

Dorinda (Dinnie) Greenway

June 25, 2014

There were so many interesting reminiscences today.

My first memory is about trying to stifle giggles – by watching the organ pipes high up at the front of the church. They were exposed then (1930s), and trying to figure out which notes on our magnificent organ, played by Mr. T. C. Chattoe, came out of which pipes. I had been watching my younger brother switch gentlemen's hats from under the pews where they had been stowed away in metal slots during the worship service. Every now and then he would try one on and, of course, they all came down over his ears. The junior congregation was wont to retire to Sunday School during the last verse of the hymn just before the sermon given by our great family friend Rev. Bruce Hunter. As my brother and I departed, I heard my Mother say to my Dad, "This hymn suits the occasion – yes?" The hymn was called "The Battle is o'er, the strife is done" and so we went (to Sunday School).

However, my ancient history precedes my attack of the giggles. Mother and Dad met at Metropolitan United Church and fell madly in love when they were just 16. Mother was a contralto and sang alto. Dad was a baritone and/or tenor, whichever Mr. Chattoe needed. This love affair lasted all their lives, but at 16! The maternal grandparents panicked. So Keziah (Kizzie) McCormick was shipped off to University in Boston. Kizzie became a successful playwright. Arthur Brickenden became an international lawyer and judge. They saw each other at church at Christmas and Easter – still madly in love. On Saturday, October 26, 1918, they married at the age of 21 at Metropolitan.

Like many places of worship throughout the centuries, the places of worship had facilities for community gatherings and drama. Kizzie took advantage of her training as a playwright and produced skits and entertainment for the church. There are copies and pictures of these skits in our church archives. They have been on display in the past. Mother went on to become Founding Director of the London Little Theatre which has established an award for amateur theatricals called the Brickenden Awards which are presented annually. It all began at Metropolitan.

My brother and I were duly christened here and later married here. In any case, I was happily married here 3 times!

But even these memories are preceded by my grandparents and Dr. & Mrs. Harry Abbott, Grandmother McCormick's brother and wife. There is an Abbott stained glass window in the northwest corner of the balcony at Metropolitan.



My Grandfather McCormick lived across the road from Metropolitan where City Hall now stands. He was President of the choir and sang bass and baritone or tenor as required by Mr. Chattoe. One winter's Sunday, Grandfather had spent the morning in church. That afternoon he took a few friends on a sleigh ride along Dufferin Avenue. Now Grandfather loved good horses and his horses had speed. He was reported to police for speeding ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON! He attended court on Tuesday and the magistrate said, "Mr. McCormick, how

fast do you reckon you were going?" Grandfather replied, "Your Honour, just as fast as that mare could trot." He was let off. In fact, the magistrate bought one of that mare's colts a few years later.

There were Sunday School picnics at Springbank Park to ride on the toy train. The trip down was in an open trolley and the boys were later chastised for hanging on by one arm and one leg as we roared along. The races were supervised by Dad, who for many years was Superintendent of the Sunday School. All the prizes were boxes of cookies from McCormick's Biscuit factory. Baseball, games, singsongs – epic adventures and great memories. Hurrah for Metropolitan!

*Cheers,
Dinnie*
