

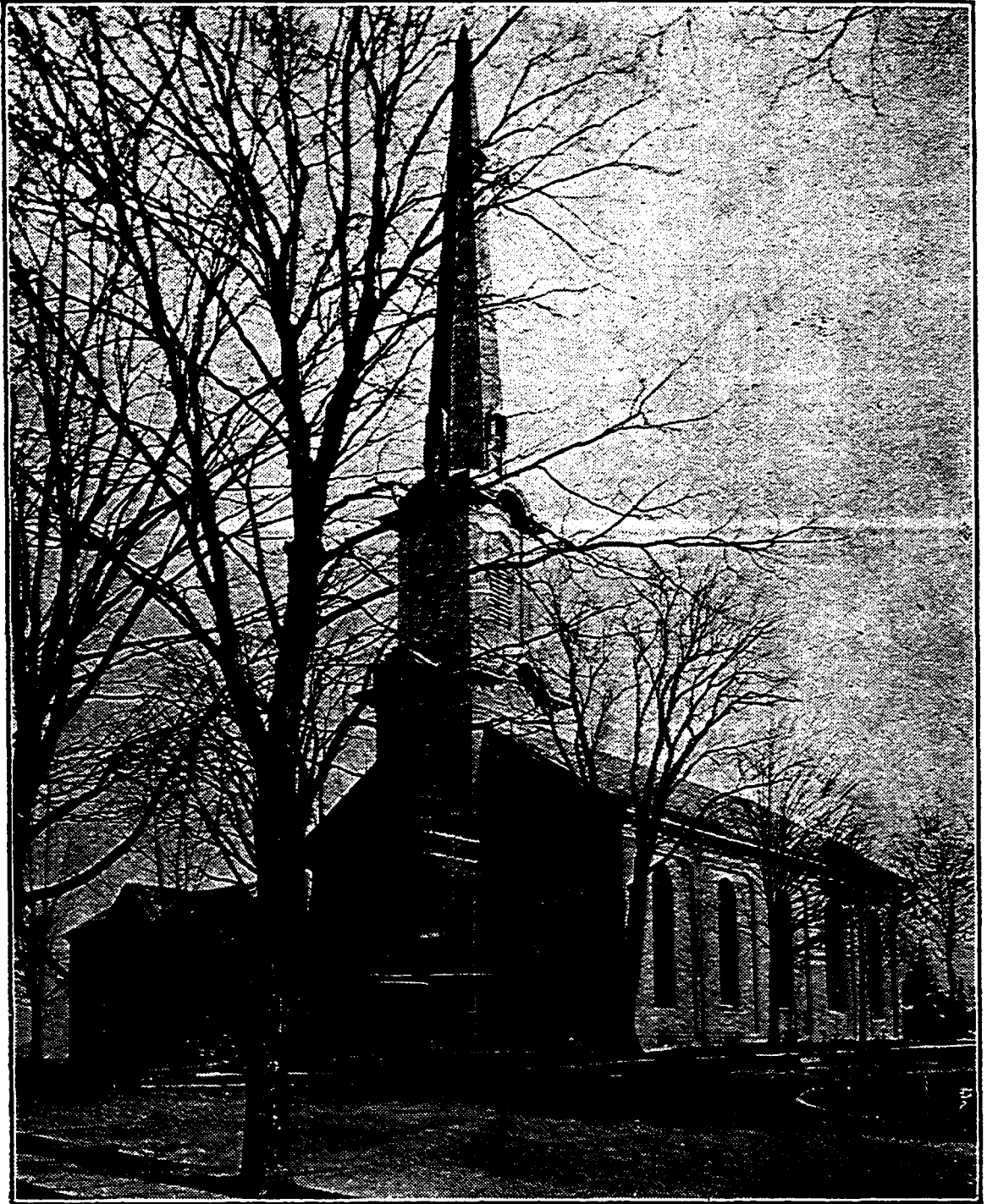
The One Hundred Fiftieth
ANNIVERSARY

of the

First Presbyterian Church

Newton, N. J.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

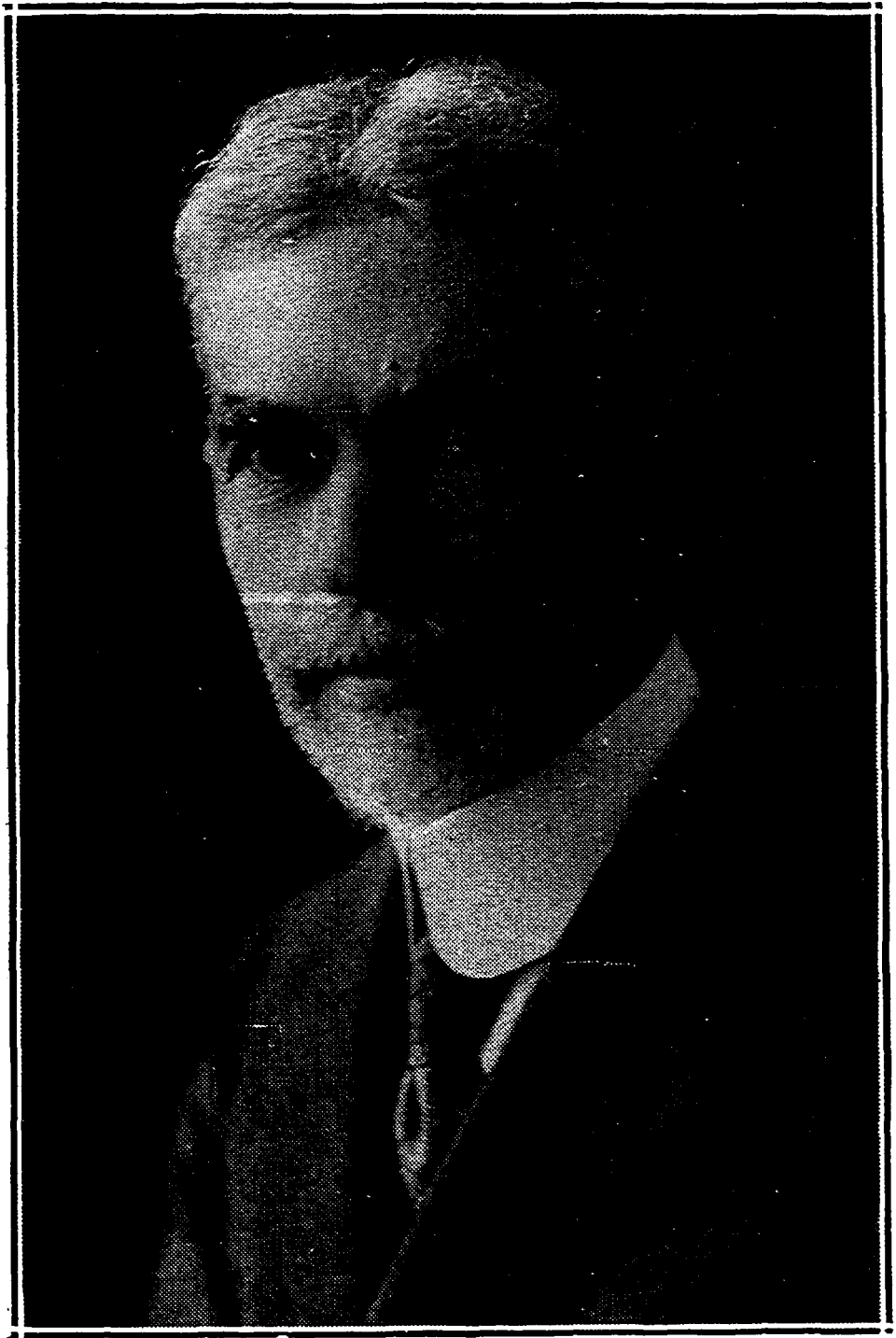
Newton, N. J.

Note—The Chapel in the picture above, is the one which was destroyed by fire February 15, 1931.



REV. J. CHARLES MCKIRACHAN

Pastor



REV. CLARENCE W. ROUSE, D. D.

Pastor Emeritus

Pastor 1903-1934

The Session

The following is almost a complete list of the session members of the Church. Unfortunately, the earliest records have been lost, and we are not sure how long before 1812 the first elders served. Some may have been members of the first session. Except for this uncertainty, the list is complete.

(* Means the elder died while in office)

Henry Johnson	1812-1826*
Benjamin Griggs	1812-1825*
Abram Gulick	1812-1814
John B. Griggs	1812-1824
Peter Hendershot	1814-1837*
Henry Couse, Jr.	1814-1827
Theodore Polhemus	1815-1820*
Lewis Howell	1819-1833
George Hopkins	1819-1819*
Benjamin Halsey	1823-1853*
William Mattison	1823-1859*
Joseph Y. Miller	1823-1839
Daniel Griggs	1830-1868*
John Trusdell	1830-1855*
Richard Brant	1830-1842
John Nyce	1847-1852
John Stephens	1847-1850
William Hunt	1855-1860*
Whitfield S. Johnson	1855-1863
John Sandford Smith	1857-
	ordained into ministry 1859
Martin Ryerson	1857-1875*
Thomas Ryerson	1862-1887*
Samuel Johnson	1862-1901*
David R. Hull	1862-1902*
S. H. Shafer	1866-1877*
John Linn	1866-1868
William P. Coursen	1866-1918*
James W. Lewis	1877-1894
David L. Foster	1877-1895*
W. W. Woodward	1901-1922*
Dr. M. N. Armstrong	1901-1904
Philip R. Hardin	1901-1921*

