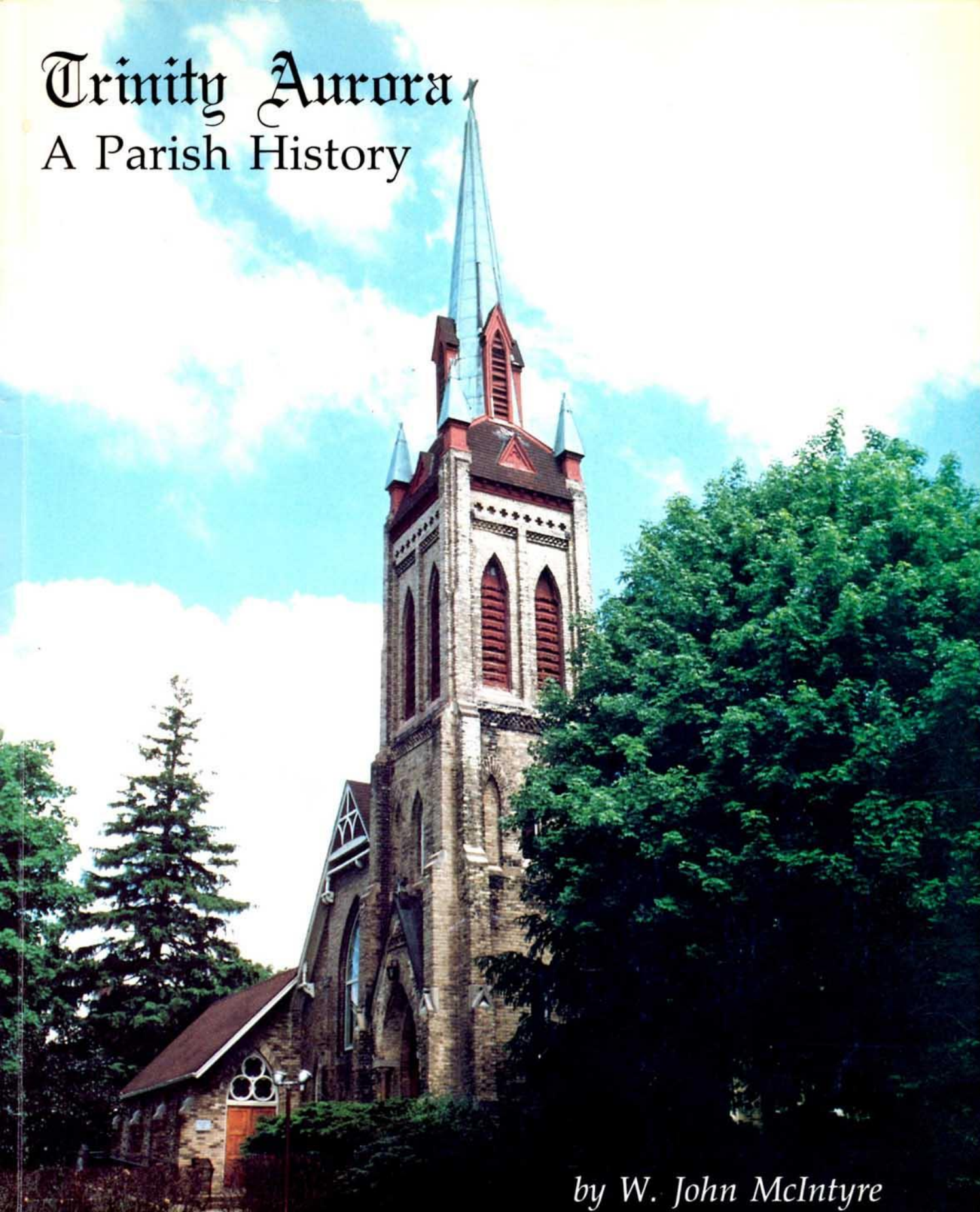


# Trinity Aurora

## A Parish History



*by W. John McIntyre*

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*by W. John McIntyre*

*Trinity Anglican Church Sesquicentennial Committee  
Aurora, Ontario, Canada  
1996*



## *Foreword by the Rector*

Good drivers have learned that they must check their rear view mirrors before they head out on their journey and, indeed, they must continually glance at the rear view mirror if they are to complete their journey safely.

This book is an effort by Trinity Aurora to check its rear view mirror, to look at the history of the first 150 years in the life of this parish before heading off into the future.

It is said that experience is the best teacher, but I am persuaded that experience teaches nothing. It is only when we reflect upon experience that we learn.

These pages, so skilfully written by our parish archivist and historian, Dr. John McIntyre, contain some of the stories, anecdotes, people, and faith which make up the experience of the family at Trinity. To the casual reader, I say, enjoy. You will learn something of the unique flavour of Trinity and something of its contribution to this part of our province. To those more intimately connected to this church, I say, read with discernment. Reflect on the legacy left to us by men and women of faith. Learn from their mistakes. Admire their courage. Note the number of times they took risks in the name of our Lord. Reflect on the exciting and awesome responsibility with which we have been presented as we continue the tradition we have inherited.

We have come a long way from our humble beginnings in Machell's Corners. For 150 years, Trinity Aurora has sought to witness in mission and ministry to its community and beyond. What the next 150 years hold we can only imagine. As we travel that road in faith, do not forget to check your rear view mirror.

By way of postscript, may I thank all those involved in our Sesquicentennial Committee whose task it is to oversee our 150th anniversary year and whose vision it was to publish this book. In particular, I wish to express my gratitude to Chris Armstrong for her dedication, professionalism, and faith.

Father Philip Poole

# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	6
Chapter 1. In the Beginning .....	7
2. The First Church Building, 1846 .....	11
3. The Second Church Building, 1884 .....	19
4. At the Turn of the Century.....	29
5. "The Great War" and a New World.....	35
6. World War II and the Baby Boom Years .....	41
7. New Challenges, New Directions .....	51
Rectors at Trinity Church .....	69
Assistant Clergy .....	69
Wardens .....	70
Organists and Choir Directors.....	71
Picture Credits .....	72

## Introduction

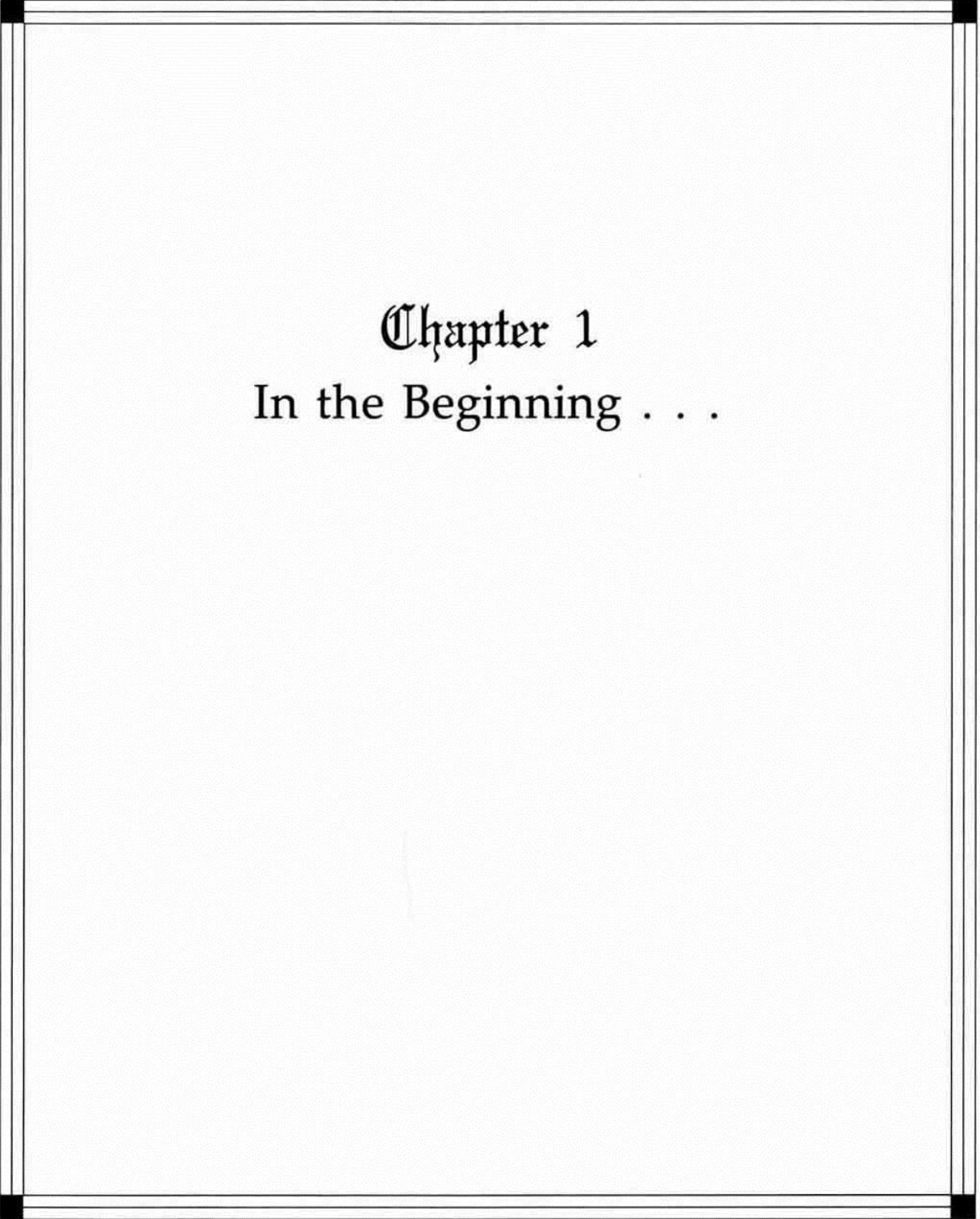
The history of a parish is not easy to write. It can become merely a self-congratulatory list of names, dates, buildings, and memorials. Parts of this history of Trinity Aurora may seem like that since the kind of written information church historians have to consult is so limited. We can find out and record when something was done or when something was built, but it is far more difficult to get at the real history of a parish which, after all, is an incredibly complex story of Christian community. How can we possibly record in any adequate way the real history of Trinity, the joys, hopes, faith, love, grief, sorrow, doubts, and human frailties which have marked the spiritual lives of people over more than 150 years? How can we document the prayers, smiles, and tears, the special feeling when someone has offered to help, the thrill of singing the words of a beloved hymn, or the healing joy of a visit in hospital? Yet these form the real history known to those who are part of this church. For their part of the story, a lot of between-the-lines reading will be necessary. For Anglicans who are accustomed to see spiritual truths embodied in material things, information about changing rituals and putting up and tearing down buildings may contain hidden truths.

Trinity is fortunate to have a large collection of parish records. Vital statistics in the form of records regarding births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths are complete from the founding of the parish to the present day and have been microfilmed by the Diocesan Archives. The church's earliest vestry books and financial records were destroyed by fire in 1878, but the beginnings of the parish can be traced thanks to two letters copied into Trinity's parish register of 1849-97. One is from John Mosley to the Rev. S. F. Ramsey, the other from Ramsey to the Rev. W.H. Stewart, both dating from December, 1860, telling of the parish's first services and the building of its first church. After 1878, there are complete sets of vestry minute books up to the present day, a large assortment of financial records, and the minutes of various parish organizations, including the 1883-84 building committee and the Woman's Auxiliary, forerunner of today's Anglican Church Women. Other important information may be found in issues of the *Aurora Banner*. Equally important are the archival collections and genealogical files of the Aurora and District Historical Society at the Aurora Museum and Hillary House. Foremost among secondary sources are John Matthew Willis's manuscript history of the church, written in 1936 and preserved in our church archives. It formed the basis for a booklet published in 1946 to mark Trinity's centennial. James Johnston's 1963 *Aurora: Its Early Beginnings* and my own 1988 *Aurora: A History in Pictures* have provided background information about the community of which Trinity is so much a part.

Many people helped make this book possible: special thanks go to Father Philip Poole, Chris Armstrong and Trinity's Sesquicentennial Committee, the staff of the Diocese of Toronto archives, Brenda Snape who designed this book and set it in type, Poppy and Deborah Price and Denise Lougheed who took my handwritten pages and put them on computer disc, and all those who read through the manuscript before it went to press, particularly Richard Baker, Wilf Black, Patrick Carter, Clarke Edward, David Flint, Sharon Melvin, Jacqueline Stuart, Ken Taylor, and Agnes Willis.



W. John McIntyre, Ph.D.



Chapter 1  
In the Beginning . . .

## *In the Beginning...*

When settlement began in what came to be the parish of Trinity Aurora, Anglicans were few and far between. The completion of Yonge Street from York (Toronto) to Holland Landing in 1796 opened this area to settlers. Among them were people such as William Graham and William Tyler, loyalists who had fought under the British flag during the American Revolution. One might expect them to have been members of the Church of England. In fact, Graham whose farm was located near today's Aurora War Memorial and Peace Park was a Presbyterian and deeded a substantial plot of land called a Glebe to help support a fledgling Church of Scotland congregation in Newmarket. Tyler, farming at today's Tyler Street, was a staunch Methodist and sold a corner of his farm for a token amount so that his fellow believers could build a meeting house. Built in 1818, this log building at the north corner of Tyler and Yonge streets became Aurora's first place of worship. Anglican Bishop Jacob Mountain of Quebec wrote in 1817 that "the settlers are simple folk, mostly dissenters; to them come the saddle-bag preachers, mostly Methodists, with the simple gospel of right living, shorn of the trimmings of ritual which a more cultivated society desires."

The Methodist "saddle-bag preachers" who travelled from farm to farm or between settlements, preaching the gospel wherever a barn or open field made a gathering place, were well-suited to conditions of life on the frontier. They often had little formal education, but spoke and dressed simply, like the settlers they visited. The camp meetings they helped to arrange provided a welcome respite from the daily chores of clearing land, building shelters, and growing crops.

The only other group of Christians present in the neighbourhood during these early years was the Society of Friends, or Quakers, who built their first log meeting house further north on Yonge Street in present-day Newmarket in 1804-05 and replaced it in 1810-12 with the frame structure still in use today.

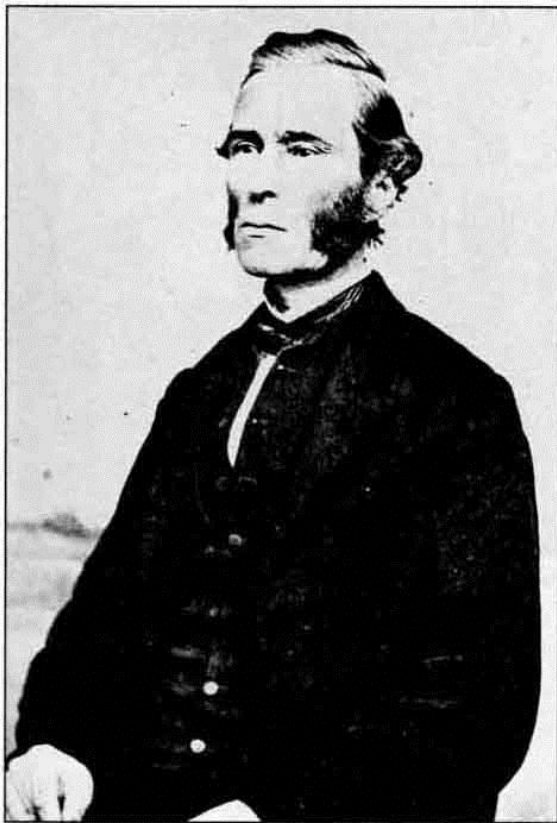
Even in York, the capital of Upper Canada, the Anglican presence was small. The first resident cleric, the Rev. Thomas Raddish, arrived late in 1796 but left early the following spring. He had no successor until the arrival of George Okill Stuart in 1800. The first Anglican Church in York, St. James's, was not begun until 1803 and remained unfinished for several years. In the meantime, services were read in the newly completed government buildings. At York Mills, Seneca Ketchum's log house had been used for services since the turn of the century, but it was not until 1816 that the first St. John's Church, York Mills, was erected. Ironically, the Church of England was the "established" church of the colony, meaning that it received special support and privileges from the government. The Constitution Act passed by the British Parliament in 1791 set aside one-seventh of all land in Upper Canada for the support of "a Protestant Clergy" which government officials assumed to mean Anglicans. The vagueness of the Act caused other denominations much anguish and led to repeated demands that they too share in the government's bounty. The Clergy Reserves, as these lands were called, caused much inconvenience and many settlers avoided renting or purchasing them when they could get other Crown lands virtually free of charge. Thus Clergy Reserves remained empty for years, the roads in front of them never properly cleared. Anglicans also enjoyed special status with regard to performing marriages. At first, only Anglican clergy were permitted to officiate; otherwise a marriage was invalid. This meant that couples who might have been married by a licensed Methodist itinerant, or at the meeting house at Yonge and Tyler streets, would have to have their marriage performed again by an Anglican clergyman or, if this was completely impractical, by a Justice of the Peace. Understandably, this led to considerable resentment and dislike of Anglican privilege and the governing Anglican elite and was among the causes of the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837.

Nevertheless, there were those living in the Aurora area by the 1830s who began to hope that an Anglican church might be established here. In the 1820s and 30s, large numbers of settlers were beginning to arrive in Upper Canada from the British Isles. The end of the Napoleonic Wars, followed by economic depression, brought increasing numbers of settlers from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Among them were members of the Church of England whose Book of Common Prayer provided for a reverent, ordered form



of worship which was in contrast with the sometimes frenzied camp meetings of the Methodists or the silence of the Quakers. (In return, Methodists and Quakers found Prayer Book worship *too* orderly and formulaic.) Anglicans also placed emphasis on the significance of Holy Communion and confined their sermons to relatively brief written discourses rather than long, often spontaneous outpourings. In their worship, they expressed particular attachment to their monarch and the parliamentary form of government. In contrast, Methodists, Presbyterians, and most other Protestant denominations celebrated Holy Communion less frequently or, in the case of the Quakers, not at all, and were less attached to British tradition.

Anglicans began to learn from the Methodists (who had begun as a movement within the Church of England in the eighteenth century under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley) and sent their own visiting preachers out on the road. The Rev'ds Adam Elliot, Isaac Fidler, and H.H. O'Neil all travelled through the area north of the capital. St. John's, York Mills, was established first, followed by Holy Trinity, Thornhill, which at first was under the guidance of masters and students from Upper Canada College. St. Mary's, Richmond Hill, began as part of Holy Trinity while, farther north "Trinity Whitchurch" began as part of the parish of St. Paul's, Newmarket, organized in 1832. "Whitchurch" was the name given to the township east of Yonge Street, between Markham to the south and East Gwillimbury to the north, as well as to the little village that was starting to form near the crossroads of Yonge and Wellington streets, now Aurora's major downtown intersection. "Whitchurch" was used for postal purposes when the village's first post office opened in 1846. "Machell's Corners" was the popular name for the crossroads village, however, to distinguish it from the large township to the east and to honour Richard Machell whose store must have provided a focal point for village life.



