

1895

The Mt. Desert Congregational Church, Tremont, Maine, 1792-1895 : Historical Sermons and Notes

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T H E
Mt. Desert Congregational Church,
TREMONT, MAINE.

HISTORICAL SERMON AND NOTES.

BY REV. EDGAR M. COUSINS.

SERMON.

DELIVERED AT SOMESVILLE, BASS HARBOR AND SOUTH WEST HARBOR,

MAY 12, 1895.

Isaiah 41: 19.—“I will plant in the wilderness the cedar;
I will set in the desert the fir-tree.”

To understand the growth of an organism we need to know something of the environment out of which it springs.

In plant life we find this true of anything as hardy as the familiar evergreens along our coast. Plant one of these hardy firs in the scant soil of some southeastern point of an outer island, give it the bracing breath of the Atlantic to feed upon, let it be buffeted by the rude winds and storms that sweep in from the restless bosom of the deep, and you have in the end a very different tree, in size and form and texture, from what the same tree would have been had it found a home in some sunlighted, sheltered valley, beside some refreshing stream among our wooded hills.

So as we turn back the pages a little and study to-day the life of this spiritual tree which was divinely planted on these shores a hundred years ago, we cannot study this tree of the Lord's planting without considering in some degree at least the soil and surroundings into which the good seed was cast and out of which it has sprung up to bear its fruit.

While it is man's privilege to rise above his surroundings yet we have to confess that environment has much to do in the development of any people. We cannot attempt to measure the influences which have been shaping even the moral and religious life of this people for the hundred years

of their local history, without taking into account these granite hills, this scant soil, these rocky fields and highways and this restless expanse of ocean that has flowed around all and tempted so continually the fisherman and the sailor, the needy, the enterprising and the adventurous.

And here we enter a wide and tempting field. Few persons can turn their attention to the history of the past, especially when this study leads them to original sources of information, or independent investigation without having their subject grow upon them, and their pursuit of such knowledge become a fascination. The limits of such a paper as is presented to-day compel a repression in many ways which may be fortunate for the auditor but is severe upon the author.

LOCATION AND POPULATION.

The territory from which the Mount Desert Congregational Church drew its membership was the southwestern half of the main island and the adjacent islands from Bartlett's on the northwest round to the Cranberry Isles group on the south. On the main island this territory was almost exactly that half of the island which was granted by the General Court of Massachusetts to John Bernard in 1785. John Bernard's father Sir Francis Bernard the English governor of Massachusetts had had the whole island granted him 1762, and in October of that year had visited here in an armed sloop. He brought his surveyors with him and made quite an extensive survey and thorough examination of different parts of the island with a view to bringing in colonists and developing his property. But this was just at the beginning of that exciting period in Massachusetts which preceded the revolutionary war. The stanch royalist governor soon found his hands more than full in trying to enforce Stamp Acts and other parliamentary measures amid the turbulent and liberty-loving people of the old Bay State. After years of contention and struggle, he was practically driven out of the country, the vessel which carried him out of Boston harbor in 1769, being saluted by the ringing of church bells and the firing

of cannon on the part of the rejoicing people. This was the end of Governor Bernard's plans for his island possession, but in 1785 two years after the close of the revolutionary war his son appears before the General Court representing that during that struggle he had been loyal to the interests of the colonies and prays that he be granted his rights as heir to his father's interests in Mount Desert. His prayer is heard and one half of the island is granted him subject to the rights of settlers already there. Two years later on the strength of a grant made by the King of France in 1689 to her grand-father, the remaining half of the island with adjacent islands and a portion of the mainland is granted Maria Theresa and her husband Bartholomy de Gregoire. When the island was divided between these two grants the part south and west of Somes' Sound and a line running nearly north from the headwater of the Sound were given to Bernard while the remainder fell to the Gregoires.

Some of the most interesting and important facts of the history of the settlement of this part of the island, including all land titles, are connected with this Bernard grant.

In 1808 three surveyors were sent here, who surveyed and mapped the Bernard territory, and allowed the claims and gave titles as the General Court had required, to all settlers who could prove that they were occupying their land in 1784, or previous to the grant to John Bernard in 1785.

This list of actual settlers and landholders in 1784 is most interesting for many reasons, but especially as it controverts the assertion sometimes made that there were comparatively few settlers on the island till after the close of the revolution. As a matter of fact there must have been a quite remarkable growth. In 1762 Abraham Somes and James Richardson were just settling at the head of the Sound. Twenty-two years later, including the seven trying and uncertain years of the war, we find on this half of the island just about fifty landholders besides those who did not hold land or failed as some did to establish their claims.

The Island had been made a plantation in the Independence

year 1776, and in 1789, with the adjacent islands, it was made a town. In the following year when the first U. S. Census was taken it had 744 inhabitants. This was a period of rapid development for Maine. Six years later in 1796, Eden was set off as a town and at the next census in 1800 we find the two towns together having 1121 inhabitants, of whom 721 are in the old town.

The great majority of these settlers had come from Massachusetts and from the western and older portion of Maine itself. Comparatively few were directly from the countries across the Atlantic. It was sturdy New England stock that came here with faith that they could gain on these rock-bound shores, an honest livelihood for themselves and their children. It was not so much farming, though that was not lost sight of, as the treasures of the forests and the seas, that drew men to these shores.

RELIGIOUS LIFE AND EFFORTS.

And those were not the men nor those the days in which the religious needs were likely to be forgotten. Something of the old religious spirit of Pilgrim and Puritan may have been lost in the century and a half since the planting of the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies, the disintegrating effects of the long war had been felt, while the closing years of the 18th century are marked in some respects for their lack of religious life and power, but we may believe that it was only their isolation and the troublous days and probably poverty in connection with the war, that kept this people so long without church privileges.

