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**Our  
Church Centennial**

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**Kilbride United Church  
1860 - 1960**

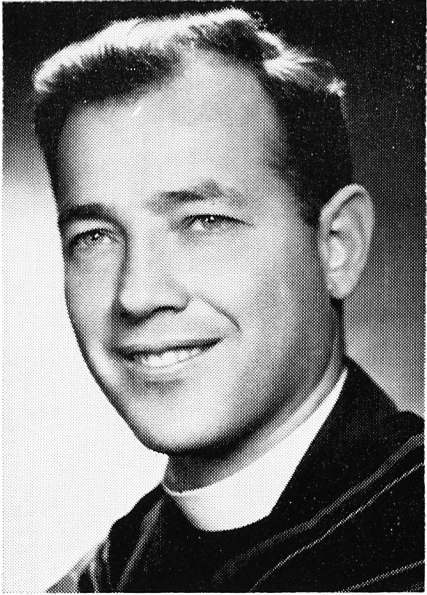
**Our  
Church Centennial**



**KILBRIDE UNITED CHURCH  
Kilbride, Ontario**

**Kilbride United Church  
1860 - 1960**





**REV. W. G. WILKINSON**  
Minister

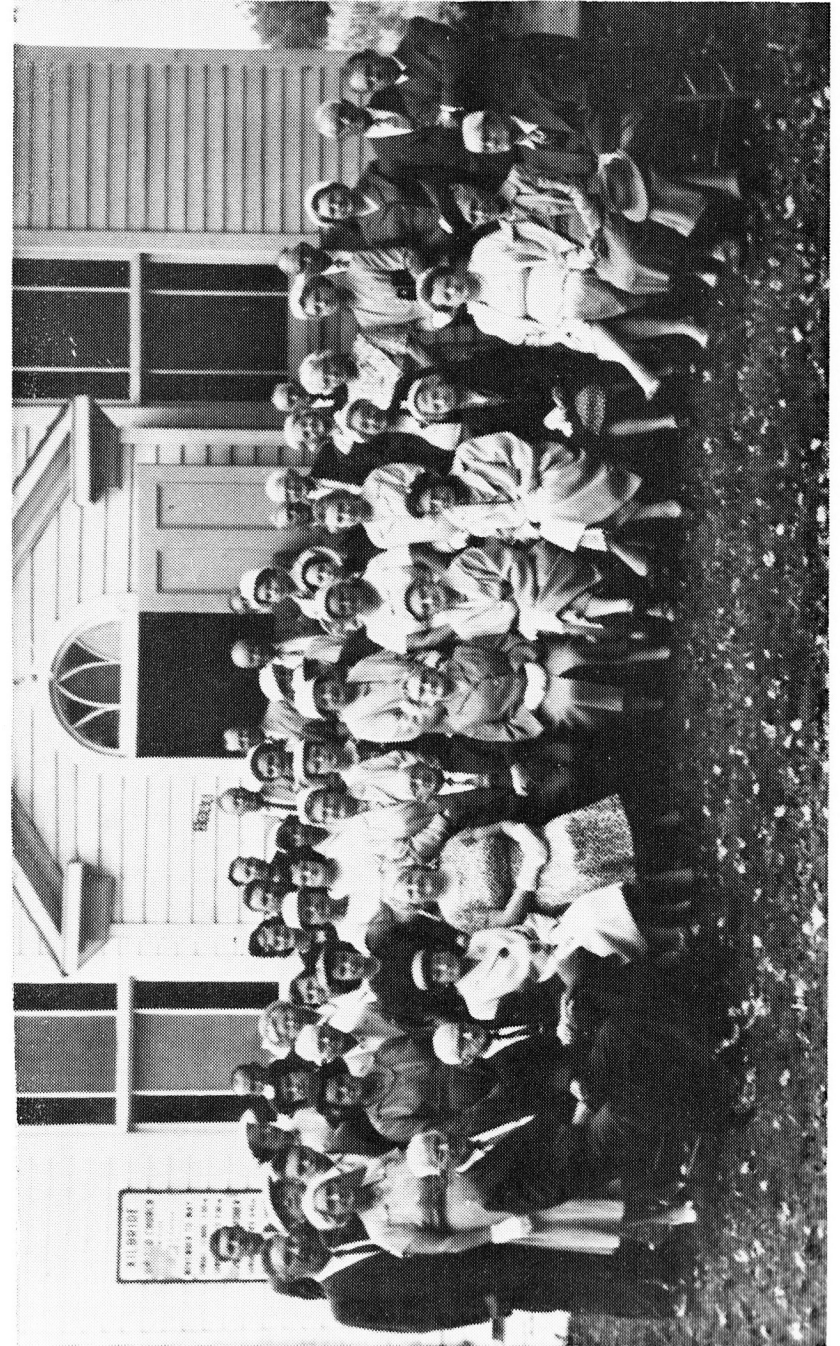
## *Our Centennial Year*

It is with not a little pride that we mark this year, 1960 as the One-Hundredth Birthday of our Church. The ancestry of the Kilbride people can be traced back to many places and many countries, mostly the British Isles and the continent of Europe. The Church itself of course goes back to the time when Jesus and his disciples walked the shores of Galilee.

In religion as in so many other things, one generation builds upon the shoulders of the previous one, and so we of the present generation acknowledge a great debt to our fathers before us. Having said this however, we must remember that there is one thing that we cannot inherit, and that is a personal relationship to the Living Lord. Each person, as the Apostle, must meet the risen Lord on his own Damascus road. We cannot live on our fathers' faith, any more that we can live on the bread they ate. We must receive strength of our own from our own faith in the Living Lord. A Church or a person that has a second hand or borrowed religion is weak and anaemic, if not dead.

