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YORK PIONEER AND PRESENT BY E. A. JAMES

Article 28

THORNHILL METHODIST CHURCH—1803-1926

The passing of the Methodist Church at Thornhill into the United Church of Canada on June 10th, 1926, removed a name that for over a century had been prominent in the religious activity and life of Thornhill and the surrounding community.

Methodism was first brought to this community by ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Nathan Bangs, David Pickett, John Reynolds, and Joseph Gatchell, all early preachers on the Yonge Street circuit. A circuit embracing all of what is now Toronto and York and more, for on horseback and with their saddlebags as complete travelling equipment they visited, in addition to the families of York, the Methodist communities of what is now the Counties of Ontario and Peel. Regular preaching services were held at the home of Benjamin Hoshel on Lot 10, Con. II., Markham, one and one-quarter miles east of Langstaff as early as 1803.

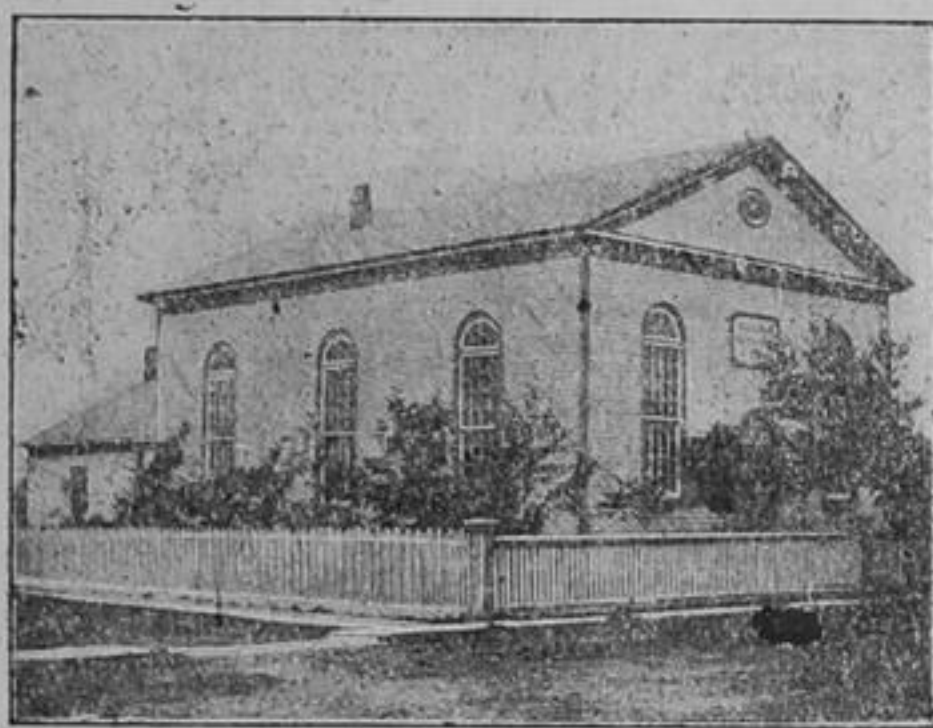
Yonge street as a circuit was formed in 1805 with David Pickett as preacher and a church membership of thirty and it was not until 1818 that the town of York was formed into a circuit separate from Yonge Street.

Just in passing let me give you the list of the early M. E. Church preachers on the Yonge Street circuit from its formation in 1806 until the York circuit was formed in 1818.

The Yonge Street circuit was described as a circuit on a road leading from York (Toronto) to Lake Simcoe.

Preacher	Year	Church Members
Daniel Pickett	1805-6	30
Andrew Prindle	1807	45
Robert Perry	1808	45
John Reynolds	1809	102
Joseph Lockwood	1810	111
Andrew Prindle	1811	95
Joseph Gatchell	1812	95
John Rhodes	1815	160
David Culp	1817	160

In 1811 the frame schoolhouse and church built on private land at Langstaff on Lot 34, Con. I., Vaughan was completed and regular preaching services were held in this church and schoolhouse until 1838.



Methodist Church, Thornhill after Remodelling in 1894.
View From North-East

In 1828 the Parliaments of Upper Canada passed an Act allowing all Christian denominations to hold land for public purposes. Before this meeting houses were built on land secured to private persons for the public good. But after 1828 land, not exceeding five acres, could be conveyed to the trustees for a congregation for the site of a church, meeting house, chapel or burying ground.

