

Early beginnings

Stone church fruit of U.E.L. labor

ANOTHER in the series of prize winning essays by students of the Rockwood public school is reproduced. Since the roots of settlement in Ontario revolve around the church, Brenda Smith chose the historic Stone Church as her subject.

STONE UNITED CHURCH

by Brenda Smith

This is the history of the church I attend and hope to join within the next year. It is located on the Fourth Line about one-quarter of a mile south of Highway 24. For being such a small church, it has a long and interesting history which I am going to tell you about.

It all began back in 1809 when the late John Loree and his wife and family of ten children moved from New York State to come to Canada. They settled in Halton County which lies along the border of Wellington County in Southern Ontario.

During the following years, Mr. Loree and his three sons, John, Heskiah, and Timothy, served in the war of 1812 for the British. This was a war between United States and Britain. For this service, the British Government gave the Loree's a grant of land which amounted to 1,400 acres.

This may seem a large area but in those days, it was natural to have a large farm. However, they only cleared a small area and after some time the rest of

it was given back to the government.

Highway 24 was then called the "Stagecoach-line" from Guelph to Erin. The crown of land cleared, extended from the Second Line to the Fourth Line down about as far as Hopkin's place below the "Stagecoach-line" to the Second Line above the "Stagecoach-line" as far as the Third Line and back down to the highway.

Today, some land still belongs to the Loree's on the Third Line. They cleared most of the land that was flat. John Loree lived where Hopkin's live.

There were other United Empire Loyalists in the area. These people built a log church on the northwest corner of the Church grounds. John Loree donated this land. A cemetery was started, also.

Strange to say, one of the first to be buried, was John Loree's brother, Heskiah, who lived on the Third Line farm now owned by Mr. Harry Loree. As most of the settlers were United Empire Loyalists, it was only natural to call the church, the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was a humble structure but it meant a lot to the faithful habitants.

In 1802, a new Stone Church, as we know it today, was built.

The Reverend John Smith had the honour of being their minister. Even though his stable and horse had been burned by some unknown person, the rest of the congregation went and bought him a horse and other equipment to show their admiration. After many years of successful preaching, he was succeeded by Reverend Cook, a painter by trade.

There was no basement in the new church as the heating system consisted of two cast iron stoves called "old bellies". It took a whole block of wood which would burn all afternoon.

About thirty-five years later, a small hole was dug in the wall near the foundation. After much digging, a door was put in. Enough earth was shovelled out for the installation of a small furnace and a few hot air pipes.

In 1871, the Eramosa Circuit was formed. It consisted of three country charges which were Bethel, Mimosa and Stone Church. The parsonage was at the last-named appointment.

The communion service was at that time called Sacrament Sunday or as the quarterly meeting. This was held at one church with the other two churches joining them.

On the following page you will find a summary of the ministers that served that charge.

Reverend Findlay M. Smith was the first minister to serve in the new church. He served three years. He was succeeded by Reverend Lynch and Reverend Cooper.

In 1880 Reverend Thurston preached for a time before Reverend Durkee took over.

Following him, Reverend Watts preached. He had a family of twelve.

Then, in 1886, Reverend Walker preached for three years. He was well-remembered as a good speaker. In 1890, Reverend Fair began to preach, which he did for one year. Meanwhile, a Mr. Hodgkinson was kept busy as a supply minister.

Reverend Harris became the next minister. His daughter started the missionary society. Reverend Noble disbanded the missionary project but he took down the doors of the pews and the door to the pulpit. From 1893 - 1901 Reverend Grandy, Sanderson and Sharp served there. In 1901, Reverend Brand served, followed by Reverend George Smith, and Reverend Sanderson. Reverend Woltz and his wife opened their home for the congregation.

Following Reverend Woltz was Reverend Craig who was then followed by Reverend Evens in 1914. His wife started the Ladies' Aid. In 1916 the Reverend W.A. Cook became the minister with Reverend Eddy following him.

At this time Everton was taken out of the charge and Rockwood was put in. A new parsonage was built in Rockwood when Reverend R. Geiger served. In 1924 Reverend J.A. Diltz came to preach to the people.

Reverend Donaldson was there when Bethel was moved to another circuit, leaving Rockwood and the Stone Church as it is today.

From 1929-1937, Reverend Will Taylor served. Reverend Harold Lawson served from 1937 to 1942. During this period, he suffered from a motor accident but recovered. Reverend Ward next, endeared himself to the congregation. Many years later Reverend Oliver came to the charge with the Reverend Diltz following him.

