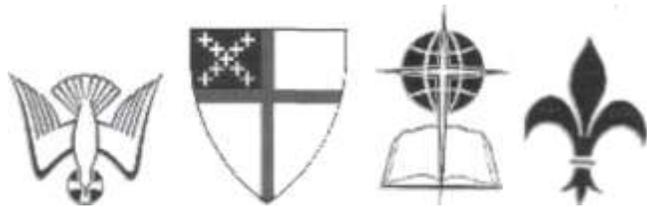
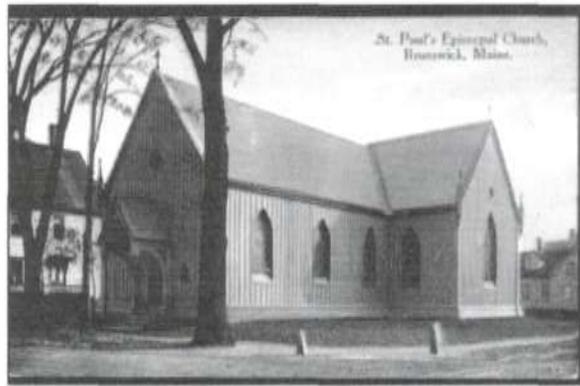
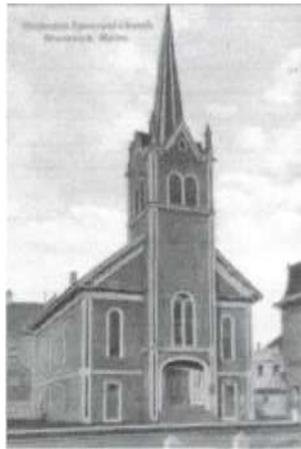




## Brunswick Churches And Religious Organizations A Short Historical Glimpse



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**B**eginning with the Pejepscot Proprietors and Massachusetts Congregational missionaries religious organizations and its appurentant structures have been an integral part of Brunswick society and history.

The chronology of church organizations began with Congregationalists, early in the 1700's (1715); Baptists in the late 1700's (1783); Universalists in the early 1800's (1812); Unitarians in 1829; Episcopalians in 1842; and Catholics in 1860.

The churches of these denominations have risen and fallen over the years, but their effect on the Town and its people are of primary importance in understanding this community and its colorful history.

This is a short selective glimpse of the major seven churches whose activities are inextricably entwined with the political, economic and social fabric of Brunswick. Wheeler and Wheeler's *History of Brunswick, Topsham and Harpswell, Maine* provides a chapter on the "Ecclesiastical History of Brunswick" and the reader is advised and encouraged to read it to garner an early view of Brunswick religious societies. In 1898 the *Telegraph* described the churches in town at that time:

Brunswick has some of the best built church edifices to be found in this section. There are nine in number, and the leading dominations are represented, namely: Congregational, Methodist, Episcopal, Baptist, Free Baptist, Advent, Roman Catholic, Universalist and Unitarian.<sup>1</sup>

## Congregationalists

The first meeting house was mid-way between the Pejepscot Proprietors Fort George and Maquoit. A plaque and graveyard marks the spot today on Upper Maine Street. The Wheelers trace the ministers who led the "parish" in those early days: Woodside, Taylor, Rutherford, Pierpont, Blower, Crumbie, McClanathan, Dunlap, Miller, etc.

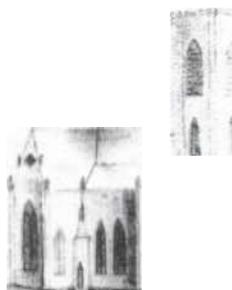
The eastern part of Brunswick was settled by descendants of the early New England settlers whereas the West was settled mostly by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. By

<sup>1</sup> "Growth and Development of the Place", Brunswick Telegraph, August 31, 1898, p. 1

1866 a new meeting house was built on "the hill" in town and the old one abandoned. A new meeting house was built in 1808 with subscriptions—a large amount of which came from Bowdoin College. In 1845 another new meeting house was built.



Second Church 1808-1845



New Church in 1845<sup>2</sup>

The first settled minister for Congregationalists was the Reverend James Woodside. The *Record* described this leader:

The first minister to reside in Brunswick was the Reverend James Woodside. He was born in Ireland, of Scotch parents, and as early as 1700 was minister of the Parish of Garvagh, in the Bann Valley, Northern Ireland. He shared in the hardships of that unhappy country, and is known to have encouraged and aided many of his fellow countrymen to seek the greater freedom of the new world. There had been a considerable movement of emigrants from Northern Ireland to America during the early part of the eighteenth century. But the great emigration took place in 1718 when hundreds of families, unable any longer to bear the burden of high rents, heavy taxes, and religious intolerance, removed to America. Mr. Woodside joined this emigration. With a company of "40 families consisting of about 160 persons", mostly members of his own congregation, he sailed from Derry Lough, in the summer of 1718, on the ship Maccallum, bound for New London where it was intended to form a settlement. But those two forces which had already figured so powerfully in the settlement of New England, wind and tide, interposed and carried the Maccallum into Massachusetts Bay. The Massachusetts authorities had set aside a certain region, for these new immigrants, extending from Cape Elizabeth to the Kennebec River, along the coast of Maine. Thither came Mr. Woodside and his company, arriving in Falmouth (Portland) on September 18, 1718. At this point there was a general disposition of the company, some remaining in Falmouth, while others sought homes along the shores of Casco and Merrymeeting Bays. Mr. Woodside and his family remained in Falmouth.

There had already been some Scotch immigration to Brunswick, settling for the most part at the head of Maquoit Bay, and along the old road leading from the Bay to the Androscoggin Falls. A sufficient number of house-holders now resided in Brunswick to necessitate the calling of a minister. The Pejepsot

<sup>2</sup> Maine Memory Network. Pejepsot Historical Museum photos

Proprietors had learned of the presence of Mr. Woodside in Falmouth. and made overtures to him to come to Brunswick, and, as the custom was in those days, serve for a probationary period of six months, "with a view to settlement."

On November 3, 1718, a meeting of the inhabitants of the township was held at Fort George, and the following resolution was passed: "Whereas the Proprietors of the township, in their paternal care for our spiritual good have by their joyful letter sought the Reverend James Woodside to be our minister, and in order thereto have proposed conditions for settlement on their part, we, the inhabitants of Brunswick, will give forty pounds per annum toward the support of the said Mr. Woodside, and the sum in proportion thereto from this time until May next (if he come to us) and God in his providence should part us."

At this meeting also it was "voted that Mr. Baxter's House on the 6<sup>th</sup> lot in Brunswick be forthwith made habitable for the said Mr. Woodside, that the charge of transporting him and his family from Falmouth to Brunswick be paid equally by us the inhabitants of said Brunswick, and that Captain Giles is hereby empowered to see the business effected." Signed, Josiah Heath, Town Clerk.

That Mr. Woodside responded immediately to this invitation is evidenced by the fact that later, at the time of Mr. Woodside's dismissal, his tenure of office was reckoned from the second of November, the day before the above mentioned meeting was held, and there is abundant reason for knowing that those thrifty citizens were not given to paying even their minister for any time that he was not actually present in the town, as we shall see.

Reverend Dunlap was mentioned in an article on the Oilman mansion:

Among the interesting relics which the Oilman house retains is the Bible of the Rev. Robert Dunlap, the first so-called "settled minister" of the First Parish Church, who was, according to reports a fiery and zealous preacher. The Bible was printed according to the custom of the time. Many records of birth or historic personages can be found only in the family Bible record. The Rev. Robert and his wife emigrated to America from the north of Ireland in August, 1735. During his passage the ship was wrecked and one of the children was washed from its mother's arms. After the Rev. Robert's arrival in Boston, he came to Brunswick in 1745, on probation as settled minister of the First Parish Church for the sum of \$200, and the committee agreeing to hire him a house during the war. His house not being finished, he resided for a time in the two-story garrison house of McFarland on the corner of Maine and Mason Streets, and endured there the rigors of the times. He continued as minister here for some 13 years, until difficulties arose concerning the payment of his salary, the Rev. Robert refusing to accept the taxes assessed by the Parish, as was the custom, on members outside his congregation. In early days the Parish meeting and town meeting was the same thing, just as church and state in Europe were

<sup>3</sup> "The Reverend James Woodside was Brunswick's First Represented From the First Parish Calendar Dealing With Brunswick's History", Brunswick Record, March 14, 1935, p. 5.

invariably linked in early times. Rev. Robert died in 1775 at the age of 60, and was buried here. Inscribed on his tombstone is as follows: "Behold a sower went forth to sow."<sup>4</sup>



In 1904 John Furbish of Brunswick gave an address about the First Parish Church history:

An address by John Furbish on the "First Parish of the Past," given in the Congregational Church vestry Wednesday evening, contained a great deal of valuable historical matter and many interesting reminiscences of former pastors.

Mr. Furbish spoke of the formation of the parish in 1714, by the Pejepscot proprietors, and the law which governed the relations between the town and the church. In the early days the town meeting called the minister and the church accepted him, for it was then the duty of the town to provide a pastor.

In 1715 it was decided to build a meeting house, and a few years later the building was completed. The site was about halfway between the falls and the shore, on the Maquoit road, and the old cemetery now marks the spot where the first church stood. It remained there a great many years.

One of the reasons advanced in the petition for incorporation of Brunswick in 1735 was that the people had secured a pious and orthodox minister. Some years later the church was given the power to call the minister and the town voted to concur. The church represented an ecclesiastical body and the parish was the financial body, which had the duty and responsibility of providing religious instruction.

The records show that in 1717 three praying Indians petitioned for a praying house in this town, which shows the gospel had reached these savages before the incorporation of the town. Massachusetts appropriated \$700 for missionary work among the Indians in Maine.

Mr. Furbish spoke of Rev. Joseph Baxter, Rev. J. Woodside and Rev. Isaac Taylor as men who preached in this town previous to 1735. After the incorporation of the town Rev. Mr. Rutherford remained here about five years.

In the early days ecclesiastical differences arose in the church, one side being Scotch-Irish Presbyterians and on the other Congregationalists, which eventually led to the erection of another church.

<sup>4</sup> "Historic Oilman Mansion is 130 Years Old", Brunswick Record, August 8, 1929, p. 1.

In 1746 the town voted to hire Rev. Robert Dunlap of Sheepscoot and to pay him \$4 a Sunday, collections to be made weekly. Mr. Dunlap was ordained in Boston, and the town appropriated 30 pounds to pay for the ordination dinner. That amount was not sufficient and later a further sum was raised. His salary was to be paid in such specie as would buy lumber.

In 1755 the East-side meeting house was built, one reason for its construction being the differences between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists and another to avoid the Indians who constituted a serious danger to people obliged to go some distance to reach the meeting house.

Difficulties in regard to Mr. Dunlap's salary led to misunderstandings that ended his pastorate.

John Miller was pastor from 1761 to 1787 and was ordained in 1762. It was the custom in those days when strangers came to town to warn them to leave in order to prevent them becoming town paupers. In accordance with the custom Mr. Miller was warned to leave, but that was of course a mere matter of form.

In 1768 the singing problem came up and an attempt was made to set off a part of the house for a choir gallery, but it was voted down.

When the organ was first used one of the church members objected to the noise as an unwarranted interruption of the reading, and expressed his opinion that it has an immoral tendency. In 1786 the custom of deaconing the lines of the hymns was practiced and that continued until there were books for all.

In 1787 the town voted to dismiss Mr. Miller. He appealed to the church and the church agreed with the town. The congregation, however, voted to sustain him. The town froze him out by appropriating no money for his support.

About this time the Baptist element of discord appeared, members of that denomination refusing to pay their church rates. In the case of a man named Minot who refused to pay, the town took his horse and sold it to meet the tax. In 1792 the Baptist element claimed and received the right to draw a portion of the tax assessed upon the parish. The last money raised by the town for support of the parish was in 1796, but two years later the town chose a committee to settle differences between the congregation and the parish.

The development of the water power and the commercial interests of the town, and the needs of Bowdoin College, led to the construction in 1808, of the first church on the site of the present edifice. The pews were sold and the building was presented to the parish, the north gallery being set apart for the use of students.

Mr. Furbish spoke of Rev. Winthrop Bailey, Rev. Father Sewall and Rev. Asa Mead, as pastors in the early part of the last century, predecessors of Dr. Adams, who, coming here in 1829, served for 42 years. He referred to Asa Mead's famous temperance sermon and the fact that he was hung in effigy by the students.

Dr. Adams won his audience by his singing, said Mr. Furbish. His fervor was so pronounced that on one occasion in war time when he sang the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" he aroused great enthusiasm.

The present church was built in 1845, at a cost, it is said, of \$14,000.

Mr. Furbish said that the first history of the parish is due to Rev. Winthrop Bailey. The records of the Adams pastorate are meager, and most of them were obtained from the diary of the old pastor.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "First Parish of the Past", Brunswick Record, May 20, 1904, p. 1

The First Parish Church remains an imposing structure on "the hill" above the railroad tracks. Its history from Harriet Beecher Stowe's alleged inspiration for "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to the many connections with Bowdoin College, as well as generations of other members of the Brunswick community, is as significant as its physical presence as a center of the town.



