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1854--1904.

JUBILEE SERMON

.. BY ..

REV. G. B. McLEOD, M. A.

PREACHED

FEBRUARY 14TH, 1904

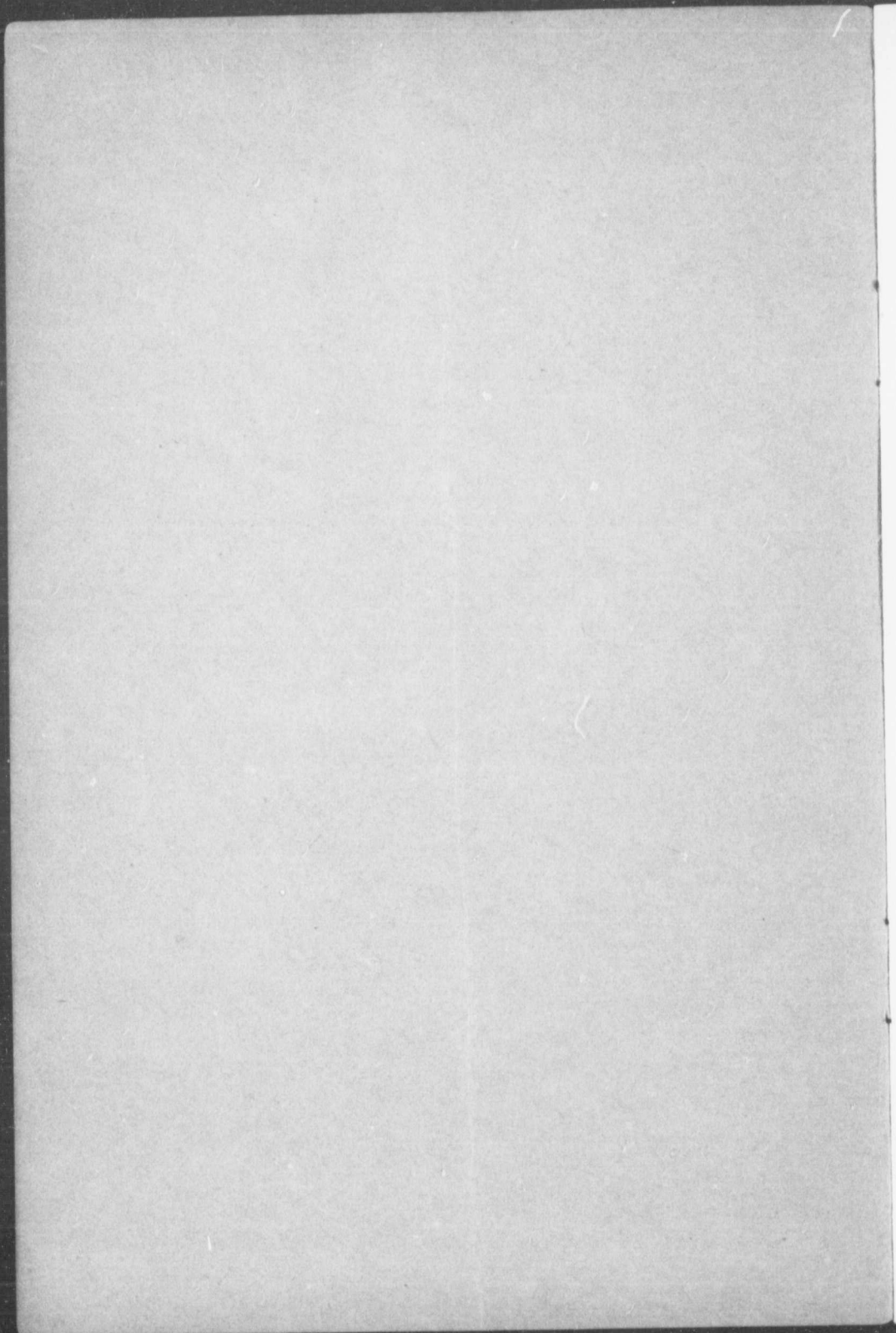
.. IN ..

