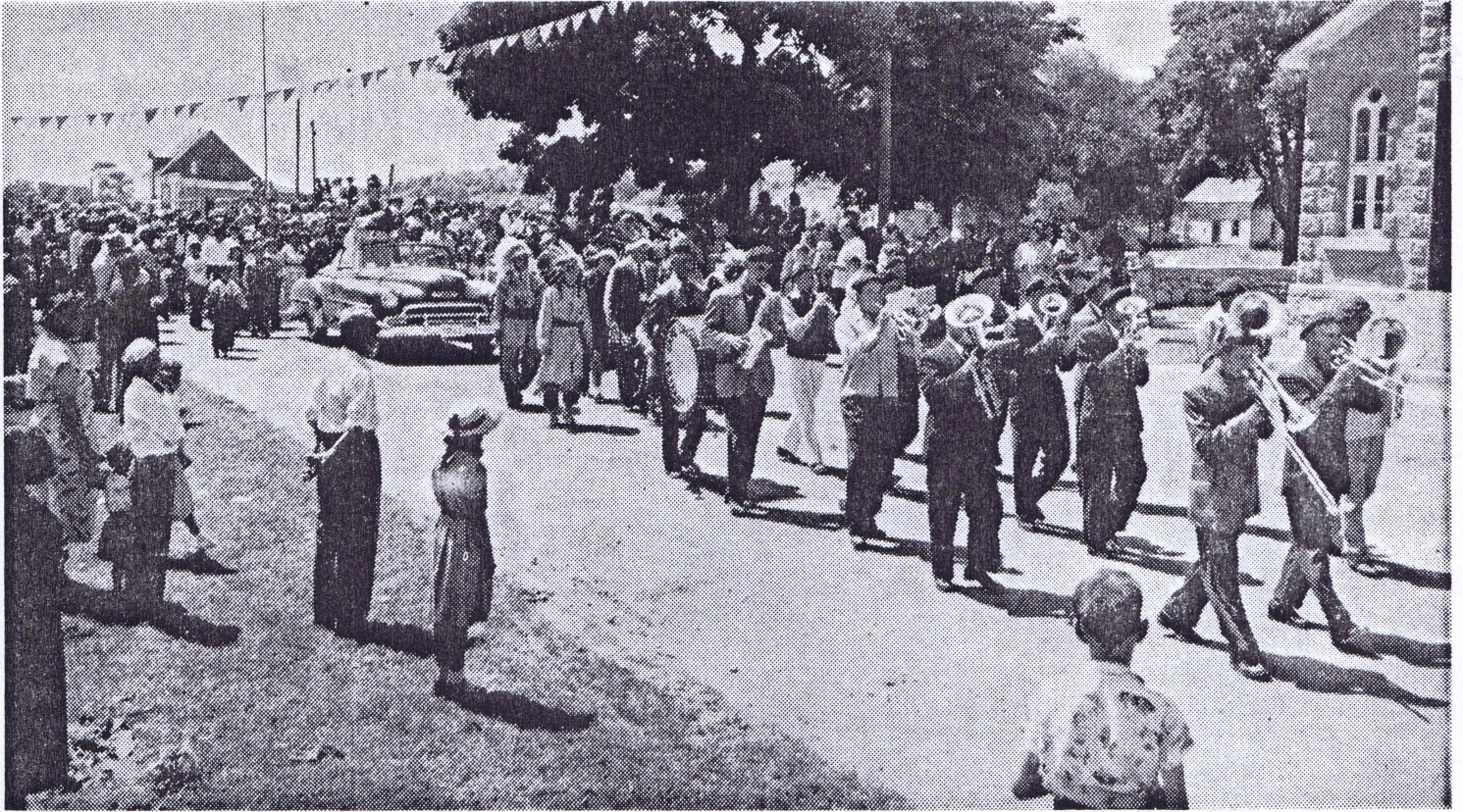


Church Marks Centenary



—PHOTO BY PATTERSON

Several thousand persons attended the 100th anniversary of Holy Cross Church at Wikwemikong on Manitoulin Island this week. The church was founded as a mission for the Indians 100 years ago

by the Jesuit Order. One of the highlights of the celebration was the parade staged by the Indian band from Cape Croker Reserve in the upper Bruce Peninsula.



