

One Hundredth Anniversary
of St. Paul's Parish

AN HISTORICAL ADDRESS

BY THE

REV. MELDGE WALKER

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St. Paul's Parish, Hampton, N.B.

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We are gathered today to do honor to two events in the history of the Church of England in this country.

Two hundred years ago the first services of the Church were held in what is now the Dominion of Canada. The first clergyman came with the forces that captured Port Royal, now known by its English name of Annapolis. There, on Tuesday, October 10th, 1710, was solemnized a Day of Thanksgiving for the successful issue of the siege in which the town was captured from the French by the troops from the colonies of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island, under Colonel Francis Nicholson. The church in which that service was held was St. Anne's, the French church of the town, standing within the walls of the old fort.

This notable event has been commemorated during the past week by imposing celebrations in Nova Scotia.

The other event to which I have referred is the one hundredth anniversary of the Parish of Hampton, in which naturally we are more personally interested.

As is well known to most of you, the original settlers of Kings County were the Loyalists who came from the United States in 1783. They were mostly from Connecticut, and settled first on the ridge of land between the St. John and Kennebecasis rivers. They called their settlement Amesbury, but this was soon changed to Kingston, as more in

keeping with intense loyalty to the English Crown. They were all Churchmen of the most devoted and earnest type, and from the very first their community enjoyed the ministrations of faithful priests.

In the autumn of the year of their settlement in Kingston we find the Rev. John Beardsley of Parrtown, afterwards named St. John, visiting the settlers, preaching and baptizing. In the spring of 1786, the Rev. James Scovil, missionary at Waterbury, Conn., from which place many of the Kingston people came, arrived to minister to his former parishioners.

It appears that Mr. Scovil spent two summers in Kingston, returning each fall to Connecticut, where his family still resided, having no home as yet in the new colony. In June, 1788, having built a house at his own expense, he arrived with his family and settled down to spend the rest of his life in most arduous and devoted labors among these people.

To the devotion and untiring work of James Scovil and his son and successor, the Rev. Elias Scovil, is due the beginning of Church life in this Parish of Hampton.

The first settlers in this immediate neighborhood undoubtedly found their way in through Kingston at a very early date. Grants of land were made by the Government along the rivers as fast as the surveyors could run the lines and lay out the lots. The records in the Crown Lands Office at Fredericton show that John DeMill and James Crawford received their grants in 1797, though probably they settled here at an earlier date.

This church stands almost exactly on the line between these two farms, and the grave-yard surrounding it was taken in equal portions from each,—the land being given by the respective owners.

The first recorded action on the part of the inhabitants of the Parish of Hampton in regard to the erection of a church is dated September 15th, 1810. On that day a committee of three were appointed, or as the record reads,

"Trustees for superintending and carrying on the work of building." They were:

DANIEL MICHAUD,
ISAIAH SMITH,
THOMAS FAIRWEATHER.

Just where that meeting was held it is impossible to say, but inasmuch as later records tell us that Parish and Vestry meetings were held in the house of John DeMill, the nearest residence to the spot on which the church was to be built, we have good reason to believe that this first meeting was held in the same place,—*and fittingly so*,—for the residence of the DeMills of Hampton, for four generations, has always been a house where the interests and welfare of the Church have received the first and highest consideration.

Probably at that same meeting was started the subscription for building the church, which reads as follows:

"First subscription for St. Paul's Church in the Parish of Hampton.

"We, the subscribers, do agree and promise to pay when demanded, the several sums answered to our respective names, on condition that a church shall be erected in the neighborhood of Mr. John DeMill's; Provided that the inhabitants of the Parish of Norton, and also those of Kingston whom it will accommodate, are willing to unite with us, the inhabitants of Hampton, in erecting a decent building for the public worship of Almighty God for the accommodation of the respective parishes."

In view of the wording of this heading we can readily understand why the church was located on this site. It was not only for Hampton, but also to accommodate Lower Norton and the Upper corner of Kingston,—the Yankee Shore, as it was early called,—a term due, undoubtedly, to the fact that the original settlers over there were from New England. It must also be remembered that access by water was a prime necessity in a time when roads were few and poor.