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA.

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# First Presbyterian Church,

TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA.

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## Fiftieth Anniversary of Opening,

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14th, 1904.

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The Fiftieth Anniversary of the opening of the First Presbyterian Church was observed on February 14th, 1904. It was found impossible to hold the anniversary services on the earlier date, and so the later date was chosen. It was noted by many, as a very happy coincidence, that February 14th was the date of Dr. McCulloch's induction and Jubilee in 1839 and 1889 respectively.

The morning service was conducted by Dr. Forrest, President of Dalhousie College. He very ably reviewed the history of the congregation, basing his remarks on Deuteronomy 8:2.

At 2.15 p. m. a united meeting of the Sabbath Schools of St. Andrew's and First Presbyterian Church was held in First Church Hall, presided over by Mr. C. M. Dawson. Addresses were made by Rev. James W. Falconer, of Fort Massey, Halifax, and by Mr. J. B. Calkin, Superintendent of St. Andrew's Sabbath School. At 3 p. m. the historical address, herein printed, was delivered by Rev. Geo. B. McLeod, M. A., pastor of First Church.

At the evening service Rev. J. W. Falconer preached a forcible and practical sermon from Isaiah 4:2.

The audiences were large at all the services: and the choir, under the leadership of Mrs. John W. Logan, sang some very beautiful and appropriate anthems.

1854. FIRST CHURCH, TRURO. 1904.

## JUBILEE SERMON.

BY THE REV. GEORGE B. McLEOD, M. A.

Preached February 14th, 1904.

"The Lord our God be with us as He was with our Fathers."—1 Kings 8:57.

This text carries us back to the dedication of the Temple of Solomon. Representatives of the people from all parts of the kingdom have come up to worship at Jerusalem. A solemn procession passes from Mount Zion to the heights of Mount Moriah. Sacrifices are offered on the way. The priests bearing the ark of the covenant, symbol of the Divine Presence, place it in the Holy of Holies. Solomon offers the dedication prayer, which is sublimely comprehensive, marvellous in its dignity, humility and trust. His confidence is in God, who had guided his people over floods and desert wastes, conquering their enemies, and bringing them into a kingdom of prosperity and into His temple of worship and of peace. Solomon realizes the greatness of the hour. He knows that life is too serious, its responsibilities too great, its issues too awful to be left to blind chance, or to the guidance of human wisdom; and so he humbly prays: "The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers."

Our thoughts go back to another dedication, not in Jerusalem, but in Truro—the dedication of First Presbyterian Church, January 8th, 1854. But older than the church is the congregation—older by more than eighty-three years. As the temple could be understood only in the light of Israel's past, so our history can be understood only in the light of the history of the men of God who laid the foundations of Presbyterianism in this part of Colchester County. God was with them as with Israel of old. Their faith, their courage, their religious daring are worthy of our emulation. They were men of heart as well

as head. Their religious fervor was kindled at the cross. In their spiritual enthusiasm there was power: for all power begins in heat. All the forces of the earth, the throb of the sea, the currents of air, the power that builds the hills and shapes the coal, that turns winter into summer and night to day are derived from the burning sun. Man has never accomplished anything great in art, literature, science, religion, with the thermometer at zero. When the religious temperature is low we may imitate but we cannot originate. Without the great heart man will not do and dare for righteousness. All that is best in our congregational life has come molten through the heart flames of men and women who felt the burden, the responsibility, the greatness of life, and who in their enthusiasm did great things for God. Their influence can never die. Their works do witness for them. And to-day as we look back over the past may we catch the inspiration of the hour and may the prayer of our hearts go out for the guidance of our fathers' God.

