



NEWSLETTER

Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society
Vol. 1, No. 3, Winter 2006

ALL THINGS GREAT AND SMALL

James Herriot might not recognize bits and pieces of historical memorabilia as “creatures great and small.” Nor is the normal person likely to consider them “bright and beautiful,” but to the researcher indeed they are all of that! Such is the feeling experienced whenever new items arrive. Among the recent “small” items, for example, is a photo of S. M. Jones (ca. 1930), sent by Wallace Culley of Sarnia. Also, two post-cards were received from Steve Courson. One is from Bruce Merritt to Oliver Tallman (April 26, 1951) in which Bruce reports his effort in Indianapolis to locate a president for Great Lakes Christian College. The second is from C. G. McPhee from Tampa, FL to his daughter, Rosalie (May 26, 1943), showing the hotel in which he was staying—mostly “taken over by soldiers.” Among the recent “great” items is a file, donated by Eugene Perry, of “congregational bundle” subscribers to the Gospel Herald in 1983 which include the membership lists of some 20 participating congregations. From the precious items collected over the years by Elgin and Mary Emptage, Meaford, are early copies of the Gospel Herald (e.g. May 1938, Carman MB; March 1940, Holland MB; October 1940, Morris, MB, August 1943, Meaford ON) and an 1886 original edition of Harding-Wilkinson *Debate on Baptism*.

To all who would like to share in the CCCHS effort to preserve such items both “great and small” that will be “bright and beautiful” for the memories and insights they preserve, let us hear from you!

Three contributions appear in this issue of the CCCHS Newsletter that we hope you will find interesting: the records of the Tintern Church of Christ, 1930-1945; the links between the famed naturalist, John Muir and the Disciples; and the attendance records of a house church in Owen Sound, 1908-1919. Do you have a similar item/insight/writing? Please share it with CCCHS readers!

VALUABLE CHURCH RECORDS

Church records contain interesting and valuable history. The Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society is interested in collecting church records that may otherwise be inadvertently destroyed because they are not in suitable storage or their value is not appreciated and hence they are thrown out. I have on hand the financial records of the Church of Christ, Tintern, Ontario, from November 1930 to June 1945. These were the records my father, Ernest Perry, kept in a ten cent account book purchased in 1930. Besides the week by week, month by month accounting of funds that give us evidence of the activities of the church, of people who ministered to the church, and the repairs made to the building, this record of accounts shows something of the changes from a depression period of history to the begin of a more affluent times at the end of the Second World War.

Included in the book of records are some loose sheets of paper that record the basic lumber from my mother's grandfather, Adam Huntsman's saw mill, provided for the building of the Tintern Church of Christ. A first list, dated November 18, 1891, involved 107 pieces of 2 by 4s, 4 by 4s, 4 x 5s and 2 by 8s at a price of \$40.67. The March 3, 1892 list of similar items plus sheeting, lath and siding, totalled \$125.76, for a grand total of \$166.43 for the lumber. (Cont'd page 2)

2006 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CANADIAN CHURCHES OF CHRIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Saturday, August 26, Hamilton, Ontario
Fennell Ave. Church of Christ
321 East 27th Street (at Fennell)
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Guest speaker:

Roy D. Merritt, St. Catharines, ON

Topic: “Roy Merritt Remembers”

(Valuable, Cont'd)

The average Sunday collection in the first quarter of 1933 was 72 cents. The average collection in the same quarter of 1945 was \$13.34. The church had grown somewhat but economic conditions had improved too. The 1933 collections were in the depression times while the more prosperous time toward the end of the Second World War allowed members to give more freely.

Another contrast is found in what special speakers and the regular speakers were given on a given Sunday. Alex Stewart must have preached to the congregation July 17, 1932 and received \$3.00. In November and December he was paid \$5.00. Bro. McPhee was given \$5.00 on July 23, 1933, and brother Stewart \$7.00 on the same occasion, perhaps a special all-day meeting. Some "cooperation" is evident in supporting men for full time ministry.

Oliver Tallman was given \$2.00 on November 26, 1933. In 1934 brother C. W. Waterworth was given 50 cents as was Oliver Tallman, and Billy Ellis. This seemed to be the going rate for these occasional speakers: Charlie Waterworth, John Williams, Clifford Lumley, Will Ellis, Morris Bailey, and Lution Huntsman. Harding Jones was given \$1.00 when he came to speak. In 1941 speakers like Bros. C. G. McPhee, and A. M. Stewart, Dr. O. H. Tallman and Allen Killom received \$2.00 for each occasion. It was not until May 1942 that the rates went up to \$1.00 for each preaching occasion by the "non-professionals" and \$5.00 for the "professionals."

