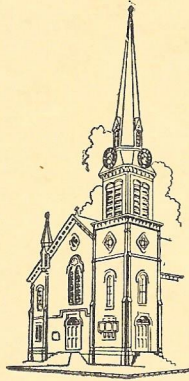


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HISTORY
of
The Westbrook Congregational Church
1832 - 1932

By MRS. FABIVS M. RAY



One Hundred Years of Service

Westbrook Congregational Church
Westbrook, Maine

Box
7

A4-1

DEDICATION

To those who through "sunshine and clouds" have most faithfully carried on the work of this Church and have made possible this day of rejoicing and fellowship, we dedicate this story of one hundred years of achievement.

Westbrook Historical Society

HISTORY
OF THE
Westbrook Congregational Church
1832 - 1932

By MRS. FABIVS M. RAY

Records of the Congregational Church in Saccarappa, January 17th, 1832, so says a battered book of much interest to us of the above-mentioned church, and not only to us, but to the community at large. The first entry is as follows: In rather quaint language, we of 1932, will doubtless say, "In consequence of letters missive issued by a committee of the First Congregational Church in Westbrook, an ecclesiastical council convened in Saccarappa village January 3rd, 1832, Tuesday."

Right here it should be said the first church of Westbrook was at Capisic, Stroudwater, and was on the spot where the Eunice Frye Home now stands. At the right stands a small building called a chapel, which was originally a schoolhouse situated near the meeting-house, and after the taking down of the church was moved back to its present position. It is a most interesting place to visit, containing as it does many things of the vintage of a hundred years ago and more.

It must be kept in mind that Westbrook was, at that day, a large town, extending as it did from the Gorham line as its western boundary to the Portland line which was about where the old power house stands on Forest Avenue nearly to Kennebec Street.

In consequence of the absence of several pastors and delegates, it was deemed best to adjourn from January 3rd to Tuesday, January 17th, 1832, which was done. This meeting was held one hundred years ago today and there was evidently a large attendance. The record states that representatives were present from Yarmouth, Gorham, Portland, North Yarmouth, Scarboro, and Falmouth, to act upon the request of 23 members of the First Congregational Church of Westbrook to be dismissed and form a new church. This request was granted after an extended examination of the persons proposing to form the new church.

Rev. Caleb Bradley, whose name is so familiar to many of us who have listened with interest to the many humorous and witty sayings and doings of this noted man, is given as one taking a prominent part in the proceedings of the council.

The new church was made up of the following persons, many of whose descendants are here tonight: two men and twenty-one women. Possibly quality rather than quantity our forefathers had in mind:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| William Akers | Betsy Babb |
| Brice M. Edwards | Nancy Hayes |
| Ann Senate | Elizabeth Babb |
| Mehitable Freeman | Sally Adams |
| Hannah Johnson | Lydia Pease |
| Rebecca Forster | Joanna Babb |
| Nancy Murch | Sally Akers |
| Ruth Merrill | Sally Quinby |
| Mary Freeman | Dorcas Brown |
| Ann V. Wise | Elizabeth Johnson |
| Charlotte Quinby | Betsey Clements |

Certainly no more upright or God-fearing men could have been found than these two: William Akers and Brice M. Edwards. The former was the father of the well-known sculptor, Paul Akers, whose famous Pearl Diver is in the Portland Public Library, it should be in Westbrook, and who was born here on what is now called Park Hill. The house was standing until recent years. The latter was the father of the late Lewis W. Edwards and the grandfather of Miss Carrie McCann and Frank H. McCann.

In November of that same year the record goes on to say: "The Church met in the hall and David Hayes was chosen clerk," an office which he filled for nearly 38 years, or until a few days before his death.

Among the first to be admitted to membership were James and Lucinda Walker. Mrs. Walker, or, as she was generally called, Auntie Walker, was a most patriotic woman. Before there was a general observance of Memorial Day, she decorated all the soldiers' graves in Sacca-rappa Cemetery, and after her death the Grand Army each Decoration Day placed a wreath on her grave and I think the custom is still kept up by those on whom the G. A. R.

mantle has fallen. She lived for many years on the corner of Main and Ash Streets, where now is a brick block.

After going through the regular form of procedure, Rev. Joseph Searle was duly installed as pastor of the new church, known as the Second Congregational Church of Westbrook. Clerk David Hayes records the event as follows: "Pursuant to letters missive from the church of Christ in Saccarappa village, an ecclesiastical council was convened in hall opposite Barker's Tavern on Wednesday, April 2nd, 1833." This places the hall where meetings were held definitely. After several months of research and tiring everyone out answering my many questions, I was able to find out that it was in the store which many of us remember as the L. W. Edwards' store. It was a large wooden block on the corner of Main and Bridge Streets on the spot where Mr. Edwards afterward erected the brick block now occupied by the Warren Furniture Store. The hall was in the second story fronting on Bridge Street and was known as Small's Hall. It was later used as a stock room by Mr. Edwards. Traces of the arched doorway and broad staircase remained for years. The Baptists and Episcopalians occupied it at different times. Barker's Tavern was the old Presumpscot House situated where now stands the Scates Block. This building was built by Jonathan Webb as a public house, very early in the 19th century, perhaps 1820-1822. This hotel was moved onto Fitch Street, where it now stands, and has been used as a boarding house. The Edwards Block was moved farther down on Bridge Street to make room for the brick block, and was used as a store and later as a laundry for some years, finally being taken down to make room for the Duclos Block.