Interesting is the history of our congregation. Familiar is the story of the unfortunate exile of the Acadians, and the occupation of their places by English-speaking settlers. About 1760, or 1761, emigrants from Londonderry, Ireland, who had previously settled in New Hampshire, were brought by the government agent, Colonel McNutt, to Nova Scotia and located in Truro and vicinity. There were in all about fifty-three families or one hundred and twenty souls. These early settlers were mostly Presbyterians, and loyal to the faith of their fathers, they in 1763 petitioned the associate or Burgher-Presbytery of Glasgow for ministerial services. In May, 1764, the petition was renewed; and in May, 1765, it was submitted to the Synod at its meeting in Edinburgh. In response to this petition Mr. Kinloch, a probationer, was sent to Nova Scotia. He was the second Presbyterian minister to visit this province; the Rev. James Lyon, of Princeton, New Jersey, who labored for a few years at Londonderry, having been the first. Mr. Kinloch arrived in July or August of 1765. Two years later, in 1767, the old church in the cemetery, on what is now Robie Street, was erected by the contractor William McNutt. I am indebted to Mr. John Blanchard for a pencil sketch of the building. Some who are with us to-day worshipped in the old meeting-house in the grave-yard, and remember well the quaint box pews, the long communion table down the centre isle, and the large galleries reached by stairways from the porch. Mr. Kinloch ministered to the people for about three years; but declining a call

to become their pastor—the first call, I believe, ever presented to a Presbyterian minister in Nova Scotia—he returned to Scotland in 1769.

In the same year the Associate Synod of Scotland sent to America the Rev. Daniel Cock, a native of Clydesdale, Lanarkshire, with instructions to remain for one year and then return unless the Synod saw fit to order otherwise. Mr. Cock arrived in Nova Scotia in the fall of 1769, and having labored in Truro and vicinity for nearly a year, he was offered and accepted a call on 13th September, 1770, which is the birth-day of our congregation, the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the province—and probably in the Dominion. St. Matthew's, Halifax, was organized earlier than 1770; but it was originally Congregational and did not become Presbyterian until 1783.

The call extended to Rev. Mr. Cock was signed by seven elders, namely, David Archibald, William Fisher, John Johnstone, James Johnstone, Robert Hunter, Samuel Archibald and John Savage. There were also the signatures of forty-four adherents, only two of whom were unable to write their names. The call guaranteed a stipend of £66 for the first two years; £70 for the next two years; and after that £80; with £30 to defray expenses from Scotland. The salary was to be paid half in cash, and half in produce. Mr. Cock returned to Scotland to demit his charge at Carlsdyke, and to bring out his family; and upon his return to Nova Scotia he was inducted as the first pastor of this congregation in 1772.

Dr. McGregor speaks of Mr. Cock as "a man of warm piety, kind manner and primitive simplicity." His ministry was abundantly blessed. He gathered around him not only in Truro and Onslow, but in the new settlements of the surrounding country, a company of devoted men and women who greatly appreciated his labors. After twenty-eight years of hard and faithful work he obtained in 1798 a colleague and successor, the Rev. John Waddell. Seven years later, March, 1805, he died at the ripe age of eighty-eight. The Rev. Daniel Cock, who formerly labored in Klondike, but who is now a missionary of the Canadian Church in India is one of his descendants.

His successor, Mr. Waddell, was also a native of Lanarkshire, being born in the parish of Shotts, April 10th, 1771. Of his early history I have no information. His arts' course which was passed with credit and success was taken at Glasgow college. His theological education was received under Dr. Lawson of

Selkirk. In May, 1797, he was licensed to preach the gospel. In June he was set apart to the ministry and designated to Nova Scotia. On the 12th of August he left Scotland never to return, and reached Truro, by way of New York on the 5th of November. In the following year he received two calls, one to Musquodoboit and Stewiacke, and the other to Truro and Onslow. The latter he accepted, and was inducted into the pastorate of this congregation, November 16th, 1798. The induction sermon was preached by Rev. Hugh Graham, minister of Cornwallis. Mr. Waddell's first sermon as pastor was preached on the following Sabbath, November 18th, from John 21:15-16. In November, 1802, he married a daughter of Colonel Jotham Blanchard, a union of sixteen years, broken by the death of Mrs. Waddell in 1818.