Indians in Colorful Native Dress Welcome Visitors

The Sudbury Daily Star

NORTHERN ONTARIO'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

45th YEAR—No. 70

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Pages 13 to 2



Bishop R. H. Dignan Addresses Gathering at Centennial Celebration

Indians Mark Church Centenary



One of the highlights of the centennial celebrations of Holy Cross Roman Catholic Church staged at Wikwemikong this week, was the admittance of Very Rev. G. E. Numan into the Indian tribe on Manitoulin Island. Father Numan is superior of the Jesuit Order in Ontario, sponsors of Holy Cross Church and the Wikwemikong mission field.

Centenary Celebration of the Dedication of Holy Cross Church.

Sunday.. June 29. .. Solemn High Mass for the Repose of the Souls of the departed from this Reserve .
Sermon by Rev. Edward O'Flaherty S.J.
2 .30 P.M. Procession to the Cemetary.. sermon at the Cross.
Solemn Benediction on return to the Church.

Monday..June 3 0. .. Solemn High Mass of Reparation.
Sermon by Rev. Vincent McHugh, PP.
7.30 P.M. Solemn Benediction..sermon by Rev. Joseph Dwyer,S.

Tuesday..July 1. Solemn High Mass for the Spiritual and temporal welfare of the Reserve. Celebrant.. Vrey Rev. George Nunan,S.J.
Sermon by Rev. Leo Desjardin, S.J.
7.30.. Solemn Benediction.
Sermon by Most Rev. R.H. Dignan, D.D. Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie.
8.30.. Pageant in the Arena.

Wednesday..July 2, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
Pontifical High Mass of Thanksgiving. Celebrant.. Most Rev. R.H. Dignan. D.D. Bishop of Sault Ste. Marie.
Sermon.. by Very Rev. George Nunan, S.J. Provincial of the Jesuits of Upper Canada.
7.30 Solemn Benediction.
Sermon.. by Rev. Oscar Labelle, S.J.
8.30 Pageant in the Arena.

Wednesday 2.30.. Induction of Most Rev. R.H. Dignan into the Indian Tribe of Wikwemikong.

wednesday 12.00 .. Official Banquet. for Clergy and Guests.

Holy Cross Church was dedicated by His Excellency Bishop Marie deCharbonnel on July 25th, 1852 .

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WIKWEMIKONG church 100 Years Old..

Wikwemikong Observes Stone Church's Birthday...

"This summer Holy Cross Church at Wikwemikong reached its 100th birthday. A century ago on a Sunday morning the last week in July the magnificent stone Church of the Manitoulin Unceded reserve was blessed and opened. At the beginning of July this year the centennial was celebrated at Wikwemikong with pageants, Indian Pow-wows and religious services..

The first visit of a Roman Catholic priest to Manitoulin Island was in 1836, by Father Proulx, a Diocesan priest from Penetanguishene region. Two years later he began devoting all his time and energy to the conversion of the Islanders, and by 1843 ~~more~~ three hundred Indians had been baptized in Manitoulin Island.

Missionary work on Manitoulin was taken over by the Jesuit Fathers in 1848 to build a mighty church to replace the outgrown little chapel which was the center of their work. Following year in June work began on the Church on the feast of St. Ignatius 31 July, 1848, the foundation of the church were blessed and the cornerstone laid.

Nowhere on the island at that time or since have there been foundations to compare with these... three feet thick to support walls only six inches thinner.

Through the next three years the work went ahead slowly but steadily as stone was gathered from Manitoulin and from islands as far as 10 miles away, and hauled to the site, where it was laid in place in the walls.

Logs were gathered near Manitowaning and cut in a primitive mill. Two years after the cornerstone was laid, the first beam was raised in place.

Finally the church was ready in July 1852 for the Bishop to bless..

Holy Cross Mission at Wikwemikong is worth a visit by summer visitors, who are welcomed by the Jesuit Fathers in residence there

"Built by the Indians of the reservation, and under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers... is a picture of the stone Church at Wikwemikong on the Reservation under the direction of the Jesuit Fathers.

