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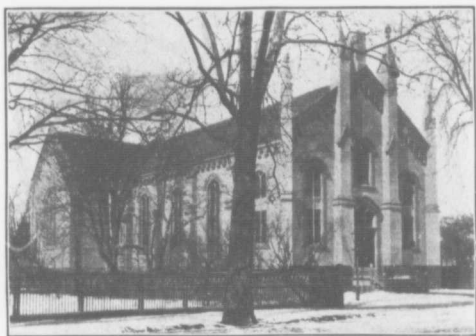
# Knox Church

St. Catharines

1891 - 1901



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KNOX CHURCH, ST. CATHARINES.

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# Knox Church

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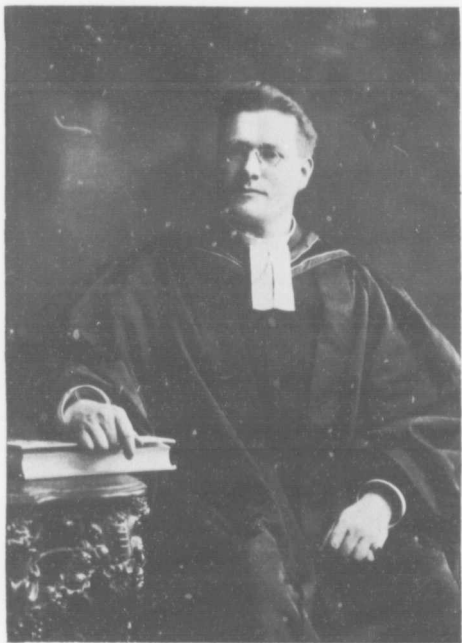
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M C M I.

### Ministers of Knox Church :

REV. JOHN PORTEUS . . . . .	1842-1847.
REV. ALEX. HENDERSON . . . . .	1847-1850.
REV. JOHN McCLURE . . . . .	1852-1854.
REV. R. F. BURNS, D. D. . . . .	1855-1867.
REV. GEO. BURSON . . . . .	1867-1895.
REV. JAS. MURRAY, B. D. . . . .	1895-1899.
REV. G. H. SMITH, D. D. . . . .	1899—



REV. GEO. H. SMITH, M. A., D. D.

# Knox Church, St. Catharines.

1891 - 1901



IN connection with the jubilee services held May 2nd and 3rd, 1891, a Historical Record of Knox Church was published by R. Lawrie, Esq. In this sequel, which records the leading events of the succeeding ten years in Knox Church, we deem it necessary here, to give by way of preface only, the briefest summary of that Record.

On the 2nd of May, 1841, the Rev. Thos. Christie organized a congregation in Grantham Academy, by authority of the Presbytery of Flamboro', in connection with the United Secession Church of Scotland. It began with twenty-four members and two Elders, John Lawrie and James Dougan. The first church was built on Centre street, in 1844. Through a dissatisfaction with an action of the Presbytery, in 1854 another congregation was organized by the Presbytery of Hamilton of the Canada Presbyterian Church in connection with the Free Church of Scotland. In 1855 these two congregations united under the Presbytery of Hamilton. In 1859 the present building was erected, and enlarged in 1874. Instrumental music was introduced in 1871. With the union of the Presbyterian Churches in Canada, in 1875, the name was changed from the "Scotch Church" to Knox Church. The present organ was built in 1889, and the Jubilee celebrated May 2nd, 1891, the Rev. Principal Caven officiating. A public meeting was held the following evening, at which Mr. Lawrie gave the history of the congregation, afterwards published.

In the latter part of 1891 the Church and Lecture Hall were renovated by the Ladies' Aid Society. Across the rejoicings of this year a shadow fell, for in the Trustees' report we read: "With our congratulations we must mingle heartfelt

sorrow, which every member of the Trustee Board feels deeply, as we also know do all the congregation, at the loss we have all sustained in the death of Capt. James Norris. He was the oldest member of the Trustee Board, beloved by us all, and although his death was expected we deeply feel the loss, and sincerely pray that a kind Providence will comfort and bless his family, and that his removal from earth was only a transition to a noble and blessed life above."

