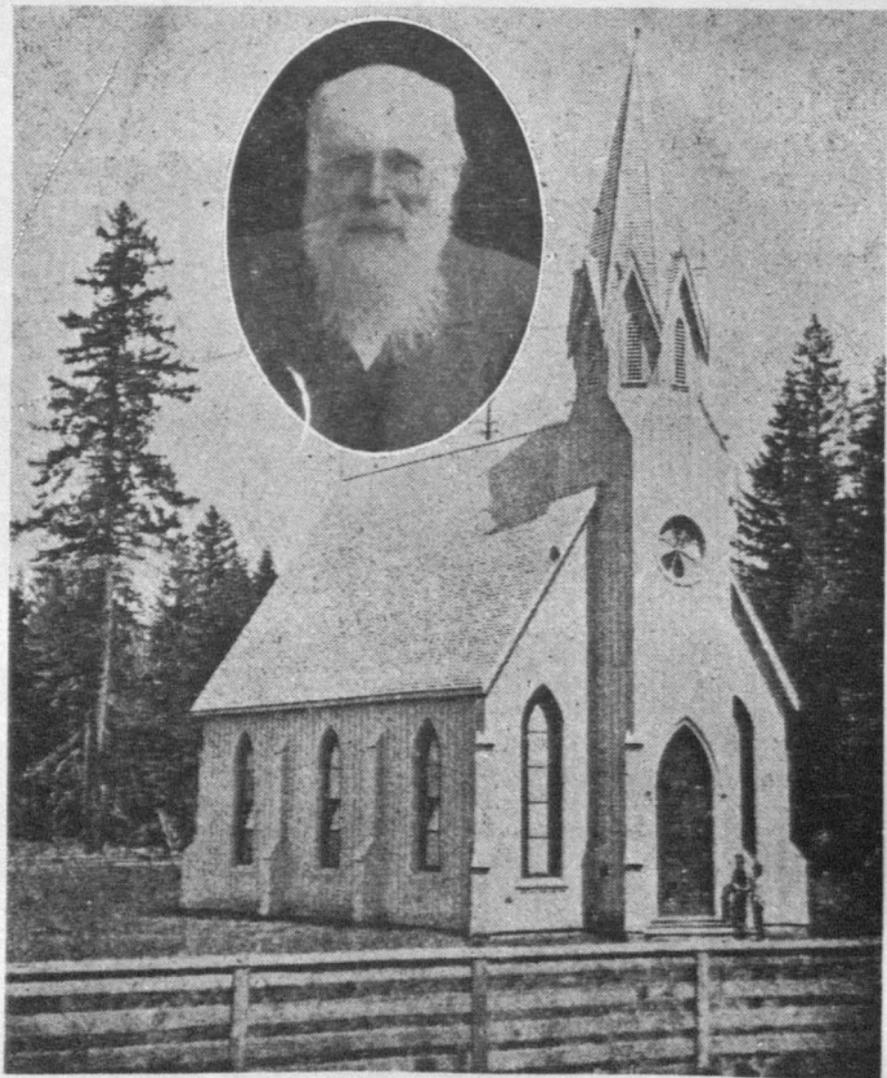


History of
THE TUALATIN PLAINS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH





