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A  
BRIEF HISTORY  
OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
AT  
BEDFORD, N. Y.,  
FROM THE YEAR 1680  
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF  
THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE, AND THE SERVICES AT THE  
DEDICATION OF  
THE PRESENT EDIFICE IN THE YEAR 1872.

BY REV. P. B. HERCOY.

NEW YORK;  
PRINTED BY EDWARD O. JENKINS,  
20 NORTH WILLIAM STREET.  
1874.



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# PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

AT BEDFORD, N. Y.

THE proprietors of the tract of land, six miles square, named by the General Court of Connecticut "Bedford," after a town of the same name in Bedfordshire, England, whence the early settlers, for the most part, came in 1680, made provision for building a meeting-house on the common and supplying a minister. In all probability the gospel had been preached occasionally in this region of country, to the few families settled here, earlier than this.

In 1681 the General Court, held at Hartford, under whose jurisdiction this province then belonged, instructed the Committee then residing at Stamford, who had been appointed to lay out a plantation in this part of the country then called the hop ground, to take care that there should be a suitable lot laid out for the minister of the place—a lot for the minister forever. In the town records we find the following minute: "22d March, 1680. The proprietors agree that vot the committee had done in laying out ye town plot; and the house-lots shall stand, and the place they reserved for the town common; and the town Lot to be as they laid it out and the meeting house shall be set upon the common so layed out, namly the rock called Bates his Hill." Mr. Bolton, in his history of Westchester County, says the first religious society organized in Bedford in 1680, was Congregational, at that time the established religion of the colony of Connecticut.

This must have been a kind of church and state affair, for the town at regular meetings transacted all the business of a religious nature. The first minister of whom we have any knowledge, who preached in Bedford, to then only about eleven inhabitants beside the Indians, was the Rev Peter Pruddon, who in 1675 the General Court of Connecticut ordered to resume his settlement in Rye. It would appear that he came from Rye, where he had formerly preached for some time.

In the town records we have this minute: "Dec. 2d 1681. They agree to give Mr. priddon, of Gemeco,\* a call to be a minister in this place. Joseph Theale the chief military officer of the train band of Bedford is chosen to goe to Mr. priddon to declare their mind in order to his coming among them as above; and Abra. Ambler who was appointed by the Court at Hartford to grant warrants to officers e witnesses, and to join persons in marriage, is desired to write to Mr. priddon in their name and behalf:" Mr. Pruddon accepted their invitation and came and preached for them some time. We have no further knowledge of his labors. Where he lived subsequently and where he died we know not. Jan. 28th, 1688, the Rev. Thomas Denham was called and settled in Bedford, and the town ordered that £20 be raised for his salary. He was son of John Denham, deacon, and one of the first purchasers of Dartmouth: preached at Sheepscott in Massachusetts colony (now in Maine), and suffered great losses in the destruction of that settlement in 1675 during King Philip's war. He came to Rye in 1677 and remained till 1684. Says a historian, "he was advanced in life when he came and was held in great respect by the people here who gave him proprietary rights, which descended to his son Isaac who became one of the principal men of the place. Mr. Denham had preached a long time in the town of Rye previous to his settlement here." This was evidently his last settlement, for it is reported he died in Bedford after a few months' labor, aged 67. His will is said to be on record in the Court House at White Plains, and his grave is on the hillside in our old graveyard in the village.

During the next eight or ten years the people seemed to be supplied with the labors of intelligent laymen in carrying on the Sabbath and conducting their religious services.

In 1689 the town agreed by vote "in case Mr. Abraham Ambler, Sen., will come up and carry on the Sabbath as God shall enable him, we will give him the sum of £20 a year as long as he shall perform the work among us." This vote was afterwards somewhat modified, for Oct. 15th, 1689, we have this minute: "At a town meeting, the town doth agree to build Mr. Abraham Ambler, Senor, a frame fortye foots long e twenty two foots wide and to set it up fit for elabording e shingling and to rais it up by the last of March to come after the deate hereof,

\* This refers to Jamaica, L. I.

e the house above mentioned is to be teen foots e a half between ioynts and the frame above mentioned is to be set up upon the consideration that Mr. Abraham Ambler, Senor will com up as often as he can conveniently to cary on the Lord's day amongst us one year yt he may settle with us." May 14th, 1690, seven months after the former vote, at another town meeting we have the following miunte: "The town doth by vote chuse Zachariah Roberts for to cary on the Sabbath day whill they can be other ways provided."

Jennewary, 1694, we have this vote: "The town by vote doth agree that as much land e medow as can be spaired e not predigious to highways yt lyeth one the norwest sid of whipping-post brook shall be kept for a ministar e to be disposed to now man els but a minister."

October 16th, 1694, the town agreed to buy a house and lot of John Ambler for a parsonage, "provided his price do not exceed £35." In all probability the spot on which the Presbyterian church (built in 1872) now stands is a part of this original purchase.

"February 21st, 1694-5. The town by vote doth chois John Holmes, Sen., Zachariah Roberts, John Wascott e Daniell Jones to cary on the Sabbath day according to the best of theyr deseresion whill they ear other ways provided. 2ndly. The town doth by vote mack choice of Cornelus Selly to cary on the Lord's day along with ye others chosen e yt in Daniell Jones roome.

March 21st, 1698. The inhabitance of the town of Bedford by a maiger note doth order e agree yt. every acre of land e meadow within the bounds of Bedford that is alooted unto pertickler parsons; both emproved e not emproved; that is to say, what every man doth possess for their one; that man or parson shall pay three pence an acre yearly for evry acre towards the maintaining of a minister amongst us.

2nly. The town by a maigor note doth order that this above said note shall be presented unto the Jenarall Court at Herford, that it may be established as a law for the town of Bedford." Their supplies all seemed to leave them, and "ienuary 9th, 1698-9: the town by a maigor note doth order that ther shall be a request made to the ministars of the county to inquire for us, e to acquaint us where we may be likely to ataine to a min-

istar and for his incuredgment we doe agre upon serious consideration for his incuredgment to give him a house loote fourty acres of land e medow; e thurty pounds a yer in curant provision pay. February 8th, 1698-9. The town by a maiger vote doth agree to improve the town loote this year in a town way towards the maintainance of a ministar e to mack theyer fence, now belonging unto ye house loote e every inhabitant to mack theyer equal sharis up with good sofsiant fine rail fence as it shall be layed out by ye towns men e it is to pass the vewars;— e the town dos agree to plow, plant e tend the loote in a way of a town rate, e if any refuse or nedgleekt to dew theyr shair of fence up by the fifteenth of march next to come shall pay four shillings a rood to the town men as they may have it dun up as above said.

November 14th 1699. The town by a maiger vote doth grant yt. Mr Copp shall have the use of the ye towns land e medow in ye feild this next year without they want it for a ministar."

Their éfforts for a minister were successful, for before the close of the year we find these records :

desember; 26th 1699: The town by a maigor vote doth agre to give unto Mr Joseph Morgan upon his comming to carry on ye ministry amongst us, senerall partieklars as followeth for his settlement :

1ly to give him all yt rit of land e medow which the Town bought of Mr Ambler e of his son John upon the condishions of his comming and macking his abood three years with us.