Philip S. Wilson	1901-1919
A. F. O'Donnell	1901-1911
Miles N. Atwood	1906-1912*
Dr. Charles J. Majory	1906-1909
Martin M. Fredenburg	1908-1930*
Clinton W. Kellam	1912-1933
Rolland T. Hull	1915-
Frank B. Boss	1918-1933
Elmer C. Savercool	1919-
William F. Howell	1920-1935
Irving J. Kern	1920-
William W. Roe	1923-1931
Austin J. McConnell	1930-
J. W. C. Carber	1931-1936*
Harvey S. Hopkins	1931-
John C. Losey	1933-
Clinton R. Hardin	1935-
Floyd W. Harding	1935-
Millard F. Goldsmith, Jr.	1936-

The Trustees

This list exhausts the resources of the existing records of the congregational meetings with regard to former and present trustees. The period represented by the dates is not always continuous but rather designates the beginning of the first term and the ending of the last recorded term.

James Primrose	-1823
John Johnson	-1829
Job S. Halsted	-1823
Peter Hendershot	-1823
John Couse	1823-1838
David Ryerson	1823-1838
Benjamin Halsey	1822-1838
Joseph Y. Miller	1829-1838
Joseph Greer	1830-1856
Thomas N. McCarter	-1863
Daniel Griggs	1828-1869
Isaac V. Coursen	-1856
James Deazley	-1857
Lyman Edwards	1856-1859

Samuel Cassidy	1856-1859
Samuel Smith	1856-1859
Edward C. Moore	-1866
William P. Nicholas	1858-1864
David R. Hull	1859-1905
Thomas H. Shafer	1859-
John Hunt	1859-1868
William W. Woodward	1862-1887
Daniel S. Anderson	1863-1870
Levi H. Truex	1864-1870
John Linn	1866-1869
George H. Mills	1865-1866
Joseph Coult	1868-1874
William P. Coursen	1868-1875
Ira G. Owen	1869-1870
Oakley B. Pellett	1869-1871
Levi Shepherd	1869-1873
David L. Foster	1870-1876
Dr. Jonathan Havens	1871-1879
Rev. Henry Rinker	1871-1875
John R. Hemingway	1873-1875
O. P. Woodford	1873-1886
James W. Lewis	1875-1880
Henry W. Merriam	1875-1895
W. S. Layton	1875-1878
Charles D. Thompson	1877-1884
Dr. Thomas Ryerson	1876-1879
Wm. McMurtry	1876-1883
Ira C. Moore	1878-1900
Martin Rosenkrans	1879-1898
H. O. Ryerson	1881-1905
Rev. L. I. Stoutenburg	1883-1887
William L. Dutcher	1884-1908
Anthony F. O'Donnell	1885-1902
Allen Rosenkrans	1886-1889
Francis J. Swayze	1886-1893
John J. Hibler	1887-1893
Thomas G. Bunnell	1887-1892
Milton N. Armstrong	1889-1896
Cyrus K. Foster	1891-1892
Wyatt W. Pierce	1892-1896

Jonas S. Decker	1893-1897
John N. Roof	1894-1901
William M. Slater	1897-1904
George A. Smith	1898-1905
Joseph E. Warbasse	1899-1914
Jacob L. Bunnell	1900-1929
Dr. Horace I. Beemer	1903-1905
William W. Roe	1901-1921
Dr. Charles J. Majory	1905-1907
J. W. C. Carber	1906-1932
John C. Howell	1905-1906
Andrew J. VanBlarcom	1905-1926
John M. Demarest	1906-1913
William W. Woodward, Jr.	1906-1925
Levi H. Morris	1907-1925
Edward M. Dutcher	1908-1939
Martin J. Cox	1912-1919
Jacob Hermann	1912-1918
Frank B. Boss	1913-1919
Horatio N. Crane	1914-1917
Harvey S. Hopkins	1914-1920
W. H. Mellor	1918-1924
William F. Howell	1912-1918
Charles L. Inslee	1919-1925
William J. Hardin	1924-1930
Andrew O. Luse	1924-1937
John H. Devore	1920-1936
Harry E. Demarest	1921-1927
William M. Armstrong	1925-1928
Frank E. Dunker	1925-1931
J. Russell Roof	1925-1938
Stephen D. Inslee	1927-1933
Douglas A. Evans	1928-1932
Clinton R. Hardin	1929-1935
J. Linn Lewis	1930-1936
Henry J. Woodward	1931-1937
John C. Losey	1932-1938
Walter W. Seals	1932-1938
Oliver W. Struble	1932-1937
F. Ernest Wallace	1936-1939
J. Rusling Cornell	1936-1939