On the 25th day of February 1837, Mrs. Elizabeth Lyon deeded part of Lot 33, Con. I. Markham to trustees for the Canadian Wesleyan Church to be used as a site for a church and the remainder of the property as a burying ground. To-day you may still see a few graves well marking the old burying ground.

The trustees of this church property in 1837 were Jeremiah Atkinson, Thomas Harris, John Devlin, William Munshaw, James Robinson, Benjamin Hoshel and David Leek. Of the seven names in the deed of gift only one, that of Hoshel, is to-day a family name in the community.

The church on this property was opened for service in 1838 and Methodist Church service was continued here until 1852.

It was in this building in 1839 that the Methodist Sunday School was organized and New Year's Day, 1926 was the occasion of the eighty-sixth consecutive Sunday School Anniversary.

On March 1st, 1846 the British Wesley Methodist Church opened their new church on Lot 31, Con. I., Vaughan but in 1847 the Canadian and British Wesleyan Methodist Churches in Canada united and this church was closed and later sold to the Presbyterian Church of Canada who opened it in 1850 as an afternoon appointment from Richmond Hill and without any exterior alterations it still serves as the Presbyterian place of worship.

In 1852 the trustees of the Methodist Church at Thornhill, William Lane, John Devlin, John Hewgill, James Robinson, William Segsworth, Josiah Purkiss, David Mulholland and John Reid purchased a new church site on Lot 30, Con. I., Vaughan, the present church site and in 1852 moved the church from its site in Markham to the site in Vaughan. The board in the front gable of the church carries the words—"Wesleyan Methodist Church erected 1852," although in 1884 the Wesleys, the Primitive, the Episcopal Methodists and the Bible Christians united in "The Methodist Church of Canada."

Only two of the trustees of 1857 are on the church deed of 1852 and one may well imagine the controversy caused by the moving of the church south.

The church and Sunday School building erected in 1852 did service for fifty years without change. The exterior is well depicted in the picture accompanying the article but the interior still holds my fancy. As I first remember the church there was a tall box pulpit in the south, galleries were on both sides and in the north gallery was the organ and the choir and the thing I remember most about the choir was the curtain that they drew across the front of the

choir loft during preaching service. The pews were boxed in and closed by a door and four of the first families had large double pews beautifully upholstered in red, two on either side of the church and near the pulpit.

It was into this church in 1857 an organ was first installed and organ music became a part of the regular church service. Miss Maggie Reid was the first organist.



Wesleyan Methodist Church, Thornhill—1852-1894.
View From North-East.

Contest for Reeveship and For Council In Vaughan

LARGE CROWD AT NOMINATION MEETING

For Reeve
T. B. WELDRICK
GEORGE KELLAM
First Deputy Reeve
JAMES H. ROBSON Acc.
Second Deputy Reeve
ARTHUR W. FARR Acc.

For Council
THOMAS M. BAKER
W. J. JOHNSON
WILBERT COUSINS
D. W. MIDDLETON
GEORGE MASTERS

There will be an election in Vaughan township for the reeveship and for the council but James H. Robson and Arthur W. Farr were elected by acclamation to the offices of first and second deputy reeve respectively. T. B. Weldrick who has been in the council for the past nine years and for the past two as reeve is opposed by former deputy reeve George Kellam who has had six years experience in the township work having served three years as councillor and three years as deputy reeve.

The nominations were held in the township hall Vellore on Monday afternoon and there was a record crowd in attendance. All the speakers were unanimous in accepting this as a good omen for the future when the ratepayers were taking such a keen interest in municipal affairs.

James McLean the capable and popular clerk of the township presided as returning officer an office he has held now for the past twenty-eight years and at 2 o'clock declared the nominations closed. The following had been nominated; for reeve, T. B. Weldrick by Chas. Malloy and Adam Cavins; George Kellam by Thos. H. Kersey and Archie Brownlee. For first deputy reeve, Jas. H. Robson by George Brownlee and Richard Jarrett. Second Deputy reeve A. W. Farr by Roy Livingston and George Bagg. Thos. M. Baker by C. E. Smith and W. L. Keffer. For Council—(two to be elected) Thomas M. Baker by Wilbur L. Keffer and Carson E. Smith, Thos. A. Keffer by Wilbur L. Keffer, and Carson E. Smith, Wilbert Cousins by George McTaggart and P. G. Watson; Carson E. Smith by Jas. Elliott and Sam McClure (withdrew); W. J. Johnson by Lawson Wilson and A. G. Bowers; Robert Dooks by Jas. Watson and Victor Orr; George A. Masters by W. J. Baker and J. Reis; D. F. Middleton by J. S. McNair and Jacob Reaman.