2nly To build him a hous two story high, twenty seven foot long e twenty on foots wid with a leantu e a chambar chimble e the condishans that if Mr Morgan liveth e dyeth with us the house shall be his on e his ayres for euer, e otherwise if Mr Morgan see cause upon any acount to leave us, he shall pay to the town the ually of the chardg yt by an acount taken there of shall be giuen.

3ly To giue him for maintainance for the first year forty pounds in good currant prouision paye and plant and mannure four acres of Land.

4ly To maniage for years following and till ten acres of Land for winter grain—the produce of ye same for him yerly—&

twenty pounds in good currant prouission paye and more hereafter as god shall inable us if he stands in need thereof—two pounds of the same to be Delivered at Stamford or horse neck, if he Desires it.

5ly To cut and cart to his Dore all his fire wood from yeare to yeare.

6ly to transport him and his famely to bedford or to be at ye charg theire of.

Jenen 1st. The town by a magor note ses caus to repeall part of the first and second note passed desember 26th, '99, e to resarne the hous e the whole homestead to themselves, except Mr. Joseph Morgan liueth & dyeth with us.

2ly The town by a maiger note doth chuse e mack chois of Mr. John Copp, Stephen Clason, John Miller, iuner, Richard Wascott, David Mead for theire commitie, for to agree with Mr. Joseph Morgan for his settlement at Bedford according to the acts of the town, e to tack the caire of ye whole manigment for his maintinance in case he commeth to dwell with us.

Joseph Morgan was the grandson of James Morgan, who settled in Conn., 1647, with the first settlers. He was the son of Joseph Morgan, born in New London, Nov. 6, 1672, and was graduated at Yale College: During the first year of his settlement, he was ordained by the ministers of Fairfield county, and preached a sermon according to the custom of that time. June 12, 1700, he was indicted under the act of 1693 for settling a ministry, but was acquitted. Two years after, 1702, he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, as one of the first class of graduates of Yale. When he commenced preaching—contrary to the practice of the times, he used notes, but some of his brethren protested against it so strongly, that he quickly abandoned them: Having ministered at Bedford, and during part of the time in the neighboring town of East Chester for nearly four years, he removed to Greenwich, Conn., and preached there till 1708: "It seems that in 1705, to encourage and sustain Mr. Morgan, the right had been granted to him to build a mill at the mouth of Coscob River, now known as Davis's Mill. He built the mill and went to live near it, that he might manage it in person, and see that his *people's grists* were *well ground*. The congregation, after a while, thought his zeal in this matter

was rather greater than they had bargained for, especially as his position down at the mill made him inaccessible to the people, and rendered his visits among them angel-like, 'few and far between.' Finding remonstrance, however, vain, they first referred the case to the neighboring ministers, to say what should be done. This showed forbearance on their part. Meanwhile, the good brother, as he had to take his salary, according to the custom of those early times, in grain, and a short allowance at that, thought it wise to stick to his mill. Whereupon the *Horseneck* people, never wanting in spirit when spirit was called for, grew impatient. They sent their committee, Ebenezer Mead, Joshua Knapp, and Caleb Knapp; chief men among them, to press the question to an immediate decision, whether Mr. Morgan would quit personally tending his mill (adding this, perhaps, to all their other objections, that a white dress was not in character for a Congregational minister), and attend to the parish. If he would not, they were to strike off his official head at a blow, and provide a successor. Now the inventions of our day are wonderful, especially in the line of sharp-cutting machines, mowers, reapers, etc.; but our congregations, I will venture to say, have invented no instrument for disposing of refractory ministers that can go ahead of this ecclesiastical guillotine of 1708. Matters were now brought at once to an issue. Mr. Morgan decided to abide by his mill, and the committee decided to consider the pulpit vacant and provide a successor." He left there and settled in Freehold, N. J., 1709. In September, 1728, complaints were made against him to the Synod that he practised astrology, countenanced promiscuous dancing, and transgressed in drink. But these complaints were dismissed for want of proof. He left Freehold and went to Hopewell and Maidenhead. Here he was again charged with intemperance, and was suspended from the ministry; but he was finally restored through the kindness of some of his brethren. He published many of his sermons and treatises on other topics. He preached a funeral sermon on the death of his son Joseph, who was graduated at Yale in 1723, and died one year after. His text, Ps. cxxxvii. 1, and Job x. 2. Nothing is heard of Mr. Morgan after 1740. His name disappears from the minutes of Synod. In 1702-3, the people called the Rev. John Jones, and here we have the first regular

call on the part of the people to a minister, and his reply in his own words, which have come down to us as a precious relic of nearly two hundred years ago :

Desember 7th, 1702, the town by a unanimitie vote doth Mr. John Jones thanks for his labors with us the day past in ye work of ye ministry, and if ye sd Mr. Jones according to our unlighted desires continueth in ye work aforesd three months among us, then we, ye sd town will pay him ye sum of teen pounds in money or equivalent to money upon ye account of our furdur acquaintance, he with us & we with him in order to settle him, ye said Mr. Jones with us, if we & he agree at ye three months end. Mr. Jones, his answer—

To my christian friends and neighbors, the inhabitants of ye town of Bedford, after dew salutations to you premised; wishing grace mareye and peace from God ye Father & from ye lord Jesus Christ, may be multiplyed towards you & yours, these lines are to intermate yt yours I received from ye hands of your worthy messengers Mr Roberts, justice of ye peace, Mr Miller and Mr John Holmes.

I unfainedly bless God and thank you for your grateful ex-ceptance of my labors in ye ministry among you yesterday and do desire yt you and I may be more and more faithful in eury good work to ye glory of His name and our mutuall edification and comfort, and I do here furdur intermate yt I have no objection to make to your proposalls for my incouragement in ye work of Christ among you, but except them humbly and thankfully, and shall by ye Lord's help without whome I can dew nothing, ingadge in your seruice, yt God as I appryhend calls me unto for a quarter of a year among yourselves, begging your prayers that I may grow in gifts and grace and yt my poor labors may be blessed for ye promoting of ye spirituall and eternall wellfair of your precious and emortal souls which will be to me great joy and comfort which is all in haste, from your friend and servant, for Christ's sake.

JOHN JONES, from my study  
Bedford Desember 7th, 1702.

A true copy received from Mr. Jones which I received and entered.

ZACHARIAH ROBERTS

*Clark*

After the three months had expired, it seems that the people desired to continue Mr. Jones as their minister, as we learn from the following recorded correspondence :

.Feb. 15th, 1702-3. the town by a unanimous vote doth agree to give unto Mr John Jones minister of ye gospell, all yt right of land and meadow with ye house and home loot which ye town bought of Mr. Ambler upon ye account yt sd. Mr Jones settle with us in Bedford and carryeth on ye work of ye ministry among us,—and forty pouds a year for his maintenance in speshe as followeth—that is to say—winter wheat at  $\frac{1}{2}$ s. 6d pr bushell, ry 3s. pr bushell, flax 6d. pr pound, beef one penny half-penny pr pound, pork two pence half-penny pr. pound. And in case Mr John Jones continueth with us until he be settled and ordained in gospell order amongst us, then ye above sd house, land & medow to be his owne for him & his forever ; as witness our hands thus underwritten. Zachariah Roberts, Clark John Miller, John Holmes sen'r, Cornelius Seely, John Holmes, Jr., Richard Holmes, Richard Wescott, Nathan Clark, Cornelius Seely Junr., Jonathan Holmes, David Miller, John Wescott, David Holmes, Zachariah Roberts Junr., Joseph Huut, Jno. Dibbell, Thomas Howard, Joseph Palmer.