For this reason we believe that the Master has an important work for us to do in the Church of this generation. It is our hope and prayer that our children after us may discover the Living Christ as we have done, and thus be enabled to find the fullest and most meaningful life possible, in relationship to the Christian Church.

W. G. WILKINSON



The Present Congregation of Kilbride United Church



## The Church's History



Situated in the centre of one of Halton County's picturesque pioneer villages, Kilbride United Church this year commemorates its one hundredth anniversary.

This attractive frame building, once known as Zion Methodist Church, New Connection, was built in 1860, on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. George Harbottle Sr. The land was deeded to the church by Mr. Harbottle's wife Rhoda for the sum of five dollars.

Unlike most churches, it was moved from its original foundation a few years after it was built and the congregation re-established themselves in a more central part of the village. The plot of ground where the church now stands was donated by Mr. Charles Harris.

Now, after a century of progress, amidst the hurry and bustle of every day life, its doors are still open each Sunday to a goodly number of members and adherents, many of whom are descendants of the early pioneers of this district.

The love and devotion of this little country congregation is shown in the general appearance and upkeep of the building and by the gifts which have been added from time to time, even back to the early years when the present pulpit was made and presented by Mr. Robert Simpson whose name appears on the original church deed. The walnut base upon which the deed is rolled, in scroll fashion, is also beautifully carved and polished by someone, presumably a church member.



**George Harbottle Sr.**

The furniture is of early design and still in excellent condition. The minister's settee was only recently replaced by a more modern type of chairs to match the communion table and baptismal font and other gifts placed there in recent years, following a redecoration of the church.

The numbers which can still be faintly seen on the seats were put there to help distinguish the family pews.

The deed, which has been very well preserved through the years, is still quite readable in parts. It was made out during the reign of Queen

Victoria, and shows that one half acre of land was given, to be used only as a cemetery and church. This land is situated on the Eastern half of lot nine, con. two, in the New Survey, Twp. of Nelson, Upper Canada. The names which appear on the scroll are partly faded but include George Harbottle, Rhoda Harbottle, Wm. Galloway, Robt. Simpson, Thomas Galloway and Wm. Harris and witnessed by John Mathews and Frances Baker. The timbers and siding for the church were supplied by Mr. William Bousfield who owned and operated a saw mill in Tally Ho.

Very little is known of the actual building of the church or of its history during the next few years as some of the early records have been misplaced. However, an article printed in 1932 indicates that notes were taken from the records at that time. In the minutes of the Cumminsville Bible Society, mentioned further in this booklet, we notice names of various ministers who may have had some connection with the church at this time. Mention is also made in 1865 of Missionary meetings still being carried on in the community. The Presbyterian Church was active at this time and Bethel Chapel was also being used regularly. Population was now on the increase and churches were becoming better established.

Following the Union of the Wesleyan and New Connection churches in 1874, Lowville and Kilbride formed one Circuit with the following appointments—Lowville, Kilbride, Salem, Bethesda and Davidson's. Bethesda was located on the Trafalgar town line. Mr. Joe Watson of the Guelph Line remembers going there to Sunday School. It now forms part of the farm house owned by John Muth. It was formerly purchased by John Marshall.

Salem Church stood on the Walker Line where the Salem cemetery is located. This church was purchased by the late Donald McGregor and is now used as the Kilbride Community Hall. Miss Nettie Husband, who was Bible Class teacher and a member of the choir for many years, was laid to rest in this little pioneer cemetery. Mrs. Joe Pickett's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Bennett were also buried here. Mr. Bennett was one of our dearly loved local preachers having served for 50 years on the Lowville circuit and surrounding area.

The minister in 1874 was Rev. James Scott who lived in Lowville. He was succeeded by Rev. James Clappison with Rev. R. C. Henders as his assistant. During Mr. Clappison's term, the parsonage was situated temporarily in Kilbride and an amazing story of faith is told concerning the burning of the Kilbride Hotel which was located on the eastern corner of the intersection in the village. The parsonage stood next to the hotel where Nelson Shuarts now live. It was in grave danger of catching fire as the wind was blowing towards it. The people began rushing about excitedly, trying to remove the furniture but Mr. Clappison calmly spoke to the crowd and to his wife. "Do not trouble yourselves" he said, "the parsonage will not burn". He asked the people to pray with him. The wind suddenly changed and the flames blew harmlessly over the creek. Mr. Clappison owned a fine horse and buggy and Mrs. G. Armstrong said it was usually left in her father's stable when he drove to Lowville where it



was given good care for Mr. Picket was fond of horses and many a meal Mr. Clappison had with the family. Their home was situated near the church.

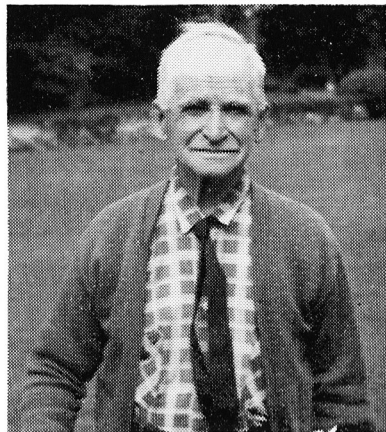
The ministers seemed to move quite frequently at that time although the Methodist rule allowed that a minister could stay three years on a circuit. Rev. J. R. McKay was appointed in 1876 when Mountain and Nassagaweya were added to the circuit.

