

CANTON CHURCH

**A BRIEF HISTORY
OF
THE CHURCH,
THE COMMUNITY
AND ITS PEOPLE**
with anecdotes

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1982

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Canton Dates to Remember, by Howard Harris

The History of Canton Village

Wesleyan Methodists of Hope Township

Canton Church Choir

Canton Church's Memorial Windows

The Sunday School

The Cemetery

The Church 1876 – 1982

Canton Dates to Remember

- 1791 Upper Canada formed with a population of 20,000.
- 1791 Survey of Hope Township commenced.
- 1793 Myndert Harris, Sr. (1748 – 1823) [buried at Wesleyville] and his family arrived at Smith's Creek.
- 1796 First land grant in Hope Township made to M. Harris, being 200 acres at Lot 3, Conc. 1.
- 1800 – 07 Canton Settlement commenced when Myndert Harris, Jr., (1785 – 1878), Asa Callender, James Hawkins, and others took up land. Harris, Jr., bought the lower half of Lot 10, Conc. 4 in 1807. The land had been partially cleared and had a small log cabin in which Harris lived. (Harris married Phoebe Hawkins.)
- 1807 – 18 Occasional services were held in private homes when an itinerant preacher, travelling on horseback, arrived. These early “Saddlebag Preachers” as they were known, were sent out by the Methodists in the United States and were paid \$100.00 per year, which had to cover all their costs. The earliest recorded preacher was Rev. Nathan Bangs in 1803.
- 1815 Rev. Thomas Whitehead, a saddlebag preacher, made several appearances in the township.
- 1819 In the month of March, a quarterly meeting, probably the first in the township, was held at the home of James Hawkins, just east of the present Canton Church.
- 1820 The first schoolhouse, a log building, was erected on the property of James Hawkins. Some of the early itinerant preachers held devotional services in this little building.
- 1827 Rev. Edgerton Ryerson preached in the area.
- 1831 Hope Temperance Society organized.
- 1832 Hope Chapel (30'X40') was erected on James Hawkins' farm.
- 1834 Property on which the church and cemetery are situated was deeded to the church.
- 1835 Renewal of Covenant Service, Rev. Thomas Bevitt officiated.
- 1836 Members of Hope Chapel became very interested in Missionary work and gave generously.

- 1838 Rev. Anson Green preached at Hope Chapel.
- 1844 Rev. William Ryerson, probably a brother of Edgerton, held a service in Hope Chapel.
- 1851 Hope Chapel Sunday School Anniversary.
- 1861 – 62 Canton Circuit formed with a full-time minister. (Rev. Anson J. Green, Rev. John C. Wilmott)
- 1863 – 65 Rev. John Burwash – later associated with Victoria College and the University of Toronto (married Eden Henwood).

The History of Canton Village

Canton Village is centrally located upon Lots 12 and 13 on the 4th concession of Hope Township, five miles north of Port Hope. It was settled in 1807 by families of Myndert Harris, Jr., Asa Callender, and James Hawkins, followed shortly by Messrs. Bowen, Johnson, and others.

James Hawkins came from Connecticut to Smith's Creek (Port Hope) in 1802 and filled several vacancies much needed by the early settlers. History recounts that he was a mechanical genius (for the period) being a blacksmith, joiner, carpenter, bricklayer, and a stone mason. He built a blacksmith shop which was equipped with a bellows, grinding stone, and also a trip hammer driven by water power which is believed to be the first in the province. Following the building of the 'Red Tavern', he then appears to have taken a grant of land at Canton (Lot 11, Concession 4) in 1805 around the present church and cemetery. James died, age 82 years and was buried in July of 1841 at the south end of Canton Cemetery. His wife, Susan, predeceased him in 1811 and seems to have been the first burial in a private burial plot which later became the cemetery.

The older son, James Jr., continued to live on the property until his death in 1863. John Hawkins, son of James Jr., and his wife, farmed the next farm east, later owned by Jonathan Brown. Azel, second son of James Sr., needed a farm and Mount Airy (Lot 7, Conc. 3), now the home of John and Susan Bickle, was purchased in 1822.

The surviving member of James Jr.'s family living in the area is Ruth, Mrs. David Ford.

Descendents of Azel living in the area are:

- (1) Mary, Mrs. Wilfred Ross, their twin sons, Carl and Craig, Craig's three children as well as one daughter, Linda Bernhard, and her children;
- (2) Ethel, Mrs. Morley Bickle, their three sons: Farley, John and William "Bill", and the children of Farley and John.

James Sr.'s daughter, Phoebe, married Myndert Harris, Jr. and then S. Smith. There are no survivors of either of her marriages.

