

1851 JUBILEE 1901

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Jubilee Sketch

Orillia Presbyterian Church

1851 - 1901



BY THE SESSION.

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**"A Jubilee shall that fiftieth year
be unto you."—LEV. XXV, II.**

Historical Sketch.

THE site of the present town had been an Indian village for centuries, and became about sixty years ago the home of the Rama Indians, under charge of a Methodist missionary. When they were removed to Rama, the Church of England bought the Council Chamber and the house of Chief Yellowhead, and settled a Clergyman in the place, with the Council Chamber as a place of worship.

The Presbyterian people were entirely neglected until after the arrival of the late DR. ROBERT BURNS, in 1845, as minister of Knox Church, Toronto. Deeply impressed by the powerful appeal on behalf of the Presbyterian settlers about Orillia, and in the surrounding townships, sent to him when Secretary of the Glasgow Colonial Society, in 1839, DR. BURNS visited the place and the surrounding townships.

He and DR. URE, of Goderich, and DR. GRAY, were the only Presbyterian ministers who conducted service in the place, previous to 1851. In that year Orillia was selected as the centre of a large missionary district, embracing ten townships, in whole or in part, and DR. GRAY was ordained there on the 21st of May, 1851. The beginning was a very humble one. The ministers present were the late PROFESSOR HENRY ESSON, of Knox College, and the late REV. THOMAS LOWRY, who was then minister of Barrie. The place of meeting was a room in what is now the Orillia House, which was then a frame building. This room, kindly given by the late JAMES QUINN, was fitted up in a very plain manner. Steps were immediately taken to erect a church, and the present site

of the church and manse purchased from the Indian Department, for a few dollars. The people entered into this work with great enthusiasm, led and encouraged specially by the late ADAM PATERSON, and JAMES and THOMAS DALLAS. The small basement was ready for worship in the Autumn of 1851, and on its completion a Sabbath School was opened with the late THOMAS DALLAS as the Superintendent. The only survivor of the original band of teachers is MRS. ADAM PATERSON.

The church was completed, and opened in March, 1852, by the late DR. BURNS, who preached from the text, "Lift up a standard for the people." Soon afterwards the Communion was dispensed. Some time previously two Elders, THOMAS DALLAS and COLIN MCKINLAY, had been elected, as well as two Deacons, ADAM PATERSON and JOHN MCKENZIE. The number of communicants admitted at this first Communion was twenty-nine. Of this number only three are now on the Roll, MRS. ADAM PATERSON, MRS. THOMAS DUNN, Sr., and MR. J. P. HENDERSON. Two others who were admitted as communicants in the sister congregation,—now known as Esson Church,—MRS. ANDREW HORNE and MRS. SAMUEL COTTON, are also now members of the Orillia congregation. Five of the original members of the Orillia Church, are still alive, although not now connected with the congregation. The number of families was at that time twenty.

From 1852 till 1855 the congregation grew rapidly, until the members numbered one hundred. Meanwhile a Manse had been built, and a Cemetery secured.

The Church continued to grow, until in 1871, when separated from East Oro Church, it consisted of one hundred and twenty families, and one hundred and seventy members. During the next eleven years progress was made, and the state of the congre-



ORILLIA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND MANSE.

gation, as represented by figures, stood as follows, when DR. GRAY gave up the charge: There were then 110 families, with 40 single persons; 235 communicants, 6 elders, 10 deacons and managers, 70 attending weekly meeting, 200 in Sabbath School and Bible Class, 25 Sabbath School teachers, and seating capacity of Church, 650. Amount raised for congregational purposes, \$2,195; for schemes, \$580, and for all purposes, \$2,918. During his ministry the church building was enlarged three times. The congregation from the first took up an independent position, and carried on its work in an independent manner, grateful for the fact that it was always, in its ecclesiastical bearings, an aid-giving, and not an aid-receiving congregation.

In 1881, REV. DR. GRAY, owing to ill health, caused by over-work, resigned, and was given the rank of *pastor emeritus*. He has ever since continued to work in the congregation, rendering such service as his health and increasing years would permit. He has twice acted as Moderator of Session during the pastor's absence.