To go back to the first installation of a pastor over our church, the account of those taking part contains the names of many whose descendants are known to us. The first church to be represented is that of the 3rd Congregational Church of Portland, Rev. M. T. Dwight, pastor, Rev. Israel Waterhouse, del.; High St., Portland, Rev. George C. Beckwith, pastor, Bro. M. G. Greenwood, del.; Saco, Rev. Sam. Johnson, pastor, Bro. Dominicus Jordan, del.; First Church, Westbrook, Rev. Henry C. Jewett, pastor, Rev. Wm. Graves, del.; Gorham, Rev. Thaddeus Pomeroy, pastor, Bro. Tappan Robie, del.; he was the father of the late Gov.

Frederick Robie. Standish, Rev. Thomas Tenney, pastor, Deacon Enoch Higgins, del.; Windham, Rev. J. L. Hale, pastor, Bro. John Waterman, del. Rev. Caleb Bradley was invited to take part in the exercises and gave the charge to the new pastor.

Such a unique personality as that of Parson Bradley requires more than a passing word. He was born in Dracut, Mass., March 12th, 1771, and died June 2nd, 1861. He came to Westbrook in 1799 and retired from the active ministry in 1829 as pastor of the First Congregational Church of Westbrook. He was a great-grandson of Hannah Dustin of Indian fame. He was one of 11 children and had 10 of his own. He was three times married. One of his wives, who was a Widow Partridge, is buried in Saccarappa Cemetery. His diary records he married 550 couples and attended 1,400 funerals.

Many are the quaint and witty sayings told of him, yet he had another side which is revealed in the voluminous diary he kept. There is a picturesqueness about these records of his daily life. He takes you into his confidence as when he ends a day's record, "this is all I have to say, so good-bye, I'm tired." He observed the Sabbath Day, Fast Day and, above all, family prayers. What would he say to this easy-going age? He disliked indolence in prayer. When he was asked to pray and the congregation remained seated his rebuke was, "I STAND when I TALK to GOD." Bushnell called his age homespun, would we had some of it.

The rules for governing the church and the covenant make interesting reading. Matters of discipline were of a strict nature. The first case was that of an erring sister for the too frequent imbibing of ardent spirits. Not being convinced of the error of her ways after being dealt with, her name was dropped from the records. A few years later, the records show her to be a member in good and regular standing, so evidently she had seen the light.

The following will explain itself: "The undersigned having been appointed a committee by a vote of the parish at a legal meeting held March 21st, 1833, to superintend the erection of a meeting-house agreeable to a plan previously adopted, having attended to that duty and succeeded in the good providence of God in the erection and

completion of said house, would report the following of expense, viz.:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| Nathan Holden, bill as per contract, | \$1,950.00 |
| Extra work done by Holden, | 50.00 |
| Marrett Cobb, bill for underpinning, | 120.00 |
| Benja. Boody, bill for underpinning, | 50.00 |
| Benja. Boody, bill for stone posts, | 11.25 |
| Pulpit furniture, lamp, chimney, | 115.86 |
| Chas. Patrick, bill for whitewashing, | 3.25 |

\$2,300.36

Westbrook, Sept. 25th, 1834,

David Hayes,
Wm. Akers,
J. B. Walker."

This edifice was modelled after the meeting-house at Capisic, a picture of which is on exhibit in the church parlors with a plan of the interior arrangement.

The late Deacon Edwin J. Haskell contributed the following story of the building of the meeting-house by Aunt Mary Murch, using her own words as she recalled the event.

"Well, you know in those days we had no meeting-house in Saccarappa, and we used to go down to Parson Bradley's to meeting. A number of the girls joined that church and in good weather we would walk down there. When we got outside of the village (Saccarappa) we would take off our shoes and stockings so as to keep them clean and put them on just before we got there.

"We used to be sure to go if one of the girls we knew was to be read out in meeting. You see there was a little box put in the entry of the meeting-house where the fellow who was going to be married would put the name of the girl and himself. When the minister came in he would take the slip of paper with the names and read them from the pulpit. On those times we used to get a seat where we could see the girl and see her blush when her name was read out.

"It was quite a walk to go down so far to meeting, and so we decided to form a church in Saccarappa. So we took letters from the First Church in Westbrook (as Parson Bradley's Church was called), called a council and formed

what was called the Second Congregational Church of Westbrook. We called the Rev. Mr. Searle to be our pastor and teacher, hired a hall over North and Pierce's store to hold our meetings in. We were getting along nicely when one Sunday we found the door of the hall locked. One of the men went for the key and he brought back word that the man who owned the hall (who was a Universalist) said he was not going to let the Orthodox have the hall any longer as he did not want them to hold meetings. Then and there, right on the sidewalk, Mr. Searle began to talk to us and said we must have a meeting-house of our own. So we went to work to see what we could do. Deacon Haskell gave us a lot and some lumber and we went around to the other mills, and as lumber was plenty enough in Saccarappa in those days, we got a lot more.

