

The Historical Record

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

DEVOTED PRINCIPALLY TO

The Early History of Wyoming Valley

AND CONTIGUOUS TERRITORY

WITH

NOTES AND QUERIES

BIOGRAPHICAL, ANTIQUARIAN, GENEALOGICAL



EDITED BY F. C. JOHNSON.

VOLUME V.

WILKES-BARRE, PA.

Press of The Wilkes-Barre Record

1895.^{v3}

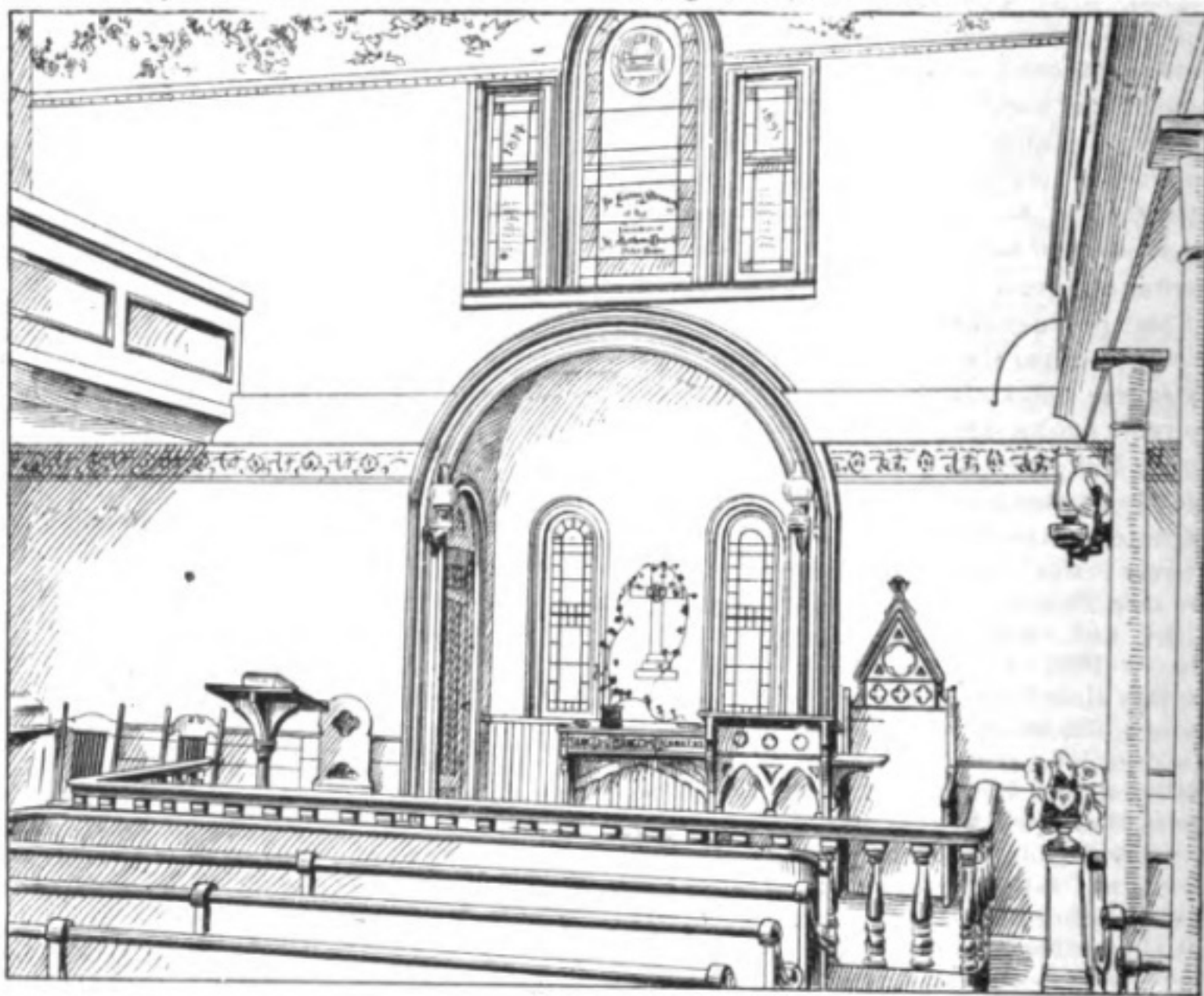
AN OLD-TIME CHURCH.