1. John Mosley, donor of Trinity Church lands, in whose house the first services were held.

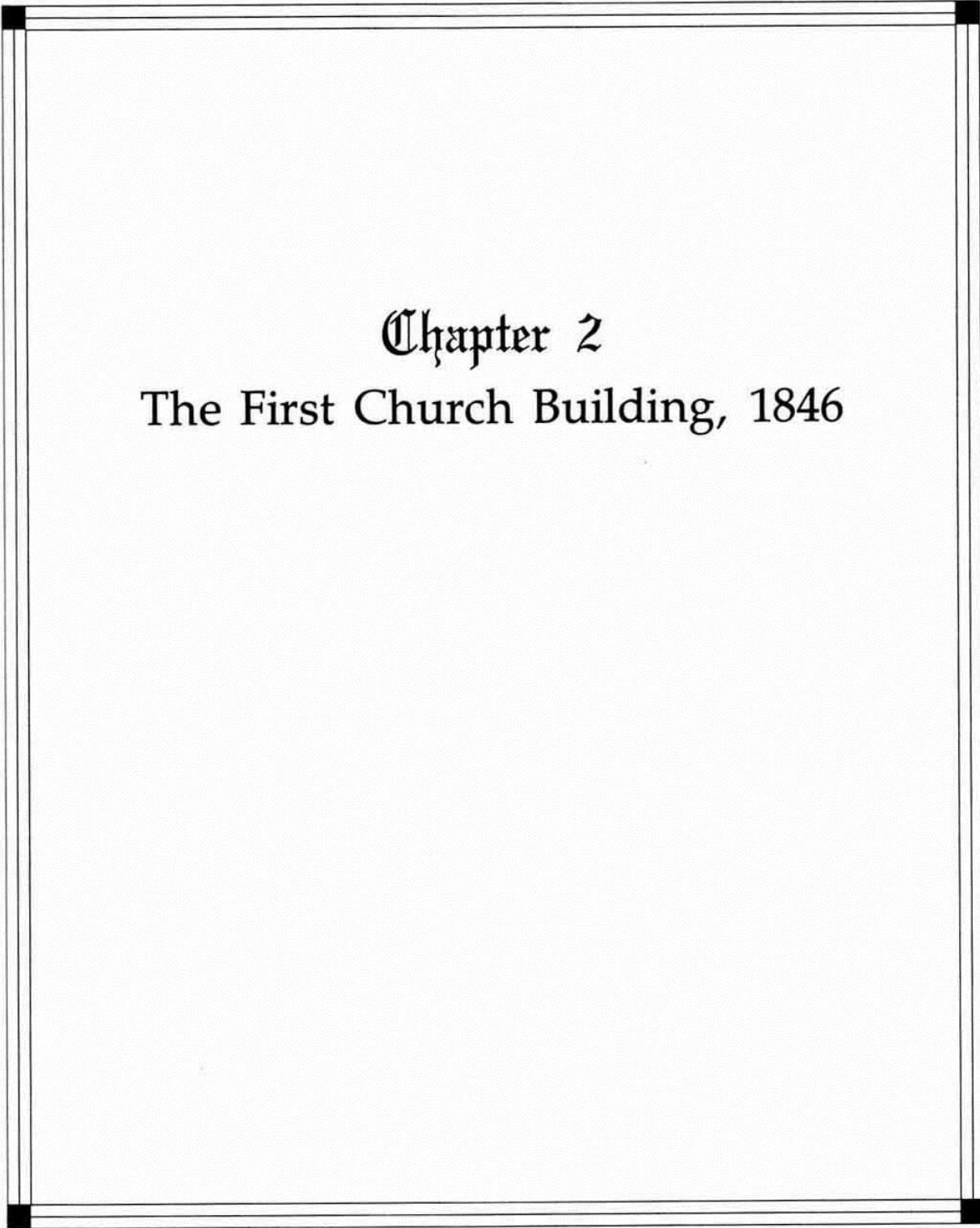
The leading Anglicans in the village were members of the Mosley family. Years later, John Mosley wrote that he had offered a parcel of land for building an Anglican church as early as June, 1836. The Mosley landholdings were extensive and included the areas bounded, approximately, by Yonge, Wellington, Ross, and Metcalfe streets today. Evidently, Mosley's offer was thought to be premature. The following year, 1837, brought armed rebellion to the neighbourhood and several years of political disruption and uncertainty. The Anglican Mosleys were staunch supporters of the government and had ridden south to Toronto (as York became in 1834) to give warning of the approaching rebels on Yonge Street. All in all, the Mosleys seem to have been a feisty lot. Thomas Mosley (c 1767-1827), John's father, had been born in Kent, England. By 1800 he was in York, advertising his services in the *Upper Canada Gazette* as an auctioneer. One cold Canadian winter nearly did him in: he was crippled by frostbite, but the *Gazette* declared in 1815, "although Providence has deprived him of the use of his feet, he has still, through his Divine Mercy, the use of his tongue" – quite essential for an auctioneer. Mosley and his wife Mary Ross (1784-1868) had seven children. Their sons John (c 1806-77) and Robert (1820-1903) would come to have particular importance in the early development of Aurora. Robert studied at John Strachan's school in York and then attended

model school for training as a teacher under the prominent Methodist, Egerton Ryerson. Perhaps it was Ryerson's influence which led him to join the Methodist Church after he returned to Machell's Corners to teach. He returned to the Anglican Church, however, and was ordained a deacon in 1870, and a priest in 1875. He became a missionary in northern Ontario and the founder of Trinity Church, Parry Sound.

It was John, however, who played the more important role in the establishment of Trinity Aurora. Once the turmoil of the rebellion had passed and Upper and Lower Canada were united under one government as Canada West and Canada East, it was time to begin again. On Ascension Sunday, May 28, 1843, a small group of Anglicans began meeting on a regular basis in an upstairs room of Mosley's house on Yonge Street, just north of present day Mosley Street. The Rev. George Street, incumbent of St. Paul's, Newmarket, and Christ Church, St. Alban's (Holland Landing), presided that day and for services every other Sunday evening.



2. Yonge Street, Aurora, c1870, looking north from a point just south of Tyler and Mosley streets. John Mosley's house, where Anglican services were first held, was just north of Mosley Street, on the east side.

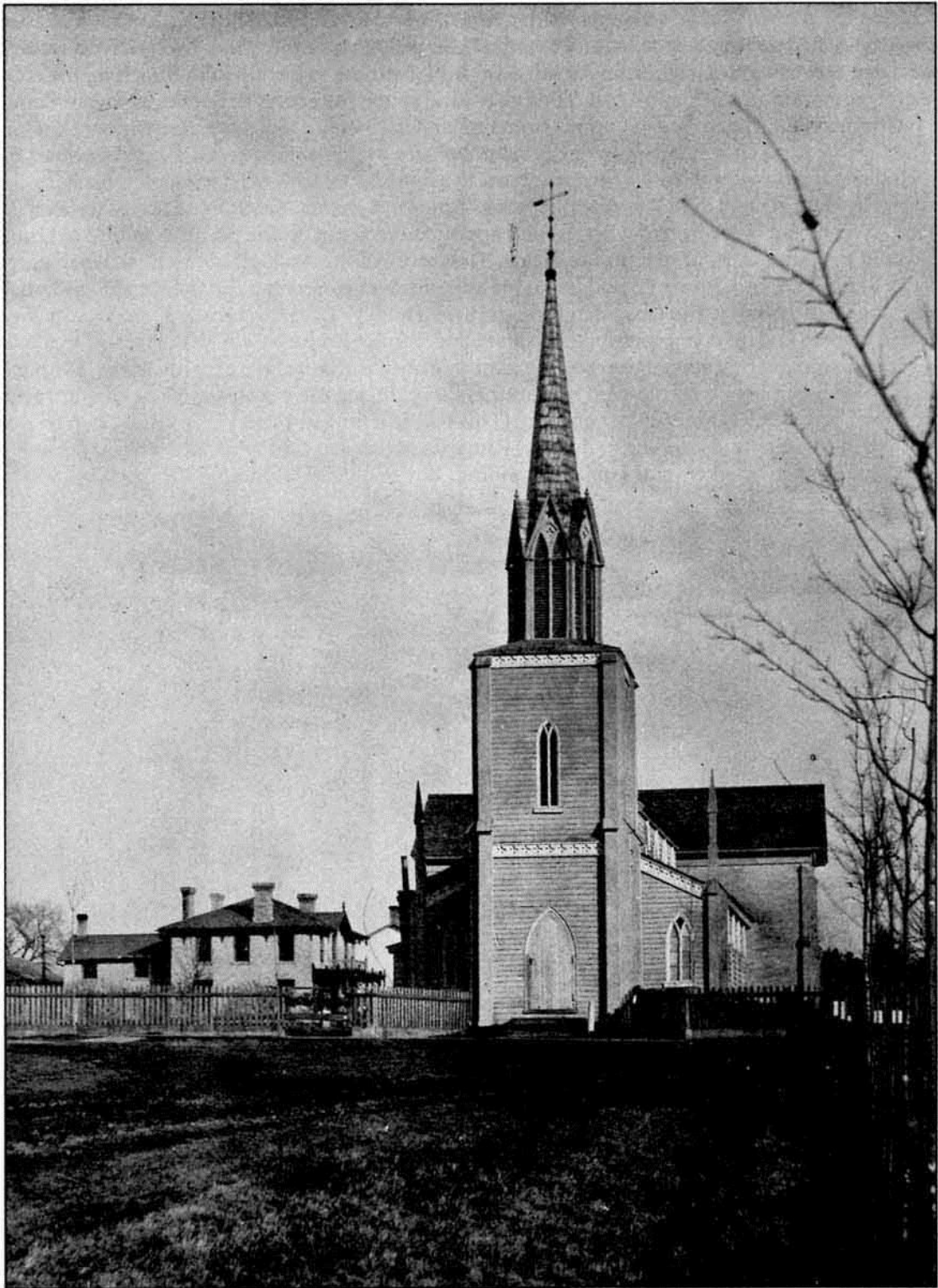


Chapter 2  
The First Church Building, 1846

## The First Church Building, 1846

Two years later, the little congregation had grown to the point where it began to consider the possibility of building its own church. On May 25, 1845, a meeting was held to discuss this proposal. By chance, or providence, the Rev. Mr. Leach, a professor at McGill University in Montreal, was in the neighbourhood on business and was invited to chair the proceedings. He opened the meeting with the Prayer of St. Chrysostom: "Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and dost promise that when two or three are gathered together in thy Name thou wilt grant their requests...." Then they sang the 100th Psalm: "O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with song. / Be ye sure that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture . . . ." In a letter written some seventeen years later, Mosley recalled that among those present were George Larmont, Jacob Wells, Henry Frost, and Aaron Playter. Wells (1797-1887) had come from Wiltshire, England, and owned a farm next to Mosley's land, running south almost as far as today's Cousins Drive. Henry Frost would become Trinity's first choir leader and was a strong proponent of music education in the schools of his day. He is remembered today by a tombstone, complete with carved musical notation, in the graveyard beside St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Eversley, just west of Aurora. It is surprising how many Presbyterians, or former Presbyterians, were at that 1845 gathering: Mr. Leach had been a Presbyterian minister in Toronto, Frost and Playter were Presbyterians, while Wells was of Baptist background but married by a Presbyterian clergyman. (Even Bishop Strachan was once a Presbyterian!) The decidedly ecumenical quality of this gathering may have helped ensure its success in a village which numbered no more than one hundred inhabitants. It also meant that Trinity Aurora would remain emphatically "low church," eschewing elaborate ritual for many years. At the meeting, \$120 was subscribed. By the fall, another \$480 had been raised, including a substantial contribution by John Mosley, along with his donation of land for the church at the head of what would come to be called Church Street.

Early the next year, enough money had been collected to begin construction with the help of volunteer labour. Timber for the building was cut and dressed at a "bee" and a frame was erected under the direction of James Bosanko. A cedar shingle roof was put on by Mr. Srigley and two or three volunteers. Exterior cladding, interior plasterwork, and the erection of the steeple were completed by Thomas Harris who also is credited with the overall design. Harris was an accomplished local builder who that same year had erected Christ Church in Scarborough. Photographs of the 1846 Trinity Church show it to have been a light and elegant example of what some would call "Carpenter's Gothic." It incorporated a tall spire, decorative buttresses, and pointed windows and doors, all coming from Gothic tradition, but accomplished in wood rather than stone. Its interior featured a high-ceilinged nave lit by clerestory windows and augmented by Gothic-arched colonnades and side aisles. At the east end was a shallow chancel lit by a large Gothic window. The church cost \$1,600 to build, \$700 of that having been raised by John Mosley and Aaron Playter - large sums at a time when an income of \$100 per year would have been considered substantial. What an impressive sight it must have seemed to the people of Machell's Corners! It was their first large public building: the Methodists continued to worship in a log meeting house, and even the village school was a one-room log building. As if inspired by the sight of Trinity Church as a new focal point for village life, the school moved from its log building near Yonge and Kennedy streets to a frame building on Church Street, close to the new church. Describing the village of 1846, *Smith's Canadian Gazetteer* declared Machell's Corners to be "A settlement on Yonge Street, twenty-six miles from Toronto. It contains about 100 inhabitants. There are in the settlement a grist and saw mill, called 'Hollinshed Mills,' three stores, one tavern, one blacksmith, one saddler, one shoemaker, one tailor."



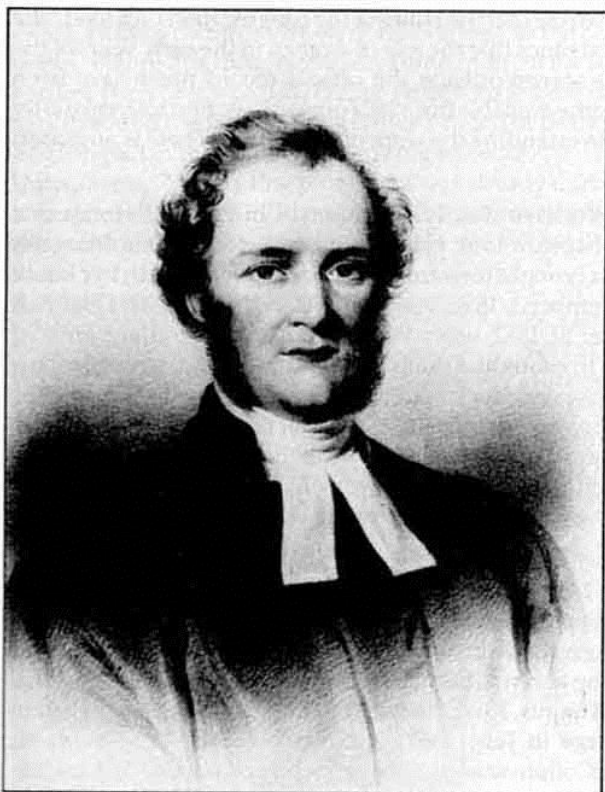
3. *The first Trinity Church (built 1846, with additions from 1857 - 58) and the rectory (built 1862).*

Despite the villagers' undoubted pride when the church opened on September 27, 1846, the incumbent Mr. Street and the Rev. Mr. Cochrane, who was visiting from the Red River settlement in the West, looked out onto a congregation seated on rough benches and boards. Their pulpit was a pine desk covered with woolen cloth. Five years later, according to a letter from Archdeacon A.N. Bethune to Bishop John Strachan, the church still lacked a font, communion plate, and a bell. Trinity's second rector, the energetic Septimus Fowler Ramsey, was soon to put things right. He arrived in Canada from England in 1848 and took over from Mr. Street who moved to Port Stanley that same year. Ramsey served as incumbent for the joint charge of St. Paul's Newmarket, Christ Church Holland Landing, and Trinity Aurora. Born in Yorkshire in 1806, Ramsey took a master's degree at Cambridge. He was ordained in 1832 and served first as curate in Beverley, Yorkshire. A few years later, Ramsey's career took a significant leap forward when he was appointed rector of St. Michael's-le-Strand in London and an assistant at the famous St. Martin-in-the-Fields. The future of the Anglican church in Canada grew to be foremost in Ramsey's mind, however, and led to his appointment as Secretary to the Canadian Branch of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The S.P.G., as it was called, reciprocated by taking an interest in Ramsey and no doubt contributed to his support and to his parish after he came to Canada. Ramsey, like Street before him, at first served the congregation at Trinity without charge for his salary. During the first three years of his incumbency, he received no remuneration; during the next three, £7 per annum and for the remaining five, between £20 and £25 per annum. (This was at a time in Canada's history when records were routinely kept in either pounds sterling or dollars.) Ramsey's parish was far-flung and included not only regular services at Aurora, Newmarket, and Holland Landing, but also visits to Stouffville, Kettleby, Sharon, and



4. Interior of the first Trinity Church.

Queensville. He presided at Aurora every other Sunday evening and wrote that "there was service once every Lord's Day," suggesting that lay readers from the congregation took over during his absence. He quickly raised funds to complete the church interior, collecting £18 from the congregation and a further £80 from his friends in London.



5. The Rev. Septimus Fowler Ramsey, rector 1848 - 59.

In 1853, five years after Ramsey arrived, an event occurred which would change Machell's Corners from a crossroads hamlet to a thriving village almost overnight. On May 16th, the shrill whistle of the steam engine *Toronto* echoed across the fields as the first steam train in Canada West made its inaugural trip north of the capital. In a few months, the railway would be extended north to Newmarket and on to Collingwood, providing a link between Lake Ontario and the upper Great Lakes. Machell's Corners, which owed its initial prosperity to its strategic location on Yonge Street, now found itself doubly blessed with the coming of the railway. John Mosley saw new opportunities immediately and subdivided his remaining land from Yonge Street east to the railway tracks and beyond. Church Street already was opened eastward from Yonge, with Trinity at its head. Running parallel to Yonge Street in front of the church was Victoria Street named after the Queen who was also temporal head of the Church of England. To the south was Metcalf Street, from a family name shared by John's older brother, Henry Metcalf Mosley. (The extra "e" on today's "Metcalf" street comes from a modern misspelling: in the 1960s street signs read "Metcalf" at one end and "Metcalf" at the other!) Mosley Street to the north was aligned so that it would provide a vista toward the Methodists' place of worship to the west. Ross Street was named after Mosley's mother, Mary

Ross, while Larmont and Wells streets took their names from Mosley's friends and fellow parishioners.

Quickly the railway became a magnet for farmers anxious to ship their crops south to Toronto. Local mills for flour and lumber began to expand. In 1854, the village officially became "Aurora," a name suggested by postmaster Charles Doan, recalling the Roman goddess of the dawn and suggesting the dawn of a new era. It achieved "police village" status, a step below incorporation, but now set apart from Whitchurch and King townships in the management of some of its local affairs. Two years later, blacksmith Joseph Fleury arrived from King and set up a foundry to manufacture a new kind of plough and other agricultural implements which would become the mainstay of Aurora's economy for over eighty years. Mosley sold more and more of his lots, the Machell family subdivided their land north of Wellington Street, calling it "Mach-ville," and the village grew apace. In 1855, Aurora's first Methodists, who had begun as a Methodist Episcopal congregation but now allied themselves with the Wesleyans, replaced their log church with a larger frame building. In 1856, New Connexion Methodists built a handsome brick church, which survives today as a childcare centre, on Mosley Street. Soon the new pews at Trinity Church were becoming crowded and the indefatigable Mr. Ramsey led a fund-raising campaign for a large addition just eleven years after his church had been built. Tenders were called in the Newmarket *New Era* of August 14, 1857, for a "permanent addition in brick and stone, 18 feet x 38 feet, to be added

to Trinity Church, Aurora." The addition gave the previously rectangular church the form of a Latin cross, with transepts extending beyond the north and south walls. It was erected at a cost of £200, £125 of which came from Ramsey's friends in England. A further £200 debt was paid by donations of £30 from Bishop Strachan, a personal contribution by Ramsey himself, and a £50 contribution from John Mosley along with the proceeds from the sale of some of his lots. The enlarged church reopened on May 23, 1858, and both the church and its surrounding lands were consecrated by Bishop Strachan on June 15. Ramsey wrote that the ladies of the congregation provided "the handsome fittings of the Church." This was one of the first times that the role of women in the early years of the parish was acknowledged, yet their work behind the scenes outside the official record must have been tremendous. As vestry minutes and financial reports become available from 1878 onward, we find reference after reference to their work in raising funds to pay debts and in extending the work of the church. There is no reason to believe that they were any less active before.

Trinity's early parish registers provide a glimpse of the lives of early parishioners and the milestones that marked their progress through life. The church's first baptism took place on June 17, 1849, when Margaret Sproxtton, born in Whitchurch on September 2, 1844, was brought forward by her parents along with her infant brother Joseph. Trinity's first marriage occurred on November 3, 1852, between Robert Brunskill and Hannah Landman. The second occurred a week later on November 10, 1852, when William Mosley married Jane Francis. This was a time, however, when the dangers of childbirth brought a premature end to many marriages. Jane Francis Mosley died at age twenty-three just nine months later. Her funeral on July 16, 1853 was the first to be held at Trinity church. Statistics, names, and dates by themselves mean nothing, but only a little imagination is needed to bring them to life and see behind them a record of joys and sorrows, belief in God, and the hope of eternal life. To the wooden church at the head of Church Street came men, women, and children in the midst of happiness and thanksgiving and in dark times of sorrow. They came to celebrate, worship, reflect, grieve, and hope.

