

FOREWORD

This little sketch of Trinity Church was first suggested by the Minister and, with the approval of the churchwardens. I have attempted to gather and edit material of historical interest. This booklet is not intended to be an official or complete history of Little Trinity; it simply touches on some of the highlights of 122 years in the service of Almighty God in this part of the city.

I am indebted to Miss Doreen Livingstone for her article and the hours spent on research. To her most of the credit is due. Mrs. Eva Wilson generously provided copies of the 1918 and 1943 booklets from which some old photographs have been reproduced. Miss Gertrude Simon also provided pictures. A special word of appreciation is due to Mr. William Orr of Upper Canada College who searched for, and discovered, an old photograph of our first Incumbent, the Reverend William H. Ripley. The management of Gooderham & Worts Limited co-operated in making available pictures of their founders. To these and other contributors, a sincere "thank you."

J.D.P.

4th May, 1965.



THE REVEREND WILLIAM H. RIPLEY
DIED 1884-1885

The Reverend William Honeywood Ripley

B.A. (Oxford) — 1833-1834

The Reverend W. H. Ripley was the eldest son of the Rev. T. H. Ripley, Rector of Toulminham and Vicar of Stoughton Hamlet, Wiltshire. He was sent to Rugby—at that time flourishing under the gifted Doctor Arnold. He proceeded to Oxford and graduated in 1835. After he had taken his degree he travelled on the Continent for several months and then set out for Canada full of romantic ideas of a life in the bush. His intention was to settle on land. However, he took the advice of a well informed friend to reside with a farmer for some months before he purchased a farm for himself, in order to gain practical experience of the trials and privations so different to what he had been accustomed.

In accordance with this advice Mr. Ripley proceeded to Ancaster where he remained until Mr. Charles Baper, who knew his family, offered him the appointment of Principal of Upper Canada College. He declined this tempting offer, not wishing to be placed over the heads of those who had been long in office and therefore accepted instead the inferior appointment of Second Classical Master. Shortly afterwards he determined to enter the ministry. After going through a severe course of reading he was admitted to holy orders by Dr. Strachan on 29th October, 1841.

Trinity Church was meeting completion but there was no endowment for a minister, and a heavy debt still remained unpaid. Such was the gloomy appearance of things when Mr. Ripley came forward to take the incumbency without fee or reward. He not only gave his time, but also regularly paid a fifth of his income for the advancement of the Church. Under his guidance a schoolhouse was built accommodating 200

children who received a free education. The debt on the Church was liquidated.

In 1844, Mr. Ripley accepted the office of honorary Secretary to the Diocesan Church Society.

In July of 1848 he was married to Miss Small in Trinity Church, Dr. Strachan performing the ceremony. The Ripleys visited friends in England and Mr. Ripley saw his aged father for the last time. Returning from England, Mr. Ripley plunged into his laborious duties although his energy of mind was not equalled by his bodily strength. He was one of the first to be attacked by the Cholera epidemic and after a few weeks died in prayer on the 22nd October, 1849.

The Church Newspaper reports: "The funeral took place on Wednesday afternoon, and was the largest and most respectable we have ever seen in Toronto. The Lord Bishop was present, many of the clergy from the country, the Chief Justice and Attorney-General, the President of King's College was there, the Professor of Divinity, the Masters of U.C. College and all the pupils. Six of the parishioners acted as pall-bearers. As the sorrowful procession slowly wended down King Street, we observed that many of the shops were closed. In fact, everything was done that could evince sorrow for the loss of the deceased, and sympathy with the surviving relatives in their bereavement."

"The corpse was met at the door of Trinity Church by the Rev. Mr. Grosset, and the appropriate sentences read. After entering the sacred building, a thrillingly solemn dirge was played on the organ by Mr. Strachy, of his own composition, and as the music, seemingly of unearthly sweetness, floated around, it was mingled with heavy sob, and scarce trickled from eyes that had long been unused to weep."

"After the lesson was read, another dirge was played, and the funeral proceeded to the family vault of C. C. Small, Esq., the father-in-law of the deceased."

The Little Church on the Road to Quebec

by Dorcas Livingstone

The Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, Colonel John Graves Simcoe, selected York as the capital of Upper Canada in 1793. In that year the site of York was but a dense forest, which deer and wild fowl shared with the Indians. Simcoe had his surveyors plot out the first town of about thirty acres near the Eastern end of the harbour and, by 1795, York comprised no more than twelve houses. One of these first houses was at the corner of Berkeley Street and King Street East, of seven logs and beams, and situated only a few steps from the present site of Trinity Church.

York grew Westward rather than toward the Don River for in 1800 much of the land to the East of the town proper (taking in the whole of what was to be the parish of Trinity Church) was Government property reserved for the proposed erection of future Government buildings. This tract of land was officially known as the 'Park'. Some years later, because of a change in Government plans, the 'Park' was divided into lots and sold.

In those early days the main thoroughfare of York was King Street which ran East and West. In line with the bay, until it reached the Eastern limits of the early town (Berkeley Street). Once a traveller reached this point, on his way from town, he was said to be on the 'Road to Quebec' or the 'Kingston Road'.

In 1834 York was incorporated as a City and took its original Indian name, Toronto, meaning 'a place where many people meet'. It was indeed becoming a place where many people met. The population was well over 10,000; it was lighted



THE REVEREND CANON ALEXANDER SANSON
Incumbent 1870-1894

by gas and the waterworks were in progress. The vendors in the market square, which held townsmen who used various languages, were held to be outmoded and 1834 saw the end of this particular indignity. Not so the public hangings. These were very popular and were to continue for some years yet.