## Baptists

Reverend Isaac Case brought the Baptist movement to Brunswick and first preached in private homes in 1783. Reverend John W. Hyssong described Baptist Church history in 1941:

It was in the year 1783 that three elders by the name of Case, Potter, and Lord began preaching and bringing before the people of Brunswick the views of the Baptist denomination. The services were held in private homes and many people accepted their persuasions. A hard stormy battle was ahead for those who would break from "the old standing order" and become Baptist. They were persecuted by taxes, fines, law suits, whippings, and imprisonments, hi spite of these they gained their freedom until 1790, when Samuel Woodward and others formed themselves into a Baptist Society and refused to be taxed by the First Parish. There was entered into the town record "the protest against ever paying anything to any Congregational or Presbyterian preacher." In 1795 the town voted to allow "Baptists to use the meeting house a part of the time."

Society Formed in 1794

The Baptist Religious Society in Brunswick, Harpswell and Bath was incorporated in 1794 with 53 male members. This society met at New Meadows where a building was erected in 1800. This building is still standing and services were resumed there in July, 1940. The building has been struck twice by lightning and once by hurricane. It had not been in use for 17 years.

In 1799, nine men withdrew from this society and formed one at Maquoit where a church had been built in 1798. They became a distinct Baptist church, called the First Baptist Church of Brunswick. In 1853 the building was bought by Israel Simpson and moved to Simpson's Point where it was fitted up as a house for shipbuilders. Later it was called the "Domhegan House." In the winter of 1940 it was destroyed by fire.

It would seem that during the ensuing years, after 1799, services were held at the village as at Maquoit, because a committee was chosen "To provide a suitable place in the village and also another at Maquoit (The Maquoit meeting house lacked a chimney) to meet in the winter for worship." In 1803 the society was incorporated in the village as the Baptist Society in Brunswick. The records given no mention of a meeting house, and it is probable that the services were held in homes. It was at this time that Benjamin Titcomb was called to minister to them and remained with them for 16 years. He was dismissed at his own request, but returned in 1824 to the society which had a membership of 150.

#### Second Baptist Church

In 1825 a division came within The First Baptist Church at Maquoit and about 15 members were dismissed by request, to form the The Second Baptist Church in Brunswick. A meeting house was built on School Street in 1826 and Elder Shimeul Owen was pastor from 1827 until it dissolved in 1840, in view of the new church on Maine Street. The building was sold to the Congregationalists and was used as a vestry. The property is now owned by the Pejepscot Historical Society.

In 1827 under the leadership of Benjamin Titcomb, the Federal Street Baptist Church was formed out of the First Baptist Society from which members received dismissal. They united with the First Baptist Church of Bath which enabled them to establish meetings in the village of Brunswick. This caused friction with the Second Baptist Church in the village. However, the church was reconciled to the formation of a new church, when the Bath church "sent a confession of their wrong doing without consultation with the churches already existing there."

In 1829 this church was organized as an independent church, called the Village Baptist Church, Brunswick. It was built on Federal Street at the corner of Franklin Street. In 1866 it was sold to the Methodist Church and used by them. Later it was sold to the Catholics. At the present time the residence of Dr. J. O. McDowell stands on the site. Elder Titcomb served the entire period of its existence. It lost its identity as a church in 1839.

It was early in 1840 that a revival swept over Topsham and Brunswick. The Rev. E.R. Warren was pastor of the Topsham Baptist Church. During this time 152 were baptized and many of these people lived in Brunswick. The group from Brunswick moved to organize themselves into a church and build a meeting house to carry on the work of God, on this side of the river. A large frame meeting house costing about \$5,000 and containing 75 pews was erected on Maine Street, a few rods of Lincoln Street. The building stood there until about 1890 when it was removed to Bowdoinham to be used as a farm building.



The Church Block of Snow Block which replaced the Maine Street Church



The Maine Street Church



The 186 Baptist Church which stood on Main St. opposite the Village Baptist Church

It was October 28, 1840, that 44 men and women received letters of dismissal from the mother church in Topsham, and met in the new church to organize the "Maine Street Baptist Church." Several of the members will be remembered today, Deacon Trueworthy Brown, Brother Henry Bowker, and Sister Maria Brown Stetson. After the business of organization, the pastor of the Topsham Church, the Rev. E.R. Warren, extended the right hand of fellowship to the 44 members. So 101 years ago the Baptist Church which is now in Brunswick came into being. During the remainder of the year the members of the Village Baptist Church presented letters of membership in the Maine Street Church.

The Maine Street Baptist Church was served for its period of 50 years with a number of pastors and several evangelists. It is interesting to note that its first pastor was the Rev. Paul s. Adams who served the church for three years, 1840 to 1843. In his second year of ministry his salary was raised from \$350 to \$400. It was voted to pay it "in quarterly installments, and that he reserve three Sabbaths of the year for himself." The membership in that time increased from 44 to 112.

During these early days much attention was given to discipline. For example it was "Voted—that whatever is done in the church, be kept secret, and should any member betray their trust, to be a subject of discipline."

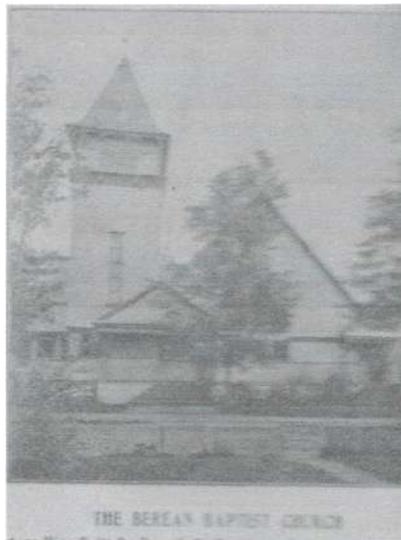
"Voted—to withdraw fellowship from a brother who refused to appear before the church and answer to the charge of profanity, immoral conduct, and voluntary absence from the services of the sanctuary."

"Voted—to exclude two sisters for persisting in attending dancing school to the great grief of the church, after being faithfully admonished."

"Voted—to exclude (an outstanding brother) from the fellowship of the church for neglecting his covenant engagements unnecessarily riding on the Sabbath and falsely accusing the church of neglecting his family."

"Voted—that a sister be expelled from the church for unchristian and abusive conduct to Sister Jacques in the public streets and for absenting herself from the meetings of the church."

It was customary, toward the end of the year, to read all the names of those excluded from the church during the year. Usually a committee called upon the individuals before the final reading of the names.



Church in 1904



Church in 1909

#### Present Church Built

The last pastor during the 50 years of the Maine Street Baptist Church was the Rev. G.P. Matthews, D.D., who served for six and one-half years, from 1884 to 1890. It was during this pastorate in 1880 that a new church was built at a cost of \$12,000. It was dedicated free of debt in January 1890. It is the edifice in which the Baptists now worship. It was unanimously to change the name from the Maine Street Baptist Church to the Berean Baptist Church of Brunswick. The membership at this time was 109.

During this time it is well to note that women did not have a voice in the meetings until 1860. When the names of church members were listed the

women appeared in one column and the men in another. It was about 1860 when the women had a voice in the meetings and the records state" "The vote was then put and carried, two male members and six females voting in favor of it." It was toward the close of the century that women began to take a real active part.

Shortly after the building of the new church on Cumberland Street the church faced a most discouraging period. The Dennison Box Factory moved to Roxbury, then to South Framingham, Mass. It meant the removal of many of the church's members. The records show that 22 were dismissed by letter. The Rev. John D. Graham was the pastor. Both the pastor and his truly estimable wife showed themselves loyal and vigorously heroic in holding up the banner.

During this last 51 years the church was served by some men of the highest type, scholars, good preachers, of sound judgment, truly Christian gentlemen. It was in 1823 that the parish was dissolved and the church was incorporated. It was voted that all business be transacted by the constituency of the Berean Baptist Church. The Rev. H.H. Bishop was then pastor and he served the church from 1919 to 1928 when he accepted the position of district secretary of the Maine Baptist Convention.

The church at present has four deacons, T. Albert Field, J. Frost, Arthur J. Langford, and Benjamin F. Harmon. There are four deaconesses, Mrs. Maude W. Frost, Mrs. L. Christine Harmon, Mrs. Addie E. Call, and Mrs. Marion L. Purington. The church clerk is John L. Purington and the treasurer is Charles F. Locke.

The following and the various organizations of the church with their leaders : Sunday School, T. Albert Field, superintendent; Missionary Circle, Miss Eva Plummer, president; Ladies Aid, Mrs. Ada Pollard, president; Philathea Class for Ladies, Mrs. Evelyn Field, president; the teacher is Mrs. Howard Frasier; Young People's Society, Mrs. Eleanor Black, president. The music is under the direction of Ralph Edwards with Miss Mary B. Ward as organist.

Since this time the church has been steadily increasing both spiritually and materially. Under its leaders it has been at times sowing seed and others reaping harvest. Today it has the largest membership in the church's history. It has pledged itself to the great task of bringing people closer to God, thereby giving to the town of Brunswick a better type of citizen.



Topsham Baptists were an important part in the Baptist movement. Reverend Chauncey J. Stuart related in 1942:

Among the old records of the Topsham Baptists is a call for a church meeting, dated March 26, 1795. This meeting was called to vote on buying a lot of land and building a house for public worship, also to see how the money for it should be raised. It was signed by Actor Patten and Peletiah Haley assessors of the Baptist Society of Topsham. This meeting house was built soon after. It was located on the old Lewiston Road, near the cemetery there and was known as the "Yellow Meeting House."

On April 17, 1797, the parish voted to give Elder Elihu Purinton of Bowdoinham an invitation to preach for them one half of the time. This invitation was accepted. Three had been preaching for several years before this but not regularly.

This organization seems to have been a parish as it was called "The Baptist Religious Society of Topsham."

The records show that on August 26, 1815, a group of people met at Oak Hill schoolhouse and agreed to invite an ecclesiastical council and request to be organized into a regular Baptist Church. On September 2, 1815 the council composed of delegates from four "Baptist Churches of Scriptural Faith" met at Oak Hill schoolhouse and organized, not a regular Baptist Church, but a Predestination Baptist Church. They soon built a small church building which was located next to the old courthouse opposite the village cemetery. This building must have been built in 1817 as the business meetings thereafter designate the meetinghouse as the place where they were held.

For some reason not given in the records several men and women met in 1824 and organized the Baptist Church Society of Topsham. In 1825 there was a great revival and many were added to the church.

In 1834 on February 22, a committee was appointed to find a suitable lot to erect a church building and to solicit funds for it. They must have accomplished their task with speed and efficiency for on May 27, 1835 the new church building was dedicated. This is the present church structure.

In 1840 forty-four members were dismissed—from the church to be organized into the Baptist Church in Brunswick village.

This same year there was another great revival here. Meetings were held for more than 100 successive evenings and 152 members were added to this church and 90 or more to the Free Will Baptist Church. These additions were by baptism.

On September 2, 1865, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church was celebrated. In the fall and winter of 1867 the church was thoroughly renovated and a new vestry was built. It was re-dedicated in February 1897. A new organ was given to the church by the people due to the untiring efforts of Edwin M. Brown.

The pastors who have led this parish are as follows: Elder Elihu Purinton, Elder Henry Kendall, the Rev. Charles Johnson, Elder Edwin R. Warren, the

Rev. George Knox, the Rev. James Gilpatrick, Elder A. Robbins, the Rev. L.P. Gurney, the Rev. A. Bryant, the Rev. Ira P. Leland, the Rev. J.D. Graham, the Rev. G.M. Stilphen, the Rev. E.A. Cranston, the Rev. Clifton Flanders, the Rev. B.F. Turner, the Rev. George M. Graham, Mr. David Burgh, the Rev. Maurice Dunbar, and Francis H. Bate.

The Topsham Free Will Baptist Church was organized in 1825 although there seems to have been some preaching prior to that time. They met for a while in the Oak Hill schoolhouse at the Old Yellow Meetinghouse and at the Baptist Church in the village opposite the cemetery. In 1836 they built the church building now standing on the south side of Winter Street. The building was thoroughly redecorated and repaired in 1895. The work of the church was carried on regularly and through all the years under the following pastors: Elder George Lamb, Elder Allen Files, Elder Dexter Waterman, Elder Andrew Rollins, the Rev. Peter Folsom, Elder Daniel Jackson, the Rev. Charles Bean, the Rev. Eli B. Fernald, the Rev. W.T. Smith, the Rev. M.W. Burlingame, the Rev. I.M. Bedell, the Rev. L.D. Strout, the Rev. I.M. Bedell, the Rev. Edwin Manson, the Rev. J.A. Simpson, the Rev. A.G. Hill, the Rev. C.B. Atwood, the Rev. A.B. Drew, the Rev. Frank W. Sandford, the Rev. Willis M. Davis, the Rev. S.A. Blaisdell, and the Rev. E.B. Tetley.

There should be loving mention made of the unselfish, Christ-like service given by the Rev. E.B. Tetley and the Rev. Maurice Dunbar hi working for the union of these two churches. In every way forgetting self and doing the work of the Master in bringing about the union leading to the United Baptist Church in 1917. The first pastor of the United Church was Dr. F.C. Wright, who served one year. He was followed by the Rev. G.F. Rouillard, who served eight years, until forced to resign because of ill health. The Rev. Andrew Young came from Rockport and served four and one-half years. The Rev. Harry Chamberlain came soon after Mr. Young left and remained with the church nearly ten years. A new vestry and kitchen were built in 1920 and later classrooms were finished in the basement.



Free Will Church on Winter St.



