

The Marysville Methodist Church

Reporter

Jan 1, 1873

The new and beautiful church just completed by Alexander Gibson at Marysville, will be opened for Diving Service on Sabbath next. Rev. Mr. Currie will preach the Dedication sermon in the morning; Rev. Mr. McKeown follows in the afternoon; Rev. Mr. Gaetz in the evening.

Architect Matthew Stead

MARYSVILLE, N.B., Wesleyan Methodist Church, built for Alexander Gibson, 1872; burned 1911 (Daily Morning News [Saint John], 6 Jan. 1873, 2, descrip.)

Reporter

Jan 8, 1873

Opening of the New Church at Marysville

It was a glorious Sabbath morning, the sun shone brightly and there was more of pleasantness in the atmosphere than we have enjoyed on any morning since the earth received its snowy vesture in November last. It had been announced all abroad that on Sunday, the 5th instant, the new and magnificent church just erected by Alex. Gibson, was to be dedicated to the Worship of the Divine Being, and as the beauty, we might say magnificence, of the structure had been depicted in glowing colors by those who had previously visited it, it was anticipated very naturally that there would be a crowded congregation on the occasion of the Dedication, especially as three of the most popular preachers in the Conference had been announced to occupy the pulpit during the day. This anticipation was literally verified, and at an early hour the roads were thronged with sleighs, sledges and pedestrians all hurrying towards the central point of attraction, Fredericton contributing a large proportion of the congregation, His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, among the rest,

About 10 o'clock we came in sight of the Church, and had just time to observe that externally it was a beautifully proportioned structure, painted a pure white, octagon in form, with a lofty spire rising from a richly carved and ornamented turret to the height of 156 feet, this turret constituting we found the vestibule of the Church, and that the main building was surmounted by a lantern of amber colored glass, sustained by Gothic columns, and that the site was a most commanding one, overlooking the village which has grown into existence by the almost magic touch of the master mind of the founder of Marysville.

The style of the whole building is Ornate Gothic, which is scrupulously adhered to throughout, and manifested to the admiring beholder on view of the entrance tower rising in octagon pinnacles with pointed and ornamented arches and recessed Gothic windows. The doors are of black walnut and ash, with carved columns and richly ornamented. Passing through the vestibule which is lightened by double Gothic windows, and through another set of richly carved folding doors, we stand within the nave of the church, lost in sudden admiration and amazement as its incomparable beauty bursts upon our view. Here we have in design all that taste could suggest and art devise, in architecture a richness of elaboration which is perfectly gorgeous, and in painting that harmonious blending of color which gives delight to the eye and imparts to the feelings such pleasurable emotions. Not having access to the architect, Matthew Stead, of Saint John, anything like an adequate description is clearly beyond our power, We have seen some of the finest churches in the Dominion and in the United States, including the celebrated Chapel of the Jesuits at Montreal, but nothing to exceed in elegance of design and execution the little Church at Marysville.

Standing at the entrance door and the astonishment of the coup d'oeil having passed away, we observe the frescoed dome, the ornamental columns, the richly

stained Gothic windows, the elegant pulpit Tabernacle, the cushioned pews and carpeted aisle, all lighted by the amber colored rays peering through the elegant lantern that graces the dome. The prevailing color on the walls is a pale drab, the pillars of a darker shade. In the angles of the outer wall are ribbed columns, partially showing in the interior crowned with ornate capitols, and from these to the columns supporting the some spring pointed arches, richly stenciled and painted. On these latter columns the caps are elegantly carved, the shadows touched with gold. From these spring, as we have already said, the vaulted dome, with grained arches, frescoed in most elaborate style. The interior of the same displays scrolls or medallions, gold stars on an azure ground, with smaller scrolls in garnet surmounting the larger in intermediate spaces. The glance upward from the centre of the Church, so indifferently portrayed in this imperfect description, is simply magnificent.

