

FIRST WESTMINSTER UNITED CHURCH

instead of the heavily trimmed millinery of a later date. The men appeared in homespun suits and wore large straw hats. There was no class distinction and never was any member known to remain at home through the need of proper clothing. When the first death occurred in the district, it was decided to set aside the land surrounding the school house as a cemetery and today this is known as Pond Mills Cemetery.

In the year 1832, Rev. William Proudfoot came as a missionary from Scotland to minister to charges in London, Westminster, the English settlement and Proof Line. In 1838 a log church was built not far from the place in which the present church stands. Mr. Proudfoot preached once every fortnight either there or in the school house at the Ponds. After his death in 1851 the two congregations of London and Westminster called his son, Rev. J.J.A. Proudfoot to serve as pastor.

Not long after this the members in Westminster decided to petition Presbytery to form a separate congregation. We here make a quotation from the minutes of the Presbytery of London in connection with the United Presbyterian Church of Canada which relates the petition, disjunction and erection into separate congregations. Quote:-

" At a meeting held at the log church, 3rd concession, Westminster, April 14, 1854, a portion of the members of the United Presbyterian Church in London residing in Westminster unanimously adopted the following petition:

To the Moderator and other members of the Presbytery of London In connection with the United Presbyterian Church in Canada, the petition of the undersigned members of the United Presbyterian Church of London humbly showeth that in the opinion of your petitioners, the field in which our esteemed pastor, Rev. Mr. J.J.A. Proudfoot, has been called to labour is by far too extensive to be adequately occupied by one minister;

That in the judgement of your petitioners a portion of the congregation residing in Westminster are now able to support the ordinances of grace amongst themselves and on account of the great distance a number of your petitioners are from London and especially for the young, your petitioners hope by the blessing of God, it would tend greatly to promote their spiritual welfare to be formed into a congregation separately from London. Therefore, may it please the presbytery to grant your petitioners a separate organization as a congregation;