

**FORD MOYNES**

# ON THE MAIN STREET



Of all the Churches in Victoria County the Presbyterian edifice at Woodville is among the oldest. Many of the present day members as well as hundreds of former members and adherents now scattered across the face of the globe will read with interest extracts of an historical nature gleaned from the Jubilee Memorial souvenir booklet, the cover of which bore the dates 1849-1909:

"A small number in this neighborhood battled with poverty and the want of a leader, and began to cast in their minds how to erect a place of worship, in the fall of 1846."

The original church was but a small plain building. Year by year passed and they met together for worship, they were as though undershepherded still their numbers increased by additions to their membership from within and without. At Mariposa Free Church, September 13, 1849, the following persons John Gunn, John McDougall and Alex Munroe, who were formerly elders in the united congregations of Thorah and Eldon in connection with the Church of Scot-

land, met with Dr. Burns, of Toronto, as moderator, as session of the united congregations of Thorah and Eldon, in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Canada. After the session was constituted Messrs. Colin McCuaig, John Campbell, Arch Gillies and Donald Gunn were ordained elders. In July 1854 Rev. J. McTavish arrived from Scotland to become the first pastor. In 1855 a substantial addition was made to the church and the congregation embraced all known as Free Church people from Eldon, Fenelon, Northern Mariposa and Eastern Thorah. On March 31, 1861, the Woodville session held its first meeting after their separation from Beaverton. In the year 1861 the congregation numbered two hundred and twenty-one families. During the pastorate of Rev. McTavish a large number of the flock received their spiritual birth. In 1872 the Rev. Dr. McTavish transferred to Woodstock and was followed by Rev. F. F. Murray, D.D. who was not only accepted for his preaching ability but also because of the fact that he could speak Gaelic fluently. For several years past the

Gaelic speaking element of the population predominated. These were succeeded by services in the English.

The old church was a mile east of the village but the growth of the thriving village of Woodville changed the aspect of affairs, and it was decided to erect the present commodious edifice. It was dedicated in the year 1877.

The new church was erected by Maunder Bros. of Uxbridge for about \$9,000.00. The work was carried on under the superintendence of Mr. J. Armstrong of Woodville. Sub-contractors included Messrs. Clilt and Co. of Lindsay, plasterers. The heating was installed by Geo. Stephenson of Lindsay and the upholstering in scarlet damask was the work of Wendt Bros. of Woodville. When completed the church had a capacity of 1,000. The choir was under the leadership of Mr. J. Jamieson.

Succeeding ministers included Rev. Alexander Ross, E. W. McAulay, B.A., Rev. F. M. Duncan, D.D., Rev. W. M. Kannawin, B.D., Rev. A. F. Mann, B.A., and others. The first Session, 1849 included Mr. Donald McCuaig, Mr. John Gunn, Mr. John Campbell and Mr. Donald Gunn and Mr. F. C. Gilchrist was Clerk of the Session for 37 years.

Main Street is indebted to Mr. John MacLeod for the above historical data and it is hoped to bring the history of this grand old church and congregation up to date in a future article.