In the years just previous to the Declaration of Independence we find that Rev. Daniel Little of Wells, on his missionary travels in 1772 and 1774 visited this people. At about the same time Rev. Oliver Noble, first pastor of the church on Deer Isle formed in 1773, also visited and preached on this island.

Little if anything is known of later religious instruction or effort till we come to the formation of the church in 1792, and

the opening history of this undertaking shows most suggestively the lack of ministerial assistance under which they labored.

We turn now to the old book of church records which has come down to us and which, while it presents many gaps in the history that we would gladly have filled, and which ought to have been filled, is yet an interesting and valuable volume.

The records begin by saying "Having Received Instruction from the Reverend Mr. Samuel Macclintock with a Covenant, a number of us appointed the 17th day of October in the year of our Lord 1792 for a day of Fasting and Prayer; for the purpose of forming ourselves into a Church and Profess to take Christ for our head.

Accordingly being assembled and meet together we signed the following Covenant."

This Covenant opens with a brief confession of a belief in God as Creator, in Jesus Christ as the God-man, and Mediator; in the need of that repentance and faith which come through the work of the Holy Spirit and use of the word of God; in the scriptures of the old and new testaments as the word of God; in the resurrection of the dead and the general judgment with its awards; . Then follows their agreement to walk with each other. The surprise here is to find so modern a statement. It is on the whole most remarkable considering the time in which it was written, for its brevity and comprehensiveness, for what it fails to include as well as what it asserts, and I shall have to ask you to take my word for it that I find nothing in it that should hinder any evangelical church of any denomination to-day from accepting such a covenant as a bond of christian fellowship.

Who Rev. Samuel Macclintock was who furnished this form of covenant to the people at this time, we do not know clearly, but suppose he was the Mr. Macclintock whom Greenleaf mentions in his list of missionaries supplying the church in Bluehill between 1763 and 1788. There seems every reason to believe that neither Mr. Macclintock or any

other minister was present in person to assist at the formation of this infant church.

Fifteen names are added to this covenant, seven men and eight women, viz:—James Richardson, Thomas Richardson, Davis Wasgatt, Nathanel Gott, Ezra H. Dodge, Paul D. Sargent, Daniel Richardson, Rachel Richardson, Rachel Wasgatt, Mary Dodge, Hannah Gott, Elizabeth Gott, Margaret Richardson, Ruth Norwood, and Nancy Atherton.

The name of Paul D. Sargent is afterward crossed out with no recorded explanation, but there is evidence that for some years he must have been counted at least in the membership of the church.

There is no further record for almost two full years, when we find August 14, 1794, "Mary Manchester was admitted and we declared a church by the Rev. Mr. Samuel Eaton of Harpswell."

This Rev. Mr. Eaton, who is not the Rev. Ebenezer Eaton who was to minister so long to this church, seems to have done the work of a council of recognition in declaring them duly constituted as a Congregational church and in extending them the fellowship of the wider family of churches to which they now belonged.

A month later, September 17, 1794 we find the members of the church entering into what they call an Agreement. I give it in full.

"We the subscribers being joined together in Covenant under Jesus Christ the Great Head of the Church; but think ourselves to lie something exposed for want of a Pastor or teacher, do in the Presence of God and relying on the strength and assistance of Christ, agree on the following rules for us to walk by until we may have a Pastor or obtain further Instruction which may God in his goodness soon grant.

1. That we will to the uttermost of our ability endeavor to obtain, encourage and protect a Regular Preached Gospel, as formerly established, and now practiced in the New England Churches.

2. That we choose James Richardson a Moderator, whose duty it shall be to keep a church Record of all that may be admitted into Covenant, with the gathering of the Church at first, and all further proceedings of the same for the future. To call church meetings at the request of any of the members or as any occasion may require, to propound and examine all such persons who shall offer to join in Covenant, when no minister is present, which persons are to be propounded three weeks before admitted.

3. That each person so admitted be able to give some account of the striving of God's Spirit with them, and further that we give all diligence to walk together in brotherly love, agreeable to the Apostle Paul's direction to the Churches.

4. That we admonish, rebuke, reprove, and exhort all such as remain obstinate in sin; to debar from our communion all offenders; such as are prescribed in the 5th Chapter to the Galatians, 19, 20, 21, verses, with all others of like nature, that we conform to, and endeavor to live in love with our neighbor Churches as chiefly now practiced in New England.

(Signed)

MOUNTDESERT.
 Sept. ye 17th day,
 year 1794.

JAMES RICHARDSON,
 THOMAS RICHARDSON,
 DAVIS WASGATT,
 EZRA DODGE,
 DANIEL RICHARDSON.

This agreement is remarkable in many directions. It shows the value which this handful of believers put upon the fellowship of the churches as well as upon the need of a settled ministry according to New England customs and traditions. At the same time it shows their wisdom in guarding against the dangers of their weak and exposed position as well as the confidence that they reposed in him whom they chose to be their leader, while without pastoral care.

The office of deacon is not mentioned here or for many years later, but James Richardson in addition to the office of Moderator is chosen Keeper of Records, a position which he apparently filled faithfully till his death on the 12th of Dec-

ember, 1807, or about 45 years after he and John Somes made the first permanent settlement on the island. He seems to have been a man of intelligence, integrity and Christian character, with the respect and confidence of his fellow citizens and one well worthy to have his name stand at the head of this ancient and honorable church roll.

It may be added that Mr. Richardson was also the first town clerk and treasurer. Not only the handwriting but the spelling and language as well as the general appearance of the volume after these many years, indicate a man of a good degree of education, method and intellectual ability.

Two months after the adoption of this Agreement, November 16, 1794, we find that the Rev. Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick, being present, the Sacrament was administered. Jacob Lurve (Lurvey) and Samuel Hadlock were admitted to the Church, "and the Church voted the following Covenant; as our *standward* to walk by."

