Historical Sketch

Wesley United Church

Amherstburg - Ontario

Front Entrance
The EDITH and LORNE PIERCE COLLECTION of CANADIANA

Queen's University at Kingston
HISTORICAL BOOKLET

COMMEMORATING

FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY

of the Present Building and
The One Hundred and Thirty-Ninth Anniversary
of the coming of Nathan Bangs

1803 - 1892 - 1942
Present building dedicated in 1892
Officials for 1942

OFFICIAL BOARD
Rev. Enos Hart, B.A., B.D., Chairman
John Turnbull, Recording Steward

SESSION
1944—C. Atkinson, R. L. Wigle, G. Carter
1943—H. Campbell (Clerk), H. Gibb, R. Dorsey
1942—J. Parks, F. Horne, C. Bonsor

STEWARDS
1944—John Turnbull (Chairman), Ed Dowler, Noble Gibb (Secretary) Harold Atkinson
1943—Everett Ong, Bert Godden, Allan Parks, Murray Ong
1942—Bruce MacGregor, Dr. E. R. Pearce, G. L. Duffin, Ross Hatch

TRUSTEES

CHURCH SCHOOL
Superintendent—H. A. L. Honor

W. M. S.
President—Mrs. H. A. L. Honor

EDNA HART EVENING AUXILIARY
President—Mrs. John Turnbull

WOMAN'S ASSOCIATION
President—Mrs. Norman Cornwall

YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNION
President—Stanley McManemy

M. & M. COMMITTEE
Chairman—W. K. Sidey

REPRESENTATIVE TO PRESBYTERY
John Parks; Alternate—John Turnbull

ORGANIST—Mrs. Colin Wigle. CHOIR LEADER—Mr. Jack Lewis

CHURCH TREASURER
Ross Hatch
Foreword

We send this booklet forth with gratitude to God for the vision, consecration and courage of our forebears. For one hundred and thirty-nine years men and women of the same religious persuasion as ourselves have here been making their Christian witness.

We are celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of our present Church building in the midst of the most devastating war that the world has ever known. We are seeking to bear our witness in a day when old things are passing away, and when God seems to be saying to us:

"Behold, I make all things new."

The shape of things to come is uncertain, but it is our conviction that Christ, and He alone, holds the key to the future.

Read what herein you find with thankfulness and with the consciousness that generations yet unborn will read the record we are writing. As we are encouraged by those who have gone before, let us so live that we will inspire those who come after and may the church, which we love, which has stood for fifty years by the busy highway, long remain to witness to all who pass this way that "they that trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion, they shall never be moved." As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from this time forth and even forevermore."
The Early Days of the Church in Amherstburg

CHAPTER I

IT APPEARS from old chronicles that the first Christian ordained to preach the Gospel who passed this way was Father Hennepin who accompanied La Salle on his famous journey of exploration in 1679. On August 10th of that year they passed into the Detroit River and Father Hennepin records their delight in the beautiful scenery and abundance of natural products.

About 1702 the remnants of the once-numerous Hurons (the Wyandots), were gathered around a Jesuit Mission established at “Bois Blanc.” Recent research seems to point out the actual site of the early Mission Church to be on the mainland about where the ancient Mathew Elliott homestead still stands. Owing to the outbreak of Indian wars, these Christian Indians were in 1752 removed nearer to the protection of Fort Pontchartrain at Detroit and established anew where Assumption Church is now in old Sandwich.

About 1784 some officers and men of the Indian Department settled along the Detroit River front in what is now Malden Township and among them was the noted Simon Girty. It was at his home where one of the earliest-recorded Protestant services was held. This was in 1793, and was a “meeting” conducted by William Savery, a Quaker from Pennsylvania, who was one of six men commissioned by his church to bring to an end, if possible, bitter Indian wars then going on in the Northwest Territory.

This “meeting,” as Quakers term their services, is recorded in a “(Journal of the Life, Travels, etc., of Wm. Savery.” Philadelphia, 1863)

... “4th August, 1793. First Day, (Sunday).

... “The afternoon being pleasant, had a meeting at Simon Girty’s, about one and a half miles from our camp (at Mathew Elliott’s), at which a number of Indians were present and behaved soberly. General Lincoln, General Chapin, Capt. Hamilton, Lieut. Givens, and several seamen also attended. I believe it was to satisfaction. The few scattered white people in this settlement, many of whom have been prisoners of war, have no opportunity of public worship; yet some of them are glad of our meetings; among whom was the wife of Simon Girty, who also had been a prisoner among the Indians.”
The Beginning of Methodism in Amherstburg

THE COMING OF NATHAN BANGS

After his ordination at the New York Conference in 1803 a young man went to Bishop Ashbury and made known to him his conviction, that he had received a providential call to the Mission of Western Upper Canada. The keen eyes of the veteran leader of Methodism lighted up as he gazed upon the young evangelist. "You shall go my son," was his immediate reply.

That young man was Nathan Bangs, the first Methodist Saddle-back preacher in these parts.

Concerning his journey he writes: "No sooner was my way thus opened than a host of difficulties rallied to prevent my going; suggestions about my youth, my want of health, want of money, the distance—it being, by the route I must go, about 600 miles—and a thousand other obstacles; but I resolved by the help of God to press through them and fulfil my mission.

With but $15 in my pocket I set out—entered Canada by way of Kingston, then went up the shore of Lake Ontario until we finally arrived at the head of the lakes—Niagara. My money was all expended. I had eighty miles still to travel before I could reach my destined field.

New difficulties presented themselves and I knew not how I could advance any further. I went into the woods, kneeled down and wept and prayed. Finally, the words came forcibly to my mind, 'The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.' I arose with renewed courage saying: "I will go in the strength of the Lord for he has the hearts of all men and can turn them which way soever he will." Before I left these parts one friend after another put into my hand money amounting to eleven dollars—enough for my journey."

On about August 9th he arrived with a fellow-traveller at Delaware, and the following day set off at day-break for a ride of forty miles through long woods. That night they spent in a small log-hut, inhabited by a Frenchman. Resuming their journey the next day which was Saturday, they came in the afternoon to the first house in a white settlement—believed to be on the site of what is now the city of Chatham. What took place at this point is given in the young preacher's own words: "Do you want the gospel preached here?" I said to a man in the farmyard. "Yes that we do. Do you preach the gospel?" "Yes," I answered. "Well then," he said, "get down and come in." I replied, "I have come a great distance to preach the gospel in this region. It is now Saturday afternoon. Tomorrow being the Sabbath Day I must have a place to preach in before I alight from my horse." He deliberated for a few moments and then said, "I have a house for you to preach in, victuals and lodgings for yourself and provender for your horse, and you shall be welcome to all if you will come in." 'God has made my way very plain thus far,' I said to myself, "and therefore I will praise him."
"The man rode through the settlement for ten miles. The next morning the house was crowded. I believe, I preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. I then said, 'All who wish to have more of such preaching rise up. They all rose—every man, woman and child. I then notified them that in two weeks, God willing, they might expect preaching again, and closed the meeting. Thus was my circuit begun.'

About August 14th he arrived in Sandwich where he preached in the evening. It is thought that from here he went across the river to Detroit. Returning to Sandwich he came along the river to Amherstburg, from here going along the shore of Lake Erie among settlements of American, English, Scotch, Irish and Dutch emigrants. Thus he completed his circuit. A more destitute region he says he had never seen. Young people had arrived at the age of 16 who had never heard preaching. "But," he adds, "although the people generally were very loose in their morals, they seemed ripe for the Gospel and received God's messenger with great kindness. They treated me as an angel of God, and as St. Paul said respecting the Galatians, 'It seemed as if they would willingly have plucked out their own eyes and given them to me if it could have added to my comfort.'"

That happened 139 years ago, and it is safe to say there were Methodists in Amherstburg from that day until 1925 when all Methodists joined with Presbyterians and Congregationalists to form The United Church of Canada with which 190 families in this town and countryside are now identified.

From that time on Amherstburg became an appointment at which the itinerant preacher, stationed on the Thames circuit, would periodically call. Nathan Bangs left these parts in November 1804. After spending four years in Eastern Canada he returned to the U. S. where he became an outstanding leader of the church. His successor on the Thames circuit was William Case who also is known to have visited Amherstburg. He later became a prominent leader of the early Methodist Church in Canada. These men were followed by others whose names are not as well remembered, perhaps because their lives were cut short by an early death; for it is said, that such were the perils of the frontier life, that nearly one half of the Methodist Itinerant Preachers died before the age of thirty; about two-thirds died after twelve years service.