The salaries paid at that time were as follows—Lowville, \$450.00; Kilbride, \$192.00; Salem, \$180.00; Bethesda, \$185.00; Mountain, \$90.00; Nassagaweya, \$35.00; and Davidson's, \$50.00.

Another change in 1878 brought Rev. John Taylor to be in charge and when he came, the parsonage was moved back to Lowville from Kilbride, to the house now owned by Orville Peer.

In the Niagara Conference minutes of 1878, it reads "That Kilbride, at present an appointment on the Lowville Circuit, be joined with Carlisle." Following this change, plans were soon made to move the church to its present site. Rev. John Turner was minister at Carlisle from 1878-1881 and was Kilbride's first minister after joining with the new circuit.

Moving the church must have required a great deal of skill and patience, but the village men, with the help of Mr. Hall Gunby and Mr. Curliss, who had equipment for moving buildings, went at the task in the usual way, by forming 'bees', with men like James McNiven, George Harbottle, and George Bennett supplying oxen, and the church was moved on skids to its new foundation. Spencer Bennett is the only man who remembers helping. He was eleven years of age and assisted his father with the oxen. The vestry was torn down and the present Sunday School was later erected. A re-opening ceremony was held with Rev. John Turner in charge. The speaker was Rev. Jas. McAlister who was a former minister on the Lowville circuit. He lived for some years in Kilbride where his son W. G. H. McAlister, M.A. was born, October 13th, 1857. Rev. Alfred C. McAlister of Dundas is a grandson. Mr. Bennett and his sister, Mrs. Chas. Eaton remember attending the re-opening of the church. Their sister Mary sang in the choir. Mrs. Eaton remembers when the family walked through dense woods from their homestead, to the schoolhouse east of Kilbride, where the Wilshires now live. Mr. William Gunby was also present and attended the tea meeting on the following evening. He said that donations were given that night and the church debt was completely paid.



**Spencer Bennett**

The cemetery still remains where the church was originally built, marking the graves of the forefathers who laboured so earnestly to establish their place of worship. Though the church is not on its original foundation, it has covered one hundred years of service to the surrounding community, and the people still sing as they sang a century ago, "The Church's one Foundation, is Jesus Christ her Lord."

Some of the earlier records of Methodism in this area date back many years when the Nelson Circuit was formed in 1832 and Missionaries were appointed to cover the area that is known as Halton County to-day, extending farther north into Erin, and east into the Toronto Townships.

The Christian Guardian of January 19th, 1833, mentions Nelson Circuit holding its first Missionary meeting in Collings Church, Lowville. This church was situated where the old Lowville United Church parsonage now stands and is mentioned in early records as a meeting place for local religious gatherings. The original Missionaries to cover this area were Rev. Franklin Metcalfe and Rev. Samuel Belton.

The salary of the Circuit preacher and his family was a hundred and fifty pounds per annum. Allowances were made for other items such as table expenses, horsekeep and fuel and an extra seven pounds for each child under seven. The preacher's salary was supplemented by produce of various kinds from members on the circuit.

In 1835, Rev. James Norris was appointed "Missionary", followed by Rev. Samuel C. Phillip in 1839.

The Canada into which these missionaries came was not our Dominion. An early map would show our Maritimes, Lower Canada, Hudson Bay Company and North West Fur Company occupying what is now Canada.

In 1836 there were ten Methodist Circuits in Upper Canada. At the close of the war of 1812-14 in a population of 80,000 in Upper Canada there were but four Anglican and four Presbyterian ministers. To declare British loyalty the Methodist Episcopal people had withdrawn from the United States connection and formed a Canada conference about 1828, but four years later, owing to the political disabilities, a union was affected with the Wesleyan Church of England. It was about 1832 that Rev. Egerton Ryerson left for England to try to promote interest in Canadian Methodism by securing closer relations with the mother church and it was at this time that the Nelson Circuit was started.

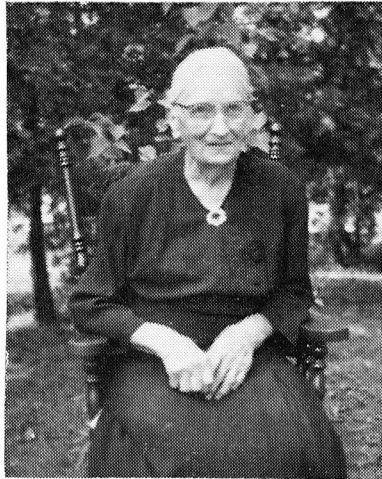
By 1842, Wesleyan and New Connection folk were becoming active in the district. The "Chapel at the Twelve" at Carlisle was built in 1839 and was of Wesleyan origin. It was situated a little south-east of the present church and also served as a schoolhouse.

After settling on the homestead south of Kilbride, Mr. John Prudham's home was made a stopping place for ministers. Going back to this time it was usual for him and his wife Elizabeth to carry their children over the forest trail and across streams by fallen logs to Collings Church,



Lowville to attend service. Others like Mr. and Mrs. John Small would think nothing of walking to Hannahsville, now Nelson Village, from their home west of Kilbride.