Here follows a confession of faith and also a covenant both of which make up in length and inclusiveness what the original covenant may have lacked in the eyes of the theologians of that early day.

They were now a regularly organized church and the work seems to have prospered under their efforts. The records are brief and largely in outline, but they show that the new church was visited quite regularly by ordained ministers usually from the nearest churches that enjoyed the ministry of a settled pastorate. Among these ministers were Rev. Peter Powers of Deer Isle, Rev. Jonathan Powers of Penobscot, Rev. Daniel Fisher of Bluehill, Rev. Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick, and less frequently others from greater distance. These visits were invariably sacramental seasons and usually accompanied by the admission of members.

One member was admitted in 1795, five in 1796, seven in 1797, but in 1798 came an interesting event which we are glad to be able to describe largely in the words of one of the chief actors.

From Greenleaf's Eccl. History of Maine, we make the following quotation :

Writing of Mount Desert he says : "Previous to the year 1798, a small church had been gathered here, and Mr. Ebenezer Eaton, a member of that church was licensed to preach, and thus the enjoyment of constant preaching was secured to the people. In June of the year 1798, a very extensive revival of religion commenced there and made progress to a considerable degree in the subsequent year."

Greenleaf continues: "The following extract from a letter written by Mr. Powers of Deer Isle, dated March 20, 1799, will best exhibit the state of things at that time. 'In the beginning of June last I was called to Mount Desert to administer sacraments to a church who have not a stated Pastor, and tarried with them about nine days; when in preaching my second sermon, the glory of the Lord came down in a wonderful manner. One convicted and hopefully converted under the sermon was added to the church about two days after, and three others who had before obtained a hope. Three months after this, I went again to administer the Lord's Supper, at which time I admitted twenty-eight who had been hopefully brought home in the interval. The work of conviction was then going on powerfully in the town, and spreading into those adjoining on the same island. (Eden was incorporated February 23, 1796.) Our Association had licensed dear Mr. Eaton to preach, who improved his talent laboring night and day among them whom the Lord had remarkably owned.' "

Greenleaf, whose history was issued in 1821, adds "The Church at Mount Desert has ever since continued in a flourishing state. In 1816 an extensive revival* of religion again marked its history and between sixty and seventy souls obtained a hope in the Lord. No person has yet been ordained to the pastoral care of this church. Mr. Eaton who is mentioned by Mr. Powers, still lives at Mount Desert, and preaches constantly there. He has often been solicited to

*Thirty-three members were added to the church in 1816.

take pastoral charge of the church but declines receiving ordination.”

The records show in connection with this eventful visit of Rev. Mr. Powers that on June 24, 1798, he administered the Lord's supper and received four members to the church, but which one of the four was the person so remarkably converted two days before we have no means of determining. September 16 of the same year was the date when Mr. Powers had the privilege of welcoming the twenty-eight additions while in the following November, Rev. Jonathan Powers admitted two other persons making in all thirty-four added to the thirty-one members on the roll at the beginning of the year.

As declared in Mr. Powers' letter the good work was still going on when he wrote in March, 1799. Ten persons were added to the church during that year and eighteen during the year 1800. After these fruitful years came several lean ones. For six years at least but two new names are entered upon the roll, although the sacrament was administered about twice in each year, and twice in this time we find that this service was performed by Rev. Jotham Sewall who is described as a "Missionare."

REV. EBENEZER EATON.

This letter of Mr. Powers and the words of Greenleaf are also interesting because they furnish us an introduction to one who was to exert a most important influence in the life of this church and community—to him who afterwards was to become the Rev. Ebenezer Eaton.

It is quite remarkable that the early church records are so silent regarding this worthy man. We have no means of knowing how or exactly when as a licensed preacher he began labor with this infant church.

The first reference to him in the church record is in the account of a church meeting for fasting, humiliation and prayer held July 5, 1803. There we are told that after considerable consultation several votes were passed. Among these votes was one that "Brother Ebenezer Eaton is guilty

of a fault, though not intentionally, for not having dealt with (a certain member of the church) so seasonably as he ought. At the same time the Church consider that they have been guilty of similar misconduct. Another vote was that Brother Ebenezer Eaton be a member in this church.

This first vote implies that Mr. Eaton had already been acting as stated supply and hence his responsibility in oversight of the membership. Mr. Powers' letter shows that he had been preaching there at least five years before at the revival of 1798.

The question comes, how long had he been at Mount Desert? Did he come there to preach or was he a resident before? If the latter why was he not already in the membership of the church which had now been organized at least ten years?

Perhaps your speaker will be pardoned if he dwells somewhat upon these questions even to the necessary neglect of some facts of the more recent history.

In a letter dated Middleboro, Mass., Sept. 18, 1893, Rev. Herrick M. Eaton, grandson of Rev. Ebenezer Eaton and at the time of writing more than 80 years of age, writes of his grandfather as follows. "His advantages of education, when *young*, were very limited. He was a Bible student all his days. His principal text books were the Bible and Mr. Henry's Commentary. He studied very closely every day when at home. He always preached without notes and he never wrote a sermon, but they were thoroughly studied. He preached two very long sermons every Sunday, but I never knew him to have a meeting in the evening. He was a thorough gospel preacher. He never left Christ out of a sermon. I think he was pastor of the Congregational Church in Mt. Desert about 50 years. He preached in different parts of the Island but principally at S. W. Harbor. He was very religiously devoted in his family. He always rode horseback and was never in a carriage till in his old age. He left the town and went to Sedgwick to live with his daughter Mrs. Currier. I think he was 87 years old when he died. He was

in the ministry 61 years. I visited him after I commenced preaching and he told me he commenced preaching when he was 26 years old, I commenced at the same age and that is why I so well remember what he said. When I saw him last, he was reading Richard Baxter's works without glasses. He was always strong physically and very temperate in his habits. Before he was 80 years old he signed the temperance pledge. Previous to that time he drank a very little liquor every day. His general appearance was *very ministerial*. He was very sedate and never given to joking or telling funny stories."