At an early date—how early we do not know—a class was formed in Amherstburg and a leader appointed. The Methodist Class Meeting was one of the most distinctive characteristics, and perhaps the most hallowing institution of early Methodism. It was based on the family idea of the church. The members of the congregation would be gathered together into classes, each one with a leader. These would meet each Sunday for fellowship, discipline, instruction, and encouragement in the Christian life. These class meetings became also the training ground for the local preacher—a gifted layman, licensed to preach, who would take charge of the service on
the Sunday when the minister would be preaching in some other part of his wide circuit. Our church register records the names of the members of the Amherstburg Class, Malden Class, Colchester Town Hall Class, Sackville Class, Atkin Class and the Anderdon Indian Class from August 30, 1859, to 1885. Amherstburg Methodism produced many class leaders. Our records show the names of John C. Iler, Gore Atkin, Peter Wright, John Thorne, James Hamilton, Mary Lane, Joseph Shepley, Silas Brown, Henry Atkin. Other class leaders were Solomon Shepley, Daniel Gravelline, Alonso Mickle, John Beetham, D. S. Wigle, Curtis Bertrond, Eliza Atkin, Anne Shepley, John Sellars. There were a number of local preachers—Gore Atkin, Albert Truax, Henry Atkin, D. A. Maxwell, Francis White, James Martin, John Honor, Sam Honor, Ronald Utton, Jabez Stallwood and Mrs. Dr. Prudham.

As years went by several branches of Methodism, which had their origin in the Old Land, took root on Canadian soil, and gained a following among the early settlers. Amherstburg, along with almost every other Methodist Church in Essex County belonged to the Wesleyan branch of the Church. There being no local division in the Methodist forces, the Amherstburg church was little affected by the Union movements that went on among the Methodists in Canada leading up to the formation of The Methodist Church of Canada in 1884. It can also be said that the larger Union of Methodists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians in 1925 had little local effect upon Wesley Church, henceforth to be known as Wesley United Church. The Congregational Church had closed some years before, the Presbyterian Church elected to remain out of the Union. However, as the years have passed by a goodly number of both men and women of Presbyterian tradition, moving to the town, have identified themselves with Wesley Church and have made a distinctive contribution to her life and work as office bearers in the societies or on the Boards of the church or as teachers in the Sunday School. Tradition tells that the first Methodist Church was on the east side of Ramsay Street between Richmond and Murray Streets. In later years when a new church was built on Seymour Street, this became the residence of James Hamilton, who for almost 50 years was an honored Trustee. Amherstburg church gave its name to a Circuit which in the early years was quite extensive. At one time it comprised stations in both Essex and Kent Counties. In 1843 from the “Mission House” in Amherstburg the Circuit rider had to make the rounds of Colchester, Mersea, Romney, Tilbury, Irish Settlement, Maidstone, Indian Village and Anderdon.

In 1856 from the establishment of new Circuits the stations were considerably less in number and are listed as follows: Colchester, Atkins, Anderdon, Indianville, Stoney Hill, and Amherstburg. Of those mentioned Indianville was the Methodist Class on the Anderdon Reserve. Stoney Hill, also called “Marble Village,” was the small settlement around the stone quarry, also in Anderdon, and from about 1840 was the home of many fugitive slaves.
By 1875 the Circuit was further reduced to Amherstburg, Malden, Harrow, Oxley, and Anderdon. By 1890 but two charges remained, Malden and Amherstburg. Before this Malden numbered several classes listed as Atkins, Squires and Lake Shore, with sometimes mention of Webb's. Finally, in 1905 the Malden charge withdrew and was served by its own minister.

In 1874 the Seymour Street Church was old enough to require extensive repairs. These were completed at a cost of over $1,300 and was re-opened on the 29th of November of that year.

In 1887 the first old church, the "Mission House," was destroyed in the great fire which swept away all the buildings on the north half of the block bounded by Richmond, Ramsay, Murray and Bathurst Streets.

When the Seymour Church again required enlarging and repairs, the decision was made to build a new church on a different site. Negotiations were entered into with a view of once again acquiring the site of the old "Mission House" for the proposed new church, but when it was discovered the plan of the new church required a wider lot than was available on the Hamilton lot it was necessary to look elsewhere. Thus it came about that the present site of Wesley Church was selected for a building site. When purchased, a livery barn stood on the property, but arrangements were made with the lessee, Chas. Kemp, whereby he bought some thirty feet of the property and moved his barn on to that portion. The great fire, in 1887, previously mentioned, had swept this area and a former roller-skating rink used by the Salvation Army had stood where stands the Wesley Church of today.

The Seymour Street Wesleyan Methodist Church, sometime after 1892 when the new church was built on Richmond Street, was sold to Colin Wigle, miller, who used it for a warehouse where he sold bran and other feeds. Some years later the structure was moved and placed on the corner of Sandwich and St. Arnaud Streets and changed into a residence which still stands.
Our First Church Building, Ramsay Street at Richmond Street

Wesleyan Methodist Church, Seymore Street, Amherstburg. Frame building, dimensions (in 1884) 28½' x 48½', one storey high.

Wesleyan Methodist Parsonage, 1884, Gore Street. Frame building, 21' x 38', two storeys high. Lot 10 E.S. Seymore Street.
THE TRUSTEE BOARD Minute Book

CHAPTER 11

THE TRUSTEE BOARD Minute Book has many interesting items in its pages, a faithful record of the aspirations and trials of the congregation down through the years. In it are found entries recording beginnings, special efforts, building and re-modelling, disciplinary action, acknowledgments of service, and bits of human interest.

From its pages can be traced the building of the Seymore Street Church (which succeeded the original Methodist place of worship on Ramsay Street), the acquiring of the Parsonage on Gore Street in 1865 for $300, the re-modelling of the Seymore Street Church in 1874, the buying of a new Parsonage on Richmond Street in 1882, and in 1892 the building of Wesley Church.

1865—Trustee meeting held in Amherstburg, April 3, 1865. James Hamilton, Henry Wright, William McGee, Thomas Buckner, Joseph Graveline, Samuel Atkin (successor to Asa Wilcox, deceased), Amos Curtis Brush (successor to Theodore Wright). It was resolved to purchase a house off Mr. Wilson for a Parsonage for the sum of $300 to be paid in six annual instalments at 6% interest. The first instalment to be paid the 26th of March, 1866, for which sums the Board authorized Bro. Hamilton and Bro. Graveline and Bro. Wright to act as a committee to receive the property and devise ways and means of payment.

1874, Sept. 18—"Resolved that we proceed to repair the church according to the plan and specifications as furnished by Messrs. Boyle and Gibb. Carried." Further resolutions were passed regarding the circulation of subscription lists, and borrowing money. Evidently tenders were called for as later Park and Borrowman received the contract for the re-modelling as the lowest bidders at a price of $1,070. The church was re-opened on the 24th of November, 1874, the Rev. J. A. Williams and W. S. Griffith officiating.

THE TRUSTEES PASS CENSURE

April, 1882—A new organ is purchased. "The Chairman (Rev. Thomas Jackson) then referred to the matter of removal of certain seats and fixtures in the church, and which some of the Trustees complained had been done without the knowledge or consent of the Board; he stated he was very sorry he allowed it to be done; that he knew it was contrary to the rules and usages of the church; but as some of the members of the church and congregation expressed their opinions as the repairs were going on in the church they might better remove the singer's seats at once, he consented, as they did not anticipate any objections from the Trustee Board.

"After several members had expressed their disappointment of the manner in which it was done, the following Resolution was passed unanimously: "Moved by John Thorne seconded by John Heard, whereas certain
members of our church and congregation have recently taken upon themselves to remove certain seats and other fixtures in our church, without the permission or consent of the Trustees, and whereas the discipline of our church as laid down in the "Model Deed Act," alone authorizes the Trustees to make such changes as may be deemed necessary in our church buildings, therefore, Resolved, that we enter our most solemn protest against such an infringement of our prerogatives, and also express it as being in our opinion detrimental to the best interest of the church, inasmuch as there cannot be harmony without order: Therefore with the view of maintaining the authority vested in us as Trustees, and to carry out the discipline of our church, we cannot refrain from censuring the persons above referred to, and emphatically to express our determination that in future we will not allow such a proceeding to occur without having the discipline strictly enforced.

1883—The Trustees purchase folding chairs to place in the aisles as the congregation was increasing. (2 dozen chairs for $18.00).

