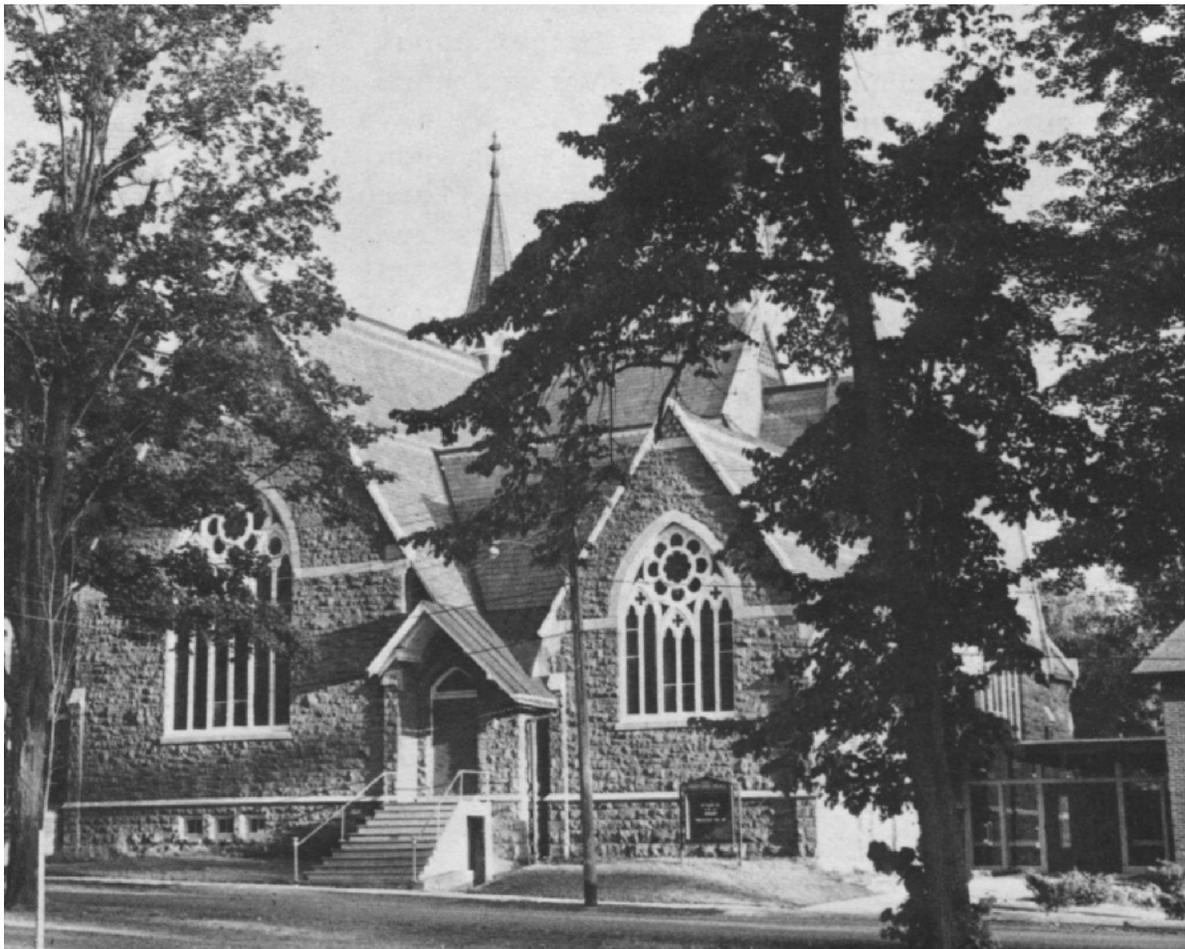


# **200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

# **First Presbyterian Church**

**Canton, New York**



**1807**

**2007**

## Introduction

Matthew 7:1-5 (New International Version)

*“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.”*

The following narrative is presented to give a sense of some of the events that happened during the past 200 years at the Presbyterian Church in Canton, New York. Of course, history really does not exist. Although history is based on real events, all that happened even a few moments ago cannot be completely recreated. What then does a report of events that happened 200 years ago represent? At best, history is a metaphor of events that happened in the past, it reflects traces of what happened and why. It is figurative. It's telling is influenced by the filtering of the people who lived through a particular event or read about it after the fact, and the reading of history is filtered by the biases of the reader.

The past should not be judged though our present day understanding of right and wrong. Judging from a position of security and comfort is not appropriate for situations in which neither existed. The people who have been associated with Church over the past 200 years were involved with this institution for many personal and spiritual reasons. What unites us with them is the struggle to understand the spirit and to reflect the love of God.

Admitting the limitation of personal biases and a less than complete access to all that has happened in the history of the church, this text nevertheless attempts to provide a sense of some of the events and people that shaped the church. But again, at best, it is figurative.

Four excellent histories of the church already exist. The text of the historical sermon delivered by Rev. James Gardner on July 2, 1876 (St. Lawrence Plaindealer, July 6, 1876) is rich in detail about early church history as is The October 6 Centennial Celebration of the Presbyterian Church by Joseph Brown (Commercial Advertiser 1921). The 100 and 150 year celebration publications also provide excellent material for an understanding of church history. However, with the availability of the internet, access to information has increased dramatically. So, the first goal of this publication is to integrate recently available material from 1807 through 1957 with that reported in the four previous histories. When available, an attempt was made to provide at least some personal information about the “movers and shakers” of the church. Additionally, the material from the past 50 years (1957 to 2007) has generally not been well preserved and so the second goal of this text is to provide some sense of what church life was like in the recent past.

Many of the actual words from the four previous church histories are used in this document. When longer passages are reproduced, the text is usually in italics. Shorter passages are incorporated into the text without notation. The rest of the material comes from Church records and some of the detail is from newspaper accounts printed over the past 200 years. Again longer quotes are indicated by italics and shorter passages are incorporated usually without notation.

## Early History

The following quote, from the Souvenir of the Centennial Celebration of the Church (1807-1907) provides a starting point for a historical overview of the organization. The text provides a sense of both the difficult struggles of the men and women who settled in Canton 200 years ago as well as the cultural lens through which members 100 years later viewed the mission and history of the Church.

“The history of the First Presbyterian Church of Canton is coexistent with the history of the town. Not infrequently the missionary of the cross has blazed the way for the onward march of progress and civilization. A century ago this whole northern section of the state was a vast wilderness whose solitudes were broken only by the screech of the catamount or the whoop of the red man. The bear roamed unmolested and the deer stalked by the rude cabins of the settlers. These were days that tried men's souls and showed the stuff of which they were made. No weakling would have dared to settle in such a primeval forest. Nature must be subdued and the fierce denizens of the forest must be cowed or driven forth to other haunts. The pioneers who came in those days possessed rugged bodies and an indomitable spirit and gave battle royal to the innumerable obstacles which menaced their onward march. These men had come with a purpose, ‘to dress and to keep’ the land and in some distant time to make it a Garden of the Lord.”

Although one of the tenants of the Congregational church was that each congregation functioned autonomously, evangelism was nevertheless seen being important. As a result, through the efforts of Congregationalist missionaries the first religious services were held in the village of Canton. With the guidance and encouragement of Rev. Amos Pettingill, and Rev. Ebenezer Hibbard, the Congregational Church in Canton was founded on March 6, 1807. This was the first church in Canton and there is an unbroken line from the Congregational Church of 1807 to the First Presbyterian on the Park in 2009.

Rev. Amos Pettingill was born in Salem, New Hampshire on August 9, 1780. In 1798 he entered Atkinson Academy and afterwards Harvard College as a charity student. In June 1806, Rev. Pettingill was appointed a missionary to travel to the new settlements of what is now Northern New York. In December of that year he was ordained as an evangelist and employed by the Missionary Society of New Hampshire. As an evangelist he preached in many places in Northern New York and Vermont. Rev. Pettingill died August 19, 1830.

Rev. Ebenezer Hibbard was born in Bennington, Vermont in February 16, 1771. He came from a long line of ministers. His father, Rev. Ithamar Hibbard, one of the first ministers in Vermont, served as a Chaplain in the Revolutionary War. Rev. Ebenezer Hibbard was employed by the Missionary Society of Vermont and he also served as the pastor for the Vermont Congregational churches at Brandon, St. Albans and West Haven. In the 1820s Rev. Hibbard became a Presbyterian minister. In 1829, after he left the Church at West Haven, Rev. Hibbard went to

Alexander Township in Ohio. He eventually settled in Hebbardsville, and apparently gave his name, slightly altered, to the village. Rev. Hibbard died in Amesville, Ohio in 1835.

The early histories of Congregational and Presbyterian denominations in the New England area were interwoven especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Congregationalists founded many colleges and universities in the United States including Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Williams, Bowdoin, Middlebury, and Amherst (Wikipedia.org). These schools were responsible for the training of many of the early ministers of the First Presbyterian Church in Canton.

In parts of New England and New York (especially around the established cities), the Congregational and Unitarian denominations shared a common belief whereas in other parts of New England and New York, the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations had more in common. One of the major splits between the Unitarians and Presbyterians was over the doctrine of the single personality of God (Unitarian) versus the Trinity -three persons in one God (Presbyterian). Presbyterians also felt education and life-long learning were important. Much emphasis was placed on studying the scriptures, theological writings, and church doctrines like the “Westminster Confession of Faith” (Wikipedia.org).

The seven charter members on the Canton Congregationalist Church were George Foot, John Richardson, Mrs. Wealtha Foot, Mrs. Betsy Donegly, Mrs. Milicent Conkey, Mrs. Jane Ross and Mrs. Phila Richardson. George Foot was chosen Moderator and John Richardson, Clerk. The little congregation had no official house of worship and so they held services in member’s homes until 1816.

In 1816 a school house was built on Hodskin Street, at the rear of Caldwell’s store. This building, which provided comfortable accommodations, became the Church’s meeting place. The congregation continued to meet in the school house until 1831, when, on the location of the present sanctuary, a church building was constructed.

### **Early Evangelists**

For a number of years the population of the village was stationary and as a result there was little increase in the number of people on the Church role. In addition, during this time the church had no regular pastor. The only religious instruction the members of the Canton Church received was from evangelists who came through Canton.

In 1809 Rev. Moses Parmelee, living in Oswego preached a few sermons in Canton. Rev. Parmelee was born on August 10, 1788. He studied theology mostly with his brother. He was licensed by North Western Association in 1815 and ordained in 1816 at South Granville (near Glens Falls). From South Granville he made his way Oswego and eventually ended up at Stockholm. After preaching at his brother’s church in Stockholm, he retired for the evening and

was found dead in his bed the next morning (February 20, 1838). He held strong views and was considered by some to be “grave,” yet he apparently was good in social situations.

Other evangelists who provided spiritual guidance during the early years included Rev. Johnson (who later became the Church’s first minister), Rev. Wright, (from Russell), Rev. Winchester (from Madrid) and Rev. Southworth (from South Canton).

Reverends Wright and Winchester were members of the Congregational Council which was responsible for the founding of the church in Potsdam in on June 9, 1811. Rev. Constant Southworth was a college friend of Silas Wright from Middlebury. In the early 1820s, he became the minister of the “South Canton Neighborhood” also sometimes called the Brick Chapel Parish. He was a fine classical scholar who was also quite articulate.

## **Presbyterians in the North Country**

In the early 1800s Presbyterianism penetrated the North Country. As early as 1802 there is a report of Rev. A. Proudfoot, a Scotch Presbyterian minister, preaching in Lisbon Center. About the same time, a Presbyterian Church was organized in Ogdensburg. By 1820 the Presbyterians had built or were planning to build houses of worship in Potsdam and Ogdensburg and the towns of Ogdensburg, DeKalb, Potsdam, Hopkinton, Rossie and Gouverneur were included in the Presbytery of Ogdensburg by the Synod of Albany. A few years later (1829) all of St. Lawrence County was placed in the Presbytery of St. Lawrence.

The proximity of these churches, the desire for a centralized administrative structure and the doctrine of the Trinity likely all led the congregation in Canton in 1821 to decide to become Presbyterian. This was accordingly done and a charter was granted by St. Lawrence County in the State of New York. The following persons are named as the incorporators: Elias Page, Silas Wright, Jr., Joseph Barnes, Henry Foot, William Richardson and Edwin Ray. With a less chartable view of the church leaving the Congregational Council, in 1825, it is said, "through spiritual weakness or indifference, they were induced to change to Presbyterian." (Religious Societies and Schools in Canton, New York 1894)

The original copies of the earliest records of the church have not survived. The oldest surviving written record of the church dates to 1821. On December 18 of that year a member was received on examination and profession of faith. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of December two members were received and on the 29<sup>th</sup> a brother who had been excommunicated was restored.

### **Reverend Hiram S. Johnson (1823-1838)**

In 1823 the Rev. H. S. Johnson, was called to be the first pastor for the Canton church and the first resident pastor in town. He was installed in Canton on March 5, 1823. At this time, the church (which, as noted above, became Presbyterian only a couple of years earlier) had fewer than thirty members. During the pastorate of Rev. Johnson, there was a slow but steady increase in church membership.

Rev. Johnson came to Canton from Hopkinton where he was the first resident pastor. He began his duties in Hopkinton on October, 1814, and was ordained in December 1815. In 1821 Rev. Hiram Johnson, after seven years of service, submitted a written resignation to the board governing the Church in Hopkinton in which he stated, "I do not receive grain enough to bread my family. I do not receive more than \$10 a year in cash. I have endeavored to live upon this salary until I am obligated to labor most of the time upon my farm to maintain my family."

After much deliberation the church members reported they did not blame Rev. Johnson for leaving and they indicated how much they appreciated the service he had given them. They felt terrible about the whole matter, but they could not possibly pay him any more. The pastor was

filled with pity for these people and he withdrew his resignation and stayed for another year before moving to Canton.

According to a record from that time, Rev. Johnson, a Middlebury College graduate, was “a man of power, and laid the foundations of the church deep and stable. Faithful, clear, and scriptural in preaching, watchful and firm, with a sustaining session in exercising oversight and discipline, the church was blessed of God and increased in numbers and religious power.” The building of the first church in Canton (dedicated in 1931) took place during Rev. Johnson’s pastorate. Rev. Johnson was also a college friend of Silas Wright, Jr.

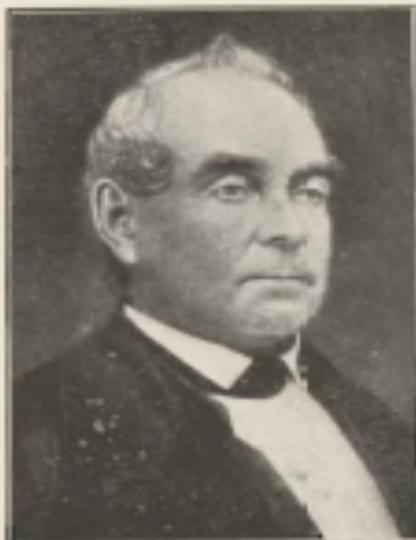
Mr. Johnson was a man of deep convictions and according to those who knew him he was “loyal to his Lord.” He also preached a strong temperance agenda. In these early days the “demon of strong drink” was considered a problem in Canton and according to accounts from church members “Satan came also.” Members of the congregation were chastised for “frequenting idle company,” failing to attend public worship and for “evil speaking.”

### **First Church Building**

In 1826 a decision was made to build the first church. According to one church historian, the members of the church “felt that they had spent sufficient time in wanderings, like the Israelites of old, and wanted a permanent place wherein God's honor might dwell.”

The first task was to find a suitable plot of land on which to build the church. Joseph Barnes and Silas Wright, Jr., who together owned a swampy field which includes most of the present public park and the church property, donated the land to be use for “church purposes” and for a public common area.

(From the Centennial Historical Sketch)



SILAS WRIGHT, JR.



JOSEPH BARNES

The corner of the present park extending from a point near the Universalist Church to a point near the public library was given by Nathaniel S., Ezra P. and John H. Prentice to the Trustees of the church for the same purposes. Overtures were made by the Universalist Society to the Presbyterians to build a union church but this was declined. Again according to an early church historian, "This child of Presbyterianism must stand alone."

The deeds for these two and one-half acres were conveyed to the Trustees of the church on October 29 and November 12, 1827. When the Trustees took possession of the property the land was little more than a marsh, covered with stumps of trees and undergrowth.

For a number of years the entire property was maintained by the Trustees of the church. Because the upkeep presented a major economic drain, and because some of the land was intended as a common area, officials representing the Village of Canton agreed to take over the maintenance of the park portion of the property. However, the Trustees of the church retained the right to approve what organized activities were permitted in the common area.

Over the years the Village Park has been transformed. Today the church property faces a beautiful park in the center of which is a recently restored large fountain. In the late 1800s, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (W.T.C.U.) placed a drinking fountain at the Main Street/Park Street corner and in 1898 the H. T. Martyn Post of The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) erected a granite statute to the memory of their departed comrades. The G.A.R. was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army who had served in the American Civil War.



A postcard of the Park – circa 1900



Later View of the Park. Notice the Church in the background



Winter Scene from the Park, looking from Park Street toward Main Street

At about the same time the building site was given to the church, Mr. Van Rensselear conveyed to the Trustees of the church the Village burial ground, commonly known as the Silas Wright Cemetery (the small cemetery, located on Miner Street, within the Village limits). The deed was soon transferred to the Village of Canton, which continues to be responsible for maintaining the cemetery.

In 1828 the Village enjoyed something in the nature of a boom. When the county seat moved from Ogdensburg to Canton, there was a dramatic increase in the size of the resident population. Before 1828, the Village consisted of a few houses scattered along Court, Main and Water Streets. With the growth in the population, there also came an increase in church membership.

Having acquired a site, and even with the increase in membership, the Society did not yet feel itself rich enough to build and so the congregation continued to worship at the school house. In 1830 a meeting was held, and an agreement entered into by the subscribers to build a church edifice. The complete Articles of the subscriber's agreement can be found in the Appendix.

During this time, business was transacted by barter and trade rather than with the exchange of printed currency, and, as a result, many subscribers to the church building project pledged grain and/or livestock which were then traded for building materials. This is illustrated in Article II of the agreement:

“There shall be two columns in this subscription, the sums in the first or left hand column shall be paid in grain the first of March next for the purpose of procuring materials so far at least to begin said building, and the sums in the second or right hand column shall be paid, one half in cattle the first October next, to be delivered on the Public Square, where said house is to be erected, and the other half in grain to be delivered at such place in the village of Canton as the superintendent shall direct in the month of February next following the above named October.”

It must have been awkward for the superintendent in charge of construction to handle cattle and grain as subscribers met their pledges, especially since the cattle were delivered to the Public Square.

At a meeting of the subscribers of the First Presbyterian Church of the Town of Canton the following resolution was adopted as an additional article to the agreement for the building of the church. “Every person paying twelve dollars and fifty cents shall be entitled to one vote and for every additional twenty-five dollars one vote, on all questions concerning said house in Canton.”

It was decided to build of stone and Joseph Barnes was elected "superintendent" and charged with erecting a church. Mr. Barnes suffered the usual fate of many builders in that the building cost more than was anticipated. In 1832 there is a record of Mr. Barnes writing to a lawyer in Saratoga Springs informing him of the situation and that he had incurred an indebtedness of about \$800 more than was subscribed. Mr. Barnes wanted to know if he was personally liable

and whether the subscribers could be held responsible for the debt. In a lengthy reply the lawyer indicate that, in his opinion, if the building had not been occupied, Mr. Barnes would have been personally liable. However, since the Church was incorporated, and because the members of the Church had already moved into the partially completed structure, the Corporation was likely liable. In October of that year Mr. Barnes resigned as superintendent and Stillman Foote was elected as his successor.

The construction of the building proceeded slowly because much of the labor was done by the subscribers themselves.

With the barter system firmly in place, payment for some of the work on the church was apparently made in the goods, because in a contract made by Mr. Barnes with Guy Noble, dated Nov. 28, 1830, ... Noble agreed to do the joiner work including the lathing, "all except the pulpit to be in the same 'stile' as well as the work in the Presbyterian church in Potsdam, and the pulpit to be constructed after the fashion of that in the Presbyterian church in Ogdensburg," The work was to be completed June 1, 1831, and Noble was to receive for his work \$265.50 either in cattle by the 30<sup>th</sup> day of October, 1831, or in grain by the 28<sup>th</sup> of February of the next year.

At times the work ceased entirely but after persistent effort the church was completed in 1830. Some time during 1831 the church was dedicated. Unfortunately no records of the dedication of this old church have been found. It must have been a time of great rejoicings as the people witnessed the completion of their task. The corner stone of this first church is still in existence. Upon it is inscribed the following: **First Presbyterian Church, planned and superintended by Rev. H. S. Johnson, pastor, A.D. 1828. Commenced in the name and for the worship of God the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost.**

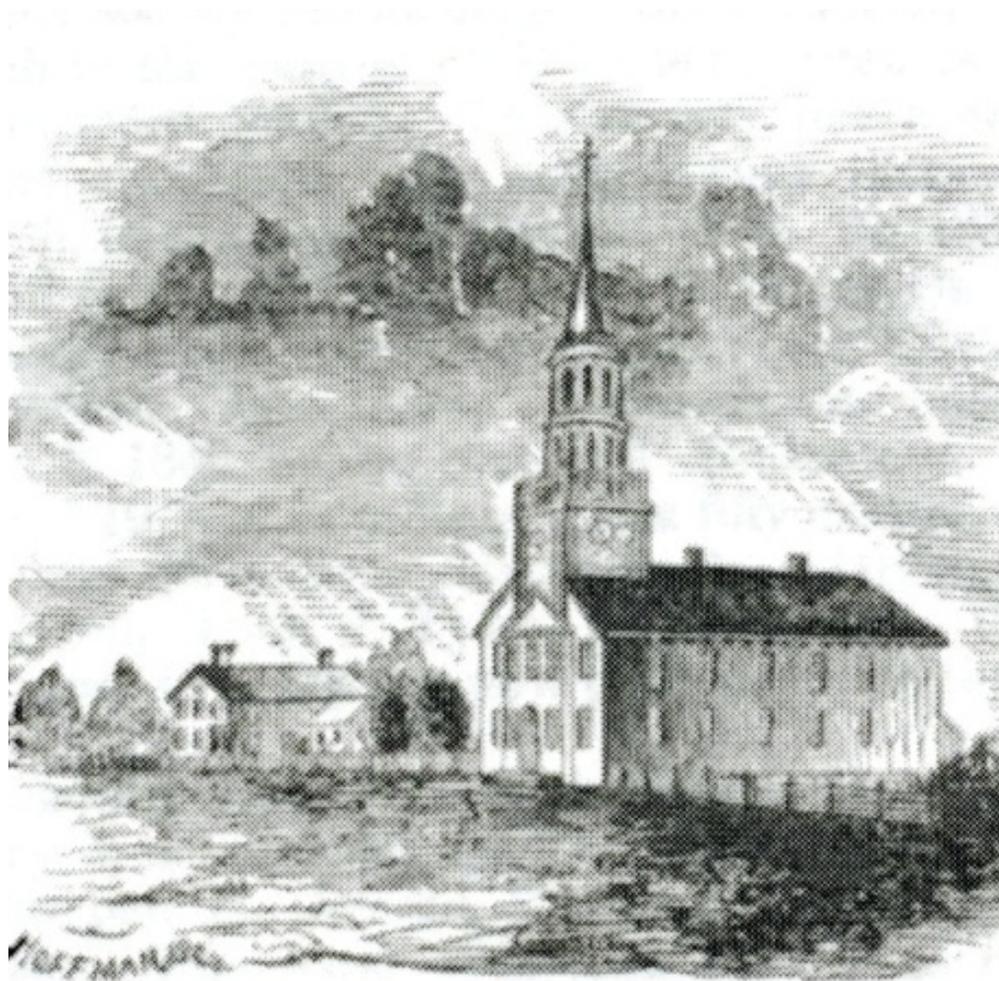
In the agreement made by the subscribers, when the church was completed, the pews were sold at auction. Bidders were permitted to use the amount of their paid subscription to the building fund as partial payment for their pews. The pews so purchased were considered property and could be sold and transferred like any other property. These pews were box like affairs, with high sides, having seats on three sides and a door for an entrance on the other side. These pews were arranged around the church walls, while through the center were two rows of seats like modern pews. These seats were called "slips."