In the eastern end of the Church and extending over the vestibule, preserving the same style of grained arches and Gothic windows, is the organ gallery, where we found an instrument which could not have cost less than \$4,000. On this occasion it was skillfully played by Mr. E. Cadwallader, of Fredericton. The organ loft will accommodate about 30 singers. If in this splendid edifice there be anything which the most correct taste would have to regret it is that the magnificent East window of stained glass, carved and decorated with fleurs de lis, and costing not less than \$1,000, is for the greater part concealed by the organ. Possibly this may yet be remedied. At the opposite end is the pulpit or tabernacle, in a semi-circular recess, three Gothic pyramids rising above the reading desk, the central pyramid inlaid, with the words in Gothic characters: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." On the platform are three richly cushioned carved chairs, all in keeping with the style of the architecture. This tabernacle is exceedingly chaste and elegant; and amid all the beautiful appointments of the buildings was especially admired. A door leads from the pulpit platform to the vestry, filled with reversible seats, and capable of seating about 100 persons. The Reading Desk is of black walnut, inlaid with ash and comparatively plain, but unique. The windows of the Church are double Gothic, of stained glass, and bearing on either side of the central stile appropriate scripture texts—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." "I am the Resurrection and the Life," and the like. The frame-work of the windows is highly ornamented, with a surrounding of fleur-de-lis in relief. The pews converge towards the tabernacle, are uniformly cushioned and finished in black walnut and ash. There are no doors, but at each entrance a carved octagonal post with walnut cap rises about a foot above the level of the pew. It is unnecessary to say that these seats are all free. From the centre of the lantern there is an elegant chandelier pendant, in blue and gold, containing a double row of lamps, each row twelve in number. This chandelier is at once a costly elegant ornament, and a useful appendance. The Tabernacle and Organ loft are lighted by triple brackets in keeping with pendant. The aisles, running along the internal walls, and leading from the vestibule to the pulpit, are carpeted with Brussels carpeting, and covered with hemp matting. The building is about 60 feet in diameter, and capable of seating about 350 persons. It is heated by a furnace in the basement, arranged on the latest and most improved system.

This model of Church Architecture, the crowning act of Mr. Gibson's munificence since his establishment at Marysville, was opened for Divine Service on Sabbath morning last. The Church was crowded although not to excess, and at 11 o'clock precisely the dedication service commenced. Within the Tabernacle were seated Rev. Messrs. Currie, Gaetz, KcKeown, Wesleyans, Rev. Mr. Gunter, Free Baptist, and another Minister whose name we did not learn. At the hour appointed, and as the great bell in the tower gave its final stroke, Mr. Currie rose and from the Wesleyan Church Service read . . .

NB Reporter and Fredericton Advertiser

April 24, 1878

Alexander Gibson

Immediately opposite Fredericton the St. John River received the waters of a small tributary—the Nashwaak. Following up the course of this stream about three miles, the traveler comes to the picturesque village of Marysville. Nothing remarkable in that, you say, but have patience. That village has a history, and that history centers

around the person of the one man whose name appears at the head of this sketch, and from whom the village is named. Not many years ago, there lived in the vicinity of St. Stephen in this Province, a man “to fortune and to fame unknown,” who was content to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow.” An energetic, hard working man with nought to cheer him on the way, but the poor man’s blessing—a large family. He laboured on, and as his own toil, accumulated for himself a little capital; he invested it in the lumber business. These small beginnings led to greater ventures, and after a time he purchased a saw mill on the Nashwaak, and removed thither. Since that time fortune has smiled upon him so kindly that, now beside owning an immense mill property on the Nashwaak, and the village which bears his name, **Alexander Gibson, the quondam day labourer, has a controlling interest in the man lumber trade of our Province, is the largest shareholder in the River du Loup Railroad, and owns large tracts of wild land as well as property in other securities. He is probably the wealthiest man in the Province, and many be fitly termed the Prince of New Brunswick lumberers.**