Mr. Waddell is described as "a man of commanding presence . . . with tall, erect, and well proportioned frame." Vigorous in body and in mind he threw himself into the work of the ministry. His labors were not confined to Truro, Onslow until 1816, and Brookfield until 1832, were parts of his congregation. But these were but the centres of his ministerial work. He visited districts many and remote. For forty years he carried the gospel over the hills and valleys of Colechester. He, too, gathered around him a loyal and devoted people who appreciated his sermons and honored the minister and the man. Like Paul, he "magnified his office." But time and hard work tell; and in 1828 he was stricken with paralysis. He partially recovered, but a fall from his carriage in 1836 led to his resignation, and in November of 1842 he passed peacefully away. As Dr. McCulloch has pointed out, November was a month of special significance in the history of this devoted servant of the Lord. In November he arrived in Truro; in November he was settled; in November he was married; in November he was stricken with paralysis; in November he resigned; in November he died.

His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Smith of Stewiacke. In the words of his worthy successor: "He lies in the old graveyard, not far from his sainted predecessor. Like him he loved the old spot, replete with so many precious memories; and over the graves of both are placed memorials, at which many gazed with reverence and gratitude, when the old cemetery was the scene of Sabbath privilege; and at which, many whom he baptized, trained, married, and admitted to the fellowship of the church have since often looked, as they thought of scenes long

gone by, and perhaps whispered to themselves: "Let me die the death of the righteous and may my last end be like his."

How much we owe to those worthy men who laid the foundation of our congregation and prepared the way for First Presbyterian Church. How much they endured for the sake of the church and the Master. These were the days of imperfect roads, forest trails, horse-back, homespun, the sickle and the scythe. The days of the railway, telegraph and telephone had not yet come. The comforts and conveniences of life, as we understand them, were unknown. But they were men of heart and purpose; men of fine missionary spirit and of intense activity; men who unselfishly gave themselves to the founding of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in the wilds of a new country. Their names are on the long roll-call of the heroes of God; and their worthy deeds still blossom from the grave.

In 1838, four years before the death of Mr. Waddell, a call was extended to Mr. (afterwards Doctor) McCulloch, son of Dr. Thomas McCulloch, whose name is so closely connected with Presbyterianism in Pictou County. Mr. McCulloch preached his first sermon on the 11th of September, 1838, in the old church in the cemetery, and on the 14th of February, 1839, just sixty-five years ago to-day, he was inducted into his first and only pastorate.

A few years later owing to the dilapidated condition of the old church and its remoteness from the village, which was fast becoming a centre of population, it was decided to provide a new place of worship; and the site on which First Church now stands was purchased for \$400. The one-half of the amount was paid out of the church funds. The balance was raised by the efforts of a few enthusiastic ladies—Mrs. Flemming Blanchard, Miss Margaret Christie, and others whose names I have been unable to obtain. The building was erected by a Mr. Savage. The pews were sold by auction realizing a sum that removed all indebtedness from the church. On the 8th of January, 1851, fifty years ago, First Church was opened and dedicated to the worship of God. The particulars of the opening I have been unable to ascertain. It is worthy of note however, that the pastor was assisted by the Rev. James Waddell, the son of his predecessor, that the Rev. John Cameron is the only surviving clergyman of those who were present, and that the ordinance of baptism was administered to the infant son of Mrs. Fleming Blanchard, now Dr. Robert Blanchard, of Winnipeg, the first to receive baptism in the new church.