Elm Street Church

The present pastor, Rev. Chauncey J. Stuart, son of the Rev. Oscar W. Stuart, resident pastor of Kennebunk, came to this church February 1, 1939. He came from the Hollis Center and Bar Mills churches, where he had been the pastor for almost ten years. He graduated from the Gordon College of Theology and Missions in 1930. The same year he was married to Miss Elsie Clark of Camden. They have four sons, Robert, David, Paul and Carleton. Mrs. Stuart is also active in work having organized a World Wide Guild among the young ladies and reorganized the Missionary Society among the women. This church has held aloft the torch for more than a century and a quarter, trying to show forth the Master's love and good will to men. As we pass it along to the coming generations may they, too, strive to keep it burning brightly to lead men and women to Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world.<sup>7</sup>

The Growstown Free Baptists also were an important chapter in the evolution of this group:



Elder Benjamin Randall, the pioneer Free Baptist minister of New England, was converted in 1770, and in the year 1783 preached the first time in Brunswick in the home of Deacon Jonathan Snow.

The house stood near the home of Fred E. Harmon on the Greenwood Road. Deacon Snow was the great grandfather of Dr. Elbridge and Dr. Joseph Stetson both of whom now live in Brunswick. He was a carpenter by trade and a great temperance worker.

It has been said that he built the first barn in Brunswick that was ever built without rum. The story runs thus: When asked to build the barn on the farm now owned by George Palmer his reply was "I'll build it, and it shall be built without rum." And so the day of the raising came. The men came from far and near, as was the custom in those early days. One man who was working on the rafters said "Deacon, I can never put this rafter up if I don't have a drink of rum." "Come down," called the Deacon, "I'll put that rafter up myself. This barn is going to be built without rum." And so he did. The Deacon put the rafter up and kept his word.

<sup>7</sup> Stuart, Reverend Chauncey J., "Topsham Baptists Have Fine Growing Church of Their Own". Brunswick Record. February 12, 1942, p. 7.

Elder Randall preached in the Snow house day and evening. In the evening he preached till near midnight and then commenced another sermon which lasted till one o'clock. The whole congregation was his tears, and many converted. The meeting lasted until three o'clock in the morning.

Delatiah Tingley of Waterboro, formerly of Sanford, and others, held meetings at the home of Mr. William Alexander. That home is now owned by Andrew Minot.

These meetings increased in interest until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October, 1799, when a meeting was held at the house of James Elliot with the idea of organizing a church. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January, 1800, there was a meeting at the home of William Alexander and Elder Stinchfield organized the first Free Will Baptist Church in Brunswick, at that time consisting of 9 members as follows: Adam Elliot, Obediah Curtis, Anthony Morse, Joseph Ward, William Alexander, John Coombs, Margaret Dunham, Susanna Morse and Hannah Curtis.

About the year 1807 there was trouble and much backsliding. This condition lasted for several years. The church numbered 40 members. In the year 1810 a great and good reformation broke out, as it was termed in those days. A house of worship was built on the old Freeport Road about two miles from this house of worship. That church was built on the old Noah Melcher farm, the place being now owned by William Williams, in this year there was a grand revival and 6 were added to the church.

In 1813 Elder Adam Elliot, son of James and Ruth Elliot, died at the age of 44 years. He was pastor ten years, and was buried in the church yard back of this church, his body being the first to be laid to rest in the yard, as his stone bears witness. This left the little church without a pastor until the year 1816 when Elder George Lamb became pastor.

In 1818 there was a division in the church about washing the members' feet and a few withdrew because Elder Lamb refused to wash their feet.

From this time until April 4, 1823, the interest of the church was very low, when upon his own responsibility Elder Lamb declared that the brothers and sisters were no longer his a Christian spirit enough to run a church in gospel order. Nevertheless they continued to meet regularly in conference.

In 1826 a committee was appointed by the Bowdoin Quarterly Meeting to investigate the affairs of the church. They reported that they did not observe the ordinances sufficiently to be called a church in gospel order, and they proceeded to re-organize a church consisting of 16 members.

In 1826 this present house of worship was built. In 1827 it was finished. Elder Lamb took such an active part in building this church that it was then and now known as the Elder Lamb meeting house.

June 25, 1831, the church voted to use a bass viol with singing and at the same meeting the temperance question came up. It was voted that no strong spirits except as medicine should be used by any of the members. But they did not all abide by the decision. In 1833, after another earnest and angry debate, it was voted to deal with all members who had violated the law.

In 1833 Elder Lamb resigned, having served this church 19 years. He was buried in this yard. He left a widow, who, before her marriage, was the widow of

Captain Samuel Dunlap. Her maiden name was Jennett, daughter of Ephraim and Martha Lowell Hunt.

On August 12, 1837, Elder Andrew Rollins commenced his wonderful work. He was pastor until 1840, (he was also buried in the Growstown Church yard.) It was during his pastorate that the two great revivals swept over the whole town. Men and women were converted everywhere. Men sought the Lord in the hayfields and woods. They would leave the hay in the field and go to church to find peace with God.

There were two sea captains who had been at sword points for many years. Indeed, so great had been the bitterness between them that their Christian wives had feared lest a tragedy should occur. One captain was going to town with his oxen, the other captain coming from town with his oxen. It will be well to remember that at this time the surrounding country was a thick wood. The Pleasant Hill Road, which was finished in the year 1806, was cut through a dense forest. As these two sea captains neared the church their hearts began to soften. One left his cattle in the woods by one side of the church. The other left his in the woods by the other side of the church. They met on the door step. Fire flashed from their eyes, their fists tightened. "What does this mean," asked one. "It means", said the other, and the tears came to his eyes, his hands dropped to his side, "It means that it is time for you and me to seek the Lord." They entered the church together, walked down the aisle and before the congregation asked each other's forgiveness, knelt and pleaded with God to save their souls. They were always dear friends after that and great workers in the church as long as they lived.

In the year 1840 Elder Rollin's salary was increased from \$300 to \$350 a year.

About this time the church was divided into districts, or classes, each entrusted to the care of a class leader appointed by the clerk every three months. It was his duty to report his class every quarter. In this year 1840 there were 11 classes.

The eleven districts were as follows: No. 1, Meeting House District; No. 2, Curtis District; No. 3, Village District; No. 4, River Road District; No. 5, Melcher District; No. 6, Freeport District; No. 7, Maquoit District, No. 8, Bunganuc District; No. 9, Lunt District; No. 10, Clark District; No. 11, Kincaid District.

This worked well for a few years. In 1844 or 1845 votes were passed to do away with the class system.

In 1841 singing was formally recognized as part of worship.

On July 28, 1842, Amos Lunt, Amos Lunt, Jr., Thomas Coombs, George Cobb and Phineas Collins were dismissed to organize the Freeport Church.

In 1851 there had been 366 members of this church. For ten years nothing of importance is recorded. In 1853 the covenant was repealed and the New Testament was adopted as a covenant. April 15, 1861, it was voted to call a meeting of the pew owners to take measures to shingle the church. From this time to 1870 the church waded through a "sea of trials."

On March 16, 1875, it was voted that the society was willing for individuals to erect horse sheds near the meeting house. These sheds stood until about 1900, when they were removed.

In 1878 there was a good revival interest, which was held under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A.

In January, 1883, Rev. Bryce M. Edwards became pastor of the church. He was pastor until December 3, 1885. During his pastorate the church building was remodeled and repaired at a cost of about \$1200. The church was enlarged and the two windows in the west side of the church boarded in. A gallery for the singers was built which had been removed. John T. Roberts offered the plans for remodeling; which were accepted. The old seats with doors were replaced by seats now in this church. In 1827 it was voted that while people should still own their pews, the seats were free to all the world. The doors of the pews were used as panels of the walls of the church. Deacon Osburn Melcher kept his pew door and it is now in the possession of his son Edward Melcher, the number being 26.

The church was re-dedicated August 14, 1884. Many of the former pastors were present and it was a joyful day for the church and parish. It was at this time that the five sons of Deacon Osburn and Margery Melcher gave to this church this beautiful chandelier which now hangs in the center of this room.

I wish to state at this time that Rev. B. M. Edwards was my father. He was born in 1850, died in 1906, and had the pleasure of baptizing and receiving into this church all of his children. There were seven of us. There were recently two of those children members of this church—the late Chief of Police, William B. Edwards, who had been a member 44 years, and myself. I have been a member 32 years. Two of our sisters have died; the other three have taken their letters to become members of churches in the towns where they now live.

From 1885 until 1900 the church did the usual work of a church. The old members died and were laid to rest beneath the shadows of this church they had loved and served so well. Young members took up the burdens.

In the year 1902 the standing committee of the church was John T. Roberts, Mrs. Bryce M. Edwards and Mrs. Harrison Snow. This was the first time that women had been allowed to act on a committee in this church.

About the year 1900 it was plainly seen that the church was losing ground. Not so much from the fact that the people had lost interest, not so much from the fact that people in this neighborhood no longer cared to have the church open, but from the fact that the old ones had gone. And now the young ones were leaving the farms to go into the cities, towns and villages. The farms were unoccupied, or had been sold. So, after a hard struggle, in which our late sister Bertha Hackett labored to prevent it, the doors of the church were closed in 1910. And with the exception of a few Sundays in the summer, a funeral from time to time, or a parish meeting, the doors of this church remained closed until 1926.

In the year 1926 the church doors were once more opened. In 1927 we had a big revival and 18 were added to the church. In the early summer, May 14, 1933, the Rev. Walter Colby, became pastor of this church.

Since the year 1816 this church has had 1,601 members. It now has 87 members. Our oldest member is Mrs. Emma Parsons. She joined the church in the year 1880, and has been faithful to it all these years.

And so this little church by the side of the road still lives. It is over 120 years old. Every Thursday night its lights shine out across hill and dell speaking to the hearts of tired men and women, and filling their souls with the assurance that Christ is the light of the world.<sup>8</sup>

Today the Topsham church remains on the corner of Main and Elm Street, the Berean Baptist Church sets still on Cumberland Street, and the Growstown Church on Church Road and they continue to minister to the spiritual and social needs of our communities.

## Universalists

The Universalists began in Brunswick about 1812. Their church has been involved with the Unitarians from a very early time in Brunswick. Reverend Sheldon Christian in 1952 wrote an article about the history of the movement:

It is a Sunday morning in the year 1812, and we find ourselves entering a certain building on Maine Street. There is a sign over the building which reads, "Washington Hall." Washington has been dead only a dozen years. Today, this building is known as the Brackett Block.

With others whom we know, we enter the front doorway and ascend the stairs to the second floor. Other people are already seated, but there are few down in the front of the hall, talking with a man whom, from his somewhat clerical appearance, we gather must be the preacher. He is, in fact, the Rev. Thomas Barnes. He comes here to Brunswick only once a month, on a Saturday, and he must leave on Monday for places on his extended circuit.

"Father" Barnes, as we affectionately call him, is a distinguished-looking man, with a full beard, and features that reveal consideration, intellectual insight and strength of character. And now those who have been conversing with Father Barnes seat themselves, and the preacher mounts the steps to the platform, and standing behind the rostrum, waits a moment for our complete attention.

"I was glad," he begins, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord. Peace be within thy gates, and prosperity within thy palaces, O Jerusalem...'"

The service continues. Father Barnes preaches to us about the Gospel promise of Universal Salvation. In other churches they are preaching that only a few were ever elected to be saved; that one is damned; and that the great majority of the damned will suffer eternal torment in an endless hell. The people whom we

<sup>8</sup> Harmon, Fannie Edwards, "Baptist Church at Growstown Dates Back to Year 1783", Brunswick Record, January 25, 1945. p. 8.

see about us listening gratefully as Father Barnes expounds the large Promise of Scripture, and all strong-willed people; people who have learned to do their own thinking, and are not afraid to be among a minority. They are men and women and young people who sense that somehow their being is part of a religious movement which is bigger than it looks, and that what they do will somehow have a potent effect on popular religious thought in the years to come, when their own names will no longer be remembered...

And here we leave them, the Universalists worshipping in Washington Hall soon after the formation of their society on January 20, 1812, and we slip down the stairs to Maine Street, and enter into the stream of time...

Eighteen years pass. Again it is a Sunday morning, in June, in the year 1830. We find ourselves among those walking down Federal Street towards a small church building on the corner of Pearl Street, now Jordan Avenue. This building was hopefully erected not long ago by the Universalist Society, but the people found themselves financially unable to maintain a pastor themselves. But the Unitarians have just organized a society, and so the fellowship have agreed to worship together in the first church building of their own which the Universalists erected—the Unitarians, however, calling the preachers.

We are a little early this morning, and we arrive at the church before the service has begun. The Sunday School is still assembled, and we see, down at the front of the auditorium, a group of adults who are gathered around a scholarly-looking young man with side whiskers. It is the Bible Class and the young man is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, professor of Romance Languages at Bowdoin College and librarian of the College Library. A man comes forward to greet us, and he is Rev. Andrew Bigelow, Unitarian.

The Sunday School classes assemble quietly and are dismissed, and we see the young professor goes up into the choir loft of the church, takes out a silver flute from a carrying case, and softly trills a few notes as he exercises his fingers. He will play a solo for us later. Soon we see the preacher rise before the people, and invoke the Divine Presence. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Seventeen more years pass, and it is again June. On this Sunday in the year 1847, we go down Maine Street toward the Androscoggin, for the Universalists are worshipping by themselves again. For that matter, the building on the corner of Federal and Jordan Avenue has been sold to the Baptists, and has been moved out of town, to Maquoit, where it is now known as the Forest Church. Along broad Maine Street, carriages are being drawn by spruce horses, taking their owners to the various churches of the town.

