

The History Of Plainville Church

A-Hamilton Top
1953

(Written by James Rosevear)

This year marked the hundredth anniversary of the first church of Plainville, the seventy-fifth of union between the Bible Christians and the Methodists and fifty years of this church.

You may think if I am going to give you the history of one hundred years we will be here the rest of the night but I am in the same position as a young minister that I heard of who went to a new charge, got along all right until one day the Ladies had a meeting, and I emphasize the word "Ladies."

They thought they had chosen the right man until it came to an old Scotch lady. (It was a Scotch settlement). She said he was very pleasant to meet and his sermon was all right, but she could not listen to a minister who read his sermon, the others did not think so but they could not convince the old lady.

She sat up in the gallery the next Sunday. The minister started the sermon and turned over leaf after leaf; the old lady was getting pretty wrathful. He turned the last leaf, braced himself up and said. We will pursue this subject no further. The old lady jumped up and said, "Ye canna, ye canna your paper's run out."

The first church was built in 1853. Mr. Neill gave the land free gratis. It was a frame structure with one isle up the centre. The choir was at the back of the church. The congregation stood with their backs to the choir when singing. Most of the churches were built that way in those days.

In 1878 twenty-five years later when preparing for church union with the Bible Christians, the Methodists as the old saying goes took time by the forelock, remodeled by putting in new pews, and moving the choir loft to the front and newly decorating it, so the Bible Christians had to come and worship with them instead of the other way around.

It reminds me of a card I saw which read, "when you come across a man who shouts 'I'm honest!' let the OTHER fellow trade horse with him. I have found out by rather dear experience that it is good advice.

There was just one door, no basement or Sunday School rooms. The choir and minister had to come up through the church.

The minister laid his hat and coat on the pew and sat in the pulpit until service time. We did not have nearly as much form of service as we have today.

At service time the minister would stand up and open the service by announcing the hymn and after the hymn led in prayer. The choir usually sang a number, the minister read the lesson, sang the second hymn, delivered the sermon, took up the collection, sang the last hymn and pronounced the benediction.

Notice they did not take up the collection until after the sermon. They followed the advice of Sandy Fraser, the Scotsman who wrote stories for the paper, he did not believe in this minimum salary, just pay for what you get.

Now that is a Scotsman for you every time. There was very little silver put on the plate mostly all coppers. They did not have plates at that time they used a wooden box with a long handle.

The neighbouring churches were more up to date. They had a bag of red plush on a wooden handle. The old church was rather small and shabby but nothing had been done until 1903 when they decided to ask Mr. Redpath, a contractor living at Camborne, to give them an estimate on the cost of a new church. He to supply everything, they would do the teaming and dig out the foundation. I think his estimate was \$3700.00.

This was early in February. We had a lot of snow then and it usually got worse so they decided to draw the bricks at once. It was fortunate because it came up a very heavy thunderstorm on the evening of February 11 and it remained very mild.

The snow was all gone by the first of March so the basement was dug out early in March and the stones drawn. Mr. Ross of Cold Springs did the stonework. Mr. J. Hayden of Cobourg laid the cornerstone and many of the neighbouring ministers were present.

Cold Springs band entertained them with music and the ladies served supper. Mr. Jex from Cobourg laid the brick, Mr. Redpath was the carpenter and Mr. Parsons did the decorating. The church was opened October 12.

Mr. McIntyre, a former minister, conducted the service morning and evening. They had a fowl supper on Tuesday evening. Mr. Mears held two services the following Sunday. Mr. Jewell was the pastor when this church was built. The was a double circuit, one ordained minister and one on probation.

There were six appointments, Bethel Grove, Zion, Gore's Landing, Camborne, Plainville and Harwood. Mr. Coon was the young minister, followed by Mr. Barrett and Dr. Mott. When Mr. Jewell changed this was cut down to a one man circuit. Harwood was closed.

Bethel Grove was joined with Baltimore and Bethesda South Bethel Grove is like a wandering Jew, at one time they were with Canton, then with Camborne and Plainville then with Baltimore and Bethesda South and now with Cold Springs and Camborne.

When this was cut down to a one-man circuit the minister started at Camborne in the morning, Plainville in the afternoon and Gore's Landing in the evening. Mr. Jewell was followed by Mr. Limbert, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Howard.

This closed shed was built in Mr. Howard's time. The old open shed was on the same site. It was "L" shaped. There was a stall sheeted up in the northwest corner for the minister's horse. The minister kept a good driving horse and most of them took a great pride in it.

Mr. Howard had a son, a doctor in Chicago, who bought a car and shipped his driver over to his father. It was a Kentucky bred roadster, some horse. He was preaching in a neighbouring church and one gentleman said to him it was too spirited a horse for an old man to be driving. "Oh," replied Mr. Howard, "I never let an old man drive it."

Mr. Howard was followed by Mr. Snowden, Mr. Totten, Mr. Spargo, Mr. Harston, Dr. Harwood and Mr. Campbell. Mr. Campbell was here but a short time when church union took place. Then he was changed to Cold Springs and Camborne.

Plainville united with Gore's Landing and Bethesda north with Mr. McCord as pastor. He was followed by Mr. Barber who was the first minister to occupy the new parsonage at Gore's Landing. He was followed by Mr. Leach, Mr. Mellow, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Larke and our present minister, Mr. Robertson.