Many years later Dr. McCulloch speaks of the opening as "a memorable day in the history of Presbyterianism in Truro." "No visible cloud," he adds, "filled the Sanctuary as in the Temple of old: but that it has witnessed often the Presence of the Gracious Master can be attested by many an aged worshipper to-day, and doubtless by many who are worshipping before the throne." "Not less impressive," he goes on to say, "was the closing of the old church with all its hallowed memories of work done for the Master, through many years of toil and travel, by those who lie under the very shadow of the sanctuary, where they proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ, and where they await His second coming without sin unto salvation." Having paid this glowing tribute to his predecessors he modestly adds that in the old church he "was honored to follow in their footsteps from September 11th, 1838, to January 8th, 1854, when the new church took up the grand old story of an unbroken Presbyterianism."

The old church, it may be added, was removed to the town by Simon K. Eaton and placed north of Queen Street near the Common, where it was used for many years as a Temperance Hall, and also for lectures, entertainments, and various other meetings. It was rented for some time by some members and adherents of the Church of Scotland, who enjoyed the ministrations of the Rev. John Martin, formerly of St. Andrew's, Halifax. From this mission has sprung the flourishing congregation of St. Paul's on East Queen Street. A few years after the removal of the church it became the property of Professor Ross, late Principal of Dalhousie College, who sold it about 1880 to Dominick Fumegalli, an Italian painter, who resided in Truro for many years. During Fumegalli's ownership it was destroyed by fire, June, 1888.

It was soon discovered that the seating capacity of the new church was inadequate to meet the needs of the growing congregation. The town was rapidly increasing in population. The Normal School, too, was opened in 1855. Many of the students were from Presbyterian centres, and worshipped in First Church. It was therefore found necessary to enlarge the seating capacity by adding twenty feet to the east end of the building, which was accordingly done in 1859.

It is to be regretted that the suggestion of the pastor to have the church removed ten feet nearer the centre of the lot was not carried out, as this would effectually have solved the

problem the congregation is facing to-day. A prominent ship-builder offered to remove the building for the small sum of five pounds, just enough to defray expenses; but the managers refused the offer on the ground that it could not be done.

Coming back to the opening of the church we find that the elders of 1854 were: Alexander Kent, Samuel Archibald, John D. Christie, John J. Archibald, Hugh Moore, John Faulkner, David W. Archibald, Samuel J. Archibald, John Waddell, W. C. Smith, Robert O. Christie, and Matthew McCurdy. In 1863 eleven elders were added: J. K. Blair, John F. Crowe, Isaac Dunlap, Andrew Johnson, James F. Blanchard, Edward Blanchard, John L. Archibald, Thomas Miller, Charles Christie, Robt. H. Smith and Robert Smith, (merchant). In 1870, at the time of the congregational centennial only four of the twelve elders of 1854 were living, namely, Alexander Kent, David W. Archibald, Dr. Waddell, and Samuel J. Archibald; of those, the last two named were non-residents of Truro, one in St. John and the other in Musquodoboit. Alexander Kent, the last of the elders of Mr. McCulloch's induction, died in 1872, having served in the eldership for sixty-nine years. Death and other causes soon thinned the ranks of the elders of 1863, and in 1875 there were elected Alexander Miller, Henry Tupper, Robert Dickson, George Ross, Yuill Loughhead, and L. B. McElhinney. In 1887 there were added John D. McKay, C. P. Blanchard, and John S. Miller. Twelve years later, 1899, Daniel Turner, W. K. Murray, and Rupert H. Reid became members of the Session. Of the thirty-five elders who have officiated since the opening of the church only twelve survive, and of these only seven are elders of First Church. The remaining five are Edward Blanchard, John F. Crowe of St. Andrew's, John L. Archibald of Harmony, Robert Dickson of Antigonish, and George Ross of Springhill. With respect to the present Session the words of Dr. McCulloch in speaking of the Session of 1870 will fittingly apply. "They are worthy of the entire confidence of the congregation."

During the past fifty years of congregational life, one figure stands out prominently and occupies the chief place in the history of the church—the revered Dr. McCulloch. I had the pleasure of meeting him on June 2nd, 1891, when I was licensed by the Presbytery of Truro in the old Hall that has since been replaced by the present beautiful and commodious building. It is a pleasurable memory, a link between the present and the past.