Holy Cross Mission Church History...

(Item re Church History in local paper about 1952 centenary fiesta) Holy Cross Mission Church reached its 100th birthday in the summer of 1952. Exactly 100 years before, on a Sunday morning the last week in July, the wonderful stone church was blessed and opened..

A jubilant crowd of villagers had gone down to the Shore in front of the Church and welcomed the Bishop who was to put the seal of approval upon the new church. The solemnity of the Roman Ritual and the colorful dress of the villagers combined to make a memorable day of this glorious event. Freshly cut boughs of pine and cedar scented the route of the procession to the Church, the very best decorations ~~that~~ at hand were used on the church itself. Vespers, the usual Sunday P.M. service, were suspended for the day and in their stead there took place the formal blessing of the new church. Wikwemikong was proud of its achievement, and justly..

PRIEST'S FIRST VISIT IN 1836...

Sixteen years earlier in 1836 a diocesan priest from Penetanguishene region had made his first visit to the Island and found the people were ~~as~~ as sheep without a shepherd. Two years later this priest, Fr Proulx

4B Proulx

↑ 1

began devoting all his time and energy to the conversion of the Islanders. Conversion set in faith grew so rapidly under the warmth of his zealous efforts that by the end of the year 1843 three hundred Indians had received the faith and been baptized.

The following summer the lone missionary received a Jesuit to help him in the large job of converting and instructing the growing number of Catholic Indians who were scattered over the length of the sprawling Island.

The Jesuit Father Jean Pierre Choné arrived from the Sarnia with his interpreter, Fr. Ferdinand Roque, and a crew of seven Indians along with Fr. Proulx on July 9, and settled down in a ramshackle drafty house placed at the disposal of the two priests. The next summer saw the addition of a second Jesuit missionary, Fr. Joseph Hanipoux. Building began in 1848.

Following a visit by Fr. Proulx in 1848, about three years after he had left the Island mission, the resolution was taken to begin construction of a Church to expand the capacity of the existing chapel. Fr. Point and Fr. Hanipoux, the Jesuit missionary priests, and two Jesuit brothers, John Veroneau and John Callaghan, each in his own respective field went to work on the planned church.

Fr. Proulx first completed a model of the church in miniature. With it he intended to demonstrate to any skeptical opponents how easy it was to construct the mission church. Every able-bodied man on the spot could and should help. It everybody helped why the whole building would be out up in.... a few seasons. Workmen would be paid, not in mere cash, but in kind. Three pounds of meat and six of flour would be a days pay.

If work were to begin without delay, it looked as if the missionaries and their flock could save a year on the actual construction period. Lack of necessary tools and insufficiency of propaganda convinced the Fathers they would be doing well if they succeeded in gathering up the stones which lay about the isle on the site of the proposed church....

Actual construction began enthusiastically in the first two weeks of the following June, on a grand scale. Barges were brought into action for hauling stone, foundations were staked off, men, women and children turned out to work. Their objective was to have the foundations ready by the feast of St. Ignatius of Loyola, on July 31, and on that day to place the first stone of the building itself.

FIRST CORNERSTONE JULY 31, 1849. The feast of the missionaries patron saint, Ignatius of Loyola, was a day not to be forgotten by Wikwemikong Indians, for on 31 July the foundations of the Church were blessed and the corner stone was laid. It was a day crammed with solemnity and excitement...

Foundations had been completed for the most part--no mean feat, to be sure for nowhere else on the island was there to be found anything to compare with them. They had been built three feet thick with a view to supporting walls of masonry six inches thinner. For the occasion of placing the first stone on the walls, the whole site had been tidied and decorated with greens and buntings: a platform had been set up in the center of the altar which was surmounted by a cross rising forty feet into the sky. To one side of the platform and upon it stood a table draped with native handicraft and on the table lay the litter bearing the stone to be blessed.

The morning was bright, but breezy. Bunting, flags and greens billowed and tossed under the morning sun. Mass was sung at 7 and followed by a colorful procession in which the entire village took part. The processional cross was followed first by the little girls and their banner, next by the little boys with banners, the choristers, priests, the 12 chiefs, uniformed soldiers in uniform, and the grown-ups.

