

FPCGH-3B THE HERITAGE OF GOUVERNEUR



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
22 CHURCH STREET
GOUVERNEUR, NY 13642

Compiled by The Gouverneur Reading Room Association,
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Page 14. The history of the Presbyterian Church dates back to 1817 when a Presbyterian Congregational Church was organized by a small group of settlers.

Early meetings were held in homes, the first school, barns, and other places. In 1820, the present site was purchased from the Gouverneur Morris Estate. Records show that a portion of this property was a cemetery, some bodies having to be removed before any construction.

The first edifice was very crude, and was soon replaced by a sturdier structure. In 1844, a new meeting house was finished. It has been referred to in some books as the Third Church. It served until razed for construction of the present building.

The First Presbyterian Church now at 22 Church Street was finished and dedicated on October 3, 1893. The outside of the edifice remains much the same, except for additions of shrubbery and trees. In 1950, there was an extensive repair and remodeling of the interior.

Detailed descriptions of these early buildings are given in Mrs. Wallace Thompson's history of the First Presbyterian Church written for the church's Sesquicentennial in 1967.

Rev. William F. Skinner, Pastor 42 years, 1887-1929

Records refer to an early parsonage around 1837, but little is know regarding it. In 1866, a wooden manse was built and years later moved to 39 John Street where it was known as the Fox house. In 1904, with funds form Mrs. Myra Dean and daughters, Cora and Jennie, the brick house adjacent to the church was built.

In November of 1974 the Presbyterian Congregation sold the lovely, marble trimmed manse to the Gouverneur Historical Society to be used as a museum.