Myndert Harris, Jr. bought the lower half of Lot 10 in 1807. The land had been partially cleared and there was a small log cabin in which Myndert Jr. lived.

In 1820, the first schoolhouse, a log building, was erected on the property of James Hawkins, just behind of where the Community Hall now stands. James Rutledge taught school here for many years. Some of the itinerant preachers held devotional services in this little building. The Wesleyan Methodists used it as a place of worship until 1832 when Hope Chapel was built. There was a second log school on Lot 14, known as the Peters School. The two were united in 1855 to form School Section 8. The Council appointed William Peters to call the first meeting of the section to elect trustees. A frame school was built. When the brick schoolhouse was built in 1870, the frame school was put on sleighs and four teams of horses drew it to Lot 10, Conc. 5, where it became part of the farm buildings of Gordon and Eric Dundas.

Thomas Doney and his family came to Hope Township about 1820. In the early 30's, he purchased land now known as 'Doneycroft' which was the home of Judge John Currelly.

Thomas Currelly, a young bachelor, arrived in Hope during the 1820's. He married Jane Doney in 1834 in St. John's (St. Mark's) Church, Port Hope. They bought the "Beavermeadow Farm", now the home of Matthew Currelly. The present House was built about 1840. Here they raised four sons – Thomas, Charles, John (father of Dr. C. T. Currelly), and Fred (father of Ted Currelly).

In 1820, Reuben P. Grant built the first house in the village on the corner where the Canton Post Office once stood.

In 1825, Potter completed his sawmill immediately west of where the flour mill now stands. This was sold to Reuben Grant who gave Joseph Ayres the privilege of erecting a grist mill upon the same dam in 1830. After the death of Mr. Ayres, this business was carried on by Emmanuel Mann who, in 1844, transferred the property to Peter Salter. He built an addition and otherwise improved the property known as "Durham Mills".

Joseph Haw and his second wife, Mary Morse, and their seven children ages 2 or 3 months to 15 years of age, immigrated from England to Canada in 1827. After a 60-day trip by sailboat, they came ashore at Marshes Landing, about four miles west of Port Hope (Port Britain). They settled at Canton on Lot 12, Conc. 4, Hope, on a two-acre parcel of land including the junction of the west and north branches of the Ganaraska River. Here Joseph built a log house. The remaining three children were born here. Joseph found employment as a farm labourer. Records state that he owned a yoke of oxen, a horse, a cow, a quantity of pigs and sheep, a wagon, and a 'jig'. He never owned real property in Canada but his and Mary's first son, their fourth child, William, did eventually own this property.

In 1830, the families of Messrs. Powers, Peters, and Henwood settled at Canton. In 1842, Mr. Powers built a sawmill south-east of Canton. The raceway for this mill crosses the county road just north of the present Bickle farm.

William Peters and his wife, Elizabeth (nee Blake), with their three sons – Thomas (6 yrs.), William (4 yrs.), and Nicholas (1 yr., 8 months), all natives of Cornwall, England, sailed from Plymouth on the brig "Friends" on May 3, 1830 and sighted Cape Breton on June 3rd. In spite of considerable seasickness, there were frequent prayer meetings and services of worship during the voyage. These were led by William Peters, Charles or Elizabeth Henwood, Thomas Hosking, and John Cornish – all lay preachers. The Peters home, Maple Grove, also known as the "Mud House" (now part of the Batterwood Estate) was built during the 1830's.

Charles Henwood operated a sawmill on the Ganaraska, east of the Powers' mill. Both of these mills did a large lumbering business in their day. It is believed that the Henwood mill burned down.

Mr. William Monaghan opened a boot and shoe store and Noah Wood was the blacksmith. In Upper or North Canton, chopping bowls were manufactured from elm. In 1850, Eli Crawley built a brick hotel in the shelter of the hill south of the flour mill. In

those days every village had its tavern and sometimes more than one and Canton was as up-to-date as any of them. Mr. Trew kept tavern on the hill at the rear of the hotel. There was a second tavern in North Canton run by William Nugent from 1867 to 1875.

William Zealand, with his wife, Sarah Clark, and four children sailed from Boston, Lincolnshire, England, in the early 1850's. Sarah and the three youngest children died of smallpox on the voyage. William, with William Jr., came to Port Hope because the eldest son, Thomas, was working for the Helm Foundry. William Sr.'s second wife was Rosanna Heatrick from Ireland. They farmed on Lot 9, Conc. 4, Hope and later at Garden Hill. They had twelve children. William, a deeply religious man, was a lay preacher in the Wesleyan Chapel at Canton. He and Rosanna are buried in Canton Cemetery.