The year 1892 marked the 25th anniversary of the induction of the Rev. Geo. Burson as Minister of Knox Church. What may be regarded as a somewhat unusual event in this country nowadays was most appropriately celebrated by the congregation. In the Annual Report for that year the following paragraph is found: "At our last annual meeting a committee was appointed to consider the best means of celebrating the 25th anniversary of Mr. Burson's induction as Pastor of this Church. The committee met on the 20th April last and drew up a report recommending the purchase by the congregation of a manse for our Pastor as one part of the proposed celebration. The report was adopted at a special meeting of the congregation held on the 27th April, and the property owned by the late Archibald Mitchell on Church street subsequently purchased for the price of \$3,600, (which included the carpets, a large mirror and gas fixtures) less the sum of \$400 very generously contributed by the heirs of the estate." The Trustees expended a little over \$1,000 on the building. On Sunday, the 23rd October, the anniversary services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Cochrane, of Brantford. On the following afternoon a reception was held at the Manse, and in the evening a public meeting in the Church, at which an address and purse of \$200 were presented to Mr. Burson, and a certificate of life membership in the W. F. M. S. was given by the ladies to Mrs. Burson.

Two quiet and uneventful years followed in marked contrast to the sadness of 1895, which shall never be forgotten by the congregation. For in the Session's report for that year we read: "On the 7th day of May last a great sorrow fell upon the congregation by the death of our late esteemed and greatly beloved Pastor, the Rev. George Burson. His pastorate

amongst us was not only a lengthened one, extending over a period of twenty-seven years, but was eminent for great usefulness in the community, faithfulness in the pulpit, and tender and helpful ministry in the home. Many in our congregation will long remember his gentle manner and his wise and comforting words in seasons of sickness and sorrow." In the report of the Trustees the following paragraph occurs: "Mr. Burson's business relations with the Board of Management of his Church were always of the happiest and most agreeable nature. We will miss his genial countenance, the warm grasp of his hand whether extended in loving friendship or deep sympathy; and the fervent spirit displayed by him in all matters pertaining to the welfare of his people; and yet while our hearts are throbbing with anguish at the departure from our midst of one so sincerely beloved and revered, should we not rather rejoice to know that he has entered into that calm and peaceful rest so certainly assured to those who follow in the footsteps of our Great Master." Similar expressions occur in the report of every Society in the Church. The funeral service, which was in charge of the Presbytery, was conducted at the Manse, the Revs. F. McCuaig, J. H. Ratcliffe, Dr. Laing and Principal Caven taking part, after which the cortege proceeded to Victoria Lawn Cemetery to the solemn tolling of the bells of St. Catherine's, St. George's and St. Barnabas' Churches. The Rev. W. Roger officiated at the grave. The memorial service on the following Sunday was conducted by Rev. Prof. McLaren, and the Ministerial Association held a special service in the Church Tuesday evening.

The date of Mr. Burson's death will always be remembered by the beautiful mural tablet in the lobby of the Church, placed there by Mrs. James Murray and her daughters as a loving tribute to a faithful pastor. In the recent alterations to the Church a few of the ladies of the congregation further remembered Mr. Burson in the presentation of the handsome oak pulpit which bears his name.

The same Session report is further saddened in its obituary record by this paragraph: "This Session records with deep sorrow the death of Captain James Murray, of whose interest in, and devotion to, Knox Church, we cannot speak too highly.



His open hand and his generous heart will long be missed by many at whose service they were while he was yet with us." The memorial window in the east transept of the Church has been placed there to Captain Murray's memory by his family.

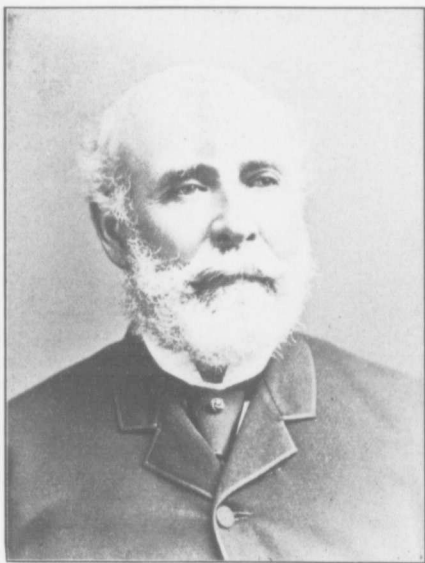
During the vacancy the Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe was interim Moderator of Session, and on December 5th, 1895, the Rev. James Murray, B. D., B. A., of Wentworth Church, Hamilton, was inducted into the pastorate of the Church. The Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe presided. The sermon was preached by the Rev. W. A. Cook, of Thorold; Rev. Dr. Lyle addressed the Minister, and Rev. Dr. Fletcher the people.

