

# In 1907 They wrote: "The Old Stone Church: Points to the Fading Past". In 1990 The Old Stone Church is Designated as Provincially Significant.

THE EVENING TELEGRAM, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1907

## THE "OLD STONE CHURCH" BUILT BY THE PIONEERS

### POINTS TO THE FADING PAST

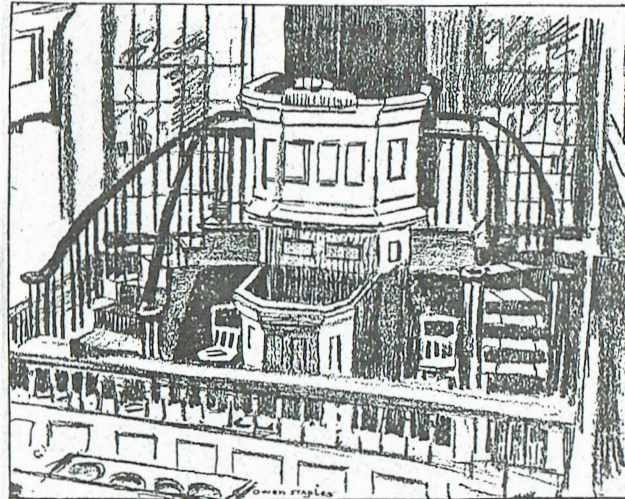
Away back in 1832 a few Glengarry folk, who came to Canada from Islay, Scotland, settled on the eastern shores of Lake Simcoe. Friends from the old land followed, and soon the little community felt the need of a meeting house.

St. Andrew's congregation was founded in the year 1832, and the building of the Stone Church commenced not very long afterwards.

Apart from the masonry the work was mostly voluntary. To

the site granted by the Crown for church, manse, glebe and cemetery enough field stone was drawn for the construction of the kirk.

Well and truly was the foundation laid, forty-three feet wide by fifty-five feet deep. Above it the walls of grey limestone, plentifully besprinkled on front and corners with granite boulders, stand as firmly as the day of their completion. These are pierced by ten high arched



Pulpit and Precentor's Box of "Old Stone Church"

windows, three on either side and two at the front and back of the building. Fifty-one little panes of glass in each letting in the light on whitewashed walls, circling gallery, precentor's box and pulpit. No paint, no gilding, no varnish is there.

#### TWENTY-TWO INCH PINE

All summer long the dancing maple leaves on the trees without, self appointed cleaners, brush the dust from the panes of glass, and the sunlight flickers in on plain oak pillar and straight-backed pews of pine.

And what pine it is! Rarely a knot in sight, most of it 22 inches wide, and all hand planed. We have nothing now to equal it. The big trees felled

for pulpit, pew and flooring grew near the banks of the Talbot River, up which Champlain travelled on his exploration voyage three hundred years ago. From Bolsover, now on the Trent Canal, the pine was drawn, log by log, over ten miles through the unbroken forest, by volunteers who spared neither time nor labor in securing the best for the house of the Lord.

#### SAT ON FLATTENED RAILS

The Kirk was walled, roofed over and well on its way towards completion in 1840, three years before the disruption in Scotland.

For ten years or more, the people worshipped in the uncompleted church, where

there was neither floor nor pew.

Some few sat on planks placed on blocks, but the majority contented themselves with flattened rails and all rested their feet in the sand.

And weary feet some of them must have been, for the Church drew its congregation from a radius of eight, ten and fifteen miles. Tramping through the bush where there was not even a bride path, they came, many of them carrying children too young to walk.

Besides, there was only service in the day time. It was pretty nearly an all day affair, though. English service at eleven. A service in Gaelic after than and then the Sunday School.

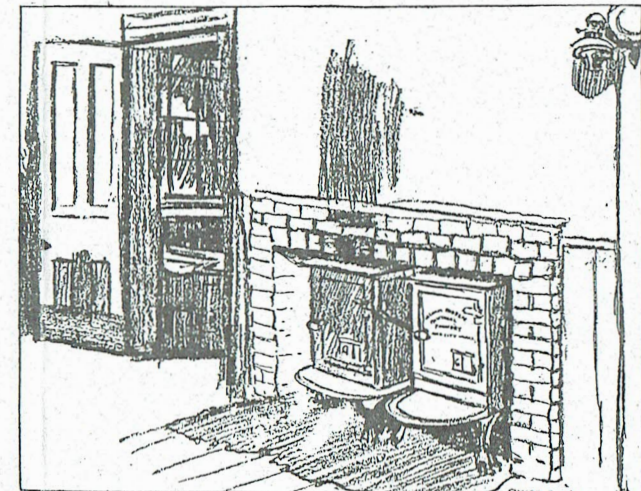
None of your twenty-minute

discourse either. Each sermon lasted a full hour.

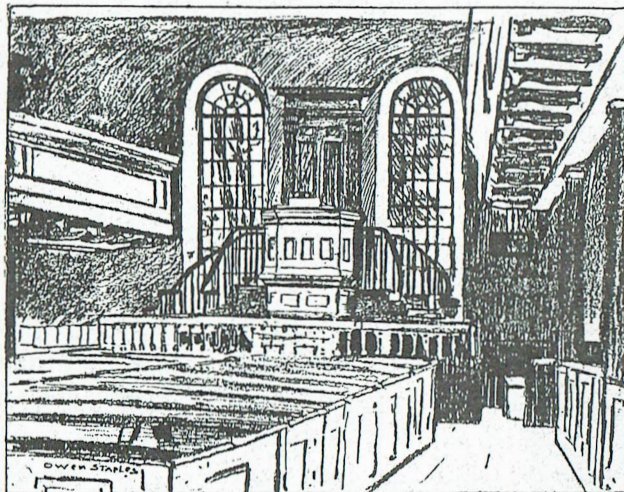
#### FOUR FOOT LOG FIRING

In 1854 stoves were procured for the kirk; big cast iron box affairs four and a half feet wide by five long. These were placed in the rear of the church with doors opening through a low bricked arch, furnace like, into the vestibule, from where they were fired with four foot logs.

To the right and left of them are doors having access to the ground floor, and on either hand a staircase leads to a gallery running round three sides of the church. Seven unpainted oak pillars, hand planed as are the numerous supports, uphold the gallery.



The Pioneer Stoves



General View of Interior