Early in the 1850's, at a public meeting held in the schoolhouse, it was decided to circulate a petition to the Postmaster General requesting a post office in the village. A Post Office was opened on February 1, 1856 in the house built by Mr. Grant. William Carr became the first Postmaster. The name "Hopeville" was suggested but this did not stand and the village became known as "Canton". Previous to the opening of the post office at Canton, if a letter arrived in Port Hope for someone in Canton, a note appeared in the newspaper suggesting "John Doe" should call at the Post Office in Port Hope.

The names of the Port Hope papers are interesting: Port Hope Telegraph and Newcastle Advertiser, Port Hope Warder and Constitutional Advocate in 1831, Port Hope Gazette and Upper Canada Independent Examiner in 1833, Port Hope Gazette and Durham Examiner 1844 and in 1851 the Port Hope Watchman.

The last Deputy Postmaster serving at Canton Post Office was James Graham. The office was permanently closed on February 28, 1967. On June 10, 1967, Canton Post Office and General Store was burned down by the Hope Township Fire Department to make way for the improvement of County Road 10. Mail for area residents is now delivered by rural carriers.

Mr. E. Dodds resided further up the road at 'Stoney Batter' (North Canton) where Mr. And Mrs. Fred Austin live. He served as Township Clerk from 1877 to 1898, a total of twenty-one years. Edwin Tyndall, who followed William Carr as Deputy Postmaster, also kept a general store at Canton.

Lovell's Directory of 1857 lists the businessmen of the area as follows:

- Edsall and Wilson, lumber merchants
- Myndert Harris, grain dealer
- Charles Henwood, lumber merchant
- William Peters, Justice of the Peace
- Charles Powers, lumber merchant
- Peter Salter, flour mill
- James Stebbins, carriage maker
- Rev. Sam Tucker, Wesleyan
- Eli Crawley, innkeeper
- Richard Gibbs, cooper

William Haw, carpenter
James Price, hatter
Sam Powers, Justice of the Peace
Henry White, blacksmith

Edsall and Wilson were the largest lumber manufacturers in Hope. Their saw mill was northwest of Canton just above the 5th line.

The following amusing account may be of interest to the area history of Canton Village. A Mr. And Mrs. John Coleman lived at Canton Corners in a little white house inside the main gate of what is now Batterwood. When Mrs. Coleman (Elizabeth Lee) was a young girl, her family owned some little pigs, which were hard to come by in those days. Their barnyard was like a stockade fenced around with sharp pointed posts to protect the animals at night. As we know, bears like pork and one evening while Elizabeth was milking, a bear got over the stockade into the barnyard. It is said that this courageous girl went after that bear with the milk stool and drove it out and away, singlehanded. This same Elizabeth Coleman helped pick stones and clear the land where the Massey house now stands. She had named the place "Stoney Batter". Her family had immigrated from Devonshire and in that dialect batter means hillside. Mrs. Elizabeth Coleman died at the age of 79 in 1898 and is buried in Canton Cemetery.

In the years following the First World War, Vincent Massey acquired an estate which eventually totalled four hundred acres. In 1922, he began building Batterwood House, a spacious home of red brick, on a beautifully landscaped setting overlooking the Mill Pond. In 1926, Mr. Massey was appointed as the first Canadian Minister to the United States, a position he retired from in 1930. In 1935, he was appointed Royal High Commissioner to London, which he kept until 1946. From 1952 – 1959, Mr. Massey was the Governor-General of Canada, the first Canadian born to hold this post. Canton was honoured by a visit from the Queen and Prince Philip in 1959 when they stayed as guests at Batterwood. Other visitors were the Queen Mother, Anthony Eden (then Prime Minister of Britain), and Governor-General Vanier.

Professor Charles Trick Currelly, founder of the Royal Ontario Museum and its curator until 1945, built a fine home called 'Doneycroft'. Professor George Wrong, a friend of the Masseys who was a Professor of History at the University of Toronto, owned Durham House on County Road 10 which is north of the Canton Mill. This home is now owned by Hart Massey, son of the late Right Honourable Vincent Massey.

Another beautiful and lovely old home, 'Beechwood', built by George Salter in 1861, was called the 'Mill House', now owned by Meredith (Jemmett) Boughen, stands across from the old Mill on the east side of County Road 10.