The village of Marysville is situated on both sides of the Nashwaak, but the two divisions differ widely in appearance, though it is difficult for the observer to determine which affords the more pleasing scene. On the left bank, and occupying a low flat close to the stream, are the dwellings of the mill employees with the village store rising in their midst. The dwelling, numbering about thirty, are all alike in plan and colors, and each is arranged for the occupation of two families. That part of the village on the right bank presents a more imposing appearance. It comprises the splendid residence of Mr. Gibson himself, those of two of his sons, and of the head officers in his extensive business, the parsonage, and last but by no means least, “Gibson’s Church,” as it is popularly known. The residences would all do credit to any locality, but the church deserves more than a passing notice; it is octagonal in form, surmounted by a lofty steeple, and painted a plain white, the ornamental work on the exterior is very tastefully executed and produces a fine effect, within the building the same taste is displayed; the furnishing are expensive and comprise one of the finest organs in the Province. The congregation is ministered to, and the parsonage occupied by, one of the Methodist denomination; but we understand that no one but Mr. Gibson has any claim on either church or parsonage. **That gentleman may generally be seen at service seated in the family pew. He cordially welcomes strangers, not infrequently conducting them to seats himself.** *In appearance and habits Mr. Gibson is quiet and unostentatious, but his face is marked by the energy and determination which have characterized his life.* professing no particular religious belief, **Mr. Gibson is celebrated for his magnificent donations to all religious and charitable institutions which come under his notice.** Though universally esteemed and respected by all who have had the pleasure of his acquaintance, **his retiring habits have prevented his fame from reaching far beyond his own business circles.** But certainly the record of his life is the most remarkable instance of a successful financial career in the annals of our Province and perhaps of the Dominion.

Reporter

July 30, 1884

Two Days in Marysville

Some of its Attractions Noted – The homestead of the Lumber King. – The Church – The Cotton Mill – The Railroad – Beautiful Private Residences – New Buildings – The Bridge – A Busy City in Prospect

A representative of the Reporter recently enjoyed the hospitality of Mr. Gibson and family while spending a couple of days in the picturesque and now famous village of Marysville. The mansion, or as many of the residents call it, to designate it from the other beautiful residences of member of the family, the “big” house, is a monument of the taste and architectural skill of the late M. Stead, whose hand is not only seen upon the exterior and interior of the building, but in the tracings of lawns, numerous walks, cedar hedges, garden plots, shady groves, and a marble sculptured fountain of exquisite design, whose limpid streams add splendour to the surroundings.

With all this magnificence visitors are more apt to find Mrs. Gibson giving directions in the scullery or assisting fruit pickers in the five acre garden on the hill,

than in the magnificent parlors. Mr. Gibson, although one of the busiest men in the Dominion, exhibits no signs of care. The loss of a couple of cargos of steel rails, the wreck of a ship in mid-ocean, or a telegram announcing the fall of deals in the English market, will not prevent him from conversing in his easy manner upon social, religious, commercial, or political matters. But whether using the telephone in his library, inspecting the cotton mill, the brick works, the Penniac booms, or other enterprises, he is always within the reach of the clergyman with a church to build or the man who lost his all by fire.

Five new cottagers are rapidly approaching completion on the hill beyond the "store" and will be occupied by the Superintendent and other official connected with the cotton mill. Great improvements are noticeable in this locality. The top of the hill is to be removed to the depth of five or six feet to afford a better view to the occupants of the houses. After the stir and natural bustle of the week Marysville is a delightful spot on the Sabbath.

The people are quiet and respectful and reverence the day, and hundreds of men women and children, neatly attired are met either going or returning from church or taking a quiet stroll along the high banks of the serpentine Nashwaak. The spiritual care of the people devolves upon Rev. E. Evans, ex-President of the N. B. and PEI Methodist Conference, and his Sabbath ministrations in the "prettiest church in Canada" are attended by large congregations. On Sabbath morning last in a practical and instructive sermon he earnestly endeavored to impress upon their minds the desirability of living rather than merely professing religion; in the evening he adverted to the heinous sin of intemperance in language forcible and convincing enough to please the desires of the most ambitious worker in the ranks of the Fredericton W.C.T.U. Not the least attractive feature in the exercises of this church, is the service of praise. An excellent choir under the leadership of Prof. Sterne, whose manipulation of the fine Organ is always so much admired, rendered the hymns and several anthems with no ordinary inspiration.

At the evening service, Prof. Crans presided at the organ with the skill so familiar to all who have recently attended the Sackville Educational Institution.

Gleaner

May 3, 1888

The editor of the Moncton Transcript, J. T. Hawke is imprisoned for contempt following his criticism of the conduct of a judge. The Gleaner protests the sentence. In jail Mr. Hawke pens some recollections of Marysville.

