

How St. Clement's Evolved: 1891--2016

St. Clement's Church originated as a mission church of St. John's, York Mills, where Canon Henry Bath Osler was the rector. He was responsible for the rapid growth of a new church in Eglinton, which was incorporated as a village in 1889. In February 2014, Osler's 188-year-old *Bagster's Comprehensive Bible* (1826) listing his family tree and containing some of his sermon notes was donated to St. Clement's Church. The first meetings of the mission church were held at 2501 Yonge Street, a building that still exists today; following that, gatherings were held at the YMCA, and then at a school house that later became the Orange Hall. This single-storey building is extant on Orange Hall Lane, just west of St. Clement's School and east of Duplex Avenue; it is most visible from the Municipal Parking lot on Castlefield Avenue.

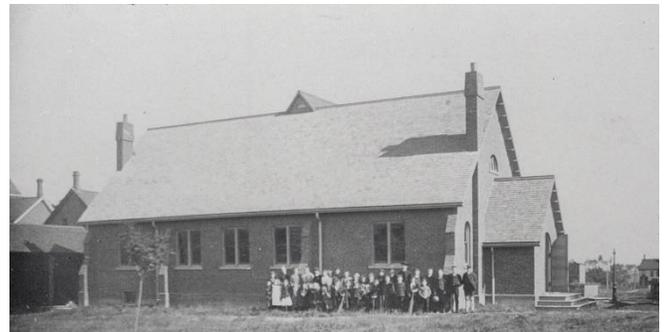
The first St. Clement's Church building was erected in 1891 on Hawthorne Avenue. On August 9, 1911, Toronto World mentions that "North Toronto has put forward a by-law (No. 1283) to change a number of street names, including Hawthorne to St. Clements Avenue". While the actual change may have occurred in late 1911 or 1912, the main Toronto street directory first includes St. Clements Avenue in 1913 with the church listed at 70 St. Clements Avenue. There is no apostrophe in the street name; there is one in the church name.



Henry Bath Osler *August 19, 1815 - +March 8, 1902
This photo was given to me on November 25, 2001 by the Rev. Jim Hunt from St Clement's, who had received it from an antique dealer who salvaged it from the contents of a house on Duggan Avenue, Toronto



Orange Hall (1958)



St Clement's Anglican, Eglinton (1910)

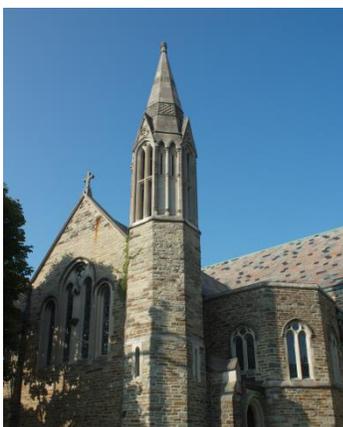


St Clements Avenue, 1902 This early photo shows the view west along St Clements Avenue from Yonge Street. In the distance is the Anglican Church of St. Clement, the home of Canon Henry B. Osler's, and Woodley's house which later became the rectory.

Mr. A. Boydell Lambe donated two lots of land on which was built a red brick church accommodating 180 people. The architect, J. C. Gibson, sited the church along St. Clements Avenue with the main entrance on the south side of the building. The cornerstone for the original church was laid by the Rural Dean Reverend John Langtry. In 1891, St. Clement's became part of the largest denomination in Toronto—The Church of England. After nearly one century and numerous renovations, we have returned to the original address!

The church name has changed several times: St. Clement's, Eglinton (1891); St. Clement's Church, Hawthorne Avenue, Eglinton (1901); St. Clement's North Toronto (1918), and The Church of St. Clement, Eglinton (March 12, 1963).

The first organ was a hand-pumped one, and the only stained glass window in the original church was the Resurrection window imported from England. It is currently installed in St. Margaret's Chapel. Kerosene lamps were replaced by gas lamps in 1893. Two parish halls were built in 1900 and 1925 respectively. To make way for a new church, the original one was torn down on November 17, 1924, except for the unconsecrated part—Old Parish Hall. The unconsecrated parts were designated by a different floor level (elevation); nowadays we strive for accessibility.



Faithful Thomas

The new church design was a sincere and scholarly expression of the East Anglian Gothic tradition. The architect, Forsey Page, received two national prizes for the design of the 152' by 88' church in 1926. In 1925, stairs and a railing were added to



Mead Tracker organ, 1842

open the balcony. The bell, now called “Faithful Thomas,” was donated by the Afternoon Badminton Club in 1931. The new Parish Hall opened on April 12, 1939, including the Club Room, kitchen, Rector’s Office, and Edwin J. Powell Reading Room. The upper auditorium, Canon Nicholson Hall, opened on November 1, 1951. The half-octagon Baker Wing (Sunroom) was dedicated on November 21, 1954. The Education Wing, dedicated on May 19, 1959, today houses St. Clement’s Archives and the remainder is leased to a private school.

While negotiations were underway for legalizing the Courtyard Cemetery, no interments were permitted. The suspension lasted from December 1, 2001, to September 27, 2006. This Cemetery, a fully enclosed quadrangle abutting the Sanctuary and Canon Nicholson Hall, comes under the new *Funeral, Burial, and Cremation Services Act*. Although it had been used for interments since the early 1970s without legal registration, as of September 21, 2002, it is now fully legitimate. Responsibility rests with The Diocesan Council of Incorporated Synod.

Between April 2008 and May 2012, St. Clement’s hired architects Davidson and Langley Inc., for an extensive renovation to the sanctuary, narthex, Old Parish Hall, and other areas of the building and property.

The western portion of the Tennis Courts was sold for housing and the remainder converted into a much-needed church parking lot. On December 1, 2009, St. Margaret’s Church, North Toronto, amalgamated with the congregation of St. Clement’s Church, at which time the chapel was named St. Margaret’s Chapel. In addition to clergy, choir, and congregants coming from St. Margaret’s Church, two significant stained glass windows from St. Margaret’s were installed at St. Clement’s—the Ascension window and the Dunkirk window. The latter installed in the choir room is the only stained glass memorial of Dunkirk in Canada.



Dunkirk Window

Donald E. Holmes, Archivist