

History of the Anglican Church at Berkeley

(Continued from page one)

It was the building of saw mills and the completion of the railway then known as "The Toronto, Grey and Bruce" that gave Berkeley its early prosperity, large quantities of lumber and poles, and later of farm produce, being shipped from this point. The mill which still remains is on the site of one first owned by Ed. Williams, then by a Mr. Brown of Meaford and run for him by his son, George, then by James Lackey from whom it was purchased by Mitchell Brothers late in the year 1888. Thomas Mitchell, having come to Berkeley a few months previously, took up his abode there, becoming a great help to the Church. Berkeley was at first a flag station, but representations made by Mr. Mitchell to the Canadian Pacific, which corporation by that time operated the road, led to the building of the station in 1892 on land purchased from Jas. Wright.

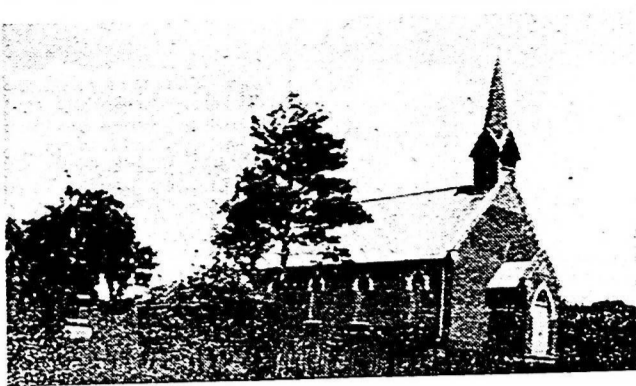
The Rev. James Ward began Anglican effort in Berkeley by opening a Sunday School in the Orange Hall in May, 1886. It began with thirty pupils in attendance, all members of Church families. Later, by the inclusion of children who had no other Sunday School opportunity, the number increased to sixty-five. Mr. James Lackey was the first Superintendent, Messrs. William Sowerby, sr., and Edward Beatty subsequently serving in that capacity down through the years. Under James Lackey, Misses M. Lackey, E. Wright and M. Abbott served as teachers. Later, in 1906, Andrew Gillespie became Treasurer of the Sunday School, which office he has filled very acceptably ever since.

At the time that the Berkeley Sunday School was organized a move was being made in the direction of greater Sunday School activity in the Deanery of Grey, for, at the spring meeting of the Deanery Chapter held at Markdale, it was arranged that a meeting of Grey Deanery Sunday School teachers should be held in Markdale on July the ninth of that same year, 1886, for the purpose of organizing a Sunday School Association for the Deanery. This purpose was effected as planned, officers being elected, and papers on Sunday School work being read by Rev. J. C. Farthing of Durham, now Bishop of Montreal, and by Adam Turner of Markdale.

On August the fourth, 1886, Mr. Ward began to hold Wednesday evening Services in the Orange Hall in Berkeley.

On April 1st, 1887, as a result of a survey of the district by the Bishop's commissioner, made during that winter, Maxwell was separated from the Markdale Parish in order that Berkeley might have a Sunday Service. Beginning with the Sunday after Easter, April 17th, 1887, Services every Sunday afternoon were regularly held, the Services in Markdale being held from that time every Sunday morning and evening.

On Wednesday, April 6th, 1887, at a congregational meeting held in the Orange Hall and presided over by Rev. Jas. Ward, it was decided to erect a place of worship in Berkeley. A building committee was appointed forthwith, consisting of Messrs. Thomas Sowerby, sr., James Lackey, Thomas Abbott, James Wright and William Sowerby, sr. At a meeting held two weeks later, a plan of the Church submitted by Rev. Jas. Ward was declared satisfactory. The offer of one-half acre of land for a Church site by Mark Abbey, father of Markmade Abbey, and Ann, his wife, was gratefully accepted and the conveyance made, the late Patrick McCullough of Markdale drawing up the deed. Rev. Jas. Ward was the architect; Thos. Abbott, father of Mrs. E. T. Walters, the contractor; Jas. Gillespie, brother of Andrew, built the foundation; Isaac Stinson of Markdale built the brickwork, being assisted by John Gibson, John Burrell and Thos. Moore; William G. Guthrie of Markdale did the plastering, and E. S. Mabee the painting. The leaded windows were procured in Toronto. The East or Altar Window was the Reverend Jas. Ward's own gift. The total cost of the completed structure was \$1100.80, or, counting in the organ and fixtures, in the neighborhood of \$1200. \$620 was paid in by subscription in a little over a year, and the whole debt



St. Matthias' Church, Berkeley, erected in 1887

was wiped out in time to have the Church consecrated by Bishop Baldwin on Wednesday, July 11th, 1894. The petition for the consecration was signed by Rev. M. M. Goldberg, the clergyman in charge at the time, Thos. J. Sowerby, Thos. Mitchell, James Wright and Charles Erwin. The deed of the property, dated June 16th, 1887, given by Mark Abbey and his wife, Ann, to the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron, and the clearing off of all indebtedness were the necessary preliminaries to the said consecration, in accordance with the uniform procedure of the Church in such a matter. To build the same structure in this year of our Lord, 1927, according to estimates made by three builders, would cost from \$3500 to \$3800 or more, and furnishings might bring it up another \$700.