C402 #1

WIKWEMIKONG CENTENARY

ALOYSIUS P. SCHRETLER, S.J.

25/2/52

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

Centennial Year.

Wikwemikong 1852 - 1952

.... Story of the building of a monument to God. Undertaken twelve years after the initial missionary efforts at conversion by the diocesan priest Father J.B. Proux, and four years after the arrival of the first Jesuit Missionary of the 19th century in the Great Lakes Region of Canada, Holy Cross Church rose out of the dauntless zeal of missionaries and through the workmanship of the Indianx people of Wikwemikong.

This summer Holy Cross Mission Church reaches its 100th birthday. Exactly one hundred years ago during the last week in July this wonderful stone church was blessed and opened. A jubilant crowd of villagers had gone down to the shore in front of the church and welcomed the bishop who was to put the seal of approval upon their new church. The solemnity of the Roman Ritual and the colourful festive dress of the villagers combined to make a memorable day of this glorious event. Freshly cut boughs of pine and cedar scented the route of the procession to the church. The very best decorations at hand were used on the church itself. Vespers, the usual afternoon service on Sundays, were suspended for the day: which happened to be a Sunday- and in their stead there took place the formal blessing of the new church. Wikwemikong was proud of its achievement, and justly.

Sixteen years earlier, in 1836, a diocesan priest from Penetanguishene ~~or thereabouts~~ had begun visiting the island, and found the people were as sheep without a shepherd. Two years later this priest, Father Proux began devoting all his time and energy to the conversion of the islanders. Conversions to the Faith grew rapidly under the warmth of his zealous efforts. Three hundred island Indians had received the Faith and been baptised before the end of the year 1843. The following summer the lone missionary received a Jesuit to help him in the unmanageably large job of converting and instructing the growing number of Catholic Indians who were scattered over the length of the sprawling island.

The Jesuit was Father Jean Pierre Choné. He arrived from Sarnia with his interpreter Ferdinand Rogue and a crew of seven Indians along with Father Proux on July 9, and settled down in a ramshackle drafty house placed at their disposal of the two priests. The next summer added a second Jesuit missionary in Father Joseph Hanipaux. The tortuous course of the early days of the mission began almost immediately after the arrival of Father Hanipaux. The friendly Agent at Manitowaning was replaced by a bigotted one. The founder of the mission became discouraged apparently, and left the island. That his departure was due to ill-feeling towards his fellow missionaries is scarcely possible. He retained his interest in the mission for years. Besides sending the Jesuits such things as Mass wine, he donated a fine chalice, and a lump sum of \$100 towards the organisation of the mission school. Three years later, the summer of 1848 he re-visited the mission headquarters to discuss the advisability of beginning the construction of a new permanent church for the Catholic Indians of Wikwemikong.

The time had come, thought Father Proux^L, for the people of Holy Cross Mission to undertake the construction of the church. The joyous reception he had just then ~~received~~ been accorded by the village people who remembered him well for his kindnesses egged him on with his suggestion, and during a conference with the new Superior of Holy Cross, Father Nicholas Point, he came forward with it. Father Point was so taken with idea that he couldn't dismiss it. He knew from his three months' dealings with the people the difficulty he would have to face in rousing their enthusiasm, but the opinion of so experienced a man as Father Proux could not lightly be discarded. There was urgent need for expanding the size of the existing little chapel: that for one thing was clear ~~was~~ to everybody. But the immediate expansion called for could be made temporarily on the chapel; a temporary addition would suffice, if construction of the large, permanent church were begun. Reasons for construction suggested themselves:- The numerous barges the Indians had built the same summer proved there was no lack of enterprise. Let the Indians themselves construct the new church, and then they will get accustomed to doing without Whites whenever there is question of building things. Give the Indians a fair opportunity to show their mettle, and they will prove to all comers that Indian laziness and incompetence are quite undeserved name-tags.