Much of the actual formation of the church is not known but older members know that religious services were held in the homes or in the village school or halls, conducted by the missionaries and by local religious leaders. The Harbottle home which was a crown grant piece of land, was once used as the local court house. Mr. George Harbottle, one of the prominent church leaders, was also local magistrate. He performed weddings in the homes. Mr. John Harris was also local magistrate for a number of years and his home was the first frame schoolhouse in the village. A log schoolhouse also stood on the Coulson homestead north of the village on the No. 10 Sideroad. Mrs. James Burns who is the oldest member of our church said her father attended school there. Mrs. Burns is in her 90th year and is a life member of the Session. Mr. Burns was active in church affairs for many years. Foster's log schoolhouse was also one of the oldest in the community. It stood on the corner of No. 5 Sideroad and Cedar Springs Road. It was a typical pioneer school with benches lined on either side and earthen floor. It was replaced in 1862 by Dakota stone school, later named Cedar Springs. The stone schoolhouse at Kilbride was built in 1878 and three of our present church members, Miss Marjorie Vanfleet, Mrs. Dr. McDonald and Mrs. Joe Henry taught there. It was closed this year in favour of the new area school built close by it. But the schools were soon no longer needed as meeting places as more new churches were becoming established.



**Mrs. James Burns**

The following paragraph is taken from the Carlisle Centennial booklet printed in 1952. "The early Methodists did not call themselves a church or denomination but rather a 'society' ". The Society of Methodists was defined as "a company of men having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation". One could look a long way for a better definition of what the church is, if we would study each phrase in this definition with discernment of the meaning it originally had.

## Bethel

In 1853, Bethel Chapel was built on land given them for the sum of three pounds, fifteen shillings. Situated on lot 5, concession 1, New Survey, Nelson Township, (Prov. of Canada), it is one of the few original Methodist churches still remaining. It bears the inscription over the doorway "C.W.N.C." The timbers were provided by William Bousfield who also split the shingles at his mill in Tally Ho. The church is well cared for and is being preserved as a Pioneer landmark. Some years ago the seats were purchased for the community hall in Kilbride. It has rather a unique pulpit with doors on either side of the minister's bench. The antependium, though worn with the years, has retained its colour and it added dignity to the pulpit with its padded top and heavy fringe. A special service marked the church's 100th anniversary in 1953. Each autumn a service is held in memory of the pioneers and for the many members of our congregation who have chosen this well-kept little country cemetery as a resting place. The present trustees are Gordon Coudry, Elmer Foster, Arthur Harris, Ross Harbottle and the treasurer, Harvey Prudham.



## Cumminville Bible Society

Among other interesting records found have been the first minute book of the Cumminville Bible Society, which began on May 9th, 1854. First meetings were held in the Temperance Hall. This branch covered the Lowville and Zimmerman area, as well as Kilbride and Bethel. It went under the same name until 1900. Then it was re-organized as the Kilbride. Many pioneer names are recorded on the regular subscription lists, which also shows fine penmanship. During the early years, meetings were held in Lowville and Cumminville Temperance Halls, and later on, in Lowville and Kilbride churches. Meetings were apparently held in rotation. The currency in the early days of the Society was in pounds, shillings and pence. After 1858 it was changed to dollars and cents.

List of officers elected on the first anniversary, in the month of September, 1854.

James Tyner .....	President
William Wilson and Thomas Galloway .....	Vice Presidents
William P. Montgomery .....	Treasurer
John Mathews .....	Secretary

### COMMITTEE

Thos. Stokes	Robert Simpson	Jas. Mulineax	John Agnew
Jas. Ingles	F. Baker	John Duffis	William Harris
F. Small	C. W. Peer	Joseph Lynn	Chas. Stewart
A. Wilson	John Small	John Prudham	Thomas Small
John Haggin	John Robb	William Gunby	



Collections were made regularly by the committee with long lists of donations.

The first meeting to be recorded in the Kilbride Methodist Church was in January, 1865. The subject of making collections was discussed, and also the best time to do it in as the missionary meetings were also being held in the vicinity and it was decided to leave the collecting until there was more time to attend to duties. One meeting states, "The roads were very muddy, the night very dark, the assembly very small—only six persons present beside the agent, who gave some very interesting information. The returns of the Depositories were very encouraging, amounting to \$70.85."

Among the officers elected in January, 1872, Rev. Jas. McAlister was appointed Secretary. He held this office for three years.



## Presbyterian Church

In 1846 the Presbyterian Church, under the branch of the Free Church of Scotland began, as a mission, with Rev. W. McLean of Waterdown and Wellington Square in charge. Grounds for the cemetery were purchased in 1848 from Jas. Harris and deeded to the Presbyterian Church of Cumminsville. A pastoral charge was formed in 1855 and in 1856 the church was built in a graceful setting east of Kilbride on property purchased from the Day estate and it was welcomed by various denominations. The manse stood beside the church for a number of years and was an attractive centre for church gatherings. Rev. W. McLean was the first minister.

The church contained no organ in the early years. Hymns were started by the presntor using a tuning fork and collections were taken in boxes attached to long handles. Strabane and Kilbride were together for many years but following church union in 1925, Kilbride joined with Waterdown and Nelson, where they remained until the church was closed in 1940 after 84 years of Christian service. A number of families joined with the United Church while others joined with Campbellville and Milcn. A few of the familiar names connected with this church are McClure, Corlett, Wilson, Fraser, Agnew, Labourne, Duncan, Hewson, Small, Turnbull, Nixon, McMillan, Harris, Clugston, Dixon and Rutherford.

The last minister was Rev. M. Young. Others included Rev. R. C. Ross and Revs. Shannon, Atkinson, McLaren, Cameron, Simpson and many others. The manse was in Strabane for many years and Mr. John Rutherford, a former member, can remember when Rev. Mr. Cathcart could make his trip from Strabane to Kilbride in thirty minutes with horse and two-wheeled cart. His Sunday School teacher for six years was Mr. Pickett and Mr. Clugson was also Superintendent for many years.

