



NEWSLETTER

Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society
Vol. 2, No. 3-4, Winter/Spring, 2007

GIFT OPENING TIME

It felt just like birthday gift opening time! A thick package addressed to the historical society had just been received, return address, Mr. and Mrs. Alex Clelland, ___72nd Ave, Surrey, BC. Opened. Out poured page after page of carefully handwritten notes. Included were historical sketches on congregations in the greater Vancouver area going back to beginnings in 1910: South Granville Street, Hastings & Jackson, Blundell Ave., 12th Avenue, and Oakridge. In addition to the recollections of the Clellands, the historical sketch by Sam Wilson describing the churches in the Vancouver area, 1910-1958, was included in the package. As well, brief histories were provided of churches at Delta, South Burnaby, Maple Ridge, B. C., and Carman, MB.

We were delighted in the confidence in the historical society manifested by the Clellands in this gift, as well as moved by the diligence evidenced in the work involved in keeping the notes and recording them in multiple copies—by hand.

The next surprise—hardly a month had passed from receiving this material when an inquiry arrived from Portland, Oregon requesting that the society supply, if possible, any information we might have on hand describing the work in the greater Vancouver area—in support of a project undertaken to develop a history of the church in that area.

WHAT ABOUT WIERS?

According to his report to Barton W. Stone's *Christian Messenger* in a letter dated Nov. 27, 1832, Daniel Wiers baptized 15 people and “constituted a church upon the New Testament alone” in Clinton Township, Niagara District. One hundred and seventy-five years later the Beamsville Church of Christ continues the life of that early church

planting. But Daniel Wiers remains somewhat of an enigma.

In February 1827, Wiers was baptized by the Beamsville Baptists. In March of the same year he became their full-time preacher, dividing his time between teaching school and preaching.

Where did Wiers come from? Possibly Up-state New York? What was his religious background that would permit preaching after one month following baptism? Perhaps his roots were in the New England “Christian Connexion”?

Why, after about six months in a second stint of preaching for the Baptists in 1829, was he fired?

What were the influences that moved him from a Baptist persuasion to the “Christian” position?

2007 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, August 25, 2007

To be held at the meeting house of
FENWICK

CHURCH OF CHRIST
765 Welland Ave., Fenwick

Featuring Guest Speaker:
Dr. Jerry Rushford

And studies of
Restoration in the Maritimes and in
the Niagara District and Frontier
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

What was the importance of a sight-unseen purchase of a set of bound volumes of Campbell's periodicals at Lewiston, NY by Wiers?

What stirred Wiers' interest in publishing a periodical that would target Ontario members of the Christian Connexion?

Why do we hear very little about Wiers in the years following 1832?

Ed Broadus, CCCHS member, has taken on the challenge of answering these questions. His findings will be presented at the society's annual meeting at Fenwick, Ontario, August 25, 2007.

What about Wiers? Be on hand to discover the real Daniel Wiers.

EIGHTH ANNUAL MEETING

The 8th annual meeting of the Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society is scheduled for Saturday, August 25, 2007, to be held at the meeting house of the Fenwick Church of Christ, 765 Welland Ave., Fenwick, Ontario.

The meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. with refreshments and registration. A brief business meeting will begin at 10:30, followed by several presentations. Don Hipwell will present a history of the Fenwick congregation, George Mansfield will give a history of the church in the Maritimes and its links with the church in the Niagara Peninsula, and Edwin Broadus will give the results of his research on Daniel Wiers. As well, historical information on such congregations as St. Catharines, Smithville, and other churches in the Niagara Peninsula and the Niagara Frontier will be available.

Those attending are encouraged to bring "sack lunches" for the noon hour.

Dr. Jerry Rushford, Oak Park, CA, will present the feature address beginning at 1:00 p.m. His topic will be "The Oldest Church of Christ in the British Isles (The Transatlantic Friendship of John Davies and Alexander Campbell)." Dr. Rushford, Director of Church Relations, and professor of Church History, Pepperdine University, has had a life-long interest in Restoration, including the movement in Canada. He is the author of *Christians on the Oregon Trail: Churches of Christ and Christian Churches in Early Oregon 1842-1882* (1997) and is currently researching a work on the early movement in Washington State.

