WE OWE SO
MUCH, AND OF WHOM WE SPEAK TOO
LITTLE THIS BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
CONGREGATION

IS

AFFECTIONATELY AND RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED

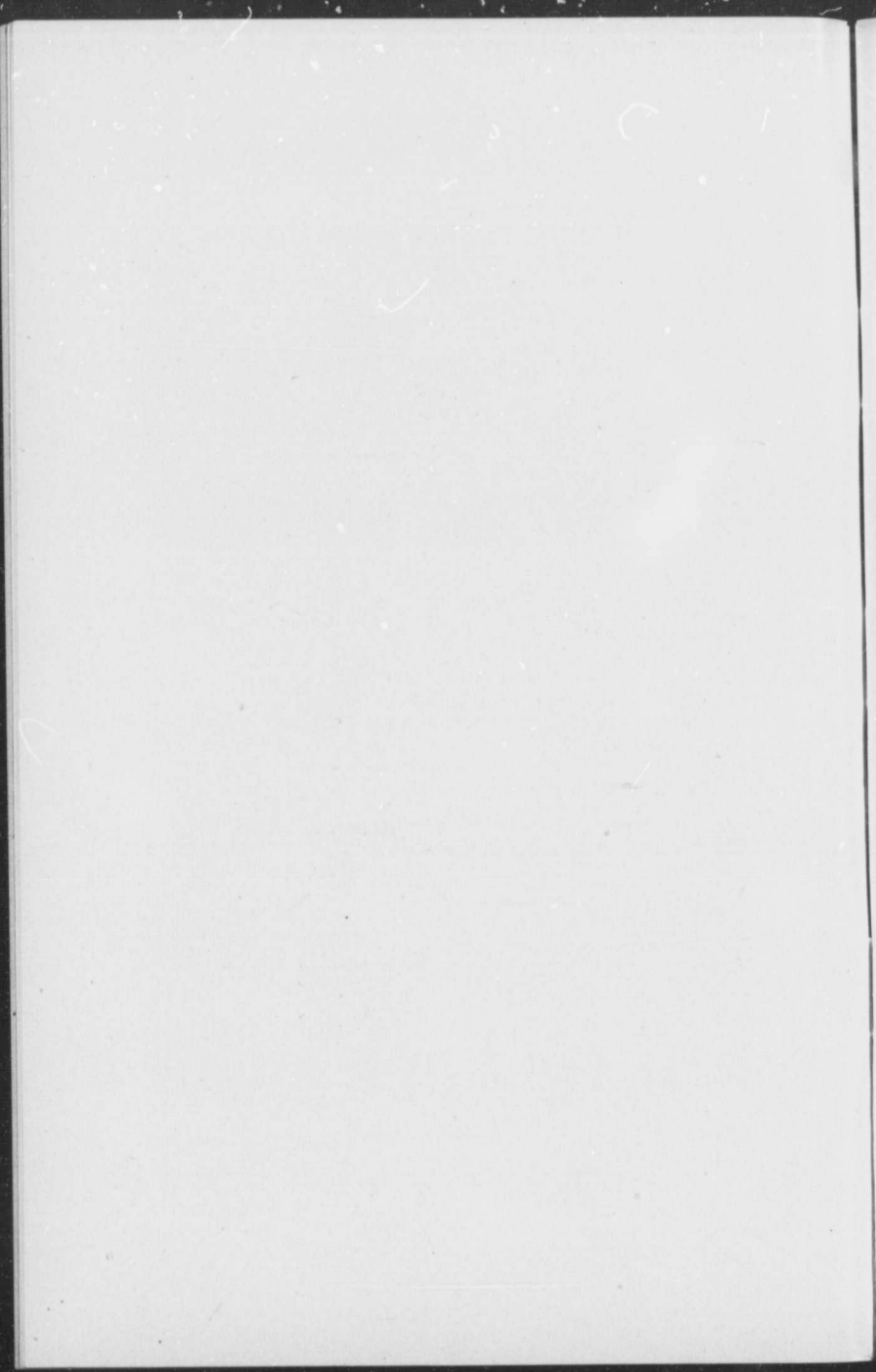
*"For I would far rather, when I may, worship
in an old church whose very stones are a history
of how men strove to realize the Infinite, and
walk at peace with God."*



REV. JAS. J. PATERSON, 1906

The History
of
St. Andrew's
Presbyterian
Church

Sarnia
Ontario



CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THINGS

The year 1833 is usually accepted as marking the time when the vanguard of the approaching army of settlers from Eastern Ontario and the Old Land came into Lambton "to lift up their axes against the great trees." Previous to the *Beginnings of Presbyterianism in Lambton.* above date there had been some slight settlement along the St. Clair River front, on the Plympton shore of Lake Huron, and here and there in the interior. But from 1833 onward, settlers began to come in more or less continuously, many of them from the County of Lanark. Christian work among these early settlers furnishes an interesting chapter in the missionary records of the Canadian Churches. To the Rev. George Cheyne of Amherstburg (1831-1843) belongs the honor of first representing the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, among the settlers of Lambton County.

Mr. Cheyne was a graduate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, Scotland. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Strathbogie, Aberdeenshire, in 1831 "to be minister at Amherstburg, Canada West, or any other place in British North America."

Arriving at Amherstburg in the autumn of 1831 Mr. Cheyne soon began to give proof of his fitness to hold this "roving commission." His first visit to Lambton can best be described in his own words:

"In the summer of 1834 I visited Sarnia, then scarcely begun." In his "Autobiography" Mr. Froome Talfourd states that he himself rode on horse-back from Caradoc to Sarnia in the summer of the same year. Mr. Talfourd states that he found only three houses in Sarnia, one of them being a grog-shop called the "NNI," i.e., "Inn" inverted.

To resume Mr. Cheyne's narrative: "I made arrangements to preach in Moore on the Sabbath. A Mr. Sutherland from Edinburgh had just come in, and bought out a Frenchman whose farm lay on the banks of the St. Clair River. Seats were erected in Mr. Sutherland's orchard, made of boards resting on blocks of wood. On the Sabbath there was a good congregation, but where they came from I could not see. Mr. Sutherland and his family were Scotch Episcopalians. They were very kind and hospitable people. I always, in visiting this locality, made arrangements to spend a night with them, as there was the place for one or more services."

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It would appear that this service held in Mr. Sutherland's orchard was the first Presbyterian service held in Lambton. It would also appear that Mr. Cheyne made later visits to the same locality. One of these visits is full of interest. Unfortunately Mr. Cheyne omits the date.

"On another occasion, in the autumn, having preached at the front in Moore (Mr. Sutherland's) I was proceeding back ten miles to Bear Creek to preach next day at ten o'clock in the forenoon. It commenced to rain when I had gone about three miles, and rained harder as I went on. At last I came to a small log cabin and clearing.

"Upon enquiring how far I was from Bear Creek I was told it was four miles, and on asking if I could get anyone to show me the way I was informed that as it was growing dark they could not find it but that I was welcome to stay all night if I could put up with what accommodation they had. This I was glad to do. The house was about twelve feet square and there were two men, two women and several children besides myself. There was a good blazing fire and the people were very kind and made me comfortable. The family was from the North of Ireland, the husband an Episcopalian, the wife and her mother were Presbyterians. The brother went with me next morning to the church service and served as guide."

Tradition has it that this service at Bear Creek was held at the home of Mr. Finlay Farquharson who, with Mr. John Coutts, was elected in 1844 on the first Bear Creek Session. Mr. Cheyne's visit to Bear Creek would probably occur in 1837 or 1838. The peculiar interest in this service lies in the fact that at the organization of the "Sarnia (St. Andrew's) and Plympton" congregations on the 15th of October, 1843, Bear Creek was included in this organization as an adjunct for pastoral work, but not held financially responsible, nor entitled to more than occasional preaching services.

The connection between Bear Creek and St. Andrew's, Sarnia, lasted from the 15th of October, 1843, until the 10th of January, 1855, when Bear Creek was declared to be a distinct charge.

Mr. Cheyne had the true missionary spirit. He possessed cheerfulness, adaptability, a sense of humor, and a deep interest in the spiritual needs of the settlers. "I enjoyed," he says, "these missionary tours very much. The settlers were delighted to see me, and to hear the Word, and if I was instrumental in fanning the decaying flame of religion I was abundantly rewarded."

Did Mr. Cheyne ever hold services in Sarnia? The balance of probability leans to the affirmative. Among the places visited by him in a missionary capacity, where afterwards flourishing congregations sprang up, he mentions Tilbury, Wallaceburg, Chatham,

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and Sarnia. Mr. Cheyne's missionary labors gave him oversight of the Presbyterian settlers in Lambton, Kent and Essex, and having visited Moore Township more than once, it is hardly probable that he would miss the then slowly growing village of Sarnia. As Mr. Cheyne removed from Amherstburg in 1843, his visit or visits to Sarnia would occur between 1834 and 1842.

Unlike the villages of Corunna and Errol, both of which were laid out under government auspices, Sarnia is indebted to private enterprise for its existence. Possessing a naturally excellent location, the shrewdness and business enterprise of its locators and early citizens gave the future city a grip upon permanence which it has never lost, while Errol, for some years an active rival for premier honors, has long since disappeared from the map.

Among those who laid the foundations of "The Imperial City" there are three that have pre-eminence, and their names will doubtless be preserved in street nomenclature so long as the city stands. These three are: Commander Richard Emeric Vidal, R.N., George Durand, and Malcolm Cameron.

Commander Vidal, after many years of active service, located 200 acres of land north of the present George Street, in 1832.

He returned to settle upon and subdivide this property in 1834. Commander Vidal was the father of the late Senator Alexander Vidal, who was one of the charter members of St. Andrew's Church, a life long temperance advocate, and a gentleman well known in the political life of his day.

George Durand arrived in 1833 with a stock of goods purchased in London, and conveyed through the intervening forest upon an "ox-jumper." Mr. Durand opened the first general store in Sarnia, built a saw-mill, was a shrewd investor in real estate, and had the reputation of being an excellent business man with a real genius for collecting accounts. He was a brother-in-law of the Mr. Hamilton who gave his name to Ontario's "Ambitious City."

Mr. Malcolm Cameron, lumberman, land speculator, ship-owner, miller, temperance advocate, Cabinet Minister, and what not, was certainly one of the most picturesque of the founders of Sarnia. Energetic, warm-hearted, resourceful, and self reliant, the maker of his own fortune, and the helper of many others to make theirs, Mr. Cameron played a large part in the early history of our city. Coming from the County of Lanark he purchased, on the 27th of October, 1835, 100 acres located in what is now the heart of the City of Sarnia, from Elijah Harris, deputy of the Indian Agent. The price paid Mr. Harris was four hundred pounds, Halifax currency.

To the eternal credit of these gentlemen, they did more than lay out subdivisions, and buy and sell city lots. In the midst of

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their temporal interests they were not unmindful of the interests of the Church.

On the 23rd of September, 1843, Commander Vidal purchased from George Durand, Lot 14, north of the London Road (one acre)—now the property of Mrs. F. W. Kittermaster—erected thereon at his own expense an Anglican Church, named it St. Paul's, and deeded this property to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron.

On the 10th of June, 1847, George Durand, whose wife was a Roman Catholic, deeded to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Toronto, two acres of land on the north-east corner of London Road and Christina Streets, for Church purposes.

To Malcolm Cameron, both the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches in Sarnia are indebted for early Church sites.

To Miss Christina Cameron, daughter of the Hon. Malcolm Cameron, St. Andrew's is also indebted for the land which forms the driveway into the Church grounds from Front Street, on the north side of the present Sabbath School building. It is interesting to note that Miss Cameron's gift stands so long as St. Andrew's remains an edifice for the public worship of God, according to the doctrines, discipline and modes of worship of the Presbyterian Church. Miss Cameron's deed of gift is dated 9th of June, 1880.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

In 1841 the Presbyterians in Sarnia Village and Township decided to erect an edifice in Port Sarnia, as the village was then designated, in which to worship God "according to the doctrine, discipline, and modes of worship of the Church of Scotland."

This resolve spoke eloquently for their hardihood of faith.



THE FIRST ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH
Erected 1841

The Second St. Andrew's Church can be seen rising behind it.

Numerically few, financially weak, without a settled minister, or the prospects of an early settlement, these settlers determined to build not only for the present but for the future. Timber was abundant enough, but this church must be a brick, not a frame structure. Hence the phrase "The Brick Church" found in some of the early records. As many of the Presbyterian families in the village and township had come originally from the townships of

THE FIRST ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

Lanark and Dalhousie their new church was modelled after the old stone church of the Village of Lanark. Its seating capacity was two hundred.

The church site was donated by Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Cameron, both loyal Presbyterians, and is described as part of Lot Letter Q on the west side of Christina Street. For the benefit of the casual reader we might state that this church site comprised *the lawn in front of the present St. Andrew's Church*, from the northern boundary of the said lawn southward to the line of the south wall of the church. The lot was slightly irregular in form. It had a frontage upon Christina Street of 70 feet. It was 52 feet deep at the northern, and 33 feet deep at the southern extremity. The back or west line was 64 feet.

The Church structure, built of red brick from the brick-yard of Holbrook and Western, situated at the north west corner of Lochiel and Vidal Streets, stood nearly parallel to Christina Street, with its southeastern corner almost touching the street line. We say nearly parallel to Christina Street. It really angled slightly in a northwesterly direction.

The Church tower, plain and square, was at the southern extremity of the building. Here was the main entrance, and the steps were of stone. In the tower hung a bell whose function was to summon the worshippers to the church services, and upon occasions to act as a fire alarm. A wooden picket-fence separated the church from Christina Street. The wooden porch shown in the accompanying illustration was erected in the autumn of 1862, the original tower porch having been utilized to increase the seating capacity of the church.

The following extracts from the diary of Commander Richard Emeric Vidal, R.N., (grandfather of Mrs. T. W. Nisbet of Sarnia) have a value that cannot be over estimated.

"9th August, 1841.—Light showers, then fine. Attended the laying of the foundation stone of the new kirk to be called St. Andrew's."

"14th November, 1841.—Blowing very hard, cloudy with squally appearance. Took the children to the opening of the new kirk."

It would be interesting to know who laid the foundation stone, and who officiated at the opening of "the new kirk."

We are indebted to the courtesy of Mrs. T. W. Nisbet, a life-long member of St. Andrew's, for much valuable information regarding this first church, and particularly to an article written by this lady for "*The Presbyterian*" some years ago, giving some impressions of the interior of the building as viewed through the eyes of her childhood memories. We have permission to reproduce the following:

"It was a plain, old, red brick church with bare, ugly walls, the white-washed monotony of which was relieved by sundry cracks

THE FIRST ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

in the plaster, and by a row of staring square windows, with a great many little panes of glass. The pews were bare and hard, and there were neither cushions nor carpets. Each pew had a door at the end and each was provided with a long wooden stool. Two long rows of stove pipes, emerging from wood stoves standing at the south end of the building, ran the full length of the church, and disappeared into the chimney at the north end. Bright tin pails were attached to the stove pipe joints to catch the drip from the wood smoke.

"The pulpit, high and dark, stood at the north end of the church. It was adorned with a red cushion and red fringes. Below the pulpit was the precentor's desk. It was lined with red cloth.

"The collection was taken up by thrusting a long stick into the pew. At the end of this stick a neat box was fastened into which the pennies were dropped." This was the old fashioned "ladle" still to be seen in remote rural parishes in Scotland. The change from the "ladle" to the "plate" was effected at an annual meeting of the congregation held on the 20th day of January, 1868. At this meeting it was strongly emphasized that all who could afford it should place silver, and not copper, on the "plate."

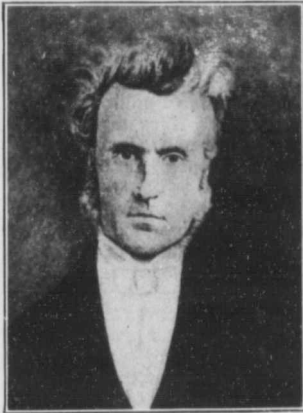
Another correspondent adds the following: "Little tin sconces were placed at regular intervals among the pews to hold candles for Sabbath evening and week night services. When the lights grew dim the sexton would go around with a pair of snuffers, and it created much covert amusement among the young whenever he extinguished, instead of snuffing, the candle."

