



BOARD OF MANAGERS

Top Row:—J. M. McVicar, R. A. Taylor, J. L. Grant, W. D. Farquhar.
Bottom Row:—W. P. Young, W. A. Brownlie, Earl L. Taylor, J. J. Campbell, W. A. Dumaw



The Present Manse



Old Manse



Rev. J. Ure Stewart, B. A., Pastor 1918-23



Willing Workers



Knox Church Choir.



Sunday School Teachers and Officers

HISTORY OF KNOX CHURCH

BELMONT

The history of Knox Church, Belmont, extending over a period of seventy-five years as recorded within this volume, was gathered under very difficult circumstances. Owing to the fact that no previous history of the church had been written or published, it was necessary to search old records, which were far from plentiful, as well as secure information from the oldest members, few of whom are left in our midst.

Among these latter, the committee would mention especially the name of Miss Catherine Kennedy, who was born on August 15th, 1842. She is one of the first on the Baptismal Records and on the Membership Roll. Catherine Kennedy was baptized on July 5th, 1850, by Rev. John Fraser, of St. Thomas, in the little log church on her father's farm in Dorchester. On September 4th, 1858, she was admitted on profession of her faith into full membership of the church at a meeting of the Kirk Session, held at the home of Mr. Peter McKellar. Many valuable records of the congregation's history were found in her possession, and much of this history for that reason is given in her own words, as her mind is still quite keen and her memory retentive not only for past, but also for present events.

About the year 1846 or 1847, a number of the Highland Scotch Presbyterians organized themselves and built a small log church on the southwest corner of Donald Kennedy's farm on the sixth concession of Dorchester, the property now owned and occupied by Daniel Ellis. The building was about 30 feet by 40 feet, having in it three windows, one on each side and one behind the pulpit and the Precentor's bench on the north end, the latter being for the purpose of giving light to the speaker. The pulpit was a plain unpainted box of white pine. On each side of the centre and only aisle were seats, which consisted merely of bass-wood slabs hewn with the broad-axe and set in wooden pegs. A large log at the front door served as a step into the building.

During these years the congregational singing was led by a precentor or leader, the first of these being Benjamin Noble, Sr., who lead in both English and Gaelic. After his death Jas. Walker was appointed for the English worship and John Ferguson for the Gaelic. Mr. Walker resigned in 1867 and was succeeded by Jas. Campbell, who held this position, and later, that of leader of the choir, for practically half a century, until his death in 1915. A.D. McCallum was then appointed leader and was succeeded by W. A. Brown in 1918, who removed from the district the following year, when the positions of organist and leader were united.

One of the greatest difficulties these Presbyterians of Dorchester at the first had to contend with was their inability to stand alone. Accordingly they tried to unite with the newly organized mission church at Frampton, now Dorchester village, but most of the Presbyterians there were Irish and didn't wish Gaelic preaching. Another attempt was made to unite with the fifth concession church, Westminster, but, being lowland Scotch, they likewise preferred not to have the Gaelic. However, early in that year, 1856, the Yarmouth congregation was separated from St. Thomas and united with Dorchester to form one congregation.

The first recorded meeting of the united sessions of this newly-formed charge was held on Sept. 4, that same year with the following present: Rev. Duncan McMillan of Aldboro, moderator pro. tem. and John McGregor, John Stewart, Neil Brown, Duncan Campbell and Hugh MacKay, elders.

"The new Presbyterian Church in Belmont was opened for the worship of God on the 14th of September, on which occasion the services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. McDiarmid, of Woodstock, who delivered an excellent and most appreciative discourse from Rom.viii., 1, to an attentive assembly of about four hundred persons.

In that same year, 1872, the house of Mr. W. D. Eckhert was purchased for a manse for \$900 and to pay for the same, the families in the congregation were assessed a certain sum, according to the amount of property possessed.



PRESBYTERIAN KIRK
BELMONT ONT.