The church was a "commodious structure for that time" and was solidly built of Potsdam sandstone. The pulpit was in the front of the church, between the two entrance doors, high up nearly at the level of the gallery that ran around the three sides of the church. The pulpit was a cup like structure that was reached by a flight of stairs.

The outside of the first church was of simple architecture. The tall graceful spire of the old church reached towards the heavens. In later years the spire was removed for safety reasons.

There is little information available about Rev. Johnson's personal history. Census records show he had two sons. One of them, Edward, was one of the early principals of the Canton Academy. Rev. Johnson was pastor in Canton until 1838 when due to ill health he retired to his farm near Hopkinton. In 1853 he was thrown from a sleigh. This accident caused his death.

Members did not take lightly the vows and obligations of the Presbyterian Church in Canton. Joining the church was something more than a casual commitment. Duties were imposed by the minister and members of the session, and church members were expected to "embrace the Christian life." Absence from the services was not tolerated and discipline, sometimes in the form of excommunication, was used to "keep the church from criticism by the unbelieving world."



**Presbyterian Church and Parsonage, Canton.**

An artist's drawing of the Presbyterian Church in Canton. Notice the "tall graceful spire of the old church reaching towards the heavens" (from the History of St. Lawrence and Franklin Counties, New York from the Earliest Period to the Present Time by F.B. Hough, Little and Company, Albany, 1853).



Later view of the first church – notice the spire has been removed (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

### **Reverend Roswell Pettibone (1839-1854)**

Rev. Roswell Pettibone was installed as the second minister of the church on February 13, 1839. This pastorate was very successful. An early Church historian reported in 1841 that “God’s Spirit was leading the people forward to a most wonderful work of grace.” In July of that year Rev. Lewis Wickes (a personal friend of Rev. Pettibone) began an evangelistic campaign in Canton, which continued with much enthusiasm. The church was crowded at all the services. Rev. Wickes left after five weeks, but the work continued, and after an absence of three weeks he returned and continued the meetings. Over one hundred people professed conversion, of which sixty-six united with the Presbyterian Church that winter.

Rev. Alfred Wickes, a Methodist Episcopal minister and the leader of 1841 revival was associated with the North Country for most of his professional life. Born at Hyde Park, N Y on

December 8, 1809, he was remarkable for his “natural vivacity and affectionate disposition.” Even while attending the seminary he went out into the neighborhoods, engaged in Sabbath Schools and prayer-meetings, and assisted the ministers with revivals. In March of 1831 Rev. Wickes went to Antwerp, NY, “a place noted for all kinds of immorality.” Later that year he was licensed to preach by the Black River Association. He was aggressive in his temperance and antislavery positions. Rev. Wickes died on May 19, 1850 in Copenhagen, New York.

Rev. Pettibone, the second minister of the church in Canton was born in Orwell, Vermont August 26, 1796. He graduated from Middlebury College in 1820 and was licensed to preach by the Addison County Association in 1822. His first church was in Hopkinton, NY where he stayed until ill health forced him to move to Ann Harbor, Michigan. In 1831 he accepted the call of the Presbyterian Church in Evans Mills, NY where he stayed until 1838 when he came to Canton. After leaving Canton in 1854, Rev. Pettibone became the Chaplain of the Clinton State Prison where he died on August 15, 1863. Rev. Pettibone was strongly attached to the Calvinistic doctrine of grace and he was very active in organizing benevolent societies. Sometime during Rev. Pettibone’s tenure the first manse was built. While in Canton, Rev. Pettibone married a daughter of Joseph Barnes, one of the people who donated the land on which the church was built.

During Rev. Pettibone’s pastorate, the church was a community center. It was for years the only meeting place in Canton capable of seating a large number of people. Ezra Jackson recalled a scene of his childhood when on a certain 4<sup>th</sup> of July politicians from all over the New York State flocked to Canton where Silas Wright was planning to deliver a speech in which he was expected to express his views on some important national issue. A procession formed at the foot of Main Street headed by Silas Wright and his friends and a march was made to the church where Mr. Wright delivered a 4<sup>th</sup> of July oration (Commercial Advertiser, March 15, 1932).

Ezra Jackson was a Canton legend. He was born in 1829 and remained in Canton his entire life (he was into his 9<sup>th</sup> decade when he died). He belonged to a group of blacksmiths who were the backbone of the Canton Community. Most blacksmiths at the time practiced veterinary medicine, and Mr. Jackson was no exception. One reference from 1898 described him and being a veterinary surgeon, although no state or federal license was required to practice veterinary medicine. The first veterinary medical school in North America was not founded until 1853 in Mexico.

J. Henry Rushton (of the Rushton Canoe fame) got his start in a room above Mr. Johnson’s shop. Mr. Johnson held a number of important positions in Canton including serving as the Chief of the Fire Department. In his later years Mr. Johnson lived in a house on College Street.

Silas Wright, Jr. was one of the early Trustees of the Church and he was very interested in the success of the endeavor. When the minister was away, Mr. Wright would read a sermon written by a minister of note, and, when this was announced before the Sunday service, the attendance was always high. Mr. Wright was a Brigadier General in the New York State Militia. At various

times in his political career he served as a United States Senator and Comptroller and Governor of the State of New York. Ezra Johnson reported “Mr. Wright was probably not a communicant but a regular attendant and he was a member of its first Board of Trustees.” (Commercial Advertiser, March 15, 1932) Mr. Wright died on August 27, 1847.

### **Rev. John Waugh (1855-1869)**

In 1855 the interior of the church was redesigned to conform to “the modern times.” The high pulpit was cut down and the old fashioned pews removed and the entire seating arrangement made like that in the center, and similar to the present seating arrangement with open pews. The gallery was torn down, leaving only the choir loft.

In 1859 a “session house” was built between the church and Park Street. This house was used for small gatherings and prayer meetings, as well as for Session and committee meetings. At one time Sheldon Brewer, father of Charles Brewer, taught singing lessons in the session house. Charles Snow Brewer was an 1891 graduate of St. Lawrence University. Charles Brewer became a successful industrialist in the New York, owning a furniture company, a bank and a lumber company in the Herkimer area. Charles Brewer contributed money for the building of the Brewer Field House on the SLU campus. The old field house now serves as the campus Bookstore.

Rev. John Waugh was the pastor from 1855 through 1869, so he was the minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Canton during the Civil War. Rev. Waugh was a forceful speaker who would today be described as a zealot. He became a member of the Republican Party when it was founded in the 1850s and he often preached political sermons. He pounded the Democrats Sunday after Sunday. Following the outbreak of the Civil War he preached war. He spoke passionately against disloyalty and for him everyone who did not fight in the War was disloyal.

The following story provides a glimpse of both Rev. Waugh and some of the members of his congregation. Asa Conkey became a member of Canton Presbyterian Church in 1827 and in 1848 he was elected an elder. He was a loyal supporter of the church up to the time of his death in 1873. All the members of the Conkey family were strong supporters of the Church and Charles N. Conkey (Asa’s son) served as the Superintendent of the Sunday school during the Civil War. Both the father and son were members of the Democratic Party. Because of Rev. Waugh’s political leanings, his sermons were often directed at the Conkey pew. Charles supported the war effort, but did not feel he could leave the farm. He felt that he could do more for the Country by staying at home, and he had a physical disability that made it impossible for him to meet even the very loose physical requirements to serve.

After news had reached Canton about one of the battlefield disasters that were common in the early years of the war, Rev. Waugh went after the “Copperheads” with a vengeance. The point he made in his sermon was there was no difference between a Democrat and a Copperhead, an attack clearly directed to Asa and Charles Conkey.

The Copperheads were a vocal group of Democrats in the Northern United States who opposed the American Civil War, wanting an immediate peace settlement with the Confederates. The name Copperheads was given to them by their opponents, the Republicans, because the venomous, although not usually deadly, copperhead snake can strike without warning (unlike a rattlesnake). In the conservative North Country, to call someone a Copperhead was to suggest he or she was not loyal to either God or Country.

Years after this particular incident, Charles Conkey reported his father seemed to slump down in his pew as the service continued. The incident affected Asa so much that Charles offered to drive him home. When they arrived at the end of Main Street, Asa raised his right hand and brought it down with a great deal of force, and exclaimed, "I'll never enter the Presbyterian Church again." But as they drove along Gouverneur Street a noticeable change seemed to come over the old man, who again raised his hand and struck the seat, exclaimed as forcefully as he did in making the first statement, "I'm not going to stay away from the church. John Waugh isn't the Presbyterian Church." And the old man was found in the pew Sunday morning after Sunday morning so long as he was physically able to handle the ride from his home to the church. Asa lived to see the Rev. John Waugh replaced by the Dr. James Gardner.

One resident of Canton who got to know Rev. Waugh quite well remembered him many years later as a "brainy man...but far from being a pulpit orator. His sermons were, however, extremely interesting, though sometimes long – often nearly an hour – and his success as a pastor interested in the welfare and happiness of his flock, has never been excelled" (Commercial Advertiser, Nov 1, 1921)

Rev. Waugh was born in North Carlisle, England, March 21, 1814. He came to Boston, Massachusetts in 1819 with his parents. He enrolled in Brown University but withdrew before completing his undergraduate degree. In 1840 he was ordained and became the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Sauquoit, New York. He had successful pastorates in Sauquoit (1841-1855), Canton (1855-1869), Carthage (1869-1878) and Cohocton (1878-1893). Rev. Waugh received an honorary degree from Hamilton College in 1852. Rev. Waugh died October 20, 1897.

### **Dr. James Gardner (1869-1884)**

In 1869, Rev. James Gardner D. D. then the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Hammond was called to the church in Canton. The call was accepted and the installation took place on February 10, 1870. During Dr. Gardner's ministry the church entered an era of prosperity. Dr. Gardner was an Irishman, who, though of an unyielding nature toward sin and evil, was still a gentle man who was very companionable. His ministry left a deep impression on the congregation. During the fifteen years of his pastorate the "utmost harmony prevailed" and his departure was amid universal regret.

Dr. Gardner was a strong preacher. His message was not been watered down to meet the fashion of the time. His Presbyterianism was of the “character that put iron in the blood of men and made them true to conviction and loyal to the cause they had espoused.”

The range of activities in which Dr. Gardner was involved provides a sense of the nature of the man. Starting in 1874, he conducted a boy’s and girl’s prayer meeting with an average attendance was about twenty-five. The adult church prayer meeting he conducted had 40 or more on even a night in which travel was difficult. Dr. Gardner also held services at the jail for the prisoners and he arranged for them to have a library. During this pastorate a County Orphan Asylum was located in Canton and Dr. Gardner conducted Sunday school there.

In 1875 and 1876 there was deep religious interest in Canton and many inquirers were made about the Christian way of life. The Sunday evening services filled the house. Dr. Gardner was also much in demand as an orator for public functions. For example, he preached the sermon at the first Memorial Day Service to be held in Canton (circa 1869).

The following quote, from a parishioner whose name has been lost, provides a more personal view of Dr. Gardner’s charisma.

“The first Sunday in August, 1873, I and my sister and brother and my mother, just arrived in Canton were led down the aisle to a pew by my father who had been here a month or two, and we listened to Dr. Gardner, and after services we were introduced. It took me just one minute to unanimously decide that any of my questionable youthful activities better, in the future, be carried on under cover, but in spite of the fact that I felt he was going to hamper me I liked him, and forever after I always thought of him, and usually spoke of him, with reverence, as Dr. “Jimmie” Gardner. He was that sort of man. You felt next to him is some way.”

In 1869 the members of the church ran the dining hall at the fair grounds and continued doing so for a number of years. This generated a lot of money for the congregation.

One of the lasting works of Dr. Gardner was to facilitate the construction of the present church building. When it was first built, many felt the Presbyterian Church in Canton was the most beautiful church in all Northern New York.

## Present Church Building

In 1872, discussions were begun about building a new house of worship in the place of the old church. The actual work of building did not begin until 1876 when the old church was demolished. The new church (the same building that is still in use in 2009) was completed four years later and dedicated January 14, 1880.

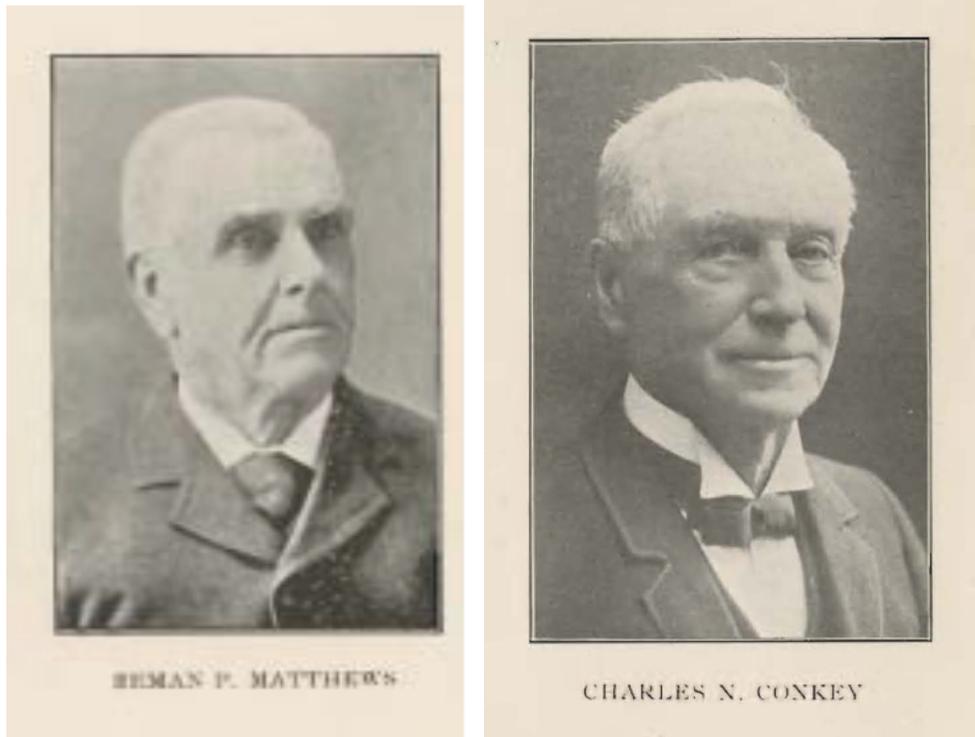
*It was long debated whether it would be wise to remodel the old church. Precious memories clustered about it and the old members were loath to see this edifice destroyed. But the congregation was living in a "progressive age." Architecturally the old building was out of harmony with the times. The accommodations were totally inadequate and rather than spend a large sum of money fixing up the old church it was finally decided to build a new and modern edifice. It was, no doubt, with some misgivings that the work was undertaken.*

*It was a day not soon to be forgotten by those who lived then when the faithful gathered to begin the work of demolishing the old Church. There were tears in many eyes. The date was April 10, 1876. The old bell in the tower was tolled fifty times and then taken down and laid by reverent hands in a temporary resting place. Then the old church building soon was no more.*

People then did not do business by barter and trade as they had on the occasion of the construction of the first church building. However, most members of the congregation were not wealthy. Still their faith was strong and the project was launched. Dr. Gardner was the inspiration of the whole movement. *He cheered on the faint hearted and instilled enthusiasm into them as well. The Building Committee consisted of Messrs. Heman P. Matthews, W. H. Kimball and M. D. Packard. Dr. Gardner was an ex-officio member. There were some generous subscribers to this work. It is regretted there is no subscription list. The only records that survived report Heman P. Matthews and C. N. Conkey each contributed one thousand dollars. But there must have been other and equally generous subscriptions or the work could not have been done.* Those who could not contribute large amounts of cash were lavish in their donations of time and labor.

Heman Matthews was the builder, after the fires of 1869 and 1870, of the Matthews Block (five buildings) located on the north side of Main Street across from the location of the present post office. His private residence, located at 34 Park Street, became the chapter house for Pi Beta Phi Sorority of St. Lawrence University until the building was destroyed by fire.

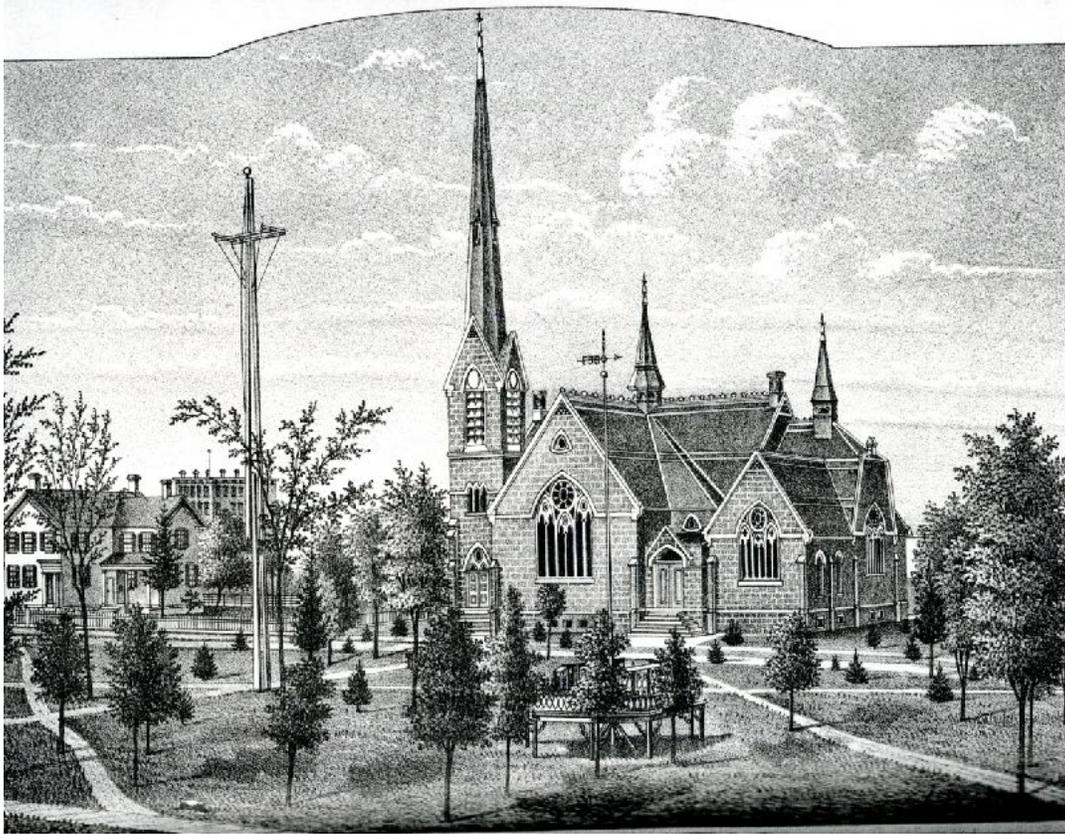
Charles N. Conkey was the son of Charles Conkey and grandson of Asa Conkey mentioned previously when Rev. Waugh was the pastor. Mr. Conkey was a business man, who among other things was the owner of the Conkey Drug Store.



Heman Matthews and Charles Conkey – Two of the major contributors to the Building Fund (From the Centennial Historical Sketch)

Mr. Valk, of New York, was the architect and the builders were Mr. Moore and the Thomas Fields, later a trustee of the church. The cost was around \$20,000 with an additional \$2,500 for the organ, but much was donated in the way of labor, so that the real cost must have been much more than that. The stone was drawn from Waterman Hill by Henry Bullis and Mr. Fields.

*The present church building was erected in 1876. It speaks for itself. The audience room, nearly square (about 67 feet), was in the form of an amphitheatre; the ceiling was arched and made of corrugated iron; the windows were of stained glass; the organ was placed in the chancel; there were no galleries; the chapel, on the west side and connected with folding-doors, was 54 by 22 feet. The building was heated by three furnaces; the house was of stone, a dark-blue lime with white trimmings, also lime, and the roof was slated. Under the chapel was a basement for two large rooms. The entire building was symmetrical, harmonious, and entirely satisfactory, while it is an ornament to the village. Its construction, done cheerfully and carefully, and as an act of devotion to Immanuel, has been a spiritual blessing to the people.*



The Presbyterian Church (from History of St. Lawrence Co.  
New York, L.H. Everts & Co., Philadelphia, 1878)



Interior of the Church, circa 1900 (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

During the construction of the church the congregation worshipped in the Court House until the winter, when the Baptist congregation, being without a pastor, offered the use of their building. The cornerstone of the new church was laid on the Fourth of July 1876. Because of the inclement weather the religious service was held in the Session House.

*A box was prepared to be placed in the stone. This box contained the following Articles: A Bible, Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., a parchment containing a written statement of the purpose for which the House was built, a brief sketch of the history of the church, a catalog of the officers from the time it became Presbyterian, also of its elders and deacons, the names of its present officers, of the trustee and building committee, a record of the articles deposited, an account of the Sabbath School and its officers, names of choir master and sexton.*

*It contains also a parchment with the names of the workman that worked on the building. Another parchment with the catalog of village and town officers, business men, professional men, prominent residents, mills, churches, etc., a number of photographs, a copy of the Plaindealer, the Presbyterian, the historical sermon preached by the pastor. Then the people proceeded to the formal laying of the corner stone. Mr. H. P. Matthews, chairman of the Building Committee placed the box in the hole made to receive it. Dr. Gardner spoke briefly and the congregation was dismissed.*

*The work proceeded toward completion. On August 5, 1877, the chapel of the church was first used for service. On August 18, 1878, the auditorium was occupied. In 1879 the pipe organ was installed.*

*January 14, 1880, is destined to live long in the memory of the members of the church. On this date the formal dedicatory service was held. Success had crowned the efforts and prayers of the people. The church was filled with an interested congregation. Rev. Dr. L. M. Miller, of Ogdensburg, presided. Dr. Gardner gave a brief historical sketch of the church after which Mr. H. P. Matthews, chairman of the Building Committee turned the building over to the trustees of the church.*

*The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Rev. J. J. Porter, of Watertown, N. Y. The text of his sermon was 11 Timothy 3:15. "The house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth." The dedicatory prayer was offered by the Rev. S. G. Brown, D. D., Ll. D. the president of Hamilton College. The services of the day concluded with a sermon by Dr. Brown from Ephesians 2:12, "Without God in the world."*

The following dedicatory poem written by Dr. Gardner was read:

God of our fathers, now to Thee  
A heartfelt song we raise;  
The Holy Spirit's presence be  
The guide of all our praise.