On Sunday, August 7th, 1887, Rev. Jas. Ward preached his farewell sermons, and the Rev. W. A. Graham of Millbank, with whom he had exchanged parishes, took charge of the Markdale parish on the following Sunday. On September 28th, 1887, Mr. Ward married Miss Mary Frances Ford, daughter of the late John Ford of Markdale. The marriage was solemnized in Christ Church, Markdale, by Rev. W. A. Graham. Three years later Mr. Ward had the privilege of officiating at the marriage of Mr. Graham to Alice Victoria Ford in Christ Church, Markdale, shortly after Mr. Graham's transfer to the Shelburne parish. St. Matthias' Church was completed during the first few months of Mr. Graham's incumbency and formally opened on February 12th, 1888, when three Services were held. Rev. Jas. Ward preached at all three services, and Mrs. Ward presided at the organ. The Wardens at that time were Thomas Sowerby and James Lackey, while Wm. Sowerby, sr., was Secretary-Treasurer.

The first organist, both in the Orange Hall and in the Church, was Miss Matilda Lackey, now Mrs. Jno. Thompson, R.R. 5, Owen Sound. On a number of occasions she was relieved by Miss A. Ford of Markdale, accompanied by some members of the Christ Church choir. After Miss Lackey's removal to Vandeleur, she continued to preside at the organ in St. Matthias' Church until relieved by Miss M. Lucas of Markdale, cheerfully undertaking a round trip of some twenty-two miles in order that the musical part of the Service should be maintained without a break.

The first marriage performed in St. Matthias' Church was that of Andrew Gillespie to Miss Elizabeth Wright on November 14th, 1888. The first funeral was that of Mrs. Thomas Sowerby, sr. The earliest baptisms in the Church were those of Wm. Sowerby, Hugh McKennitt, Dora Isabel Walker and Amelia Violet Gillespie. George Wilson, son of Robert and Harriet Wilson; Zella Abbey, daughter of Richard and Mary Abbey, and John Samuel Lackey, son of Samuel and Alice Lackey, had been baptized at the Services in the Orange Hall.

The Wardens appointed at the Easter Vestry on April 3rd, 1888, were Thos. Sowerby, Clergyman's Warden, and Jas. Lackey, People's Warden. Wm. Sowerby was reappointed Secretary-Treasurer, his position being designated, "Vestry Clerk", from 1889. Jas. Wright and Thomas Abbott were appointed sidesmen.

The names of the men transacting the business of the Church at the earliest meetings of the Vestry are: James Lackey, Thomas Sowerby, sr., James Wright, Thomas Abbott, Mark Abbey, Robert Wilson, William Sowerby, sr., John Beatty, John Craw-

ford, Chas. Craven, Thomas Mitchell and Thomas Sowerby, jr.

The names of the Clergy who have had charge of St. Matthias' Church in succession are,—Revs. W. A. Graham, H. E. Bray, Wm. Hinde, M. M. Goldberg, J. R. Newell, J. A. Robinson, E. G. Dymond, J. H. Hosford, A. W. Richardson, A. S. Mitchell and the present Rector, C. O. Pherrill. The Church sheds were built in 1895 and re-roofed in 1927 at a cost of \$90.69. The Church was re-roofed in 1919 at a cost of \$107.85, and re-decorated in 1924, the decorating being done by James Culp. Storm windows were added in 1929 and 1931 at a total cost of \$55.86, and a new southern boundary fence was put up in 1932.

In 1922, Rev. A. W. Richardson being Rector, the Ladies' Guild was organized, Mrs. Edward Beatty being elected president, ably filling that office ever since. This step gave new impetus to the work of the Church, a number of improvements and very necessary repairs being effected, as well as substantial grants being made to repairs and alterations to the Rectory in Markdale, to Church maintenance and to the Diocesan Budget by the Guild with the co-operation of the congregation.

As to the Church furnishings now in use,—The Church pews were made in Desboro by Wm. Smith, afterwards of Chesley. They are of elm grown near that place. The work is of the very best type, reflecting

credit upon the maker, who at that time having very little machinery did a great deal by hand. It was a credit also to him that he charged the exceedingly low price of \$125. They were installed in 1909. The Lectern was given by the Misses Sarah and Margaret Sowerby in 1909 in memory of Thos. Sowerby, sr., and his wife. The Organ was purchased in 1912, at a cost of \$122.28. The Communion Table was purchased with money bequeathed to the Church by William Henry Abbott, who died on February 11th, 1911. The iron fence fronting the Churchyard was erected in the year 1913, having been purchased at a cost of \$65. The Prayer Desk was installed in 1908 and the Sanctuary Chairs in 1912. The Offertory plates were given on Easter Sunday, 1935, in memory of Mrs. Thomas Mitchell (nee Matilda Ann Huggins), whose death on August 4th, 1934, was a great loss to the Church Militant. The donors were her children. The last work of outside painting was done in 1908.