Septimus Fowler Ramsey's time in Aurora ended in 1859 with the appointment of William Henry Stewart

and a revision of parish boundaries. Trinity was now large enough to be set apart from the somewhat older parishes of Newmarket and Holland Landing and was formally allied with St. John's Church, Oak Ridges, and All Saints, King. Stewart became ill, however, and had to resign his charge in July, 1861, to be followed by the Rev. J. H. McCollum. McCollum was an Irishman who had obtained his bachelor's degree from Trinity College, Dublin, and added to the increasing number of prominent Anglo-Irish folk at Trinity Church, including the influential Hillary family. Trinity's first incumbents had lived in Newmarket, but with Aurora, Oak Ridges, and King joined as a new parish, a new place of residence was needed. In 1862, a "parsonage" (called the "rectory" in later years) was built by Thomas Harris under the direction of the wardens of Aurora, Oak Ridges, and King, to the northeast of the church, facing Metcalfe Street. It was one of the first brick houses built in the village, a gracious residence, Georgian in plan, with a graceful stairway, fine woodwork and handsome fireplaces. McCollum paid part of the cost from his own pocket. It was a fine place for the young Irish rector and his family to live, but saw its share of sadness as well as joy. Scarcely a year after the McCollums moved in, there was a sad entry in Trinity's burial register, noting the death on August 19, 1863 of Louisa Ina Matilda McCollum, aged 10 months, of dysentery. Dysentery, common in the days when well water might be contaminated by a nearby privy or food spoiled in the summer heat, was particularly deadly for young children. On November 26, 1864, tragedy came again to the McCollums, this time recorded in a brief but



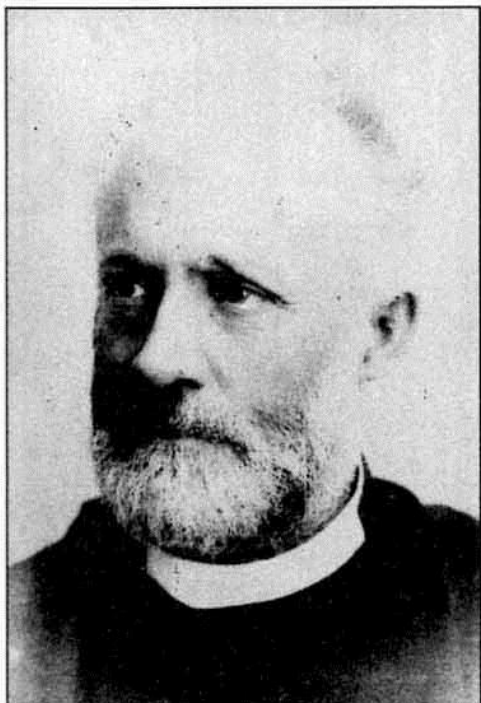
6. *The Rev. James Henry McCollum, incumbent 1861 - 71, the first to live in Trinity's rectory.*



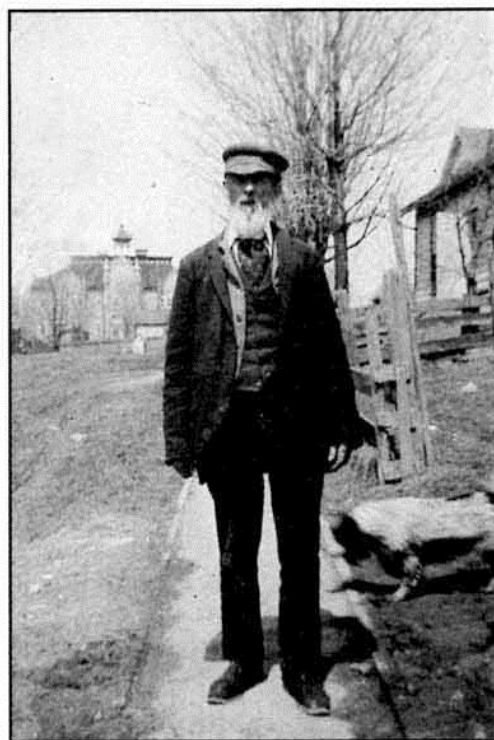
poignant note in the church's baptismal records: Emma McCollum, daughter of the Rev. James Henry McCollum and his wife Louisa Mary "died unexpectedly two hours after birth and was not baptised." Soon afterwards, Mrs. McCollum died. In 1867, Trinity's rector, then 34, must have caused something of a stir when he took the seventeen-year-old Elizabeth Lucinda Barnard of Elgin Mills as his new bride.

The McCollums left Aurora in 1871 as the Rev. A. I. Fidler took over as Trinity's fifth incumbent. Highlights of Mr. Fidler's incumbency were renovations to the church and the purchase in 1872 of the church's first pipe organ. Before this time, musical accompaniment for services likely was provided by a small reed organ. In the earliest years of the parish, Henry Frost who led the first choir may have done so only with the aid of a tuning fork to sound the first note of a familiar hymn or psalm. Or music may have been provided, as was common in English parish churches before the organ became the instrument of choice, by a wide variety of string and reed instruments. Trinity's first pipe organ was already thirty years old when it arrived and had been used previously at St. James's Church in Toronto and St. Paul's in neighbouring Yorkville. It was located between the chancel and the south transept, suggesting that this was where the choir sat during services in the old church.

In 1878, Mr. Fidler was drawn to Whitby and the Rev. Charles W. Paterson and his family arrived from Port Hope. That same year saw the separation of All Saints, King, from the combined Aurora-Oak Ridges parish. Eight hundred dollars were paid to All Saints as reimbursement for their share of the costs of building the rectory. From that time on, two Sunday services could be held in Aurora, one in the morning and one in the evening.



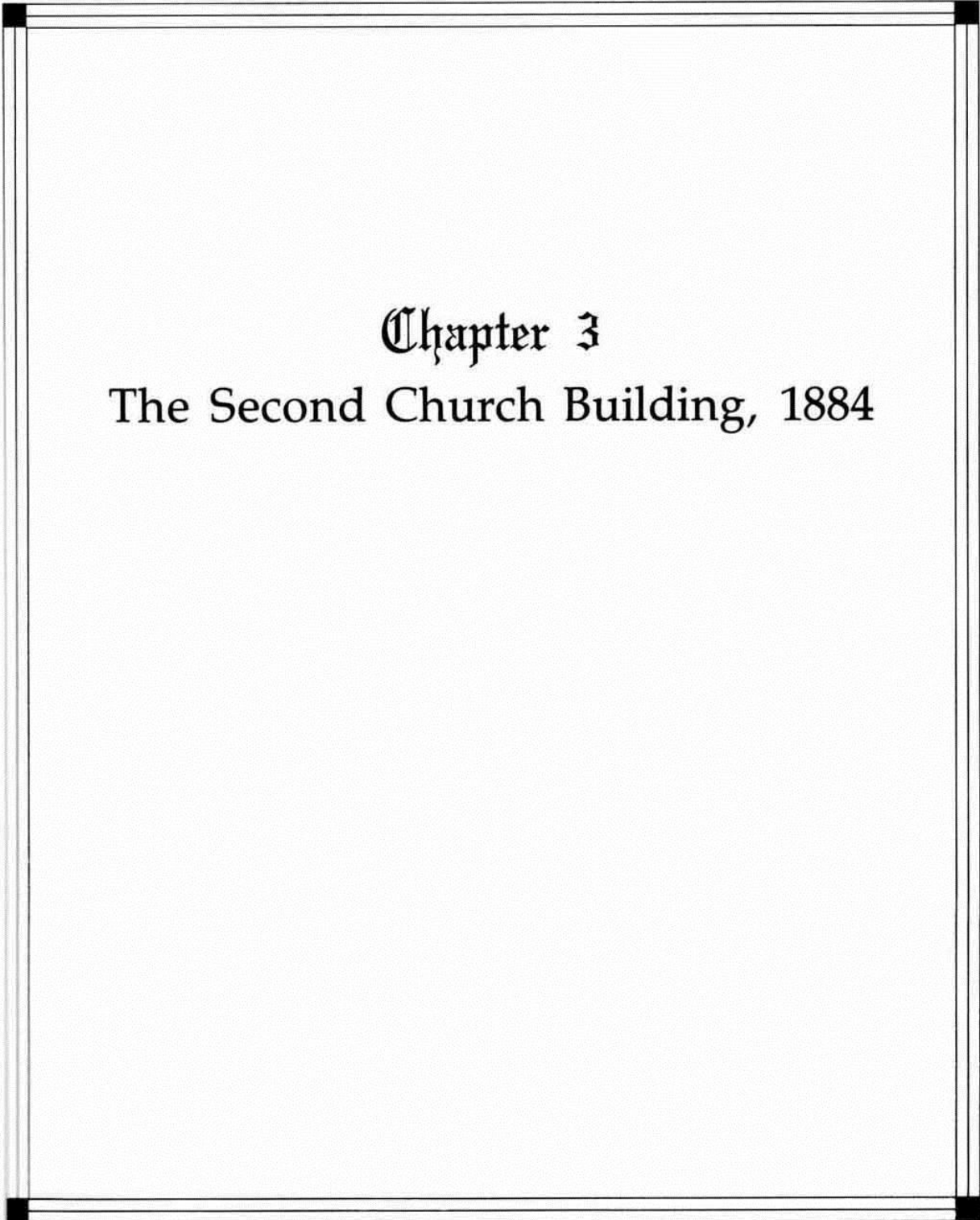
7. The Rev. A.I. Fidler, incumbent 1871 - 78.



8. William Taylor, among Trinity's early parishoners, standing beside muddy Gurnett Street, south of the church, c 1890. In the background is Church Street School.



9. Trinity's first organ, built in Montreal c 1842, used in the church from 1872 to 1913.



Chapter 3  
The Second Church Building, 1884

## The Second Church Building, 1884



10. The Rev. Charles Paterson, incumbent 1878 until his untimely death in 1881 before his vision of a new church could be realized. The east window and stone baptismal font in the 1884 church were dedicated in his memory.

Charles Paterson brought a spirit of new life and energy to Trinity. By the time of his arrival in 1878, Anglicans could no longer claim that their church was the largest in the village. One block to the north, the Presbyterians had built a handsome brick church in the Gothic Revival style. At Mosley and Wells streets, to the northeast, a new Methodist Episcopal church had been erected, bringing to three the number of Methodist congregations in Aurora. At Yonge and Tyler, the Methodists had another new church under construction: a magnificent Gothic Revival building with a soaring 146-foot spire. Paterson, however, was a speaker of great ability, and his sermons began attracting many who had never attended Trinity before. Before entering the ministry, he had studied law and may have used his capacity for argument and persuasion in the pulpit. The church his parishioners attended was beginning to seem too small, even with its 1858 addition. In fact, the 1858 addition itself may have led to problems since it was very unusual to add large brick wings to a frame building and difficult to join them together properly. The union of brick and wood may never have been satisfactory and could easily have led to the deterioration of Thomas Harris's elegant wooden church. A fire in 1878 which destroyed the church's vestry books and other records must have reinforced the belief that the wooden church should be replaced. On May 9, 1879, a special vestry meeting was called to consider building a new church. Opinion was favourable, but in the meantime a motion was passed to "put in new kneeling stools, & widen all the seats." (Apparently narrow seats have long been a concern in Trinity Church!) The following spring, members

were canvassed for financial commitments, and by April 12, \$1,800 had been subscribed. It was then time to strike a building committee, at first consisting of Wardens W.H. Perram and Matthew B. Faughner along with George Harrison, Dr. Robert William Hillary and David Willson Doan to whom were added the following year William Willis Sr., C.C. Robinson, and John van Nostrand. This committee included some of the most influential men in Aurora at the time. Matthew Faughner was the owner of the Dominion Block downtown which housed a bank and retail store on the ground floor and a music hall above. Dr. Robert William Hillary was a well known physician who lived with his family in *The Manor* on Yonge Street. David Willson Doan, whose family had been prominent followers of David Willson and the Children of Peace at Sharon, had succeeded his father Charles as village postmaster. William Willis was a saddler by trade, founder of the Aurora Choral Society, and the first of five generations of Willis at Trinity Church. He and his family are remembered today through the small brass book rest on the altar and the magnificent brass lectern which stands near the chancel steps. C.C. Robinson was a prominent lawyer, while John van Nostrand operated a thriving sawmill in Vandorf. By the spring of 1881, Paterson and his committee could report that over \$4,000 had been subscribed. Mrs. Paterson had given birth to a child, and all seemed right with the world. But that summer, Dr. Hillary found himself called to the rectory for other purposes. In early August, Charles Paterson became alarmingly ill, and Dr. Hillary's record books show visits to the rectory and the prescription of medicine on August 4, 5, and 6. Mr. Paterson may have shown some improvement at first, but on October 2, Dr. Hillary was summoned to the rectory in the night and on October 7, Trinity's rector died.

# TRINITY CHURCH, AURORA.

## CHURCHWARDENS ANNUAL STATEMENT FROM EASTER 1879 TO EASTER 1880.

RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.
Balance from last year..... \$ 15 68	Rev. C. W. Patterson, stipend to 1st April, \$450 00
Amount received through offertory from Easter 1879 to Easter 1880, (50 Sundays)... \$100 30	Sexton ..... 47 00
Through Envelopes..... 423 44	Organ Blower..... 1 60
523 74	Fuel, \$12 25; Light, \$6.30..... 18 55
Additional Contributions..... 44 50	Washing, cleaning Stoves, etc..... 8 70
583 92	Repairs, Lamps, etc, \$3.94; Stove, \$2.00.. 5 94
	Wine for Communion..... 2 50
	Stationery..... 3 09
	Synod dues..... 3 00
	Sexton, fees last year, .....\$12 } 14 00
	Organ Blower, " " .....\$2 }
	Insurance, \$1000 3 yrs. to 7th May, 1882.. 10 00
	Music for Choir..... 1 15
	Balance in bank..... 18 39
	583 92

### SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.

RECEIPTS.	PAYMENTS.
Mission Fund—Thanksgiving Day, Oct. 9, 1879 \$4 12	Mission Fund..... \$22 23
" " Missionary Meeting, Jan 20, 1880, 5 61	Algoma Mission Fund..... 11 80
" " Parochial Collections..... 12 50	Widows and Orphans Fund..... 8 55
22 23	Irish Relief Fund..... 12 90
Algoma Mission Fund,—Ascension day, May 20, 1879, ..... 60	
" " Special Collection, Nov. 30, 1879. 11 20	
11 80	
Widows and Orphans Fund,—Nov. 9, 1879.. 8 55	
Irish Relief Fund,—Feb. 29, 1880..... 12 90	
55 48	55 48

### STATEMENT OF CHURCH AND PARSONAGE REPAIRS.

RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
Ladies Sewing Society..... \$154 50	Church Repairs..... \$ 47 54
Special Subscription, (collected by Rev. C. Paterson and Mr. Willis..... 69 74	Parsonage Repairs..... 193 49
Parlor Concert at Mrs. Hillary's..... 11 85	
Entertainment in Town Hall..... 4 94	
241 03	241 03

Total amount collected during year... \$725.93.  
Balance in hand towards new Church... 10.00.

*Audited,* { H. W. BOLITHO,  
STEPHEN FRY.

W. H. PERRAM, }  
R. W. HULLARY, } *Churchwardens.*

Aurora, Easter, 1880.



12. The Reverend Charles Paterson and family at the rectory.

On October 18, 1881, a special vestry meeting was called at which the congregation passed a resolution expressing their profound sorrow and offering their sympathy to Paterson's widow and children. Dr. Hillary was in the chair as the resolution was read:

*This loss sustained by the parish over which our late beloved Pastor presided, we feel to be almost irreparable, and with much difficulty to be replaced on account of his untiring efforts for the good of his parishioners, both temporal and spiritual, which with increasing fidelity he continued even unto death. Not only in his ministerial capacity, but also as a genial and sympathising friend in all our secular concerns will his memory be long revered. His ceaseless efforts for the advancement of his fellowman has left us an example which we, as members of Christ's flock, should always endeavour to follow.*

Appropriately, when the new church which Paterson envisioned was built two-and-a-half years later, a stained glass window depicting Christ as the Good Shepherd was installed over the altar by his family, while the children of the Sunday School contributed toward a stone baptismal font in his memory.



13. Trinity choir, 1882.

*Front row, left to right: Carrie L. Willis, Clara Lepper, Victo Marsh, Leila Faughner. Back row, left to right: W.E. Wheadon, J.M. Willis, Annie Webb, Annie Robinson, Patty Faughner, Emily Willis, Ettie (Henrietta) Robinson, Mr. Payne, Clara Doan, Mary Lepper, W.C. Willis, W.C. Clift.*

1883 saw the reactivation of the building committee, now under the direction of Trinity's new rector, Horace Mussen, and including some additional members: Dr. Alfred Robinson, James Mosley, George Lemon, William C. Clift, and Wardens William Wheadon and P.T. Bond. The committee chose as its architect Marshall B. Aylesworth who was then practising in Collingwood and must have been known to Horace Mussen because of Mussen's family connections there. Also, Aylesworth was just completing the new St. Paul's Anglican Church in Newmarket and gaining a favourable local reputation. Tenders were called in July for a contract which was not supposed to exceed \$5,700. William Cane and Sons of Newmarket delivered a quotation well within the committee's budget, whereas D.S. Pickworth of the village of Warkworth, Northumberland County, offered to do the work for \$6,350. Curiously, Pickworth's much higher estimate was chosen. Both prices were to include the moving of the old church for occupation as a "school house," possibly a Sunday School, but these plans seem to have been abandoned as time went on. Another matter the committee must have had to address was the location of the church cemetery. From its inception, Trinity had its own cemetery to the east, and possibly also on the north and south sides of the church. Aurora's other early burial grounds were on

a plot of land given by William Graham, where the War Memorial and Peace Park are located today, and around the Methodist Church at Yonge and Tyler streets. Otherwise, the dead were buried in private family plots. After the Aurora Cemetery opened in 1869, some graves were transferred there, but certainly not all. To add to the confusion, Trinity's cemetery records were lost or may have been among those destroyed by fire in 1878. Among the names on the old markers located in the Garden of Remembrance just east of the church today, only that of George Case (d. 1857) can be linked to an entry in Trinity's burial register. One story says that the chancel of the new church was built out over some of the earliest graves. Others tell of remains being disturbed when later additions were built or when excavating has been done in the yard.

The old church was taken down and the second Trinity began to rise in the autumn of 1883. It was opened on March 14, 1884, with Bishop Sweatman presiding at morning and evening services. The total cost reported by the building committee in its final statement was \$7,204.18, considerably above original projections. Of this cost, \$4,897.16 remained to be collected. The church's liability was covered by loans from four people, by far the largest amount, \$3,000, coming from Frederica Blanche Clift, wife of committee member W.C. Clift – yet another instance of the important, but largely unrecorded, role which must have been played by women in the early history of the parish. Evening light was provided by hanging gas fixtures and wall sconces installed by James H. Byrne of Toronto. G. Burry of Toronto supplied the seats and N.T. Lyons and Company at least some of the windows. In place of a true cornerstone, a few mementos from the time when the church was built are said to have been placed in a metal box set behind the second course of bricks near the northeast corner of the chancel.