For nearly twenty-seven years (1841-1868) the parishioners of St. Andrew's met within this church to worship God and to deliberate upon the best methods of carrying on the work of the congregation. Meetings, sometimes harmonious, sometimes with sharp divisions of opinion, were held there. There were many strong minded men in St. Andrew's in these early days, men who did not always see eye to eye. It was within this church that David Gray, Sr., and Francis O. Laird led the congregational services of praise, and the Revs. Wm. Macalister and David Walker proclaimed the Evangel of Jesus Christ. And it was there on the 25th day of April, 1866, that the ordination and induction services of the late Rev. John Thompson, D.D., took place, during whose pastorate a new St. Andrew's was built, and afterwards enlarged, and who for thirty-seven years lead a loyal congregation in the "Way of Righteousness" and showed ~~them~~ the beauty thereof. When the second St. Andrew's church was opened on the 25th day of October, 1868, the first church building having served its day, had ceased to be.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST MINISTER

Nearly ten months elapsed betwixt the opening of the first St. Andrew's, and the coming of its first minister in the person of Rev. Wm. Macalister, previously of New Lanark and Dalhousie, in the County of Lanark. We are again under obligations to Commander R. E. Vidal's invaluable diary for the precise dates of Mr. Macalister's coming and induction.



REV. WM. MACALISTER
1842-1853

"25th September, 1842. — A very fine day. All hands to the kirk. The new minister Mr. Macalister preached." The text and subject of this first discourse are, alas, unrecorded. But after the ancient fashion of the Scottish kirk, Mr. Macalister "preached himself into his new charge."

"2nd November, 1842—(Wednesday)—All hands at church to see Mr. Macalister inducted."

Mr. Macalister made a real sacrifice when he consented to come to Sarnia. From a comparatively well organized parish, he came to one where the organizing was still to do. He had a wife and four children to support, and he could not expect, and did not receive, for several years in his new charge, a salary equivalent to the one he received at New Lanark and Dalhousie. And pioneering, particu-

larly in a missionary capacity, is both physically and mentally trying. When Mr. Macalister left this charge after eleven years of faithful ministry, his health was permanently undermined.

The truth is, he heard a "Macedonian appeal" to come to Sarnia, and could do no other than obey. Several of his old Lanark parishioners had moved westward and settled in the townships of Sarnia and Plympton. Their solicitations, that he would come and minister to them, touched both his heart and his sense of duty. Mr. Malcolm

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Cameron added his own persuasive arguments and appeals. He came believing it to be his duty to come.

Presbyterianism in Lambton County owes much to the Rev. Wm. Macalister. He had the Celtic temperament, and loved a roving commission. He it was who initiated Presbyterian services where now the following congregations exist: Burns Church, Moore Line, Camlachie, Mandaumin and South Plympton. At Sarnia and Bear Creek he consolidated what others had begun. It would be a pity if the memory of this man should disappear entirely from the place where his greatest work was done.

The following brief sketch is penned in honor of one whom the late Professor Gregg of Knox College designated as "a singularly earnest minister, and an impressive preacher of the Gospel of Christ."

The Rev. Wm. Macalister was born at Glasgow, Scotland, in 1803, and received his education in the schools and university of that city. His father was an elder in Anderstone Parish Church, Glasgow. From his youth Mr. Macalister's mind

A sketch of was seriously disposed toward serious things.
Mr. Macalister

Graduating from the Church of Scotland, Divinity Hall, Glasgow, in 1829, the young probationer determined to seek a field of labor beyond the seas. He made application for a charge in Demarara, British Guiana. This application was apparently shelved by the Colonial Society.

In September, 1829, he approached the Rev. Dr. Burns, then minister of St. George's Parish Church, Paisley, and afterwards of Knox Church, Toronto, regarding ministerial opportunities in Canada. Dr. Burns was at that time secretary of the Glasgow Colonial Society, an organization within the Established Church of Scotland founded for the purpose of supplying needy congregations in Canada with ministers from the Church of Scotland. Among other testimonials he produced the following from his minister, the Rev. D. Macfarlane:

"I know Mr. Macalister to be decidedly pious, and sincerely devoted to the glory of God. He is firm yet prudent, of kind and conciliatory manners, humble in his deportment, and disposed to prefer others. He has been accustomed for years to communicate religious instruction in Sabbath Schools, at the sick bed, and in private houses as a city missionary, and on board various steam vessels as a chaplain. In all of these circumstances and situations he has created impressions of personal worth which will not soon be erased."

Dr. Burns took kindly to the young probationer, and at first desired to send him as a travelling missionary to Nova Scotia. Other counsels prevailed, and having been ordained by the Presbytery of Skye, he was designated to the parish of New Lanark and Dalhousie, Lanark County, Upper Canada. The designation service

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was held in the Tron Church, Glasgow, on the evening of the 14th of October, 1830. The Colonial Society provided his outfit and passage money to Canada, presented him with \$50.00 for the purchase of books, etc., and guaranteed him \$350.00 per annum for three years. His Canadian parish guaranteed about \$150.00 per annum for the same period of time. During his first three years in Canada Mr. Macalister received about \$500.00 per annum—an excellent salary in those days. We are inclined to believe that part of the congregational contribution to salary was in produce, not in cash. At the end of three years a dissolution of the pastoral tie was in order, if either minister or congregation were dissatisfied.

Mr. Macalister arrived in New Lanark in January, 1831, and four months later sent in his first report to the Glasgow Colonial Society. He wrote quite frankly regarding both parish and parishioners:

“Canadian homes are overheated, and I have been suffering from severe colds in consequence. The roads, or what are called roads, are shocking, especially in the spring and autumn months. My parish is practically two townships, New Lanark and Dalhousie, each about ten miles square. The land in places is not the best, but the settlers, mostly of Scottish birth, are industrious and very intelligent.”

He complains however of moral conditions, due to the absence for some years of church opportunities and ordinances. Worldliness, drunkenness, loose morals, Sabbath desecration and general indifference to religion are all too common in some sections.

Mr. Macalister labored in this field for eleven years, 1831-1842. In September, 1842, he removed to Lambton County to become the organizer and first minister of the congregation of “Port Sarnia (St. Andrew’s) and Plympton.” Here for another eleven years, 1842-1853, he “spread himself thin” over the townships of Sarnia, Plympton and Moore. Had he not done so, many Presbyterian congregations now flourishing in these townships might have passed into other communions.

On the 11th of May, 1853, Mr. Macalister resigned the pastoral charge of Port Sarnia and Plympton and accepted a call to Metis, P. Q. He labored there as a Presbyterian minister for eight years, 1853-1861.

He was now 53 years of age, and not so much old, as aged. Removing from Metis he made his home for some months in Cobourg, presenting his Presbyterial certificate of good standing to the Presbytery of Cobourg on the 24th of September, 1861. In March, 1862, he apparently desired the Presbytery of Montreal to send him back to Metis as a missionary. This the Presbytery of Montreal declined to do. Deeply exercised in spirit, Mr. Macalister withdrew from the Presbyterian Church and united himself with

THE FIRST MINISTER

the Congregational Church at Cobourg in April, or May, 1862. On the 4th of August of the same year he removed to Metis and began the organization of a Congregational Church in that place. Several of the elders, deacons and members of the Presbyterian Church in Metis followed him into the new organization. But they did so because of the man, not because of the ecclesiastical name.

The Presbytery of Cobourg marked his defection in somewhat gentle terms: "Sympathizing with Mr. Macalister's infirmity, and remembering the earnest and devoted way in which he performed his duties in times of health, the Presbytery resolves simply to give effect to his withdrawal from the communion of the church, and declares him no longer a minister of the Canada Presbyterian Church."

With increasing feebleness of body, but anxious to die in harness, Mr. Macalister labored among his little flock in Metis from the 4th of August, 1862, until the 2nd of December, 1866. Then the end came, and the worn out frame was laid to rest in Metis Protestant cemetery with the following inscription:

REV. WM. MACALISTER
DIED
ON SABBATH, DECEMBER 2ND, 1866.
AGED 63 YEARS.

It is very pleasant to read the following extract from the Session records of Metis Presbyterian Church under date of 3rd of December, 1866:

"The Rev. Wm. Macalister, formerly pastor of this congregation, having departed this life yesterday, it was unanimously agreed to offer the surviving relatives, as a tribute of respect to his memory, the use of the church on the day of his funeral." After his death the little Congregational body he had gathered together united with the Methodist Church.

The portrait of Mr. Macalister looks down from the vestry wall of St. Andrew's Church, Sarnia. It is the portrait of a man of medium height, and spare angular frame. The features are sharp, somewhat austere, but not unkindly. "The burden of the mystery" rests upon the face. The forehead is broad and high, suggesting good mental powers, and we understand upon good authority that he was a close and earnest student. The face is Highland, not Lowland, with that distinctive air of authority so noticeable in the clerical portraits of half a century ago.

Mr. Macalister magnified his office. He loved to preach, and was absolutely fearless and uncompromising in his conceptions of right and wrong. Many, both of his own and other congrega-

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tions, knew this to their cost. His name does not appear very often in the records of Presbytery. I think he was more at home in the pulpit than in the church courts, in the woods than amid the clamor of ecclesiastical debate.

The circle of those who remember the man and his ministry is now a very narrow one. But it is wide enough to testify that Wm. Macalister was a godly man, and a power for righteousness among the early settlers of Lambton County.

“And having served his own generation, he fell on sleep.”

CHAPTER IV.

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

On the 15th of October, 1843, nearly one year after his induction into St. Andrew's, Mr. Macalister, by permission of the Presbytery of Hamilton, organized his new parish under the ecclesiastical designation of the "Port Sarnia and Plympton" congregation. The Sabbath services were to be held in Sarnia, and in Errol, a small village on the Plympton shore of Lake Huron, about 14 miles northeast of Sarnia. Sarnia, *i. e.*, St. Andrew's, was to receive two-thirds of the Sabbath supply, and provide two-thirds of the stipend. The remaining one-third of the Sabbath supply and stipend went to the Plympton settlers worshipping at Errol. Every third Sabbath Mr. Macalister preached once at Errol; on the other Sabbaths he preached forenoon and afternoon in St. Andrew's, Sarnia. There was no manse specified and, naturally enough, no holidays. The stipend was £80 per annum, and was paid partly in cash, and partly in produce.

The village of Errol has now disappeared from the map of Lambton County, but in the early forties it competed with Sarnia for county honors. The only church building in the village was a log structure capable of seating about thirty-five persons, and situated on Lot 14, West Dalrymple Street. All denominations were free to use this building. Here Mr. Macalister preached his first sermon to the Plympton settlers in October, 1842, and here, every third Sabbath, he continued to hold services until the opening of the new Plympton Presbyterian Church, two miles east of Errol, in 1846.

The Bear Creek settlement was admitted into the organization as an adjunct for pastoral work. No definite pecuniary obligation was laid upon the Bear Creek members. They were to receive services on week days and were invited to contribute, in return for such services, what they felt able to give. Mr. Macalister had visited this settlement in December, 1842, at the invitation of Mr. John Coutts who resided on Lot 8, Concession 5, in the Township of Moore, and had held his first service in Moore at Mr. Coutts' home. The arrangement with Bear Creek regarding week day services continued until January, 1847, when Mr. Macalister was asked to give Bear Creek two Sabbath services during the year in addition to the week day services. This arrangement continued until the Presbytery of London practically separated Bear Creek from Sarnia by giving it the status of a mission field on the 11th of May, 1854.

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

We stated that no manse was provided. In Commander Vidal's diary we note the following:

"1st October, 1842—Rented my house to Mr. Macalister." The house referred to was the original of the present No. 273 Christina Street North, the home of Mrs. T. W. Nisbet. It *Mr. Macalister's* had been newly erected and Mr. Macalister was *homes.* its first occupant and tenant. On the 2nd of April, 1844, Mr. Macalister purchased from Mr. George Durand Lot 6 (one acre) on Christina Street West and north of the London Road. On this lot he built a small log house, the original of the Mackenzie home known as Springbank, in which he resided until the 8th of October, 1850, when he sold the property to Mr. David McCall, who in turn sold it on the 10th of June, 1857, to Mr. Archibald Young, the father of the late Mrs. Charles Mackenzie, Sr. From the 8th of August, 1850, until his resignation on the 11th of May, 1853, Mr. Macalister resided in a rented house on Front street, immediately north of the present Merrison Block.

The Session records of St. Andrew's, Sarnia, contain the statement in Mr. Macalister's bold handwriting that previous to the date of organization, services had been held on three successive days. The Session of St. Andrew's Church was then formally constituted. This Session consisted of: "The Rev. Wm. Macalister, an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland and member of *The Original* the Synod of Canada, and John Robson and George *Session.* Waddle, ordained elders of the Church of Scotland." The new congregation was therefore organized as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Established Church of Scotland. One year later, September, 1844, Mr. Macalister and his entire congregation, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. John Robson, severed connection with the Church of Scotland and the Synod of Canada, and united with the Free Church Synod of Canada. Mr. Robson, dissenting from this procedure, thereupon resigned his eldership, but retained his membership in St. Andrew's.

The first Communion Roll of the organized congregation was drawn up at a meeting of the Session held at the home of Mr. Robson, Point Edward, on the 10th of January, 1844. The following are the Charter members of the congregation of Port Sarnia, Plympton and Bear Creek. *The first* All of them have now passed away. The late *Communion Roll* Senator Alexander Vidal was, we believe, the last survivor of this first roll of members:
Port Sarnia—Dr. James Coleman, Elizabeth Dougan, Mrs. Wm. Macalister, Mrs. Cross, David Gray, Sr., Mrs. David Gray, Archibald Young, George Stevenson.

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

Sarnia Township—James Duncan, Mrs. Duncan, Andrew Hosie, John Miller, Mrs. Miller, Mrs. James Miller, Mrs. Robson, Dougald Ferguson, Joseph Motherwell, Alexander Vidal.

Plympton—John Davidson, Wm. Davidson, Mrs. Davidson, Wm. Hastie, Thos. Houston, John Thomas, Mrs. Thomas, John McKay, Mrs. McKay, James Lockhart, Robert Symington, Mrs. Symington, Mrs. Symington, Jr., Mrs. Robt. Walker, Mrs. Young, Martha Houston, Margaret Morrison, John Scott.

Moore—Robt. Watson, Mrs. Watson, John Ross, John Farquharson.

Bear Creek—John Coutts, Finlay Farquharson.

Forty-two in all.

At the same meeting of Session it was determined to ask the members of the congregation to elect in proper localities "men supposed to be qualified for the eldership." This

Appointment of New Elders. was done at an early date, and the following were ordained into the eldership at Errol on the 4th of June, 1844:

For Sarnia—Archibald Young.

For Plympton—Wm. Hastie and John McKay.

For Moore—John Coutts, Finlay Farquharson, Robt. Watson.

As both Mr. Waddle and Mr. Robson had now resigned their eldership, Mr. Archibald Young remaining through the whole of Mr. Macalister's pastorate the only elder representing St. Andrew's.

A Deacons' Court to supervise the financial, and in a broad sense the general congregational activities, was elected on the 25th and 26th of December, 1844. Until finally superseded by the

Board of Management, this organization was an active *The Deacons' Court.* and valuable factor in the life of the congregation. The first Deacons' Court consisted of the minister,

Session, and the following additional gentlemen:

For Sarnia—George Stevenson, James Duncan, Alexander Vidal.

For Plympton—Thos. Houston, Henry Young, John Davidson.

For Moore—John Farquharson.

The regular meetings of the Deacons' Court were held quarterly on the last Saturday of March, June, September and December. Mr. Alexander Vidal was elected the first secretary, and Mr. George Stevenson the first treasurer of the Court. This arrangement made these two gentlemen secretary and treasurer respectively of St. Andrew's Church.

