

ABSTRACT OF THESISName of Candidate JOHN DALZIELDegree Ph.D. Date March, 1957.Title of Thesis THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF PRESBYTERIAN ORDINANCES OF WORSHIP
AMONG ENGLISH SPEAKING EUROPEAN SOUTH AFRICANS PRIOR TO THE FORMATION
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA in 1897.

When the Presbyterian Church of South Africa was formed in 1897, the area covered by the new Church was all Africa South of the Zambesi River. At the time of the Union of the Churches, this vast area was divided into the following Presbyteries, viz. Transvaal, Natal, Cape, Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria, Free Church Presbytery of Tanskei, United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria, United Presbyterian Presbytery of Adelaide. By the year 1897 there had grown up within these Presbyteries 56 English Speaking European Congregations (all 56 did not survive until 1897) and it has been the aim of this Thesis to show how these Presbyteries and Congregations originated and grew from 1806 to 1897.

The Cape Presbytery.

Presbyterian Ordinances of Worship among English speaking persons in South Africa owe their origin to The Calvinist Society formed in 1806 among the soldiers of the 93rd Regiment. From this Society there was formed in 1813 the first Presbyterian Congregation in Cape Town. This Church became Congregationalist in 1819 but the Presbyterians began again in 1824, and, by 1829 they had built St. Andrews Church, Cape Town, and called a new minister. As a result of the work of this Congregation, four Churches and two Preaching Stations were established by 1897. In addition, the Free Church of Scotland had established three Churches within the Cape Presbytery area in 1846, 1859 and 1861. Due to lack of support these three Congregations had had to close down long before 1897. The Cape Presbytery was not formed until 1893.

The Missionary Presbyteries.

The Glasgow Missionary Society sent Missionaries to the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony in 1824 and they formed themselves immediately into the Presbytery of Kaffraria. In 1837 this Presbytery split into two sections over the Voluntary Question and in 1843 the one section became the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria and in 1847 the other section became the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria. In 1889 both of these Missionary Presbyteries split into two forming United Presbyterian Presbytery of Adelaide and Free Church Presbytery of Transkei.

Four English speaking European Congregations were established within the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria, while another four congregations were established within the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria. In addition, five Independent Presbyterian Congregations were established within the area of the Missionary Presbyteries.

In addition to these European Congregations more than 20 Native Mission stations, together with numerous outstations, were established within these 4 Presbyteries between 1824 and 1897.

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The Presbytery of Natal.

The English speaking Presbyterian Church of Natal began in 1850 when Rev. W. Campbell accepted a call from a group of Scotsmen in Pietermaritzburg, whom he constituted into a congregation. The Presbytery of Natal was constituted for the first time in 1853 in order to ordain Rev. C. Scott called to the recently formed congregation in Pinetown. Within the bounds of this Presbytery 12 congregations were formed by 1897.

Presbyteries in the Trekker Republics (O.F.S. and Transvaal).

When gold was discovered in Barberton in 1885 the Natal Presbytery sent Rev. James Gray to investigate the possibility of starting a congregation among the miners. On his recommendation, a congregation was established in Johannesburg in 1887. Two more congregations were established along the Gold Reef and one which started at Klerksdorp had to close down, in 1892. By 1893 Natal Presbytery realised they could not cope with the development in the Transvaal and they erected the Transvaal Presbytery. By the time the Presbyterian Church of South Africa was formed in 1897, 10 congregations had been started in the Transvaal and 2 in Rhodesia.

In addition to the Transvaal and Natal Congregations the Natal Presbytery was responsible for the establishing of 2 congregations within the Orange Free State. These Churches, together with the independent Presbyterian Congregations of Kimberley and Beaconsfield, were erected into the Orange River Presbytery in 1898.

In the same year (1898) 4 other congregations were established within the Orange River Presbytery, but their origins date back to 1897.

The Steps towards Union.

Two attempts were made to unite the Dutch Reformed Church and the English Speaking Presbyterians prior to 1860, but with no result. From 1881 to 1886 attempts were made to unite Free Church and United Presbyterian Presbyteries of Kaffraria but these efforts also ended in failure. From 1892 to 1897 Federal Council Meetings, including representatives from all the Presbyteries in South Africa, were held. These meetings resulted in a vote in favour of Union at the 6th Federal Council in 1897. The Free Church Synod of Kaffraria refused to become part of the new Church thus formed.

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I have added an Annotated Bibliography indicating the value, extent, condition and location of the sources I have used in compiling this Thesis.

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PRIOR TO THE FORMATION
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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA
IN
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BY
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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Divinity of the
University of Edinburgh in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the Ph.D. Degree.

MARCH 1957



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F O R E W O R D

SECTION 1

I was led to the writing of this History partly as a result of trying to find some information connected with the early history of St. Andrews Church Durban, Natal. I discovered that many of the original records had not been properly cared for and that they were either missing altogether or lying in old boxes in the homes of aged and infirm members.

I determined to do what I could to rectify this situation and therefore began an 'archives' at St. Andrews Church Durban in 1950.

Encouraged by the response to my Durban appeal for documents of historical interest to Presbyterians, when I began this thesis I wrote to the other Natal and Cape Presbyterian Churches, and, indeed, visited the majority of them making the same appeal. Everywhere I was received with great courtesy and consideration.

I found people most anxious to help me search for old books, and in my travels in Cape Town I entered the homes of some fine old Scots folk in order to find "the old box in the storeroom" where the precious Presbytery or Session minutes were being stored. Alas, some of the records have

become soiled with water, and in Natal, where the bookworm thrives, many of the ancient Records are in tatters.

However, the rescue work has been commenced and it is hoped that the Assembly will soon provide a place to store the historical records of the congregations of our Church.

The history of the Cape Presbytery affords an interesting illustration of the truth that without the unifying influence of a Presbytery individual Presbyterian congregations tend to become congregational in form and in spirit. It took the Cape Town Presbyterians seventy years to form a Presbytery, and during that time, one congregation became a Congregational Church, a group of Missions became Dutch Reformed, three European Churches were commenced and died. Much of this trouble and expense might have been avoided had there been a strong Cape Presbytery before 1893 - although even Presbyteries have been known to make mistakes in starting churches where there was no hope of development.

However, there is no doubt about the devotion and the faith of the early Scotsmen who came to South Africa. They did not rest content until they had a place to worship God in the way to which they had always been accustomed. The Churches they established were always associated with Scotsmen. The original name of the first South African

Presbyterian Church was "The Scotch Church Cape Town," and when the congregation changed the name, it was the Patron Saint of Scotland they chose. This was all quite natural, for in the beginning all the members were Scotsmen, but in later days this was to be something of a hindrance. The second and third generation Scotsmen married into South African families, some of them Dutch, and the next generation of Scotsmen in South Africa were really more South African than Scottish. This affected the Church in that now Scots folk were both in the Dutch Reformed Church and the Presbyterian Church, and it seems a thousand pities that the moves for union between these two Churches did not take place before the end of the century. In 1896 the Jamieson Raid and later the start of the Boer War made such a union impossible, but prior to 1860 it might well have been achieved. It is impossible to conceive the good that this would have done to South Africa, because today the Dutch Reformed Church has great influence with the Government and the people of this land, and had we been part of that Church, we might have had a moderating influence on some of its stern attitudes. It is my view that the Dutch Reformed Church is still today the greatest single influence in South Africa. It has greater influence in this land than any of the political parties and in this lies the hope of South Africa.

The great Dutch Reformed Church has always been very friendly disposed towards the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, and it may well be that in the future the union suggested as early as 1824 will become an established fact.

In writing the Section about the Cape Presbytery I received great help from everyone I approached and I should like to express my thanks to numerous folk who have been exceedingly kind in assisting me with this Section. Dr. Alex King of the Colonial Department of the Church of Scotland was most helpful in connection with the Minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland; those in charge of the Church of Scotland Archives in St. Johns Church Tolbooth in Edinburgh were always helpful; Miss Leslie at the New College Library was unfailing in her assistance. In Cape Town the ministers of the Churches there were most generous in the time they gave to searching out where the old Minute Books were to be found and in directing me to the various addresses. The Government officials at the Cape Town Archives in Queen Victoria Street were most helpful in procuring old papers for me and in advising where I might find what I was looking for. To the Librarian of the Africana Section of the Cape Town Library I owe a debt of gratitude for the trouble to which she went

to find small and long since out-of-date publications which had a bearing on the History of the Presbyterian Church.

To these and to many others I express my thanks.

SECTION 2.

In the writing of the Section on the Missionary Presbyteries I was greatly assisted by the kindness of numerous Session Clerks and Ministers throughout the Eastern Province. They were most patient with my persistent questionings about their ancient records, and, they have one and all been most helpful in finding the various Minute Books I required. I had to write to some Ministers because their Churches were too far from the route I travelled, and, to these I owe a special debt of gratitude because they had to go to the trouble of writing out passages from their minute books for me.

During the course of my wanderings in search of information I came across a Mr. Eric Pringle, great grandson of the Poet who came out with the 1820 Settlers. Mr. Pringle has spent himself in collecting information about his illustrious family and in his home at Adelaide he now has a tremendous amount of material. He feels, and I agree with him, that someone should write the story of the Pringle family.

The story itself is one of indomitable courage. The courage and devotion of the early Scottish Missionaries has rightly earned for them the admiration of those of us who today reap the harvest of their sowing. They were chased from their Churches and Mission Stations five and six times as a result of Kaffir Wars, but they never gave up. They always returned and started again. Nothing seemed to daunt them, neither raids by savage kaffir hordes nor tempests which wrecked their buildings, nor droughts which ruined their crops, nor financial depression which removed their material means of support, made them in any way waver in their desire to "go into all the world and preach the gospel."

This History is mainly concerned with the European Churches but it is quite impossible to write the story of the European English speaking congregations in the Eastern Province without showing how they fitted into the Missionary Presbyteries of which they were a part. I have therefore given in outline the history of the establishment of the Mission stations and in more detail the history of the establishment of the European congregations. Unfortunately the ancient records of the European Churches have not been well kept and in some cases the Kirk Session Minutes are no longer available. However it has been possible to put the story together by extracting information from the

records in Scotland. The Missionaries sent over their Annual Reports to Edinburgh each year and the important passages were either transcribed into the Minutes of the Colonial Committee or they were printed in the Free Church Missionary Record.

It would seem that the formation of a Presbytery as early as 1824 was in no small way responsible for the fact that these Missionaries managed to weather the storms of their early years on the frontier. It was not so much that the Presbytery was there to exercise discipline and authority but simply that it gave them a feeling of "belonging." It meant that there was always a place where they would obtain not only a sympathetic hearing but also whatever assistance could be given. Even after the split in the work on the frontier the Missionaries still met together in what was called the Missionary Council. This body which met to discuss mutual problems consisted of Missionaries from both the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches. The Minutes of this Council are still in existence and are kept at Lovedale and they indicate that wherever help was needed it was always given.

One impression deeply graven on my mind is that the men who came out from Scotland to South Africa were magnificent examples of the kind of folk Scotland has always managed to produce, and, which, throughout the

years, has been her finest export of all.

SECTION 3

The collection of information in the Natal Presbytery was made extremely easy because as Natal Presbytery Clerk, it is one of my duties to keep the Presbytery Archives. These Archives comprise the Presbytery Minute Books from 1850 onwards, together with Session Minute Books of all charges which are now defunct. These are all kept in a safe in St. Andrews Church in Durban. I am the present Minister of the Church.

Individual Church records were not difficult to obtain for the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa recently instituted an enquiry asking all Natal congregations where their ancient records were kept. The result was that all Kirk Sessions saw to it that their old minute books were properly stored. This meant a great deal of time was saved when I went to look at them for the purpose of this Thesis.

Ministers and Session Clerks in Natal were all very helpful indeed and in many instances were ready and willing to write out long extracts from their Minutes for me. One Minister brought his Minute Books sixty miles to save me the bother of going to fetch them and to him and all the other

Ministers and office bearers of Natal Presbytery I am extremely grateful.

I was also fortunate in having as a member of my own congregation a lady who is in charge of the Reference Section of the Durban Library. This meant that I was able to get easy access to numerous rare books on the early history of Natal. To her and to the Durban Library staff I owe a debt of gratitude.

Nor must I forget Professor Petrie of Natal University whose intimate knowledge of the history of the First Church Pietermaritzburg made it so much easier to write that eventful story. He has been an elder in Pietermaritzburg for close on thirty years and has interested himself in the history of the Church there. He has in his possession one or two documents of historical value connected with the history of the Church. He made these and his own fund of knowledge available to the present writer.

The History of the Natal Presbytery illustrates the courage of the Scotsmen who laid the foundations of the Church in this land. They had great problems to face not the least of which was that of their own health. Many of the men who came from Scotland to Natal came in search of health, and, the warm sunshine gave to almost all of them that for which they sought.

The emigration to South Africa of thousands of

Scotsmen between 1850 and 1900 meant the need for the establishment of Presbyterian Ordinances of worship, and in Natal this need was adequately met by generous men and women who gave sacrificially that Churches might be established.

SECTION 4

In obtaining information about the Transvaal Presbytery I encountered unexpected difficulties. The Ministers in this area of the Church were so busy that they could give me little assistance in finding material for this work. Fortunately the historical records of most of the Churches in which I was interested were kept in the Church vestry and by searching on my own I managed to obtain much of what I was looking for. The First Transvaal Presbytery Minute Book presented a real problem to me because the Clerk of the Presbytery refused to allow me to see the Book without official permission from the Presbytery, and that body had decreed that I could see the book provided I did not take it outside the bounds of the Presbytery.

When I arrived in Johannesburg I phoned the Clerk for permission to come out and see the precious Minute Book. I asked to speak to him and I was dumbfounded to hear the news that he had died two days previously. I explained my predicament to his daughter-in-law and son and they very kindly invited me out to the house to search among their father's old books. I received every assistance on that evening and together we discovered not only the First Transvaal Presbytery Minute Book

but we also found the ancient records of all the early South African Republic Presbyterian Churches in which I was interested.

This young couple allowed me to take away all the Minute Books I needed, and also assisted by writing out some of the required passages for me. Without their co-operation I could not have written the history of the Transvaal Presbytery and to Mr. and Mrs. Somerlid McDonald I owe a special debt of thanks.

In the Orange River Presbytery I was particularly fortunate. This Presbytery was and is a small Presbytery but during its history the Orange River Presbytery has had two ministers who were specially interested in South African Presbyterian Church history. These men were the late Rev. David Wark D.D. who wrote "The History of ^{the} Kimberley Congregation" and the late Rev. James Craig M.A.B.D. who wrote the "History of St. John's Bloemfontein" There is only one copy of each of these pamphlets still in existence and we owe their preservation to Rev. G. Smith of Kimberley. These two pamphlets proved invaluable to the present writer and together with the Session Minute Books formed the main source of the information about these two Churches. The present ministers of the Orange River Presbytery gave me splendid assistance in my search for information and as was the case in almost every area of the Church the men went to the trouble of writing out

passages for me and of obtaining copies of any old magazines and pamphlets they thought would be of assistance.

No history such as this could have been written without such co-operation and to one and all I express my gratitude.

SECTION 5

The information needed for "The Steps toward Union" was, for the most, part gleaned during the writing of the other four Sections but I was particularly fortunate while in Cape Town, because, while looking around in St. Andrews Church, I came across two printed copies of the Proceedings of the Conference between the Free Church and United Presbyterian Presbyteries on the subject of Union. This pamphlet was lying among old magazines on the top of a cupboard and enquiries all over South Africa have made me realise that this copy is probably the only one in our Church today. I have since heard that there is another copy in Lovedale Library and one at Rhodes University Library.

Rev. Dr. J. Russell also wrote much about the prospects of uniting all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa and among his papers I found references to books and pamphlets. Had it not been for these references I might not have known where to look for the information regarding

the various attempts at Union prior to 1880. The Presbyterian Church of South Africa owes much to this fine Scotsman who was honoured with the Degree of LL.D. by the Cape Town University in 1916. It was Rev. Dr. John Russell who first set the Church thinking about how the long discussed Union could be achieved. Certainly the present writer owes much to Dr. John Russell's careful collecting of historical information about the early story of the Cape Town Church. In the Bibliography I have called Dr. John Russell's collection of historical information "The Russell Papers."

Since I started writing this Thesis the General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa has sent out a circular to all congregations asking where they keep their "Historical Records."

From what I have seen in my travels Rev. J. Paterson Whyte is going to get some very interesting replies to his circular but what is perhaps more important it seems that this is the first step in centralising all these records in a Presbyterian Church Archives in Johannesburg. This is greatly needed and I hope that my insistent pestering of my brethren for information has in some small way helped toward this end.

Throughout this work I have assumed that the reader is not well acquainted with South African political history.

I have therefore prefaced each section with a short account of the history of the relative Province so that references to political events in the purely Church History portions may be more intelligible.

The aim in writing this Thesis has been to record the fascinating story of how the Presbyterian Church originated in South Africa and how it developed and spread. It is a story of Scotsmen who came to the young and developing South Africa and who wanted the Ordinances of Worship to which they had been used in Scotland. To achieve this they worked hard themselves and gave generously, but the amazing development could never have been achieved had it not been for the incredible generosity of "The Home Churches", particularly the Free Church of Scotland. The Churches in Scotland poured money and men into South Africa and when the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa united and formed their own autonomous Church the "Home Churches" not only supported the move but continued to pay all the grants they had previously paid.

The only group which refused to join the United Church was the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria. One of the main reasons which made them refuse was the desire of the Missionaries to have colour named in the Constitution in such a way that the Church would be governed by the white man's vote and not the black man's vote. How strange this

sounds to modern ears, for today the Missionaries are in the forefront of the battle to obtain equal voting powers for the Africans inside and outside the Church.

The Free Church Synod of Kaffraria was eventually incorporated into the Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa an almost entirely non-European Church formed in 1920. For over thirty years the Presbyterian Church of South Africa has tried ^{to find} a basis for Union with this sister Presbyterian Church but the negotiations break down almost every time on the same issue, namely - The fear of the Africans that if they unite with the predominantly European Presbyterian Church of South Africa (that) they will be completely outvoted. "Could an African ever become Moderator?" they ask, and assurances are often met with "It may be possible but it would never happen."

Whether this fear is justifiable or not it nevertheless seems a thousand pities that the Free Church Synod did not join the United Church in 1897. If they had done so there would not be two Presbyterian Churches in South Africa today, namely - The Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa which is a non-European Church served by a handful of European Missionaries and The Presbyterian Church of South Africa, a European Church which has a large and increasing African Mission Work. It is, of course, with the story of this latter Church that this

present work is mainly concerned.

In searching for information to write the story which follows I travelled the length and breadth of South Africa and over a fair portion of Scotland as well. Almost everywhere I met with abounding kindness and consideration for I found my fellow Scotsmen both in "the old Country" and in South Africa as friendly and hospitable and as helpful as tradition claims them to be.

I owe thanks in the writing of this Thesis to more persons than I could name here but several folk not already mentioned must be specially remembered. I wish therefore to express my thanks to Miss Dolly Liddell for typing the first draft and to Mrs. Gladys Prickett for typing the final copies and last and by no means least I express my thanks to Rev. Principal Hugh Watt for his kindly encouragement and his great patience with a student who had to do a large portion of his researches at a distance of seven thousand miles from Edinburgh.

To all of these I give my thanks.

J. D.

SECTION 1.

THE CAPE PRESBYTERY.

CHAPTER 1

THE STORY OF SOUTH AFRICA UP TO 1806

THE DISCOVERY OF THE LAND

There are but few references in ancient history to what is known today as South Africa, but Herodotus records¹ that Pharoah Necho, who lived 200 years before him, or 600 years before Christ, had dispatched a party of Phoenicians from the Arabian Gulf on a voyage of exploration to the South. After an absence of three years Herodotus tells us that they arrived once again at the mouth of the Nile, having circum-navigated the African continent.

Although voyages such as these are recorded, it is really to the Portuguese that South Africa owes its discovery by Europeans. In 1487 a Jewish traveller, Joseph Zopateers de Lamego, wrote the following to the King of Portugal, King Joao II :

"that ships which sailed down the coast of Guinea might be sure of reaching the termination of the continent by persisting in a course to the south; and when they should arrive in the Eastern Ocean their best direction must be to enquire for Sofala and the Island of the Moon and they will find pilots to take them to Malabar."²

1 Herodotus Bk. 2 p. 158 Bk. 4 p. 42

2 Louis Herman "A History of Jews in South Africa" p.1.

The Portuguese, anxious to find a sea route to India and prompted also by the desire to discover the country of the fabulous Christian Prince, Prester John, who was believed to reside in a central African city, sent Bartholomew Diaz on a voyage of exploration round Africa. He sailed on August 16th, 1486, and reached the Cape in November, 1487, being the first European to set foot on the Cape Peninsula. He erected a "padrão" or commemorative Cross at Cape Point.^① Diaz, however, was not destined to find The Kingdom of Prester John or the sea route to India, for, having reached Algoa Bay, his men mutinied, and he had to turn back. When he returned home the King of Portugal, Dom John, gave the name "Cape of Good Hope" to the Cape where Diaz had stood and erected the padrão, because, as he said

"it gave promise of the discovery of the sea route to India"^②

So Diaz thought that he had failed, and 12 years later on another attempt to find the Kingdom of Prester John, he was drowned when he went down in a storm off his own Cape of Good Hope.

Guided by the experience of Diaz, in 1497 Vasco da Gama sailed round the Cape of Good Hope and reached India in

1 Vide S.A. Museum Cape Town

2 G.Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 1 p. 35.

the "San Rafael" From that time onwards the great trade of the East passed into the hands of the Portuguese.

THE PORTUGUESE AND THE CAPE

For a century South Africa remained a portion of the Portuguese Indian Empire, and such history as it can lay claim to in this period is bound up with that of Portuguese India. When in the middle of the Sixteenth Century the Holy Inquisition was set up at Goa, the Portuguese Headquarters in India, Caspar de Leao, the first Grand Inquisitor, issued a proclamation dated 29th September, 1565, "to be issued to the people of Israel exhorting them to become Christian". In this document he claimed jurisdiction over "The Portuguese possessions in Asia and Africa as far as the Cape of Good Hope"^①

The Portuguese made no settlements at the Cape despite the fact that it was, in theory, a Portuguese possession. Their goal was India. However, on their long adventurous voyages they discovered and explored most of the coast of what today is known as South Africa .

During this "Portuguese period" few events of importance occurred at the Cape, but it is of interest to

1 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 48

note that in 1503 Antonio da Saldanha entered a Bay opposite the mouth of a fresh water river. He named the bay Saldanha Bay. He was the first European man to climb Table Mountain. Before sailing this man clashed with the Hottentots, and the first recorded affray between blacks and whites in South Africa resulted in the Captain of one of Saldanha's ships being wounded.^①

The Portuguese found two groups of brown men at the Cape when they arrived, viz : The Bushmen, the aboriginals of the country, and the Hottentots, a people whom it was suggested migrated from Madagascar.^② (The Bantu had not yet made his appearance at the Cape) As far as the records show, there were no serious clashes between the white and the brown men till this occasion when Saldanha's men went ashore to trade with the Hottentots.

In 1510 Dom Francisco de Almeida en route to India landed at the Cape, and while trading with the Hottentots a quarrel arose which resulted in a punitive expedition being sent ashore. This action was taken against the better judgment of Dom de Almeida, and it resulted in heavy losses on both sides. "Dom Almeida himself was killed in the affray,

1 P.W. Laidler "A Tavern of the Ocean" p. 3

2 E.Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 36

which did much harm to the relationship between brown and white men." ①

During this period other European nations were spreading their wings and preparing to take flight into that new world which the genius of Prince Henry the Navigator and the courage of the men who followed him had opened up. The ships of England and the Netherlands were not far behind those of Portugal, and there was fierce fighting among the ships of these countries as they vied with each other for supremacy in the East. Ships from many nations sailed past the Cape in the next few years.

Sir Francis Drake, who sailed round the Cape of Good Hope in the "Golden Hind" in 1580, has left us a picture of the Cape as he saw it from the sea. He did not land at Table Bay, but he wrote in his log, "This Cape is a most stately thing, and the fairest Cape that we saw in the whole circumference of the earth." ②

For a century Portugal continued to be the dominant European power in the East, but she was a small country, unable to send out an adequate supply of men of the type necessary to the upholding of an empire, and so, far from keeping themselves

1 D. Fairbridge "A history of South Africa" p. 11

2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol.1 p. 47.

strong and virile, the tendency was to become absorbed by the people among whom they lived. As the Portuguese weakened, so the English, French and Dutch grew strong, until, in the latter half of the seventeenth century they were ousted from Ceylon, Java and most of India.

THE EAST INDIA COMPANIES

During the sixteenth century a number of private companies in England had sent ships to the East to load spices for the English market (e.g. Captain James Lancaster had reached India in 1591). On December 31st, 1600, Queen Elizabeth amalgamated all these private enterprises who had sent ships to the East into the English East India Company,^① and its first fleet set sail for India via the Cape in February, 1601.

In 1583, a Dutchman named Jan Huyghen van Linschoten had sailed to Goa with a Portuguese fleet. He drew up a book of sailing instructions and, guided by it, several Dutch privately owned ships sailed to the East. In 1601, Joris van Spilbergen, with a small fleet, put into Table Bay and gave it its name.^② Shortly afterwards several private

1 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 27

2 Ibid. p. 26

companies were founded in the Netherlands for trade in the East. In 1602 these Companies were amalgamated into the Dutch East India Company,^① by the States General. The Headquarters of the Company was in Batavia, and in the Netherlands the Company was represented by local boards which sat at Amsterdam, Middelburg, Delft, Rotterdam, Hoorn and Easterhuizen, while the central authority was vested in a Board of Seventeen. "The Seventeen", as they were called, were chosen as follows - sixteen members were chosen by the Directors in proportion to the amount which each local Board had subscribed to the general capital, the seventeenth member was nominated by the other members in the United Netherlands.

It was a very powerful company, with authority to maintain armed forces and to establish colonies and administer them. Its sphere of operation extended from the Cape of Good Hope to west of the Magellen Straits.

In 1604 the French formed a similar Company, which was finally reconstructed as La Compagnie des Indes in 1647.^②

THE HALF-WAY HOUSE ESTABLISHED

In 1608, John Jourdain, Chief Merchant of the English

1 Ibid. p. 27

2 Ibid. p. 92

8

East India Company landed at the Cape, and has left on record his opinion that

"Saldania would beare anythinge that would be sowen or planted in it, as for all kind of graine, wheate, barlye, etc., besides all kinds of fruite as oranges, lemons, limes and grapes, etc. Being planted and sowen in due time and kept as it ought to bee, if this country was inhabited by a cruell nation, having a castle or forte for defence against the outrage of those heathenish people and to withstand any foraigne force in short time it might bee brought to some civillike and within fewe yeares able of itself to furnish all shipps refreshinge, for the country at present doth abound with fishe and flesh in great plentie"①

But England was otherwise occupied, and did not pay attention to John Jourdain's opinions. However, a small group did come from England in 1614, as is shown in the record of Edward Terry, Chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe, English Ambassador to the great Mogul. He tells that in 1614^② persons who had been sentenced to death in England were released on the entreaty of the English East India Company on the understanding that they should be banished to the Cape as an experiment in colonisation. The experiment ended in failure.

A gallant effort was made to set the seal of England on the Cape when in 1620 five ships of the English East India Company put into Table Bay under the command of Captains

1 D. Fairbridge "A history of South Africa" p. 29 (quoted).

2 Ibid. p. 30

Andrew Shillinge and Humphrey Fitzherbert. Quick to realise the value of the place as a half-way house to India, they hoisted the flag of England on the top of what today is called Signal Hill, taking possession "to the boundary of the nearest Christian Kingdom in the name of King James,"^① and so the English flag fluttered for the first time in South Africa. Alas, England did not do anything about this. Instead she established her half-way station at St. Helena, and left it to the Dutch to take over the Cape in 1652, when the Dutch East India Company very wisely decided to send a group of settlers to found a provision station at Table Bay. The name of the man they sent to begin the colony was Johan van Riebeck.

THE DUTCH AT THE CAPE

Johan van Riebeck established a provision station for ships of the Dutch East India Company. Any other ships which passed the Cape were provisioned only from the private gardens of the Company's servants. A fort was built, and during van Riebeck's time the first group of its so-called Free Burghers came into being.^② This was a group of persons

1 Ibid. p. 31

2 G.Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 2 p. 89.

not in the employ of the Company who were given land at the Cape. It had been decreed by the Company that Hottentots were not to be enslaved, but slave labour was brought from other parts of Africa to work the lands of the "Honourable Company" as it was called. The Burghers and the Company carried on a considerable trade with the Hottentots in addition to the trade with passing ships.

The detailed history of the Administration of the Dutch East India Company at the Cape need not concern us here except to say that from 1652 - 1793 the Company gradually increased the numbers of Free Burghers who obtained more and more rights for themselves. Moreover, from the small group who came out with van Riebeck to form a provision station, the population had grown in 1793 to 17,000. The vast majority of these folk were Dutch, bringing with them their own customs from Holland, and, above all, their own form of Christianity, viz. Dutch Reformed Church.

THE RISE OF DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH ^①

Not many English speaking Presbyterians came to the Cape during the period of the Dutch East India Company rule,

- 1 P. Engelbrecht "Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerke" also
John McCarter "The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa."

but those who did come found there a church almost identical with their own church in Scotland, for the Dutch Reformed Church was Calvinistic in its Theology and Presbyterian in its form of Church Government. Services were, naturally, conducted in the Dutch language, but, as later history showed Scotsmen found little difficulty in picking up this language, and it is no wonder that the few Presbyterians at the Cape in the days of the "Honourable Company" found little need to petition for a church of their own.

Those who founded the Cape Colony under Johan van Riebeck were all devout members of the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland, adhering strictly to the Heidelberg Catechism.

Those were days in which the observances ordinarily connected with profession of religion were strictly adhered to. No one was permitted to be absent from Church without good reason, and in the Dutch East India Company no one was allowed to worship God in any other manner than that approved of by the Government, and the Government of South Africa was in the hands of "The Honourable Company" who decreed that the only way permissible to worship God in South Africa was according to the rites of the Dutch Reformed Church. Johan van Riebeck

issued a proclamation to this effect in 1660 after three priests of Rome had appeared in Cape Town from a French ship. These were not permitted to hold services of any kind. ①

No ordained minister came with van Riebeck, but he had been accompanied by a "sick-visitor" named Willem Barents Wylant. The sick visitor was a lower order of Church official who could comfort the sick and read someone else's sermon in Church. He was not, under any circumstances, permitted to administer the Sacraments or preach his own sermon. Mr. Wylant once overstepped the mark by preaching his own sermon and he was reprimanded both by the Church and the Dutch East India Company. ②

In 1665 an important ecclesiastical event occurred, viz. the appointment of Rev. Johan van Arkel as the first resident minister at Cape Town. He arrived on 18th August, 1665, and a few days later an ecclesiastical court was established, the constitution of which showed a relationship between Church and State, which was to continue for almost 200 years after this day. The court consisted of a member of the Council of Policy (the Dutch East India Company Government at the Cape) called the "Kommisaar Politiek"

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 2 p. 22

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 23

the Minister, who was a servant of the Company and whose salary was paid by that body, and deacons, who were selected by the Council of Policy from a list of names furnished yearly by the Church Court itself, and the elders, who were elected by the Court as representatives of the congregation but who could perform no duties until the elections were confirmed by the temporal authorities. ^①

Such was the constitution of the Church Court throughout the whole of the rule by the Dutch East India Company. The Church was an engine of the State, and in everything of any importance it was subordinate to the policy of the Government.

Theologically the Church was guided by the decrees of the Synod of Dort, and by the precedents of the Church courts of Holland. These were never disputed. One of the problems which constantly came up for discussion was whether the children of unbelieving parents should be baptised or not. The Cape Church was divided on the subject, and reference was therefore made to the higher court, and reply came from Holland as follows :

"children of unbelieving parents are to be baptised provided those who live with them

1 §. P. Engelbrecht "Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika" p. 58

bind themselves to have such children educated in the Christian religion" ①

Rev. van Arkel embraced this view of the classis of Amsterdam, and baptised all children brought to him. Alas, on 12th January, 1666, he died, and Rev. Johannes de Voocht, a chaplain of an East India man, was detained temporarily to fill the post till the Company appointed Rev. H. van Oordt who arrived in Cape Town in 1668.

During the next 100 years the Church spread as the people increased in number and formed new towns. In Cape Town services had been held in the Governor's Hall in the Fort, but when the Castle was built provision was made for a church within its bounds. Eventually a plot was granted to the Cape Town congregation at the bottom end of the Company's garden, and there the Church was built. ②

On 20th December, 1686, the Council of Policy approved the formation of a second congregation. This was to be at Stellenbosch, and in January, 1687, Rev. H. Oeverney visited the congregation and elders and deacons were inducted according to the Company's Rules. The Church was eventually built and opened on 19th October, 1687.

On 30th December, 1691, the Church at Drakenstein

- 1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol.2 p. 134
- 2 A Classis is a Presbytery
- 3 The Cape Town Dutch Reformed Church stands on the same site today

was constituted according to the Company's laws. In the same way, during the Eighteenth century the following Churches were founded, viz :

8th October, 1743 the Church at Tulbach;
 8th July, 1745 the Church at Malmesbury;
 13th March, 1792 the Church at Graaf Reinet. ①

Thus, by 1795, when the Dutch East India Company rule came to an end, there were six established Dutch Reformed Church congregations in the colony. Each had had its own particular problems and difficulties, but despite a shortage of ministers and the problems of a Church spread over so vast a land, they had more than survived.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

In addition to the Dutch Reformed Church, despite the rule of the Company concerning other religions, the Dutch Lutheran Church had been established in Cape Town in 1780. A wealthy burgher named Martin Melck had erected a building to be used as a church, and he presented it to the ever-increasing group of Lutherans in the city. He gave it to the people in 1774. In 1778 the Lutherans asked the Dutch East India Company to allow them to have a pastor,

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol.2 and 3 also

John McCarter "The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa" also

P.Engelbrecht "Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika"

whose salary they would pay. The Company acceded to their request on condition that "The Honourable Company" were not called upon to meet any expenses connected therewith. The Lutherans thus called Rev. Andries Kolver, who arrived in South Africa on 22nd November, 1780.

The Council of Policy approved the Lutheran deacons and elders on 15th December, 1780, and the Dutch Lutheran Congregation had begun.^①

DUTCH REFORMED "CLASSIS" AT THE CAPE

The Dutch Reformed Churches throughout the colony were governed by the classis of Amsterdam, and were, therefore, not supposed to meet in convocation to discuss their own affairs. However, in 1745, a combined council met for the first time in Cape Town.^② It continued to hold yearly meetings until 1759, when it was abandoned.^③

THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT

One final point must be made regarding the Dutch Reformed Church under the Dutch East India Company, viz - a new movement began to make itself felt towards the end of

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa Vol.3 p. 208
2 Ibid Vol.3 p. 136
3 The meetings were recommenced during the rule of Commissioners Jansen and de Vaer 1802-1806.

the eighteenth century. The doctrine preached had always been evangelical in theory, and ministers were required, once a month, to explain and illustrate a portion of the Heidelberg Catechism. But it was generally felt at the beginning of the century that belief in the Bible, the Creed and Catechism, together with upright demeanour constituted a Christian. Anything emotional was disliked.

This early Dutch Reformed Church neglected almost entirely the conversion of the heathen, and though a formidable list of baptised slave children could be produced, yet there is hardly any trace of the clergy trying to induce blacks or Hottentots to become Christian.

The form of service differed little from the present day. Metrical Psalms, Paraphrases and Hymns were in existence, but the latter two were all but never used in public worship. Hymns of an evangelical nature were not used in a Dutch Reformed Church till 9th January, 1814,^① and this was one of the causes of later divisions within the Church. In the days of the Dutch East India Company services commenced by the Clerk giving out a Psalm and during the singing the Minister entered the pulpit in Geneva Gown and Bands. Then

1 John McCarter "The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa" p. 198

followed the Ten Commandments, The Creed, Bible Readings, then another Psalm, followed by a sermon lasting one and a half to two hours. Before the sermon there was an extempore prayer during which women sat and men stood. The service closed with ^{the} singing of another Psalm and the Benediction. All was dignified and simple, but little feeling in it at all. ①

In September, 1786, Rev. Helperus Ritzema van Lier ② arrived from Holland. He was an apostle of the new Evangelical School, and in addition to wanting to convert all Europeans at the Cape, this earnest young man urged upon everyone the necessity of converting the heathen too. He urged that no-one was a Christian unless he felt a change in his life and unless he was reconciled to God. His services witnessed strange scenes of women in tears, and hysterical men who were either fanatically attracted or utterly repelled.