## Highlights of the Century

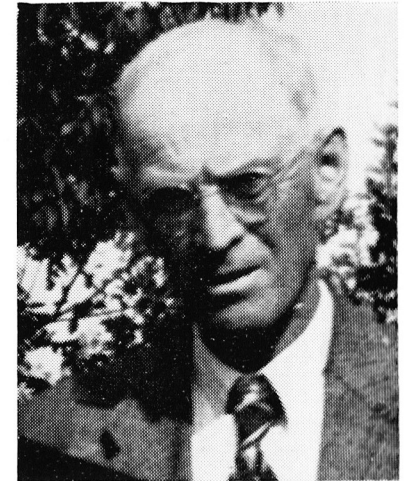
The Women's Association, formerly known as the Ladies' Aid, has always rallied towards the needs of the church. It was first organized in 1911. Records for that year stated that the sum of five dollars was paid to Mrs. (Rev.) Vollick for helping to organize the Ladies' Aid Society. Officers for that year were: Mrs. Prudham, President; Mrs. W. Foster, Treasurer; Mrs. H. McArthur, Winnie Tweedle (Finnamore) and Nellie Foster (Franke) are the only three charter members left. In 1914 a new organ was purchased for the church for \$140.00.

The W.A. is now divided into two groups, Afternoon and Evening Auxiliaries. The annual church garden party was for many years a special event, but it required much planning and preparation and the church finally withdrew in favour of the community garden party which was being held annually on Labour Day. The last church garden party recrded was in 1939 when the total profit after weeks of preparation amcunted to \$7.72. "But it had a social angle about it," said one member, "and we enjoyed working together." The community recently gave the W.A. \$100.00 as a gift to use for church improvements. The annual Tea meeting was a popular event for many years on the Monday evening following the anniversary services in October. It had a good reputation for many years. The rationing during the war years made it difficult to provide for these suppers and they were discontinued. The congregational St. Patrick's supper of pot luck style was popular for a number of years.

The W.M.S. has a good membership. Meetings are held regularly each month in the homes.



**Former S.S. Supt.  
A. J. Harris**



**Former S.S. Supt.  
Chas. Prudham**



The Sunday School plays an important role in the work of the church. We have always had good leaders and with the growing population, the attendance is mounting up. Improvements have recently been added to the S.S., and it is hoped in the future to add more class rooms.

An 1898 record book lists the officers and teachers for that year as follows: W. W. Foster, Superintendent; Robert Simpson, Asst. Superintendent; B. Simpson, Secretary; E. Vivian, Librarian; Teachers, J. J. Fields, Miss Husband, Mrs. D. Vanfleet, Miss E. Foster, T. Bennett, Miss J. Vanfleet, Mrs. Philips, Miss E. Paige, Miss E. McArthur, Miss Nixon, Miss Wood.

Mrs. Chas. Feer had one of the largest groups of senior girls and taught this age group for over twenty years.

The Young Adult Club provides recreation, usually meeting from house to house, with educational and social entertainment. The Epworth League served much the same purpose in the early years. We also remember the Tuxis Square, the C.G.I.T., and the Mission Circle and the Young People's organizations which bring back many memories among the different age groups through the years. The 1960 Young People's are already showing an enthusiastic outlook for the months ahead. A good Christian background is a valuable asset in forming a successful family or business career. We hope that the faith and foresight of our ancestors



**Mr. John Hollingsworth Welcomes Rev. Wilkinson.**

will be justified by our determination to keep up a high standard of Christian education in the community.

Mr. Geo. Harbottle and Mr. John Hollingsworth have both given much to the church in their ability as local preachers. In recent years Mr. and Mrs. Hollingsworth have endeared themselves to young and old in the community. Being a self educated man, Mr. Hollingsworth is a gifted messenger of the Gospel and has served in many of the surrounding churches. His words of inspiration and guidance leave a lasting impression on his congregations.

Dr. H. R. McDonald is known to a great many in the district as "The Family Doctor", and has seen many families rise and establish homes of their own. Dr. McDonald came to Kilbride in 1923 as a young practitioner, after serving in the medical corps in the First World War. He went from McGill University in 1915 and was with General Hospital No. 3 until 1918 when he returned to complete his studies and has been in this district for 37 years. He was appointed Medical Health Officer for Nelson and Nassagaweya Townships in 1931 and served for a number of years and is now a charter member of the Milton District Hospital Board. Mrs. McDonald taught school here for three years. Their home has always been open to church and community interests. Mrs. McDonald has been church organist for twenty years with Mrs. E. McArthur as assistant. Dr. McDonald is a member of the church board.



**Dr. H. R. McDonald**

Dr. A. C. Jones and Dr. G. C. Carbert were the only other regular practitioners here just before the turn of the century.

In 1903 the envelope system was first introduced into the church and in 1905 Carlisle and Kilbride began holding their own Sacramental Services.

Mrs. Nancy Robertson is the oldest resident in the community. She has made her home here for 45 years. She will celebrate her 96th birthday in December, and she has 87 descendants.

The first Kilbride Troop of the Girl Guides organization was started in 1954 by Mrs. V. Johnson, assisted by her daughter, Faye. A presentation of a picture of the Christ was made in the church in 1957. The leaders are now Donna Allison and Peggy Watson. Jack Inglis is the leader of the Scouts.