REV JOHN JONES' REPLY

TO THE INHABITANTS OF BEDFORD.

*My good Friends.*

These are in answer to your unanimous motion, made unto me respecting the work of the ministry to be carried on in your place ; that having endeavoured at Due consideration of the motion I apprehend encouridgment on the one hand And Discouridgment on the other ; encouridging To me Are my own Affection. Altho unworthy According to my poor capacity in that way to be serving the interest of my Dearest Lord and Master. And if I may Be profitable to the eternall good of Precious and Immortall Soules, with which is to Be Added in Relation to your Place, your unanimous Agreement, And good Affection manifested During my Late Short Abode with you. And your uneversal Desires of my further Improvement in that Sacred Imployment with you ; Discouridging to me is the uncertain face of things with Respect to the govern-



over the sea a man after His own heart, to break unto them the Bread of Life.

*May 3d, 1720.*—Rev. William Tennent was invited here to preach the gospel. It is not certain whether he was ever regularly installed—probably not, as he united first with the Presbytery of Philadelphia after he left here—for he remained here only a short time. The church, in all probability, belonged at this time to the Presbytery of Long Island, which numbered but two or three ministers, and it was not convenient then as now to hold a meeting of Presbytery. Mr. Tennent came from Ireland, and was first settled in East Chester, New York. From there he came to Bedford, and from Bedford, after a little more than a year's labor, he went to Bensalem and Smithfield churches, in Pennsylvania. From there he accepted a call to Neshaminy, 1726, where a rich man, by the name of Logan, a relative of his, gave him fifty acres of land, on the Neshaminy Creek, on which to locate and carry on a school, which he had already commenced. Here he built a small house, about twenty feet square, mostly of logs, rudely shaped, cut out of the woods from the very spot where the house was erected; and being skilled in the Latin language, so as to speak and write it almost as well as his mother tongue, he continued his school, and educated some of the first and most eminent ministers that ever adorned the American pulpit. This was called the Log College, out of contempt, by its enemies. Every vestige of it has long since passed away, but this was the germ whence sprung Princeton College, with all its vast influence and renown, giving character in a great measure to the intelligence and usefulness of the learned men in this country. Mr. Tennent continued till the close of life in Neshaminy, where he died May 6th, 1746, aged seventy-three years.

While Mr. Tennent was settled in Bedford, through the munificence and liberality of the people, he became possessor of some land, which his son Gilbert, in his last will and testament, gave to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Society of Bedford; for on the records of the town we find the following minute:

“May 16: 1749. Gilbert Tennent of Philadelphia in the Colony of Pennsylvania, Gentlemen; Son of and heir at law unto Rev. William Tennent formerly of Bedford in Westchester

County in the Colony of New York, but lately of Neshamina in the Colony of Pensilvania, Deceased, for the promoting and supporting of the gospel of Jesus Christ according and under the Presbyterian Discipline in the above said Bedford—gave to John Holmes, John Miller and Zebediah Mills, trustees, and their successors, several pieces of land, formerly possessed by his Reverend Father, for the use and support of the ministry. From time to time the Trustees have sold the land belonging to the parsonage, which formerly consisted of a large Traet, for the more profitable use of the minister, until there is not more than eight or ten acres left at the present date, May 27, 1874.”

It is not certain who preached the gospel in Bedford to the Presbyterian Church, after Mr. Tennent left them, in 1721, until 1746. In 1746, the Rev. Robert Sturgeon is represented by Mr. Bolton, in his “History of Westchester County,” as being the minister in Bedford. He was a native of Scotland. He left his native land under some embarrassment, and came to New England, and was licensed by a council, greatly to the regret of Cotton Mather, by reason of his conduct here and at home. He is said, in President Stile’s Papers, to have been settled in Bedford, N. Y., for twelve years. But here seems a discrepancy in the history of those times, for the Presbytery of New Brunswick installed here, in 1743, the Rev. Samuel Sacket. This would hardly seem probable, if Mr. Sturgeon still sustained any relation to the people ; but, says Mr. Webster, the historian, when so many other ties were sundered rudely, even this unbrotherly act may have been committed. Mr. Sturgeon was present, in 1745, at the first meeting of the Synod of New York, as a member of the New York Presbytery. His name is not mentioned after 1750 ; and where he finally settled and died, we have not the means on hand of knowing.

*October 12th, 1743.*—Rev. Samuel Sacket, in all probability the son of Richard Sacket, one of the early ministers in Greenwich for eleven years, was installed the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Bedford, in all probability by the Presbytery of New Brunswick. He acted also as a sort of missionary in this part of the country, and in 1747 Crumpond obtained his services for half of his time, Bedford being weakened by the Separates. He supplied Salem also, and Peekskill. In December, 1749, he was

released from his labors in Crumpond, now Yorktown, and gave the whole of his time to Bedford, where there had been quite a revival of religion, and the divisions and alienations in a measure healed. He was what in our day would be called a new-school man, and very ultra in many of his measures—to such an extent that the Presbytery of New York took cognizance of them, and disapproved of their use; and he sought connection with the Presbytery of New Brunswick, where he found more congenial spirits. He resigned the care of the church in Bedford April 4th, 1753, the affections of the people being alienated from him after ten years of pastoral labor. Many of the people refused to contribute to his support, because he refused to baptize their children; but the Presbytery assured the people that they were bound to pay him. He left here and settled at once over the Church of Hanover, in Cortland Manor. He was dismissed from here April 1st, 1760, and the next year was installed again in Crumpond. The church missionary of Hanover immediately wrote to England that the new light preacher had left them. Mr. Sacket had a great deal of trouble with his brethren in the Presbytery. He differed widely with them in both the doctrines and government of the Church. He preached for twenty years in Yorktown, or Crumpond, and finally died there June 5th, 1784. His tomb in the cemetery bears record that he was judicious, faithful, laborious, and successful in his ministry.

