

SOUTH TARANAKI

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ST. GEORGE'S, PATEA

ANNIVERSARY JUBILEE

PROUD HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

INCIDENTS OF SIXTY-FIVE YEARS.

The church of St. George at Patea possesses a proud and historic record that dates back to the earliest years of the development of the province—a record that has associated with it the names of those who, while engaged in military and agricultural pursuits in difficult times, never lost sight of their loyalty to the faith. Down through the long avenue of years from 1868 to the present time the history of the parish abounds with sacrifice and service that cannot fail to inspire those of the future to preserve their heritage.

The first authenticated incident in the parish of Patea, or Carlyle as it was then known, is to be found in the diary of the great Bishop Selwyn, who held a Maori service in Waiokana pa, south of Hawera, in 1842. The parish at that time embraced Hawera and places further north.

The commencement of regular church activity dates from 1858, although it is probable that the chaplains attached to the military forces conducted services prior to that year. In that year, however, Mrs. Dale, who had settled in the district with her husband, approached Archdeacon Govett, then vicar of St. Mary's, New Plymouth, for help in the establishment of a Sunday school. This was readily given and permission was obtained to hold the Sunday school in the barracks, Major Cummings undertaking to read the morning prayer on Sundays.

The boundaries of the diocese could not have been clear at the time as information concerning the proposal to build a church in 1870 was sought from both Bishop Cowie at Auckland and Bishop Hadfield at Wellington. In reply Captain Charles Wray, J.P., who was later appointed church registrar, received a letter containing an extract from the minutes of the standing committee of the Wellington diocese, which read: "That the best course will be that the Government be requested to make out the Crown grant in the name of William Garden Cowie, Bishop of Auckland, his heirs and assigns in trust for religious purposes, and when the grant is received the bishop be advised to nominate the following as local trustees: Major Maillard Noakes, R.M., Captain Charles Allen Wray, J.P., George Watkin Williams, Esq., Government surveyor, after they have signed the declaration required by section 28 of the church constitution."

FIRST MEMBERS.

The first members of the Church of England at Patea, dated June 20, 1871, were recorded as follows: A. S. B. Forster, Samuel Taplin, F. J. Smith, John Gibson, John Gillman Beamish, Thomas Eytson, F. T. Fortescue, William Covern, W. A. Winchcombe, George Beamish, N. A. Alcorn, William Dale, Henry Wright, C. J. Foote, H. W. Dundas, T. McKennedy, C. A. Wray, James Stent, G. W. Williams, E. C. Meredith, Matthew Carey, C. A. Cornish, Major Noakes, Dr. S. Walker, G. T. Potts, Henry Usher, James Hirst, G. F. Sherwood, D. M. Warren, Arthur Drake, James Lett, Henry Davies, J. A. Hulton, D. G. Fraser, G. N. Baggett, H. F. Turne and Dr. R. C. Croft.

Raising funds for the proposed church was the next problem that confronted the handful of settlers, but a bazaar organised by the women in 1870 realised the astonishing total of £127 15s 2d. Printed circulars appealing for support were also distributed. A site for the church was allotted by the government and on January 21, 1871, Mr. Toxward, architect, was asked to prepare plans, which were accepted on March 1. The new church was named St. George's at a public meeting on March 18 at which the Rev. Handley Brown presided. On April 22, 1871, the tender of Mr. Thomas North to erect the church for £227 was accepted.

THE CHURCH OPENED.

The time spent on construction was never recorded, although it is known that the foundation stone was laid by William Dale, worshipful master of the

Mrs. E. C. Horner and Mr. Frank Horner. Mr. R. Horner was a lay reader for many years. Messrs. C. A. Wray and S. Taplin were churchwardens from 1872. Mr. Tennent succeeding Mr. Taplin on his resignation in June 1875. Captain Wray was appointed the vicar's warden by Bishop Hadfield in 1883 in succession to Mr. R. Horner.