Our hearts and hands Thou hast inclined  
To build this house of prayer  
Accept our work and let us find  
Thy presence always here.

Here may Thy heralds long proclaim  
Salvation to lost  
Salvation through atoning blood  
Of Jesus Christ alone.

And let the Comforter and Friend –  
The Holy Spirit, meet  
With all who here in worship bend  
Before the mercy seat.

And us, and all our children too,  
Thy covenant word fulfill,  
And sacramental grace bestow  
To mould us to thy will.

Assailed by sin, by care opposed,  
When grief shall o'er us roll,  
The sheltering love shall be the rest  
Of every burdened soul.

May faith grow firm and hope grow warm,  
And righteousness abound  
And coming generations learn  
That this is holy ground.

*At the time the church was built it was the most beautiful church in all Northern New York. It was of Gothic design, built of dark blue granite trimmed with Gouverneur granite. The seating capacity was about seven hundred.*

*The memorials for the stained glass windows were as follows: Large windows to the memory of Silas and Clarissa Wright; Capt. L. and Julia G. Moody; The Women of the Church; Rev. James Taylor, by his daughter, Mrs. Charles D. Rich. Smaller windows: Jacob Noble; John Leslie and Mary S. Weed; Tyler and Mary S. Martyn; Eliz Strong Baldwin; H.P. Mathews and F.P. Mathews; Albert H. Allen; Sunday school; A.M. Eastman's S.S. Class; and the Busy Workers.*

Horace Moody donated two of the large sets of windows in the Church. Those facing the park are in memory of Silas and Clarissa Wright (his Aunt and Uncle) and those facing east are in memory of Captain Lucius Moody and his wife, Julia Guest Moody (his parents).

Lucius Moody was the second male child born in Canton and his sister, Clasissa, was the wife of Silas Wright, Jr. After the purchase of the steamer Jenny Lind in Montreal, Lucius Moody became a part of The American Line, a company that owned three steamers which daily traveled from Ogdensburg to Montreal. Captain Moody was not a military man, but got the title of "Captain" because he was in charge of the St. Lawrence River navigation company's boats. (Commercial Advertiser, April – June 1946)

At the time of the dedication an indebtedness of five-thousand dollars was nearly covered by subscriptions. A mortgage was taken out to cover the remainder of the cost of the building and furnishing. The Ladies Aid Society of the Church eventually collected sufficient funds to satisfy the terms of the mortgage.

Since it was no longer needed as a meeting house, in May 1877, Mr. Horace Sackrider purchased the session house and moved it to Pine Street and subsequently it moved again to 18 Miner Street. The session house was turned into a residence.

The story of the Church bell from a previous church history is reproduced in the Appendix.

The following newspaper account was printed in the St. Lawrence Plaindealer on March 20, 1878. "The grounds about the new Presbyterian Church are being changed for the better. A neat hedge has been set across the lot on Park Street, which when grown, if properly trimmed, as it doubtless will be, will be very pretty as well as appropriate. The wagon entrance from Park Street has been graded and the new sidewalk of flagging is being laid;..."

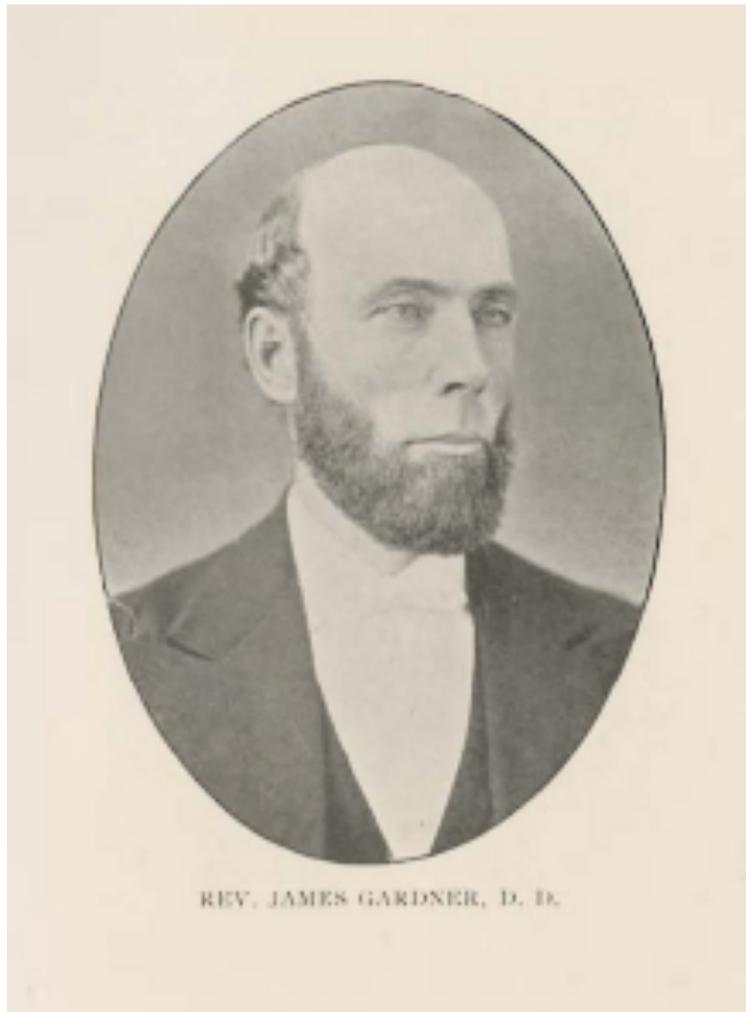
In the early days many of the parishioners drove horses to the church and extensive horse sheds were arranged along the rear of the church lot. In 1879 a resolution was passed requiring the Church Trustees to look into the title of these sheds and see if any were actually owned by the persons using them. Not long after this the sheds were removed altogether, alienating some of the church members.

In 1879 Dr. Gardner was called by the church at Gouverneur which was declined. The Canton congregation showed its appreciation for the work of their pastor by raising his salary to fifteen

hundred dollars, the most money a pastor in Canton had, to date, been paid. In 1884 the Presbytery severed Dr. Gardner's pastoral relations with the church so he could accept a call to the church at Gloversville, N. Y. The congregation in Canton tried to induce him to stay, but he felt it was time to move on. He remained pastor of the Gloversville church until the time of his death. His death occurred in 1901 at the home of his son, Rev. M.H. Gardner, at Horseheads, N.Y.

During Dr. Gardner's pastorate in Canton he received 139 persons into the church on profession of faith and 62 by letters of transfer from other churches.

Dr. Gardner was born in Ballymena County, Antrim, Ireland on December 3, 1828. He came from a Presbyterian background and was educated in the college of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Coming to the United States with his father in 1852, he was licensed that summer by the Presbytery of Ogdensburg, and in the fall ordained and installed as the pastor in Hammond, NY where he remained for seventeen years. He was next the pastor in Canton for 15 years, and then served the church at Gloversville for 16 years. He received a D.D. from Hamilton College. He was an ardent advocate for reunion of the Protestant denominations. For a number of years he was the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of St. Lawrence. For some years he was also the Moderator of the Synod of New York, and he was a prominent candidate to be the Moderator of the General Assembly. His two sons, both graduates of Hamilton College and Princeton Seminary, were also successful ministers. Of his three daughters, one was a graduate of Houghton Seminary and the other two completed their post high school educations at Elmira College. Rev. Gardner died August 2, 1901. The writer of his obituary observed that "although Dr. Gardner was strong in his individual convictions, he respected those who differed from him."



Photograph of Rev. Gardner (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

### **Rev. Rolla G. Bugbee (1885-1888)**

Reverend Rolla George Bugbee was Dr. Gardner's successor, coming to the Church as the stated supply in 1884 and then he was installed as the regular minister in November 1885. In comparison to Dr. Gardner, Rev. Bugbee was "drab." "He was tall, thin, austere and unemotional."

Through the efforts of Mr. Bugbee, the Christian Endeavor Society was organized in 1886 on the part of young people in the congregation. Christian Endeavor began as a group of 16 eager young people who met at the manse. Most of the members were married couples.

# Presbyterian Church Parlors.

DECEMBER 16, 1888.

REGULATOR, - - - - - REV. R. G. BUGBEE.  
FIRST ASSISTANT, - - - - - MATTHEW "MAC."

## MENU.

### SOLIDS.

Biskets. .... Scrib and the D.  
Butterine. .... Tuttle and B.

### ENTREES.

Taters Skolupted by ..... The Boys.  
Devilleed Ham. .... The Poor Man.  
Chicken Joints. .... Sand-or-Son.  
Canton Baked Beans. .... Bullis and Pa-in-law.

### RELISHES.

Dead Beats. .... Lucius the brother of Moses.  
Kut Kabbages. .... Supervisor Charley.

### DESSERT.

Cafe au Lait. .... Allie and Mt. Eagle.  
Krullers. .... Davie, Eddie, Wille and "Maury".  
Sweet Kake iced. .... The Noble Six.  
Krackkers with Frozen Ache, 10 cts. extra.

CARVER, - - - - - "DAVE GRIS."  
TABLE D' HOTE ARTIST, - - - - - JAKIE.  
CHEF DE GARCON, - - - - - DR. WILLIAMS.

### ASSISTANTS.

Prof. Cheetham, Rob. Sack., S. D. Kimball,  
W. McElroy, Frank Clark, James Johnson.  
Bert Matthews, Gail Griswold, Maurice Rutherford,  
Will Rutherford, G. E. Jamieson.

HEAD DISHWASHER, - - - - - DEAN DELANCE.  
ASSISTANTS, - - - - - SELECTED.

### RECEIVING COMMITTEE.

The Session, as it is at their house!

Elders.....Manley, Conkey, Robinson, Matthews, Sackrider.  
Assisted by....E. A. Barber, J. B. Howe, Chas. Nickelson,  
W. H. Tallman, L. L. Jackson, L. Lawrence, and others.

Menu for an 1888 Church Dinner

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour was a nondenominational evangelical society founded in Portland, Maine, in 1881 by F. E. Clark. Its professed goal was "to promote an earnest Christian life among its members, to increase their mutual acquaintanceship, and to make them more useful in the service of God." Basically the objective of the society was to show the youth that the church cared for them. The Society enabled young people to become involved in the workings of the church by stressing devotion and an evangelistic spirit. The society was maintained by private donations. The organization, which promoted family values, expanded rapidly growing into a world movement. Christian

Endeavor took up many causes including an aggressive support of the temperance movement. Christian Endeavor is still operating today; their activities are reported on Christian Endeavor Websites.

The Christian Endeavor Society had a unique relationship to the Sunday school. In Canton, Sunday school began under Mr. Joseph Barnes in the early years of the church. In the 1880s it was mostly directed toward adults, with a smaller section known as the Primary Department for children of all ages. Christian Endeavor was an attempt to get young people who were not quite ready for the adult Sunday school involved in the life of the church.

Rolla G. Bugbee was born September 7, 1848, in Bridgewater, VT. In 1871, he was graduated from Dartmouth College, and entered the Yale School of Religion. Two years later, in 1876, he received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity. On November 8, 1876, he was ordained as a Congregational minister at West Hartland, CT, where he preached until November, 1880. His later pastorates were in Bridgewater, Bethel, and Randolph, VT, Canton, NY, Thomaston, CT, Wells River, VT, Athol, MA, and Peterboro, NH. Mr. Bugbee was married in Mechanicsville, Vermont, August 24, 1876, to Susan Imogene Barrett. They had two children, only one of whom survived to adulthood. Rev. Bugbee's annual salary in Canton was \$1,200. He died in Peterboro on August 13, 1915

### **Dr. Avery S. Walker (1888-1894)**

Rev. Avery S. Walker, D.D. was installed July 11, 1888 and he served as the pastor for the next six years. Dr. Walker was a heavy man, "with a ponderous voice and a stiff leg. He owned a finely trained bird dog and a fine gun." By all accounts he was a fine shot and moved easily and quickly through the dense brush of St. Lawrence County.

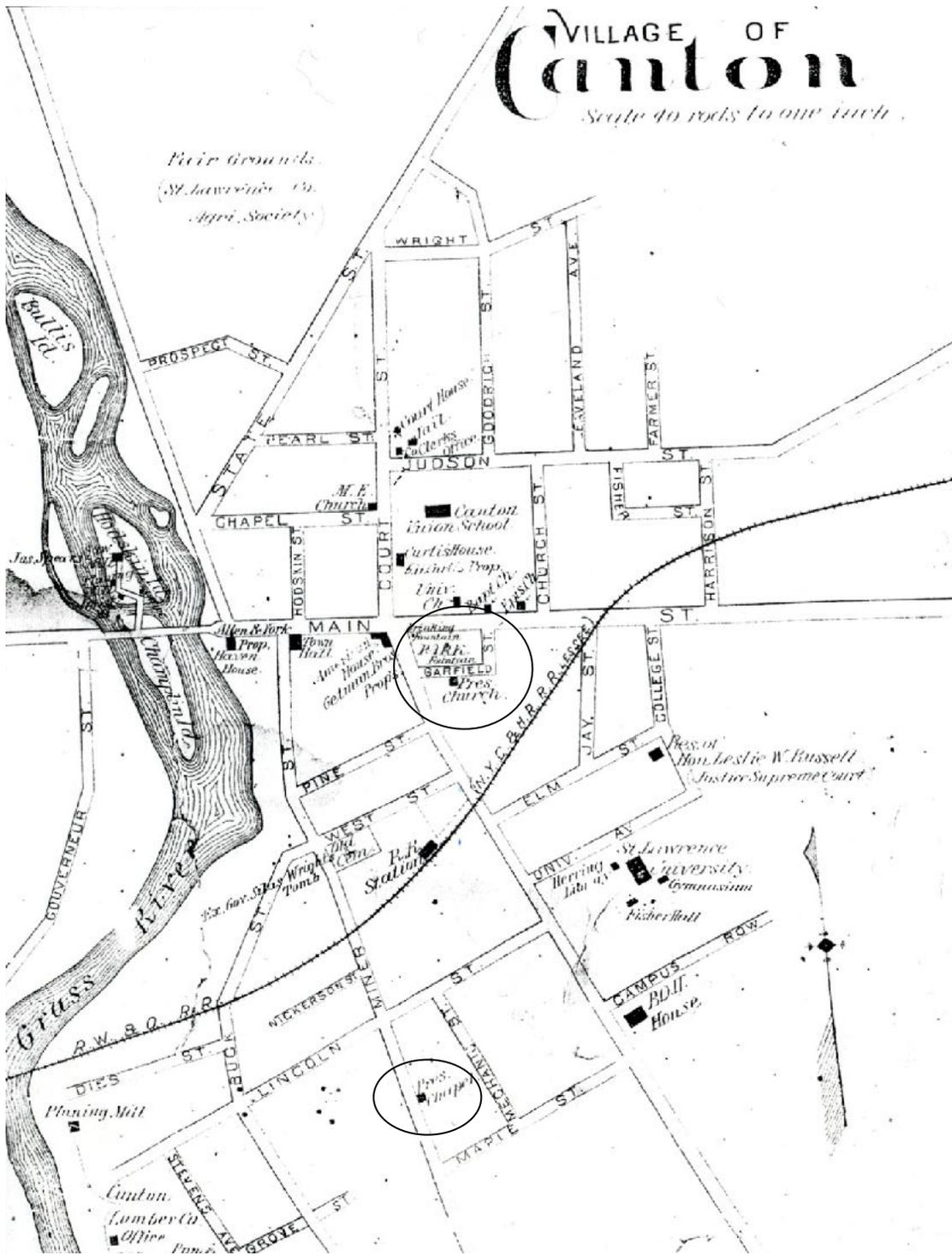
### **The Presbyterian Chapel**

While there were enough churches in the village to accommodate all the residents, there were a large number of people who rarely went to religious meetings. Many of these people lived in a section in Canton commonly called the Miner Street Division. Miner Street and vicinity was the home to many of the workers at the various mills (e.g. lumber). This group of people afforded an opportunity for the Christian Endeavor Society to do missionary work. In 1888 the first move toward mission work was attempted as the members of the Park Street church held Bible readings in houses in the Miner Street Division. As the interest in the Bible readings increased, a weekly prayer meeting was added to the agenda. This also proved successful and the Society members then organized a Sunday school.

The first session of the Sunday school was held at the home of Mrs. Peters in May 1889. The Sunday school was held in a number of houses in the Division with the average attendance being about sixty. While some of these homes were quite large it became evident that if the work were to continue, a permanent home was needed.

The project of building a chapel on Miner Street was thus begun. A building committee was appointed consisting of Frank Spaulding, Dean D. Delance and Sylvester Wright. Friends of the church and the business men of the village subscribed liberally and the money was quickly raised for the building project. A lot on Miner Street was purchased from B. H. Rogers, for two hundred dollars, and the building proceeded quite rapidly. In 1894 the chapel was ready for occupancy. The chapel, a neat, substantial building measuring 88 feet by 86 feet was located on east side of Miner Street in the middle of the block between Lincoln and Maple Streets. The windows contained colored glass; the cost to construct the building was \$800.

About 1900 it was thought by some members of the Park Street Church that the Salvation Army could handle the work being done at the Chapel more successfully than the Society. However the discussion with the Salvation Army did not result in a change in ownership for the Chapel. Interest began to wane, the teaching force from the Park Street church was depleted and the population of the Miner Street Division had dwindled. As there was no likelihood of the chapel being used for religious purposes again it was sold in 1906 and turned into two houses. The Chapel building and property were sold in March, 1906 to Mrs. Julia B. Squires for the sum of \$350.00. Money remaining after paying the outstanding mortgage and property transfer fees was returned to the Christian Endeavor Society. Although the Chapel was built as a mission endeavor, there was no attempt to unite the Miner Street congregation with the Park Street church.



1896 Blankman Map – the Presbyterian Chapel is located on Miner Street between Maple and Lincoln; the Drinking Fountain, Park and Presbyterian Church are located on Garfield and Main Streets. Both are circled.

## Tuesday Evening Session Minutes

Enforcing the doctrine that church members were expected to “embrace the Christian life” continued to be seen as work of the session and minister. The following report from an 1894 session meeting illustrates how the session members and Dr. Walker fulfilled this duty.

The “case” before the Session dealt with an unmarried woman who had a child out of wedlock.

“Lawrence Russell, who had become acquainted with the circumstances and details of the case by having been employed as attorney in civil proceedings connected with it, appeared at her request and by consent of the Session on behalf of Miss B, who some month previously, had become a mother out of wedlock. From the history of the case in detail, as previously ascertained and now presented by Mr. Russell, it appeared that Miss B’s sin was not a willing abandonment to an immoral course of life, but a temporary yielding to persistent temptation for which she bitterly and sincerely repented. She then herself appeared before the Session, humbly and in a penitent manner acknowledged her sin, and said that she had very truly sought and believed that she had received forgiveness of God, and asked the Church, through the Session to forgive her. After careful consideration of the case, believing her profession of penitence to be sincere, voted unanimously to grant her petition for forgiveness, and continue her in good standing as a member of the church.”

Five years later the following story appeared in one of local newspapers:

“Mr. C and his wife, nee Miss B, of ..... Michigan arrived in town Friday on their wedding trip and a visit to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. B. The happy couple had been married Wednesday and directly went east. The evening of her arrival was celebrated by a reception at the Park Street home of Mr. and Mrs. B. ... (the parents of the bride).. The couple will remain a couple of weeks in town before returning to their Western home.”

Avery Walker was born in Union Square, Oswego County, NY on October 15, 1829. He attended Oberlin College, and in 1854 received a Master of Arts Degree. He then enrolled in Union Theological Seminary, and was awarded a Doctor of Divinity degree in 1857. He married Rosanna Baldwin (also a graduate of Oberlin, 1855) on August 22, 1857.

Dr. Walker was ordained by the Third New York Presbytery on June 24, 1857. He served as the Stated Supply at Lodi, NY from 1857 to June 1860. He had pastorates in Rockville, CT (1861–1864), Dover, NY (1864-1868), Fair Haven, MA (1868–1871), Gloversville, NY (1871–1877), Spencer, MA (1877-1885), Canton (1888-1894) and Needham, MA (1895–1898).

Their daughter, Mary Cynthia Walker, graduated from Wellesley College in 1883, did graduate work at the University of London and after returning to the United States was active in the W.C.T.U. and the Suffrage Society.

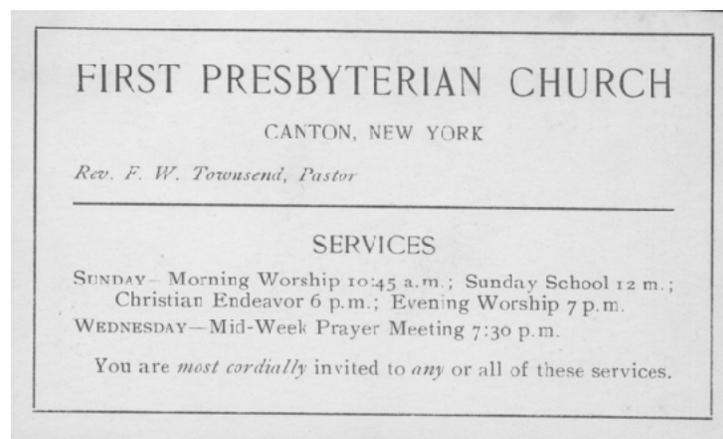
Dr. Walker's sister, Mary Edwards Walker, visited Canton on a number of occasions. Mary Walker was a graduate of Syracuse Medical College in 1855 who served as a surgeon with the Union in the Civil War. She was captured by Confederate soldiers in 1864 and became part of a physician prisoner exchange after spending four months as a prisoner of war. She was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1865, and for many years was the only woman to receive the country's highest military award. In 1917, her Congressional Medal was taken away when Congress revised the Medal of Honor standards, but Mary refused to give it back and wore it every day until her death in 1919. An Army Board reinstated Mary's medal posthumously in 1977.

After the Civil war, Mary became a writer and lecturer, touring here and abroad on women's rights, dress reform, health and temperance issues. The impact Mary Walker had on the women in the Church in Canton has been lost.

### **Rev. Frank W. Townsend (1894-1904)**

Rev. Townsend provided leadership in adding new members to the church role and in making substantial repairs to the physical plant. Electric lighting was introduced into the sanctuary, the church re-carpeted and the walls frescoed with The Ladies Aid Society paying off a mortgage of \$2400 for expenses incurred as a result of the changes in the physical plant. During his tenure 119 members were received into the church.

Rev. Townsend and his family became an integral part of the social life of the Canton Community. Through his efforts there was a spiritual awakening in the Church and in the wider community.



Card Distributed to Residents of Canton to Inform  
them of Times and Days of the Services

Frank Townsend was born in New York City, but he spent several years of his early life at Tarrytown. Coming back to New York City in 1804, he pursued his studies in both private and

public schools. Although as a young boy he felt the calling to be a minister, health concerns prevented him embracing this mission until later in his life. In New York City, he studied under Rev. Talbot W. Chambers, of the Collegiate Church. Because of his mother's health, his family spent the summers at Richfield Springs in Otsego, New York. When in Otsego he studied with Rev. F. H. Seeley D.D.