1884, April 12—"The following were appointed a committee to consider what is best to be done to renovate the church building and improve its appearance: John Heard, Nathan Brush and John Thorne. The said committee to report at the next meeting.

May 17—"The following resolution was adopted: 'That the Rev. Mr. Hodson at the approaching Conference do ask the consent of same to allow the Trustee Board to sell the present church premises and apply the proceeds toward erection of a new church.'

"Moved by N. Brush, seconded by John Waters, and adopted, that an advertisement be inserted in The Amherstburg Echo offering the church premises for sale, application to be made to John Heard, Sr., the price to be $1,500.'

1885—Dispose of old stable (on new Parsonage lot). Build woodshed.
1886—Redecorate Church. Build new picket fence on Seymore Street church property "painted on Seymore, unpainted on Gore."

1889, March 30—"Appoints a committee to investigate the matter of lighting the church with electricity. The matter of lighting the church with the electrical light was introduced, and after some general conversation the following resolution was put to the meeting and carried: That Messrs. Borrowman, Jason Pulford, and the secretary (John Thorne), be a committee to see Mr. Wigle and ascertain from him on what terms he would be willing to erect the necessary apparatus for lighting the church with electricity and if the cost does not exceed $40 per annum, said committee to enter into contract with the Electric Light Company to have the church, as soon as convenient, lighted with the electric lights."

The said committee was also requested to see Mr. Thad Harris, the janitor, in reference to a reduction in his salary, if the electric lights are introduced."

1890, Feb.—The committee reported against installing electric lights at present "as it was a matter of doubt if the lights would prove suitable for church purposes."
QUARTERLY BOARD MINUTES

1912, Feb. 6—“Ballot vote was then taken by the Quarterly Board on "Church Union." Thirteen votes were cast for Union and none against it.”

1912, May 7—“The church membership roll was read over for the purpose of revising same. Membership remains at 241. The question of Mr. Samuel Honor’s qualifications as a local preacher were satisfactorily answered, and he continued in the office.”

1912, Nov. 5—“Moved by W. W. Trimble and seconded by W. H. Jones, that the old Communion Service be disposed of by Messrs. Park and Curtis as their judgment may dictate.—Carried.”

HOLIDAYS FOR THE MINISTER

1913, Aug. 6—“Moved by W. H. Jones, seconded by T. J. Harris that the Pastor (Rev. A. W. Tonge) be granted two Sundays vacation the last of August and that the Pulpit Supply Committee provide supplies.—Carried.” Rev. Murray Stuart came as assistant to Mr. Tonge. Both Rev. Tonge and his wife died in Amherstburg.

Anecdotes

CHAPTER III

The Story is told of a revival meeting held in the old Methodist Church on Seymore Street, near Gore when a revivalist had so worked on the feelings of his audience of young men that all resolved to take what he called the red ribbon pledge. This pledge was to the effect that from thence they would neither use tobacco nor alcoholic beverages. The pledge was symbolized by the wearing of a piece of red ribbon. The meeting was so successful that the supply of red ribbon was exhausted but the deacons were equal to the emergency. They crossed the street to the J. D. Burk store where with some difficulty they aroused the night watchman who let them in and supplied their deficiency.

When the meeting broke up and all the pledged had been decorated with their red ribbon, one was seen, as he left the church, to throw his plug of chewing tobacco in the bed of weeds adjoining the church. However, three days later in the pangs of backsliding he was back in the weeds making careful search for the now precious plug which he had so heroically cast off a few nights before. Such is the stuff of which we mortals are made. Some rise to fall again.
Anecdote of Rev. Thomas Jackson, Minister of
Wesley Church, 1879-1882

REV. THOMAS JACKSON, while a pastor on the Amherstburg Circuit, frequently visited Detroit. In those days, in the winter, when navigation had ceased, the usual way of travelling to Detroit was by means of the Canada Southern Railroad. This railroad at that time did not touch Amherstburg, and the nearest station was at the village of Gordon, one mile above Amherstburg. Here the trains of cars were ferried across the Detroit River to Stoney Island. From Stoney Island there was a bridge to Gross Isle and another bridge from there to the mainland and thence the railroad found its way to Detroit. At Gordon there were two slips where the car ferries could dock. Returning from one such trip the car ferry which carried the Rev. Jackson for some reason docked at the Upper Slip instead of the usual place opposite present-day Brunner Ave.

Now local passengers were in the habit of leaving the train as soon as it docked and so walk ashore rather than wait for the coach to be hauled off the ferry and backed down to Gordon Station. So it happened on this occasion the Rev. Jackson, not realizing the ferry was docking at a different wharf, blithely stepped off into the night and twenty feet of winter water. He was a sprinkler, and no advocate of total immersion, and his yells of consternation soon brought help. While in the water his overcoat helped keep him afloat, and he was easily rescued, and suffered no ill-effects.

Anecdote of Rev. E. S. Jones, 1872-76

THE REV. E. S. JONES, Methodist preacher, like many of his brethren, was a good judge of horses. He liked a fine animal and drove a good span himself. It was perhaps but natural that the ministers of that day liked horses, for the roads were bad and the Circuit long, and it took a good horse to carry the parson through.

It is related that the Rev. Jones sometimes indulged in a little “brush” on the road with some parishioner whose rig happened to be going the same way. His zest for these trials of speed afforded some amusement to the worldly-minded but this was giving vent merely to his exuberance brought forth by the performance of a good, fast horse.

It was with appreciation, one day, that Rev. Jones stood watching a team driven by Mathew Rankin. Rankin was engaged in placing logs on the raap of the Rankin and Thomas Saw Mill (which then stood on the present site of Waterworks Park). The Rev. Jones enjoyed seeing the play of muscle as the team pulled the heavy logs from the stock pile. Finally Rankin’s team was hitched to a log which they failed to move. The preacher observed to Rankin that in his estimation they should be able to draw it without difficulty. Rankin replied, rather pointedly, that they would if the preacher wasn’t present. Jones took the hint and departed for Rankin’s team was used to being urged by a stream of words not usually recited in the presence of the cloth!
Lights

The General Illumination in use in this vicinity was candle light until after the discovery of petroleum when "coal oil" or kerosene lights came into use. The old Methodist Church Minutes mention in 1869 that coal oil lamps were to be used. These lasted until the coming of the electric light plant to Amherstburg.

In 1890 at a meeting of the Trustees the question of having electric lights in the church was discussed and a committee appointed to investigate the matter. Their report was to the effect that the electric lights were not suitable for use in our church.

The next mention is as follows: "Moved by Messrs. Brush and Botsford that the Epworth League be empowered to put lights into the church. Moved by Messrs. Waters and Pulford that the collection of the Anniversary Services be given the League towards cost of putting in lights."

Evidently these plans fell through for several years later the following is found in the Minutes, Jan. 25, 1904: "Moved by Messrs. Brush and Waters that Rev. Fear and C. Wigle be a committee to interview W. H. McEvoy just now as to cost of maintenance of electric lights in church.—Carried. Said committee returned and stated cost would be $1.00 per light per annum, or if meter was put in a rate of 12 cents per thousand watts. Moved by Brush and Waters that said committee be empowered to enter into agreement with the Amherstburg Light, Heat and Power Company for installation of forty-five lights at the rate of 12 cents per 1,000 watts, having meter put in and said rate not increased for at least five years."

The Mortgage was burned during the ministry of Rev. Fear. Colin Wigle held the Mortgage and his daughter Emma, now Mrs. R. P. Jones, struck the match to burn the paper.

CHAPTER IV

Incidents in the Pastorates of Recent Ministers

THE MINISTRY OF REV. L. W. REID, B.A.

June 1917—May 1919

In 1917 St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church was to be remodelled. Our Board extended an invitation to the Presbyterian people "to meet with us for the present," and allowed them to hold their Sunday School in the basement of Wesley United Church. This gesture is one of many indications of the good feeling existing between the Amherstburg churches.

During Mr. Reid's ministry Miss Lovedy Barrett served as choir director.

In the spring of 1918 the shed was repaired and each farmer received a key to the gate. Apparently a good deal of use was made of the shed as horses were still the chief mode of transportation.
In February of 1919 our church services were withdrawn on evenings of the Presbyterian Special Services.

On the first Sunday of June a special collection was taken for the Halifax Relief Fund.

Mr. Reid expressed his desire to change his pulpit, and Rev. Walter Donnelly was invited at the next Conference.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. WALTER DONNELLY, B.A., D.D.

March 1920—May 1923

A NEW FURNACE had been installed in the parsonage and at the first board meeting Rev. Donnelly reported that he had found the parsonage to be very comfortable.