Some Points in its History and of the Veteran Who Has Been its Rector for Many Years.

One of the oldest Protestant Episcopal churches in Northeastern Pennsylvania is that of St. Matthew's, in Pike, Bradford County. The following sketch is furnished the RECORD by Rev. S. F. Hotchkiss:

William Bradford, attorney general of the United States, is commemorated in the name

In A. D. 1827, the report of Bishop White, in the *Diocesan Journal*, at a meeting at Harrisburg, reads as follows: "On September 25 (1826) I set off for Wilkes-Barre and for the beech woods, being accompanied by the Rev. Jackson Kemper (afterward bishop)" "On the 28th I preached in the borough of Wilkes-Barre, as did Mr. Kemper on the 27th, who on both of these occasions performed divine service. On the next day we entered the beech woods, being accompanied by the Hon. Judge Scott, who accommodated us by the



INTERIOR OF ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH.

of Bradford County, and Judge Wilmot, author of the Wilmot proviso, is buried near Towanda in the same county

A higher interest arises from the fact that the missionary, Post, who is buried in Germantown, in A. D. 1760, preached to the Iroquois Indians on Christ's birth, here. Zelsberger, the great Moravian missionary, and Jacob Schmick, dwelt with the natives at Friedensbütten, (Huts of Peace,) and the bell called to prayer. There was daily service.

furnishing of his carriage and horses on this tour. On the first evening we were at Springville, where Mr. Kemper read prayers and preached. On the next day we reached the farthest point of our destination, the neighborhood of the church lately built near Wyandoming creek, where in the evening Mr. Kemper read prayers and preached." "On the next day, being Sunday, the 1st of October, I consecrated the church. I also preached, confirmed and admitted to the communion in

it, Mr. Kemper assisting. In the afternoon the Rev. Enoch Huntington, who had joined us from Wilkes-Barre, delivered a discourse, Mr. Kemper reading prayers; who also preached in the evening, prayers being read



REV. GEORGE P. HOPKINS.

by the Rev. Samuel Marks, the minister of the place."

The next day, in returning, the bishop visited New Milford, where there was a lay-reader. The Rev. Mr. Marks journeyed with the bishop and assisted in services for some distance on the homeward road. They held service in the court house at Montrose. Bishop Onderdonk was elected assistant bishop at this convention. Bishop Kemper was active in mission work when settled at St. Peter's, Philadelphia. In June, A. D. 1823, Bishop White consecrated St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre, and confirmed, and also ordained Rev. Samuel Sitgreaves a priest. This year Rev. Samuel Marks was sent as a deacon to Bradford and Susquehanna counties. He was the first rector of Montrose. In 1825 the formation of a Sunday school at St. Matthews is noted. Rev. Mr. Marks was a missionary of the Advancement Society. A church building is mentioned in 1815. In 1822 Rev. Manning Roche visited the congregations in Bradford and Susquehanna counties. Rev.

Mr. Sitgreaves followed in a like visitation. His long report is historic. Some of the rectors of St. Matthews can be traced and are given in the succeeding list. Samuel Marks (1823), Samuel Lord, Freeman Lane, Richard Smith, John King, Rev. Hale Townsend officiated occasionally in 1860. Rev. Messrs. Asa B. Colton, Dewitt C. Bylesby, Hopkins and Heaton have been rectors here. Rev. Benjamin J. Douglass, when rector of Christ Church, Towanda, took an interest in St. Matthew's and sometimes officiated there, once with Bishop Alonzo Potter. The Rev. George P. Hopkins, present rector of St. Matthew's, (1895) is a cousin of Bishop J. H. Hopkins, and studied under him, and was ordained by him in Burlington, Vermont, Oct. 18, 1838. He was long rector of St. Paul's, Troy, Pa., where he worked successfully, and a beautiful new church has been built since his removal. While at Troy he held an afternoon service at Burlington. Mr. Hopkins has done a great work in Northern Pennsylvania and is yet working. His marriages and funerals and visitations of the sick and dying have been performed by traversing long distances in the diocese of Central Pennsylvania. He is the son of John and Catherine Hopkins of Philadelphia. His noble work in founding St. Paul's, Doylestown, Pa., is noted in my "Country Clergy of Pennsylvania," pages 112 and 113.

