

EARLY SCHOOLS AND EARLY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN FREDERICTON

History of Schools as They Existed Before the Free Schools Act --- The University and Collegiate School

At the York and Sunbury Historical Society meeting on Wednesday evening, Mrs. Susan Squires read an interesting paper on "Early Schools and Early Teachers." Mrs. Squires named many old time teachers who may be remembered by our older citizens. She also gave a history of the old Collegiate School, the mother of our present High School. The University was also mentioned. Mrs. Squires' paper was as follows:

(Continued)
In 1837 Dr. George Roberts, an Oxford man and father of Canon Roberts, became headmaster and Rev. Charles Coster his assistant. In 1840 a new school house was built on George Street at the rear of the Academy and the first old college building on Brunswick Street was made into a residence for D. Roberts. It was torn down in 1869 to make way for the last Collegiate School building. I have been told that the Rev. Charles Coster lived in the Julius Ingham brick building on the corner of Queen and St. John Streets and boarded a number of the boys of the

Collegiate School whose homes were not in the city.

Mr. Slason Thompson gives a description of the Collegiate School under Dr. Roberts. He says, "My enrollment in the Collegiate School in 1860 was coincident with its disestablishment although the scent of the Church of England still hung around the staff of teachers. George Roberts, 'Geordie' we called him, the headmaster, shared with Rev. Charles Coster the duties of classical and mathematical master. French was taught by the Professor of Modern Languages at the University, and Hugh Moore was the English and Writing Master. Dr. Roberts was widely known in his generation as an educator of sterling ability. His associate Dr. Coster was rector of St. Anne's Chapel, Fredericton. He had one glass eye but the other missed nothing he wanted to see and gleamed like a headlight when he was aroused. The Rev. Charles had an arm of iron and wielded a grape vine cane which had all the resilience of raw hide and the sting of a steel rod."

"When I entered the Collegiate School it had about one hundred pupils of whom probably thirty were in the English division. The rest of us were divided up among the other three masters. School opened at nine and dismissed at four with fifteen minutes at eleven and an hour at noon. The routine of study was an hour each for Latin, Greek, Geometry, Arithmetic and Writing. We marched at the sound of a bell from the main assembly room where the proceedings were opened with a formal prayer to our respective classes and marched back at the tap of the same bell at the end of each period. This was done without loss of time for the interval scarcely suffered to clear our throats of Greek roots before we were scanning our Vergil or Horace in the next classroom. We got to be pretty thoroughly grounded in the grammar of the two languages but I fail to remember a single scholar who became truly proficient in reading Latin or Greek understandingly. We did profit, however, by our reading of the histories of Rome and Greece to say nothing of our intensive study of English history from the days of Boadicea to Victoria. My Collegiate School days cost my father one pound or five dollars a quarter, for we still used pounds, shillings and pence."

A story is told that at one time Dr. Roberts made a strict rule against fighting. On one occasion the boys adjourned to a vacant lot on George Street opposite the school to settle a dispute. In the midst of the engagement someone called, "Here comes Mr. Coster." There were a number of post holes near as a house was about to be erected. When Mr. Coster crossed the street not a boy was in sight. He walked from post hole to post hole and looked down and then turned his back and walked away and nothing more was heard about it. It might be added that the two combatants were in the same post hole.

Free Schools

The fight for free schools in the Province of New Brunswick was finally won in the year 1870. No other measure, not even the Act of Confederation, had ever aroused so heated and often bitter discussion in the Legislature and throughout the province as attended the proposal and passage of this free and non-sectarian school law. Not alone was it opposed by the Roman Catholic Church, which was dominant in the French counties but the Protestant Churches were divided on the principle of free schools and the banishment of religious instruction in the schools. But the law was passed and went into operation Jan. 1st, 1872.

The problem before the board of school trustees of the city of Fredericton was to find buildings large enough to house the increased attendance of children.

The following notes are gleaned from the minutes of the meetings of the Fredericton Board of School Trustees after September 18th 1871. Their first move was to make an application to the Dominion Government for the use of the Officers and Park Barracks. Then tenders were called for, for one thousand desks and seats to be made according to specifications of cherry, black ash or walnut. A Fredericton firm, Cooper and Co., Furniture Makers, got the order. The price was three dollars for each set, one desk and one seat. The Dominion Government gave permission for the use of part of the Officers' Barracks for a Secretary's office, and the use of the Park Barracks if they could make arrangements with a man named Sills who had a lease of the building. This they finally did by paying Sills about six hundred dollars, and got control of the Park Barracks, Nov. 20th, 1871. The trust-

SPECIAL SERVICES MARKING 145TH ANNIVERSARY WILMOT UNITED CHURCH

Reproduction of Old-Fashioned Service in Evening Was Especially Interesting --- Minister Stresses Supernatural Origin of Church.

Special services, morning and evening, marked the one hundred and forty-fifth anniversary of Wilmot United Church, yesterday. The Rev. J. W. Bartlett, pastor of the church, spoke at both services. Inspiring music was supplied by the choir under the direction of F. W. Harrison, organist and choir-master.