A resolution was sent to the District Meeting pointing out the desirability of a federation of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches of Windsor District.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Sam Honor was continued in his relationship as a local preacher in 1921, 1922, 1923.

The local board defeated a motion to ordain women as ministers by a vote of three to five.

This church donated $100.00 to the Essex County Temperance Association in 1922.

Rev. Walter Donnelly was a very popular pastor and the congregation regretted his leaving. He has been back several times since and has agreed to come from Winnipeg for this fiftieth anniversary of our church.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. M. J. WILSON

May 1923—May 1925

Rev. Wilson of Exeter followed Rev. Donnelly. The congregation offered him a four weeks vacation in the summer but he refused to accept the fourth Sunday. It is interesting to note that this precedent has been followed during recent years.

During this period Mr. Jabez Stallwood was granted a license as a local preacher. He was the last person so licensed.

By June 1925, the Union of the Methodist Congregational and Presbyterian Churches of Canada was consummated. An additional $20 was assessed on this charge by the Conference to meet the expenses incurred by the Union.
We the members of the Board of Wesley Methodist Church have heard with deep regret that, on account of ill health and danger of a nervous collapse our beloved pastor, Rev. M. J. Wilson, by the advice of his physician, is compelled to resign and take at least one year for rest and recuperation. We wish to express to him and to put on record the fact that, during these two years among us he has won the love and esteem, not only of this Board and congregation, but also of the other denominations and the citizens of Amherstburg.

Mr. Wilson on all great moral questions of outstanding sin such as bootlegging, gambling, Sabbath desecration, and other glaring immoralities, has stood fearlessly four-square opposed, but has won to himself the deep respect even of those opposing his convictions and the high regard of all lovers of the best citizenship.

As a pastor, the homes of his people, especially those of the sick or aged and shut in, hold him as a dear friend and counsellor. Mr. Wilson makes no favorites and is loved by all alike.

As a preacher he has an originality of method of presentation of truth peculiarly his own that seldom fails to compel the hearer to meditate after his return to his home.

During his term here the attendance has been sustained and increased. The various financial interests of the church maintained and Mr. Wilson in June will leave the church in a progressive condition and will bear with him the heartfelt respect and loving regard of the congregation he has so splendidly served and also of the town.

Signed in behalf of Wesley Board.

Wesley United Church
1925–1942

The Methodist Church of Canada entered the Union in a body. The Presbyterian churches voted separately. In this vote the local St. Andrew’s Church continued as before. Their congregation, though small, consisted of a number of families of Scotch descent who were justly proud of the tradition of their local church which has had a long history. As has been mentioned before their kirk had just been remodelled in 1917.

The Union has not produced as marked a change in the Amherstburg charge as in many other Canadian localities.
REV. COUCH was very popular with the Young People but the older members of the congregation considered his message to be almost too modern.

The Board agreed to continue under the rules of the Methodist Church until the new Union rules arrived. A new policy was introduced with regard to the payment of salaries. Previous to this time the minister was paid when the funds were available. Henceforth, it became the policy to pay monthly, even if it meant borrowing at the bank.

Mr. Louis Philp of the High School Staff was granted the use of the church basement for Scout meetings. This privilege was to be continued "as long as their conduct proved commendable." Mr. Philp proved to be a popular leader among the youth here.

The choir gowns were purchased in 1925.

Wesley Church has always been ready to help her sister churches. On May 7, 1928, the Board gave one Sunday's collection to aid the churches in the Border Cities, and the following year they helped to furnish the parsonage of Riverside United Church.

In May 1928, Rev. Morley Colling of Grand Bend was invited to occupy Wesley pulpit. The Board was in conflict with the conference authorities for a number of years, apparently because they insisted upon following the procedure of the former Methodist Church in securing a new pastor instead of conforming to the United Church law in this regard, on the other hand it was felt that conference had not tried to understand the problems of our church.

THE MINISTRY OF DR. PRUDHAM

June 1928—June 1931

WE ARE INDEBTED TO Dr. Prudham for an excellent history of our church up to the time of his ministry. Dr. Prudham had been a Missionary in Japan.

One contribution of his ministry was re-organizing the Board under the new rules of the United Church of Canada. Although three years had passed since the Union had been consummated, no change had been made. In January 1928, the congregation accepted the Basis of Union and elected as their members of Session, for three years, Messrs. Chas. Bonsor, Howard Campbell, Curtis Mickle; for two years, John Parks, R M. Dorsey and W. K. Sidey and for one year, R. L. Wigle, Chas. Atkinson and Sam Honor. The Stewards, elected for one year, were: Howard Gibb, Ben Shillington, H. A. L. Honor, Bruce McGregor, R. P. Jones, Ralph Piper, Everett Ong, Alex Mickle and Andrew Mickle.
At their first meeting it was agreed that the property committee should be on the lookout for a new parsonage and they applied for permission to sell the parsonage and the church sheds. The sheds were sold eleven years later to Mr. Stanley Laramie.

In 1929 H. A. L. Honor recommended the formation of a Men’s Class which has been an asset to the Sunday School ever since.

The church raised $100 to help the Ottawa Street United Church in Windsor.

During the summer R. M. Dorsey remodelled the kitchen to make it more convenient.

It is typical of the pre-depression years to note that the Annual Meeting on January 6, 1931, closed with a solo entitled: “When It is Springtime In the Rockies.”

In March 1931, Rev. W. L. Hiles was invited to come to Amherstburg.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. W. L. HILES, B.A.

June 1931—June 1938

Mr. Hiles’ Ministry was the longest of any minister ever on this charge. The years he was here were during the depression. The records show a determination on the part of the pastor and his people to carry on. The first committee appointed was to deal with Relief Work among unemployed. The committee consisted of: Ben Shillington, Mrs. Chas. Bonsor and Mrs. Robert Dorsey. Special offerings were taken on Communion Sunday to aid this committee. In recent years this fund has been used to furnish flowers and Christmas baskets for the sick and shut-ins.

In October 1933, a motion by Glen Kemp and H. A. L. Honor was passed to notify the Prime Minister that this church opposed the sale of beer and wine by the glass.

Mr. Hiles started the Young Worshippers League which later became the Junior Congregation. He co-operated with Rev. H. A. Wright of the Anglican Church and Rev. Miller of the Presbyterian Church to begin classes in Religious Instruction in the Public School once a week.

The school teachers of the congregation presented the church with a new communion set. This replaced the first individual communion service used in Wesley Church, which was given May 1912, by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Jones. Those contributing to this set included: Hannah Jaffary, Helen Marsh, Dora (Miller) Turnbull, Helen Atkinson, Dorothy Atkinson, Bessie Aylesworth, Helen Richardson, Lovedy McGee, Thelma Aldrich, Francis Wigle, Janet Botsford, Elizabeth Botsford, Gordon Duffin and Walter K. Sidey.

It is interesting to note that many of the local educationists have played an active part in Wesley Church. In former years Dr. David Mawell, the inspector; Mr. B. P. Overholt, the first High School Principal; Mr. E. H. Pearce, the first principal of the present Public School, were faithful
servants of the Sunday School. During the past decade or so Mr. W. K. Sidey, B.A., principal of the High School, and Gordon L. Duffin, B.A., M.Ed., principal of the Public School, have been members of the Board and teachers of classes in the Sunday School.

Among the physical improvements made to the church during those years were the re-designing of the choir loft in 1934. Mr. Dorsey was commended by the Board for his work in this regard. In 1938, the church was redecorated by the men of the congregation. For example, Will Dent alone worked 21 days at the job. Mrs. E. A. Patton donated a new lighting system in memory of her late husband.

During the seven difficult years in which Mr. and Mrs. Hiles worked among us, they received many votes of thanks for their faithful ministry. Mrs. Hiles was very faithful to the Sunday School and the choir.

In 1933 and 1934, when Walter Stuebing was choir director, a Junior Choir of 40 voices was developed. This group sang over the radio and at a number of church services. Several of these young people have retained their musical interest in later years. Mr. Austin Allen conducted the choir from 1936 till 1938 when our present director Mr. Jack Lewis accepted the position. Both of these men have brought us talent from the city which has been greatly appreciated by the congregation.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. ENOS HART, B.A., B.D.

June 1938—and still going strong in 1942

WHILE REV. DONNELLY was on the Gesto circuit, Enos Hart decided to enter the ministry. In May 1923, Rev. Donnelly was preaching at Amherstburg and at a District meeting held in our church Enos Hart was recommended for the ministry. He is now our pastor.