Mr. Kennedy was succeeded by the Rev. Alex. Dament in July, 1876, and the latter remained in the parish until January, 1881. In April of that year the Rev. I. Lloyd Keating was appointed, leaving four months later for Auckland, despite a special appeal to stay from an appreciative congregation. For 18 months the parish was without a vicar, the lay readers Captain Wray and Mr. R. Horner carrying on, assisted by occasional visits from the Revs. E. K. Taylor, Peter Cameron and Archdeacon Thorpe.

NEW CHURCH NEEDED.

At a meeting in 1883, the year in which Patea was gazetted a borough, the problem of building a new church to cope with the growing needs of the developing district was discussed, 80 persons attending. The following resolution was passed: "That in view of the increase in population of Patea, and of the fact that applications for sittings in the church are far in excess of its accommodation, the present building is inadequate for the requirements of Patea, and in the opinion of this meeting it is desirable that a new church should be erected to increase the usefulness of the Anglican communion in this town."

In September, 1883, a further resolution stated that the building of the church should be proceeded with as soon as funds were available at a cost not exceeding £750. During discussion of the annual report for 1883-84, however, a vestryman stated that the possibility of building a new church was utterly visionary, despite the fact that £438 11s 6d was in hand. On June 13, 1884, the vestry had £530 in hand for the building.

Then comes a blank in the records, dating from August 19, 1884, to February 23, 1885, during which much thought and time must have been given to the problem of the new church, for on March 5 the new building was consecrated by Bishop Hadfield. A congregation of 130 was present, and the bishop preached to a congregation of 200 the following Sunday, March 8.

The contract price for the building was £630 and the architects were paid £44. Much of the credit for the achievement was due to the efforts of Mr. R. Horner, the vicar's warden, and Mr. G. D. Hamerton, people's warden, to get the parishioners to take some definite action. Mr. Whitehouse, the new vicar, had stimulated a keener interest and the choir, under the tuition of the organist, Mr. Frank Horner, had done much to assist him.

In 1886 Messrs. E. Kempthorne and E. C. Horner became wardens, Mr. F. Long succeeding Mr. Kempthorne the following year, Mr. Kempthorne returning to office with Mr. W. Covern in 1888. Succeeding appointments were 1888-89, Messrs. E. C. Horner, H. F. Christie, 1889-90, Messrs. E. Kempthorne, W. Covern, 1890-91, G. D. Hamerton, F. Long, 1891-92, E. C. Horner, F. Long, 1892-93, H. F. Christie and E. C. Horner.

FAITHFUL WORKERS.

To this handful of loyal workers, who remained faithfully at the helm through years of difficulty and misunderstandings, must be given much of the honour for the growth of the church, the development of which meant spiritual comfort and strength to so many of the struggling settlers in the district.

The Rev. E. Whitehouse (1884-87) was succeeded by the Rev. C. P. Clark, 1887-92. In 1893 the relief from the financial yoke that had apparently borne heavily on previous vestries is apparent in the joyous sentence in the annual report: "Having emerged from all debts we can now direct our attention to work of development."

Vicars of St. George's since the erection of the present building were:— Rev. E. Whitehouse, 1884-87. His death occurred recently at Palmerston North.

Rev. C. P. Clark, 1887-92, who was afterwards appointed to the district of Tasada.

Rev. C. C. Harper, 1894-1900, one of New Zealand's best known clergy. He became vicar of All Saints, Palmerston North, Archdeacon of Rangitikei, then vicar of St. Peter's, Wellington, leaving for England about 1915. He recently revisited New Zealand.

Rev. R. Herman, 1900-10. He retired to Palmerston North after long and faith-

fulness of which are enhanced by the late afternoon sun. The font was the gift of Mrs. Dale and her scholars, the cover for which was carved and given by Mr. Izard, Moturka. The alms dish was presented by the Rev. C. C. Harper, the communion vessels by the women's guild when Mrs. W. F. Sheld was president, and the cross and candlesticks were given by the parishioners.