. . . My pen and imperfect memory cannot do justice in description to the town established and maintained through the enterprise of Mr. Alexander Gibson, but I will convey s true an impression as I can. On driving up the road which is at the very edge of a bluff overlooking the river, the most prominent edifice in view is the magnificent Methodist church erected by Mr. Gibson for the accommodation of his employees. In its exterior appearance it is not unlike th parliamentary library building at Ottawa. It is octagon shaped surmounted by a massive dome, which is capped in turn by a lantern. In front there is a large porch and towering for at least one hundred and fifty feet in the air is the spire. Borrowing the key from the adjacent parsonage, we enter the church, but what a surprise. It has the most beautiful interior for its size I have ever seen in a Protestant church. Its design is unique and its ornamentation chaste. The interior is octagon shaped, and the porch forms one of the sides, and over the porch is the choristry lighted by three stained glass windows. Here is a beautiful, large organ, which is played by a musician who received a handsome salary. Leading to the choristry are stairs from the body of the church.

Immediately opposite the entrance is the pulpit and altar and on the wood carving which arches above is this text: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." Six beautifully stained glass windows, adorned with favorite scriptural texts, subdue the glare of daylight. Away at the very crown of the dome amber-tinted glass lends a subdued tone to the light which harmonizes with the general effect. The Interior of the dome is frescoed of a pale sky blue relieved with a myriad of golden stars. Lines of another shade run through the whole design preventing any monotony. The dome is supported by sixteen pillars, eight of which are built in the wall and eight stand a few feet on the floor, each pair of pillars being united by key arch. The pews are commodious and all splendidly upholstered. The floor is uniformly carpeted, and in

commomious and an spienority upnoisterea. The floor is uniformly carpeted, and in each pew is a Bible and Wesleyan hymn book combined. The combined book is never taken from the pew and bears the name of the church stamped in gold letters upon its binding. From the centre of the dome hangs a magnificent lamp pendant. To the rear of the building is an extension used as the Sunday school room and vestry. The pastor is the Rev. Mr. Reid, and not only his salary but that of the organist are, it is understood, defrayed through the liberality of Mr. Gibson. The boundless character of that liberality may be better appreciated when it is learned that Mr. Gibson met personally the whole cost of erecting and fitting up this model church edifice. Mr. Gibson evidently acts on the belief that it is better to seek during his life time to make the world better for his having been in it, than to leave such a work to be solely done by executors after his passing away. It is a pity that more wealthy men do not follow in Mr. Gibson's footsteps.

Gleaner

Jan 22, 1898

Religious census of Marysville

1. **Methodist 744**, number attending church 579, number of communicants 238; number attending Sunday School 57
2. F.C. Baptist, 426; attending church 342; communicants 164; attending S. S. 283
3. Baptist 186; attending church 146; communicants 68; attending S. S. 67
4. Roman Catholic 144; attending church 105; communicants 95; attending S. S. 39
5. Church of England 122; attending church 93; communicants 41; attending S. S. 52
6. Reformed Baptist 35; attending church 29; communicants 19, attending S. S. 23
7. Presbyterian 39; attending church 23; communicants 6; attending S. S. 5
8. Congregational 10; attending church 10. communicants 4, attending S. S. 5
9. Salvation Army 7; attending church 5; communicants 2, attending S. S. 3

Summary

Total population 1704

No. Attending church 1330

No. not attending church 374

No. of communicants 637

No. attending S. S. 594

No. not attending S. S. 1110

(this list taken from reports prepared for each individual church)

Gleaner

Dec 22, 1902

At Marysville

The services at the Marysville Methodist church are of more than ordinary interest. In the morning the Rev. R. Crisp, pastor of the church, preached on the advent of Christ—a thoughtful interesting and impressive discourse. The music selected was well chosen and increased the attractiveness of the service.

In the evening a Christmas service was held by the members of the Sunday School and rarely has such a congregation been assembled. Every available space was utilized and some having to content themselves with standing room. Mr. Alfred Rowley, superintendent, had his work well in hand and the school responded to his call as readily as soldiers to the voice of their commander. The music comprised Christmas carols, choruses, solos and duets, and if given in a public hall would have elicited heartiest applause. The Misses Crisp and an able staff of teachers ably assisted Mr. Rowley in the different departments.

The superintendent asked for seventy dollars towards the library fund and no doubt but what he received it. None were more interested than Mr. Alexander Gibson Senior, who will make Christmas a day long to be remembered by the children of the school. Such a service as that last evening will linger long in the memory and many will think of the old familiar lines: "Oh make me a child again, Just for a night."