At his first service in our church Mr. Hart forgot to take up the offering. Roy Wigle reminded him and he hasn't forgotten since. Mr. and Mrs. Hart brought with them a family of three boys and a girl, Ray, Bob, John and Elaine. The next year David was born. Each member of this happy family has made the parsonage into a home of which our people are justly proud. May we continue to love them and ever cherish their efforts to do good work as they minister so faithfully in our midst.

The first move made by Mr. Hart was to influence his board to take part in the Quarter-Million Fellowship Crusade. The session called on every home and invited the members and adherents to come to the regular Communion Service. They received an overwhelming response and filled the church and gallery. Ever since that effort our regular church attendance has been much improved. The Sunday School and Junior Congregation have carried on as usual and the Young People have been stimulated to new efforts.
FIRST LADIES A.D. Left to right (back row): Mrs. Dose, Mrs. George Boyle, Mrs. J. Tomlinson, Mrs. William Borrowman, Mrs. Hubert Sharp, Miss Isabel Ireland (Mrs. J. R. Taylor), Mrs. Thaddeus Harris, Naomi Borrowman. Middle Row: Malvina Akin, Mrs. Churchill, Mrs. Oliver, Miss Gene M. Wigan, Miss Middletown. Front Row: Alvina Lidwell, Nellie Teeter (Mrs. Thomas Salmon), Tony Johnson, (Mrs. George Harris), Mrs. George Wynn, Jennie Johnson, Clare Oliver (Mrs. George Jones). Framed picture, that of the first Mrs. Colin Wigan.
In 1940 Mr. Hart was Conference Chairman of the drive to sell War Savings Certificates payable to the United Church of Canada to liquidate its debt. Our Congregation under the leadership of Mrs. Bruce McGregor, has exceeded its allocation of $800.

Among the improvements to property during the past four years are the following items: In 1938 new washrooms were installed in the church basement; the Young People bought a church bell; the church sheds have been sold; a garage was built at the parsonage in 1939; the parsonage was painted in 1940. Each year we have closed our church books with a favorable balance. In addition, under the chairmanship of W. K. Sidey, we have raised over $700 a year for the Missionary and Maintenance Fund.

During these four years 106 have joined our church and 86 have been baptized.

The Second Great War is being fought. Many of our young men are serving in the armed forces and those of us who are at home are helping in Red Cross, Victory Loan, War Savings Campaigns, Home Guard and are sending comforts to those overseas.

This winter the three local Protestant churches have been holding union services on the last Sunday evening of every month. The collection from the first service was given to the bombed-out churches of Britain. We trust that this co-operative worship service among the people of Amherstburg may continue for many years to come.

Outlines of Women’s Organizations and Sunday School

WOMAN’S ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER V

IT IS UNDERSTOOD that the women of the old Methodist Churches in town always did their share in raising funds, but it was not until 1892 that a formal Ladies Aid was constituted. It seems that the Rev. Mr. W. H. Gane called together all the women of the church and the society was planned. Even some of the young girls of the congregation ‘not to be left out of any of the fun’ came to this meeting and when they found out what was expected of the group, with a new church impending, were not intimidated but joined and became hard working members.

This busy little society sponsored a grand and successful picnic at Caldwell’s grove on the Pike Road. Then they made a quilt, of alternate red and white squares, on which were embroidered names at ten cents a name. This scheme realized $135. On May 11th the quilt was auctioned at the corner-stone laying of the church and was “knocked down to Simon Fraser for $50.”
In spite of the rain on that important date 50 years ago, the Ladies' Aid served a 25c dinner in the Oddfellow's Hall, "the dinner was an excellent one and reflected great credit on the ladies of the congregation," said The Echo.

This itemized account of the proceeds from the different corner-stone laying festivities and the quilt project is very interesting: Mr. Massey of Toronto sent a $10 bill; $11 was taken in at Dr. Pascoe's lecture; on the stone was placed $72.70 (they evidently had a ceremony when the friends of the church were given an opportunity to make contributions); $45 was the proceeds from the dinner; the famous quilt made $177 for them (the material cost $8), making a total of $315.70. So you can see that the "Ladies' Aid" activities, half a century ago, were much the same as those of the Woman's Association of today except for perhaps one big item—they carpeted the church.

Mrs. Gane was President of that zealous group and Mrs. George Wynn (whose husband was editor of the Leader, the opposition paper of The Echo) was the secretary.

The active members of this first society are shown in the accompanying picture:

On the badges is printed I. H. N. Ladies' Aid, Amherstburg. For 50 years a similar enterprising organization has been untiring in its efforts to lighten the financial load of the church board. At the time of Church Union, the name Ladies' Aid was dropped and Woman's Association was adopted Canada wide. Mrs. Norman Cornwall is the president for 1942 and she has Mrs. Enos Hart as secretary and Mrs. Gordon L. Duffin as the treasurer.

Our records show that the following ladies have been presidents: Mrs. Lewis Taylor, Mrs. Colin Wigle, Mrs. William Wanless, Mrs. William Corson, Mrs. A. W. Marsh, Mrs. Harry Burke, Mrs. E. H. Pearce, Mrs. Bruce McGregor and Mrs. Norman Cornwall.

W. M. S.

During the pastorate of the Rev. Ezra Fear (1902-1904) his wife instigated and organized the first Missionary Study Group which was known as the "Watch Tower." Mrs. Fear assumed the Presidency and Miss Emma Bratt became secretary. Previous to this time the women in churches did not interest themselves in missionary work. A general missionary board looked after this church branch.

The original Missionary Society was organized in the United States. Soon after, the Canadian Methodist Churches, realizing the great need for such an organization, planned a similar missionary study group and the name Women's Missionary Society was chosen.

For about 40 years this has been an important, outstanding and intelligent society, leading in the spiritual and social life in Wesley Church. The 1942 executive has Mrs. H. A. L. Honor as president, Mrs. Walter K. Sidey, sec-
secretary and Mrs. Glen Kemp, treasurer. There are fourteen life members: Mrs. W. W. Trimble, Mrs. A. W. Marsh, Mrs. Charles Graveline, Mrs. Glen Kemp, Mrs. William Gillespie, Miss Edith Thomas, Miss Annie Honor, Mrs. E. A. Patton, Mrs. Ross Mickle, Mrs. Charles Bonsor, Mrs. Robert Dorsey, Mrs. B. P. Overholt, Mrs. Hilton Mickle, Mrs. Norman Cornwall. Seven Life members are deceased: Mrs. Elizabeth Lockhart, Miss Dorcas Honor, Mrs. Dease, Mrs. W. H. Jones, Mrs. Fred Mickle, Mrs. Curtis Mickle, Mrs. J. R. Taylor. Some of the Past Presidents of the W. M. S. have been: Mrs. E. A. Fear, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Godwin, Mrs. A. E. M. Thompson, Miss Thorne, Mrs. W. H. Jones, Mrs. W. W. Trimble, Mrs. J. R. Taylor, Mrs. H. A. L. Honor and Mrs. Ross Mickle.

In 1919, when the late Mrs. James R. Taylor was president, the Mission Band (an affiliate society) was reorganized and called the Beulah Shepley Mission Band in honor of Miss Shepley (Mrs. William Gillespie) a member of our church who was a missionary in China. Mrs. L. W. Reid, the pastor's wife, helped get this young group under way. The first meeting was held at the home of Mrs. John Jones (now Mrs. William Corson) on Dalhousie Street. Mrs. Glen Kemp and Mrs. Robert Dorsey were put in charge. For about 22 years this children's study group has been very active. This anniversary year Mrs. Enos Hart (the wife of our present pastor), Mrs. B. P. Overholt and Mrs. Walter K. Seyed are directing its activities.

As it is the ambition of the Women's Missionary Society to interest women of all ages, the local adult society sponsors the C.G.I.T., which in our church, is inter-denominational. Mrs. Melvin Wigle and Mrs. John Wigle lead this enthusiastic group of 'teen-age girls.

In 1934 Miss Nora Wilson (Mrs. Charles Ayerst) and Miss Hannah Jaffary were instrumental in getting this particular group in working order.

In 1941 Mrs. John Turnbull proposed and succeeded in organizing the Edna Hart Evening Auxiliary, which is, at present, a missionary study group made up of the younger women of the congregation. Mrs. John Turnbull is the president, Mrs. Harold Atkinson the secretary and Mrs. John Scott is treasurer.