"The men put in the stone foundation and we began to build. When lumber gave out we would stop work, go to the mills, and buy some more. Then the nails or something else would give out and we would raise some money to get what was wanted. We girls who worked in the cotton mill gave and gave. It was about that time that Sarah Turner left the mill and went up to Captain Warren's to work. That winter Mr. Searle went to Massachusetts and gave a course of lectures and gave all the money he received for the house. We kept on and at last got the pews and stoves in place, then we had the dedication. We were pretty happy to have a meeting-house of our own, I can tell you.

"Soon some of the people began to complain of the minister as he had a little impediment in his speech. It was not much, just a little catch in his voice, but it did not amount to much. They kept on talking and at last it came to the ears of Mr. Searle, and as he had a call to Bridgton, he left us and went there.

"Deacon Hayes went up to the installation. (Deacon Hayes joined the church while Mr. Searle was with us and we were very glad to get him as he was inclined to candles.) He had a talk with Mr. Searle while there and he told him how badly he felt to leave us, as he had worked so hard to build the meeting-house and would have enjoyed so much holding meetings in it.

"The meeting-house was about the same size as the present church. There was no cellar. It was a plain building with a platform in front of the two doors, a belfry in which was the same bell we have now. There was a wood stove in each corner near the doors, the smoke pipes running the length of the church to the chimneys. The pews were what I think were called box pews, with a door with a button, so that when the family was safely in the pew the door was buttoned and no one could get in or out. They were painted green inside and the outside was white. There was a little rail on the top painted red, but the paint never dried hard, and in warm weather ladies would get a mark of red across their back if they did not take the precaution to put a hymn book between their back and the rail.

"In 1858 there were two deacons, David Hayes and B. M. Edwards. There were wing pews each side of the pulpit, the people sitting there faced the minister and side to the congregation. Deacon Edwards sat in one of the wing pews and Deacon Hayes sat in the second seat from the front facing the minister. During the long prayer both deacons would stand, Deacon Edwards facing the minister and Deacon Hayes facing the congregation and back to the minister. I used to wonder, in my childhood days, if this was so that one could keep an eye on the minister and one on the congregation to see if they behaved during the prayer.

"The choir was in what were called the singing seats in the rear of the house and the congregation would stand and turn around with their backs to the minister during the singing. There was a pipe organ in the singing seats that was built by Mr. Rufus Johnson, who was a member of the church and quite a musician. Some of the wooden pipes of this old organ were used in the present organ.

"The pews in the old meeting-house were sold, generally to those who attended church there, but some to people who bought them as an investment and let them to those who worshipped there. When the house was remodeled all holding deeds to pews were asked to give them up. Some held out but I think some settlement was made with them."

I find that Aunt Mary was mistaken about Deacon Haskell giving the lot. He allowed them to build upon it but

was paid for it, and the deed is in the hands of the parish. The Aunt Mary referred to in this little sketch was Miss Mary Murch, who lived on Brown Street. She came to spend the day with us when we were first married and told us the story after dinner.

By Deacon E. J. Haskell.

In 1836 the membership had grown to 76. In 1837, Rev. Joseph Searle resigned, his reason set forth in a long letter to the church being lack of financial support. Evidently the church was in financial straits and the burden of his support fell on a few who could no longer keep up the task.

Just when the bell which today hangs in the belfry was purchased is not stated in the record; however, March 14th, 1837, mention is made of paying for the care of the bell. This bell was obtained by the efforts of Deacon Brice M. Edwards, who went about collecting from everyone so minded whatever he could get. I have always understood it was a Paul Revere bell and in order to make sure the janitor kindly climbed up and copied the inscription cast with the bell. It reads, "Revere, Boston, 1821."

The "National Geographic Magazine" for November has a picture of All Souls' Church in Washington, where President Taft worshipped. It says: "Its bell was cast in Paul Revere's foundry and sent to John Quincy Adams in 1822 for use in the First Unitarian Church built in Washington." So ours is a year older.

I have also been in communication with Rev. John W. Day, pastor of the Unitarian Church at Kennebunk. He writes: "I have been able to get direct witness about our bell. The inscription is 'Revere and Sons 1803'." That is 18 years older than our bell. Ours was second-hand when Mr. Edwards obtained it.

After the resignation of Mr. Searle in 1837, there was no settled minister until 1840, when a call was given Rev. John H. Mordough, which was accepted. Right here in the records are one or two pages of baptisms, many of the names being such familiar ones as Babb, Johnson, Murch, Marrett, Hayes, Bacon, Edwards, and others.

It is amusing to read that at a proposed meeting to revise the articles of faith, only men should be present, too weighty for the female mind, evidently.

In 1843 a meeting was held to consider the matter of several members straying from the fold and going after false Gods, so to speak. One or two members had been interested in Universalism, also some in Swedenborgianism and others in spiritualism.

In 1844 Mr. Mordough resigned, giving as his reason that there was disaffection among the members toward him and also that his salary was much in arrears. It was voted to accept his resignation.

In 1845 Rev. Calvin Chapman was invited to become the pastor at a salary of \$500, with the hope of increase in the year to come and also embracing the privilege of two or three Sabbaths' absence during the year.