Rev. Talbot W. Chambers, Rev. Townsend's mentor in New York was a prolific scholar and theologian. He was a member of the Reformed Dutch Church, and many of his works are still in print today. His book titled "The New York City Noon Prayer Meeting" was originally published in 1858. This classic text recounts the remarkable history of New York City's Fulton Street Noon Prayer Meeting which sparked a revival throughout America and abroad. It contained "remarkable stories of God's power to draw people to Him." In addition to Rev. Townsend, a number of other influential people studied with Rev. Chambers including Dr. John Frelinghuysen Talmage, a pioneering New Jersey homeopath. In their History of Women Suffrage, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and her coauthors report Rev. Chambers (among many others) espoused the position that "women should be nowhere but home."

Richfield Springs, where Rev. Townsend spent the summers of his youth and where he also later served as a pastor, was famous for being the source of the "Great White Sulphur Springs." The water from these springs was said to be the purest mineral water in the world. In the early 1800s affluent people from the New York City area came to Richfield Springs because of the "medicinal properties" of the water.

Rev. Townsend was licensed by the Oswego Presbytery in 1873, although at this time he was already supplying the church at Exeter Center. In 1874 he accompanied Dr. Chambers abroad. He went up the Nile, through the Sinai Peninsula, and through the Holy Land from Beersheba to Beirut. After his return he resumed his work at Exeter Center. In September 1875 he was ordained at Cherry Valley, NY. From 1876-1877 he was pastor at New Berlin. He then went to Utica and took charge of the work at the Olivet Mission in connection with the Westminster Church. That mission soon became a church, and a building was constructed and dedicated in 1891.

From 1894 to 1904 he was pastor in Canton and from 1904-1908 he served the church at Pleasant Valley. He then went to Richfield Springs, and while he had no pastorate, he was constantly in demand for supply work, and when they were without pastors he acted as minister of the church at Richfield Springs, the Congregational church at West Winfield, the Reformed church at St. Johnsville, and the church at Unadilla. In 1913 he became regular pastor of the Unadilla church. In 1876 he married Miss Mary T. Pratt of Sherburne. Of his three children, the two sons preceded him in death, Talcott Harold dying in 1912 and Theodore in 1913. Their daughter, Mrs. Clarence S. Cook, remained in Canton her entire life. Her husband was the President of the St. Lawrence County National Bank of Canton.

Rev. Townsend belonged to the Masonic fraternity, and he was a member of the Sons of Revolution. He was often asked to conduct special services in connection with schools, temperance meetings, installations and ordinations. He attended the General Assembly of the Church twice as commissioner, once at Madison, Wis., in 1880, and once at Winona, Ind., in 1898, when he was elected temporary clerk of the Synod of New York. He also was moderator of the Otsego, Utica, St. Lawrence and North River Presbyteries. Rev. Townsend died on Dec. 16, 1914.

Because her life touched the Presbyterian Church in Canton for many years, the life of Mary Tunnicliff Pratt Townsend (wife of Rev. Townsend) deserves a few lines in this text.

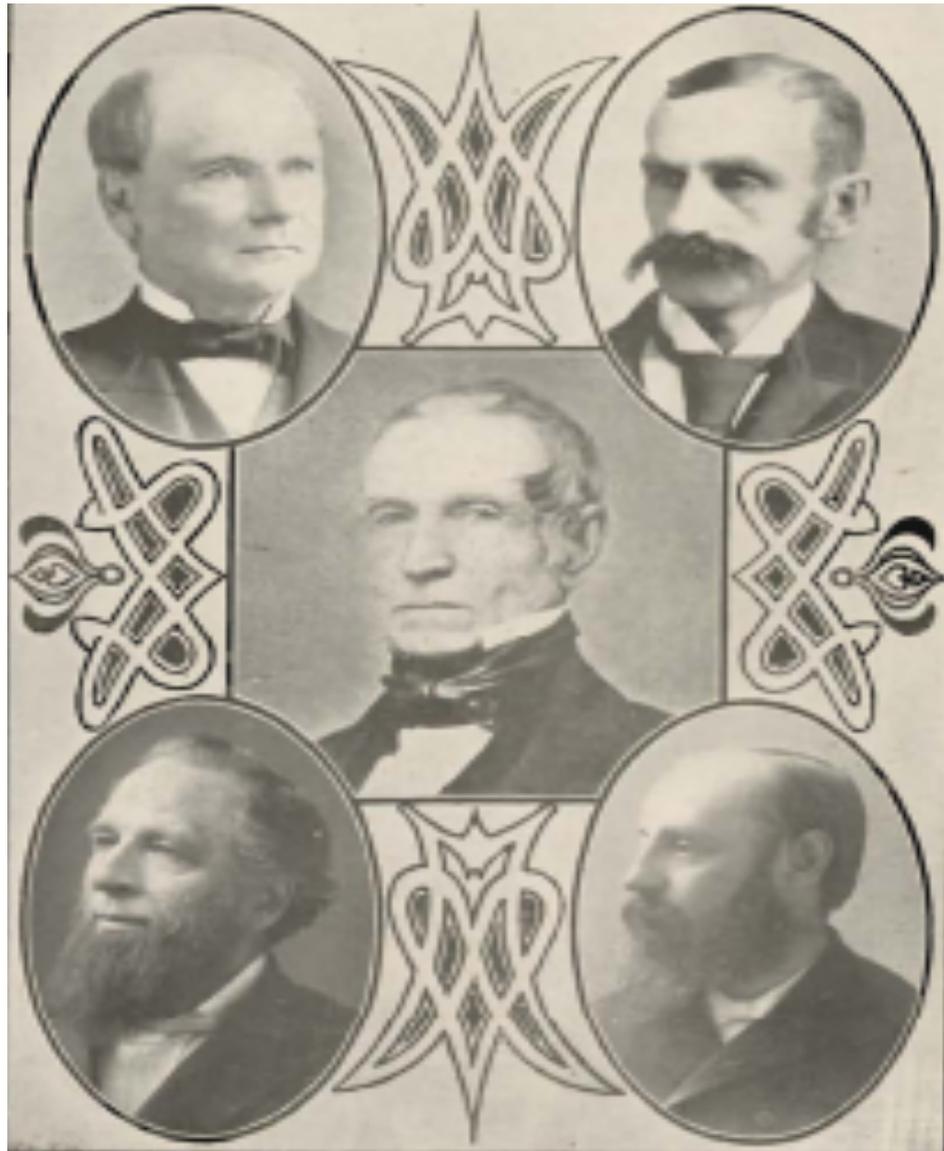
Mrs. Townsend was born Aug. 3, 1857, at Sherburne, NY, the daughter of Talcott and Caroline Tunnicliff from New Berlin, NY. On June 21, 1876 she married the Rev. Townsend.

On their coming to Canton Rev. and Mrs. Townsend and family lived for some time in the Fonda Bullis house on the west side of the river. Only a few days previous to his death Rev. and Mrs. Townsend were in Canton visiting Mrs. Cook, their daughter, and on Thanksgiving Day he preached his last sermon in the Park Street Church.

After Mr. Townsend's death Mrs. Townsend lived for some years with the widow of her son Talcott Harold Townsend at Waterville. Her son, who had died in 1912, leaving a widow and two sons had been married to Miss Katherine Tallman, a member of the Tallman family of Canton. When their mother then died, Mrs. Townsend came to Canton with her grandsons, living with Mr. and Mrs. Cook on Judson Street.

Mrs. Townsend was a woman of exceeding charm whose life was wrapped up in her family and her church. While in Canton she served as president of the Presbyterian Society. She was president of the Canton library Association and a member of the W.C.T.U. and an honorary member of the Canton Study Club.

While a pastor's wife in Canton she took deep interest in the students at the university, being known affectionately as "Aunt Mary." During these years the manse was always open to students and others.



John Waugh                      Rolla G. Bugbee  
    Rosewell Pettibone  
 Avery S. Walker                      Frank W. Townsend

Pictures of five of the first seven ministers  
 (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

**Dr. William H. Stubblebine (1904-1907)**

Dr. Stubblebine came to Canton, in 1904 succeeding Dr. Frank W. Townsend. He was a very popular preacher, of whom the congregation was very fond. While at Canton Dr. Stubblebine published a history of the first 100 years of the Canton Church.

In 1905 the church united with the Methodist and Baptist churches for a series of evangelistic meetings. In 1906 the project of building a new manse was undertaken. After considerable discussion, a committee decided to build a new manse rather than to remodel the old one. The

old manse was sold to Mr. A. Z. Squires. Mr. Squires cut the house in two and moved to either Miner Street or what is now known as Lincoln Street.

The new manse was constructed at a cost of \$3,225.00. The house was completed and occupied in December. Mr. Stubblebine's notes: "The house is a credit to the society. It is a handsome modern home with all modern conveniences. It has hard wood floors on the first floor. It is fitted with electric lights throughout."

James E. Johnson, who was fond of Dr. Stubblebine, was very supportive of the project. Mr. Johnson was a prominent in local business and political affairs. Starting as a bellboy at the Hodskin Hotel he became the Postmaster and head of the Electric Light Company in Canton.



The New Manse - (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

In Canton Dr. Stubblebine was often ask to deliver his illustrated lecture “Amid Greenland Snows.” Dr. Stubblebine had spent three months in Greenland and his lecture portrayed the character of the country and the life of the Eskimo. The lecture was presented to awaken a deeper interest in that country and its people.

His pastorate in Canton was successful owing to his zeal and ability. The membership was increased and a new manse erected during his tenure was practically paid for during his pastorate. On learning of his decision to leave, the member of the Canton church petitioned him to reconsider his decision, and he was offered a substantial increase in salary to remain. However, in his resignation letter, Dr. Stubblebine stated “that a change in the pastorate in Canton was desirable was clear in my mind.” He went on to indicate he saw the development of the village of Massena would “afford him the opportunity to put into operation ... plans and schemes for aggressive work.”

Dr. Stubblebine’s last visit to Canton was Christmas time, 1926, to conduct the funeral for Mr. Alex Milne. The Rev. J. Manley Spencer had just retired from the local church and the Rev. John A. Erickson had accepted a call to the church, but hadn't yet arrived in Canton. At Mrs. Milne's request, Dr. and Mrs. Stubblebine arrived in Canton and Dr. Stubblebine officiated at the funeral. He then occupied the pulpit of the Part Street Church on Sunday.

William H. Stubblebine was born in Philadelphia on December 7, 1867. He attended public schools until the age of 14.

In 1883 he joined the Heidelberg Reformed Church, a denomination whose beliefs are articulated in the Heidelberg Catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism is one of the three Reformed confessions that form the doctrinal basis of the original Reformed Church in The Netherlands. It was an attempt to bring together the wisdom of Martin Luther and other reformers of the 16th century. The Catechism served as the philosophical basis of the Dutch reformed churches that originated in the Netherlands. Several Protestant denominations in North America presently honor the Catechism officially including the Christian Reformed Church, the United Reformed Churches and the Presbyterian Church (USA).

In 1883, Mr. Stubblebine became a student at the private school of George Eastburn to prepare for college. He studied for two years at the University of Pennsylvania and graduated from Ursinus College (Collegeville, Pa) in 1889. He spent the following year at the Union Theological Seminary before returning to Ursinus Seminary graduating in 1891 with a Ph.D. Following graduation he was ordained and installed as the Pastor of Shenkel’s Reformed Church. He had pastorates in St. John’s Church in West Alexandria, OH (1899-1901), The Calvary Reformed Congregational Church in Scranton, PA (1894-1896), The First Presbyterian Church in Canton, NY (1904-1907), The Congregational Church in Massena (1907-1909), the Wickliffe Presbyterian Church in Newark, NJ (1909), and the 6th Presbyterian Church in Albany (1911-1917). In addition to his pastoral duties in Albany, in 1917 was the Assistant District Superintendent of the Anti Saloon League.

He was the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Billings, Montana when in 1918 he was appointed a General Secretary for the Y.M.C.A. His duties with this organization required him to be stationed in France.

Upon returning from Europe, Dr. Stubblebine continued his efforts at the Weequahic United Presbyterian Church in Newark, New Jersey. The Weequahic Church began as an organized Sunday school in 1896 and by 1910 this organization of worshipers united to form the Weequahic Presbyterian Church. This church was the only Protestant congregation in a square mile area which was populated by people representing a variety of faiths and ethnic backgrounds. The church became a focal point in the community inviting people of every faith and race to join and worship.

Dr. Stubblebine stayed in Newark for some years, retiring only because of health problems. During this pastorate he was given a leave of absence of a year and went to one of the J. C. Penney Farms in Florida for treatment. After retiring from the Newark Church he and Mrs. Stubblebine went to New Port Richey, Florida and lived in a home for retired ministers. Dr. Stubblebine died at New Port Richey on October 5, 1935 after a long illness related to “a nervous breakdown.”



Dr. and Mrs. Stubblebine (from the Centennial Historical Sketch)

## The Second Century

The monograph written for the Sesquicentennial of the Church is rich in detail. Because it provides such an excellent overview of the history Church from 1907 until 1957, some of the text of that monograph is reproduced in this document. Some annotation is added to provide a context to allow for a more full appreciation of the original text and some details not available to the authors of the Sesquicentennial are also included.

*In 1907, the sanctuary was usually quite well filled with worshippers on Sunday mornings. In the words of some people, 'everybody went to Sunday School!' Adults, young people and children were present for classes. Two of the most enthusiastic classes were the young men's class, the Conquerors, and the young women's class, the Winners. These classes were made up of young people in their late teens, and they engaged in contests for attendance, collection, new members and so on. It is reliably reported that the Conquerors usually were unable to live up to the name and found themselves treating.*

*The Christian Endeavor Society was a strong organization as the church began its second century. The Society was made up of young people and some of the younger married couples. Attendance used to run in the neighborhood of fifty or sixty on any given Sunday evening. The Society worshipped and worked, but it also served a useful social function, since there were few places for young people to go. It provided a good opportunity for the young people to get together, and oftentimes they would walk over to Main Street for some refreshments after the meetings.*

*The Sunday evening worship service was still a regular feature of the church week, and attendance was quite good. The Ladies Aid continued strong, and "Thimble Parties" were popular. There were 201 members on the roll of the church.*

*Where there had been seven ministers in the church throughout almost one hundred years of history, there were five pastors in less than twenty-five years as the church entered its second century. This does not mean that the ministries represented in this period were unproductive, but it does give one food for thought as to the effectiveness of short and long pastorates.*

## **Rev. George McCulloch (1907-1911)**

*The Rev. George McCulloch was called to the church at the end of 1907. There are several things of interest about his pastorate. All "Old Folks Day" was instituted and continued for some time. The purpose of the day was to encourage and help older people who found it difficult to go to church to attend together on this particular day. Transportation was provided, and the practice seems to have been worthwhile. The Session voted to approve the publication of a church newspaper under the sponsorship of the young people with the minister as editor. In 1907 the minutes of the Board of Trustees are typed in a purple pink. And this practice continued for some years.*

### **The Rural Churches**

*Mr. McCulloch had a great concern for the churches in smaller communities in the area surrounding Canton. .... In 1910 the Session voted to accept Mr. Phillips as minister of Brick Chapel, Beech Plains and Pyrites. Apparently St. Lawrence Presbytery had given the Canton church some authority in overseeing the work in these churches, for in June of 1910 the three churches here mentioned are designated as the Canton Rural Mission Field. There are also reports on rural work at Woodbridge, Eddy and West Potsdam in 1910.*

*The Sunday evening service was discontinued for a while during Mr. McCulloch's pastorate, but it was soon begun again. There was an evangelistic campaign late in 1910 or early in 1911, conducted with a series of meetings over a week or ten days.*

*This very active pastorate was brought to a close in 1911, when on the congregation voted to join Mr. McCulloch in requesting Presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship between the minister and the church.*

Rev. McCulloch came to Canton from a church in Bradford, Pa. He was attracted to the area in part through the efforts of his old friend Rev. Guy L. Brown of the Ogdensburg Baptist Church. Rev. Brown was a very popular minister in the area who served the North Country for many years. In the announcement of Rev. McCulloch's coming to Canton it was reported "he is a man of ability and comes with the highest recommendation." Rev. McCulloch resigned on October 24, 1911 to take a position at the Presbyterian Church in Lancaster, New York.

In 1908 a daughter, Mary Elizabeth, was added the McCulloch family. Sadly this baby only lived for three months and died on December 11, 1908. The baby was buried at the Fairview Cemetery, located on Miner Street in the Town of Canton, just beyond the Village limits.

## Rev. Curtin G. Roop (1912-1918)

Early in 1912 The Rev. Curtin G. Roop was appointed Moderator Pro Tem and began to preach in the church. He was installed as minister in April of that year. A new constitution for "The Bible School of the First Presbyterian Church of Canton" was adopted almost immediately.

**Come** And Eat **BREAKFAST** With Us !

You cannot do a finer thing  
than to have your

**MAY BREAKFAST**

In the Dining Room of the  
Presbyterian Church

**FRIDAY, May 1, 1914**

**M E N U**

Fruit

Eggs                      Creamed Potatoes                      Toast

Griddle Cakes and Maple Syrup

Doughnuts and Coffee

Breakfast Served from 6:30 to 8:30 a. m.

**Tickets only 25 cents each**

may be obtained from any member of the Ladies Aid Society

Such a menu as the above is positively unequalled any-  
where at this low price.

SECURE YOUR TICKETS EARLY.

Commercial Advertiser Print, Canton, N. Y.

Advertisement for Breakfast at the Church

It called for six departments including the Primary, the Junior, the Intermediate, the Senior, the Department of the Presbyterian Brotherhood, and the Home Department. The Sunday school elected its own officers and the departmental heads were appointed by the Superintendent. The Board of Control met once a month to provide oversight of the program.

In May the Session voted to unite with the Baptists and Methodists for Union Sunday evening services. They were to be held throughout June and July. Cooperation among the churches in the village had increased gradually during the previous fifty years of the church's history.

In the summer of 1912 Rev. Roop did a rather exhaustive study of the situation in the rural churches. He preached in several of them. In his report to the Session he indicated that in order

to arouse sufficient concern to help these churches grow some means of providing a continuing ministry was needed. He reported that the occasional sending out of the minister or other representatives of the Canton church would accomplish little of lasting value. He indicated that the churches in West Potsdam and Eddy seemed to him to have the most promise at that time. Later in Rev. Roop's pastorate there is a mention of the church at Crary Mills. During Rev. Roop's pastorate the Presbytery assigned the churches at Clare and DeGrasse to the Canton church for oversight and development.



SLU Moving Up Day – 1914 – taken in the Park

## *World War I*

The period of the First World War fell during Mr. Roop's pastorate, and there is some evidence of this in the church records. Offerings for the Red Cross were received, beginning in 1914. Fuel conservation became a necessity beginning in 1917. The church began worshipping every other Sunday, but this proved unsatisfactory. The congregation then began worshipping in the afternoon in the Universalist Church. The every other Sunday worship was an early failure. In June, 1917, a revival program was initiated, and some seven seventy to eighty persons united with the church. Perhaps the war had a bearing on the success of this endeavor.

Rev. Roop had two sons and three daughters. One of Rev. Roop's sons recalled one method of changing the light bulbs in the chandelier which hung from the center of the ceiling in the sanctuary. Apparently there was a rope which could be lowered from the ceiling, and so the chandelier could be accessed by a system of ropes and pulleys. This rope was lowered and tied securely about the waist of one of the boys, whereupon his father would swing him until he was able to catch the light fixture and make the repairs. This spectacular method of church maintenance came to an abrupt when Mrs. Roop walked in on the proceedings one day.

In March 1918 the Presbytery took action to dissolve the relationship between Rev. Roop and the church.

While in Canton, Rev. Roop took a prominent part in many movements for public welfare. For example, he was the head of the Good Citizenship League. The Good Citizenship League was a political action organization open to all voters who desired a sober and prosperous Canton. In part because of the work of the League, after the election of 1909, there was a "temperance wave," sweeping over the State and Country. After this election there are fourteen towns in the country that were wholly dry and nine others which allowed alcohol to be served only in hotels. The villages of Colton, Edwards, Hermon and Potsdam were included in the alcohol free group whereas in Canton alcohol was allowed to be served in hotels and it could also be sold in some stores.

Rev. Roop was recalled fondly by the people in Canton. He was a very strong Woodrow Wilson man and he was outspoken in meetings of societies of the church for Wilson. When a member of the Church protested his bringing politics into the church, he quoted Patrick Henry. "If," said he, "this treason, make the most of it."

Curtin Roop was born in Loveville, PA on Sept. 26, 1863. He was a graduate of Pennsylvania State College, where he taught for several years before entering the ministry. In 1889 he was graduated from the School of Theology of Boston University and in 1908 he received a degree from the Boston University Law School. Rev. Roop was educated and ordained in the Methodist church but he served other denominations as he did at the Canton Presbyterian Church.



In 1890 Rev. Roop was ordained by the Genesee Methodist conference. In 1918 he joined the Northern New York Methodist conference. During his many years of service in the church, Mr. Roop became widely known throughout New York State. His pastorates included Glenwood Methodist church of Rochester and Methodist churches in Naples, Antwerp, Boonville, Camden, Frankfort, Alexandria Bay, Ellisburg and Hammond. For two years he served as pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Bainbridge and for six years as pastor of the Presbyterian church in Canton. In the last two years before his death, Rev. Roop served as a supply pastor, filling the pulpit of the Baptist church in Mexico. In 1947, Rev. Roop and his wife, Marie Spencer Roop, were able to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary.

## Rev. Fred O. Scurrah (1919-1922)

### *The Twenties*

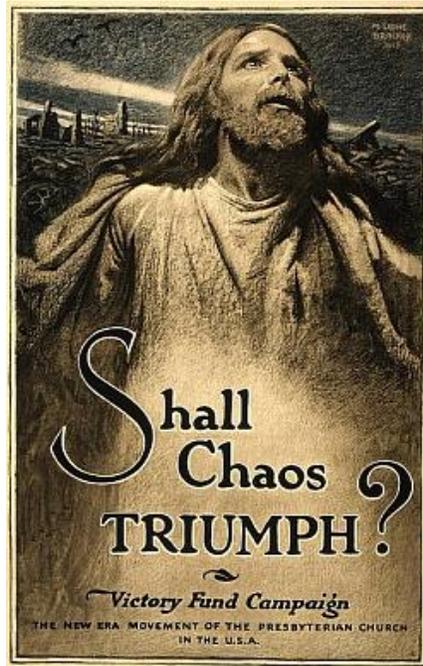
The church was without a regular minister for several months, and there is indication that worship services were not held every Sunday during the interim, and that some lay preaching was done at the Sunday evening services. In January, 1919, Fred O. Scurrah was called to the church and began his ministry. The church membership at that time was reported as 236, the Sunday school enrollment as 150. The giving to benevolences amounted to \$400.00 in round numbers, and to the local church about \$2,100.00. The ratio of benevolence giving to current expense giving in 1919 was about 20%.

*The advent of the automobile wrought a tragic circumstance for Mr. Scurrah during his pastorate in Canton. Rev. Scurrah's wife (Letty) was walking with their dog across the Main Street bridge over the Grasse River when the dog darted into the path of an early automobile. Mrs. Scurrah tried to rescue the dog and was herself struck and killed. Rev. Scurrah was called to the scene and carried Letty, by himself, back to the manse where she died.*

Following the death of his first wife, Rev. Scurrah married Marian Sylvia Browning, a Canton High music teacher and church organist, on November 24, 1920. One year later, their daughter, Mary Scurrah was born on the dining room table in the manse.