To round out the missionary cycle in our church life, Mrs. Ross Mickle during her years of leadership, was most desirous of having a W. M. S. Baby Band. So in 1941, this Band was formed, in charge of Mrs. Russell Wigle and Mrs. Harold Borrowman. This youngest Missionary group entertained at a Mother's Tea recently which w.s so successful that it is to be an annual event. The 1942 officers are: Mrs. Harold Borrowman and Mrs. Clifford Wigle.

"2—52"

Affiliated with the Sunday School is an interesting women's organized class called the "2—52." A group with far reaching ideas and good works without being primarily a money-making society.

In 1927, on September 13, Mrs. Isaac Couch, wife of the pastor, realizing the need for a study, social and cultural class for the many young women in the church, called a meeting at the Parsonage and this class was

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organized. The following were chosen to fill the various offices: Hon. President, Mrs. Couch; President, Doris Jones (Mrs. James Garrison); vice-president, Ada Pearce (Mrs. Rupert Scott); secretary, Irene Beard (Mrs. Harold Atkinson); treasurer, Lovedy McGee. Miss Jessie Maitland (now Mrs. John Forde of Smith's Falls, then of the General Amherst High School Staff) suggested that—as the aim was to encourage a four-fold development, spiritual, physical, moral and social—we use the name “2—52” which translated literally means, Luke Second Chapter and Fifty-Second Verse, “And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, in favor of God and man.” This clever suggestion was accepted. Through these last turbulent 16 years the interest in the “2—52” has not waned.

In October 1931, at the suggestion of the Mrs. (Rev.) W. L. Hiles, a Baptismal Font was presented to the church. The communion linen, and the pulpit cloth were given in 1938. The class has made church, Red Cross and “New Canadian” donations. As a golden anniversary present, the “2—52” has purchased a $50 Victory Bond for the Church. Some of the very nicest affairs of our church life have been given by this enthusiastic group of women. Mrs. Paul Harlen is the 1942 president and she has Miss Hannah Jaffary, a charter member, as her first vice-president. The secretary is Mrs. Carl Kennedy and the treasurer Mrs. John Garrow.

Several of the charter members are still active in “2—52” activities. Among those are Miss Bessie Aylesworth, Miss Hannah Jaffary, Mrs. Harold Atkinson, Mrs. Howard Campbell and Mrs. Harold Borrowman.

Past Presidents to date have been: Doris Jones (Mrs. Garrison), Mrs. Henrietta Wilson, Mrs. Russel Wigle, Mrs. E. R. Pearce, Edna Down (Mrs. Cecil Alguire), Mrs. Bennett, Mrs. Norman Cornwall, Mrs. Lloyd Brown, Mrs. Jean Ryan, Mrs. W. K. Sidey (deceased), Mrs. Harold Atkinson, Hannah Jaffary, Mrs. Marguerite Park, Mrs. Glen Kemp, Mrs. Harold Borrowman, Janet Botsford, Helen Richardson, Mrs. Bruce MacGregor, Bessie Aylesworth, Mrs. Howard Campbell, Irene Eggleton (Mrs. Schrombery), Thelma Aldrich, Mrs. Mahlon Anderson, Mrs. Charles Blaney, Una Borrowman, Mrs. Frank Spry, Mrs. George Brown, Mrs. Paul Harlen.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

As only a few Sunday School records were available, it is impossible to give a full report of this branch of the church work. Through the years Dr. D. A. Maxwell, Colin Wigle, W. W. Trimble, John Parks and H. A. L. Honor as superintendents, and Mrs. B. P. Overholt, Fred Horne, Charles Bonsor and many others as teachers, have served faithfully and efficiently in this department.

At present the Sunday School is self-supporting and always gives from $25 to $50 a year to the general church fund. A few years ago a lantern and hymn slides were bought. The highlights of the Sunday School year are: The picnic (held either at Bob-Lo or Mr. and Mrs. John Parks' Farm, River Front Road) and the Christmas concert. At present H. A. L. Honor is superintendent and G. L. Duffin is associate. There are twelve Classes as follows, with 150 members in all:

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Moonbeams—Mrs. Bruce MacGregor and Miss Gwen. Horne.
Sunbeams—Mamie Roadhouse and Marianne Nattress
Starbeams—Ray Hart.
Churchill—Fred Horne.
Pals—Charles Bonsor.
Willing Workers—Gwendolyn Overholt.
Busy Bees—Mrs B. P. Overholt.
Live Wires—Helen Marsh.
Comrades—G. L. Duffin.
Amity—Hannah Jaffary.
Men's Discussion Class—W. K. Sidey. This class was organized in 1929 on the recommendation of H. A. L. Honor.
“2—52” and Bible Class—Rev. Enos Hart.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S UNION

One of the oldest organized groups in Wesley Church is the Young People's Union. In 1893, the Rev. S. J. Allin "had the honor of organizing the first Epworth League in the conference."

After Church Union the name Epworth League was dropped and Young People's Union accepted. This very wide-awake society belongs to the Border Cities Young People's Union and takes an active part in Presbytery affairs. Last year it won the Presbytery attendance banner.

It was through the efforts of the Y. P. U. that in 1938 the church bell was dedicated.

In 1941 soon after John Eggleton was elected president, he resigned to join the R.C.A.F. and is now a Sergeant-Observer in England. Coincidental enough in 1942, the president-elect, Joe Tofflemire, gave up the office when he was accepted in the Tank Corps.

The fiftieth anniversary officers are: President, Stanley MacManemy; Secretary, Frances Parks; Treasurer, Elmer Tofflemire.

CHAPTER VI

Local Churches With Which Some of Our Members Are Affiliated

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMHERSTBURG

IN AN OLD COMMUNITY like Amherstburg it is but natural there should be some inter-marriage between adherents of different faiths, and in Wesley Church congregation there are those whose church ancestry goes back to the early Catholic Church. For this reason it is thought proper to record the beginning of Catholicism in Amherstburg to make our sketch more complete.

The Catholic Church has been established on the Detroit River since early in the 1700's. Detroit was founded by de La Mothe Cadillac in 1701 and soon after a Jesuit priest gathered the Wyandotts or Hurons in a Mission which was for a time established at the lower end of the Detroit River.
REV. MURRAY STUART, B.A.

REV. W. E. DONNELLY, D.D.

MR. COLIN WIGLE

MR. DAN WIGLE

REV. ISAAC COUCH

REV. A. W. TONGE
The Bois Blanc Mission is believed to have been located on or near the site of the Mathew Elliott homestead, one mile below Amherstburg. However, it is certain many of the Indians lived on Bois Blanc Island directly opposite.

Father Potier succeeded to the direction of the Mission in 1744 and about 1752 the Bois Blanc Mission was abandoned and the Indians were re-established on the Huron Reserve opposite the Fort at Detroit. This move was made necessary by the pagan Indians from the north annoying the Christian Indians of the Mission. At that period many distant tribes were taking part in the border wars between the French and English colonies.

No Catholic Church was nearer than Sandwich when in 1802 a priest was appointed to administer to the Catholics of Amherstburg. Sometime before 1820 a church was built on Bathurst Street. It was commonly called the "French Church" and travellers have recorded the observation that the roof was surmounted with a Gallic chanticler. About 1844 the Bathurst Street Church was destroyed by fire. When rebuilt the church was erected on Brock Street where, enlarged and embellished, it remains to serve the faithful.

At present the church is administered under the direction of the Basilian fathers who also direct Assumption College in Windsor.

**ANGLICAN CHURCH IN AMHERSTBURG**

The first services of the Anglican Church in Amherstburg were held in the Indian Council House at Fort Malden. The Council House was one of the first buildings erected on the site of Amherstburg and stood near where the Museum of Fort Malden National Historic Park is now.

From time to time previous to the War of 1812 the Council House was the scene of services, but during the war it was destroyed. After the defeat of the British fleet at Put-in-Bay Colonel Proctor resolved upon a flight to Burlington where the main body of British troops lay. He ordered all the public buildings fired to prevent the Americans advancing under General Harrison, making use of them. After the establishment of peace a brick church was built on land donated by Colonel Caldwell and it is the oldest brick church in Ontario. It was twice enlarged, first in 1853, and again in 1873, and in 1912 the interior was restored exposing the beautiful hand-hewn timbers of the roof.

Richard Pollard, a lay missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, had charge of the early services. He was first established at Detroit as a missionary in 1792. He developed, among others, the parishes of St John’s, Windsor and Christ Churches of Colchester and Amherstburg. In 1804 he became a regularly ordained priest, and he died in 1819. He has had many worthy successors for since that early day the Anglican communion has continuously borne a share of the Lord’s work in Amherstburg.
Sketch of the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches in Amherstburg

In Wesley United Church there are many who were before the Union of 1926 members of the Presbyterian Church either in Amherstburg or elsewhere. For this reason it is thought appropriate to include in this booklet a short sketch of Presbyterianism in Amherstburg derived from printed articles and local information.