The first action of the Deacon's Court was to systematize the pew rents in St. Andrew's. The regulations were as follows:

1.—Any family or person in possession of a certain pew or sitting in that church, and contributing annually to the Sustentation Fund of the church a sum not less than £1 or 5 shillings respectively, shall be entitled to certain possession of such pew or sitting.

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

2.—That the neglect or refusal of any contributor to pay the quarterly proportion of his annual subscription upon proper application being made by the collector, or members of this Court, or any of them, shall annul the claim of such person to any pew or sitting.

3.—That no contribution, however large, shall entitle the contributor to hold any more pews or sittings than his family really occupies.

A situation calling for judgment and tactfulness in the handling, came before the Deacons' Court on the 28th of June, 1845. The Plympton congregation had greatly outgrown its Errol place of worship. The necessity for a new church was apparent to all, but the site of the proposed church became a bone of contention. A section of the congregation desired to build at Errol, a rival section at a point two miles east of Errol on the Egremont Road. Both of the disputing parties secured a free site, and both raised a subscription list of about £52, to be applied for church building purposes,—if built where the subscribers desired. Mr. Isaac Buchanan of Toronto donated £50 to the proposed building. He wisely specified no particular site, although strongly urged to do so.

There was grave danger of a serious division in the congregation when the Deacons' Court took the matter in hand. After two months of watchful waiting, the Court called a meeting of the male members of the Plympton congregation at the Errol school house on the afternoon of the 19th of August, 1845. Messrs. Archibald Young and Alexander Vidal represented the Deacons' Court at this meeting. The whole matter was then fully discussed, a vote taken, and by a fair majority it was decided to build the church two miles east of Errol. The church was erected in 1846, giving place in 1874 to the present Presbyterian Church in Camlachie village.

The Deacons' Court asked St. Andrew's congregation to elect Trustees in January, 1846. From this Board of Trustees the present Board of Management traces its descent. When the Deacons' Court dissolved in 1854 the Trustees assumed the oversight of the secular affairs of the congregation. The first Trustees were Messrs. A. Blaikie, Alexander Vidal and Alexander Leys.

Before leaving the Deacons' Court, we would mention two items in connection with its work. The first was the effort made in 1849 to increase the minister's salary to \$500 per annum. Money was scarce, but the effort was successful.

The second item of interest was that at the annual meeting of St. Andrew's congregation held on the 12th of January, 1850, the Court spoke earnestly regarding the low spiritual condition of the congregation. The reasons given for this lamentable state of affairs were: (1) The lack of an efficient Session; (2) the frequent absence of the minister from the Sarnia section of the congregation,

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

and (3) the non-observance of the Lord's Supper for over one year. Mr. Macalister's attention was drawn to the above, but it was also moved and carried that a Tuesday evening prayer meeting be called "to implore the Divine forgiveness, and that we may the better discharge our duties to God, to ourselves, and to each other."

There was nothing done in Mr. Macalister's day to increase the numbers and thereby the efficiency of the Session. With the work he had to do no minister could have attended to the Sarnia portion of the charge any more faithfully than Mr. Macalister was doing. As regards the non-observance of the Lord's Supper, it must be remembered that in those days the Communion seasons lay entirely with the decision of the minister. He it was who judged the fitness of the congregation to receive the Lord's Supper. In some Scottish parishes there were cases where no Communion season was held for two, four, six and in one instance, fifteen years. If the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not observed in St. Andrew's for over one year, it was because the minister did not consider the congregation worthy to partake of the same. And Mr. Macalister was a serious man who approached sacred things in a most reverential manner.

Mr. James B. Brown of Alliance, Nebraska, an old resident of Sarnia Township, gives some very valuable information regarding Mr. Macalister as pastor and preacher:

"I cannot imagine," writes Mr. Brown, "how one man could have accomplished more than he did of pastoral work. Besides

Mr. Macalister as Sarnia he had the outstations of Errol, 14
Pastor and Preacher miles from Sarnia; the Anderson settle-
ment, one mile east of Wyoming; Cole's
school house, 5 miles from Sarnia; Dun-
lop's school house, one mile east of Mandaumin, and Bear Creek,
7 miles from Mooretown.

"The services at Anderson's, Cole's, Dunlop's and Bear Creek were all held on week days. At Dunlop's the service was held every third Monday afternoon. The school house was a small, neat building 14 ft x 17 ft. inside, built of round logs and chinked with moss.

"But his work was not simply preaching a sermon. He also did pastoral work, visiting the families in each locality. At such visitations he would gather the children around him, talk earnestly to them, question them, and then kneel down and pray with them. We were awe stricken in his presence and spoke in whispers.

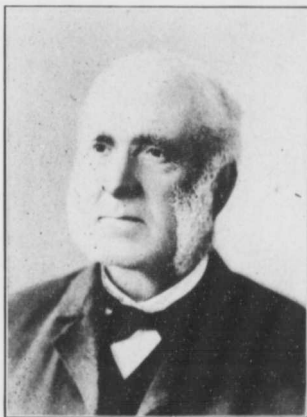
"Sabbath schools and prayer meetings were held in the various settlements, and there were always some families who led the way in religious things. The Sabbath Schools were usually Union Schools. Mr. George Waddle conducted a Sabbath School in Morrison's school house on the London Road, Messrs. Olver, Dunlop, David Nisbet and R. S. Chalmers taught in the Sabbath School at Dunlop's." During Mr. Macalister's pastorate the only Sabbath

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School in Sarnia was a Union Sabbath School. Among the St. Andrew's members who taught therein were Alexander Vidal, Henry Glass, John Robson, Robt. Steed and Peter Young. A copy of D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation," presented to Mr. Peter Young by the teachers of Port Sarnia Sabbath School in January, 1848, is in the possession of Mr. Charles Mackenzie, Jr. Regarding Mr. Macalister's preaching ability, Mr. Brown has this to say: "The people were plain, and somewhat old fashioned. They did not look for eloquence or oratorical display, and they did not receive it from Mr. Macalister. The plain, simple Gospel was what they desired and received. There never was any question as to where Mr. Macalister stood. I can remember, though but a boy, how persistently he taught the theology of his church. One sentence I have never forgotten—"Some people," he said, 'tell us that a person is saved partly by God's grace, and partly by their own will. As well tell me that a man is saved partly by the mill-stone around his neck, and partly by the hand that drags him from the waves.'"

The few who remember Mr. Macalister as he appeared in the pulpit of St. Andrew's tell us that his sermons occupied about one hour in delivery, and that he wore his Geneva gown. Mr. David Gray, Sr., led the congregational singing of the Psalms and Paraphrases from the precentor's desk, for love's sake.

If any further testimony is desired regarding Mr. Macalister's ministrations, the following from a letter written on the 14th of February, 1845, by a gentleman leaving the congregation should be sufficient: "For yourself, my dear sir, I entertain the highest respect. Your piety I am persuaded is of the purest and most fervent kind; from your public and private teaching I have received great benefit, and I have ever found you a sincere friend."



DAVID GRAY, SR.
The First Precentor, 1841-1861

Church discipline is becoming today either more lax, or more amiable. Occasionally grave cases demand serious action, but the spiritual surveillance practised by Sessions sixty years ago has become largely a thing of the past.

In Mr. Macalister's and Mr. Walker's day the Session worked overtime to keep the spiritual tone of the congregation up to concert

MR. MACALISTER'S PASTORATE, 1842-1853

pitch. Some of the cases that came before it would to-day be tried in the Civil Courts. The bulk of the "Session *Church Cases*," however, had to do with offences against the *Discipline* generally accepted standards of church membership.

Where drunkenness, profanity and Sabbath desecration were involved, the sentiment of sixty years ago and the sentiment of to-day would largely coincide. But there were other offences that make us pause. Dancing, particularly at public assemblies, was taboo. This rule bore hard upon several of Mr. Macalister's members both in town and country. A Bear Creek member was reproved for attending a "Burns' celebration" where there was dancing, singing and drinking. He professed deep contrition for having joined in the revelry to the extent of singing "Auld Lang Syne." A godly elder in a neighboring congregation was cautioned to abstain "from the very appearance of evil" because he attended a circus at Sarnia.

The above cases are interesting from the light they shed upon the religious attitude of the times toward the social side of life. There was doubtless a repression exercised that was not always wise, but the underlying idea was sound enough. There is, and must always be, a difference between the attitude of the spiritually minded and that of the worldling toward the things of life.

And there were cases that came before the Session calling for both tact and delicacy in the handling. So far as we can judge, the Session of St. Andrew's in the early days exercised its disciplinary powers with kindness, moderation, and in a Christian spirit. "It rejoiced not in iniquity, but rejoiced in the truth."

On the 11th of May, 1853, Mr. Macalister accepted a call to Metis Presbyterian Church, P.Q. He only revisited Sarnia once after that date—in the summer of 1862. While in Sarnia he was the guest of his friend and former elder, Mr. *The Passing of Archibald Young*. On that occasion he occupied *Mr. Macalister* the pulpit of the Methodist Church at an evening service. His text on that occasion is forgotten, but he read with deep feeling the first chapter of the Book of Revelation, making appropriate and striking remarks upon certain of the verses in the course of the reading.

On the 2nd of December, 1866, he passed from earth to God.

CHAPTER V.

A VACANCY AND A NEW MINISTER

The resignation of the Rev. Wm. Macalister on the 31st of May, 1853, was followed by a vacancy of nearly two years. During this vacancy several interesting changes took place.

The Deacons' Court dissolved and the Trustee Board assumed the oversight of the financial affairs of the congregation. As the records of this board from 1854 to 1857 have disappeared, much valuable detail is forever lost.

The Plympton congregation worshipping at Camlachie withdrew from its connection with St. Andrew's, and on the 31st of May, 1854, the Rev. Wm. Porterfield was inducted into the pastoral charge of Camlachie, McKay's Church, Mandaumin, and South Plympton, four stations in all.

The Bear Creek congregation likewise petitioned the Presbytery of London for recognition as a mission-field, under the care of the Presbytery. Their request was granted on the 11th of May, 1854. In 1856 the Rev. John Gauld, a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, was inducted into the pastoral charge of Bear Creek, Mooretown, and Corunna.

In the meantime St. Andrew's was endeavoring to fill its vacant pulpit. After hearing candidates for nearly fifteen months an informal meeting of the congregation was held on Saturday, the 9th of September, 1854. A test ballot was taken, but no unanimity of choice was manifested. On the 9th of November of the same year the Rev. David Walker, a minister of the Free Church of Scotland, newly arrived in Canada, preached in St. Andrew's by order of the Presbytery of London. Mr. Walker continued to supply the pulpit for some weeks. The result was a unanimous call. The call was accepted by Mr. Walker. The induction services were held in St. Andrew's church on the 14th of February, 1855. The Rev. Lachlan MacPherson of Williams, presided, and preached an appropriate sermon from Ephesians, 4th chapter, verses 11 to 13. The Rev. Wm. Porterfield of Camlachie suitably addressed the newly inducted minister and the congregation.

The Rev. David Walker was born at Crevy, Co. Down, Ireland, on the 1st of December, 1827. His father, Mr. Wm. Walker, was for forty years an active elder in the Original Secession (Anti-Burgher) church at Boardmills, County Down. His mother, a woman of strong mentality and fervent piety, dedicated her boy from his birth to the Christian ministry. Mr. Walker inherited his mother's mental and spiritual gifts and also her delicate constitution.

A VACANCY AND A NEW MINISTER

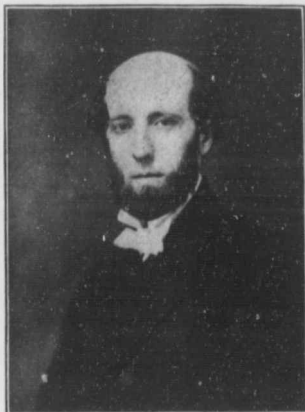
At the age of fourteen he made a public profession of faith in Christ, and definitely set his heart upon the ministry. His minister, the Rev. John Downs of Boardmills, strongly encouraged him in this desire.

After receiving his preliminary training in the Royal College, Belfast, Mr. Walker entered the theological college of the Original Secession Church in Edinburgh, at that time under the principalship of the Rev. Dr. McCrie of famous memory. From this seminary of sacred learning he graduated in 1848, at the age of 21. For two years he served his church as probationer, and on the 25th of July, 1850, he was ordained and inducted into the Original Secession congregation at Kirkwall, in the Island of Orkney.

In October, 1852, his congregation united with the Free Church of Scotland. As there was already a Free Church congregation in the town of Kirkwall, and neither place nor necessity for another of the same denomination, Mr. Walker brought about a union between his own and the sister congregation, and left Kirkwall. With him the cause was always paramount. His own personal interests took second place.

For some months he was content to act as assistant to the Rev. J. Watt of Elgin. His thoughts now began to turn to the possibilities of work in Canada. In the summer of 1854 he married the eldest daughter of the Rev. David Burn of Thurso, and soon afterwards sailed for Canada, landing at Quebec on the 14th of October of that year. Reporting himself at the offices of the Free Church in Canada, he was assigned to the Presbytery of London. On the 9th of November, 1854, he preached his first sermon in St. Andrew's Church, Sarnia, and at a meeting of the congregation held on 21st of December of the same year, it was moved by Andrew Hosie and seconded by John Cameron that "Mr. Walker be the choice of the congregation." This was unanimously agreed to, and he was inducted on the 14th of February, 1855.

Mr. Walker revisited the homeland in the summer of 1852, a trip undertaken for his health's sake, and financed by the congregation. The hopes entertained by him of better health proved all



REV. DAVID WALKER
1855-1864

A VACANCY AND A NEW MINISTER

too delusive, and on the 30th of April, 1864, he passed away in St. Andrew's manse, aged 36 years and 4 months.

Mr. Walker was a man of fine missionary and evangelistic spirit. As a man he was amiable and obliging, free from all austerity and sternness of manner. He was full of human kindness and while not combative he was clear in his thinking and firm in his opinions. As a minister his sermons showed great care in preparation. His week night addresses were also carefully prepared. Gentleness and goodness were his outstanding characteristics.

As a member of Presbytery he was greatly respected by his brethren, and filled the office of Clerk of London Presbytery for several years. Mr. Walker was at home in Presbytery and did his full share of work as a member of the Court. As a citizen of Sarnia his purity of heart and life secured for him the confidence and respect of the community. The business men of Sarnia, of all denominations, closed their places of business during the hour of his funeral.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

Mr. Walker's first task was to secure a much needed increase in the number of his Session. On Sabbath, the 18th of March, 1855, Mr. David Gray, Sr., and Mr. Francis Blaikie were ordained into the eldership of the church. These two gentlemen, together with Mr. Archibald Young, comprised the *Election of Elders.* Session during Mr. Walker's pastorate. A Baptismal register (now unfortunately lost) was procured and placed in Mr. Gray's charge, a York shilling being charged for each entry. Mr. Gray was also appointed Clerk of Session, and Mr. Young representative elder. Monthly meetings of Session were agreed upon.

Mr. Walker began his pastorate during the prosperous era in Canada that accompanied the Crimean war. It was during this era—19th of June, 1856—that the act incorporating the Town of Sarnia was assented to. His pastorate continued during the trying and depressing years that followed the closing of the war with Russia. But during his entire pastorate the church officials loyally upheld their minister's hands, and the congregation, even when financial conditions were most trying, contributed unselfishly to the support of religious ordinances. The ladies of the congregation, through the medium of bazaars, etc., did excellent work.

From 1856 to 1862 the financing of the new manse property occupied the attention of the congregation. At Mr. Walker's induction his stipend was fixed at \$600 per annum and a manse.

The congregation did not in 1855 possess a manse property, but in 1856 the Board of Trustees, consisting of Messrs. Francis Blaikie, Robt. Mackenzie, Alex.

St. Andrew's Manse Leys and A. Young, purchased from the Vidal estate a block of land comprising Lots 99, 100, 101, on Brock Street, east, and 100, 101 on College Avenue, west. Upon this property a manse was erected in 1857. The moneys expended upon the lots, buildings, etc., amounted to \$2,876. On the 11th of January, 1862, the manse property was practically free from debt. On the 17th of September, 1870, the entire manse property was sold to Mr. D. McMaster, Sarnia.