The windows at Trinity remain one of the church's most striking features today, some dating from the time the church was built and others added early in this century. The east window in memory of Mr. Paterson is believed to have been in place when the church first opened. So too were the small *IHS* ("Jesus" in Greek), and *Alpha* and *Omega*, "the beginning and the end," windows in the east wall. They are flanked by two narrow lancets which were presented by Aurora's Rising Sun Masonic Lodge. Nearly all of Trinity's early rectors and parish leaders were active Masons, and the two lancet windows commemorate some of them. The figure of Faith with the cross was dedicated to the glory of God and in memory of James Holladay (c 1830-68), a member of Aurora's first village council, Frederick Suttle (d. 1867), Simeon Russell (c1840-78), and James Nicol. Hope with the anchor remembers the rector Mr. Paterson; Joseph Fleury (1832-80), founder of Aurora's largest nineteenth century industry; and druggists Seth H. Ashton (1850-82) and H.E. Conner. The three central panels of the large west window may have been in place in 1884 with plans to complete the design already in hand. At the centre is the figure of Christ, dedicated in memory of John Mosley (c 1806-77) who had donated the church lands and played such an important role in the early years of the parish. Flanking this are the figures of Matthew in memory of Elizabeth Faughner (d. 1882), wife of building committee member Matthew Faughner, and Mark in memory of Michael Hillary (c 1794-1867) and his wife Ellen Kelly (1806-67), the first of six generations of Hillarys who have worshipped at Trinity. The other two parts of the five-panel west window depict the remaining two evangelists, Luke and John. The figure of Luke was dedicated in memory of Michael and Ellen's son, Dr. Robert William Hillary (1832-94), and his wife Anne Fry Hillary



14. The Rev. E. Horace Mussen, incumbent 1882 – 1900, under whose direction the second church and Trinity Hall were completed.



(c 1832-1907). John commemorates Henry (1794-1863) and Eleanor (d. 1860) Fry, Anne Fry Hillary's parents. As in parish churches of old, these windows were intended as a source of beauty and instruction, depicting Jesus and the four evangelists, proclaiming the steadfastness of faith and love, recalling the beginning and end, and reminding parishioners of some of the faithful who had gone before them. Lessons were proclaimed too in quotations from scripture which, as in the 1846 church, were painted on the church walls. Special prominence was given to "Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners" boldly proclaimed above the chancel arch and above all who would approach the altar to receive communion. Additional stencilled decoration was applied to the plaster ceiling of the nave, while the ceiling of the chancel was panelled in wood.

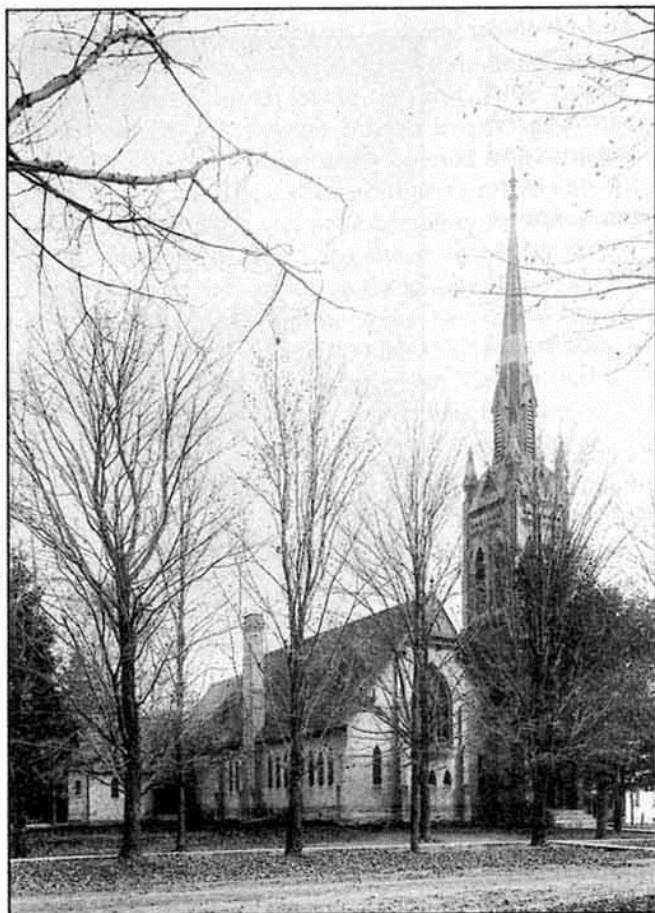
A significant difference between the old and new buildings was the presence of a full chancel which would have profound effect upon how worship in the new church was conducted. The addition of a chancel reflected the influence of the Oxford Movement and the work of the Ecclesiologists within the Anglican Church at large. The Victorian era saw a revival of many Gothic spatial configurations which had been all but lost in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the classical ideals of Renaissance and, later, Georgian architecture swept away many older elements of English church design. The first Trinity Church had been transitional in character, using Gothic details, but lacking a real chancel to serve as a focal point for worship. The second Trinity church revived this essential element of medieval church architecture, complete with facing rows of seats for the choir. In ancient times, these facing rows would have been intended for choristers consisting largely of monks and clerics who would sing antiphonally, one side beginning and the other responding. At Trinity, both men and women would occupy these seats, dressed in their "Sunday best," without cassocks, surplices, or other choir robes. At first, there was also room for the organist in the chancel after the old organ was moved into a chamber on the north wall, its case modified with some additional Gothic-inspired ornament. Out of view from the congregation was the "organ blower," a boy who was paid Sunday by Sunday to pump the bellows by hand. (Nora Hillary recalled that "she's all fruzz up" was his way of saying that he couldn't get the bellows going properly.)

At a vestry meeting held on April 14, 1884, it was decided that "all seats in this church be free," thus taking Trinity away from any notion of pew rental or ownership by its contributing parishioners. Further efforts to make visitors and new members feel welcome were made nine years later when a fund was begun "to provide books for strangers." Prior to this time, worshippers had brought their own hymnals and *Book of Common Prayer* with them to church. Most continued to do so for many years afterward, but from now on there would be a supply kept on hand for those who didn't have their own copies, or who had forgotten them.

Thinking beyond bricks and mortar, glass, wood, and plaster, the second Trinity Church was, and remains, a place of beauty and inspiration, now mellowed over time. Its floors and narrow pews are worn with age and may creak and sag here and there, but even more than in the busy Aurora of 1884, Trinity still provides a place for resting and rejoicing, rejecting values of business and busy-ness.



15. Dr. Robert William Hillary, scarcely five feet tall, but a leader in his parish and community.



16. The second Trinity Church, built 1884.

# CONCERT.

A grand concert will be held under the  
auspices of  
**TRINITY CHURCH S. SCHOOL**  
in the  
**MECHANICS' HALL,**  
**AURORA.**  
on  
**Wed. Ev'g. 28th March.**

## PROGRAMME:

1. Military Chorus. . . . . The Heavy Dragoon  
from the Opera of Patience.
  2. Charade. . . . . Boys and girls.
  3. Easter Chorus. . . . .
  4. Song. . . . . E. Heaslop.
  5. Spanish Dance. . . . . Six young ladies.
  6. Topsy-Turvy Chorus. . . . .
  7. Kindergarten Song. . . . . Children
  8. Dialogue. . . . . Boys.
  9. Chorus. . . . . Children.
  10. Cradle Song. . . . . Children.
  11. Kindergarten Song. . . . . Children.
  12. cho. "Now our Evening Work is Ended."
- To conclude with Act 3, from Scene 2, Mid-  
summer Night's dream.

Admission, Reserved Seats 25 and 15; General  
Admission 15 and 10c.

Plan of Hall at Rutherford's drug store.

17. Advertisement for a Sunday School concert from  
the Aurora Banner, 1894.



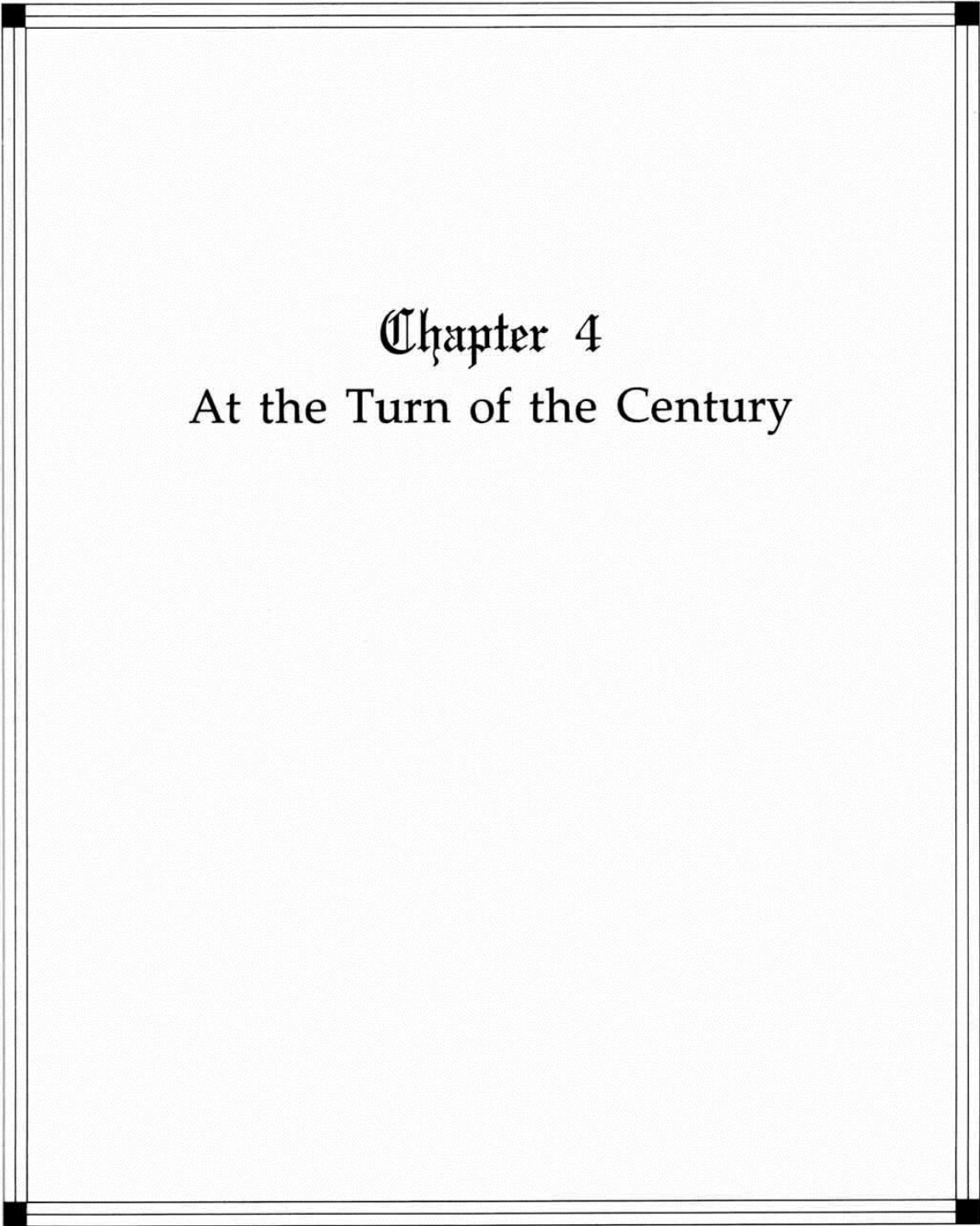
18. The Rev. Horace Mussen and his family at the rectory, 1895.



19. The 1884 church decorated for a "Harvest Home" celebration, November 1893.



20 - 23. Clockwise, from bottom left: Patti Faughner, Honoria (Nora) Hillary, Clara Lepper, and Henrietta (Ettie) Robinson, choir members in the 1870s and '80s. (Ettie Robinson and Nora Hillary also served as organists.)



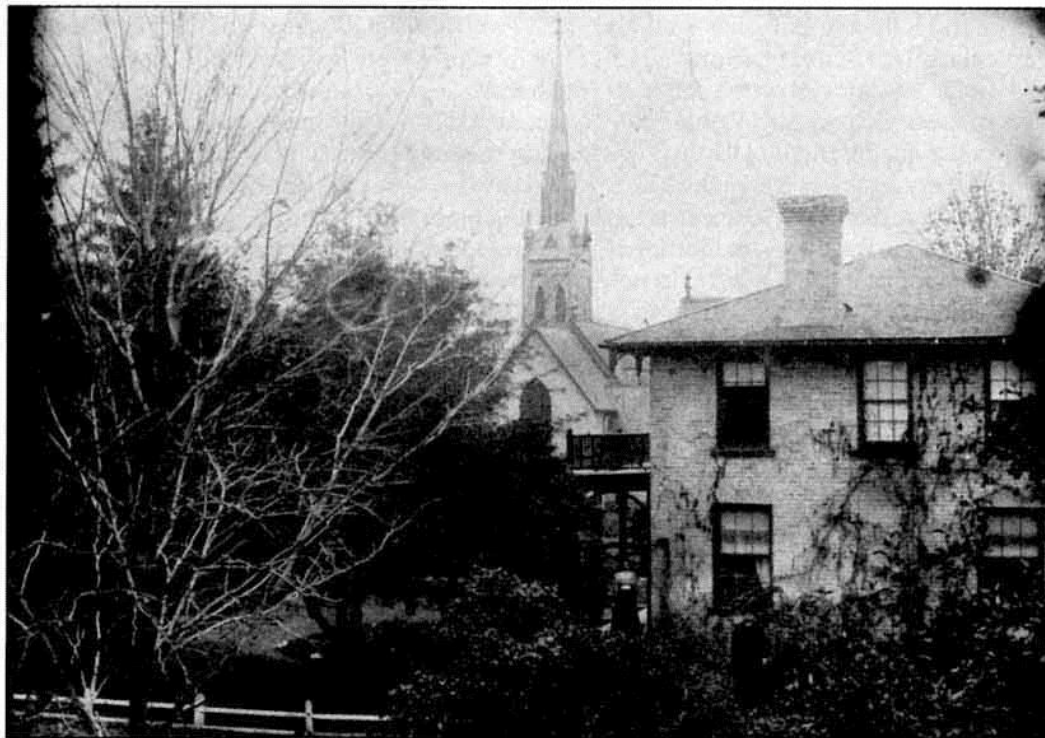
# Chapter 4

## At the Turn of the Century



24. *Trinity Hall, built in the 1860s, moved next to the church in 1897, and renovated and enlarged in 1922-23.*

## At the Turn of the Century



25. Trinity Church and rectory, October 1895.

Once the new church was completed, a substantial debt remained to be paid, but for many the 1880s were not prosperous times. A severe depression was taking its toll across North America, probably equalling that to come in the 1930s, but softened somewhat by the fact that many could still turn to large extended families or the family farm for relief. Not long after the church was finished, Matthew Faughner, prominent churchman and member of the building committee, declared bankruptcy. Even Dr. Hillary considered selling his practice and his family home on Yonge Street. When the second Trinity Church was built, Aurora had grown from only about 100 people to nearly 2,000. From 1891 to 1901, however, Aurora's population fell to 1,561 as small industries and businesses closed, machinery began to invade both workshop and farm, and more and more people began leaving for the cities or to homestead in the west. The *Aurora Banner* commented on the large number of tramps who were given a night's lodging and breakfast in the town lock-up. Although Horace Mussen had been offered a stipend of \$800 in 1889 from the combined parishes of Trinity Aurora and St. John's Oak Ridges, he saw his salary reduced to \$700 in 1890.

On November 14, 1897, however, the new Trinity church was officially consecrated and all its outstanding debts had been paid. The next day, November 15, another momentous occasion took place when Trinity Hall was opened. Despite the difficulties of the times, the congregation not only had paid for its new church but also had its own parish hall and Sunday School building.

Before the opening of the Hall, parish-sponsored events undoubtedly took place in a wide variety of locations: on the rectory lawn in fine weather or just down the street inside the Mechanics Hall which still stands today on the southeast corner of Victoria and Mosley streets. On March 28, 1894, for instance, the Sunday School sponsored a "grand concert" at the Mechanics Hall, featuring everything from a "Topsy-Turvey Chorus" to selections from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience*.

Reserved seats sold for up to twenty-five cents each, while general admission could be had for as little as ten. Other locations included the Town Hall, built in 1875 on the north corner of Yonge and Mosley, the "ballroom" at the Hillary *Manor*, and Faughner's Music Hall where the Trinity Church Sewing Society held its "Promenade Concert, Bazaar and Refreshment table" in spring 1877. From earliest days, the church had wanted to have its own hall, particularly for the use of a Sunday School. When the Trinity Sunday School began is unknown, but John Mosley's will of 1877 left a lot on the south side of Metcalfe Street to be sold in aid of a building fund. Without rooms of its own, the Sunday School would have been conducted in the church itself, probably on Sunday afternoons, in the rectory, or after the 1884 Church was built, in the large vestry which was located immediately north of the Chancel. Trinity Hall was not a new building; it had been built in the mid-1860's at the southeast corner of Centre Street and present-day Walton Drive as a meeting place for the Rising Sun Masonic Lodge. When the Masons moved in 1885 to their present location in the former Methodist Episcopal Church at Mosley and Wells, this left an empty building. It was hauled to its new site just north of Trinity Church and refitted for new use under the direction of Thomas Graham.

In 1900, Horace Mussen left Trinity for Collingwood, having guided the parish through the erection of its second church and its first hall during his incumbency of eighteen years, longer than that of any other before or since. His ties to Aurora remained strong. In 1895, his daughter Edith had married Dr. Robert Michael Hillary who by then had taken over his father Robert William's practice and moved into *The Manor* on Yonge Street. Mussen exchanged pulpits with the Rev. Laurence H. Kirkby who left Collingwood to come to Aurora.

Each rector has put his stamp on the life and work of Trinity parish and Mr. Kirkby was no exception. During his incumbency, the Trinity choir began to wear vestments for the first time. Black cassocks and white surplices, with caps for the women, were procured from England partly from the proceeds from a concert given in Aurora by the famous singer Harold Jarvis of Detroit. Missions and outreach also were of concern to Mr. Kirkby and his wife Mary who organized a branch of The Woman's Auxiliary to Missions at Trinity on March 27, 1901. (The present clergy chair at the altar was later dedicated in memory of the Kirkbys.) A financial report for the year 1879-80 shows "Special Collections" for a Mission Fund, Algoma Mission Fund, Widows and Orphans Fund, and Irish Relief Fund to have been \$55.48 out of a total budget of \$725.93. In other words, less than eight per cent of recorded contributions went to missions and the support of the poor. The Woman's Auxiliary to Missions may well have been organized to bring the needs of the wider world more clearly to the attention of the parish. It replaced a "Woman's Guild" and an earlier Sewing Society before that. Despite the change in name, however, Woman's Auxiliary members did spend a lot of time sewing and W.A. minutes from the early years suggest that needlework, mission study, devotions, and socializing were given equal emphasis. Typical are minutes from March 19, 1907: "Meeting of the W.A. at the Rectory. Pleasant time spent knitting and sewing. Six members present. Very interesting paper read on China by President. Meeting closed with prayers." While some forty members were on the rolls, a small attendance at many meetings was not uncommon. The sewing and knitting of W.A. members went primarily to filling "bales" destined for the diocese's "Central Rooms" and then for places such as The Pas, Manitoba, and Rainy River, Ontario. The contents of a bale packed on November 27, 1902 were typical of what was sent to Indian Missions in Western Canada. "New goods" consisted of "1 Cloth Quilt, 1 Flannelette petticoat, 1 pair Flannelette drawers, 1 pair mitts, lb. tea." "Second Hand Goods" were "2 woman's wrappers, 3 Dress shirts, 1 Quilted petticoat, 1 woman's jacket, 1 Blouse, 2 undervests, 1 pair woollen drawers, 1 cotton quilt, 6 linen collars, Fancy ties and ribbons, 1 man's smock, 3 pairs socks, 1 Overcoat, 1 Hat." W.A. members also supplied clothing on a regular basis for an Indian boy, and later a girl at the Hay River school. At one of their meetings, the ladies were told through a letter from Mrs. Stanley Stocken of the Black Foot Home: "The River overflows very often and several Indian girls died." Anglican women of more recent times have learned that many of the knitted goods they laboured over and sent in their bales were later painstakingly unravelled by the Indians and made into things they really wanted and needed. All of us today have heard reports of abuse at some church-sponsored residential schools, but without the wisdom of hindsight, the people of Trinity Aurora offered their coins and their handiwork. There was a time when Canadians basked in the belief that British civilization was bringing enlightenment and prosperity to all people and when the sun never set on the British Empire. Parishioners did not always tie their gifts to conversion and education, however; in 1913 Trinity's Woman's



Auxiliary paid for a bed and other necessary equipment at a hospital in Honan, China. To encourage the youth of the parish to take a broader interest in the world outside, a Junior Branch of the W.A. was formed in 1903.