## Kilbride

To look at this quiet little residential community today, one would never believe that over 100 years ago, or between 1850 and 1885, this was one of the important industrial centres in the surrounding area. By 1855 it was rapidly becoming a thriving community. Much of the land which is now prosperous farming country was at that time covered with thick forests. Large lumbering concerns were being carried on. Mr. William Panton, born in 1808 in the County of Wicklow, Ireland, came to Canada in 1834 and settled on a farm in Nelson Township. After spending some time in the Niagara District as Public Works Inspector, he came to Cumminsville and was with Francis Baker for a time, in the Milling and Lumbering business. Together, they laid out the village of Kilbride, and named it after a town in Wicklow, Ireland. Panton and Baker Streets are named after these men.

The lumbering business gradually declined by 1870, as timber became scarce. Farming became more general though, and Mr. T. L. Whyte, manager of the large department store in town, continued to carry on a good business. He employed a large staff and had at least five clerks in the grocery dept. Heaps of barrels held supplies of sugar, salt, molasses, syrups, oils etc. The meat shop was always filled with choice meats which T. L. Whyte bought direct from the farmer and resold in small or large quantities to the consumer. The original store was burned but was immediately rebuilt. The millinery dept was at the back of the store, now the living quarters of the present owners. It required many clerks, and the tailoring department upstairs employed five men and eight ladies. It was managed by Chas. Thompson, father of William Thompson, who still resides in the village. There was a boot and shoe department, and the dry goods department was well stocked with yard goods, silks, velvets, woollens, yarns, laces, braids and trimmings of all description. T. L. Whyte was a good tradesman and it was not necessary to go to the city to either buy or sell produce.

The community in the late seventies had a population of several hundred. Kilbride is quoted as having 200, Cumminsville 200, and a little village also surrounded the Powder Mill area.

At this time there was plenty of work for everyone. Many came from distant parts seeking employment, there being other important industries in the locality. There was also a great deal of teaming being done by both oxen and horses, and blacksmiths were kept exceedingly busy. Charles Harris had a shop west of the church, John Greenlees had one on Hardsand's corner. Others were Bob Burton, Jack Small, Mr. Page and Bert Cartwright. Barber shops were run by Oliver Nixon and Fred Vivian.



**Mrs. Bertha Harbottle**

Kilbride was favoured with sidewalks, extending from the upper end of the village, to the Dakota grist mill. Of course, the roads were not stoned as they are at present and were often very muddy. Mud was something to be remembered, not only in Kilbride, but in the whole County of Halton. Much walking was done then and sidewalks were almost a necessity.

The T. L. Whyte store still stands on the corner and serves as a general store and post office, and also a home for the present owner, Vernon Johnson. It has changed hands many times. T. L. Whyte sold to McNabb and Parker, who ran a good business for a number of years. Others to carry on included Alex. Robinson, Jas. Fields, D. A. Vanfleet, C. Erwin, Samuel Brain (Mrs. Brain now resides with her daughter, Mrs. George Pegg), Bert Sproule, Jas. Lillicrop and the present owner.

On the opposite corner to the store was a large hotel, owned and operated by Frank Mills, and later by Chas. Rasberry. It was destroyed by fire as we mentioned before. A new building was erected and used as a wagon maker's shop, operated by Joshua Worthington. During the First World War, this building was purchased by Carey Brothers who equipped it for an evaporator and handled a good business for several months in the year for several years. It was torn down last winter and replaced by a new garage, owned by Bill Watson. The late William Mitchell owned a service station and refreshment booth there for a time and was noted for his generosity to the village children. He was a member of the church board.

This village was thriving eighty years ago with large stores, and houses were thickly populated. Most people kept boarders as many industries required much help. Up the creek to the north of the village stood a large woolen mill, owned and operated by William Montgomery. Close beside it was a tannery owned by Geo. Lee. There was a tin shop, a cooper shop, and a drug store, the latter being owned by Dr. Beattie. It was later purchased by D. A. Vanfleet for a harness shop and is now used as a garage on the property of Mrs. Marion Cartwright. For many years D. A. Vanfleet operated a general store close to the harness shop. The store and house adjoining it were destroyed by fire when owned and operated by Chap Erwin. The store was never re-built. A new house was built on the property, which is now the residence and office of Dr. H. R. McDonald. For a number of years Donald McGregor operated a small general store which was later owned by Jas. Tweedle and then by John Harris. It was used for a time as a Gospel Church and is now a residence.

The Community Hall was formerly Salem Church and was purchased in 1905 and re-built on the present site by Donald McGregor who used it for a meat shop. The community later purchased it and it has been greatly improved in recent years and is one of the community's recreation centres. In 1921 an Old Boys' Reunion was held for the purpose of renewing old acquaintances and obtaining funds. Friendships were renewed and the community realized \$1,500.00. The community grounds were purchased from G. H. McArthur in 1928 and both the hall and



grounds have been a centre of activity for the community through the years. The annual community garden party was a popular event for many years on Labour Day.

Many of the beautiful old maple trees which continue to shade the lawns in the village today were planted by Chas. Rasberry and T. G. Whyte over seventy years ago.

Town constable for many years was Harry Henderson, who lived where the Gorter Greenhouses are now located.

The village of Cumminsville was named after its founder, Mr. Cummins, and was really a continuation of Kilbride. Hawkins' general store stood on the corner. Other owners mentioned are Robert Hay and Robert Thompson. Above the store was the Temperance Hall and it also housed the office of the Montreal Telegraph Co., which was the only means whereby one could exchange distant messages in emergencies. Sandy Fraser was telegraph operator for a time. He also taught in the village school. There were 17 scholars in the entrance class at that time. Robt. Rasberry, Leila Earle (Harris) and William Thompson were three of them. A bake shop was owned by Sam Shouldice, and a large hotel stood on the opposite corner, once owned by Bob Thompson and his sister. There was a grist mill owned by Thomas Galloway, a saw and shingle mill, operated by Abram King, then by the Greenlees Bros., and finally by Thos. Dent. David Liddle had a turning and lathing shop. The Rasberry family have a rocking chair made there and still in excellent condition. It is well over 100 years old. There was a tailor shop operated by H. Leasley. Two doctors practiced there, McGregor and McClure.