Gleaner

Jan 30, 1911

The Beautiful Methodist Church at Marysville Totally Destroyed by Fire on Sunday

The Beautiful Methodist Church at Marysville Totally Destroyed by Fire on Sunday Afternoon. (2 pp.)

One of the Monuments to the Liberality of Mr. Alexander Gibson in the Town Which His Genius Called into Existence

Erected at a Cost of over \$65,000 and Given to the Methodist People of Marysville. Dedicated Thirty Eight Years Ago. Residence Next to Church Also Destroyed
The beautiful Methodist church here, said to be the most costly church edifice of its size in Canada, was destroyed by fire on Sunday.

With the church, the genius and liberality of Mr. Alexander Gibson., Sr., in the town that his genius called into existence, there was destroyed the residence nearby occupied by Mr. W. T. Day, the circuit steward of the church and its principal of the public school of the town.

Visitors from far and near have come here to see this thriving town founded by one of the Canada's greatest captains of industry and one of the places of interest has been the church built by Mister Gibson at his own expense and presented by him to the people of the community. The edifice was beautiful in its design, complete in its appointments and brilliant in its furnishings, particularly the interior.

Only a few minutes before the fire broke out from a faulty furnace Mister Gibson had left the church, where he had attended the regular morning service, and it was a great shock to him when he answered a telephone ring at his residence and was informed that the church was in flames and that there was no chance of saving it from complete destruction. It was a hard blow to Mister Gibson in his declining days and he stayed at home during he fire, saying he did not believe that he could be of any aid to those who were there and he did not wish to watch the destruction of the building.

The church building was completed and dedicated on January 28th, 1873, thirty-eight years ago almost to a day, costing between \$65,000 and \$68,000. At the dedicatory service, which was during the pastorate of Rev. Robert Wilson, who is now superannuated and living at Saint John, Mr. Gibson arose in his pew and stated: "This church is dedicated to the worship of God for the people of Marysville calling themselves Methodists." And since then Mister Gibson from his private funds has contributed practically the entire cost of the upkeep of the church, including the payment of the salaries of the ministers, the organist and the gratuities to the members of the choir.

The Origin of the Fire

The disastrous fire is believed to have found its origin from a defective flue or chimney. During the morning service Rev. J. C. Berrie, the pastor, noticed a smoke issuing from the registers of the church and fearing there might be something wrong, he remained at the church at the conclusion of the service and had Mr. Brannen, the janitor, go to the cellar and make an examination of the furnace.

He reported that everything was all right and about 14:30 o'clock they left the building. Fifteen minutes later, when Rev. Mr. Berrie passed by the church after driving the janitor home and everything seemed to be all right.

Shortly after one o'clock smoke was seen issuing from the roof around the chimney and soon the building was in flames. An alarm was given, but it was too late to do anything towards stopping the progress of the flames without any fire fighting apparatus.

It was not long before a vast crowd gathered, men, women and children coming from all over the town, as well as from Fredericton, to watch the progress of the fire. Scores of men willing to do anything to save the building, were powerless. In fact, after the fire was discovered the flames had gained such headway and the heat inside the building was so great that nobody was even able to enter and its valuable contents, **including the records of the church, which were kept in the basement**, could not be saved.

Between 1 and 2 o'clock the fire was at its height and fore miles around the flames could be seen as they swept up the spire, which finally fell across the lawn in front of the residence of Mr. W. T. Day, which was also in flames.

Mr. Day's Residence Destroyed

During the early stages of the fire a valiant effort was made to save Mr. Day's residence. A number of teams, including several from the livery stable of Mr. T. G. Hatt, were used to haul water, some of its distance of half a mile or more, and a bucket brigade formed. Water was put on the building until the heat became so great

that the volunteer fire fighters had to withdraw.

In the meantime some of the furniture had been removed from the house and taken to the residence of Mr. Alexander Gibson Jr., where Mr. Day's family took refuge, but the piano and a lot of other furniture was destroyed. Several times the barn in the rear of Mr. Day's residence caught fire and it took a lot of hard work to stop the flames from spreading to that building, whence the flames would, no doubt, have quickly caught on the old school building adjoining and then on the main school building, which is also nearby.