*It should be noted that for some years before and after Mr. Scurrah's pastorate the church had often been made available for meetings of the W.C.T.U. and the Anti-Saloon League. In Mr. Scurrah's years here the W.C.T.U. had area, probably countywide, meetings in the church and the League had its "Field Day Service" in the church at least once.*

In part through the efforts of Rev. Scurrah, the Church became involved with the New Era Movement. This movement arose out of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and was spearheaded by Dr. J. Wilber Chapman, the Moderator of the General Assembly in 1917. The goal of the New Era Movement was to coordinate the efforts of Presbyterian churches in helping with the reconstruction problems arising from World War I. Money was available to help rebuild churches destroyed in the war zone and to help American soldiers and sailors returning from the war. The people involved with the New Ear Movement contributed to the foundation of the Federal Council of Churches and subsequently to the organization of the National Council of Churches. The church in Canton supported the Federal and National Council of Churches from their beginnings. Mr. Scurrah took a new pastorate in 1922.



Poster for the New Era Movement, 1917

Fred Ormiston Scurrah was born February 21, 1877 in Oxbow, New York. Rev. Scurrah died on February 15, 1966 and the second Mrs. Scurrah died on April 28, 1986.

### **Rev. J. Manley Spencer (1922-1926)**

On June 6th of that year, the Rev. J. Manley Spencer became the twelfth minister of the church. Mr. Spencer served the church almost exactly four years. One of the concerns of his ministry was the Week Day Church School. The school was first conducted in conjunction with the Methodist Church, and it was originally held in that church building. Later some classes were conducted in the Park Street church. Junior or senior high students of any faith who wished to participate would be bused from the school to the Church for what was mostly Bible study. This contrasted the Sunday school program which was more involved in the development of religious faith. The two programs were designed to complement each other.

The general picture of the church programs and participation during this time can be gleaned from the Session record in April, 1923. The number of communicants on the roll of the church was 258, and the enrollment in the Sunday school was 216. The average attendance for the ten non-summer months was listed as 139 for Sunday morning worship, 69 for Sunday evening worship, and 24 for the midweek meetings. The average attendance at Sunday school was 85, and here we have an explanatory note that of the 216 on the Sunday School Roll, some 58 were either in the Home Department or the Cradle Roll. The total of all giving to the church in that year was \$5,173.77, and of that amount \$1,270.58 was for Benevolent and New Era purposes.

Tragedy struck the minister's family during Rev. Spencer's ministry. His wife, Estelle Spencer (married January 1, 1912) suffered from polio, and she was practically helpless all the time that Rev. Spencer served the church in Canton. She passed away in Canton on November 27, 1923. Mrs. Spencer was born in Macomb, moving to Gouverneur at a young age with her family. She was a graduate of Gouverneur High School in 1906. After graduation she taught in local schools for two years before she contracted polio.

In 1924, Rev. Spencer married a Canton girl, Miss Evelyn Churchill, who was a French teacher at Moravia. Miss Churchill was born in Mooers New York on June 12, 1903. She was a graduate of St. Lawrence University.

*In June, 1926, Rev. Spencer reported to the Session that he had a call from the Presbyterian Church at Franklin, New York, and he asked the Session to accept his resignation in order that he might accept this call. His resignation was accepted with regret, and Presbytery was petitioned to take the usual steps in clearing Mr. Spencer so that he could move, and in preparing the church for its search of a new pastor.*

Rev. Spencer was born on March 10, 1886. He was a pastor for 5 years in Oregon (1910-1915) and five years at the church in Chaumont, New York (1916-1921). After Canton, Rev. Spencer served churches in Franklin, Westfield, Mayfield and Evans Mills. Rev. and the second Mrs. Spencer retired to Gouverneur where Rev. Spencer died in August, 1967. Mrs. Spencer was active in her husband's ministry. She died on July 21, 1985.

### **Rev. John Arndt Erickson (1927-1940)**

In September and October of 1926 the congregation met on two separate occasions to prosecute the call of the Rev. John A. Erickson. At the October meeting 67 voters cast 67 ballots in favor of extending the call to Rev. Erickson. John Erickson had been a student at St. Lawrence University from 1908 through 1913. As a first year student at SLU he did his first preaching, at the Mission Church at Helena. During his college career, Rev. Erickson took an interest in the church at Pyrites where he did many things besides preaching. For example, he painted the floor and did other repairs so that the Crane Memorial Church would be fit for worship.

After graduating from St. Lawrence University, Rev. Erickson entered Union Theological Seminary. He graduated in 1916. During his time at Union, Laurens Hickok Seelye was studying at the same seminary. Mr. Seelye served as the President of St. Lawrence from 1935 to 1940.



Rev John A. Erickson (Watertown Times, 1928)

On August 14, 1916 Rev. Erickson married Edna Louise Heal from Port Richmond, Staten Island. They lived for several years in St. Albans, New York, moving in 1919 to Parkesburg, PA. In 1923 Rev. Erickson became the pastor of the Faith Presbyterian Church located on West 48<sup>th</sup> Street. In the four years Rev. Erickson spent in New York he saw the best of the city and “Hells Back Kitchen,” at that time one of the worst sections of New York.

Mr. Erickson was called at a salary \$2,000.00 and he became the pastor in Canton on January 1, 1927.

### *A Time of Prosperity*

Before the end of that year, a new pipe organ was installed in the sanctuary. This organ was purchased at the cost of \$7,500.00. It filled the apse on the south side of the building. It served the congregation splendidly. There was a plaque on the wall of the church by the organ keyboard which indicated the names of donors and some other information about the organ. In the redecoration of 1955 the organ keyboard was moved to the right and forward in the sanctuary, and turned at right angles to its former position.

*The purchase of the organ was just the beginning of a vigorous program to rehabilitate the physical plant. In 1928 an extensive project was undertaken, and the following work accomplished as recorded in the minutes of the Board of Trustees. "The repairs made embrace the remodeling of the kitchen, laying tile inside the dining room, and plastering over same; covering the ceiling of dining room, chapel, auditorium with celotex, and redecorating of the entire interior, and rewiring of whole church; also remodeling of the roof." The sum of \$7,200.00 was borrowed to help defray the expenses of this project. Rev. Erickson proposed that the project be broadened to include the reordering of the chancel in much the same way that this was carried out in the 1955 remodeling project.*

*In the reports of these years the organizations of the church carried on without much change. The Sunday school continued to function and Sunday morning and evening services were held as usual. The Ladies Aid continued to be a source of great strength. In 1931 the Society turned over \$500.00 to help reduce the note incurred in the 1928 remodeling, and the Society spent more than \$400.00 on extensive repairs to the manse. There was mention of a Men's Club, and the Christian Endeavor reports were heard at the Annual Meetings which were held in April.*



Interior of the Church circa 1930 – the text on the Gothic Vaulting reads  
“The Lord is in His Holy Temple”

There were quite a few references in the Church records from this time about attempts to repeal the Volstead Act. The Volstead Act, passed in 1919, specified that “no person shall manufacture, sell, barter, transport, import, export, deliver, or furnish any intoxicating liquor except as authorized by this act.” Any drink containing more than 0.5% alcohol was defined as being intoxicating. The Volstead Act, in combination with the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the Constitution of the United States (ratified in 1919) legislated what was commonly know as “prohibition.” Opposition to the Volstead Act and the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment appeared soon after prohibition took effect. Prohibition was repealed in 1933 with the ratification of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment.

Rev. Erickson strongly opposed attempts to repeal prohibition. *The Session informed the congressional representatives that it opposed repeal of Prohibition on at least two occasions.*

*In the fall of 1928 a Sunday was set aside to commemorate the occupation of the first church building a century before. There was also evidence of much cooperation between the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. The Presbyterians worshipped with the Methodists during the sanctuary redecoration. The two churches operated the Week's Day Church School cooperatively. The pastors would split the summer, one vacationing in July, the other one in August, and both congregations would attend the church that was open that particular month.*

### ***The Depression***

*The Trustees minutes are most revealing in regard to the period, 1930-1940. The word "depression" never appears in any of the church records, but the difficulties of this economic situation on the Church are clear. The purchase of the organ in 1927 and the remodeling program of 1928 left the church almost \$10,000.00 in debt, and not much of this had been taken care of by the fall of 1929 when the "crash" occurred in Wall Street. The congregation at its annual meeting in April of 1929 increased the pastor's salary to \$2,200.00. In the ensuing years the salary was reduced, always at Rev. Erickson's suggestion, first to \$2,000.00, then to \$1,800.00, then in a particularly critical period, to the rate of \$1,500.00 for at least part of the year 1933. The Board of Trustees refused to lower the salary to \$1,500.00 for the next year, though what was actually paid Mr. Erickson that year was not indicated. The members recalled that Rev. Erickson made large contributions to the church out of his salary. Meantime, the debts of the church were slowly reduced and the giving to benevolence and local church expenses was a bit less each year.*

*In 1938 the congregation apparently participated in World Wide Communion Sunday for the first time. This emphasis was coupled with the experiment of distributing tokens to the residents in Canton to be turned in on Communion Sunday. The results were gratifying, for 146 received communion. The record for the fall communion for the preceding few years was 82, 88, 95, 101 and then 146. Obviously the communion attendance had increased substantially. There were other attempts to bolster the church in this time. In 1936 a religious census and preaching mission were conducted in connection with other churches in the community. The minister and*

*the Session gave consideration to means in which the congregation might be stirred, but one elder indicated that there was no point in stirring the congregation unless there was reasonable chance of making it a continuing process.*

*In 1932 a celebration of the 125th anniversary of the founding of the church was held. Among other things, there was a pageant in the Town Hall. A copy of the pageant program is in the Appendix. In the last half of the 1930's the church joined with the other churches in the Presbytery of St. Lawrence in buying the Inn at Oak Point on the St. Lawrence River for a camp and conference grounds. For the time it was owned by the Presbytery, Oak Point provided a summer retreat for hundreds of young people each year.*



Oak Point Inn – late 1930s – Rev. Erickson is the person on the left, standing in the foreground.

Once again, the minister's wife passed away while he was serving the Canton Church. Mrs. Erickson died on March 14, 1938 at Hepburn Hospital in Ogdensburg.

Mrs. Erickson was born October 31, 1888 in Brooklyn, New York. The family soon moved to Port Richmond, Staten Island where Mrs. Erickson lived until she was ten years old. The family then returned to Brooklyn where Mrs. Erickson attended high school. While living in Canton, Mrs. Erickson was a member of a number of local organizations including The Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Canton Study Club. The cause of death was a staphylococcus infection. The couple had two daughters, Edna L. Erickson and Margaret H. Erickson. At the time of the death of Mrs. Erickson, Edna was studying at Potsdam Normal School and Margaret was a first year student at Wilson College. Edna later graduated from the State Teacher's College at Potsdam.

In 1940 Rev. Erickson took a six month leave of absence from his ministry. He was not well. On October 15, 1940 the congregation accepted his permanent resignation with regret. After his

resignation, Rev. Erickson moved to Morristown and in 1941 he accepted the call to serve as the relief pastor there. In 1944 he returned to the New York City area, but in 1946 he was back in the North Country first as the interim pastor at the church in Ogdensburg and then as the pastor in Morristown where he remained until his retirement in 1949. Even after his retirement Rev. Erickson served as a relief pastor in emergencies.

Rev. Erickson was born on May 27, 1887 on a farm in New Jersey where he spent his early years. The farm had 112 acres that was tilled every year. At the age of twelve, he was behind a plow, doing hard physical work as a “plowboy.” In Canton he was “not only interested in the work of the church but in the betterment of the community and has always been in harness when there was work to do – Work of a church nature and work of a civic nature.” As a student at St. Lawrence University, Rev. Erickson joined the Freemasons, St. Lawrence Lodge III on May 20, 1913. On November 7, 1967 he was awarded a 50 year pin celebrating his commitment to the organization. In Canton, Rev. Erickson was very active in the St. Lawrence County Tuberculosis and Public Health Association.

Although it was less of a consideration in the 1900s, the nature of Freemasonry continues to be the subject of debate. Some call the organization a secret society whereas Freemasons themselves argue that it is more correct to say that it is a society for which certain traditions are private.

### **Rev. Theodore DeVries (1941-1947)**

#### ***World War II***

*The Rev. Theodore DeVries came to the church in April, 1941. He had a vigorous ministry from the first, and a good many people united with the church beginning shortly after he arrived in Canton. The church was repaired outside and redecorated within in the early 1940's. There was a celebration in 1946 in honor of the church having been Presbyterian for 125 years. Three former pastors returned for this event, namely Rev. Scurrah,*



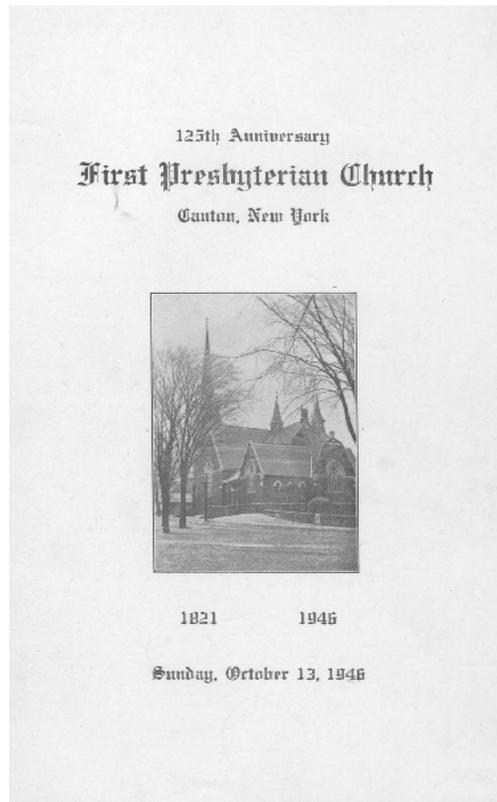
Rev. Theodore DeVries (Plaindealer, October, 8, 1946)



Choir about 1945. Second row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the left, Shirley Munson (Wells), 3<sup>rd</sup> row, first on the left, Larry Pries, 3<sup>rd</sup> row first on the right, Del Willoughby (Organist). The Director (right front) was Lillian Sayer.

*Rev. Spencer and Rev. Erickson. In the newspaper accounts of that celebration it is noted that the Christian Endeavor Society has passed out of existence. There is no record indicating exactly when this took place, but for some years prior to this the Society is only mentioned now and then in the annual reports. The accounts also indicate that the missionary work carried on for years by the Women's Missionary Society was now taken care of by a committee of the Ladies Aid.*

During his tenure, there was a large increase in church membership, the financial condition of the church improved significantly, there was a big increase in benevolence, new hymnals were purchased, an outside bulletin board was installed and there were many other improvements in the manse and in the inside and outside of the church. The congregation included many college students.



Bulletin Cover for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Celebration as a Presbyterian Church

In 1945, 4 years after coming to Canton Rev. DeVries collapsed suddenly at the Hotel Harrington where, as the Secretary of the Rotary Club, he was registering the members for the meeting that day. After an extensive medical evaluation he was diagnosed as having Addison's Disease (a rare disease of the Adrenal Gland in which insufficient amounts of natural steroids are produced). His condition required treatment in Rochester at various intervals. He would be stronger after treatment, but it would be only a matter of time before his strength ebbed. Supply ministers had to fill the pulpit on many occasions, but the congregation continued to support the DeVries family in every possible way. Rev. DeVries submitted his resignation in the spring of 1947, and it became effective on September 30th of that year. He retired to Norwood, a suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio.

*"This had been a most trying situation for all concerned, and the congregation and the DeVries family held each other in mutual love and faithfulness throughout."*

Theodore DeVries was a native of Arlington, Pa. He received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Mission House College (now called Lakeland College) in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. While he was a college student he served as a missionary to the Comanche and Apache Native American people in Oklahoma. His Bachelor of Divinity degree was earned at McCormick Theological Seminary in Hanover, Indiana. His first church was the Goldendale Presbyterian Church in Goldendale, Washington. After three years in Washington, Rev. DeVries moved to Charlton

Presbyterian Church near Schenectady. While in the Albany area, Rev. DeVries studied philosophy, psychology and other subjects as a postgraduate student at Albany State Teachers College.

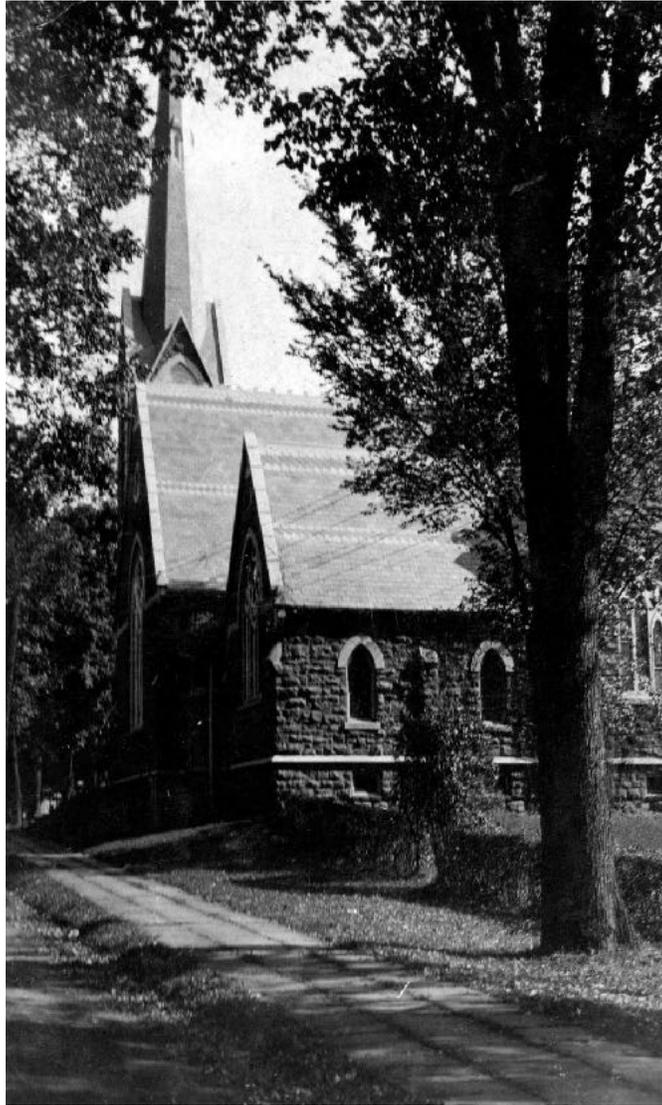
He next went to the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Utica. While serving at the Utica Church, Rev. DeVries was active in the Utica Council of Churches, was President of the Utica Ministerial Association, a member of the Theology Club and chaplain for the nearby tuberculosis sanatorium and State Hospital. Rev. DeVries died in March, 1949. He had a son, Theodore who studied at St. Lawrence and then entered Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to pursue an engineering degree.

### **Rev. Earnest Edward Eells (1948-1954)**

#### **Building for the Future**

*The Rev. Earnest E. Eells was called to the pastorate in the early days of 1948. His ministry laid the ground work upon which we strive to build today. He first recommended the establishment of a Westminster Fellowship, a Presbyterian program for high school young people. The Session accepted the suggestion and the work was begun. The Ladies Aid, still going strong, decided to reorganize under the denominational program suggested, and in 1949 the name was changed to the Presbyterian Women's Organization, or the P.W.O. There is an interesting note in the minutes of the Ladies Aid at the time of reorganization: "Because many younger women shy away from the name Ladies Aid with the feeling it implies a group of stiff-necked old women -which we know we're not -and because it is the name most commonly used in our National, Synodical and Presbyterial Societies." The organization was just as active and energetic as ever, and the reorganization was only adopted to keep up with the changing times. The women served the church both locally and through missionary giving, just as faithfully as ever under the P.W.O.*

*Extensive work was done in the lower floor of the church in 1951. A new kitchen was installed and the dining room and a smaller room off the kitchen were renovated. Major repairs were also done on the manse.*

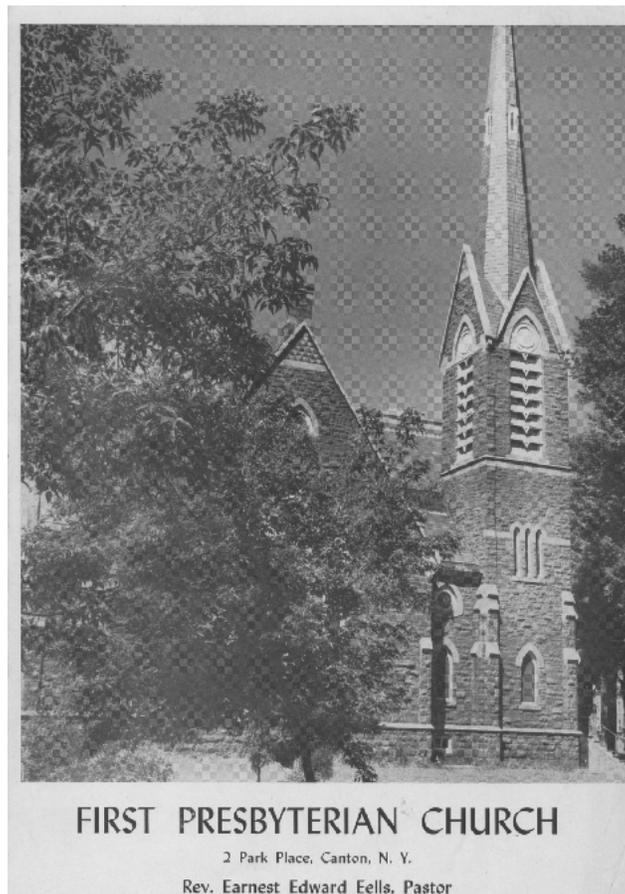


Side View Before the Addition of Fellowship Hall

*Mr. Eells maintained an active organization throughout the church. He was constantly trying to serve the various elements of the congregation, and there are notes of dinners for college students and other such activities.*

*Mr. Eells made what is probably the best attempt to solve the situation in regard to the Canton Church and its concern for the churches in the rural areas around the village. He preached and served as he could the churches at Crary Mills, Brick Chapel and Beech Plains. Finally, he proposed the organization of the Canton Larger Parish with the Canton Church as sort of a mother church. The four churches voted to join in such an organization, and a young man just out of seminary, the Rev. James Belt Jr., was called to be associated with Mr. Eells in the work.*

*This promising start was blunted by a series of problems, most of them arising out of misunderstanding between the Canton Church and Presbytery.*



Sunday Bulletin, 1949

*The Presbytery would not approve the plan and other difficulties arose with the result that the Brick Chapel Church never became actively involved in the program and the Canton Church soon felt itself to be left out. The Crary Mills and Beech Plains churches continue to be yoked as a two-point charge. Mr. Belt left after two years.*

*In 1950, Mr. Eells' wife became ill and was hospitalized in Ogdensburg for a long time. This took a great deal of care and strength on the part of Mr. Eells who made daily trips back and forth. Excellent care and loving concern proved of no avail, and Mrs. Eells passed away. Mr. Eells was approaching retirement age, and in 1954 he indicated his intention to retire in the fall of that year. He remarried before leaving Canton.*

On Oct. 2, 1954 a retirement dinner hosted by the Canton Pastors Association by was held in honor of Rev. Eells at the Hotel R. The Hotel R was originally known as the Erwin House but became known as the "R" when it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Louis J. Russett. The original "R" was destroyed by fire in 1950 and was rebuilt as the St. Lawrence Inn.