In the previous year the first mention of electing deacons is made and David Hayes and Dr. Wm. Marrett were chosen.

Mr. Joseph Walker, who gave to the town the Memorial Library, had been a resident of Saccarappa some little time and a church attendant, although he never became a member, and in 1846 Mrs. Walker united with the church. Later they removed to Portland, but they always retained a warm place in their hearts for this community and they visited here frequently.

Finances must have been a little easier for in 1847 both Mr. and Mrs. Chapman were made life members of the Board of Foreign Missions by the church.

In the Fall of 1848 Mr. Chapman resigned and the society remained without a settled pastor until October, 1851, when Rev. John L. Ashby became the pastor at a salary of \$600.00 and two Sabbaths out, as the record has it.

Mr. Ashby remained in Westbrook until September, 1858, when he resigned, giving as his reason the cry so familiar to us all, "the high cost of living." Prices had advanced so much since his coming here that his salary was no longer adequate to support his family.

An entry that excites no little conjecture is as follows, to quote: "October 2nd, 1858, at an adjourned regular meeting of the church held in the meeting-house at 7.30 o'clock P. M.—on motion—voted unanimously that the clerk is hereby instructed and directed to make no record of the doings of the church at the church meetings held on the 27th and 29th of September and 1st of October."

Just enough is said to excite curiosity.

July 9th, 1860, the following record will explain itself, when a meeting was held on the above date at 7.30 o'clock. To quote exactly: "In the month of February last certain individuals of the parish met at the meeting-house to see what means might be taken for supplying the pulpit. Among them were several who had previously made efforts, under the guidance of Rev. Mr. Stebbins of Portland, to organize and establish a society in this place on liberal grounds for liberal preaching.

"They then and there proposed to send for our late pastor, Rev. J. H. Ashby, then in California, to return and supply the desk. At the same time they stated that they wanted a good, liberal preacher and one who would exchange with all denominations, and they believed Mr. Ashby to be the right man and one who would suit them. The proposition was adopted and an invitation was sent. Mr. Ashby returned June 8th and the following Sabbath preached. At the close of the service he publicly accepted the invitation without in any manner recognizing the church in the transaction. At the same time he defined his position and was understood to say, that he should hold himself independent of all ecclesiastical and Congregational usages and stated that he should not be governed or judged by any human creeds or isms. The following Sabbath he read from the pulpit a letter from Mr. Stebbins, sympathizing and fraternizing with them in having obtained a minister to suit, and one calculated to unite all parties. The question was then proposed to the church whether it should concur in the foregoing transaction and approve the course adopted by Mr. Ashby. The church declined to take any action and consequently adjourned without delay.

Attest, David Hayes, clerk."

During the next three years the records are of little moment. The church then numbered 18 men and 42 women. Mr. Ashby finished his work with this church May 10th, 1863, and shortly after went to California. On returning from California he accepted a position in one of the departments of the government at Washington, where he remained until his death.

In 1865 Rev. Joseph Danielson of Killingly, Conn., became pastor, and was ordained August 9th. The church at that time numbered 54.

In 1866 several prominent members asked to be dismissed as their views had changed and they had become spiritualists. During Mr. Danielson's pastorate the church grew largely in numbers and was in a most flourishing condition.

In 1869, owing to ill health, Mr. Danielson resigned, much to the regret of his parish. The church numbered at that time 115.

In July, 1869, the services of Rev. E. P. Thwing were secured for one year.

Sept. 2nd, 1869, the following were dismissed to form a new church at Cumberland Mills, which is known as the Warren Church:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Elisha Newcomb | Jane McFarland |
| Phoebe Newcomb | James Graham |
| Geo. W. Hammond | Annie Foye |
| S. A. Cordwell | George Millions |
| Lucretia Cordwell | Ellen R. Millions |
| Peter W. Files | John Wheeler |
| A. G. Bickford | Susan R. Wheeler |
| Salome Bickford | Isabel Gladhill |
| Julia E. Libby | Lizzie J. Graham |
| Nancy M. Andrews | |

Nineteen from our church, four from Portland, 23 in all, same as the mother church started with.

In 1869 Harlan P. Murch was made deacon, an office which he held for over 50 years.

Deacon David Hayes had acted as clerk since the Fall of 1832 of this Second Congregational Church of Westbrook and early in 1870 illness and the infirmities of age led him to resign. The following letter will explain the feeling of the church when his resignation was tendered:

"Saccarappa, March 4th, 1870.

Dear Deacon Hayes: At the church meeting last evening your resignation of the office of clerk was accepted and the pastor directed to communicate to you the expression of our esteem, and our appreciation of your long and faithful services in this capacity. In prayer also you were affection-

ately remembered by the deacons. May our heavenly Father make your closing years serene and happy and an abundant entrance be administered to you into the kingdom above.

Yours in Christ,

E. Payson Thwing."

The answer is quite remarkable for a man in Deacon Hayes' condition and extreme age.

"My dear Brothers and Sisters: I thank you for your kind words and affectionate expressions communicated to me by our pastor, accepting my resignation as clerk. In Nov., 1832, 38 years ago, I was chosen to that office. Many changes have taken place and varied has been the history of the church since that time.