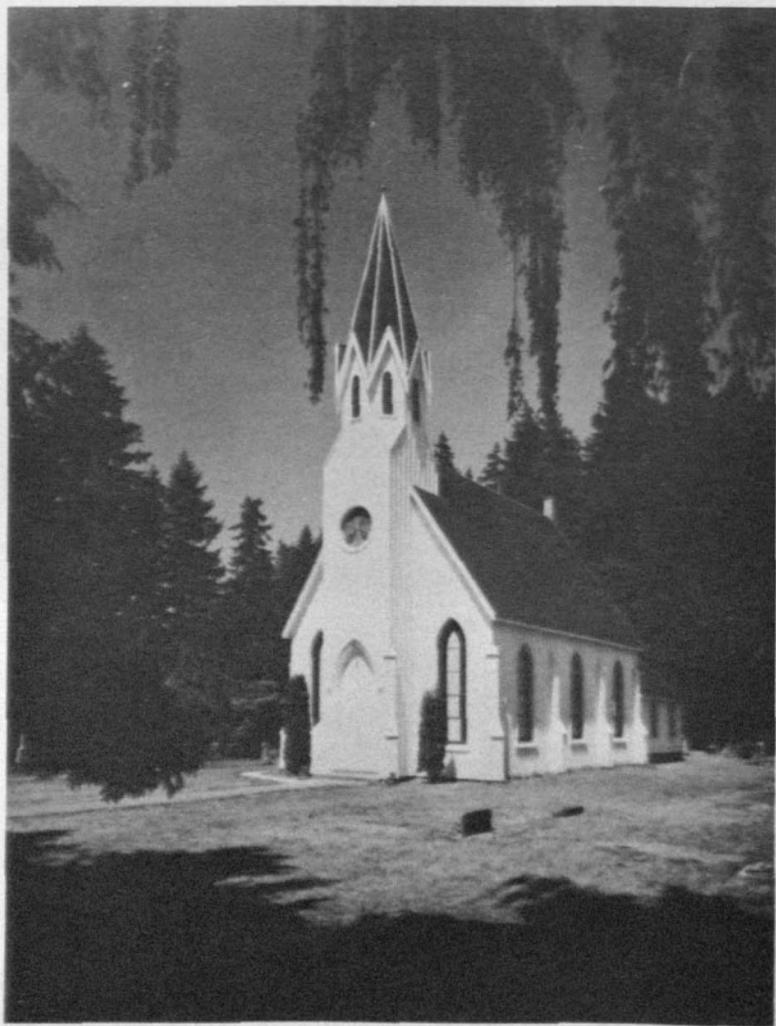
Insert is picture of The Rev. George Ross, first pastor of the historic "OLD SCOTCH CHURCH"

History of
THE TUALATIN PLAINS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Prepared By
Jane Cox

March 31, 1964



Church as it appeared before 1959 remodeling.

History of

THE TUALATIN PLAINS

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The organization of the Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church is recorded on the first page of the minutes of the session, in the time faded hand of the first pastor, Rev. George Ross. The words of this venerable sage were set down in the following locquacious manner:

“Columbia Academy, Washington County, Oregon, 16th November, 1873. After a sermon this day by the Rev. A. L. Lindsley, D.D., Portland, Oregon, he along with two of his elders, Messrs. Holman and Wadhams, organized the Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church, consisting of twelve members. The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was dispensed. The congregation then proceeded to elect two elders, when Messrs. William Chalmers and James Smith were chosen to fill that office. It was found that Mr. Chalmers was an ordained elder, he having been chosen and set apart to that office a long time previous to his departure from Scotland. He was received and Mr. Smith ordained to the eldership of the Tualatin Plains Church. Closed with Prayer.¹

¹ Congregation of Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church, Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church, 1873-1933, Sixtieth Anniversary (November 16, 1933), p. 3.

So the Tualatin Plains Presbyterian Church was organized on the fall day of November 16th at the first service held at the four room Columbia Academy school house, 4 miles Northwest of the present site. This service and the ones immediately following it were held at the Academy until a permanent site for construction of a house of worship could be located by the little congregation.

These charter members all came from the same area near Glasgow, Scotland, and upon coming to Oregon, all settled in the same area on the Tualatin Plains. From the Scottish origin of its charter members this church acquired the name it is more often identified with today, "The Old Scotch Church." There were twelve original Scottish pioneers; by name, Mr. and Mrs. William Chalmers, Mr. and Mrs. James Smith, Rev. and Mrs. George Ross and their infant child, Mr. and Mrs. George Alexander, John Milne, Miss Alexander, Miss Eliza Alexander and Catherine Chalmers. Of these twelve charter members all remained in the area and in the church all their lives. Eight of these twelve are presently at rest in the cemetery surrounding the church.

The Rev. George Ross led this tiny band of Presbyterians for twenty-one years, the period from 1873 to 1894. He was still in the service of the congregation when he passed away in 1894.

Though the records of these original twelve are scattered, the death of Wm. Chalmers in 1891 and that of his wife in 1899 are recorded in the min-

utes of the session. Mrs. Chalmers is memorialized in the minutes of the session soon after her death by these words: "Unselfishness, devoutness, hospitality, benevolence and loyalty to Christ".² The death of James Smith is recorded a year later in 1899; "Mr. Smith was a man of sterling worth and an elder and trustee for 16 years."³ It is evident from these references that several of the church's early members contributed many long, loyal years to this struggling new church.