26. Trinity choir, 1905.

Front row, left to right: Emily Willis, Clara Tefft, Myrtle Rowland, Jean Bond, Minnie Bond. Middle row, left to right: Marjorie Willis, Mrs. D.A. Radcliffe, Mrs. W.C. Willis, Shirley Willis, Nanny Thompson. Back row, left to right: D.A. Radcliffe (warden), Laurence H. Kirkby (rector), unknown, Percy Thompson, William C. Willis, Alston Radcliffe, John Matthew Willis, Harry Rowland (in front of J.M. Willis), Clara Tefft, Arthur Green, George Pressman, James Doddington.

The Kirkbys left Aurora in 1912 when the Rev. Gerald S. Despard became rector at Trinity. Despard's arrival coincided with the formation of a Church Improvement Guild dedicated to raising money to redecorate the church interior, make repairs at the rectory, and purchase a new organ. Guild members established a separate organ committee early in 1913 to plan for the replacement of the then seventy-year-old instrument which had been installed in the first Trinity Church in 1872. In total, \$2,500 was raised to purchase the organ which still serves the church, with many modifications, more than eighty years later. Five hundred dollars of the purchase price came from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation of New York whose charitable gifts have benefitted thousands of churches, libraries, and cultural institutions across North America. The organ was dedicated on December 16, 1913. For a while, the old organ gave service to the Sunday School in Trinity Hall, but soon too many little boys began to discover the fun of using its pipes for whistles and Dr. Robert Michael Hillary obtained permission to move the venerable instrument to his home on Yonge Street. (Dr. Hillary's mother-in-law, sisters and aunts had long been members of the Trinity choir as singers and volunteer organists.) There the organ remained until 1966 when it was sent to St. Clement's Eglinton for use as an antiphonal organ in the gallery.

Another new dimension came to the musical life of the parish in 1913 when the Guild provided cassocks and surplices for "6 boys about the age of 12 yrs. to be trained for the Choir."



27. *The Rev. Gerald S. Despard, incumbent 1912 - 17.*

was in 1900 when the church took out a \$1,000 mortgage to finance improvements which presumably included the house's first indoor bathroom and the installation of electrical wiring. The plan in 1915 was to sell the rectory and its grounds and build a new house closer to the church on the site of the old cemetery. The motion was defeated, the lawn bowlers eventually moved to Maple Street, and the existence of Trinity's cemetery was all but forgotten. Trinity did, however, negotiate with the directors of the Aurora Cemetery Company to acquire a section of land within the town cemetery on Yonge Street containing eighteen lots for members of the parish who did not have the funds to purchase their own burial plots. Many years earlier, Daniel Steele had given the church a gift of land just to the north of the Yonge Street cemetery. This land, hilly and unsuitable as a burial ground, was later exchanged for property immediately south of the cemetery and, finally, for a section within the boundaries of the cemetery itself as a burial place set aside for "indigent people."

Also during Mr. Despard's incumbency, Trinity formed a Men's Club, the first of several such organizations which have come and gone over the years. This one undertook the development of a bowling green on the lawns immediately east of the church. With uncharacteristic disregard for the history of the parish, they removed the remaining stones from the old cemetery and laid them down by the east wall of the chancel. (If at the time they recorded where these stones had originally stood, these records have now been lost.) Over the graves of some of the church's earliest members, lawn bowls rolled and tournaments were held, involving men from Aurora and surrounding communities, not just from Trinity. With this, it became clear that the church would not permit further burials on its lands, although in more recent years the area east of the chancel has been carefully tended as a Garden of Remembrance for the interment of ashes.

The removal of stones from the cemetery may have been a prelude to a motion put before a church vestry meeting on April 6, 1915, calling for the sale of the rectory and its adjoining lands "in view of the much needed repairs to the Rectory and in view also of the difficulty in the upkeep of the extensive rectory grounds." How similar this sounds to motions presented at vestry meetings in more recent years! The first time major expenditures had been made on the rectory

# Chapter 5

## “The Great War” and a New World

## *“The Great War” and a New World*

Concern over cemetery lands coincided with a time of grief and conflict which touched the lives of all parishioners and has left its mark on Trinity Church today – the Great War, or as we now know it, World War I (1914-18).

Trinity has had more than its share of militia and military leaders within its congregation. Marble tablets on the north wall of the church commemorate the descendants of William Taylor who served with the Aurora Volunteers in the York Battalion during the Fenian Raids of 1866. (The Taylor house, built in the mid 1850's, stands today on the southeast corner of Wells and Wellington streets and is still owned by descendants.) One of William's sons, Major William Henry Taylor (1863-1948), served during the Northwest Rebellion, while another, Samuel Charles (1866-1931), became Mayor of Aurora. His grandson, Major Frederick N. Taylor (1890-1953), also remembered on a tablet, served as an officer during World War I.

Generations of Aurora men have been active members of what became the 12th York Rangers whose Drill Hall has stood since 1874 at the corner of Mosley and Larmont streets, just a block and a half from the church. In 1914, the regimental colours of the Rangers, in use since 1878, were “laid up” at Trinity by company Commander Lt. Col. A. G. Nicol, another Trinity parishioner. They were hung high in the chancel and joined in 1917 by the colours of the 208th Irish Regiment just before the departure of the Regiment for overseas duty. The 208th Irish was commanded by parishioner Lt. Col. T. Herbert Lennox whose house was immediately east of the rectory. (Lennox was a member of the Ontario Legislature from 1905 to 1919 and was elected to the federal parliament in 1925 when he defeated Liberal candidate and then Prime Minister of Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie King.) The colours of the 12th York Rangers were deposited at St. James Cathedral in 1962, while those of the 208th Irish remain in storage at Trinity, awaiting restoration.

When war came in the summer of 1914, Trinity men were quick to enlist, few of them having any idea of the horrors which lay ahead. There were a few Aurora men who had served in the South African War at the turn of the century and fewer still who remembered active service during the Northwest Rebellion of Louis Riel and the post Civil War raids on Canada by American supporters of the Irish Fenians. But for most, military life consisted of drills and parades at the Town Park or pleasant summer afternoons at training camps in Holland Landing or Niagara. The boys from Trinity who went overseas and never came back were James Amos, W. Kenneth Exley, Walter Harris, H. Higgs, John E. Hill, R. Stuart Hillary, Fred Luxton, and James Albert Proctor.

Stuart Hillary died in France after the Battle of Vimy Ridge, early in 1917. The altar at which communion is celebrated Sunday by Sunday to this day was dedicated by his family in Stuart's memory just after the war. All who died in uniform during those terrible years are worthy of our remembering, but Stuart, unlike most, left some letters which may remind us today of life as it was and give a sense of reality to lists of names.

On October 9, 1916, Stuart wrote to his mother from camp at Shorncliffe, Kent, England,

*We are in tents until the Cavalry move from our barracks - 10 in a tent. Folkestone is a lovely place only a little way from Shorncliffe, along the coast. You can see France on a clear day and once in a while hear the guns. At night none of the street lamps are lit. All shops are heavily blinded and our tents are a dirty green and searchlights are searching the sky every night..... Was down town on Sat. and who should I meet but Ted Morris. He is in a tent about 1/4 mile from me across a plain and is with the Le Royd [Learoyd] boys from Aurora and several others. I heard on, Well I'll be d\_\_\_\_\_ Harold LeRoyd Sammy Stevens and Norm Johnson just came up and shook hands! Well to go on, I heard on Sat. that the 127th had moved to Sandling, a few miles from us so Dad and I will be quite near one another. A regular family party, all the Aurora fellows to be together.*

Stuart's father, Dr. Robert Michael Hillary, had also enlisted, serving as a medical officer. For Stuart and his friends from Trinity, the Church of England clubs provided a quiet place to write and get away from camp life for a while. Club #5, Stuart wrote, "is just back of our lines and is a nice cozy place to come on a cold day. Eats, magazines etc. at our disposal."



28. R. Stuart Hillary, among the Trinity boys who did not return from World War I. The altar in the 1884 church is dedicated in his memory.

Not far from it is a memorial to young Ken Nicol who served for several years in the Royal Flying Corps, one of the most dangerous postings of all in the early days of flight. Ken survived the war, but, ironically, ten years later was involved in a car accident, appeared to be unhurt, yet died suddenly a few days later. The flower holder below his memorial was given by his friend and neighbour, Sir William Mulock, a familiar local figure and the former Postmaster General of Canada in the Laurier cabinet.

With its many new memorials in the chancel, Trinity sent its old altar, pulpit, and other furnishings to a mission church in Matheson. One item which may have survived from earlier years, however, is the pine lectern currently used in Trinity Hall: its style and profile certainly suggest the year 1884 or earlier. In 1917, the church interior had been repainted and electric lighting installed for the first time. Sadly, the ornate old gas fixtures were removed rather than being wired for electricity and the present starkly plain lights were hung in their place.

When the war was over, the chancel of Trinity church was transformed not only by the carved oak altar given in memory of Stuart Hillary, but also through many other memorials and thankofferings dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1919. The present oak pulpit was dedicated in memory of Walter Collis whose family operated the Collis Leather Company on Tyler Street where many Aurorans were employed. The credence table was given in memory of Anne Fry Hillary, while the Bishop's chair was presented in memory of Jane Ann Bonisteel. The clergy chair at the reading desk came from Mary E. Rowswell and J. Albert and Gertrude van Nostrand, while the reading desk itself was the gift of Emma and John B. Spurr, a local composer whose popular turn-of-the-century compositions included *Canada*, *Star of the Empire* and *The Battle at the Gates of Love*. Another memorial was unveiled a few months later in the form of a large brass plaque placed on the north wall of the church to honour those from Trinity who had served and died in the war.



29. Ken Nicol in his Royal Flying Corps uniform. A plaque and flower holder in the 1884 church are dedicated to his memory.



30. *The Rev. Percy R. Soanes and his family on the rectory lawn following his induction in 1917.*

1917 was also the year when the Rev. Percy Soanes and his family arrived at Trinity. Almost immediately, renovations began at the rectory, enlarging the cellar for a new heating system and tearing off the old verandah and delicate Gothic Revival fretwork to make way for a porch and upstairs sunroom in the simpler taste of the times. To one of Mr. Soanes's sons this room proved to be a godsend. He was stricken with tuberculosis, and sunlight and lots of fresh air were the only known treatments at the time.

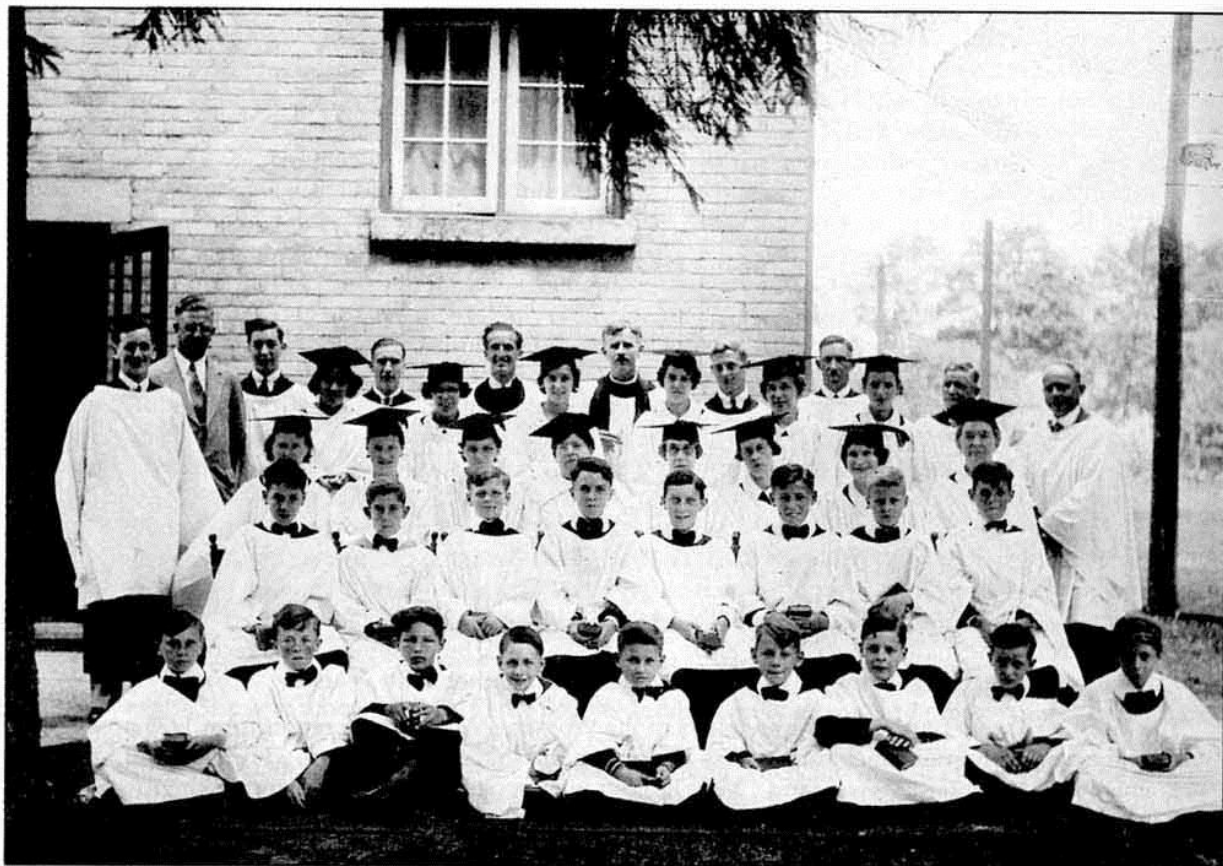
The relatively prosperous 1920s saw a steady increase in church attendance and the completion of a number of projects around the church. When Mr. Soanes made his first report to Vestry in January, 1918 (a change in date from the traditional time of holding annual Vestry Meetings just after Easter) he had expressed his unhappiness with the church's small average attendance at communion. Out of 135 confirmed members on the church rolls, only thirty eight took communion on a typical communion Sunday. On Easter Day, only seventy six came forward. By 1923, Easter communions had more than doubled to 180. The average number of communicants on other Sundays was still only fifty five, but average morning attendance had risen to ninety six and attendance at Evensong to ninety. By 1930, when radio programs had begun to compete with Sunday evening church attendance, numbers went down to sixty four at Evensong, but up to 129 in the mornings. Sunday School attendance held firm with an enrolment of sixty-seven boys, fifty-six girls, and twenty teachers and officers. Increasing numbers were to be expected at a time when Aurora's population was growing once again. What was extraordinary was Mr. Soanes's personal schedule; in 1929, he reported that during the preceding year he had attended 385 meetings, given 235 addresses and sermons, and made 1,232 parish visits - all in addition to twenty-nine baptisms, thirty-two confirmations, twelve marriages, and twenty funerals! Growth in numbers at Trinity and the increasing workload of its rector meant that it was now time to consider separating Trinity from St. John's, Oak Ridges. This was a difficult decision since it meant that Trinity would then have to pay its rector's salary and maintain the rectory without the help of its neighbours to the south. The suggestion was turned down unanimously in 1929, but accepted in 1930.

To accommodate increasing activities at Trinity during Mr. Soanes's tenure, Trinity Hall was enlarged and remodelled in 1922-23, reportedly using some of the lumber salvaged from the old barn and carriage

house which originally had stood behind the rectory. To serve the needs of rural parishioners between Trinity and St. John's church, located near the corner of Yonge Street and the Stouffville Road, Mr. Soanes was responsible for erecting a building at "Schomberg Junction," as today's community of Oak Ridges was known, for Sunday School classes and weekday meetings. In 1922 repairs were made to the church's soaring steeple after a suggestion that it should be removed was soundly rejected at a congregational meeting. In 1927, another special meeting discussed the need for a new heating system in the church along with the possibility of adding a choir robing room on the south side of the chancel to match the vestry built on the north side. There were hopes of linking the new robing room with the vestry by means of a tunnel under the chancel until one of the older members of the congregation claimed that the east end of the church had been built on quicksand and a tunnel would lead only to disaster. The choir had to be content with robing in Trinity Hall and then walking across the lawn, no matter what the weather, to come into church services. Perhaps it was this setback, combined with age-old conflicts between "low" and "high" church practices, that led to trouble in 1928. The choir made a decision not to turn to the east and face the altar during the saying of the Apostles' Creed. The result was one of the largest special vestry meetings in Trinity's history. One hundred and twenty-five members attended to hear arguments for and against turning to the east. The congregation and the choir were divided on an issue which may have arisen from some "low church" supporters fearing that turning to the east suggested "Popery" and Roman Catholic tendencies. In the end, Anglican reason prevailed; a motion put forward by the People's Warden that "the choir be instructed to turn" was never put to a vote. The minutes record that one member of the meeting "spoke of the folly of tearing the church asunder on a difference that was in his opinion only petty." Mr. Soanes was asked to use his skills of diplomacy and canvass the feelings of choir members and parishioners during his frequent visits. The matter never arose again, and vestry clerk Bill Coleman, who recorded the minutes from this, his first meeting, went on to be vestry clerk for another sixty years.

The 1920s also were busy years for members of the Woman's Auxiliary. A report from 1925 noted fifty-four members and programs including "Miss Harris our Missionary from Egypt who told us of her work there, illustrated by lantern views" and "Miss Walton who spoke on the Indian and Eskimo work in the Diocese of Moosonee." W.A. members continued their sewing, knitting, and quilting, catered banquets, organized a "Little Helpers" group and a Teen-Age Girls Auxiliary, raised funds to install the first toilets in Trinity Hall, and held many a successful bazaar. Quoting from their minutes of November 1, 1926, "Discussion went on with regard to our annual bazaar. It was decided to have the same menu as last year: the tongues were all promised at the meeting, Mrs. Lee kindly offering to pickle them."

The year 1931 brought Gilbert Lightbourn to Trinity as a worldwide depression was settling in. The 1930s turned out to be a decade of financial difficulty and retrenchment. One of several special vestry meetings was called on April 27, 1931 to consider the church's financial situation and begin a canvass of members to ask for contributions. In 1936, the possibility of reunion with St. John's Oak Ridges was discussed. Nonetheless, increasing numbers of people came to the church or the rectory door for help and were never turned away empty-handed. Church organizations continued to meet and evolve, offering a sense of support and stability to their members. Out of the disbanded evening branch of the Woman's Auxiliary came a Parochial Guild in 1935. For young people came the Harmony Club and then a branch of A.Y.P.A., the Anglican Young People's Association. This organization had operated at Trinity in the early 1920s, but had since disbanded. The new A.Y.P.A. included a tennis club with the enthusiastic support of parishioner and legendary local high school history teacher, Wilfred Adams. The depression ended only with the beginning of a World War which again took a terrible toll on Trinity's youth.



31. Trinity Senior Choir and Boys' Choir, 1935.

Front row, left to right: Edwin Simpson, Bert MacGirr, Don Judd, Gordon Boakes, unknown, Bob Stephens, Russell Sayer, Gordon Horner, Harold Stephens. 2nd row, left to right: Arthur Hill, Bill Fry, Ken Jones, Reg Southwood, Keith Southwood, Eric Bunn, Jay Cody, Bill Heath. 3rd row, left to right: Connie Willis, Betty Cody, Evelyn Boakes, Ethel Chapman, Miss Griffith, Miss Boyd, Kay Morris, Florence Killingsworth. 4th row, left to right: Joan Stephenson, Lily Bradbury, Grace Waite, Lillian Bunn, Miss Bellman, Grace McGhee. Back row, left to right: Bob Hodgkinson, Sam Chapman, Roland Hill, Leslie Eveleigh, Illyd Harris (director and organist), Gilbert Lightbourn (rector), Cyril Belman, Bill Boakes, Walter Brandreth, Ernie Bradbury.

Russell Sayer and Roland Hill, Boys' Choir members in 1935, would later become Anglican priests. (Frank Lee is another Trinity boy who went on to the priesthood.)