"Of the 23 members which constituted the whole number, when organized that same year, 21 were female. And how appropriately it may be asked, the mothers, where are they? Gone, all gone with the exception of three to join the church above. The links of the chain that bound them together in Christian love have, one after another, been broken, and the ties that bind the remaining few of the little band to earth, will soon be severed. With tearful emotions we call to mind the many happy scenes of the past, when we were accustomed to meet these good mothers in Israel, in social prayer, conversation and affectionate greetings. When the candle of the Lord shone round about us and souls were added to our numbers. Nor can I forget the time when it was, indeed, a day of small things with us, days of darkness and discouragement—when some good sister would drop a word of encouragement, and all would be bright again. And thus we have gone on through sunshine and clouds, the Lord being with us and greatly blessing and comforting us.

"And here let me express my grateful acknowledgments for the respect I have always received from every individual member of the church from the beginning till now. Nor do I remember ever having a quarrel of any kind with any member through this long period, which fact I find to be a very comforting reflection as I draw near the end. That the Lord may continue to bless you all with his grace is the prayer of your most unworthy brother in Christ.

David Hayes."

Deacon Hayes died March 26th, 1870.

In 1870, Joseph P. Libby, so well remembered as Deacon Libby and whose deep bass voice we recall in "I love Thy church, O Lord," was made a deacon.

Mr. Thwing resigned and in 1871 Rev. S. L. Bowler became pastor. This year we sustained a keenly felt loss in the death of Deacon Brice M. Edwards. Always foremost in everything beneficial to the church and community, thrifty but with always an open purse where real need was to be met, his likeness was indeed hard to find.

In 1872 the first mention of a yearly get-together of the church members is noted. In this year, too, began the agitation of building a chapel or vestry on the lot of land given to the parish some years before by Nathaniel Haskell.

Up to this time there had been two preaching services and it was voted to have Sunday School in the forenoon to take the place of the sermon.

In 1874 the church edifice, as we know it today and no longer called the meeting-house, was renovated and emerged in its present form. The record says it was "re-built from the foundations throughout."

While the church was being rebuilt and a chapel built, the Sunday School met in the upper part of the building now occupied by Graf's meat market. The drug store of Charles B. Woodman then occupied the place where the market now is.

The total cost of the chapel was \$1,236.46 and that of the renovated church and furnishings, \$12,241.59; the debt on both chapel and church was \$7,662.77.

The clock also was placed in position this year. This was paid for by individuals mostly outside of the society and cost around \$600.00.

A great event was the dedicating of the remodeled building. The exercises were as follows:

Invocation Rev. H. Whitcher, Freewill Baptist, Saccarappa Anthem

Scripture Rev. S. F. Strout, Methodist, Saccarappa

Prayer Rev. Addison Blanchard, Warren Ch., Cumb. Mills

Historical Sketch Woodbury K. Dana, Chmn. Bldg. Com.

Hymn Composed for the occasion by Rev. E. P. Thwing,
a former pastor

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Sermon | Rev. Joseph Danielson, Saugerties, N. Y. |
| Dedication Prayer | Rev. L. Z. Ferris, Gorham |
| Benediction | Rev. S. L. Bowler |

September 6th of this year it was voted at a church meeting that "no notices unless of a religious nature to be read from the Pulpit."

Mr. Bowler closed his labors September 14th, 1874.

Rev. Henry B. Mead was installed as pastor of the church, February 10th, 1875. Mr. Mead was the possessor of a very fine tenor voice, of which he was most liberal. During his pastorate a rather remarkable male quartet flourished. Many will recall the personnel, Mr. Mead, Temple H. Snow, E. B. Phinney and W. W. Cutter. George F. Mariner also substituted. The regular choir of the church, Mr. Snow, Mr. Phinney, and later Mr. Cutter, Mrs. Abbie B. Stackpole and Ellie L. Brackett, afterwards Mrs. Frank Dana, gave much pleasure by their singing, giving of their services entirely without pay.

Owing to trouble with his throat that could not stand our harsh climate, Mr. Mead resigned June 15th, 1880.

Rev. Edward E. Bacon was called in October of that year. He was installed on January 11th, 1881. Rev. E. C. Ingalls supplied the pulpit from October to January and so well did he like Westbrook and the people that when he went away he took with him as his wife one of our most zealous workers among the young people, Miss Ella Cloudman. Mr. and Mrs. Ingalls were most successful in their chosen field of work. Mrs. Ingalls has died quite recently, Mr. Ingalls having died previously.

The need of an organ being very great, Mr. Bacon, during the first year of his stay among us, interested himself in the need to such good purpose that our present organ was obtained and has served us for over 50 years, and when purchased was not new. It cost originally \$1,800; we paid \$1,000.

During the next ten years the church was most prosperous and grew in numbers, although the years took toll of many of our older members.

It had become apparent that a new vestry was greatly needed, it was called parish house by our up-to-date ones, and May 24th, 1891, it was voted to build a new one from the ground up.

In February of 1892, after considerable discussion, it was proposed the declaration of faith be revised and it was so done to conform more nearly to that of other churches of our denomination.

June 19th, 1892, the first Children's Day was held. It was a most decorative occasion. The church was literally filled with flowers and many canaries were brought in whose songs, at times, almost drowned the children's voices.