An Historical Account of the First Presbyterian Church

By SUSAN DECKER ROE

This paper is a record of the historical data of the First Presbyterian Church of Newton, New Jersey. For information I am indebted to Snell's History of Sussex and Warren Counties, the files of the New Jersey Herald and Dr. Clarence W. Rouse.

The earliest record of the Presbyterian Church in Newton dates back to 1786, when application was made with the Hardwick Church, now Yellow Frame, for the ministerial services of the Reverend Ira Condit, under sanction of the Newton Presbytery. This application was granted. Mr. Condit came in 1787 and was installed as pastor of Hardwick, Newton and Shappanack. This installation took place at Hardwick. The Reverend John Witherspoon, the only clerical signer of the Declaration of Independence, preached the sermon and gave the charge to the pastor. Mr. Condit was said to have been a man of recognized ability and was pastor until 1793.

The first church edifice was begun in 1786. It faced Church Street. It was built of stone and was considered a large building for that time, although it was only forty five feet square and would seat three hundred persons. The pulpit was in the north end, with an overhanging soundingboard on which was perched a gilt dove bearing an olive branch. The cushions and hangings of the pulpit were of crimson material purchased in Philadelphia in 1803. Two brownstone tablets on which were engraved texts of scripture were placed over the doorways. These with the dove were transferred to the later church buildings and were in the chapel which burned in 1931. Nothing remains of the first church building but the ground on which it stood. This is a part of the foundation of the present church.

The Woodward family have in their possession a chair which was a part of the furniture of the pulpit of either the first or second church.

Services were carried on in the first church building without stove or fireplace, the minister often wearing mittens while preaching. The hours of service were announced by the ringing of the court house bell, the bell ringer having a free seat for the service. The sexton received a salary of five dollars a year. Singing then as now was an important feature of the service. Singing school was the popular amusement for winter evenings, Church hymns, the popular sing. Hymn books were not in general use, so it was

the practice to line the hymns. Harmony rather than melody predominated, but "Old Hundred" in those days could thrill the soul. The congregation was a long time completing the church because of financial difficulties and for a long time was embarrassed by debt. In 1809 the church petitioned the Legislature to legalize a lottery. It was to be called the Newton-Princeton lottery, as Princeton was to share the profits. The Legislature granted the authority, but the plan failed. The church was finally sold by the sheriff and purchased by Daniel Stuart. The second pastor, the Reverend Halloway Hunt, from 1795 to 1802, agreed to take the pew rentals or as much of them as he could collect for his yearly salary. The third pastor, Reverend John Boyd, 1803-1811, relinquished his salary. The church still owed Mr. Condit. This debt was not liquidated until 1818, when the church it is supposed was free from debt.

The Sabbath School was organized in 1812 by Mrs. Susan Crane in the old academy building, and was taught by the ladies of the congregation. At this time the need of a new church was agitated. The Reverend Joseph L. Shaffer was called to be the fourth pastor. He was pastor for a period of fifteen years before the project of building a new church materialized. In 1827 the old church was torn down and the new one started. In the mean time the congregation worshipped in Rinker's Hall, a brick structure on Park Place. The Hall of Records now occupies its site. The church was built of stone and had a seating capacity of six hundred. It cost six thousand dollars, and was finished in 1829. It was dedicated Wednesday, March the eighteenth, 1829. The following Sunday communion service was held in the church. Mr. Shaffer really had two pastorates, for he resigned in 1835 and went to Middletown Point. The Reverend Daniel M. Barber became pastor. His health failed and after three years he resigned. The church recalled Dr. Shaffer. He had recently received the honorary degree from Lafayette College. He came back to the church in 1838 and remained the pastor until his death in 1853. This was the longest pastorate in the history of the church, nearly forty years. During this period the church increased in numbers and influence.