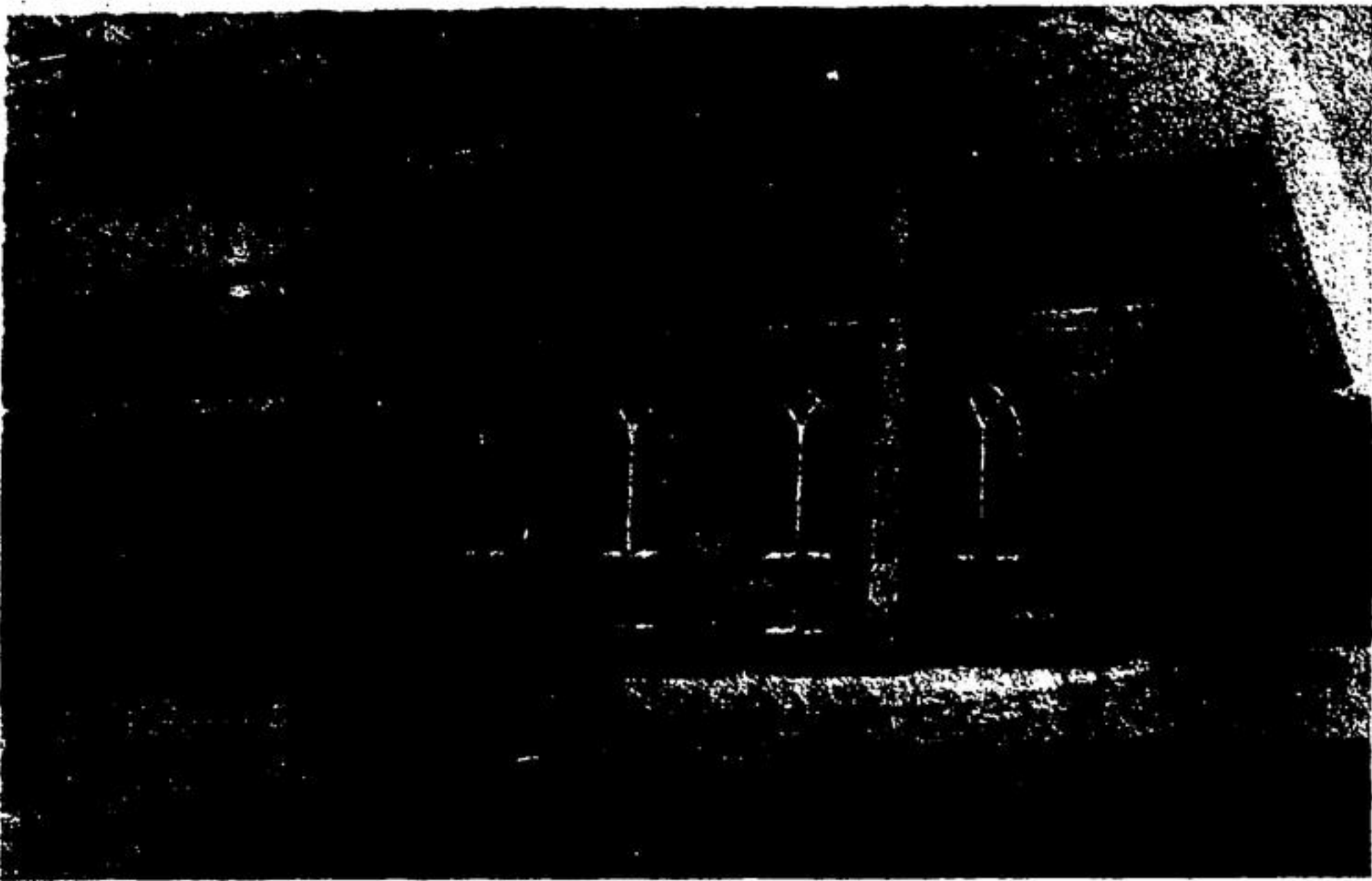
Then came Reverend Moore, Reverend Connor, and finally our present-day minister, Reverend Gardner.

In 1945 a community effort was put forth to remodel the church once again. They needed space for Sunday School rooms. Mrs. A.L. Stevens (Mary Loree) made these dreams come true.

In 1943 the church received \$3,500 to be divided between the church and the cemetery. The people voted that seven hundred dollars be used for the cemetery and the remainder for the church.

In December, 1945, a building committee was selected consisting of two stewards, two elders and two members of the Young Peoples'.

In 1946 the building was emptied to put in the basement. A large hole was dug and the floor was raised six feet, changing the appearance completely.