Mr. van Lier spent his time between services urging everyone to good works and charity, and then on 21st March, 1793, he died at an early age. He had undoubtedly been the instigator of the new evangelism in the Dutch Reformed Church and had profoundly affected its life. He was followed by Rev. M.C. Vos, a man with the same zeal. The introduction

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 3 p. 229 ff.

2 Vide Appendix Page 724

of this evangelical spirit raised the Dutch from their lethargy, and they began to take more interest in each other's welfare. Philanthropic institutions of various kinds were established, and generally mens' ideas with regard to relationships with others were enlarged.

It was a pity that the good work thus begun had to be forgotten so soon, for political events culminating in the overthrow of the Dutch East India Company in 1796, began to occupy mens' uppermost thoughts.

This, then, was the Church which the British found in South Africa when they took over the Cape for their King in 1796. To an Englishman surely a strange Church, but to a Scot so much like his own Church in Scotland that he would notice little difference, except that of language, for this strangely constituted Dutch Reformed Church of the days of the "Honourable Company" was, decidedly Scottish Presbyterian in its attitudes and atmosphere. It is little wonder that the few Scotsmen in the Colony prior to 1796 found no need to petition for a Church of their own.

IMMIGRANTS DURING THE DUTCH EAST INDIA COMPANY
RULE

- 1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa"
Vol. 3 p. 237

French Immigrants

In 1688, four hundred Dutch and French Immigrants arrived at the Cape.^① Louis XIV had inflicted cruelties on his Protestant subjects, who flooded into Holland where Protestant Services were held in the French language in the Dutch Reformed Churches. A few of these refugees entered the service of the Dutch East India Company and were sent to South Africa, but in addition the Company tried with some success to obtain Huguenots as immigrants; and so in May, 1688, 176 French folk arrived at the Cape together with Rev. Pierre Simond of Dauphine, and Anne de Berout, his wife. They settled at Drakenstein, where Mr. Simond ministered to their spiritual needs. This French Church became a branch congregation of the Dutch Reformed Church at Stellenbosch.

THE FIRST ENGLISH SPEAKING PRESBYTERIANS

The Britisher was not to appear in South Africa as a colonist for a long time, but it is recorded that in 1656 five English ships arrived at the Cape. They were treated in a friendly manner but were not sold provisions from the Dutch East India Company gardens - those with private gardens,

1 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 53 ff.

however, supplied them. The British thus did not settle at the Cape, but from time to time a few remained for a considerable time. Shipwrecked sailors, for example, formed a fair sized community, and some of these waiting for passages home were of British stock.

One of the earliest known stories of Scotsmen at the Cape concerns an incident in 1659.^① The surgeon of the "Fort William" a man Robertson by name and a native of Dundee, Scotland, came to learn of a plot to steal the yacht "Erasmus" lying in the harbour. He informed the Commander, and the rogues were arrested and punished. From our point of view the names of the conspirators are of interest, for all save one were Scotsmen and Presbyterians who had left ships bound for the East; here is the list :

Colin Lawson, John Brown, John Beck,
Alexander Crawford, all of Dundee, Jacob
Bain of Glasgow, Peter Barber of Hampstead.

THE CAPTURE OF THE CAPE BY THE BRITISH ^②

During the Dutch East India Company's rule at the Cape the Half-way House to India had certainly become more than a mere provision station, and its strategic importance with regard to the sea route to India was recognised by other

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 2 p. 98

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 Chapters 14 and 15 page 365 ff.

European powers. The French, for example, at war with Britain, were thought to be casting envious eyes on the Cape as a means of inflicting a decisive blow to the English East India trade. Thus it came about that a British fleet, under Admiral Elphinstone and a small force under General Baird, arrived at the Cape in 1796, and after a skirmish on the Cape Flats took over the Cape in the name of the King of Great Britain. This situation was quite satisfactory to a large number of the Dutch at the Cape because they were, for the most part, Orangemen, and the British Troops claimed that they were taking the Cape on behalf of the Prince of Orange who had been chased out of Holland with his party when the French advanced into that country. However, in 1796 the British Parliament openly declared that it had no intention of returning the Cape to the Dutch, and that it was to be kept as a Crown Colony commanding the highway to India. This greatly upset a number of the Dutch at Cape Town, who voiced their protest, but, nevertheless, Lord Macartney was sent out as Governor, with Major General Francis Dundas as Lieutenant Governor. Upon the retirement of Lord Macartney in 1799 Sir George Yonge became Governor at the Cape.

COMMISSIONERS JANSEN AND DE MIST

In March 1802, according to the Treaty of Amiens, the Cape was handed back to the Netherlands, and, amid scenes of great jubilation among the Dutch, Commissioners de Mist and Jansen took over the reins of Government from the British. The Cape was once more governed from the Netherlands, though the Dutch East India Company was long since defunct.

When the Netherlands' Commissioners Jansen and de Mist took over the ~~reins~~ of Government one of their first acts was, on 25th July, 1804, to publish an ordinance declaring "That all religious societies which for the furtherance of virtue and good morals worshipped an Almighty Being were to enjoy in this colony equal protection from the laws, that no civil privileges were to attach to any creed, but that no religious association might hold public worship or meet in public assembly without the knowledge or consent of the Governor." ①

In Cape Town this "Freedom of Public Worship" proclamation was well received, but the country folk were not prepared to regard with favour an enactment allowing Jews and

1 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 154

Roman Catholics the same civil rights as their old Dutch Reformed Church. In Cape Town there was, by this time, almost every kind of denomination. In October, 1805 a room was fitted up as a Roman Catholic Chapel in which a Roman Catholic priest conducted Mass for the soldiers of the Garrison. The Dutch Reformed Church, however, remained the established Church of the Colony inasmuch as its ministers were appointed by the Government and drew their salaries from the public treasury. The salary of the senior Dutch Reformed minister in Cape Town was £333. 6s. 8d. per annum and the junior minister received £300. per annum. ^①

Jansen and de Mist also granted civil rights to all denominations to establish schools under Government control. ^② This was, however, far in advance of the times, and a hue and cry was started throughout the country "Better no education than education not founded on the old religion" they said. Before this question could be settled South Africa changed owners again. Once again the British took over the reins of Government.

One other matter of semi-ecclesiastical nature was effected by Jansen and de Mist, viz - they permitted marriages

1 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 178

2 Ibid. Vol. 4 Chap. 8 p. 173

henceforth to take place before the Landdrost in his district instead of requiring ALL couples to come to Cape Town for License no matter where they lived.

The Commissioners also sent a commission to investigate the work of the London Missionary Society and Dr. Henry Lichtenstein and Landdrost Johan van der Graaf reported that the Mission was doing no harm politically or in any other way, but it appeared to be of very little service to the few people under its influence.^① The London Missionary Society had been in existence since 1799 and the Commission had been requested because of complaints from the Dutch colonists about what was being taught to the Hottentots at the London Missionary Society's Stations.

THE BRITISH CAPTURE THE CAPE FOR THE SECOND TIME^②

The future of the Cape was, however, again to be affected by the international situation in Europe. Britain was still at war with France, and, once more, to prevent France taking the Cape, a British fleet and six thousand six hundred and fifty four soldiers under Major-General Baird set sail for the Cape. By 6th March, 1806 the Cape was, once

1 Ibid. Vol.4 page 184 ff.

2 Ibid. Vol.4 Chapt. 1 p. 2 ff.

again, in British hands, and on that day the last representative of the Dominion of the Netherlands ever to rule over the Cape Colony set sail for Holland. ①

The arrival of the British in 1806 was of great importance to our subject because this time the soldiers who took the country were from the Argyle and Sutherland Highland Regiment. English speaking Presbyterians were thus present in South Africa for the first time in substantial numbers. e

1 Ibid. Vol. 4. p. 194 ff.

CHAPTER 2

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MISSION STATIONS AND CHURCHES

1806 - 1830

THE ATTEMPT TO ANGLICISE THE DUTCH AT THE CAPE

When the British took over the Cape for the second time in 1806 they began a policy of "Anglicising" the country despite the fact that the governing party were very much a minority as far as population was concerned. ^① The form of Government was now virtually a despotism. The British Governor could make what laws he chose, unrestrained by the old Council of Policy of the Dutch East India Company days; he was responsible to the British Secretary of State seven thousand miles away and under that minister's instructions in all matters of policy. The Governor controlled personally all Government departments at the Cape, and the personnel of the civil service was entirely in his hands. He was even Appeal Judge in criminal cases.

The first Governor under this system was Earl of Caledon, and during his governorship the Slave Trade was abolished by Britain. The Governor, faced with the problem

1 Ibid. Vol.4 Chapter 10

of what to do about the slaves at the Cape, decided to sell them, because, he said

"they will become a nuisance if we set them free" ①

Thus 189 men, 73 women and 23 children slaves were sold in 1808 to passing slave trade ships.

The Earl of Caledon was followed by Sir John Craddock as Governor, and under his governorship the first rumblings of the troubles between the London Missionary Society and the Cape Government began. The Missionaries, believing stories brought to them by Hottentots, complained to the government about "unjust treatment of the non-Europeans"

The next Governor was Lord Charles Somerset,^② during whose time at the Cape the Presbyterian Church became established. He arrived in 1814 and it was under his rule that the anglicising process really took a definite form. English became the official language of the courts, and it was suggested that English should be used even in the Dutch Reformed Churches. This was, of course, never put into practice probably because it was impossible to enforce.

During this period the Dutch Reformed Church, which

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 68

2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 4 Chapter 13 p. 275 ff

had not held a Synod since 1805, asked for and received permission to hold such a meeting. On 2nd November, 1824, they met again for the first time in nineteen years, and passed numerous resolutions. ^① These resolutions required the sanction of the Governor and the minister in England, but Lord Charles Somerset neglected to send them to England, so they could not become law.

However, in 1826, another Synod was held and more resolutions passed, and this time Lord Charles Somerset was overseas, and the Acting Governor, General Bourke sent the 1824 and the 1826 resolutions to England for approval. After this it was agreed to hold a Dutch Reformed Synod every two years.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION AT THE CAPE WHEN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WAS FOUNDED

1) The Dutch Reformed Church The story of the rise of this Church has already been given, but at the time of the establishment of the first Presbyterian Church in Cape Town there were Fifty four Dutch Reformed congregations scattered throughout the Colony. ^② In 1821 Rev. G. Thom ^③ had been sent overseas by the Government to obtain ministers and teachers

1 P. Engelbrecht "Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika" p. 98

2 Ibid. Page 110

3 Dr. Thom received his doctorate while in Scotland in 1821. It was conferred on him by Aberdeen University See also P. 46

for the Dutch Reformed Church and the Cape Schools. The result of his efforts was that over the next four years eleven ministers from Scotland became pastors in the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.

2) The Church of England ^① In 1802 a Church of England Minister was stationed at Capetown as Chaplain to the English troops. No congregation was formed, but Government officials and local merchants attended the military services.

In 1806 there was still no Church of England Church or minister except the two military chaplains, Rev. L. Halloran and Rev. R.E. Jones, who, by permission of the Dutch Reformed Church, now conducted Church of England services in the Dutch Reformed Church every Sunday in Cape Town. Rev. L. Halloran was, alas, convicted of sending obnoxious anonymous letters to various Cape Town people, and after five weeks in gaol he was sent home to England.

By 1827 the English episcopal Church had five ministers working in the Colony. VIZ. In Cape Town Rev. George Hough, in Simonstown Rev. George Short, in Grahamstown Rev. Thomas Ireland, in Wynberg Rev. William Wright and in

1 J. Hewitt "Sketches of English Church History in South Africa" p. 20 ff.

Port Elizabeth Rev. Francis McClelland, and churches had been built or commenced in Capetown, Wynberg and Port Elizabeth.

3. Lutherans The Lutherans had still only one congregation in Cape Town in 1827.^①

4. Weslevans^② The Wesleyans established a Church in Cape Town on 16th June, 1822 though prior to this ministers had conducted services in a store hired for that purpose. The first Wesleyan class Meeting was held in Cape Town in 1806 and consisted of members of the garrison. In Albany, Rev. William Shaw was working mostly among the Africans, but ^{he} also served what Europeans happened to be in his area.

5. Roman Catholics^③ In 1806 there was already a Roman Catholic priest conducting Mass for the soldiers in a Chapel in Cape Town. Sir David Bain, Acting Governor in 1806, said that no services could be conducted without his permission and he refused permission for the building of a Roman Catholic Church or for holding Roman Catholic services. The Roman Catholic services therefore closed down officially till 1819 when Earl Bathurst consented to a priest officiating in Cape

1 Vide Page 15

2 J. Whiteside "A History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in South Africa"

3 Anonymous pamphlet "Papers illustrative of the case for an R.C. Church at the Cape of Good Hope" (published 1825).

Town. The man appointed was Rev. P. Scully, and he arrived on 1st January, 1820. When he proposed to erect a church, men of all denominations, including the Protestant ministers, subscribed towards the fund, and the Church was duly built at the top of Plein Street where it still stands.

6) The Missionary Societies

(a) Moravian Missionary Society ① Started work at Genadendal where the missionary George Schmidt established his splendid work in 1792. This society was always in good favour with the government for the practical way in which it tackled its missionary efforts. There was never a clash with the government over missionary policy as the Moravian Missionaries worked quietly at their appointed tasks among the Africans and Hottentots keeping clear of the political issues which all but wrecked the work of the London Missionary Society. By 1828 the Moravians had one station at Genadendal and several out-stations in the same district.

(b) The London Missionary Society ② In March 1799 the London Missionary Society commenced to labour in South Africa, where its first missionaries Rev, J.T. van der Kemp and William

1 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" Chapters 9 and 10

2 R. Lovett "The History of the London Missionary Society" Vol. 1 p. 481-648

Edwards started work at Kat River.^①

Dr. van der Kemp died in 1812, and his work was carried on by Mr. Read who had been his assistant since 1800. Throughout the years 1799 - 1812 Dr. van der Kemp had listened to stories told him by the Hottentots of the way the farmers, and white people, generally were ill-treating the poor blacks and the matter came before the Circuit Court in 1811 with the Missionaries supporting the Hottentots against the farmers. Mr. Read wrote to the Secretary of State in London complaining of the "cruel, inhuman treatment of Hottentots by white settlers and farmers"^② An assertion was made that one hundred murders were known to Dr. van der Kemp in the Uitenhage district alone. The Court instructed that a thorough investigation be made and it was proved conclusively that the missionaries had listened to gossip and that they were, moreover, dupes of the Hottentot storytellers. Their stories were, alas, believed in England where protests were made to the Secretary of State about the way the non-Europeans were treated in South Africa and from this time onwards the name London Missionary Society became synonymous with slander in the eyes of the South African frontiersmen.

1 The name of the station was Bethelsdorp

2 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 123

Dr. van der Kemp was followed ~~as~~ ^{T. J.} Superintendent of the London Missionary Society by Dr. Phillip in 1821. ^① He carried on this dispute with the government. Dr. Phillip accused the Governor and all authorities in South Africa of racial discrimination against the blacks. He enlisted the support of the local press, which the Governor, Lord Charles Somerset, had tried to suppress and he tried in this way to work up public feeling against the Governor. By the time the Presbyterian Church was established in 1828 the controversy was approaching white heat. Dr. Phillip was a very obstinate man, and antagonised everyone who did not agree with him. Even the saintly Dr. Andrew Murray ^② fell foul of this indefatigable missionary, the son of a Scottish weaver from Kirkcaldy, as he fought fanatically for the Hottentots.

In 1826 Dr. Phillip published "Researches in South Africa" a book trying to show the unjust treatment meted out to the Hottentots and coloured races in South Africa. It is a book full of exaggerations and very false statements, but it had the desired effect upon the people in England so that in July, 1828 Mr. Powell Buxton moved in the House of Commons :

"that His Majesty be humbly solicited to

1 Vide Page 48 Dr. Phillip carried on his work for the London Missionary Society and at the same time he was minister to the Cape Town Congregational Church.

2 Vide Page 46

cause such instructions to be sent to the Colony of Good Hope as should most effectively secure to all natives the same freedom and protection as are enjoyed by other free people of that colony whether English or Dutch, and that His Majesty be humbly requested to order copies or extracts of the special reports of the Commissioners at the Cape of Good Hope relative to the condition of the Hottentots and Bushmen, together with the papers given in to the Commissioner by Dr. J. Phillip and the memorials addressed to the Colonial Office by the Directors of the London Missionary Society, to be laid before the House." ①

This was agreed to by the House of Commons on 2nd August, 1828 and it was further agreed to send all this to the Cape Governor together with His Majesty's special command for ^{the} security of Hottentots and Bushmen and their freedom and protection by the laws.

Before these instructions reached Cape Town the Ordinance of Cape Government of 17th July, 1828 was received in England. This relieved free peoples of colour from the operation of the Pass Laws, and placed them in all respects politically on a level with the Europeans. ②

When this Cape Ordinance reached England, Dr. Phillip saw to it that a clause was added prohibiting its alteration without ^{the} consent of King in Council, and in this form, on January, 1829, it was duly ratified.

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 114

2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 4 p. 499

The next two years are full of legal actions against Dr. Phillip for libellous statements made in ^{"Researches"} South Africa. ① In the case brought by Mr, McKay, Landdrost of Somerset East, the court declared Dr. Phillip's book as "a false and malicious libel" He had to pay £900 damages.

In England the Missionary party said Dr. Phillip was suffering for his efforts to secure humane treatment for non-Europeans, and they raised funds to protect him, Some said Mr. McKay had been "prompted by the Government" As a result of all this the Colonists at the Cape believed they could receive no justice from the so-called philanthropic party in England, and relationships between farmers on the frontier and the British Government deteriorated till in 1836 the Dutch in the Eastern Province trekked away to form their own Republics in the interior.

(c) Glasgow Missionary Society ② In 1820 the Glasgow Missionary Society turned its attention to South Africa, and in 1821 Rev. W.R. Thomson and Rev. John Bennie proceeded to assist Rev. Brownlee, already at Chumie. Other missionaries soon followed from Glasgow and in 1825 Mr. Brownlee left that part of Kaffirland entirely to the Glasgow Missionary Society,

1 Ibid. Vol 4. 499 ff.

2 For details of the work of this Society see Section 2 of this Book. p.134 ff.

who established their station at the now famous site of Lovedale.

This was the religious and political situation at the time of the establishment of the first Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. The struggle for the freedom of the Press, associated with the names of Messrs. Fairbairn and Pringle in their ~~struggles~~^{battles} with autocratic Lord Charles Somerset, was at its height. Amongst the Colonists the feeling towards Missionaries was none too cordial in view of the reports of Dr. Phillip sent over to London, and in Cape Town it was a time when churches of all denominations were beginning to establish their causes. The day of one denomination at the Cape was over, and the day of gradually increasing religious tolerance had dawned.

CHAPTER 3

THE BEGINNINGS OF PRESBYTERIANISM

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SERVICES

During the first British occupation of the Cape the only services conducted apart from the Dutch Reformed Services, were those of the Church of England. These were in the hands of the chaplain of the English Regiment under General Baird, and it seems probable that any Presbyterians, either in the army or in the town, worshipped with the Church of England at this time. However, in 1800, Rev. W. Reid of the London Missionary Society, who afterwards laboured at the Kat River Settlement, was encouraged to hold services for soldiers in Cape Town who were not members of the Church of England. There cannot have been a very large number of non-Anglicans among the garrison or in the City, but this is one of the earliest records of a service in English for people who were neither Dutch Reformed nor Church of England. There is very little recorded about these services, but, in a letter sent by Mr. Reid to his Society in London, he writes as

follows :

"I have conducted services for the soldiers stationed at Cape Town and though my other duties have made these infrequent those attending have professed much profit from them" ①

Some of these soldiers may have been Presbyterians, but the Services were not really Presbyterian in name or form.

THE CALVINIST SOCIETY

In 1802 the Cape was handed back to the Dutch in accordance with the Treaty of Amiens, but it was retaken again in 1806 when the British force who took possession consisted of the 93rd Highland Regiment or Sutherland Fencibles. ② Here, for the first time in the history of South Africa, were Presbyterians in large numbers.

These Highlanders, being without a Chaplain of their own, decided to form themselves into an association called the Calvinist Society. This group met every week for Prayer, Bible Study and public worship, and continued their weekly activities during the whole time that the Highland Regiment was at the Cape, that is from 1806 until 1814. In the "Manual for the use of Members of the Congregational Church" for the year 1847 there is a small reference to this Calvinist

1 Magazine of St. Andrews Church Cape Town Feb. 1878 p. 22

2 Vide p. 25 and 26

Society :

"The soldiers of 93rd Highland Regiment had formed themselves into an Association called The Calvinist Society. They met each week for prayer, Bible Study and worship for the up-building of the spiritual life. They were as devout a group of Christian people as could anywhere be found" ④

This weekly meeting of religious Scotsmen was the first really Presbyterian gathering of English speaking people in South Africa, and it was in this way that the soldiers fended for themselves from 1806 till 1812. It would seem that whenever the opportunity offered itself they invited a Missionary to preach for them, and, as many Misionaries from Britain en route to India, passed through Cape Town, it is possible that they were able to have a fair number of services conducted by ministers. There is, alas, no detailed record of the work of this Society.

THE FORMATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION

The soldiers of the Sutherland Fencibles had not formed a properly constituted congregation when the Calvinist Society was in operation, but in 1812 there arrived at the Cape Rev. G. Thom, a Presbyterian Minister who had accepted service with the London Missionary Society. Rev. George Thom

1 Op. cit. p 41.

was on his way to India, to which country he had been appointed by his Society, but, having to stay in Cape Town for some considerable time in order to catch a ship going to India, he began holding services for the soldiers of the Highland Garrison. The Calvinist Society requested him to meet with them for prayer and consultation regarding

"the best means of promoting the spiritual improvement of themselves and others at the Cape" ①

The result of this meeting was that Rev. G. Thom decided to remain at the Cape, and to establish a Presbyterian Church there, while also doing the work of the London Missionary Society.

In a letter from Rev. G. Thom to his Society he mentions

"that I desire to remain at the Cape in order to assist in the establishment of the Presbyterian cause here" ②

The soldiers thereupon agreed to raise the stipend for Rev. G. Thom from amongst themselves, and they more than managed to do so until the time when the Regiment was recalled to Britain. Rev. G. Thom commenced his labours by receiving into membership of the Presbyterian Church forty members of the Calvinist

1 Ibid. p. 42
2 The Russell Papers also quoted in Magazine of St. Andrews Church Cape Town Feb. 1878 p. 23 in an article by Rev. J. Russell on the beginning of Presbyterianism in Cape Town.

Society, and on the first Sunday in July, 1813 the Lord's Supper was observed for the first time.

For the only record of this early Presbyterian Church we are indebted to an article in the Congregational Church Manual for 1847, which reads as follows :

"On 6th May, 1813, they met in the Chapel of the South African Missionary Society in Long Street, and they were constituted a Church of Christ, Rev. G. Thom leading in prayer. After prayer the members gave to each other the right hand of fellowship. Others soon joined their communion, and on the first Sabbath of July the Lord's Supper was observed by the Church for the first time. About ninety then sat down at the Table of the Lord; and this ordinance they continued regularly to observe every two months....

"On the 5th August six of the brethren were elected in accordance with the principles of Church government laid down in the Westminster Confession upon which the Church had been founded, and a fortnight thereafter two of these, who agreed to comply with the wishes of their brethren, were formally set apart to the work of Deacons; and ^{men} mainly but not exclusively from amongst the soldiery joined the Church as members or as occasional communicants, so that the Church embraced in its communion members of the Church of England, of the Scotch Secession Church, of the Baptist persuasion, and of the Wesleyan connexion.

Strict discipline was maintained. A deed was adopted setting forth the constitution of the Church, the character of which can be understood from the following clauses :

The Doctrine, Practice and Order of the
Church of Jesus Christ formed in Cape Town
Cape of Good Hope, May 6th 1813.

1. Doctrine The doctrine contained in the Catechism of the Westminster Divines, which, in sum, is that which is believed by the Reformed Churches on the continent of Europe and the Kirk of Scotland.
2. Practice The strictest morality which results from these Doctrines. Some may be more particularly noticed - as spiritual conversation, not reproaching other persons, avoiding worldly amusements as the theatre, dancing, etc. obedience to the Government under which we live, and affection for all men, and in fact everything which is enjoined in the Sacred Scriptures. These are the standards of our faith and practice.
3. Order of the Church The ministers to be chosen by the members of the Church. The elders and deacons to be chosen by them also with the approbation of the minister. The Minister to be President of all Meetings, and in his absence the Senior Officer present to preside, and nothing to be done without his consent and approbation.

These Rules and Confession of Faith, etc. ratified by me, George Thom in the name of the whole Church, and any explanations or additions may be made afterwards with the consent of 2/3rd majority of the congregation and the consent of the minister." @

Such then was the constitution of the newly formed Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. The congregation was almost entirely

1 Op. cit. p. 43

composed of the soldiers of the 93rd Regiment, and it is therefore small wonder that they gained a reputation for high morality and pure living. In his book "The Land as it was and is" Hugh Millar says :

"The conduct of the soldiers was so exemplary that disgraceful punishment was as unnecessary as it would have been pernicious. Indeed so remote was the idea of such measures in regard to them that when punishments were to be inflicted on others and the troops in camp were assembled to witness the execution, the presence of the Sutherland Highlanders was dispensed with. The effect of terror as a check to crime being in their case uncalled for, as examples of that nature were not necessary for such honourable soldiers."^①

They certainly must have been a fine body of men, and there is no doubt that their high standard of behaviour was due to the faith which they so assiduously practised.

Early in 1814 the 93rd Regiment was removed from the Cape, and in preparation for their departure the members of the congregation connected with the Regiment were constituted a separate Church, with elders and assistants.^② In his "Lectures on Presbyterianism in the Colonies" the late Rev. Dr. R. Balfour of Edinburgh quotes the following remarkable testimony by Rev. G. Thom :

"When the 93rd Highlanders left Cape Town last

1 Op. cit. p. 86

2 This is the origin of the congregation within the Argyll and Sutherland Highland Regiment. It still exists as a properly constituted congregation.

month there were among them 156 members of the Church, including 3 elders and 3 deacons all of whom, as far as man can know the heart from the life, were pious persons. The Regiment was certainly a pattern for morality and good behaviour to every other corps. They read their Bibles, they observed the Sabbath, they saved their money in order to do good - 7000 rix dollars (£1400) the non-commissioned officers and privates gave for books, societies, and the support of the Gospel, a sum perhaps unparalled in any other corp in the world, given in the short space of seventeen months. Their example had a general good effect on both the colonists and the heathen. How they may act as to religion in other parts is known to God, but if ever apostolic days were revived in modern times on earth, I certainly believe some of these to have been granted to us in Africa"①

The departure of the 93rd Regiment left a sadly depleted congregation in Cape Town; there were only three civilians and twenty four soldiers left to carry on the cause for which the Highland Regiment had given so much.② They had, however, a magnificent leader in Rev. G. Thom, and for some time they continued to meet in the rooms of the South African Missionary Society in Long Street. However, towards the close of 1818 Rev. G. Thom decided to resign the charge of this Church,③ and he also severed his connection with the London Missionary Society, in order to accept a call to the pastorate of the Dutch Reformed Church

1 Op. cit. p. 12

2 Manual for members of Congregational Church
1847 p. 44

3 Ibid. p. 44

at Caledon. Thus the first Presbyterian Church in South Africa suffered a further devastating blow. It was bad enough to lose most of the congregation with the departure of the Highland Regiment, but to lose their revered and able minister was almost more than they could bear.

In any history of Presbyterianism in South Africa Rev. G. Thom must be accorded a special place. He was the first minister of a Presbyterian Church (English speaking) in this country; an acting superintendent of the London Missionary Society at the Cape; he had the privilege of welcoming and assisting Rev. Robert Moffat on his arrival in South Africa in 1817; when sent to Scotland in 1820 to obtain ministers for the Dutch Reformed Church and teachers for the local schools he succeeded in inducing a considerable number of men to come to South Africa who afterwards made their influence widely felt. One of the most famous of the men he was instrumental in bringing to South Africa was the wellknown Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray who went as minister to the Dutch Reformed Church at Graaf Reinet; and it was Rev.G.Thom who advised the Glasgow Missionary Society to begin mission work in Kaffraria.^①

1 Vide p.151

The departure of Rev. G. Thom made things exceedingly difficult for the small group left to carry on the first English speaking Presbyterian congregation in Cape Town, and there seems no doubt that had he remained the history of the Church in Cape Town might have been very different.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BECOMES CONGREGATIONALIST

In the "Congregational Church Manual for 1847" the history of the Church subsequent to the resignation of Rev. G. Thom is explained as follows :

"On the resignation of Mr. Thom there were 31 individuals in Church fellowship. Of these 22 were in the army, and the remainder were civilians. Though left without their pastor, they resolved to continue their meetings for worship, and to continue the exercise of Church discipline.....

.....On the arrival of Dr. Phillip and Mr. Campbell at the Cape in 1819, they were requested to preach to the Church, which they did for several weeks in the Hall of the Orphan House to an increasing congregation.....

At a Church Meeting held on 3rd April, 1820, it was agreed that a call should be given to Dr. Phillip to become the pastor of the Church, and an elder and a deacon were deputed to communicate with him on the subject. But, the Church being Presbyterian and he a Congregationalist, he considered it necessary that he should meet the Church to state freely his views of Church Government and that every member might have an

opportunity of becoming acquainted with his ecclesiastical principles. This having been done, it was unanimously agreed that, although the view of Dr. Phillip differed in some respects from the form of Church government adopted by the Church, the difference was so unimportant that the Church could with little exception adopt such alterations in their Church polity as would meet his views without doing violence to their conscientious convictions.....

At a Church Meeting held on 1st July, 1820, Dr. Phillip delivered an appropriate address and undertook the pastoral charge of the Church, upon which a number of persons joined the Church.

On one point, however, a difference has arisen. The impression on the mind of Dr. Phillip appears to have been that those who at that time joined the Church constituted a Congregational Church with which people previously enrolled with the Presbyterian Church were associated, while the Church records show that others understood it to be the Presbyterian Church modified in polity into which the others were received. Be this as it mayFrom that day it ceased to be a Presbyterian Church subject to a Session of ruling elders, and from that day it has been regarded as a Congregational Church, in which the final appeal in all cases must be to a regularly constituted Meeting of the congregation or body of members including the pastor and the deacons. And they subsequently moved their place of meeting from the Orphan Chambers to the premises in Church Square belonging to the London Missionary Society...." ①

Thus the first Presbyterian Church in South Africa ceased to exist after being in organised operation for about seven years. It was to be another four years before the Presbyterians at

1 Op. cit. p. 46

the Cape were to make a further effort to complete what the soldiers of the 93rd Regiment had so devotedly begun.

CHAPTER 4

THE PRESBYTERIANS BEGIN AGAIN

ENCOURAGEMENT TO START AGAIN

It was four years before another effort was made by Cape Town English speaking Presbyterians to form a Church. The new movement was caused by two things - first of all by remarks which appeared in the press regarding the 'forlorn condition' of the Presbyterians in the City. In the Government Gazette of March 1823 the following comment appears :

"It is intended to resuscitate the cause of Presbyterianism in the Colony, and thus allay the forlorn condition of the Scotsmen who are, at present, without their own ordinances of worship" ①

Secondly, because of a sermon preached in Sydney, Australia, by Rev. J. Dunmore Lang, a few copies of which found their way to the Cape. Lieutenant P.W. Grant of the English East India Company when on a visit to the Cape, issued a circular regarding the republication of this sermon, and in the circular he mentioned that on 13th May, 1824 in a letter to the Moderator of Glasgow Presbytery, Earl Bathurst, the Governor

1 Op. cit. p. 1

of State in London, intimated :

"The desire of His Majesty's subjects' Government to extend to His Majesty's Presbyterian subjects abroad the means of enjoying the religious ordinances of their country and of allowing such pecuniary aid as may be necessary in addition to the funds realised from other sources, to construct Churches and maintain a pastor in each Church." ①

This meant that Presbyterians in the Colony could expect financial assistance from the British Governor for the establishing of a cause at the Cape. This proved a tremendous spur to the Cape Town Scotsmen, and as a result of this news the Cape Town Presbyterians formed a Provisional Committee with a view to establishing an English Speaking Presbyterian Church.

THE WAYS AND MEANS BY WHICH THE NEW START WAS MADE

The sanction of the Governor having been obtained, a public meeting was held in the Lutheran Church, Strand Street, on 25th November, 1824, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Alexander Macdonald, a merchant of the city. ② Among those who took part in the proceedings, besides the Chairman, were Mr. C. Grant, Rev. A. Murray (Graaf Reinet), Rev. J. Smith (Uitenhage) who gave an address on the Government of the Church of Scotland.

- 1 The Russell Papers quoted also in article by Rev. J. Russell in St. Andrews Church Magazine February 1878 p. 24
- 2 Minutes of The Provisional Committee 1824 p. 1.



At this meeting the following resolutions were adopted unanimously :

1. "That, as the Scottish and Presbyterian community residing in this Metropolis and the neighbourhood, forms a considerable proportion of the Anglo-Colonial population, it is highly desirable as regards both the moral and religious interests of that body, that a Presbyterian Church should be erected in Cape Town and placed in connection with the Established Church of Scotland and under the immediate protection of His Majesty's Colonial Government.
2. That for the purpose of carrying into effect this object in concert with and under the sanction of the Colonial Government, a General Committee be formed and the following gentlemen be appointed members thereof : Mr. A. Macdonald, Dr. H. Abercrombie, Mr. T.H. Maxwell, Mr. A.B. Craig and Mr. T.S. Urquhart.
3. That the Scottish Presbyterian community desirous at all times of manifesting their loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's Person and Government and to His Majesty's Representative in this Colony, and reposing the utmost confidence in the disposition of His Excellency Lord Charles Somerset to afford every facility towards the attainment of the object above stated, do instruct the Committee to consult the wishes and conform to the views of His Excellency the Governor as far as may be practicable, consistent with the principles of the National Presbyterian Church.
4. That on the plan being drawn up by the Committee and submitted to His Excellency the Governor, the same shall be made known at another general Meeting or in any other manner the Committee may judge expedient and no time thereafter/lost in requesting His Excellency to forward and favourably recommend

it to Earl Bathurst with a view to obtain the sanction of His Majesty's Government to the early nomination of a Presbyterian Pastor conformably to the tenor of His Lordship's letter to the Presbytery of Glasgow dated 13th May, 1824.

5. That a subscription be opened in this metropolis and throughout the Colony for defraying the expense of building the Church, and that the assistance of His Majesty's Government be solicited in aid of the funds realised by voluntary contributions for this purpose and for paying part of such stipend as may be deemed adequate for the respectable maintenance of a Pastor of acknowledged character, talent, judgment and experience.
6. That the Committee be instructed to communicate their proceedings to the Presbyteries of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, and the Moderator of the General Assembly, and to solicit their aid in promoting the objects contemplated by the Meeting." ¹

At this momentous meeting it was also decided to appeal to the local community for contributions including a strong appeal to be sent to all the other denominations.

The Meeting also adopted a vote of thanks to the Governor

"for having granted his sanction for the Meeting" ²

and for his readiness to take the interests of the Scottish Church.... under the protection of the Colonial Government.

The Committee carried into effect all these instructions.

1 Op. Cit. p. 2

2 Ibid. p. 4

They asked the Governor to send a copy of the proceedings to Earl Bathurst, and, at the same time, the Committee asked the Governor for a piece of ground for a Church, and the Governor promised to go into the matter with the Cape Town Burgher Senate (City Council).