The years that are gone have not been forgotten, and a programme of religious and social functions was prepared last week to mark the jubilee of the parochial district of Patea, from 1870 to 1885 in the old church and from 1885 to 1935 in the present structure.

The programme included a reunion luncheon, when old parishioners and others were present, special jubilee services, a concert, afternoon tea and a ball. Expressions of goodwill were received from other clergy at Patea and the sister parishes of Hawera and Waverley. The occasion was marked by the planting of pohutukawa trees in the churchyard by Messdames J. G. Beamish, K. Honeyfield and M. Carey. A kowhai tree was planted by Mrs. W. H. Walton, wife of the vicar.

Two hundred children followed the flag of St. George in a procession that terminated in a jubilee party when both the older and younger generations were associated in a cake-cutting ceremony illustrative of the old and the new illustrations of the parish.

At the church the Ven. Archdeacon Young took for his text the appropriate line, "The Lord prosper ye; we wish you good luck in the name of the Lord." The text upon which the speaker based his appeal to the present on the history of the past, may well epitomise the spirit that has actuated those who have toiled, yet not grown weary in the service of the church for more than 65 years. The celebrations just concluded mark the turning down of another page, leaving space for the writing of greater achievements and higher aspirations for a new generation.

Those present at the jubilee re-union included the Mayor and Mayoress (Mr. and Mrs. F. Ramsbottom), the Rev. W. H. Walton and Mrs. Walton, Mr. C. R. Honeyfield (vicar's warden) and Mrs. Honeyfield, Archdeacon Young (Wanganui), Canon Malcolm (Hawera), Rev. S. R. Gardiner (Waverley), Rev. H. B. Burnett and Rev. W. H. Wilson (Patea), Mr. and Mrs. L. W. Austin (people's warden), Mr. G. H. Buckridge (Hawera), Mr. K. Honeyfield, Mrs. M. Carey, Mrs. J. G. Beamish, Mrs. Blyde, Mr. S. Taplin (son of the first churchwarden of the parish), Mr. and Mrs. Hone (Kohi), Misses Beamish, Mrs. Laing, Mrs. White, Mr. and Mrs. I. Jones, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Ballard, Misses Gibson, Mr. A. T. Christensen, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Gibbs, Mr. A. H. Hodge, Mrs. Boagay, Mrs. C. Masters, Mr. and Mrs. T. Foreman (Alton), Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Scown (Hurleyville), Mr. Burnand (Alton), Mr. and Mrs. Rex Hamerton, Mrs. J. Pearce, Miss Pearce, Miss M. Shield, Mrs. F. E. P. Bealey, Mrs. L. Honeyfield, Mr. and Mrs. W. Bond, Mr. and Mrs. T. Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. Hilliar, Mr. E. C. Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. H. Miller, Miss Kenworthy, Mrs. W. H. Kelly, Miss G. Kelly, Mrs. T. E. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Hemingway and many others.

CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S AID.

MEETING TO BE HELD TO-NIGHT.

An opportunity for the full expression of the sympathy felt by Hawera citizens towards the movement to aid crippled children will be afforded to-night at 8 o'clock, when a public meeting will be held at the Hawera Borough Council Chambers to launch a branch of the New Zealand Crippled Children's Society. For some weeks the Hawera Rotary Club has been engaged in preparing the ground for the meeting, and arrangements have been made for a large attendance. At the invitation of the convener (Mr. F. W. Horner, president of the Hawera Rotary Club), the Mayor (Mr. J. E. Campbell) will preside.

GENERAL ITEMS.

Euchre Party at Auroa.

The Katua Men's Hockey Club held another successful euchre party in the Auroa hall on Tuesday. There was a good attendance. Prizes were won as follows: Mrs. Maha 1, Mrs. Huma 2, Mr. H. R. Wood 1, Mr. J. Symes 2, Mr. Brian Davies was master of ceremonies.

Ohangai Tennis Club Party.