In May, 1882, the congregation unanimously called the REV. R. N. GRANT, then Pastor of Knox Church, Ingersoll, and he was inducted on the 19th day of July, in the same year. The call was signed by 197 members, and 110 adherents. The congregation continued to grow and it was soon apparent that more seating accommodation must be provided in the church. Various plans were discussed, but none of them seemed to meet the views of the people. In the Spring of 1888 it was resolved to build a new place of worship, and steps were promptly taken, which ended in the erection of the present church. The corner stone was laid on the 10th of September, 1888, by the REV. DR. McMULLEN, of Woodstock, then Moderator of the General Assembly, and addresses delivered by



REV. JOHN GRAY, D.D.
PASTOR EMERITUS.
ORDAINED AND INDUCTED MAY 21, 1851

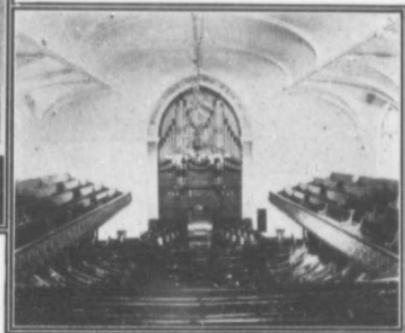


REV. R. N. GRANT, D.D.
PASTOR,
INDUCTED JULY 19, 1882

PRINCIPAL MACVICAR, of Montreal, REV. D. D. McLEOD, of Barrie, and others. The following were the building committee: DR. BEATON, Chairman; MELVILLE MILLAR, Secretary; G. A. CHASE, Treasurer; C. J. MILLER, J. R. EATON, H. COOKE, WM. THOMSON, (Longford), WM. J. KING, JOSEPH DUNN, T. A. MAIN, R. STRATTON, JAMES HUSSACK, (since deceased), J. P. HENDERSON, JOHN ALLAN, (since deceased), W. M. HARVEY and C. ROBERTSON.

The opening services on the first Sabbath of July, 1889, were conducted by the REV. DR. MACLAREN, of Knox College, Toronto, who preached in the forenoon; the REV. JOHN WILKIE, D.D., of Indore, India, in the afternoon, and the REV. DR. McMULLEN, of Woodstock, in the evening. On the following Sabbath, service was conducted by the late REV. DR. COCHRANE, of Brantford, and a social meeting was held on the following Monday evening, which was addressed by DR. COCHRANE, and others. The new church had a seating capacity for 1050, which was afterwards increased to 1100. The entire cost of upholstering and carpeting the new church was defrayed by the Ladies' Aid Society, at an outlay of over two thousand dollars. Some few years afterwards the Society raised two thousand five hundred dollars, the amount expended for the organ now in use by the congregation.

The general policy of the congregation in its life and work has been in the main conservative, and while not unwilling to consider and adopt changes in non-essentials, that may have seemed useful, the main reliance has been on the preaching of the Gospel, and wise and effective administration by the office-bearers of the church. During the half century of its existence the congregation has had only two Pastors, and two Sabbath School Superintendents. The second Pastor and second Sabbath School Superintendent are at the date of



Interior
of Church.

1. View from Pulpit.
2. Choir Platform, Pulpit and Organ.
3. View from Gallery.

this Jubilee, doing full duty, with as much vigor and efficiency as they ever possessed. Many of the office-bearers have had long terms of service. MR. J. P. HENDERSON has been in office as Deacon or Elder for forty-six years; MR. WILLIAM HARVIE has been in office as Deacon or Elder for forty-six years; MR. GEORGE A. CHASE has been a Manager or Deacon, for twenty-five years; MR. MELVILLE MILLAR, with the exception of a few years absence in Peterborough, has been a Manager or Deacon for thirty years; DR. BEATON has been a Manager or Elder for twenty-five years; WILLIAM THOMSON, (Longford), has been continuously a Manager for nearly twenty years; MR. H. COOKE has held the position of Sabbath School Superintendent continuously for twenty-one years, and MR. C. J. MILLER, that of Assistant-Superintendent, for the same length of time. Several younger men, and others, who have recently become connected with the congregation, have held official positions for terms ranging from seven to twelve years.