The meeting will include an opportunity for audience participation in examining the history of churches and leaders in the Niagara Peninsula and the Niagara Frontier. Attendees are encouraged to bring photos, artifacts, records, books, etc., that illustrate the work in these regions.

The meeting will conclude at 3:00 p.m.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Following is a list of items recently received by the historical society. Their inclusion serves two purposes: to identify source materials for those who may be interested in the information available; and to illustrate the kinds of materials that are of value for those who may have similar items and wish to have them preserved by the society.

- "A Grandmother's Reminiscences," (copy), by Edna Elford White, age 72, dated 1973.

- "The Elford Family Genealogy" (copy), the ancestry of Peter Elford.

- Photo: C. G. McPhee's Meaford Bible class with identifications of the 24 students supplied by Bruce Franklin.

- Photo: Woodgreen Church of Christ, 1934 group photo on the occasion of a meeting conducted by E. W. Shepherd.

- H. A. Rogers cloth Sermon chart, topic: "Ye Must Be Born Anew," from c. 1918.

- Booklet: "Histories of Prairie Churches of Christ," by Lillian Torkelson, prepared for the 1989 Regina Leadership Rally.

- The Preaching Records of Louis Pauls.

- Booklet: "History of the Ice Lake Church of Christ, 1875-1982," written by Julia McDougall, published by Jerry Gardiner.

- Photo: S. M. Jones, late 1890s.

- Booklet: "A Vision Splendid," the story of the early Saskatchewan Bible schools, by Lillian Torkelson.

- Year Book: Ogema Bible School, 1932-33, text and photos included.

- Photos: of the 1978 reunion of students who attended the early Bible Schools, held at WCC, at Weyburn, SK.

- Book: *Forty Years a Canadian Preacher*, by J. C. Bailey.

- Book: *New Living Pulpit of the Christian Church* (1918), by W. T. Moore.

- Book (original edition): *Harding-Wilkerson Debate on Baptism*, (1884, 1886).

- Book: *Queries and Answers by David Lipscomb, Editor of the Gospel Advocate*, J. W. Shepherd, editor (from the library of S. M. Jones).

- History: "A Church Upon the New Testament Alone," a copy of the previously published History of the Beamsville Church of Christ, 1832-1982, but with the addition of footnotes which refer to source materials.

- History: "St. Thomas Church of Christ," 1879-1929 (copy).

- History: "Cape Rich Church of Christ," by Claude Cox, and program of the June 7, 1998 remembrance service.
- History: "Baptists in Beamsville, 1788-1988," by Marion Whitman Dawdy.
- Books: From the library of S. M. Jones: *Franklin College and its Influences* (1906), edited by James E. Scobey, Class 1855. *Biographies and Sermons* (1898), by F. D. Srygley. *The Braden and Kelley Debate* (on Mormonism, 1884). *Adam Clarke's Commentary—Job to Song of Solomon*, purchased by S. M. Jones, Nashville, 1899.
- Issue: *Gospel Herald*, photocopy of the original gestetnered first issue, March 1936.
- Booklet: *Baptism* (1945, five copies), by H. McKelvie.
- Paper: "Greek Prepositions" (1950), by Roy Dean Merritt, presented for his B. A. Greek major, Abilene Christian College.
- Photo: Jordan Church of Christ, original brick building (which is pictured as the logo of the Newsletter).
- Book: *The Serpentine Road, 1935-1993*, David Hallet's autobiography.
- Booklet: *100th Anniversary Thessalon Church of Christ, 1907-2007; Homecoming May 19 & 20*.

TRIP TO ENGLAND

(Chris Blackwell, Waterloo, Ont., who has a keen interest in the Restoration connections between England and Canada, writes of his trip to England in March of this year.)

Early in the month of March I was blessed to go to the British Isles to visit family. I also had the fortune of meeting with brethren from three churches on the Wednesday and Sunday of the week I was there.

