

The Catholic Church and Havre Boucher

At the very beginning of this historical outline, prepared on the occasion of the centenary of the establishment of Saint Paul's Parish, Havre Boucher, I wish to make it know how much I am indebted to Re. Doctor A. Anthony Johnston, Diocesan Historian, whose scholarly research has made it a slight chore indeed for all those, who, like myself may wish, in the future, to publish an authentic record of the ecclesiastical history of any part of the Diocese of Antigonish.

St. Paul's Parish, Havre Boucher, is a daughter of Arichat in Isle Madame; and next of Tracadie our neighbour parish to the West. As to its first inhabitants and origin of its name, the record of most consequence is the diary of the great Bishop Plessis of Quebec who in 1812 conducted a visitation of The Maritime Provinces, which were at that time a part of the vast diocese of Quebec.

From Bishop Plessis' Diary August 4, 1812:

"Their departure from Arichat took place the next day, before five o'clock in the morning in a fairly large rowboat. All the oarsmen were worn out with fatigue because they had to row against the wind and tide until evening. The sun had set when the boat arrived at Havre a Boucher on the Nova Scotian coast. This is an entirely new settlement, which takes its name from Captain Francois Boucher, of Quebec, a man still living, who was overtaken on this coast by the winter of 1759, and spent the winter there, more than fifty years ago. The place is neither beautiful nor ugly, but it is somewhat inconvenient, because the harbour is generally not deep enough for the entry of ships. Today there are about thirty houses, in the midst of which there is a little chapel, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, but totally unfurnished."

Thus while celebrating in this year of Our Lord 1958, the one hundredth anniversary of Saint Paul's Parish, it lacks but one year for the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the landing of the first settlers at Havre a Boucher, as Bishop Plessis spells its name.

The Nova Scotian Journal of Education for the year 1933 contains the following article on Havre Boucher and the origin of its name. "A harbour in Antigonish Country opening on Northumberland Strait. This name is spelled variously Bouche, Bouche and Boucher and is used in conjunction with the English "Harbour" as well as the French "Havre". For every form there is a different pronunciation and the confusion seems to be due, partly at least, to different theories as to the origin of the name.

A widely accepted explanation of the name derives it from the French Bouche, i.e. "blocked" or "obstructed". The harbour entrance is almost closed by an Island and the name would seem to apply well enough. There is sufficient evidence to show that this is not the correct derivation. Previous to 1785 a tract of land measuring 170 acres was granted to Paul Bushee, and in the grant and all succeeding grants of the period, the

harbour is marked Harbour a Bushee. By 1839 the name in land-grants had changed to read Harbour au Bushee.

The harbour took its name, therefore, from the men who were probably the first to settle in the vicinity. But the name Bushee is obviously a computation of the French Boucher. This was a name not uncommon among the Cape Breton French, and in 1752 a man named Boucher, a King's Engineer, lived in the vicinity of Louisbourg.

There is no doubt in my mind but that proper spelling of the name is equally correctly Havre a Boucher or Havre Boucher. Pomquet is said to have been settled in the year 1762 and the first settlement at Tracadie may date back as far as 1772.

But to return to Havre Boucher; we know that Captain Francois Boucher, and we may well presume his wife and family, were living there in 1759. The next bit of certain knowledge we have, other than the land grant is contained in a letter written in 1787 twenty-eight years after the original settlement by Father Phalen, a missionary at Arichat in which he said that while travelling from Prince Edward Island to Arichat he intended to visit among others, two French settlements containing nine or ten families near the Gut of Canso.

In this same letter, which was written to the Bishop of Quebec, Father Phalen asked for a pastoral letter from the Bishop, giving him ecclesiastical authority over a considerable territory including Havre Boucher, which however, is not mentioned by name.

In 1791, two ships loads of Scottish Highland Catholics arrived at Pictou and at the urging of Father, afterwards Bishop Angus Bernard MacEachern, they made their way eastward toward Cape Breton and some of them may well have settled at Havre Boucher since the earliest records of the parish contain some Scottish names as well as a lesser number of Irish ones.

As to what conditions were like in those days, there is a letter extant written by Father LeDru who visited Arichat in 1786. "I ministered to the people at Arichat and then undertook to go overland to Pictou. I arrived there on the 14th of last December after having covered about 100 miles in snow that was always waist high and sometimes higher."