On the resignation of Mr. Sacket, 1753, the Church of Bedford had leave of the Suffolk Presbytery to go to the Congregational Association for a candidate, and there they presented the name of Eliphalet Ball as their choice. The Presbytery met at Bedford, Dec. 31st, 1753, and examined their candidate, appointed pieces of trial, and heard him preach from Rom. iii. 28, on Justification. When their former minister came into Presbytery, knowing his peculiar views, the examination of Mr. Ball was resumed for his sake. He was installed on the 2d of January, 1754; Mr. Silliman prayed; Joseph Parke preached from Tim. iv. 6; Ebenezer Prime, of Huntington, Long Island, presided; Samuel Sacket, the former minister, gave the right hand of fellowship; Rev. Mr. Dagget, of Smithtown, Long Island, exhorted the people. Mr. Ball was arraigned before the Presbytery with being too free with his neighbors' fowls when they came into

his yard, with impudent levity and unguarded airiness of deportment, with setting aside the elders and managing the church contrary to the Presbyterian mode. He was acquitted before the Presbytery, but admonished to be cautious as to his natural turn of mind, and more particular as to the formula suitable for baptism. But he had more or less difficulty with his session. He dismissed two elders, and created quite a division and difficulty in the church. He was finally dismissed from the church, December 21st, 1768, having spent fourteen years as pastor of this church. He died in Ballston, 1797. After one year of vacancy, December 13th, 1769, the Rev. Samuel Mills was installed pastor of Bedford Church, and remained till May 18th, 1786, when the Presbytery of Dutchess County met, and dissolved the relation between him and the church, and the same day installed the Rev. John Davenport as pastor of the church. But Mr. Mills, though nominally pastor of the church from 1769 to 1786, was absent from the charge for several years, having been driven from Bedford by the distressing circumstances attending the war. In the meantime, their former pastor, Rev. Eliphalet Ball, returned, and assumed the supply and charge of the church, and remained in this connection till 1784, when he was dismissed. Mr. Ball having spent four years at Amity, in Woodbridge, Conn., he removed to Saratoga County, New York, 1788, taking with him a part of the Bedford congregation. The settlement for a long time was called Ball Town, now Ballston.

Mr. Ball was the stated supply of this church in the stormy times of the American Revolution, when the people were struggling for their independence. When the old church, built in 1680, was burned to the ground, having stood an hundred years, and having proved amiable to the hearts of the people of God for a century, they stood silently by and saw it reduced to ashes by the British army under Col. Carlton. An old veteran still lingering among us, almost ninety years old, remembers having heard her mother say she saw the smoke of the old church rising to heaven, as sweet and holy incense, as the timbers yielded to the devouring element, though living a mile and a half distant. Mr. Ball saw his own house (the parsonage), his church and the entire village reduced to ashes by the British troops; but he lived to see a new house of worship built on a more commanding

spot, and no doubt on a larger scale, so that the latter house exceeded the former in its external proportions, if not in the internal manifestations of the spirit of God. We have reason to believe that the records of the church kept in the parsonage were destroyed with it, as we have no records of the church preserved till after peace was declared.

The elders of the church, when the second temple of worship was built, were Ebenezer Miller, Jacob Smith, Moses St. John, and soon after were added Eli Tyler, Justus Harris, Peter Fleming, Stephen Benedict and Joseph Owen.

Rev. Samuel Mills, who was nominally the pastor of the church, though not present continually from 1769 to 1786, was the son of Rev. Zedediah Mills, of Ripton. He was graduated at Yale College in 1765. In 1782 he was preaching at Patter-son (then Fredericksburg), and there he continued till 1789, when he joined the Anabaptists and was dismissed from connection with the Presbytery. He died in 1815.

In 1783 Capt. Lewis M. Donald gave to the Presbyterian Society the land on which the second house of worship was built. Here is the deed of gift as recorded in the town records :

“To all christian People to whom these presents shall come Greeting. Know ye that I Lewis M. Donald, formerly of Bedford in Westchester Co. state of New York but now a Resident of Long Island, for certain causes me thereunto moving & out of Love & Affection for the Encouragement of Virtue and the propigation of the gospel, do hereby Bequeath & give unto the Presbyterian Society of Bedford in county & State abovesaid & to their Heirs & Successors forever, as long as they shall Remain a Society and as long as they shall stand in Want of a House of Public Worship or a Spot of Ground to Erect a House of Worship thereon, one half acre of Land, Situate & Lying & being in the Township of Bedford in the County & State aforesaid, Bounded (as follows. Lying on an Eminence above the spot of ground where the former meeting House stood) Easterly by the Road that Runs from the Town to Cantito, Westerly, North-erly and Southerly by my own Land which land was purchased of John Eliot, Reference being had to the original conveyance to have & to hold the above Bequeathed & given Spot of Land with all & singular the rights and privileges thereunto belong-  
ing—to the above mentioned Society, to their Heirs & Succes-

sors, agreeable to the above mentioned Terms and Conditions, and also I the said Lewis M Donald, do for myself, my Heirs and assigns, Covenant with the said Society, their Heirs & successors, that at and untill the Ensealing of these presents, I am well siezed of the Premesis as a good indefeasable Estate in fee simple and have good Right to Dispose of the same in manner & form above written, & the same is free of all Incumbrance whatsoever, and furthermore I the said Lewis M Donald, do by these presents bind myself & my Heirs to Warrant & Defend to the above Covenanted premises to the said Society, their Heirs & successors against all claims and Demands Whatsoever, in Testimony & confirmation of which I have hereunto set my Hand & seal this the sixth Day of August in the year of our Lord christ one thousand seven hundred and Eighty & three and in the Seventh year of our Independence.

LEWIS M DONALD.   \*\*  
                                  \* \*  
                                  \*\*

in the presence of

STEPHEN CORNWELL  
MARY CORNWELL."

On the back of this old document we have this record :

" Be it Remembered that on the 14th Day of June 1792, personally appeared before me, Ebenezer Lockwood Esquire, first Judge of the Court of Common pleas in & for the County of Westchester, the within named Lewis M Donald the granter to the within deed of gift and acknowledged that he signed & sealed & Delivered the same as his free & Voluntary act & Deed and having Examined the same and finding no material mistake, Erasure or Interlineation Do allow the same to be recorded.  
EBEN LOCKWOOD"

The records of the town inform us that the town meetings of 1784 and 5 were held in the meeting-house. The judges of the court of common pleas and the supervisors of the county held their meetings May 9th, 1786, in the Presbyterian meeting-house in Bedford, so that we have conclusive proof that this second house of worship was built where it now stands, but which has been vacated by the people for one larger and more commodious, built on the ground owned by the church next to the parsonage.

In 1785 the legislature of the State of New York incorporated the Presbyterian Society, to be known by the name of the Trustees for the Presbyterian Church and Congregation of Bedford, to be governed in discipline and worship according to the Directory of the now established Church of Scotland. The first trustees elected were Zebediah Mills, Israel Lyon and Joseph Owen. These were the men, no doubt, who were prominent in erecting the church at that time. Joseph Holmes and Jacob Smith were appointed by the legislature to call a meeting for the election of these officers. Immediately after the building of the church in 1789, and the incorporation of the church and society had been completed, and the revolutionary war had closed, the session commenced the purification of the church, and made provisions for greater efficiency in the work of the church. During the revolution, as might have been expected and imagined, the church had become worldly and loose in doctrine and outward deportment, if not in a great measure corrupt, and hence the efforts set on foot by some of the best and most spiritual men to correct and reform the character. Men were disciplined for the neglect of public worship, for the absenting of themselves from the ordinances of the Lord's Supper,—for the neglect of family prayer, for circulating evil reports and public scandal, and for a too free use of intoxicating liquor. The people now resolved to have the sacrament of the Lord's Supper administered quarterly and regularly. Previous to this there had been no regularity, and the ordinance was very seldom observed. They resolved now to take quarterly collections for the poor of the church. Christian liberality was in its infancy. It had just begun to develop itself, though nothing was done as yet for the perishing heathen. The seed of benevolence began to germinate as the means of the people increased.