The first post office in Cumminsville was kept by William Panton. Mail came from Hannahsville to Cumminsville twice a week. There was the Hamilton Spectator, the Christian Guardian, and A. McCoy, a store keeper in Cumminsville printed a small paper called "The Wasp". Envelopes were not in use. Foolscap was used to write on, then the letter was folded and sealed with wax. Postage on a letter was three pence and on a newspaper, one-half pence.

Mail was also brought from Milton to Kilbride. Chas. Rasberry was the mail driver for thirty-five years, living in Kilbride and driving the mail from Milton to Hamilton. It is stated that during those thirty-five years he never missed a day or took a holiday except the day of his marriage. Lowville was later brought into the route and deliveries were then made by stagecoach. John Duncan was the chief driver, using four or five excellent road horses. The coach was always full of people, parcels and boxes, but it was invariably a happy load and the drivers including Frank Featherston and Frank Robertson were reported to be very obliging.

Robert Rasberry, son of the early mail driver Chas. Rasberry, farmed for many years in the district. Now living in Milton, Mr. and Mrs. Rasberry can recall the days of gas street lamps, horse drawn

street cars and early farming methods. Mr. Rasberry believes he owned the first automobile in the Kilbride area, a 1911 model with a handsome brass front. "He used to run it up against the fence and say 'whoa'," Mrs. Rasberry laughed.

South of Cumminsville stands the old Dakota grist mill, once used largely as a flour mill, but in later years as a grist and saw mill. It is one of the last remaining pioneer landmarks of the community. The original building was moved to Southampton about 1903, and the present mill which had previously been used as a storehouse, is quite possibly as old as the original mill. Some of the millers who have operated the mill during the past years include Andrew Gage and son, Jas. Harvey, Daniel Smith, David Kirkwood, John Fostener, Alex Robinson, Richard Mathews, Geo. Bragg (who had the rolls installed for grinding grain which had previously been ground by stones), Thomas Bennett, Spencer Bennett, Charles Williams, Samuel Ecker, Clark Eaton, William Pegg and the present owner George Pegg and son. This area was originally surveyed out into lots. Dakota at one time had quite a number of residents.

Below Dakota on the Cedar Springs property was the old Powder Mill Plant consisting of three buildings owned by the Canada Powder Co. and managed by E. Corlett. These mills employed a great many men and women. Many of the employees lived in small houses in that district. In the deed of the land now owned by Cedar Springs the village of Willbrook is mentioned. Perhaps the saddest and most terrible tragedy that ever happened in Halton County was the explosion of these mills just 76 years ago on Oct. 9th. The following clipping was taken from the Hamilton Spectator.

"Cumminsville, Oct. 9th, 1884 (by wire)—The Hamilton Powder Mills were blown up at 12.45 to-day. The cracker, glaze and press mills



Remains of the Powder Mills

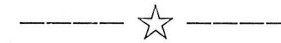
are all gone. There were four men killed and two wounded. The cause of the explosion is not known."

Happening at noon hour, only several men were on duty. Residents of Hamilton heard the violent explosion which shook the earth like an earthquake. Then they saw the huge cloud of dense smoke and knew at once that it was the large powder mills at Cumminsville. The deafening crash was heard as far north as Owen Sound. Nearby homes were badly damaged by the concussion. The cause was not definitely known but it was feared that the machinery became overheated as they had to rush orders for powder and were running the mills day and night. Those who remember it can recall men running from every direction toward the scene, some on galloping horses, others with wagon loads of men. Sadness covered the country for miles around. Relief organizations were formed to assist stricken families. The names of those killed were Heatherington, Murray, Tibbles and Calder. One man named Andrew Coffee was blown to the treetops but landed in the waters of the Twelve and miraculously escaped death. Mrs. James Burns remembers attending the mass funeral service which was held in the old St. George's Anglican Church. The Powder Mills were never rebuilt. A large barn was erected by E. Corlett where the warehouses had stood. The farm changed hands many times until, in 1924, W. D. Flatt purchased it together with additional acreage to begin building what is now one of Ontario's finest private summer resorts and ski clubs. Lack of employment now caused the village folk to go to other parts of the country and Dakota and Cumminsville were soon practically deserted. The Canada Powder Co. had purchased the land and constructed these mills under great difficulty. The Powder Press had been shipped by boat to Burlington Beach, moved on greased timbers to Wellington Square, and then drawn by a specially constructed sleigh with thirteen yoke of oxen, to the site of the mills. Powder from here was used to blast the right of way through the Rockies, for the C.P.R.

The first actual settler where the Powder Mills stood and where Cedar Springs is located, was Thomas Simpson, a veteran of the Napoleonic wars. In the reign of King George the Fourth, he was given a Crown grant of 100 acres which was then solid bush and he built a log cabin and began clearing the land. He was the ideal type of pioneer. He was a soldier, a tailor, he tanned deer skins and made shoes for his family. He carded and spun wool, and wove and knit it into cloth, mitts and socks. His handiness with scissors and needle made it possible to provide all necessary clothing for the family. His wife was the first woman to offer produce of the farm on the Hamilton market, her only method of conveyance being on horse back. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson were the first people in the vicinity to own a horse. He was also responsible for erecting the first church in the vicinity, by making bees and spreading his enthusiasm for a place of worship, to his neighbours. The logs were cut down, dressed and the church was built on the site where the Nelson Presbyterian church now stands. Mr. and Mrs. Simpson were laid to rest beside this little church.