Father Phalen writing to a friend in Halifax in April 1791 makes reference to his missionary activities, which included Havre Boucher, and to his means of support. "The district I attend here consists of six settlements, distant from 12 to 90 miles from each other. The average number of families thro' the whole of these settlements has been in these three years past about 140. They are chiefly French Acadians, and more about frequently. I never receive, on average, more than one Quintal, (100lbs) of fish per year, and in ordinary years there are about forty of them, really paupers, from whom I never receive a shilling."

“There are no roads open in this country as yet and tho there were, the six colonies above mentioned are separated from each other by water and by water alone at any season you can pass from one to another.”

Even though the people were so poor and few, and that few in widely separated little communities, Arichat had a chapel in 1786, and there is also a tradition that there once stood on a prominent western point of the harbour and Havre Boucher a chapel built of logs which was served by French missionaries and attended by Indians. The early Acadians, few in number, also took advantages as the occasion offered, of attending Mass at this Chapel, and this chapel was in service “about 1790”. About 1900 human bones are said to have been disinterred from the ground which was apparently a cemetery; also some woodwork apparently of a log cabin and more recently a broken headstone with out inscription.

Although Captain Francois Boucher and his family had settled in Havre Boucher in 1759, it is interesting to note that the ever observant Bishop Plessis wrote in 1812 that “this is an entirely new settlement”, the majority of the people being new-comers, apparently, as compared with those of the neighbouring districts. There is a tradition, according to which the original settlers at Tracadie were joined about the year 1797, by some forty French families from France who landed at Halifax and then settled at Pomquet, Tracadie and Havre Boucher. It would seem that perhaps a considerable number of these must have settled at Havre Boucher, together with the Scottish immigrants of 1791 and after, and some three or four Irish families to give Havre Boucher such an appearance of being “entirely new” in 1812.

In 1792, Father Francois Lejaintel then stationed in the Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, refused to take the schismatical oath to the French Revolutionary Government and fled to the Magdalene Islands. In the same year, he came to Nova Scotia and was appointed missionary at Arichat in succession to Father Phalen. As under Father Phalen, Havre Boucher continued to be a mission of the parish of Arichat until the year 1803.

In that year, the first bishop to visit Havre Boucher arrived in the person of Bishop Denaut, tenth bishop of Quebec who in order to reach the parish, travelled by way of Burlington, Vermont, Boston, Halifax and Arichat. He confirmed everyone even the babes in arms and records the population of Havre Boucher as sixty-nine adults and eighty-seven children, probably in the vicinity of twenty families. The settlement in what is now the parish of Tracadie was almost twice as great in numbers.

In this same year, 1803, Tracadie was established as a parish with Pomquet and Havre Boucher as missions. Father Amable Pichard was appointed the first pastor in September 1803 and continued as such until May 1815. It was during this time that the great Bishop Plessis, already referred to made his pastoral visit in 1812 and notes in his Journal that at Havre Boucher he administered Confirmation to 393 candidates, 131 of whom were Scots. It seems certain that many of these Scots must have come from Cap Breton to be confirmed; but allowing for that, the difference between Bishop Denaut’s figure of 156 in 1803 and Bishop Plessis’ figure of 393 in 1812 shows a remarkable growth of population

in a period of just nine years. Bishop Denaut in 1803 recorded that the name of the mission church at Havre Boucher was Notre Dame. He ordered that the use of cemeteries existing at Tracadie, Havre Boucher, and Pomquet were permitted for one year, after which time the people were to fence in new ones. The Bishop also gave direction to provide for the support of the pastor. "When a resident pastor comes to Tracadie, the present inhabitants of Tracadie, Pomquet, and Havre Boucher shall assess themselves so as to pay him annually £80 in Halifax currency, (\$320.00), and each new family formed or established in the future in said places shall pay the said pastor, in addition to the amount mentioned above, one pound (\$4.00) a year, in the same currency."