The people now resolved to hold prayer-meetings on the first Wednesday in every month at the different houses, and the member at whose house the meeting was held should lead the meeting and make the first prayer. This was an admirable arrangement and might be practised profitably by their successors in the church at the present day. A Confession of Faith and Covenant was drawn up and adopted to be used in the future admission of members to the church, and that persons shall not be admitted into the church until they have been pre-

viously propounded two Sabbaths preceding the communion, and that on communion days at the table of the Lord the elements of bread and wine shall not be handed round from member to member as has been hitherto practiced, but that each of the communicants shall receive the elements at the hands of the pastor or deacons, and that all baptized persons should be considered under the watch and care of the church, and should be subjects of discipline according to the rules of Jesus Christ, and none but those sound in the faith and of visible holiness shall be admitted to the special ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and no transient person shall enjoy occasional communion with the church a term exceeding six months without producing a certificate of his regular standing in some church of Christ, or giving a satisfactory reason to the church of his omission to do so. These regulations and improvements in the church, and numerous cases of discipline, showed that there were many here at this early day who loved the purity of the church, and were anxious for its greater power and efficiency for good in the world.

They took place under the ministry of Rev. John Davenport, who was called here May 18th, 1786. Mr. Davenport was born in Philippi, New Jersey, August 11th, 1752. He was graduated at the college of New Jersey in 1769; studied theology partly under Dr. Bellamy and partly under Dr. Buell of East Hampton, Long Island. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Long Island and served the congregation of Southhold as stated supply for two years. From Southhold he came to Bedford and settled May 18th, 1786, and remained here a faithful and godly minister for five years. Leaving here he was called to Deerfield, New Jersey, and settled there August 12th, 1795. He remained there ten years and was dismissed on the account of failing health. He finally became a home missionary in Western New York, and died in Lysander, July 13th, 1821, an amiable and excellent man.

In June, 1792, Rev. Isaac Foster was settled here, and remained not more than two years. We are in possession of the original subscription list, with the amount promised by each subscriber for the support of Mr. Foster for one year, commencing March 22d, 1792, in £. s. d. And here we find the names of the ancestors of families still residing in Bedford.

The Millers, Mills, Holmes, Clarks, Lyons, Benedicts, French, Ambler, etc. Mr. Foster remained probably two years, and left, as tradition reports, with his name and that of his wife in bad repute. But we know nothing of the place whence he came, or the place whither he went, or where he died. Then came a most excellent man, the Rev. Samuel Blatchford, who preached here for some time as stated supply, refusing to settle permanently. He was an Englishman, and was invited here by a committee appointed by the church, from Topsham, England, to settle here with the people in Bedford. He resigned his charge in Topsham, and sailed at once for this country. The captain of the vessel on which he sailed was present and heard his farewell sermon in Topsham, and so deeply was he affected by it, that he immediately offered to take him and his family at a greatly reduced price, that he might have the benefit of his instructions during the passage, though previous to that the price talked of was so much beyond Mr. Blatchford's means, that he almost regretted having projected the enterprise. He left his native shores on the 19th of June, 1795, and arrived within the Hook at New York on the first of August. Without any unnecessary delay he made his way to Bedford, the anticipated field of his labors, but several adverse circumstances occurred in connection with his arrival here which occasioned his disappointment and even despondency. The most mortifying thing of all was, that one of the individuals with whom he had corresponded, informed him that as his arrival had been delayed beyond their expectations, they had actually filled the place, and a Mr. Benedict was engaged to supply the pulpit for one year. When Mr. Benedict, however, came to understand the circumstances of the case, he generously insisted on withdrawing in favor of Mr. Blatchford; but the result was that they were both retained to supply alternately the congregations of Bedford and Poundridge. At the next meeting of the Presbytery of Hudson, to which the congregations then belonged. Mr. Blatchford, giving assent to the Presbyterian Confession of Faith and form of government, was appointed the sole supply for Bedford, as many Sabbaths as convenient for him. But in 1796 he received a call to Greenfield, Conn., in the church that Rev. Dr. Dwight had formerly charge of. In 1797, he was invited to the church at Stratford (now Bridgeport), to preach for them

six months with reference to a final settlement. He was finally installed here and remained for a number of years, both as a preacher and an acceptable teacher of an academy built by his special request. In 1804 he was invited to take charge of the churches of Lansingburgh and Waterford, in the State of New York. He remained here for seven years, both preaching and teaching an academy most acceptably, and where some of his old parishioners, now living in Bedford, at great sacrifice visited him. He died at Waterford, March 17th, 1828, in the sixty-second year of his age, and forty-first of his ministry. Dr. Nott, president of Union College, preached his funeral sermon. He was the father of seventeen children; of these, seven died before him. Two of his sons were ministers, one a physician, and one a lawyer, all respectable and useful in their professions.

After Mr. Blatchford left, Rev. Josiah Henderson, of Martha's Vineyard, was called to preach the gospel at Bedford, and he was installed over the church by the Presbytery of Hudson, November 15th, 1798, and remained just five years. He was dismissed November 3d, 1803. The elders of the church were then—Moses St. John, Justus Harris, Ely Tyler, Peter Flemming, Joseph Owen, and Stephen Benedict, all most worthy, venerable, pious men. Mr. Henderson, though his pastorate was short, left a favorable impression upon the church, and a good name among the people. We have the minutes of the church during his ministry here, and they show that he was a pious, godly, faithful man. We had, but a year ago, an aged disciple lingering with us, who united with the church under his ministry in 1800, and if she was a type of the piety of the church then, we have certainly at this date, made but little, if any, improvement in this respect.

The Session resolved now for the first time, to hold a meeting every month throughout the year. A deacon was also appointed in the church at this time. We have no knowledge of Mr. Henderson's former history, or what became of him after leaving Bedford.

Rev. Ebenezer Grant succeeded Rev. Mr. Henderson as the pastor of this church, and was installed September 20th, 1804. He preached here for seventeen years. He was a native of New Jersey, and came here from the Presbytery of New Brunswick. The records of the church during his pastorate are very meagre.

He was a faithful, good man, but his labors were not abundantly blessed. Only seventy-two united with the church during his long pastorate. He had about him a godly set of men as elders in the church. Mr. Grant was never married, and this no doubt had its influence in limiting his success as a minister. At his death, the session of the church made this record of their deceased pastor:

“Be it remembered that on the 6th day of September, 1821, the Rev. Eben. Grant, having fulfilled his ministry, closed the scene of life, and sleeps with his fathers, being buried in the town of Bedford, in the burying ground in the village.”

Rev. Dr. Isaac Lewis, of Greenwich, preached his funeral sermon from Rev. xiv. 13. “And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” His remains lie beneath the green sward under the cliff, where the ground is terraced gradually up to the overhanging rocks, and on the broad marble slab marking this interesting spot, the sculptor has engraven these words:

Sacred  
to the memory of the  
REV. EBENEZER GRANT,  
17 years minister of the  
Presbyterian Church in Bedford,  
who departed this life Sept. 6, 1821,  
Aged 48 years.