At a Meeting of the Committee on 19th February, 1825, the following minute appears :

"The Chairman reported the particulars of several interviews with the Colonial Government and the Burgher Senate relative to the grant of a piece of ground for the erection of the intended Scottish Church in the Metropolis, and that ultimately the Burgher Senate had offered the enclosure now occupied as a cooper's yard in front of the Public Burying Ground, on condition that the Committee will defray the expense of enclosing in a similar way an equal extent of ground in the neighbourhood of the other." ①

The Committee made ^{an} urgent appeal for a more suitable site and to be relieved of the necessity of building the wall, but they pleaded in vain. The only concession given by the Burgher Senate was that the Town Quarry might be used free of charge for building both the Church and the wall. They were offered a site nearer the Parade Ground in the centre of the city, but this site was not free of charge, ^{and so} the local Scots felt it wisest to take

1 Op. cit. p. 21

the free site on the edge of the new residential area.

The next step taken was the appointment of Trustees and the Minutes of the Provisional Committee dated 1st April, 1825 record the names of the Trustees elected as follows :

Alexander Macdonald
William Dickson
John Findlay
George Paton

James Nisbet
Charles Mackenzie
John Saunders
Charles S. Pillans ①

On 20th July, 1825 the Minutes of the Meeting record :

"that the Committee was greatly gratified and encouraged at receiving the following letter from the Government announcing the reply sent by Earl Bathurst to the Memorial of the Scottish Community :

"Colonial Office
13th July, 1825.

Gentlemen,

His Excellency the Governor having submitted to Earl Bathurst, one of His Majesty's Principal Secretary's of State, the Memorial presented to His Excellency by you, on the part of the Scottish Community in this Colony, praying that His Majesty's Government would be pleased to assist in providing the means for building the proposed Scottish Church in this town, I am directed by His Excellency to signify to you the satisfaction he has experienced in receiving from Earl Bathurst a despatch conveying His Majesty's pleasure that on a plan and estimate of the proposed

Church being submitted to and approved by him, His Excellency should assign for that purpose a sum equal to one-third of the amount of such estimate, and further that he should allow the sum of one hundred pounds per annum to the officiating clergyman in addition to what may be given him by the congregation.

His Excellency trusts that you, gentlemen, and the whole of the Scottish Community in this Colony will feel deeply impressed by the prompt attention which has been paid by His Majesty's Government to their memorial, and by the very liberal assistance which has been afforded on the occasion.

I have the honour to be

"Richard Plasket" ①

Secretary to Government"

The Committee, on receipt of this letter, decided to insert an advertisement in "Cape Town Gazette" inviting competent persons to furnish plans and estimates for the intended Church and Manse. ②

Mr. Jardine, who was Librarian at Cape Town at that time, in his pamphlet "A fragment of church history at Cape of Good Hope, 1827" made an urgent appeal for support of the new church, he says inter alia :

"Eventually assistance was derived from the professional skill of Messrs. Skirrow & Schutte.. Nothing was, however, finally determined till Mr. Reveley, a scientific architect, and whose

1 Op.cit. p. 24 a copy of the letter is also kept among
The Russell Papers

2 Op. cit. August 1825 p. 1.

arrival in the Colony was of recent date, submitted a plan, upon which tenders of estimate were called for and finally accepted." ①

The Church cost £3,600 of which the Colonial Government gave £1,200 and by dint of tremendous effort and a bond for £500 all the money was eventually raised. Mention is made in the records of the Committee of their gratitude for gifts from :

1. The Government
2. Dutch Reformed Church at Graaf Reinet
3. Dutch Reformed Church at Stellenbosch ②

Thus the permission was granted for the building of the Church and the money was raised for its completion. The money, however, was only one part of the project, there still remained the all important task of finding a minister for this newly formed but unconstituted congregation. To this work the Committee now addressed itself.

THE OBTAINING OF A MINISTER

The Committee in January, 1825 sent a letter to the Moderator of the Edinburgh Presbytery, in which they explained their needs and views at considerable length :

"Under the circumstances it might appear most

1 Op.Cit. p. 48

2 Minutes of Provisional Committee March 1825 p. 61.

just and reasonable that the patronage should rest jointly with the Presbytery and the Government at home....The Presbytery might have the privilege of presenting candidates in the first instance, and it might rest with His Majesty's Government to select one of these for the Church in this Metropolis." ①

The Edinburgh Presbytery appointed a small committee which unanimously recommended :

"Mr. James Adamson, a distinguished student and a Licentiate of the Presbytery of Cupar for the position. On 28th February, 1827, Presbytery Edinburgh duly constituted, ordained Mr. James Adamson as a Minister of the Gospel and Pastor of the Scottish Church at Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope." ②

This news was received at Cape Town with great satisfaction where the Minutes of the Provisional Committee record :

"A letter has been received from the Moderator of the Presbytery of Edinburgh stating that Rev. J. Adamson has been licensed and ordained as Minister of Presbyterian Church, Cape Town, and that he will very soon be sailing to take up his new appointment. This information is joyfully recorded." ③

It is to Rev. G. Morgan that we owe a description of what took place when Rev. Adamson eventually arrived in Cape Town. In his pamphlet "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town" he says :

"On 11th November, 1827 Rev. Adamson arrived at Cape Town and on 18th of that month, without

1 The Russell Papers

2 Quoted from G. Morgan "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town 1842" p. 7

3 Op. cit. p. 63

any regular induction, entered on his public duties, the Lutheran Church having been kindly granted for that purpose.

On March 28th 1828 Rev. Adamson associated himself with Rev. James Edgar, Pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church at Tigervale, who had been ordained by the Presbytery of Glasgow, and Judge Menzies who had been a ruling elder in the Church of Scotland. These three persons having appointed Rev. James Adamson as their Moderator, did, by prayer unto Almighty God, constitute themselves a Kirk Session to bear rule in the congregation." ①

The congregation was thus constituted and the Session was formed, but the Church building was by no means completed when these events took place. They continued to meet in the Lutheran Church building until the following year (1829) when on the 24th January the new Church was opened.

Soon after the opening four deacons were elected and ordained and in the Minutes of the Kirk Session 1829 we read :

"Their names were ordered to be added to the list of Kirk Session as Assessors thereof." ②

The names of the four deacons were Messrs. George Paton, Nicol Stenhouse, John Saunders and John Reid.

The so-called Provisional Committee, which had been formed on 25th November, 1824 was thereupon dissolved, and the Scottish Church continued to be governed by the Kirk Session and Deacons Court constituted as mentioned above.

1 Op. cit. p. 9

2 Op. cit. p. 8

That the local community attached no little importance to the starting of the Scottish Church may be seen from the fullness of the following account of the laying of the Foundation Stone. This appears in "The Cape Town Gazette" 9th November, 1827 :

"On Wednesday 24th ulto., was laid the Foundation Stone of the Scottish Church. Previous to the ceremony Divine Service was performed in the Dutch Reformed Church, which commenced at half-past one. The Rev. Mr. Faure, who kindly officiated on the occasion, read from Scripture Sixth chapter of Second Book of Chronicles, giving an account of the Temple of Solomon, and afterwards delivered a most impressive and highly appropriate discourse from the following text : "Behold I lay in Zion a corner stone, elect, precious (1st Peter 11,6.).

Immediately after the service the procession moved in the following order to the site :

- Sheriffs on horseback, to clear the way,
- Three gentlemen, members of the Good Hope Lodge, carrying in vases the elements of consecration,
- The builders - the one carrying a mallet, and the other a trowel,
- The architect, carrying plan and elevation,
- Chairman of the Finance Committee,
- Secretary of General Committee bearing the glass tube in which was enclosed the last number of the "Cape Gazette" and a roll of parchment containing an account of the proceedings of the Committee and a list of subscribers,
- The Chairman of the General Committee bearing on a velvet cushion the plate on which was the

following inscription :

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."

Ricardo Bourke C.G. etc. etc.

Die Ante Kalend. Novembris MCCCCXVIII
positus est

Johanna Andrea Truter, Equite honorabili

Judicium Principe

Ricardo Plasket, Equite honorabili, Scriba

Principe Provinciæ,

Jacobo Adamson Ecclesia Pastore

With names of Committee, Architects and Builders.

Then followed the honorary members of the Committee, many gentlemen friendly to the undertaking; then different Masonic Lodges of the Colony preceded by a military band.

The procession having reached the site of the building where an immense concourse of people, perhaps greater than had ever been witnessed on any former occasion had assembled, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor descended from the platform which had been erected for respectable visitors, and took his station at the south-east corner of the intended Church, where the foundation stone was to be laid. Dr. Abercrombie then addressed those present, followed by the Attorney-General. The coins, glass tube, and plate were then severally placed on the stone, which had been hollowed out for their reception. An appropriate prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Faure; the silver trowel was next handed by G.H. Maasdorp, Esq., the Acting Provincial Grand Master, to his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, who, having spread the lime, the stone was lowered into its place. The square, plumb and level were afterwards successively handed to him and used for their respective purposes; when he declared the stone to be "well laid, true and trusty" The Acting Grand Master lastly strewed a little corn and poured wine and oil on the stone, and concluded the ceremony

by striking the same three times with a mallet.

Thanks were returned to the Lieutenant-Governor for his kindness on this occasion, after which three cheers were given, the band playing "God save the King" and salutes were fired by Messrs. Collinson & Company, Messrs. Hudson, Donaldson and Dixon, and in Table Bay by the ship "North Briton" appropriately decorated with flags for the occasion.

The collections at the Church and on the ground amounted together to 740 riks dollars" ①

Such then was the report in the Cape Gazette showing that the English speaking Presbyterians had started once again, and this time there was to be no turning back. The Church begun with such pageantry and enthusiasm was to have many daughters in the next hundred years, for the foundations then laid were not just those of one isolated church in Capetown, but those of a church destined to establish itself from the Cape to the Zambesi River.

1828-1842 THE MINISTRY OF REV. DR. JAMES ADAMSON

The new Minister, Rev. Dr. James Adamson, was a man of great gifts; not only was he a preacher of very great ability, but his intellect soon made him a leader in the community of Cape Town. The little congregation began to grow under his leadership,

1 Op. cit. p. 1

and long before his resignation he had the joy of seeing Presbyterianism well and truly established at the Cape.

One of the first items of interest during his ministry was the choosing of the name of the church, and on 4th August, 1829 the Session minutes read :

"It was resolved that the Scottish Church in this Metropolis be henceforth named "St. Andrews Church" ①

Dr. H. Abercrombie had his protest against this recorded, saying that :

"The appellation of St. Andrews Church as applied to the building used for public worship was a relic of Popery, improper for Protestant Churches to retain, and under present circumstances perfectly unnecessary as a mark of distinction." ②

Despite this protest, the resolution was carried, and the Scottish Church, Cape Town, became St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, Cape Town, by which name it has been known ever since.

The Kirk Session was responsible to no Presbytery, though from time to time Rev. Dr. J. Adamson sent reports on the work to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland Colonial Department Committee. ③

In 1831 it was felt by the Deacons Court that an increased grant should be asked for from the Governor.

1 Op.cit. p.18

2 Ibid. p.18

3 Vide. G. Morgan's pamphlet for detailed arguments regarding constitutional position of the Cape Town Church i.e. The pamphlet "The State of the Scottish Church Cape Town 1842"

According to the arrangement made when the congregation was founded in 1828 a salary of One Hundred Pounds per annum was paid to the minister by the Governor, but on 14th May, 1831 the minutes of the Deacons' Court read as follows :

"It was resolved to send a memorial to the Government praying that such an addition may be made to the allowance now granted to them by the Government as may place them on a level with the Clergy of the Dutch Reformed Church." ①

The result was an increase in the Government Grant from One Hundred Pounds to Two Hundred Pounds per annum.

THE ST. ANDREWS MISSION

For some considerable time the Session had been considering the idea of starting christian work among the coloured population. Thus in 1836 the Session began Mission work among the Hottentots and the emancipated slaves. In 1836 the Session had applied to the Committee of the Church of Scotland for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts to establish a mission at the Cape, and that Committee agreed and went so far as to give

"sanction to the detention of Mr. Nisbet, one of their Missionaries at Bombay then at the Cape for the recovery of his health, provided Mr. Nisbet consented to the measure." ②

1 Op. cit. p. 28

2 Minutes of St. Andrews Kirk Session August 1836 p. 188

This was conveyed to the St. Andrews Session in a letter from the Convener of the Church of Scotland Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Mr. Nisbet, on being informed of this letter from Scotland, apparently declined, for he returned to Bombay.

However, in 1838 St. Andrews Session engaged the services of Rev. G. Stegman to look after this mission. At that time Mr. G. Stegman was second minister at the Dutch Lutheran Church in Cape Town.

A Mr. W. Gorrie, afterwards Rev. W. Gorrie, had been appointed and ordained as a deacon at St. Andrews in 1838, and he, together with members of Session, gave assistance to Rev. G. Stegman at this newly established mission. Their work was crowned with success, and not only was spiritual work continued, but, in addition, a Day School was established for the benefit of the coloured people. The work was continued in Buitengracht Street in a building bought for the purpose by St. Andrews Church.

In 1836 Rev. Adamson undertook work as a Professor at the South African College,

"In order that its total collapse and disappearance might be prevented, and that

1 Ibid. p. 190

2 Ibid. p. 214

the proceeds of his office as Professor might be devoted to the support of the mission among emancipated slaves." ①

Rev. J. Adamson's work as a Professor was performed in addition to his pastoral duties, and the extra money thus brought in to the Church enabled the new coloured mission to survive without being too heavy a burden on the local church.

In 1840 Dr. J. Adamson visited Scotland and tried to persuade the Foreign Mission Committee of the Church of Scotland to take over the St. Andrews Mission in Cape Town, but he received the reply that the Committee was so pledged with regard to India that it could not undertake responsibility for the Mission at Cape Town. He returned to Capetown with this news, but it did not affect the zeal with which the Capetown Presbyterians continued to work for the coloured mission.

Dr. J. Adamson did not continue long as minister of St. Andrews after his return from Scotland, for in 1841 he resigned the pastorate of St. Andrews, Capetown, in order to devote himself to the duties of the Professorship at the South African College, and the Minutes of Kirk Session record their deep regret at this decision :

1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church
September 1836 p. 193

67.

"It is with the deepest regret that we accept the resignation of Rev. Dr. Adamson whose outstanding ministry has done so much to establish the Presbyterian Church at the Cape....." ①

A good deal was recorded in the Minutes of St, Andrews Session regarding Dr. J. Adamson, and what follows is but a summary taken therefrom :

"He was the eldest son of Dr. Lawrence Adamson, minister of Cupar, the countytown of Fife, and was born there in 1797.....

Dr. Chalmers was his cousin, and, like him, James Adamson was a man of remarkable mental powers. He showed a great taste for Mathematics, and while in Scotland contributed a number of articles on mathematical and other subjects to "Edinburgh Philosophical Journal....."

In Cape Town he took an active part in the work of the various philanthropical and religious institutions in the City, and also acted on a number of Government Commissions relating to :

- a) The Public Library
- b) The Museum
- c) Table Bay Breakwater
- d) Roads
- e) The Botanic Gardens
- f) The Gaols
- g) Religious Education

He was a great personal friend of Mr. Fellowes, the first Astronomer Royal at the Cape, and also of Sir Thomas Maclear.....

At various times he acted as Professor at South African College, and he leaves St. Andrews to devote himself to this work." ②

1 Ibid. Vol 2 August 1841 p. 42

2 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 43 ff.

Dr. J. Adamson, though not now minister of the Church continued to live in Cape Town, but in 1850 he went to America where he took part in the establishment of a college for the training of Missionaries at Oxford, Pennsylvania.

In Ritchie's "History of South African College" he says :

"In 1860 Dr. Adamson returned to Capetown where he spent the closing years of his life at Green Point. He died in July, 1875, leaving behind him the reputation of a man in whom great natural genius was associated with ardent missionary zeal and simple faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ." ①

By the time Dr. J. Adamson resigned there was a strong Presbyterian congregation in Cape Town which had begun an active Mission work among the emancipated slaves in the city. In addition, due to the ability and character of the first minister, the Presbyterian Church was beginning to play a leading part in civic affairs.

Many of its members were associated with Dr. J. Adamson on the philanthropic committees in the city, and the Church became a real force in the community of Cape Town.

Part of the salary of the minister was still being

paid by the Government, but despite this generous gesture the Government had no say in the affairs of the Church. ①

During the ministry of Dr. J. Adamson at St. Andrews, the Dutch Reformed Church imported a number of ministers from Scotland into the ranks of their ministry. These men played a great part in moulding the future of that Church, but from our point of view the arrival of Scottish ministers into the Dutch Reformed Church meant :

1. Wherever there was a Scottish minister in a Dutch Reformed Church he could easily minister to the English speaking Presbyterians in his area. This, in some ways, must have prevented efforts being made by the English speaking folk to build their own Presbyterian Churches and form their own English speaking congregations.

2. There was a great deal of "coming and going" between the newly formed Presbyterian cause and the old established Dutch Reformed Church; interchange of pulpit was fairly frequent, ② and there is no doubt that at this time the English speaking Presbyterians looked upon the Dutch Reformed Church

1 This point is emphasised again and again by Rev. G. Morgan in his Booklet "The state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town 1842"

2 Vide numerous references in Minutes of Kirk Session. Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray was a fairly frequent visiting preacher during Rev. Dr. Adamson's ministry.

as its "nearest relation" and elder brother.
Alas, that later generations allowed other
considerations to alter this early relation-
ship.

71.

CHAPTER 5.

THE MINISTRY OF REV. GEORGE MORGAN AT ST. ANDREWS,
CAPE TOWN, 1841-1872

EARLY DIFFICULTIES

In 1841 Dr. J. Adamson resigned the pastorate of St. Andrews Church in order to devote himself to the duties of the Professorship at the South African College, and in the Session Minutes June, 1841 we read :

".....that a call be addressed to Rev. George Morgan, at present Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Somerset East." ①

Rev. George Morgan had been ordained in 1824 by the Presbytery of Lochcarron of the Church of Scotland, and he was one of the young Scotsmen whom Dr. G. Thom had enlisted for the ministry of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was a student at King's College, Aberdeen, when Dr. G. Thom visited Scotland, and was one of the first to volunteer for the work.

After finishing his Theological Course he became tutor for a short while in a Ros^sshire family, and so it was to the Presbytery of Lochcarron that he went for licence and ordination

1 Op.Cit. Vol.2 p. 30

2 Rev. G. Thom had been given a D.D. by Aberdeen University while he was visiting Scotland in 1821 on behalf of the Cape Government.

on 8th September, 1824.

In the minutes of the Lochcarron Presbytery on 8th September, 1824 we read :

"The Presbytery meeting was held at Gairloch to facilitate discussion of a Manse Building Scheme for Rev. Dr. James Russell, minister of Gairloch Church." ①

It is interesting to note that the Dr. James Russell referred to in this Presbytery Minute was the father of Dr. John Russell who succeeded Mr. Morgan at St. Andrews in 1872.

It is further recorded in the same Presbytery Minute that :

"Mr. Morgan's discourses were received with approbation." ②

He was ordained forthwith in order that he might proceed at once to South Africa. After arriving in the Cape he remained minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Somerset East for seventeen years where his labours bore much fruit, and in 1842 he accepted the call from St. Andrews Church.

This was the man who became the second pastor of the first English speaking Presbyterian Church in Cape Town, and it was he who guided the affairs of the congregation through the very difficult years 1842 to 1872.

1. Quoted by Rev. J. Russell in St Andrews Church Magazine 1878.

2. Ibid.

An interesting "hitch" occurred in connection with the call, and it shows how loose was the link between St. Andrews, Cape Town, and the Church of Scotland. The original call to Rev. G. Morgan was for him to become "Colleague" to Rev. Dr. J. Adamson "until the resignation of Dr. J. Adamson was sanctioned by the General Assembly's Committee for Colonial Churches or by the Presbytery of Edinburgh;" ^① the idea was that Rev. G. Morgan should thereafter become sole pastor of the charge. The Governor at the Cape sanctioned this arrangement, and agreed to pay Mr. G. Morgan the salary previously paid to Dr. J. Adamson. However, it was soon discovered by the Governor that the grant could not be paid to a colleague but only to the minister of the church, and therefore Dr. J. Adamson received the following letter :

"Colonial Office,
7th October

Dr. Adamson,

Sir,

.....His Excellency has found himself obliged to make the appointment of Rev. George Morgan as minister under which name alone he can be permitted to draw the stipend, leaving it, of course, to you and the Kirk Session to designate him as colleague or otherwise as you may deem expedient....." ^②

1 G. Morgan "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church Cape Town 1842" p. 21
2 Russell papers.

Accordingly, in the Cape Government Gazette on 12th November, 1842, there appears the following notice :

"Mr. Morgan is appointed Minister of St. Andrews Church, Cape Town, vice Dr. Adamson." ①

On 14th November, 1841 Dr. J. Adamson inducted Mr. G. Morgan to the pastoral charge of St. Andrews Church, and the records are in the minutes of St. Andrews Kirk Session which state :

"That after a service in which prayers for the new minister and people were offered Rev. Dr. Adamson duly inducted him to the charge of St. Andrews Church, charging him in the name of the Lord faithfully to discharge his office." ②

After the induction, Dr. J. Adamson, who seems to have been a stickler for regulations, raised the constitutional question as to the necessity for the acceptance of his resignation by the Committee for Colonial Churches of the Church of Scotland or by the Edinburgh Presbytery. The matter was duly referred by letter to the Church of Scotland, and in 1845 the opinion of the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland was received as follows :

"The Committee has serious doubts of the Presbytery's jurisdiction. All the Edinburgh Presbytery conferred on Dr. Adamson was ordination as a minister, which he does not propose to demit. Induction to the charge at Cape Town they did not and could not properly give." ③

- 1. Op.cit. 12th November 1842 p. 2
- 2. Op.cit. Vol.2 p. 78
- 3 G. Morgan : "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town 1842" p. 24.

Here the matter ended, and Rev. G. Morgan began his St. Andrews ministry. The work at the mother church immediately prospered under his guidance, and, as he could speak Dutch fluently, he also took an active part in the Non-European Mission attached to St. Andrews, a work which was to cause splits within the ranks of St. Andrews Church before many years had passed.

THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BEGIN WORK AT THE CAPE

In 1844 Mr. D. Hawkins, a Free Church Missionary en route to India, landed at Cape Town, where he had to wait several weeks for a ship to take him to Bombay. During his sojourn in Cape Town he associated himself with St. Andrews Church, where, alas, he found a number of things of which he did not approve. When eventually he arrived in India, he wrote a stinging article in the "Calcutta Free Churchman" accusing St. Andrews Cape Town of

"Being in erastian bondage to the Government." ①

Rev. G. Morgan was very justly annoyed that Mr. Hawkins had not seen fit to have a private conversation with him on this matter while he, Mr. Hawkins was

"still enjoying the fellowship of St. Andrews Church" ②

1 Op. cit. Page 4

2 G. Morgan : "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church 1842 p. 27.

It is true that Mr. Hawkins did not always worship at St. Andrews whilst he was in Cape Town, but, as Mr. G. Morgan says :

"I find it quite extraordinary that a man who holds so closely to Free Church principles should forsake worship in a Presbyterian Church and worship in the Church of England, as Mr. Hawkins did while he was in Cape Town." ①

It would certainly seem that Mr. Hawkins and Mr. G. Morgan did not see eye to eye in ecclesiastical matters, but, be that as it may, the article in the Calcutta Free Churchman found such attentive ears in Scotland that Mr. G. Morgan felt constrained to reply at some length in a pamphlet entitled "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town." It is a masterly defence of the position of the Cape Town Church, and a reply to the statement by Mr. Hawkins

"that no one holding to the principles of the Free Church should associate themselves with the Cape Town Church" ②

Mr. G. Morgan's pamphlet deals with the relation of the Church of Scotland to Colonial congregations, and also with the history of the Cape Town Church in that light. He shows, quite clearly, that St. Andrews was an isolated Presbyterian congregation, that it was not under the

1 Ibid. Page 28

2 Ibid. Page 4 Mr. Morgan quotes Mr. Hawkins statement.

jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland, and that the Government, though giving pecuniary aid, had never claimed the right of patronage with regard to the appointment of ministers. In this pamphlet Mr. G. Morgan also declares :

"I am, myself, in whole hearted support and sympathy with the principles of the Free Church, but I emphatically insist that those who so believe need not leave the Scottish Church in Cape Town." ①

This pamphlet must have been read by the Mission and the Colonial Committees of the Free Church of Scotland, but on them at any rate it seems to have made little impression, for we read in the minutes of the Colonial Committee in 1846 :

"The Committee heard with deep interest the statements of Mr. William Gorrie regarding the possibility of starting work in Cape Town." ②

What Mr. W. Gorrie said on that occasion is not recorded anywhere, but he was destined to become a leading figure in the attempt to establish a second Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. Mr. W. Gorrie and Mr. Hawkins had become very friendly while Mr. Hawkins was at the Cape and it is a great pity that Mr. W. Gorrie was so easily influenced by this man.

Mr. W. Gorrie was, at one time, a deacon of St. Andrews Church, having been ordained in 1836. He taught for some

1 Ibid. Page 56

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol. 1 p. 129.

years as Drawing master and assistant to the Professor of Mathematics, Dr. J. Adamson, at the South African College. St. Andrews Church had employed Mr. W. Gorrie to assist the minister as an agent in charge of the Mission for Non-Europeans, and his work had been so successful that the Session had decided in 1843 :

"to apply to have Mr. Gorrie licenced as a Preacher of the Gospel" ①

and it seems that this would have happened had it not been for the ~~amazing~~ events which took place in the Church in Scotland when in 1843 the Free Church of Scotland came into being. This affected Mr. W. Gorrie's position with the Cape Town Church, and the arrival of Mr. Hawkins at the Cape further convinced Mr. W. Gorrie that he should not associate himself with St. Andrews any longer. The Minister, Rev. George Morgan, in his pamphlet already mentioned, deploras the way Mr. Hawkins :

"affected the loyalty of one of my deacons without so much as a word to me, his minister" ②

Be all that as it may, the result was that Mr. W. Gorrie proceeded to Scotland, where he met with the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, who

1 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Andrews Church February 1843 Vol. 2 p. 112

2 G. Morgan : "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church Cape Town 1842" p. 31.

"heard with deep interest all that Mr. Gorrie had to say" ①

They, had, doubtless, also heard from Mr. Hawkins, though no mention of Mr. Hawkins' letter to the Committee appears in the minutes. The result was that Mr. W. Gorrie was ordained and set apart for Free Church of Scotland Mission and Colonial work in the Cape Colony at a service in Free St. George's Edinburgh, on 9th June, 1846. ②

In addition to Mr. W. Gorrie, a Mr. E. Miller was also ordained and set apart for the work of the Free Church in Cape Town, and the two newly ordained ministers set out to South Africa to start a second English speaking Presbyterian cause in Cape Town.

Due to the generosity of Mr. Hawkins, who seems to have been a man of some substance, a sum of Two Hundred Pounds was available for the purchasing of a site and the building of a Church, and to this was added the contributions of Cape Town Free Church supporters. At first they held services in the Orphan Chambers in Wales Street, ③ but they afterwards bought a site on Greenmarket Square on the spot where today stands the Metropolitan Methodist Church, and here they built a church.

- 1. Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol. 1 p. 108
- 2. Ibid. Vol.1 p. 112
- 3. Ibid. Vol.1 p. 241

The New Free Church in Cape Town seems to have catered for an increasing congregation at the Church in Greenmarket Square, but the reports sent to the Committee in Scotland were more about the financial difficulties being encountered than with the spiritual progress of the community. The Cape Colony was beginning to feel the financial setback which was later greatly to affect the whole of the Presbyterian cause in South Africa, and the two Free Church Ministers in Cape Town wrote desperately asking for financial assistance in order to keep going.

In July, 1851 the minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland read :

"Mr. Hawkins, being present, made a statement regarding the congregation at Cape Town, from which it appeared that the Church was in considerable debt and that they were able to guarantee only £150 p.a. to their minister. The Committee agreed to give £100 annually for the next three years conditionally that a new effort be made for the cause at the Cape and especially in the way of clearing the Church from its remaining debt" ①

From the beginning the stipend of the ministers of the Cape Town Free Church had been partly paid by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. They had given One Hundred Pounds per annum for three years at a time.

1 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 371

Unfortunately the Church was burdened with ~~the~~^a debt of some £2,500 on their building, and the congregation was quite unable to ~~meet~~ their obligations. Moreover, in 1851 the Free Church of Scotland was itself in financial difficulties, and therefore unable to increase its grant to the Cape Town Church. Despite the resolution taken in July, 1851, in December of the same year it was felt wisest to close down the work in Cape Town,^① and so, due to lack of financial support in the Colony and the inability of the Free Church to increase its gifts, the Free Church in Cape Town ceased to exist in 1851. The building was sold to a storekeeper who used it as a warehouse for some years. In 1874 it was burned down, and after the fire the site was bought by the Wesleyans who now have a church on what is perhaps the best central site of any denomination in Cape Town.

Mr. W. Gorrie made a very strong protest against this move by the Church in Scotland, but his protest is simply "noted" in the minutes of the Colonial Committee of 1852.^② Mr. W. Gorrie was appointed as a Missionary to Kaffraria after the closing of the Cape Town Church. His was a

1 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 394

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 6

chequered career, and in his declining years, Mr. W. Gorrie returned to Cape Town to live at Newlands, where he died in 1884.

Time seems to have healed the breach between Mr. W. Gorrie and the Cape Town congregation, or maybe it was because the new minister at Cape Town was himself from the Free Church of Scotland, but in the minutes of the Kirk Session of St. Andrews in August, 1884 we read that :

"Mr. Gorrie, who at one time laboured for the Lord in the Mission attached to St. Andrews Church died at Newlands on 12th June, 1884 His was a life devoted to the Lord and his work.... He rests now from his labours." ①

Nothing there of the kind of thing said and thought in the St. Andrews Kirk Session of the 1840's.

After the closing of the Second Presbyterian Church in Cape Town Mr. E. Miller was also deputed to report to the Kaffrarian Mission, ② where his work among the Africans was marked by the same quiet faithfulness as he had shown in the shortlived Cape Town Free Church. He was later sent to labour in India.

Thus ended the first of the splits which took place in the early days of the ministry of Rev. George Morgan at

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 Page 91

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol. 2 p. 6.

the Cape but this was not the only problem with which he had to deal at the time, for in addition to the establishment of a Free Church for Europeans, he had to face the unpleasant fact that a split was imminent in the work of the St. Andrews Mission.

A SPLIT IN THE NON-EUROPEAN WORK

The Mission established by Rev. Dr. J. Adamson in 1838 had flourished for a number of years, despite the fact that the Church of Scotland had not seen its way clear to give any assistance whatsoever. Indeed, in 1843, the Session had again

"memorialised the Church of Scotland with a view to their either taking over the Mission, or at least giving it some financial support." ①

However,

"owing, very likely, to circumstances consequent on the disruption" ②

as Rev. G.W. Stegman puts it in a letter he wrote to the Free Church Colonial Committee :

"it would seem that our memorial was entirely overlooked" ③

Thus it was when Mr. Morgan became minister of the Church, he was also in charge of the Mission. Prior to the induction

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Andrews Church
Cape Town Vol. 2 p. 101
- 2 The Russell Papers
- 3 Ibid.

of Mr. Morgan the Session had always used Mr. Gorrie to assist Dr. Adamson in the work, but when Mr. Gorrie left they asked for and received the assistance of Mr. Stegman the assistant minister of the Lutheran Church. He was delighted to help the Presbyterians in this work, and gave himself wholeheartedly to it. He was in charge of the Mission when Mr. Morgan was ~~was~~ inducted.

Mr. Morgan was a fluent Dutch speaker - he had served the Dutch Reformed Church for seventeen years - and felt that he should also take some part in the Mission work, especially as the Non-European services were all conducted in the Dutch language. This seemed reasonable enough except that there was a clash between the two ministers and Mr. Stegman decided to resign. He wrote to the Session in April, 1842 explaining :

"That he wished to resign in order to start Mission work elsewhere" ①

The Session had no alternative but to accept the resignation

"with much regret and thanks for all the assistance rendered by Mr. Stegman" ②.

But when Mr. Stegman left the Mission more than half the congregation walked out with him. They started a new Mission

1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church
Cape Town Vol. 2 p. 76

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 77

in a building in Riebeck Square, where today stands St. Stephen's Church.^① In the work of this new Mission we read that Mr. Stegman

"received much help from Rev. Dr. Adamson"^②.

Life cannot have been too easy for the new minister of St. Andrews in the early days of his ministry at St. Andrews with the establishment of a second Presbyterian cause in a city where there was room for only one, and this unfortunate split in his Mission work partly led by the former minister of the Church. Things must have been very difficult for Rev. George Morgan in the 1840's.

THE APOSTOLIC UNION

The Mission of St. Andrews Church however continued to function, and it more than survived the difficulties of these early days but it is interesting to note that the new Mission which started as outlined above began to lean towards the newly established Free Church under the ministry of Mr. W. Gorrie and Mr. E. Miller. A number of independent Missions of this type had been established in and around Cape Town as a result of the efforts of Mr. Stegman and Dr. Adamson

1 St. Stephens Church is an Anglican Church.

2 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol. 2 p. 86

and these came together to form a loose Union which they described as "The Apostolic Union,"

"denoting the principles whereby we sought to be guided" ①

Mr. Stegman and Dr. Adamson were the leading men in the Union, and it was urged that they should seek to join up with the Free Church of Scotland. To this end they drew up a petition, ② which they sent to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. It read as follows :

"In course of time, owing to the call of a new pastor to the church in Capetown, circumstances arose which occasioned a separation, and a large number of people adhering to Dr. Adamson and Mr. G.W. Stegman united themselves and were constituted a congregation in a building formerly used as a theatre, but which had shortly before been purchased for church purposes. In this building, which has since become the property of the whaling people at a cost of £3,464, a congregation was established under Dr. Adamson and Mr. Stegman. These operations were brought to the notice of the Church of Scotland by Dr. Adamson.

Meantime it pleased the Lord to bless the work. A Mens' Instruction Society was formed, tracts and Bibles were distributed, and meetings were held in various of the most destitute parts of Cape Town.

In course of time, at the urgent request from various parts of the country of emancipated

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 1 p. 163 where the receiving of the petition is recorded.

2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 163

slaves, two brethren, who had been labouring in the Mission in Cape Town, were sent out as catechists. Thus the work was gradually extended, and it soon became evident that the services of ordained men were urgently required. We felt ourselves in a position of great difficulty, but being ordained ourselves we proceeded to ordain others as Missionaries. The two brethren alluded to were Messrs. N.W. Smith and J.F. Stegman. Before ordination they were examined in the presence of Dr. Adamson, Revs. J.N. Kok, A van Stateren and G.W. Stegman and several elders of the Church.

In like manner we ordained three more missionaries viz. Revs. Knobel, A. Keet, W.D.V. Fleisher, and judging by the result of their labours, we have felt confirmed in our belief that we have acted in accordance with the mind of the Holy Spirit. This association in the work of the Lord adopted the name of "The Apostolic Union" denoting thereby the principles by which we sought to be guided.

The following details will show the extent and location of our labours :

CAPE TOWN

St. Stephens Church, formerly a theatre, was opened as a place of worship in 1842. This parent Church of the country stations was originally under the ministry of Dr. Adamson and Rev. G.W. Stegman. Upon Dr. Adamson's departure for overseas Rev. J.A. Stegman, ordained in Holland, was called "by the community" to occupy his place. The place of worship is calculated to contain 1000, and is generally well filled. The Tokens for Sacrament occasions number 300. The members in only a very few exceptions are from the "Coloured Classes" - the former slave population, a few Moslems and some negro slaves captured by men-of-war and liberated here.

On the Sabbath the following services are held :-
as follows :

8 a.m. A plain exposition of the Psalms
 3 p.m. Sermon
 Evening - Lecture
 12 p.m. Sabbath School

During the week an Adult Instruction Class is held, conducted on the Sabbath School lines.

A highly important branch of our operations in Cape Town is the instruction of the young in juvenile and infant schools. This is under the control of Miss Acton, sent out to us by "The Ladies Society for promoting Female Education in the East." We have 400 children in these schools. The Bible is our book, and all are taught to read it.

The Building cost £3,464, increased by outlay for furnishing. The present debt is £2,500 and we have no fear of not being able to pay. The means of support are :

£200 per annum from the Government, besides £75 for the school and £25 from the Negro Fund; a rental from stores of about £180 per annum; besides £120 contributed by the congregations and collections of £100 - £150.