We soon come in sight of our own destination. We have noted its fine white steeple all the way down, and indeed that steeple is a landmark in the town. By the town clock, which is hung in the belfry of this same steeple, we see that we are in good season. We had better be for it is Children's Sunday, and the parents of the children in the Sunday School will be there to hear the children speak their pieces.



Universalist Church 1880 Pejepscot Historical Museum Photo

We pass under the arcade fronting of the various stores which are on the first floor of the church building; turn down Mason Street, and begin to go up the long flight of stone steps, this time only a short flight, into the body of the building. At right and left of this entry other flights of stairs go up to the gallery. Rubbing elbows with others who are entering the auditorium we come into the large square room in which we gather for worship. We look behind us as we enter and notice the big queer-looking stoves, one on either side of the rear entrance of the auditorium, setting back in the shallow alcoves. In the winter we stand around them till we get our feet warmed, but there is no need of that today.

The whole auditorium is plain and painted white. Along the east and west sides of the church, long windows with plain glass admit the light, and this morning they are flung wide open, and all along the sides of the church, bird cages are hung, because it is Children's Day, and the air is full of their natural music. There are many people already seated in their pews. The pews are white, too, with black walnut tops. In many of them are little haircloth-covered "crickets" on which the people may rest their feet for greater comfort; but the pews themselves are none to comfortable as we ourselves know as we take our place in one of them. The shallow channel of the church has been cleared, the pulpit placed on the floor to one side of the front of the church and the pulpit chairs near them also. The platform is decorated with many flowers, and there can be no doubt that this is the Children's Day.

The organist, in the gallery, begins to play the prelude. It is an old organ, but the music is good. When the prelude is ended, we see a man down at the front of the church rise to his feet to speak. It is the Rev. Giles Bailey, an energetic man who commands immediate attention by the strength of his personality. Even the children cease from whispering as he spoke.. The Children's Sunday service is underway...

It is the night of October 4, 1884. It is raining. If we were listening, we may have wondered why the bell in the Universalist steeple on Mason Street was rung for a few moments, then stopped short as suddenly as it had begun. There was no real reason why it should have been rung at all, unless it was to give an alarm. Then why had its stopped? Now we hear the bell in the tower of the

Congregational Church on the hill begin to ring also, and we go to the door to see if we can see anything; but not seeing anything, we go back inside the house, but we keep having a feeling that something is wrong, and we decide to go "downstreet" and find out.

Suddenly, as we head down Maine Street, we see it; through the shimmer of the descending rain, we see the beautiful spire of the Mason Street Church entirely in flames, even timber and cross-tie standing out like a Fourth of July illumination.

We step into a store and cry out excitedly to the men inside that there is a big fire downstreet. One of them, lolling against a cracker barrel, waves a hand and says there isn't—"It's over in Topsham." "Step outside, then, and see for yourself," we exclaim impatiently. He steps out, just in time to see the great spire, its skeleton glowing in outline, topple slowly over into the street. When we get to the fire, we find the Topsham fire company there, as well as the local companies; and the men are manning the brakes furiously. They tell us that they had been unable to save the spire, because the water turned to spray before it reached it and therefore was ineffective. But the rain helps some, and finally the blaze in the rest of the building is fought to a smolder.



Universalist Church Fire Pejepscot Historical Museum Photo

We go home at last in the rain with heavy hearts; there is no insurance on that part of the building which is the property of the church. The results of 72 years of parish husbandry have been wiped out in a night.



Again it is Sunday morning. It is the ninth of September in the year 1886. This time our destination is a new building which we have just erected on the corner of Pleasant and Middle Streets. Today it is to be rededicated. As we enter it, there are many of our friends already here, and there is a general feeling in the air that a good work has been done and that the parish has again been placed in a position to assemble in its own house of worship for many years to come. As we look about us, there are many mementos of the Mason Street Church which will carry on its remembrance for us, and for those who will follow us in the work of our church.

The old pipe organ in the Mason Street Church was pretty thoroughly ruined by the fire, but the "Old Lady" Stone salvaged some of the wood from it and had "Old Man" Larrabee use it to build the communion table which we see down there in front of the church. The pulpit in the Mason Street Church was also salvaged from the wreck, and is good for at least a few more hundred years. Up in the belfry, we can hear the bell ringing for tardy attendants. That bell will serve as a reminder, too, of the Mason Street Church, for the parishioners of future generations; Mrs. Mathilda Swift sent the metal from the old bell to a foundry, and had it recast, and there it is, pounding away up in the belfry of our new church. And the people who are gathered with us in this new church, on this Sunday morning of September 9, 1886, to dedicate this new church home, have the satisfaction of knowing that the building is clear of debt.

John L. Swift, who owns the block of stores over which the Mason Street Church Building was erected, gave the society \$1,000 for the release of their option to rebuild over his stores and with this and other monies subscribed at the time, we bought a double lot here on this corner, then we sold half the lot, which gave us more toward the erection of the projected new building. The State Convention gave a large part of the amount needed; and the rest was raised in the parish by subscription and among friends of the parish in Maine and Massachusetts.

As the service begins, the Rev. Lucan Seneca Crosley, who was pastor of the church at the time of the fire at Mason Street, and who had been working hard with the church committee to get the money for the new building and see it through, proudly rises and gives the invocation. And as the service progresses, we

hear words of encouragement from the Rev. J. H. Little, who preceded Mr. Crosley as our pastor at Mason Street, but who was called to the state superintendent while still our pastor. During the work of getting funds for erecting this new building, Mr. Little has been a great help to us. Then we hear a sermon by Mr. Crosley's brother, the Rev. Marion Crosley.

And when the service of dedication is over, on the ninth day of September in the year 1886, we all go forth from this little church with the feeling that although it is not all that we should like in the way of a building, at least it is ours; and as such we shall love it.

And we come back to where we started from, in these glimpses of the hours of worship which our society has inhabited during the first 130 years. The future remains to be enacted, and no one can prophesy what that future will be. We find ourselves in a situation in the present which is certainly unusual. A building, whose construction has been halted when half completed, seems to have little meaning. Yet, there was meaning in the plans from which the building has been started, and when the structure is finished, every detail will be seen to have its place. We find ourselves in the situation of the man upon whose project building has been halted.

Two years ago the sense of inadequacy of our Pleasant Street building was brought home to us forcefully because of the growth of the activities of the parish. New organizations, new needs, and new times required more facilities to work with than we have been favored with in this Pleasant Street edifice. But efforts to secure funds for adaptation on this buildings elicited little interest. Then we found that certain business interests were looking eagerly toward the possibility of purchasing this property, and were willing to pay a good price for it. But the amount which any such group would be able to pay would not go far in the construction of a new and better building.



At that time, Wheeler Hall, formerly the Unitarian Church, and for many years used as a school building, had just been abandoned. The possibility of purchasing it from the town was investigated, and at a subsequent meeting of the town, formal authorization was given for the act. The money needed for its

purchase was given expressly for this purpose by friends of the church, and the purchase price was paid in full.

But already the Battle of the Atlantic was in progress, and financially, those interests which had gone to considerable trouble and expense to themselves in preparing to purchase the Pleasant Street property, decided that the times were now not opportune for the venture and withdrew. Though naturally this was a great disappointment to us, a study of the balance sheet shows that as a result of these two years of extensive work on the problem of acquiring better quarters for the church, the church now holds title to a building which in all fundamental respects is far superior to the one which we dedicated in 1886, and it may be that, though the kindness of persons interested in the parish, funds may someday be made available for repairing and slightly modifying the Federal Street building with the view to its full-time occupation by the parish.

The parish today consists of the fellowship of members with a board of management, Mrs. Emma Haley, chairman, which conducts the affairs of the parish between meetings of the parish itself. A number of groups are active within the parish: The Macrina Society, Mrs. Gertrude Staples, president, an organization for women; The Mission Circle, Miss Helen L. Varney, president; The Associates, Russell Hosmer, president, an organization for men; The Youth Fellowship, Dorothy Perkins, president; the Sunday School; the Choir, Mrs. Helen Brackett, director; Boy Scout Troop 33, scoutmaster Lauriston Trott, Harry Snow, assistant scoutmaster; Cub Lack No. 33, Lauriston Trott, cubmaster.<sup>9</sup>

Majorie B. Libby wrote a short history of the Church of Christ in Brunswick. In it she describes Wheeler Hall and the Universalists as well as the Unitarians:

This church building was built in 1878, at that time it was noted, "on the corner of Federal and Pearl Streets," later named Jordan Avenue. Previous to that time the Universalists had built a building on this site. It was taken over by the Unitarians and in 1847 moved to another area, possibly either Pennelville or Mere Point. Later it was sold to the Grangers and moved back into town where it is an apartment house on the corner of Union Street and Oilman Avenue.

Records from the Penobscot Historical Society copied from the Telegraph are: "1875 Unitarian Society purchased land on the corner of Federal and Pearl Streets -contract awarded to Waterville contractor, "6/7/78 "granite blocks from the Jay quarries set for foundation," 8/30/78"many objected to the design of the building!" 10/4/78 "Henry W. Long-Fellow, Esq. presented to the new Unitarian church a Bible." The Bible was lost for years, but later found. 12/6/78 "dedication of the new Unitarian Chapel. The cost of the building and furnishings, \$5000."

Wheeler's History speaks of the lack of preachers, and evidently both the Unitarians and the Universalists were back and forth in the building until the Pleasant Street church was built.

<sup>9</sup> Christian, Reverend Sheldon, "History of the Universalist Church Traced Through Several Edifices:", Brunswick Record, January 3, 1952, p. 7.

Some time later the town purchased the building and named it Wheeler Hall in honor of the Wheelers who wrote the history of Brunswick. It was used mostly as a recreation hall for the school, which is now the Hawthorne School. One interesting bit of history is that the hall was once the site of a tonsil clinic with the mass removal of tonsils!

The rear room, which is now a part of the apartment and preachers residence, was one large room with a kitchen. This room was used by the school as the Domestic Science room. Many young girls learned to cook and sew here.

In 1929 the building was remodeled and two seventh grade rooms were made. Classes were held here until the new High School was built. A ceiling was installed at the top of the lower windows and sliding doors were installed which rolled up. Heat was supplied from a one-pipe furnace. A large sheet of metal was installed in the middle door over the register. Heat, what little there was, was sent to either side of the room

There were twelve large stained glass windows in the original structure. These were replaced with sixteen windows of plain glass; the original windows have never been found. The windows at the top of the present stained windows, which were from a chapel at the Veterans Hospital in Togus, are original as are the windows in the tower and along the front.

An interesting feature of the original building was a large cover at the back door. Wagons could drive up and leave persons at that door being designed to protect one from the weather.

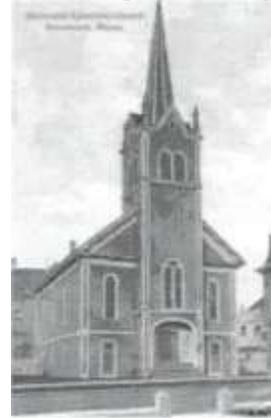
The building became a target for vandals with much damage being done. The Universalists then purchased the building since they had received an offer from an oil company to purchase their building. This did not come about (the purchase of their building) and thus it became apparent that they could not use the building for church services. The building was used by them as a Day Care Center operated by one of their members for a few years.

The building was then offered for sale. In 1948 Roy Lacy, a Church of Christ member, saw the empty building and thus a desire for a church here was born.

Today the Unitarian/Universalist Church remains on Center Street and Pleasant. It welcomes all and carries out many socio-political events and seminars in addition to ministering to the faithful.

## Methodists

The first Methodist preaching in Brunswick occurred in 1821. At first meeting in private homes it met soon at the Baptist Meeting House on Federal Street. They purchased the meeting house on the east side of Federal Street called the "Baptist Branch Meeting House". One of the first preachers was the Reverend William H. Norris. An article appeared in the Brunswick Telegraph describing the history of



### Methodists in Brunswick:

The new pastor of the Methodist church, Rev. W. P. Merrill, is one of the well-known clergymen of this conference, having preached for more than 25 years in this section. During this time he has supplied some of the prominent charges, among them being Berlin, NH, Bridgton, Portland, Berwick, and the Beacon Street church in Bath. At Berwick, where he remained for four years, Mr. Merrill remodeled and refitted the entire church at an expense of \$5,500 and paid the bill. At Bath he also made improvements to the church to the extent of \$3,000. It is said of Mr. Merrill that he is particularly successful in raising funds.

In Bath he enjoyed a wide popularity being recognized as a man of broad sympathies and marked ability. Mr. Merrill preached here last Sunday for the first time and was greeted by a large congregation. He is much gratified at the cordial reception. Although a stranger in this town he is not unfamiliar with its character and traditions, for he is a native of Portland and has always known Brunswick.

### ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

The Methodist church in Brunswick, now one of the strongest religious societies in town, was organized on April 25, 1836, 67 years ago. The

present house of worship on Pleasant street was erected in 1866. Previous to that time services were held in the old "Baptist Branch Meeting House," which was bought in 1836 for \$1,900. The origins and early struggles of this denomination, while not unlike the history of other churches here, contain much interest. One of the old sayings about this church was that it formerly consisted of Hiram Tibbetts and 16 old maids. Mr. Tibbetts says that, the statement is hardly true. He says the statement was made by a clergyman in 1867 when it was proposed to hold the conference in Brunswick, and that the number of old maids was 49 instead of 16.