Chapter 6  
World War II  
and the Baby Boom Years

## World War II and the Baby Boom Years

Rhetoric about the Second World War is more subdued and memorials to the dead more subtle in the records of Trinity Church than in what remain to us from the time of World War I. That earlier war was "The Great War" and "The War to End All Wars," the war of poppies and Flanders Fields and the first Remembrance Days, but twenty-one years later, the world was at war again, with many of the same opponents fighting each other over the same turf.



32. Wing Commander Lloyd Chadburn, a Trinity boy who helped in recruitment across Canada during World War II.

One hundred and ten Trinity men and women enlisted; sixty went overseas and twelve never came back. Those who died were John Bradbury, Lloyd Chadburn, Jack Davidson, Frederick Fife, Donald

Gleave, Wesley Heaney, William Heath, Duncan Hewitt, brothers Perry and William King, Orley Morning, and Reginald Wade. Trinity's 1946 history declared, "If a roll could have been called of Trinity Church men, it would have been answered from ships of the Royal Canadian Navy, from a dozen fighting units facing the enemy in Western Europe and Italy, from scattered airfields of the RCAF and from reinforcement centres in England and Canada." Rector Gilbert Lightbourn left Aurora in 1940 to become Senior Chaplain with The Royal Canadian Air Force. His successor, Keith Perdue, was in Aurora for only two years before he took a leave of absence to serve as chaplain with the 3rd Division. In his absence, Canon F.J. Fife served as Trinity's rector, losing his son Fred on the battlefield. When Keith Perdue returned from England after the war, he brought with him a very special souvenir, the brass processional cross which now is used to lead church school children in and out of church. Markings on the cross indicate that it was once a crucifix. It was found, bent and tarnished among the ruins of

**Trinity Church**  
Aurora, Ont.

✠

**Memorial Service**

— ON —

SUNDAY, JUNE 25th, 1944

— FOR —

**Wing Commander**  
**Lloyd V. Chadburn, D.S.O. and Bar, D.F.C.**  
R. C. A. F.

KILLED IN AIR OPERATIONS IN NORMANDY

✠

"All you had hoped for, all you had, you gave to  
save mankind — yourself you scorned to save."

33. Leaflet for memorial service at Trinity for Lloyd Chadburn, 1944.



34. *The Rev. R. Keith Perdue, incumbent 1940 – 42 and 1946 – 48. He brought Trinity's brass processional cross from a church bombed during World War II.*

a bombed-out church, and was given to Mr. Perdue as a token of that church's grieving parishioners' thanks for his ministry among them. It is a poignant memorial from a cruel time, yet it too led to controversy. In an incident reminiscent of the "turning east" controversy of 1928, some parishioners left the church when a processional cross was first used.

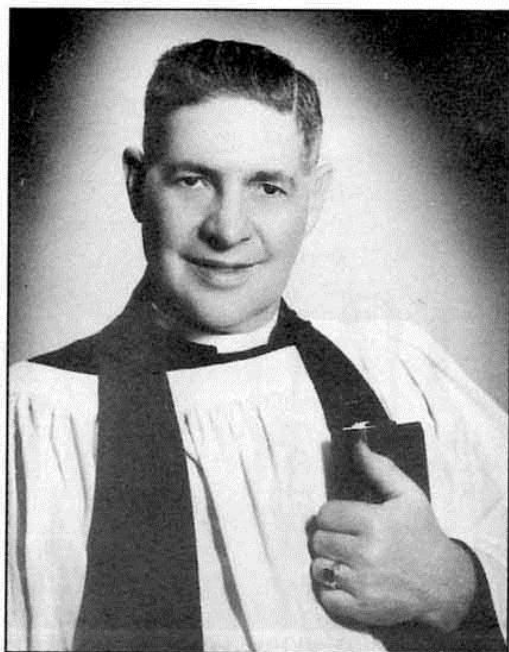
Trinity's major memorial to its Second World War dead is the carved oak panelling and reredos along the east wall of the chancel. Unlike all other memorials in the church, however, it lacks a plaque or inscription to tell of its history. It was dedicated in 1946, a very special year for the parish, celebrating not only the end of the war but also the centennial of Trinity at the head of Church Street. Since 1941, care of the chancel, its furnishings, linens, and communion vessels had been entrusted to a Chancel Guild which previously had existed as part of the Parochial Guild. It was appropriate that the new Guild's first president was Edith Mussen Hillary who was given charge over a sacred place built when her father was rector, and which included an altar cross given in memory of her father-in-law and an altar in memory of her son. By this time, the walls of the chancel and nave had been painted a stark white, completely obliterating the church's original colour scheme.



35. *Centennial service, September 27, 1946. The Rev. Keith Perdue stands at the reading desk while Archbishop Owen, Primate of Canada, is seated on the bishop's chair. John F. Willis is at the organ. (See page 72 for identification of other participants.)*



36. Historical display, Trinity Hall, September 27, 1946.  
 Left to right: Evelyn Taylor, Dorothy Hofland, Mrs. Maughan, Anna Smith, Marjorie Willis, Margaret Dann, Genevieve Robinson.



37. The Rev. E. Hugh McLellan, incumbent 1953 - 59.

The late 1940s and the 50s saw the incumbencies of the Rev'ds K.D. Whatmough (1948-1953) and E.H. McLellan (1953-59), at a time when Aurora was rapidly turning into a community of commuters living here but working in Toronto. Aurora's population more than doubled during this time as Regency Acres subdivision to the south and Aurora Heights to the north were begun. Many parish activities which had been disrupted by the war were revived again and new ones begun, including another men's group, officially part of the Brotherhood of Anglican Churchmen, and a newly reorganized troop of Boy Scouts. Choral music at Trinity began to take on new importance in 1950 with the appointment of Ruth Harris as organist and choir director. Mrs. Harris, licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music in England, had begun her training at Wells Cathedral at the tender age of six. By age fourteen, she had her first church appointment. At Trinity, she was to bring the Senior Choir to a new level of excellence, direct Boys and Girls choirs, and lead the new Trinity Choral Society.

In 1955 and again in 1957, Trinity canvassed its changing community, seeking support for ministry at home and,

increasingly, for the wider Anglican church of which Trinity was a part. In 1957, the church was redecorated, with stencilled and hand-painted ornament reminiscent of Victorian splendour and incorporating timeless Christian symbols. Even in the late 1950s, however, church attendance figures remained close to what they had been thirty years before. An 8:00 a.m. communion service was added on Sundays, and average morning attendance totalled just over 200, augmented by Anglican students who lived at St. Andrew's College. Attendance at Evensong, however, dropped to less than twenty, presumably including the rector, organist, and choir members. Walt Disney and Ed Sullivan did to Sunday evening church attendance what Edgar Bergen, Charlie McCarthy, and Amos 'n Andy had done in the 1930s. Trinity's records from the immediate post-War years seem rather sparse, as if the church were resting a while after the hard times of the Depression and the Second World War but quietly gathering its forces to face the challenge of the tumultuous 1960s.



38. In the old vestry, 1963, with the Rev. Lloyd Gesner (left) and John Speers, incumbent 1959 – 1968.

On November 29, 1959, a new rector with a twinkle in his eye and a soft Irish accent, John Speers, made his debut at Trinity Church. The parish began to grow as never before. On April 3, 1960, a 9:30 morning service was added to a schedule which already included services at 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. every Sunday. In October, Lloyd Gesner, a classics master at St. Andrew's College, later to be ordained a deacon and serve as Trinity's first assistant curate, began helping at services. In June, 1963, Mr. Gesner took up a position at King's College in Halifax and was succeeded by David E. Jones. By the autumn of that year, a Sunday attendance of 475 people was not unusual. Numbers increased beyond that on some Sundays when 3:00 p.m. baptismal services were held. Many of the people who flocked to Trinity were new to Aurora, families with their "baby boom" children who bought houses in the new subdivisions and loved the sense of security, history, and small-town flavour which Aurora could offer. Some of them came to church by a bus service which, according to a 1961 feature in



39. Junior Choir, 1961.

Left to right: Patricia Watson, Susan Adams, Wayne Harding, Maureen Dowling, Paul Harding, Martyn Lanaway, Doreen Harrison, John Lanaway, Susan Wrixon, Jim Coles, Anna Pratt

the *Toronto Telegram*, was initiated by Trinity and offered six trips every Sunday to and from the Anglican, United, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches in town. When people came to church, they found a place exploring new programs and inspired by liturgical revival, rediscovering ancient forms and experimenting with new ones. A scrapbook in the Trinity archives recalls a few of many special Sundays: Mothering Sunday observed with flowers and simnel cakes; celebrations of the New Fire and lighting of the Easter candle; a folk mass by Geoffrey Beaumont, drawing on Latin and Afro-American rhythms; "Jazzmasses"; a "gospel hootenanny" attended by 300 area teenagers who were part of a revitalized Anglican Young People's Association; a parish mission with the Rev. Erasmus Bitarabeho from Uganda; a "blessing of the pets" service near St. Francis Day; a memorial service at the death of Sir Winston Churchill; a New Year's Eve party and Watch Night Service; the beginning of the Golden Years senior citizens group; and the reorganization of the Woman's Auxiliary as the Anglican Church Women. The church glowed with red hangings donated one Pentecost in memory of former rectors and with Christmas altar hangings worked by the Sisters of St. John Divine. Candleholders were made for the window ledges for annual Christmas candlelight services, while nativity figures sculpted from paper by parishioner Margaret Dann became another Trinity Christmas tradition. Ruth Harris's Trinity Choral Society performed sacred and secular works with the nascent York Symphony Orchestra at St. Andrew's College, Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School, and in the church itself.

Trinity must have seemed to be bursting at the seams, so much so that additions were needed. May 24, 1964, was the date of a ceremonial sod-turning for what would come to be known as the van Nostrand Narthex, the St. Columba Chapel, and the Falconbridge Wing. Appropriately, the ceremony included one of the oldest active members of the parish and two of the youngest: ninety-two-year-old Mrs. Harry MacGirr, three-year-old Mark Hodgkinson whose great-great-grandfather William Taylor had worshipped in the first



40. At worship, 1963.

Trinity Church, and three-year-old Robert Glass whose forebears had farmed on the site of St. Andrew's College and maintained close ties with Trinity over four generations. On November 8, a cornerstone was laid, including a copper box which contained a copy of the *Aurora Banner*, a service leaflet, and a silver dollar. At a special service of Evensong, November 24, 1964, the new additions were opened by the Rt. Rev. Frederick Hugh Wilkinson, Lord Bishop of Toronto, in the presence of the Hon. E. Earl Rowe, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario. Building Committee chairmen included George Cady, Philip Jones, Donald Bassett, and Alan Cossar. Members were Ira Thayer, Robert Case, Keith Nisbet, Tony Arkell, Don Glass, Bert Green, Ken Taylor, and Holly Hillary whose paternal grandfather Dr. Robert William Hillary and maternal grandfather the Rev. Horace Mussen had both served on the church building committee exactly eighty years earlier. Members of the Furnishing Committee were Louise Brittain, Annabelle Black, Mary Hillary, Helen Williamson, and Mrs. J. Carter. C. Walter Noble of the firm of Noble and Douglas worked with John Dol of Model Builders, Aurora, to create facilities which in many ways combined the best of new and old. For the narthex, they created a Gothic-inspired addition which complemented the appearance of the 1884 church, especially since it was faced with identical brick salvaged from the demolished 1883 Baptist church just two blocks away at Victoria and Wellington streets. The narthex also included several small stained glass windows which had to be moved to make way for the new additions. In the new narthex, there was room for a proper cloakroom and, at last, choir and servers' robing rooms connected directly to the church. It came to be known as the van Nostrand Narthex in recognition of contributions by the pioneering van Nostrand family and, more particularly, in memory of Gertrude van Nostrand who in 1941 had died while shielding her infant granddaughter from a charging ram. The St. Columba Chapel, named after St. Columba of Iona, recalled the Celtic roots of many parishioners. With its stained glass windows designed by parishoner Jerry Jeffs, it provided an intimate contemporary setting for new liturgies in pleasing contrast with the traditional layout of the church it adjoined. The Falconbridge Wing, named after contributor Dorothy Falconbridge, provided a direct link with Trinity Hall, along with offices, large and small meeting rooms, and the church's first nursery. That nursery was named the Kevin Speers Nursery and furnished with the help of a Memorial Fund established in 1962 after the sudden death of the two-year-old son of John and Gwen Speers in his crib at the rectory.

All Aurora was deeply saddened at little Kevin's death since all Aurora had come to admire John Speers. He seemed to know almost everyone by name, whether they attended Trinity or not. He played an enthusiastic part in Aurora's 1963 centennial celebrations, offering the prayer of dedication at town council's inaugural meeting when parishioner Keith Nisbet was sworn in as Mayor. He and his family wore period costumes to special events organized by yet another parishioner, Don Glass, chairman of Aurora's centennial program. He was a frequent contributor to the *Aurora Banner's* "The Clergy and the World" series, encouraged the Aurora Drama Workshop to hold their early rehearsals for *H.M.S. Pinafore* in Trinity's St. Francis Room and, like subsequent rectors, graciously allowed the Aurora Historical Society to open the old rectory for its fundraising house tour. When the Speers family left in April, 1968, for their very different, inner-city parish of St. Stephen's in the Fields, over 300 attended a farewell banquet at Aurora Highlands Golf Club. His final Sunday evening service at Trinity featured a folk mass which he himself had composed.

In retrospect, the 1960s may seem like a golden time. At the beginning of the decade was the Camelot presidency of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, watched by Canadians as well as Americans as a symbol of youthful energy, hope and change. Near the end were Canada's Centennial, Expo '67, and then Trudeaumania. Along the way were the hopes and struggles of the Civil Rights movement in the States and the Quiet Revolution in Quebec when it seemed that principles of goodwill and justice might prevail. But the 1960s were also the time of political assassinations, violent bombings, killings of civil rights activists, the birth of the drug culture, and the start of the Vietnam War. The 60s also brought new attitudes toward material things: buy them now and embrace the promise of supposedly limitless economic prosperity.



41. Church School children on the steps of Trinity Hall, 1963.





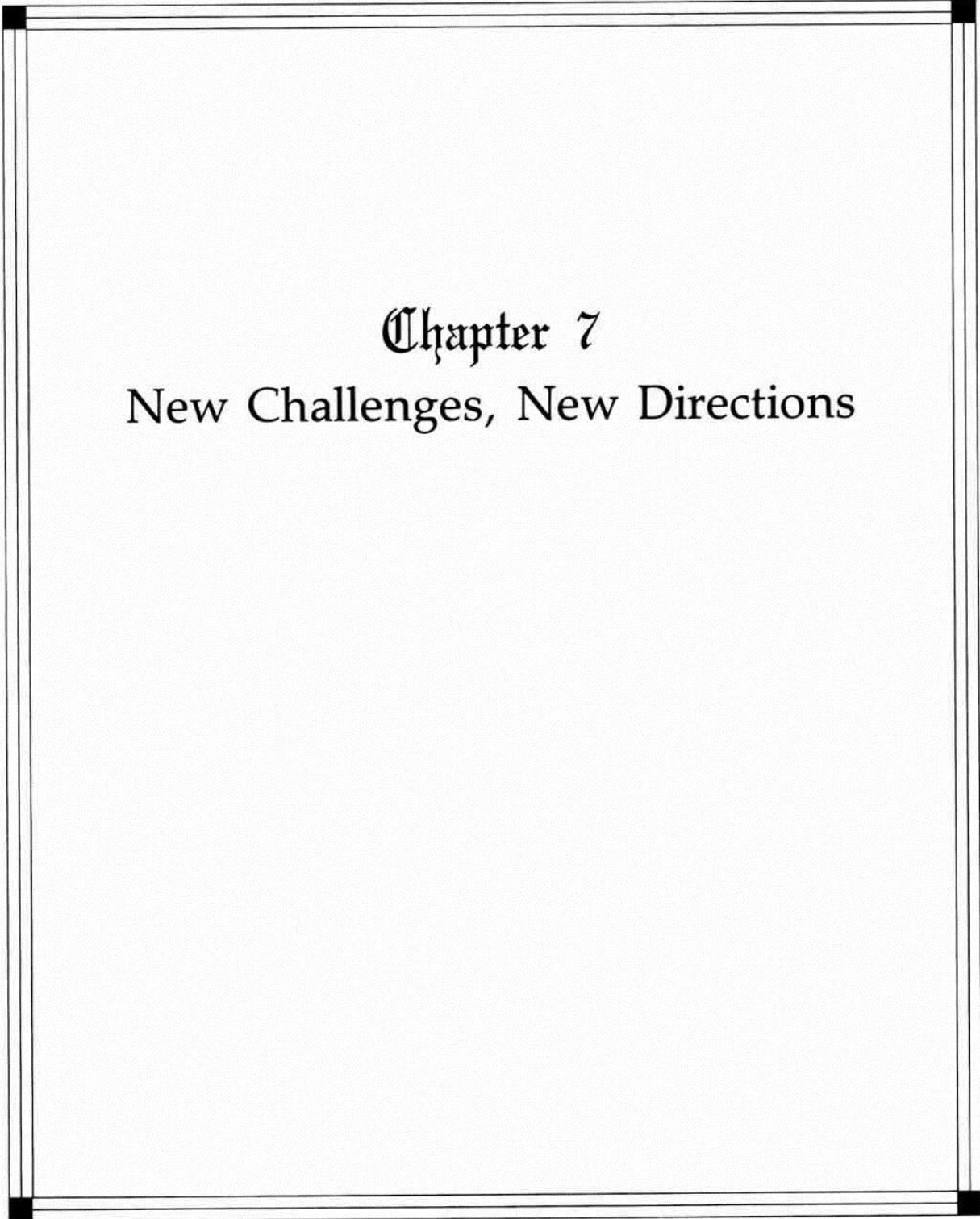
42. John Mullings's church school class, Trinity Hall, 1963.



43. Parishoners performing a skit written by Joan Seager, depicting a vestry meeting of 1867, on January 30, 1967, in Trinity Hall.



44. Confirmation class, April 1968, including John Speers and Bishop Robinson with Brent Binions, Geoffrey Brooks, Michael Clubine, Peter Coleridge, Robert Farquharson, Robert Hales, David Hally, Harry Housser, James Knowles, Donald Lewis, Dale Lewis, David MacMain, Richard Matthews, Cameron Miller, Stuart Neary, Nicholas Ryeland, Ralph Smith, Douglas Twiss, Michael Ward, Gordon Watson, James Williamson, Suzanne Arkell, Sherry Lee Case, Deborah Chapman, Jeanne Hales, Jo-Ann Harrison, Gillian Hitch, Patricia Hutchins, Heather Lacey, Freda Munshaw, Janet Nisbet, Sharon Sooley, Shelagh Speers, Joanne Stein, Anna Stein, Mary Walsh, Janet Wilder, Sanga Wilson.



# Chapter 7

## New Challenges, New Directions

## *New Challenges, New Directions*

The best and worst of the 60s lay at the foundation of much that would be experienced by Canadians and their churches in the decades to follow. At Trinity the best legacy of the 60s awakened the church to the concerns of the world around it and made it more open to change and experiment.



45. The Rev. Fred G. Hall, incumbent 1968 - 1980, wearing a cope presented to him by Trinity parish on his twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination.