PARISH GROOT DRAKENSTEIN

This parish is 40 miles from Cape Town, and it was commenced in 1843 by the liberality of a Christian friend. A farm was purchased for mission work, and it was divided up so that each family is allowed a plot to cultivate and erect a dwelling for which they pay 3/- per mensem. Free titles are given to the purchaser, and a trifling fee in support of Church and School is exacted. In other respects the Mission is run as the one in Cape Town. The Missionary is Rev. J.F. Stegman who has to attend to the day school as well as pastoral work.

AUGSBURG- CLANWILLIAM

This Mission, which is 50 miles from Cape Town, was established 1845, and its first operations were conducted in a private house. A year later a farm was bought for £1,000 (10,000 acres), and here Mr. Smith, the Missionary, has been carrying on with cheering success ever since.

The foundations of a new church have been laid, and about 360 individuals have been brought together under instruction. The pattern of the work is the same as Groot Drakenstein.

The Government allowance is £20 per annum.

HERMON - GROENBERG

This station is 50 miles from Cape Town, and is similar to Augsburg. There are 60 residents, but no ordained Missionary is resident. The School and Church are under a catechist. A place of worship has to be erected, and non-European and Europeans worship together as members.

KLISSFONTEIN - CAPE FLATS

This station is 12 miles from Cape Town. The Coloured folk have bought a new chapel, and reduced their debt to £18. The weekly Sabbath attendance is 50 of which 14 are now members. The day school has attendance of 30. There is no resident Missionary here.

CALEDON

In this field Mr. Knobel, ordained Missionary, has laboured since 1846. From here several outstations have, from time to time, been visited and 300-400 individuals brought under teaching. The Government allowance for this station is £20 per annum.

MALMESBURY and PAARDENBURG

Both of these stations are under Mr. Keet. Operations started two or three years ago, and

about 700 souls have been brought under instructions, but as the people in this area are widely scattered, the attendance is only about 50 each Sabbath Day. At another place about 20 miles away there is a daily attendance of 40 children. Two evening adult schools are held each with an average attendance of 30-60. No Government aid is given to this station.

MISSION TO CONVICTS

Rev. W. Fleisher and Mr. N. Meeser, two of the Apostolic Union are engaged as missionaries to the convicts. They are wholly supported by the Government, and, although little fruit has appeared, the Word cannot return without accomplishing its work.

The religious instruction of criminals forms a regular feature of our Union.

STATIONS ABANDONED

Two stations - one at Beaufort West and another at Wynberg - have been given up. The former being so far removed from Cape Town occasioned great expense, and the work has been taken up by the minister of the place Rev. C. Fraser, to whom the Chapel has been made over. The work at Wynberg was not originally commenced by this Union but by an association called The Wynberg Christian Instruction Society, which was broken up, and the station being deprived of support became inefficient. It was deemed prudent to remove the missionary as there was no lack of labourers for that place.

We lament that in the country there are many very destitute places where coloured and blacks live without a God of any sort. But while oppressed at beholding all this, we cannot but feel deeply grateful for what the Lord has been pleased to accomplish by the weakest of his servants. To Him be the Glory." ①

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 Page 163 ff. also quoted in full in Free Church Missionary Record November 1850 p. 243 ff.

APPLICATION FOR UNION WITH FREE CHURCH

This statement was drawn up by one of the Brethren of the Apostolic Union as a result of what Rev. W. Fleicher told them at a Special Meeting of the Brethren when he returned from a visit to Scotland in 1847. During his visit to Scotland he had been in conference with various ministers of the Free Church to whom he made known how the Apostolic Union had originated. He had also made the brethren in Scotland aware of the anxiety of the brethren in South Africa to be united to the Free Church. He had upon enquiry found that he should make proper representations with a request to be placed on the same footing as the Church in Canada, and if this was done he ^{had been} ~~was~~ told that the Free Church of Scotland might take the Apostolic Union over as its Cape Mission ~~is~~ work. When the Meeting heard this news :

"It was resolved unanimously that whilst the brethren of the Apostolic Union acknowledge the gracious hand of the Lord in this opening, immediate steps be taken to draw up a statement of history and operations of this Union, and further, that the earnest desire of the brethren be expressed for a union with the Free Church of Scotland, so much the more, as they felt themselves sincerely attached to that branch of the Church of Christ, and greatly loved and practised

1 Ibid. Vol 1. p. 163 ff.

its forms of Church Government, and had always regarded the Westminster Confession of Faith next to the Word of God as the groundwork of their teachings"

BY ORDER OF THE UNION

"G.W. Stegman" ①

The lengthy Report and memorial were duly received by the Free Church of Scotland, and on 18th October, 1850, the minutes of the Colonial Committee read :

"A Communication was laid on the table from a Committee in Cape Town relative to a proposal for a connection between the Apostolic Union and the Free Church of Scotland. Before coming to any decision the Convener was requested to write and receive more information." ②.

It would seem that this was a polite way of delaying any immediate decision on this matter, for, although it may have been desirable to have included this Apostolic Union with the new Free Church cause at the Cape, the financial situation of the home Church was such that it could not take on any further commitments at the time. Whatever the cause, the Apostolic Union was never accepted into the Free Church, and as already mentioned, the Free Church work in Cape Town was closed down in 1851. ③.

The Apostolic Union records cannot be traced, but it is almost certain that most of the Missions mentioned in

1 Quoted in Free Church Missionary Record November 1850
Page 243

2 Op. cit. Vol. 2 p. 112

3 Vide page 81

the Report by Rev. G.W. Stegman became attached to the Dutch Reformed Church in later years.

.....

RESIGNATION OF REV. G. MORGAN

Despite the unfortunate setbacks the work of Rev. G. Morgan bore much fruit at St. Andrews, and in the years from 1850 to 1873, notwithstanding the economic depression which afflicted the whole country at that time, he built up a splendid congregation and more than held the Presbyterian fort in Cape Town. In the Session Records of 1861 we read :

"The number of persons attending the Services is so large that the building is no longer able to accommodate them." ①

and in the Deacons' Court Minutes for the same year we read :

"It was resolved to build a gallery at the back of the Church to accommodate increasing congregations." ②

These are the kind of things all ministers love to see recorded in the Minute Books of their Churches, and Mr. Morgan had the satisfaction of knowing that his labours were attended by much success. It was, of course, a day when the Cape was expanding in population due to immigration from Scotland, England and Ireland, and no doubt this had

1 Op, cit. Vol. 2 p. 361

2 Op. cit. Vol. 2 p. 128

a beneficial effect on the Church in Cape Town, but nevertheless it was a far cry from the noble twentytwo who carried on with Dr. Thom after the departure of the Highland Regiment in 1814.

In 1873 due to failing health Mr. Morgan resigned his charge. The Minutes record him as stating :

"I wish to resign because the infirmities of old age have caught up on me and because I know that a suitable young minister is available in Scotland." ①

The congregation which owed so much to Rev. George Morgan recorded their appreciation of the man in these simple words written as a memorial tablet erected in the Church after his death :

"A greatly loved servant of the Lord" ②

After a trip to his beloved Scotland, he spent the remaining days of his life in Cape Town where he died in 1880 being buried by his young successor Rev. John Russell who wrote as follows in the Church Magazine :

"How can we repay so great a debt, for George Morgan gave himself utterly to the cause of His Lord in this place..... What then shall we say to these things? asks Paul. What indeed - George Morgan would have me answer with that text which was so obviously a mark of his life 'If God be for us who can be against us'" ③

- 1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol. 2 p. 406.
- 2 Vide Tablet in St. Andrews Church Cape Town
- 3 St. Andrews Church Magazine March 1880 p. 9

The resignation of Mr. Morgan in January, 1873 marked the end of an era for rapid changes were to take place in the ministry of the men who followed Mr. Morgan in May, 1873.

CHAPTER 6

THE MINISTRY OF REV. J. RUSSELL, B.D.

When Rev. J. Russell arrived in South Africa in 1873 to take over the work of Rev. G. Morgan at St. Andrews Church, the Colony was still in the throes of the economic depression which had had such a marked effect on the history of the Church. It had not been possible to extend the Church in any way during the years 1860 to 1870 because there was no money with which to do it. Moreover, in other parts of the country - in Natal for example - it was becoming so difficult to meet the financial obligations of the Church that ministers' salaries were either not paid at all or were paid months late. In some places ministers were forced to resign because their congregations could no longer pay their stipends and because the Home Church in Scotland was unable to increase their grants.

Rev. J. Russell did, however, have this advantage over his predecessors, namely that in 1869 diamonds had been found in Kimberley,^① and this gave promise of

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa"
Vol. 7 p. 362 ff.

alleviating the economic depression; there were rumours too that gold was to be found in other parts of the country. These factors made a great difference to the era of Presbyterian expansion which is associated with the name of Rev. J. Russell. The rumours about the gold proved to be true, and ten years later gold was discovered in the Transvaal in large quantities, and, although it brought with it attendant problems for Church and State, the discovery of diamonds and gold meant that both people and wealth began to flow in the country.

When Rev. J. Russell was inducted on 4th June, 1873 we read in the Congregational Report for that year :

"We welcome Mr. Russell to our midst and pray that he may long be spared to minister to us. The membership of the congregation is at present 102" ①

Mr. Russell was spared long to serve the Cape Town Church and in later years he was honoured with the Degree LL.D. by the Cape Town University. ② He was a man of amazing spiritual, administrative and intellectual gifts.

During the ministry of Rev. J. Russell several events of some importance took place in the history of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa.

1 Annual Report St. Andrews Church Cape Town for year ending December 1873 p. 1

2 In the year 1916.

THE END OF THE ST. ANDREWS MISSION

In 1878 the St. Andrews Mission, which had been begun by Dr. Adamson in 1838, had to close down. For some years it had been found to be very difficult to obtain the services of a Dutch speaking evangelist or assistant. After the resignation of Rev. G. Morgan the Services had been conducted by an evangelist of the Dutch Reformed Church, but it seems that the Session felt that the time had come to discontinue the services altogether and in the minutes of the Kirk Session in 1878 we read :

"In view of the difficulty of obtaining the services of a Dutch speaking evangelist and in view of the desirability of inviting the present members of the Mission to join St. Andrews Church, it is agreed that as from 31st October 1878 the Mission shall be closed down." ①

There is no record in the minutes as to which members of the Mission accepted this invitation to become members of St. Andrews Church. The Mission always was a mixed congregation of Europeans and coloured folk worshipping together and if a large number accepted this invitation it would be more than a possibility that some of those joining were Non-Europeans. If so, this is the first instance in the history of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa of

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p. 41

Europeans and Non-Europeans being invited to become members of the same Church. The records of St. Andrews Session do not mention what happened as a result of this decision, but as most of the members of the Session were Dutch speaking and as they had for a number of years been served by an evangelist of the Dutch Reformed Church it is safe to suggest that most of them became members of that great Church. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the spirit of the St. Andrews members at that time. There was obviously no thought in 1878 that blacks and whites should always be separate, for no protests are recorded in the minutes, and nowhere do we read of any objections being raised. This could of course, mean that it was only the Europeans at the Mission who accepted the invitation, but, in my view, that is somewhat unlikely.

Be all that as it may, the fact of the matter is that in 1878 the Mission ceased to be.

The day school, which had been attached to the Mission since its inception, continued to be held each day despite the closing of the Mission services. The salaries of the Teachers were paid by the Government, who now assumed

responsibility for the school itself. It continued to meet in the old building until 1896, when the authorities decided to amalgamate it with the Harbour Works Public School.

THE ST. ANDREWS SABBATH MORNING FELLOWSHIP

One of the first things which Mr. Russell did when he became minister was to establish a Sabbath Morning Fellowship, which was a meeting held before the morning service, "for the purpose of studying the Scriptures and extending the Kingdom of Christ." This Fellowship, which seems to have been composed mainly of men, decided they ought to do something for the African population living in squalor in the slums of the city. The "something" they decided on was the establishment of a Mission in Bloem Street. They hired a room for the purpose, and at their own expense they began holding meetings and classes for the natives. They employed a native evangelist to assist in the work, and they paid him from the Sabbath Morning Fellowship funds. ①

This Mission seems to have continued until 1893 when the money collected from the Africans and by the Sabbath

1 Annual Report St. Andrews Church Cape Town for year ending 1876 p. 4.

Morning Fellowship was handed over to the newly formed Presbytery. The Presbytery used the money (£70) to start the African Mission of the Cape Presbytery in Ndabeni Location on the outskirts of Cape Town. The minutes of the Cape Presbytery read :

"A sum of £70 was handed to the Presbytery Treasurer in the name of St. Andrews Sabbath Morning Fellowship, with the request that it be used for the establishment of work among the native peoples of the Cape area....

It was agreed that the money should be used to establish the cause in the African Location in Ndabeni..... This was moved by Rev. Meyers seconded by Rev. Yule and agreed." ①

The St. Andrews Mission in Bloem Street continued till 1893 when it was closed down in favour of the Presbytery Mission, and ^{also} because by that time the Bloem Street area had become predominantly coloured and ^{no longer} ~~not~~ African.

CLIFTON HILL

The St. Andrews Sunday School Teachers Association reported in 1881 that

"in view of the movement of our scholars and members to the new areas round Hanover Street, we deem it expedient to start a Sunday School in that area" ②

It seems that the Sunday School did not need to refer

- 1 Minutes Cape Presbytery Vol . 1 p. 2
- 2 Annual Report St. Andrews Church Cape Town for year ending December 1881 p. 3.

matters to the Session immediately, for the Session minutes record nothing until January, 1882, when we read :

"The work of the Sunday School at Clifton Hill has made such progress that it has become necessary to take steps to provide a building for their meetings.....The services are, at present, being held in the home of Mr. A. Rawbone, who has promised to present a site for the building of a Church at Clifton Hill. Mr. J.E. Maxwell, a resident of the area, has promised to give £100 towards the building...." ①

With these gifts it became easy to start the new cause and in December, 1882 the Clifton Hill Hall was opened. The preacher was Rev. J. Russell.

The Records of Clifton Hill have, unfortunately, disappeared, and we are dependent on the Session Records of St. Andrews for the brief history of this preaching station. In the St. Andrews congregational Report for 1885 we read :

"The work at Clifton Hill, under the supervision of St. Andrews Session continues to flourish..... A morning and afternoon Sunday School is held, and on Wednesdays a Mothers' Meeting is held, and a Service every Sabbath Evening is attended by some forty people." ②

The name of the preacher is not mentioned, but several laymen of Cape Town gave great assistance, particularly a Mr. W.E. Moore, a Cape Town lawyer living in Woodstock.

In 1892 Rev. Wm. Yule, who had come down from

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p. 82

2 Op. cit. Page 3.

Beaconsfield on a holiday, was asked to preach to the people. He was persuaded to accept a call as a result, and in July, 1892 he was inducted as "colleague to Rev. J. Russell of St. Andrews" ^①

Mr. Yule's work soon bore much fruit, and by the end of the year St. Andrews Session minutes record :

"There are now 133 names on the Roll. In addition to the Hall which cost £393 the members at Clifton Hill have now purchased a manse costing £1,262, and have paid off £662 of the Bond....Plans are now submitted for the enlarging of the present Hall....." ^②

All of this speaks volumes for the work of Mr. Yule, and he had the further joy of seeing the new preaching station made into a charge in full standing by the Cape Presbytery in 1893. The Presbytery minutes read as follows :

"It was moved by Rev. J. Russell seconded by Rev. J.S. Maver and agreed that as from even date the preaching station at Clifton Hill be promoted to the status of a charge in full standing.....Agreed" ^③

Mr. Yule's ministry at Clifton Hill was a most successful one, and he was greatly loved by the people, but, to the great loss of the Church, Mr. Yule's health began to fail, and on 23rd May, 1899 he resigned his charge. ^④ He died in 1901.

- 1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol. 3 p. 111
- 2 Op.cit. Vol. 3 p. 138
- 3 Op.cit. Vol. 1 p. 19
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 182

WOODSTOCK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In 1882 Mr. W.E. Moore, who lived at Woodstock, started a Sunday School in his own house to cater for the children in the area who could not be expected to go ten miles to the city to attend St. Andrews Sunday School; moreover, the new Sunday School at Clifton Hill was about four miles away.

At this time South Africa was increasing its population very rapidly due to immigration from Britain. The rumour of the gold discoveries and the news of the diamond fields brought an increasing number of folk from overseas, but from the Presbyterian point of view what was more important was the policy of the Government in bringing out Scotsmen to work on the Railways of the country. Railways were in their infancy in South Africa at the time, but they were to play an increasingly important role in the development of the new provinces of Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal. From our point of view this meant that wherever the Railways went that there was at least the need for supplying religious ordinances. The energetic and generous Scots in South Africa at that time saw to it that almost everywhere the

1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church
Cape Town Vol. 3. p. 86.

Railways went a Presbyterian Church was established. Alas, it was not always possible to maintain the new Churches, but as far as Woodstock was concerned all was well. It was an area in which Railway workers were housed, and it soon became necessary for Mr. W.E. Moore to consider asking the Session of St. Andrews, of which he was a member, for assistance in the building of a Church at Woodstock. ①

A. Mr. J. Greenshields and Mr. W.E. Moore offered the Session a free site in Woodstock, and St. Andrews Session in their turn offered :

"£200 for three years on condition that the people of Woodstock would find another £100 for the salary of an Assistant Minister at St. Andrews." ②

This arrangement was acceptable to all concerned, and in 1883 a Hall was duly built at Woodstock at the cost of £1,100. ③ It was opened on the 4th June, 1883, by Dr. Stewart of Lovedale.

For some time the Services had to be maintained by laymen despite the arrangement agreed to by the congregation of St. Andrews, but in January, 1886, Rev. J.S. Maver arrived in South Africa quite unexpectedly. He was asked to accept the position of Assistant to Rev. J. Russell and he duly agreed. ④ Mr. Maver was not ordained when he arrived in South

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 88
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 88
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 94
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 162

Africa, and he started his labours at Woodstock as a licenced probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, having completed his studies at Edinburgh University in 1880. He was not ordained until 1889 when he took over Woodstock. The ordination of Mr. Maver presented some difficulty because there was no Presbytery in Cape Town to perform this task. Letters were therefore sent to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland and this resulted in Edinburgh Presbytery appointing the Free Church minister in Cape Town namely Rev. J. Russell and his Kirk Session as a Commission to ordain Mr. Maver.^①

Curiously there is no record of the ordination in the Minutes of the St. Andrews Kirk Session.

After his ordination in 1889 Mr. Maver was given full control of the Church, and a Board was elected to look after the financial affairs of the congregation. Until this time the finances had been administered from St. Andrews an arrangement which had not met with the entire satisfaction of the Woodstock people.^② However, from now on, the Church was virtually independent though theoretically still under the control of St. Andrews Session.

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p.162 and 169

2 Minutes of Deacons Court St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol.4 p. 89

In 1895 the congregation purchased a house in Woodstock so that their minister could be properly housed, and in the same year they purchased the plot adjoining the Hall with a view to erecting a Church.^①

In 1893 when the Presbytery of Cape Town was formed, Woodstock became a separate charge from St. Andrews, and the minutes of the Cape Presbytery read :

"It was moved by Rev. J. Russell and seconded by Mr. W. Moore that Woodstock be promoted to the status of a charge in full standing....Agreed."^②

Mr. Maver continued to work at Woodstock until 31st July, 1897 when to the great regret of the Presbytery and the congregation, he decided to return to Scotland where he accepted a call to a Church in Paisley.^③

The vacancy at Woodstock was fortunately soon filled for the people addressed a call to Rev. W.E. Robertson of Richmond, Natal, and he accepted being inducted by the Cape Presbytery on 10th December, 1897,^④ two months after the great Durban Assembly, when for the first time the Presbyterian Church of South Africa came into being.

GARDENS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In 1882 two or three of the leading members of St. Andrews had come to live in the Gardens area, and they now

- 1 Minutes of Board of Management Woodstock Church Vol.1 (1895) p. 4
- 2 Op. cit. Vol. 1. p.7
- 3 Minutes of Kirk Session Woodstock Church Vol.1 p.106
- 4 Minutes of Cape Presbytery Vol.1 p.125

felt that it was too far for their young children to walk six miles to St. Andrews Church for Sabbath School, and they therefore combined to form a Sunday School at the corner of Rheede and Orange Streets. The families concerned were the Pattersons, the Jardines and the Cairncrosses. The first to take the lead was a Mr. Munro, who later went to Australia where he became well known for his work with the Childrens' Special Seaside Missions. It was he who suggested to the others that a Sunday School be formed in the Gardens area. ①

At first only a few children attended this Sunday School, but as Mr. Bryson, the Superintendent wrote in 1900

"For a time difficulties were encountered but the work gradually increased and more room was required than the tin house in Rheede Street could supply" ②

The more room required was supplied by Mr. Jardine, whose home "Dryfe House" was 100 yards up the road. He had a most suitable wing on his house, and there the increasing Sunday School moved in the early part of 1883. ③

Suggstions had been made to the Kirk Session of St. Andrews that

"consideration should be given to the establishing of a congregation in the Gardens area....." ④

- 1 Andrew Bryson "After 25 years" (the story of Gardens Sunday School) P. 2
- 2 Ibid. Page 3
- 3 Ibid. Page 4
- 4 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol. 3 p. 85

These suggestions fell on unreceptive ears for two reasons first of all St. Andrews Kirk Session had its hands full with the establishment of the two causes at Woodstock and Clifton Hill, and secondly there was a grave doubt in the minds of the Session as to whether the city would spread towards the Gardens, or whether it would spread towards Woodstock.

These things, however, did not deter the folk at "Dryfe House" and the Sunday School began to increase rapidly. In 1885 Mr. J. Patterson became the Superintendent and his teachers with the St. Andrews teachers formed "The St. Andrews Teachers Association." ① They were certainly not lacking in enterprise, for in 1886 the Teachers Association, without the backing of the Session or congregation, bought a piece of land some three hundred yards from "Dryfe House" in Orange Street. ② It was not very clear what they could do with the land, but not long afterwards they were offered and accepted the sum of £1,125 for it. Having all this money, the teachers began again to consider the question of building a Hall for Sunday School work, and after negotiation they bought the site next to

1 Annual Report St. Andrews Church Cape Town for year ending December 1885 p. 6
 2 A. Bryson "After 25 years" p. 3 ff.

the piece of land they had sold, and erected a Hall on it for which the total cost was £1,300.

By this time the Session of St. Andrews were "in the picture" and were giving the Teachers Association full support.^① The foundation stone of the new Hall was laid by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Henry Loch, on 27th May, 1890.

It had been agreed by the Session that in addition to the Sunday School an Evening Service should be held each Sunday, and the first of these Services was taken by Rev. C. Muller of the Dutch Reformed Church.^② At first no minister was at hand, but in December Rev. Mr. Vickers Taylor B.A. of the Irish Presbyterian Church arrived in the Colony with his sister. He was on holiday, visiting relatives in Cape Town. Rev. J. Russell approached him, and invited him to become assistant minister at St. Andrews with special care of Gardens. To this Mr. Taylor readily agreed, and he began his labours in 1891 (January).^③

Gardens remained a preaching station of St. Andrews for a number of years, for it was not till July, 1894 that it became an independent charge with Mr. Taylor as its pastor

- 1 Minutes Kirk Session St. Andrews Church
Cape Town Vol 4 p. 14
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 30
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 67

This took place at the meeting of the Cape Presbytery held on that date, when it was

"unanimously agreed that Gardens should be promoted to the status of a charge in full standing." ①

Such is the bald official statement, but in the years of Mr. Taylor's ministry the Church and Sunday School had grown very rapidly, and the report for the year 1894 as recorded in the Gardens Session Minute Book reads :

"We rejoice at the success of Mr. Taylor's ministry and there are now 108 members on the Roll.... The Sunday School has 180 scholars.....Every quarter collections are taken for the Gala Boys at Lovedale. There are 300 volumes in circulation in the School Library.....A Band of Hope has been started, and also a Boys Brigade and a Girls Sewing Meeting...."The Monthly Visitor" the congregational magazine, is produced monthly and circulated to every member." ②

It would seem that the fears of the St. Andrews Session that the Gardens cause would not be a success were far from justified. Gardens has never looked back, and today is one of the senior charges in the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

In 1896 Rev. Vickers Taylor, to the regret of everyone, resigned his charge due to indifferent health, and there ③

- 1 Minutes of Cape Presbytery Vol.1 p. 70
- 2 Op. cit. Vol.1 p. 98
- 3 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 216

followed a ten months vacancy, at the end of which the Session Clerk records :

"During the vacancy the congregation were well provided for. Rev. J.M.Russell and David Russell preached frequently. The Rev. W.E. Robertson of Richmond, Natal, gave his services for a month, and Rev. Dr. Ross of Newcastle-on-Tyne supplied the pulpit for three months. Meanwhile an influential Committee was looking out for a suitable minister. It was not until Dr. Ross returned to the Old Country with the full power of selection, and after conferring with Dr. Matthews of London, that the choice fell on Rev. J.J. McLure of the Irish Presbyterian Church, whose credentials were of a very high order." ①

And so it was that Rev. J.J. McLure came to Gardens Church, and was inducted to the pastoral charge on 10th February, 1897.

Rev. J. McLure was destined to play a leading role in the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, and, like his colleague Rev. J. Russell, he too was to receive the degree of Doctor of Divinity, this time from Belfast University. The Session minutes of Gardens Church record appreciation of Rev. J. McLure's work in these words at the end of two years ministry :

"It is pleasing to note that the seeds of friendship sown at the first meeting have already ripened into a mutual feeling of regard and confidence." ②

1 Ibid. Vol.1 p 291
2 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 18

It was in the early days of Rev. J. McLure's ministry that steps were taken to raise money for the building of a Church alongside the Hall erected by the Sunday School Teachers Association in 1890, and it was his great pleasure to see this achieved in 1903, when the magnificent building in which the congregation now worships was erected to the Glory of God. The service of dedication was conducted by Rev. Dr. Smith, and the foundation stone of the new building was laid by the Governor, Lord Milner on 29th August, 1901. ^①

The Gardens Church, begun with some misgivings on the part of cautious Scots at St. Andrews, had become a firmly established charge, and, under the notable leadership of Rev. J.J. McLure, began to play an increasingly important role in the civic affairs of Cape Town.

THE FORMATION OF THE CAPE TOWN HIGHLANDERS

In 1885 the Cape Town Highlanders Regiment was formed, and it is good to be able to record that from the beginning they had a strong connection with St. Andrews Church. The minister of that congregation was appointed the official chaplain to the regiment, ^② and each year they held a

- 1 Vide "The Gardens Messenger" September issue 1901 for full description
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol. 3 p. 93

111.

Regimental Service in the Church, which so many years before the soldiers of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders had more than helped to establish. The Cape Town Presbyterian Churches owe a great deal to the Highland Regiments, and to this day the tradition is kept by the Cape Town Highlanders of attending an Annual Regimental Service in St. Andrews Church. The minister of the Church is still the Honorary Chaplain to the Regiment.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CAPE PRESBYTERY

Until 1893 it had not been felt necessary to form a Presbytery in Cape Town because all the congregations which had been established had come into being as a result of the work of the St. Andrews minister and his assistants. Thus the Session of St. Andrews had for many years ^{virtually} been the Presbytery. ^① However, as the newly established congregations increased in number it became absolutely necessary to complete the organisation of the Presbyterian Church by the forming of a Presbytery. The first move came from the Kirk Session of St. Andrews, who noted :

"that there now being three charges in full standing in the area, it is expedient that steps be taken to form a Cape Town Presbytery." ^②

1 The St. Andrews Kirk Session never regarded itself as being a Presbytery.

2 Op.cit. Vol 4 p. 36

A meeting was duly convened at St. Andrews Church on 11th October, 1893 and they constituted themselves a Presbytery of Christ's Church by prayer. The congregations represented were

St. Andrews with Gardens as a Preaching Station, Woodstock and Clifton Hill. ①

The four ministers present were

Rev. J. Russell, Rev. A. Maver, Rev. Wm. Yule and Rev. A. Vickers Taylor. ②

It was an auspicious occasion and most of the Meeting was taken up with the discussion pertaining to the suggested union of all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa, but it was also agreed to start African Mission work in the Ndabeni Location.

The Cape Presbytery became greatly strengthened when Rev. J. McLure arrived. He was one whose gifts were peculiarly suited to the courts of the Church, and the minutes after his arrival are studded with ideas of his for the extension of the Church.

He was a great champion of the cause of those who believed in the establishment of a South African Presbyterian School for European children.

1 Minutes Cape Presbytery Vol.1 Page 1

2 Ibid. Vol 1. Page 1

He fought tenaciously for his views and aired his grievances in the Cape Presbytery.

The formation of the Presbytery gave the Cape a better position from which to discuss the affairs of the proposed United Church and the minutes between 1893 and 1897 are full of the Cape Presbytery's^{ITS} deliberations on the subject. After almost one hundred years of virtual independence the Cape Town Presbyterians were now duly constituted as a Presbyterian Church and, as always in Cape Town Presbyterian affairs, the lead had come from St. Andrews Church and its virile young minister, Rev. J. Russell.

THE MOWBRAY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. J. Russell had a series of assistants between 1880 and 1897 who all made their mark on the life of the Church, but the man who became his assistant in August, 1895 was destined to become the very finest of them all. A man who all but outshone his illustrious senior, and who, strangely enough bore the same surname. He was Rev. David Russell,^① and he became the greatest of the South African Presbyterian Evangelists of the first half of this century. In her book on the Life of David Russell, Mary Dick says :

1 Vide Page 492 Section 3.

"To attempt any comparison between David Russell and other passing evangelists such as Gypsy Smith would be irrelevant. When the Gypsy and he visited South Africa, their paths crossed but could not converge. The Gypsy went his flamboyant way through the larger South African towns and passed on his meteoric way beyond the South African horizon. David Russell drove his jolting Cape cart over the dusty highways and byways of an undeveloped country, travelled in its tedious railway trains, carrying his message of Salvation not only into the towns but particularly to the villages and dorps, to isolated houses, to Black men and to White men alike, to all indeed who had a soul to save."①

He came from a very different tradition from that of the scholarly John Russell with whom he was associated - the one a man of culture, the other a converted carpenter turned evangelist, but such is the power of the Spirit that these two men worked together in perfect harmony

"without so much as one quarrel in the years they worked together" ②

As Mr. David Russell had charge of only one Service at St. Andrews each Sunday, he began to look round for some new extension work he could do. A man, who had for years been an itinerant Evangelist found it hard to take things easy, but he soon found that there was ample work for him in the Mother City of South Africa.

1 Mary Dick "David Russell" p. 82

2 Ibid. p. 94

After some deliberation he chose Mowbray as the place to begin a new work, and with the concurrence of several Presbyterians in that area of Cape Town, David Russell petitioned the Cape Presbytery :

"to be allowed to commence Services and a Sunday School at Mowbray." ①

The Presbytery had little difficulty in accepting this offer, and

"it was unanimously agreed that Rev. David Russell should be allowed to proceed with his plans for the establishing of a Presbyterian cause at Mowbray." ②

Services were started in the home of a Mr. Chalmers, where David Russell conducted the Evening Service every Sunday. Mr. Chalmers took charge of the Sunday School every Sabbath morning.

The area was growing one, and it was not long before the accommodation at the home of Mr. Chalmers was too small for the increasing congregation. Mr. Russell was a brilliant preacher, and he drew folk from all the surrounding districts to hear him. The folk in the area therefore formed a committee with a view to establishing a Church in Mowbray. ③ Its first chairman was Mr. Chalmers, and by 1897 they had

1 Minutes of Cape Presbytery Vol.1 p. 129

2 Ibid. Vol.1 page 129

3 Ibid. Vol.1 page 163

*James Chalmers: former captain of Scotland
Brother of Rev. John Arthur Chalmers B.D.
(Kilmarnock, Hamilton, Dumfries & Galloway)*

collected enough money to start to build the Church they so much desired.

A site was purchased in Albert Road, Mowbray, at a cost of £567 and on 1st May, 1897 Dr. Muir the Superintendent General of Education in the Cape Colony, laid the foundation stone of the Hall. Within a few months the Hall was completed, and it was opened for public worship on 10th October, 1897, a month after the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ^①

Mr. David Russell remained at Mowbray building up the work there with marked success until on 28th February, 1901 he resigned in order to take up full time evangelistic work once more. By the time he had reached this decision David Russell, more than any other person, had laid sure foundations at Mowbray on which later Presbyterian ministers were richly to build. Mowbray today is one of the three largest congregations in the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, and the tradition of the Evangelical ministry started by David Russell in 1897 has been carried on ever since.

TOUWS RIVER AND MATJESFONTEIN PREACHING STATIONS

In 1896 St. Andrews appointed, what they called "A

1 Ibid. Vol.1 Page 205



Congregational Missionary."

For some time the minister had found difficulty in meeting all the ships which arrived at the Cape, and he also found that his time was so taken up with pastoral work, that he had little time to devote to requests for Presbyterian Services in other parts of the Colony. However, one of St. Andrews members, a Mr. D. Officer, was invited to undertake this work on behalf of the Kirk Session, and he was duly appointed as a "Congregational Missionary." There is no record of his having been ordained or set apart, and his work seems to have been as a sort of pastoral assistant to the minister. In addition, he was responsible for starting two new preaching stations - one at Matjesfontein, and the other at Touws River - both of which are about one hundred miles from Cape Town. At these stations the work was mainly among Non-Europeans, and it is recorded in the Session minutes :

"Mr. Officer reported that he had conducted his monthly service at Matjesfontein and at Touws River, and that the attendance had been 25 at the former and 35 at the latter." ②

It would seem therefore that Mr. Officer went out once a month to these places for the purpose of conducting Divine

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Andrews Church Cape Town Vol 4 p. 181
- 2 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 206

Service. In the minutes of the Cape Presbytery it is recorded that Mr. Officer gave assistance at the Ndabeni Location in connection with the new African Mission established there by the Cape Presbytery. ^① He seems to have been a man of many parts, for we also read that during the vacancy after the retirement of Mr. Yule that

"Mr. Officer has been preaching at the evening Service at Clifton Hill with much acceptance." ^②

The history of the two Preaching Stations after 1900 is uncertain, for the only records are the minutes by St. Andrews Session, where we read in 1902

"It was agreed that in view of the difficulty in maintaining the stations at Matjesfontein and Touws River that the work there be discontinued." ^③

What happened to the congregation we are not told, but as the records speak of

"services held in the private house of Mr. van den Berg." ^④

it seems safe to assume that after the Session of St. Andrews ceased to send them a missionary, that they became Dutch Reformed.

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The ministry of Rev. J. Russell at St. Andrews, Cape

1 Op.cit. Vol 1 p. 152
 2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 31
 3 Op.cit. Vol 5 p. 62
 4 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 38

Town, was undoubtedly a ministry of expansion. Between 1873 and 1897 Clifton Hill, Woodstock, Gardens, Mowbray and the two preaching stations at Matjesfontein and Touws River were formed. In addition an African Mission was started at Ndabeni Location and another Meeting for Africans held each week in Boom Street. Moreover it was during this period that the Cape Presbytery came into being.

Money and people were pouring into South Africa at this time, and it is well for the South African Presbyterian Church that such men as Rev. J. Russell and Rev. J. McLure were in Cape Town at this critical stage of the history of the Church. They were men of vision and they saw to it that new churches were built as the population increased.

In this expansion of the Presbyterian Church between 1873 and 1897 the work of St. Andrews Church cannot be overstressed, and, as so often happens when a Church is thus employed, they themselves increased as well. In the Annual Reports for 1896 we read :

"The numbers on the Communion Roll now stand at 345. This means that there are now three times as many members as there were when Rev. J. Russell was inducted in 1873" ①

1 Op.cit. page 2

The work of Rev. J. Russell ~~was~~ and his influence in Cape Town may best be learned from the speech made at his funeral service 3rd August, 1928 when Rev. Robert Whyte spoke thus :

"While we mourn at this time the loss of a godly minister, a noble gentleman and a dear friend, our thoughts today are not so much of sorrow as of gratitude to God for the rich gift of His servant. For thirty years Dr. Russell not only worthily maintained but enhanced the traditions of the "Ecclesia Scotica" in this far distant land, and above all in this city on which the influence of Scottish character and personality have left an indelible mark. And then, during a quarter of a century's retirement from the active duties of the pastorate of St. Andrews, he exercised a wider ministry which put the whole of Presbyterianism in South Africa still more deeply and permanently in his debt. But indeed he was a servant of all churches, and he laboured incessantly for the good of his fellowmen to the day of his death.