Earnest E. Eells was born November 27, 1892 in Falls Church, Virginia. He held a Bachelor of Arts degree from Clark University in Massachusetts and a Master of Arts degree from Princeton

University. He did post-graduate work at the University of Pennsylvania and Auburn Theological seminary. He also held Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Auburn. Rev. Eells studied the life and times of Henry James, he was an usher at one of the lectures presented by Sigmund Freud on his only trip to the USA and he was a Freemason.

Before coming to Canton he held pastorates in Boonville, Orchard Park, East Hampton and Rutledge PA. He served six years as a Chaplain in World War II. When in the USA, he was stationed at the Plattsburg barracks, Fort Devens, Mass and Fort Monmouth, NJ. While overseas he served with the Fifth Army in Africa and Italy, the Seventh Army in Italy and France, and the Twelfth General Hospital in Leghorn, Italy. During his overseas service, he traveled extensively in Palestine, Switzerland, France and England. He had 29 years of active and reserve duty in the military when he retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Rev. Eells first married Miss Ada Cox in September 1917, at Newton, L. I. She died at Cancer in December, 1951. He then married Mrs. Florence Gallagher from the Canton area. After leaving Canton, the couple lived at North Sebago, Maine where he reinvigorated the Community Church in Sebago. Although Rev. Eells retired from a regular pastorate, he continued to serve as a supply preacher in Maine. In 1966 the couple moved to Lakeland, Florida where he died on November 30, 1981.

### **Transition**

Following the resignation of Rev. Eells, Dr. William Halbert Campbell was appointed to act as Moderator of the Session as the congregation searched for a new pastor. Dr. Hammond served the Hammond Church from 1923 until 1935 and again from 1943 to 1955. In the intervening years, Dr. Hammond was the pastor at the Presbyterian Church in Watertown.

William Halbert Campbell was born January 3, 1897 in LeRoy, NY. His undergraduate work was completed at the University of Rochester and he completed his seminary training at the Auburn Theological Seminary. In 1951 he received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Tusculum College in Greenville, TN. During his two pastorates in Hammond, 331 members were added to the congregation making it the largest rural Presbyterian Church in New York State. Rev. Campbell was also responsible for founding the Oak Point Youth Conference. At the time of his death on April 24, 1965, Rev. Campbell was serving as the General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Northern New York.

### **Rev. Jack M. Wells (1955- 1967)**

*The....pastorate... of Rev. Jack M. Wells was begun in January, 1955, at the end of that month. Let it suffice simply to state the condition and program of the church at that time. The church numbered 360 members with a Sunday Church School enrollment of 186 including some fifteen children on the Nursery Roll. The average attendance on worship during the ten non-summer*

*months of 1956 was about 250, the attendance on Sunday School about 120. The current receipts in 1956 were \$12,600.00, the giving to benevolence by all organizations \$2,300.00.*

*The church had the following organizations: The Presbyterian Women's Organization which was divided into five circles with the circles meeting the first Wednesday of every month, the Junior High and Senior High Westminster Fellowships which met on alternate Sunday evenings, The Silas Wright Club for married couples which met once a month on Sunday evenings, the Postscript Club made up of women who are working met on a Monday evening each month. In 1955 extensive repairs were made to the exterior of the church, and the sanctuary was redecorated and drastic changes made in chancel arrangement. There was active support of the church by a good many college students from St. Lawrence University and the New York State Agricultural and Technical Institute. The congregation was growing, and there is a real sense of tremendous opportunity in the future. This is the Church Rev. Wells inherited in 1955.*

His first church was the Presbyterian Church in Cambridge, a congregation he served for 6 years, moving to Canton in 1955. While in Canton he was the Moderator of the Presbytery of St. Lawrence and he served as the President of the Westminster Foundation Board of Directors, a group that supervised the ministerial work on the college campuses throughout New York State.

Rev. Wells married Elizabeth Norman of Portland, Oregon on December 6, 1942. They had eight children. Elizabeth Norman Wells worked as the Secretary to the Chair of the Agriculture Division at the Canton Agriculture and Technical College (A.T.C.)

Early in the tenure of Rev. Wells the first two women were elected elders. Edith Wight and Inez Butterfield (their names appear in the Session minutes as Mrs. Charles D. Wight and Mrs. Earl Butterfield) were both elected ruling elders in January 1956. Although Mrs. Grace D. Rogers served as the Treasurer beginning in the 1950s, it was 1961 before Mrs. Janet Patterson was elected the first women Trustee. It is not clear from the Church records when the first woman was elected to be a Deacon but in the 1950s there were many women Deacons.

In Canton Rev. Wells was a founding member of the St. Lawrence County United Fund (The United Way), serving as the president of this organization, a position he held for four terms. He was also very active in the many youth sports organizations, serving on the Canton Youth Commission and on the Pee Wee Board of Directors.

The Crary Mills church was the largest of the rural churches in the Canton area in 1957 and the Church in West Potsdam had become Methodist.

Within the church, he was very active with the Youth Fellowship, serving as “an inspiration to the young people.”

There are lots of stories about Jack Wells. Jack Wells was known as the “sweatshirt pastor.” His normal attire in the office and around town was a sweatshirt. He was known for sitting in the park often and people would come up to speak to him there. He also “hung out” at Billy's a restaurant down the block. While he served in Canton he never owned a car (although he did ride a bicycle) and he would hitchhike to the hospital on visitations, an activity that initially was not fully appreciated by all the members of the congregation. In another story, when the weather looked threatening the Wells family would, on occasion, hang laundry on the porch of the manse. Again not all the members of the congregation felt this was appropriate. However as the congregation and Wells family got better acquainted, it became clear the minister and the members of his family were loved and respected by the members of the church and the citizens of the Canton community.

In October, 1960, the Church employed Mr. Thomas J. Philipp, a student from the Union Theological Seminary as “the Minister to Students.” Mr. Philipp oversaw monthly student suppers for sixty to seventy students from the SUNY College of Agriculture and Technology in Canton and St. Lawrence University. He also held dinners at his apartment for students who left home to attend one of the colleges in Canton. The idea was to provide an atmosphere of warmth and fellowship in which students could get to know each other. In part as a result of these dinners it was not uncommon to see SLU and ATC students attend Sunday services together. Mr. Philipp conducted services at number of local churches including those at Hammond, Pyrites, Pierrepont, and the St. Lawrence Campus. He also preached a number of times at the Park Street Church and he did hospital and home visits. Mr. Philipp left Canton on June 9, 1961.

Rev. Philipp remembers his days in Canton vividly.

“The first day I arrived in Canton I went to the Wells home, right next to the church. Jack and I sat in the living room getting to know each other and his hopes for my ministry. First one of his children passed through the living room, then another, then another...I finally asked him how many he had. “How many have come through here, so far?” he asked. I believe the final number was eight! (I always thought it was ironic that later in life Jack became the Executive of Planned Parenthood in the North Country. His wife once commented to me, years later, ‘Jack should have gotten into Planned Parenthood much earlier!’)

“Jack was a wonderful mentor to me and I will always be grateful to him. Our office set-up was most unusual, there were three desks pushed arranged in a manner in which Jack, Alice Huddelston and I were looking at each other all the time. I was intimidated by this for anytime I looked up Alice was staring right at me as much as to say: ‘I'm waiting for you to give me some work!’

“There had been a committee that was to find an apartment for me BEFORE I arrived. It didn't happen. For the first couple of months I lived with the Huddelstons in a room that was just off the dining room with a drape that separated the two rooms. I never went to bed at night until I

knew everyone else had left the area, and tried to get up before others invaded that area! Later I went into a lovely apartment right next to the St. Lawrence campus, on the second floor of the home of a Geology Professor. My place was known as The Apartment. Often I had students there for dinner or for meetings and publicity that went out indicated the meeting would take place at The Apartment. Everyone, even townspeople, knew what that meant. Several times I cooked supper for the entire hockey team (or as many players that could make it) Boy could they eat.”

After leaving Canton, Mr. Philipp returned to Union Theological Seminary where he completed his studies. After graduation he was ordained and had a long and successful career as a pastor. His ministry has involved a great deal of activism on peace, justice, and human rights issues: Women's Right to Choose, Gay Lesbian Bisexual and Transgender issues, peace issues, and immigration reform. Rev. Philipp is currently serving as the pastor of the Community Presbyterian Church in Merrick, New York.

Although there was enthusiasm for the Ministry to Students program, finding suitable interns who were interested in coming to Canton was difficult. As a result the program was not continued.



Making Tree Ornaments and curler caddies and other trimmings and goodies for the annual Christmas Bazaar. Pictured, left to right: sitting: Mrs. John Wells, Mrs. William Bell, Mrs. Barton and Mrs. Jack Kaumeyer; standing: Mrs. Roger Hutchinson, Mrs. Harry King, Mrs. Lauren Clute and Mrs. Thomas Patterson (with a curler caddy) (Plaindealer Nov. 17, 1965).

Until Fellowship Hall was built, the congregational meetings were sometimes held in the Masonic Hall in Canton. This facility was used because it provided a building in which the members of the congregation could enjoy a meal together before the Annual Meeting.

In December 1961, the Session discussed ways to display the American and Christian flags in a “more advantageous position” in the sanctuary.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, a week day school program continued to be held on Wednesdays in the Church. In 1961 the Canton Central School Board eliminated the bus transportation to and from the Church, one of the reasons that lead to the disappearance of the program.

1962 marked an important decision by the United States Supreme Court on the issue of prayer in public schools. The Regents of the State of New York had written a prayer that was to be recited by all public students at the beginning of each day. The prayer read “Almighty God, we acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, and we beg Thy blessings upon us, our parents, our teachers and our country.” The Supreme Court ruled it was unconstitutional to require students to repeat this prayer.

### **Building of Fellowship Hall**

One of the lasting contributions of Rev. Wells was the construction of the education building which is attached to the stone church. In 1962, it was clear more space was needed. According to the “classified advertisement” use to solicit funds for the a building project, “every available room in the present church is being used twice each Sunday morning, the same rooms see equally service on Sunday evening, all day Wednesday and many afternoons and evenings during the week. The Sunday School is literally overflowing...and there is no space large enough for a church family gathering.”

Sunday school required two sessions and still the Junior High department met in the Town hall. Two senior high classed met in the chapel (at the same time) and the downstairs used portable screens to separate classes. On Wednesday evenings there were meetings in the Church of the Boy Scouts and Cubs, Girl Scouts and Brownies, Interdenominational Assemblies, The St. Lawrence County Council of Churches, The St. Lawrence County Extension Service Association (including 4-H) and the St. Lawrence County Ministerial Association.

In light of changing concepts in Christian Education and a continuation of the growth of the community and the congregation, additional facilities were clearly needed. This led to the building of “fellowship hall,” The third major building project in the church’s history.



Ground Breaking, October 17, 1962. Pictured, left to right: Rev. Jack Wells, Rance Bell, Mrs. Floyd Morter with help from her son David, Mrs. Robert Crowell, Miss Laurie Buys, Dr. Rollo Wicks and Thomas Kelly. (Plaindealer, June 17, 1962)

The next three pages are part of the brochure use to solicit donations for Fellowship Hall:

1930 Thompson 20  
outboard; 1958 Evin-  
motor; 1960 Master-  
Canton FT 6-8332.  
8-31-tf (1)

**RAVEL**

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erpoint.  
FFORD, FT 6-2040  
8-17-4tp

Utility Trailer to at-  
r, with rack on, no  
ffer refused. J. C.  
.A. Store, Russell.  
9-14-3t (1)

Large chest type  
ood condition \$200.00  
3242. 9-14-4t (1)

Speed Queen auto-  
her; 17 inch Crosley  
udebaker. FT 6-2850.  
9-14-tf (1)

f roofing and sidings  
aluminum clapboards,  
windows and doors,  
n and Stonekote.  
ne by experienced  
nd fully guaranteed.  
onthly payments.

**LLINGER  
ING CO., INC.**

Junction, N.Y.  
ANTON FT 6-3759  
9-21-6t (1)

White birch fireplace  
ll seasoned. Claude  
eKalb Jct. Phone 18-  
9-14-3t (1)

Steel Bar Joists 37'  
Call Star Lake 8393.  
9-14-3t (1)

Coal and wood furn-  
condition. One regis-  
be converted to more  
ill sell cheap. Call  
299. 9-21-2tp (1)

Used washing ma-  
n's Sunoco Station, 3  
St. Ph. FT 6-3621.  
9-21-2t (1)

Play pen and pads,  
and liner, car seat  
All very good condi-  
6-2703. 9-21-1t (1)

17" Crosley blond  
7; 1934 Studebaker.  
-2850. 9-21-1t (1)

Used Sentry safe,  
protects up to 1700°  
hour. New and used  
and adding machines.  
rvic. Ellis Typewrit-  
Main St. (Upstairs)  
9-21-1t (1)

**FOR SALE:** 50 New Hampshire  
Red pullets. Ready to lay. Tele-  
phone FT 6-4275, Loys Noble.  
9-21-1tp (1)

**FOR SALE:** 300 20 ft. lengths of  
secondhand 1" galvanized pipe  
in good condition. Floyd L. Grant.  
Phone FT 6-2092. 9-21-1tp (1)

**FOR SALE:** 1 desk with swivel  
chair, brown, Phone FT 6-3824.  
9-21-1t (1)

**FOR SALE:** One Belsaw Gang  
saw edger like new 225.00,  
some mill run lumber and slab  
wood, also guns and pistols and  
sights. Nick's Saw Mill and Shop.  
One Mile off Heuvelton-Renssel-  
aer Falls Road. 9-21-2t (1)

**Real Estate (2)**

**FOR SALE:** 1-room house with  
attached apartment having sep-  
arate entrance.  
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**Services (4)**

**INSURANCE**  
Life—Accident & Sickness—Group  
Estate planning and Business  
Insurance  
**DICK PEGGS**  
INSURANCE CONSULTANT  
REPRESENTING  
METROPOLITAN LIFE  
INSURANCE COMPANY  
43 Judson Street, Phone FT 6-2869

**WANTED TO DO** Sewing in my  
home. Beverly Hill, 88 Buck St.  
or phone FT 6-3404. 9-21-2t (4)

**WILL TAKE IN** elderly ladies or  
men to room and board in a  
good home. Call Fireside 4-2226,  
Heuvelton, N.Y. 9-21-1t (4)

**WANTED:** Cows and horses for  
dog meat. Power winch truck.  
Call Gouverneur 264, Denver  
Littibrant. 9-14-tf 5)

**WANTED TO BUY:** One (1) used  
cement mixer. FT 6-2423. H. D.  
Scott. 9-21-1t (5)

**Automotive (6)**

**FOR SALE:** 1958 Buick Riviere,  
fully equipped. Can be seen at  
16 Maple St. Call FT 6-8641 day-  
time; FT 6-8468 evenings. Must be  
sold to settle estate. 8-31-tf (6)

**Auction Sales (7)**

**DAIRY Replacement Sale,** Gou-  
verneur Stockyards, Monday,  
September 26th, 8 p.m., Lamb

**WANTED:** More room for rapidly growing  
church family of lively children and adults. Must  
be suitable for fellowship, conducive to learning,  
adjacent to present downtown location and reason-  
able in price. Contact: First Presbyterian  
Church, Canton, N. Y.

**FOR RENT:** Unfurnished house  
in Pyrites. Contact Guy Rocca.  
9-21-2tp (9)

**2 ROOMS For Rent** with board  
if wanted 7 miles out of Can-  
ton. FT 6-2011. 9-21-1t (9)

**FOR RENT,** 2 furnished and heat-  
ed 3 or 4 room apartments, one  
with private bath and private en-  
trance. Call at 5 State St. days  
and evenings telephone 8 F 21 De-  
Kalb. 9-21-1tp (9)

**FOR RENT:** 3 room furnished  
and heated apartment with pri-  
vate bath for 1 or 2 adults. 5  
Harrison St., Canton. Phone FT  
6-2529. 9-21-2t (9)

**Card of Thanks (12)**

**CARD OF THANKS**

I am taking this opportunity to  
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also grateful  
and the staff  
spital for ex-  
cellent care and assistance.  
Hannah Flynn  
9-21-1tp (12)

**NOTICE TO BIDDERS**

Notice is hereby given that  
bids for old lumber at the Town  
Garage will be received by the  
Town Board of the Town of Rus-  
sell, New York at the office of  
the Town Clerk, Russell, New  
York until 8:00 p.m. on the 3rd  
day of October, 1960.

The Town Board reserves the  
right to reject any or all bids.

BY ORDER OF THE TOWN  
BOARD OF THE TOWN OF  
RUSSELL, N.Y.  
Hattie S. Jones, Town Clerk  
9-21-1t (13)

**Legal Notices (13)**

**NOTICE OF JUDICIAL SALE**

OF REAL PROPERTY

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BERNARD #  
Attorney for  
Office and P.  
208 Trust Co  
Watertown, N

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## *Sunday Church School*

### *First Session*

The Junior High department, crowded out of the church, meets in the drab surroundings of the old Town Hall where a worshipful atmosphere is created with difficulty through the ingenuity of the youngsters and their teachers.

Even the kitchen with the table pushed back provides space for another gathering of young people. No possible use of space is overlooked: many formulae for shifting and mixing have to be tried each quarter to get everyone in.

The Chapel shelters two Senior High classes: one on stage and one at the pastor's desk. Conducted in hushed tones while the first service congregation worships in the adjoining sanctuary, these classes share their closing moments with the choir preparing for the second service.

Downstairs a much used set of portable screens separate two teachers conducting classes for different age groups in the same room. Discussions must be limited and quiet; visual aids displayed temporarily and then packed away until next week.



## *Sunday Church School*

### *Second Session*

There is an almost constant moving of furniture and equipment from one spot to another, from temporary storage to active use. Between Sunday morning sessions, the basement rooms must be transformed from elementary school scale to pre-school size. This class folds and stores its chairs and helps the staff to move out the rocking boat and toy chests.



Necessity is the mother of imaginative teaching when a single room is shared by classes of both 4 and 5 year olds, each with their own teacher and special lesson activity.

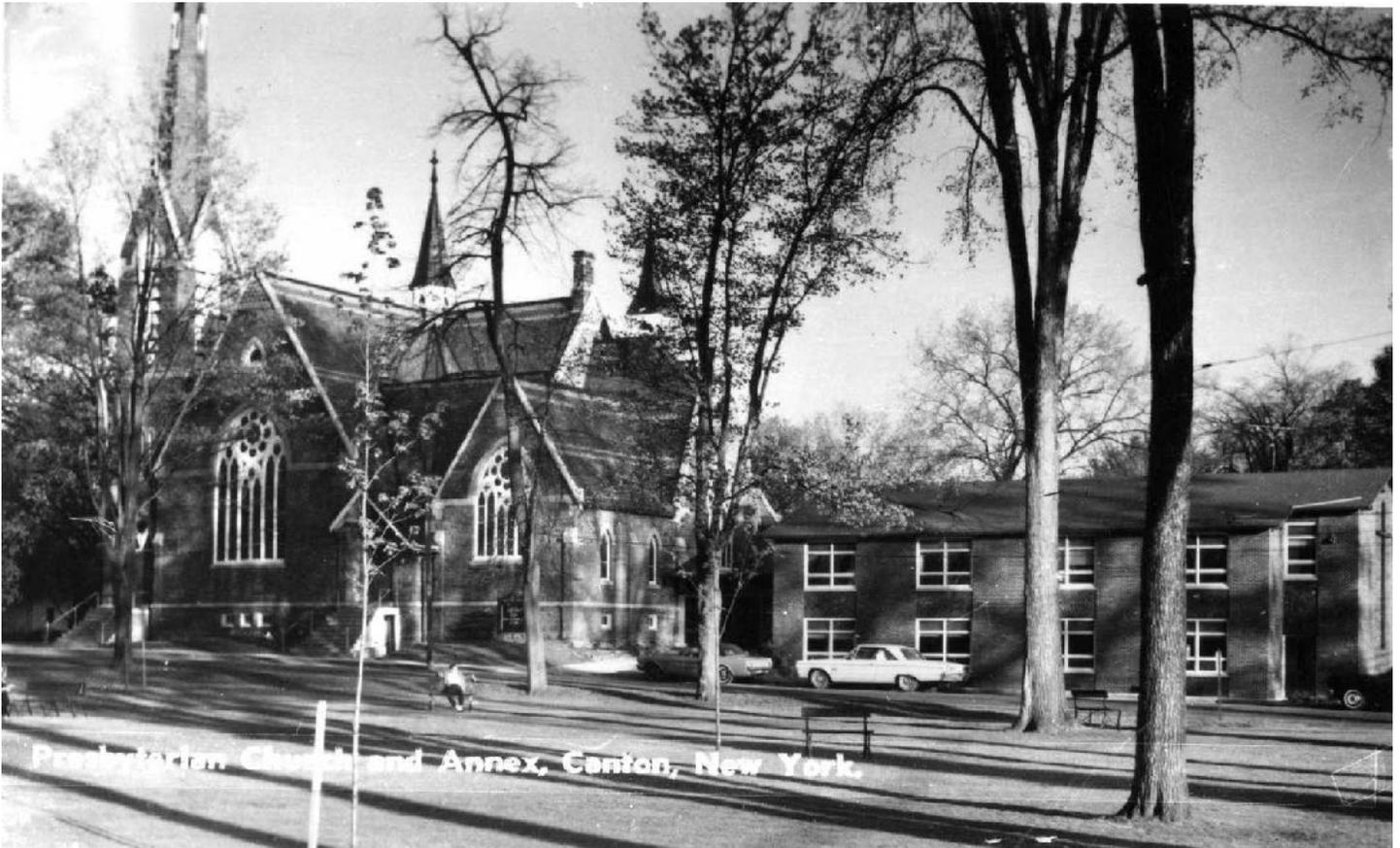


The Cradle Roll with its less-than-2-year-olds convenes in the kitchen within easy reach of stove handles and cupboard doors under the ever watchful eyes of attending parents.

The fund raising slogan was “**Everybody Give ...Until it Helps.**”

The new unit provided 6000 additional square feet of floor space, and included a foyer, three large and one small Christian Education rooms and a boiler room on the first floor and a dining room and kitchen on the second floor. A connecting foyer linked the new building with the Church. Major renovations of the west portion of the stone church structure provided a new entrance to the sanctuary, church offices, and a combination lounge and choir room. The former chapel area was renovated to include the new entrance to the sanctuary and new church offices. The downstairs, which had been the dining room was refinished and divided into a lounge and infant care room. The cost of the new facility was \$85,000 which was paid for in part with a \$25,000 mortgage.

When the new wing opened, the Primary and Junior Departments assembled in the first floor rooms at 9:30 A.M. Sunday morning while the Junior High Department met in the new second floor Fellowship Hall. The Senior High Department gathered in the youth area of the church. At 10:45 A.M. the nursery and kindergarten departments met on the first floor of the new building.



The formal dedication of the new and renovated areas of the church and fellowship hall was held on Sunday, May 12, 1963 even though the building had been in use for a couple of months before the dedication. The architectural firm employed was Granger, Gillespie and Robertson

although John Robertson was the primary consultant. The general contractor was William Morley and Sons, the electrical contractor, Shelly Inc. of Potsdam, the plumbing was done by Northern Mechanicals Inc. of Norwood, and the heating was done by the minister, Rev. John Wells

Dr. Rollo Wicks was the chair of the building committee. His committee included Mrs. Earl Butterfield, Mrs. William Robinson, George Roger, Lutfullah Butterfield, Frank James and Homer Kelly.