This letter is of interest as furnishing the best picture of this good man that we shall be likely ever to obtain. We cannot be too thankful for it and could only wish that it had given us light on some points upon which it is silent.

If he began preaching when he was 26 years old and continued that work 61 years or until his death at the age of 87, then he must have been a preacher before he came to Mt. Desert, whatever the reason that led him there.

Dea. E. F. Duren in his "Ministers and Churches of Maine," published by our general conference in 1867, says the Mt. Desert church was organized in October 1792 and Ebenezer Eaton was licensed as "stated supply" from 1793.

Another and on the whole a more authentic source of information is the town records which pertain to the obtaining of a minister. Let us remember that the town at this time was the parish and all parish matters relating to the support of the ministry and provision for places of worship were a part of the regular action of the town meeting.

Beginning with the spring of 1793, or the first regular meeting after the formation of the Church we find in all the annual meetings and in others that must have been special meetings, action looking to the obtaining of what our N. E. fathers valued so much, a settled pastor. Committees are raised, the aid of other ministers sought, two men at least invited to supply during the summer months, with a view to settlement. These efforts were clearly unsuccessful and

April 6, 1801, nearly eight years after the church was organized we find the first reference to Mr. Eaton in a vote that the town give him a call to settle as minister, and a committee was appointed to treat with him for that purpose. In the following month, May 18, it was voted "to employ Mr. Ebenezer Eaton as a preacher for the town of Mt. Desert" and he is to have four weeks in which to give his answer and during those four weeks "he is to inform himself so far as to give answer whether he can accept or not, to be ordained next fall."

In the following October it is voted,

1. "That Mr. Eaton came here to settle.
2. That the town give Mr. Eaton \$250 per year, and four Sabbaths in the year for himself.
3. That the town assist Mr. Eaton in moving his family."

Just when Mr. Eaton moved his family to Mt. Desert we do not know, but at the regular March town meeting in 1803, nearly eighteen months later we find it voted "that the town allow John Manchester ten dollars for moving Mr. Eaton from Sedgwick to Mt. Desert."

At the same time Mr. Eaton evidently decided not to be ordained and settle over the church, and the subsequent votes show that he was engaged from year to year or sometimes for but six months at a time, and the people were still looking for a candidate for settlement.

At the March meeting of 1804 or only the next year after the town had paid for the removal of Mr. Eaton's family it was voted "to employ Mr. Eaton the ensuing year or till we can obtain a candidate on trial."

This is the last reference to any attempt to obtain another as a settled, that is an ordained minister. Such efforts either had not proved encouraging or the people had become satisfied that they could not do better than depend upon the faithful efforts of Mr. Eaton. After this the usual votes are to engage this worthy man for the ensuing year and to raise money for that purpose. The amounts raised varied con-

siderably from \$250 down to \$100 per year, or sometimes he is to be paid \$4 per Sunday and "no more."

These town records end as far as I have been able to obtain them with 1820.

Another fact we may note that at the March town meeting of Eden in 1798 two years after it had become a town, it was voted "that the selectmen should be a committee to agree with Mr. Eaton, (as regards preaching,) and report to the town accordingly." This shows that Mr. Eaton was preaching in Eden before the revival of 1798, and employed by that town before we have any record of the older town voting to employ him, though it is plain from Mr. Powers' letter that he was preaching here at the time of the revival.

From other sources we know that Mr. Eaton consented to be ordained July 9, 1823, but as he was not installed as pastor of this church the records give no hint of the important fact. A reference to him a few weeks later uses the title Reverend for the first time and continually afterwards, while here begins the record of his officiating regularly at the sacramental services and in the reception of members to the church.

At the time of his ordination Mr. Eaton must have been nearly sixty-five years of age, and though a strong man physically in a comparatively few years we find evidence that the church was compelled to think of other leadership.

After the death of James Richardson, Davis Wasgatt acted as clerk for a short time and he was succeeded by Dr. Kendall Kittredge. Dr. Kittredge who was long a leading member of the church had been admitted to membership by letter from the church in Penobscot in 1803.

At about the time of his ordination Mr. Eaton began to act as clerk but his last entry on the records is in 1827 and Dr. Kittredge resumed the office.

In May 1830 we find that Rev. E. Gillet, secretary of the Maine Missionary Society, preached at Somesville and administered the communion and "advised the church to settle a colleague pastor." A few days later we find it voted by the

church to have "five or six communion seasons this season as Father Eaton found himself able to attend."

The record continues, "Spoke our minds freely and agreed that we should immediately use our endeavor to get a candidate to settle as assistant minister with Rev. E. Eaton."

LATER MINISTERS.

The next spring, April 1831, Mr. George Brown was called to preach as assistant to Mr. Eaton, at the same time a committee was appointed to apply to the Maine Missionary Society in behalf of the church for aid. Rev. Mr. Brown accepted the invitation here given, and while the records give no other hint of the difficulties, we find a year and a half later an entry signed by three well-known ministers of the state giving their advice by request of the church concerning "the unhappy divisions in regard to their ministry." The recommendations of this committee or council of ministers were briefly:

1st. That Rev. Mr. Brown should seek some other field of labors.

2d. That the people find some other person of approved piety and talents, in whom they can unite to labor with them with a view to an eventual settlement.

3d. That as Rev. Mr. Eaton has proposed to take himself out of the way of the settlement of a minister in the place, that the church give him a suitable expression of their respect and affection and obligation in view of his past services and endeavor to obtain the continuation of such services from him as his infirmities may permit and their wants require, until a permanent settlement can be obtained.

4th. That the members of the church be advised earnestly to abstain from any reference to the past, but to seek, live and labor in harmony for the time to come.