His character was transparently simply, his religion unaffectedly real, and his friendship a personal benediction, while to many it was like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

None could be more tender and sympathetic in times of trouble, or more eager to share in another's joy. No effort was too great for him to make if he saw a way of helping or serving anyone. He was the most accessible and approachable of mortals and his counsel could always be relied on for wisdom and discretion.

A Highlander to the backbone, with Highland fervour showing to the last, he had schooled by

iron discipline the native impetuosity of his race, and whatever upheavals may have been in the depths on the surface and to his fellowmen all was calm, practical, purposeful, sagacious. He had the judicial mind in an eminent degree; intensely methodical, the soul of order and precision, firm and unyielding on all matters of principle, he was really the least formal and pedantic of scribes, and his gifts of humour and kindness made him an ideal colleague with whom to work.

He had all the Highland dignity and courtesy; of fine and noble presence he was a marked man in any company no matter how distinguished. He was like one of his own Highland mountains, and the rugged strength of Scottish character was embodied in every line and lineament.

His mere carriage inspired confidence. The soul of honour, it was utterly impossible for him to stoop to anything questionable or mean; therefore he was entirely trusted, and for fifty years looked up to by the whole community. What that meant to our City during all that time it would be difficult to over estimate, for he enjoyed, quite unsought, a position of quiet prominence.

He played an important part in the academic life of the City, and was held in high regard by the whole community for his personality, scholarship and organising gifts; but after it the whole Presbyterian Church of South Africa bears today the most visible seal of his ministry and life work.

It was his character that told - the radiance and vitality of his Christian faith, his unaffected humility, unselfishness and generosity, his devotion to duty, his childlike simplicity, his gentleness as of a woman, his courage and

rectitude, the saintliness of his whole walk and conversation. He was a very perfect Christian gentleman." ①

Such was the man who ministered to the English speaking Presbyterians of Cape Town from 1873 until 1903 - a period of tremendous growth in the development of the work at the Cape. It was fortunate indeed that such a man was in Cape Town during those important years.

1 "Presbyterian Churchman"
September 1928

CHAPTER 7

TWO CHURCHES OUTSIDE CAPE TOWN

The origin and growth of most of the Cape ^rPresbytery congregations is closely connected with St. Andrews Cape Town which mothered all the causes which we have so far examined. There were, however, two Churches which were started independently of St. Andrews namely the Church at Beaufort West and the Church at Victoria West. It is to these two churches we must now turn our attention.

BEAUFORT WEST

A few years after the affairs of the second Presbyterian Church in Cape Town had been wound up and all the debts paid, the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland received an unexpected letter from a group of Scotsmen living at Beaufort West in the Cape Province.

For some time the local Scotsmen had been gathering together

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"Each Lord's Day for prayer and Bible Study"

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church
Scotland Vol. 2 p. 275

in the home of Mr. L.C. Anderson, a local resident. The numbers had grown

"to over forty souls" ^①

and they had decided to take steps to become a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland, and to make provision for the payment of a stipend to a minister.

The first step they took in this connection was to write to Rev. G. Morgan in Cape Town for his advice, and he told them to write direct to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. This was duly done by Mr. Anderson and his group of fellow-worshippers and on 21st December, 1857 the following minute appears in the minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland :

"A letter was read from Mr. L.C. Anderson of Beaufort in the Cape Province stating that he was instructed by the congregation therewith which he was connected, and acting on the advice of Rev. G. Morgan of Cape Town to apply to the Committee for a minister. The letter stated that they were able to offer £200 per annum from local sources, and that they guaranteed the passage money of any minister who would be willing to come. The convener was requested to endeavour to find a suitable minister as soon as possible." ^②

To this request the Committee agreed, and it was left to the Convener to find some suitable man for the work.

1 Ibid Vol.2 P. 273

2 Op.cit. Vol.2 p. 284

A month later, on 18th January, the Committee in Scotland received another letter from Mr. Anderson stating that the Government would be willing to assist in the payment of the passage of the minister, if, in addition, he were also a school teacher; moreover, if the minister/teacher were prepared to teach in the local school, the Government would pay him a salary for that work.

The Committee at this meeting resolved :

"We cannot agree to the request of Mr. Anderson to find a Minister who is also a School Teacher." ①

The Committee in Scotland, despite the numerous calls of this nature which their minute books reveal, nevertheless found time to obtain a man for this tiny little congregation in the centre of what was, at that time, an unknown and undeveloped continent. It would seem that a Rev. James Turnbull had been appointed by the Committee to go to Santiago, but when approached about the possibility of going to Beaufort West instead, he readily agreed, The minutes of the Colonial Committee read :

"Rev. James Turnbull has declared his willingness to go to Beaufort West instead of Santiago....Mr. Turnbull is, therefore, appointed

1 Ibid. Vol.2 P. 286

to Beaufort West in terms of the letter received from Mr. L.C. Anderson on 18th December, 1858." ①

This news was received with great satisfaction in Beaufort West, and Mr. Steadman thereupon promised to pay his passage money which was duly sent over to the Committee in Edinburgh. The minutes record :

"great satisfaction at Mr. Steadman's generosity and the Committee agrees to pay £20 to Mr. Turnbull for his outfit" ②

Mr. Turnbull had not yet been ordained when this correspondence was going on, and the next thing we hear of is the statement in the Colonial Committee's minutes :

"It is intimated that Rev. James Turnbull has been ordained by the Presbytery of Kelso and Lauder on 6th July, 1859, and that he will leave for South Africa next month." ③

Rev. James Turnbull duly arrived at the Cape and made his way by Cape cart four hundred miles into the Karroo where he was met by Messrs. P. McNaughton, I.B. Lawson, W. Stewart, L.C. Anderson and Henry Lear - the Committee who had been responsible for the establishment of the church and on whose responsibility he had been brought to South Africa. The house of Mr. L.C. Anderson was now regarded too small for the congregation, and so a request

1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 312
2 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 341
3 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 349

was made to the Dutch Reformed Church for the use of their building. This was readily granted, and on his first Sunday in Beaufort West it would seem that not only did Mr. Turnbull preach to his own congregation in the Dutch Reformed Church, but that he was invited to preach to the Dutch congregation as well. The records of the Colonial Committee simply state :

"Mr. Turnbull writes to say he was asked to preach in the Dutch Reformed Church on the first Sunday after his arrival" ①

Little news is available about the detailed history of the congregation during the next few years save only a small note in the Free Church Missionary Record in 1860 where we read :

"Mr. Turnbull of Beaufort West in South Africa reports that the congregation is progressing favourably" ②

It seems that Mr. Turnbull did not write many reports to his Committee for apart from this one remark we have no record of what took place in the first year of his ministry at Beaufort West. However, in 1861 a Mr. Molteno from Beaufort West arrived in Edinburgh and appeared before the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. ③ Mr. Molteno told the Committee that the congregation at

1 Op.cit. Vol.2 p. 359
 2 Op.cit. July 1860 P. 248
 3 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 2 p. 70.

Beaufort West was progressing very well under the ministry of Rev. J. Turnbull, and that the minister was

"greatly loved by all in the district" ^①

Mr. Molteno explained that Mr. Turnbull ministered not only to the small community of Scotsmen in the town itself, but that Beaufort West, being the centre for the farming community of that area, Mr. Turnbull served the outlying districts as well.

Mr. Molteno then explained to the Committee that he had come to let them know that he had decided to give the ^{Congregation} ~~Church~~ a site for the building of a Church and the erection of a manse. This news was received with great satisfaction and the minutes read as follows :

"The Committee thanked Mr. Molteno for his communications and for his liberality in giving a site for Mr. Turnbull's Church and Manse, as well as for other acts of kindness which Mr. Turnbull had referred to in his correspondence with the Committee." ^②

And so the Church and the manse were duly built in Beaufort West. Who opened the Church, or what services were conducted we do not know, but Beaufort West was a long way from the nearest large town, and it is very unlikely that the opening services were conducted by anyone other than

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 P. 70.

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 P. 70.

the Rev. J. Turnbull assisted by the local Dutch Reformed Minister.

In 1865 a report was received in Edinburgh stating that :

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"although things were proceeding favourably, and although there is apparent growth - the numbers attending the services are 60 each Sabbath, - the economic depression which has afflicted this land has had a serious effect on our financial position." ①

In 1866 the Colonial Committee in Scotland received a letter explaining that things had become so serious that the congregation was no longer able to support Mr. Turnbull. The minute reads as follows :

"A letter was received from Rev. J. Turnbull and laid on the table. From this letter the Committee learn that the provision for the support of the minister has from various causes become seriously diminished, and that on this account and also on account of the failing health of Mr. Turnbull he is now entertaining the prospect of changing his sphere of labour" ②

and in the October of the same year Mr. Turnbull more than "entertained the idea" of resignation. He actually did so, saying that he could remain at Beaufort West only until the end of 1866. ③

On 20th November the Committee in Edinburgh met again

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 289
2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 316
3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 335

to discuss a letter received from Mr. Turnbull. The minutes read as follows :

"A letter was laid on the table from Rev. James Turnbull of Beaufort West, South Africa, acknowledging receipt of the Committee's grant to him of £50 and representing that the place of worship and the manse at Beaufort West would be sold to the Dutch Reformed Church to be used in connection with the Mission they were establishing in the town for the coloured community. Mr. Turnbull states that in the event of payment being made by the Dutch Reformed Church for the buildings the congregation will be able to meet the £200 owing to him as stipend, and he therefore wishes to return the £50 sent to him by the Committee." ①

Such then was the end of the Presbyterian cause in Beaufort West. The economic depression had a great deal to do with the tragic end of the Church; had the country not floundered financially at this time, no doubt the Church would have continued to exercise a great influence in the community. BUT the weakness here was the same as the weakness in Cape Town itself - there was no Presbytery to which the Church was responsible, no group of sister Churches in the area willing to come to its aid in the time of need. ~~The whole of the history of the Churches in the Cape show this.~~

Had there been a Cape Presbytery before 1893 then Churches like Beaufort West would probably have survived the

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 346

depression; indeed, had there been a Presbytery, the cause might not have been started at all because the area had always been a predominately Dutch area, and I doubt whether any Presbytery would have recommended the establishment of a cause in Beaufort West.

Thus ended the cause for which a few local Scotsmen had given of their time and substance. Fortunately Rev. James Turnbull was easily placed in another sphere of labour, and he ended his days in Greytown, Natal, where he became the minister of the Dutch Reformed Church.

VICTORIA WEST

About five hundred miles from Cape Town, lying on the Great Karroo, stands the little town of Victoria West, which serves as ^{THE MARKET OF ?} the surrounding sheep-farming community. The area in 1860 was a mixed one, containing Dutch Reformed farmers and Scotsmen from the Highland Crofts settled in the area as a result of the immigration scheme of the 1850's.

Whenever Scotsmen leave their Homeland they try to keep up their Scottish customs, and in the days of 1860 no custom was more important than that of "the Kirk."

They were never satisfied with the services of any other denomination than their own, and consequently, they nearly always tried to obtain their own ordinances of worship wherever they happened to be. Certainly this is what took place at Victoria West. A group of Scotsmen in this tiny hamlet gathered together for weekly prayer and worship at the home of a Mr. J. Adams, and like their brethren in Beaufort West some two hundred miles away, they decided to take steps to build a Church and procure a minister. There being no local Presbytery, they wrote direct to the Committee in Edinburgh who record in their minutes of 1861 :

"The Convener laid on the table a letter from Mr. J. Adams of Victoria West, stating that a community of some 30 souls had been gathering each week for worship at his house, and that they now desired to become a congregation, to build a Church, and to procure a minister. The application for a minister offered a guarantee of a stipend of £150 per annum. The Committee entertain this application favourably and request Mr. Richard Craig at Kelso to go to this new and important field of labour, and failing him to look out for some other suitable person." ①

The important sphere can surely have been important only from the point of view of the Kingdom of God for Victoria West was a tiny little village at that time and

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 Page 41

the people were predominantly Dutch speaking. How difficult it is to assess the value of Church extension schemes without a Presbytery on the spot from whom to obtain impartial information. Mr. Richard Craig agreed to go, and he asked the Committee in Edinburgh to pay his passage money. They regretted that it was impossible, so Mr. Craig got into touch with the Committee in Victoria West, and they provided £50 for his fare on the s.s. "Alacrity" The people of Victoria West then wrote a letter to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, which is recorded in their minutes as follows :

"The Committee resumed consideration of the application from Victoria West, and the Convener laid on the table a call from the parties making the application to Rev. Richard Craig, Licentiate of the Free Church Presbytery of Kelso and Lauder, with a guarantee of stipend of £150 per annum for three years. The Convener also laid on the table the following documents :

- i) A letter intimating the Call and requesting the ordination of Mr. Craig.
- ii) A letter to Mr. Craig from Mr. Adams of Victoria West stating that the congregation were delighted at the prospect of receiving him as their minister.
- iii) A list of subscribers who have promised to support a Presbyterian Ministry at Victoria West.

The Committee being otherwise satisfied as to his suitability for the important position to which he has been called, do hereby appoint him to the proposed congregation at Victoria West in terms of the above documents, earnestly asking on behalf of the congregation the Grace and Guidance of the Great Head of the Church.

The Committee agrees to request the Presbytery of Kelso and Lauder to proceed with the ordination of Mr. Craig."^①

and so Rev. Richard Craig set out for his new sphere of labour.

When he arrived he was met by Mr. Adams and services continued in his house for some months. In 1863 a report received in Edinburgh indicated that :

"although Mr. Craig's ministry was proving highly acceptable, difficulty was being experienced in finding the money for the upkeep of the Church and its ministry. A few of the families who promised financial support have had to leave the district because of the depression afflicting the whole country, and the congregation is in dire need of financial help."^②

The Committee viewed the matter gravely, and having reports from other South African Churches before them as well, it seems that they realised that little good would be done by carrying on, and so it was decided in 1866 that the cause at Victoria West should be closed down, and that :

1 Op cit Vol. 3 p. 58 Mr. Craig was ordained in January 1862.

2 Ibid Vol. 3 P. 189

"Rev Craig should be moved to another sphere of labour." ①

Where there is no Presbytery to exercise vigilance enthusiastic local Committees often get carried away with the idea that a Church can and should be established, and when the establishing authority is seven thousand miles away it is almost impossible to form a realistic judgment. The Free Church of Scotland poured thousands of pounds into South African Churches, ~~many~~^{some} of which "fizzled out" not just because of the depression, that could have been weathered, but because they were persuaded to start Churches in places where there was little if any opportunity of development.

Viewing the situation from almost a hundred years after the events it does seem a pity that the Church in Scotland did not insist on the establishment of a Cape Presbytery long before 1893.

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 322

SECTION 2

THE MISSIONARY PRESBYTERIES

CHAPTER 1

THE STORY OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER TILL 1834

Long before the British arrived the Dutch farmers had trekked away from their own folk at the Cape and had established such farming towns as Graaf Reinet and Swellendam in 1786 and 1745.^① Indeed, by the end of the Dutch East India Company's rule frontier farms had become so well established that the Dutch Reformed Church had been ten years in Swellendam and seven years in Graaf Reinet.^② But the Dutch farmer is not easily kept in one place, and by 1800 he had trekked beyond Graaf Reinet as far as the Great Fish River.

Being a pastoral farmer, used to the wide open spaces, the Boer, as he was called, did not bother to fix boundaries to his farm but simply allowed his cattle to feed and find pasture wherever they thought fit. After all, South Africa was a vast land, and there was plenty of space for everyone so why worry about boundary lines. This attitude was all very well provided they did not come into

1 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol. 3 p. 241
 2 P. Engelbrecht " Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Afrika p. 98

contact with hostile people who had similar ideas.

Alas, that is exactly what happened and the result was a series of Wars lasting for one hundred years.

Until the Boers reached the Great Fish River they had not met the Kaffirs (or Bantu as we ^{they are} would call ^{them} them today) in any great numbers. Like the Europeans the Bantu tribes were also foreigners who had come from other climes. ① Great hordes of Bantu had been swarming down from Central Africa for ages and they too were pastoral farmers quite unused to such things as boundaries and fences. Moreover to the Kaffir, ② might was pretty well right, and their standard of morality with regard to cattle rustling was even lower than that of the Europeans. The theft of cattle was to be the trigger which again and again set off the cannon of war between the European settlers and the Kaffirs, but basically the trouble was one of land rather than one of cattle. Both the Kaffirs and the Dutch farmers found it impossible to keep to boundaries.

The Boers, once they came into contact with the Kaffirs, had to find ways and means of protecting themselves, and thus grew up the Commando System, by means of which men

1 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol 3 Chapt 7. p 128 ff

2 Throughout the Nineteenth century the Bantu were usually referred to as Kaffirs spelt Caffres but today the term used is African. The word Kaffir has now become an insult. The word used throughout this work is however the old term Kaffir except where it is obviously more correct to use the name of the tribe.

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in various areas grouped together in order to mete out their own justice whenever any cattle was stolen or whenever any lonely farmer was attacked by the Kaffirs. ①

This clash with the Kaffirs was far worse than anything faced by the colonists before. The Hottentots had been easy to quell; they had been a fairly small group, and though incredibly dishonest, on the whole they had been well disposed to the white man. They traded with him and worked for him. The Bushman, too, had not given much trouble to the European settlers, for he was a hunter and an extremely primitive man and as the Europeans had advanced the Bushman had retreated more and more into the Kalahari Desert. It may have been because of their small numbers, but the Bushmen gave little trouble to the European settlers despite the fact that these little Hunters are the aboriginals of South Africa. The Hottentot, the Bantu and the European are all foreign invaders who have taken the land from the little Bushmen Hunters, of whom there are less than one thousand in the world today. The European had little difficulty in subduing the Bushmen and the Hottentot but when he met the Bantu on the Eastern frontier he was up against a different

1 For details of the Commando System see E. Walker p. 42, 49, 68 and 71.

problem altogether. The settlers now had to contend with a warlike people in vast numbers, a people who were for centuries to compete with them for the land.

EUROPEANS AND KAFFIRS UP TO 1834

It was in 1779 that the first real War^① broke out between the Kaffirs and the Farmers on the Eastern frontier. It was provoked largely by the overbearing attitude of a farmer, Willem Prinsloo, and his son, towards the natives, and in part by the raids made by the Kaffirs on the white man's cattle. The farmers called out all the Commandos, and elected a farmer called Adriaan van Jaarsveld as Field Commandant. After a great struggle they drove all the Kaffirs beyond the Great Fish River by July, 1781. This was the first of the Kaffir Wars which were to render the position of the farmers on the Eastern frontier almost untenable for many a year. It was into the Kaffir War era on the Eastern frontier of the Cape that the Presbyterian Missionaries came, trying to convert both Europeans and Kaffirs to the ways of the Prince of Peace. They did not arrive, however, till much later and in the meanwhile in 1789 another Kaffir War broke out.^② This time, much to the

1 D. Fairbridge "A history of South Africa p. 106

2 Ibid p. 112

annoyance of the farmers, instructions came from Cape Town saying that

"It would be unwise to try to get the cattle back from the natives and they must be appeased and allowed to remain in the Zuurveld."^①

Perhaps it is not surprising that the farmers, who had been robbed of their cattle and who had little respect for authority at the best of times, were on the brink of mutiny.

Then came the British occupation which caused much disunity among the Dutch; indeed, Graaf Reinet and Swellendam had proclaimed themselves Republics,^② and had refused to accept the Government in the Cape as having any jurisdiction over them. This rebellion was eventually put down in 1799 but the spectacle of the white men disunited led the Kaffirs to try again to obtain the land beyond the Fish River, and so broke out the third Kaffir War,^③ resulting in a patched up peace made by the General of the British Forces at the Cape. He concludes

"that it was unwise to try to inflict punishment on the Kaffirs"^④

Once again the Eastern frontier Boers were incensed at not being allowed to chase after their cattle taken into Kaffir land by the Black men.

- 1 Ibid. p. 115
- 2 Ibid. p. 131
- 3 Ibid. p. 136
- 4 Ibid. p. 136

In 1799 Dr. van der Kemp established a station of the London Missionary Society at Bethelsdorp on the frontier. To this station came Hottentots, and although in the European area, the Kaffirs were permitted to come over for religious instruction. The Farmers in the area were again annoyed, because they maintained that not only did spies find their way to Bethelsdorp^① but that all sorts of criminals were harboured there too. They complained bitterly to the Cape Government. In 1807 the Governor at the Cape was a young man called The Earl of Caledon, who being a civilian, was unable to direct the Eastern frontier campaigns himself so he sent up Col. H. Collins to be in charge. Col. Collins, among other duties, was ordered to send a report to the Cape Government about what he saw at Bethelsdorp.^② This he duly did in the following terms :

"I found the settlement in a very un-sanitary condition. In his zeal to protect the Hottentots and his desire to protect them from harshness on the part of the farmers, Dr. van der Kemp has gathered together a large number of these natives who are now given to sloth and idleness.....The Mission is, moreover, a harbour of refuge for bad characters from the Native territory."^③

Col. Collins recommended that the work of the Society should

- 1 R. Lovett "The History of the London Missionary Society Vol 1 p. 486 ff.
- 2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa Vol. 4 p. 213
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 214

be among the Hottentots and Bushmen only, but his advice fell on deaf ears in Cape Town.

It was in 1812 that the Fourth Kaffir War broke out.^① This time the new Governor, Sir. J. Craddock decided to stop the trouble on the frontier by driving the Kaffirs from the Zuurveld beyond the Fish River. The Troops were under Lt. Col. John Graham, and they achieved their objective and so as Andries Stockenstroom the Landrost said :

"six months after his arrival Sir John Craddock could look with satisfaction on a peaceful Frontier."^②

In order to uphold peace and order he established two forts - one at Staden's Dam afterwards known as Craddock, and the other at the source of the Cowie River on the farm of one Lucas Meyer. To this fort was eventually given the name of Grahamstown, so named after Lt. Col. Graham. For some years this system proved successful but in 1818 trouble broke out afresh.^③ This time the Governor was Lord Charles Somerset. The kaffirs were quite unwilling to remain behind the Fish River and 10,000 of them rushed on Grahamstown where 333 soldiers held them at bay. When the War ended the Government proclaimed a new boundary, this time taking

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 167

2 Ibid. p. 168

3 Ibid. p. 181

the Kaffirs' land as far as the Keiskama River and including it in the Cape Colony.

This arrangement was to keep the peace between the black man and the white man until 1834 when trouble broke out again in the Sixth Kaffir War,^D and during these sixteen years the Scottish Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier established their stations and their European Churches.

Let us now turn to look at the work of the Missionaries and the establishment of Churches for both Europeans and non-Europeans.

STEPS LEADING UP TO SENDING OUT OF SCOTTISH MISSIONARIES TO SOUTH AFRICA

While South Africa was being involved in Kaffir Wars and frontier troubles, interesting matters were being discussed in Scotland; matters which were to have far-reaching effects on the history of South Africa, and which were to lead to the establishment of Mission stations and Churches throughout the country.

In his book, "The History of Free Church Missions" in India and Africa" Rev. R. Hunter says :

"The French Revolution had rudely disturbed

1 Ibid. p. 203

the slumbers of the Church, and when in 1792 and 1793 the terrible atrocities perpetrated by the Jacobean faction showed the depth of cruelty to which unregenerate man can sink even when he talks of brotherhood and stands as the nominal advocate of Freedom, the Scottish Church began to arouse herself." ①

The particular form of the arousing in Scotland was the starting into life of two Missionary Societies. The Glasgow Missionary Society founded on February 9th 1796, and the Scottish Missionary Society founded like its sister in March 1796 in Edinburgh under the Presidency of the celebrated Dr. John Erskine. Soon after the establishment of these Societies circulars were sent out which resulted in three overtures being transmitted to the Church of Scotland General Assembly in 1796. The discussion of these Overtures lead to the famous Missionary debate of that year. The Overtures were as follows :

A MONTH LATER

The Overture from Synod of Fife read :

"That the Assembly consider the most effectual method by which the Church of Scotland may contribute to the diffusion of the Gospel among heathen peoples" ②

The Overture from Moray Synod read :

"That it be recommended to members of the Synod as shall attend the next General Assembly to use their influence and endeavours for promoting an Act of Assembly for a general

1 Op. cit. p. 2.7

2 Ibid. p. 3.3

collection throughout the Church to aid the several societies for the propogating the Gospel among the heathen natives." ①

The Overture from Mr. W. McBean read :

"It is humbly ovetured to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland that in respect of a very laudable goal for spreading the Gospel to heathen countries which has appeared both in Scotland and England, the Assembly should encourage this most important and desirable object by appointing a general collection over the Church, or adopting whatever other method may appear to them to be most desirable." ②

ZEAL ?

Strange as it may sound to modern ears the Church of Scotland refused to give any official backing to the Missionary enterprise and the three Overtures were rejected by the Assembly.

When the Church fails in her duty to be Missionary, then any Society outside the Church which undertakes this task deserves the utmost thanks of all Christian people, and such thanks is due to the Glasgow and the Scottish Missionary Societies who, when the Church of Scotland Assembly were unwilling to consider the Missionary enterprise, took up the task. These Societies contained Christians from the various sections of the Scottish Church, and it is good to note that they were also supported

1 Ibid. p. 4.

2 Ibid. p. 4.

3 An account of these Societies is given in outline in R. Hunter "The History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa" p. 6 ff.

by a large number from the established Church. Let us, therefore, examine the work of these societies for they were responsible for a great deal of the history of Presbyterian ordinances of worship in South Africa.

THE GLASGOW MISSIONARY SOCIETY

It is to this Society that we must now turn our attention for of the two this is the society more vitally connected with South African Church History.

When the Glasgow Missionary Society was formed in 1796 Dr. John Love^①, who was destined to play a great part in its history, was in London as Secretary of the London Missionary Society. In 1800 he received and accepted a call to Anderston Parish Church, and from that time to the day of his death in 1825 he was the chief man in the Glasgow Association. His influence was inestimable and his labours for the Missionary cause have left him a special place in the History of the Church both in Scotland and South Africa.

The Society's first efforts were directed towards the country near Sierra Leone^②, two portions of which were

1 R.H.W. Shepherd "Lovedale" p. 23 ff.
2 Ibid. p. 27 - 28 also R. Hunter "The History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa" p. 44

successfully occupied. Alas, in the one case the Missionaries proved to be unworthy or at least unsuitable for the task and they returned, and in the other instance the place chosen for the Mission station was so unhealthy that they had to abandon it. The Missionaries in this second sphere all died. Thus the Society's first attempts at Missions had failed.

In his book "The History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa, Dr. R. Hunter says :

"The next attempt was made in the direction of the Foulah country in the interior of West Africa. The London and the Glasgow Missionary Societies co-operated on this Mission, but this effort also ended in failure, and the station had to be abandoned." ①

After these discouragements the Society did very little for many years; they contented themselves by raising funds for other Missionaries and by sending what they could to the men in the field under the direction of The London Missionary Society. However, in 1819 there occurred in India a tremendous earthquake at Cutch and in the following year the Glasgow Missionary Society considered sending out a Missionary to this field. The report of their Society reads :

1 Op. cit. p. 812

"Pitying the poor people exposed to the danger of being swallowed up alive in such catastrophes... a Mission should be established on the banks of the Indus."^①

The matter was almost decided; indeed, Dr. Love had penned a pamphlet commending the proposal to all members of the Society, when difficulties arose which prevented the plan from being put into immediate operation.

It was just at this crucial time that Rev. Dr. Thom arrived in Scotland from South Africa. He had been sent home to Scotland by the Cape Government to recruit ministers for the Dutch Reformed Church and to obtain teachers for the schools of South Africa. He communicated with the Directors of the Glasgow Missionary Society and strongly urged upon them the importance of sending out Missionaries to the Cape Colony. The Directors were soon convinced by the arguments of Dr. Thom and they decided to try once more to evangelise the heathen. They resolved :

"at the request of Dr. Thom from South Africa to send out agents immediately to that region."^②

On 29th May, 1821 Rev. W.R. Thomson, and Mr. John Bennie were designated as missionaries to Kaffraria and on March 5th 1823 Rev. John Ross was set apart^③ for the same

1 Glasgow Missionary Society Quarterly Paper 1819 p. 2
2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1821 p. 9
3 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1822 p. 2 - 3

field. The Glasgow Missionary Society had begun again to send out Missionaries, and this time the venture was to succeed, for it was from the work of this Society that the Presbyterian Churches and Mission Stations on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape Colony came into being.

It is interesting to note that while the Glasgow Society was thus engaged the Scottish Missionary Society was sending to India and to West Africa men whose names were to be written on the scrolls of fame there; ^① moreover the Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the next twenty five years became more and more aware of its responsibilities in connection with the Missionary cause. Under the guiding hand of Rev. Dr. Inglis the following resolution was passed by the 1824 Assembly as a result of further Overtures commending Foreign Missions :

"The Assembly approves the general purpose and object of these overtures and appoints a Committee to devise and report to next Assembly a specific plan for the accomplishment of that object, and reserves to consideration of next Assembly the means of providing the requisite funds by appointing an extraordinary collection as well as opening a public subscription for the accomplishment of this pious and benevolent object." ^②

Thus the Church had also begun to consider the need

1 Vide R. Hunter "History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa Section 1

2 Ibid. p. 911 also Acts of General Assembly Church of Scotland 1824

for foreign Missions. During the quarter of a century after the famous 1796 debate evangelism^{ICNL} played an increasing role in the life of the Churches in Scotland. It would seem that the evangelical message helped people to see the need for foreign Missions, for from this time forward, in addition to the Missionary Societies, the Churches in Scotland were sincerely committed to the task of spreading the Gospel among all nations; many parts of the world today owe their Christian character to the work of the Churches in Scotland. It is, however, to^{THE} Glasgow Missionary Society that South Africa Presbyterianism owes so much and we must now follow the fortunes of the early Missions established on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape by that Society.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERY IN SOUTH AFRICA (ENGLISH SPEAKING)

The first two Missionaries sent out by the Glasgow Society were Rev. W. Thomson and Mr. J. Bennie, who arrived at the frontier in 1821 and began work at Chumie where Mr. Brownlee^① had been labouring for some years for the London Missionary Society. It was not until two years later that a Presbytery was formed, and this took place

1 R. Lovett "The History of London Missionary Society"
Vol. 1 p. 502 ff.

after Rev. John Ross arrived at Chumie in December, 1823. Rev. John Ross had received ordination at the hands of the Presbytery of Hamilton before coming out,^① and he, with Rev. W. Thomson and Mr. Bennie, an ordained elder, formed themselves into a Presbytery, the first one of its kind in South Africa. This took place on 1st January, 1824 :

"Rev. W. Thomson constituted the Presbytery with prayer to Almighty God, there being present Rev. John Ross and Mr. J. Bennie."^②

With these simple words the chequered story of the Presbyteries in Kaffraria began.

The Presbytery was, of course, not responsible to any Assembly in Scotland, but simply to the Glasgow Missionary Society which was composed of folk from all the different Scottish Churches.

Within two months of their constitution, they decided to occupy a new station at Incha. It was in December, 1824 when the minutes read :

"It was agreed that Rev. Ross and Rev. J. Bennie should establish a new station at Incha and that Rev. W. Thomson should remain with Rev. Mr. Brownlee at Chumie."^③

In the next year the minutes read that :

"It was agreed that the new station at Incha

- 1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1823 p. 2
- 2 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 1
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 27

should be renamed Lovedale after Rev. Dr. Love, Chairman of the Glasgow Missionary Society."^①

The value of this Presbytery was clearly indicated by the steps it took to extend the work and to strengthen the hand of the isolated Missionaries from Scotland. The Presbytery was, of course, concerned first and foremost with the establishment of Missions among the "heathen blacks"^② and the Hottentots, but as more and more of their countrymen came to live in the area, the Presbytery turned its attention to work among the Europeans as well.

1 Ibid. Vol. 1. p. 32

2 A term often used in the Presbytery minutes.

CHAPTER 2

SCOTTISH MISSIONS 1820 - 1834CHUMIE.

So far as it is known, the very first European missionary on the Eastern Frontier was a Dutch doctor called van der Kemp, who was sent out by the London Missionary Society along with Dr. Kitchener in 1798.^① He founded a station at Bethelsdorp on the Kat River. After a long interval a Mr. Joseph Williams was sent forth by the same Society, and he arrived at a place called Emgwali and established a mission station in April, 1816. Here he stayed until August 1818 when he died. After the death of Mr. Williams the converts kept up a weekly meeting under the leadership of one Unstikana, an african convert and thus they continued until June 1820 when the London Missionary Society sent out Mr. Brownlee to fill the place of Mr. Williams.^②

This new labourer was really a Scotsman from the banks of the river Clyde, though he had come out to South Africa under the auspices of the London Missionary Society.

1 R. Lovett "History of London Missionary Society"
Vol. 1 p. 491

2 Ibid. Vol. 1. - p. 502

He decided, when he arrived, that he and his family should remove from Engwali and establish themselves at Chumie, which is on one of the tributaries of the Chumie River and lies about nine miles from the present site of Lovedale Seminary.

The circumstances which induced the Glasgow Missionary Society to send out Rev. W. Thomson and Mr. John Bennie have already been mentioned and it was to this station of Chumie that they came when they arrived.

In 1820 Mr. W. Thomson, then a divinity student whose studies were nearly completed, was asked to accompany a small group of Scottish emigrants going out to South Africa under the 1820 Settlers Scheme of emigration. He agreed to go as their pastor as soon as he had completed his studies, and so the good ship "Abeona" sailed without him. The Glasgow Missionary Society asked him if, in addition to his work among the few Scottish emigrants now on their way to South Africa, he would undertake to minister to the natives as well. This he consented to do. Meanwhile the "Abeona" which had gone on without him burned in mid-ocean and most of the Scots emigrants perished. It was then decided that Mr. Thomson should go out solely as a Missionary to the

1 Vide Pages 46, 153
2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1821 p. 9
3 Ibid. p. 10

Kaffirs and so, when he arrived at Chumie in 1821, he and Mr. Bennie were there principally to evangelise the native people. They received a tremendous welcome from Mr. Brownlee.

The "Edinburgh Christian Instructor" relates the following not long after the arrival of the Missionaries :

"The Missionaries were in the habit of naming those whom they admitted as members of the Church after friends and patrons in Scotland, and so by the end of 1822 the Kaffir Church at Chumie had in it a Robert Balfour, a John Love, an Elizabeth Love and a Mary Kerr." ①

In March 1823 the small group at Chumie was increased by the arrival of Rev. John Ross who had received ordination at the hands of the Hamilton Presbytery, and had been sent out by the Glasgow Missionary Society. ② He came armed with a small Ruthven printing press, on which passages of Scriptures were to be printed and distributed in the African dialects. ③ The arrival of Mr. Ross was a big step forward, for, as already mentioned the Missionaries formed themselves immediately into a Presbytery. ④

In December of that year Mr. Brownlee resigned Chumie and removed to the banks of the Buffalo River and formed a station on a site which today constitutes the city of

1 Op. cit. January 1823 p. also quoted in R. Hunter History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa p. 321
2 Glasgow Missionary Report 1823 p. 2
3 Several copies of these are still in existence. They are kept at Rhodes University and at Lovedale.
4 Vide p. 153

Kingwilliamstown. Thus it was that Chumie was left entirely to the agents of the Glasgow Missionary Society. ①

THE FIRST LOVEDALE

In 1824 the Mission felt itself strong enough to establish another station, and the place chosen was Incha, which the missionaries renamed Lovedale after the Rev. Dr. Love of Glasgow. The Presbytery agreed that Messrs. Ross and Bennie should move to the new station and that Rev. W. Thomson should remain at Chumie. ②

BALFOUR

In March 1827 the Missionaries were again reinforced by the arrival of the following persons from Scotland :

"Mr. and Mrs. McLachlan from the Old Light Burghers, Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers from the Relief Church, Messrs. Weir and McDiarmid from the Church of Scotland. Mr. Chalmers was sent out as a Catechist, and Messrs. Weir and McDiarmid as Missionary mechanics." ③

Every time new staff arrived it seemed to be an occasion for the Presbytery to extend its work and so when this new group arrived it was decided :

"that a new station should be commenced on the Kat River, and that Mr. Ross and Mr. McDiarmid should be the labourers, and that

1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1824 p. 14
2 Ibid. p. 4 also Kaffraria Presbytery Minutes May 1824 Vol. 1. p. 48 Vide Page 154
3 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1827 p. 20

Mr. Chalmers should remain at Chumie to assist Mr. Thomson."①

The station was duly established as decided, and they gave to it the name of Balfour. Alas, the Balfour station was not destined for an easy time in its infancy, for within six months the natives attacked the little settlement and the Missionaries had to leave. It was May 1829 before peace was restored, and by that time Rev. W. Thomson had decided to cease his direct connection with the Mission and to settle as minister of the new Dutch Reformed congregation at Balfour.② Thus, when peace was once again restored the Mission left the work of evangelising the natives at Balfour to Mr. Thomson, and the Presbytery of Kaffraria ceased to have any direct control over the work there.