Yesterday's celebration commemorated the founding of the Fredericton Methodist Church in 1791. In that year, Abram John Bishop was sent here by the British Methodist Conference and the inauguration of the Fredericton Methodist Church resulted. Two men associated with Bishop in the establishment of the church were Duncan McCol and Duncan Blair.

The first Methodist Church in Fredericton was built in 1809 on King street near Westmorland. The building was destroyed by fire in 1850 and the present structure was erected at the junction of King and Carleton streets in 1852.

An interesting feature of the anniversary services in Wilmot Church yesterday is that a large Bible which was the property of Duncan Blair was used in conducting the worship. The Bible is over one hundred and fifty years old.

The music by the choir and organist included some inspiring compositions. A procession "O Worship the King" by the church choir and the junior choir under the direction of Mrs. James Badcock opened the morning service. The unaccompanied anthem for male voices, "A Song of Joy" by Gretchenhoff-McKinney and Mendelssohn's "Hear My Prayer," for mixed voices were sung. The splendid interpretation of the solo in the latter anthem by Mrs. Charles Fleet was outstanding. Organ selections played by F. W. Harrison, included "Processional" by Henry Dunbar; "The Swan" by Saint-Saens; "Humoresque" by Dvorak.

The Rev. J. W. Bartlett spoke in the morning on the mystic origin of the Church "The Bride of Christ."

In the opening words of his address, Mr. Bartlett remarked on the character of the Bible. This Book does not pretend to answer questions that science can answer, the pastor said. It does not describe the heavens—it points the way to Heaven. It does not describe rock formation—it tells of the Rock of Ages. It is more concerned with the Creator than with the creation.

A delegation from a society once went to hear a reputedly great preacher. In making a report the delegation said that they had been charmed, diverted, instructed by the sermon but had not received a needed sense of God. The preacher had missed the supreme purpose of his calling—a purpose without which preaching is unavailing.

Speaking at his recent induction service at City Temple, London, Leslie Weatherhead said his one qualification for that responsible position was "I am sure of Christ and I believe in God."

As Eve came from the side of Adam in the Garden of Eden, so from the wounded side of Christ on the Cross came the Church, said Mr.

Bartlett. Just as Eve was the mother of all living, physically; so the Church is the mother of all living, spiritually. The Church has sometimes been faithless and fickle but Christ is willing and ready to cleanse her anew.

"It is a good thing on this anniversary day to remember the supernatural origin of the Church," said the pastor. It is of the heart of Christ—not of the hand of man.

Eve issued from the side of Adam to be his companion—not from the head to be his master or from the feet to be his slave.

"Perhaps the Church has been too intellectual," said Mr. Bartlett. She must appeal to the hearts of men.

Just as Eve was created to give companionship to Adam, so the Church meets the supreme need of human fellowship in the world.

The Rev. J. S. Gregg led the congregation in prayer at this service.

The evening service was a reproduction of old-fashioned worship. The church was illuminated in a striking and attractive manner with candlelight. Hymns were sung in the old style, unaccompanied, each stanza being first read by the pastor and then sung by choir and congregation. The unaccompanied anthem, "Lord, Thou Hast Been Our Dwelling Place," by Palestrina, was sung by the choir as an offertory.

The Rev. Mr. Bartlett was assisted at this service by the Rev. D. R. Chown, who read a scripture passage from Corinthians and the Rev. Dr. F. A. Wightman who led in prayer. This service was attended by one of the largest congregations ever to enter the church.

In speaking at the evening service on the subject, "Things That Don't Wear Out," the Rev. Mr. Bartlett departed a little from the pattern of the old-fashioned church service in that his address was brief and to the point.

"There is first man himself," said Mr. Bartlett. The body decays, but man is immortal.

The glory of Athens and Rome is long past but the poetry of Homer and Virgil still lives. It is the spiritual quality which determines the life of the thing.

The old-time religion, if we mean that of Abraham and Moses, will survive. Religion is irradicable in the human spirit, Mr. Bartlett declared. Radio, wireless and the aeroplane are wonderful but the fundamental truth on which our fathers fed alone will succor us—alone abide. Styles in religion may change but our gospel is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

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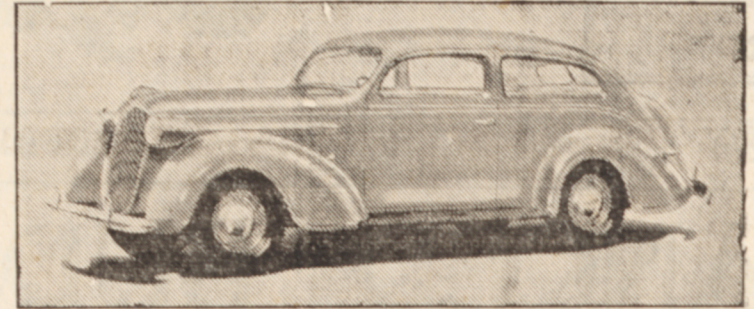
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