On the conclusion of Father Proux^L' visit, the resolution was taken to begin construction. Father Point and Father Hanipaux, the Jesuit Missionary priests, and two Jesuit Brothers, John Veroneau and John Callaghan, each in his respective field went to work on the planned church. Father Point first completed a model of the church in miniature. With it he intended to demonstrate to any skeptical opponents how easy it was to construct the mission church. Every able-bodied man on the spot could and should help. If everybody helped, why the whole building would be put up in ... a few seasons. Workmen would be paid, not in mere cash, but in kind. Three pounds of meat and six of flour would be a day's pay. Were work to begin without delay, it looked as if the missionaries and their flock could ~~make~~ save a year on the actual construction period. Lack of necessary tools and insufficiency of propaganda convinced the Fathers that they would be doing well if they succeeded in gathering up the stone which lay about the site of the proposed church.

August 2 the same summer, 1848, Father Hanipaux took a more aggressive step ~~in~~ towards construction, when he led a large gang of workers off to Manitowaning to gather stone. Two weeks later they returned from the bee to discover that Father Point, the two Brothers and an old-timer had built an addition to the existing chapel, and towards the construction of the church had received from the agent at Manitowaning a forge and a collection of tools. During the autumn that ensued a beginning was made in the gathering of stone on and about the site of the future church. During the winter, the whole project slumbered under a thick layer of snow and ice.

Actual construction began enthusiastically on a grand scale in the first two weeks of the following June. Barges were brought into action for hauling stone. Foundations were staked off. Men, women and children turned out to work. Their objective was to have the foundations ready by the feast of St Ignatius, July 31, for the placing of the first stone of the building itself.

Work rolled along merrily in the hot June weather, in temperatures which rose continually into the eighties. It was deemed necessary to remove the old church from where it stood, and it was decided to have it rebuilt as an addition to the school. A single day's effort sufficed to bring this manœuvre almost to completion. The little old church was torn down and all of it save the roof was rebuilt according to plan June 11, 1849 when the thermometer hovered over a reading of 86.

Trouble arose when Gabaw, an otherwise able foreman and excellent worker, took the responsibility upon himself of advancing wages to some of the work-gangs. These gangs were piling the stone they had hauled by barge on the shore of the bay, a quarter-mile from the scene of construction. And there and then they were being paid in full for their work of hauling. Father Hanipaux was greatly annoyed, and anticipated further payments for the laborious job of transporting the stone up the quarter-mile hill to the church site. Quick and effective action on the part of the priest averted serious disorder. Men went on hauling stone; women carried sand; teen-age boys brought lime; and the younger children made themselves useful by bringing water.

CORNERSTONE LAID JULY 31 1849

July 31, feast of the missionaries' patron saint, Ignatius of Loyola, was a day not to be forgotten by Wikwemikong Indians. It was the day the foundations of the new church were blessed and the cornerstone was laid. It was a day crammed with solemnity and excitement. The foundations had been for the most part completed - no mean feat, to be sure, for nowhere else on the length of the island ~~was~~^{was} there to be found anything to compare with them. They had been built three feet thick with a view to supporting walls of masonry six inches thinner. For the occasion of the placing of the first stone of the walls, the whole site had been tidied and decorated with greens and buntings; a platform had been set up in the centre for the altar which was surmounted by a cross which rose forty feet into the sky. To one side of the platform and upon it stood a table draped with native handicraft, and on the table lay the litter with the stone to be blessed. The morning was bright but breezy. Bunting, flags and greens billowed and tossed in the morning sun. Mass was sung at seven and followed by a colourful procession in which the entire village took part. The procession cross was followed first by the little girls and their banner, next by the little boys and their banner, and then by the choristers, the priests, the twelve chiefs, the soldiers in uniform, and the green-ups.

The ceremony lasted about two hours. One of the missionaries gave an instruction on the meaning of the holy holiday. Three of the chiefs made speeches: Assiginaki, in the name of all the chiefs, Attagewinini, in name of all the Island Indians, and Tekkoman in the name of the militia. This last was very impressive; his eloquent speech was welcomed by a salvo from the guns of the soldiers. The guns were heard ~~xxx~~ a second and a third time at appropriate moments in the proceedings, once when the priest's hand was raised in blessing over the stone, and again when the procession on its return was about to enter the enclosure of the foundations. In the afternoon a program of foot-races and the like engaged the energies of the young enthusiasts of the village and received the encouragement of a great many onlookers. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at sunset brought the epoqué-making day to a peaceful close.