In the original design of the building there was to be a hallway parallel to Park Street which was to provide the entrance to the classrooms on both sides of the hall. To save money the decision was made to eliminate the hallway but when the new plans were drawn up, the architect failed to relocate all the light switches, which explains the unusual placement of the switches on the lower floor. It was also decided to reduce the size of fellowship hall on the upper floor and the conference room on the lower floor by a few feet. Unfortunately the architect moved these walls in the reverse direction. So, on the lower floor, the room that became the office used by Rev. Stone was significantly reduced in size.

Sept. 28, 1966, the state lottery amendment was opposed by the Presbyterians as an “irresponsible form of State taxation.” (St. Lawrence Plaindealer) That year the Session voted to purchase flyers articulating the



Rev. Jack Wells (Plaindealer, Oct. 19,1966)

opposition to this amendment to the New York State Constitution. The flyers were distributed with the Church Newsletter and they were used as bulletin inserts throughout the month of October. Despite this effort the Amendment was ratified in the November election.

On the occasion of Rev. Well's retirement from Canton, Miss Linda Atiyeh, who had been a member of the first Communicants Class he taught in Canton observed "Although his eleven years have ended, the effect of influence and contributions which Mr. Wells has made to our church and community are something which will never end."

After leaving Canton in 1966, Rev. Wells became the General Presbyter of the Northern New York Presbytery, a position he held for nine years. He relocated to Potsdam, the location of the Presbytery office. After leaving the Presbytery Office, he served as an interim or supply pastor for several churches in the North Country including Daley Ridge, Cray Mills and Fort Covington.

He was on public record celebrating the Roe vs. Wade decision by the Supreme Court giving women the right of access to abortions and he was a member of the St. Lawrence County Friends for Choice. In the 1970s, he helped establish the Canton Recreation Pavilion. He was a director of Planned Parenthood, the Green Thumb Program, The St. Lawrence Community Development Corps, Literacy Volunteers, Girl Scouts, Headstart and Meals on Wheels. He also got the Rural Rehab Ministry up and running. This was a program that helped senior citizens, needy families and shut-ins upgrade their homes.

Rev. Wells was born in Winnipeg, Canada on July 9, 1918. His family then moved to Syracuse where he went to high school, graduating from the Onondaga Valley Academy in 1937. After high school, he attended Colgate University where he was a Phi Beta Kappa student and a star member of the varsity ice hockey team. After graduation in 1941, he served four years in the US Army as a radio officer in the 87<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division where he saw combat in the European theater. He was honorably discharged from the Army in 1946 at the rank of First Lieutenant and Company Commander. After the Army, Rev. Wells attended Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut, graduating in 1950.

Rev. Wells died on July 5, 1995. As one author observed "Jack Wells will long be remembered. He has been a fine example for both clergy and laymen."

### **Period of Transition**

Rev. Varre A. Cummins, the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery and Chaplin at St. Lawrence University served as the moderator of the session during the transition period from when Rev. Wells left until the next pastor could be installed.

Varre Cummins was born in Los Angeles, California on April 27, 1915. He received his bachelor's degree from the University of London in 1937 and earned his divinity degree at the

Princeton Theological Seminary. He married Wilma Wurster in 1945 and served as the minister of a number of churches in Pennsylvania before becoming the minister of the Presbyterian in Potsdam in 1957. In 1964 Rev. Cummins was appointed the Chaplain at St. Lawrence University, serving in this capacity until his retirement in 1981. After retirement he and his wife moved to North Carolina where they lived until 1992, when they returned to Canton. Rev. Cummins died in March, 1996. (St. Lawrence Plaindealer, March 6, 1996)

### **Rev. Richard F. Stone (1967-1996)**

On February 26, 1967, Rev. Richard F. Stone was installed as the seventeenth pastor of the Canton Presbyterian Church. Rev. Stone came to Canton from the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hormell, New York; he served the church in Canton for almost 30 years. This was an interesting time in the history of the world. For the first time a human heart was successfully transplanted from one person to another, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy were assassinated, the first human walked on the moon, the war in Vietnam polarized the country, students were killed at Kent State University, President Nixon was impeached and resigned, the USA celebrated its 200 birthday and the Berlin Wall was taken down. The members of the church were faced with a rapidly changing world. People struggled with questions of human sexuality, gender roles, race relations and questions related to how Christians should best navigate the changing political and social topology.

In 1967, the Presbyterian Church was one of four churches in Canton which participated in a week of prayer for Christian Unity. Joining the Presbyterians were members from the Grace Episcopal Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Methodist Church. "Services were held daily on a rotating basis."



On October 23, 1967 the session voted to go on record opposing ratification of a new constitution for the State of New York. The issues in the minds of the members of the Session were maintaining the right of the citizens of New York to vote for major fiscal expenditures and supporting strong public schools by preventing State money from being used to fund private, religious based schools. The voters rejected the new constitution in the November election.

Given the social unrest in late 1960s and 1970s there were discussions from the General Assembly to the local church on issues like Vietnam and the Moratorium, campus unrest, racism and the gap between the church and college students.

In 1969 the church purchased a new furnace, had work done on the slate roof of the sanctuary and made major repairs to the manse. During this year, the Session sent a letter to the members of the Village Board supporting an increase in money for youth programs.

In 1969 it became clear there were major problems with the pipe organ. The blower, which forced the air through the resonating pipes, was not working well. According to Carolyn Leavitt, the organist at the time, the motor often got so hot that during a service a member of the congregation would be stationed by the motor with a fire extinguisher. In addition, because of the cost of heating such a large structure, when not in use, the sanctuary was maintained at a temperature just warm enough to prevent structural damage. This made practicing the organ very difficult during the winter months and when the sanctuary would be warmed up for a service, the organ was unpredictable. Sometimes pipes would not open and other times pipes would not close. After a long and contentious discussion, an Allen electric organ was installed in spring 1970. The pipes currently in the front of the church in the ambulatory at the end of the chancel are only for decoration.

In the early 1970s, a significant issue for many Presbyterians was the church's financial support for the Angela Davis Defense Fund. Davis, a member of the Communist Party, was an African American University Professor who, because a gun she purchased had been used in the killing of a judge, was charged as an accomplice to homicide. She was only the 3<sup>rd</sup> woman to appear on the FBI Most Wanted List. After a sensational trial she was acquitted of all charges. The Presbyterian Church of the USA contributed \$10,000 to her defense fund, a donation that was poorly received in many churches. Since the money given to the defense fund came from a mission budget, the effect was to significantly reduce mission giving throughout the church. This issue was discussed in Canton, and there was a decrease in mission giving to the national church.



Protest in the Park Against the Vietnam War – 1969

In 1971 the church adopted a Unicameral Board which combined the duties of the Trustees and the Elders. Until 1971, the Trustees had been given the responsibility of maintaining the physical plant, managing the budget and dealing with other financial matters whereas the Elders governed the church. After adopting the unicameral board, all Elders became Trustees and the session assumed the tasks that had previously been carried out by the Trustees.



Mother-Daughter Banquet – From left to right: Mrs. Gordon Myers, Miss Enith Westerway, Mrs. Alden Chadwick, Mrs. Karl Mayhew, Sr., Mrs. Ronald Scott and Mrs. Margaret Maybee (Plaindealer May 15, 1968)

In the 1970s college faculty and staff from Canton College and St. Lawrence University with an interest in the Church met once or twice a year to share a meal. These were well attended, and on occasions students with similar interests were invited.

On December 18, 1975 the Church mortgage (from the building of Fellowship Hall) was paid in full. The money to retire the mortgage came, in part, from the fund raising efforts of the women for the Church.

In 1980 a Healing Team was established at the church through the International Order of Saint Luke. Members of the team engaged in prayer services for people who were having physical or mental difficulties. The International Order of St. Luke was an inter-denominational community of ministers and lay people. Healing Services were available after the Sunday service and when requested by members of the Canton community. Following the healing tradition described in the Bible (Mark 6:5; Luke 4:40; 13:13) the services often included a “laying on of hands.”



Rev. Richard Stone (Plaindealer, Feb.22, 1967)

The Social Concerns Committee became one of the standing committees of the church in 1981. The committee was charged with facilitating discussions, usually once a month during the winter months, on topics which had implications for both the religious and secular communities. The discussions were held after the worship service on Sunday. Some of the topics discussed during “Open Forums” included HIV/AIDS, the treatment of refugees moving through the USA on route to Canada, Mad Cow Disease, abortion, a commitment to Peacemaking, the death penalty, Central America Peace Project, prison ministry and homosexuality. These discussions were intended to, in a non-hostile environment, allow the members of the congregation become better informed about secular issues.

In the early 1980s, the members of the Social Concerns Committee presented the following resolution to the session. “To improve national and international security, the United States and the Soviet Union should immediately stop the arms race. Specifically they should adopt a mutual freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapon.....Further the United States should assume a leadership role in implementing this nuclear weapons freeze.” This resolution was adopted by the session.

1981 was a typical year in the life of the church. To raise money for the church there was two bake sales, two rummage sales, a bazaar, and a smorgasbord, in addition to the myriad of fellowship breakfasts, lunches and dinners and receptions.

In the early 1980s, the “Plan of Reunion” of United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States was discussed at the Canton Church. The main obstacles to reunion were theological differences, the role of women in church, differences in governance and race. In 1983 these obstacles were overcome and the two denominations became The Presbyterian Church (USA).

The Clowns for Christ (also know as Christ's Clowns) program was begun at the Canton church in 1985. The clowns were members of a non-profit group that "shared the love, laughter and joy of Jesus with everyone they met." The motivation for some of the members came from First Corinthians 4:10 – "We are fools for Christ's sake." Whatever the motivation the clowns provided joy for the young and young at heart in the church.

In 1986 a major renovation project was undertaken involving cleaning and painting the ceiling and windows, refinishing of the door frames and repairing and painting the walls of the church. In addition, all the wood paneling in the church was refinished, the floors were refinished and sealed and the pews were repaired. New cushions were purchased for the pews, a new carpet was laid in the sanctuary and there was a re-wiring of lighting system. The cost of the project was \$60,000 of which \$30,000 came for the Synod in the form of a loan. The conditions of the loan were satisfied in full in March 1990.

In the middle 1980s a number of members of the congregation became involved in the Church World Service Crop Walk program. This was an international program in which neighbors walked together to take a stand against hunger. The goal was to raise awareness and funds for international relief and development, as well as local hunger fighting. The Crop Walk still takes place each year in Canton.

In 1987 an exchange was begun with the Knox Church in Iroquois, Ontario. On a given Sunday the congregation for Ontario would worship with the congregation in Canton and then sometime later the Canton Congregation would visit the Knox Church. These exchanges often involved a sharing of a meal, which was prepared by the members of the host congregation. The exchange continued for a number of years.

Although the manse provided a comfortable and convenient place for ministers and families to live, ministers were not able to take advantage of the benefits of owning their own homes. As a result, ministers did not accrue equity for retirement as the value of a personally owned residence increased through the years. In 1989 there were discussions in the Session and with the congregation about the selling of the manse. The discussions were heated, but in the end, and in part because of how the property had been originally deeded to the church, the decision was made to keep the manse.

### **Church & Community Program Center**

Church Community Worker Program began in 1974. Mary Logan, the first Director was hired August 15, 1974. The driving forces behind the project were Rev. Stone and Rev. Max Coots, the Minister of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Canton. The Church and Community Program (C&CP) was established in a cooperative effort to respond to needs of local residents by utilizing resources of both the church and community.

The program goals were:

- To provide a "safety net" for people in crisis
- To assist with emergency needs other agencies are unable to meet
- To provide volunteer opportunities for area residents.

The Church & Community Program provided emergency intervention and referral services, and arranged for on-going counseling, outreach and advocacy for those in need. The people involved with the program worked closely with local agencies to provide coordinated and comprehensive services. One of their mantras was "If we are unable to help, we will try to find someone who can!"

The program was funded by donations from many congregations in the area; it was initially housed in the basement of the Presbyterian Church. By 1975, a Thrift Shop, also located in the church, was in operation. The "rent" for this space was 60% of the gross income or \$50.00 per month, whichever was less.

In part because of space concerns, in 2003 the offices of the Church & Community Program moved to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the building located at 95 Main Street.

Still in operation in 2009, "the Church & Community Program has ensured that lower income residents of our community can obtain needed food, clothing, and other essentials. Last year the C&CP: filled 610 emergency food requests; distributed 350 holiday food baskets; assisted 55 families grow fresh vegetables; helped with budgeting, fuel, eyeglasses, diapers, clothing, transportation, & counseling; provided 100 kids with school supplies; and helped to make Christmas possible for over 300 families."

In 1990 the Park Street Church began the Lenten Luncheon Program which, for a modest fee, provided soup and sandwiches once a week during Lent. For over 10 years all the lunches were served in the Park Street church, although volunteers from other churches in the area would prepare the food. Later the lunches were offered at other churches. The money raised from the luncheons went to the Church and Community Program. In 2009, because of health department regulations about serving food for the public that was prepared in private homes, the program was in jeopardy. However, the difficulties with the Health Department were resolved and the Lenten Luncheon Program continues.

### **Use of the Facilities**

The feeling of the leaders of the church was that the facilities were to be shared by the residents of the Canton Community. As a result the demands for the use of the facilities were high.

A partial list of the groups using the church facilities during the tenure of Rev. Stone includes The Neighborhood Center, The Church Community Worker, The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (better known as the WIC Program),

Alcoholic Anonymous (AA), the Cub Scouts, the Boy Scouts, the Brownies, the Girl Scouts, Planned Parenthood, The League of Women Voters, Hospice, the Board at Cooperative Educational Services, Interdenominational Assemblies, The St. Lawrence County Council of Churches, The St. Lawrence County Extension Service Association (including 4-H), the Criminal Justice Task Force, the St. Lawrence County Ministerial Association, The Women's Task Force, the American Lung Association and The St. Lawrence County Nutrition Task Force. In some cases these organizations were charged (or made a donation) for the use of the facilities and in some case the facilities were provided at no charge. Some of the organizations on this list received congregational support from the local mission budget.

The Psychiatry Center Office (with its Mental Health Clinic) and Planned Parenthood both held clinics in the church facilities. Allowing Planned Parenthood to use the facilities was a matter of considerable discussion. In 1972, six members of the session were in favor of allowing Planned Parenthood to use the facility and six members were opposed. The tie was broken by the vote of Rev. Stone, the moderator. Both Planned Parenthood and the Mental Health Clinic eventually moved out of the church to facilities with more space. The congregation of the Church of the Nazarene also used the facilities until the congregation was able to build its own place of worship.

In 1996 the membership of the Church was 229 active members and 138 non-active members for a total of 367 adherents, the average non-summer attendance at the Sunday service was 90, and approximately 25 children participated in the Sunday school.

Richard "Dick" Stone was born in Waterloo, New York. He received a bachelor's degree from Grove City College in Grove City, Pennsylvania and in 1957 he received a divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary. Before coming to Canton, he had been the pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hormell for 7 years. In addition to his activities in the Geneva Presbytery and Synod of New York, Rev. Stone was active in the Ministers Association, the Parent-Teachers Association (PTA), the Red Cross and the Boy Scouts. He was married Jeanne Anne Irland Stone also from Waterloo. They had three children. In Canton, Rev. Stone served as the Moderator of the Presbytery of Northern New York. He was an active participant in the Canton Clergy, many ecumenical programs and organizations dealing with substance abuse and youth recreation. He was also a member of the Kiwanis Club. For a number of years, Mrs. Stone was the Secretary to the Associate Dean at St. Lawrence University. In November 1996 tragedy struck the Stone family when they learned of the death of their son Kirk. Kirk is buried in the Evergreen Cemetery just outside the Village limits on Route 11.

The Dick and Jeanne Stone retired to Saranac Lake, New York where Rev. Stone continues to serve as a supply preacher.

## **Period of Transition**

Given the 30 year pastorate of Rev. Stone, Dr. Evelyn P. Meredith was hired to serve as the Interim Pastor between Rev. Stone and his successor. Dr. Meredith inherited a strong congregation but for some of the members, Rev. Stone had been their only minister. To allow for a smooth transition to another pastor, it was necessary to break from the past. Dr. Meredith was a calm and non-anxious presence in Canton. She maintained a continuity and stability in the life of the church and kept the traditional style of worship. One change Dr. Meredith suggested was to replace the 1955 Hymnbook with the 1990 Presbyterian Hymnal. This change was not made, however, until after her tenure in Canton. She also held two special services in 1997. One was before Mother's Day and the other was a Blue Christmas service. Both were designed for "those who found these festive days especially hard because of losses and sad memories." Dr. Meredith was the minister when the Canton experienced the worse ice storm in 100 years. As a result of the storm, parts of the Canton area were without power for over 5 weeks.

Dr. Meredith was born in Indianapolis, in December, 1937. She graduated from Warren Central High School in 1956, then from Hanover College (Hanover, Indiana) in 1961. At Hanover she met and married her husband Robert on November 28, 1958. After graduating the couple moved back to Indianapolis where Dr. Meredith enrolled in the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. She graduated with a Master of Divinity degree in 1973. She was ordained by the Whitewater Presbytery in Indianapolis in 1974, and became the assistant pastor at Knox Presbyterian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Five years later, she entered the Doctor of Ministry program of McCormick Theological Seminary, completing the program in 1984.

After Dr. Meredith had served three churches in Ohio, she had ministries in Plattsburgh, Western Adirondack, Hammond, Canton, and Mt. Moriah, New York. She retired February 28, 2003 and then supplied the pulpit at Childwold during the summer of 2004. Dr. Meredith and her husband have two daughters and three grandchildren. One daughter is a Presbyterian minister. Dr. Meredith continues to accept invitations to preach throughout the presbytery.

Dr. Meredith served the Canton church from January 1, 1997 to July 15, 1998.

### **Rev. Michael Catanzaro (1998 – present)**

Rev. Michael Catanzaro (Reverend Mike) was installed on October 19, 1998 after a contentious discussion between the members of the Search Committee of the Church and the members of the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) of the Presbytery. After a protracted discussion, Rev. Catanzaro was endorsed by the PNC. On June 28, 1988, in a secret ballot of the Congregation, by a vote of 72 "yes" and 0 "no," Rev. Michael Catanzaro was unanimously elected the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Canton. Rev. Mike fancies himself an accomplished fisherman and he is the first minister of the Church with a pony tail. Rev. Mike is the 18<sup>th</sup>

minister of the Canton Presbyterian Church. On coming to Canton Rev. Catanzaro's first oversaw the repairs of the physical plant including both the Church structure and the manse.

Linda Potter, who is married to Rev. Mike, is also a vital part of the life of the church. She has provided leadership in a number of important activities in the Canton Church including serving as the Editor of the News Letter and being one of the driving forces behind WILD Women (described below). She was also one of the women from the Church who participated in the Mission Trip to Malawi that is also described below.

To evaluate a ministry in progress is difficult since the outcomes are unknown. With that in mind, what follows is a brief description of some of the highlights of church activities during the tenure of Rev. Catanzaro. Then an attempt is made to provide a "snapshot" of the life of the Canton Presbyterian Church in 2008.

Bible study takes place on Sunday morning following the Sunday service. The format of the "stand alone" sessions is a presentation with group discussion. The presentations are prepared by a shared leadership team.

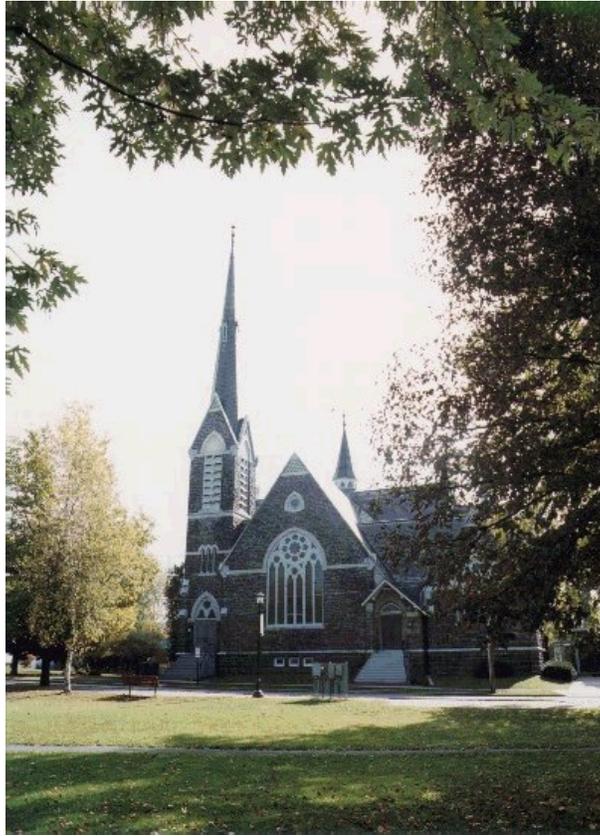
A book discussion group meets once a month during most of the winter months to talk about a text that may be a contemporary work or a recognized classic. The text chosen for discussion often deals with spirituality, travel, women's issues, relationships or global concerns.

The event during Rev. Catanzaro's pastorate that has most captured the imagination of the congregation was the Mission Trip to Malawi. One of the poorest countries in Africa, Malawi has a population of about 10 million. About 90% of the population lives in rural areas. Four women from the Canton Presbyterian Church and four women from the Presbyterian Church in Watertown traveled to Malawi in the summer of 2008. They took with them clothing, medicine, toys and home furnishing that had been collected through public appeals. On returning to Canton the women did radio interviews and presented seminars in the Church and in the Canton and Watertown Communities about what they saw and did in Africa. This act of mission has enriched the lives of the people in The United States and Malawi.



Rev. Michael Catanzaro (Reverend Mike)

## The Church in 2008



What follows is an attempt to provide a snapshot of the church in 2008.

The Mission of the 1st Presbyterian Church of Canton continues to be “to reach out to all people and welcome them in celebrating truly the joys, freedoms and responsibilities that come with our faith in God, Christ’s unconditional love for us, and the power of the Holy Spirit to transform our world. Through this nurturing Christian Community we will fully recognize the value of each believer, humbly forgive ourselves and others, and lovingly embrace God’s Grace.”

The church is not just surviving it is thriving – it is looking forward – and it is a vital part of the Community. Its function is to support people in whatever way possible.



Ms. Donna Doig

The Associate Pastor of the Church is Donna Doig, a long-standing member of the Church who has become a Commissioned Lay Pastor.

In 2008, the membership of the Church was 137 active members and 182 non-active members for a total of 329 adherents, the average non-summer attendance at the Sunday service was 103, and approximately 17 children participated in the Sunday school. A total of 70 young people participated in Christian education activities. The age distribution of the active members of the church was:

25 and under	6 people
46.	15 people
55.	30 people
65.	55 people
over 65	31 people.

The total compensation package for the pastor in 2008 was \$67,574.66. This included a salary of \$31,182.35, an allowance for the manse, a pension, a medical reserve account, mileage, a

professional development allowance and a book allowance. That year the total operating budget for the Church was \$147,170.44. The total value of the various church “endowments” was \$324,751.71 and the total mission giving (not included in the operating budget) was \$21,191.69.

The work of the Church is accomplished through various committees. The functions of the standing committees are described below.