“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord  
from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that  
they may rest from their labors;  
and their works do follow them.”

REV. xiv. 13.

There is not an individual member of the church living who was present when Rev. Mr. Grant was installed here. Officers and private members have all passed away. And there is only one member of the church living who followed their beloved pastor to his grave and saw his remains deposited in their mother dust. Our fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever? Only a few months elapsed before the

church was again supplied with a pastor. April 16, 1822, the Rev. Jacob Green was called and installed pastor of this church, and remained here a faithful standard-bearer, a consistent, godly and acceptable preacher for twenty-seven years. Mr. Green was a graduate of Rutgers's College, N. J. He studied theology at the Princeton Theological Seminary. He entered the seminary the first year it opened, in 1812, and remained two years. He was a native of Hanover, N. J., and was first settled in Suckasunny, N. J. Leaving this, his first charge, he was afterwards appointed a domestic missionary in Western Virginia, where he was married. From this field he was called to take charge of the Presbyterian church in this place, April 16, 1822. Mr. Green was the nephew of the venerable and distinguished Ashbel Green, one of the former Presidents of Princeton College, and author of some valuable theological works. The labors of Mr. Green in the church, as many now living are ready to bear witness, were greatly blessed. The church by his fidelity was greatly enlarged, and many new plans were adopted for its greater efficiency at home and in the foreign fields. He loved the cause of missions, and frequently had young men in his family, boarding or educating them, while they were preparing for the ministry at home or abroad. He was greatly beloved by his brethren in the ministry, and held in high esteem by the executive of all our benevolent boards and directors of our seminary at Princeton. God never blessed him with any children, while many look up to him as their spiritual father, and many in the congregation bear his honored name. After more than a quarter of a century pastorate here, and marrying the children that he had baptized, and burying nearly all the congregation to whom he preached when he first came among them, alienation and dissatisfaction arose that almost broke his heart. He was dismissed by Bedford Presbytery from this charge, June 25, 1848. A kind providence provided for his faithful servant. The governor of the State of New York sent him an appointment, previous to his leaving Bedford, to act as chaplain in the State prison at Sing-Sing. Completing his appointment here, his health becoming impaired, he supplied a few churches in Presbytery for a short time; but the time for his departure came and he laid down his commission as a minister of the gospel, and resigned his ransomed spirit to God who gave it, in Sing-

Sing, September, 1851, and was buried in their beautiful cemetery, to await the glorious rewards of the resurrection morning. The venerable Dr. Spring, of New York, who has recently gone to meet him, preached an appropriate sermon on his funeral occasion. His wife still survives him. While Mr. Green was pastor of the church, twenty-five hundred dollars were raised to make extensive repairs on the church, to remodel and refurnish it complete. A beautiful and sweet-toned bell was also bought and hung in the tower. But what was more noble than all, a thank-offering to God was made by the pastor and a few of the people on the occasion of the semi-centenary, or completion of the fiftieth year of the first meeting of the General Assembly in this country, to the divine mercies and deliverances during that period.

This offering was made December, 1839, and consisted of about three hundred dollars. It was observed by order of the General Assembly.

May 1st, 1848, Rev. David Inglis was called to take charge of the Church of Bedford. He was installed here over this people October 26th, 1848. He was a young man, a little rising twenty years, recently from Scotland, of great promise for usefulness, having preached a short time previous to his coming here in the lower part of this county—Washington Heights. But his pastorate, while pleasant, was short; for, after four years of successful labor, a wider field of usefulness and a more competent support were offered him in the city of Montreal, Canada East, which he felt bound to accept; consequently, he removed from Bedford to his new field of labor in June, 1852. Here he soon sustained a most severe domestic affliction in the loss of his wife and three children. Amid a cloud of dark providences he removed to Canada West, having received a call to a Presbyterian church in Hamilton. Here he remained sixteen years, a most worthy and acceptable pastor, and success crowned his indefatigable labors.

In the summer of 1871, he was elected by the Synod to a Professorship of Theology in Knox College in Toronto, on Lake Ontario; and in obedience to the mandate of the Synod, as a good Presbyterian, he entered upon his new field of labor, greatly to the regret of the good people of Hamilton, for every demonstration of attachment was made by the whole city in a

public meeting, where the Mayor presided, and speeches were made by judges and lawyers and ministers of all denominations, to manifest the high esteem in which he was held by the people in Hamilton. In August, 1872, he received and accepted a call to the Reformed Church on the Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y.; and there he is now, preaching the glorious gospel of the Son of God in a most acceptable manner to the people—a worthy successor to the great and good Dr. Bethune.

After writing the above, I received a Brooklyn paper, with the following notice of Dr. Inglis and his brief history:

“The learned divine was born in the year 1825 at Greenlaw, Berwickshire, in Scotland—the youngest son of the Rev. David Inglis, of that place, a well-known minister in the south of Scotland. The subject of this sketch was educated at the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated in 1841, and studied Divinity there; and was licensed by the Presbytery of Carlisle, of the English Presbyterian Church, in 1844. Immediately after receiving his license, he proceeded to this country, and after having spent some time in traveling in the West, and supplying for a year the Presbyterian Church on Washington Heights, he was ordained pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Bedford, Westchester County, in 1847. In 1851, he received a call to the St. Gabriel Street Church of Montreal, where he remained nearly two years, and, being then in delicate health, he removed to Hamilton, Ontario, having taken charge of a newly-organized church there. He remained at this station for sixteen years, and in 1871 was called by the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church, to the chair of Systematic Theology in Knox College, Toronto, where he had previously been teaching as a lecturer both in Systematic Theology and Apologetics. In the following year (1872) he received a call from the Reformed Church on the Heights, in the city of Brooklyn.”

Before the close of the year, December 1st, 1852, David C. Lyon was called and installed pastor of this church. Mr. Lyon was a native of New York; a graduate of Union College in 1842; and studied Theology at Princeton, and graduated in 1845; was ordained as an Evangelist by the Presbytery of Ogdensburg in July, 1846; preached as stated supply at Covington, New York; removed to Wisconsin; acted as a domestic

missionary and afterwards stated supply at Mineral Point, Wisconsin; and was then called to Bedford in the fall of 1852. He was dismissed from Bedford, having been appointed a synodical missionary for the State of Wisconsin. After a few years in this department of ministerial work, he was called to take charge of the Presbyterian Church at Winona, where, by unwearied labor and patience, he was instrumental in helping the people to build a new and beautiful house of worship. But in a few years he resigned his charge at Winona, and returned to what seemed a more congenial field of labor—a synodical missionary. And there he is to-day, exploring the waste and destitute portions of the country, traversing the dreary woods and extended prairies, fording rivers, and crossing mountains, tracking the line of the railroads, to look up the lost sheep and feed them, and provide the means of grace for the careless and unconcerned. He has proved the right man in the right place. His labors have been crowned with success.