In accordance with these recommendations Rev. Mr. Brown seems to have closed his work as minister, although we find him present and acting as temporary clerk at a church

meeting held about a year later in November, 1833. At the same meeting the moderator was Mr. Micah W. Strickland, who in the following spring was called to the pastorate of the Church and regularly installed by a Council held July 15, 1834. Mr. Strickland was a native of Gray, and had just finished his studies at Bangor Theological Seminary. The Council for his ordination and installation met at the house of Mr. John Somes, and after organization and preliminary steps adjourned to the school-house for public examination of the candidate and on the following day the regular exercises were held at the same place.

I emphasize this fact that Rev. Mr. Strickland was the installed pastor of this church because it seems to have escaped the notice of others who have made public record of his services. In two places where there ought to be found no such mistake, I find him mentioned either as "stated supply" or "acting pastor," when if records mean anything he was all that we mean by the term "installed pastor" or as we use the expression to-day "Pastor by Council"?

In connection with the coming of Mr. Strickland we find the first reference to a parish or society acting with the church in giving the call and fixing the compensation.

Before this as far as I can discover the town had been the parish and attended to this matter, except that in the calling of Rev. George Brown, the church itself had voted to raise for him \$138 "in cash and produce," while he should preach forty-six Sundays for them and attend to other ministerial duties. The church also appointed at this time an "Appropriating Committee" and voted to apply to the Maine Missionary Society for aid.

Tradition has it that out of this meager salary and the necessity of supplementing it by teaching, grew some of the difficulties which attended Mr. Brown's labors.

Mr. Strickland was treated more liberally. As salary for each of his first, second and third years he was to receive \$300 and of his fourth and fifth years and thereafter, \$400, with the understanding that the Maine Missionary Society should

add \$100 annually, while the pastor is to have four Sundays each year for travelling and visiting.

Although ordained at what we know as Somesville, though that name never appears on the records up to this time, but "above" or "between the hills," and marrying there the daughter of Dr. Kittredge, the old and faithful church clerk, the new pastor concludes to settle near Mr. Eaton at S. W. Harbor, probably as nearer the centre of his parish. Purchasing from Mr. Eaton or his son, twenty acres of land lying on the southern side of Norwood's Cove, he erected the house still standing in which the speaker was born, and now occupied by his brother.

In an interesting letter from Mr. Strickland's widow now nearly 85 years of age, we learn that this hard working man did very much of the labor in building this house himself. The granite for the basement was quarried on the side of the Sound and brought upon rafts into Norwood's Cove, the quarrying and setting being done largely by his own hands as well as the blasting out of the well beneath the house. The carpenter work also was mostly done by the minister.

Mr. Strickland preached every fourth Sabbath at Somesville, Pretty Marsh, S. W. Harbor or Cranberry Isle.

The parish soon found itself unable to carry out its agreement in the matter of salary and although the Missionary Society seems to have increased its aid to \$150 per year, after seven years this pastorate closed in 1841. It had been a period of earnest labor and of growth in some directions but several trying cases of church discipline had left evil effects in different parts of the field. In the previous pastorate but more especially during this period, whenever there came that searching of the heart and trying of the ways that betokened a turning to the Lord, these good people were not satisfied as we are to-day, perhaps too easily so, with searching and trying our own individual hearts, but there was a decided tendency to search and try the hearts of others, and if members were found delinquent to summon them to answer before the church. Church discipline has its place, and may not be

honored to-day as it should be, but as we review the history of such discipline in almost any community we may question whether like family discipline too much is not as harmful in the end as too little.

Mr. Strickland went to Amherst and Aurora, and was succeeded by Rev. Charles M. Brown in the spring of 1842. Mr. Brown had been preaching for fifteen years. He was born in England, had had a partial course in Harvard College and was a graduate of Bangor Theological Seminary. He was a man of good mind and ability, and the work of the church went on regularly under him, but certain peculiarities or eccentricities gradually developed in him until it was found that his mind was unbalanced, so that he ceased from regular work as minister in 1850. He resided at S. W. Harbor until his death in 1871.

After about six months service by Rev. Dana Cloyes, Rev. Samuel Bowker who was closing his first pastorate at Union, was invited to supply the church. The invitation was accepted and near the close of 1851, Mr. Bowker entered upon a term of service which continued till 1855. He was an earnest, godly man and is remembered with respect by many of our older people.

After the departure of Mr. Bowker the church records present a sad gap for many years. Beyond the record of the admission of a few members in 1858 by Parson Tenney of Ellsworth and one member in 1860, we find nothing to show that there was any church life until 1866.

But from other sources we know that Rev. Albert B. Houston supplied the church in 1857 and '58 and Rev. R. B. Snowden in 1858 and '59, while Rev. John W. Pierce was here from 1859 to '64. There could have been little growth in numbers but as many of us recall the fires were kept burning upon the altars and the gospel was preached.

In June 1866 Rev. David S. Hibbard became acting pastor, remaining in this office something over two years.

Here practically begins the later life of the church. During this period and especially in connection with a revival result-

ing from the labors of Rev. John U. Parsons an evangelist, a good number of members were added to the church. Your speaker cannot now attempt to trace these more recent years with their various ministers and important changes. He can only promise if it be thought best to put anything into print in connection with this history to add an outline of these facts which shall preserve them for the later historian.

The same promise must apply to many other things that we would gladly mention, especially, as regards church officers and membership, and places of worship.

In conclusion it may be said that it would be hard to estimate the difference if this church had not been planted on these shores.

While not in membership or achievement ranking among the great as men count greatness, it has been the leaven hidden among this sturdy people and its influence has been felt by all who have here dwelt. For twenty if not thirty years it was the only church organization on this half of the island and upon its altars glowed the continual fires of devotion and instruction, while at times these fires have kindled in revival power and men and women have bowed the heart and yielded the will to the Savior of men.

