

HISTORY OF THE UNITED CHURCH PURPLE VALLEY: (As Compiled
and Written by Mr. Thos. Coveney)

When my parents moved to what was then known as the Watchorn settlement, later called Purple Valley, I was a little over four years old. There was one frame house in Purple Valley, all the rest of the buildings were constructed of logs, some of which were so well and substantially built that they are doing good service as dwellings to this day. There was a log building on the site where the present school now stands which served as school house and Orange Hall and religious services were also held there by the Rev. Thos. Legate, a Wesleyan Methodist missionary.

I can remember the old log school house. There were long benches along the walls with long desks in front of the benches and in one corner on a bracket shelf near the ceiling was a mysterious box or chest stoutly padlocked. The Orangemen told us that this box was where the "goat" was kept.

As I have previously stated, Rev. Thos Legate was the first Methodist missionary to hold services in the old log school house and he made a good start, being a minister who was liked and an earnest and convincing preacher. I cannot recall the name of his successor, but I remember that a few years later a group of Methodists calling themselves "The Gospel Band" held revival services in the old log school house and that through their efforts a great change for the better was made in the lives of a goodly number of people in the neighbourhood. The addition of the new converts to those who already belonged built up the Methodists into a strong congregation and they decided that they needed a new place of worship, so about the year 1885, the Oxenden Methodists, having built a new church, had their old church building to dispose of and sold it to the Purple Valley Methodists. This building they sawed into sections and hauled across the ice of Colpoys Bay and erected it on the present site where it now stands.

I have no record of the names of Methodist ministers who served in Purple Valley. Those that I remember are: Revs. Sparling, Berry, Wesley Glazier, Reuben Lyler, Robert Carson Smith, Robert Rogers, John Neill, Jas Drew, Adam Glazier, John Hilditch, Strapp, Oliver Strapp, Woolley, R. R. Elliott, Andrew Edington, Horace Kippen and the present pastor, Frank Burgess.

In the year 1925, the Methodist Church and a large section of the Presbyterian church had joined forces to form the United Church of Canada. Rev. Oliver Strapp was the first minister