It was providential that the village and its missionaries had had a thoroughly enjoyable day of it. Next morning marked the beginning of two painfully long years of construction. Missionaries and their people are human. Their hopes rise and fall, and their devotedness to a task has its lapses. The magnitude of the project, the slow advance in the work, and the inadequacy of tools and materials at times threw a blanket of discouragement over the village. At other times quarrels among the workers, petty jealousies, or sheer discontentedness with pay would drag operations towards a standstill. Outsiders, individual cantankerous persons with a little authority, sometimes interfered and succeeded on occasion in stalling the entire venture. Yet faith and perseverance won out in the end, and there arose a church which to this day is the pride of the island and a queen among mission churches in Ontario.

Interest in the work slackened during the first winter after the foundations were blessed. In February all that was done on the church was the raising of the timbers for the framework of the building. In vain did the missionaries plead with the Indians to go and cut logs for the mill at the mission, so that the mill would not be idle in the spring. The maple-sugar season will begin soon, replied the village spokesmen, and with the money we intend to make this year on syrup and sugar we shall pay our debts and buy lumber for the church. The season came and went; the take was pathetically small, less than half that of the year before. The village was without money, and their church without wood for the floor.

A White skilled labourer, Joe Dollard was hired as head-mason for the church. His coming May 18 sparked the resumption of work on the walls. Under him eight men laid stone, and drew full pay for their work. Other workers, men, women and children were all paid one way or another. Stone was fetched from islands as far as ten miles away. When brought to land, it was dragged on sleds or carried on stretchers up the hill to the church site.

In June the little community of Jesuit missionary priests and brothers were visited by their higher superior, Father P. Boulanger, S.J. This visitor met with what looked for the world like an embarrassing reception. The priests and brothers were taken by surprise in their disregard for their own provisions. They had practically nothing to set on the table before their famished higher superior. But Father Boulanger was not offended, and when later in the day he inspected the tremendous efforts everybody was making to further the construction of the church, his disappointment over his reception melted and gave way to admiration. He stayed ten days and saw too the efforts the missionaries were making to instruct and baptise converts and to instil a deeper appreciation of the faith in the Catholic Indians of several Indian settlements on the island. Before his departure he contributed the sum of \$500 to the new church, and said he was convinced the stone-work would be finished by winter. His visit proved an invaluable encouragement to the entire village.

Hardly had his homebound ship disappeared from view, when Joe Dollard's fondness for drink roused the ire of Father Point, who promptly dismissed the man. The seven stone-masons who had been working directly under and with Joe Dollard suddenly refused to go on with their work. They demanded Joe's recall. To enforce their demand they rallied practically the whole population of Wikwemikong to a meeting in front of the priests' house early the next morning.

A horse and rider they had ready for an immediate trip to Manitowaning to bring Dollard back. Father Point stepped outside the door and faced the people and their spokesmen. He listened to their grievance and to their weighty reasons for having Joe recalled. They insisted that no man in the village was competent enough to succeed Joe Dollard; recall him, shouted Nebanekijik, and we'll all go back to work willingly. Having heard them out, Father Point took issue with their arguments and presented his own for dismissing Dollard. Wakekijik, one of the leaders of the rally, was now persuaded that Father Point had been right. He spoke out in defence of Father Point's action. Thereupon the rally broke up. Wakekijik then went to work under the direction of Bemanakinang who showed himself no less willing and proficient in handling the trowel, and the two got along so well that before long the other men came back. Kinojamek and Gabaw, two of the principals in the rally in protest of Dollard's dismissal, could not resist the example of Wakekijik and Bemanakinang. In a few days' time the newly organised work-team were convinced that nothing better could possibly have happened to Holy Cross Mission than the dismissal of Dollard. The last trace of resentment disappeared forever, when 'after less than three weeks' work the village discovered that the same work-gang under Bemanakinang had accomplished as much work in 17 days as they had done under Dollard in 28 days.