In May, 1857, the present pastor, Rev. P. B. Heroy, was called here to preach the gospel; and here he has been for now nearly eighteen years. And you who have sat under his ministry will bear witness to his fidelity and anxiety to build up the church, and bring the ungodly to the cross of Christ for salvation. Many have gone before to witness for us or against us at the final day of reckoning. In looking over the past, we are filled with humility at our unprofitableness, and are ready, if any good has been accomplished, to attribute it all to the grace of God. Not unto us, but unto Thy name, O God, be all the praise. The present pastor is a native of Putnam County, N. Y. He was graduated at La Fayette College, in the class of 1841. He studied Theology at the Princeton Theological Seminary, and was graduated there in 1845, and settled first as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Delhi, Delaware County, N. Y., in 1845. December 16th, 1850, he was called and settled as pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Highlands, Orange County, in the Presbytery of North River. Leaving the Highlands in 1856, he was called to the Second Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton, N. J., in July, 1856, where he remained but a few months, for in May, 1857, he received a unanimous call to the Presbyterian Church, Bedford, where he was installed pastor, October 29th, the same year, and where he has been ever since. Of the ten pastors

and stated supplies who have served this church since its organization, after the Revolution, only three survive. All the rest, with all who preached here the hundred years before the Revolution, when this country was almost a wilderness and sparsely inhabited, have passed away.

In the summer of 1871, it was observed that the rude hand of time was leaving sad marks of decay in many parts of their long-cherished house of worship. Its outer covering, its frame, its walls, and its furniture, all rendered it inconvenient as a house of worship for its large and prosperous congregation, without extensive repairs. Just in this emergency, God inclined in answer to prayer, we have no doubt, and the gentle solicitations of his wife, one of the former members of this church, who left us nearly forty years ago, and went to New York city, and by industry and economy, and the smiles of a gracious Providence, has been enabled to accumulate a handsome property; and now, in the generosity and benevolence of his heart, for the glory of God and the good of souls, with the help of his wife, who is ever ready to respond to the wants of the needy, offered to build a new house of worship, and present it unencumbered to them. This generous offer was gladly accepted, and on June 29th, 1871, the corner-stone of the new edifice was laid on the lot next to the parsonage. In these interesting exercises, which the people came to witness from far and near in great numbers—for it was a gala day for them—the choir sang Psalm cxviii. 3, read by Rev. Dr. Sawyer of the Baptist Church; prayer was offered by the Rev. John Hancock, of Mount Kisco; the Scriptures—1 Cor., 3d ch.—were read by the Rev. J. H. Hawkshurst, of the Methodist Church, Bedford. An address by the Rev. J. P. Thompson, D.D., of the Tabernacle Church, New York, and also an address by Rev. Wilson Phraner, of Sing Sing; and an address also by A. B. Baylis, Esq., of Brooklyn, N. Y. Congratulatory remarks by Rev. Mr. Hawkshurst of the Methodist Church, and Rev. Lea Lequeer of the Episcopal Church, both of Bedford. Rev. Wm. Patterson, of Poundridge, read the 464th Hymn, which was sung by the choir in an appropriate manner. A brief history of the church was read by the pastor, Rev. P. B. Heroy; and it, and a copy of the Holy Bible, the silver coin of the date of 1871, a gold dollar of the same date, specimen bills of the postal currency of 1871, the *Presby-*

terian of June 24, also the *New York Observer*, the *Independent*, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, the *Young Folk's News*, *New York Times*, *Herald and World*, *Home and Foreign Record*, *Foreign Missionary*—the name of the architect, Mr. Jardine; the name of the builder, Mr. Gedney; the name of the mason, Mr. Andrews; the names of all the ministers present; the elders of the church, and the pastor; and the magnanimous donor of the church, Francis A. Palmer, Esq.—were all placed in the copper box prepared for them, and sealed up and deposited in a cavity made in the granite, and then the corner-stone was laid by Mr. Palmer, the donor, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Prayer was then offered by the pastor, the long metre doxology sung by the whole congregation, and the Rev. Lea Lequeer pronounced the benediction, and the vast assemblage returned reluctantly to their homes, after a season of great profit and delight, as the sun was casting his setting rays on the distant hills.

The new church was a little over one year in building—a year of care and toil, and yet of great pleasure, to those more immediately interested. On the 15th of August, 1872, the tones of the bell sounded out long and loud, and an immense congregation came together from neighboring churches and distant cities to witness the dedication of the new church. It was complete from cellar to tower, at a cost of \$50,000; and when the notes of the grand and beautiful organ were heard, so soft and sweet, the people seemed wild with delight. In these dedicatory services the most of the members of the Presbytery of Westchester were present, and took part in them. Dr. Taylor, of New York, preached the sermon from Acts xi. 26: “And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”

At an early hour a large congregation assembled, and soon the church was filled. Benches and chairs were brought in, and the crowd, numbering over seven hundred, overflowed the lecture-room and lobby, and out into the grounds. The scene was very animated. The pulpit was adorned with beautiful flowers, and was occupied by the Rev. P. B. Heroy (pastor), Rev. Dr. W. M. Taylor (Broadway Tabernacle), New York, and Rev. Dr. Craig, of Western New York. There were a number of clergymen present, some of whom assisted.

The music was furnished by the local choir, and a New York quartette under Mr. Harrison.

The exercises were opened by the singing of the L. M. Doxology. The Rev. Dr. Craig invoked the Divine blessing on this community, this congregation and pastor, and these generous donors whom the Lord had blessed with plenty and large hearts.

Anthem, "O praise God in His holiness."

Reading of the 17th chapter of St. John by the Rev. Mr. Phraner, of Sing Sing.

Prayer by Rev. A. R. McCoubray, of South East, New York.

"Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah!"—Choir.

Reading of the Commandments by Rev. Mr. Lewis.

The 1285th Hymn was sung :

"Here in Thy name, eternal God,  
We build this earthly house for Thee.  
Oh! choose it for Thy fixed abode,  
From every error keep it free."

The Rev. Dr. Taylor then arose: "I have been requested by my friends, Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, to read this letter. It is especially the object of a minister's calling to proclaim 'glad tidings.' This agreeable office of the day devolves upon me, and I fulfill it with joy. I look around this beautiful edifice, and I congratulate my friends and you upon its completion, that it is so beautiful, so perfect and so substantial. I congratulate him upon the success of his life, and this crowning act. It must be a cause of deep thanksgiving to be able to return to his childhood's home, and among his own people rear this monument. In ancient times and in Eastern climes, the good man who would benefit his kind digged a well that all might drink and live. We have this day seen the completion of this spiritual well, from which we hope many may come to draw living waters of eternal life.

"I congratulate you, my friends, in receiving, and you, my brother, in the giving. Be careful to use it in the Lord's service. If I were rich enough to build a drinking-fountain in the midst of our great city, nothing could make me happier than to

see eager crowds slaking their thirst. And I am sure nothing will give my friend and his good wife greater joy than to see multitudes drinking at this fountain, and after they are gone hence to know that, through their works, souls were brought to salvation. It is a great thing to witness this scene. But if I envy any one, I envy the giver. 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

BEDFORD, WESTCHESTER Co., N. Y.,  
August 15th, 1872.