The first meeting was with the church at Reading, a town just west of greater London, a congregation that has been around for about ten years and is very multicultural. This church is growing and has a leadership made up of men previously of the Wembley church of Christ which began in the 1960's. On the weekend I found myself in Northamptonshire where there are quite a few churches of Christ's scattered around, much like the Golden Horseshoe area of Toronto and Hamilton. I had the fortune of meeting with the brethren at Corby, a town 15 miles north of Northampton and 25 miles east of

Birmingham which is at the center of England. Corby is a church of about 55 members. It has gone through a regeneration since the boom days of the '70s and '80s when its numbers were close to 140, with the return of Frank Worgan who was the preacher during those days. Frank has been in the work of the Lord since the 1940s and was trained under Walter Crosthwaite. Corby also has the distinction of being the home of the British Bible School. The relationship between the church there and the BBS is very similar to the relationship between the Waterloo church of Christ and Great Lakes Bible College.

The Bible School was the brainchild of the famed Jim McGuiggan which was begun in Northern Ireland before being moved to the England in the early 1980s. The School also is the keeper of some of the most precious books and archives of the restoration history of the British Isles. I was blessed with spending a whole morning there perusing the shelves and pouring over old volumes of the *British Millennial Harbinger*. During this time I spent time with my old friend, Paddy Boynes who is now the Director of the School. As an alumnus of this school, Paddy was one of my teachers during my time at the school. He kindly allowed me to take one of the duplicate copies of the *British Millennial Harbinger* they have and said that if we have an interest perhaps more could be given if we have a good home for them to go to. [This volume was presented by Chris to GLBC and is now on loan to CCCHS.] In my discussions with Paddy concerning the health of the church he was very positive about the current path the church as a whole is taking over there. Since the turn of the century the church seems to be growing in many areas.

The following site is run by Graham Fisher who is another good friend and is the current keeper of the main periodical of the church in the British Isles, *The Christian Worker*.
<http://www.christian-worker.org.uk>

EXERPTS FROM *THE BIBLE STUDENT* ON BEGINNINGS IN ST CATHARINES

(Myrna Perry, Beamsville, ON, has researched the publication, *The Bible Student* which was published 1904-1913, and drawn out references to the early work of the church in St. Catharines, ON. A portion of

the items are included here. A full record will be available at the annual meeting.)

- January 1904, page 3

The Field and Workers – H. M. E. Bro. W. F. Neal is laboring at Meaford, Ont.; Chas. W. Petch at Selkirk, Ont.; S. M. Jones, at Beamsville, Ont., J. Madison Wright, at St. Catharines and Jordan, Ont., and the writer at Hamilton and Tintern, Ont.

- June 1904, page 4

St. Catharines is planning to re-paint their house and build a shed this summer. Bro. C. H. Claus is the efficient and untiring leader in this congregation.

We had the pleasure of visiting these two congregations lately and preaching twice at each place. St. Catharines is only a young congregation.—Ed.

- July 1904, page 1

Beamsville Items – S. M. Jones I expect to hold meetings at the following places before the Bible School reopens (which will be on the 31st of October): Erin, this is a new place, a tent will be used; Niagara Falls; Fenwick; Carpenters, Tenn.; Stevens' Point, Wis.; and St. Catharines, Ont.

- July 1904, page 3, 2nd paragraph

Annual June Meeting – O. E. Tallman [June Meeting was at Fenwick] L. E. Huntsman officiated in the afternoon, and short talks were given by Bros. Geo. Gamble and J. Dean, of Fenwick; Wm. Forrester, T. T. Reilly and Jas. Stewart, of Toronto; John Yake, of Stouffville; O. E. Tallman, of Smithville; Ellis Claus, Valdosta, Ga.; Chas. Claus, St. Catharines; Chas. W. Petch, Selkirk; S. M. Jones, Beamsville; and W. F. Neal, Meaford.

- November 1904, page 2

Editorial Jottings

The meetings conducted by Bro. Jones in Wisconsin last month resulted in four additions. His meetings now going on in St. Catharines have, up to the time of going to press, resulted in three accessions, with others almost persuaded.

- January 1905, page 3

Editorial Scraps and News Notes

Bro. J. M. Jones, of Nashville, Tenn., who came to labour with the church at St. Catharines, Ont., had to return home unexpectedly, on account of eye trouble.

- June 1905, page 2

Editorial Notes and News Scraps

Bro. Petch reports two baptisms at St. Catharines since Bro. Jones' meetings closed.