The real founders of this church were Mrs. Snowdon, Miss Jane Blake, Miss Eunice McLellan, Miss Margaret Todd and Miss Maria Walker, who in 1820 were baptized and formed into a class. From that class grew up the present Methodist church.

The first Methodist preaching was in 1821, services being held by Rev. Melville B. Cox in the Franklin Bridge house on Franklin street. It is related that opposition to the Methodists was exceedingly bitter. Rev. Mr. Cox coming here on Sabbath evening after a long ride called at the house where he had previously been entertained, and was refused admittance, the man saying he could not receive him, that he must turn him away or be turned away himself. The preacher went to the Meeting House and preached without his supper and drove eight miles to find a lodging.

The original organization of the church in 1836 was as follows: Stephen M. Vail, Clerk; trustees Allen T. Cobb of Durham, John Wilkinson of Bath, Ebenezer Moore of Gardiner, John Moore of Gardiner, Eliphalet Bryant of Brunswick, Ephriam Sturdivant of Cumberland and Samuel G. Lane of Brunswick.

LIST OF PASTORS The church  
records show the following list of pastors:

Rev. Mark Tralton	1836	Rev. James McMillan	1869-72
Rev. C. P. Bragdon	1837	Rev. H. C. Sheldon	
1872-4			
Rev. C.C. Cone	1838-40	Rev. C.W. Morse	1874-6
Rev. A. P. Hillman	1840-2	Rev. W.S. Jones	
1876-9			
Rev. Ashahed Moore	1842-44		
Rev. Cornelius Stone	1844	Rev. James Moxam &	
Rev. Daniel Fuller	1845-7	Prof. Ladd of Yale	1879
Rev. John True	1848-9	Rev. F. C. Rogers	1880-83
Rev. Ezekial Robinson	1850	Rev. W. W. Sterling	1883-85
Rev. Charles Munger	1851-2	Rev. W.S. McIntire	1885-88
1889-93		Rev. F. C. Haddock	
Rev. Joseph Hanks	1853		
1893-96		Rev. W. B. Dukeshire	
Rev. J. C. Perry	1854		
		Rev. W. F. Holmes	1896-97

Rev. Parker Jacques	1855	Rev. E.D. Holmes	
1897-1901			
Rev. C.W. Morse	1856-9	Rev. D. E. Miller	1901-2
Rev. John Cobb	1860-1	Rev. W. P. Merrill	present pastor
Rev. Josiah H. Newhall	1862-3		
Rev. W. W. Baldwin	1864		
Rev. John B. Lapham	1865-7		
Rev. Stephen Allen	1867-9 <sup>10</sup>		

Reverend A. H. Graham hi the *Brunswick Record* also traced the history of Methodists in Brunswick:

Brunswick Methodism dates back to 1821, when the Rev. Melville B. Cox first began preaching in this little village on the Androscoggin. The first class consisted of five members, Mrs. J.S. Snowden and the Misses Jane Blake, Eunice McLellan, Margaret Todd and Maria Walker. Not a man could be found to enlist in the new army. Not until 1836 could a board of trustees be organized, and only then two of the seven, S. G. Lane and E. Bryant were Brunswick men. The Rev. Mark Trafton was appointed pastor at the conference in August, 1836.

#### First Church In 1865

Intense struggle and great sacrifice were the constant lot of the heroic little society until 1865, when the Rev. J. B. Lapham became pastor, and did such constructive work that a new church was erected on the site of the present edifice. Since that time both the membership and the building have undergone many and varied changes.

Under the ministration of the Rev. Stephen Allen, 1867 to 1869, the membership was increased considerably and many property improvements made. The next three years was a period of continued revival under the pastorate of the Rev. James McMillan. Out of 116 received on probation 40 became members in full standing and good report. A noted scholar of the church Professor Henry M. Sheldon, later Professor of Church History in the Boston University School of Theology, was pastor at Brunswick from 1869 to 1872. Here he met his wife, Miss Louise McLellan, daughter of Theodore McLellan.

A touch of character was added to the edifice when in 1875 the doors were recessed. We see twenty-eight members added under Rev. W.S. Jones 1876-1879; and as we further peruse the record we note the organizing of the Sunday school in 1878. This same year saw the installation of an organ. Four years later the society built a chapel on Richmond Camp Ground.

During the pastorate of the Rev. F.C. Rogers, 1880-1883, the pastor and people working together without any outside help saw a moderate increase in membership, and a good state of finances. The organ debt was erased and a furnace installed in the vestry.

' "New Methodist Pastor", Brunswick Telegraph. May 1, 1903, p. 1.

### Parsonage In 1884

The Rev. N.M. Stirling remained two years, during which the present parsonage was purchased. He was followed by the Rev. W. S. McIntire who remained the three-year limit. In this time the spiritual interest of the church was quickened by the work of a praying band which held cottage prayer meetings.

No historical notations were made during the pastorate of the Rev. F.C. Haddock who served four years until the spring of 1892.

Spiritual progress was hindered by adverse conditions, but the ministry of the Rev. W. B. Dukeshire was not in vain, for material progress is written into the record for the years 1892 to 1895, this ministry witnessing a spiritual quickening under evangelistic program led by the rather picturesque preacher, the Rev. I. T. Johnson, very pronounced in his utterances.

Fifty members were added during the pastorate of the Rev. G.D. Holmes, 1897 to 1900, and property improvements were made. However during Mr. Holmes fourth year a problem arose which his successor, the Rev. D.E. Miller, found a source of hindrance to any vital spiritual progress in the next two years. However the next five years under the leadership of the Rev. W. P. Merrill witnessed a spiritual revival with an increase of twenty-three members, the formation of an Epworth League, and a Women's Home Missionary Society of fifty members.

The Rev. J. F. Haley found spiritual progress in evidence during the years 1908 to 1911, a period in which many property improvements were made both in the church and parsonage including the placing of memorial windows in the church, and new hymn books for both the main auditorium and vestry services.

On October 14, 1916, the church observed its eightieth anniversary. Former pastors aided in the observance while the Rev. J.E. Sawyer, D.D. who was present at the dedication of the church edifice in 1866 came from his home in Bath and spoke at the exercise.

### Fire In 1917

At 9:40 Sunday morning February 25, 1917, the fire alarm was sounded, bringing the town fire apparatus to the church to fight a stubborn and costly fire which caused damage accounting to about \$5,000. All the Protestant churches having offered the use of their edifices, the gracious offer of the Free Baptist building was accepted. Under the leadership of the pastor, the Rev. George E. Ackerman, D.D., the church, through its trustees, brought to pass the necessary reconstruction with such dispatch that the rededication exercises were held two months in advance of the anticipated time.

### New Church

On July 8, 1918, the Rev. Joshua M. Frost, superintendent of the Portland District, preached the dedicatory sermon and conducted the impressive service of dedication without the usual appeal for money, the finances having been cared for beforehand. The congregation observed a new modern steel ceiling, hardwood floors, an indirect lighting system, and restored memorial windows.

Dr. Ackerman, who had come from a prominent church, in the Midwest to serve Brunswick at a much reduced salary, for reasons of health, shortly before

the dedication exercises, while visiting in Philadelphia, was claimed by death to the great sorrow of the Brunswick parish.

During Dr. Ackerman's pastorate the church went over the top in raising \$1,000 for the campaign for missions. Following Dr. Ackerman for a one year pastorate came the Rev. H.A. Clifford whose wife, Cora Knight Clifford, was a very active worker for missions and other Christian activities of concern with social and moral uplift.

Harold G. McMann and Arthur A. Callaghan served in succession as pastors and later were appointed district superintendents in the Maine Conference. During the pastorate of the Rev. Charles Parkin, 1924 to 1927, a men's fraternity was formed, and a survey of the parish made. The Rev. D. P. Pelley, 1927 to 1931, was supported by his son, Lincoln, who was possessed of a beautiful baritone voice. Mrs. Pelley was instrumental in organizing the Loyalty Club, an important factor in supporting the church.

The Rev. W. H.H. Taylor promoted revival services during the years of his pastorate 1931 to 1934. The mortgage was paid and part of the parsonage land was sold during these years. The Rev. J.R. Howse brought to the pulpit good preaching the next two years, and made preparation for the redecorating of the church and auditorium, which was realized during the pastorate of the Rev. A. G. Davis, 1936 to 1941, and also the painting of the exterior of the church building.

On Sunday, November 22, 1936, a service of Holy Communion was observed, ushering in the observance of the centennial of Methodism in Brunswick. At the morning service the sermon was preached by the district superintendent, the Rev. A.A. Callaghan, a former pastor; Charles Wesley Burns, bishop of the Boston area, preaching at an afternoon service. Others taking part during the day were Mrs. E.L. Crawford, reading a history of the church, and A.B. Tedford, speaking for the trustees; also assisting were the Reverends M.G. Powers, Ernest Heyward, and Sheldon Christian. The exercises were concluded on Tuesday evening by a Thanksgiving service.

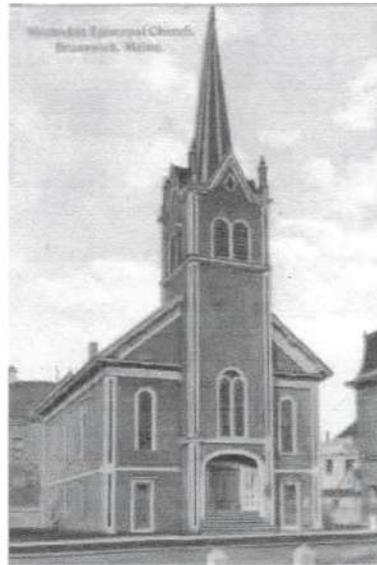
#### The Church Now

Mr. Davis, concluding a five-year pastorate last May, was succeeded by the present pastor, the Rev. A.H. Graham, who is supported by a fine group of church officials, who realize that Methodism has a real service to render the cause of religion in Brunswick. The church is fortunate in having the talented musician, Ernest T. Stanwood, to preside at the organ during the Sunday morning services. The Ladies' Aid under the presidency of Mr. A. B. Tedford and the Loyalty Club, under the presidency of Mrs. John French, give good service. The stated meetings of church are: Sunday, morning and evening services and church school which is at present conducting under the leadership of its superintendent, Ernest A. Purinton; and on Wednesday evening a mid-week devotional meeting, followed by an official board meeting the first Wednesday of the month, while the church school board meeting follows the evening meeting each third Sunday.

As a Christian body, Methodism finds its strength not in its buildings or programs, but in that degree of loyalty to the leadership and teachings of the

great head of the church, Jesus Christ, exhibited in the lives of its members and communicants.<sup>2</sup>

The original church on Pleasant Street has become a restaurant, store and pool hall while the new church has been built on outer Church Road.



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<sup>2</sup> Graham, Reverend A. H., "Methodism Here is Supported By A Fine Spirit of Loyalty In Parishioners", Brunswick Record, November 20, 1941, p. 5.

## Episcopalians



Early picture of St. Paul's Church

In 1941 Charles S.F. Lincoln wrote an article in the Brunswick Record about the history of St. Paul's church.

A brief explanation of the origin of St. Paul's Parish may be necessary for those who are not of our particular branch of the Christian Faith, and who are unfamiliar with the Episcopal polity and order.

As most people know, we are a branch of the Church of England, established by its great missionary society, The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in early colonial days. The American Church fell into disfavor before and during the War for Independence, 1776-81, but was kept alive by the devotion of its few faithful adherents, and became independent of the Mother Church in 1789.

To the early New England church with its Puritan antecedence, the Episcopal Church and its worship, with the Book of Common Prayer, as its standard, was particularly unpopular, as most of its members were Loyalists, and many of them during those troublous times migrated to Canada.

When Maine was made a state in 1820, at the call of the Rt. Rev. Alexander V. Griswold, Bishop of Rhode Island and the "Eastern Diocese," delegations from the only two active Episcopal churches in the state met in Brunswick on May 3, and organized the Convention of the Diocese of Maine; they were St. Paul's Church, Portland, later renamed St. Stephen's, and Christ Church, Gardiner. The inference is that they selected Brunswick for this meeting, even though there was no parish here, as it is halfway between the two cities, and in stage-coach days distance was more important than it is now.

### First Service in 1842

Twenty-two years later, in 1842, the Rev. J. Cook Richmond of Rhode Island, on his journey from Gardiner to Portland, was obliged to stop over in Brunswick. Being a zealous missionary, his first thought was to take the opportunity to present the services of the church to the town's people and students. The use of the college chapel was kindly offered to him.

After the death of Bishop Griswold in 1843, his successor, Bishop Henshaw, in company with the Rev. Mr. Fales and the Rev. Mr. Pratt of Portland, visited Brunswick, and held service and preached in what was then the Congregational Vestry on School Street, now the home of the Pejepscot

Historical Society.

The Rev. Thomas F. Fales was appointed by the Diocesan Board of Missions to take charge of the Brunswick mission. The outlook was promising, even with the six communicants; and the opportunity for work among the students was so alluring, that steps were taken to organize a parish as soon as possible. Mr. Fales held services for the first time the second Sunday in November 1843, in a room of the Pleasant Street Academy, long since removed and nearly opposite the Methodist Church.

There were only three communicants living here then, and three or four Episcopal students; also members, who knew anything about the service. The attendance was encouraging; and on January 8, 1844, the following met in the home of F. Murray Johnson to organize St. Paul's parish. The officers elected were Prof. Daniel R. Goodwin, senior warden; Joseph W. Sargent, Junior Warden; the vestrymen were Abner B. Thompson, Joseph Badger, George Earle, Samuel Dunning and M. O'Brien Dunning; E.M. Johnson, treasurer; and Samuel Harris, clerk.