STONE UNITED CHURCH is situated just off No. 24 highway on the fourth line of Eramosa township. Like other country churches of pioneers it has a cemetery alongside making its site doubly sacred to the congregation. (Staff Photo)

Christians should make ethnic groups feel more welcome in chosen country

By Mrs. F. Taylor

Rockwood - At the November meeting of the Rockwood Presbyterian W.M.S. and W.A., the president Miss Elva Pearen led the group in an interesting discussion. The topic was the ethnic groups and the department of Immigration for the Presbyterian Church.

Miss Pearen who spoke for the Ukrainian people was assisted by Mrs. J. Freeman for the Hungarians, Mrs. Gordon Swanson for the Italians, Mrs. Sinclair for the French and Mrs. D. Gray the Chinese. They came to the con-

clusion, that as a Christian organization we should do more to make them feel welcome in their chosen country.

Misses Minnie and Colena Nickell were hostesses for the meeting with 14 members and three visitors present.

Miss Pearen opened with a verse "What I can do" followed by a hymn. After the approval of the minutes and the treasurer's report, the roll call was answered by presenting the Sunshine Bags. The offering received by Mrs. G. Swanson was dedicated by Miss Pearen.

Mrs. L. Johnston and Mrs. G. Swanson were named on the nominating committee to prepare next year's slate of officers.

Mrs. Sinclair reported on the rally in Preston where Miss Elsie Taylor, a missionary on furlough from Nigeria was guest speaker. Miss Taylor showed many slides of her work in the hospital and told many interesting facts and experiences.

An invitation was read to attend the meeting of the Twilight group when Miss Sinclair of Guelph will be guest speaker. Final plans were made for the annual bazaar in the church school room.

Miss Pearen asked if members would like to resume the giving of life memberships this year, but no decision was reached. The Scripture lesson was given by Mrs. L. Johnston. A hymn and prayer closed the meeting.

During the social half hour a lovely lunch was served by the three Nickell sisters, assisted by Mrs. Aitken and Mrs. D. Gray.

In the rainbow trout class the top honors went to Thomas McCullough for a beauty tipping the scales at 5 lbs. 8 oz. One at 5 lb., 6 oz. brought second prize to Alfred Aug while third went to Nigel Anderson for his 4 lb., 3 oz. rainbow.

For speckled trout James Stewart had first at 3 lbs., 9 oz. Don Mathies came second with his 2 lbs., 14 oz. speckled with one for Ossie Downes at 1 lb. 7 oz. in third place.

In the ladies special speckled class, Marg Lillie had a catch of 1 lb., 2 oz. for top award and Janet Peart had a 7-1/2 oz.

Station closing

Agent with no duties left in Rockwood

protest from residents of Rockwood it's unlikely the subject will come to a public hearing before the Board of Transport Commissioners.

Although business in the Rockwood station does not approach in volume that done in Acton, it has always kept one man busy. Revenues have never been astronomical but one person in Rockwood told The Free Press reporter he figured they more than supported one person on duty.

Acton station which is on the same schedule as Rockwood has all the current records for business in the last six months removed. Agent Charlie Perry, the last survivor, says he thinks the railroad will let the station set until they see what's going to happen in Acton.

Several protests have been received about closing the C.N.R. station in Acton.

Trains started running through this area first in 1856.

"I think I'll be here till spring," Rockwood station agent Wayne Casemore told The Free Press, but the only thing I've got to do is report the trains as they go by.

Agent Casemore had a pile of boxes which contained all the books and records of the C.N.R. station in Rockwood piled up ready for delivery to Guelph where the master agency is located. He's only been in Rockwood since October 20, replacing Barry Shea who quit the railway because of job insecurity.

Mr. Casemore realized the job is only a temporary vacancy but even with nearly eight years of

service on the railroad employment is a precarious state.

The Rockwood station with the bookkeeping and records gone, only a pot-bellied oil burner giving heat, is all ready for closing. There's a three or four month trial period before the C.N.R. comes in and locks the door but unless there's some concerted

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Approve cost sharing

Everton, Montrose dams first on Grand River conservation program

The Grand River will rise by about two feet, Grand River Conservation Authorities warned last week.

Unusually high rainfall during the summer and fall has almost filled the authority's two main waterholding reservoirs, the Sand Dam near Fergus and the Conestogo dam near Elmira.

Ilmar Kao, director of operations, said water is being released from the two dams because it could be dangerous to

have them nearly full in case of heavy rain.

He said the river is about three feet above normal for this time of year, making the river level at Galt about five feet and at Brantford, about four feet.

The additional discharge from the dams will result in a further rise of about two feet, he said. Discharging will continue for about three weeks until the dams are less than half full.

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