BURNSHILL

In the Free Church Missionary Record for September 1847 we read :

"In June 1830 a station was founded at a place on the east bank of the Keiskama River. It was called Burnshill after Rev. Dr. Burns, minister of the Barony parish Church in Glasgow. The station is situated on the face of a ridge around the base of which the Keiskama pursues its winding course. It is one of the most beautiful spots in Kaffraria. Almost opposite the station is a

1 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery April 1827
Vol.1 p.102

2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1830 p.11

magnificent valley called the Anatola Valley with ranges of hills on either side. On one of these south west from the station the British during one of the early Kaffir Wars, built a fort and called it Fort Cox which was allowed to go into decay on their quitting the station at the end of the War. The Kraals of the great chiefs Suku and Sandile are also in the area." ①

Such then was the place to which Messrs. Chalmers and Mc. Diarmid were sent by resolution of the Presbytery. ② These men were the founders of the station, and its first missionaries.

PIRRIE

On August 31st, 1830 Rev. James Laing was ordained and sent out by the Glasgow Society to labour in Kaffraria. He arrived in December of the same year amid further rejoicing among the Missionaries already there. As was always the case when a new man arrived on the frontier, the Presbytery felt that a new station could be started, and there was no exception in the case of Mr. Laing. He was sent to establish a station at Pirrie. ③

WAR BREAKS OUT AGAIN ON THE FRONTIER - 1834

Since 1816 there had been comparative peace on the frontier, and the arrangement made by Lord Charles Somerset

1 Op. cit. September 1847

2 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery June 1830

3 Ibid. November 1830

had met with some considerable success. He had pushed the frontier back to the Keiskama River, and had settled European immigrants in large numbers on the farms beyond the Kei River. The 1820 Settlers Scheme fulfilled a twofold purpose from the South African point of view, in that it settled well armed and civilised people on the boundary between the natives and the Europeans and it also provided the country with that which has always been its chief need, namely European population. There is little doubt that the Lord Charles Somerset's scheme had been successful, but in 1834 trouble broke out again. ①

It started, as most of the Kaffir Wars started, over cattle. Some native cattle strayed into the European territory and began to graze. These were seized by the soldiers from the forts. The kaffirs immediately set about recapturing the cattle and they managed to do so but two of their number were killed in the affray. This roused the kaffirs and without warning on 22nd December, 1834 they rushed into the colony and plundered and murdered wherever they got opportunity. War followed as the Commandos were called out.

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa"
P. 209

During this anxious time the missionaries occupied a precarious and unenviable position. They could not but condemn this unprovoked raid upon the colonists and the bloodshed to which it gave rise while outwardly they were forced to maintain an appearance of loyalty to the Kaffir chiefs upon whose goodwill they were dependent. Brownlee and his family made their escape under cover of night to the Wesleyville station, whence they were rescued, together with a number of other whites, by a body of Port Elizabeth volunteers. Chalmers and Weir, with their families, were conducted in like manner to Port Adelaide by a military patrol. The Pirrie missionaries made their way to Burnshill, where they remained under the powerful protection of Sutu the widow of Gaika the Xosa Chief. She had always shown marked kindness to white people. From Burnshill they were eventually all fetched to Grahamstown, at which place they were harboured until the cessation of hostilities. ①

The Missionaries remained at their stations as long as they could but they had to clear out because their lives were in danger, and so all the stations were abandoned until the end of the War which came in 1835 when the natives were glad to sue for peace. The terms were that they were to

1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1836

return behind the Keiskama River and that the Fingos should be settled between them and the Europeans. ①

When the Missionaries resumed their work the Free Church Missionary Records records it this way :

"when the Scottish labourers returned to their stations they found that the buildings had been occupied alternately by the British and African forces, and were in a sad state of dilapidation. At Chumie the furniture had been broken but the buildings were still standing and at Burnshill the furniture only had been destroyed. At Lovedale and Pirrie the premises had been burned to the ground." ②

TWO NEW STATIONS

When the Missionaries at Lovedale saw the state of their station they decided to remove to a better location. ③ They had long felt that the site at Incha was unsuitable and so the opportunity was taken to remove further up the banks of the Chumie where there was ample water for irrigation purposes. This new Lovedale was destined to become the most famous of all the Scottish Mission stations in South Africa.

IGGIBIGHA

In 1836 after the War a new Missionary, Rev. R. Niven a new station ④ arrived and commenced/at Iggibigha. Mr. Niven proved to be

- 1 E. Welker "History of South Africa" p. 192 - 193
- 2 Op.cit. June 1836
- 3 R.W. "shepherd "Lovedale" p. 87
- 4 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 181

a splendid Missionary and the work at Iggibigha made rapid progress. After he had been there for eighteen months he had the joy of baptising Tente, the son of Gaika, chief of the Xosas.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE MISSIONARIES

1) Europeans at the Services The work of the Glasgow Missionary Society had certainly not failed this time, and as these stations which their missionaries established grew, they began to cater not only for the Africans but also for any Europeans in the area who happened to want their services. At Lovedale, Pirrie and Burnshill it is recorded :

"The farmers from the surrounding areas come to our services and worship along with the Kaffirs and Hottentots."①

This was especially so after the arrival of the 1820 settlers, for among them were earnest Scots who cared more for the Kingdom than to worry about the colour of their fellow worshippers. However, in time it became expedient ② to separate the European from the non-European work, but in the beginning no one seemed to regard it as at all necessary. In a letter to his mother, Mr. Chalmers writes inter alia :

1 M.S. letter by Mr. Niven in the Godfrey papers

2 It was expedient because of the language problem.

"Our service was today attended by a small company of farmers from the surrounding districts...." ①

2) The ire of the Colonists However, if some of the European farmers thought well of the Scottish Missionaries they were not all well disposed to them. Many of the Dutch farmers on the frontier maintained that the Missionaries were giving the natives wrong ideas of their own importance, and that the Mission stations were places where laziness was taught and where spies still watched out the land. Complaints were made against the Missionaries, partly in retaliation for the complaints by the Missionaries that the natives were being cruelly treated. Rev. Dr. Phillip of the London Missionary Society led the battle, and I fear that many of his exaggerations were believed in Britain where the part of the African was taken in official quarters. All of this made the relationship between the Missionaries and the frontier farmers none too cordial and so it is all the more amazing that

"the surrounding farmers came to the services" ②
as Mr. Chalmers says they did.

3) The attitude of the Natives Nor was the lot of the

1 M.S. letter dated 14th February 1829

2 Ibid.

Missionary any easier among the Kaffirs. The Free Church Missionary Record of 1852 says :

"It was a very hopeful circumstance that the foundations of the Church had been made in the conversion of several natives, but there was still discouragement tending to occasion the Missionaries anxiety. The men, as a rule, treated their preaching with indifference, and the women with hostility, nor were their lives always safe among ignorant and superstitious people who, as yet, had neither learned to respect their motives nor appreciate their personal worth."^①

Life must have been difficult for the Missionaries, but it is good to be able to record that the complaints made against the London Missionary Society labourers were never made against those of the Glasgow Missionary Society, who continued to aim first and foremost at the "conversion to a saving knowledge of Christ of all men and women, no matter what their colour."^②

A SPLIT IN THE GLASGOW MISSIONARY SOCIETY 1837

The War on the frontier was hardly over when news came to the Missionaries that their beloved Glasgow Missionary Society had split into two opposing parties over the Voluntary question.^③ The actual date of the split was

1 Op. cit. May 1852
2 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 1
3 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1837 also J. Laing "Memorials" p. 79

December, 1837.

In Scotland the majority of the Directors and members of the Society adhered to the "establishment" principle, while the minority split off and took their stand on the "voluntary" principle. The group which broke away took the name of the Glasgow African Missionary Society, whilst those adhering to the "establishment" principle retained the name of the Glasgow Missionary Society.^①

When the separation in Scotland was effected in December, 1837 the two sections on the Mission field in Kaffraria did not at first divide into two Presbyteries, but continued to meet as one.^② Rev. R. Hunter describes it thus in his book "History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa" :

"For some time afterwards the Missionaries met in one Presbytery, and never alluded to the points on which they differed, but at length, in 1842, they ceased to unite, and their separation was complete. They still continued to entertain the most cordial feelings for one another."^③

When they parted in 1842 the stations commenced and built up by their joint efforts were divided among them as follows :

- 1 J. Leing "Memorials" p. 80
- 2 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 209
- 3 Op. cit. p. 329

"Lovedale and Pirrie and Burnshill remained with the Established party; Chumie and Iggibigha going to the Dissenters." ①

Despite the split, the Missionaries continued to co-operate as much as possible. Mr. W. Slowan puts it in his book "The United Presbyterian Missions in Africa and India" in this way :

"Although now separated, the Missionaries continued to work in harmony.... There were now two standards, but both followed the cloudy pillar which still went before them through the Kaffir wilderness." ②

This meant that the few Missionaries who had constituted the Kaffraria Presbytery were now divided into two Presbyteries both of which called themselves Presbytery of Kaffraria. The original Presbytery was now reduced to Messrs. Ross, Bennie, Weir and McDiarmid representing the stations at Lovedale, Burnshill and Pirrie; Messrs. Chalmers and Niven remained under the Glasgow African Missionary Society.

The future history of these two Presbyteries we shall discuss in the following chapters for as they grew the European work assumed a more important role than was possible or necessary in 1837. The Presbyteries were concerned first and foremost with mission work among the natives but

1 Minutes Kaffraria Presbytery Vol.1 p. 218

2 Op. cit. p. 33

they encouraged any settler in the surrounding areas to attend their services.

There was another group to whom these early Scottish Missionaries ministered namely the soldiers. Throughout the Kaffir Wars soldiers were often stationed near the Mission stations and the Ministers took services for them at their Forts. There is no record of any European being received into membership at this time but it is certain that European soldiers and settlers attended services conducted by the Missionaries. ①

1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1834 and 1835

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CHAPTER 3

THE FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA

Matters reached a new crisis in 1843, when the "Ten Years of Conflict" in Scotland ended with the secession of the Free Church of Scotland from the Established Church of Scotland. The Glasgow Missionary Society decided to become part of this new Church, and from September 1843 it ceased to be an interdenominational Missionary Society, and became part of the work of the Free Church of Scotland. ①

In the Mission Field the result was the separation from the Presbytery of Messrs. Chalmers and Niven, and the renaming of the tiny Presbytery as "The Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria." ② The stations at Chumie and Iggibigha continued to be administered by the Glasgow South African Missionary Society until 1847, when they passed to the care of the United Presbyterian Church, a "voluntary" Church formed in 1847 in Scotland. ③ We shall discuss the history of these stations in a later chapter, meanwhile let us examine the history of the stations under the care

- 1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1843 also J. Laing "Memorials" p. 80
- 2 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 2 p. 46
- 3 Vide p. 238

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of the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria.

FREE CHURCH MISSION STATIONS

Burnshill When Rev. John Bennie returned to his station at the end of the 1834-1835 Kaffir War he found that the building was still standing, though there was little else to show for years of toil. The Missionary set himself the task of rebuilding the work and within three years things had so progressed that it was decided to build a Church.^① In 1839 the building was completed and Dr. Hunter describes it as :

"A building of very humble character, being built of rough hewn stone, and having a clay floor and a thatched roof." ^②

To this new building Rev. John Bennie invited all who would come to hear the Word preached. This invitation was given not only to the natives, but also to all Europeans in the area. It was never the policy of the Missionaries to confine their ministry to those with black skins, and though there is no record of Europeans being received into full membership at Burnshill, there is no doubt that a few white people were present at the regular Sabbath Day Services. The white folk who attended would, for the most part, be the

1 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 189
also Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1838 p. 4.

2 R. Hunter "History of Free Church Missions in India
and Africa" p. 350

relatives of the Missionaries, and any passing traders, or, in special cases, some of the settlers from surrounding farms. There is no record of settlers having attended the Burnshill services at this time doubtless because of the attitude of most European settlers to the Missionaries and because the Burnshill station was not in the midst of a thickly populated area.

Pirrie When Rev. John Ross returned to his station after the War^① he found things in an appalling state; the buildings had been used alternately by the European and the native forces, and a battle had raged on the very site where the Missionaries had laboured to convert the heathen to Christ. Such things, however, do not daunt missionaries of the calibre of Mr. Ross and with the help of his faithful native catechist he set about the formidable task of re-building.^② By 1842 things had so progressed that not only was the Mission re-established, but also a school had been founded for the African children of the district. In 1842 Miss G. Thomson from Glasgow came out to Pirrie as a female European teacher for the school.^③

Lovedale Towards the end of 1836 the Missionaries met as

- 1 The Kaffir War of 1834 Vide p. 146
- 2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1836 p. 5
- 3 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1842 p. 8

a Board for the discussion of their mutual interests, and they decided to abandon the old Lovedale site which had been ravaged by the War and to establish the New Lovedale, four miles to the west on the Chumie River. The new site possessed greater water facilities, and was more likely to be attractive as a settlement for the Native people. The work of building the first house was entrusted to Mr. Weir in the absence of Mr. Bennie and within two months it had been completed.

Close to the new station was the house of Captain C. Stretch, the Government Commissioner with the Ngqika Tribe. Captain Stretch had proved a great friend of the Missionaries, and had strongly supported their efforts to evangelise the natives. While living at Fort Cox it is recorded that he had given liberally towards the construction of the water furrow at Burnshill :

"He supplied men, and even gave rewards to the most diligent of the native labourers."

In 1838 a small dwelling house and a Church School were added to the building erected by Mr. Weir at Lovedale and it is recorded that by 3rd April, 1839 there were present at the school 132 pupils of whom 94 were girls

1 Minutes of Kaffraria Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 191 also Glasgow Missionary Society Report for 1836
 2 Ibid.
 3 R. Shepherd "Lovedale" p. 94

and 38 boys

- "of the total of 132 scholars at the school 19 were dressed in European clothes." ①

Almost from the beginning the Missionaries had felt the need for educating the natives as well as converting them to Christ. Now they felt the need for some centre where the Natives could be trained as teachers and as catechists. In 1837 the matter was brought to a head because the Missionaries realised that oral instruction was

"indirect in its outlines and evanescent in its character" ②

They therefore urged upon the Home Society the importance of starting a Seminary for the Training of Teachers and Catechists, and for the education of European and Native children. Rev. John Ross drew up the memorandum which was sent to the Directors in 1837; it contained the following declaration :

"We conceive the business of education would be carried to a much higher degree of improvement than, in our circumstances, we can carry it, if the Directors would sent out a well-qualified individual, who would give almost all his time to this important work. We would suggest to them the expediency of endeavouring to find a licentiate who has had experience in the best mode of communicating instruction, and who could soon be ordained, and sent out to form an educational establishment, for the training, in

1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1839 p. 8

2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1837 p. 7

the first instance, of schoolmasters and catechists, from among the children of the Missionaries, and from among those of the Caffres, for the upholding of Christ in this country, when we are in our graves. It is now six or seven years since some connected with the Mission desired to see the formation of such a seminary, and we think we are not premature in bringing before you a proposal for its establishment. We conceive that some plan of this kind is the more desirable, as the children of the Missionaries are now growing up to that period in which, should they give satisfactory indications of personal religion, they could advantageously be trained up as agents of the Mission; and we cannot think that this proposal is unnecessary; for as these children will be better acquainted with the native language, and consequently may in some respects be more efficient teachers of the heathen than their parents, there can be no doubt but that their education ought to be an object of interest to the Directors, as well as to the Missionaries themselves." ①

To this the Directors readily agreed and Rev. William Govan born in Paisley in 1804 was selected for the post of Seminary Tutor. Mr. Govan accepted, completed his studies was ordained on 21st July, 1840 and arrived in South Africa in September of the same year and at Lovedale in January 1841. ②

The Institution was opened on Wednesday 21st July, 1841 the first anniversary of Govan's ordination. Dr. Shepherd in his book "Lovedale" writes :

- 1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1837 p. 10
- 2 R. Shepherd "Lovedale" Chap IV p. 103-125

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"It was fitting that the opening service should be conducted by Rev. W.R. Thomson, the first ordained missionary of the Glasgow Society appointed to South Africa, who was then minister of the mixed settlement at Balfour, and who came down from the Kat River district for the occasion. Thomson preached from the words "And He ordained twelve that they should be with him and that He might send them forth to preach" (Mark III, 14) The Chronicler states that the preacher showed the scriptural grounds on which missionary operations, including those contemplated in the Seminary proceed. At the conclusion of the sermon, the Rev. John Bennie addressed the Bantu in Xosa, rehearsing to them the substance of what had been delivered in English." ①

Rev. Dr. Hunter of the Free Church of Scotland writes of the Seminary :

"The Seminary was designed to accomplish several matters of importance; it would be a place suitable for the education of the Missionary's own children; it would teach the European and Kaffir boys to associate together with mutual respect, and finally it would raise up from among the natives teachers and preachers as did the "Institutions in India" ②

Such were the lofty ideals with which the Lovedale Seminary was begun and on 21st July, 1841, Mr. Govan opened the school with eleven native children and nine European children, the latter being mainly but not all children of the Missionaries. The European and Native children were treated exactly alike, sitting together in the same classroom and treated identically. The

1 Op.cit. p. 95

2 R. Hunter "History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa p. 351

results are well worth noting, for Mr. Govan writes :

"So long as the representatives of the two races remained boys they were almost equal in their mental powers as was shown by the fact that the prizes gained by the members of each race were almost exactly proportional to the numbers of that race in the class. BUT, subsequently it was ascertained that when the boys grew up to manhood the superiority of the Europeans became very marked." ①

Lovedale Seminary was then a school for Africans and Europeans, and one of the first institutions of its kind in South African history. Children of farmers came along as well as the children of the Missionaries and sat down in school with black boys and girls. Such a procedure was to become illegal in South Africa in later years but in the beginning it ~~was and~~ seemed the obvious thing to do. Alas, that later generations spoiled so happy a beginning.

In later years Mr. Govan was accustomed to refer to the day on which the Institution was opened as the most anxious day of his life, because of two decisions he had to make. ② One was concerning the undenominational character of the Institution. He determined that its facilities should be open to members or adherents of all Christian

1 Ibid. p 362

2 R. Shepherd "Lovedale" p. 97 - 98

bodies. This principle has been acted on throughout Lovedale's history, and, it may be added, that posts on its staff, not excluding headships of departments, have been thrown open, on the same principle, to members of all denominations.

The other decision had reference to the relative positions that the white and black students were to occupy in Lovedale. In face of the prejudices of the day, he decided that the different races should have their meals in the same room, though at different tables, as the fees paid and the food supplied were different, and that all should be taught in the same classrooms. In the latter particular, however, Lovedale was not singular. Until the 'nineties' in various parts of the Cape Colony, students of different races were taught together in the same schools and classrooms.

From 1835 to 1846 this was the main happening at Lovedale. The long dreamed of Seminary became a fact and Europeans and Africans sat down together to study in the same classrooms.^①

WAR AGAIN - THE WAR OF THE AXE

The Free Church had hardly taken over when war broke

1 M.S. Letter to author from Dr. R. Shepherd (

out again on the Eastern Frontier.^① At the end of the sixth Kaffir War in 1835 the Governor Sir Benjamin D'Urban had issued a proclamation by which the border of the Cape Colony was extended from the Keiskama River to the east bank of the River Kei, and to this new district he gave the name of The Province of Adelaide. He founded, as its capital Kingwilliamstown, where Mr. Brownlee, the Missionary, had moved not long after the arrival of the Scottish Missionaries. Colonel H. Smith, who had done so much to end the war in 1835 was left in charge of this new Province, and he spent himself in improving the lot of the Kaffirs. From beyond the Kei River Sir Benjamin D'Urban brought 18,000 Fingoes, and settled them between the troublesome Kaffirs and the European farmers. These natives were sworn enemies of the Xosas and it was thought that they would act as a buffer between them and the white people.

All this had been done without reference to England and it had been assumed that the Government in London would approve the policy, but bitter disappointment was in store for the Cape Governor and for the farmers on the

1 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol. 6
p. 1 - 60

frontier who strongly approved of the plan, for Lord Glenelg reversed the policy.^① In this decision he was greatly influenced by the philanthropic party in England. This party gained most of its information and its attitudes from the missionaries in South Africa, particularly from Rev. Dr. Phillip of the London Missionary Society. He held the view that native states should be formed under the direction of the missionaries, and that no European should be admitted to these states except with the permission of the Missionaries. Naturally this was quite unacceptable to the farmers on the frontier, and although the Scottish Missionaries had very little to do with this plan they fell under the same opposition as their brethren of the London Missionary Society who had been the main cause of the bother. This is what Colonel Smith says about the Glenelg policy, which was now ordered to be put into force :

"Lord Glenelg, an excellent and worthy and able man but led by a vile party under the cloak of sanctity and philanthropy, directed the Province of Queen Adelaide to be restored to barbarism, the allegiance the Kaffirs had sworn to be shaken off, and the full plenitude of their barbarity to be re-established. It is greivous to reflect that any well disposed

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 204

individual like Lord Glenelg, believing that he was doing good, under the influence and guidance of others, should have blasted the bright prospects of such rapidly progressing civilisation." ①

So the land between the Kei and the Keiskama was given back to the Kaffirs, Sir Benjamin D'Urban recalled, and Colonel Harry Smith was removed from Adelaide. They were replaced by Sir George Napier as the Governor and by Captain Andries Stockenstroom as officer commanding the frontier troops. These two used their efforts to put the Glenelg policy into practice but when the power of the Kaffir chiefs was restored the frontier was left to the mercy of thousands of their savage subjects. It is little wonder that the farmers felt the situation untenable, and as a result, they moved away in large groups to found their own republics north of the Vaal and the Orange Rivers. ② The Glenelg policy was certainly one of the major causes of the Great Trek, as it is called, and it was a policy which caused the greatest possible unrest among the European farmers on the frontier. They unfortunately, blamed the Missionaries for the whole thing and made their lives none too pleasant as a result. Mr. Chalmers

1 Quoted in D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p.204

2 Vide p. 536 ff.

writing home to his Committee wrote :

"I was addressing a group of Europeans in the Town Hall at Grahamstown last night and exhorting them on the importance of supporting the missionary cause when the meeting broke up in uproar.....The farmers are most resentful at the new policy on the Frontier, and the Missionaries are being blamed for its application...." ①

It was only with difficulty that Mr. Chalmers escaped from the Hall and from the town. Such incidents will serve to show how the farmers felt when Sir Benjamin D'Urban and the popular Colonel Harry Smith were recalled.

It was of little avail that in 1851 Sir George Napier appeared before a Royal Commission and made the following statement :

".....My own experience and what I saw with my own eyes have convinced me that I was wrong and that Sir Benjamin D'Urban perfectly right; that if he meant to keep Kaffirs under British rule the only way to do it was by having a line of forts and maintaining troops in them." ②

As was expected, the policy did not work and it was not long before there was fresh trouble on the Frontier. Cattle raids became more frequent than ever before, and the boldness of the Kaffirs became so great that in 1846 they fell upon an escort which was taking a Kaffir to Grahamstown to be tried for the theft of an axe. The man

1 Free Church Missionary Record February 1846

2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 205

had been handcuffed to a Hottentot, whose hands the natives cut off at the wrist to free their comrade. The wretched victim bled to death, and the Governor, now Sir Peregrine Maitland, roused to indignation by the insult, sent troops to drive the Kaffirs back to their own territory. At first disaster fell upon the British troops, and they were defeated on the banks of the Keiskama but eventually they won the victory and drove the natives behind their boundaries. ①

The Fortunes of the Missionaries in the War of the Axe

It was in this war that the fortunes of the missionaries suffered a great reversal. Most of the stations were beyond the Keiskama River, and when war broke out, they had to seek safety in the Colony. Messrs. Bennie and Ross gathered at Lovedale and then in company with Messrs. Govan, Laing and Weir they retreated to Balfour, and eventually they moved as far back as Fort Beaufort. ② Mr. Govan decided to return to Scotland because he considered the war would last a very long time and so he severed his connection with the Mission. ③ Mr. Bennie went to Graaf Reinet and Mr. Ross went down to Port Elizabeth.

1 For details of the War vide G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol 6 Chapt. 1.
 2 J. Laing "Memorials" p. 97
 3 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 2 p. 201

The war proved to be of shorter duration than Mr. Govan had anticipated, and on 5th November all the missionaries except him and Mr. Bennie, returned to their stations to try to build them up again. Once again buildings had been razed to the ground and furniture burned, indeed, when Mr. Laing returned to Lovedale he found the military still in occupation of the Seminary. At Pirrie Mr. Ross had to live in a native hut till he could rebuild his station. ① It was not until July, 1849 that the Lovedale Seminary could be reopened again and Mr. Govan returned in October of that year to continue his work. In 1847 the military had vacated the Seminary buildings and transferred to Fort Hare ten miles away, but the Seminary could not be opened until the buildings had been repaired.

It came to the knowledge of the missionaries at this time that a proposal was being canvassed among leaders of the Free Church of Scotland that the South African missions, in Cape Town and Kaffraria, should be abandoned and the missionaries employed in some other department of the Church's activities. This proposal was definitely made in the General Assembly at Edinburgh in May, 1848. ②

1. R. Shepherd "Lovedale" p. 130
- 2 Reported in Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 2 p. 314

It was pointed out that the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church found itself with an adverse balance which was increasing by over £2,000 per annum. Fortunately^{for} the Presbyterians in South Africa/^{the Assembly}resolved to defer abandonment and to make an appeal to the membership of the Church for increased contributions in order to prevent such a disaster. ①

While the final decision was still pending the missionaries in the field resolved to accept the Government's offer of £100 per annum towards the support of the Lovedale Institution. ② As Mr. Govan had resigned from the Mission Mr. Laing agreed to discharge temporarily the duties of Principal in addition to his ordinary work and to assist him, he had the valuable services of Mr. Weir. The Presbytery at a meeting on 4th July, 1849 resolved that the Institution should be reopened on the 17th of the same month. ③ At the reopening service on that day there were present Revs. W.R. Thomson, John Brownlee, Henry Calderwood and George Brown and Messrs. McDiarmid, Weir and Charles Brownlee. Ten European and seven Bantu pupils were admitted as students. The Meeting of missionaries sent a request to Scotland that Mr. Govan be asked to resume the

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 331
 2 J. Laing "Memorials" p. 111
 3 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol .3 p 12.

post of Principal, it being declared that he was a tried and approved man and one who, under God, "could do much to give Christianity a permanent hold of the Native mind." ①

In the meantime events had been moving in Scotland. The Free Church departed from the idea of giving up its mission Stations in Kaffraria. Friends in Glasgow, long interested in the work among the South African Kaffirs, undertook responsibility for the financial support of the Mission for a period of five years. In doing so they laid down two significant conditions; first, that the Institution at Lovedale must be conducted as before the war; the second, that Mr. William Govan be reinstated as its head. These conditions were readily accepted. Mr. Govan resigned the charge of the congregation at Inchinnan to which he had gone in 1846 and on 3rd February, 1850 he and Mrs. Govan were once again at Lovedale. ②

By 15th November, 1846, all the Missionaries had returned to their stations with the exception of Mr. Bennie; he had obtained leave for two years and did not return to the Mission. ③ This meant that Burnshill was left to the tender mercies of the Catechist till Mr. Bennie's place could

1 Ibid Vol. 3 p. 18
2 Ibid Vol. 3 p. 48
3 Ibid Vol. 2 p. 216

be filled but Mr. Mc Diarmid was well able to fulfill all the duties required of him.

On 15th March, 1850 Mr. Bryce Ross, the eldest son of Rev. John Ross of Pirrie, was ordained by the Glasgow Presbytery and arrived at Lovedale in August, 1850.^① He had not long arrived when War broke out again.

THE GREAT KAFFIR WAR OF 1853 ②

Suddenly, out of the blue sky, a thunderbolt fell. Under British rule the Kaffirs had been making progress towards civilization, feeling that there was a power even greater than that of their chiefs to which they might look for security. This, however, was not pleasing to Sandilli and his half-brother Makoma, for progress on the part of their people meant consequent loss of power to the chiefs. "The feudal system of ages was threatened by the flag of England - the symbol of an authority to which the humblest Kaffir might appeal against the despotism of the sons of Gaika." ③

So Sandilli and his brother chiefs took council together and evolved a plan. Makana should come to life again, that mystic prophet-warrior who had given himself

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 74
2 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol, 6 p. 85 although called the Great Kaffir War of 1853 the hostilities began in 1852
3 D. Fairbridge "History of South Africa" p. 239

up for the sake of his people and to whose second coming they looked forward with ardent and child-like faith. Brave Makana had been sleeping for thirty years beneath the blue waters of Table Bay - but that was no obstacle to the clever brain of Sandilli. A witch-doctor named Umhlangeni was found willing to act as the chiefs' tool and the people's dupe, and soon through all Kaffraria rang the joyous news that Makana had indeed risen from the past and had come to lead his people to victory. In the dense forests of the mountains thousands flocked to hear Umhlangeni - the false Makana - and bowed themselves at his feet as he promised them charms which should call back the cattle that the white man had taken, and provide immunity from his bullets.

The terrible drought and the distress which had followed made the people easy victims of "the designing men who played on their emotions as a violinist plays on a violin," until they were roused to fierce enthusiasm for war and for "the riches which would be theirs," said the false Makana.

So, when all was prepared, Sandilli threw down the

1 Makana had offered his life to the British if they would spare his people.

2 D. Fairbridge "History of South Africa" p. 240

gaze of defiance by refusing to meet the Governor at Kingwilliamstown. Sir Harry Smith hurried to the scene of ^{the} trouble and convened a meeting of the chiefs when news of Umhlangeni's crusade reached Cape Town. Sandilli was therefore declared deposed from his position as chief of the Gaikas, and Mr. Brownlee, ^① the Civil Commissioner, appointed to administer affairs in his place. At the time the other chiefs present gave their consent to this arrangement - but it proved eventually to be the seed of further trouble. The troops which were sent to search for Sandilli were caught by his Kaffirs in the Boomah Pass on Christmas Eve and suffered heavily. On Christmas Day vast hordes of natives swept again over the province, burning villages and murdering between forty and fifty of the farmers. Sir Harry Smith himself was besieged by thousands of Kaffirs at Fort Cox, not far from Alice. Colonel Somerset, who went to his rescue, was driven back with heavy loss, but the Governor, wearing the uniform of a Cape Rifleman, in order to avoid recognition, dashed with his escort of Hottentot Rifles through the Kaffirs and escaped to Kingwilliamstown.

1 The son of the Missionary John Brownlee.

Sir Harry Smith was attacked in the House of Commons, charged with burdening England with new territory and with high-handed methods of government, and in 1853 he was recalled - though by the time his successor Sir George Cathcart, arrived, the Kaffir War was well in hand, thanks to the fine military qualities of the Governor and the gallantry of the troops under his command. His recall, the work of Lord Grey, was strongly condemned by the Duke of Wellington, who spoke earnestly against it in the House of Lords; and Sir George Napier, who knew the conditions on the frontier, has left on record his convictions that :

"The greatest mistake Smith ever made was in giving in to Lord Grey's folly of withdrawing a single soldier. I still hope, he wrote, that he may be able to finish the war before his successor arrives, for till lately he had not forces to do more than he did." ①

So Sir Harry Smith went his way, and Cape Town sped him with cheers and tears and farewell addresses, in which, under the gilt and illumination of the stilted phrases, sounded a deep note of regret and affection. All the honour at her command the Mother City of South Africa heaped upon the veteran soldier who had deserved more of

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 241

his country than humiliation, and whose last words were generous counsel to the people to aid Sir George Cathcart

"heart and hand in his arduous undertaking" ^①

He set sail on April 17th 1853.

Sir George Cathcart, himself a gallant soldier, with large forces now at his command, soon finished the work which had been begun by his predecessor.

The Fortunes of the Missionaries during 1853 Kaffir War.

In all this fighting the Missionaries had to leave their stations once again. ^② They obtained early intelligence of what was to happen and took means of preserving their lives. Mr. McDiarmid of Burnshill escaped with his family to Kingwilliamstown, as did Mr. Ross of Pirrie. This was the fifth time that Mr. John Ross had had to flee from his station, and when his son, Rev. Bryce Ross, arrived in the Colony he could get no further than Kingwilliamstown, where he found all the other missionaries from beyond the Keiskama assisting Mr. Brownlee in his work among the European soldiers and the native refugees.

REBUILDING THE MISSION STATIONS AFTER THE WAR

1 Ibid. p. 242

2 J. Laing "Memoriels" p. 128

McFarlane When the War ended in 1853 it was decided to establish another station on the banks of the Chumie. To this station was given the name of McFarlane after the Rev. D. McFarlane of Renfrew, who had acted as the medium of communication between the Missionaries and the Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Church of Scotland till his death. It was agreed that Mr. McDiarmid should be located at this new station. ^①

Burnshill In 1855 Burnshill was re-opened, and Mr. Laing, who had been at Lovedale, was sent there as Missionary-in-Charge. ^② Mr. Bennie had, of course, not returned so it was his place that Mr. Laing was filling.

Lovedale In 1849, Lovedale had obtained another 20 acres of land from the Government and in 1855 Sir George Grey the Governor, proposed that an Industrial Department should be added to the Lovedale Seminary. Financial assistance was given by the Government, and the work was duly completed. ^③ It is recorded that the only disadvantage which ever arose from the close alliance between the Government and the Missionaries was that SOME Kaffirs obtained plausible grounds for saying :

- 1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol. 3 p. 121
- 2 Ibid Vol. 3 p. 200
- 3 R. Shepherd "Lovedale" p. 146

"Our country has been taken from us by white men. The Missionaries are only Government agents." ①

On 3rd August, 1855 Rev. Richard Ross, another of Rev. John Ross' sons arrived from Scotland at Lovedale. He was accompanied by Mr. Templeton who had come out to take charge of the Lovedale Seminary Boarding House. ② Rev. Bryce Ross, after returning from Kingwilliamstown at the end of the War, took over the editorial department of the Lovedale Mission, and he was responsible for the periodical "Indana" which he issued monthly.

Early in 1861 an event occurred in Scotland which was to have far reaching effects on the South African Mission, James Stewart, a medical graduate and Divinity student of the Free Church, made a proposal to the Foreign Mission Committee to commence a station in some portion of the territory opened by Dr. Livingstone, and so he departed, and eventually met Dr. Livingstone on the banks of the Zambesi River. ③ It was found quite inexpedient to open a station there and so James Stewart set off for home. Dr. Tweedie, the Convener of the Foreign Missions Committee, hearing that he was about to return to Scotland, wrote and asked the young medical

1 Ibid. p. 147
2 Minutes Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p. 164
3 R. Hunter "History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa p. 357.

doctor if he would visit the Kaffrarian missions before his return and report on them. This James Stewart duly did reaching the Presbytery in May, 1863.^① When he arrived at Lovedale Rev. Richard Ross was the resident Missionary and Rev. W. Govan was still the principal of the Seminary, while Mr. Templeton was in charge of the Boarding House.

Dr. Stewart made a thorough inspection of the Missions and then returned home and made his report. Then in 1864 Mr. Templeton resigned as Missionary in charge of the Boarding School at Lovedale and it was agreed to send out Dr. Stewart as his successor. He was ordained by the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow on 1st February, 1865 and proceeded shortly afterwards to his destination, the first ordained medical doctor to come to the South African Mission.^②

At this time Mr. Colquhoun, the Teacher at Lovedale retired and Mr. Bennie, the son of the former Missionary, was appointed in his place.^③

Towards the end of 1866 there were seventy youths in attendance at the School, thirty seven Europeans and thirty-three Natives. Dr. Stewart's medical skill was of much

1 Minutes Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol.4 p. 91

2 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 152

3 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 158

service to the Mission and under his guidance many improvements were made to the Seminary.

