

## VICTORIA SUNDAY SCHOOL

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Victoria Sunday School was organized in 1867 by a young school teacher, Henry Jason Parliament. At that time Victoria was known as Bush's neighbourhood. Mr. Parliament taught Bush's school, a brick building built in 1864, on the same site as the present frame school house which was built in 1904.

When Henry Jason Parliament was only eight years old, his father died. When he was eighteen, his next-door neighbour at Mountain View, Mr. Sylvenus Sprague, talked to him, admonishing him to be as good a man as his father. He solemnly promised to try. That promise took hold of his very life, and accounted for his ambition to begin a Sunday School.

Sunday School was held in the school building from 1867 until 1897 when Victoria Church was built. For many years Mr. Parliament returned to visit Victoria Sunday School each year in May. Speaking at Victoria Sunday School's 70th Anniversary in 1937, Mr. Parliament, then 93 years old, reminisced about Bush's neighbourhood in 1867. The forest had just been cleared away, and the soil of this valley was very rich. Fall wheat had been sown upon the fields, which had ripened into a beautiful golden colour. Anyone coming from the south got a great view out over this valley of wheat fields from the top of the high hill to the south. It took on the name and was known as "The Golden Valley"

The first year he taught school at Bush's, Mr. Parliament recalled how, one morning about ten o'clock, a wagon drove up to the schoolhouse with four men in it, all armed with guns, several dogs following the wagon. The men wanted the teacher to go with them to kill a bear which was over in the woods about half a mile away. He told them he would be delighted to go, but that his contract with the trustees didn't include bear hunting. They went on without him, but were back about an hour and a quarter later with a large bear, dead, in the wagon.

The first year Mr. Parliament was in the section, he boarded around. Money was very scarce with the first settlers, with much to buy and very little to sell, so they had the teacher board around, one week in a home, and then move on to the next home. For him it was a first class picnic the year round, eating the bountiful and delicious meals provided every day by the kind-hearted mothers in the homes of this section. Mr. Parliament received \$300.00 a year and paid \$1.50 a week board.