Colonel Alan Giles, O.B.E., M.C., a former Councillor and Lord Mayor of Birmingham, England, came to Canada with his wife in 1951 and took up residence here. He was a veteran of both World Wars as well as the representative in North America of the Colonel of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment (The Sherwood Foresters). During the First World War, he was an infantry officer on the Western Front and won the Military Cross. He was the Military Governor of the city of Milan under the command of the Allied Military

Government in Italy, during the Second World War. He shared his pictures of his worldwide travels with area residents. He was also active in community affairs especially in the rural fire protection by offering the use of a pump and other facilities. As a result, a volunteer fire brigade was formed under the name of 'The Col. Giles Volunteer Fire Company'. Col. Giles was fatally injured in a car accident in 1965 while travelling north up Highway 28. He had been ordering material at a Port Hope lumber yard for a Community Fire Hall to be built on his farm to house the Company's equipment. After his death, George Stapleton took charge of the construction of the Canton fire hall and the purchase of vehicles and equipment. In 1966, Hope Township appointed him Fire Chief, a position which he held for eleven years, retiring in 1977 due to ill health.

Lewis Osland, a prominent resident of Canton for 82 years, who farmed in the area and did custom grain and seed threshing for neighbouring farmers, had a miraculous escape from death on November 5, 1923. His steam engine and grain threshing machine crashed through the bridge on County Road 10, pinning him chin deep in the frigid water of the Ganaraska River for one and a half hours. A friend of his held his head out of the water and administered a stimulant (liquor) until he was able to kick himself loose and climb up the bank none the worse for this very hazardous and one-of-a-kind accident. Lewis and the late Lola (Zealand) Osland raised their family at Canton. Lloyd, who with his wife, Lena, operates the family farm and homestead. Their daughters, Mineitta (Mrs. Norman Heard), lives in Peterborough and Aleda (Mrs. Clifford Andrus) lives at Welcome. Lewis Osland celebrated his 95th birthday on September 20, 1982 and died a month later on October 18th.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS IN HOPE TOWNSHIP

During early pioneer times in Hope Township, the settlements were served by local preachers and travelling preachers; the latter coming from New York State. When the American Methodists knew of the need for preachers among the loyalist communities in Canada, the Conference asked for volunteers to spend one year on a circuit there. Any longer time was considered too rigorous. This period in Methodist history brought the proud claim that no settlement in the woods was so small that it did not receive the ministry of the travelling preacher. Men who volunteered to come to Canada carried their belongings in saddle bags, so were called "Saddle Bag Preachers". Their huge territory allowed them little time for study, so most of it was done on horseback as they rode from settlement to settlement.

In 1801, records show that a circuit came as far west as Smith's Creek (Port Hope) but it was not until 1805 that Smith's Creek was named as the head of a circuit which took in all the territory from the Trent River to the border of the Yonge Street Circuit at Whitby. Some years later the name of the circuit was change to Cobourg.

In 1828, the Canadian Methodist Church became independent of the church in the United States, with William Case the first general superintendent. Previously, churches had been built on private property, but that year the Canadian government allowed five acres of land to be given to the Methodist church trustees. In 1840, Port Hope was made a separate circuit and in the 1861 Canton Circuit was organized.

The appointments on Canton Circuit were:

1861 – 1865: Hope Chapel, Perry town Branch, Elizabethville Branch, Wesleyville Church, Bethel Branch, Plainville Branch, and Gore's Landing Branch.

1866 – 1884: Canton, Perrytown, Elizabethville, Bethel, Morrish, and Wesleyville.

In 1884, as a result of the union of all the Methodist bodies, the circuit was reorganized. Morrish and Wesleyville Branches became part of the Welcome Circuit. Mount Pleasant, Eden, Zion (formerly Bible Christian), and Garden Hill (Methodist Episcopal) were added to Canton.

In 1886, Conference gave permission for Mount Pleasant church to be sold. In 1898, Eden Church was closed and the congregation united with Elizabethville; Zion was added to Welcome Circuit. From 1899, to the time of realignment of charges in the United Church of Canada in 1969, the churches of Canton Circuit were Canton, Elizabethville, and Garden Hill. Now Canton, Garden Hill, and Welcome churches comprise Hope Township Pastoral Charge.