- July 1905, page 3

St. Catharines News – Chas. W.

Petch

The cause here is progressing favourably. Since our last report eight has been added to our numbers, six from other congregations, one from the Baptists and one lady was baptised. We are now having meetings at Port Dalhousie on Lord's Days in the afternoon. The prospects are still encouraging to the faithful ones here. Pray for us, brethren, that God may work in and through us to the greater advancement of His cause in this place, and to Him we will ascribe all the praise.

- July 1905, page 4

The Niagara District June Meeting –

O. E. Tallman (last paragraph)

The June meeting next year will be held in St. Catharines, Ont.

- July 1905, page 4

Wedding Bells: Shelly-Snure

On the 8th ult., at the residence of the bride's mother, Jordan, Ont., Bro. W. C. Shelly, of St. Catharines, to sister Cora Snure, Bro. Jones officiating. Sister Cora is a exemplary young lady, and will be sadly missed as the leader of the song in the Jordan congregation. They intend, we believe, to attend Potter Bible College next session. The Bible Student extends congratulations to the newly married pair, and especially congratulate Bro. Shelly in his excellent judgment in the selection of a life partner.

- September 1905, page 2

Bro. Wright and His Work (first two paragraphs)

We enjoyed a long and interesting conversation with Bro. C. H. Claus, of St. Catharines, a few days ago, in which he expressed his delight in the condition of his home congregation under the efficient services of Bro. C. W. Petch, the evangelist of that congregation.

In the course of the conversation

Bro. Claus stated that St. Catharines congregation owes the price of its existence to the faithful and heroic labors of Bro. Wright, our B. C. missionary, who began the work in that city under the dark clouds of indifference and bitter opposition. That

mission, first opened by Bro. Wright under such discouraging circumstances, is now, though young and comparatively financially weak, a healthy, growing, earnest and enthusiastic little body, and is developing a missionary spirit that is well worthy of imitation by older congregations. In addition to its other work it has decided to remit regular contributions to our B. C. mission.

- September 1905, page 2

Editorial Notes and News Scraps

Since the last issue Bro. T. Q. Martin, of Toronto, preached several discourses at Smithville, and also visited Beamsville and St. Catharines. The longer Bro. Martin stays in Canada the better he is liked and we regret that he cannot see his way clear to remain and labor in our Dominion. The brethren are pressing him to stay, but duty seems to call him home.

- October 1905, page 2

Editorial Briefs

Bro. and Sister Shelly, of St. Catharines, Ont., and Bro. O. H. Tallman, of Winnipeg, Man., will ere this reaches our readers, have taken up their studies in Potter Bible College, Bowling Green, Ky. These are true and noble young people, and are destined, we believe, to accomplish much good in the world. Success to all three. We will soon have a number of young preachers in Ontario. Bro. J. D. C. McMurchie and C. Watterworth are among the number who have done some acceptable preaching this summer.

- November 1905, page 2

Editorial Briefs

Bro. C. W. Petch, St. Catharines, reports one baptism Sept. 3; also one reclaimed at the nine days' meeting at Port Dalhousie. Bro. Petch still preaches at that point Lord's day afternoons.

- November 1905, page 3

From the Field – O. E. Tallman (2nd paragraph)

The last Lord's day in August we spent in St. Catharines with Bro. Petch and I had the pleasure of speaking in the afternoon at Port Dalhousie. The church in St. Catharines is earnest and energetic, and by the help of Bro. Petch is doing a good work in that city.

St. Catharines Church News –

Charles W. Petch

Since our last report two more took membership here. The work is moving along as usual. We are all encouraged by the results of Brother W. D. Campbell's

meeting at Jordan. Fourteen were added to the church there. We hope they will be nurtured and established in the one faith.

- February 1906, page 4

Editorial Briefs

Bro. Petch reports three more baptisms at St. Catharines since last report. The St. Catharines congregation is certainly growing under his labours.

- May 1906, p 6

Beamsville Bible School (3rd paragraph)

After this we all had great pleasure in hearing Bro. Chas. Petch, of St. Catharines, who delivered an excellent address on the subject of "True Education." Many good points were brought out and I am sure all interested in the Bible School are thankful for the great encouragement he gave. One of his very complimentary remarks was:

"The Bible School is doing the greatest work in the Dominion of Canada for the cause."