The Presbyterian congregation in Amherstburg first came into notice in 1828. The first minister we have record of is the Rev. Alex Gale. He was succeeded by the Rev. George Cheyne in 1831. In 1831, a lot and building was purchased on Bathurst Street for a church. Much altered, this building still stands, and it is now the residence and office of Dr. E. C. Harris. In 1843 the Rev. Robert Peden became the third minister.

The trials and tribulations of Presbyterianism in Scotland found its echo in Amherstburg. This was natural enough because many of the members were of Scottish birth as were most of the ministers. In 1844 came the great parting of the ways in Scotland known as the Great Disruption. The Rev. Peden and most of his congregation were adherents of the new order, but lost the right to the church building, for the Auld Kirk members were successful in retaining it in a hearing before the church courts. This resulted in 1845 of the building of the present St. Andrew's edifice which was occupied by the Peden secedents. The Rev. Robert Peden was a man of advanced views which eventually resulted in his dismissal from the Canadian Presbyterian Church. This happened in 1850 and he became a member of the Evangelical Union.

Most of Peden's congregation again followed him and as by seceding they lost the use of the St. Andrew's Church building arrangements were made to return to the original church, the "Auld Kirk." The Auld Kirk no longer had a regular minister so they leased the building. As members of the "Evangelical Union" the congregation worshipped until 1868. In that year the Evangelical Union united with the Congregational Churches of Canada. As Congregationalists they continued to use the Auld Kirk until the congregation disbanded in 1875.

The Evangelical Union and the Congregational churches were served with but three ministers: The Rev. Robert Peden 1850-54; Rev. Henry Melville, 1854-74, and the Rev. James Smith, 1875.

A considerable impetus to higher education was given by the Congregational College at Oberlin, Ohio. Many Amherstburg students attended with profit to themselves and community.

To revert to the Presbyterian congregation of St. Andrew's. After the withdrawal of Peden and his followers in 1850 the church was numerically weak, but gradually grew as new-comers settled in the district. When Windsor enjoyed a boom quite a number of the congregation removed there and this again depressed the church of St Andrew's. For a few years before 1874 there was a local union of the Presbyterian and Congregationalists as there was no regular minister settled at Amherstburg by the Presby-
In 1875 there came about the general union of all the Presbyterian bodies in Canada, and this indirectly brought an end to the Congregational Church in Amherstburg. The Auld Kirk Presbyterians who since 1845 had retained title to the church premises occupied for so many years by the followers of Peden and his successors turned the building over to the new Presbyterian Church in Canada. The revived St. Andrew's congregation turned the Auld Kirk into a Manse. This imposed the necessity on the Congregationalists of providing new premises for their services. This was a burden they were not able to assume, so disbanding, some became Presbyterians, and others were received in full communion in the Methodist Church.

Since that year the Presbyterian Church of St. Andrew's has maintained itself as a force in the spiritual life of Amherstburg. Though voting to stay out of Union the ministers and members have been on the most brotherly of terms with the United Church.

**CHAPTER VII**

**MINISTERS AT AMHERSTBURG**

1826 — George Ferguson.
1827-28 — Edmund Storey.
1829 — Joseph Messmore.
1830-31 — Mathew Whiting.
1832 — Thomas Harmon.
1833 — Supplied by Gosfield.
1834-35 — Ben Slight.
1836-37 — Jonathon Gladwin.
1837-38 — Supplied.
1839-40 — William Scott, a layman, British Wesleyan, later ordained.
1841-43 —
1844-46 — F. W. Constable.
1847 — Phelps.
1849-51 — Richard Whiting.
1851 — Thomas Stobbs.
1852-53 — John Goodfellow.
1853 — William Williams and Griffiths.
1854-55 — Ephraim Royle.
1856 — John Hodgson.
1859 — W. Wasil.
1861 — O. E. Birch.
1862 — Thomas Howard and Drake.
1862-63 — Thomas Cleworth, "Wesleyan Methodist."
1864-65 — F. C. Rice.
1866 —
1867-68 — Thomas Calbert.
1869-70 — E. S. Shcrey.
1871-72 — James Laird.
1872-76 — E. S. Jones.
1875 —Adam I. Snider. Supply for Harrow and Pot Lake Road.
1875 —Thomas Gee. Supply for Harrow and Pot Lake Road.
1876-79—James Harris.
1879-82—Thomas Jackson.
1882-84—J. M. Hodson (First to occupy Parsonage).
1885-86—T R. Earle and J. S. Livingstone, Assistant.
1887-90—Thomas Cobb.
1890-93—W. H. Gane. (Builder).
1893-96—S. J. Allin.
1899-03—W. E. Allin.
1903-05—Samuel E. A. Fear. (Burned Mortgage).
1905-08—Wm. Godwin.
1908 —R. Redmond.
1908-09—A. G. Harris.
1909-13—A. E. M. Thompson. (First President of Conference).
1913-17—A W. Tonge.
1917 —Murray Stuart
1917-20—L. W. Reid.
1920-23—W. E. Donnelly.
1925-28—Isaac Couch.
1928-30—W. W. Prudham.
1930-38—W. L. Hiles.
1938 —Enos Hart.

WESLEY CHURCH TRUSTEES

A complete list of the Trustees is not available as some of the earlier Minutes are missing and some of the later ones not as full as they might be, but the following is a compilation, subject to correction:

METHODOIST TRUSTEES

ROLL OF HONOR 1939-1942

The following young men from the homes of our church are now serving in the Navy, Army and Air Force:


REV. W. H. GANE, L.L.D.

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE on the life of Rev. W. H. Gane, L.L.D., who built Wesley and Malden Churches, was sent to us by Mr. Geo. H. Merwin, Westport, Conn., Historian of the Greenfield Congregational Church, New Hampshire:

Rev. W. H. Gane, L.L.D., was called to Greenfield Hill (town of Fairfield) from Peterboro, New Hampshire, December 31, 1900, and was installed May 14, 1901. Peterboro was his first Congregational Parish, previous to that he had served Methodist churches. He was a native of Ingersoll, Ontario, educated in public and high schools and Collegiate Institute of that town, and Methodist institutions of Ontario; received the degree L.L.D. from a Methodist College in the U.S.; ordained in 1879.

He was dismissed from Greenfield Hill April 26, 1908, accepting a call to Jewett City, Conn. He died February 4, 1924; buried in Willimantic, Conn., but for several years previous to his death he was engaged with his son Silas in printing business in Willimantic.

Rev. J. M. Hodson, L.L.D. and his ever charming wife were the first occupants of the present parsonage. Mrs. Hodson always wished to go to Paris, France. The couple moved there to preach in the Church of the Stranger. Mrs. Hodson died in Paris. He then preached in Fordham Manor Reform Church, New York City, for 28 years. He is now living in his 90th year at Rock Ridge, Conn. In a letter just received by Mr. Hart, he asks if anyone remember the Crosley and Hunter Revival during his ministry.

MR. JOHN THORNE COMMEMORATED

May 2, 1892—"That we received with profound sorrow the fact of the death of our brother, John Thorne, who has for more than fifteen years most efficiently and faithfully filled the office of Trustee of the Methodist Church here, and for nearly thirteen years that of Secretary of the Board, which office he filled in a manner most creditable and in the very best interests of the said Trustee Board. Brother Thorne was ever careful and untiring in his efforts to advance the interest of the church of his choice.

We desire to record our high estimation of his character as a man, an officer and a brother. Be it also resolved that we convey to Mrs. Thorne
our sympathy in her great sorrow and loss, and we earnestly pray the Great Head of the Church to sustain and comfort her and her daughter in their time of great trial."

MRS. COLIN WIGLE

A SPECIAL NOTE of appreciation is here included to thank Mrs. Colin Wigle, our faithful organist. Mrs. Wigle has played the organ in our church almost continuously from its installation in the fall of 1896. It is the wish of everyone of our congregation that she may continue in good health for many years to come. The pipe organ which she plays was donated to the church by her husband, Mr. Colin Wigle, who is one of the three men still living who was a member of the church board when it was built 50 years ago.

COL. ALBERT GASKIN, Ph.D.

