



THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The above picture, taken some years ago, is a view of the local Presbyterian Church. Although little changed in outward appearance, the interior however, has been kept up to date with the addition of new furnishings and interior decorating to such an extent that the original phrase of approval still applies - "a splendid tribute to the enthusiasm of the people and the earnest labor of the Rev. T. E. Fotheringham". - the Minister in charge when the Church was erected and dedicated in 1878.

Available records of the founding and growth of "Presbyterianism" in this area show considerable variation in dates but it is known that some of the original settlers of that faith, were located in the Southern parts of Dummer Township and it was there that the first meetings were held in the homes of those faithful adherents, among whom were mentioned, Robert Burgess, Alex Ross, Wm. McMillan, John Brooks, George Gardner, David Barrie and several others whose names are quite familiar because their descendents are still with us and loyal to the teachings of their fathers.

About the year 1850 preparations for the building of a Church "of their own" were begun. Money was scarce but timber was plentiful and willing workers donated both time and material with the result that a "Handsome and comodious" Church was erected on the corner of Ridge and Victoria Streets, the opening of which took place on July 12th, 1851 with the Rev. Arch. Colquhoun preaching to a very large congregation of Orangemen gathered from the surrounding community. One year later, on September 7th, the Rev. David M McAleese was inducted as the resident Minister in conjunction with churches at Warsaw and at "Crook's Rapids" (Hastings). Mr McAleese remained only Two years but during that period he was most dilligent in his labors, both for the Church and for any worthy objective for the good of the community, one of his greatest efforts being the initiation of the establishment of a "Grammer School" in the Village. He was the first Chairman of the Board and to his untiring efforts belongs the credit for the final opening of the much desired Grammer School located on the Hastings Road just South of where the present Church is standing. In 1860 an addition to this Church was erected and for Eighteen years this building continued to serve a rapidly growing congregation or until the present structure had been planned, completed and dedicated in the Winter of 1878-79. Although no records are available, I have been reliably informed the "Church on the Hill" was finally torn down and removed to the Clarina settlement at Stonéy Lake where it was rebuilt and now serves that community and an ever increasing number of Summer visitors.