Mr. Day had occupied the house, which, like all the others in the vicinity, was built by Mister Gibson for upwards of thirty-five years and only last summer he had placed the first insurance on his furniture, having taken out a \$1,000 policy to include the piano, so that his loss is covered. The house was worth probably \$2,000 and was insured for \$800, being included in the blanket policy in the Guardian Fire Insurance Company covering all of the Alexander Gibson Company's property in Marysville.

Souvenir Hunters There

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon the worst of the fire was over. The two large flues leading from the furnace stood until that time and then fell, one after the other, in rapid succession.

The heat from the burning buildings had melted the snow away within a radius of some feet and the snow had turned into water and ran down into the roadway, where the slush was several inches deep.

Souvenir hunters were busy and a little fellow named George White secured the cap of the stop of the church steeple, which appeared to treasure very highly and declined to let it pass out of his hands. Other parts of the steeple were being chopped up with an axe to make souvenirs for the crowd.

Asked Aid from Fredericton

Shortly before 2 o'clock Dr. Fisher of Marysville telephone to Chief Rutter of the Fredericton Fire Department asking if there was any help that could be given by the Fredericton department, but found they had nothing to offer that would be of any assistance. Later in the afternoon Chief Rutter was a member of the one of the parties who came here to view the results of the fire.

A Unique Church

Built by Mr. Alexander Gibson, Sr., at a Cost of \$65,000. The List of Pastors
The Methodist church destroyed by fire had on a number of occasions been the scene of the meetings of the New Brunswick and PEI Conference in years gone by and was without question the most beautiful edifice in the conference.

When Mister Gibson was building up the town of Marysville in the early '70s, he realized the necessity of having a proper place for worship and with his characteristic benevolence had plans and specifications prepared and the erection of the church commenced.

The best of imported Southern pine was used for the sills and other heavy parts of the building, and in the interior finished mahogany, walnut and whitewood were used. French and Italian artists were brought from New York and paid large salaries to have the interior decorations the best that could be provided. The stained glass windows were imported from England.

The organ was installed by Messrs. Hook and Hastings, of New York, and was a costly instrument with a beautiful tone and excellent equipment. When the church was opened the congregation found the pews supplied with leather bound bibles and hymn books, all furnished by Mister Gibson for the use of the worshippers.

He also paid the salary of the organist, Prof. Max Sterne being employed at an annual salary of \$1,500 before his engagement later on at Christchurch cathedral, Fredericton. Later Prof. Cadwallader, who has for many years been musical instructor at the Provincial Normal School, was for many years the organist and choir leader.

The List of Pastors

When the church was dedicated on January 28th, 1873--thirty eight years ago on Saturday--Methodist ministers had been stationed at Marysville for several years previous, the place forming a part of the British North American Conference.

In 1868 and 1869 the pastor was Rev. Arthur D. Morton, who was succeeded in 1870 by Rev. Joseph Sellar, who a year later was replaced by Rev. Silas C. Fulton.

In 1872 Rev. Robert Wilson, who is now superannuated and living at Saint John, was appointed to the pastorate and he remained there for two years. It was during his pastorate - on Jan. 28th, 1873 - that the church was dedicated, and since that time there has been some eloquent preachers and able men in charge of the church.

In 1874 Marysville became a part of the New Brunswick and PEI Methodist Conference and the following year Rev. Edward Jenkins was appointed pastor in succession to Rev. Mr. Wilson, and was succeeded the following year by Rev. Robert Duncan, who remained until 1878 when Rev. W. W. Brewer, at present stationed at Saint John, was appointed. He remained for three years and the list of ministers from that time until the present day following the year of their appointment.

1882 Edward Evans

1885 John Reid

1888 Howard Sprague

1890 Dr. Chapman

1895 W. W. Lodge

1901 Robert Crisp

1905 W. B. Thomas

1908 J. C. Berrie

Mister Gibson Feels the Loss Keenly
But Views the Situation With Truly Christian Spirit

A meeting will probably be held tomorrow of the congregation of the destroyed Marysville Methodist church to consider plans for the future. An invitation has already been received from the Orangemen of the town to use the Orange Hall for holding services until permanent arrangements are made for a new church and there has been an intimation that the Baptist Church, situated only a short distance above the burned church, will also be offered for the use of the Methodist people at certain times.