There was a good attendance at the flag five hundred party and dance held in the Ohangai hall on Tuesday in aid of the Ohangai Tennis Club funds. The table winning the greatest number of flags comprised Misses E. Frahm and J. Devery and Messrs. G. Cunningham and J. Trilford. Dancing was enjoyed to music by Mr. Roy-Willis, with an extra by Mr. S. Kerrisk. Mr. H. Dickson was master of ceremonies.

Mangatoki Junior Red Cross.

A concert arranged by the Mangatoki Junior Red Cross circle was held at the



St. George's Church, Patea, which has celebrated its 65th anniversary.

local Masonic lodge. The lodge records were later destroyed by fire and no record of the service remains. Illness prevented Archdeacon Govett opening the church as was desired, and as the courthouse, where services had hitherto been held, was no longer available, Captain Wray, the lay reader, commenced services in the new building. On two occasions the Rev. B. K. Taylor, Wanganui, officiated at services.

Records of baptisms date from 1873, when Bishop Hadfield took 12 baptisms, others being taken subsequently by the Rev. Taylor and Mr. Jeremiah Hurley.

In 1874 the Rev. H. M. Kennedy commenced his ministry, taking his first services on Sunday, July 25. Those confirmed by Bishop Hadfield on a date not recorded were William Dale, Clarence Dale, Clara Dale (Mrs. J. G. Beamish), Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Covern and Miss Drake. Although marriages had probably been performed earlier, the registrations of which would be lodged at New Plymouth or Wanganui, the first marriage register in the parish record is of interest. Names still familiar appear as follows: Edmund Morgan Honeyfield to Catherine Gane, Albert Symes to Emily Jenkyn, Francis Long to Emily Derrett. Mrs. Hirst was the first organist, being succeeded by her daughter,

ful service to the diocese, where his death occurred some years ago.

Rev. H. J. Deane, 1910-13. Mr. Deane returned to England.

Rev. A. W. Payne, 1913-15. Mr. Payne is now living in retirement at Levin after serving in other parts of the diocese and later as warden of St. John's College, Auckland.

Rev. N. S. Barnett, 1915-19, who was afterwards appointed to the Upper Hutt parish and is still serving in the diocese.

Rev. H. B. Goerty, 1921-24.

Rev. O. S. Gibson, 1927-32. Mr. Gibson is now at Tauranga.

Rev. W. H. Walton, the present vicar, was appointed on March 1932.

In addition to the valued service given by the lay readers mentioned, the work in more recent years has been carried on by Messrs. F. S. Tarrant, G. H. Stephenson and E. F. Hemingway. Mr. Hemingway will have given a quarter of a century of service in this capacity by next year. He has also been a synod representative, others being Messrs. J. W. A. Marchant, E. C. Horner and Mr. C. R. Honeyfield.

The beautiful east windows were given to St. George's by Mr. Derrett in 1884, and the lectern was given by Mr. Arundel, New Plymouth. Mrs. Honeyfield gave the west windows, the richness and

school recently, when £1 1s 6d was realised for the purchase of articles used by the school. Jack Carlson, a senior boy, was stage manager, and items were presented as follows: Opening chorus, "Canadian Boat Song"; pianoforte solo, Eric Sheerin; recitation, Rudolph Miles; Nurse's Song, senior girls; dance, junior pupils; recitation, Zena Morgan; vocal solo, Julia Miles; playette, "Lost Boy," standard 2 pupils; recitation, Doris Hammond; pianoforte solo, Audrey Carlson; play, "Ten Little Nigger Boys"; recitation, Jean Anderson; Highland fling, Marion Alexander; aeroplane song, junior boys; unaccompanied song, junior girls; playette, "Dollies' Show," seven small girls; drill display, senior pupils. At the conclusion Mr. C. W. Carlson expressed pleasure at the entertainment and thanked the young performers.

Jubilee at Mania.

The executive committee of the King's silver jubilee committee met at Mania on Wednesday evening to make final arrangements for the celebrations to be held on May 6. The programmes dealing with the sports and parade was completed. It is proposed that the parade leave the town hall at 11 a.m. and march to the domain. The town will be decorated during the week.