In appointing Father Pichard as pastor, the bishop promised that he would transfer him at the end of three years, and further stated that the people were to supply the priest with firewood and provide him with transportation to the two missions. Four years after his appointment to Tracadie, Father Pichard wrote on April 6, 1807: "I am stationed in a little village called Tracadie and also have to look after two little villages which are not far away from this one. The roads leading to them are not practicable for me, and storms often prevent me from getting there by water. Because I am not well, I have great difficulty in walkin. At the end of autumn, in winter and in the spring, I cannot travel by water and there is a fear that some of the sick may not receive the Sacraments. Although that would not be my fault, I would be very sorry if it were to happen. I submit with a good heart. I am in the midst of the woods. I have no company, I find it very tedious. My tithes would be sufficient to give me a living if people would pay faithfully, but most of them are poor. The two missions I serve, (Havre Boucher and Pomquet) would like to take care of me and have me stay longer with them but there are very few people in them."

If life was hard for the priest in those years, what was it for the parishioner? Bishop Plessis for the second time visited the Maritimes in 1815 and extracts from his Journal relating to conditions in Arichat and Main-a-dieu in that year probably give a good indication of what life was like in still another fishing village, Havre Boucher.

"Arichat has assumed an entirely different aspect of materially. Even within three years there is a notable difference and considerable betterment. The houses are more attractively constructed and the people dress better. They eat better food, such as bread, which the Acadians know so well how to do without, not that their fields produce more grain, for they do not cultivate them; but because they have money enough to buy foreign flour. There is also much activity in the harbour. Many more ships come and go, and stiff bargains are made. Some of the ships carry coal from Sydney and others plaster from Antigonish. Several go even to the Strait of Belle Isle to gather from its rocks, eggs of seagulls, starlings, magpies, cormorants, and other sea birds."

How far they had to go for eggs, and not very fresh or Grade A size at that!

As for the prominent people, the bishop remarks that at Arichat "he spend part of the day in receiving visits from the most distinguished people of the place – doctors and merchants, excelling more in wealth than in delicacy of manners."

Church choirs had little to commend then; “two or three bawlers who ruined the Roman Chant by singing syllables out of time on wrong notes and with little or no sense.”

At Main-a-dieu the Bishop found that “here as elsewhere, the people take to fishing to the detriment of the cultivation of the soil. Cod and mackerel are abundant, but there are also dogfish, which can be caught in abundance in the autumn. The dogfish has a claw in the middle of its back which people use to burnish gold in gilding. Sculptors and carpenters use its rough skin for polishing wood. Its flesh is not used but there is a very great demand for the oil obtained from it.” Has opportunity been swimming at our feet, even fouling our nets for so many years and we unaware of it?

The houses at Havre Boucher in 1815 may have been like those visited by the Bishop at Main-a-dieu. “The people are poor, if one may judge from the appearance of their houses and furnishings. In winter they do not use stoves. Their chimneys are just a wall at one end of the house, four or five feet wide and ten or twelve feet height. In front of this wall is a kind of wooden canopy to bring the smoke up to the roof. The large opening serves less for taking up the smoke, than for bringing cold air into the house which is already filled with cold and snow because of the badly caulked spaces between the logs of which the house is built.”

When the pastor dined out in those days he was more than likely to encounter what the Bishop met up with when he and his two priest companions accepted an invitation to dinner; - “a table scarcely large enough to hold their three cups. There was only one teaspoon and two little benches to seat three persons. With great respect, the members of the family seated themselves on old boxes from which they had taken the bread, butter and dishes that were mixed up in them with the belongings of the mother and her children.”

It is well to remember that for almost fifteen years prior to 1814, the people of Havre Boucher numbers some thirty families and dependent on the sea for their livelihood and transportation, lived in perpetual fear of every unknown ship they saw because of the wars that raged almost uninterruptedly between Britain and France, and from 1812 to 1814 between Britain and the United States as well.

When Father Manseau in 1815 took up the spiritual charge of Havre Boucher, he was afflicted with a persistent headache, from which he was cured in St. Peter's, Cape Breton by Father Andre Doucet, who succeeded him in Tracadie in 1824. Father Lejaintel of Arichat, writing to Bishop Plessis on October 20, 1815 told of the treatment and its aftermath. “Father Manseau's head is reported to be better for I have just been told that he was on a missionary tour to Havre a Boucher. He had his head shaved for the application of patches and he says he has become a Capuchin.”

The following year, April 25, 1816 Father Manseau wrote to Bishop Plessis from Havre Boucher. “I should like to know from your lordship how the ceremonies of Holy Saturday are to be carried out without a Pascal Candle €?”