Ministers on the Port Hope Circuit 1840 – 1860

1840	William Ham
1841	Asheal Hurburt
1843 – 44	William McFadden
1845 – 46	J. Gemsly
1847	C. Lovelle, S.S. Nelles
1848	J. Scott, S.C. Slater
1849 – 51	George Goodson
1851 – 53	William McCullough
1853 – 54	William McCullough, Edward H. Dewart
1854 – 55	Joseph W. McCallum, William Tomblin
1855 – 56	Joseph W. McCallum, William Byers
1856 – 57	Richard Whiting, Samuel Tucker
1857 – 58	Richard Whiting, A. E. Ross, W.C. Henderson, B.A.
1858 – 60	Lewis Warner, William Andrews, J. H. Stinson
1860 – 61	John Hunt, Alex T. Green

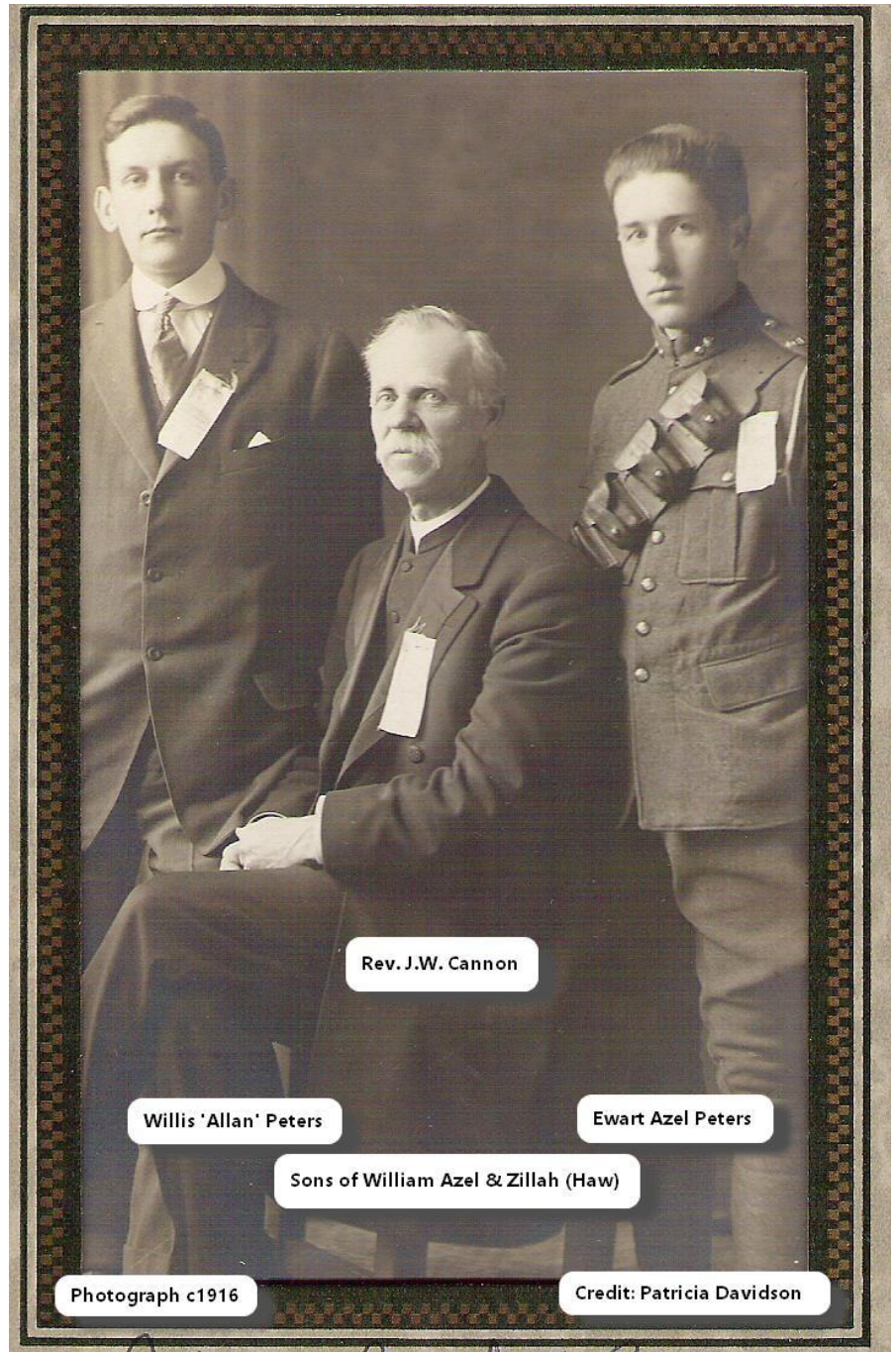
Ministers on Canton Circuit 1861 – 1884

1861 – 62	A. T. Green, John C. Willmott
1862 – 63	A. T. Green, W. F. Morrison, B.A.
1863 – 65	Thomas Stobbs, John Burwash, B.A.
1865 – 68	Charles Sylvester
1868 – 70	James Graham
1870 – 72	William J. Hewitt
1872 – 73	Stephen Bond
1873 – 76	Arthur Browning, J.M. Wilkinson (2 nd year), John A. McCamus (3 rd year)
1876 – 79	Edmund S. Rupert, M.A., A. Wilson (1 st year), Robert H. Leitch (2 nd year), David McCamus (3 rd year)
1870 – 82	Edward Cragg, Henry S. Jenkinson (1 st year), Robert H. Leitch (2 nd year), David McCamus (3 rd year)
1882 – 84	James C. Seymour, Wesley A.V. Pattison (1 st year), James McMullen (2 nd year)