The subscription paper was signed by eighty-one persons, evidently heads of families; and considering the value and scarcity of actual cash in those days, is a fair evidence of the devotion and liberality of the signers. The subscription amounted to £344, or over \$1600, to which was added £65 from twenty subscribers in St. John. The names, too numerous to mention in detail, give evidence of who the founders of our Parish were: DeMills, Raymonds, Crawfords, Smiths, Morrells, Wannamakers, Uphams, Ketchums, Hoyts, Frosts and Fairweathers. The two largest subscribers were Isaiah Smith and Daniel Michaud, who gave £20 each; next John DeMill, £15, and Benjamin Darling, £10 10s.

Further evidence shows that the frame of the church was raised the following spring—1811—and the building enclosed, but it was not finished for several years. The War of 1812 apparently demoralized all effort at public work. Still it was in such a condition that it could be used for services; for the Rev. Elias Scovil, reporting to the Venerable Society in 1812, acknowledging the receipt of a Bible and Prayer Book for the Church at Hampton, further says, "That the church is gotten into such forwardness that they met in it all last winter, and another subscription has been made sufficient to wall it and finish the chancel, if it should not be stopped on account of the war with the United States." He goes on to say, "It is placed in a very eligible situation, where a large congregation may and do assemble. A resident clergyman is much wanted there." Communicants number forty-five.

In 1815 he again reports: "Hampton Church is not yet seated, which delay has been occasioned by the war." But in 1817, Mr. Scovil reports: "At Hampton great exertions have been made for the erection of a church which it is expected will be open shortly before Christmas."

Considering the fact that the building had already been used for public worship for several years, we may presume that by the word "*open*" he means completely finished and

formally set apart for its proper use. In the same letter he goes on to say: "This place, together with Norton, an adjoining Parish, would form a desirable mission, and the Society has signified their readiness to meet the wishes of the people and afford them every encouragement they may appear to deserve."

Again in 1818: "Upon representation of the Rev. Elias Scovil of Kingston, the Society has expressed their readiness to form a new mission at Hampton and Norton, and furnish the people with a Missionary, provided they would contribute so far as their present means would allow towards the maintenance of a resident minister, and it is with much satisfaction that the Society have learnt that they have entered into engagements to that purpose."

As the result of the negotiations and mutual promises between the Venerable Society and the people of Hampton, the first Rector, the Rev. James Cookson, came out from England and took charge of the Parish in the summer of 1819. He preached his first sermon here June 27th, 1819, from the text, Luke xv. 10, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

Evidently Mr. Cookson found an encouraging field of labor. The people of Hampton, whatever they may have since become, were then, almost without exception, devoted to the Church of England. He reports the average congregation at Hampton as 300, and Norton 200.

In 1823, in a report by the Rev. Robert Willis, Ecclesiastical Commisary in New Brunswick to the Bishop of Nova Scotia, we read as follows: "To the valuable labors and kind attention of the Missionary at Kingston, this Parish (of Hampton) owes its high character for sound Church principles. Mr. Cookson happily has few dissenters in his Parish. It was his good fortune to receive an appointment to a mission where the people were already trained to the Church, and inferior to none in their attach-

ment to the form of worship of our national Church. The church is a commodious and handsome building, in good repair, and I need scarcely add, numerously attended. On a former visit to this church I took the liberty to suggest to the Wardens some improvements in the chancel, and I now had the pleasure to observe that a carpet had been provided and a decent cloth for the communion table."

Naturally, the first important action to be taken after securing a Rector was the erection of a parsonage. Previous to such action, the Parish had secured a temporary residence for Mr. Cookson in part of a house belonging to Mr. Edward D. Sharland, for which they agreed to pay an annual rental of £20. At the same meeting when the above action was taken, viz., July 24th, 1819, it was voted to purchase a tract of land adjoining the church belonging to James Crawford, for which the sum of £50 was to be paid down, and the balance in annual payments of the same amount. The total sum is not mentioned. This agreement, however, was never carried out, for the land above mentioned was still owned by James Crawford till 1831, when it was purchased by the second Rector, the Rev. Wm. W. Walker.