In 1830 the Hunt Brothers, later of Carlisle, were said to have purchased 200 acres of land in the vicinity of Kilbride, for 12 shillings, 6 pence an acre (about 3 dollars). Records tell of the pioneers using the outdoor bake ovens, and making their own sugar, soap and candles. They started their fires by using flint, steel and tinder.

Few of the descendants of these pioneers are left to transfer the actual facts and experiences as once told in family circles or before open fire places, yet life still goes on, and Nature still provides a peaceful setting of winding streams and shady trees for those who like to wander away from the hustle and bustle of modern living, to catch in the stillness, something of the God given beauty and simplicity that our forefathers enjoyed, and to hear the still small voice which somehow speaks in the quiet, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the ends of the world."







**1960 OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH**

Front row—Mrs. P. Fisher, Mrs. N. Smith, Mrs. Ross Harbottle, Mrs. J. Inglis, Mrs. A. Hiscott, Mrs. J. Henry, Mrs. E. McArthur, Mrs. Dr. H. McDonald. Second row—John Harris, F. Tinkler, Dr. H. McDonald, J. Hollingsworth, Rev. Wm. Wilkinson, S. Corman. Back row—H. Gorter, W. Pickett, C. Fretz, R. Weir, R. Harbottle, G. Armstrong, W. Bullard, J. Ayton, J. Inglis.



**Kilbride Young People's Union**



**Kilbride United Church Sunday School**

## List of Ministers, 1860-1960

### Lowville Circuit

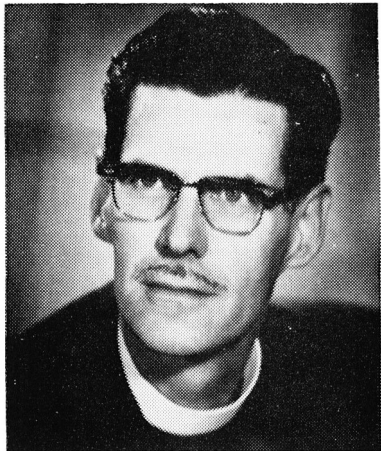
James McAlister  
1874—James Scott  
1875—John Clappison  
    ass. R. C. Henders  
1876—J. R. McKay

### Carlisle Circuit

1878-81—John Turner  
1881—James Goodwin  
1884—Thomas Stobbs  
1887—George Ferguson  
1890—Thomas Athloe  
1893—Richard Scanlon  
1894—James Mooney  
1896—John Stewart  
1898—T. Webster Kelly  
1901—George Launds

\*There are only four former ministers living today.

"And still their silent ministries  
Within our hearts have place  
As when on Earth they walked with us  
And met us face to face."



**Rev. Harold Currie**

Rev. Harold Currie left this year to take up the directorship of the Wesley Centre for Young People in Hamilton. He spent some time in the mission field of Saskatchewan and also volunteered for chaplaincy duties in the R.C.A.F. Supplementary Reserve with whom he spends his summer vacations. Mrs. Currie was an active worker in the Kilbride W.M.S. and W.A. organizations. During their stay, the new parsonage was built at Carlisle.

### Carlisle Circuit

1902—J. H. McArtney  
1905—G. Francis Morris  
1909—W. M. Vollick  
1913—W. A. Terry  
1915—G. A. Cropp  
1917—E. M. Morrow  
1921—F. R. Hendershot\*  
1924—H. E. Walker  
1927—C. H. Woltz  
1932—G. F. N. Atkinson  
1937—Chas. Hackett  
1942—Newman Truax\*  
1950—G. E. Almack\*  
1954—H. F. Currie\*

### Present Minister

1960—Wm. Wilkinson

## REVEREND WILLIAM GIFFEN WILKINSON, B.A., B.D.

Rev. Wilkinson was born at Brampton, Ontario in 1921. He attended a rural public school in Chinguacousy Township. His father died when he was 14 years of age and he spent the next ten years on the home farm near Brampton. Due to the influence of some young Christians he decided to become a minister. He completed his high school at Dominion Business College, Toronto and McMaster University, Hamilton. He received a Bachelor of Arts from Victoria College, Toronto, in 1953. In 1955 he married Carol Graydon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Graydon who at that time was teaching at Brampton High School. In 1956 he received his Bachelor of Divinity from Emmanuel College, Toronto. Their first pastorate after ordination was at Cut Knife, Saskatchewan, where two sons were born, Peter in 1957 and John in 1958. He accepted a call to Carlisle and Kilbride in May, 1960.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

John Shepherd	A. J. Harris	William Pickett
William Foster	F. McNiven	John Hollingsworth
George Harbottle	Chas. Prudham	Mrs. Chas. Peer
G. F. Morris	Archie Cairns	Mrs. E. Heatherington
Mrs. D. A. Vanfleet	Lloyd Rasberry	Mrs. Ross Harbottle

### ORGANISTS

Elmer Lee, Lizzy Earle (Dales), Leila Earle (Harris), Bertha McArthur (Harbottle), Edith Greenlees (Chisholm), Laura Prudham (Dixon),  
Gertie McArthur, Mrs. Dr. McDonald

### CHOIR LEADERS

Thomas Wood, Elmer Harbottle, Fred Green

### JUNIOR CHOIR

Zelma Coverdale                      Edna Gorter

First wedding to be recorded—Mark Harris and Leila Earle.