The Session oversees all the activities of the Church and is charged with strengthening and nurturing the faith and the life of the congregation. Since the church is run by a unicameral board, the session members also function as the Trustees for the Corporation. The session is composed of 15 members who serve for a 3 year term. Each year, five session members are elected by the vote of the congregation. The session is committed to making the Church a place in which everyone is welcome as they pursue their personal journeys. Many Session members are less interested in the Calvin doctrine than they are in making the Church a place where all are welcome. Some members of the Session were initially attracted to the Church because of the charisma of “Rev. Mike” and continue to stay because of the sense of belonging to a “family.”

The Deacons minister to the sick, help those in need and are friends to those in distress.

The Resources Committee is responsible for securing, managing and dispensing funds to fulfill the mission and ministry of the church.

The Facilities Committee is responsible for maintaining the physical plant including the church and the manse.

The Worship Committee prepares the sanctuary for the morning worship, arranges for worship leaders in the absence of the pastor and associate pastor and prepares the sanctuary for special services like those held during Christmas and Lent.

The Fellowship Committee plans memorial dinners (often on short notice) and arranges for the refreshments at the fellowship time following the Sunday service.

The Nominating Committee recruits members of the congregation to serve our church.

The Stewardship Committee is responsible for all aspects of stewardship.

The Flower Committee arranges for the flower arrangements that decorate the sanctuary each Sunday.

**WILD (Wondrous In Love & Devotion)** Women, Women’s Circle and the Book Discussion are groups that provide the women in the church with fellowship and study opportunities.

Bad (**B**reakfast and **D**evotion) Guys provides the men in the church the opportunity for fellowship and devotion.

The Postscript Club is a women's group that meets once a month to listen to a presentation, raise money to support the work of the church and enjoy refreshments.

The Care Committee is involved with service to the church and it promotes renewal and evangelism. The Committee's goal is to "continue to grow and evolve to meet the changing needs of the church."

The Church Band plays monthly in worship. The style moves between rock, country, classical and blue grass.

The Christian Education Committee provides Sunday school for the younger children and activities for the junior and senior high school students. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, funds were available to hire a part-time Christian Education Director. In 2008 this position was filled by Ms. Barbara Burdick, a respected and gifted teacher with interest in music and drama. The classes provided from Christian Education are detailed below.

- A nursery is provided on Sunday from 9:45 until 11:00 for children up to four years of age.

- A Sunday school is provided for children from 4 years of age up to those in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. These children attend the 10:00 Service and then following the Children's Sermon, leave for Sunday school.

- Junior and Senior High young people join in the 10:00 am Worship service and then meet together in their classes from 11:15 am until Noon.

The Silas Wright Club, a monthly fellowship group of men and women that met for many years during winter months to share a meal and hear presentations of interest to the group no longer exists. The Social Concerns Committee, established as one of the Church's standing committees in 1981, also no longer exists.

### **Rural Churches**

Of the various rural churches which have been loosely associated with the Park Street Church only Cary Mills and Brick Chapel churches remain viable. Since neither currently have pastors, the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery has appointed Rev. Catanzaro the Moderator of the Session for these two churches. Although they continue to function as autonomous units, a small amount of mission money from the Canton Church is directed to these churches. Michael Catanzaro and Donna Doig supply the preaching and worship leadership for the Brick Chapel church.

Although not a "rural church" in the historical sense in which this phrase has been used, another Presbyterian church in the area currently without a pastor is the Daily Ridge Church in Norwood. The Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery has appointed Rev. Catanzaro the Moderator of the Session for this church.

## **Outside Organizations**

As described in the preceding pages, The Neighborhood Center, The Church Community Worker, The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children - better known as the WIC Program, Alcoholic Anonymous (AA), the Cub Scouts, the Boy Scouts, Planned Parenthood, The League of Women Voters and Hospice all at one time in the past 50 years held meetings in the Park Street Church. All of these organizations have either moved to locations outside of the Church structure on Park Street or they have ceased to exist as viable organizations.

As has been the case ever since the first church structure was built on the Park in Canton, maintaining the physical plant (especially with the steep slate roof on the sanctuary), paying the utilities for the sanctuary and the manse and providing liability and building replacement insurance continues to be an issue for the members of the Church. Balancing the business of the Church with its spiritual mission also continues to be a challenge.

## **The Minister**

Rev. Catanzaro was born in Buffalo, NY November 8, 1964. He attended Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA from 1982 through 1987, receiving his BA degree in 1987 with a major in religion and history. Before graduating from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1993 with a Masters of Theology degree, Rev. Catanzaro pursued a number of activities including racing sled dogs in Northern Minnesota. After Seminary he was Ordained on December 5, 1993 and Installed January 1994 as the pastor for the yoked Presbyterian Churches in Cuba and Allegany, New York. On the mutual consent of the pastor and the congregation, the Presbytery ended this relationship in 1998. Rev. Catanzaro is less active in the Canton Ministerial Association than his predecessors however he is active in the Presbytery. Besides serving as the Moderator for the three churches described above, Rev. Catanzaro is the chair the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) and he serves on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) Working Group. In short, he concentrates his efforts (and the efforts of the church) in reaching out to people by providing food, shelter, comfort to those in need. He also teaches a writing class at Canton College and is active in life of St. Lawrence University by serving as the community representative on the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (I.A.C.U.C.) and the Instructional Review Board (I.R.B.).

## **Congregation Members who Became Ministers**

One measure of the spiritual vitality of the church is the number of members who choose to pursue careers as ministers. During the past 35 years five members of the congregation, all women, attended or are currently attending seminary. The women, the seminaries and the dates of ordination are:

Sharon Dittman attended Vanderbilt Divinity School. Rev. Dittman was ordained November 1982.

Mickilu Robinson attended Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Rev. Robinson was ordained November 23, 1980.

Laura O'Shaughnessy is attending the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, has not yet been ordained.

Vanessa Syvertsen – attended Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and has not yet been ordained.

Carol Drew attended Queens Theological Seminary, which is part of the Queens University, in Kingston, Ontario. Rev. Drew was ordained in Canton on February, 1985.

## Musings

Through one worldwide economic catastrophe, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Rights Movement, the God is Dead Movement and eight major wars including a war against Canada, the US Civil War and World Wars I and II, the congregation has built, at considerable emotional and financial expense, two churches, two manses, a Session house, a neighborhood mission and an education building. Some of these physical assets are gone but the spirit in which they were constructed remains. Men and women have gone to war sometimes with the encouragement of the congregation but always with their prayers. High school and college students, teachers and administrators, lumbermen and their families, farmers, shop owners, health care providers and many others have all been touched in some way by the Church on the Park.

The backbone of the Church has been the willingness of the members of the congregation to do what needed to be done. When repairs had to be made, or the Church needed to be cleaned, or a dinner had to be prepared, volunteers, both women and men, were willing to contribute of their time and effort. When mortgages needed to be paid, again volunteers, mostly women raised money by serving food at the Country Fair or by staging bazaars, smorgasbords and spaghetti dinners. Yet no women were elected to serve as members of the Session until 1956 or to serve as Trustees until 1961.

The members of the church have experienced unbridled joy and unspeakable sadness both individually and communally. The Church families have changed in their size, makeup and character. Members who would have at one time been excommunicated for their actions now are vital parts of the congregation. Ameliorating the temperance tradition that was a part of the history of the church for so many years, the church has given permission to have champagne served in Fellowship Hall on at least one occasion and permission has been given for wine to be sold at the Farmer's Market which is held in the Park during the summer months.

Churches, like culture evolve. The direction of that evolution reflects, at some level, the successes and failures of the eighteen white male pastors who have served the Church for the past 200 years. The challenge is for us all to recognize God-given opportunities for Christian mission, to face that responsibility, and to carry forward that work. We should do no less than those who have preceded us. We need to determine what is fashion and what is doctrine. It is the blurring of this line that often excludes people from receiving the word of God. However, having no doctrine, nothing sacred, makes the church simply a social organization and most social organizations do not stand the test of time.

# Appendix

## ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING BUILDING OF FIRST CHURCH.

Articles of agreement entered into by the subscribers to build a house for religious worship and also to regulate the use of said house after it is built.

### ARTICLE 1.

We the subscribers agree to build a house for religions worship in the town of Canton on the plot of ground known by the name of the public square and lying in the village of Canton, and the said house shall be built and regulated according to the following articles of agreement entered into by as this twenty-sixth day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six.

### ARTICLE 2.

This house shall be known by the name of the First Presbyterian Church in the town of Canton.

### ARTICLE 3.

This house shall be owned by the First Presbyterian Church and congregation in the town of Canton and it shall be used by them.

### ARTICLE 4.

This house shall be built of stone, if practicable, it shall be not less than forty feet by fifty feet on the ground and not larger than forty-eight feet by sixty-four feet on the ground. It shall be two stories high; it shall be ornamented with a suitable steeple and it shall in every way be built and finished in a good and workmanlike manner.

### ARTICLE 5.

When one thousand dollars shall be subscribed toward building the house, public notice shall be given to the subscribers to meet on a specified day and hour, then according to said notice the subscribers shall meet and appoint one man who shall superintend the building of said house and on being appointed he shall immediately go forward in procuring materials this winter and he shall commence to build as early as practicable after the opening of the ensuing spring and at the said meeting of the subscribers there shall be appointed a committee of two who shall audit the accounts of the superintendent and from time to time make reports to the subscribers of the progress of the building and also of the state of the funds for the building.

## ARTICLE 6.

Should the office of superintendent or the office of either one or both of the committeemen be at any time vacated then public notice shall be given to the subscribers of such vacation and the subscribers shall be notified to meet in the same manner as they were notified for their first meeting and they shall accordingly meet and supply the vacancy which may have taken place.

## ARTICLE 7.

Public notice given at the close of public worship on the Sabbath in the First Presbyterian Church shall be sufficient to assemble the subscribers to this said building, provided always that the subscribers shall not be notified to meet unless six men who are subscribers to the building of this house shall present to the minister or in case of his absence to one of the elders of the church a written request to notify a meeting of the subscribers but such written request shall not be necessary in order to have notice given for the first meeting of the subscribers.

## ARTICLE 8.

When this house shall be finished or at such previous time as may be thought suitable by the committee they shall appraise the pews of this house so as to mark them at the cost of building said house and after this appraisal the pews shall be sold to the highest bidder but no pew shall be struck off without the bidder shall be responsible for what may be due on his bid nor shall any pew be sold at a lower price than it has been appraised by the said committee. When the pews are sold whatever has then been paid by any subscriber shall be considered as already paid by him towards what he bids.

## ARTICLE 9.

Any person owning a pew or any share in a pew in this house shall have a right to sell it and a writing from the owner to that effect shall entitle the purchaser to all the privileges of the original owner.

## ARTICLE 10.

Those who subscribe and pay on the subscription written on the 16th and 17th pages of this book shall be entitled in proportion to the amount they pay to the same privileges in the house to be erected with those who subscribe to the articles of agreement contained in the first pages of this book.

## ARTICLE 11.

There shall be two columns in the subscription, the sums in the first or left hand column shall be paid in grain the first of March next for the purpose of procuring materials so far as at least to begin the said building and the sums in the second or right hand column shall be paid one half in cattle the first of October next to be delivered on the public square where this house is to be erected and the other half in grain to be delivered at such place in the village of Canton as the superintendent shall direct in the month of February next following the above named October.

## ARTICLE 12.

We the following subscribers do agree to pay to the man who shall be appointed the superintendent of the building the sums set opposite to each of our names agreeably to the tenor of the foregoing articles. We whose names are hereunto subjoined are subscribers to the foregoing articles and the figures in each column stand for as many dollars as they express numbers.

Sartwell Prentice	\$50.00	\$100.00
Elijah Baker	50.00	100.00
Silas Wright, Jr.	10.00	30.00
Thos. Baldwin Jr.	5.00	10.00
Stillman Foote	300.00	
Elias Page	30.00	70.00
Owen Strong	5.00	5.00
Wm. Nobel		50.00
Isaac K. Drury		15.00
John L. Barnes	10.00	30.00
Mason Foote	5.00	10.00
N.S. Prentice	25.00	25.00
Medad Moody		50.00
Orlena Storley	6.00	6.00
Copper Brooks	6.00	6.00
Ransom Tuttle	3.00	3.00
Wm. F. Cahoon	15.00	
Wm. Richardson	10.00	40.00
Moses Sanderson		20.00
Dan Judd		10.00
Joseph Stephen	2.00	3.00
Augustus Clark	20.00	50.00
Charles F. Eldridge	5.00	5.00
Joseph Barnes	20.00	50.00
Benjamin Walker		50.00
Moses Whitcomb		25.00

## THE CHURCH BELL

The first bell owned by the congregation was purchased by the women, the money for which was raised at a fair, held in the old Town Hall on Court Street. The bell was hung in 1851. Owing to a flaw in the casting the bell soon lost its tone and in 1858 was exchanged for another. Sweet and loud were its notes as across village and field it pealed forth its welcome invitation to attend the service of the sanctuary of the Lord.

In 1876, after it had been decided to build a new church the members assembled to dismantle the church. Fifty times did the bell toll the knell of the church beneath. Reverent hands lifted it from its resting place and conveyed it to a temporary shelter, until God should crown the efforts of the people with success in their great undertaking. After a year of silence, upon the completion of the church, the bell was again placed in position and once again called the people to worship and service.

The following poem was written for this occasion:

Again we hear thy welcome voice;  
Again it bids our souls rejoice;  
Again with dear familiar sound  
Glad echoes from our hearts rebound.

Ring out on winter's morning air  
Break hallelujahs rich and rare,  
We the alabaster box will bring -  
Praise, thanks and glory to our King.

O, mother, dear Jerusalem  
No brighter gleam thine upper walls  
Than this fair temple which we build,  
No sweeter note thy trumpet calls.

Ring out old bell for years to come,  
And when our life's full work is done  
Hush thou, on waiting slumber blest  
With folded wing, till morn we rest.

For twenty-five years longer the bell called the people to the House of God. "For nine years its voice had lost its sweetness and year by year it grew more husky and indistinct," until it finally sounded more like clanging brass whose discordant notes jarred upon the nerves. Reluctantly the old bell was discarded.

The following lines written by an unidentified writer, under the pseudonym J. B. C. on the abandonment of the old bell may be appropriately recorded here.

### FAREWELL TO THE OLD BELL

Farewell, old bell, a long and last farewell,  
For years and years, I've heard thy cheery knell,  
When thou wert young and in thy prime  
I loved to listen to thy soft and mellow chime.

Then thou wert young, old friend, and so was I  
And like you, will shortly have to say good bye,  
Thy cracked and creaky voice and tone  
Will not be thine, old bell, I mean, not thine alone.

Full well and oft thou'st called God's folks to prayer  
While I have struggled hard to do my share,  
But we are old and useless, so our old friends say  
And other voices than thine, old friend, will call them today.

Around thy battered, broken frame fond memory ere shall stay  
Till I, like you, from mortal eyes shall calmly pass away.  
But thou, old friend, with ruthless touch will pass thro other hands  
While I sit with patience here awaiting God's commands.

Again, old bell farewell, a long and last good-bye,  
Tis pleasant after all, dear friend, to know we all must die  
For tho the clearer chimes may ring to younger hearts today  
Twill call to them in after years, when we have passed away.

In the year `1901 Mrs. Martha L. Manley informed the Ladies' Aid Society of the church, of which she was a member, that she would present the church with a bell (on certain simple conditions) in honor of her lamented husband, Gilbert B. Manley. The conditions were readily agreed to and a bell weighing ten hundred and eighty-six pounds was contracted for at a cost of three hundred and seventy-five dollars. Inscribed upon the bell is the following:

Presented to the Presbyterian Church, Canton, New York  
In memory of Gilbert B. Manley, by his wife, Martha L., A. D., 1902.  
"Let him that heareth say come."

The following letter from Mrs. Manley was read at the dedication of the bell.

My DEAR PASTOR:

It is with no small degree of pleasure that I present to the First Presbyterian Church, Canton, so dear to the heart of my late husband and myself, this memorial bell, which seems to me a fitting token, both to the House of God and to its departed friend and benefactor, who was so seldom absent from its gatherings, which knew him once but shall know him no more forever. May its notes ring pure and true, and I trust that sometime when they ring out on the calm still air, the people will recognize in them the voice calling them to worship in their beautiful sanctuary. I trust also that pastor and people may hear in them a call of love, tenderness and encouragement, that shall unite them in thought and spirit, and bind them with cords of consideration, mutual helpfulness, and earnest effort, so essential to the fullest realization of the true work of any House of Worship, the Lord's work, a work that was so near and dear, and withal lovely to the man in whose memory the bell is given. Altho I shall never hear its tones I feel that each Sabbath their echoes will penetrate the gloom of my darkened room, dispelling in a measure its inevitable clouds and perhaps revealing to me glimpses of its silver lining. May the gift be accepted as from a sincere and loving friend.

MARTHA L. MANLEY

# Pageant – November, 1932

## In Celebration of the 125 Anniversary of the Founding of the Canton Presbyterian Church

### Performed – Town Hall, Canton, New York

#### Program of the Pageant



Violin Solo—"Der Sohne der Haide" ..... Keler-Bela  
Harmon Gehr, Miss Harriet Reusswig, Accompanist

#### PROLOGUE

Spirit of North Country ..... Miss Grovine MacLean

#### EPISODE I—The First Settlers

Scene 1—At the end of the trail at Chateaugay, March 1801.

Stillman Foote ..... Dwight Church  
His Father ..... G. Lester Flint  
Three Associates ..... Lloyd Brown, Cecil Denny, Everett Peters

Scene 2—Night of May 10, 1801, in Foote's shack on the Grasse River. Daniel W. Church has brought the heavy things, including mill irons, by boat, through Lake Champlain, Richelieu River and St. Lawrence River, to Lisbon Landing.

Characters in Scene 1—

Daniel W. Church ..... Merton Church  
Five others who joined them—Frank Fox, Carl Freeman, George Brown, Alfred Walters, Ira Endersbee,

#### INTERLUDE

An allegorical presentation of "Whiteman, the Civilizer" overcoming the obstacles of the wilderness: Loneliness, Discouragement, Privation, Sickness, Early death, Hard labor, Wildmen, Dense Forest.

Whiteman ..... Mrs. M. M. Edwards  
Obstacles—Martha Clark, Helen Priest, Jean Burr, Harriett Clark, Alice Priest, Aldine Stevens, Mary Heffernan, Katherine Benton.

#### EPISODE II—Community Beginnings

Scene 1—Organizing to build the Schoolhouse.

Stillman Foote ..... Dwight Church  
L. Johnson ..... Robert H. Smith  
P. R. Leonard ..... E. A. Banford  
Thos. D. Olin ..... George Robinson  
Mrs. Jane Ross ..... Mrs. Robt. Smith  
George Foote ..... Harry B. Bell  
John Richardson ..... Janet Bruce  
Mrs. Richardson ..... Mary Bruce  
Mrs. Wealthea Foote ..... Mrs. E. A. Banford  
Mrs. M. Conkey ..... Mrs. Whitman  
Mrs. Betsy Donegly ..... Mrs. J. A. Erickson

Scene 2—Organizing the first church in the Village, March 6, 1807.

Rev. Amos Pettingill ..... Wellington L. Ginn  
Rev. Ebenezer Hibbard ..... Ernest Hammond

Characters from Scene 1, except Stillman Foote. (The charter members were Geo. Foot, John Richardson, Mrs. Wealtha Foot, Mrs. Betsey Donegly, Mrs. Milicent Conkey, Mrs. Jane Ross, Mrs. Phila Richardson).

Scene 3—A Schoolroom Scene.

Three older boys... Gardner Gilson, Richard Clark, Walter Gunnison  
The Master ..... Tyrus McKimm  
Committeeman ..... E. A. Banford  
Two older girls ..... Katherine Schwartz, Hilda Schwartz  
Other Pupils—Angeline Duskas, Helen Phalon, Ruth O'Neil, Winifred Taylor. The persons in the Shoemaker Chorus and those in Ye Olde Time Dances.

#### INTERLUDE—The Hunters

John Peel—(An old English hunting Song) ..... Mark Andrews  
The University Quartet

Ralph Plump, Edward Kinloch, Paul Allison, Howard Petzold

#### EPISODE III—Silas Wright and the County Seat

Scene 1—In Silas Wright's house; the origin of Canton's Park.

Silas Wright ..... Harry Adams Hersey  
Joseph Barnes ..... Kimball Gay  
N. S. Prentice ..... Frederic Burgess  
E. P. Prentice ..... Orrin Thayer  
J. H. Prentice ..... J. R. FitzGerald

Scene 2—A meeting in Wright's yard to get action on County buildings.

The characters in Scene 1, and the following from previous scenes: Cecil Denny, Lloyd Brown, D. P. Church, Everett Peters, Robt. H. Smith, E. A. Banford, Geo. Robinson, H. B. Bell, Tyrus McKimm.

Scene 3—First meeting of the Board of Supervisors in Canton.

Clerk ..... Kenneth Swarhout  
Chairman, Wm. Allen ..... Victor Johnson  
Ansel Bailey, Building Commissioner..... Ansel Bailey, 2nd  
James Parkill, Supervisor from Canton..... Dr. F. B. Sanford  
Zenas Clark, Supervisor from Potsdam ..... Philip Young  
Other Supervisors—R. H. Bassett, H. B. Bell, Glen Wight, Robert Smith, Dwight Church, George Robinson, E. A. Banford.

### INTERLUDE—The Travelling Shoemaker

Shoemaker .....Lucian Meade  
Soloist .....Doreen Cornell  
Chorus—Helen Hersey, Marion Davis, Alice Priest, Mary E. Pike,  
Elizabeth Rebert, Esther Church, Donald Barber, Harold Russell,  
Robert Carr, Charles Fox, Horace Burr, Richard McKenney.

### EPISODE IV—Gay Life in Olden Days

#### Scene 1—In the General Store.

Storekeeper .....Glenn J. Wight  
Mrs. Adams .....Mrs. Glenn J. Wight  
Zeke Adams .....Garner Gehr  
Idlers in the Store—Raymond Veitch, Mark Conners, Kermit Kil-  
bourne, John Rogers, Floyd Levine.

#### Scene 2—Starting Life together in 1835.

Liza .....Katherine Schwartz  
Hezekiah .....John Rogers  
Mother .....Margaret Chisholm  
Father .....Myron Barber

### POSTLUDE—Ye Olde Time Dances

Ruth Fox, Wilfred Lytle, Evelyn Fraser, Jack Sheridan, Eleanor  
Stone, Billy Sheridan, Helen Tupper, Richard Peggs, Betty Williams,  
Charles Sims.

### EPILOGUE—Spirit of North Country

Finale—'Varsity .....The University Quartet

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### THE PAGEANT COMMITTEE

Prof. John Comstock	Rev. Noble I Mack
Mrs. Cyrus Clark	Mrs. Charles Wight
Mrs. Robert H. Smith	Miss Florence Hall
Miss Lottie Southworth	Miss Mabel Milhan
Miss Marion Howard	Mrs. M. M. Edwards
Mrs. Mary Farmer	Rev. John A. Erickson

Mrs. Frank Fox

### COSTUME COMMITTEE

Mrs. Edson R. Miles	Mrs. Jay Benton
Mrs. John Bullis	Mrs. Rhodes

Mrs. G. Lester Flint

### RELICS COMMITTEE

Mrs. John T. Newby	John Dromey
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Elmer E. Church