Nothing further seems to have been done about a parsonage for some years, and just when the house was erected there is no positive record. It was built about five years later (1825) on a small lot given by Mr. John DeMill or his son, Thomas S., but no record of the gift, deed, or erection remains, except that according to the report of the Rev. Robert Willis above mentioned, he states that there was no parsonage in 1823, and that he urged the matter upon the parishioners so strongly and with such good effect that he reports next year (1824): "At Hampton the work has not been lost sight of. It was so difficult to obtain a site for the parsonage-house in this Parish that the people even contemplated at one time building it on the glebe, a distance of five miles from the church and the most populous part of the Parish. They have, however, been lately relieved

from their difficulties by the liberal donation of a commodious piece of ground near the church, in every way eligible for the purpose by a young parishioner whose property adjoins the church ground. Since this donation was made, such has been the energy of the people, and the consequent progress of the work, that nearly all the materials for the building are on the spot, and they are, I believe, possessed of means to finish it, I trust, next summer."

The "*young parishioner*" to whom Mr. Willis refers must have been Thomas S. DeMill, though why he should be mentioned as the donor, I do not understand, as his father, John DeMill, did not die till the following year, 1825.

The house was not completed as soon as was expected, as we shall see in the report of the Bishop of Nova Scotia when he visited the Parish two years later to administer confirmation and consecrate the church and grave-yard. The following is taken from the Journal of Bishop John Inglis, third Bishop of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and is probably the record of the first visit of a Bishop to this Parish.

"Monday, July 17th, 1826.—I set out (from St. John) with Archdeacon Best and part of my family, in two carriages, for Hampton, twenty-five miles, where we arrived in the evening, after stopping to examine the church, which is a mile and a half from the village. It is a most commodious building, finely situated in the midst of beautiful scenery. Very near it is the parsonage, in which the Rector, Mr. Cookson, now resides, although it is not finished.

"Tuesday, July 18th.—Mr. Cookson and his churchwardens, Saliger Morrell and Ebenezer Smith, were with me at an early hour to make arrangements for the day. The church (St. Paul's) and its burial ground were consecrated at ten o'clock, and after preaching to a very respectable and numerous congregation, I confirmed 123 persons, who seemed duly impressed with the solemnity of their engagements. After service here and some unavoidable

delay in crossing a ferry at Hampton, we hastened to the church at Norton, distant six miles."

Christ Church, Norton, was consecrated next day, and thirty-four persons confirmed. Trinity Church, Springfield, was consecrated the day after and seventy-five persons confirmed, and later one hundred and eighty-two were confirmed at Kingston.

The church in Kingston had been consecrated some time before, and had recently been enlarged, for the Bishop notes: "I had also an opportunity for offering consolation to a most respectable and aged couple, Judge Pickett and his wife, now nearly ninety years old, whose greatest joy has been in the enlargement of the church and of its holy influence."

In studying the records of those early days, I am everywhere impressed by the staunch and loyal Churchmanship of the men who laid the foundations of our old parishes in this Province. The good Bishop evidently appreciated that fact, for he further testifies:

"This county (Kings) was blessed in its early settlement with the zealous pastoral labors of the late Mr. Scovil, a most valuable and primitive missionary, who planted the Church around him deeply and firmly; the blessing of God has rested upon it, and this apostolic missionary has been worthily succeeded by his exemplary son."

"When Mr. Scovil is necessarily absent from Kingston, an able lay-reader is employed to prevent the dispersion of the flock, but a portable desk is always introduced into the church upon these occasions *that the layman may not stand in the Priest's place.*"

It seems to me that perhaps the most important consideration that can occupy our minds on this one hundredth anniversary is this: How have we, the descendants of those old worthies, maintained the standard which they set?