Upon organization the congregation began examining the countryside for a site suitable to the excavation of a new church, and establishment of a cemetery. In regard to this quest the following passage is found in the session minutes: "At a congregational meeting held at the home of Wm. Chalmers, Rev. George Ross, acting as chairman, it was unanimously agreed to buy two acres of land from Jacob Hoover as a site for a church and burying ground. Mr. Hoover being present very generously said: "I will donate one acre to you and sell you the other for \$25.00."⁴ The offer was accepted and the thanks of the meeting given to Mr. Hoover for his liberality. The site they chose was beautifully set among huge firs near the bank of the McKay Creek about two miles North of Hillsboro.

² "Dedication at Tualatin Plains", Oregonian (November 27, 1905), p. 10.

³ Ibid, p. 10.

⁴ "Dedication at Tualatin Plains", Oregonian (November 27, 1905), p. 10.

Now that a site had been chosen and the land acquired, plans went ahead for construction. At a congregational meeting on March 11th, 1878, the board of trustees was requested to get plans and specifications of a church building and the probable cost and report at the next meeting. The trustees reported that two plans had been submitted, one by Mr. Goodin and one by Mr. Balantyne. The congregation chose Mr. Balantyne's simple gothic styled plan at a probable cost of \$2120. The trustees were then instructed to employ a responsible contractor and have the church building finished with as little delay as possible.

The chosen plan called for a simple style, with a tall eight sided steeple, buttresses on the outer walls, steep roof, and gothic stained glass which he imported from Scotland especially for these windows.

Construction began immediately with much of the labor and materials donated by church members or men and women of the community. The lumber for the building came from nearby forests, processed by mills in the vicinity. With these donations of labor and materials the building was rapidly completed, and dedicated in 1878. Today this structure is one of the oldest and most beautiful continuously used church sanctuaries in the state. The historic majesty and beauty of this structure is emphasized by the large number of artists who each summer try to capture its charm on canvas with paint or pen.

The church bell which still heralds Sunday morning services was not installed in the steeple

until September 1926, when it was donated to the Scotch Church by the Linton Methodist Church. J. E. Edwards and William Dierdorff were responsible for the transportation and installation of the large bell in the steeple.

Besides labor and construction materials, other worship materials were donated by members and friends of the congregation. The pulpit and the large pulpit Bible, still in use today, were gifts to the first pastor, Rev. Ross, by Mr. and Mrs. Benton Killen. The sterling communion service, now encased on the back wall of the sanctuary was purchased for the church by Mrs. William Chalmers, wife of one of the first elders.

Along with construction of the church building, work also progressed on the cemetery plot. The land was cleared and readied for burial purposes. The first person laid to rest in this peaceful cemetery was Margaret Smith Chalmers who died May 28, 1876 at the age of 6 years, 9 months. Inscribed on the gravestone were the child's last words, "The Lamb has come for me, He's come."

Many old and famous pioneers of the Oregon Country lie in this picturesque old cemetery. One of the most famous is the grave of the mountain man, Joe Meek. He died June 20, 1875 and was buried at this time on his home place near the historic marker in his memory on the Sunset Highway. When this property was sold his remains were moved to their present resting place located Southeast of the Church. Buried near him are his wife and members of his family.

There have been thirteen ministers who faithfully served this pioneer church with years of service ranging from several months to twenty-seven and a half years.

The first pastor George Ross served for twenty years, 1873-1894, the second longest pastorate in church history. Rev. Wm. H. Dierdorff served from 1895 to 1897. He left the Scotch Church to preach in Klamath Falls.

Following Wm. Dierdorff were two interum pastors, Rev. E. A. Holdridge, summer of 1897, and Rev. S. A. George who served in 1898 and 1899. Albert Robinson was pastor from 1899 until 1907 followed by interim pastor J. R. Welch in 1908-1909.

Dr. Andrew Carrick began the longest pastorate in the Church's history in August 1909, and served for a fruitful 28 years until his retirement on April 4, 1937. When he began his pastorate the church had 80 members, upon his retirement there were 110 active members on the register. Dr. Carrick was much beloved by his congregation, and his death in December 1948 was greatly lamented.