In March measures were taken to procure a suitable site and place of worship. A committee was appointed to secure subscriptions for pews from residents of Brunswick and Topsham, and the rector, Mr. Fales, was asked to obtain subscriptions from Episcopalians abroad.

#### Church Built In 1845

By the blessing of God upon these efforts, means were obtained to warrant the building of a church on the lot on the southeast corner of Union and Pleasant Streets. Plans were drawn by Richard Upjohn of New York, who was also architect of the college chapel and the Congregational Church, both building at the same time. The style of the building is Gothic, like the Congregational Church, and was finished in the summer of 1845.

St. Paul's Church was consecrated, free from debt, by Bishop Henshaw, July 11; and on the same day 11 persons were confirmed, five of them Bowdoin students.

For years St. Paul's was a missionary parish, and labored under the handicap of its not so remote English ancestry. The national prejudice has been fostered by malevolent histories; the influence of which is shown both in public and private life in the attitude of thousands of Americans toward the critical situation which confront us today.

Mr. Fales was rector from 1843 to 1848. Thirty-four were confirmed in that period including students.

#### Professor Goodwin

The most important event in the church life in that time was the ordination of Professor D.R. Goodwin, Bowdoin '32, in July, 1847. Professor Goodwin was first tutor, and then professor of modern languages, and librarian from 1835 to 1843, and was rector for six months in 1853; when he left Bowdoin in September to become president of Trinity College, Hartford, Conn.

Dr. Goodwin was loved and honored by the students and his fellow citizens; a devoted churchman, and an inspiring and loyal member of the young and feeble church. Shortly before leaving Brunswick, in his report to the Diocesan Convention, he wrote: "Though it is still with us a day of small things, a few hearts among us remain undiscouraged and undismayed."

The Rev. Mr. Fales was succeeded by the Rev. Andrew Crosswell from

1849 to 1850. Under his care the church school increased from six teachers and thirty-six pupils in 1849 to eleven teachers and sixty-four pupils in 1850; for in those days there were a good many English operatives in the Cabot Mill, and some of them church people. Owing to business depression, they gradually moved from Brunswick to more active centers, which naturally kept reducing the membership in the church.

#### St. Paul's Guild

The Ladies Sewing Circle (now St. Paul's Guild) was organized in January 1845. It has been and still is an unfailing source of strength and support to the church, spiritual and material, by the usual resources of S.S.S; sewing, sales and suppers.

Between Mr. Crosswell's departure and the arrival of Rev. George S. Chadwell, services were conducted by two faithful lay readers, the brothers Foster '55 of Old Town. Mr. Chadwell was a Maine man and graduate of Bowdoin in 1843. He was ordained deacon by Bishop Burgess in 1854, took charge of the church at once, and was made priest in St. Paul's in 1855. He served faithfully until 1858.

In 1858 the Rev. Ballard was elected rector. He was older and had been longer in the ministry than any of his predecessors; scholarly, able, with a personality which endeared him to all who knew him. His gracious service to the parish, the diocese, and the community continued through the trying period of the Civil War, and a part of the no less difficult days of the depression which followed. The parish was reduced no fault of his; years of his rectorship 142 of his people left Brunswick; a serious depletion for so small a church. His sudden death, in November 1879, was a sad loss to the church and the town.

The Rev. Joseph P. Taylor took charge of the church early in 1871. In the two years of his ministry extensive repairs and improvements were made which added to the comfort and beauty of the church.

The Rev. Frederick S. Sill was rector from October 1873 to April 1876. More improvements and gifts included an altar cross and vases, and new lamp chandelier were placed in the church. On July 11, 1875, there was a celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the consecration of the church. The Rev. Mr. Sill preached an historical sermon.

#### Rectory Built

For a little over a year the services were conducted in sequence by a lay reader, two deacons, a priest, and another lay reader; and on May 6, 1877 the Rev. H.P. Nichols became rector. Young, genial, energetic, he was notable as a pastor in the community. He was acceptable to all ages, and his influence among the students marked. He married while here, and Mr. and Mrs. Nichols were the first to occupy the new rectory built in 1881, just west of the Odd Fellows building. The rectory was sold in 1923 when Codman House was opened.

In 1883 just before his resignation a young boy, son of a clergyman, who was living here with his mother, was confirmed by Bishop Neeley. That boy, who went on to a brilliant and distinguished career in the church, was the late Bishop Charles L. Slattery of Massachusetts.

#### More Rectors

The Rev. Dr. Nicholas was rector of large and active parishes in New Haven, Minneapolis, and New York; he passed his latter years in his home in Intervale, N.H., and died only last autumn, in his 91<sup>st</sup> year.

His successor, later in 1883, was the Rev. George L. Holbrook, Bowdoin '77, who was baptized and confirmed in Mr. Nichol's time. In his rectorship a new communion service was purchased, a fund was started for a new altar and reredos; and the weekly celebration of the Holy Communion was begun. Mr. Holbrook resigned in 1888 to be rector of St. Barnabas Church, Troy, NY. He died there, still in active service, in 1939. He left a bequest of two thousand dollars to the church here.

His successors were the Rev. W.H. Burbank, two years; the Rev. C.E.O. Nicholas, 1890 to 1893; The Rev. Mr. Parker, six months in 1894; the Rev. Mr. Medville McLaughlin, 1897-1901. Mr. McLaughlin had served here as deacon back in 1876. He was a friendly man, with the drollness of manner, which was sometimes misconstrued by older people, but which amused his friends. He liked young men; and the students were helpful in the church especially in the choir, which had been vested for the first time in 1891. He presented the church with a beautiful translucent window of Carrare marble, depicting the ascension of our Lord, which was placed above the altar; and why it was removed is, in the name of artistic value and beauty, incomprehensible.

The Rev. Edward D. Johnson was rector from 1901 to 1905, and again from 1912 to 1916. His name will always be gratefully remembered in connection with our first parish house (Codman House) though it was not to be realized until his return. A new pulpit was presented, a memorial to Miss Swift and Miss Keyes, later members of the choir; and after a fire in 1903 the organ was moved, and a window cut into the west wall of the chancel.

#### President Sills

In 1906-7 services were in charge of the Rev. C.F. Lee of Newcastle, and lay readers, the late Edgar Kaharl, principal of the high school, and Mr. Sills, then instructor at Bowdoin College, who was clerk of the vestry until 1910 when Dean Sills was elected treasurer and served until his election as president of Bowdoin College in 1917. He has also been a member of the vestry for the last thirty years. From his student days his interest in the church and his devotion to it have been loyal and constant, and no one member of the faculty, since the day of Professor Goodwin in the first days of its life, has been the tower of strength to St. Paul's that President Sills has been and is today. And it may well be added that Mrs. Sills has been equally devoted and helpful in the parish life and work.

Of the present faculty, Professors Beam, Copeland, Cushing, Kendrick, Koelln, Means, Riley, Root, Thayer, Farley, Thacher, and Mr. Lancaster, Mr. McIntire and Mr. Potter of the college staff are members of the parish.

#### Bond College and Church

From 1843 to the present the bond between the college and St. Paul's has been strong and friendly. In the early years, when most of the students were from Maine, the church boys were few, but they have increased steadily as students come from other sections of the country, until today the average is about 120 in the college.

From their interest in the church, aroused and quickened by its services, 36 Bowdoin men have entered the ministry, and many more, some unknown to the writer, have become its loyal and devoted sons.

In the last sixty years in the rectorships of the Rev. H.N. Nichols, Holbrook, McLaughlin, Johnson, Gilson, Stray, and Cadigan, the interest and cooperation of the students has been notably gratifying.

It is enough to say that the long line of Bowdoin men who have entered the church and its ministry, since 1843, more than justifies the wisdom in the founding of St. Paul's, and compensates for the heartaches and times of depression that have been its heritage through the years.

In 1912 Mr. Johnson came back to St. Paul's. Early in that year the church was badly damaged in the fire that destroyed St. John's Roman Catholic Church across Union Street. His devotion and service to the parish are best expressed in a resolution passed by the vestry on his resignation in 1916: "Mr. Johnson worked effectively for the material improvement of the church property; and under his supervision the church was thoroughly renovated after the fire, and a parish house (now the rectory) splendidly adapted to the needs of the work, has been given to the parish free of debt. Mr. Johnson was in every sense of the word a true pastor, interested in his people, spiritually minded and humble. He will long be remembered in Brunswick outside of the church circle, and in the parish as an ideal rector."

The Rev. Medville McLaughlin returned as priest in charge until April 1917, when the vestry called the Rev. Roy Rolfe Gilson, who took charge on Whitsunday.

The wish for a new altar and reredos, which was in the heart of the Rev. Mr. Holbrook in 1887, when he started the altar fund, was realized in October 1917; with the generous gift of Miss Williams, these were consecrated and six candidates, two Eucharistic lights, a sanctuary lamp, and a sanctus bell blessed. Miss Williams was a devoted churchwoman, and the most generous benefactor of the parish.

The entrance of America in the war in 1917, found twenty-four member and four former members of the parish in either the American or British forces.

In November 1922, the rector's family moved to the upper story of Codman House, and the old rectory was sold in 1923.

Mr. Gilson did much for the spiritual nurture of the people, and to strengthen their church tie, and was loved by them in return. The two mission parishes, St. Matthew's, Lisbon Falls, and St. Matthias, Richmond, served by rectors of St. Paul's for several years with the help of lay readers, mostly Bowdoin students, were finally transferred, St. Matthias' to the charge of the rector in Hallowell, in 1920, and St. Matthew's to the rector in Auburn in 1941.

Mr. Gilson served until the end of 1823, and Bishop Brewster and the Rev. C.M. Sills, the president's father, conducted services until Feb. 17, when the Rev. Arthur T. Stray, formerly rector of St. Michael's, Auburn, took charge. He was instituted rector on September 28 and served until early in 1937, a longer term than any previous rector. He was also in charge of St. Matthew's at Lisbon Falls, with the help of four students who have since been ordained, and he held occasional services in All Soul's Chapel at Poland Spring.

#### Codman House

Under his stimulus the new Codman House, spacious, well equipped, and directly connected with the church was completed. Father Stray is a gifted preacher, and has been secretary of the Diocese for the last twenty years.

After Father Stray's resignation on account of ill health in the spring of 1937, services were conducted by the Rev. Canon Pressey of Portland. The vestry then called the Rev. George L. Cadigan, curate of Grace Church, Amherst, Mass, who became rector in July.

### The Present Rector

In the four years of his ministry he has done a fine piece of reconstruction in renovating and beautifying the church building and grounds; and in building up the church school and the congregation which has grown steadily in numbers, and it is to be hoped in grace.

The church was redecorated, recarpeted, and relighted, the last by the generosity of a loyal parishioner. The financial strain has also been lifted through the efforts of the "Friends of St. Paul's," non-residents, who either from relationship, former interest or summer residence have come to know and love it, and also by the effective drive instituted by the rector this year, assisted by the committee of sixteen, of which the former treasurer, Mr. Aldred, was chairman, which has to date cut the parish debt almost in half. Professors Copeland, Cushing, Hartman, Root, Beam and Mr. Lancaster have also been most helpful in this project.

The choir, a most important adjunct to any satisfying church service, has been, since 1916, under the direction of Robert Toothaker. What he has been able to accomplish with a limited number of reliable singers, and a constantly changing variety of voices, male and female, deserves the greatest praise.

From 1900 to 1923, Miss Alice V. Lincoln, though not an Episcopalian, was our faithful and acceptable organist, and since then Mrs. Charles Warren has been an admirable successor. Mrs. Hunt, Mrs. Toothaker, Mrs. Burr, and Fred Jackson have given outstanding support; the younger generation of girls in singing faithfully, and the church students have been valuable transient reserves.

...

Space forbids more than an enumeration of the church organizations. St. Paul's Guild, before mentioned, now includes the local branch of the Woman's Auxiliary, has about forty to fifty members. Mrs. Maynard Dow is president; Mrs. Boggs, vice president; Mrs. Fred Jackson, secretary; and Miss Belle Haskell, treasurer.

The Altar Guild, which has charge of the Eucharistic vessels, the altar linen, lighting and all chancel decorations, has about ten members and is directed by Mrs. Barber, Miss Mildred Haskell, and Miss Swift.

The Senior and junior wardens are Dr. Lincoln and Professor Copeland, the treasurer is Professor Beam; and clerk of the vestry is Harry Gilchrist.<sup>3</sup>



The stately St. Paul's, designed by Upjohn as was King's Chapel at Bowdoin, still stands on the corner of Union and Pleasant Streets. With an expanded Codman House and complete restoration it still maintains the image our citizens well recognized before the civil war.

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<sup>3</sup> Lincoln, Charles S.F., "Close Bond Between St. Paul's Church and Bowdoin Faculty and Students", *Brunswick Record*, December 11, 1941, pp. 11,13,14.