We think ourselves more enlightened, more advanced; possibly in some ways we are, but when it comes to earnest love for the true principles of the old Church of England,

and a hearty endeavor on her behalf, have we anything of which to boast? Here is a community founded and settled entirely by Churchmen,—how do we account for the fact that sectarianism is everywhere prevalent throughout it? and that the grandsons and greatgrandsons of these men of whom we are speaking have in so many instances wandered from the faith or, at least, become lax in their Church duties.

The condition of those early days is further emphasized in a report to the Venerable Society from the Archdeacon of Fredericton, January, 1828, speaking of Kingston words which would have been equally true of Hampton he says: "This Mission, when I look at the number of communicants, really appears, if I may use such an expression, the *ringstone* of our Church in this Province—nor in any Mission in the Diocese, do I believe, is the number in proportion at all equalled."

For ten years Mr. Cookson ministered faithfully to the united parishes of Hampton and Norton. He resigned in 1829 and returned to England to the same parish in which he had served before coming out to New Brunswick. He was succeeded the following year by the Rev. Wm. W. Walker, a native of Annapolis, N. S., and recently rector of St. Eleanor's, P. E. I.

This rectorship, extending over a period of *fifty-three* years, more than half of the century we are now commemorating, witnessed much growth and many changes.

The "old Parson," as he was familiarly and affectionately called for many years, was well known for his sturdy and uncompromising Churchmanship, and his love for fine horses. I am convinced that these two characteristics are not by any means incompatible. Far and wide he travelled on his missionary work—from Upper Norton to Rothesay, and from Gondola Point to Upham, Hammond and Quaco—good need had he of sturdy horses, and small wonder that he loved the faithful animals that carried him so safely on his long and tedious drives.

And now began a new era of Church extension. The increasing population in the surrounding districts necessitated the building of new churches—at Gondola Point, at French Village and at Upham. St. Luke's Church, Gondola Point, consecrated August 4th, 1835, was evidently begun early in Mr. Walker's ministry, for in the report of 1832 we read: "This Mission comprises Hampton and Norton, in the former of which there is a parsonage-house, and in both a church, in which stated services are held. A second church is now building in the parish of Hampton, which it is hoped will be finished in the course of the present summer. There is another congregation in this parish, but without a church, at Little River, where the Missionary occasionally visits."

In the Bishop's Journal we read as follows:

"Tuesday, August 4th, 1835.—A cold day. We proceeded towards Gondola Point, four miles from Kingston, and after crossing the Kennebecasis at a ferry, which is sometimes inconvenient, we came to a new chapel built in excellent taste and beautifully finished, to the great credit and joy of the parishioners, some of whom devoted themselves in the most zealous manner to the accomplishment of this good work. It now ranks among the most perfect and beautiful buildings in the Diocese. I was so much pleased with its proportion and execution that I obtained architectural drawings of it with bills of scantling to assist the building of other churches.

"A very respectable congregation was assembled. The chapel (St. Luke's) and the burial ground around it were consecrated. I preached on the consecration of both, and confirmed twenty-five persons."

The Bishop further notes: "This chapel at Gondola Point is in the Mission of Hampton, and I was glad to give licenses to two lay-readers, one of whom, Mr. Wm. Scovil, a nephew of the Missionary at Kingston, is a candidate for Holy Orders."

Certainly the good Bishop never failed to appreciate most fully the efforts of both Missionary and people, and especially he had an eye for the scenery of this beautiful region. In his visitation of 1842 he says: "The Rev. Mr. Walker met me at Norton and drove me seven miles to his parsonage at Hampton, where I slept. The scenery in all this neighborhood is as beautiful as hill and valley of various shapes, and wood and water, can make it."

Seventy-two persons were confirmed on this visit at Hampton, and ninety-three at Kingston, and the Bishop writes: "I have seldom had more unmingled satisfaction than in my visit to the flourishing parishes through which I had just passed. The blessing of God seems to rest upon them—His name is glorified, His Church is strengthened and increased—to Him be all praise."

Next comes the progress of the work at French Village, or Little River, as it was usually called. It may be a matter of surprise, as well as of interest, to many to learn that here was the earliest settlement in the Parish of Hampton. Before the building of the first Parish Church on this spot, an effort had been made to establish a Church in that neighborhood. A considerable piece of ground was secured on which to build a church and parsonage, and which, I am told, is still known as the *Church Lot*, though never used for that purpose. Occasional services were held by Mr. Walker, presumably in private houses, for many years before a church building was erected.