Also he tells in the same letter to the bishop, - "The people of Havre Boucher—are showing all the good-will and unanimity that could be desired, in preparing material for the new chapel. There has not been a single refusal and I am surprised in view of their lack of means. " Father Mauseau then stated that Michael Webb of Havre Boucher, son-in-law and heir to Henry Maryfield, former sergeant in Royal Highlanders under Colonel Small, had a claim to 200 acres of land at Niagara. Webb wanted to land sold and promised a donation for the Havre Boucher chapel.

In 1817, the mainland of Nova Scotia was cut off from the diocese of Quebec and became a Vicariate Apostolic with headquarters in Halifax, and partly in consequence of this. Father Manseau left Tracadie and its missions.

However before he left, and before the end of 1816 he set up a school in each of his three missions. All we know of this event in his own terse statement in a letter," I have succeeded in establishing schools in my three missions, thus adding to my debts.

The last letter Father Manseau wrote to the Bishop Pleasis from Tracadie is dated the 28th of May, 1817. In it he said "What news there is here is alarming. Last year's harvest having failed everywhere, there is a famine everywhere this spring. There is an extreme shortage of provisions and of seed. Not half enough can be procured and that means a sad outlook for the future. However, the House of Assembly has taken measures to come to the assistance of our county. If the supplies arrive on time, next year could be better than this year for it is a long time since we have had a spring so favourable to agriculture.. Even if the seed arrived on time, cropping was late that year!"

After Father Manseau's departure, the people of Havre Boucher were ministered to that saintly man of God, Father Vincent de Paul, Trappist, who founded the Monastery at Tracadie, and who first came to that place in 1818. Father Manseau had gone to Quebec the previous year and in a letter written to his superiors in France in 1824, Father Vincent gives the following description of the Tracadie district: "On my arrival, I found three parishes abandoned and deprived of the precious consolations of religion. Many children were brought to me for baptism and I had numerous confessions to hear. They came from great distances to take me to visit the sick, who had ample time to die before I could get near them." He further stated that the parishes were composed of Acadians and of natives of France.



Fr. Vincent de Paul

Father Vincent left Tracadie in October, 1823 to go to France to seek assistance for the Monastery he had already built in 1819 and during the first year and a half he was away, Tracadie and its missions were without a priest until Father Andre Doucet arrived in June 1824, remaining until October 21 of that same year.

Again, there was no priest until the arrival from France of Father Vincent with Father Francis Xavier another Trappist in 1826 and between them they looked after the three missions until October 1836.

In 1826, Havre Boucher came under the spiritual authority of Rev. John Fraser, consecrated Bishop in 1827. What manner of man he was can best be found in extracts from two letters written in 1836 by Father Miranda of Arichat to a priest friend in Quebec. In the first letter of August 24, 1836, he jokes about the visit of Bishop Fraser whom he has not as yet met – “I am expecting his lordship from hour to hour. I have oatbread, herring, and potatoes for the Scots.” On September 27, he writes to the same friend “My bishop spends eight days with me. He is one of the most estimable missionaries that one could find. He is a learned man who made a very complete course of studies in Scotland and then spent many years in Spain where he learned everything a bishop should know. He speaks Latin, Greek, Spanish, Italian, English, Gaelic, Irish, French and Micmac. He preaches well and loves God with all his heart and without ceremony. He left this morning and since his departure I have been inexpressibly sad.” In this second letter there was no mention at all of herring and potatoes.

Father John Quinan was appointed pastor of Tracadie in 1837 and remained until 1842. His successor was a Quebec priest, Father Modeste Ansart, who was drowned in Pomquet on December 15, 1843, and once again Father Vincent de Paul assumed charge of the three missions until Father John Quinan was reappointed pastor in May 1845.

As far back as 1790 and perhaps before that time there had been a chapel at Havre Boucher, and in 1816, a school was opened. The settlement had in 1790 perhaps four or five families, in 1812 about thirty. Prosperity came to all and the little fishing villages after the wars ended in 1814, and with prosperity an increase of population. In the thirteen years preceding 1824 there are recorded fourteen marriages, in twelve years preceding 1836, there are twenty marriages. Bishop Fraser in 1831 confirmed 246, an average increase in population of eighteen a year since the confirmation administered by Bishop Plessis in 1812. Not much can be gleaned from the baptismal records of those days, since almost all the children were baptized not by the priest at Tracadie but “par la sage femme” the mid-wife, as the priest notes when he enters the name of the child in the parish register and that by way of exception. How otherwise could it have been when the infant mortality rate was such that a baby was usually baptized within hours of its birth, and the pastor resided ten miles away and could be reached best by water!