This church has also stood as an illustration of the beneficent work of our Maine Missionary Society. Since the close of its first pastorate its ministers in facing the needs of this scattered flock have been encouraged and aided almost continuously through the fostering care of this society.

As the years have passed the field of labor has narrowed somewhat. The "northern district" as we find it called in the early day, has been separated from the other. The little church in Somesville became separate in 1876. Since 1847 the newest town on the island has been Tremont and the work here has been more and more confined to the northern side of S. W. Harbor and Bass Harbor.

But there is reason to feel that this narrowing of the field has been in the interest of deeper and more careful cultivation.

There has in some respects been an encouraging development in these recent years. Already nearly three years have passed in a second century of the church's history. They have been years of spiritual life and of promise, and with increased confidence we may use again the divine promise in the words of the text. "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, . . . I will set in the desert the fir-tree, the pine and the box together; that they (men) may see and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it."

NOTES.

MINISTERS.

EBENEZER EATON, 1793 (?)–1834, Probably supplied the church when others did not from 1793. Invited to become regular supply by vote of town 1801. Removed his family from Sedgwick in 1802. Ordained July 9, 1823. Returned to Sedgwick, May 1, 1836, and died there June 1, 1841. Hancock County Deeds show that January 3, 1812, Mr. Eaton purchased 270 acres of land including Clark's Point from George William Erving of Boston in consideration of the sum of \$70. Mr. Erving was at that time owner of the Bernard grant. The 20 acres which Mr. Eaton sold Mr. Strickland though adjoining his larger purchase on the north was obtained by him through a different purchase. Mr. Eaton's house was on the hill near where Capt. Jacob S. Mayo's house stands. Mr. Eaton must have been preaching before this church was organized as we find in the town records of Deer Isle that in March town meeting of 1788 and also of 1789 it was voted to try to obtain the services of Mr. Ebenezer Eaton to assist Rev. Mr. Powers through the following winters.

GEORGE BROWN, associate with Mr. Eaton, 1831–1832, died at Hudson, Mass., Sept. 24, 1884.

MICAH W. STRICKLAND, 1834–1841. Ordained and installed pastor July 16, 1834. Died at Prentissvale, Pa., Feb. 13, 1884.

CHARLES M. BROWN, Acting Pastor 1842–1850. Resided at Southwest Harbor till his death, which occurred at Deer Isle, Oct. 29, 1871.

DANA CLOYES, 1850–1851.

SAMUEL BOWKER, Acting Pastor 1851–1855. Died at Reading, Mass., Sept. 16, 1891.

ALBERT B. HOUSTON, 1857–1858.

R. B. SNOWDEN, 1858–1859.

JOHN W. PIERCE, Acting Pastor, 1859–1864. Died at Highgate, Vt., March 2, 1872.

DAVID S. HIBBARD, Acting Pastor, 1866-1868. Resident in East Sumner.

CHARLES MERRILL, at Southwest Harbor; BURKE F. LEAVITT at Somesville, students for summer 1869.

HENRY M. PERKINS, student at Southwest Harbor, 1871.

ALEXANDER R. PLUMER, at Somesville '71-'72.

HENRY M. PERKINS, 1872-1874. Ordained Pastor at Southwest Harbor, Aug 14, 1872. Pastor in Derby, Vt.

ALEXANDER R. PLUMER, 1875-1878. Supplied both Somesville and Tremont. Church formed in Somesville, Dec. 21, 1876. Resident in Tremont.

JOSIAH P. STINCHFIELD, 1878.

AMOS REDLON, 1878-1879. Pastor at Industry, (Allen's Mills).

ALBERT N. JONES, 1879-1882. Resident in Turner. Supplied both churches. Mr. Jones was last minister to serve both churches.

TIMOTHY LYMAN, 1883. Died at Southwest Harbor, March 18, 1883, soon after beginning work.

AMOS REDLON, 1884-1889. Pastor at Industry.

EDWIN A. HARLOW, State Missionary, 3 months, 1889. Pastor in Robbinston.

THOMAS J. LEWIS, 1889-1891. Ordained Pastor, Dec. 5, 1889. Pastor in East Andover, N. H.

EDWY S. IRELAND, 1891-1892. Ordained, Dec. 2, 1891.

JOHN ELLIOTT BOWMAN, 1893-1895. Ordained in Park St. Church, Boston, Feb. 14, 1895.

DEACONS.

GEORGE FREEMAN, chosen——, died April 18, 1844.

BENJAMIN ATHERTON, JR., chosen Aug. 9, 1834. Dismissed to church in Bluehill, Sept., 23, 1866.

ISAAC GOTT, chosen Aug. 9, 1845, died——1866.

OLIVER HIGGINS, chosen——, died Feb. 1870.

DAVID KING, chosen June 23, 1866, died Aug. 11, 1880.

THOMAS CLARK, chosen Jan. 15, 1876. Dismissed to South Church, Augusta, May 14, 1890.

WILLIAM T. HOLMES, chosen about 1868.

EDWIN L. HIGGINS, chosen Oct. 15, 1890.

I find no record of when George Freeman or any earlier deacon was chosen. When Benjamin Atherton, Jr., was chosen deacon the record

reads: "Voted to add one to the number of deacons in this church." It would seem that there might have been already more than one deacon, but there is no other record to indicate the fact.

CLERKS.

JAMES RICHARDSON, chosen Sept. 17, 1794, died Dec. 12, 1807.

DAVIS WASGATT, chosen June 13, 1816. Served three months.

KENDALL KITTREDGE, chosen Sept. 23, 1829, died Dec. 4, 1857. The records show that Dr. Kittredge acted as clerk from Sept. 27, 1816.

BENJAMIN GILLEY, chosen Assistant Sept. 23, 1829.

THOMAS CLARK, 1878—1887.

MARY A. CARROLL, chosen May 1, 1889.