From time to time there were some expenses for Bible class materials (quarterlies etc. \$1.00 more or less) from the Gospel Advocate Company. A couple of cords of wood for \$4.50 was purchased for winter heating with two box stoves. A little coal oil for the lamps was needed for the rare Sunday night meetings before the building was wired for electricity. Hydro was installed in 1939 at a cost of \$45.00. Fifteen dollars was by special gifts, the remaining coming from regular contributions. The quarterly bill for the electrical service was in the area of \$3.00. Fire insurance on the church building was \$3.60 per year through these years. There was cost of some quilting materials from time to time and freight costs for sending parcels to the West for the Indians and other poor people. Bro. Evans' widow was supported at \$1.00 a month for some of

this period. The March 29, 1937 item of expenditures was \$1.15: "flowers for Mrs. Comfort." There was an expenditure of \$3.50 on December 20: "items for presents for Sunday School." In 1938 \$20.00 was spent for hymn books. .

The congregation did not have a full time preacher during this period so was able and ready to help families working in other areas. In 1931 and many years through the 30's Otoshige Fujimore was supported in Saware, Chibaken, Japan. There are three reports from him folded up and inserted in the account book. Regular funds were sent to Bro. Eatough in Winnipeg to support Bro. Trindle, an Indian working among the Natives in Western Canada. Some funds were sent to J. C. Bailey for his work in the West. Regular funds went to Bro. W. F. Cox for the weekly radio program broadcast from St. Catharines. Funds were sent to Carman for the support of Bro. Sinclair in his evangelistic work in Western Canada. The full amount of the July 4 collection of \$13.91 was given to O. H. Tallman. Funds were sent to Amos Beevers at Charlton Station in 1940 to support Bro. Simpson.

This kind of material found in account books of congregations has increasing value for archives as the years pass. Such material needs to be preserved for their historical value in a central place where they can be made available to any interested persons. Will you seek to find such material which might be available in your congregation? Some private diaries also give considerable information on church activities. As our older generation passes on these materials need to be passed down to the next generation.

- Donald Perry

HISTORY COMES ALIVE

A few years ago, while doing some research on the Trout family from Meaford, an interesting historical connection between this family and the famous U.S. naturalist John Muir began to emerge for me.

The question was asked, "Why did Muir come to Meaford?"

We knew the "Trout Family History" written by Wm. H Trout in the early 1900's mentions that Muir and his brother Daniel came to Canada in 1864 to escape the draft in the U.S. for the Civil War --- but, why Meaford? More digging about uncovered the fact that the brother's father, Daniel Sr. was influ-

enced by the Haldanes in Scotland and had come to Wisconsin to settle a farm and preach for the "Disciples" movement. Daniel was a very stern disciplinarian and had the boys working in the fields all day and memorizing the New Testament as they worked. They could both recite the entire NT by the time they were 12. Their father was not home much, since he was "out preaching." So the brothers and their mother had the up-keep of the farm to themselves. *(This information has come to us from the writings of Muir about his childhood and may be somewhat more negative than warranted)*

John loved to get out into the woods where he could enjoy the freedom from his life and enjoy God's creation. He developed a natural mechanical ability to the point where he won several awards as a youth for some interesting inventions using gears and wheels. He did very well at the University of Wisconsin. But the war interrupted his studies, and he went "botanizing" in Canada, collecting mosses and ferns and sending them home to friends and family.

The Trouts owned and operated a sawmill and rake factory on the Bighead River outside Meaford from 1857 - 1866. William Trout Sr. was an elder for the Disciple church in Norval before coming to Meaford in 1847 to build barns and mills. He and his family formed the nucleus of the early church in Meaford and Joseph Ash's early letters indicate that Wm. Sr. was considered to be the chief elder of the Meaford Church. It would seem to me that if the Muirs were looking to work somewhere, they might seek out fellow Disciples for possible leads and finding a business run by Disciples might seem providential.

The Trouts, Muirs and Charles Jay who was in partnership with the Trouts at this time were all alone, up the river, working in their mill and had lots of time to discuss religion. Muir writes in one of his letters that he and the Trouts "didn't agree on a number of religious things, but that he had learned not to scold them too much". He wrote about God's glorious creation and how it could not help but inspire one to get to know God better, and how one was compelled to be peaceable, gentle and content with the natural order of things, just like our Saviour. He talks of Heaven and how beautiful it will be if it is more glorious than this wonderful world. Muir taught a Sunday school class

while in Meaford and when he left town, left his books with the class. *Wouldn't it be something to find them somewhere here today??*

Muir stated that he wasn't much for the rules and regulations of the church and that they bound too much on a person who should be able to enjoy the marvelous creation that God had made, without a lot of restrictions. *Some claim that his outlook was a product of his harsh upbringing and the dictatorial attitude of the church of the day.*

Later in life Muir wrote much about the goodness of God and his creation, repeating his comments about our wonderful Saviour whose example we should follow.

He gradually came to agree with the thoughts of transcendentalists like Emerson, Bourroughs and Thoreau.

What struck me as interesting is that 150 years ago, people were struggling with the "rules and regulations" of the church and not finding much satisfaction in church life as it was generally practiced (right here at home). At the same time, they were finding God in the natural environment and communing with Him alone in the great outdoors.