At a meeting held November 17th, 1892, it was voted that a board of deacons should be organized, consisting of four members to serve one, two, three and four years, and that the clerk and treasurer should be one of the members. The new articles of faith were adopted.

In 1893 Mr. Bacon resigned after 12 years' pastorate, as the records attest, greatly to the sorrow of many. During these years the parish and church had gone steadily forward. Mr. Bacon introduced weekly offerings. In 1893 the church was lighted by electricity and in this year the parish which had been known as the Saccarappa Congregational Parish became the Westbrook Congregational Parish.

In 1893 Rev. Silas N. Adams became pastor, coming here from South Gardiner. The new parish house was dedicated October 25th, 1894.

In 1897 Edwin J. Haskell became deacon and remained so for 35 years. He was greatly interested in the coming centennial and told me many things of much interest before his death. A loyal, devoted christian, his death came as a personal loss to the entire church. I doubt not that this faulty record of our hundred years of service would have been much more interesting could it have had his wonderful memory to rely upon.

In 1898 a memorial service was held for Rev. Joseph Danielson, whose death was much regretted by many of his former parishioners, he having served as pastor from 1865 to 1869, and intercourse with the family having always been kept up.

The two notable things to record in 1898 seem to be the using of individual communion cups for the first time. Who says we are not hygienically progressive? Sunday, July

3rd, the heat was so extreme that the preaching service was postponed until 7.00 P. M.

On April 1st, we suffered a disastrous fire. It was discovered at 2.00 A. M., having caught around the register in the center aisle. Four pews were burned and the carpet destroyed and of course much damage by smoke and water. Preaching services were held in the parish house while repairs were made.

In 1900, membership had risen to 188. In 1901, Mr. George Springer resigned as deacon and Mr. Ashley F. Small was elected to fill the vacancy. Mr. Small served until his death, a few years since. Mr. Franklin Partridge was elected deacon for one year. The first mention of deaconesses was this year, when the following were chosen: Mrs. George H. Raymond, Mrs. Ashley Small, Mrs. James W. Morris, and Mrs. Alice B. Libby.

A period in some respects like the present depression now came upon us, many left town to seek employment elsewhere. The records have it that it "was the most discouraging time the church had ever known." With 1902 came returning prosperity, as it is returning now with us.

Rev. Mr. Adams resigned. During the rest of the year the pulpit was filled by supplies. The scribe has it that the first Sunday Mr. Adams preached in 1893 there were 306 in attendance and 243 in the Sunday School.

Rev. Eugene Webster was chosen pastor in February, 1903, and in June he asked to be released from his engagement, which was immediately granted.

January 3rd, 1904, Rev. Lee Maltbie Dean, having accepted a call to this church, preached his first sermon.

The first mention of a union Thanksgiving service was November 20th, 1904.

January 15th, 1905, John R. Lowell died of pneumonia, having served the Sunday School for 33 years and a half as recording secretary. This was a wonderful record as he lived two miles away and through all kinds of weather he was always at his post. A most enviable service.

The first rally day mentioned is that of October 15th, 1905.

During the Summer of 1906, the pastor, Mr. Dean, spent two months in Europe and the pulpit was supplied by Rev. Freelan Bolster and Rev. William Olesen. In this year was

introduced for a six months' trial a printed order of services or calendar. Mr. Dean held a Monday evening Bible Class that did most excellent work. This note occurs: "Mr. Dean introduced the boy choir, 15 boys wearing black gowns and white surplices, at the Easter service." He was a fine musician, having made a study of music. This unheard innovation caused much comment, both for and against the step. Some fearing we were being made Episcopalians, however, we are still Congregationalists. Mr. Dean resigned, to take effect October 7th, 1907. Mr. Dean had made many friends here who regretted his leaving. Rev. Freelan Bolster was asked to preach for three months. Mr. Bolster remained until 1909. In October of that year, Rev. W. G. Mann was engaged to supply until it was decided to call a minister. Late that year, Rev. Dorr. A. Hudson of North Chelmsford, Mass., was invited to become our pastor. He accepted and began his long and most successful work among us in March, 1910. That year Deacon Partridge resigned, owing to ill health, and Mr. Woodbury K. Dana was elected as deacon.

A reception was tendered Mr. and Mrs. Hudson in the parish house, which was largely attended not only by our own people but by many from the other societies.

Mrs. Rebecca Haskell, Mrs. Alice Libby, Mrs. John Warren, and Mrs. Morris were the deaconesses this year. Deacons: Small, Murch, Haskell, and Dana.

There was very little to record in 1914 aside from this: January 14th, 1914—this was the coldest day for 40 years, only 33 at the morning service.

Temple H. Snow died November 29th, 1915. He sang for over 30 years in the church quartette without pay. During the years up to 1920 a large number were admitted to the church and a most prosperous condition prevailed.

In 1920 Deacon Murch celebrated a half-century as clerk and was given a purse of \$50 in gold. The pastor's salary was raised to \$2,000.00. In 1922 it was voted to invite the parish to participate in the yearly church meeting, a custom which has prevailed ever since.

Walter F. Haskell was elected deacon at the annual meeting in 1920.

