

October 23rd, 1957

ADENDUM:

Remarks about St. John's Anglican Church, York Mills, as supplied by Mr. George H. Gooderham of Calgary, Alberta.

To the south and to the east and beyond St. John's Church there was originally a small Baptist Church. This Church lost its congregation and was unused, and a few years ago was demolished. To the south of the Church is a small graveyard in which a number of pioneer families are buried, and to the immediate south of that is a small cottage in which the resident Pastors lived in the early days, possibly until the Church was discontinued. This cottage has been renovated and is apparently in reasonably good condition and is occupied.

The foregoing is submitted because Reverend Ezekiel Gooderham was the very first of the name to come to Toronto with his brother-in-law James Worts, and was Pastor of this Baptist Church on or about the time it was erected in the 1830's. This old Church was built in the woods and it was quite evident that much of the lumber was hewn from nearby trees. This was particularly evident in the floors.

In the adjoining Churchyard my great grandfather, Rev. Ezekiel Gooderham and his wife are buried as well as some of this branch of the Gooderham family whom I understand lived and farmed in and about this area, even until recent years, when the farms were absorbed by the Township.

The Writer does not know any of these families, as his Grandfather, son of Ezekiel Gooderham, moved to Meadowvale from Wexford in 1868, where he managed the Gooderham farms connected with the Grist Mill, which was under the management of Mr. C. H. Gooderham. This branch of the family remained for many years in Meadowvale and the remaining link is a William Ezekiel Gooderham, youngest son of George, who lives in retirement in the village and is now 92 years old.

Of my generation there is only one male cousin living, who is Mr. Ronald M. Gooderham of Toronto. He lived for many years in London, England, and on his

return to Toronto in 1947?? he got a home in York Mills area, and on one of my visits to his home I stated that it was rather interesting that he had returned to the spot in which his family had originated. Apparently he did not know this fact, and I pointed across the ravine in the general direction of the Church, and told him that was where his Great Grandparents had lived.

As a result, we visited the area, going about the Church and the yard, noting that everything was in great disrepair, and we felt it was our proper business to see what could be done to preserve this landmark.

Since it was a Baptist Church, we made an appointment with the Secretary of the Baptist Church for Canada, and in an interview with this gentleman learned that the disposition of the property had been one of his problems. He stated he had approached the Attorney General of Ontario, who said the Church could readily be removed and the property disposed of to advantage, and even the graveyard could be taken over and the bodies moved if it was thought that it was obstructing development. Actually we were shocked at this statement and said we thought this should not happen. The Reverend gentleman however was nonplussed and smilingly said "after all, this was not a true Baptist Church, for the ordinances that were prepared at the time of its establishment and prior to the construction of the Church included one which was not at any time recognized by the Baptists, that there should be two gallons of whisky at the raising"; nevertheless, he said he would do what he could towards its preservation and asked for our co-operation. Apparently there was a good many friends who wished well for this historical spot and its preservation, but none could see any particular reason for leaving the Church building, and this was demolished. However, before this my cousin and I had obtained the old bibles with certain writings which we presume were by our Great Grandfather, and other small items.

15

To my great surprise and happiness, when I visited the site again three years ago with Mr. & Mrs. Gooderham we found that the graveyard had been preserved and enclosed with a very high and strong iron fence, and furthermore, that a beam from the Church had been removed and used in the recent addition to the St. John's Anglican Church, on which was placed a small plaque explaining where it had come from.

To my rather biased mind this is a link worth recording in respect to the early development of Yonge Street and particularly York Mills or Hogg's Hollow.