In 1869 an old Hottentot servant called Catherine Eckhard died. She seems to have obtained her first religious impressions in the house of the poet Pringle but for nearly eight years she had been Mrs. Govan's servant. Catherine Eckhard had become a sort of 'established fact' in connection with the Seminary and there was a wave of emotion throughout Lovedale when it was found that this old coloured woman had made a will bequeathing her property amounting to £300 to form bursaries at Lovedale for native scholars. ^①

On 20th January, 1869 Dr. Stewart read a paper before a Missionary Conference on "A Native Ministry for Africa," ^② treating with great ability and judgment of such delicate matters as the status and salaries of Kaffir preachers. Soon afterwards he took up the subject of native huts and showed the importance of attempting to "square the circle" ^③ a feat, he remarked, which had hitherto been almost as difficult as the mathematical problem of similar designation. By this phrase he meant that in his view the natives should

1 J. Laing "Memorials" p. 142

2 Ibid. p. 149

3 Ibid. p. 150

be taught to build square huts instead of the traditional round ones. Other topics of a kindred character subsequently received the attention of the indefatigable Dr. Stewart.

DR. STEWART BECOMES PRINCIPAL AT LOVEDALE SEMINARY 1869

In 1869 The Committee, ~~having~~ decided upon certain alterations in the working of the Lovedale Seminary, ^{which were} designed to render it, if possible, even more efficient from a missionary point of view. ^① Mr. Govan did not see his way clear to approve of the changes, and, somewhat stubbornly, refused to comply. The Committee in Scotland asked Mr. Govan to come home to Edinburgh to discuss the matter with them, but even after this conference with the Committee he, partly on this account, and partly because of increasing years, decided to resign his place in the Mission. ^② Dr. Stewart was appointed his successor in the principalship of the Seminary; ^③ it had in it by this time a College Department, a Library of 4,500 volumes continually recruited from Minister's Libraries and other places in Scotland. The books were made available not only for the missionaries, but for the general public within a radius of eighty miles of Lovedale.

1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p. 317
2 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 329
3 Ibid Vol.4 p. 329

Dr. Stewart, the new principal, became an outstanding leader in the South African Mission Field and under his brilliant principalship Lovedale became one of the first institutions of its kind in Africa.

Toleni In 1865 Sir Walter Greene proposed to the Government that Kreli, one of the chiefs deported to the East after the war of 1853, should be removed from the country which he then occupied beyond the Bashee River. Kreli felt by no means disposed to fall in with the arrangements proposed, but quietly sounded his fellow chiefs as to whether they would aid him in resisting if forceful means were adopted for his transfer. Next the home Government which was thoroughly sick of Kaffir wars, sent out instructions that Kreli should remain undisturbed and that the territory east of the Kei should be given back to the Natives. On hearing this, Kaffir chief Sandilli at first thought that something good might be in store for him, but when he learnt the new distribution of lands intended, he would have nothing to do with it. The plan designed for him was then offered to the Fingoes. They gladly leaped at the offer, and a Fingo emigration began

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 251

from Fort Beaufort, Victoria, Queenstown, British Kaffraria, both Transkeian Territories. The emigration drew away many church members from the Missions. A Mission to the Transkeian territory was therefore resolved upon, the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Labourers agreeing to undertake it as a joint enterprise, and thus a new station was established at Toleni.^① The Rev. Bryce Ross was sent as Free Church representative to this station. To supply his place at Lovedale, Rev. James Robertson was ordained and sent out from Scotland.^②

The money for this new mission was supplied by a few men in Edinburgh who raised £1,000 to commence the Mission. The station was called Toleni after the district where it was established at the end of 1865. By 1867 there were 180 members.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ENGLISH SPEAKING CONGREGATIONS WITHIN THE FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA

1) ALICE CONGREGATION

Alice is the name of the village attached to the Mission station of Lovedale and in 1849 the Missionaries decided that it

1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol 4 p. 160

2 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 160

"would be wise to erect a building for English Preaching" ①

and so a small Church was built by the Missionaries out of stone. No appeal was made for money from the Church in Scotland, all the work and the funds being raised locally by the missionaries. The first services were conducted by Rev. J. Laing of Lovedale, assisted by Rev. W. Govan. ②

It is interesting to note that the idea behind the building of this separate Church was not that Europeans and Natives could not worship together, but simply because of the language question. It was felt that an English speaking Church should be established, and so the Alice congregation came into being. Nothing is recorded about it but it is certain that no one would ever ^{be} or indeed has ever been excluded from its services on the grounds of colour.

The Alice Church has hardly changed since the days when it was built, except that in 1902 an organ was installed. ③ The Church has always served the European members of the staff of Lovedale, who have been its main office-bearers. Whenever the Military were in the vicinity

1 J. Laing "Memorials" p. 139
2 Ibid. P. 139
3 Minutes of Kirk Session Alice Congregation February 1902

they attended as well. It has never had a large congregation, but it has had a series of distinguished ministers, all of whom were closely connected with the work among the natives.

From 1849 to 1869 Rev. James Laing took responsibility for the Church Services. He was assisted by various members of the Lovedale Staff but he was regarded as the minister. In his "Memorials" which is a diary of his labours edited by Rev. W. Govan, Mr. Laing says that

"The Sabbath Services in English at Alice afford me much joy. The staff of the Seminary and the mission make up most of the congregation." ①

From 1870 to 1897 Dr. Stewart was the Minister at Alice and it should here be observed that he was not much in favour of the Union which took place in 1897 and did not advocate that Alice congregation should become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ② Despite his opposition, however, Alice did eventually join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ③ ~~Along with the other congregations of the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria~~
~~Presbytery.~~ ③

2) KINGWILLIAMSTOWN CONGREGATION

When Rev. J. Brownlee left Chumie in 1824 and established

1 Op. cit. p 140

2 Vide p.706.

3 Alice congregation did not join the new Church in 1897 but along with the other European congregations of the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria it remained outside the Union till the early part of the next century. Alice joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1907.

an Independent Mission beyond the Keiskama River, he little thought that he was laying/^{the} foundation for what was to become the chief city of British Kaffraria, for it was from such humble beginnings that the city of Kingwilliamstown was founded. The name was given to the town in 1835 when the Governor at the Cape visited the district. It was called after the King of Britain, King William IV. ①

In addition to the Mission station there soon developed a number of native trading stores, and during the 1835 and 1846 Kaffir Wars the town was used as a headquarters for the Military. Thus Europeans began to gather in the town in fairly large numbers. Many of these were Scots folk, and by 1860 the number of European Presbyterians had so increased that they sent a memorial to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. This memorial was signed by Rev. Bryce Ross, son of the revered Missionary at Pirrie, and sent on behalf of

"Scotsmen in Kingwilliamstown without the joy of regular sabbath worship conducted by their own minister." ②

In this same year Rev. James Laing of Burnshill was in Scotland on leave and he had been asked to appear before the

- 1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 202
- 2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 3 p. 48

Colonial Committee to press the claims of the Kingwilliams-
town Presbyterians. The minutes of the Colonial Committee
read as follows :

"Rev. J. Laing made a statement regarding the rapid increase by immigration of Scots people and of Presbyterians from other parts into British Kaffraria and he referred to the memorial signed by Rev. Bryce Ross which he now appeared before the Committee to support. He asked for ministerial supply for Kingwilliamstown stating that a large amount of local support might even be obtained." ①

The Committee appointed a sub-Committee

"to confer and correspond with Rev. J. Laing on this subject" ②

and they agreed to pay £50 per annum for three years to the congregation plus another £50 for the

"outfit and passage of such minister when he was found" ③

Rev. James Laing returned to Burnshill while the sub-Committee looked around for a suitable minister. An approach was made to Mr. James Ayton Craig, whom

"The Committee had reason to believe would be willing to go to Kingwilliamstown, and being well satisfied as to his suitability agreed to give him a Commission." ④

Unfortunately, Mr. Craig declined, and the Committee had to look elsewhere. At this stage a letter was received

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 56
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 56
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 56
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 57

from Kingwilliamstown where Rev. Bryce Ross had gathered

"some 50-80 Scots and Presbyterians for regular worship" ^o

stating that the congregation was willing to supply £120 per annum towards the support of a minister.

Unfortunately no one could be found willing to go to this new charge, and so the Presbyterians of Kingwilliamstown were left to fend for themselves. They therefore approached the Missionaries for assistance, and as always, these large hearted servants of God gave them all the help they could.

Let us now examine the history of this congregation from the time the Missionaries began to take responsibility for the ordinances of worship.

THE VARIOUS MINISTERS OF ST. ANDREWS, KINGWILLIAMSTOWN

The Missionaries 1861 - 1863

The Church had its origin in the minds and hearts of the early missionaries at Lovedale, but perhaps no-one has more credit due than to him^v that remarkable personality "John Brownlee". He was the fons et origo of almost everything in Kingwilliamstown, and it is therefore not

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 56

surprising to find Rev. J. Brownlee as Chairman of a Committee of Scots folk who met on 5th March, 1861, with a view to establishing a Church. ①

The names of the Committee were Revs. J. Brownlee and S. Kayser, Messrs. Usher, Blaine, Doyle, Baker and Tudhope, and it was decided that steps be taken to establish a church in Kingwilliamstown. ②

On 24th June, 1862, in reply to an advertisement in the "Kingwilliamstown Gazette" a meeting of adherents of Independent and Presbyterian Churches was held in the Temperance Hall

"for the establishment of a United cause in this place" ③

This memorable meeting resolved to establish "at present" an Independent and Presbyterian Church, and that they should rent the old Wesleyan Chapel in Berkeley Street. ④ This chapel was secured at the cost of £5 per month, but it is recorded that

"a store in connection with it has been sub-let for £1.10.0 per month, reducing the rent to £3.10.0. per month." ⑤

The early services were conducted in this Wesleyan Chapel by the Missionaries. Rev. John Brownlee and Rev.

1 Rev. J. Paterson "Jubilee St. Andrews Kingwilliamstown" (a special issue of the Church Magazine) p. 2
2 Ibid. p. 2
3 Ibid. p. 3
4 Ibid. p. 3
5 Ibid. p. 4

Bryce Ross are mentioned as having conducted services during this time.^① However, application having been made to Scotland, the Foreign Missions Committee of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland was able to send out Rev. James Davidson, who sailed in "The Avoca" which left Glasgow in April, 1863.^②

While awaiting the arrival of Mr. Davidson, Rev. John Chalmers accepted the invitation of the congregation to act as permanent supply. Mr. Davidson arrived in June, 1863 and when he had been with the congregation only one month, the foundations of a new Church were started and the stone laid on 17th July, 1863.^③

The new Church was built in Fort Murray Road, which is today called Alexander Road, and the ground was a grant from the Government for "the establishing of a Presbyterian and Independent Place of Worship." The terms of this grant were, in later years, to become a source of difficulty for St. Andrews Church, Kingwilliamstown.^④

In the month of May, 1863 Mr. Chalmers, the acting supply, intimated that he had been requested by the Foreign Missions Committee of the United Presbyterian Church of

1 Ibid. p. 4

2 Ibid. p. 4

3 Ibid. p. 4 and 5

4 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation
Vide summary of history up to 1867 which appears on p. 1 ff

of Scotland to return to Engwalli. However by this time it was known that Rev. James Davidson was on his way to take over the pastorate of the new Church.

REV. JAMES DAVIDSON 1863 - 1866

In his pamphlet on "St. Andrews, Kingwilliamstown, Jubilee" Rev. John Paterson says :

"We find the new minister presiding over the Elders' Committee on 10th August, 1863, but there is no record of his induction." ①

The new Church, whose foundation stone had been laid in July, 1863 was completed and finally opened on 30th November, 1863; the officiating ministers were Rev. J. Chalmers in the forenoon and Rev. Robert Johnstone in the afternoon and evening; the collections for the day amounted to £40. ②

It was agreed that three services be held each Sunday in this new Church, two being for civilians and one for the soldiers of the town. ③

Due mainly to the problems of financing the Church, Mr. James Davidson's ministry did not last very long, and in October, 1866 Mr. Davidson's resignation was regretfully accepted. ④

1 Op. cit. p. 5
2 Ibid. p. 6
3 Ibid. p. 6
4 Ibid. p. 7 vide also Minutes of Kingwilliamstown Kirk Session p. 4

REV. CHARLES BELL 1870 - 1874

After the departure of Mr. Davidson the congregation was for three years entirely dependent upon the Missionaries who generously gave of their services. ① In 1867 the congregation agreed to become Presbyterian and to seek reception into the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria ② and on 4th July, 1867, Dr. Stewart of Lovedale, then Moderator of the Presbytery, received a communication from the Kingwilliamstown congregation which the Presbytery minutes record as follows :

"relative to the Independent and Presbyterian congregation at Kingwilliamstown being admitted into the Presbyterian Church there were laid on the table various documents connected with this application including a resolution of the Congregation, a statement regarding its history and present financial position, Annual Reports for two years and its constitution and principles." ③

These indicated that the congregation was already governed according to Presbyterian polity and that the doctrines taught were those laid down in the Westminster Confession of Faith. A Conference of United Presbyterian and Free Church Missionaries held in Kingwilliamstown in July of the same year, 1867 :

"recommended the application to the favourable consideration of the Committee." ④

It took over two years for these recommendations to

- 1 Ibid. p. 7
- 2 Minutes Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation. Vol. 1 p. 16
- 3 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p. 281
- 4 Recorded in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol. 3 p. 371.

be fulfilled for it was not until March, 1870 that Kingwilliamstown congregation became part of the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria. ① However, ever since the communication received in Edinburgh in 1867, the Colonial Committee had been trying to find a minister and in January 1870 Mr. Charles Bell agreed to go. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in that month and in February, 1870 set sail for South Africa. ②

Rev. Charles Bell was inducted to his new charge on the last Sunday of March, 1870 and "read himself in" by commission of the Free Church of Scotland on 2nd May of the same year. ③

With the coming of Mr. Bell there was a tightening up of the discipline of the Church, and the minutes in the next few years speak of "Ex-communication" and "Admonition." ④ One member, asking for his child to be baptised, was told to wait till the Kirk Session had satisfied itself regarding the circumstances of his recent bankruptcy. ⑤ However, as is so often the case, strictness was associated with a high sense of responsibility.

In November, 1875 the Kirk Session minutes relate that Presbyterians along with Wesleyans and Anglicans got together

- 1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol,5 p. 161
- 2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 4 p. 68
- 3 Minutes of Ffree Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 5 p. 170
- 4 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation Vol. 1 p. 129
- 5 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 140

to form a Girls School in the city. The Presbyterians agreed to give £300 for this project. ①

Mr. Bell, from time to time sent reports of his labours at Kingwilliamstown to Scotland and in the Free Church Missionary Record in 1871 we read :

"A letter from Rev. Chas. Bell giving gratifying details of his work and at ^{the} same time expressing his yearning desire for more spiritual fruit, "Outwardly" he says, "the congregation goes on well. The seats are fully let, the Church-doors collections are increased, and the attention of the people is all I could wish." ②

It was during Mr. Bell's ministry too that the great missionary pioneer, Brownlee, died in Kingwilliamstown, having laboured there since 1824. Although not a Presbyterian Missionary the minutes of the Kirk Session record :

"No missionary deserves greater praise, and no servant of the Lord has laboured with greater devotion than John Brownlee, who passed to his rest in 1871...." ③

Mr. Bell's ministry was one of laying foundations and it was at a time when the Colony as a whole was suffering from a financial depression.

In the Session Minute Book for January, 1872 it is recorded :

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 184
- 2 Op.cit. July 1871
- 3 Op. cit. Vol.1 p. 133

"that the Kirk Session is deeply grateful to the Free Church of Scotland for help rendered in sending so fine a labourer as Rev. C. Bell." ①

However, Mr. Bell did not remain very long at Kingwilliamstown. In 1874 he decided to go to Durban and on 31st August he handed in his resignation. ②

REV. J.D. DON 1876 - 1898

After the departure of Mr. Bell in 1874 the congregation was again dependent upon the Missionaries to supply the pulpit. Rev. Bryce Ross was Moderator during the vacancy and eventually he was able to report that Rev. John Davidson Don had accepted the call. ③

The Colonial Committee was fortunate in securing the services of Rev. J.D. Don, who was destined to play an important role in the life of the Free Church Presbytery.

The minutes of the Colonial Committee read :

"It was stated that Rev. J.D. Don had accepted the appointment to Kingwilliamstown, and had sailed for his destination on 2nd October, 1876." ④

Mr. Don had long been a valued Missionary of the Free Church in Calcutta and on 28th November, 1876, he was duly inducted at a public service in Kingwilliamstown. ⑤ The Meeting

- 1 Op.cit. Vol 1 p. 148
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 161
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 182
- 4 Op.cit. Vol. 4 p. 362
- 5 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation Vol. 1 p. 216

held in the Temperance Hall, was presided over by Mr. J. Rose Innes, secretary for Native Affairs, and the words of welcome were spoken by Rev. Mr. Buchanan of Lovedale. ①

During Mr. Don's ministry the Presbyterians were given a gift of a magnificent piece of land in the main street of the town by a Mr. J. Weir. They set about the erection of a new Church which, when built, was undoubtedly the finest church building in the Transkei. It cost £4,000 and was built of stone.

Dr. Stewart of Lovedale opened the new Church on 2nd December, 1881 and Mr. Chalmers of Grahamstown preached in the evening. ② The building is, in a peculiar sense, a missionary memorial.

The Church is pierced by three windows, each seventeen feet high, in which coloured lights have been placed. The one on the left represents "Faith" a female figure holding in one hand a staff and a Bible in the other. Below is the inscription :

"In memory of John Brownlee, Missionary, ③ founder of Kingwilliamstown, died 1871"

The window on the right has a figure leaning on an anchor and is entitled "Hope" It bears the inscription :

1 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 217
2 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation Vol.2 p.86
3 Vide window in the Church at Kingwilliamstown

"In Memory of James Laing, Missionary,
Died 1871" ①

Another is Mary meeting her Lord after the Resurrection
and bears the title :

"In Memory of Kate Neville wife of Rev. J.D.
Don, minister of this church. Died 1882" ②

In the east there is a three-light window the centre having
a portrait of "St. Andrew" after which the church is named;
the light to the left having a portrait of "St. John" and
to the right a portrait of "St. Peter" Underneath there
is the following inscription :

"To the memory of Tiyo Soga, Missionary.
Died 1871" ③

The minutes of Kingwilliamstown Kirk Session read :

"We have to record our thanks to Almighty
God for having guided us to this happy day,
for we have to record that we are met for
the first time in our new Church building" ④

Under the excellent guidance of Rev. J. Don the Church
flourished and the Deacons court records in its minutes :

"That it is impossible to let any further
seats as they are now all fully let." ⑤

However, it must have cheered the hearts of the Committee in
Scotland to read in the Annual Report for 1881 that

- 1 Ibid.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Op.cit. Vol. 2 p. 86
- 5 Op. cit. Vol. 2 p. 121

"Church collections have greatly increased since the coming of Mr. Don, and the people's attention to the preaching of the Word is all that could be desired." ①

By this time the place abounded with Scots settlers who had come out under two immigration schemes in the last twenty years. ② These Scots folk had been settled in fair numbers on the Eastern Frontier and in Natal, and the result was new life in the European Presbyterian congregations in these areas.

In 1885 Mr. Don was elected as the Clerk of the Kaffraria Free Church Presbytery and in this capacity his administrative qualities proved invaluable to the Church. ③ It was a time of expansion both among the European and native churches, and under such conditions it was well that the Presbytery had such a capable man as its clerk.

The Kingwilliamstown Church was still heavily in debt in 1892 so the Kirk Session resolved :

"that a letter should be written to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking them to negotiate a loan of £3,500 at 4%.....It was moreover agreed that a meeting of the congregation be called to discuss this matter." ④

The result was that the Committee in Scotland received a

- 1 Op, cit. p 2
- 2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol.7 Chapters 6 and 9
- 3 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol.6 p.210
- 4 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation Vol.3 p. 29

letter :

"requesting the aid of the Committee to negotiate a loan of £3,500 on the grounds that it would be too heavy a drain on the resources of the congregation to bond their building for amounts borrowed locally." ①

According to the Annual Reports for 1889 the number of members was 189, but the church seating capacity was 400 with all the seats fully let. ② It may have been this factor which lead the Committee to resolve :

"The Committee regret that they have no funds available for the aid desired." ③

They did, however, suggest that Mr. Don should approach folk in Scotland privately and this resulted in the energetic Mr. Don distributing no less than 250 Collecting Books among his friends in Scotland. The results were overwhelmingly satisfactory as can be seen from the Colonial Committee's minute in 1895 :

"The Collecting Book number 217, issued to Mr. Walter Duncan authorising him to collect money towards extinguishing the debt on Church Buildings in connection with the Church Buildings at Kingwilliamstown shows that a sum of £511.4.0. has been collected by Mr. W. Duncan and remitted by him to Mr. Don." ④

In this way the debt on the Church was liquidated by 1896. ⑤

But Mr. Don's ministry was not all as easy as the

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p.158
- 2 Op cit p. 1
- 3 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p.159
- 4 Ibid. Vol.7 p. 386
- 5 Annual Report Kingwilliamstown congregation 1896

above record would seem to indicate. The intervening years had their dark shadows as well.

In 1882, to the great sorrow of all, his beloved wife Kate died. She had not been a strong woman before she left Scotland, and the rigours of life on the frontier of the Cape Province proved more than she could endure and she

"passed to higher service amid the tears and prayers of the whole congregation on 10th June, 1882" ①

In 1885 Mr. Don became involved in what is called in the Church records as "The Pelser Case" ② In a sermon preached on Sabbath morning 3rd July, 1885 Mr. Don mentioned treatment meted out by Mr. Pelser, a local Dutch farmer, to a native caught trespassing on his farm. Mr. Don also wrote a letter criticising the Government which refused to prosecute Mr. Pelser because they had heard that the Dutch farmers of the District intended taking violent action if they did. Mr. Pelser had shot and killed the native, and in his letter printed by Mr. Hay in "The Cape Mercury" Mr. Don called it a miscarriage of Justice and upbraided the Government for allowing itself to be intimidated. The letter resulted in the public prosecutor, Mr. Uppington, accusing

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Kingwilliamstown congregation Vol.2 p.130

2 Charles Don "And having writ..." Chapter 15 see also Appendix 2 p.729

Mr. Don and Mr. Hay of libel. They were arrested and spent a week in jail before the case was heard in Grahamstown. Mr. Rose Innes defended the men, who were found not guilty. Amazing scenes followed the declaration by the Judge as prolonged clapping took place in the Court House. They were duly discharged.

A year later, on the anniversary of this trying occasion Mr. Don wrote the following letter to Mr. Innes, his Attorney :

"It is a year today since I was arrested along with Mr. George Hay on a charge of libel in the Pelser case, and the proceedings began which have become so memorable. Now I have to acknowledge your gratifying communication, thankful to God that this business has been brought to a satisfactory end.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the Committee, especially to Mr. Hartly, for organising the Defence Fund and to all who subscribed.

I am glad that it was possible to present a testimonial to Mr. Hay in acknowledgment of his great service to the cause of public Justice, and as a memorial of his connection with the case. To you, Mr. Innes, your services as an Attorney were more than professional.

The temporary prominence thrust upon me by this trial was not desired and is now gladly left behind, but I trust the lessons taught will remain, accepted, remembered and observed - if silently, so much the better.

That result will be worthwhile and more than worth all the cost." @

And it was so, for the congregation rallied round their minister as never before and helped him to build up one of the leading congregations in British Kaffraria in the next few years.

By 1897 the Kingwilliamstown European Presbyterian Church was free of debt and a congregation of over 200 members was supporting itself without assistance from the Mother Church in Scotland. ⁽¹⁾

Mr. Don might well have been the first Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa had he not refused the honour, ~~xxx~~ ^{along with the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria} In 1897 his congregation refused to become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ⁽²⁾

EAST LONDON (WEST) CONGREGATION

The history of the Presbyterian cause in East London has been greatly affected by the Buffalo River. This River runs through the town and although it provides an excellent harbour for shipping it divides the city into two sections which have often displayed quite fierce rivalry. As far as the Presbyterians are concerned this was certainly the case and it resulted in the formation of two separate

1 Annual Report Kingwilliamstown congregation 1897 p. 1

2 Vide Page 682 ff.

congregations in a small town which could really support only one.

East London was one of the last of the South African East Coast ports to develop; and the reason is not far to seek. It is right in the middle of the Kaffrarian territory on which there were so many Kaffir Wars. Until the boundaries of Kaffraria had been established it was all but impossible for Europeans to settle at the mouth of the Buffalo River in anything but small numbers. However, from 1860 onwards the native trading stations at East London were improved, and a town grew up round them which was destined to become one of the five largest cities in South Africa.

The original houses and stores were all on what is called the West Bank, indeed East London was the West Bank. The other side of the river was called Panmure¹. The Buffalo River runs through the area in such a way that Panmure is on the interior side and West Bank on the coastal strip of the Province.

From 1870 a number of Scottish families began to settle on the West Bank as traders and there was also a fair number

1 At first there were very few European settlers at Panmure probably because the Europeans felt it safest to have the river between them and the Xosas

of Presbyterian families among the farmers on the coastal belt between G nubie and East London. These folk gathered together for worship in East London each Sunday in some place which is never mentioned in their correspondence. It seems possible that it was in the West Bank School, for the leading elder of the ministerless congregation was the principal of the school, a Mr. A. Ferguson, originally from Glasgow.^①

A Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Mr. Ferguson and they wrote to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland and also to the Foreign Missions Committee of that Church :

"making application for a minister, and guaranteeing a stipend of £150 per annum from local sources. Subscription list is appended."^②

The Colonial Committee agreed to pay £50 per annum and the Foreign Missions Committee agreed to pay another £50 per annum for three years so that the total amount available for the support of a minister was £250 per annum. The problem was the finding of a suitable man, and the Committee in Edinburgh found it no easy task. They approached several likely young men, including a Mr. T. Munro^③ but they all declined.

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church
Scotland Vol.4 p.51

2 Ibid. Vol.4 p.51

3 Ibid. Vol.4 p.58

The matter was made more urgent in 1877 because in that year a number of Scottish families emigrated to South Africa and were settled on farms at Cove Rock on the West Bank and at Gnubie on the East Bank. The matter had been referred to the Presbytery of Kaffraria who wrote :

"earnestly requesting the appointment of a probationer to East London."¹

However, despite all efforts including personal letters from Dr. Stewart of Lovedale, the Committee in Scotland could not find anyone to go to East London until 1877 when Rev. Mr. Barnes came out.²

The Ministry of Rev. Mr. Barnes 1877 to 1880

There is little to record about Mr. Barnes' short ministry except that he held the supporters together and constituted them as a congregation at his first service held on September 8th 1877.³ He then formed a Kirk Session and set about the task of procuring a site for a Church and the erection of a suitable place of worship.⁴

He was, unfortunately, not to see any of these plans come to fruition because in 1880 he died.⁵ Indeed, it seems clear that one of the motives in his coming out to South Africa was the hope that the sunshine of this land would

1 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol.5 p.8
2 Ibid. Vol.5 p 104
3 Ibid. Vol.5 p. 21
4 Ibid. Vol 5 p. 22
5 Ibid. Vol. 5 p.159

heal his chest ailments. It was "no tae be" and he died at the early age of 31. He was unmarried.

The Ministry of Rev. Mr. J. Russell 1880 - 1885

After the death of Mr. Barnes the Colonial Committee appointed Rev. John Russell to the West Bank congregation, East London and he arrived at his small charge on 10th July, 1880 having been ordained by the Edinburgh Presbytery before he left.^①

When he arrived, East London was in the throes of one of those economic depressions which seemed to afflict most South African towns during the second half of the nineteenth century. He had not long arrived when the congregation wrote to the Committee in Edinburgh asking :

"for an additional grant to be made to them on the ground of present distress caused through war and drought."^②

The ever generous folk in Scotland agreed to give an additional £80 for the following year.

The congregation managed to weather the storm and in 1882 the Church was finally completed on the West Bank, the opening services being conducted by Rev. J.D. Don of Kingwilliamstown on the first Sunday of February.^③ It was a tiny

1 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 163

2 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 190

3 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 263

building, built to accommodate 150 people, and served the group of Presbyterians living on the West Bank. ^①

It is at this time that we read in the minutes of the Presbytery of Kaffraria of Mr. Russell attending as a full member. ^② There is no record of his congregation having been "received"; it is from now on taken for granted that East London (West) is under the Kaffrarian Presbytery of the Free Church.

Mr. Russell wrote to the Committee in 1882 expressing the joy of his people at the opening of the new Church, and explaining that he conducted services in the Church on Sabbath mornings but that he continued to travel to Cove Rock and Gnubi to take services on "Sabbath afternoons and evenings." At Gnubie, which is on the East Bank and some fifteen miles from East London, one of the farmers, a Mr. Hay, had erected a tiny Church at his own expense and here about 20 - 30 folk gathered each week for services. ^③

Things might have gone on quietly developing in this way had it not been for the Railway and the River. By 1880 the railway from Port Elizabeth had reached Kingwilliams-town and in 1882 it was extended to the East Bank at East London and a station was built at Panmure.

- 1 It was a wood and iron building which though greatly "patched up" still stands today. It is used as a Hall by the present congregation a new Church having been built in 1909
- 2 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 5 p. 294
- 3 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 5 p. 271

This had a devastating effect on the West Bank community for it had the result of draining off trade and wealth, and so as the East Bank waxed stronger and stronger the West Bank became weaker and weaker.

Had there been a bridge across the Buffalo River all might have been well, but the only way of crossing was by Ferry or pontoon and this took such a long time that business people who had been living on the West Bank moved across the river and established their homes in Panmure.

With the exodus of members the West Bank congregation began to find a drop in Church attendance. Mr. Russell wrote to the Committee in 1884 and stated :

"Members living on the East Bank have to cross the river by ferry or a pontoon worked by Kaffirs after which they have a fatiguing walk of at least threequarters of an hour to get to our Church." ①

Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the Presbyterians in Panmure decided to form their own congregation; and in 1883 they decided to withdraw from membership of the original Scottish Church of East London and form their own congregation. This left the West Bank folk in a position where they could no longer pay the stipend of

1 Ibid, Vol.6 p.18

2 Ibid, Vol.6 p.75

Mr. Russell and needless to say, the relationship between the two sections was none too cordial.

The matter was referred to the Presbytery of Kaffraria when Mr. Russell handed in his resignation in January, 1883.^① The Presbytery sent the following report to the Colonial Committee at Edinburgh :

"After consultation with all parties concerned a separation has been arranged between the East and West Bank congregations in East London, the new congregation undertaking to give a minimum of £50 per annum towards the salary of Mr. Russell while the West Bank agreed to raise £220 for all purposes. This means the Committee will be burdened with £180 for the current year (1883). And further, Mr. Russell has accepted the arrangement withdrawing his resignation on the understanding that the Committee's guarantee for two years beyond 1883 is the same as now, viz £350 per annum as stipend and £60 for house rent." ②

The Committee were pleased to receive this report, and expressed their opinion that the new congregation on the East Bank should be allowed to continue especially as it was to be self-supporting:

"besides fulfilling a reasonable measure of obligation to the other congregation." ③

Theoretically the arrangement should have worked satisfactorily but unfortunately, the East Bank congregation did not pay its

- 1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 6 P. 84
On this occasion Mr. Russell was persuaded to withdraw his resignation because Presbytery felt that the two congregations though separated should support one another financially.
- 2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol. 5 p. 389
Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 390

share of the stipend as regularly as it should have done, and in 1883 Mr. Russell wrote to Edinburgh saying :

"The prospects on the West Bank are discouraging. The congregation on the East side have paid only one quarterly instalment of the sum they promised." ①

Letters were sent and apologies made but it did not surprise the Committee in Scotland to receive a letter from Mr. Russell dated 13th December, 1884 together with an extract of Kirk Session, intimating his resignation. The minutes of the Colonial Committee read simply :

"It is not expedient to interfere further in the resignation of Mr. Russell and/^{we} accept it with regret. We recognise the important services he has rendered and express the hope that a suitable field of labour at home or abroad will be found for him." ②

Mr. Russell returned to Scotland in 1885 and left the two quarrelling causes in East London to settle their differences themselves. Rev. J.D. Don, clerk of the Presbytery of Kaffraria was of the opinion that the two congregations should unite and wrote to the Committee suggesting :

"The Committee could with advantage give help to a probationer to assist the minister of the East Bank Church on the understanding that the two congregations unite under one minister." ③

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 3
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 71
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 70

The Committee was of the view that such a plan would not work and that it would make the finding of a probationer more difficult. They adhered to the original plan of fostering both congregations, and decided to send a probationer to the West Bank Church. The man selected was Mr. R. Barr. ①

The Ministry of Rev. R. Barr at East London West 1885-1889

Mr. Barr arrived in December, 1885 to take charge of the congregation of East London West, Cove Rock (seven miles out) and G nubie (fifteen miles out on the East Bank). He was ordained by the Presbytery of Kaffraria in February 1886 ② and he held together a dwindling congregation on the West Bank for four difficult years. Another depression smote East London at this time and many folk trekked away to the new gold fields in the Transvaal. The folk on the West Bank still clung stolidly to the view that union between the two Churches in the city was impossible and therefore while the new congregation was growing by leaps and bounds the congregation under Mr. Barr was managing to keep going largely because of the generosity of the Committee in Edinburgh. ③

Although the congregations would not unite the

1 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 82
2 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 6 p. 161
3 The Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland were paying £150 per annum.

the relationship between the two ministers was fortunately most cordial. The West Bank congregation wrote in 1888 to the Committee :

"Thanking all concerned for sending so fine a minister as Mr. Barr." ①

It was during this period too that the name East London (West) was changed to St. Andrews East London, a much more suitable name than the awkward title by which the congregation had been known for so long.

In 1889 Mr. Barr returned to Scotland and for the next three years there was a vacancy at St. Andrews. Left without a minister, more and more of the congregation transferred to the growing Church on the East Bank but still a small company clung together. Mr. Ferguson of the East Bank Church did what he could for them until he too returned to Scotland on holiday. One of his elders a Mr. Jackson, headmaster at one of the East London Schools, conducted services for the West Bank congregation, during 1889 and 1890. ②

In this way the congregation held out till 1892 when the Colonial Committee appointed Rev. W. Abel of Fettercairn to the charge. ③

The ministry of Rev. W. Abel 1892 - 1897

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland
Vol. 6 p. 353
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 378 - no reason is stated why Mr. Barr decided to resign
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 396 - where part of the Annual report for 1889 is quoted
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 7 p. 156

Rev. W. Abel had no sooner arrived than he wrote as follows to the Committee :

"Arriving at East London (West) at the beginning of January 1892 I found that some mistake had been made somewhere as to the position in which matters really stood. I found most of the people on the West Bank expecting me to minister exclusively to themselves and Cove Rock and G nubie and steadily maintaining that it was for their sakes that a minister had been sent. Under the circumstances there was nothing for it but to put myself in the hands of the Presbytery and I was duly ordained to Cove Rock, East London West and G nubie." ①

The confusion arose over the fact that it had been suggested in Scotland that all the Churches and Preaching Stations at East London might best be administered by two ministers running all the congregations as one Charge. This must have been mentioned to Mr. Abel but the idea was quite unacceptable to the people of East London and it is fortunate that by this time the Presbytery of Kaffraria was exercising control and authority over these congregations which had grown up independently within its bounds.

The arrangement seemed quite satisfactory to Mr. Abel and he sent his Annual Report home to Edinburgh at the end of 1892 and in it he gives a picture of his work :

"My working time table stands thus :

First Sunday of the month

East London West at 11 a.m. I then ride out

six miles to Cove Rock to preach. At 3 p.m. I return to preach at East London West at 7 p.m.

Second and fourth Sundays of the month

At 9 a.m. I preach at Kefoni a new preaching station established in June of this year (1892) and which is 25 miles from East London on the East Bank. At 1 p.m. I preach at Gnubie which is 12 miles from Kefoni and I return to East London for the evening service at 7 p.m.