The Rev. David Walker was the father of the missionary spirit in St. Andrew's Church. He was aided in this by several of his congregat'ion to whom had been given the larger vision, but it was his own fine influence that made possible the forward movement. The first missionary meeting held in St. Andrew's took place

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

on the evening of the 12th of February, 1856. Mr. Alex. Vidal occupied the chair.

The Rev. Wm. McLaren of Amherstburg, afterwards Professor in Knox College, Toronto, gave an address on "Missions." He stressed particularly the national importance of "Home Missions." An offering of \$70 was made to the Home Mission funds of the church. From this date contributions to missions, both Home and Foreign, have appeared in the annual reports of the congregation. The average amount contributed to missions during Mr. Walker's pastorate was about \$85 per annum. A special contribution to Knox College of \$60 is recorded in 1861, and during the stress of the American Civil War, the Lancashire Relief Fund was not forgotten by the congregation.

The weekly prayer meeting was held at this time on Monday evening, and in the absence of gas or electric light, the old tallow candle served as illuminant. It would appear that occasionally the prayer meeting drew heavily upon the manse
The Prayer Meeting candle-box, for in the minutes of the Trustee Board under date of the 14th of February, 1853, the following quaint note occurs: "Mr. Leys was directed to send a box of candles to the Rev. David Walker, to repay him for those used during the last three years, at the Monday night prayer meeting."

The first caretaker or sexton of St. Andrew's church must remain forever nameless. In the minutes of the Deacons' Court of the 14th of January, 1846, this "Village Hampden" looms dimly upon the ecclesiastical horizon, engaged in a titanic
The Caretakers struggle for his rights. His reading of his contract limited his church duties to the opening and heating of the church building on Sabbaths only. The Deacons' Court pointed out very firmly that the true interpretation was "on all and every occasion whenever the building is required." We could have wished that this sexton's name had survived the erosive hand of time. We believe that he was a Scotchman by birth, that he fought out a well sustained argumentative battle—and died game.

The first caretaker whose name is recorded was Mr. James Welsh. His term of service is unrecorded. During Mr. Walker's pastorate the name of Mr. Aaron West appears for a short time. His term of office ended abruptly on the 17th of March, 1858, when Mr. Robert Laird was appointed "Beadle" at a salary of \$30 per annum. On the 31st of December, 1860, Mr. Henry Barnet became caretaker at a salary of \$40 per annum. Mr. Barnet combined with his other duties the collecting of the quarterly subscriptions of the church members for the maintenance of ordinances in St. Andrew's church.

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

For forty years Mr. Barnet, or "Harry," as he was affectionately designated by the old members of St. Andrew's, performed his duties with fidelity and conscientious thoroughness. From time to time he received well earned increases in salary, until the pressure of years and physical infirmity compelled a reluctantly accepted resignation on the 26th of March, 1900. Mr. Barnet's immediate successors in office were Messrs. Hugh Thompson and J. T. Duncan. On the 16th of June, 1901, Mr. Robert Galloway was appointed caretaker. Mr. Galloway has served the church in this capacity for over seventeen years.

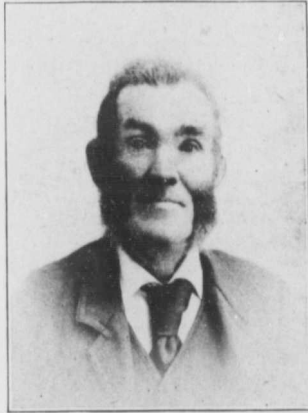
Until the coming of Mr. Walker the only Sabbath School in Sarnia was a Union School, called the Port Sarnia Sabbath School. During his pastorate a congregational Sabbath

School was organized in St. Andrew's Church. The date of organization was 1857, although the matter was discussed by the Session on the 4th of July, 1855. On the 13th of March, 1852, the teachers petitioned the Session to have the hour of meeting changed from forenoon to the afternoon. This was agreed to. It would appear that for some time Mr. Walker was himself superintendent of the school.

I. David Gray, Sr.—Mr. David Gray, elder, S. S. teacher, and Clerk of the Session, added yet this to the abundance of his labors, that from 1841 until 1861, he led the congregational psalmody, for love's sake. "A handsome man with bright dark eyes and curly hair, who sang as if he thoroughly enjoyed it," is the verdict of one who remembers him and his ministrations well. When after twenty years of service Mr. Gray resigned his precentorship, the regret and appreciation of the congregation was voiced in the following resolution:

Moved by Hope F. Mackenzie, seconded by Alex. Leys, and carried unanimously:

"That the thanks of the congregation are due, and are hereby tendered to Mr. Gray for his long and unrequited services in leading the singing of the church, and that he be



HENRY BARNET
Caretaker 1860-1900

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

presented with a Psalm Book, and a pair of gold spectacles as a slight memorial of his long services."

These articles were purchased in the City of Hamilton, and presented on the 28th of May, 1862.

The following inscription was placed upon the Psalm Book:

PRESENTED
TO
MR. DAVID GRAY
ALONG WITH A PAIR OF GOLD SPECTACLES
AND THANKS
BY

THE TRUSTEES OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE POST OF PRECENTOR, AFTER HAVING PERFORMED THE DUTIES GRATUITOUSLY, AND WITH MUCH SATISFACTION TO THE CONGREGATION DURING THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS OF ITS HISTORY.

2. Francis Ogstan Laird—Mr. Laird succeeded Mr. Gray as precentor in January, 1861. Coming from Crathie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, to Sarnia in 1854, he from the first displayed a deep interest in things musical. He was appointed a member of the first Musical Committee in St. Andrew's Church in January, 1859. The other members of the committee were Messrs. Geo. Leys, Wm. Stewart, and David Gray, Sr.

At the request of the Music Committee, Mr. Laird conducted a congregational singing class during the year 1860. In its report for the year the committee notes a marked improvement in the congregational singing as a result of the weekly practice. An attempt was also made through the class to interest the younger element in the congregation in music generally. Mr. Laird's good work in connection with the singing class made him the logical successor to Mr. Gray.

At the annual meeting of the congregation held on the 15th of January, 1864, it was agreed that Mr. Laird receive a salary of \$40 per annum, for his work as precentor. When he retired in December, 1877, his salary had reached the sum of \$100 per annum. Mr. Laird was a man of quiet and retiring disposition, and a genuine lover of music. He was the last of the precentors in St. Andrew's Church. After his resignation the congregational singing was led by a choir

Mr. Walker was essentially an unselfish man. He manifested this spirit by always endeavoring to found new preaching stations rather than to have the people drive miles to hear him. At as early a date as possible he would encourage these stations to become self-supporting charges, and aid them in finding pastors.

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

When what is now the Moore Line congregation withdrew from St. Andrew's to unite with Mandaumin in 1858, Mr. Walker aided this withdrawal in opposition to his own Session, although by so doing he was for the time being weakening his own congregation both numerically and financially. The withdrawal of Burns Church to unite with Bear Creek in March, 1864, had also his hearty support. And this policy towards his out-stations in Canada was simply the policy adopted by him in Kirkwall in 1852. He sought not his own, but others' good.

The Rev. David Walker was and ever will be remembered as a man gentle in speech and life, a man who would go far and suffer much for the sake of peace. And yet he was fated to have his righteous soul vexed with more annoying disturbances *The Great Trial* in his congregation than has been the lot of any minister of St. Andrew's Church, either before or since his time.

His most painful experience was in connection with the circumstances which culminated in "The Great Trial" of 1858.

The whole trouble originated in the political fervor and rancor that kept Western Ontario ablaze during the fifties. The Hon. Malcolm Cameron—father of Sarnia, which owed much to his public spirit—was then in the hey day of his fame, and had sat in the Legislative Assembly for the united counties of Kent and Lambton from 1848 to 1851. From 1851 to 1854 he sat for the Huron Division, and Mr. George Brown, much to Mr. Cameron's disgust, was elected for Kent and Lambton. In 1854 Mr. Cameron contested Lambton County against Mr. Brown, and was defeated. This was a sore blow to Mr. Cameron's pride, as up to that time he had imagined his influence in Lambton to be supreme. In 1857, Mr. Brown having withdrawn from Lambton, the political contest was between Mr. Cameron and Mr. Hope F. Mackenzie, and proved to be one of the most bitterly contested party battles ever waged in the riding. Party feeling ran—not wild—but mad. Hand bills dripping with abuse were circulated among the electorate, and endearing terms such as "miscreant," "liar," "scoundrel," etc., resounded from every platform. When the votes were counted Mr. Cameron was declared victor with a majority of 158.

Now, both Mr. Cameron and Mr. Mackenzie were members of St. Andrew's Church. Mr. Walker therefore took no part in the election and did not even vote. Unfortunately while the fever of the recent contest was still clinging to the electorate, reports came to his ears that Mr. Cameron had accused him of having shown political partizanship during the election. Mr. Cameron denied having made any such statement, but the reports persistently continued. Stung to the quick, Mr. Walker thereupon wrote an open letter to Mr. Cameron in the "Sarnia Observer," under date of the 28th of January, 1858, drawing Mr. Cameron's attention to these reports, and practically challenging that gentle-

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

man's veracity. Mr. Cameron replied in his characteristic fashion, and the relationship between himself and his minister became neither correct nor cordial. With the letters before us it is manifest enough that Mr. Walker had suffered great provocation, but it might have been wiser for him to have refrained from rushing into public print in view of the very strained feeling existing in the church since the election. The tension finally became so great that the Presbytery of London was asked to sit in St. Andrew's Church to hear charges and to give judgment.

The Presbytery met in Sarnia on the 3rd of February, 1858, and sat for three days. The air was full of charges and counter-charges, all indicating the hysterical condition of the congregational mind. Charges were laid against the Kirk Session, alleging its illegal constitution, lack of proper oversight, and partiality in the exercise of discipline, also by the Hon. Malcolm Cameron against the Rev. N. Paterson, for alleged political proselytizing, and against the Rev. David Walker, for certain offensive statements said to be contained in a letter published by Mr. Walker. Charges were also laid by various members of the congregation against each other for inconsistent conduct, injurious acts, and offensive speeches.

The Presbytery gave a patient hearing to all the charges. In the case of Mr. Paterson it was found that saving some injudiciousness in certain instances which he was advised to beware of in future, there was nothing in his conduct that called for censure; it being the undoubted privilege of ministers of the Gospel to exercise their civil rights as citizens of the realm if they think fit to do so. Several members of the Court spoke strongly on this point, asserting the right, and even the propriety, of ministers taking part in elections when the interests of religion are involved in the politics of the day.

In Mr. Walker's case it was found that he had credible evidence to justify his writing the letter under discussion, but its publication was to be regretted.

It was all too evident to the Presbytery that political controversy travelling beyond its proper bounds had much to do with the present dissensions. The congregation was therefore given some good counsel regarding moderation and charity in all things.

That this meeting of the Presbytery cleared the air, and restored sanity, is shown by the kindly relationship that existed ever afterwards between Mr. Walker and his congregation, and their great sorrow at his all too early death.

On Saturday morning, 30th of April, 1864, Mr. Walker passed away. His last service in St. Andrew's was held on the 20th of March, and had been conducted amid much physical weakness. His funeral took place on Tuesday, the 3rd of May, and was the largest up to that time ever seen in Sarnia. The Rev. Mr. Goodfellow held a

MR. WALKER'S PASTORATE, 1855-1864

short service at the manse, and the Rev. J. W. Chestnut conducted the services at the church. The body was borne to the cemetery by three relays of eight men each, selected from the membership of the congregation, the clergymen present and the Kirk Session. The coffin was lowered by relatives and members of Session.

On Sabbath, 8th of May, the Rev. Dr. Robert Irvine of Hamilton, who had known Mr. Walker from childhood, conducted services in St. Andrew's, preaching in the forenoon from John, 17th chapter, 24th verse; and in the evening from Philippians, 2nd chapter, 1st verse. The congregations were very large and the services both affecting and impressive.

In 1867 the congregation ordered a monument to be erected over the grave of their late pastor.

CHAPTER VII.

MORAL, SOCIAL AND PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES IN SARNIA

1841-1858

Temperance.—Seventy-five years ago the temperance question was a burning issue in Sarnia and adjacent townships. The strength of the movement may be estimated from the fact that at the annual meeting of the Total Abstinence Society of the Village of Sarnia and neighborhood held on the 15th of December, 1841, 178 members were reported. The officers elected for 1842 were: Malcolm Cameron, president; Rev. Mr. Scott and A. E. Young, vice-presidents, and H. B. Dowling, treasurer and librarian.

Much oratory characterized these meetings. The chief speakers were Malcolm Cameron, Alex. Vidal, Froome Talfourd, Frederick Davis, John Robson, Sr. and Jr., and last, though not least, Dougald Ferguson of Sarnia Township. Mr. Ferguson was an interesting figure on the platform, and would crack his fingers and thumb, and stamp his right foot when making a point. His remarks on the awful depravity of liquor selling on one occasion closed as follows: "Ladies and gentlemen, the man who would sell liquor would pick the pearly gates of Paradise with a rusty nail and steal the tinsel from the angels' wings." On another occasion, during the course of a temperance meeting, the statement was made that there were only two barrels of whisky in the village. A man had brought them in from London and had traded them off to a storekeeper for salt fish. A subscription was taken up, the two barrels were purchased, rolled along the streets to the temperance place of meeting and a few rousing speeches delivered over them. The barrel heads were then knocked off and the torch applied. The contents, alas, refused to burn. We draw the kindly curtains of obscurity over the scene.

The temperance soiree was a popular institution in those early days. In No. 1, Vol. I., of the "Lambton Shield," we note the following: "On New Year's evening (1st of January, 1852) a temperance soiree came off in Mr. Macalister's Church in this town. At the hour of meeting a large company both from town and country assembled to pass the evening in *rational* and *friendly* intercourse. The creature comforts were supplied in great abundance, and the evening was spent very agreeably. Several excellent speeches were delivered, and the intervals were filled up by several appropriate pieces from the choir. The entertainment was under the auspices of the Sons of Temperance and the Temperance Reformation Societies, and the proceeds after defraying expenses, to be added to the Charity

MORAL, SOCIAL AND PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES IN SARNIA

Fund in connection with these bodies." The lodge room of the Sons of Temperance was on Lochiel Street, immediately west of the present Central Baptist Church.

In the same number of the "Shield" another interesting item of news is recorded. The municipal elections of the township and Village of Sarnia had just taken place. The voting was continued for two days and a really vigorous contest had taken place. The results were:

Councillors (elected)—Messrs. Robert Syme, John Waddle, Archibald Young, Hope F. Mackenzie and George Stevenson.

License Inspectors (elected)—Messrs. Alexander Leys, John Ford and Charles Taylor.

Messrs. W. G. Harkness and Horace Hall, both tavern keepers, had been candidates for the office of License Inspectors, but had been defeated. The candidature of these gentlemen was either a Napoleonic stroke of genius, or the manifestation of a sad lack of humor.

Here is another item of some interest:

In 1853 the township council of Sarnia passed a by-law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquor in hotels and houses of entertainment within the township and village. The sale of liquor in shops does not appear to have come within the scope of the by-law. It was, however, necessary that the by-law be sustained at the municipal elections to be held in January, 1854. This action of the council may seem to-day to have been very inadequate and incomplete, but in 1853 it was doubtless considered to have been a goodly step in advance.

The following is an account of the fate of the by-law: "A meeting of the prohibition voters of Sarnia met at James Smith's Temperance Hotel on the evening of the 16th of December, 1853. Mr. James Drake, tailor and clothier, Front Street, occupied the chair.

"The purpose of the meeting was the nomination of councillors and inspectors of houses of entertainment for the coming municipal elections, who would sustain the prohibitory by-law relating to the liquor traffic passed by the council of 1853.

"The following prohibition ticket was agreed upon:

For Councillors—T. G. Vidal, Archibald Young, Alex. Mackenzie.

For Inspectors—Alex. Leys, Hope F. Mackenzie, A. Symington.