In 1922 Walter F. Haskell was elected clerk and treasurer.

In 1923 it was voted to hold the morning service at eleven o'clock, a custom which has since prevailed.

Deacon Murch died August 30th, 1923, and Leon Waterhouse was chosen to fill out the unexpired term. For more than 50 years both Deacon and Mrs. Murch had been prominent members of this church and their passing left a vacancy hard to fill.

It was voted this year that hereafter the Sunday School should be known as the Bible School.

March 9th, 1923, Charles M. Waterhouse was taken into the church from the pew in which he had worshipped for nearly two score years. It was an impressive ceremony. Deacon Ashley F. Small died April 21st, and Deacon Dana died in May of the same year. These losses were keenly felt by the church as well as community. Harry F. G. Hay was chosen to succeed Mr. Small.

April 5th, 1925, Mr. Hudson resigned after 15 years of most faithful service, the longest pastorate in the history of the church. During this time the church had progressed in all ways. Mr. Hudson received and accepted a call to Charlemont, Mass.

The years of Mr. and Mrs. Hudson's stay among us are so fresh in the minds of us all as to need no words of mine, although much might be said of their faithful years of service. We sorrowed, indeed, with the family when Mrs. Hudson left us for other and I trust better realms of usefulness whence no traveler returns.

Rev. J. Albert Hammond of Closter, N. J., became pastor in September, 1925.

January 26th, 1926, a bad fire wrecked our parish house. As a new boiler had to be installed we could not heat the church and the Methodist people most kindly came to our aid, and as their pastor had resigned a few weeks before, Mr. Hammond preached at union services until March, when we were able to return home with many cordial thanks for their exceeding kindness to us in our time of need. In May our Bible School was able to return home.

During the year of 1926, 38 united with the church. In February, 1927, Mr. Hammond resigned, owing to the serious illness of Mrs. Hammond. The time of the annual meeting was changed to April and the membership was the largest in its history. Two new deaconesses were

chosen: Miss Louise Dana and Mrs. A. H. Burroughs. The deacons remained the same.

In May of 1928 a call was given Rev. Ray Gibbons of New York. Mr. Gibbons began his pastorate in September of that year. This same year was built our parsonage on Monroe Avenue which the Ladies' Guild promised to pay for and are doing so. The organization known so long as the Ladies' Sociable has a new name, the Ladies' Guild, and is doing the same good work under the shorter name.

The annual meeting of 1929 was the largest in its history. The church membership is also the largest it has ever been. At the annual meeting held April 21st, 1930, the name of the church was changed to Westbrook Congregational Church, there being no longer need of the name Second Congregational Church as the first had gone out of existence, meaning the one at Capisic.

The uniting of the church and parish in one body has long been under advisement and in the last Spring was an accomplished fact.

New by-laws were adopted and the church and parish incorporated as one April 21st, 1931, when the property of the parish was turned over to the church and the union consummated, and now there are no longer two bodies, but one.

At the annual meeting one new deaconess was selected, Mrs. Frank H. Cloudman, to serve with Mrs. Roger Haskell, Mrs. Louis L. Hills, and Miss Louise Dana. Mr. Harry W. Saunders was chosen to fill out the term of Deacon Edwin J. Haskell, to serve with Harry F. G. Hay, Walter F. Haskell, and Leon E. Waterhouse.

Chronological Outline of Westbrook Congregational Church History

- 1832—January 17th. Church organized with 23 members—two men and 21 women. Services held in Small's Hall for two years. David Hayes, first clerk, held office for 38 years.
- 1833—Rev. Joseph Searle installed as first pastor.
- 1834—Meeting-house built at a cost of \$2,300.31.
- 1837—Rev. Joseph Searle resigned.
Paul Revere bell.
- 1840—Rev. John H. Mordough became pastor.
- 1845—Rev. Calvin Chapman became pastor at a salary of \$500.00.
- 1848—Mr. Chapman resigned.
- 1851—Rev. John L. Ashby became pastor.
- 1858—Rev. Mr. Ashby resigned. He returned early in the sixties and finished his labors in 1863.
- 1865—Rev. Joseph Danielson of Killingly, Conn., was ordained pastor. The church then numbered 54 members.
- 1869—Mr. Danielson resigned, owing to ill health. The church then numbered 115.
- 1869—The services of Rev. E. P. Thwing were secured for one year.
- 1869—In September of this year 19 members were dismissed to form a new church at Cumberland Mills, to be known as the Warren Congregational Church.
- 1869—Harlan P. Murch made deacon, an office which he filled for over 50 years.
- 1870—Deacon David Hayes died.
- 1871—Rev. E. P. Thwing resigned.
- 1871—Rev. Stephen L. Bowler became pastor.
- 1871—Deacon Brice M. Edwards died.
- 1874—Church remodeled and chapel built on land given several years previously by Nathaniel Haskell.
- 1874—Mr. Bowler resigned.