The next pastor was Reverend Myron Barrett, 1854-1859. The first lecture room was built in 1856. It stood in the rear of the church. A. J. Skinner, of Marksboro, was the builder. The infant class was organized the same year, 1856. It was in charge of Mrs. John Trusdell, Miss Phoebe Townsend and Mrs. David Thompson. Mrs. Thompson's daughter, Miss Susan D. Thompson, taught the little children for a period of fifty-three years. Mr. Barrett was succeeded by the Reverend George S. Mott, 1859-1869. The

largest addition to the membership of the church at any one time was during his pastorate in 1865, when one hundred and twenty-four joined on profession of faith.

The Reverend Theodore L. Byington was called to become the next minister. He had been a missionary to Bulgaria under the American Board for nine years before he took up his work in this church and while here he so inspired the congregation with his interest in missions that when the Reverend Oscar Harden was sent as a missionary to Syria in 1872, the church resolved to support him and did so for several years. During his pastorate the second church gave place to the present edifice. The third on the same site, but facing High street. The corner stone was laid August nineteenth, 1869, with appropriate exercises. The Reverend George S. Mott and the Reverend Few Smith, D. D., of Newark, New Jersey, officiating. The other ministers present were the Reverends A. A. Haines, Myron Barrett, Joel Campbell, T. B. Condit and T. L. Byington. The building was completed in less than two years. The architects were C. S. Graham and son, of Elizabeth, New Jersey. It was dedicated May sixteenth, 1871. The dedicatory sermon was preached by the Reverend John Hall, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City. The church is a fine example of Gothic architecture. The walls are of native blue limestone, finished with six pilasters on each side of dressed stone three feet wide. There are five windows on each side, the intervening space between the windows and pilasters is laid up in rubble work. The front has pilasters three and one half feet wide, with three doors and a large window over each door. The ceiling of the auditorium is thirty feet high, with galleries on three sides. The organ and the choir occupying the gallery in the rear. It has a tower twenty feet square, surmounted by a spire which rises to the height of one hundred and eighty five feet. The total cost was fifty thousand dollars.

During its construction the congregation worshipped in the Methodist Church for a time, the Reverend J. N. Fitzgerald and Dr. Byington alternating at the services. Then the Episcopalians, who had just finished their present church, vacated Rinker's Hall and the Presbyterian congregation moved there until the church was completed.

In 1874 Dr. Byington resigned to go as a missionary to Constantinople. His going was regretted by everyone in the community. He was born and grew to manhood in Warren County and was known and loved by all. Reverend J. Addison Priest was called to succeed Dr. Byington, 1875-1880. After five years he was obliged to resign because of failing health.

Then followed the shortest pastorate in the history of the church. The Reverend Eugene Olney, less than two years. The church was without a pastor until May 1883, when Dr. Alexander H. Young was called. Under his leadership the stone chapel adjacent to the church was built in 1886. A gem of no particular architecture, with three handsome memorial windows, two in the auditorium, one the gift of the Thompson-Hull family, the other the gift of Mr. Henry W. Merriam. The third window opened on the balcony, the gift of the Misses Hedges. The interior of the chapel was finished with Georgia pine and California redwood. The chapel was admirably adapted to the various branches of church work and filled a long felt need.

In 1888 the young people were organized into a "Christian Endeavor Society." The motto for "Christ and the Church." This society was very active for a number of years. After eight years of faithful service Dr. Young resigned. The church was again without a pastor for more than a year, when Dr. Samuel Carlyle was chosen by the congregation. He took up his duties in May 1892, but was not installed until November the first of that year. Shortly after Dr. Carlyle became pastor he preached a sermon from the text, "Beautify My House." This made so deep an impression on the congregation that they resolved to put into action plans for the remodeling and modernizing the interior of the church. It was twenty years since anything had been done and the interior had never corresponded with the exterior. Plans were drawn and estimates made. Mr. Henry W. Merriam made a generous offer of ten thousand dollars, if the congregation would give six. Pledges to the amount of eight thousand, six hundred dollars were promised and the work was begun August the seventh, 1893. The old plaster cornices and center pieces were taken down and a new ceiling of paneled oak with four ventilators took its place. The choir was moved from the rear to the front of the church and a new organ was installed. The frame of the galleries was lowered and surmounted with a brass railing. The side galleries were connected with the choir gallery by a flight of stairs. Rooms were placed either side of the pulpit, one for a vestibule, the other for a private reception room for the pastor. The new pews were of quartered oak, amphitheatre in style, cushioned with elastic felt covered with English mohair damask. Four aisles instead of three. The pulpit and its furniture with the communion table were of quartered oak. The windows of opalescent glass. Three large chandeliers of antique brass were suspended from the ceiling, also lights under the galleries. The newel posts at either end of the choir gallery have brass candelabra with seven branches. When the work

was completed the necessary repairs had been made in the chapel and a floating debt of two thousand dollars had been paid, there was a balance in the treasury of six hundred dollars. A church property free from encumbrance. The remodeled church was dedicated February first, 1894. Dr. A. H. Young preached the sermon; Dr. George S. Mott gave congratulations and reminiscences and Dr. Carlyle an historical address. February the eighth Wenham Smith, of Newark, gave two recitals on the new organ.