"A meeting of the citizens of Sarnia was held at McEvoy's hotel on the 23rd of December, 1853, for the purpose of nominating candidates for the coming municipal elections. (This was apparently a meeting of the 'moderate' party.)

"The following ticket was agreed upon:

For Councillors—Henry Glass, George Stevenson, D. McCall.

For Inspectors—John Watson, Sr., W. B. Clark, Hugh Smith.

MORAL, SOCIAL AND PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES IN SARNIA

The municipal elections for township and village were held on Monday and Tuesday, January 2nd and 3rd, in the Grammar School, Sarnia. Mr. P. T. Poussette was returning officer.

The results were rather curious:

(1) The by-law for preventing the sale of liquor was sustained by a large majority—110 to 69.

(2) The "moderate" party councillors were elected, viz: Messrs. Glass, Stevenson, Carrick, McCall and Craig. The councillors of 1853 either did not run or were defeated.

(3) The prohibition inspectors were elected, viz: Messrs. J. B. Swart, Hope F. Mackenzie and Alex. Leys.

The by-law was upset on the 17th of August, 1854, on the ground that a majority of the total electorate, not a majority of the votes polled, was the meaning of the Act. The village and township thereupon went once more under license.

Before leaving the temperance question in Sarnia we might refer to the meeting of the friends of temperance and prohibition held in St. Andrew's Church on the evening of Monday, 22nd of April, 1879. A lecture on the "Scott Act and Prohibition" by the Hon. Vice-Chancellor Blake, was the feature of the evening. The chair was occupied by Mayor D. Mackenzie, and the Rev. John Thompson, minister of St. Andrew's, the Rev. Mr. Johnston and the Rev. Mr. Claris took part in the program.

The Bible Society appears to have existed in Sarnia at a comparatively early date. We note an annual meeting of the Society held on the 28th of February, 1855. Mr. Froome Talfourd was president, and Messrs. Hope F. Mackenzie and Daniel

The Bible Society. Mackenzie, secretary and treasurer respectively. The committee associated with these gentlemen consisted of Messrs. Archibald Young, F. Blaikie, Thos. Whiffen, Alex. Vidal, Alex. Leys, H. Glass, John Robson, A. McLagan, Jas. Flintoft and Robt. Steed.

The annual meetings were held in the various churches, and deep interest manifested.

This organization was apparently a debating society. Its object was manifestly the self improvement of its members, but as regards its origin or the day of its extinction we confess to honest ignorance. In the files of the "Sarnia Observer" of 1858, this society frequently occurs. The following is an illustration of the work done: "The subject of debate in the Dialectic Society on the 12th of February, 1858, is: "Had circumstances more to do with Napoleon's greatness than his own peculiar talents." Affirmative—W. Macalister, T. M. Hammond and J. Creighton; Negative—G. R. Wallace, Chas. Mackenzie and T. B. Pardee; R. S. Gurd, secretary.

In these days of World War, when so much enthusiastic

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liberality is being exhibited in the raising of moneys for Patriotic purposes throughout the Dominion, it is gratifying to note that Sarnia's record in this respect is one in which her citizens have every reason to be proud. The result of the recent "War-Chest" campaign conducted in Sarnia in June, 1918, during which the magnificent sum of \$115,000 was subscribed, has given the city an enviable place in the eyes of other cities of like size throughout Canada.

It may be of some interest to Sarnians to know that during the Crimean War a Patriotic Fund in aid of wounded British soldiers and of the dependents of those who were slain was launched in Sarnia during the early months of 1855. In the launching and prosecution of the canvass for the first Patriotic Fund several of the prominent members of St. Andrew's Church played a leading part.

"A meeting of the citizens of Sarnia was held in the Court House on the 12th of January, 1855. The meeting was well attended and a sprinkling of the fair sex was also present to give their countenance to the proceedings. Sheriff Flintoft called the meeting to order. Mr. Henry Glass was elected chairman, and Mr. Hope F. Mackenzie, secretary.

Moved by Alexander Mackenzie, seconded by David Buchanan, and carried:

"That we express our cordial sympathy with Great Britain and France in the present war with Russia, not only because we glory in our connection with the British Empire, but also because we believe the war to be just and necessary for the advance of the cause of freedom, and the ultimate peace of the world."

Moved by Malcolm Cameron, seconded by J. F. Davis, and carried:

"That we warmly and heartily recognize the claims of the widows and orphans of such of our gallant countrymen as have fallen or may yet fall in so just a cause, as well as those who may return maimed or helpless to their native land and may thus be rendered unable to provide for themselves or those dependent upon them, especially as we are not called upon to contribute of the members of our families in repelling the common foe."

Moved by Wm. P. Vidal, seconded by Archibald Young, and carried:

"That a local committee be at once formed to solicit subscriptions from all the inhabitants, with instructions to devote all their energies toward the collection of such a sum as shall convince everyone that although placed in a remote portion of

MORAL, SOCIAL AND PATRIOTIC ACTIVITIES IN SARNIA

Her Majesty's Dominions we are none the less desirous of sharing the burden as well as the glory of our beloved motherland."

The following to be a committee: Sheriff Flintoft, Judge Burritt, Malcolm Cameron, Arch. Young, Henry Glass, Chas. Taylor, G. W. Thomas, Jas. Porter, David Buchanan, James Drake, Alexander Vidal, Alfred Fisher, Wm. P. Vidal, Wm. Stokes, Alexander Mackenzie.

Moved by Alexander Vidal, seconded by Thos. Forsyth and carried:

"That this meeting rejoices to express its satisfaction at the alliance now existing between Great Britain and France, believing that such an alliance will result in the triumph of liberal principles throughout the world."

With very slight modifications these resolutions could be endorsed by a Sarnia audience to-day.

At the above meeting the sum of \$910 was immediately subscribed. In a few days this amount increased to \$1,250, or something over \$1.00 per head for Sarnia's then population. In the course of a month the subscription list had grown to \$1,360, and finally closed at \$2,565. This total included township grants.

This was considered, and doubtless was, a very generous subscription for the year 1855, and the editor of the "Sarnia Observer" in commenting upon it expresses the hope that London, Hamilton, and Toronto, with their larger populations, will manifest a proportionate liberality. Special mention was made of the subscription of Mr. David McCall, a one-armed Army pensioner, who although not wealthy had donated to the fund no less a sum than \$500. As the editor well expressed it, "Mr. McCall has done better than the best. He has given all he was able financially to Britain's cause—and an arm besides."

CHAPTER VIII.

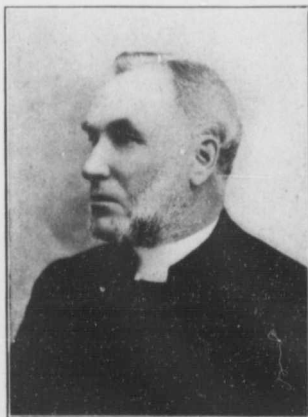
THE COMING OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON

Mr. Walker's death was followed by a long drawn out vacancy of almost eighteen months. During this period two attempts were made to call a minister, but in each instance the lack of unanimity made delay the more prudent course of procedure. Finally, on the suggestion of Mr. Hope Mackenzie, an invitation was extended to the Rev. John Thompson of Morrin College, Quebec, to preach before the vacant congregation. The result was that at a largely attended meeting held in St. Andrew's Church on the 7th of November, 1865, it was moved by Mr. A. Vidal, and seconded by Mr. Francis Blaikie, "That the Rev. John Thompson be the choice of the congregation as successor to the late Mr. Walker."

This motion was carried unanimously, the call was accepted by Mr. Thompson and he was ordained and inducted into the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's Church on the 25th of April, 1866, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

On the day of induction the church was well filled, many being present from Moore, Plympton and Sarnia townships. The Rev. George Cuthbertson conducted Divine worship and preached an appropriate sermon from Galatians vi.-14. The Rev. Mr. Chestnut presided, narrated the steps leading up to the call, and asked the customary questions. The Rev. Mr. Kemp of Windsor then led in the ordination prayer. The newly inducted minister was addressed by the Rev. Mr. King of Buxton, and the people by the Rev. Stephen Balmer of Detroit. At the close of a deeply impressive service the congregation gave their new minister a hearty welcome.

In the evening a soiree was held in the Town Hall by the ladies of the congregation. The handsomely decorated hall was



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1866-1903

THE COMING OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON

filled to overflowing, the repast was bountiful, and was served in excellent taste. Mr. A. Vidal occupied the chair.

After the tables were cleared, addresses were delivered by the clergymen present, and by Mr. J. F. Davis, Mayor of Sarnia. Mr. Kemp spoke on "British Institutions," Mr. Cuthbertson on "The ruling elder," Mr. Fletcher of Carlisle on "Denominational spirit," while Messrs. Smith, Armstrong, and McDermid discoursed eloquently on "The Ladies," the last named throwing in a bit of Gaelic. After a vote of thanks to the chairman, the meeting closed with the Doxology and the National Anthem.

The committee in charge of all arrangements in connection with the soiree was as follows: Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Mackenzie, Miss Leys, Mrs. Carmichael, Mrs. Chas. Mackenzie, Mrs. John Cameron, Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. A. Mackenzie, Mrs. Thomas, and Messrs. Robt. Mackenzie, Geo. Leys, A. Campbell, D. Gray, John Bell, F. O. Laird, and the Trustees.

The Rev. John Thompson was born at Norham, England, 31st of December, 1836, and came with his father to Canada at an early age. He was educated at the Quebec High School, and afterwards at Toronto University and Knox College. His college course was a distinguished one, and after being licensed by the Presbytery of Toronto, he was appointed to the Chair of Mathematics in Morrin College, Quebec. This position he held for three years, leaving Quebec to assume the pastorate of St. Andrew's, Sarnia, in 1866, which under his vigorous leadership grew and prospered.

In the midst of a busy pastorate he found time for various forms of service to the Church at large. For many years he was a valued member of some of the most important Church committees, and was a lecturer in the theological classes of Queen's College, Kingston. He also contributed to periodical literature and published one or two books.

Dr. Thompson was not unrecognized by the Church. When Manitoba College was founded in 1871, he was offered the Principalship. This he declined. In 1886 Knox College conferred upon him the degree of D.D.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we add to the above the following appreciation, penned by the Rev. W. G. Jordan, D.D., Professor of Old Testament Literature and Exegesis, in Queen's University, Kingston, and for many years a friend and co-presbyter of Dr. Thompson:

"With regard to Dr. Thompson, who was so long the faithful pastor of St. Andrew's congregation, it is my privilege to write a few words of pleasant reminiscence and kindly appreciation.

"During the years of my ministry in Strathroy I met him frequently and several times occupied his pulpit; on the thirtieth

THE COMING OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON

anniversary of his settlement I conducted the services, and when the end came I was summoned to take part in the funeral and to preach the memorial services on the following Sabbath.

"The congregations, the Presbyteries, and the higher courts of the church owe much to ministers of the class to which Dr. Thompson belonged; men of careful scholarship, sane judgment, and real consecration to high calling. Such men are not brilliant in the superficial sense, and not sensational in any sense, but they exert a powerful influence by their loyalty to truth and unswerving devotion to duty. Anyone looking at the portrait of Dr. Thompson would say at once, 'That is a thoughtful man, there is a noble face with something of the saint and mystic, but no suggestion of the fanatic.' He was interested in the works of the various Church courts, but you would not call him an 'ecclesiastic' in the unpleasant sense of that word; he gave wise and helpful lectures to Queen's students, but you would not take him for a professor; he was simply a Christian minister, a thoughtful preacher, and a kindly pastor. Originally a graduate of Knox College, he was in later years in close touch with Queen's, as a friend and admirer of Principal Grant, a man whom some regarded as dangerous on account of his impetuous energy and broad sympathies.

"It must be that in an interval extending over many years, even between men who have much in common, that differences will arise in private consultation and public debate, but I have no memory of anything rough and aggressive on his part, though there was at times a sternness which those who are not mere weaklings must occasionally display. He was patient with everything except pretentious ignorance and narrow bigotry. Judged by the standards which now prevail it might be said that he had not sufficient enthusiasm for social reform and spasmodic revivals. His idea was that the children of Christian parents, "The Lambs of the Fold," should be treated as belonging to Christ from the first, and should be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to take their proper place in the Christian community. Further, that the school and the church should be rich in intellectual elements, and emotional appeals. That may not comprehend everything, but it is a noble ideal when maintained with strong sincerity and reverent dignity; and it is a long way from the other extreme of shallowness, fussiness, and sensationalism.

"He was an 'orthodox' theologian in the best sense of the term, though there was rising in his later years a new tide of discussion and criticism. He did not feel that there was any need for fear or haste but he did recognize the demand for a re-examination of the old doctrines in the new light, being convinced that truths which had sustained countless generations of saints could be restated so as to meet the needs of the modern world. He had a quiet

THE COMING OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON

sense of humor, though he made no public display of it; he never aspired to be a popular orator, but he was a real teacher and a faithful pastor. It is to be hoped that the Presbyterian Church, while adapting itself to new needs, will continue to produce men with the same ideals of sober scholarship, true spiritual ministry, and kindly social service."

CHAPTER IX.

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON, D.D.

1866-1903

St. Andrew's Church was Dr. Thompson's first and only charge. For 37 years he lived the life of a Christian minister and a Christian gentleman in the midst of his congregation and before the citizens of Sarnia. The town of Sarnia more than tripled its population during his pastorate, and he saw the membership of his congregation increase in like proportion. Ninety three names were attached to his call; at his death there were 450 names upon the membership rolls of the church. The work of his predecessors had consisted in foundation laying, his work was that of consolidation and expansion.

It is of course impossible in this brief sketch to do justice either to the man or his work. A man like Mr. Francis Blaikie could have done this. All that we can do is to indicate some of the changes that were effected, as the congregation moved from the old standpoint to the new; the men who were associated with him in the Session and other church agencies, and somewhat of the expansion that took place during his ministry in the congregation itself. That this may be done with some degree of clearness we will study his pastorate under the following divisions:

I.—1866-1876.

II.—1877-1887.

III.—1888-1903.

I. 1866-1876—Mr. Thompson began his pastorate with an election of elders. The popular choice fell upon Messrs. Alex. Vidal, Daniel Mackenzie, James Barrie, James Palmer, and John Brebner. These gentlemen were ordained into the eldership of St. Andrew's Church on the 28th of October, 1866. For the purpose of supervision the parish was divided in 1867 into seven districts, one of these being Point Edward, at that time an out-station of St. Andrew's. In 1872 four elders were elected for Point Edward alone, viz: Messrs. James Palmer, Wm. Boyce, James Brown and Alex. Dingman. In 1873 the Rev. Alex. Burr was inducted as the first minister of that congregation.

On the 21st of July, 1868, it was decided to initiate standing during the singing and sitting during the prayers in public worship, and to have the Communion season at regular stated intervals. The last Sabbath of February, May, August and September in each

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON, D.D.

year was agreed upon. This order continued until 1904, when the change to the first Sabbath in March, June, September, and December was effected. In 1875 the evening hour of service was changed from 6.30 to 7 o'clock.

In 1867 Mr. John Brebner appears as superintendent of St. Andrew's Sabbath School. The Union Sabbath School was discontinued in 1865, and

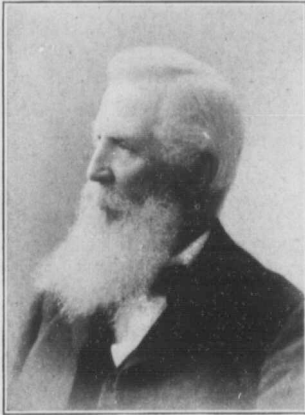
The Sabbath School we find in 1868 certain members of St.

Andrew's who had been teachers in the Union School in charge of classes in the Sabbath School of their own church. Among these are Mr. Alex. Vidal and Mr. John Robson. Mr. Vidal's work as a teacher of adult Bible classes was very successful.