- 1875—Rev. Henry B. Mead became pastor.
- 1880—Rev. Mr. Mead resigned.
- 1881—Rev. Edward E. Bacon became pastor. Pipe organ purchased.
- 1893—Mr. Bacon resigned, after a pastorate of 12 years. During these years great advances had been made, both in a material and spiritual sense.
- 1893—Rev. Silas N. Adams became pastor.
- 1897—Mr. Edwin J. Haskell was made deacon, an office which he held for 35 years or until his death a few months ago.
- 1901—Mr. George T. Springer resigned as deacon and Ashley F. Small was chosen to fill the vacancy.
- 1902—Mr. Adams resigned.
- 1903—Rev. Eugene Webster became pastor, resigning at the end of six months.
- 1904—Rev. Lee Maltbie Dean became pastor. Union Thanksgiving service held for the first time.
- 1905—John R. Lowell died of pneumonia, having served 33 consecutive years as recording secretary of the Sunday School.
- 1905—First Rally Day.
- 1907—Rev. Mr. Dean resigned. Rev. Freelon Bolster supplied until 1909.
- 1910—Rev. Dorr A. Hudson began his long pastorate.
- 1910—Woodbury K. Dana chosen deacon.
- 1914—Sunday coldest day for 40 years. 33 at morning service.
- 1915—Temple H. Snow died. He sang for over 30 years in the church choir, freely giving his services. Large number admitted to church membership. Very prosperous condition.
- 1920—Deacon Harlan P. Murch had served 50 years and was given a purse of \$50 in gold. Pastor's salary raised to \$2,000.00.
- 1920—Walter F. Haskell chosen deacon.
- 1922—Parish invited to yearly dinner of the church, custom kept up.
- 1923—Morning service changed to 11.00 o'clock.

- 1923—Deacon Murch died. Mr. Leon Waterhouse chosen deacon to fill vacancy.
- 1923—Sunday School name changed to Bible School.
- 1923—Deacon Small died April 24th. Deacon Dana died in May. Harry F. G. Hay chosen to succeed Deacon Small.
- 1925—Mr. Hudson resigned after a pastorate of 15 years, the longest in the history of the church.
- 1925—Rev. J. Albert Hammond of Closter, N. J., called as pastor.
- 1926—January 26th the parish house suffered a bad fire.
- 1926—Thirty-eight united with the church.
- 1927—February 26th Mr. Hammond resigned. Membership largest in history up to 1927.
- 1928—Rev. Ray Gibbons became pastor in September, 1928.
- 1928—Parsonage on Monroe Avenue built.
- 1930—At the annual meeting in April the name of the church was changed to Westbrook Congregational Church, there being no longer need of the Second Congregational Church as the first had gone out of existence.
- 1931—In April the uniting of the church and parish in one body was accomplished and the property of the parish turned over to the church, and now there are no longer two bodies, but one. The following deacons and deaconesses were chosen: Mrs. Frank H. Cloudman, Mrs. Roger Haskell, Mrs. Louis L. Hills, Miss Louise Dana, Mr. Harry W. Saunders, Mr. Harry F. G. Hay, Walter F. Haskell, and Leon E. Waterhouse.
- 1931—Present membership, 236.

Westbrook Congregational Church

RAY GIBBONS, *Minister*

42 Monroe Avenue

WALTER F. HASKELL, *Clerk* FRANK H. CLOUDMAN, *Treasurer*

KENNETH G. STONE, *Collector*

Deacons

LEON WATERHOUSE
WALTER F. HASKELL

HARRY W. SAUNDERS
HARRY F. G. HAY

Deaconesses

MISS LOUISE W. DANA
MRS. LOUIS L. HILLS

MRS. ROGER HASKELL
MRS. FRANK H. CLOUDMAN

Standing Committee

WALTER F. HASKELL
MRS. OTIS WYER
MRS. ANNIE K. SMITH
HIRAM B. RICH

MISS ANGIE PALMER
MISS WILMA MCBRIDE
MISS ANNIE MORRIS
THE PASTOR

Prudential Committee

HARRY F. G. HAY
MRS. RICHARD RAYMOND
MRS. ALEXANDER SPEIRS

PHILIP DANA
RUFUS K. JORDAN

Auditor, ARTHUR W. RICKER *Budget Drive*, OSCAR A. FICK

Head Usher, HARRY D. BROOKS

Music Committee

HARRY W. SAUNDERS A. A. STAPLES REV. RAY GIBBONS

Conference Delegates

MRS. ROGER HASKELL
MRS. RALPH H. FILES
MRS. EDNA JOY

MRS. V. C. HANSON
MRS. JOHN KINMOND
MRS. ANNIE K. SMITH

Religious Education

MRS. GEORGE M. WOODMAN
MISS MARION MATTOCKS
MRS. KENNETH G. STONE
MISS ELLEN SKILLINS
MILTON PHILBROOK
REV. RAY GIBBONS

MRS. LOUIS L. HILLS
MISS CHARLOTTE CLOUDMAN
MRS. RAY GIBBONS
WARREN SAUNDERS
LUTHER DANA

Leaders of Church Organizations

Ladies' Guild
MRS. RICHARD G. RAYMOND

Men's Club
DR. RALPH M. WHITNEY

Women's Missionary
MRS. F. M. RAY

Young People's
ROBERT RICH

Sunday School
MISS ELLEN SKILLINS

Girls' Campfire
MRS. RAY GIBBONS

Boy Scouts
MR. H. WARREN SAUNDERS

Friendly Indians
REV. RAY GIBBONS

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