The waterfront of the new City was a hive of industry. There were steamers running hourly to and from Niagara, Hamilton, Cobville and Port Credit. Not only steamers, but sailing vessels and fishing boats of every description dotted the spacious harbour.

But for the citizens of Toronto there was a new object to view on the waterfront. In 1832 Mr. James Worts, a newly-arrived sailor from England, built a picturesque windmill at the Eastern end of the harbour, at the mouth of a small tributary of the Don; this windmill was to become a well-known landmark. By the 1840's the farmers arriving in town on the Kingston Road would deliver their load of grain to the mill by way of Windmill Road; this road had been cleared and graded as far as the Kingston Road cross King Street East by Mr. Avery and his partner and brother-in-law, William Gooderham.

It was at this very corner, where Windmill Road met the Kingston Road, that on July 12, 1842, a group of zealous and devout churchmen decided a House of God should be built for the several hundred residents of the 'Park'. Many of these members of the United Church of England and Ireland were Irish Protestants. They did not live within the sound of the church-going bell of St. James' Cathedral, which was situated further West on King Street and the only other Church of England at that time in the City. Thus it was that, in 1843, Trinity Church was built for the spiritual needs of the 'Park' residents.

Many citizens assisted materially in the building of the Church. John Strachan, first Bishop of Toronto, and Chief Justice John Beverley Robinson, both gave land. Alexander

Dixon, an Abolitionist, secured the grant and, with the assistance of Messrs. Wm. Gooderham, Joshua G. Beard, Joseph Shuter, Enoch Turner, Wm. Cowthra and Samuel Mitchell, the Church was erected at a cost of one thousand, eight hundred pounds sterling).

The first service was preached on February 14, 1844, by the Bishop of Toronto when Trinity in the "Park" was dedicated to the Glory of God.

The plans of the Church were drawn up by Mr. H. B. Lamb, an English architect who had settled in Toronto. It is a



ENLARGED CHURCH 1868-1861

fine specimen of picturesque Gothic. The plans called for a spire of some thirty feet to soar above the tower; however, lack of funds at the time prevented this and Trinity is, to this day, without a spire. The Church was lighted by oil lamps until 1858 when a motion was made to proceed with the installation of gas lamps "in the most economical and tasteful manner". Heavy stones with ugly pipes marred the interior of the Church and the congregation sat on high-backed pews. Two-thirds of the seats were free while the remainder were private pews.

From baptismal records we learn that the early congregations consisted of mariners, bricklayers, servants, farmers, potters, coachmakers, coachmen, tinners, keepers, candlemakers, coopers, lamp-lighters, bookbinders, keepers in the jail and those who termed themselves "gentlemen".

Also from early Church records we note the names of those who not only assisted in the founding of Trinity but who continued to support it. Mr. Wm. Gooderham was Church Warden for thirty-five years and contributed both time and money to the furtherance of God's Holy Word in that part of the City. Memorial tablets in the Church today attest to the prominent part this family played in the early history of Trinity Church.

The name of Enoch Turner, brewer, also appeared frequently in the earliest records. He was a most generous contributor towards the spiritual and material welfare of Trinity. In 1850 he donated fourteen acres of land to pay for the construction of a gallery. He was responsible for the erection of a School House, now the Sunday School, which stands today and which still tells the world, in bold letters, that it was **BUILT BY ENOCH TURNER — 1848**.

The first incumbent of Trinity Church was the Reverend William Honeywood Ripley, B.A. The memorial tablet relates that he "devoted himself during the six years of his ministry, freely, without money and without price, to the advancement



REVEREND CANON THOMAS B. O'HEARA
Incumbent 1904-1906

of the spiritual and temporal welfare of this congregation and neighbourhood, and to the great increase among them of the knowledge of Christ and His Church", and "fell asleep in Jesus on Monday, 22nd October, 1849, aged 34 years".

A picture of Mr. Ripley's parish may be obtained by referring to maps of the time. Directly South of the Church, near the windmill, was the new jail, built in 1840, where thousands of citizens went to see the public hangings. South-west of the Church were the new gas works, built also in 1840, on the site of the old Parliament Buildings. These same gas works have just recently been torn down.

Directly across from the Church, on the Kingston Road, the houses were for the most part, one storied, frame structures, with neat gardens, surrounded by woods. In one such house lived Mr. Watson, a prominent figure in the early life of the Church, who lost his life during the great fire of 1849. It was in this same fire that the first Church of England in Toronto, St. James', was destroyed, thus making Trinity the oldest surviving church in the city.

Three years later, in 1852, Canon Alexander Sanson became Rector of Trinity and was to remain for over half a century. In 1895 Canon Sanson was said to be the oldest clergyman in charge of any City congregation in the English and Irish Church. In spite of this, he remained on duty at Trinity for a further twenty years.

When Trinity Church had just passed its 50th anniversary, one of the members caught the vision of the church's mission in far off places. In the following 25 years — from 1894 to 1919—25 missionaries set out from Little Trinity for service in Japan, China, Persia, Egypt, India and the Arctic. The work of the late Bishop White in China and the Rev. C. A. Sadler in Chile has inspired many.

In his time as Rector, Canon Sanson saw tremendous changes, both within the Parish and within the City itself. He