



Right: St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church is rooted in Warkworth's farming community; Top: 40-member Ontario Presbyterian Choir which travelled from Toronto to perform; Below: Part of the congregation attending last Sunday's celebration of the church's 150th anniversary.



PAUL DALBY PHOTOS

# Church marks 150th milestone

*St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Warkworth celebrates a special birthday with songs of praise*



Violinists Beth Clelland and Marion McCallumh.

by Paul Dalby  
THE INDEPENDENT

**W**HEN A CHURCH IS NINE YEARS OLDER than Canada itself, it's a good cause for celebration. And St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Warkworth has not only recorded local peoples' births, deaths and marriages for the past 150 years – it's had a front row seat for the birth of a nation.

The church's formation came just the year after the naming of the village of Warkworth by an English army officer after the village of the same name in England.

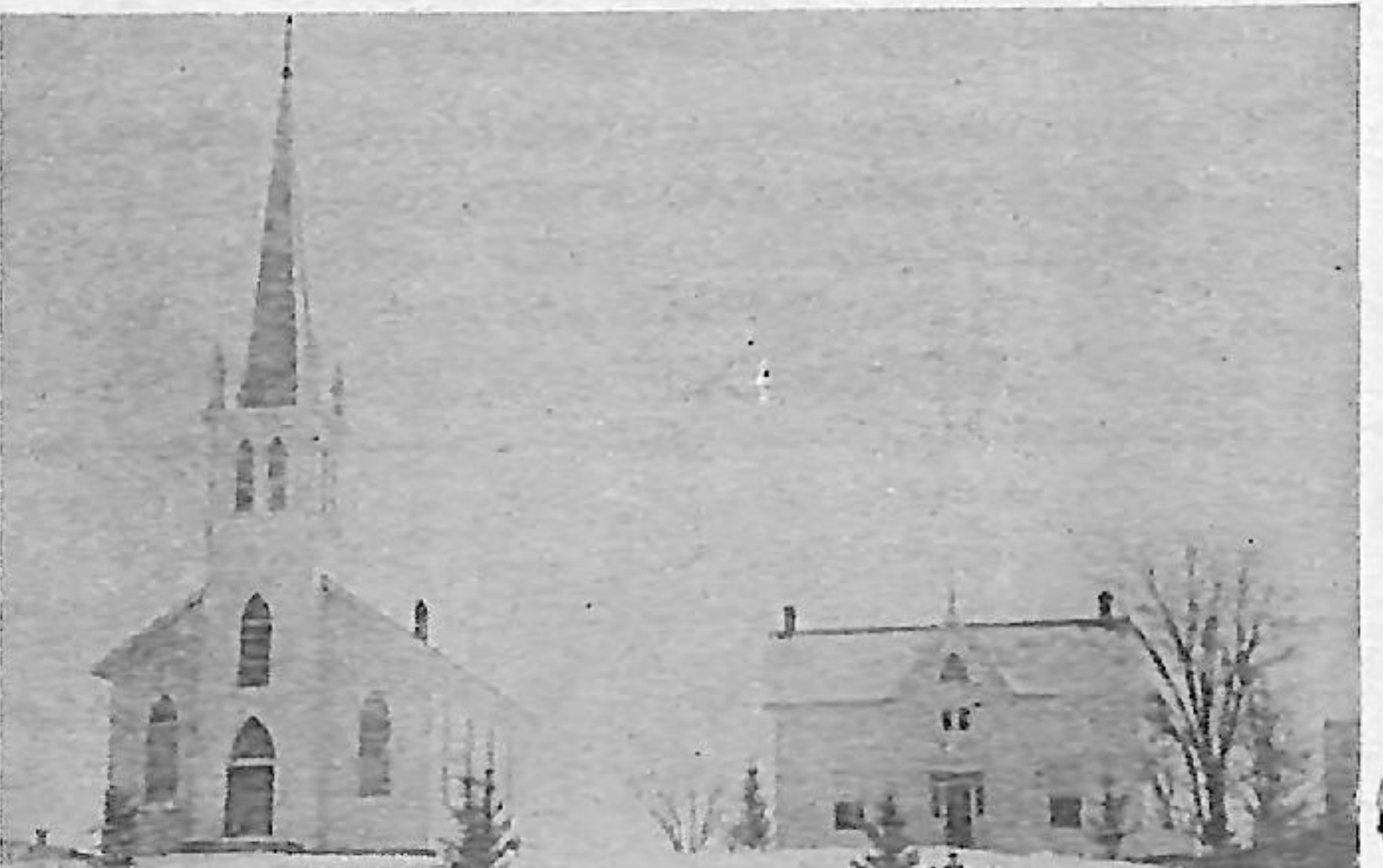
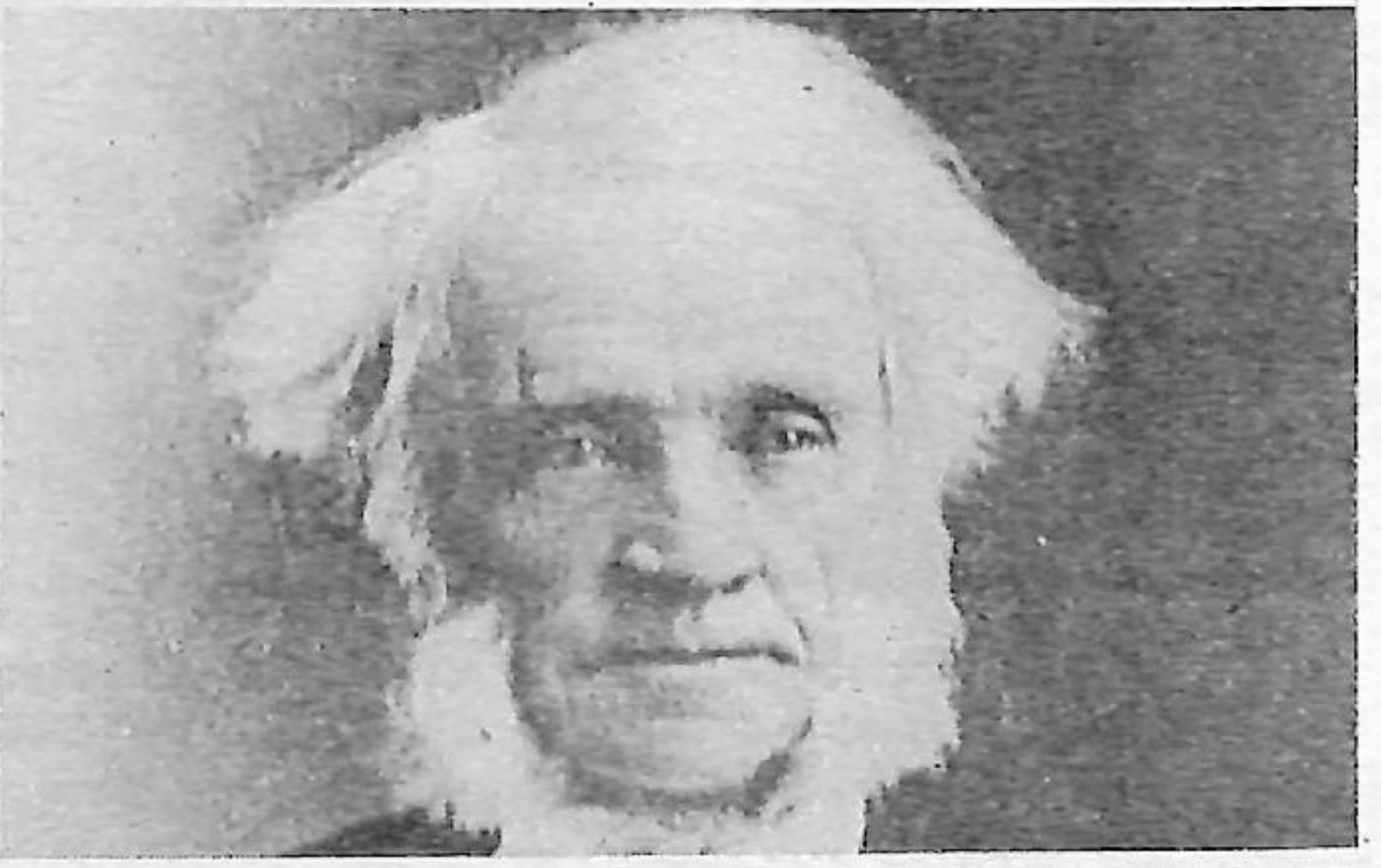
It was to be a busy 12 months that saw the construction of the first Post Office and the public school as the community of settlers quickly took shape.

In fact the congregation of the Church didn't have a real church when they engaged their first minister Thomas Alexander from Dundee, Scotland, on June 1, 1858.

At that time, services were held in two nearby school-houses and also the Baptist building. It would be another seven years before the burgeoning congregation built their frame church building.

By 1893, the congregation in this thriving farming community had outgrown the church. With rare ingenuity, the community jacked up the building and turned it at a 90-degree angle on its foundation. This allowed the church to be expanded with a new frontage, almost doubling the seating capacity.

Today the church remains largely in tact from those early days. And last Sunday it resonated once again with the sound of voices in song – the 40-member Ontario Presbyterian Chorus from Toronto performed songs, psalms and a cantatas that celebrated the words and music of Charles Wesley.



Above: Reverend Thomas Alexander came from Scotland to be the church's minister in 1858; Below: the original church, built three years before Confederation.

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