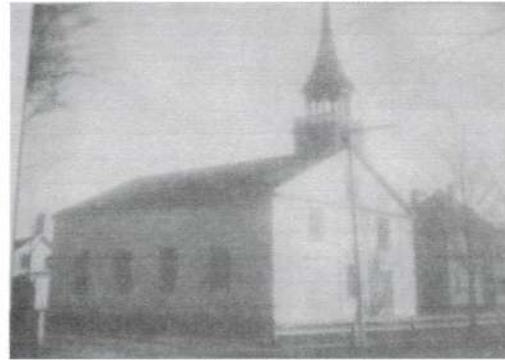
## Catholics

The Wheelers related that the first catholic service in Brunswick dated back to 1860 and that the Catholics of Brunswick purchased a building on Federal Street from the Methodist Society in 1866. A *Record* article in 1941 described the long struggle of Brunswick Catholics:

According to reliable sources Catholic services were held in Brunswick a good hundred years ago. There is a well founded tradition that Bishop Cheverus of Boston said mass here on one of his annual tours between 1808 and 1817. In the 1840's Catholic services in Brunswick were conducted by priests from Augusta and Whitefield and it is definitely known that the Rev. James Reilly, pastor of St. Mary's in Augusta, said mass here in 1849 at the residence of Patrick Donnelly, on Cedar Street. In the 1850's the Rev. Edward Putnam of Whitefield came regularly to Brunswick to hold services for the growing number of Catholic laborers who made their home here. Mass used to be said at the home of John White near the Bowdoin College property, and also in the home of John Dolan on

<sup>12</sup> Wheeler, George Augustus, & Wheeler, Henry Warren. History of Brunswick. Topsham. And Harpswell. Maine. Boston: Alfred Mudge & Son, Printers, 1878, pp. 403-5.

Elm Street. The Varney Hall near the Cabot Manufacturing Company was also used for Catholic services.

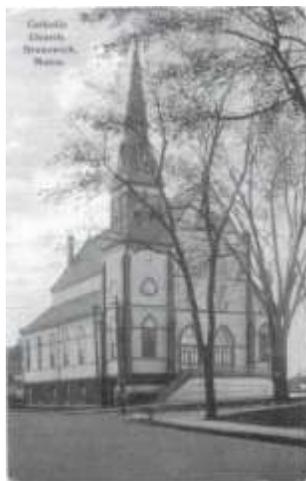


Church on corner of Federal and Franklin Streets

#### First Parish in 1877

Noticing the ever growing number of parishioners, the Rev. L. Hartley in 1866 purchased a Protestant church which became the first permanent Catholic mission of Brunswick, and here mass was said regularly until 1877 when the Rev. P. Powers announced the opening of a Catholic parish in Brunswick itself. In the previous year he had purchased the site at the corner of Pleasant and Union Streets from Captain McManus, and a rather substantial church building was erected. Catholics in town in 1875 numbered 667—477 of which were of Canadian descent.

It was on the first of January 1877 that the Rev. J.H. Noiseux was appointed pastor of the new parish in Brunswick which was dedicated to the protection of St. John the Baptist. That New Year Day of 1877 is a well cherished day in the annals of the Catholic families in Brunswick and a great incentive towards a happier and more prosperous existence, hi fact, the growth of the parish was a steady one under the able pastorphism of the Rev. J. H. Noiseux and also the Rev. James Gorman who became pastor in 1881.



Larger Church in 1882

The ever increasing number of adherents to the Catholic encouraged the energetic Father Gorman to start the building of a new and larger church in 1882. Hardly a year after the blessing of the corner stone of the edifice the spacious church basement was ready for occupancy and mass was said there. Immediately, the old church was converted into a school which was the first St. John's School of Brunswick. Father Gorman's new church was completed on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June in 1886. It was a day of rejoicing not only for the parishioners but for the town in general. In fact, everyone turned out for the ceremony of the blessing of the new church.



Pejepscot Historical Society  
photo Early St. John's School

#### First School and Cemetery

Father Gorman converted the old church building into the first St. John's School in the year 1883 and lay teachers were given charge, and when in 1886 the

new church was completed and blessed school rooms were partitioned in its basement. At about this time, or 1888 to be exact, the present commodious rectory was built and the first seven acres of St. John's Cemetery were purchased by Father Gorman, a project which greatly accommodated the large catholic populace.

#### The Rev. M. Sekenger

Father Gorman became pastor of St. Michael's, South Berwick in 1892, and made his departure from the local parish. His successor was Father Sekenger, very well remembered by the many present parishioners of St. John's, and the memory of this name is perpetuated in local organizations, especially the Sekenger Council of the Knights of Columbus. The first endeavor of the new pastor was to find religious teachers for the parish school and to enlarge the latter. Thus in 1893 he purchased a site for a school and convent on Oak Street. He immediately rebuilt the dwelling house which was on the premises, making it a commodious convent for the eight Sisters of Sion who came to Brunswick at the bequest of Father Sekenger and took charge of the parochial school. The school was known as the well remembered "little school." Many present parishioners have fond memories of that famous little building. Father Sekenger also made several changes to the parish church building, making it more beautiful and comfortable. His term of pastorship lasted 19 years and he was helped succeedingly by nine assistant priests: The Reverend Father J. Carufel, Paul Roy, Arthur Decary, Joseph Drolet, J. Raimbault, Robert Lee, Louis Renaud, Jr., J. Tranchemontagne, and Joseph Orioux. Some of these are still pastors in the Portland diocese.

#### The Marist Fathers

In 1911, Father Sekenger ended his stay in Brunswick and Bishop Walsh gave the charge of St. John's Parish to a society of religious priests known as the Marist Fathers. The first representative to become pastor of St. John's was the well remembered and beloved Father Theophile Remy who took up the pastorship on August 14, 1911. He was assisted by the Rev. A. St. Martin, now pastor of the Sacred Heart Church in South Lawrence, Mass.



Ruins of Catholic Church after the fire



### Church Destroyed in 1912

Father Remy's first endeavor was to build a school to accommodate the ever-increasing number of parishioners. The land had been bought and the plans completed for the school when, at four in the afternoon, April 12, 1912, a disastrous fire which originated near the railroad tracks, reached St. John's Church and destroyed it completely, a quick and merciless destruction of years of hard work and sacrifice. The old St. John's Church had been a beautiful testimony of the faith and love of ardent people. A frame building with a basement of granite and brick, its side walls were relieved by Gothic windows. It has a clerestory pierced at regular intervals by windows. In the facade center there stood out portals which were approached and over them stood out an elaborate window containing six arcades and innumerable foils. The church tower arose from the left end of the facade, and above it was a latticed belfry and a pretty spire,

### Present Church Built in 1912

The terrible happening of 1912 did not break, however, the undaunted spirit of the parishioners and their heroic pastor. No time was lost, the ruins were cleared, the rectory was moved to its present location and the foundations of the beautiful St. John's Church were laid. In the meantime, mass was held in the town hall which the town authorities graciously placed at the disposal of the bereaved Father Remy. It was on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 1913 that the basement of the new church was completed and on the next day took place the dedication of the new school which had been under construction at the same time as the church. Shortly afterwards, in order to accommodate the Sisters who were to teach in the new school, Father Remy bought the present convent and the old convent was sold. Sisters of Mercy were then in charge of the parish education.



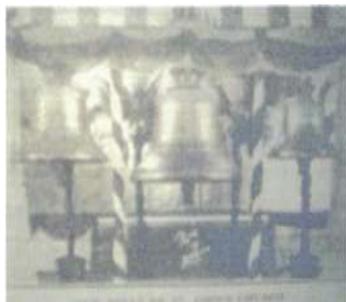
### Ursuline Sisters in 1915

The task of education of the young people in St. John's Parish has always been an important and arduous one considering the large number of students, which today number well over 600, and the bi-lingual problem. The Sisters of Mercy filled their task to perfection but in 1915 Bishop Walsh, for personal reasons, recalled the Sisters of Mercy and placed in their stead the Ursuline Sisters from Waterville, who, today are doing such wonderful work at St. John's. The splendid results obtained are an ample reward to the generous parishioners who besides supporting the Brunswick public schools by regular taxation support also their parish school.

### Father E. Vinas in 1921

Father Remy's pastorship at St. John's lasted ten years during which he was succeedingly assisted by the Reverend Fathers, A. St. Martin, A. Ravel, F. Bergeron, L. Pelletier, and F. Morcel. It was Father Remy's own request that he relinquished the work of pastor and took up the charge of assistant. He was ably succeeded by the Rev. E. Vinas whom practically everybody in the parish fondly remembers. Both Father Remy and Father Vinas are now deceased.

It was Father Vinas' task during his pastorship, 1921-1927, to complete the superstructure of the church, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 1925, the atmosphere of Brunswick vibrated for the first time to the resounding peal of the three large and beautiful bells installed in the lofty church steeple. The blessing of those bells, which were henceforth to summon the parishioners to prayer and service, were held during an imposing ceremony on the April day of 1925. The honor of blessing the bells was given to Bishop Joseph Henry Prudhomme of Saskatoon, Canada.



Helping Father Vinas in his task of pastor were the Fathers H. Thiery, A. Madore, and F. Sollier. The greatest event of his pastorship was undoubtedly the blessing of the completed St. John's Church by the Most Reverend Bishop J. G. Murray, Bishop of Portland on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 1927, exactly fifty years after the foundation of St. John's Parish.

### Three Pastors Since Vinas

Three Marist Fathers have held the pastorship of St. John's Parish since Father Vinas completed his term in 1927. Succeeding him was Father C.

Chambard with whom started a period of readjustment. Several debts had to be paid and larger parish accommodations were to be built or acquired. Father Chambard, who remained pastor for a complete term of six years, 1827-1933, enlarged the school and convent despite the trying times of the crisis of 1929.

Father J. Andre succeeded Father Chambard and became the valiant pastor of the parish from 1933 to 1939. Father Andre is well remembered for his untiring zeal in modernizing and enlarging the parish buildings and cemetery.

When Father Andre left in 1939, a man who "had gladly spent himself for the welfare of his flock" to use the words of St. Paul, he was succeeded by the present pastor, the Reverend J. Dauphin. Among the many assistants at St. John's parish in recent years were the well remembered names: Father Dion, Bouchard, Leblanc, Blanchette, Fluet, W. Cote, L. Dupery, J. Chester.

#### The Present Parish

It was the summer of 1939 that Father Dauphin started his pastorship of the local church. Although born in Vermont his family home is Lewiston. Before coming to Brunswick he spent several years in various Marist parishes and schools. Deeply absorbed in the progress of the local parish he leaves nothing undone for the welfare, spiritual and social, of St. John's Parish. The material aspect of the parish has already found a new shape under his able guidance. Several improvements have been made to the various buildings and a large tract of land has been added to the cemetery. The most recent census of the parish indicates that Father Dauphin is the pastor of over 1,200 families.

#### Assistant Priests

Father Dauphin is helped in his task by three able assistants, the Reverend Fathers Charles Le Flem, Leon Roy, and Victor Milot. Considering that services must be conducted weekly at the Catholic mission in Pejepscot by the priests of the local parish, there is a need for four priests to direct the numerous activities.

Father Le Flem is a native of France but has spent most of his life among American Catholics, having been stationed in a number of parishes throughout the United States. He came to Brunswick in 1937 and has been, since then, actively engaged in parish activities. He is director especially of the married women group of the parish organized under the title of Ladies of St. Anne.

Father Roy is a native of the State of Maine, his family home being Waterville. He has been helping out in the local parish almost continuously since June 1937, and since his ordination in 1936, has done some teaching in Marist schools. Among his many activities Father Roy is director of the men's group of the parish, organized under the title of the Holy Name Society.

Fr. Milot is a native of Lowell, Mass. Since 1936, when he was ordained in the same class with Father Roy. Father Milot has spent a year teaching in Marist schools and has performed ministerial work in Marist parishes. He came to the local parish in September 1940, to replace Father Philip Fluet. Among his various responsibilities Father Milot is director of the girl groups of the parish organized under the title of Children of Mary or Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, and is also teaching, for the second year, a course of religion at Brunswick High School.

#### Organization For Men

An organization, spiritual and social, was founded for the men of St. John's Parish as early as 1883 under the title of the Holy Name of Jesus Society. So much benefit can be derived from such a society that it appears in practically every Catholic parish in the country. The officers in charge of this society in St. John's are as follows: Spiritual director, the Rev. Leon Roy; president, Henry Morin; vice president, Wilbrod Menard; secretary, Joseph Philippon; and treasurer, Samuel Lavallee.

#### Organization For Married Women

The married women of St. John's also have their society, known as the Ladies of St. Anne, organized many years ago. Through monthly meetings and various activities they mutually encourage one another towards a more perfect and happier state of life. The spiritual direction of this society is in charge of the Rev. Charles Le Flem. President is Mrs. Joseph Thibeault; Vice President, Mrs. Simeon Caron; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Paul Viney.

#### Organization For Girls

The girls of St. John's Parish are organized into the Girl's Sodality bearing the better name of Children of Mary. Enriched with spiritual benefits it has been a prosperous society of the parish. Due to the youthful qualities of the majority of its members it is a particularly active organization. The spiritual charge was entrusted to the Rev. Victor J. Milot. The president is Miss Cecilia Leclair; vice president, Marguerite Desjardins; secretary, Eugenie Menard; and treasurer Miss Gabrielle Fortin. Besides a monthly spiritual meeting the society holds several social meetings.

#### Boys and Girl Scouts

St. John's Parish sponsors four troops of Boy Scouts, two Troops of Girl Scouts and a large group of Cubs. Such a situation is more than wonderful but it is the result of much hard work and faithfulness. Many a time has Brunswick enjoyed hearing and seeing its Catholic Boy Scout Band (the only one in Maine) and Drum Corps. Many a time has Brunswick enjoyed the wonderful cooperation of the St. John's Boy Scouts in various public celebrations and undertakings in town. In charge of the Boy Scouts are the Rev. Leon Roy, chaplain, Louis Philip St. Onge, general chairman; and Utmont Nickerson, chief scoutmaster. In charge of the troops of Girl Scouts are Mrs. Harry Shulman and Mrs. Wilfrid Lapointe. The Cubs have their cubmaster in the person of A. Tetreault.