Rev. J. C. Berrie, the Methodist pastor, visited Mr. Alexander Gibson at his residence last evening. After the interview Mr. Berrie stated that the destruction of the church was a hard blow for Mister Gibson but he viewed the situation philosophically and with true Christian spirit, remarking that **it was one of those things which could not be helped and it must be for the best.**

Speaking to the Gleaner Rev. Mr. Berrie said that he had had the furnace and chimney at the church examined by builders from Fredericton last fall and also last spring and they had declared the building as safe from fire as possible.

"It has been a sad blow to the Methodist people of this community," declared Mr. Rev. Berrie, "and what action will be taken I don't know. We couldn't possibly ever put up another church like the beautiful building which has been destroyed."

Rev. Dr. Wilson's History of Church (2 pp.)

Pastor at Time of Dedication Writes of Marysville and Methodism

The following interesting article on the history of Marysville and the destroyed church is from the pen of the Rev. Dr. Robert Wilson, who was pastor of the Marysville Methodist church at the time of its dedication in 1873 and who is now superannuated and living in Saint John:

The Nashwaak river is an important tributary of the Saint John, into which it empties its waters about a mile below Fredericton. From its mouth to where it is lost in the uninhabited wilds, it possesses unusual attractions in the thriving villages that dot its banks, the fertile valleys that lie along its course, and especially for the vast forest with which its neighborhood abounds. Viewed from an historical, agriculturist and commercial standpoint few places possess more that is interesting to the tourist and the trader than the Nashwaak region.

The men who first settled along this river were a brave and hardy race, and had proved their readiness to do and suffer on the tented field as well as in the quieter walks of life. Some of these had faithfully served their king as members of that gallant corps, the 42nd highlanders, and bravely upheld the national honor in the hour of danger. But life in the wilderness was a new experience and they found their lot a pretty hard one. To fell the forest, build a home, and to earn a livelihood under such circumstances was no easy matter,

and the greater number of these hardy pioneers went down to death without securing those comforts for which they had so earnestly labored. But they never lost that spirit of sturdy independence so characteristic of the Scottish race to which many of them belonged. An illustration of this was given the writer by Lieutenant Governor I. A. Wilmot. While Sir Archibald Campbell was the governor of the province he met in Fredericton an aged man in Fredericton by the name of Maclean. Sorry to see one who had borne himself so bravely amid other conditions now poor and unable to do much for himself, Sir Archibald offered him a home at Government House, with only such light work to do as black boots and other odd jobs. The old Scott was indignant, the hot Highland blood reddened his cheeks, and drawing himself up to his full height, replied with a look and tone of surprise, "Nae, nae, Sir: nae, nae; a Maclean never blackit a boot for a Campbell."

The town of Marysville, so named by Mister Gibson in memory of his deceased and closest daughter Mary [not true], is pleasantly situated on the banks of this river about three miles from its junction with the Saint John. From a commercial point of view it is a commercial centre because of its large lumbering interests, and its manufacture of cotton goofs. During the last few years it has passed from obscurity to fame, and now ranks as one of the most prosperous towns in the Maritime provinces. The man to whom this wonderful development is due is Alexander Gibson, who by dint of earnest and indefatigable exertion raised himself from the ranks, and has shown what can be done with a blunt axe in the hands of determined energy.

He has been described as: "Tall, of commanding appearance, silent, dressed quietly, and always wears a soft felt hat. He has a will of iron, and an active brain to break it up. Among his distinguished characteristics has been a strict adherence to the temperance principles and **great respect for his parents, especially for his mother. This was shown on every fitting occasion, but perhaps never so strongly as during the visit paid him by Lord and Lady Dufferin. While it was a pleasure to show his distinguished visitors around the town that owned its all to his energy, nothing gave him such satisfaction as the opportunity to introduce the plain, practical commonsense old lady to their excellences.**"

There is no reliable data at hand to show when Methodism was first brought to this section, but as Mr. Bishop visited the Nashwaak in 1792, it is in every way probable that he reached here also. Certain it is that ministers from Fredericton did pay some attention to it for many years, but the first preacher appointed with special reference to its needs was Arthur D. Morton in 1868, who remained for two years. He was followed by Joseph Sellar and Silas C. Fulton, each for one year. It was made a separate circuit in 1872. Robert Wilson was its first superintendent.