In a most quaint and interesting journal kept by Mr. Azor Hoyt, I found an entry under the date of July 16th, 1846: "Frame of Hammond River Church raised—Church of the Advent." This was undoubtedly the church which we now know as St. Andrew's, French Village. Evidently it was the intention to call it "The Church of the Advent," as that name appears in another record,—but this was changed, and the building was consecrated by the Bishop of Fredericton on Epiphany, January 6th, 1848, as St. Andrew's Church.

At the Easter Monday meeting of that year Josiah Fowler and William Langstroth were appointed a committee to care for the church.

At the same time that the church at French Village was in course of erection a similar work was going on at Upham. On the 29th of October, 1842, a church building committee for that neighborhood was appointed, consisting of the Rev. Wm. W. Walker, Henry Fowler, Henry DeMill, James Fowler, and Samuel Forster. The frame of the building was raised October 14th, 1843, and the church was consecrated May 14th, 1850.

With the completion of the church at Upham the Parish entered on a period of rest so far as building was concerned, and soon after, through sub-division of territory, the labors of the venerable Rector were much reduced. The parishes of Norton, Upham and Hammond were separated from Hampton and resident rectors appointed. But increasing population caused a constant expansion of the work. The building of the railroad induced considerable settlement in the extreme lower part of the parish, resulting in the community now known as Rothesay. In 1861 the Rector of Hampton, reporting to the Venerable Society, states that he was holding services at this point. At first, I believe, services were held in the station, later the use of the Presbyterian church was secured. This building was afterwards purchased for the Church of England, when Rothesay was set apart as a separate parish in 1870.

Meanwhile new work was undertaken in the neighborhood of Nauwigewauk, and services were held in the Presbyterian church on the Neck, with the natural result, *i. e.*, the building of a new church.

The site chosen was on the main road, about half a mile south of the Hammond River bridge. Here was built Trinity Church, now the Parish Church of Rothesay, largely through the energy, devotion and generosity of Captain John Ford, Allan Otty and John Palmer, and other resi-

dents of that neighborhood. This church was opened for divine service on January 1st, 1863.

Next in interest to the building of the first church comes the effort to rear the second,—this dignified and churchly building in which we are now assembled. If the first church was due to the godly devotion and energy of the *men* of the Parish, the second was certainly the result of the consecrated efforts of the women.

As far back as 1857 we find the women raising a fund for repairing the old church, but after due consideration it was decided to be unadvisable to lay out money on the old building, and the funds were put at interest as a nucleus for the construction of an entirely new structure. And now began ten years and more of an unremitting labor of love on the part of the women of this parish. The leaders in this endeavor, whose names appear in the records, were Mrs. Margaret Simonds, Mrs. Elizabeth P. Smith (better known as Mrs. Charles I. Smith) and Miss Elizabeth Otty.

"The Ladies Sewing Society of Hampton" became a notable organization and their efforts met with wonderful success. In November, 1867, they again approach the Parish Corporation with a lengthy address, the substance of which is that they have raised a sum of over \$1400, and that they think the time has come that some decided steps should be taken towards the erection of the long wished-for church. They offer to transfer their funds to the Corporation on the following conditions:

1st. That the (new) church should be free.

Let me note here that this was not by any means a simple matter. The pews of the old church had been *owned* by their occupants. They were the private property of the various Church families, handed down from father to son like the farms and dwellings of the neighborhood. Many were not willing to give up their rights. Personally, I distinctly remember the long continued efforts of my father in quietly influencing some of the tenacious old owners to surrender the title of their pews to the Vestry.

The second condition was that "the new church should be built on the site of the old one." Whether, in view of present day conditions this was wise or not may be an open question; certainly it seemed to be so then. At least it is interesting to remember that the site of the new church was a question of debate nearly fifty years ago, and had the location been changed to a different place, the building of two other churches might have been saved, and many heart-burnings as well.