Even though poor and few in numbers, in 1807 Father Pichard wrote that the people of Havre Boucher were anxious to have him live with them. No wonder then, that with the passage of years and steady growth in the population, the time would come when they would be granted a pastor who would be their very own. It was not, however, until 1856, that Bishop John Cameron began making arrangements through Father Quinan and a committee from Havre Boucher for the procuring of a Glebe House for the pastor soon to be appointed. Unfortunately, a dispute arose which divided the parish in halves; the former wardens bought a house which was to be moved to the parish property and did this in defiance of the new committee which claimed in letters to the Bishop that the house “is not worth being hauled to the site intended.” The bishop told the wardens to “dispose of it the best way you can” and sent them a “plan for a small house to be erected near the old chapel, and which will do in the meantime. You will go on at once

with this little house and have it finished as early as you can. This will be your first job. When I visit you next summer, please God, we shall then call you attention to a greater understanding". This letter is dated February 11, 1857 and refers to the construction of a new church to replace the one built in 1816 or 1817.

In a letter dated April 14, 1857 the bishop writes that "They are all in peace and more there"; and that the new committee is "able to act freely." When good people are eager to do the right, but in different ways, the differences which may arise between them are soon reconciled.



Rev. Hugh MacDonald

On October 1, the parish of Notre Dame de l'Assumption was created at Havre Boucher and the Rev. Hugh MacDonald, who's sister was married to the Bishops brother, became its first parish priest. It is not known whether the new Glebe House was built or whether he continued to reside in the "small house to be erected near the old chapel". In any event, he was transferred on August 28, 1860 and once again, Havre Boucher, though now a parish, found itself under the care of the new parish priest at Tracadie, Father Charles Martell.

Father Martell was an extremely energetic man, as is evidenced by the fact that almost immediately following his appointment to Tracadie and Havre Boucher, he had three churches under construction at one time, one at Havre Boucher, one at Tracadie, and one at Merland, - "The Irish Back Settlement." Bishop MacIntyre of Charlottetown blessed the cornerstone of the church at Tracadie on June 29, 1861 and that of the church at Havre Boucher to June 30, 1861.



Fr. Charles Martell



Fr. Pierre Fiset

Much work remained to be done by his successor, Father Pierre Fiset, who was later built the beautiful church at Cheticamp, Inverness Co. Father Fiset built the gallery in the church in 1867, two years after his arrival. Labour cost was \$26.68 and the lumber paid for cost \$481.50. Spruce boards were selling at \$10.00 per thousand. In 1868 extensive repairs were made to the Glebe House, and in 1869 pews were bought for the church at a cost of \$304.00. There must have been terrible storms in those days, since in 1870 the nine year old church had to be completely reshingled. In

1872 Father Fiset finished the interior of the Church.

Father Fiset was succeeded in 1875 by Father Hubert Gerrior, the first Acadian priest ordained from the diocese of Antigonish.

The principle event in Father Gerrior's pastorate, was the rebuilding of the church tower, which had either fallen down or was about to do so. The job took over three months to complete and thirteen men were employeed most of that time, yet the bill for wages amounted to only



Fr. Hubert Gerrior

\$727.53. Carpenter's wages were ten cents an hour for a ten hour day, spruce boards were \$8.00 a thousand, hemlock at \$6.75 a thousand, and because the heavy timbers were donated by the parishioners, the bill for materials amounted to only \$50.00, which included \$3.00 for a "boy making 60 messages at five cents per message." It would be interesting to know whether this was some boy working his way through college for at that time there were two boys from the parish at the college in Antigonish, Dan MacDonald from Havre Boucher and Dan J. Chisholm from Cape Jack. Board and lodgings cost twenty-three cents per day but flour was \$7.50 the barrel. The bill of scantling reveals that Michael DeCoste, boss of Ward IV had to provide among other pieces, "4 pieces of birch, 25 feet long 12 x 12 inches"; and P. Webb, boss of Ward 3, "4 birch pieces, 30 feet long 11x11 inches." Among the 119, who contributed to the building fund was John S.D. Thompson, later Sir J.S.D. Thompson and Prime Minister of Canada who contributed \$4.00.