In connection with this work, he inaugurated services at Chestnut Hill and J. unkin-town. He had previously a mission at Lawrenceville and Tioga. A church at Athens, Bradford County, Pa., was built during his incumbency. Bishops Onderdonk, Bowman, Stevens, Howe, Whitehead and Rulison have visited St. Matthew's, which lies in the diocese of Central Pennsylvania. In 1891 Bishop Rulison confirmed nine persons here. In 1861 and 1862 the work of God was highly prospered in the in-gatherings to the fold of Christ, the present rector being then in charge of the parish. St. Matthews was formerly styled "The Church Near the Creek," that is the Wyalusing. The building once caught fire and was saved with difficulty. By the exertions of Rev. Mr. Hopkins, the interior, including chancel and pews, was renewed. This as well as the recent renewal was indeed a work of faith in God, who moves hearts and hands in His blessed work. On Tuesday, April 11, 1894, the old church was reopened after late improvements. There were present the rector,

Rev. Dr. D. Webster Coxe, archdeacon of the Scranton Archdeaconry; Rev. Dr. Henry L. Jones, rector of St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre, and Rev. Charles L. Sleight, rector of St. Clement's, Wilkes-Barre. The sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Jones. A violent snow storm prevented the attendance of other clergy. Three services were held on Tuesday. The Lord's help in restoring this church amidst circumstances most discouraging is gratefully acknowledged by the faithful rector who has aided my notes.

The interior of St. Matthew's is quaint, but the extension of the chancel has given it a new beauty. The woodwork and old-fashioned galleries are done in ash, and the walls in terra cotta. The ceiling and chancel wall are in delicate blue and silver. The chancel furniture from Getzler, N. Y., is antique oak. The windows are exceedingly beautiful additions to a country church. They resemble mosaics of precious stones. The memorial windows of Harriet C. Burrows (with its harp and forget-me-not), and Louis L. Bosworth and his wife, Sarah A. Bosworth, (with its cross encompassed by violets), and the angel's face looking upward on the window of Helen S. J. Wells, and the founder's window (with cross and crown) on the chancel wall, are beautiful adornments of the church. A plain silver cross on the wall under this window has on the Calvary base this inscription: "In Memoriam Catherine Davenport Hopkins, mother of Rev. George Payne Hopkins, Rev., 8:4." It was placed here by her grandchildren. These silent memorials keep in mind the spiritual lives of departed saints.

An Almost Forgotten Spring Freshet.

As bearing on the December freshets the RECORD learns of a flood 87 years ago which was even higher than the present one. The fact is mentioned in a letter written May 1, 1807, by James Sinton to his friend, Steuben Butler. He says the water came up Market street and was around the horse block in front of the Sinton store, which stood on the corner of Market and Franklin, where is now the Wyoming Bank. He further says had it not been checked by a cold day and night he

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

A Letter Showing that Brant Did Not Command

The Indians at Wyoming--Judge Woodward Elected President-- Accessions to the Library and Cabinet.

The annual meeting of the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society was held Feb. 25, 1895, Rev. Dr. Henry L. Jones, one of the vice presidents, in the chair. The meeting was largely attended, many ladies being present. In calling the meeting to order the chairman feelingly referred to the recent death of the society's president, Sheldon Reynolds Esq. (Page 151.)

A committee comprising A. F. Derr, J. D. Coons and J. M. Crane recommended the following as officers for the ensuing year, and they were elected: Hon. Stanley Woodward, president; vice presidents, Rev. Dr. Henry L. Jones, Hon. Eckley B. Coxe, Capt. Calvin Parsons and Col. G. Murray Reynolds; trustee, Edward Welles, H. H. Harvey, Hon. C. A. Miner, S. L. Brown and Richard Sharpe, Jr.; treasurer, A. H. McClintock; recording secretary, Sidney R. Miner; corresponding secretary, Rev. H. E. Hayden; librarian, Hon. J. Ridgway Wright; assistant librarian, H. R. Deltick; curators--mineralogy, Irving A. Stearns; paleontology, R. D. Lacoe; archaeology, J. Ridgway Wright; numismatics, Rev. H. E. Hayden; historiographer, George B. Kulp; meteorologist, Rev. Dr. F. B. Hodge.

The only change from last year was the promotion of Judge Woodward from a vice presidency to the presidency, the election of Col. G. M. Reynolds a vice president, and the