His was not at first the compact congregation of to-day. At

the date of his induction in 1839 it extended nearly twenty-five miles from Old Barns and Lower Village on the West to Kemptown and Riversdale on the East. It took in Greenfield eleven miles from Truro, extended from Onslow Mountains on the North to McCallum's ten miles out on the Old Stewiacke Road and to Johnson's Crossing, now Hilden, six miles out on the Halifax Road. Over this widely scattered congregation he went preaching, teaching, visiting, catechizing, holding prayer meetings, and establishing Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes. By splendid self sacrifice he carved five congregations out of one. The four others, besides First Church, being in the order of their separation from the parent stem—Clifton, Coldstream, St. Andrew's and Harmony.

The first of the congregations thus formed was Old Barns, or Clifton. It was united with the Beaver's Brook section of the Rev. Mr. Baxter's congregation and organized into a separate charge about 1859.

The next step was the organization of the Eastern section of the congregation into a separate charge. The matter was brought to the attention of the Presbytery in 1868. The petition was supported by Dr. McCulloch, as moderator, and by Mr. Charles Christie, as representative elder of the Session. But no immediate steps having been taken the Session engaged the Rev. Thomas Cumming as assistant to their pastor. This, however, proved too great a strain on the financial strength of the congregation, and in 1869 the Presbytery was again petitioned to consider the matter. This petition was supported by Dr. McCulloch, Mr. Isaac Dunlap, and Mr. Thomas Miller. It was urged by the petitioners that seven places besides the central church required stated religious services, namely, Lower Village, Johnson's Crossing, Harmony, Greenfield, Union Church, Kemptown, and Riversdale; that the growing town of Truro needed special attention if Presbyterianism was to hold its own among the other denominations; that in the outlying districts other denominations were seeking a foothold; and, therefore, in the interests of Presbyterianism both in town and country immediate action was imperative. The sum of \$80 was promised by First Church to the new congregation, provided the latter raised \$400; and Dr. McCulloch was willing to give a monthly service to Union Church, which might help to reconcile the people to separation. As a result of this petition the congregation of Coldstream, including Union Church, Greenfield, Kemptown, and Riversdale was organized, July 6th, 1871.

Two years later, 1873, a further division was contemplated. The rapid growth of population, and the ever increasing demands of ministerial work rendered a further rearrangement necessary, "and though the feelings and attachments of the people were opposed to separation yet rising high above personal feelings, so general and harmonious was the conviction of the absolute duty of separation and, in the interests of Presbyterianism, of the establishment of a new charge, that it was resolved to apply to the Presbytery to take the steps requisite for that purpose." As a result, a new congregation under the temporary title of "Truro West," and including Lower Village, and Johnson's Crossing, or Hilden, was organized, January 1st, 1875. Young Street was the dividing line between the two congregations, but the right to choose their place of worship was reserved to all parties on both sides of the line. The names of the elders of the new congregation were J. K. Blair, Robert Smith, Isaac Dunlap, John F. Crowe and J. F. Blanchard. The names of the elders remaining in the old congregation were David Waddell Archibald, Thomas Miller, Andrew Johnson and John L. Archibald now of Harmony. The new congregation worshipped at first in the Young Men's Christian Association; but in 1889, five years later, a new church was erected on the corner of King and Duke Streets, and the name of "Truro West" was changed to St. Andrew's. Beginning with seventy-five families and one hundred and twenty-one communicants, St. Andrew's has become a flourishing congregation of one hundred and seventy-five families and three hundred and seventy-five communicants.

Of the original congregation only Harmony remained under the care of First Church. But in 1885 it was made a separate station; and recently with North River it has been raised to the status of a congregation under the ministry of Rev. R. P. Murray.