A gratifying and hopeful feature of our church life is the interest taken in congregational and other Christian work by many of our young people. A large proportion of our membership is composed of the young, and many of them are doing excellent work in various lines of Christian service. The problem of keeping the young in their own church, and of getting them to take an interest in the work and worship of their own congregation has never given us any trouble. Many of our working staff professed their faith, for the first time, in the congregation in which they are now rendering efficient service.

The Sabbath School room, with the exception of the part annexed from the old church, was built by the Sabbath School.

The REV. C. H. COOKE B.A., the REV. J. A. CLAXTON, B.D., the REV. A. GRAHAM,



THE ORIGINAL CHURCH, ERECTED 1851
Rev. Dr. Gray and Mrs. Gray
near the Manse gate,



FIRST ENLARGEMENT OF THE CHURCH.

B.A., the REV. W. H. FARRER, the REV. W. D. McPHAIL, the REV. A. McNABB, (recently deceased), professed their faith for the first time in the Orillia Presbyterian Church. The REV. M. J. LEITH, the REV. F. A. McCRAE, B.A. (recently deceased), the REV. W. A. McILROY, M.A., the REV. J.R. ELMHURST, and MR. R. J. WILSON, B.A., of Knox College, were at one time connected with the congregation. Many of our former members are scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and a sufficient number might be found in Toronto alone, to make the nucleus of a good congregation.

As these pages cannot fail to be of interest to those who fifty years hence prepare a Centennial sketch, a list of the present office-bearers of the congregation is subjoined:—

SESSION.—Moderator—Rev. R. N. Grant, D.D.; Clerk—J. R. Eaton; Elders—J. P. Henderson, William Harvie, A. H. Beaton, M.D., Rev. G. Grant, B.A., H. Cooke, C. J. Miller, C. Robertson, T. G. King, W. M. Campbell.

BOARD OF DEACONS AND MANAGERS.—Chairman—Rev. Dr. Grant; Treasurer—H. T. Blackstone; Assistant-Treasurer—G. A. Chase; Secretary—H. M. Christie; Deacons—G. A. Chase, Melville Millar, James Johnstone; Managers—W. Thomson, H. T. Blackstone, T. H. World, A. Anderson, D. I. Grant, A. B. Thompson, J. Carruthers, H. M. Christie, T. J. Muir, E. B. Alport, J. Dunn, Dr. W. C. Gilchrist, R. Mainer, W. S. Frost, Geo. Thomson, J. E. Dickson. CHURCH OFFICER—John T. Bailey.

SABBATH SCHOOL.—Superintendent—H. Cooke; Assistant Superintendent—C. J. Miller; Secretary—W. M. Campbell; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer—A. Maclean; Librarians—A. B. Thompson, G. Pace, V. Chase; Teachers—Bible Class—Rev. Dr. Grant; Mesdames R.N. Grant, Dickson, Cooke, sr., C. J. Miller, W. C. Gilchrist, Pray, White, J. B. Tudhope,



THE CHURCH PULLED DOWN IN 1886, TO MAKE ROOM FOR PRESENT EDIFICE.

Needham, McNabb, Hussack; Misses Dallas, Chase, Dennis, McKinnon, Ross, Ingram, E. Miller, M. McKinnon, Thomson, D. E. Ross, Grant, Young, Cooke, McLean, Maclean, Ferguson, G. Dunn, Wesley, Carter, G. Miller, Watt, Inglis, R. Thomson, M. E. Miller, Wilson; Messrs. C. J. Miller, J. E. Dickson, M.A., J. J. Thompson, H. T. Blackstone, T. B. Cramp, D. L. Wright. Organist—Mr. D. L. Wright.