In 150 years, not much has changed. We still struggle with the "rules and regulations". We still look for God in the peace, beauty and quiet of nature. I wonder if we long to be back in the garden walking hand in hand with Him, *the way it used to be?*

Oh, by the way, who said history isn't exciting? I recently learned that Daniel Muir Sr. came to Hamilton, Ontario to preach for a church in the 1880's. Also, I still haven't been able to find a decent picture of the original Meaford church building, built in 1858. Hmmm, maybe it is in this next box of "old stuff"!

- Ron Knight

HOUSE MEETINGS IN OWEN SOUND, 1908-1919

A congregation after "the ancient order" was established in Owen Sound, Ontario in 1842, and a sister congregation in nearby Meaford in 1848. Travelling preachers would include both in their itineration. They shared in a "co-operation" for evangelism in 1863, again in 1870, and again in 1881. Benjamin Franklin, Cincinnati, OH well-known evangelist and editor, spoke at a "June Meeting" at Owen Sound in 1874 and similarly at Meaford in 1878.

The *Christian Worker*, edited by H. B. Sherman, newly arrived evangelist to Meaford in 1881, was first published in Owen Sound and subsequently in Meaford. Then province-wide, indeed continent-wide fissures in fellowship, began to develop, with a fault line running through the Georgian Bay.

When William Ellis, Meaford, moved his young family to Owen Sound in 1908, he could not conscientiously worship with the Disciples of Christ in that city. On July 19 of that year he began to "break bread for the 1st time in our house." You can imagine my delight, while leafing through the pages of my grandfather's daily journal and business ledger, to come across the record of this assembly, a record that was faithfully kept until the family moved to Smithville, Ontario in 1919.

At the first meeting, "W. F. Ellis & Wife [Charrie (Tallman) Ellis; the Ellises had two children at the time, Ora, age 7 and Howard, age 6], Jos. Walker & Wife, and Esther Meads" were present; collection was 75 cents. On the next Lord's Day, Miss Mary Tolton joined the gathering, but the Walkers were not listed (presumably they were back at home in Meaford), collection \$1.05. For a number of Sundays following, the meetings remained small with Mary Tolton and Esther Meads as regulars. On August 16, "Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Bumstead" were present. On Nov. 30, 1909, \$5.00 was sent from the accumulated fund to the *Bible Student* (publication, West Gore, NS) edited by H. M. Evans.

On May 1, for the first time, they met at 92 Campbell St. where the family had re-located. H. M. Evans was present. He had moved his paper from West Gore, NS to Meaford. It is likely he preached on this occasion (and a number of meetings following); another \$5.00 is directed to him. Other names appear: William and Ethel Rogers, L. Richardson, Mrs. Lawson and son Andy, J. Bell, and Mrs. C. H. Jay (visiting from Meaford). When Otoshige Fujimori visited the region from Japan, he attended the Owen Sound meeting, Jan. 2, 1910. Subsequently, small amounts of money are forwarded to him. On Feb. 14, 1910, \$5.00 was sent to the Maritime Bible and Literary College, West Gore, NS, (the MBLC was founded and operated by Charrie Ellis' brothers, O. E. and O. H. Tallman). While the numbers in attendance continued

to be modest, on Dec. 15, 1912, "28 of a total" were present. Other names of attendees are identified from time to time: Mrs. O. Tallman (Charrie's mother), Clare McMurchy, Mrs. Snure, Nora Tallman (Charrie's neice), Hugh Doherty, William Rogers, Norman Smart, R. Mason, S. Huntsman, and others. On May 25, 1913, the group began meeting in the Foresters Hall, O. E. Tallman preached, 39 were present. On June 22, 49 were present and O. E. Tallman was again the speaker. The last reference to rent paid for the hall is Jan. 16, 1916.

On April 23, 1916, "O H Tallman & Family met," (The MBLC had closed that Spring; the O. E. Tallman family returned to the family home in Smithville; Owen Sound may well have been chosen by O. H. Tallman for his family because his sister and brother-in-law lived there.) Two baptisms are reported "Ora Ellis immersed at Meaford," July 1, 1917, and "Howard Ellis immersed at Meaford," Sept. 16, 1917 (uncle and father of the writer). (The record, *The Meaford Journals, 1848-1998* indicates that O. H. Tallman baptized both of his nephews.) From the congregation's funds support was sent periodically to H. Rogers, Bro. McDougall (NS), Bro. Dunn, Fujimori, and on Nov. 5, 1917, \$25.00 was sent to the "Brethren at Pine Orchard, C/O C. W. Petch." On Aug. 25, 1918, the note reads "last time OH met at our place...began meeting at OH's."

The last meeting reported in Owen Sound was on Sunday, June 9, 1919. The balance on hand was \$195.02; this amount was divided between O. H. Tallman, \$50.00 and \$145.02 the church at Smithville.

- Geoffrey Ellis

MEMBERSHIPS, YEAR 2006

Forward annual membership (\$25.00) to Eugene Perry, Treas. 4904 King St., Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6.

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