ISABELLE C. CLARK, chosen Assistant Aug. 12, 1889.

Previous to 1878 all ministers (except Mr. Pierce) acting as Pastors for any length of time also acted as clerks, a custom which tended to make the records defective whenever there was a change or interruption in the pastoral office.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

The two earliest meeting houses were provided for by the vote of March 4, 1800. In accordance with this vote the northern one was located at Pretty Marsh, and the southern on the south side of S. W. Harbor almost directly back of the Union meeting house now standing and the burying ground in its rear. Both these houses are mentioned first in church records as used in the summer of 1802.

The present meeting house on the southern side of S. W. Harbor was erected about 1840.

The meeting house in Somesville was erected about 1852.

The meeting house on the northern side of S. W. Harbor was dedicated Sept. 9, 1885, and that at Bass Harbor, Sept. 11, 1890.

Besides meetings held at private houses in different parts of the town, we find mention of different school houses or places where the meetings were probably held in school houses as there is no mention of private houses. I give the year when some are first mentioned (1824,) Pretty Marsh school house; (1825,) Duck Cove; (1825,) Goose Cove; (1825,) School house "Above the hills"; (1826,) "Between the hills"; (1828,)

Gott's Island; (1833,) Seal Cove; (1833,) Norwood's Cove also Norwood's creek; (1836,) School house on Beech Hill; (1839,) South Norwood's Cove school house, same called later, (1847,) New school house at Norwood's Cove; (1848,) Freeman's school house; (1852,) White school house, (This may refer to the house on the south side of the harbor); (1853,) School house near J. R. Freeman's; School houses at Bass Harbor and Sandy Point are also referred to in recent years. (1854,) we find in church records first reference to Tremont also first use of name Somesville, and to the meeting house at Somesville, also to the meeting of the Hancock Conference on the Island (at Somesville.)

MEMBERSHIP.

It would seem appropriate that these notes should contain a list of members of the church. This is omitted for several reasons. The compiler questions whether he has the authority to attempt to make such a list. He certainly lacks time to make it what it ought to be. Whenever a church manual shall be published, such a list will be a most important part of such a publication. In the meantime under the labors of the present efficient church clerk, this list is being completed in many items and is constantly becoming more perfect.

The Centennial of the church was observed Oct. 17, 1892, by a service at S. W. Harbor, with addresses by Rev. E. S. Ireland, Rev. A. Redlon, Capt. Lewis Freeman, Mr. E. E. Babson of Somesville, Capt. J. S. Mayo and Dea. H. H. Clark of the Baptist Church.

This pamphlet is the result of a desire on the part of the people that some one should give more attention to the earlier history of the church.

Rev. John Elliot Bowman is the present Pastor (1895) of the church, and Miss Mary A. Carroll, (P. O., S. W. Harbor,) clerk.

EXTRACTS FROM TOWN RECORDS OF MT. DESERT,

FURNISHED BY COURTESY OF E. M. HAMOR, ESQ., OF EDEN.

 APRIL 1, 1793.

Voted, that the town send to the westward for a minister on probation, and that Mr. Thomas Richardson and Capt. Davis Wasgatt and Capt. Ezra Young be a committee for that purpose, and that they write to the Rev. Samuel McLintock of Gloucester in New Hampshire, to provide us a candidate to preach the Gospel to us and we will make s'd candidate good for his time and expense.

SEPT. 10, 1793.

Voted, that the town try for a minister for the next season.

Voted, that the town apply to Mr. Daniel Merrill for his assistance and that he would try to get a minister for us, for three months, the first of the next summer ensuing.

Voted, that the selectmen be a committee to apply to Mr. Merrill and agree with him for the above purpose.

MARCH 7, 1795.

Voted, that the town hire a minister for three months this summer and that the selectmen be a committee to obtain a minister if possibly they can.

MAY 6, 1795.

Voted, that the selectmen draw money out of the town treasury to pay a minister if one can be had.

MARCH 4, 1796.

Voted, that the selectmen be a committee to use their endeavors to obtain a minister to preach to us three months this season if possible.

APRIL 3, 1797.

Voted, that the selectmen be empowered to use their endeavors to obtain a minister to preach four months the ensuing season.

MARCH 7, 1798.

Voted, that the selectmen procure a minister four months between the first of May and the last of November.

JAN'Y 20, 1800.

Voted, that there be a committee chosen to treat with Mr. Johnston to preach for us till after the second Sabbath in March next on condition that he will settle with us, if on further trial he likes the people, and the people like him, and not else.

Chose, James Richardson, Thomas Richardson, and Samuel Hadlock, said committee.

MARCH 4, 1800.

Voted, that there be two meeting houses built in the town, and that the southern one stand on the land formerly owned by Mr. Cockle on a ledge near where Mr. Emerson used to live and the northern one to stand half way between James Richardson's and Wm. Heath's to measure by the highway.

JUNE 26, 1800.

Chose, James Richardson, Thomas Richardson, and Samuel Hadlock, a committee to agree with Mr. James Davis to preach to us four months this season, if he thinks it may suit him to settle with us hereafter.

NOV. 3, 1800.

Chose, Ezra H. Dodge, Samuel Hadlock, and James Richardson, a committee to hire Mr. Eaton to preach the Gospel for us six months if he will give any encouragement to settle with us afterwards.

MARCH 3, 1801.

Chose, Richard Jordan, James Richardson, and James Richardson, Jr., a committee to treat with Mr. Gordon Johnston to preach for us this season.

APRIL 6, 1801.

Voted, that the town give Mr. Ebenezer Eaton a call to settle with us as our minister.

Voted, that Capt. Davis Wasgatt, Daniel Gott, and Ezra H. Dodge be a committee to treat with Mr. Eaton.