At this time the church was contributing six hundred dollars annually to the Board of Foreign Missions for the salary of the Reverend H. D. Noyes at Canton, China. The Ladies Sewing or Benevolent Society sent two boxes of clothing each year to missionaries in the then far west. This society also contributed to the social life of the church.

The earliest record of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society is 1876, but a Home Missionary Society had been working in the church for fifty years prior to that date. These societies have been carried on by the splendid women of the church and much efficient work has been accomplished. The eighteen nineties were the days when Chautauqua circles flourished. Dr. Carlyle organized a circle. It was called the Chautauqua Literary Society of the Presbyterian Church. At first the meetings were held at the homes of the members, later in the chapel parlors. He was a fine leader. His teaching an inspiration. The society continued until he resigned. In June 1902, Dr. Carlyle asked permission of Presbytery to resign after ten years of devoted service.

The Reverend Clarence W. Rouse was installed as pastor June the twenty-second, 1903. The Reverend Peter McQueen, D. D., of Boston, preached the sermon; Reverend A. H. Young gave the charge to the congregation, and Reverend J. DeHart Bruen, of Belvidere, gave the charge to the pastor. Under Dr. Rouse's leadership the Woman's Society was organized May the fifth, 1905, with Miss Helen A. Pierce as president. Its aim was to provide for the needs of the church and to direct the social affairs. It took the place of a Pastor's Aid Society, which had been in existence some years before. The Ladies' Benevolent Society, the oldest society in the church was still active. The Brotherhood, an organization for the men of the church, was formed in 1906. "The Watchers," the second of the name, a band for young girls, was organized. Its object the cultivation of missionary interest. In 1915 "The Guild" was organized. Their early efforts were the war work for the church. After these activities ceased they have taken an interest in and performed any necessary work pertaining to the welfare of the church.