Perhaps the most outstanding event during the first decade of Mr. Thompson's pastorate was the erection of the second

The New Church Previous to Mr. Walker's death the question

of a new church building had been freely discussed, but owing to the minister's uncertain health nothing had been done. With the advent of a new pastor the whole matter was revived, and carried forward to a successful conclusion. The



JOHN BREBNER

The First Recorded Sabbath School Superintendent

story of the erection of the new church is as follows:

At a special meeting of the congregation held in the old church on the evening of the 25th of February, 1867, the report of a special committee appointed to consider the question of the erection of a new church was taken up. All were agreed as to the necessity of the new edifice, but there was a difference of opinion as to the site. A majority of the committee was in favor of erecting the new building immediately behind the old one. This was opposed by a section of the congregation led by Mr. Archibald Young and Mr. Bryce, who favored building upon the manse property on Brock Street. Mr. Young's motion was voted down and it was decided to purchase lots behind the old church on Christina Street and build the new church thereon. As all this happened fifty years ago, and old strifes are, or should be, dead, it might not be amiss to say that Mr. Young's idea was the correct one. Had the new church been built where he desired, *i. e.*, where

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON, D.D.

the Hon. Mr. Hanna's residence now stands, it would, in the light of the present expansion of the city of Sarnia, have occupied a much more central situation than it does to-day.

A Building Committee of fifteen was then appointed to undertake the purchasing of the site, the procuring of plans, the collecting of funds, and the erecting of a church edifice. The following comprised the committee, with nine constituting a quorum: Daniel Mackenzie, chairman; Alex. Vidal, W. B. Clark, Robt. Mackenzie, James Barrie, George Leys, Francis Blaikie, John Cameron, David Gray, Sr., John Bell, Alex. Leys, Joseph Lowrie, Wm. Wanless, John Crawford, John Mackenzie.

The plans and specifications were prepared by Mr. James Anderson of Detroit. The accepted contracts for the erection of the church were as follows: Wm. Ireland, for mason and plaster work, \$5,700; R. H. Mackenzie, for carpenter work, \$5,100; Chas. Taylor, for painting, \$520; Wm. Patterson, for drainage and excavation, \$350; Joseph McCausland (Toronto) for stained glass, \$570; Robert Hopkins (Detroit) decorating ceiling, \$250.

The church bell was purchased with funds raised by special subscription at a cost of a little less than \$700. The fire alarm attached to the bell was paid for by the Town Council. Eight years later, 26th of October, 1876, this bell, having proven defective, the present church bell was installed.

The furnaces, heating and ventilating apparatus, chandeliers, lamps, etc., were supplied by Messrs. J. & C. Mackenzie; the carpets and matting by Mr. W. B. Clark, and the basement furniture by Messrs. R. & H. Mackenzie, all at wholesale rates.

The corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies in the north-east corner of the building by the Rev. J. J. A. Proudfoot of London, Moderator of Synod, on the 1st day of July, 1867, being the inauguration of the new Dominion of Canada which may God long preserve and defend. A silver trowel with an appropriate inscription was presented to the Rev. Dr. Proudfoot in commemoration of the occasion.



THE SECOND ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH
1863

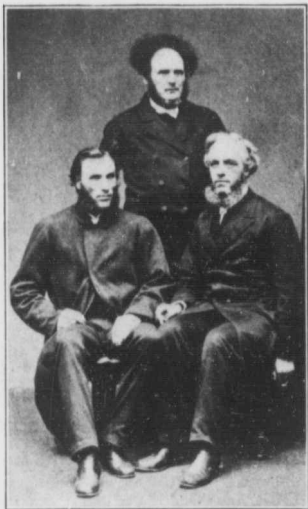
PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON, D.D.

On Sabbath, 25th of October, 1868, the new church was formally opened for public worship. The Rev. Dr. Ormiston of Hamilton, conducted the services in the morning and evening, and the Rev. A. F. Kemp of Windsor, in the afternoon. The attendance was very large, and the offerings were generous. The total expenditure upon the new edifice amounted to \$16,740, with about \$4,000 to be provided for. This was an excellent showing for a congregation of about 130 members. The chairman of the Building Committee concluded his report to the annual meeting of the congregation on March 1st, 1869,

in this wise: "And, finally, your committee in presenting this report of their completed work hope and pray that our children and children's children may here from Sabbath to Sabbath worship the God of their fathers in the beauty of holiness when the builders of this house of prayer shall have gone 'the way of all the earth.'" A noble sentiment nobly expressed.

On the 5th of August, 1870, an iron fence and gates were erected in front of the church property at a cost of \$500, and the present tower clock was installed in January, 1877.

The subscription lists of this period are still extant, and make interesting reading. There was apparently a real spirit of liberality abroad in the congregation. The lists contain the names of gentlemen belonging to other denominations. It is also interesting to note that a benefit concert in aid of the Building Fund was given



REV. DR. ORMISTON
REV. JOHN THOMPSON, REV. MR. KEMP

by Mr. David Kennedy, the Scottish vocalist, whose concert tours were the joy of all Scotchmen the wide world over, fifty years ago. Mr. Kennedy had been a precentor in Perth and Edinburgh before entering upon concert work, and on more than one occasion officiated in that capacity in St. Andrew's, Sarnia, when touring Western Ontario. One Sabbath after singing in St. Andrew's he was followed into the vestry by an old farmer who had driven in several miles to attend the service. The old gentleman addressed the Rev. Mr. Thompson as follows: "It's not very often ye see me in Sarnia, Mr. Thompson, but I've been in twice, nae less, this

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON, D.D.

week. I came in on Thursday to hear that man sing the songs o' Robbie Burns, and I'm in again the day to hear him sing the Psalms o' David, and on the whole (speaking with great deliberation as though not quite assured in his own mind) on the whole, I think that King David has rather the better o' Robbie Burns."

On the 17th of September, 1870, the original manse property was sold, and the proceeds applied to the church building fund. On the 8th of April, 1872, the Trustees purchased the Stevenson property on Vidal and Brock Streets, for manse purposes. This property is owned to-day by Dr. Wilkin-
The Manse Property son. At a special meeting of the congregation held on the 29th of January, 1874, it was decided to sell this property, and on the 6th of May of that year the Trustees offered and the Rev. John Thompson accepted, an additional \$200 of salary per annum, on the understanding that the congregation be no longer held liable for the providing of a manse. We may extract what comfort we please from the thought that this free and easy disposal of the manse property was not the unanimous wish of the congregation.

In 1874 an addition to the eldership was an admitted necessity. The following gentlemen were elected, and on Sabbath, July 5th, 1874, were ordained into the eldership, viz: Messrs. Alex. Craise, George Leys, Wm. Sinclair, and Samuel Carr. Mr. Craise was for five years, 1872-1877, superintendent of the Sabbath School, and Mrs. Craise during the same period conducted the Infant Department of the school.

On the 15th of June, 1875, the union was consummated of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, the Synod of the Maritime Provinces of British North
Church Union America, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, and the Canada Presbyterian Church. The united body assumed the name of "The Presbyterian Church in Canada." When the basis of union was voted upon by the Session of St. Andrew's, only one elder dissented. The congregation voted strongly in favor of the proposed union.

The Sarnia Auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in December, 1876. The first office-bearers were: Mrs. Vidal, president; Mrs. Thompson and
The W. F. M. S. Mrs. Scott, vice-presidents; Miss Cameron, secretary; Mrs. Jas. King, treasurer; committee—Mrs. Brebner, Mrs. Symington, Mrs. C. Mackenzie, Mrs. Nisbet, Mrs. D. Mackenzie, Mrs. G. S. McLean, Mrs. W. B. Clark, Miss McGregor.

The first meeting of the Society was held on the 3rd of January, 1877.

CHAPTER X.

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Continued)

II. 1877-1887—The second decade of Mr. Thompson's pastorate was one of continuous expansion. The progress from the old to the new in church methods, the beginnings of new organizations, the enlargement of the church buildings, all manifested a desire on the part of the congregation to meet the spiritual needs of the growing town of Sarnia. There remained one or two problems to be solved, the chief one being the Hymn and Organ question.

The use of hymns in the service of praise was for many years a bone of contention in the Presbyterian Church. The Hymn Book and the Organ agitation wrought "great confusion in *The Hymn* Israel" owing to an exaggerated idea of the importance *Question* of the question at issue.

The Hymn question was handled very cautiously by the Session of St. Andrew's. It was discussed at a meeting of Session in May, 1869, and while a majority of the elders were in favor of the use of hymns, the dissent of Mr. A. Young stayed proceedings for some years. It was wisely agreed to hasten slowly. In May, 1877, the question was again introduced, and a congregational meeting was called on the 27th of December of that year to discuss the matter. There was no discussion; and a vote being taken only three voted against the use of the hymns in public worship. It was then moved by Mr. Vidal and seconded by Mr. Peter Symington, that the "Free Church selection" be adopted by the congregation.

This selection was apparently the one in use in St. Andrew's until May, 1881, when it was superseded by the Presbyterian Hymnal, which was followed in October, 1897, by the Presbyterian Book of Praise. All of the above changes were accomplished without friction in the congregation.

At a meeting of Session on the 6th of March, 1883, it was moved by Mr. Geo. Leys, and seconded by Mr. Murray, "That the question of the introduction of an organ be brought up for discussion at the next annual meeting of the congregation.

The Organ This meeting was held on the 12th of April, 1883. It was moved by Mr. James Watson, seconded by Mr. David Gray, Jr., "That this meeting approve of instrumental music in the public worship of God." The motion was carried with only one dissenting vote. The first organ was installed in September, 1883, and the present instrument in April, 1909.

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Continued)

The Rev. David Walker was the father of the missionary movement in St. Andrew's. The Rev. John Thompson was the first to emphasize the desirability of having an organization within the congregation which should oversee the raising and allocation of the mission funds of the church. St. Andrew's first Missionary Association was organized on the 20th of November, 1878. The first members were: James King, president; David

The First Missionary Association

Gray, Jr., secretary; W. R. Gemmill, treasurer, and Messrs. David Gray, Sr., Francis Blaikie, Geo. Leys, Jas. Walker, G. S. McLean and James Brebner.

It must not, however, be forgotten that there had existed in the Sabbath School since 1875 an organization called "The Sabbath School Missionary Society." The object of the society was to collect funds for missionary purposes and to foster generally the missionary spirit in the school. The good work done in the Sabbath School was evidently having its effect upon the congregation in the organization of the Missionary Association of 1878.

The use of the weekly envelope had been adopted by the congregation in May, 1876, and it was recommended that the givings to missions be also contributed weekly. We do not know whether this association has had a continuous existence until the present time, but Mr. David Gray, who was secretary at its inception, is to-day treasurer of St. Andrew's Missionary Society.

Early in March, 1877, a concert was given in the church by a chorus consisting of members of the congregation and conducted by Mr. Samuel Osborne. The proceeds of this concert were applied to the Tower Clock Fund. After the concert it

The P.M.A. and The First Choir

was decided by the members of the chorus to continue the practise of choral music with Mr. James Watson as conductor and Mrs. Watson as pianist, the organization to be called "The Presbyterian Musical Association," or the "P. M. A.," for short.

The P. M. A. included the following ladies and gentlemen:
Sopranos—Mrs. D. N. Morrison, Miss Sarah Middleton, Miss Aggie



FRANCIS O. LAIRD
Precentor 1861-1877



THE P. M. A., ORGANIZED 1.77

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Continued)

Leys, Miss Lizzie Vidal, Miss Belle Sinclair, Miss Jessie Leys, Miss Mary Morrison, Miss Lizzie Foulds, Mrs. Geo. Williams, Miss Shillinglaw. *Altos*—Miss Maggie Leys, Miss Emma Lawson, Mrs. T. F. Towers, Miss Agnes Hossie. *Tenors*—Messrs. J. D. Stewart, Chas. Ellis, T. F. Towers, S. Osborne. *Bassos*—Messrs. Joseph Laird, J. B. Watson, John Leys, D. N. Morrison, Wm. Morrison, James Watson (Conductor), Wm. Vidal, Alex. McGlashan, T. G. Hodges.

During its existence this choral society gave several concerts, including the Oratorios "The Messiah," (Handel); and "Athalie," (Mendelssohn).

In December, 1877, Mr. F. O. Laird resigned the precentorship of St. Andrew's. A committee of Session appointed to secure a successor reported its inability to secure a suitable person for the position, but stated that it had spoken to Messrs. Watson and Osborne of the P. M. A. regarding the possibility of that organization taking charge of the musical services of the church. The matter was laid before the association, and through its secretary, Mr. John Leys, the P. M. A. agreed to undertake this duty, subject to the following conditions:

(1) That a place be made suitable for the choir in front of the pulpit.

(2) That a set of new Psalm books with words and music be provided; that the question of the introduction of the hymns into the Sabbath service be submitted to the congregation to be voted upon at as early a date as possible, and, if carried, that the choir be supplied with books containing words and music.

(3) That when practicable the Psalms and Hymns to be sung on Sabbaths should be given to the leader of the choir on the Friday preceding.

All of these conditions were agreed to by the Session, and the P. M. A., under the leadership of Mr. James Watson, became the first choir in St. Andrew's Church. This choir was seated immediately in front of the pulpit.

At an annual meeting of the congregation held on the 12th of April, 1883, the use of instrumental music in the church was sanctioned by a vote of the members of the church. Only one dissenting vote was recorded.

A committee was appointed to ascertain the cost of installing an organ, and in June, 1883, this committee was authorized to purchase the organ from Warren & Son. This was done at a total cost of \$1,818, and at the same time a new choir gallery was built behind the pulpit. In September, 1883, the organ was opened, and Mr. A. A. Clappe, bandmaster to the 27th Battalion Band, was appointed organist and choirmaster.

Mr. Clappe resigned his position in November, 1884, and until December, 1885, Mr. T. F. Towers conducted the choir, with Miss Nellie Leys as organist. In February, 1886, Mr. J. D. Martin was

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Continued)

appointed organist and choir-master, and was succeeded toward the end of the same year by Mr. W. Philp, who remained until 1893. When Mr. Philp resigned the organ was taken by Miss Kate Dalziel, with Mr. Towers as leader.

In 1894 Mr. Carl Koelling of Chicago, was organist for six months, and was succeeded by Mr. Julius McVicar as organist, and Mr. James Watson as choir-master. Mr. McVicar resigned in 1895 to become organist in a church in Detroit, and Miss Lizzie Watson was appointed organist.

In 1897 Mr. Watson gave up choir work and Mr. F. B. Fenwick became choir-master, Miss Watson remaining at the organ until 1899, when Miss Elma Chase was appointed organist, with Mr. Fenwick as choir-master. In 1902 Mr. Alfred Dunn was appointed choir-master. He was succeeded in 1906 by Mr. F. Corrison, who left Sarnia in 1907 to accept a position in British Columbia. In the meantime Miss Chase was succeeded in 1905 by Mrs. K. McGregor, as organist.

In 1897 Mr. W. E. C. Workman, the present organist and choir-master was appointed, and has ably filled the position for over eleven years. In 1909 the present organ was installed and the choir resumed its former place in front of the pulpit.

In the second decade of the Rev. Mr. Thompson's ministry it was found necessary to enlarge the church opened in 1868.

At a congregational meeting held in the church on the 26th of February, 1880, it was moved by Mr. Wm. Steed, seconded by Mr.

W. B. Clark, "That this meeting recognizes the necessity of additional church and Sabbath School accommodation, and that a committee consisting of Messrs. *Enlarging the Church* Robt. Mackenzie, J. R. Gemmill, John Murray, David McMaster, and T. W. Nisbet be appointed to prepare plans and recommendations and report."

Previous to the above meeting Mr. James King, a member of the congregation, had offered to the congregation the land owned by him in the rear of the church building for \$1,200, on condition that a Sabbath School building be erected thereon within a reasonable time. The committee appointed to consider plans for additional church accommodation recommended the purchase of Mr. King's property, and with the enlargement of the church to erect also a suitable Sabbath School building. Also that Mr. Hodges' plans be accepted. These plans provided for an additional 302 sittings in the church, and a Sabbath School building, at the estimated cost of \$10,300.