Ministers on Canton Circuit 1884 – 1969

1884	John Davies
1885	Joseph C. Bell
1888	Edward A. Tonkin
1891	Francis Johnston
1893	Thomas Brown, S.F. Dixon, J. P. Berry, H.E. Curtis
1896	S. C. Philp, C.W. Barret
1898	Harry B. Kenny
1901	Samuel C. Moore, B.A., B.D.
1904	A. Mansell Irwin, B.A., B.D.
1907	Albert H. Hoare, B. A.

- 1910 Walter Smart
- 1912 – 16 J. W. Cannon, superannuated
- 1919 George W. Marvin, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.
- 1922 Henry A. Bunt, B.A.
- 1925 J. Fred Lane
- 1933 A. S. Doggett
- 1934 W. F. Banister
- 1937 G. W. Porter
- 1939 A. Y. Robertson
- 1941 P.F. Gardiner
- 1950 E. L. Udell
- 1956 J. R. Trumpour, then P.F. Gardiner after Mr. Trumpour's illness
- 1957 James A. Bryson
- 1958 George W. Wright
- 1964 J. A. Ramjit
- 1974 Robert Bartlett
- 1977 W.W. Kennedy
- 1981 Gordon Rutherford



Canton Church Choir

Through the years the service rendered by the Canton Choir has meant a great deal to the church and community. When the new church was dedicated in 1877, Mrs. G. B. Salter was the organist. Those who followed were Miss Andrews, Miss Florence Harris, Mr. George Bean, Miss Gertrude Hawkins, and Miss Bessie Kinsman. From 1904 to 1940, Mrs. Fred R. Currelly gave enthusiastic and devoted service. Mr. Morley Bickle held the position for a number of years. He was followed by Mrs. Grace Marsh. The present organist is Mrs. Margaret Langdon.

The Male Trio, composed of Will and Mont Bickle and Fred. R. Currelly, made an outstanding contribution in musical circles for over forty years. They were later joined by Allan Peters to make up the Canton Quartette. During the years, the choir and quartette were often called up onto assist on special occasions and at anniversary services of neighbouring churches, a service which they themselves thoroughly enjoyed.

In reviewing the work of the choir in the more recent years, reference should be made to the presentation in 1933 of the beautiful Easter Cantata "The Thorn Crowned King", composed by Fred B. Holton. This met with such enthusiastic approval and appreciation that it was repeated the following year. In more recent years, other Easter and Christmas Cantatas have been presented. In December 1962, the Wesleyville and Canton Choirs combined to present the Christmas Cantata, "Chimes of the Holy Night", in both churches.

Under the leadership of Grace Marsh, the combined Senior and Boys Choirs produced a very successful Minstrel Show in May 1960. Another Minstrel Show was presented in June 1961. In September 1962, the choir concert took the form of a 'Gay Nineties' night.

For several years there have been no men in our choir. It is made up of ten to twelve very faithful women members. We supply the music for the morning service of our Anniversary, on Thanksgiving Sunday and special services at Christmas and Easter as well as leading the weekly service of praise.

Memorial Windows

The memorial windows which had been completely restored during the year were re-dedicated at a special 75th Anniversary Service held on June 3, 1951. Rev. C. E. Cragg, whose father was a former minister, was the guest preacher. Ronald Doggett, also the son of a former minister, was the soloist.

The top centre window is in honour of James Lowes, a local preacher in the early days. The high east window is in memory of Peter Salter and his wife. Mr. Salter built and operated the Canton Flour Mill. The most easterly window (on the left when viewed from inside) is in memory of George Redford, a descendent of Henry Redford, whose name appears in the records of 1856. Beside this window is one installed in memory of Mrs. Thomas Currelly and Mrs. Caroline Currelly. The high west window is in memory of Rev. Thomas Andrews and his daughter, Maria. It is not known to whom is referred in the window bearing the initials J. H. They could be those of James Hawkins, Sr.. J. G. Is for John Gordineer, an early pioneer. The window on the extreme right is in memory of William Peters and his wife, Elizabeth Blake, settlers in 1830.