Owners of vessels in 1878 were Captains Michael Crispo, Michael DeCoste, Jeremiah DeCoste, Patrick Webb and Peter DeCoste. Merchants were Michael Crispo, Angus MacDougall, Donald Anderson, and Patrick Webb.

Newcomers to the parish didn't just saunter into the church on the first Sunday following their arrival, for the records of the parish committee in 1887 reveal that John MacDougall paid his "qualification" of \$9.00 and in 1887 Captain John Fraser, Michael Fitzgerald, Hugh Chisholm, John Beaton and James MacEachern did likewise.

The parish committee seems to have been an organization dating back to the days perhaps of the first church, and long before there was a resident pastor. Its members in 1867, consisted of Michael Crispo, Treasurer; John Breen, Louis Charpentier, Joseph Brow, Stephen Crispo, Patrick Webb, Michael Webb, Fidel Levandier, "Simon's son," Jeremiah Fouher, Patrick Chisholm, and Nicholas Bellefontaine. It must have been irritating to the newcomers to pay \$9.00 "to qualify", when in the year 1887, the entire Sunday collection for the year amounted to \$20.85, and the back pews of the church were sold at auction by the committee for ten cents per annum.

An unbiased observer, Father Ronald MacGillvray, pastor of Arisaig, and scholar of merit, wrote some eighty years ago the following appraisal of the people of Havre Boucher area: "They are extremely conservative in their dress, their methods of work, and in their pious religious customs. These people are noted for their honesty, economy, industry and sobriety. To see a Frenchman drunk is happily a rare spectacle in our county. The white cottages and commodious barns indicate their industry and the state of comfort and independence to which they have attained. There is a remarkable absence of what is called crime in the district. In the ways and manners of the people, traces of the ancient refinement and chivalry of their fathers survive. Our Frenchman is a good hater upon occasion, but he repays with compound interest any deed of kindness done to him. He turns away from those who are cold and reserved, towards him; but his heart overflows with kindness and affection for those who are friendly to him. The language of the family is French; but I am told the young people are taking very much to the English.



Fr. Phileas F. Bourgeois

It is said they prefer to read the English papers and books. This must be largely the outcome of the English schools among them.”

Father Gerrior died on January 25, 1884 and was buried beside the church. The present church is built over his resting place. His successor was Father Pierre Forgeron who was pastor until 1886. He was succeeded by Father Phileas F. Bourgeois who remained until October 16, 1889.

Father Alexander Beaton became parish priest on October 15, 1889, and at first glance, saw that the great need of the parish was a good school. After consulting Bishop John Cameron, he journeyed to Halifax and persuaded the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity to establish a community of their Sisters in Havre Boucher. In the spring of 1890, work began on the construction of the convent which stands to this day, and is the oldest in the group of parish buildings. The builder was John Beaton, brother of the pastor, and the total cost of construction was \$3,600. It was not, however, until August 21, 1891, that the Sisters of Charity arrived, to be warmly welcomed by pastor and parishioners, and ever since that day, to be cherished by pastors, pupils, and parents, for the magnificent service they have given to God and to the Parish.



Fr. Alexander Beaton



Fr. James Adrian Butts

On October 16, 1895, Father Beaton was succeeded by Father Moses Coady who in 1897, built the present Glebe House. That a new one was badly needed was shown by the parish account books which show that the old house was sold at auction for \$75.00 and the old stove for only \$2.00.

Father Coady left in August 1907, and was succeeded by Father James Adrian Butts, who remained until January 1913, when we was replaced by Father Moses Doyle. The first parish hall was built some two hundred yards from the site of the present one in 1914. It was completed early in October, and there may have been disapproving shaking of heads by the older generation when on October 11 of that same year, the younger set saw the ir first silent movie.

Tragedy struck early in 1916 when on a February day, the sixty-five year old church so long an object of love and care was completely destroyed by fire. Bishop Morrison at once sent Rev. J. A. D'Auteuil to assist Father Doyle who, with the parishioners, had at once started to clear out the ruins and plan a new church. Masses were said in the Convent chapel and in the parish hall on Sundays, and so fast did the construction of the new church go on, that on December 8th, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the parishioners attended Mass for the first time in the new Saint Paul's Church.