Methodism at Marysville

There is no reliable data at hand to show when Methodism was first brought to Marysville, but as Mr. Bishop visited the Nashwaak in 1792 it is every way probably that he preached there. Certain it is that ministers from Fredericton did pay some attention to it for many years, but the first preacher appointed with reference to its needs was Arthur D. Morton in 1868, who remained for two years. He was followed by Joseph Sellar and Silas C. Fulton, each for one year. It was made a separate circuit in 1872, with Rev. now Dr. Robert Wilson as its first superintendent.

The services had been held in a school house, and after that in a hall, but Mister Gibson built the church not only beautiful for situation, but beautiful in design and finish. It was dedicated Jan 6th, 1873. The Rev. D. D. Currie preached in the forenoon. Rev. H. McKeown in the afternoon, and the Rev. Leonard Gaetz in the evening. The day was fine, the roads excellent, and the music under the management of Prof. Cadwallader of a high order. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, the pastor, offered the first prayer in the new edifice. The church was one that had to be seen to be appreciated. It was Gothic in style, octangular, with a spacious vestibule in front and lecture room in the rear. The stucco work was very fine and frescoing elaborate. The ground work of the

ceiling, was sky blue, and this studded with golden stars, gave a fine effect. The windows were of the best English stained glass, and were inscribed with some of the grandest and most suggestive passages in the book of god. The duties we owe to God and man were taught in "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Christ's interest in the young was shown in "Suffer little children to come unto me." the grave is robbed of its gloom by the soul-cheering utterance: "I am the resurrection and the life." Heaven rendered attractive with: "In My Father's house are many mansions," etc. The pulpit was under a triple arch, the centre one bearing the beautiful prayer, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." [Gibson's own epitaph] The pulpit bible was presented to the church by the late Isaac Burpee, one of Mister Gibson's most intimate friends.

The church would seat 400, but the pews were so arranged that 200 more could be provided for.

The following have been the pastors of the church since 1872:

1872-76 Robert Wilson

1876-79 Robert Duncan

1879-82 Waldron W. Brewer

1882-85 Edwin Evans

1885-88 John Read

1888-90 Howard Sprague

1890-92 Douglas Chapman

1892-97 William W. Lodge

1897-1900 Waldron W. Brewer

1900-1901 William Lawson

1901-1905 Robert S. Crisp

1905-1907 Wallace B. Thomas

1907-1910 J. C. Berrie

Yesterday's Disastrous Fire

The Methodist Church in the Maritime Provinces, and more particularly that portion of its followers living in Marysville, has received a severe blow in yesterday's loss by fire of the magnificent edifice erected some thirty-eight years ago at the thriving town of Marysville through the generosity of Mr. Alexander Gibson. This splendid monument to the greatest captain of industry this Province has ever produced, has been visited by thousands upon thousands of people from various sections of the continent, and all were outspoken in praise of its classic beauty of architecture, in many ways it was without an equal in the maritime provinces as a place of worship in its elegant but costly simplicity it was indeed a marvel of architectural beauty.

While the loss of the beautiful church on which he had devoted so much loving interest, came as a stunning blow to Mister Gibson, now in the declining years of his mortal existence, yet with characteristic philosophical mind, he looks to the possible future good which may be derived from this disposition of his work by the All Wise, who doeth all things for our good.

Gleaner

Jan 21, 1913

The Marysville Methodists Will Built a Church

The Methodist congregation of Marysville are preparing to erect a new church to replace the beautiful Gibson memorial Church which was destroyed several years ago.

Rev. Thomas Hicks, the new Methodist pastor at Marysville, has been busily engaged for some time in arranging for the work to commence and it is likely that a contract will be signed with a local contracting concern in the course of a few days.

The new structure will be of brick and **will cost probably \$5,000 or \$6,000**, although the plans are not entirely complete, it is expected that work will commence in the early spring and the insurance money from the former building will provide for most of the cost of the new church. Since the fire which burned the beautiful church erected by Mr. Alexander Gibson, Sr., the Methodist congregation at Marysville have been holding their services in a public hall.