When the Rev. Fred Hall and his family first arrived at Trinity in 1968, the Anglican Church of Canada was beginning to think of a future partnership with the United Church and was already well along in its planning for a controversial new Anglican/United hymn book. Early in 1969, Trinity began experimenting with one of many new orders for Holy Communion, but wrote the rector, "The reaction was far from positive." In 1973, the women of the choir discarded their head coverings, following the lead of many women in the pews. In 1975, Trinity began studying new liturgies once again, a sometimes confusing array which included the English Series 3, the Canadian Alternate Rite, and the American Rite 2. The American Rite 2 proved to be most popular with the new Worship Committee and was adopted for use once per month. The following year, children were permitted to receive communion without first being confirmed. Trinity Sunday, 1975, was met with enthusiasm by some and foreboding by others as choir pews were removed temporarily from the chancel and the chapel altar was placed near the top of the chancel steps. For the first time, the Gospel was read following a procession into the nave while the morning's sermon was exchanged for "an intimate chat from the chancel steps." In the continuing spirit of community involvement, a group of Trinity members formed a "Coalition for Community Development" in 1971 and, with the support of the parish and the federal government, sponsored an Opportunity for Youth program which provided paid summer employment to seventeen young people to work on the properties of eighty of Aurora's senior citizens. In 1976, Trinity became a sponsor of "Telecare" which trained volunteers to lend a sympathetic ear to callers in distress. Trinity also used telephones to advantage in its 1978 "Buy-a-shingle"

telethon campaign which raised \$7,655 one weekend for roof repairs. Musically, Trinity continued in directions established previously, although the end of 1972 saw Ruth Harris leave her post as organist and choir director after twenty-three years. She was succeeded by Gregory Paskaruk who left Trinity in late summer 1979 to become Frederick Silvester Scholar at Bloor Street United Church. Greg's tenure saw not only the abandonment of choir caps for women, but a change from black to dark red cassocks and the formation of a multi-talented group of chamber players.

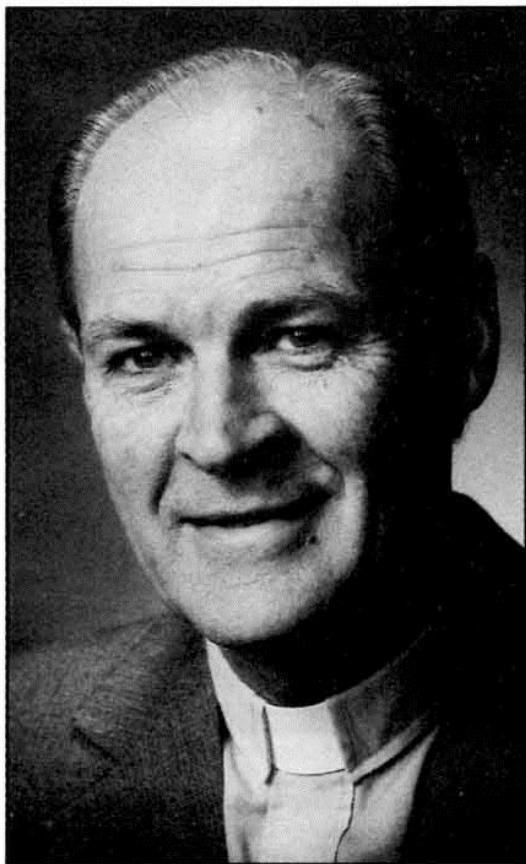
Despite all these things, however, church attendance declined. In 1973, Trinity reduced its morning schedule to services at 8:00 and 10:00, supplemented only occasionally by Evensong. Occasional assistants included Paul Brillinger and Harold Boundy, but for the most part, Fred Hall served his parish alone.



46. *The Diocesan Girls Choir School and their director, Tony Browning, at Trinity church, August 17, 1980.*

Attendance dropped to much less than half of what it had been in the 1960's, numbering only 130 adults and forty-five children on an average Sunday in 1975. What had happened? Some were uncomfortable with the changes which were afoot in the 1970s, but the dynamic 1960s had been a time of far greater change for the parish. Perhaps some parishioners had become more cynical, following the lead of the world around them in their disillusionment with 60s promises. In the secular world, it was becoming decidedly unfashionable to go to church or become involved with idealistic causes. Economics and changing patterns of family life must have been playing a role too. The new houses of the 50s and early 60s subdivisions were modest and relatively inexpensive, with two or three bedrooms, one bathroom, kitchen, living room, small dining area, an unfinished basement, and a carport. They were designed to be affordable through the income of one family member, the husband and father, whose wife usually stayed at home and looked after the children. Cottages, boats, and long vacations were considered luxuries. Since the late 1960s the new houses of Aurora and the working lives of many Aurora families have changed enormously. Houses are bigger, often requiring the paycheques of two people, usually husband and wife, to buy and maintain them. Commuting time to work has increased, children are fewer, and holidays and vacation homes more common. Where does the church fit in? Studies have suggested that it fits into many people's lives only as a consumer commodity, something to be used, its services to be purchased only occasionally, at Christmas or Easter, for a wedding or baptism. Fred Hall wrote in a perhaps overly pessimistic tone in his vestry report for 1975, "... Generally the numbers involved showed no increase,

while I had hoped that it would be the year that everything took off. In short, my frustration is that we were marking time and nothing more." All Aurora's churches, however, were experiencing similar problems and parishioners who were active at Trinity in the 1970's recall Fred Hall's tenure with great fondness. Perhaps numbers in the pews provided a false view of Trinity in the 1970s, or through much of the 1980s, for that matter. Despite smaller numbers, annual givings increased by roughly 130 per cent, from \$28,420 to just over \$69,000 between 1970 and 1980. They would grow at an equal rate during the 1980s. These figures cannot be explained by inflation and rising personal incomes alone.



47. *The Rev. Canon Dr. Graham Tucker, Honourary Assistant at Trinity and the former director of the Aurora Conference Centre.*

In October 1980, the Halls left Aurora for Christ Church, Brampton, soon after the celebration of Fred's twenty-fifth anniversary of ordination. Canon Douglas Blackwell, Archdeacon Jackson, and the Rev. Graham Tucker, who had arrived in the parish ten years earlier as the director of the Aurora Conference Centre, filled in until the arrival of the Rev. Donald R. Bone from Scarborough the following spring. Don Bone's arrival coincided with a decision to restore the colourful wall paintings which had been completed in the church by the firm of Thomas Browne of Markham some twenty-five years earlier. The walls had become dingy when ceiling fans installed in 1979 began drawing several decades of dust up from behind the church's old radiators. Another phone-a-thon was held to pay for this work and for renovations at the rectory, raising nearly \$17,000 on the weekend of May 8, 9, and 10. The decoration of the church involved cleaning, filling and repainting. It did not duplicate the earlier work exactly, but the 1981 redecoration, like that of 1957, preserved the spirit of Victorian church decoration which itself had been an adaptation of the medieval art of wall painting. Ancient parish churches once had been decorated with colourful walls and ceilings which were whitewashed at the time of the Reformation. A similar fate had befallen many colourful Victorian churches when they were whitewashed in the name of modernist simplicity.

While Trinity restored and renovated its church, it began looking again at the future of the rectory, establishing a Long-Range Planning Committee in 1980 to consider "an implementable alternative to the present rectory and surrounding lands." Inspiration for this may have come, in part, from the new rector's previous involvement with the development of Cana Place, an innovative seniors' housing complex built on the lands of the old church of St. Paul's L'Amoureux. The 1984 centenary of the church building and events such as a parish house tour that September, including the 1862 rectory, gave parishioners a renewed sense of their history, however. Discussions took place with the Town of Aurora Planning Department, and committee member Ira Thayer undertook a cost study. The annual vestry meeting in 1985 was told, "This research showed that while costs were more than what we might expect for an average home, they were not as excessive as many of the members thought." The following year vestry approved a decision that all land owned by the church should be retained and that the rectory continue in use as a residence for Trinity's clergy. More than 130 years after it was built, the rectory continues as a gracious home for the church's assistant curate, its large rooms, wide veranda and spacious front lawn often hosting parish events and welcoming visitors. Judging from past experience, however, its future will again be called into question. Can it survive as a

residence when clergy today, understandably, are anxious to own their own homes? Will a new and creative use be found so that it can continue to serve its parish and remain a historic landmark in Aurora?

Changing patterns of worship characterized the 1980s as they had the two decades before. By 1980, a confusing number of alternative services were in use in parishes across Canada, and Trinity's adaptation of the American Rite 2 was not among those on the College of Bishops' authorized list. Thus for a time the church returned entirely to The Book of Common Prayer. In 1983, however, the parish began using a communion service based on the Third Canadian Order with music composed by music director Richard Baker and entitled *Missa Trinitas*. Richard and Mary Baker had joined the Trinity choir in 1976. Richard became interim director when Greg Paskaruk left in 1979, and that fall was officially appointed Director of Music, briefly assisted by Pamela Hodgson. Mary Baker would later fill the role of Organist Associate. Richard continued the traditions of Anglican Church music which he himself had learned in England and which had been firmly planted at Trinity by Ruth Harris, but also knew that the church must draw on the best music of its own time, as it always has done. Hence his *Missa Trinitas* now provides a modern setting for contemporary rites in the Book of Alternative Services which came into use at Trinity as a supplement to Prayer Book liturgies in the spring of 1986.

Looking beyond buildings and worship, the parish continued to broaden its definition of Outreach and Mission. In July 1979, thirteen parishioners formed the Trinity Aurora Group which sponsored the Ly family, among Viet Nam's tragically displaced "Boat People," who arrived in Aurora in December that year. The Lys quickly became financially independent. By 1986, the Trinity group had sponsored twenty-two refugees, most of them members of the Lys' extended family. In January 1983, with the help of members of Aurora United Church, the church opened the Helping Hand clothing depot, offering free or inexpensive used clothing of good quality to people in need, particularly mothers and children who had found refuge at Aurora's Yellow Brick House shelter. To further the church's work in the north, Trinity members helped support Greg Frazier, a theological student committed to serving the church there. Frazier was ordained a deacon at Trinity in January, 1984 by the Rt. Rev. Caleb J. Lawrence, Bishop of Moosonee. In a very practical form of local ministry, the church continued its practice of holding regular "Foot Clinics" through its Golden Years senior citizens group. All these things were in addition to broadening support of the church at large; in 1983, Trinity responded to the Anglicans in Mission Campaign with a pledge of \$96,000 over the next five years, considerably more than the \$45,000 requested by the diocese.

Trinity was growing in terms of its members' financial commitments and sense of stewardship, but not in terms of numbers which remained roughly the same as or less than they had been in the 1970s, despite continued expansion of Aurora's population. Nonetheless, it became clear that if the church was to respond adequately to the needs of current members and increasing demands for counselling, nursing home visits, and diocesan committees, more staff would be needed. Hiring an assistant, frustratingly, had to be put off when the steeple needed repairs, the church had to be re-shingled, or storm windows were ordered, but on June 1, 1986, June Abel arrived as assistant curate. June was the first woman cleric to officiate at Trinity on a full-time basis, although in 1980 theological student Barbara Rhodes had served as a summer assistant to Fred Hall. In 1987 June was appointed priest-in-charge when Don Bone left Trinity for a position in the Toronto church offices.



48. The Rev June Abel, who served Trinity as an assistant and then priest-in-charge, 1986-88.



49. Trinity Church School float, Aurora Santa Claus Parade, 1988.

Just before Christmas 1987, the bearded and energetic former chaplain of Trinity College School in Port Hope, the Rev. Philip Poole, arrived as Trinity's nineteenth incumbent. The son of an Anglican priest, Father Phil had grown up in Peterborough and Toronto and majored in music at Waterloo Lutheran University. From there he went to Trinity College, graduated in 1977, became an assistant at Holy Trinity, Thornhill, and then served as rector at Christ Church, Stouffville. While at Stouffville, he had overseen the building of a new church and was founder and chair of York Simcoe Ministries, designed to improve the quality of pastoral care to seniors and health care facilities. His talents in music and ministry have enriched Trinity in many ways. In the earlier 1980's the church had begun edging away from its traditions of sung services from the Book of Common Prayer. Father Phil restored these traditions, but embraced more modern liturgies with equal energy and soon became known for his talents on the guitar in the midst of Church School children gathered around the chancel steps. He moved the main altar out from the east wall, a change debated but avoided over many years, so that clergy officiating at the Eucharist could face their congregation at Trinity for the first time. He moved the reading of the Gospel out into the middle of the congregation and often left the pulpit entirely during his sermons. His liturgical renewal saw a return to some older Trinity customs such as candlelight Christmas services along with a host of other observances, some of them recalling the liturgically diverse 1960s, some of them new to the parish: a Festival of Light at the end of each Christmas season, the Solemn Liturgy on Good Friday, the New Fire (setting off smoke alarms in the process) at Easter, Mothering Sunday, Rogation Sunday, the blessing of animals, and informal summer Wednesday services at barbecues ("Q and Pew") in the church's back yard. Children's programs reclaiming Christian observance of All Saint's Day and Ash Wednesday attracted attention throughout the diocese.

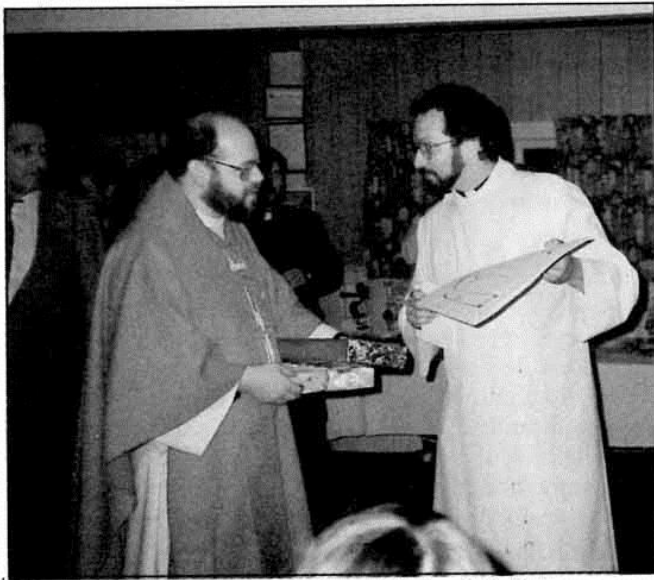
Soon after his arrival, the church returned to its practice of holding three Sunday morning services, now at 8:00, 9:15, and 11:00. With the exception of Easter Day, the 8:00 service is "said," but worship at 9:15 is mostly led by the senior choir, and at 11:00 by the junior choir. The four-part senior choir continued to grow, and exemplified a volunteer group at Trinity Church whose members have remained faithful over





50. "Trinity Teens Together." 1991.

*Front row, left to right: Steven Arkeveld, Leigh-Anne Hogan, Nana Abo-Duncan, Carlene Adler. Back row, left to right: Sean Murphy, Steven Lofkrantz, Manua Abo-Duncan, Patrick Arkeveld, Amy Arkeveld, Christine Simmons. Missing are Faria Khan, Marnie Lanaway, Danaka Sassur, Chas Brims, Craig West, Deborah Price, and Colleen Price, and their advisor, Linda Adler.*



51. The Rev. Andrew Graham and the Rev. Philip Poole.

many years through good times and bad, with several choristers recording more than 30 years of continuous service. The junior choir now had responsibility for leading the worship on their own, and responded to the challenge under the enthusiastic leadership of Allaurien Trakas. When she moved away from Aurora, the junior choir was led for two years by the rector until Mary Ridgley took over the position in 1993, assisted by Colleen Price. The lure of Trinity seems to be inescapable at times, since Allaurien, Mary and Colleen had all been members of the junior choir during the 1970s and 80s.

In December 1992, the church installed a telephone system which enabled parishioners who could not attend services to still be a part of the worshipping community. Some dubbed the telephone

sitting on the main altar as Trinity's "hot line to God." A front page picture in *The Anglican* in January 1993 showed music director Richard Baker extending the Peace, over the telephone, to Agnes Willis. Agnes would be honoured in November 1994 with a Certificate of Merit by the Diocese of Toronto for her membership in the choir over fifty-five years and her devoted work with the Chancel Guild, Anglican Church Women, Advisory Board, Parish Council, and Anglican Conference Centre, and as a member of General Synod and tireless worker on diocesan committees.



52. Participants in Trinity's Christmas pageant, the afternoon of Christmas Eve, 1995.

Back row, left to right: Lou Goodwin, Stenphanie Newfeld, Carol Edward (Gabriel), Linda Kaye, Poppy Price, Penny Dodson. Middle row, left to right: Gail McIntyre, John Hedgecock, Valerie Keith (and one of the girls), David Timms, Shirley Alberga, John Trueman, Tom Clark (loaned from CFTO), Clarke Edward, (Our other King who is missing is Gerry Arthur). Shepherds: Danielle Trueman (with sheep), Katie Ney with Coco, Jan Greenwood (with lamb), Geoff Barton with Jazzie, J-D Ney, Beverley Wood. Angel: Heather Jarvie.

Outreach and expanding ministry also found outlets in parish support for the Anglican Church's Faith in Action Program which helped the wider church finance its far-flung ministry and allowed Trinity to add to its own staff of clergy. When June Abel left to become Associate Priest at All Saints, Whitby, in 1988, Andrew Graham arrived as Assistant Curate, with Chris Barriger as a summer student assistant. Other student clergy have been April Hoeller and Marty Keatings. Prue Chambers came in 1989 as a student at a time coinciding with the display of the diocesan sesquicentennial cross at Trinity as part of the cross's celebratory tour of 265 parishes. Prue brought special gifts with her in her ministry to the bereaved. Her "Living with Loss" program would bring comfort to many as she returned to Trinity in 1990, first as Assistant Curate and then, in 1992, as Associate Priest, working also with Father Gary Kilgore who served Trinity as an Associate from 1990 to 1992. When she left Aurora in 1994 to become the incumbent at the Church of St. Nicholas, Birch Cliff, in Scarborough, scores of Trinity parishioners and all of the Trinity Choir of



53. *Father Phil with Church School children on the chancel steps.*



54. A gathering of seniors, with the Rev. Prue Chambers officiating. Gatherings such as this every Christmas and Easter bring seniors from five Aurora residences, many of them in wheelchairs, for lunch and the celebration of Choral Eucharist.



55. Assistant Curate, the Rev. Sharon Melvin, greets parishioners following a morning service, January 1996,

which she and husband Bruce had been part, went to participate in her induction service. From December 1994 to May 1995, the Rev. Grahame Thompson assisted at Sunday services. In summer 1995, the Rev. Sharon Melvin moved into the rectory as Assistant Curate and the Rev. David Flint was appointed Associate Priest. With a growing congregation sometimes numbering over 500 on Sunday mornings, Trinity also has developed new kinds of ministry based on small self-supporting and self-directing groups whose leaders have been given advice and training by Honourary Assistant, the Rev. Canon Dr. Graham Tucker. At a time when many may feel lost within a large parish community or whose work schedules may conflict with other church-related programs, small groups which focus on the spiritual needs of their members may provide an important key to maintaining the high levels of involvement Trinity now enjoys. Perhaps they may remind us of the small groups which met in John Mosley's house on Yonge Street to found Trinity parish over 150 years ago; or going back further into our history, perhaps they are a modern-day equivalent of the small groups of Christians who first gathered nearly 2,000 years ago to share the Good News of Christ.

Far beyond the bounds of Aurora, Trinity parishioners Marty and Jenny Bell and their family work in central Asia in the field of economic development and medical services thanks, in part, to support from church members. At home, Trinity has begun to provide a forum for the discussion of some of the most complex social and moral issues of our time. "An Evening with..." has included topics such as euthanasia and sexual orientation and brought Trinity and its community face-to-face with issues the founders of the parish would have found incomprehensible.



56. Associate Priest, the Rev. David Flint, chats with parishioner Peter Simmons following a morning service, January, 1996.

which stands in marked contrast to much that exists in the world outside and which helps to symbolize the timelessness of Christianity itself. Yet Trinity's people also embrace change as they always have done throughout the parish's history. "In Christ's footsteps, we worship, serve, and grow" has become an all-embracing motto. As new buildings are planned in detail and then gradually rise north of the present church, they will bring with them a sense of Trinity's future while honouring Trinity's past. Above all, if the parish is to survive through another 150 years, these buildings will be a welcoming, loving home for Christians in the Anglican tradition, like John Mosley's upper room, the elegant frame building from 1846, or the history-filled church of 1884.