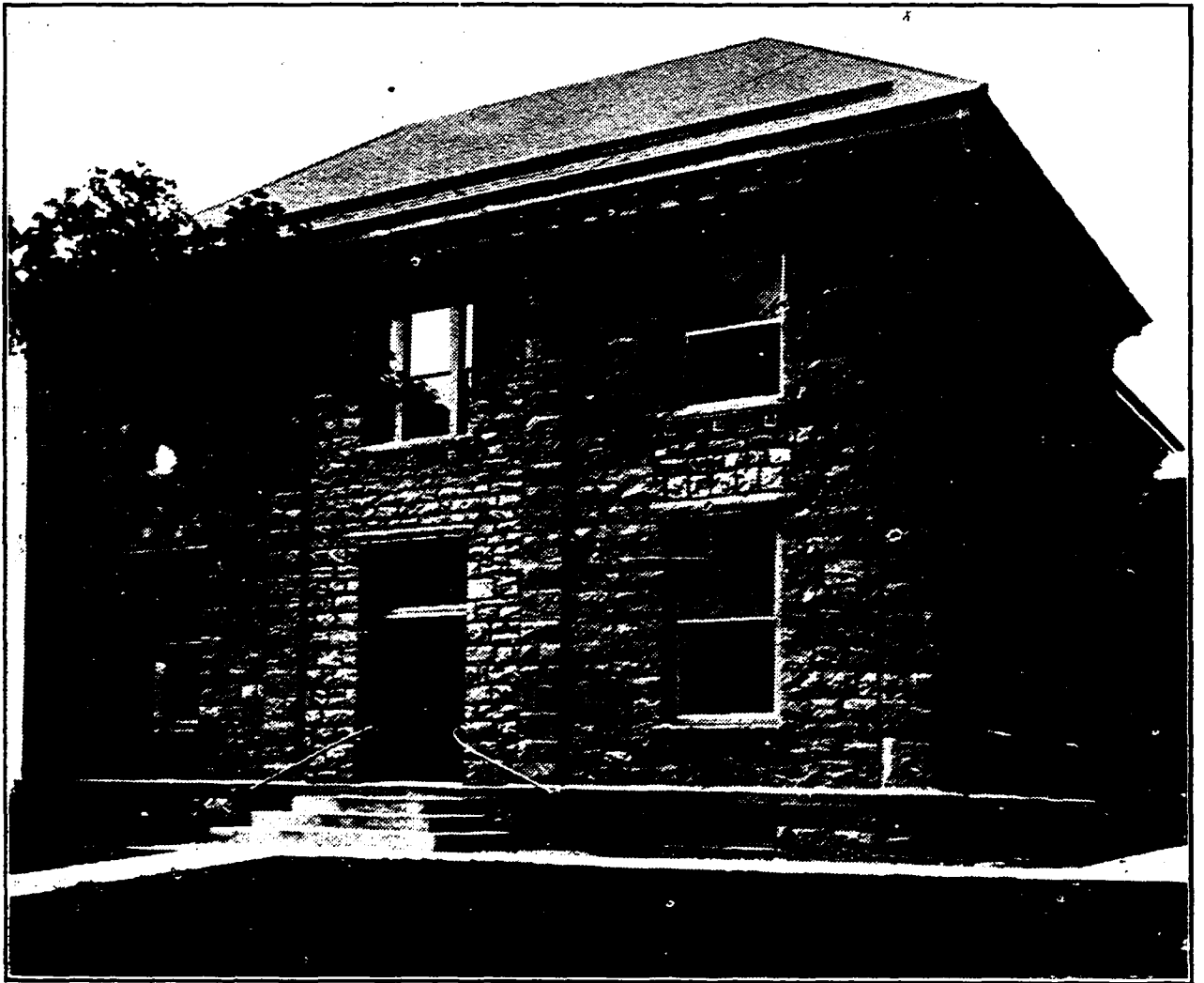
A new addition to the chapel, consisting of a modern kitchen and "Recreation Hall," was completed in 1930 at a cost of forty thousand dollars. February the fifteenth, 1931, the beautiful chapel erected in 1886, was destroyed by fire. Nothing but the stone walls were left of the original chapel. The new kitchen and Recreation Hall were saved. A new chapel was built by Mr. Clinton W. Kellam, an architect and an elder of the church. It is two stories, in the first floor is an auditorium seating about two hundred people and two large rooms; up stairs there are six class rooms, a kitchenette and two parlors. The floors are oak, the trimming chestnut. The cost without the furnishings was eighteen thousand dollars. It was dedicated September the twenty third, 1931, Dr. Rouse conducting the exercises, Mr. Kellam giving the keys to the board of trustees.

The church property today could not be replaced for the sum of two hundred thousand dollars. It is a monument to the integrity and devotion of the congregation. It could not have been built without the cooperation of the people down through the century. The Spirit of God is represented in the world by the church. May we, the congregation of today, value this inheritance and be worthy of the sacrifice it cost, and bring our best gift, the gift of personal service to its altar.

Dr. Rouse resigned in October, 1934. A long pastorate of thirty-one years. The honor of Pastor Emeritus was conferred upon him. "The churches one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord," was ever Dr. Rouse's message to his people. He said of the church, "never forget that it is yours not the minister's; built by the precious blood of Christ; that it is your spiritual mother, the source from which you derive your knowledge of the scriptures, of the love of God in Christ, your hope of eternal life. Love it, spend and be spent for it."

The present pastor, the Reverend J. Charles McKirachan, was installed July the ninth, 1935. Dr. A. W. Blackwood preached the sermon; Dr. C. W. Rouse gave the charge to the pastor elect, and the Reverend C. R. Comfort, Jr., the charge to the people. During the short time Mr. McKirachan has been the pastor he has been instrumental in uniting the women's organizations of the church into a federation, made plans for the celebration of the sesquicentennial and carried on the regular work of the church.

For one hundred and fifty years this church has rendered effective service for the community. Its graceful spire broadcasts for miles around the text the pioneers of the first church placed over their doorway, "Thou shalt keep my sabbaths and revere my sanctuary."