At a congregational meeting held on the 18th of March, 1880, the report of the committee was approved with a few additions, bringing the estimated cost to \$12,000. The following were appointed a Building Committee: Messrs. Francis Blaikie, Daniel

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Continued)

Mackenzie, T. W. Nisbet, George Leys, Chas. Mackenzie, James King, D. N. Morrison and Morrison Hall. Mr. Blaikie was appointed chairman of this committee.

The work of enlarging the church and the erection of the Sabbath School building was carried on during the year 1880, the congregation worshipping in the Town Hall, and the Sabbath School and prayer-meeting being held in the Y. M. C. A. rooms. This arrangement continued until the last Sabbath of December, 1880. For about three months thereafter services were held in the new Sabbath School building. On the 24th of April, 1881, the enlarged church was opened for public worship, the services being conducted by the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, D.D., of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto. It is very evident that the ladies of the congregation gave heroic assistance to the above undertaking. At the annual meeting on the 12th of April, 1883, it was moved by Mr. Robert Mackenzie, and seconded by Mr. F. Blaikie, "That the thanks of the congregation are eminently due and are hereby tendered to the ladies for their untiring and successful efforts to lighten the load of our indebtedness. They have not only assumed and handsomely discharged all accounts for furnishings of the church and school, and also for walks and fences, at a cost of about \$3,000, but have now surprised us by contributing \$500 to the Building Fund account."

On the 3rd of June, 1881, the following were ordained to the eldership: Messrs. John D. Murray, T. W. Nisbet, and Thomas Houston. In July of the same year a new division of elders' districts took place. Five districts, with two elders to each district, were agreed upon as being best suited for purposes of supervision.

The Mission Band was organized by Miss C. Cameron, and the first meeting was held on the 31st of October, 1883, twenty-two young ladies being present. Miss Cameron was chosen as the first president, and after her death, early in 1884, Miss Gemmill was appointed to that office. The first report of the Mission Band in 1884 shows the following list of officers: Miss Gemmill, president; Miss Gray, 1st vice-president; Miss Doak, 2nd vice-president; Miss Sinclair, secretary; Miss Minnie Mackenzie, treasurer.

The meetings were held on the first Wednesday of each month in the church parlor at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

In April, 1885, the Senate of Knox College, Toronto conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon the Rev. John Thompson of Sarnia, and the Rev. James Middlemiss of Elora. In both cases the honor had been well and worthily earned.

CHAPTER XI.

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Concluded)

On the 27th of November, 1884, Mr. T. W. Nisbet reported to the Session that after consultation with his Sabbath School teachers, he had taken action towards the establishment of a branch in the South Ward of the town. The Public School trustees had kindly granted the use of the Public School in that ward for Sabbath School purposes, and Mr. James Barrie had volunteered his services as Superintendent. This was a forward step preparatory to the establishment of a Mission Church in that section of the town, and the Session cordially supported Mr. Nisbet in his action.

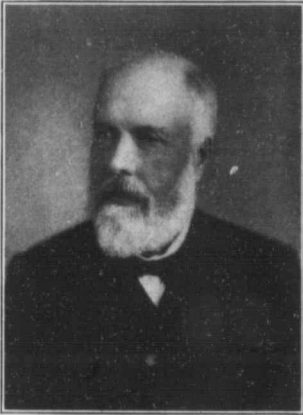
The Sabbath School was established, but after a lengthened trial it was decided that there was not a population in the district sufficiently large to warrant the continuance of the school.

With the construction of the St. Clair Tunnel and the consequent influx of population into the South Ward the Sabbath School question again came to the fore. On Sabbath, the 19th of January, 1889, the school was re-opened in the Public School building with an attendance of about 50.

The following were the officers and teachers at the re-opening: W. A. MacLean, superintendent; D. J. Symes, secretary-treasurer; Miss

Anna Dalziel, organist. The teachers were: Mr. Thos. Houston, and Misses Barrie, Dalziel, Watson, Ross, and Anderson. Mr. W. A. MacLean, who acted as superintendent, is now the minister of St. Giles Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg.

At the annual meeting of St. Andrew's congregation held on the 21st of January, 1889, it was moved by Mr. J. S. Symington, seconded by Mr. D. N. Morrison, "That Messrs. Jas. King, Thos Houston, J. C. Douglas, Chas. Mackenzie, T. F. Towers, and the



JAMES B. BARRIE
The First Sabbath School Superintendent of
Albert Street Mission

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Concluded)

mover, consider the feasibility of procuring a piece of ground in the South Ward, looking forward to the erection of a suitable edifice for Sabbath School purposes, and report to the next annual meeting. This committee reported on the 3rd of February, 1890, and recommended the purchase of a lot on the corner of Albert Street and 4th Line, for the sum of \$400. The Y. P. S. C. E. of St. Andrew's became responsible for this amount, the lot was purchased, a suitable building was erected and opened for public worship on Sabbath, the 9th of November, 1890, by the Rev. Alfred Gandier of Brampton, now Principal of Knox College. Mr. J. C. Douglas was appointed superintendent of the Albert Street Sabbath School, Mr. MacLean having left town, and it was decided that for a few months the elders of St. Andrew's should be responsible for conducting the forenoon services in the Mission Church, beginning on the 7th of December, 1890.

During the summer of 1891 Mr. D. Strachan of Queen's College, Kingston, labored in the Albert Street Mission, and was followed during the early months of 1892 by Mr. Edgar. Mr. Strachan resumed work in May, 1892, and remained all summer. The fruits of Mr. Strachan's labors were manifested in the organization of the Mission into a regular congregation in January, 1893, and the induction of the Rev. F. O. Nichol as the first settled pastor on the 22nd of March of that year. The new congregation was named "St. Paul's Presbyterian Church."

Mr. Nichol remained in St. Paul's until October, 1893, and was succeeded on the 14th of March, 1899, by the Rev. John Hall, M. A., the present popular minister of St. Paul's Church.

On Sabbath, 10th of May, 1891, the following were ordained into the eldership: Messrs. Thos. F. Towers, J. C. Douglas, Jas. King and George Shand. Messrs. J. B. Barrie and John Brebner, who had already been ordained, were inducted into the eldership. In November, 1893, it was decided to replace the metal tokens used at the Communion seasons with the modern Communion card, the same to come into effect at the Communion on the last Sabbath of February, 1894. The elders' districts, as at present constituted, were drawn up in 1894.

Two interesting events characterized the annual meeting of the congregation held on the 18th of January, 1894. The first was the presentation of a gold watch and chain to Mr. George Leys in appreciation of his many years gratuitous labors in the service of St. Andrew's Church. The presentation was made by Mr. Jas. King in the name of the congregation.

The second interesting event was the reading of a brief history of the church by Mr. Francis Blaikie. Mr. Blaikie was cordially thanked for his labor and this semi-centennial record of the con-

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Concluded)

gregation's life was ordered to be embodied in the church report of the year.

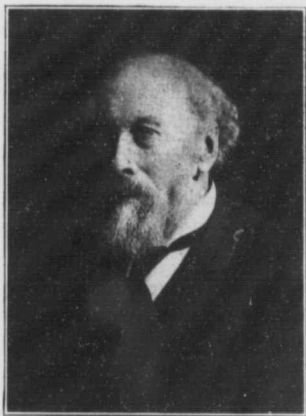
A thorough canvass of the congregation in the interests of the Century Fund was made in 1900. Subscriptions to the amount of \$4,209 were received, of which the sum of \$2,163 was *The Century* applied to the payment of the church mortgage debt. *Fund*

Special services were held on the last Sabbath of the Nineteenth Century by the Rev. W. J. Clark of First Presbyterian Church, London.

On the Monday evening following a meeting of the congregation was held in the church. A. MacLean, M.D., occupied the

chair. Addresses were delivered by Francis Blaikie, the Hon. A. Vidal, Mr. R. I. Towers and the Rev. Dr. Thompson. Suitable music was rendered by the choir. An adjournment to the school room took place about 10 o'clock where refreshments were served by the ladies and a very pleasant social hour was spent. A particularly pleasing feature of this part of the proceedings was a presentation to Mr. Francis Blaikie, who had served for 35 years as Session Clerk, and to Mr. H. Barnet, who had for 40 years acted as caretaker of St. Andrew's Church.

Shortly before the Nineteenth Century drew to a close all present returned to the church and greeted the advent of the new century in silent prayer to Him who from everlasting to everlasting remaineth God.



MR. FRANCIS BLAIKIE
Elder, 1855-1904

On Sabbath, 13th of November, 1898, Messrs. John Cowan, John Mitchell, and Alex. Wark were ordained, and at the same time Messrs. Henry Ingram and J. Ross Geddes were *Increase in* inducted into the eldership of St. Andrew's Church. *The Session*

On the 30th of November, 1902, the following addition was made to the eldership: Messrs. Wm. A. Smart, D. N. Sinclair, Robert Wanless and Norman Parks. Mr. John B. Watson had also been elected to the eldership at this time, but considered it his duty to decline the honor conferred upon him.

One of the penalties attached to a lengthy pastorate is that the minister is fated to see the staunch and steady supporters of the early days of his ministry pass away, leaving gaps sometimes

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JOHN THOMPSON (Concluded)

difficult to bridge over. To Dr. Thompson there came something of this experience both in congregation and Presbytery. His own end came with great suddenness on the 12th of May, 1903, and was a profound shock to the congregation and to the community generally. He was buried in Lakeview Cemetery on Friday, 15th of May, 1903. The Rev. R. H. Warden, D.D., late Treasurer of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, conducted the services, assisted by the Rev. W. G. Jordan^{2d} of Strathroy. The places of business in town were closed during the hour of the funeral.

Charles Hamilton

On Friday evening, 11th of December, 1903, a tablet in honor of his memory was unveiled in St. Andrew's Church, when a touching and eloquent tribute to the dead pastor was delivered by the friend of his boyhood, Dr. A. MacLean, Sarnia.

The Rev. John Eadie of Point Edward was appointed Moderator of the vacant congregation. After a vacancy of almost one year the Rev. James S. Scott of St. Andrew's Church, Brantford, received a unanimous call, and was inducted on the 19th of February, 1904.

CHAPTER XII.

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JAMES SKINNER SCOTT, B.A., 1903-1904

The Rev. James S. Scott was inducted into St. Andrew's on the 19th of February, 1904, and died in St. Joseph's Hospital, London, Ontario, on the 11th of October, 1905, in his 38th year. He was only beginning his work in St. Andrew's when he was called to higher service.



REV. JAMES S. SCOTT, B.A.,
1904-1905

The following appreciation from his friend the Rev. A. J. MacGillivray, D.D., minister of Knox Church, Guelph, will be read with keen interest by all who were privileged to sit under Mr. Scott's ministry:

"My acquaintance with Mr. Scott began with our student days in Princeton Seminary in 1892, and continued until the day of his death. He came to Princeton after taking a distinguished course in Philosophy in Toronto University. His classmates all recognized that he was a student of great promise and more than ordinary ability. From Princeton he went to Manitoba College as Tutor, and after completing his course travelled extensively in Europe and Asia Minor. With the single exception of Spain he had visited every country in Europe. In the course of

his travels he met with many experiences, but there were two on which he loved to dwell. The first was a visit he paid to the late Count Leo Tolstoi at his home in Russia; the other, and most memorable, was the taking part with a few fellow travellers in an early morning prayer-meeting on Mt. Calvary.

*"Where the dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all."*

Returning to Canada in 1897, he accepted a call to Hespeler, where he is still affectionately remembered. A brief but successful

PASTORATE OF THE REV. JAMES SKINNER SCOTT, B.A.,

pastorate in St. Andrew's Church, Brantford, was followed by a very brief ministry in St. Andrew's, Sarnia.

"There were some outstanding features in this life 'cut off before its prime,' that are worthy of mention.

"Mr. Scott had a genius for friendship. To know him was to love him. He occupied a very special place in the thoughts and affections of his friends. In this respect he came nearer to the Henry Drummond type than any man it has been my privilege to know.

"He was an omnivorous reader of books, especially those dealing with Theology, Apologetics, and Psychology. Of many books in his valuable library he had made a careful synopsis as if preparing to pass an examination. Often did he confess to a growing distaste for works of fiction. Doubtless he suffered somewhat from lack of imagination, but this was well offset by the fervor with which he proclaimed his message of fact and reality. Had he been spared long enough to systematize his rare fund of knowledge, he would undoubtedly have been one of the greatest preachers of the church. His preaching was characterized by ripe scholarship, and evangelical fervor. He was a moral force in every community where he dwelt, and still lives in lives made better from having known him.

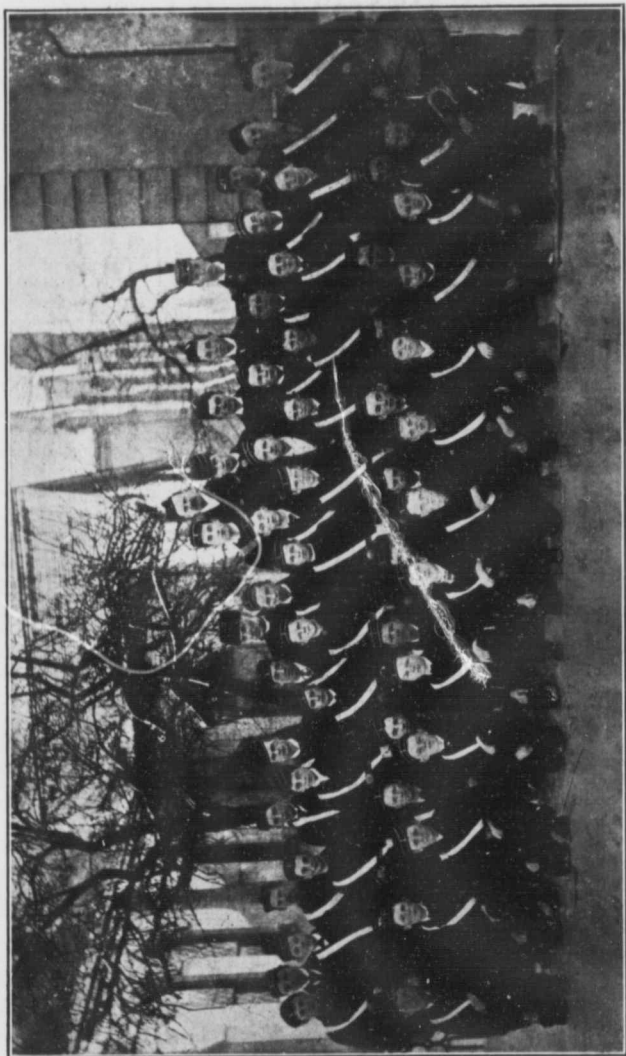
"In 1903 he was married in Redlands, California, to Miss Ethel Hart of Winnipeg, whose untimely death cast a shadow over the closing years of his life."

In 1906 a brass tablet to the memory of Mr. Scott was unveiled in St. Andrew's Church by the Rev. W. J. Clark of First Presbyterian Church, London, another warm friend of the deceased minister.

In May, 1904, Mr. Francis Blaikie passed away. He had been a member of Session for 49 years, and Clerk of Session for 36 years. Throughout a long life he had walked humbly

Mr. Blaikie's before God and uprightly before his fellow men.

Death all the congregational activities he had taken a large part, and was ever wise, sane, and tender both in speech and behaviour. All matters requiring delicacy, tact, and sane judgment in the handling, were instinctively placed in Mr. Blaikie's hands. His presence was a benediction to the aged and the ailing. Like Burnbrae, Francis Blaikie "was far ben."



THE FIRST SARNIA BOYS' BRIGADE

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PRESENT PASTORATE

Following the death of the Rev. James S. Scott, Mr. Eadie was again appointed Moderator, and on the 13th of April, 1906, the Rev. James J. Paterson of Knox Church, Regina, was inducted minister of St. Andrew's Church.

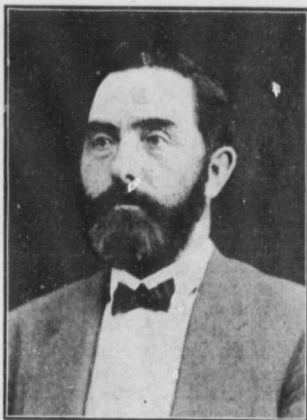
During the past twelve years there have been many changes in the personnel of the congregation. Old and valued members of Session like Messrs. Leys, Wark, Mitchell, Nisbet, have passed away, and many, very many, of the old and tried members of the church have also gone to their rest. St. Andrew's is rapidly becoming a new congregation.