Not a single white man was kept on the job. Work progressed wonderfully well during that summer of 1850. Cold weather alone called a halt in their work. Two months passed, and with the first of the New Year 1851 the good missionaries called for men to go and cut logs but there was no response. All the fervor for work on the church had somehow died out completely. The chiefs were invited to dine at the priests' house and to discuss the call for more logs. Still there was no response. Then two days later one of the men, Bebamitabi, explained how the superintendant at Manitowaning had shipped a supply of meat and flour so as to get the men to work for him on a public road. That this road work had been arranged on the sly was clear from the attending circumstances. The missionaries however patiently waited for the situation to right itself. They renewed their request to have logs cut, and asked those who were willing to look for an area in which to cut. Off towards Manitowaning an area was found. Its discovery was announced. A band of workers set out immediately, and their good example kindled a blaze of fervor which brought all kinds of assistance. In three days their efforts yielded a total of 200 logs and transportation to the mill at Holy Cross. Wakekijik, Kenojamek and Itawigijik were among the energetic woodsmen who took part in this highly successful venture.

Men at and away from the mission had tried to thwart construction of the new church. Now it was time for the elements to oppose the noble undertaking. March thaws and running water said it was time for the mill to go to work. But the mill refused to cut a straw. Matchiwita went to work with Brother Veroneau on the mill; together they repaired the machinery so well that in two days' time the mill was running better than ever. Fire broke out a day or two later. A thick cloud of smoke escaped from the roof, and the school-house was ablaze. No lives were lost, nobody was injured, and the fire was put out before it had demolished the building thanks to the ready cooperation of the villagers. Animikwam and Agowasse were cited on this occasion for their selfless efforts directly to the school but indirectly to the church. Sickness and death came next to impede full-scale work on the church. Faithful Kenojamek was quickly losing his sight; Wakekijik's ten-year-old daughter Marguerite died after a short but painful illness. She had been a very bright pupil at school, and at the close of the school year she had brought home top

honours in classwork and conduct. During her illness her father was continually away from construction work. Somebody made off with his trowel and pile of picked stone. ~~Little~~ incidents of the kind were indeed trying, but still the bereaved father devoted his time and energy generously.

Construction went on. July 6 the masonry for two windows was completed, July 31, exactly two years after the ~~corner~~ cornerstone was blessed and laid, the first beam was raised into place. Two weeks later six pillars were set in place, and next the roof-timbers were raised. By the end of September the masonry was almost finished, and on October 1 the long arch in the roof was set in place. With the beginning of winter, all ~~the finishing touches~~ ~~taxes~~ outside the exterior, except for the finishing touches, was complete. Considerable work remained to be done on the interior, but it could be done at a leisurely pace during the first half of 1852 provided the church were finished inside and out by July.

July 1852 made history at Wikwemikong. To the full satisfaction and intense delight of the whole village His Grace the Bishop announced his coming for Sunday the 25th of the month. The steamboat on which he arrived was met with meticulous formality by a gaily decorated barge. On the barge beside the crew sat the choristers and the now familiar ~~three~~ ~~three~~ three missionary priests Fathers Point, Hanipaux and DuRanquet. A nine- o'clock morning sun beamed upon the welcome barge as the Bishop disembarked from the steamboat and shook hands with the jubilant Jesuit trio. He was sung ashore and up to the priests' house past the curious eyes of a record-breaking crowd of spectators who had gathered near the dock. Then in the full splendour of church ritual he was led to the old church for Mass. All the ceremonies of Pontifical High Mass made a deep impression on the congregation. The greater number of those present had never before seen anything so magnificent. Lavish decorations inside and outside the church completed the colourful spectacle. They included a long rectangle of closely planted trees between the homes of Wakekijik and Donawenimiki, which looked like an arcade fit for a king. In the afternoon the formal blessing of the church climaxed the excitement of the day. The Blessed Sacrament was solemnly carried to its new tabernacle; Benediction ended the celebrations of the day and marked the commencement of a hundred-year era of peace and happiness.

APS .sj

25-2-52

(Schellen)