The Church School

The Church School was organized in 1812 by Mrs. Susan Crane in the old Academy building. In 1886 the chapel which was destroyed in 1931 by fire, was built. The chapel as it is today is on the site and utilizes what was left of the former building. The Church School had considerable reorganization in 1856 and the following is a list of the men who have been Superintendent of the Church School since that time:

W. P. Nicholas	1856-1857
Thomas Ryerson	1858-
S. H. Shafer	1859-1860
Martin Ryerson	1861-
Samuel Johnson	1862-
T. N. McCarter	1863-1864
Joseph Coult	1865-1867
David R. Hull	1868-1890
William W. Woodward	1890-1896
Dr. M. N. Armstrong	1896-1905
A. F. O'Donnell	1905-1910
Rolland T. Hull	1910-1917
John C. Losey	1917-1925
Charles H. Reagle	1925-1934
Louis H. Budd	1934-

The Officers of the Church

THE SESSION

J. Charles McKirachan, Moderator
 Rolland T. Hull, Clerk
 Elmer Savercool
 Irving J. Kern
 Austin J. McConnell
 Harvey S. Hopkins
 John C. Losey
 Clinton R. Hardin
 Floyd W. Harding
 Millard F. Goldsmith, Jr.
 Frank I. Farrell, Clerk of the Congregation

THE TRUSTEES

Walter W. Seals, President
 J. R. Cornell
 Edward M. Dutcher
 John C. Losey
 Andrew O. Luse
 J. R. Roof
 Oliver W. Struble
 Ernest F. Wallace
 Henry J. Woodward

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Louis H. Budd, Superintendent
 Austin J. McConnell, Assistant Superintendent
 Miss Ilsa Depew, Corresponding Secretary
 Condit B. Roy, Recording Secretary
 Walter Coriell, Assistant Recording Secretary
 Miss Gertrude Beemer, Treasurer
 Mrs. N. Eugene Willson, Superintendent Cradle Roll
 Mrs. Garfield W. Jones, Ass't Superintendent Cradle Roll
 Miss Gladys Reeder, Superintendent Beginners Dept.
 Miss Margaret L. Sparling, Supt. Primary Department
 Mrs. John Stickle, Superintendent Junior Department
 John Hallock Whitfield, Superintendent Senior Department
 Mrs. Wm. T. Pannell, Superintendent Home Department
 Carroll F. Mynard, Orchestra Leader

TEACHERS

Miss Gladys Reeder	Miss Gladys Snyder
Miss Gladys Wolfe	Miss Ilsa Depew
Miss Louise Butler	Miss Jean Sasse
Miss Theodosia Boss	Miss Betty Hardin
Miss Eda Mason	Miss Irene Roy
Miss Margaret Sparling, Supt.	Garfield W. Jones
Mrs. Coit Monks	William Aumick
Mrs. Roberta Blesskany	Mrs. Harry Lewis
Mrs. John H. Whitfield	Rev. J. C. McKirachan
Mrs. George Mosby	Francis W. Morrow
Miss Elizabeth Snook	Miss Florence Beemer
Miss Jessie Trusdell	Russell Gill
Miss Lesta Condit	Mrs. Richard Martin
Miss Marion Roy	

THE FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S SOCIETIES

Mrs. Robert T. Adams, President
Mrs. Millard F. Goldsmith, Jr., First Vice President
Mrs. William L. Mann, Second Vice President
Mrs. Ernest Roy, Corresponding Secretary
Mrs. M. L. Plumer, Recording Secretary
Mrs. Harvey S. Hopkins, Treasurer
Mrs. J. R. Roof, Member at large from Senior League
Mrs. John Devore, Member at large from the Guild
Mrs. Wilson Hopkins, Member at large from the Guild
Mrs. J. R. Cornell, Member at large from the Senior League
Mrs. E. M. Dutcher, Honorary Member

THE SENIOR LEAGUE

Mrs. Millard F. Goldsmith, Jr., President
Mrs. John R. Cornell, Vice President
Mrs. Martin J. Cox, Secretary-Treasurer

THE SERVICE GUILD

Mrs. William L. Mann, President
Mrs. Wilson Hopkins, Vice President
Miss Frances Slater, Secretary
Miss Theodosia Boss, Treasurer

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Miss Kate J. Woodward, President
Mrs. Frank A. Roe, Vice President
Miss May Swarts, Secretary
Mrs. Jacob Hermann, Treasurer
Mrs. D. L. Fisher, Assistant Treasurer
Mrs. Mary E. Konkle, Secretary of Literature

THE BROTHERHOOD

Garfield W. Jones, President
A. R. Stickle, Vice President
William L. Mann, Secretary
Harold Gebhardt, Treasurer

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Fred S. Fountain, President
Sarah Margaret Halsted, Vice President
Mary Gertrude Strader, Secretary
Ellen Losey, Treasurer
Mrs. Frank Roe, Historian for the 150th Anniversary
Harold N. Coriell, Church Historian

THE CHOIR

F. Ernest Wallace, President
Mrs. Moses N. Strader, Organist and Music Director