A HISTORY OF THIS NATURE would not be complete without a word of appreciation for the fellowship of Col. Gaskin, retired Salvation Army officer who has attended our services regularly for a number of years. He has always been willing to supply our pulpit and his sermons are appreciated by all. He is justly proud of the Salvation Army. May he have many more years of useful life among us.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writers of this booklet had access to the church records and to historical outlines formerly prepared by Dr. Walter Donnelly and Dr. Prudham. Mr. John A. Marsh of The Amherstburg Echo allowed us to search the old editions of The Echo and we have followed his advice in the printing of the booklet. Mr. John Turnbull, B.Sc., chairman of the Board of Stewards, drew the pictures of the first two churches from descriptions given by Walter Botsford. David Botsford, Curator Fort Malden Museum, wrote about half of the manuscript. Helen Marsh dealt with the Women's Organizations of the church. Rev. Enos Hart wrote the introduction and secured the pictures and Gordon Duffin was responsible for synopsizing the last 20 years.

Closing

O N MAY 2, 1917, just 25 years ago, the following motion was passed at a meeting of the Quarterly Official Board:— "Moved that we recognize the hand of God in the wonderful progress made by the church and that we return Him thanks for such a full measure of His love."

We have every reason now in May 1942, to renew this pledge of thankfulness to Almighty God for His continued blessing on our work.

The committee, who prepared this booklet, have enjoyed browsing among the records of the past. We trust that present and future minutes may be kept accurately for future reference. It is from such minutes that
we have been able to read of the perseverance with which our forebears faithfully built a church of brick and stone to house a congregation of folk who felt the need of Christian worship.

May we and future generations exemplify a true appreciation of this heritage by leading lives of Christian service.


Order of Service—Sunday, May 31, 1942

MORNING

Organ Prelude—La Carita ..... Rossini.
Call to Worship.
Doxology
Invocation and Lord's Prayer
The National Anthem
Hymn 670: "Thou Shalt Arise"
Prayer
Anthem: "Great and Marvellous"—Turner
Responsive Psalm—Hymnary No. 717
Children's Hymn—594 "Praise Him, Praise Him"
Scripture Lesson
Solo—Selected—O. H. Lewis
Announcements
Offertory Prayer
Offertory—Intermezzo
Hymn—174 "For All the Saints"
Sermon—"The Church and the Vision Splendid"
(Rev. W. E. Donnelly, D.D.)
Hymn—378, "Rise Up O Men of God"
Benediction
Organ Postlude—Gloria.

EVENING

Organ Prelude—Largo ..... Handel
Call to Worship
Doxology
Invocation
The National Anthem
Hymn—2—"Glory be to God the Father"
Prayer
Anthem—"O how amiable are Thy Dwellings"—Barnaby
Scripture Lesson
Solo—"O Divine Redeemer"—Mrs. E. R. Pearce
Announcements
Offertory Prayer
Offertory—"A song of Trust"
Hymn—286—"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"
REV. W. W. PRUDHAM, D.D.

MRS. W. W. PRUDHAM

REV. W. L. HILES, B.A.

MRS. W. L. HILES

REV. ENOS HART, B.A., B.D.

MRS. ENOS HART
Order of Service—Sunday, June 7, 1942

**MORNING**

Organ Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Doxology  
Invocation and Lord's Prayer  
The National Anthem  
Hymn—446—"O God of Bethel"  
Prayer  
Anthem—"Prayer of Thanksgiving"—Slater  
Responsive Psalm—Hymnary No. 768  
Children's Hymn—603—"I think when I read that sweet story of old"  
Scripture Lesson  
Solo—"Bless This House"—Jack Lewis  
Announcements  
Offertory Prayer  
Offertory  
Hymn—399—"Faith of Our Fathers"  
Sermon—"The Holy Catholic Church"  
(Rev. A. Murray Stuart, B.A.)  
Hymn—164—"The Church's One Foundation"  
Benediction  
Organ Postlude  

**EVENING**

Organ Prelude  
Call to Worship  
Doxology  
The National Anthem  
Hymn—681—"Unto the Hills"  
Prayer  
Anthem—"At even when the sun was set"—Turner  
Scripture Lesson  
Anthem—"O how lovely are Thy dwellings—Maker  
Announcements  
Offertory Prayer  
Offertory  
Hymn—496—"Tell me the old, old story"  
Sermon—"The forgotten man"  
(Rev. A. Murray Stuart, B.A.)  
Hymn—402—"Lead On, O King Eternal"  
Benediction  
Vesper Hymn  
Organ Postlude
TOP. Malden United Church Also Built In 1892 by Rev. Gane.

Small Cut Is Rev. G. W. Butt, Present Pastor.
CHAPTER VIII
A Brief History of Malden United Church

On Saturday, Feb. 27, 1892, there was an historic meeting of the Quarterly Official Board of the Amherstburg Circuit when according to the minutes: "The following members of the Methodist Church were constituted as Board of Trustees, to hold property and build a Methodist Church . . . in the 7th concession of the Township of Malden . . . viz. Henry Atkin, John Sellars, Alex F. McGee, William Squires, Alfred Bratt, Jos. E. Shepley, Sylvester C. Brush, Alanson Mickle."

Such was the beginning of what has become today the Malden United Church, and that Board of Trustees must have been made up of men who had vision and were earnest indeed, for at their March 28th meeting in the same year they opened tenders for the building of the church and on March 29 a contract was signed with Mr. Arthur Bailey to erect the building. The July 11th trustee meeting was held in the basement of the new church and on Monday evening, August 15, 1892, a dedication tea meeting was held. There was an active Ladies Aid at this time for they subscribed $400 at the dedication tea meeting. A W.M.S. was organized in April 1898. At the time of the building of the church the Rev. A. H. Gane was pastor of the Amherstburg and Malden appointments and the Rev. Mr. Scott, then president of the London Conference, was present at the Dedication.

From this time until 1905 Malden was served as an appointment of the Amherstburg Circuit. The Rev. E. A. Fear was the pastor in Amherstburg under whose leadership arrangements were made for Malden to become a separate appointment. There is extant a letter which Mr. Fear wrote to Mr. R. J. McCormick who was the first resident minister in Malden. This letter gives a list of 120 members of the Malden Church and shows their division into five classes under the leadership of Henry Atkin, Alanson Mickle, John Sellars, Mrs. Althea Atkin and Miss Eliza Atkin.

Mr. McCormick was at Malden for four years. He also conducted services at Webb's School and organized the Epworth League, whose first treasurer was Freeman Martin. The parsonage was built during his pastorate.

The Rev. F. H. Langford came next to Malden in 1909. He was a brilliant young man who gave inspired leadership to the young Malden church. He also conducted services at the Webb School and had as his able and faithful Sunday School Superintenent there Mr. Robert Countess. Mr. Langford's daughter, Grace Evelyn, was the first child born in the Malden parsonage and as such was presented with an engraved silver cup donated by the Ladies' Aid.

The Rev. F. E. Clysdale followed Mr. Langford in 1911. He remained but one year during which time Zion became a joint charge with Malden. After Mr. Clysdale's departure Rev. R. A. Robinson came to Malden for six months, but at the end of that time went to the U. S. A. and was followed in 1913 by the Rev. S. J. T. Fortner, whose wise leadership over a period of four years endeared him to the people of Malden. He was very interested in farming and had much in common with the members and followers of his church.

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In 1917 Rev. J. A. Snell came to Malden for two years and was followed in 1919 by Rev. Arthur L. Spracklin who was an energetic and untiring worker. He was very active on behalf of the temperance forces in the stormy days of strife over the O.T.A. After four years of Mr. Spracklin's leadership the Rev. A. Harold Johnston came to Malden in 1923. During his sojourn here Church Union took place, June 10, 1925, and the Malden Methodist Church became the Malden United Church. The Young People's organization was very active at this time and produced several excellent plays under the able and talented direction of Mrs. Johnston. During one banner year in this period the young people raised $529.

In 1927 Rev. D. W. Pomeroy came to Malden to give three years of faithful, earnest leadership. His daughter Helen, has come back to the church as the wife of Thomas Laramie and is active in the many organizations of the church.

When Mr. Pomeroy left in 1930 Malden ceased to have a resident pastor and was no longer a joint charge with Zion, but was served by the Rev. J. E. Holmes, a retired minister living in Windsor. He was dearly loved by the Malden people whom he served so faithfully for the 6½ years that his health permitted. When he had to give up the active ministry in 1937 his place was taken by the Rev. Gordon W. Butt, resident pastor at Harrow. Mr. Butt has put sincere and untiring effort into the leadership of the Malden Church for the past 5½ years.

—Muriel Atkin McLean, B.A., Church Historian.