According to a study by the U.S.-based Fuller Institute, Trinity in the 1990s is among the leading ten per cent of all Protestant churches in North America in terms of its number of participants and rate of growth. It is not surprising then that on the eve of its 150th anniversary at the head of Church Street, Trinity has embarked on a campaign to raise more than three million dollars to expand its facilities. The church has decided to remain at its present historic location at the heart of Aurora, to build a new worship space, church school, offices, meeting rooms, and other facilities, and to retain its much-loved 1884 building. Survey after survey has shown that one of the things which attracts people to Trinity is its sense of history and tradition



57. Junior Choir - April 1996

Back row (left to right): Hope Kibjij, Noël Kibjij, Bronwyn Simpson, Mary Ridgley (Director), Colleen Price (Special assistant). Middle row (left to right): Sabrina Welcome, Sarah Young, Marissa Diceman, Kelly Welcome. Front row (left to right): Lindsay Hewitt, Michelle Jones, Kevin Frost, Jenny Watson, Lauren Frost, Christine Armstrong, Britina Clarke. Absent: Danielle Jones, William Simpson



58. Enjoying a barbeque on the church's back lawn, 1994.



59. Honouring Agnes Willis at the rectory, November 1994, are (from left to right) Bishop Taylor Price, the Rev. Canon Don Bone, the Rev. Prue Chambers, the Rev. Philip Poole, the Rev. Canon Fred Hall, Richard Baker, and Ken Lanaway.

*"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations"*

Psalm 90, v.1



60. Parish secretary, Poppy Price, with special assistant Coco in the church office, January 1996.



61. Treasurer Linda Adler at Trinity's popular annual fund-raiser and dinner dance, "Harvest of Talents", autumn 1995.





62. *St. Columba Chapel, Harvest Thanksgiving, 1995.*



63. *Director of Music, Richard Baker, 1996.*



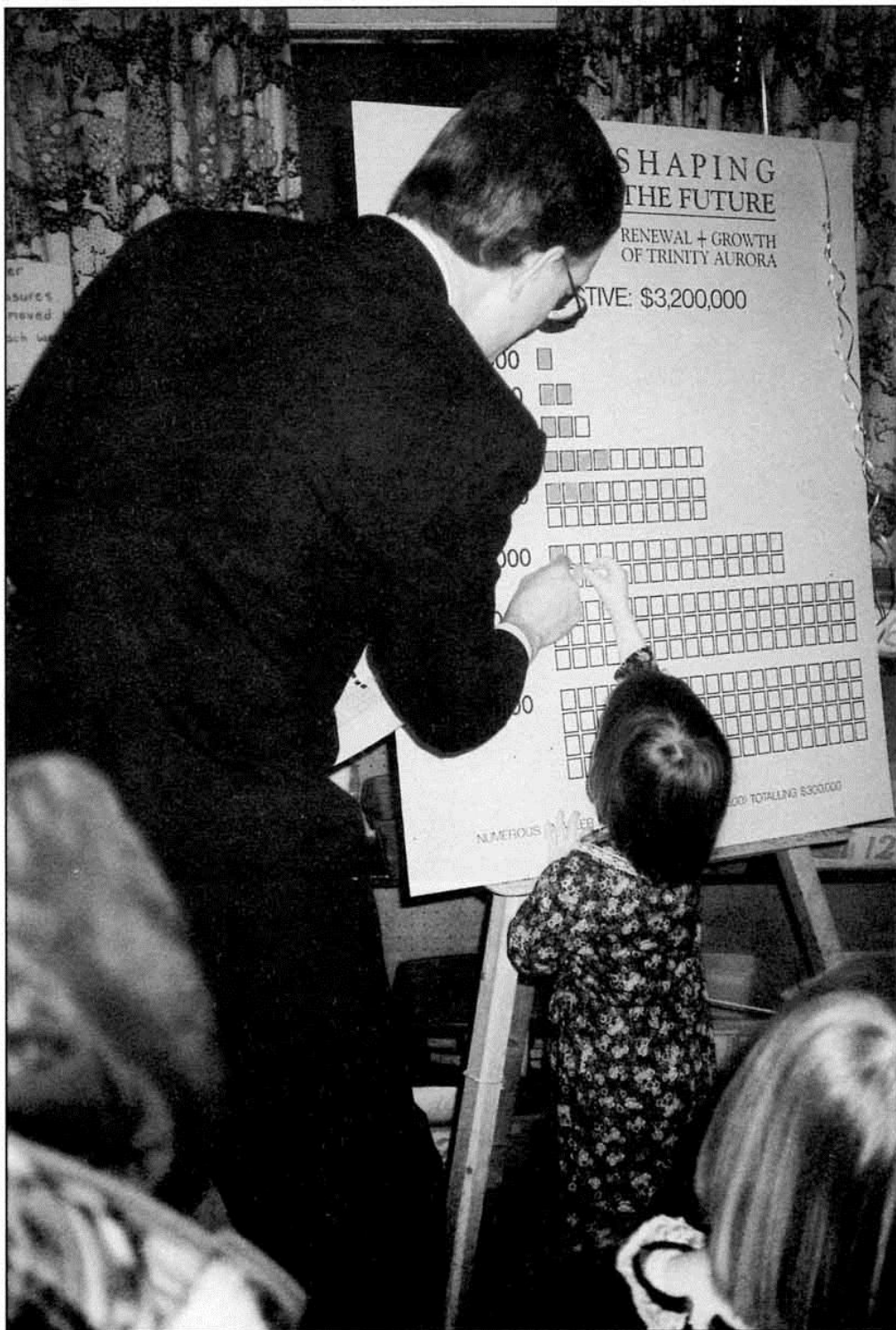
64. *The Senior Choir, alto and bass sections, 1995.*

*Front row, left to right: Mary Baker, Nancy Hallford, Joy Gannicott, Stephanie Sommer, Brenda Knight. Back Row, left to right: Clarke Edward, Gordon Sarles, Harry Carter. Missing are Jim Smythe, Peter Douglas, David Gilbert, and Patrick Carter.*



65. *The Senior Choir, soprano and tenor sections, 1995.*

*Front row, left to right: Margaret Carter, Lee Williams, Doreen Carter, Mary Cousins, Brenda Gillies. Back row, left to right: Ken Taylor, John McIntyre, John McLernon, April Franklin, Betty Ryeland, Muriel Lanaway. Missing are Jackie Stubbs and Jess Coleman.*



66. Helping to launch Trinity's "Shaping the Future" building campaign are Campaign Chair, Brian Armstrong, and Lisa Tate, spring 1995.

## Rectors at Trinity Church

George C. Street	1843 - 1848
Septimus Fowler Ramsey	1848 - 1859
William Henry Stewart	1859 - 1861
James Henry McCollum	1861 - 1871
A.I. Fidler	1871 - 1878
Charles Paterson	1878 - 1881
E. Horace Mussen	1882 - 1900
Laurence H. Kirkby	1900 - 1912
Gerald S. Despard	1912 - 1917
Percy R. Soanes	1917 - 1930
Gilbert O. Lightbourn	1930 - 1940

R. Keith Perdue	1940 - 1942 and 1946 - 1948
F.J. Fife	1942 - 1946
K.D. Whatmough	1948 - 1953
E. Hugh McLellan	1953 - 1959
John E. Speers	1959 - 1968
Fred G. Hall	1968 - 1980
Donald R. Bone	1981 - 1986
M. Philip Poole	1987 -

## Assistant Clergy

Lloyd Gesner	1960 - 1963
David E. Jones	1963 - 1967
June Abel	1986 - 1988
Andrew Graham	1988 - 1990

Prue Chambers	1990 - 1994
Gary Kilgore	1990 - 1992
Grahame Thompson	1994 - 1995
Sharon Melvin	1995 -
David Flint	1995 -

## Rector's Wardens

## People's Wardens

*This list is based on lists compiled and published in 1946 and 1984 and on vestry reports. Reports prior to 1878 are incomplete.*

1862	Dr. R.W. Hillary
1867	Major Ernest M. Peel
1878	W.A. Curtis / Dr. R.W. Hillary
1879	W.H. Perram
1880	W.H. Perram
1881	W.H. Perram
1882	Dr. R.W. Hillary
1883	W.E. Wheadon
1884	J.M. Willis
1885	W.H. Perram
1886	R.M. Hillary
1887	W.H. Perram
1888 - 9	Arthur G. Nicol
1890	Arthur G. Nicol
1891	D.A. Radcliffe
1892	Thomas Redditt

John Field
Matthew Lepper
G.F. Pepper
Dr. R.W. Hillary
Matthew B. Faughner
William Willis, Sr.
William Willis, Sr.
P.T. Bond
C.C. Robinson
C.C. Robinson
William C. Clift
William C. Willis
William C. Willis
F. Baldwin
William C. Willis
F.J. Holladay

## Rector's Wardens

1893	Thomas Redditt
1894	T. Herbert Lennox
1895	Robert Newbery
1896	Dr. R.M. Hillary
1897 - 8	C. Leadbetter
1899	D.A. Radcliffe
1900 - 3	D.A. Radcliffe
1904	D.A. Radcliffe
1905	D.A. Radcliffe
1906	Alexander W. Brodie
1907	H.A Sims
1908	William C. Willis
1909	Mr. Sadlier
1910	Dr. Thomas Scrivener
1911	Charles Collett
1912 - 3	John B. Spurr
1914	Samuel C. Taylor
1915	George McKenzie
1916 - 7	James Brothers
1918	Sidney M. Collis
1919	Sidney M. Collis
1920 - 1	A.J. Grimwade
1922	William S. Lee
1923	William S. Lee
1924 - 6	William S. Lee
1927 - 8	Mr. Gregory
1929	Samuel C. Chapman
1930 - 1	Samuel C. Chapman
1932 - 7	Samuel C. Chapman
1938 - 9	Samuel C. Chapman
1940 - 1	Lorne C. Lee
1942 - 9	Lorne C. Lee
1950 - 2	Ernest J. Eveleigh
1953 - 9	Ernest J. Eveleigh
1960 - 1	Jack D.H. Williamson
1962	Ira Thayer
1963 - 4	Don Glass
1965 - 6	Bert Green
1967 - 8	Ken Taylor
1969	Holly Hillary
1970	Murray Binions
1971	Tony Arkell
1972	John Mullings
1973	Dr. Wilfred Black
1974	Harold Spence
1975	George Cady
1976	George Page
1977	Eugene Blackie

## People's Wardens

Matthew H. Thompson
Samuel C. Taylor
Samuel C. Taylor
D.A. Radcliffe
John Rice
T. Herbert Lennox
William C. Willis
Thomas T. Caster
William C. Willis
(no appointment listed)
Alexander W. Brodie
Alexander W. Brodie
William Henry Taylor
William Henry Taylor
William Henry Taylor
William Henry Taylor
W.H. Wright
W.H. Wright
William C. Willis
Samuel C. Taylor
Reginald S. Morphy
N.F. Alcorn
N.F. Alcorn
James Hill
Samuel C. Taylor
Dr. Charles R. Boulding
William Price
Joseph Collins
Ernest J. Eveleigh
Martin Southwood
Martin Southwood
W. Harry MacGirr
W. Harry MacGirr
Jack D.H. Williamson
Ira Thayer
Don Glass
Bert Green
Ken Taylor
Holly Hillary
Murray Binions
Tony Arkell
John Mullings
Dr. Wilfred Black
Harold Spence
George Cady
George Page
Eugene Blackie
Janet Beasley

## Rector's Wardens

1978	Janet Beasley
1979	Hugh Moreland
1980	Lloyd Grainger
1981	Lloyd Grainger
1982	Eugene Blackie
1983	Eugene Blackie
1984	Geoff Dawe
1985	Geoff Dawe
1986	Hugh Moreland
1987 - 8	Bob Price
1989	Marilyn Redvers
1990	Bob Hartwell
1991	Shirley Grainger
1992	Bill Croker
1993	Martyn Lanaway
1994 - 6	Christine Gillepsie

## People's Wardens

Hugh Moreland
Lloyd Grainger
Philip Jones
Eric Hill
Eric Hill
Geoff McCullough
Geoff McCullough
Clarke Edward
Clarke Edward
Marilyn Redvers
David Simpson
Shirley Grainger
Bill Croker
Shirley Grainger
Scott Elphinstone
George Page

## Organists and Choir Directors

Mr. Henry Frost  
Miss Nora Hillary  
Miss Mary Lepper  
Mr. W.A. Geddes  
Mary (Mrs. Lindsay) Hall  
Miss Henrietta ("Ettie") Robinson  
Miss Carrie L. Willis  
Miss Myrtle Rowland  
Dr. C. Rogers  
Miss Brooksbank  
May Victoria (Mrs. E.H.) Mussen (1882 - 1900)

Mr. John Matthew Willis (1900 - 1917)  
Gulia Machell (Mrs. Orlan) de la Haye  
Mr. G. Strickland Thompson  
Miss Mary Alexina Mortson  
Mr. John Farrar Willis (1930 - 35 and  
1938 - 1950)  
Mr. Illyd Harris (1935 - 1937)  
Mr. Frank Murch (1937 - 1938)  
Constance Willis (Mrs. G.B.) Kirk (1938)  
Ruth (Mrs. Illyd) Harris (1950 - 1972)  
Mr. Gregory Paskaruk (1973 - 1979)  
Mr. Richard I. Baker (1979 - )

*This list is based on those compiled by John Matthew Willis in 1936 and, more recently, by John and Agnes Willis. It is roughly chronological. In the early years of the parish, duties of organist and choir director often were divided between two people, both of them volunteers. John Farrar Willis, Mus.Bac., A.C.C.O., served for two terms, beginning at age sixteen. His wife, Agnes, sang alto in the Trinity choir for fifty-five years. Illyd Harris would go on to a long and distinguished career as organist and choir director at Aurora United Church and as director of music in Aurora's schools, while his wife Ruth would serve Trinity for twenty-two years, longer than any other.*

## Picture Credits:

Trinity Anglican Church: 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 19, 24, 26, 27, 30, 31, 34 - 46, 49 - 66.

*(Special thanks are extended to parishioners Keith Franklin, John McIntyre, George Page, Poppy Price, Brenda Snape, and Helen and the late Jack Williamson who have helped document Trinity's recent history through their photographs.)*

Aurora and District Historical Society (Aurora Museum Collection): 1, 2, 12, 16, 17, 18, 29, 32, 33.

Aurora and District Historical Society (Hillary House Collection): 6, 10, 15, 20-23, 25, 28.

The Rev. June Abel: 48

Mr. Peter Hodgkinson: 8

The Rev. Canon Dr. Graham Tucker: 47

Front cover photograph by George Page.

Back cover photograph by John McIntyre, with inset photograph of the author by Brenda Snape.

Page 43: Centennial Service, September 27, 1946. Thanks are expressed to May Heath for identifying the participants at this historic event.

*Left side of chancel, front row, front to back: Rev. Mr. Wrixon (Richmond Hill), Mrs. Chapman, Jane Hodgkinson, Irene Brodie, Barbara MacGirr, Frances Moore, Grace Willis*

*Left side of chancel, back row, front to back: Rev. Roland Hill, Charlie Davies, Albert Doolittle, Gordon Lee, Reg Southwood*

*By the organ: W. Harry MacGirr (People's Warden), Lorne C. Lee (Rector's Warden), John Willis (organist and choir director)*

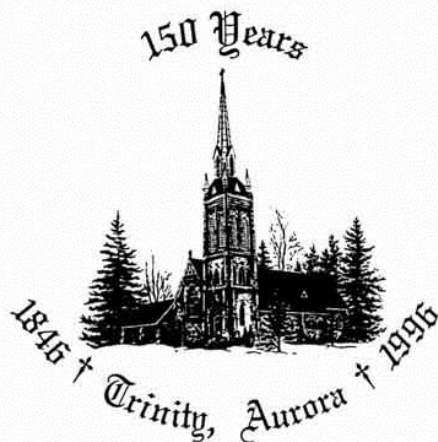
*Seated in the bishop's chair: Archbishop Owen, Primate*

*Right side of chancel, front row, front to back: Raymond White, Bobbie Bull, Jackie Lous, Murray Hodgkinson, Ronnie Brooks, Bill Lous, John Hodgkinson, Freddie White, Malcolm Hill*

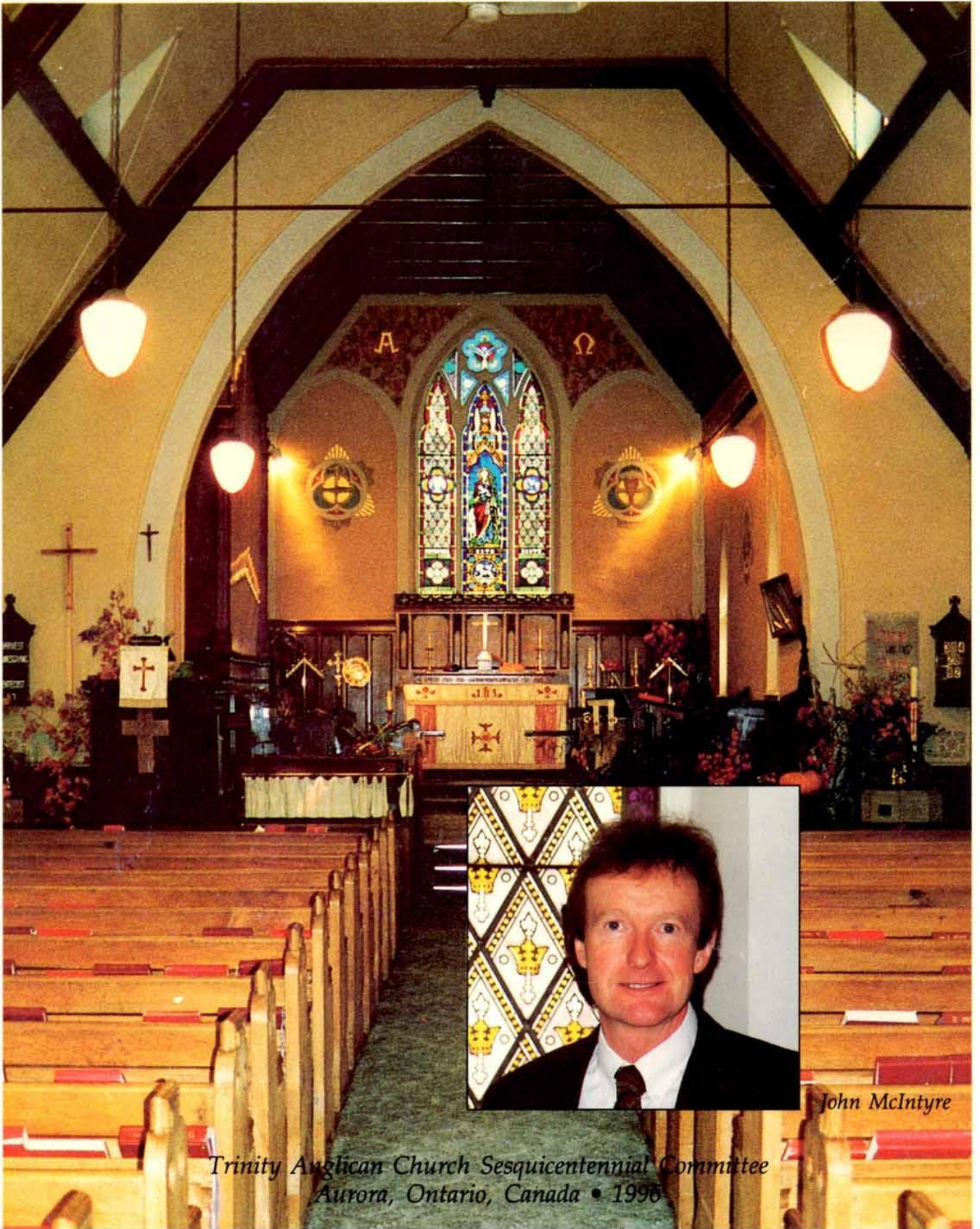
*Right side of chancel, middle row, front to back: Lilly Bunn, Mrs. Wade, Mrs. Adams, June Billings, May Heath*

*Right side of chancel, back row, front to back: Rev. R. Keith Perdue, Will Taylor (Lay Reader), Bob Hodgkinson, Ernest Bradbury, Peggy Bull, Mary Adams, Ann Lous*

*Clergy by the lectern, left to right: Rev. Gerald S. Despard, Rev. Gilbert O. Lightbourn, Rev. Percy R. Soanes, Rev. Mr. Abbot (Kettleby), Rev. Mr. Smythe (Woodbridge), Rev. Mr. Worrall (King)*







*John McIntyre*

*Trinity Anglican Church Sesquicentennial Committee  
Aurora, Ontario, Canada • 1996*