CHRISTIAN BRETHERN: This house of worship, now completed, has been erected for your use as the Presbyterian Church of the village of Bedford, Westchester County, New York, and my wife and myself desire formally to present it to you, with the following statement and conditions:

We have had no desire, in this undertaking, to have our names inscribed in your place of worship, but have been actuated in gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings He has conferred upon us, and especially for His exceeding grace in giving us the hope of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ the Lord, our Saviour.

We do not feel that we can make any recompense to God for His mercy, but, constrained by His love, we desire to honor and serve Him.

Another motive influencing us has been our interest in this community, in the midst of which we have had our summer home for many years, and this church as a Christian congregation with whom we have been privileged so often to worship.

This, as you know, is the place of my birth and the home of my kindred, and with the services of this church my earliest religious impressions are associated.

We desire to testify our sympathy, and aid in the work of the Master here, of helping to maintain His service, and in bringing souls to Christ.

In the conception and prosecution of this enterprise, my wife has been intimately associated with me—indeed, it has been with her a cherished wish for years; and with this, as so much else of my life, she has been, under God, an inspiration of good.

The best artists, workmen, and materials have been employed

in the construction and furnishing of this building, and I do not know of anything which remains to be added to render it ready for use. I have used every exertion to make it suitable and convenient for your purposes, religious and social, as a church and congregation.

And now, in presenting to you this house of worship, we desire to submit the following conditions, upon which, we understand, our views are in harmony :

1st. The church is to be a free church, as this phrase is generally accepted ; the pews are to be free, so that all who choose to come to worship God here will feel at liberty to do so. The current expenses of the church and congregation to be met by subscription on the part of those interested in its maintenance, or by any plan of systematic contribution the congregation may deem proper to adopt.

2d. The congregation obligates itself to keep the property in good and necessary repair, and to preserve and perpetuate in it religious services.

Your acceptance of the property will be understood as the acceptance also of the conditions before expressed.

Thankful for the ability to make the offering, we now through this letter make over to you, the Bedford Presbyterian Church and Society, all our interest and right in the building we have erected, praying also that the Master will mercifully accept and grant that in it His people may be comforted and strengthened, and many souls "added to the church daily of such as shall be saved."

Most respectfully yours,

FRANCIS A. PALMER.

Mr. Williamson, in behalf of the Trustees, briefly accepted the conditions and the gift, and returned thanks.

The Rev. Mr. Heroy then said :

"A word only need be said in regard to the origin and completion of this house. So far as is known to me, I believe the purpose to build this house originated with Mrs. Francis A. Palmer. She kindly offered three thousand dollars to repair and refit the old church. To this Mr. Palmer offered a sufficient amount to pay half the expenses of a thorough repair, and modernize as far as possible the old church. But good judges,

after an examination, thought that a large amount of money expended in repairs on the old house would be poorly laid out, and that a little more added to it would build us a new and convenient house of worship. And the most of the people were willing to coöperate to the utmost of their ability in an undertaking of this kind. But Mr. and Mrs. Palmer offered to build a house of worship at their own expense, and present it to the people completely furnished, leaving them at liberty to place any memorial in it, in any shape they wished. And here we see this beautiful house, in proportions and elegance far exceeding our fondest expectations, built and furnished, from the bell in the tower to the furnaces in the cellar, except the furniture in the parlors, and presented to this church and congregation as a memorial of God's unbounded goodness. It has no debt against it, and we are about to dedicate it to God unencumbered by any claim. It is consecrated to God by willing and grateful hearts, and years to come will testify to the advantages of this house, temporal and spiritual, to this entire region of country. The spire will point the travellers' gaze to heaven, and the bell will long invite them to hear the story of the cross of Christ.

“And now, in behalf of the Presbyterian church and congregation of Bedford, N. Y., represented by a Board of Trustees, under a charter from the State Legislature, I accept most gratefully this house of God, presented by the generous donors, Mr. and Mrs. Francis A. Palmer, as a free gift to this Society, to be preserved and perpetuated by them and their children, and their children's children, as a house dedicated to the worship of Almighty God. And we do here publicly engage, before God and this vast assembly, that we will seek to carry out the intentions of the liberal donors in building this house to glorify God and save the souls of our fellow-men. And we do further pledge ourselves that the pure doctrines of the cross, as taught by the fathers of the Presbyterian Church in this country and Europe, shall be faithfully preached here. We accept, therefore, with the most profound sense of indebtedness, this beautiful, neat, and appropriate house of worship as a free-will offering to God, and as a memorial of His manifold goodness; and our united and fervent prayers shall be that the glory of this latter house shall exceed that of the former which we have just vacated, in lasting

and spiritual benefits to this entire region of country, and that the blessings of Israel's covenant God may follow the donors all the days of their lives, and crown them His in the final day of accounts. We accept this house from the hand of God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, through the great kindness and liberality of His servants; and our prevailing purpose shall be in all coming time to render to God the pure incense of thankful hearts, and devoted and consecrated lives. And thus this house shall stand for ages, a monument of Christian liberality, an honor to God and the Christian religion, and a perpetual blessing to this entire community. And in the spirit of the liberal donors, we throw the doors of this sanctuary wide open, and we invite here to this fountain of living waters all classes and conditions of men, of all names and circumstances, assured that they shall be made welcome to its exalted privileges.

"To the following persons we owe great thanks for their successful and harmonious working: Messrs. D. & J. Jardine, architects; Messrs. W. H. & C. Geduey, builders; Messrs. N. & H. Andrews, masons; Mr. C. Otto Fiecht, decorator; Mr. R. Taylor, painter; Mr. Kane, stained glass; and general superintendence."

Anthem, "O beautiful!"

Rev. Mr. Nevins then read 6th chapter, 2d Chronicles.

Rev. Mr. Heroy then added:

"The whole congregation will now rise while we proceed to the dedication of this house to the worship of Almighty God.

"Dearly beloved: The Scriptures teach us that God is well pleased with those who build temples and dedicate them to the service and worship of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. The history of Christianity in every age will testify to the advantages of a house of worship to the interests of any people. God has smiled upon those who bring their sacrifices into the sanctuary and offer them upon His altar; and we are exhorted to worship Him in the beauty of holiness. For the extension, therefore, of the Redeemer's kingdom on the earth, and for the glory of His name, we dedicate this house as a house of God, to His service and worship, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen."

Rev. D. Inglis, of Toronto, offered prayer.

Anthem, "Great is the Lord."

Then followed the sermon by Rev. Dr. Taylor.

The exercises were closed with prayer by Rev. Mr. Fletcher, of Brewster's, and the benediction.

The religious services were continued in the evening, and a crowded assembly, by their presence, manifested their interest in the new church.

This brings down the history of the church to August 15, 1872. And here we close our sketch. The church at present, July 1, 1874, is composed of 159 members, Rev. P. B. Heroy, pastor. Alvah Howe, Phineas Lounsbury, St. John Owen, John G. Clark, elders.

Albert Williamson, W. O. Scribner, and J. G. Clark, Trustees.

"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." Ps. cxxii. 7.

P. B. HEROY.











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