After the nominations were closed Harry Naughton was selected chairman and ably presided over the remainder of the meeting. He expressed his pleasure on seeing such a large crowd in attendance and complimented the people of the township on the splendid municipal government which they had had in the past years and paid tribute to the excellent services of Clerk J. B. McLean. Municipal government was an important part of our system of government and it was important that the high standard be maintained.

T. B. Weldrick was the first speak-

er and in an interesting manner he gave an account of the years work. He had at all times worked in the best interests of the township and if all had not been accomplished which they would have liked it was largely because of the unfavorable weather. New Machinery had been purchased to the amount of about \$5000 and with the improved equipment more work could be done next year. He pointed out that the time had come when the front portion of the township which was now being sub-divided should have more money spent on streets as the taxes from this property had greatly increased in the past few years. Ratepayer—"Were you ever in Brookside?"

Reeve Weldrick—"I've been in all parts of the township."

Here the ratepayer from Brookside gave voice to the grievances of the people of that section. No money had been spent on the road which was in a deplorable state he said.

Reeve Weldrick stated that if elected he would see that justice was given all parts of the township.

George Kellam the other candidate for the reeveship commented on the splendid attendance at the meeting and received a very attentive hearing free from interruptions as he gave an interesting and thoughtful review of the years work touching very particularly on the great problems facing the county council.

He thanked all the ratepayers for their co-operation during the year and stated that despite the bad weather he had accomplished almost all the work he had laid out for the year. Whether the work was done or not and how it was done depended a whole lot on the local commissioner he said. This year all culverts and bridges had been built under the supervision of the road superintendent and a considerable saving had been made. In county council grave questions came up for discussion and demanded serious and thoughtful consideration. The south portion was growing very fast and were making many demands and the township representatives needed a firm grasp of the situation to get a square deal for Vaughan. Education was a big problem and the county was paying huge sums annually for High School education. The new regulation which provided that the cost of charity patients in hospitals was borne half by the county and half by the local municipality was unfair as the more urban municipalities had a hundred such patients to the rural municipality's one. The industrial home was filled to capacity and the county would soon be faced with an expenditure for additional accommodation. "If elected," said Mr. Kellam, "I will aim to be reeve of the whole township and be fair and equitable to all at all times and if honored by election, next year at the nomination meeting I will give you an account of the years work."

J. S. Naughton wanted to know who was to blame for the township losing about \$1200 as a result of not getting the provincial grant on certain work in 1925.

Deputy Reeve Kellam stated that he had the assurance of the Highways Department that all work done under

(Continued on page 2.)

Vaughan Election Cards

Electors of Vaughan Township

YOUR VOTE AND INFLUENCE
Are Respectfully Solicited For The Election Of

T. B. Weldrick

As Reeve for 1927

If My Nine Years Service Appeals To You Vote For Me.

POLLING DAY—MONDAY, JANUARY 3rd, 1927.

Vaughan Township Elections

Monday, January 3rd.

ELECT

George Kellam

REEVE for 1927

PROGRESSIVE AND ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATION

Vaughan Township Elections

MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 1927.

YOUR VOTE AND INFLUENCE RESPECTFULLY
SOLICITED TO RE-ELECT

THOMAS M. BAKER

Councillor for 1927

Concord—Male P. O.

Telephone Maple 368

"SANE, PROGRESSIVE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT."

VAUGHAN ELECTORS

YOUR VOTE AND INFLUENCE

are respectfully solicited for the election of

Wilbert Cousins

COUNCILLOR for 1927

ELECTION,— MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 1927.

Vaughan Township Elections

YOUR VOTE AND INFLUENCE RESPECTFULLY
SOLICITED TO ELECT

W. J. Johnson

As Councillor 1927

Vaughan Township Elections

Monday, January 3, 1927.

YOUR VOTE AND INFLUENCE SOLICITED TO ELECT

G. A. Masters

For Councillor

A Returned Man of the Third Battalion who is determined
that the East Section of the Township will get a
Square Deal

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