The work of Dr. McCulloch was almost done. After a long and successful pastorate of more than forty-seven years, during which he had "added 1008 to the fellowship of the church, baptized 960 persons, performed 520 marriages, and officiated at 810 funerals," he resigned his charge, December 31st, 1885. The centennial of the congregation had been celebrated in 1878. The Fiftieth Anniversary of his ordination and induction was fittingly observed in 1889. And on July 14th, 1895, he passed to his reward. The words upon his memorial tablet reveal the man: "Bold to oppose the wrong, eager to advance the right, ready to help the needy, a beloved pastor, and faithful follower of Jesus Christ." Upon the remaining chapters of the history

of the church I need not dwell. Dr. McCulloch was succeeded by Rev. Mr. Robbins in 1886. He was followed by Rev. Mr. Falconer in 1896. And he by the present pastor in 1902. The present pastor is the sixth in the history of the congregation—a history of more than 133 years.

First Church has had a splendid record. It stands at the fountain-head of Presbyterianism in Nova Scotia. To this congregation belongs the honor of having taken the first steps towards uniting Burghers and Anti-Burghers in the days gone by, a union which has been followed by larger unions, until Presbyterianism stands united from Atlantic to Pacific. The first Bible Society in British America was organized here in 1810 by Rev. Mr. Waddell. It was a congregational society, however, and not a Branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which had been organized in 1801. Here, too, was organized the first Bible class in the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion. The first members were: Miss Jane Archibald, Miss Jane Blanchard, Miss G. Henderson, Miss M. Witter, and the Misses Alice and Margaret Moore. Here also originated the first missionary prayer meeting, which has greatly fostered the missionary spirit of our congregation. It is interesting to note in a sessional minute of February, 1856, eight years after Dr. and Mrs. Geddie had been settled in Ancitium, a resolution to support the young people of the congregation in their effort to maintain a native teacher in the New Hebrides. First Church has ever been a missionary church. From her walls have gone forth to Trinidad Miss Blackader and the late Minnie Archibald; and to India, Mrs. Fraser Campbell and the Rev. Daniel Cock.

To the home church she has given Rev. C. P. Pitblado, Winnipeg. Rev. E. A. McCurdy, Agent of the Eastern Division of the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Edwin Smith, Musquodoboit, the late Rev. Frederick Archibald, of St. Thomas, Ontario, and the late Rev. Howard Archibald, of Australia.

Some of the fathers of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia have worshipped here, such as Dr. Lyall, Principal Ross, Dr. Keir, Professor Thomas McCulloch, all of the Seminary; and Dr. Forrester of Normal School, which began its career in Truro in 1855.

I cannot close this sketch without making reference to one who would have been delighted to have worshipped with us to-day—the late Mrs. Little. She loved the Presbyterian Church,

She loved to share in the privilege of worship and of service.  
With the Psalmist she could sing:

“How lovely is thy dwelling place,  
O Lord of Hosts to me:  
The tabernacles of thy grace,  
How pleasant, Lord, they be.”

But she has joined the worshippers above, “the choir invisible,” not of the “immortal dead,” but of the living; and through the splendid generosity of Mr. Little a memorial organ will soon be placed within our church, and consecrated to the service of the Master.

Standing thus at the fiftieth milestone of the historic journey, and looking back over the past may we catch the inspiration of the hour and go forth to larger work for the Master, as we weave the days and years into the web of life. There are with us some who were present at the opening of the church fifty years ago. They have come a long way upon the journey. They look back over the past with its tears and smiles, its sorrows and its joys. They see the way marked by the graves of their loved ones. The companions of their youth have fallen on the journey. Only here and there a solitary traveller to remind them of the old associations, and to bear them company to the end. “Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life,” saith God.

First Church has ever stood for righteousness, justice, truth, and a pure gospel. May the standard never be lowered. Let us be loyal to the best traditions of the past. In the ringing words of Dr. McCulloch's Jubilee address: “No time-serving, no expediency, no novelties, no cowardice, no divisions. Stand together and together stand for the faith once delivered to the saints.” “And may the Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers.”