The third condition, that it be of approved ecclesiastical style of architecture.

4th. That it shall have the approval of the Rector, Church Corporation and Colonel Otty; provided the latter gentleman will kindly supervise the same.

These conditions were graciously accepted with thanks by the Corporation, and progress was reported from time to time. The following year, 1868, a Building Committee was appointed, consisting of the Rector, and Wardens (Charles I. Smith and George Otty), and a vote of thanks to Craven Langstroth for his liberal gift of a deed of four hundred and four acres of land situated in Springfield, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to the Building Fund.

In the Spring of 1869 the old church was torn down and the frame of the new one raised and enclosed during the summer. Two years were occupied in the construction of the building, during which time services were held at the Station in Atheneum Hall, now used as a store by Mr. R. H. Smith. The church completed, with the exception of the spire, was consecrated October 18th, 1871.

With the completion of the new Parish Church, the more active part of the venerable Rector's long ministry may be said to have terminated. From 1865 to 1874 he was assisted from time to time in the Parish work by his three sons, as they were successively ordained. In 1878-9 the Rev. George Gardner was curate, succeeded by the Rev. Arthur Hoadley in 1880, and the Rev. Henry Montgomery in 1883.

On the tenth of October, 1880, there was celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of this long rectorship. The exact date happened to fall upon a Sunday. The Rector, assisted by his three sons, his son-in-law and the curate, conducted the services and preached an historical sermon, reviewing the work of the past fifty years, during which period he had baptized 1,432 persons, married 344 couples and buried 564. On the following day, Monday, a short service was held at three o'clock, at which an address was presented by the Wardens and Vestry and a response by the Rector. A parish reception was held in the Rectory in the evening.

In the fall of 1883, being over 80 years of age, and having served this parish for fifty-three years, Canon Walker resigned his rectorship and retired from the active duties of the ministry. He died in 1889 and his mortal remains rest beneath the chancel window of this church. He had done a great work and had witnessed a great growth. Of his original cure, in which he had worked so many years single-handed, he saw the setting apart, first the Parish of Norton, then Upham and Hammond, and finally Rothesay. He was instrumental in building the churches at Gondola Point, French Village, Upham, Hammond River, and this Parish Church, in which we are now assembled.

The next Rector was the Rev. O. S. Newnham, elected in 1883. During his rectorship were built the churches at the Village, Station and Smithtown, all of them opened for public worship about the same time, viz., in 1887. Mr. Newnham resigned in 1888 and was followed in somewhat rapid succession by the Rev. Messrs. Maynard, Burns and Dickenson. The Rev. Chas. D. Schofield was rector from 1899 to 1904. The Rev. J. DeW. Cowie, 1905-1906, succeeded by our present Rector, well beloved and valued for his indefatigable labors, whom we trust may be kept with us for many years to come.

Of the last seven rectorships, most of them so brief, it needs not that I should make any lengthened record: those days are within the plain recollection of most all of you, time has not yet decorated them with the halo which perhaps they deserve.

In conclusion let me urge you to emulate the example of your forefathers, their zeal and devotion. Under God they laid the foundations of the Church in this new Colony deep and broad, and preserved the faith and worship which they so dearly loved, handing it down to their children as a most precious heritage. See to it that you hold firmly to that for which they sacrificed so much, and especially remember the obligation you are under to that grand old Missionary Society in England, without whose fostering care it would have been impossible to maintain a ministry here in those early days.

Your gratitude for those lavish benefactions can best be shown by your own gifts to help to spread the Gospel far and wide. For over sixty years the venerable society paid the salary of the rectors of this parish—perhaps it was not altogether an unmixed blessing. Too much help from outside tends to weaken the energy within—we do not fully appreciate that which costs us little. When that appropriation ceased at the death of the second Rector the parishioners began to realize that they had never learned to *give*, and the lesson came hard, and perhaps some even yet have not fully learned it.

Finally let us thank God for the good examples of all those His servants, who having finished their course in faith do now rest from their labors, and may we have grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of His heavenly kingdom.