In 1896 alterations were made to the Church entrance and to the Lecture Room, and through the gift of \$100 from the Ladies' Aid, the lighting equipment of the Church was greatly improved.

In 1897, in the month of February, special evangelistic services were conducted by Rev. Dr. McTavish, of Central Church, Toronto, and Rev. J. G. Shearer, of Erskine Church, Hamilton. During the summer holidays the congregations of the First Church and Knox Church worshipped together.

In January, 1899, the Rev. James Murray received a call to Erskine Church, Toronto. The call was accepted, and during the vacancy the Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe was again appointed by the Presbytery as interim Moderator of Session. A farewell social was tendered Mr. and Mrs. Murray before their departure, and Mr. Murray was presented with an address and a purse of \$100.

The Rev. George H. Smith, M. A., B. D., Ph. D., was called from Thamesford, Ont., and inducted on September 28th, 1899. The induction service was presided over by the Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe. The Rev. W. Wallis, of Port Dalhousie, preached; Rev. Dr. Laing addressed the Minister, and Rev. W. A. Cook the people. On the 3rd of April, 1900, Dr. Smith received the degree of D. D. by examination from the Presbyterian College, Montreal. In the Annual Report for 1900, reference is made to the Church improvements and to the \$1,000,000 Century Fund. Regarding the latter, Knox Church is aiming at a \$6,000 contribution. The improvements were completed and the Church reopened December 9th by the Rev. J. A. Macdonald, of the *Westminster*.



ROBT. LAWRIE, ESQ., SESSION CLERK.

In this year the Church had been completely renovated. The galleries in the transepts have been removed and the rear gallery closed, and the lobby in consequence reconstructed. The Church has been re-seated and cathedral glass put in the windows. Besides the pulpit and the Murray window already referred to, Mr. John Dougan, of New York, has presented a window in the west transept to the memory of his father and mother. In the east side of the Church another window has been placed by Mrs. John McClive in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. A. Mitchell, and a window to correspond, on the opposite side, is given as a memorial to Mr. Wm. Boles by his daughters. On the 26th September, 1900, Dr. Smith was married to Miss M. M. Cawthorpe, B. A., of Thamesford, late Professor of English of Parson's College, Iowa. A very pleasant reception was given to Mrs. Smith by the congregation. The Church reopening was further celebrated by the presentation of a set of pulpit robes to the pastor, on the evening of December 10th. The Circle of the King's Daughters and Sons had previously presented a pulpit Bible and Book of Praise to the Church. On December 12th Messrs. A. Hodge and C. O. Borrowman were ordained Elders. By a special collection of \$250, the congregation supported a missionary at Salmon Arm, B. C., and this field, with its five preaching stations, is committed by the Superintendent to our care.

Regarding the statistics of the last ten years, 236 persons have united with the Church and 165 names have been removed, leaving the roll with 325 names. \$8,909 have been contributed to the Church schemes, \$2,723 to other benevolent objects, and the amount raised for all purposes has been nearly \$50,000.

It is a matter worthy of note that our venerable and esteemed Session Clerk, Mr. Robert Lawrie, has been for nearly forty years continuously representative Elder, and in recognition of his long and valued services, in 1895 he was elected Moderator of the Presbytery of Hamilton. Only five times has it occurred in the history of our Church that a lay member has been elected to this high position.

The services on the occasion of the "Diamond Jubilee" were conducted on Sunday, May 5th, by the Rev. Dr. Milligan,

of Old St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, who also gave his lecture, "Is Life Worth Living?" on Monday evening. At this service Mr. Lawrie gave a brief historic statement of Knox Church, and Dr. Smith gave a report of the Century Fund canvass, stating that the amount subscribed to date is \$5,728.

In a memento as brief as this must necessarily be, we regret that no attempt can be made to do anything like justice to the generosity and self-denying effort that even a brief ten years of Church work must have meant to many. The best results cannot always be recorded in figures, and many of the most wonderful chapters of Church History will never be written. Nor will space here permit even the naming of those who have served so faithfully in the societies and committees of the individual Church; nevertheless their rewards await them.

With such a record of sixty years witnessing for Christ, let us look forward with fidelity to the God of our fathers, to a still more useful future for Knox Church in the service of the King.