- June 1906, page 2

Annual June Meeting – Chas. W.

Petch

The annual June meeting of the Disciples of Christ of the Niagara District will be held at St. Catharines, Ont., June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1906. The meetings on Lord's Day will be held in the Opera House, Ontario Street. On the 9th, commencing at 3 o'clock p.m., and 11th, in the Church House, Raymond Street. Evangelists E. A. Elam, Lebanon, Tenn., W. F. Neal, Meaford, Ont., and others are expected to be present.

- July 1906, page 3

The June Meeting – Chas. W. Petch

While with deep regret we announced the unavoidable absence of Bro. E. A. Elam, because of sickness in his family, yet we were cheered up by the presence and powerful preaching of Bro. S. M. Jones, who returned from the south just in time to fill Bro. Elam's place at the meeting. As I heard his strong voice echoing through that spacious building and beheld the deep interest manifested on the face of his auditors, while he fearlessly proclaimed the truth, I asked myself, "How much better could Bro. Elam do?" With the exception of Bro. J. A. Harding, no man has influenced my life like Bro. Jones. We were indeed glad to have him here, and we feel sure that if any present were in any way prejudiced against Bro. Jones yet they could not "withstand the wisdom and spirit by which he spake."

- November 1906, page 8

Church and Field Reports: St. Catharines, Ont.- Chas. W. Petch
I am now in the beginning of a meeting in Fenwick. Bro. Jones has just closed a good tent meeting near Rosedene. One young man was added to the "one body", and many heard the truth in its purity, presented in Bro. Jones plain and forceable manner. They will not soon forget what they heard.

- January 1907, page 8

Church and Field Reports: Fenwick, Ont. – Chas. W. Petch
I began a meeting at Fenwick on the 1st of October and preached for two weeks with a fairly good attendance. I saw, while here, the urgent need of some one to labor continuously at this place, for an indefinite time, that previous labor done here might not be in vain and that the cause might be more fully established in this section of the country. While I regretted to leave St. Catharines, and the faithful band there, yet I felt that I was needed more at this place at this time. The work at St. Catharines, during the twenty months of my stay there, was pleasant, peaceful and profitable...I moved here on Nov. 5th, and expect to labor in this community and at Tintern for an indefinite time.

- November 1907, page 3

St. Catharines, Ont. – Chas. H. Claus
The meetings which began here on Sept. 29th, assisted by Bro. S. M. Jones, were brought to a close on Oct. 24th. To say the meetings were a success would be putting it mildly. This was the fifth meeting that Bro. Jones has held for the church here and we all think the best one...There were nine additions by confession and baptism...it was impossible for Bro. Jones to stay any longer as the Beamsville Bible School opened the following Monday. However, Bro. Jones has kindly consented to speak for us the fourth Lord's day each month...

- November 1908, page 4

Editorial Briefs – [H. M. Evans]
Lords Day, Oct. 18, we began a two week's meeting with the Church in the city of St. Catharines. Masquerade carnivals, roller rink, hippodromes, theatres, and the excitement of our Dominion elections did much to reduce the attendance, but in spite of all this we had splendid audiences...

2007 MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE

2007 CCCHS membership fees, covering Sept. 1, 2006 through Aug. 31, 2007 are now being received. Annual fees are \$25.00 (for both voting and associate memberships).

Direct your payment to treasurer, Eugene Perry, 4904 King St., Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6.

Would you like to become a member? Contact any member of the CCCHS board of directors for information.

----- AVAILABLE FROM THE CCCHS

2003 – Periodical Publishing in the Restoration in Canada from 1822 \$2.00
2004 – The Restoration Churches in Toronto \$5.00
2005 – Restoration in the Georgian Bay, 1853-1895 \$6.00
2005 – Pioneer Churches of the Georgian Bay – CD \$5.00
2006 – Restoration in Hamilton, Ontario, 1821-2001 \$8.00
2006 – Roy Merritt Remembers – CD or audio tape \$5.00

*Add cost of postage

Order: CCCHS, 120 Moccasin Dr., Waterloo ON N2L 4C3, or ghellis@golden.net, or 519-885-3702

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