

428

*The*  
**BULLETIN**

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

OXFORD, NEW JERSEY

By

A. G. YOUNT  
*Minister*



**Oxford Historical Record**

Then Jesus spake again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

---John 8:12

"O God, make perfect our love toward thee and to our Redeemer and Justifier; give us a true and unfeigned love to all virtue and godliness, and to all thy chosen people wheresoever they be in all the world; increase in us strength against all temptations and assaults of the flesh, the world, and the devil, that according to thy promise we be never further proved or tempted than thou wilt give us strength to overcome. Give us grace to keep a good conscience; give us a pure heart and mind, and renew a right spirit within us. Amen"

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Next Sabbath daylight saving time ends, and all services will be on Standard time.

The Annual Chicken-Waffle Supper will be served at the Chapel on next Thursday evening, beginning at 5 P.M.

Our Church will observe the Holy Communion on October 9th, three weeks from to-day.

In view of the fearful condition of the world at this time, it would be fitting for all who have faith in God as the Creator and Ruler of the world, to gather in their places of worship to unite in supplication and prayer for peace and good-will among men. The thought of another world war with modern weapons is frightful and heart-breaking, and we can do nothing to prevent it except to appeal to the Lord of Hosts.

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The Fall session of the Newton Presbytery will take place next Tuesday, Sept 20th, at the Presbyterian Church in Washington.

History of Oxford Second  
Presbyterian Church  
(Continued from Bulletin 427)

The new Church immediately began to look for a minister, and soon called the Rev. Isaiah S. Hopwood, "and though never installed, served the people faithfully and with a large measure of success till July 1, 1865." He was then a young man of great promise, and in later years became pastor of Newark, First Church, the leading Presbyterian Church of the State. He was a brilliant pulpit orator. In 1908 it was the present writer's privilege to hear him twice in the First Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, Ind. Oxford Second may well be proud to have had him for their pastor for even a short time.

Before he left nearly 60 new members were added to the Church roll and the old Chapel was too small to accommodate the rapidly growing congregation.

This led them to plan for a new house of worship in 1864, and during the next year the Brick church was erected, at a cost of \$20,000.

The lot 85 X 150 feet was given by the following members of the Scranton family, as we find their names in the deed which the Church still possesses;—

Selden T. Scranton, Ellen C. his wife, William H. Scranton, Rosalie P. his wife, of Oxford, N. J.

Jane H. Scranton, James S. Scranton, Kate L., his wife, George A. Fuller and Elizabeth W. his wife, of Scranton, Pa.

The deed contained a reversion clause, in the interests of the heirs of the grantors, if it should cease to be used as a church.

The deed is dated November 25, 1870, but was not offered for approval until April 17, 1871, by the Court.

The probable explanation for this delay in completing the transfer of the property, may be found in the fact that the cost of the building was not all met by the congregation until 1870, when, according to a statement of Mr. Cline the church paid off in that year the debt on the church of \$7,000. The old Session record states that in 1866 the church had raised in all, \$12,838. It may be the grantors were in some way

responsible for the debt until paid. It was certainly a very large sum for a small congregation to put in a new church edifice, and further remarkable that they were able to pay it off in five years time.

And it becomes more wonderful that in the very year they completed the paying for the church, they proceeded to erect the present Manse for their pastor, at a cost of \$3,000. That was in 1870, a notable year in the history of the church.

But it was made possible by the extraordinary developments in Oxford industries. It was the period of the erection of the new furnace, No. 2, the Rolling-mill, nail factory etc.

New families were flocking to the new industrial center, and many of them were experienced iron workers from New England, who were mostly Presbyterians, and indentified themselves with our church from the very first.

But we must return to the year 1865, while the church was in building, Mr. Hopwood having resigned, he was succeeded by Rev. E. Clarke Cline, who began to supply the pulpit in July and in September was formally chosen as pastor. However his installation was postponed, by consent of all, until the new church was to be dedicated. This event took place on Wednesday, January 31st, 1866.

Dr. Frederick K. Knighton presided; the sermon was delivered by Rev. W. H. Kirk, of Belvidere; the dedicatory prayer by the new pastor, Mr. Cline.

At another service on that day Mr. Cline was installed by a committee appointed by the Presbytery of Newton. "In this service the Rev. E. D. Bryan preached the sermon, the Rev. Wm. H. Kirk gave the charge to the people, the Rev. George E. Bush, the charge to the pastor, and the Rev. F. K. Knighton presided and proposed the constitutional questions, and offered the ordaining prayer." (this note is taken from the minutes of the Presbytery at that time. Ed.)

Very few persons now living can recall attending these services. We have found only one, Mr. Henry Race, an Elder of the First Church, who has a distinct recollection of the day. He was then a youth and perhaps that explains why he has only  
(over)

one way to remember it--that is by an amusing incident, connected with the Rev. Mr. Henry C. Major, a well known Methodist minister, who among others of neighboring pastors, was present. He was requested, as were other ministers, to speak, and when called on he, for a moment, hesitated before beginning his talk. This gave Dr. Knighton, who presided, a chance for a witty remark, saying, that "it takes a good while to get a big engine started." Mr. Major explained that his hesitancy was due to the fact that he was not sure just what he ought to say, and illustrated by the story of a man noted for his liberality in giving; who when asked why he gave so largely, replied that the Lord shovelled in faster than he could shovel out.

The writer some years ago before Mr. Major passed away, called upon him during his last illness, and he recalled attending the dedicatory exercises, and remembered the same incident as related above.

Thus so happily launched was the long and blessed pastorate of Rev. E. Clark Cline. Not many ministers have been so favored with auspicious circumstances at the beginning of their ministry. A newly started Church, a new commodious house of worship and a new pastor and a rapidly growing congregation in a community of immense industrial developments; all of which presented a remarkable opportunity for Christian service; and as it proved, Mr. Cline was just the right man for the situation.

(To be continued)

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Our readers even at a distance will be interested to know that the old Oxford First Church has for several years been observing its anniversaries with annual home-coming festivals. Next Sabbath, Sept. 25th, the 194th anniversary will be celebrated with attractive services morning and afternoon, with free luncheon at noon.

Mrs. Clark Wilkinson sends two dollars for the Bulletin.



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A. G. YOUNT, *Moderator*

*Elders*

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