Voted, that the proceedings of the last year's committee for the northern meeting house, is approved of by the town, and that they be recorded on the town's Book, and that the proceedings of the same committee for the present year be legal, and be recorded on the town's Book, and that John Somes, Reuben Freeman, and Ezra H. Dodge be a committee for the northern meeting house for this year.

Record of the proceedings of the northern district recorded according to the above vote.

YR. 1800.

At a meeting began and held the 3d. day of May, 1800 of the inhabitants of the North District of Mt. Desert for the purpose of building a meeting house.

Chose, Ezra H. Dodge, Reuben Freeman, and John Somes a committee to measure the road from James Richardson's to Wm. Heath's, to find the centre.

Voted, that the road be measured on or before the first day of June.

Voted, that the house shall be 40 feet by 50.

Voted, that there shall be \$800.00 raised in labor and money for said building, and that labor shall be one dollar per day for a man and four shillings for oxen.

MARCH 29, 1801.

Voted, that there shall be \$300.00 raised to be laid out on the meeting house.

MAY 18, 1801.

Voted, to employ Mr. Ebenezer Eaton as a preacher of the Gospel for the town of Mt. Desert, and give him four Sabbaths to give his answer, and in the time of the four Sabbaths, he is to inform himself so far as to give an answer whether he can accept or not, to be ordained next fall.

The first of the four Sabbaths to begin the last Sabbath in May instant.

JULY 6, 1801.

At a meeting held in the southern district it was voted to raise \$300.00 in the district for building the meeting house, and Wm. Norwood, Thomas Richardson, Jr., and Samuel Hadlock were chosen a committee to carry on the meeting house in the district.

OCT. 2, 1801.

Voted, that Mr. Eaton come here to settle.

Voted, that the town give Mr. Eaton \$250.00 per year, and four Sabbaths in the year for himself.

Voted, that the town assist Mr. Eaton in moving his family.

Chose, Samuel Lopaus, Geo. Freeman and Capt. Davis Wasgatt a committee to treat with Mr. Eaton.

MARCH 1, 1803.

Voted, that the town allow John Manchester ten dollars for moving Mr. Eaton from Sedgwick to Mt. Desert.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton until the first of October next, and the committee to agree with him afterwards, without calling the town together, and that his pay be the same as it was last year.

OCTOBER 27, 1803.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton until March meeting next and that he shall have four dollars and no more per day.

MARCH 6, 1804.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton the ensuing year, or till we can obtain a candidate on trial.

Voted, to raise \$250.00 for support of the Gospel.

MARCH 5, 1805.

Voted, that the town lose one-half of the time that Mr. Eaton was sick.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton till the last of November.

DECEMBER, 1805.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton this winter.

Voted, to pay him as usual.

MARCH, 1806.

Voted, to raise for support of the Gospel, \$250.00.

Chose, Ezra H. Dodge, Kendall Kittredge and Daniel Somes a committee to get a minister.

MARCH 3, 1807.

Voted, to hire Mr. Eaton the ensuing year.

Voted, that each parish have their part of the money.

Voted, to raise \$250.00 for the support of the Gospel.

Voted, to allow Mr. Eaton four Sabbaths.

APRIL, 1807.

Voted, that Mr. Eaton shall have one-half in six months, and the other half in twelve months.

MARCH, 1808.

Voted, to raise \$250.00 for the support of the Gospel the ensuing year.

MARCH 7, 1809.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton, till the money is all expended.

MARCH 2, 1810.

Voted, to raise \$175.00 for the support of the Gospel.

MARCH 5, 1811.

Voted, to raise \$150.00 for the support of the Gospel.

Chose, Benjm. Benson, Ezra H. Dodge and George Butler a committee to agree with a minister.

MAY 8, 1811.

Voted, to give Mr. Eaton four dollars per week to preach the ensuing year and to have his pay as usual.

MARCH 3, 1812.

Chose, Benjm. Benson, Samuel Hadlock and Daniel Somes a committee to settle with Mr. Ebenezer Eaton.

Voted, to give Mr. Eaton four dollars per week.

MARCH 4, 1814.

Voted, to raise \$100.00 for the support of the Gospel.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton to preach the ensuing year.

MARCH 7, 1815.

Voted, to raise \$100.00 for support of the Gospel.

Voted, that the selectmen agree with Mr. Eaton to preach the ensuing year.

APRIL 3, 1815.

Voted, to allow Mr. Eaton four dollars per week to preach, to begin the first of March.

MARCH 5, 1816.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton the ensuing year at four dollars per week.

Voted, to raise \$100.00 for the support of the Gospel.

APRIL 1, 1816.

Chose, Simeon Milliken, Ezra H. Dodge, Daniel Somes, Nathaniel Gott and Kendall Kittredge, a committee to treat with Mr. Eaton. The committee agreed with Mr. Eaton, that he should preach two-thirds of the money at four dollars a Sabbath and the other third as he should think proper.

MARCH 4, 1817.

Voted, to raise \$100.00 for support of the Gospel.

MARCH 2, 1818.

Voted, to raise \$150.00 for the support of the Gospel.

APRIL 3, 1820.

Voted, to employ Mr. Eaton to preach the ensuing year.

Chose, Kendall Kittredge and Daniel Somes a committee to treat with Mr. Eaton.

Mr. Hamor adds:

I have not the Mt. Desert record subsequent to April 3, 1820, and do not know whether or not, the town employed Mr. Eaton after that date. I think he preached in town a number of years after that time. In an old record of the town of Eden, I find the following: In the warrant for a town meeting to be holden March 7, 1798, there is this article "to see if the town will agree to engage with Mr. Ebenezer Eaton for to preach to us after the time is expired that he is now engaged for and to act thereon as shall be thought proper."

At the meeting it was voted, "that the selectmen should be a committee to agree with Mr. Eaton and report to the town accordingly." So it seems that Mr. Eaton preached *some* in the town of Eden after it was set off from Mt. Desert, which was in 1796.