Owing to death and removal it has been found necessary to renew the ranks of the Session twice since 1906. On the 25th of July, 1909, Messrs. David Milne, James Carr, Wm. A. Gemmill, and John McNab were ordained into the eldership of the congregation. On the 5th of December, 1915, Messrs. Henry Conn, David Rennie, Chester Belton, and W. E. Beresford were ordained, and Mr. James Lockhart was inducted into the eldership.

At the date of writing the Session is composed of Messrs. Carr, Ingram, Geddes, Cowan, McNab, Milne, Gemmill, Beresford, Rennie, Conn, Belton, Lockhart, Sinclair and Towers. Mr. Wm. Gemmill is Clerk of Session, Captain John McNab is Presbytery representative and Mr. T. F. Towers is senior elder.

The Board of Management comprises Messrs. J. A. Farquharson, chairman; Don. E. Leslie, secretary; J. B. Williams, treasurer; P. T. McGibbon, W. A. Watson, J. B. Watson, Judge A. E. Taylor, C. H. Belton, W. B. Clark.

The Trustees are: Messrs. Robt. Mackenzie, Wm. Williams, W. R. Gemmill, Malcolm Mackenzie and T. F. Towers.



MR. GEORGE LEYS

THE PRESENT PASTORATE

In November, 1907, the congregation decided to introduce the individual Communion cup. In voting upon the question only eighteen recorded their votes against the innovation.

In April, 1909, a new organ was installed at a cost of \$5,000.

In 1914 the Sabbath School building was enlarged at a cost of nearly \$3,000.

On the 20th of January, 1908, an Auxiliary of the Woman's Home Missionary Society was organized by Mrs. T. F. Towers, and at the request of the minister was named the "Thompson Auxiliary." The first officers of this organization were: *Missions* Honorary presidents, Mrs. Charles Mackenzie, Sr., Mrs. David Milne, Mrs. W. B. Clark, Sr.; president, Mrs. Jas. D. Stewart; 1st vice-president, Mrs. Andrew Lockhart; 2nd vice-president, Mrs. Robt. G. MacArthur; 3rd vice-president, Mrs. John Hetherington; secretary, Mrs. W. E. McKelvey; assistant secretary, Mrs. H. Unsworth; treasurer, Mrs. Wm. Williams; assistant treasurer, Mrs. Andrew Lockhart; "pioneer" secretary, Mrs. Sutherland Johnston.

In May, 1914, an amalgamation of the W. F. M. S. and the W. H. M. S. Auxiliaries took place. The united body was named the Women's Missionary Society. The first officers were: president, Mrs. J. J. Paterson; 1st vice-president, Mrs. John McGibbon; 2nd vice-president, Mrs. A. B. Telfer; 3rd vice-president, Mrs. (Dr.) Bell; 4th vice-president, Mrs. W. R. Gemmill; treasurer, Mrs. A. Lockhart; corresponding and recording secretary, Mrs. W. E. McKelvey; literature secretary, Mrs. F. Gutteridge; strangers' secretary, Mrs. (Dr.) MacLean; press secretary, Mrs. J. Galbraith; envelope secretary, Mrs. J. Hetherington; pianist, Mrs. James Watson.

In the autumn of 1912 Miss Margaret Brebner was designated to the Foreign Mission field at Mhow, Central India. The Rev. Dr. MacKay, Foreign Mission Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, assisted by the Rev. J. J. Paterson, conducted the designation service in St. Andrew's Church. Miss Jessie Brebner accompanied her sister to India, and St. Andrew's was the poorer by the loss of two earnest workers.

In August, 1914, the Great War broke the peace of the world. St. Andrew's sent out its quota of young men, some, alas, never to return. The ladies of the congregation have been second to none in their zeal for Red Cross and other forms of patriotic work.

At the present time the membership stands at 632, and last year the congregation raised for all purposes the sum of \$10,311.

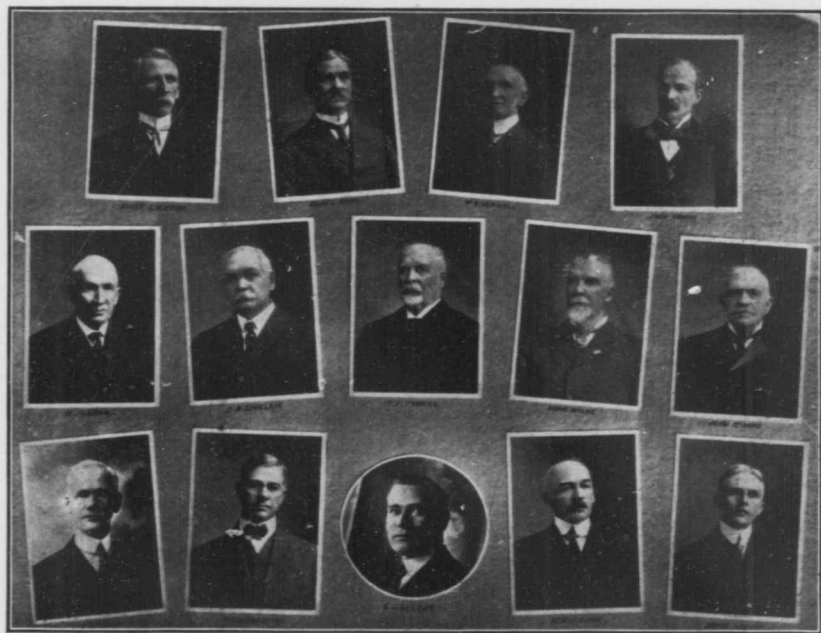
We are well aware that in this necessary brief sketch there are many things omitted that would be well worth a place. Twenty-five years hence St. Andrew's will, in the providence of God, celebrate the centenary of its organization as a congregation. To the historian of that occasion we leave the task of filling in many

THE PRESENT PASTORATE

gaps in this narrative and thereby giving to the congregation a worthy memorial of St. Andrew's Church.

Treasurers—The following gentlemen have filled the office of treasurer in St. Andrew's Church: *George Stevenson, 1844-1846; Thomas Houston, 1848-1854; (There are no records from 1854 until 1856) Alexander Vidal, 1856-1858; Alexander Leys, 1858-1867; George Leys, 1867-1880; Wm. R. Gemmill, 1880-1882; Wm. Williams, 1882-1891. (The congregational meeting of April 12th, 1883, sanctioned the payment of \$100 per annum as Treasurer's salary). James B. Barrie, 1891-1900; John B. Watson, 1900-1907; D. N. Sinclair, 1907-1917; John B. Williams, 1917.

Clerks of Session—Rev. Wm. Macalister, 1843-1853; David Gray, Sr., 1855-1864; Francis Blaikie, 1865-1900; Henry Ingram, 1900-1902; W. A. Smart, 1902-1906; Alex. Wark, 1906-1915; W. R. Gemmill, 1915.



THE ELDERS, 1918

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

During the Rev. Wm. Macalister's pastorate, 1842-1853, the only Sabbath School in the Village of Sarnia was a Union School. In July, 1855, the first year of the Rev. David Walker's pastorate, the question of a Presbyterian Sabbath School was favorably considered by the session, but no immediate action was taken. In 1857 the first St. Andrew's Sabbath School was organized. The Union Sabbath School, however, seems to have continued in existence until 1865.

In 1863 St. Andrew's Sabbath School changed its hour of meeting from the forenoon to 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Mr. Walker was relieved of the care of the school in 1863, and Mr. John Brebner of the Grammar School became superintendent. Mr. Brebner was associated with the school from 1863 until his removal to Ottawa in 1870. A "Band of Hope" was organized in the school in 1867.

Mr. James B. Barrie acted as superintendent from 1870 to 1872, when he was followed by Mr. A. Craise who continued in office until his removal to Denver, Colorado, in 1877. In 1875, while Mr. Craise was superintendent the Sabbath School Missionary Society was organized. This was the beginning of the regular giving to missions that has always characterized the school. We have before us the reports from 1878 to 1896, and these show the average missionary contributions from the Sabbath School to have been about \$220 per annum.

Mr. T. W. Nisbet succeeded Mr. Craise in 1877 as superintendent of the School, and continued to act in this capacity until 1897. Mr. Nisbet gave time, energy and devotion to this work. He was an enthusiast in Sabbath School work and did not spare himself. The present Sabbath School building was erected while he was superintendent. The first Sarnia Company, Boys' Brigade, originated with him. While health and strength permitted Mr. Nisbet gave of his best for the moral, physical, and spiritual benefit of the youth in Sarnia.

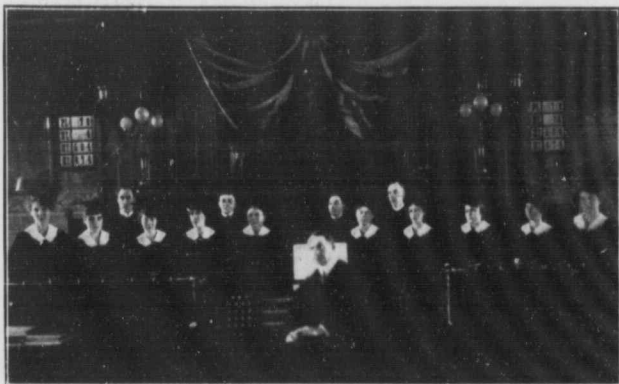
The first Sarnia Company of the Boys' Brigade, the second of its kind in Canada, was enrolled on the 17th of February, 1890, in connection with St. Andrew's Church. T. W. Nisbet was captain, and James C. Clark and John Brebner, Jr., lieutenants.

Mr. John Cowan, K.C., succeeded Mr. Nisbet in 1898. During Mr. Cowan's term of office, 1898-1904, the Sunday School was

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

brought to a high state of efficiency. Mr. T. F. Towers who followed Mr. Cowan, was a careful, painstaking superintendent, and brought to his work the experience of many years of Sabbath School teaching. Mr. Towers was superintendent from 1905 to 1909, when Mr. Cowan again took charge of the school, 1910-1917.

During this period the Sabbath School building was enlarged, reorganization effected in certain sections of the school and the missionary idea stressed. Special attention was given to the adult



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classes. In 1917 Mr. Cowan was succeeded by Mr. J. T. Patton who is ably sustaining the high ideals of his predecessors.

The Chinese Class was formed in March, 1900, through the efforts of Mrs. T. F. Towers, and Miss Jessie Brebner, with the Rev. Dr. Thompson as superintendent. The class began with four teachers and four Chinese present. In 1906 Mr. W. R. Gemmill was appointed superintendent, a position he still worthily fills.

During the year 1917 St. Andrew's Sabbath School raised \$722, of which \$300 went to missions.

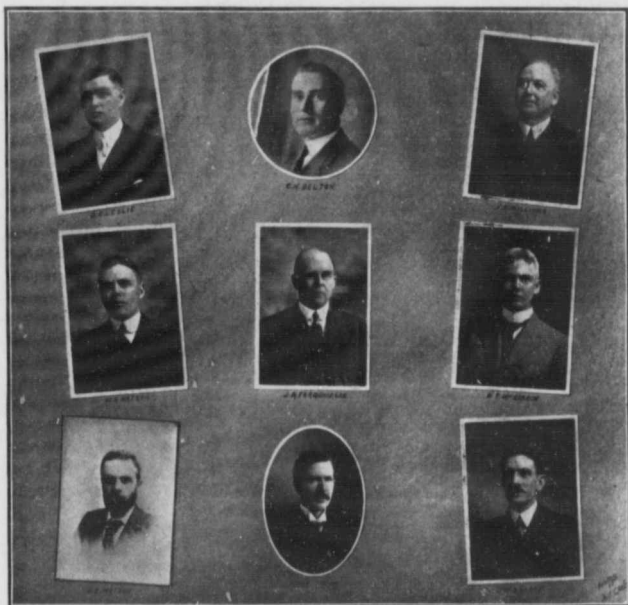
The teachers and officers for 1917 were as follows: J. T. Patton, superintendent; D. W. Rennie, secretary-treasurer; Bible Class teachers—Messrs. Henry Conn, J. Ross Geddes, W. E. Beresford, T. F. Towers.

Teachers in the Middle School—Mrs. T. C. McCobb, Mrs. J. T. Patton, Miss Story, Mrs. Dr. Bell, Mrs. Henry Conn, Mrs. J. J. Paterson, Miss. J. Paul, Mr. D. M. Allan, Jr., Mr. Alex. McMurtrie,

THE SABBATH SCHOOL

Miss McKinlay, Mrs. T. Symington, Miss R. Mackenzie, Mrs. W. E. Beresford, Miss Nisbet, Mrs. McCoig.

Primary Department—Miss M. Mackenzie, superintendent.
Teachers—Miss Watson, Miss Skeoch, Miss Logie, Miss M. Milne, Miss I. McNab, Miss Gray.



THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, 1918

St. Andrew's Honor Roll



Our Honored Dead

W. A. HENDERSON, M.D.	RUSSELL SOPER
D. BENTLEY, M.D.	HEGLER McGIBBON
N. EWART TOWERS	CAMERON BISSETT
STEWART COWAN	WILLIAM CHAPMAN



HUGH FLEMING	STEPHEN RICHARDSON	CHARLES CARRUTHERS
A. LENNOX	DAVID BENTLEY	JULIUS FIELD
STUART D. MacKENZIE, M.D.	MALCOLM F. MacKENZIE	W. J. BENTLEY, D.D.S.
HECTOR COWAN	GILBERT JOHNSTON	KENNETH B. MacKENZIE
DONALD MacLEAN	STEWART HITCHCOCK	HARRY TAYLOR
FINDLAY McGIBBON	GORDON MILLS	ALBERT BENTLEY
HENRY A. NISBET	WILFRED DUNCAN	STEWART COWAN
WILLIAM MANN	ALLAN MELLON	GRAHAM WANLESS
ROBERT C. LAWRENCE	SHERMAN ARCHBOLD	ALBERT ELLIS
ROSS GRAY	CLAYTON BROWN	STUART ROBSON
GOLDWIN GRAY	CHARLES PAUL	WILLIAM CAMPBELL
J. C. MERRISON	T. LOGAN TOWERS	WILLIAM CHAPMAN
REX LONGLEY	M.D.	WILLIAM A. LAWRENCE
RUSSEL SIMPSON	N. EWART TOWERS	DAVID M. ALLEN
ROBERT A. TAYLOR	ROBERT I. TOWERS	JOHN McGIBBON
HARVEY GALLOWAY	JAMES R. MacKENZIE	WALTER LOTT
HEGLER McGIBBON	ARTHUR ELLIGTT	EWART McMANN
WILLIAM KENNEDY	RUSSELL SOPER	THOMPSON SLATER
CALVERT CARRUTHERS	WILFRED HANEY	WILLIAM L. PATERSON
LELAND TUCKER	HOWARD SINCLAIR	FRED GALBRAITH
D. BENTLEY, M.D.	RAYMOND SINCLAIR	LOUIS CONSTABLE
W. A. HENDERSON, M.D.	CHARLES H. LAWRENCE	WALTER CARRUTHERS
MALCOLM MacKENZIE	M.D. DOUGLAS LOGIE	WILLARD GRAY
CHARLES WEIR	LLOYD LOTT	HARGLD TELFER
ROBERT JOSS	LYLE FAWCETT	LAURISTON O. TELFER
J. KEITH GEDDES	J. A. BELL, M.D.	RUSSELL MORRISON
ALEXANDER ROSE	DONALD McPHERSON	N. W. McCRAE
JAMES MILLER	WILLIAM BRADLEY	URQUHART MacKENZIE
JAMES P. ELLIOTT	EDWIN BERESFORD	FERGUSON BROWN
MALCOLM DUNCAN	CAMERON BISSETT	D. D. LAWRENCE
	J. NEIL MacLEAN, M.D.	