

and Smith built a brick house there for the parsonage. During the shifting of sales Mr. Jewett became the pastor. A house was rented for him and family across the road from Mac McNeil in July 1905, and by fall he was in the new parsonage. He stayed until 1908.

In 1908 Rev. Hussar and family came, and his daughter Pearl was our organist. We still had our first organ and she could bring the music from it like a pipe organ. She played fifteen minutes before the service, and the congregation came early to hear her play. We were complimented on having a new pipe organ.

Between 1906 and 1908 a special effort was made to clear the balance of the debt due on the church. On October 15, 1906, the Thank-offering anniversary collections were \$624.45. The following year it was nearly the same, and in the fall of 1908 a congregational meeting of Thanksgiving was held in the church to burn the mortgage. A trustee board member said the youngest child in the church would never see the debt paid off. The youngest member of the church, Alice Porter, burnt the mortgage. Rev. John Kennedy came in 1911-1914. Rev. Mr. McGibbon was with us one year 1914-1915, Rev. Harvey Kennedy 1915-1918, then Rev. A. Brown was with us for two years. Rev. Mr. Snell was ill when he came and did not finish out one year, but bought a home here and died here.

Rev. Mr. ~~Godfrey~~ Godfrey was with us 1921-1924. The circuit was very proud of both Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey, and begged them to stay until our church went into church union. They decided to go.

Rev. Mr. Rutherford was here for one year. In 1924 at an evening service Mr. Godfrey read a letter from the Methodist Conference, asking for a vote on church union. We had a couple of weeks to decide. The missionaries we sent to the Foreign Field were anxious for union. Their converts were confused, there was only one God, why so many denominations. This was hard to explain, so the vote being taken, we decided to stay with our conference. Separated from our circuit, could we carry on alone? Would new members join in union? Our Lord has guided us through our many troubles and he has certainly been with us and blessed us in this "United Church" movement.

Choirs of West Elgin United Churches Mass for Anniversary Service

1950?



—Photo by Stollery

A MASSED CHOIR of 65 voices, representative of United Churches in West Elgin, participated in the service in St. John's Church, Dutton, Sunday afternoon, when the 25th anniversary of church union was observed. The choir, under the direction of Mrs. M. Fisher, of West Lorne, and with Mrs. Mildred McNeil and Mrs. S. E. Wheeler as organists, contributed two anthems, "O Worship the King" and Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus. (See page 1, section 2, for another picture of Dutton service and report of Dutton and other anniversary services.



GRANDMOTHERS HONORED — That today's grandmother is by no means the staid individual you might expect is indicated by this happy group. They are members of Dutton Women's Institute who turned out in costume of yester-year for the annual grandmother's meeting and had a merry time. Seated, left to right,

Mesdames J. D. McCallum, Roy Lyons, Matilda Cole, Jack McNeil and Mac McKellar. Standing, l. to r., Mesdames J. U. Brown, Robt. Tansley, R. H. McNeil, James Bennett, Herb. Bentley, George Monteith, R. C. Drager, Bert Downey, Jack Stacey, J. T. Johnston and William Graham.

—Advance photo

Perhaps you have noticed inside the cover of some of the books at the Library a plate with "Mechanic's Institute" printed on it. That was the germ of Public Libraries. In the days of yore before automobiles were in circulation or even in existence, and when horses and carriages were not too plentiful, young men who were employed during the day were wont to meet in the evenings and discuss world affairs in general. They found themselves lacking in the knowledge of a great many things and desired to find a remedy. Their thoughts turned to books but where could such books as would help them be obtained? The answer they found by forming an institute and applying to the Department of Education for books.

It is interesting to learn of the early days of our own Public Library which still houses a few books that belonged to the "Mechanic's Institute". The idea of developing a library was first suggested by Neil A. Campbell, Principal of the Public School. He, with some other enterprising young men, drafted a letter to the Department of Education asking for a charter for their proposed Mechanic 's Institute. When that had been received and filed in the Registrar's office for the County of Elgin, he called a meeting to acquaint all interested in the project, that they were now in a position to elect a president and such other officers as should be required for the management of the now legally incorporated Mechanic's Institute. So, on November 18th, 1892, the following officers were elected - L.J. Willson, Chairman, Neil A. Campbell, Secretary, J.E. Saunders, Treasurer, and the members of the Board - Rev. Thos. Wilson, Rev. C.T. Scott, Rev. J. Hill, Rev. H. Randall, Dr. J. Cascadden, Dr. J.A. Shannon, James Poole, D.S. Skinner and J.D. Blue.

Committees were formed to look for a room, to draft by-laws and to decide on membership fees. By the time the next meeting was called, a room in the Leitch Block had been secured, so now the work of preparing the room to receive the books when purchased was the next duty of the committee. Three applications for the position of librarian were received but as the finances were as yet nil, it was agreed the

members of the board should take turns in being librarian until the treasury could stand paying a salary. A caretaker was a necessity as there were fires to start, lamps to clean and the room to keep clean. Alex. Crawford was the first Caretaker.

The sum of \$125.00 was agreed on for the purchase of new books. As this amount would need to be raised, a notice was inserted in the Advance stating that any contributions (either books or money) to the library would be greatly appreciated. The membership fee was set at \$1.00 per year and a few of the first subscribers were Dan McArthur, J.M. Blue, W.H. Cape, Mary Fowler, William Hollingshead, and Mr. A.E. White.

The precaution of placing \$200.00 insurance on books and fixtures proved its worth, for on April 7th, 1893, just four months after the opening of the Library the Leitch Block burned and the Library and contents were a total loss. Sixty volumes that were in the hands of the readers at the time represented all that was left of the enterprise.

Now began the task of rebuilding. For the next few months the Board meetings were held in L.J. Willson's store while the Board members were busy searching for new quarters and seeking means of raising money. One venture from which \$48.00 was cleared was an excursion to Detroit over the M.C.R. in August. A timely grant from the Government of \$90.00 came in the fall, but it was not until a year later that quarters were secured and the library able to be operated again. An excursion to Niagara Falls was sponsored by the Board that summer and the treasury replenished thereby.

In the fall of 1896 N.A. Campbell resigned as Secretary on account of his leaving to enter theological college. A. Patterson was elected to fill the position of Secretary.

In 1897 the Mechanic's Institute became a Free Public Library whereby the village council would be responsible for its support to the extent of 50cents per capita. This maintained for a few years when it reverted to an association library which it still is.

In 1898 Rev. J. Steven was elected Chairman to succeed L.J. Willson and a Miss McCallum was appointed librarian at a salary of \$40.00 per annum. A committee