#### Other Organizations

**Charities:** The parish sponsors two societies to help the poor and unfortunate. One is the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the other the Ladies of Charity. Both are under the spiritual surveillance of Father Dauphin and have done wonderful work in helping the needy.

**Higher Spirituality:** For those members of the parish who feel more spiritually inclined than others, the parish affords two societies, the so-called Third Orders of Mary and of St. Francis. The first is under the direction of the pastor and the second under the direction of the Rev. Father Le Flem.

**Missionary Societies:** In order to answer the universal call of the many Catholic missions doing so much good through the world St. John's Parish sponsors its diocesan unit of the missionary society called the Propagation of the

Faith Society. The local director is the Rev. Father Roy, and the diocesan director is the Rev. R. Ouellette of Portland. The parishioners sponsor also a very well organized Mission Club.

St. John's School Spiritual Societies: The young people at the school have their own little spiritual societies. The societies are known as the Our Lady of Lourdes Society and the Junior Holy Name Society, the Holy Angels Society, and the St. John the Baptist Society.

School Aid Society: This society groups all the persons who have the generous desire of helping directly the upkeep of St. John's School. Mrs. Omer Morais is at the head of this organization which is functioning under the supervision of the pastor.

#### Fraternal Organizations

Of the many fraternal organizations in Brunswick the members of many are mostly the parishioners of St. John's Parish: to wit, the Knights of Columbus, the Daughters of Isabella, the Catholic Foresters, the Union S. Baptiste d' Amerique, the Artisans, the Vigilants and others. Indeed no one can deny that the parishioners of St. John's have done their share to improve the social standing of Brunswick by true Christian neighborliness, and readiness to alleviate difficulties and solve civic problems. As in the last war, a large percentage answering our country's call in its present plight, and should Brunswick be attacked in war or by disaster, every man, woman and child of St. John's Parish, bearing in their hearts and souls the protection of their Patron, will defend their beloved town.

A sincere word of thanks is offered to the Brunswick Record for granting space to make known the history and organization of St. John's Parish. It nobly promotes the spirit of the President of our country who in great truth insists that Christianity must be made known since the very foundation of our democracy are laid upon it!<sup>13</sup>

William Wheeler remembers the old Catholic Church on Federal Street that, as a schoolboy, he thought was haunted:

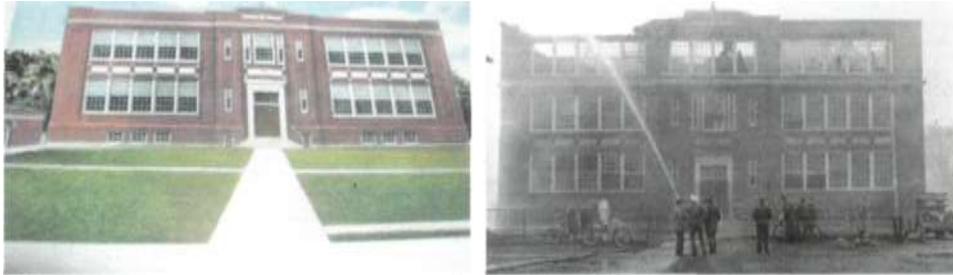


On the corner of Federal and Franklin Streets there stood at that time a long, low white wooden building, the abandoned church of St. John's Catholic parish. Built originally as a Baptist "meeting house" in 1829, the building was purchased in

<sup>13</sup> "St. John's Parish Ministers To Over 1200 Families In The Community, History of Catholic Services Go Back A Hundred Years, Brunswick Record, December 4, 1941, p. 4.

1866 and used by them until around 1890, when their new edifice on Pleasant Street was ready for occupancy.<sup>14</sup>

F



St. John's Church eventually built a new school for the children of the parish and the *Record* reported on it:

The handsome new parochial school, which for the past 10 months has been under construction for the parish of St. John the Baptist, was opened Monday with the enrollment of nearly 500 scholars. This number is expected to be increased at the opening on the next term.

The new school is a handsome building 94 by 64 feet, two stories in height and built of brick with granite trimmings. It contains five classrooms on the first floor for the primary grades and six rooms on the second floor. One of these rooms is to be used as an assembly hall, while the others will be used for the higher grades. The school contains nine grades, beginning with the sub-primary and going through the ninth grade, the ninth grade having the regular curriculum of the public schools and in addition typewriting and bookkeeping are taught. A graduate of the school is thoroughly fitted to enter the Brunswick High School or any similar institution and those who have entered higher schools in the past have invariably maintained a high standard of scholarship.

The school has 10 teachers and instruction is given in English and French.

With the opening of the new school, the old convent and the old wooden school building in its rear, and the school on the corner of Mill and Gushing Streets will be given up and the old convent will be sold.

The formal dedication of the school building will be postponed until later in the spring when the grounds have been graded and other improvements made.

The basement of the new church of St. John the Baptist, which is being built to replace the church burned in the big fire of April 26, 1912, was used for the first time Sunday. The basement has been finished and will be used as the church for a time until funds are secured to continue the construction of the edifice. When the church is finished the basement will be divided into two large rooms, one for weekday services and the other for society meetings.

<sup>14</sup> Wheeler, Walter A., "When A Ghost Walked In Brunswick", Brunswick Record, February 14, 1946, p. 10.

Sunday three masses were held, all of which were very largely attended so that the capacity of the church is taxed to its utmost. The last mass was sung by Rev. Fr. Archambault of Lewiston. The new church was privately blessed Saturday evening by the pastor, Rev. Fr. T. J. Remy.<sup>15</sup>



There was another group of Catholics that organized and built a church. St. Charles parish was described in the *Record*:

It is important in narrating the history of Brunswick's youngest church, that mention is made of this fact—that a Saint is chosen as a patron, not as, a deity. The church is first and always the House of God. The Saint is chosen as a link between God and all who pray in the particular church.

Here in Brunswick, St. Charles Borromeo was selected as patron of the new Roman Catholic church, eleven years ago. The choice of him was appropriate, as he is highly regarded as an educator and was the founder of several colleges and universities; and in the mind of the diocesan leader of the Catholic Church, there was the hopeful prayer that St. Charles might always aid the directors of Bowdoin College to direct the young men under their care in the ways of true knowledge which includes ever a knowledge of God.

#### St. Charles The Saint

Charles Borromeo was born October 1, 1538, one of the six children of Gilbert and Margaret Borromeo. Of a wealthy and politically prominent family, he nevertheless early in life gave signs of a vocation to the church, and to the delight of his parents, expressed his fond desire to become a priest. He made rapid progress in the study of Latin and in letters in Milan, and at the age of 21, received the degree of doctor of laws—canon and civil—at the University of Pavia. When he was 23, he was made a cardinal in the church; that dignity not being then necessarily an ecclesiastical honor. Later ordained a priest and

<sup>15</sup> "New Parochial School Opens", Brunswick Record, March 21, 1913, p. 1.

appointed Archbishop of Milan, his good judgment and profound piety became apparent. He was entrusted with many grave duties by his uncle Pope Pius IV, so much so that Charles was said in his time to practically rule the whole Christian Church.

He made it evident that the sole purpose of all his undertakings was the glory of God through the salvation of souls. He was assiduous in the administration of the Sacraments; at the time a fearful plague in Milan, he visited the sick, personally administering the last rites of the Church; he distributed his vast family fortune to the poor, and though placed high in the Church, he was never averse to follow the advice of persons of proved wisdom and virtue. He was most zealous in bringing to all the people a knowledge of religion, and with this in mind, he instituted a school for religious training of the younger—or as we know it, the modern Sunday School. The extent of this phase of his work is seen in this, that before his death, he had established 740 schools with more than 40,000 scholars. He saw early, with deep regret, that many abuses had crept into the lives of some who were supposedly the religious leaders of the people, so he set himself to the task of correcting these abuses.

His foresight for the welfare of the church and religion was made manifest particularly at the great Council of Trent, where by the force of his will and his own character, he introduced many corrective provisions which remain til this day. In his efforts to root out of the Church those who were bad and false leaders, he made many enemies, with the result that several attacks were made on his life.

On his family crest, is the HUMILITY; that virtue was the basis of his life, as it must be in every truly great life. Thus, despite the honors heaped upon him, he remained always obliging, courteous, helpful. He was not a glamorous personality; he had a habit of stammering, which despite long labor, he could not correct; his personal appearance was not attractive in a worldly sense; but he did attract all who met him by his zeal and deep piety. From all, he forced the conviction that he labored for God, and his work was fruitful because God was with him.

In his personal life, history shows that Charles practiced what he preached to others, and full of good works and sanctity he died in 1584, and was canonized in 1610. His feast is kept on November 4.

#### Church Founded In 1931

With a profound knowledge of the life and works of St. Charles, and with the certainty that he would be for a spiritual influence, The Most Rev. John G. Murray, D.D., then Bishop of Portland, chose St. Charles as the special patron of the new church in Brunswick, eleven years ago, and appointed as pastor, the Rev. Thomas W. Dunnagan. The new pastor was well equipped for his charge. After graduating from Lewiston High School, his courses in the various branches of learning and study were made at Canisius College, Buffalo, N.Y.; St. Joseph's College, Three Rivers, Quebec and the Seminary of Philosophy at Montreal. He was ordained to the priesthood December 23, 1922, and thereafter for nearly eight years, was an assistant in various large parishes in Maine. On October 29, 1930, he began his work as pastor of St. Charles Church. The difficulty of securing a hall for mass was solved when with noteworthy generosity and thoughtfulness,

President Sills offered the use of the Bowdoin Chapel as the temporary home of the new parish. There mass was offered two days later, November 1, All Saints Day.

Negotiations began for a site, and the house and lot at the corner of Maine and Nobel Streets were acquired, and work was begun there November 28, 1930. Considerable local history attaches to this location. The house was once used as a private school; then passed into the possession of Professor Robinson of Bowdoin College, later it was owned by Samuel Furbish from whom it was purchases in 1930 as the location of the new church and rectory. The house, more than 100 years old, was made into the rectory for the pastor's home is now so used.

Work on the new church building progressed quickly and on January 25, 1931, in the splendor of ecclesiastical ceremony, Bishop Murray celebrated Pontifical High Mass, and dedicated the new church to the honor and glory of God, under the patronage of St. Charles Borromeo.

With the church built, it was necessary for Father Dunnagan to organize and establish parishioners, and carry on the many parochial devotions and affairs. In all this work, he was ably and generously aided by his small group, deeply grateful for their new church. He did not spare himself in the building of his parish, and in what must have been extremely trying circumstances, kept to himself the unsuspected secret of losing his health. Early in 1939, he was forced to seek medication, but it was too late, and his devoted parishioners, learned with great regret of his death on March 24, 1939, at the age of 44. His memory has been perpetuated by his many friends and parishioners, in the erection of a beautiful tabernacle in the church where he labored.

The Rev. Alfred Simard was in charge of the parish until May 26, 1939, at which time the present pastor, the Rev. John L. Doherty, was appointed.

#### The Church At Present

St. Charles Church has been favored bounteously, materially and spiritually. The generous spirit of its good parishioners and friends even from distant places has produced many fine gifts. Organ statute, linens, vases, vestments and many other articles to be used in divine service testify to that generous interest. In 1940, a beautiful set of chimes and a gorgeous stained glass window, in the manner of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Gothic style, portraying the patron Saint's life and labors were installed. In September 1941, a complete renovation of the Sanctuary was made possible through the bounty of L. Eugene Thibeault of Bath, as were the chimes and window. These have added to the charm of this "little church on the hill".

#### Parish of 100 Families

These eleven years have seen the church grow from a very small group to a parish of nearly 100 families and there is testimony that those who built, built well. There have been periodic visits of the Most Reverend Bishop, the administration of all the Sacraments, the various devotions of religion to which in all these years an interested body—the parish choir has added its voice. It has lost through death, many of those who were the most loyal helpers and friends.

Some of its earliest families, proud of its growth, still look with interest to its further development. Its young families have seen their children grow with

their church. It is the earnest prayer of all its present parishioners that it may continue to play its part in the spiritual life of the community, and that God who "always gives the increases" may always smile beneficently on its parishioners and those who made St. Charles Church possible.<sup>16</sup>

The St. Charles Church building has housed a Senior Center group and is destined to be torn down to build a hotel complex. The new St. Charles is on McKeen Street nestled in a wooded area. St. John's Church still stands regally on Pleasant Street—a lasting testament to the faith and commitment of Brunswick Catholics to God, Country and Community.

Brunswick's history is richer for the religious groups which grew and matured here. In addition to those covered here in detail the Town boasts of Seventh-Day Adventists, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Presbyterians, Christian Scientists, Church of Christ, Assemblies of God, Jehovah Witnesses, Nazarenes, Pentacostals, and other evangelical assemblies as well as the Quakers of Durham and those of the Jewish faith. All of these constitute the rich spiritual history of the past, the diversity of the present and the building blocks of the future of the Town of Brunswick.

<sup>16</sup> Doherty, Reverend J. L., "St. Charles, The Educator, Is Patron Saint of Town's Youngest Church", Brunswick Record. November 13, 1941, p. 10.