The Sunday School

Sunday School has been held since the days of Hope Chapel when Nicholas Peters was one of the earliest superintendents and classes were held in the chapel. In the new church in 1876, a Sunday School room was provided and was called the Lecture Room. For forty-two years, Mr. Ephraim Hawkins was the Superintendent. During these years, it was the custom for the Primary Class to practice singing after their lesson period in the Church with their teachers, some of whom were Misses Tootie and Della Hawkins, Jennie Currelly, and Beata Kinsman. In later years, they used the Community Hall for the same purpose.

The Christmas Tree and Concert has been an annual event for a great number of years. Many will recall the Christmas concerts held in the church when a large platform had to be built for a drill presented by some sixteen or so young women in fancy costume. Many happy hours were spent in preparation for these events.

In the Twenties, the Sunday School enjoyed considerable social activity. Picnics on the banks of the Ganaraska at Sylvan Glen and others further afield were looked forward to each year. A very popular feature with everyone was the Strawberry Festival in June when a good programme, assisted by outside talent was presented on the Church lawn.

When Zillah Peters, Mrs. William A., was Superintendent, there was an attendance contest in 1917. This brought people into the Sunday School work who remained to prove a blessing in future years. Mr. Carroll was Superintendent and will long be remembered, especially for the clever coloured designs he drew on the blackboard each Sunday to illustrate the lesson story. Later, Mr. Fred R. Currelly held this office. The attendance was often over one hundred and the service of song was unexcelled. Interest in missions was maintained by a class taking the missionary programme on the first Sunday of the month.

The Comrades class composed of young men in their teens and early twenties was organized in 1915 with Mr. Percy Carroll as teacher. Mrs. Tom Barrie was later appointed teacher, a position she held until her death in 1941. Four young women of a similar age, the Sunshine Weavers class, was organized by Miss Bertha Cooper as teacher. She was succeeded by Mrs. Wilbur Barrie. These classes had a combined monthly meeting in the members' homes at which they had study and discussion periods. The year closed with a banquet in the Hall as well as a special speaker. In the war years, attendance in both these groups gradually dropped.

Afterwards, Mrs. Sydney Bennett took over the girls' class, giving faithful service for a number of years. At present, the senior class, comprised of teenage girls and boys, is taught by Mrs. Lena Osland.

The Adult Bible Class was organized on August 24, 1915 with thirty-two members and Mr. Blake F. Peters, teacher. This class continued to function as an organization until 1947. Then it became difficult to secure a permanent teacher. Mrs. Frank Bamsey and Mrs. Mont Bickle alternately taught the class until Mrs. Bamsey's death. They were followed by Mrs. Wilbur Barrie and others. There is currently no adult class.

For the past several years, the Sunday School has joined the congregation for the

first part of the worship service. They then retire to the Sunday School room for their lessons.

On the second Sunday in May, the teachers and pupils are in charge of the annual Mothers' or Family Day Service. They also present the White Gift Service in December. For a number of years, the Sunday School has sponsored a congregational potluck luncheon which is held immediately following the church service on a Sunday in December. It is followed by the singing of carols and the distribution of gifts from the Christmas tree.

Superintendents of the Sunday School

1869 Nicholas Peters
1874 Ephraim Hawkins
1916 Zillah, Mrs. William Azel Peters
1921 Percy Carroll
1931 Fred R. Currelly
1943 George Stapleton
1951 Syd. Bennett

During the years 1965 to 1969, Alf Laird, Neil Boughen, and Roy Graham each served as superintendent. Mr. Bennett again filled the office from 1969 to 1972. Mrs. Lena Osland is the present Superintendent.

The Cemetery

The cemetery was deeded on the same date, 1834, as the churchyard and the deed was signed by the same trustees. The earliest recorded reference to a cemetery at Canton is 1843 when it was called Hope Chapel Graveyard. Lots sold for \$10 and the individual lots for \$1. Some of the earliest names to appear in the records were Joseph Reed, James Lowes, Lee Mills, William Stephenson, and Myndert Harris.

The cemetery was under the management of the Trustees of Hope Chapel which in 1886 became Canton Methodist Church. This continued until October 31, 1931, when a Cemetery Board was appointed and a Trust fund set up. The agreement drawn up was as follows: "We, the lot holders of Canton Cemetery and others, being desirous of raising money for the establishment of an endowment fund to provide for future upkeep of the cemetery for all time, pledge ourselves to the sum opposite our respective names. The sum needed to carry out the above program is \$2,000.00 and we place that sum as our objective and no subscription or any part thereof shall be considered to or liable to collection until the above sum has been secured in bonafide subscriptions."