Fr. Moses Doyle

A picnic was held in July of 1916 and the sum of \$2080, huge for that day, was

realized. The parish account books show that the church cost \$13,362 to build, itemized as follows: Building contract - \$8,600 to W.E. Landry; Steel Work - \$2,500; Heating - \$1,385; Bricks - \$1,147.

Between 1858 and 1910, the original name of the parish, our Lady of the Assumption must have been forgotten since in all those years the church is always referred to as “the chapel.” It is only in 1910, that we first meet with the name St. Paul, a name given to it perhaps on the presumption that as Father Martell had built both the church in Tracadie and Havre Boucher, he must have called the second Saint Paul’s since he had called the first Saint Peter’s. At any rate, the cornerstone of the present church attests its dedication to Saint Paul.

Father Moses Doyle retired from parish work on April 7, 1918, and for the next twenty-five years was a semi-invalid until his death in 1943 at Saint Martha’s Hospital in Antigonish.



Fr. Ronald MacDonald

Father Angus Bryden, who just three months ago, died while pastor of Lakevale, was appointed administrator of the parish and remained until May 8, 1919, when a new pastor arrived in the person of Father Ronald MacDonald, just returned from Europe and four years service as Chaplain with the Canadian Army.

During 1920 the interior of the church was finished and on September 8th of that year, the completed church was blessed by Bishop Morrison. The Casket of September 16, 1920, in recording the even estimated the cost of the finished church at \$32,000 which would, of course, be exclusive of the generous contributions of labour by the men of the parish.

On October 1st, 1922, Father MacDonald was succeeded as Pastor by Father James Doyle who was to remain as spiritual father of the community longer than any other priest in the parish’s history, sixteen years in all. In the difficult days of the “Depression”, when the lobster fishermen were particularly hard hit, Father Boyle left Havre Boucher in 1938 to become pastor at Whitney Pier. On June 6th, 1944 he was consecrated Bishop of Charlottetown. While on his way to visit the Holy Father in Rome, Bishop Boyle died in London, England, on June 23, 1954.



Fr. James Doyle



Fr. James Kiely

Father Doyle was succeeded by Father James M. Kiely who, at sixty-seven years of age and in failing health, continued to give his all for the parishioners of his native county. In 1936 and 1937, while Father Boyle was pastor, extensive repairs were made to the church but these proved ineffective and in 1945 extensive additional repairs were required. These were carried out by Father Kiely now seventy-four years of age and frequently a patient in hospital, with the faithful

co-operation of the parishioners.

In 1946, Father John G. Webb, a native of the parish and a descendant of one of the pioneers mentioned in a letter of Father Manseau to Bishop Plessis of Quebec in 1816 was appointed as curate to assist Father Kiely in his old age. Under his leadership, the present hall was constructed in 1950.



Fr. John G. Webb

Father Kiely resigned the parish on July 19, 1950 and retired to Saint Martha's Hospital, Antigonish, and on August 30th of the same year, he was created a Domestic Prelate by the Holy Father in recognition of his many and fruitful years of service to the Church.



Rev. Samuel Campbell

Reverend Samuel Campbell was appointed pastor on August 2nd, 1950. His principle endeavours were to modernize the parish plant and to provide leadership in the new movements just beginning to manifest themselves in the field of education. Four of the five school units at that time existing in the parish, united in a local consolidation, thus laying ground work for the present, satisfactory arrangements by which pupils of the parish below Grade X are accommodated in the local school and those in senior high school grades are transported to St. Andrew Rural High School near Antigonish.

Economically, Havre Boucher existed from the beginning because of its harbour and its fishing industry. When coastal shipping ceased because of the coming of the railroads, just about one hundred years ago, Havre Boucher was fortunate to find itself on the main transcontinental line of what was to become the Canadian National Railways. Its future hope lies in the establishment in the near future of a chemical pulp industry in or near the Mulgrave area, to provide employment for its ever-increasing battalion of hard-working young men and young women, eager to learn the ways of the modern world and to make their mark in it, but eager more to do so, not too far away from the soil, hallowed by the sweat and the bones of their ancestors, and within sight and sound of the church and parish buildings, which their ancestors struggled to build and which their descendants are not less proud to maintain.