The Officers of St. Matthias' Church in this Golden Jubilee are,—Honorary Wardens: Thomas Mitchell, who was elected People's Warden on April 3rd, 1893, ably serving in that capacity until January 22nd, 1935, or all but forty-two years, and William Hampton, who was Minister's Warden from 1906 to 1935, or nearly twenty-nine years in all, showing the same devotion as Mr. Mitchell. Wardens: James Mitchell, Minister's Warden, and E. D. Gilpin, People's Warden; Vestry Clerk: Edward Beatty, who has served acceptably in that capacity since he succeeded Wm. Sowerby, sr., in 1894; Lay Representatives to the Synod: Jas. Mitchell, and Substitute, Gordon McKennitt; Sidesmen: Harold Gillespie, Hugh McKennitt, Gordon McKennitt, William Sowerby, John McLaughlin, William Wright, Clifford Allen, Edward Baillie and Ernest Aitken; Select Vestry: James Mitchell, E. D. Gilpin, Edward Beatty, John Sowerby, William Sowerby, H. B. David, Harold Gillespie, Gordon McKennitt, William Wright, John McLaughlin, Mrs. A. Hannah and Mrs. Edward Beatty; Organists: Mrs. A. Baillie and Miss Hannah Mitchell; Guild Officers: President, Mrs. Edward Beatty; Vice-Presidents, Mrs.

Wm. Dodds and Mrs. A. Baillie; Secretary, Mrs. J. McLaughlin; Treasurer, Mrs. A. Hannah; Sunday School Staff: Superintendent and Bible Class Teacher, Rev. C. O. Pherrill; Treasurer, Andrew Gillespie; Teachers, Mrs. John McLaughlin and Mrs. Almer Nesbit.

The congregation has never been strong, although somewhat larger in early days. But though weak in numbers, it has ever been strong in zeal. It can look back with pride to the time when the Parish attained to self-support in the time of Rev. J. R. Newell. Gratefully remembering the time when it had to depend upon outside aid, St. Matthias' congregation made it a practice to pay its Diocesan Budget assessment in full, and succeeded in so doing for a number of years until financial stringency due to "the depression" compelled it to reduce its givings to that object to eighty per cent. in 1934, and seventy-five per cent. in 1935. However, it entered this Jubilee Year with the 1936 Budget met in full once more and creditable balances in both the Guild and in the Church Maintenance funds.

The spiritual zeal and loyalty to their Church which has characterized the membership in the past is a real challenge to the congregation of the present and to that of the future to stubbornly resist twentieth century temptations to spiritual slackness and indifference, everything, in fact, that would steal from us the appetite for worship and self-dedication to the Master's work. These chronicles of the past will have done their work only if they inspire all connected with the Church with new and unflagging zeal for the cause of Christianity. Let us resolve, then, not to rest content with past achievements, but to make them, as did St. Paul, only an added reason for "pressing forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus. Necessary as it is to record history, it is much more our duty to make it. It would be well for us then to resolve to bear in mind the charge of God to Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." For the future of St. Matthias' Church will be just what, by the grace of God, we make it.

"Silent Barriers" is Splendid Canadian Film



Silent Barriers, the film epic of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which had its Empire premiere under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Mary, and Mrs. Stanley Baldwin, in London recently, and its Canadian premiere in Montreal, and which depicts one of the most important chapters in the history of the British Commonwealth of Nations, will be shown in theatres from coast to coast during the current month. The story, based on Alan Sullivan's book "The Great Divide," brings back and vitalizes the titanic struggle with nature waged by the giants of pioneer railroading in this country, and particularly in the seemingly impossible task of thrusting the road through the Rocky Mountain barrier. The story has a tremendous Canadian

historical value, as well as being first rate entertainment. The film, a Gaumont British production, was made at Revelstoke, B.C., and in the surrounding mountain area. It includes such great stars as Richard Arlen, Barry MacKay, Antoinette Cellier, Lilli Palmer, and J. Farrell MacDonald. In it the men who would not acknowledge defeat again play their parts. The log-out shows a re-enact-

ment of the historic scene when Sir John Macdonald pledged the support of his Government to the enterprise. Left to right are shown George Stephen, William Van Horne, R. B. Angus, Sir John Macdonald, T. G. Shaughnessy and Donald Smith. Picture No. 2 shows one of the tense moments of the play and is a scene between Richard Arlen and Lilli Palmer.