This indenture, made the 31st day of October 1931, was from the Trustee Board of the United Church of Canton, Ontario, by its Chairman, Rev. J. Lane, its secretary, Thomas Barrie, and the following Trustees: Frederick R. Currelly, J. Fred Hawkins, W. E. Mason, William Langdon, W. G. Bickle, Percy Carroll, John Dundas, all of the Hope Township in the County of Durham to The Canton Cemetery Trust with the following trustees: J. Fred Hawkins, W. E. Mason, Harvey B. Henwood, Thomas C. Barrie, Allan Peters, Morgan Stanford Hawkins, and Stanley B. Harris.

By 1951, subscriptions totalled \$2,330.84. Lots sold for \$25.00 and this amount was added to the permanent fund.

The Cemetery Board, 1951 – Honourary President Stanley Harris, President, J. Fred Hawkins, Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Mont Bickle, Mrs. Wilbur Barrie, Thomas Barrie, M. Stanford Hawkins, and Allan Peters. Caretakers: Syd Bennett, Ed Long and Mont Bickle.

The Present Church 1876 – 1982

On March 9, 1876, the congregation of Hope Church met to consider the advisability of erecting a new church at Canton. At a General Committee meeting held on March 31, 1876, it was decided that a church should be built. The Building Committee consisted of A. Bean, chairman; Nicholas Peters, secretary; J. T. Henwood, treasurer; Thomas Currelly; and G. B. Salter. Mr. Soule of Port Hope was the architect. Mr. McMaster, who lived south of the school, was the builder and Mr. P. R. Randall was superintendent of building. Mr. McMaster had built Port Hope Methodist Church the previous year.

On March 1st and 8th, 1877, special services were held for the opening of the new church. Rev. E. S. Rupert was the minister and was assisted by several visiting ministers. At the service on March 8th, a pulpit Bible and a number of hymn books were presented to the congregation by Mr. And Mrs. J. Z. Hickey.

Until 1924, each family had its own pew. Pew stewards were appointed annually. In August 1900, the following was recorded:

“It was moved by Brother Abraham Bean, seconded by Brother W. H. Kinsman, that after October 1st next, the pew steward is instructed not to rent a part of a pew on any account, except on the second row of seats from the back be three dollars each and the third row from the back be four dollars each. All others except the row in front and the row farthest back be five dollars.” Nicholas Peters, Secretary.

Anniversary services have been held on Thanksgiving Sunday since 1896. On November 26 of that year, receipts from a tea were \$77.63.

Since then, the church has been maintained with little change from the original. It was lighted by oil lamps until 1926 when these were changed to electric fixtures. In 1911, a new organ was purchased, and, in 1942, the choir loft was lowered and enlarged. The pulpit platform was brought forward and the first row of seats removed, as were the two large ventilators in the ceiling. The major part of these alterations was paid for from the bequest of the late Mrs. John Martyn.

In 1946, Dr. C. T. Currelly, former curator of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, presented the church with a beautiful painting in triptych form in memory of his father, John Currelly. This painting was dedicated on October 13, 1946 by Rev. P.F. Gardiner. It was also in honour of all those from the Canton Circuit who served in World War II and was unveiled by Mrs. Alice Austin. Her daughter, Emily, and two sons, Arthur and Howard, as well as her son-in-law, Bert Tompkins, were all on active service in the war. A memorial plaque in honour of the men of Canton who served in World War I hangs on the south wall.

In 1954, an electric organ was purchased, paid for, in part, by memorial donations made by former residents during the 75th Anniversary in 1951.

The church is now oil heated, the first oil furnace being installed in 1962 and a new one purchased in 1981. The seats and floor were refinished in 1972.

Officers – Session Stewards, Trustees – 1951 – 1982

Charles Langdon, Reg. McCool, Noray Goheen, Alf Laird, George Murray, William Scott, Mrs. N. Goheen, Mrs. E. Long, Mrs. L. Mills, Mrs. Lloyd Osland, Lewis Osland, Harold Wilson, Howard Austin, Lancelly Mills, Lloyd Osland, Mrs. H. Wilson, Roy Graham, Gordon Austin, Mrs. Gordon Austin, Mrs. C. Gifford, Miss J. U. Bamsey, Mrs. June Dundas, Mrs. Harold Osborne, Mrs. Margaret Langdon, Sim Dickinson, Keith Rose, Mrs. Roy Graham, Mrs. Morley Bickle, Mrs. Annie Watkins, Miss Ruth Mills, Peter Vanderwindt, Miss, Kim Austin, Bruce Pickering, Mrs. Vivian McCool, Mrs. Aline Austin, Jack Vanderwindt, and Bernhard Mueller.