PASTOR'S BIBLE CLASS.—Honorary President and Teacher—Rev. Dr. Grant; President—Mr. T. G. King; Secretary—Miss J. Jackson; Treasurer—Mr. C. E. Fortier; Organists—Mr. E. R. Eaton and Miss E. Millard; Committee—Misses I. Culver, M. Irish, E. McBain, E. B. Harvie, J. Dickson, E. McKinlay; Messrs. Ira Clark, Alex. C. Grant, Gerald Thompson, Herbert Cooke, Alex. Rose, Thompson Reid.

THE CENTURY FUND COMMITTEE.—Convener—Mr. C. J. Miller; Treasurer—Mr. Melville Millar; Secretary—Mr. D. Inglis; Grant; Rev. G. Grant, B.A., Dr. Beaton, Dr. Gilchrist, Messrs. I. Day, B.A., J. B. Tudhope, H. Cooke, H. T. Blackstone, J. R. Eaton, T. G. King, W. S. Frost, H. M. Christie, Joseph Dunn, William Thomson, E. B. Alport, Adam Anderson, James Thomson, T. J. Muir, T. H. World, G. A. Chase.

WOMAN'S HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—President—Mrs. Geo. McKinnell; Vice-Presidents—Mrs. H. T. Blackstone, Mrs. C. J. Miller, Mrs. Geo. Grant; Treasurer—Mrs. Archie McPhail; Recording Secretary—Mrs. Jno. Richardson; Corresponding Secretaries—Mrs. R. Hoy and Miss Dallas; Organists—Mrs. E. B. Alport and Miss M. E. Miller.

WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—President—Mrs. R. N. Grant; Vice-Presidents—Mrs. G. McKinnell, Mrs. G. Grant, Mrs. McPhail, Mrs. C. J. Miller, Mrs. Dickson; Treasurer—Mrs. T. A. Main; Leaflet Secretary—Mrs. H. T. Blackstone; Librarian—Mrs.



THE LATE THOMAS DALLAS
Sabbath School Superintendent for
twenty-nine years.



MR. H. COOKE
Sabbath School Superintendent for
twenty-one years.

H. M. Christie; Secretary—Mrs. W. M. Harvey; Assistant Secretary—Mrs. J. B. Tudhope; Organist—Mrs. T. H. World; Musical Committee—Mrs. Tudhope, Mrs. Stratton and Miss Miller.

WOMAN'S AID SOCIETY.—President—Mrs. H. T. Blackstone; Treasurer—Mrs. T. A. Main; Secretary—Mrs. A. McPhail.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.—Honorary President—Rev. Dr. Grant; President—Miss M. E. Miller; Vice-Presidents—Miss R. W. Chase, B.A.; Mr. L. Hussack; Recording Secretary—Miss C. L. Thomson; Corresponding Secretary—Mr. T. G. King; Treasurer—Miss C. Cooke; Mission Treasurer—Miss M. Murray; Organist—Miss I. Culver.

YOUNG WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—President—Miss A. M. B. Hutcheson; Vice-Presidents—Miss Budd and Miss Jennie Jackson; Secretary—Miss E. Miller; Treasurer—Miss E. B. Harvie; Convener Lookout Committee—Miss A. Campbell; Organist—Miss M. McLean.

BRIGHT SUNBEAMS MISSION BAND.—President—Miss R. W. Chase; Vice-Presidents—Miss Carrie L. Thomson, Miss Mamie Eaton, Miss Eva Eaton; Sewing Superintendent, Mrs. Dulmage; Secretary—Miss Mary M. Grant; Treasurer, Miss Ada I. Millar.

The number of families now in the congregation is 332; number of members, 700; the contributions for all purposes in the year 1900, were \$7,773.01.

Whilst grateful for the services of many good men and noble women, who have gladly given their work and their prayers in aid of the congregation, we desire to give the Head of the Church all the glory. Grateful to our Heavenly Father for His goodness to those that are still with us in the Church here, and for His kindness to those who are waiting for us in the Church above, we thank our covenant God for the blessings of the past half century, and hopefully enter upon our duties for the years to come.

**"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but
unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy
and for Thy truth's sake."—PSALM CXV, 1.**