Rev. J. F. Gibson accepted the call upon the retirement of Dr. Carrick and served until March 20, 1945. Rev. Ellis Marshburn accepted the pastorate on November 1, 1945 and served until March 19, 1946 when he resigned to take up home mission work.

Rev. W. J. Smith, a retired missionary who had served in the Philippines, became the new pastor

in January 1947, followed by Rev. Ken Brown who served the pulpit until 1954.

Dr. McClure was supply pastor until 1955 when Rev. Kent Lawrence answered the call to the pulpit. He served the Old Scotch Church for seven and a half years then left to serve Westminister Presbyterian Church in Portland. In June 1963 Rev. Archie McPhail was called from Montana to become the present pastor.

During the terms of several of these ministers improvements and additional construction has been added to the church. In the spring of 1905 an annex was added to the back of the church to provide more Sunday School class rooms. This addition was dedicated by the congregation on November 26th, 1905. The Rev. Dr. Dunning gave the sermon and Francis Chalmers gave a historical sketch of church history at this dedication.

The annex of 1905 was enlarged and a half basement and heating plant was added during the pastorate of Rev. J. F. Gibson. During the term of Rev. W. J. Smith the church grounds were improved, a tract of land across McKay Creek was acquired for a manse. The Manse was completed and dedicated during his years of service.

Work began on July 27, 1959 and was completed in the spring of 1960, on another addition needed to meet increasing church and church school membership. Plans for this addition were drawn by the pastor Kent Lawrence. These plans included adult class rooms, nursery, office for the pastor, all

upstairs behind the sanctuary. In the enlarged basement, room was provided for two class rooms, rest rooms, a large kitchen and a fellowship hall for dinners and meetings which is converted to classroom space by screens and dividers.

Other improvements include an organ and speaker system for the sanctuary, a new well and pump which will provide irrigation for the cemetery. Additional land has been acquired for expansion in the coming years.

Even with all the construction and changes on the interior of the church great care has been taken to keep the exterior style of the building the same as the original. A fire once threatened to change this historic landmark but only slightly charred original timbers in the steeple remain as evidence and today the outside of the structure is little changed from the pioneer appearance.

The Old Scotch Church has paused to look back at many years of growth and struggle and to honor the members and pastors who made this growth possible. Such times are commemorated by anniversaries of church history, such was the Sixtieth Anniversary in 1933. At this time nineteen direct descendants of original members were present. These descendants honored the charter members by laying wreaths upon the graves of these Oregon Pioneers. Descendants included children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of George Ross. Bouquets of chrysanthemums were sent by Bethany, Reedville and Buxton Presbyterian churches. These

groups together with the church at Forest Dale were organized from members of the Tualatin Plains Church.

The Old Scotch Church again paused to reflect on its contribution to Oregon history during Centennial church services in 1958. But the Old Scotch Church does not reflect often — rather it pushes ahead to increase its influence in the community and remain a symbol of a vital congregation and a valiant heritage.



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Sunday, May 8th 1910

- 10:15 Sunday School
11:00 Bible Training
 Birthday Offering
11:15 Worship
 Hymn 291
 Talk to Children
 Childrens' Hymn 305 (Seated)
 Scripture lesson
 Prayer
 Offertory
 Sermon, Ministry of the Spirit
 Hymn 187
 Benediction (Seated)
 Silent Prayer
2:30 Sunday School at Glencoe
7:00 C. E. Subject, Christian Graces
8:00 Sermon, The New Birth

Announcements

Mr. J. A. Paterson of Portland will speak next Sunday on his experiences in Africa while establishing the Livingstone Mission.

The pastor expects this church, with all its societies to give, for Missions at

Home \$200., for Missions Abroad \$100. Last year the amounts were \$187.85 and \$51 respectively.

The publisher of the Calander expresses his appreciation for the generous response of last Sunday.

The Sunday School Council considered two important matters last Sunday: 1st, the adopting of a cradle roll if somebody could be found to superintend it, and 2nd, the securing of temperance pledges from every member of the Sunday School.

Oregon Going Dry!

The Memory Hymn for this month was written by a Catholic Monk, Bernard of Clairvaux, about the year 1150 A. D.

The C. E. Meeting at Glencoe last Sunday night was well attended. The service had an attendance of 43.

Christ saves "unto the uttermost." In return He wants us to do our utmost to evangelize the world in our generation.