Third Sunday of the month

At 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. I preach at East London West and address the Sabbath School at 2.30 p.m.

When there is a Fifth Sunday I am left to my discretion as to where I shall preach.

Besides this we have a service at East London West on Wednesday evening at 7 p.m. and constant visiting must be maintained." ①

During the ministry of the energetic Mr. Abel things greatly improved at St. Andrews. Over 100 persons were present at both services and 95 seats were let at 12/- each. Of this group only 20 - 30 were communicants. ②

Cove Rock

This farming community provided the East London market with vegetables and farm produce and Mr. Abel's services were conducted in an unoccupied farm house. The people were widely scattered and some of them came more than eight miles in ox-wagon to attend the services. Mr. Abel explained :

1 Op.cit. 1892 p.2

2 Ibid. 1893 p.1 ff.

"They are from many different churches. I have not yet managed to get a Committee of Managers or indeed any organisation established." ①

In 1893 he wrote in his Annual Report that hopes were being entertained for the erection of a Church at Cove Rock but that finance was the main stumbling block. ②

Gnubie

At this outstation Mr. Abel reported that he ministered to twenty families, most of whom were Dutch. Of the settlers from Scotland who arrived there in 1877 only four families remained in 1893. He writes :

"Many of the Dutch speak English and come great distances to hear a Scotch minister... They are very eager that their children should have an English education and have joined with the Scotch families to erect a building to serve as a Church and a school." ③

Mr. Abel constituted a Kirk Session at Gnubie and the cause maintained

"steady progress" ④

as his Annual Reports regularly say.

Kefoni

By the end of 1893 the Kefoni people, who were a group of Dutch and Scottish farmers erected a building to

- 1 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland
Vol 7 p 262
- 2 Op.cit.p.3
- 3 Ibid p 4 also quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee
Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 301
- 4 Annual Report East London (West) 1894 p. 1

serve as a Church and a School. It cost £80 and was paid for entirely by the local farmers. It opened free of debt. ^①
 The years from 1893 to 1897 were years of peace in the East London churches. Mr. Abel proved himself not only a splendid pastor but a fine administrator too, ^{so} (inasmuch) that by 1895 he was able to write in his Report :

"We have at last cleared the debt of £275 which remained on the Church when I arrived in 1892." ^②

He was very happy in his work at St. Andrews and expressed the following view to the Edinburgh Committee :

"In my opinion East London (West) is a position that is worth holding by the Home Church. It is beyond all doubt the better side of the river, and would commend itself to many as a most desirable place of residence, were a bridge built over the river. WHEN that may be is uncertain but many people think it must be soon." ^③

That he was wrong in his judgment did not affect the situation for the Church developed under a man who really believed in its future. Later years were to prove him wrong, for the residential area of East London developed on the East Bank despite the erection of the longed for bridge across the Buffalo River in 1901.

Such was the position of the East London (West) congregation

- 1 Annual Report East London (West) congregation 1893 part quoted also in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol 7 p 262
- 2 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 387
- 3 Ibid Vol 8 p 31

in 1897 when, along with others in the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria, it ^{refused to} become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ①

EAST LONDON (EAST) CONGREGATION

In 1881 a Mr. Melville and a Mr. Thornton were commissioned by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland :

"to investigate and report on the situation in East London which was causing a measure of anxiety as to the future of the congregation." ②

These gentlemen duly inspected the scene and interviewed all the parties concerned and reported as follows to the Edinburgh Committee :

"From information got on the spot after conference with all the parties concerned we report that there is a very strong desire for separation among the members of the congregation residing and worshipping on the East side of the river, and that separation seems ultimately inevitable. We would intimate also that a memorial praying for separation is at present in the hands of the Presbytery of the Kaffraria and we recommend that the Committee should foster BOTH congregations and should endeavour to prevent any steps being taken which might injuriously effect the interest of Presbyterians there." ③

1 Vide p. 682 ff. East London (West) did not join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa till 1904
2 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 5 p 200
3 Ibid Vol 5 p 249

When the Presbytery of Kaffraria reported in similar terms, the Colonial Committee resolved that it would foster both causes despite its original feeling that one minister should supply both pulpits. ^① This plan having been found unworkable due to the local situation, it was agreed to comply with a request from the Presbytery of British Kaffraria in which the clerk, Rev. J.D. Don says :

"In view of the importance of a minister being provided for East London (East) as soon as possible would it be in order to ask whether a minister proceeding to Australia could be sent via the Cape with a view to his possibly being settled over the congregation." ^②

The result was that Mr. John Ferguson, a probationer, appointed on 22nd January, 1884, to Victoria, Australia, was asked to proceed to East London to supply the pulpit there for three months. The Committee agreed to pay £50 to East London (East) for that period. ^③

Mr. Ferguson duly arrived on 10th September, 1884 and began his work on the East side of the River at Panmure, where an increasing congregation gathered each Sabbath to hear him preach

"in the Wesleyan Chapel" ^④

In November the Session Clerk of East London (East)

1 Ibid Vol 5 p 251

2 Ibid Vol 5 p 252

3 Ibid Vol 6 p 4

4 Minutes Kirk Session East London (East)
congregation Vol 1 p 1

wrote to say how delighted everyone was at the work Mr. Ferguson was doing, and requested that the three months be extended as Mr. Ferguson was agreeable; and so the original three months was extended for nearly six years, during which time Mr. Ferguson received ordination at the hands of the Presbytery ①

In 1885 the people on the East Bank procured a magnificent site in the main street (Oxford Street) and proceeded to the erection of a large Church Building which was opened on 3rd January, 1886 when Rev. J.D. Don of King-williamstown conducted the opening services. ②

Mr. Ferguson continued to exercise a splendid ministry in East London and in one of the few reports he sent back to Edinburgh the Committee noted with satisfaction :

"That 120 attend the morning diet of worship and about 100 in the evening.....

The congregation is self-supporting and is making rapid strides towards the liquidation of the debt on their Church." ③

In 1885 it was felt by the Kirk Session :

"that the name of East London (East) was unsatisfactory." ④

It was, therefore, duly agreed that the name should be

changed to St. George's East London, by which name it has

- 1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol 6 p 171
- 2 Minutes Kirk Session East London (East) congregation Vol 1 p 81
- 3 Annual Report E.L. (East) 1887 as quoted in Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol 6 p 238.
- 4 Minutes of Kirk Session East London (East) Vol 1 p 111

been known ever since.

In 1889 Mr. Ferguson ^{went} returned to Scotland for a holiday and when he returned in 1890 his congregation was engaged in discussing the question of the Union of all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa. Mr. Ferguson's congregation was very much in favour of the Union but being a part of the Kaffraria Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland they did not join the new Church when it was established in 1897. St. Georges East London did not remain outside the new Church for long because in 1904 the congregation decided to join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

During the years 1890 to 1897 there was one unusual incident which took place. The Church had been built with a small dome on the roof. This dome had become one of the East London land marks but in 1893 a terrific storm struck the city and lightning demolished the dome so that next morning it was lying among the storm sodden pews inside the Church. ¹ When the roof was repaired it was decided not to replace the dome.

1 Minutes of Kirk Session East London (East) congregation Vol 2 p 141

CHAPTER 4

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN ^{MISSION} STATIONS IN KAFFRARIA

After the voluntary controversy of 1837 had sundered the Glasgow Missionary Society into two camps, the work in South Africa also divided into two sections. ¹ The first section, whose story has been narrated in the previous chapter eventually cast in its lot with the Free Church of Scotland, while the stations of Chumie where William Chalmers laboured, and Iggibigha where young Robert Niven ordained by the Glasgow Presbytery had opened a station in 1836, continued to adhere to the Glasgow African Mission Society until the year 1847, when the United Presbyterian Church came into being as a result of the union between the Relief and the Secession Churches. ² The Glasgow African Missionary Society threw in its lot with the new church and its mission stations in South Africa came under the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in 1847.

In South Africa the Missionaries formed themselves into a United Presbyterian Church Presbytery, where it is recorded in the minutes of their first meeting held at

1 Vide Page 167

2 For details of this story see J. Fleming "The Church in Scotland 1843 to 1874" p 21. ff.

Emgwali :

"that it be agreed that the name of this Presbytery shall be The United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria." ①

This United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria was later to split into two Presbyteries - the one concerned mainly with European work and the other mainly concerned with work among the Africans, but as it is impossible to understand the development of the one without the other, let us examine the work of the Native Mission Presbytery first.

Chumie

After having worked for a while at both Lovedale and Burnshill, Mr. W.A. Chalmers received ordination at the hands of the original Presbytery of Kaffraria in 1834, ② and was given full charge of the Chumie station in the same year. The mantle of Brownlee and Thomson had fallen upon Chalmers, whose life was henceforth devoted to his beloved Chumie.

"His days were a perpetual round of teaching and preaching, church and school under his wise direction going hand in hand in the good old Scottish fashion. The little sanctuary was circled with kraal schools, one named "Mitchell" another "Struthers" after wellknown Glasgow Divines who "rocked the cradle of the infant mission" and whose people provided the money (£10 per annum) needed to furnish the young kaffirs with their A.B.C." ③

- 1 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol 1 p. 1 (1847)
- 2 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol 1 p 81 (This particular volume is not called Free Church Presbytery but Volumes from 1843 were so named)
- 3 J. Laing "Memorials" p 72

When Rev. W. Ross had arrived in 1823 he had brought with him a printing press, which remained at Chumie when the unfortunate split took place in the Scottish Mission work. This press was put to splendid use by Mr. Chalmers. He printed a translation of the Shorter Catechism and several chapters of the Scriptures and a regular magazine in Xosa was distributed from this station.

It was at the rude benches of "Struthers" one of the out stations of Chumie that a Kaffir lad, called Tiyo Soga received his first training.^① He was one of the many sons of Soga, a Counsellor of Chief Gaika of the Xosas. Tiyo Soga was destined to become a famous man and a great missionary of the Church.

Mr. W.A. Chalmers wrote to his home Society in 1834 saying :

"My time is fully occupied preaching the Word on Sundays at Chumie at 10 a.m. at Struthers at 11, at Mitchell's at 2.30 and again at Chumie at 7 in the evening. During the week we hold a day school at each station and a mid-week prayer meeting at Chumie on Wednesday nights....."^②

The work began to show signs of real progress under the devoted leadership of Mr. Chalmers. The numbers of the

1 John Chalmers "The Life of Tiyo Soga" Chapt. 2

2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1836 p 10 (quoted)

converted rapidly increased and there was talk of increasing the accommodation at the station. A church had been built in 1834 and a manse was nearing completion when almost without warning the 1834 Kaffir War broke out. ①

Iggibigha

Here the Rev. Robert Niven proved himself to be a splendid missionary. He set himself the task of mastering the language, of teaching the Natives not only the Christian faith but also the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. The building erected with such labour in 1834 was used for this Christian School. ② Numbers at the school were just beginning to reach reasonable proportions and the local natives were just beginning to reap the benefit of having so fine a man among them when the 1834 Kaffir War necessitated a temporary closing down of the station.

.....

When the Missionaries returned to Chumie and Iggibigha at the end of the War they found a scene of desolation. At Chumie there was nothing left save the buildings and at Iggibigha the windows and furniture had been broken, though it had not suffered quite as badly. ③

1 Vide p 161
2 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1834 p 4
3 J. Laing "Memorials" p 70

THE WAR OF THE AXE

There followed twelve years of peace, during which time the missionaries settled down to the task of building up their work again. In 1840 another missionary Rev. Mr. Cumming came out from Scotland and was settled at Glenthorn.^① With him came Miss A. McLaren, who was posted to work as a teacher at Iggibigha under Mr. Niven.^②

Early difficulties were being surmounted, the language was being mastered and as the report says :

"Modest Churches and manses have been built at Chumie and Iggibigha; converts were gradually being brought in; the confidence of the people had been gained, and all gives promise of more fruitful years."^③

when suddenly the War of the Axe, 1846, shattered all their hopes.^④

The Missionaries had to flee once again from their stations. Mr. Niven expected this war to be a long one and he returned to Scotland on furlough. Here he did splendid work stirring up the churches to assist the Missionary cause. The Chalmers family retired reluctantly from Chumie and took refuge in Fort Armstrong, where they lived for eight weeks.

- 1 Glasgow Missionary Society Report 1840 p. 6
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Vide page 179 ff.

TIYO SOGA

It was during this war that Tiyo Soga was sent over to study in Scotland. He had long since left "Struthers" and had been studying under Mr. Govan at Lovedale. Mr. Govan desired that his promising pupil should have the benefit of a Christian education in Scotland.^① He therefore approached his mother, Nosutu, a Christian wife of a heathen counsellor whose tribe was even then in the field against the British. When she was asked if she would trust her son to the country of her husband's present enemies she replied :

"My son is the property of God and when across the sea will still be in God's keeping."^②

It was a splendid answer, and seemed to show how deep the work of the Missionaries had gone. It is also pleasing to record that the Christian Kaffirs took no part in this war; for the most part they took refuge with the Missionaries behind the lines of the British Commandos. It was for this reason that Mr. Govan was able to contact Nosutu and her brilliant son.

While in Scotland, Tiyo Soga was adopted by John Street Church, Glasgow as its special charge. They watched over his

1 John Chalmers "The Life of Tiyo Soga" p. 38

2 Ibid. p.40

school life in Glasgow and on 7th May, 1848 he was baptised by the minister of that Church Rev. Dr. William Anderson, and he was thus admitted into full communion with the Church. ①

Chumie

After the War of the Axe when the Missionaries returned to their stations they found them utterly destroyed.

"At Chumie the manse, Church, the precious library and the printing press were totally destroyed. The printing press was turned into bullets and the Bibles and books into wads for the guns of the Boer soldiers. The Book of Life thus becoming the messenger of death" ②

Mr. Chalmers was broken-hearted at the scene which met his eyes, and he was forced to seek the hospitality of Mr. John Pringle ③ at Glenthorn for a while. However, he could not rest at Glenthorn while his beloved Chumie was in ruins and so leaving his wife and children with Mr. Pringle, he and his eldest son, John, set out to rebuild Chumie with their own hands. ④

For a time he toiled with the lad at the ruins by day and slept at night in the open, wrapped only in a blanket. But the strong man's strength had gone. He became very ill,

1 Ibid p 70.

2 W. Slowan "The story of the Kaffraria Mission U.P." p.35

3 Vide page 267ff.

4 W. Slowan "The story of the Kaffraria Mission U.P." p. 36

and only with great difficulty did he regain the shelter of Glenthorn, where he died on 8th February, 1847. It was with the words of the Twentythird Psalm in his ears he passed into the House of the Lord forever. He was buried at Chumie, which he loved and where for twenty years he^{had} laboured so hard. As W. Slowan puts it :

"He died an old man at 45" ①

Igibigha and Uniondale

Mr. Niven returned to his station to find a similar scene but he managed to weather the storm better than Mr. Chalmers. Within two years he had not only rebuilt the school and Church, but he had actually opened a new out-station at Uniondale (1848) so called after the union between the Relief and Secession Churches in Scotland.

Uniondale was right in the heart of the Amatolas, where Tiyo Soga had been born, and when he returned to South Africa in 1848 he was appointed and accepted as a Catechist for this new station. ② Tiyo Soga came out along with Rev. George Brown who had been ordained to Kaffraria in 1848, ③ and after a voyage lasting three months they arrived at

1 Ibid p. 36.

2 John Chalmers "The Life of Tiyo Soga" p. 7e

3 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol 1. p. 61

Chumie where Mr. Brown remained to assist Mr. Cummings who had gone there after the death of Mr. Chalmers.

The young African Catechist found himself at a splendid station at Uniondale.

"Mr. Niven had proved himself from the beginning an able and successful missionary. He had diligently cultivated his linguistic gifts, had visited Holland before ordination to acquire the Dutch language, and within a couple of years after his settlement at Iggibigha he had mastered the Kaffir tongue. His usual Sabbath work included four services, one in English, one in Dutch, and two in Kaffir..... The hymn "O Yehova Tuka" a favourite Xosa hymn to this very day, was from Mr. Niven's pen." ①

Tiyo Soga learned rapidly and Uniondale and Iggibigha were beginning to progress very favourably when war broke out again.

THE WAR OF 1853

In 1853 War broke out again when thousands of Kaffirs poured over the Keiskama River and began plundering the frontier farms ②

In the afternoon of December 24th 1853 soldiers encamped near Uniondale and warned Mr. Niven of impending danger. Next morning dawned on the blackest Christmas day

1 Report of Deputies Carstairs and W. Slowan 1883

2 Vide page 138

in the history of the mission or the Colony. The Kaffirs attacked the military villages and killed 45 inhabitants who~~se~~, from the contempt and roughness with which they had treated the natives, had long been the object of their bitter hatred. Warned by one of the converts at the risk of his own life, Mr. Niven with his delicate wife and young family tramped on foot twentyfive long miles to Chumie, leaving Tiyo Soga and the native elder Busak in charge of the station. In a few hours only the fragment of a gable was left to show where Uniondale Church and manse had stood. Tiyo Soga set off at night after Mr. Niven, and all eventually gathered at Chumie but it was soon found to be prudent to move back to Philliptown. ^①

Rev. Henry Renton of Kelso, who had been sent out as the first deputy from the home Church to advise and comfort the missionaries, arrived in time to partake of their sufferings.

"In the enforced retreat from Chumie in the five dreary weeks during which he was shut up with them in Philliptown and in the noble stand he made at Grahamstown when maligned and molested by a section of the excited inhabitants who falsely accused him, in common with his missionary brethren of having been the cause of

1 W. Slowan "The Story of the Kaffraria Mission
U.P. " P.40

the Kaffir rising, Mr. Renton gave proof of the nobility of character and dauntless courage that ever distinguished him." ①

With the exception of the Christian converts almost all the Kaffirs took part in the War. Indeed, it was not till March 23rd 1854 that martial law was revoked. In the end, exhausted, impoverished and beaten the tribes sued for peace.

THE TEMPORARY EXTINCTIONS OF UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS ON THE FRONTIER

Uniondale and Iggibigha had been turned into military posts during the War of 1853 and the Mission was forbidden henceforth to occupy these stations. ② They never occupied them again.

Mr. Niven, accompanied by Tiyo Soga, returned to Scotland. The young Kaffir refused tempting offers from the Government, ③ setting his face steadfastly towards the ministry.

Mr. Cummings also returned to Scotland but he took months to reach the coast and did not reach Glasgow till the following May. It was his first and last furlough.

Chumie, which had risen from the ashes of the War of

1 Ibid. p. 41.
2 They were forbidden by the Cape Government who wished to use them as forts.
3 He was offered a most lucrative civil service post by the Government (Cape)

the Axe, was no more. Indeed the United Presbyterian Church Mission in Kaffraria was no more.

Mrs. Chalmers remained near Chumie till 1867 living in a cottage till she moved to Alice, where the deputies from the Home Church found her in 1883.^① When she died in 1887 she was laid beside her husband, near the Gwali stream at Chumie.

When the news of this 1853 War reached the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland there were those who felt very strongly that the United Presbyterian Missions at Chumie and Iggibigha should be closed and that the field should be left entirely to the Free Church.

Tiyo Soga, Mr. Cummings and Mr. Niven were all in Scotland at this time and it was due to their earnest desire to try again that the Synod of 1853 agreed :

"that Mr. Niven should return to South Africa and report prospects of a new beginning." ^②

Mr. Cummings persuaded the Foreign Mission Board that he should be allowed to accompany his friend and they agreed

"on condition that should no opening be found his engagement must end within a year." ^③

When the two friends returned to the Eastern frontier

- 1 Report of Deputies Carstairs and W. Slowan 1883
- 2 W Slowan. "The story of the Kaffrarian Mission U.P." p 43 (quoted)
- 3 Ibid. p. 43

they were not permitted to open up either Chumie or Iggibigha, and they could not get permission to start a station anywhere. All they achieved was permission for two itinerant native teachers to travel in the Gaika territory. With this discouraging news Mr. Niven returned to Scotland, never to return to his beloved South Africa. In 1855 he accepted a call to Maryhill (United Presbyterian) Church in Glasgow and here he served till his death in 1877.

Mr. Cummings did not return to Scotland with Mr. Niven but accepted an opening at Glenthorn.^① Here he renewed his South African work among Scots folk living in that town. Although his new work was mainly European Mr. Cummings was not long in starting a mission at Glenthorn for the natives.

The years 1846 to 1857 were black years for the Missionaries on the Eastern Frontier. The Kaffir Wars had ruined their work, and as far as the United Presbyterian Mission was concerned they had all but wiped it out. In 1856 a further blow to the work was received when a false prophet Mhakaza told the Kaffirs that if they killed all their cattle the white man would be driven into the sea and depart from

1 Vide Page 268.

their country. In their folly they killed 150,000 head of cattle.

This "Cattle Killing Delusion" as it is called, meant the death of hundreds of the African people. The Missionaries of both Free and United Presbyterian Churches, together with Commissioner Brownlee moved

"heaven and earth to save the people" but they failed and by the autumn of 1857 they realised that they had destroyed themselves.

Mr. J. Chalmers, son of the devoted Missionary who died in 1847, wrote the following to the United Presbyterian Missionary Magazine for December 1857 :

"Thousands of human skeletons crept in bands inch by inch into the Colony where food could be found. The highways were strewn with corpses and the towns and villages overrun by dying men and women and children."

It was a terrible tragedy which only passed when Mhakeza himself died of the famine he had brought on his people.

YEARS OF RECONSTRUCTION 1857 - 1877

For twenty years after the "Cattle Killing Delusion" there was a time of relative peace in Kaffraria.

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 245
2 G. Theal "A History of South Africa" Vol 7 p. 45 ff.
3 Op.cit. p. 146

In such periods the work of the Missionaries gets a chance to bear fruit and the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria so sadly depleted after the 1853 War began to show signs of new life and vitality.

Chumie - Engwali

In April, 1857 Rev. Robert Johnston arrived on the Frontier to assist in the reconstruction of the United Presbyterian Missions.^① The new Governor at the Cape, Sir George Grey encouraged Rev. Robert Johnston and Rev. Tiyo Soga, who had arrived with him from Scotland, to begin again at Engwali on the Chumie River. Tiyo Soga, who had now completed his training for the ministry, had been ordained in 1856 and he and Mr. Johnston set about the task of rebuilding. In six months the buildings were completed and the station began again.^②

In 1859 much to the annoyance of the United Presbyterian Mission Board in Scotland, Mr. Johnston accepted a call to Trinity Church, Grahamstown, leaving the young Kaffir minister in sole charge at Engwali.^③

The appointment of Tiyo Soga had quite startled the European colonists in 1857 but in the two years of his

- 1 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 1 p. 341
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 351
- 3 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 18

ministry he had all but quelled their fears, and it is recorded that when he appealed for a fund to build a Church at Emgwali

"the colonists too responded generously to this appeal of the first Kaffir minister who, two years before, had startled their notions of propriety." ①

On 16th June, 1862 the new Church was opened at Emgwali. Mr. Brownlee, the Native Commissioner, preached, and his father, the venerable Missionary at Kingwilliamstown, rode twenty miles to be present for the occasion. Rev. W. Govan, Tiyo Soga's Lovedale Teacher, also came along to rejoice in the progress made by his pupil. ②

The new station and Church at Emgwali were not on exactly the same site as the old Chumie station from which Mr. Chalmers had been driven so often in the course of the Kaffir Wars, but nevertheless, it would have cheered his heart to have seen with earthly eyes the lad who learned his "A.B.C." at "Struthers" an outstation of Chumie, taking charge of the station to which he had given so much.

Tiyo Soga's lifelong friend, Rev. John A. Chalmers, son of the Chumie Missionary, who was later to write the

1 J. Chalmers "The Life of Tiyo Soga" p. 161

2 Minutes United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol 2 p. 141

life of its first Kaffir Missionary, having been recently ordained at Anderston Church, Glasgow, arrived at Emgwali in 1861 to assist in the work of that station.^① It was Dr. Duff who wrote in 1863 concerning these two young ministers

"A nobler pair of Missionaries it would be difficult to meet. I scarcely know which of them to admire most."^②

Henderson

Mr. John Chalmers did not remain long at Emgwali for he founded the station at Henderson early in 1862.^③ The station was so called after Mr. John Henderson who was for many years, the Chairman of the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church.

This meant that Tiyo Soga was again working alone at Emgwali but in 1867 the Foreign Mission Board sent out Rev. J. Sclater, who arrived with his sister in February of that year and settled at Chumie with Tiyo Soga.^④

Mbulu

Assistants to Tiyo Soga did not remain for long at Emgwali for the need to establish new stations was very great, and the shortage of trained staff was all that prevented the more rapid extension of the work. Within

- 1 Minutes United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol 2 p. 121
- 2 Quoted in United Presbyterian Missionary Record December 1863
- 3 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol 2 p. 138
- 4 Ibid Vol 2. p. 214

two months Mr. Selater and his sister were ~~soon~~ starting a station of their own at Mbulu ^① across the valley of the Kei River among the Fingoes.

Uxolo ^②

In connection with the Mbulu mission an unusual event occurred. A certain Major Malan, when in garrison with his regiment (75th Infantry) at Kingwilliamstown, had taken part in the opening of the new Church at Mbulu on 9th January, 1872. He found 200 converts out of a native population of 7,000 who had from their own meagre financial resources paid over £100 towards the cost of the church. This fact, together with all that Major Malan saw in the Transkei so impressed this soldier that he determined to associate himself with the work. In 1873 Mr. Selater wanted to go overseas on furlough and Major Malan offered to "supply" for him in his absence. During this period Major Malan founded a new station at Uxolo, where he placed a Mr. Noble together with two other young men. The whole project was paid for at his own expense. In 1874, when he was in Scotland, the United Presbyterian Synod of that year expressed the thanks of the whole Church to Major Malan for his generosity. He

1. Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol.2 p. 219
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 92 ff. vide also W. Sloman "The story of the Kaffrarian Mission U.P." p. 72.

returned to South Africa in 1875 and lived at Uxolo till 1881 when he died.

Tutura

When Mr. Sclater left in 1867 to found the station at Mbulu, his place at Emgwali was taken by Rev. James Davidson, who had been minister at the Free Church European congregation in Kingwilliamstown from 1863.^① He volunteered to take the place of Mr. Sclater in assisting the indefatigable Tiyo Soga. But it would seem that Emgwali was not destined ever to remain very long with two ministers for in 1868 as the result of a conference of all the Free Church and United Presbyterian Missionaries in Kaffraria, it was agreed that Tiyo Soga should leave Emgwali and commence a new station among the people of Chief Kreli. The place eventually chosen for this station was Tutura, where in 1868 the new station was founded.^②

In the same year Rev. William Girdwood came out from Scotland and was placed at Tutura.^③ He was a man with some medical training and the fortunes of the mission changed for the better when in 1869 he cured Chief Kreli's Prime Minister of an illness which the local witch doctors had been powerless

1 Vide Page 208

2 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol. 2 p. 360

3 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 365

to alleviate.

THE DEATH OF TIYO SOGA

Tiyo Soga's work was almost done but he saw yet another Church opened up among the Galeka. On 16th April, 1871 the Church was opened and present at the service was Rev. Bryce Ross who came one hundred miles from Pirrie also Rev. John Chalmers and Mr. Sclater.^① But the rigours of Missionary work had taken their toll of the man described as "the most eminent native South Africa has yet produced."^② He became seriously ill and died on 12th August, 1871 in the arms of Rev. Richard Ross, his old Lovedale schoolfellow and brother missionary. His life story has been told by his friend Chalmers, who, in 1887 joined him on that farther shore.

"Soga was a theologian, an evangelistic missionary with no superior in the annals of our Church."^③

On the east wall of the Emgwali Church above the pulpit is fixed a tablet the gift of Mr. Whyte Millar of Edinburgh, bearing in Kaffir an inscription written by Dr. William Anderson :

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 6.

2 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 363

3 Ibid. p. 363

"This stone is to keep us in remembrance of Rev. Tiyō Soga, the first ordained Preacher of the Kaffir race. He was a man inspired by the Holy Spirit a disciple of his Holy Word, an ardent patriot, a large hearted philanthropist, a dutiful son, an affectionate brother, a tender husband, a loving father, a faithful friend, a learned scholar an eloquent orator in manners a gentleman, a devoted Missionary who spent himself in His Master's service.

A model Kaffir" ①

It was amazing to think that the United Presbyterian Missions which had been reduced to almost nothing in 1853 were numbering thirty stations including outstations, by the time Tiyō Soga died in 1871. How well the faith of the missionaries who had persuaded the authorities to continue in South Africa had been vindicated, for they were correct in urging that all that was required to ensure the establishment of their work was a policy on the Eastern frontier which would work for peace.

WAR AGAIN 1877 ②

The twenty years of peace on the frontier were rudely shattered in March 1877 when 10,000 natives poured over the Keiskama River and began the last of the Kaffir Wars. The effect of War on the labours of the Missionaries was always

1 Vide Church at Chumie also J. Chalmers 'The Life & Tiyō Soga' p. 488.

2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 274

to destroy their work and this 1877 War was no exception. When the War began the resuscitated United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria could point with pride to forty one Mission Stations (including all the out-stations) with a staff of nine European Missionaries. At the end of the War these were reduced to two stations. ①

They contented themselves with the thought that this time they at least had two stations to which they could return for after the 1853 War they had had not even one. Nothing seemed to daunt these men of faith for they simply ~~g~~^oet down to the task of starting all over again.

MORE YEARS OF RECONSTRUCTION 1879 - 1897

Emgwali Rev. J.W. Stirling was appointed to Emgwali in 1882 as colleague to Mr. Cummings ② who had taken care of the Chumie station in 1869. Here he gained familiarity with the language and in 1886 he carried the Gospel to Sulenkama ③ in what today is called East Griqualand. In 1886 Mr. Cummings retired and his place was taken by Rev. Alexander Welsh. ④ By this time there were several substantial buildings including

- 1 Minutes United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol 3 p. 126
- 2 Ibid. Vol 4 p 8
- 3 Ibid. Vol 4 p 119
- 4 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 115

a school for both boys and girls.

Mbulu In 1866 Mr. Sclater built the little hut in which the worship of the true God was first set up in the valley of Tsomo with 40 native christians. The population in the district of 20,000 Fingoes and the station was therefore well situated for expansion and that is exactly what took place.

In 1876 Mr. James Davidson was sent to this station. When he came to it the 40 members with whom Mr. Sclater began ten years before had become well nigh three hundred and in 1894 the membership was 750 with 250 candidates.

The Deputies from the United Presbyterian Synod who visited Mbulu in 1883 recorded that their

"last glimpse of it shewed the women on their way to morning prayers." ③

In 1886 a Mrs. Forsyth was sent from Scotland to assist Mr. Davidson at Mbulu and she devoted herself unsparingly to teaching and evangelical work and Mrs. Buchanan who visited the station in 1892 says :

"Mrs. Forsyth's work is the most remarkable I have seen in South Africa." ④

The Greenock Ladies' Kaffrarian Society supported an African woman helper to Mrs. Forsyth (her name was Emily

1 Vide Page 255

2 Vide Page 255. Minutes U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria
Vol. 3 p. 129

3 Report of Deputies Carstairs and W. Sloman 1883

4 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p. 162

5 U.P. Missionary Record February 1892

Ntintili) and in 1894 a Miss Isabella Lamb arrived to work alongside Mrs. Forsyth at Mbulu. ^①

Columba ^②

In 1879 a forward step was taken in the opening of the new station at Columba beyond the Tentani Hill. Here Rev. James Auld, whose fiery baptism in the Mission had been received at Elujilo found new scope for the ardent missionary spirit which filled him. By 1883, when the deputies from United Presbyterian visited Columba, Mr. Auld received them in his rough building

"with a cordial welcome beneath its kindly if somewhat leaky roof" ^③

Malan

Mr. Auld's settlement at Columba was soon followed by that of Rev. John Lundie's at Malan (1881). ^④ The Deputies of 1883 found Mr. Lundie and his wife lodged in three Kaffir huts, which in 1890 were replaced by splendid buildings and between 1881 and 1894 the membership grew to 324. Moreover out-stations were planted at Dodamba, Bikama and Shiernie. ^⑤

Tutura In 1884 Zazi Soga, Tiyo's half-brother, began to

- 1 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 6 p. 92
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 261
- 3 Report of The Deputies Carstairs and W. Slowan 1883
- 4 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p. 387
- 5 Ibid. Vol. 4 p. 12

gather round the forsaken Tutura a few Gaikas and Fingoes and in 1885 Rev. William Girdwood, resuming his work at his original station, set out "to rebuild the waste places" with great success.^①

Sulenkama For five years Tutura had the honour to be the frontier station of the Mission, but in 1886 Mr. Stirling^② left the well-established work at Emgwali to plant the standard in the heart of Pondoland, now called Griqualand East. Here; in remote Sulenkama, he had great reward.

Buchanan In 1881 the FONDOS rebelled against British rule but after a short War in which they were scattered they were allowed to return to their lands. As a punishment large tracts of their land were given to the ever ready Fingoes who were overcrowded in the Transkei. As a result numerous Christian families flocked to the new territory. The Missionaries decided that ordinances of worship should be provided for these people and so it was agreed to form two new stations - one named Somerville was allocated to the Free Church, the other called Buchanan^③ was allocated to the United Presbyterian Church. Like Sulenkama it was to be under Mr. Stirling. This station has now become parent to

1 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 161

2 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 8 vide Page 258

3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 380

two other stations, namely Gillespie among Tiyo Soga's Xesibes and the Tina Mission among Macaula's Bacas.

Miller Bomvanaland, to which the attention of the Church was called by Major Malan who visited it in 1876, is between Bachas and Umtata. It was in the eyes of Dr. W.A. Soga^① as "a virgin sphere of labour" no stated mission work having been attempted there.

Dr. William Anderson Soga, son of the United Presbyterian first Kaffir missionary, was the Church's first resident missionary in Bomvanaland. He completed his medical and theological training in 1885 and began his ministry as an assistant to Mr. Lundie. He went to Bomvanaland in 1887 opening a new Church at Miller in 1888^②. It was named Miller after Robert Miller, a generous and large hearted elder of Claremont Church, Glasgow, who in 1893 was suddenly called to higher service.

Gillespie Not the least remarkable advance made by the United Presbyterian Missionaries was that made in 1890 into the country of the Xesibes^③, thirtyfive miles north east of Buchanan. Away back in 1878 their chief, Toyo, had

1 The son of Tiyo Soga the Missionary
2 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol.4 p. 321
3 Ibid Vol 4 p. 358

expressed a desire to receive a missionary, and he appealed in turn to Wesleyans, Free Church and United Presbyterian Missions, but without success. Then came the Buchanan station. Mr. Stirling, commissioned by the United Conference of Presbyterian Missionaries, visited Tóyo and joined him in his appeals for a missionary. This time he was successful and in June 1890 Rev. P.L. Hunter was duly installed as Missionary to Xesibes.^① In 1893 he wrote a report to the Mission Board in which he spoke of

"slow but steady progress"^②

Mount Frere On the evening of 24th September, 1893 Rev. John Henderson Soga was ordained in Morningside Church, Edinburgh, as a Missionary to Kaffraria. Born in the Engwali manse, second son and second missionary son of Tiyo Soga, he thus returned after a full university and theological curriculum in Edinburgh, to take up his father's work among his father's people.

When the three Soga brothers first came to Scotland in 1870 in one of his pathetic brooding letters their father wrote :

"They do not go to Scotland to seek a fortune;

1 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 361

2 Quoted in U.P. Missionary Record" May 1893

they go to Scotland for the benefit of Kaffraria. They are needed here." ①

It was a great joy when John Soga crossed the Tina drift and entered his district for the first time as a fully ordained minister. Mr. Stirling had gone to the Cape to meet him and in his report to the Mission Board he says :

"A right royal surprise awaited us, for Ntuta, the headman of Tolani location had sent 40 horsemen to escort us to the Tolani" ②

On 14th December the Session of Buchanan met at Lower Mkemane to welcome the young missionary and induct him into the charge of the new district, now disjoined from the immense territory till then under Mr. Stirling's charge.

1 U.P. Missionary Record March 1870 (quoted)
2 Ibid. Nov 1894

CHAPTER 5

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN PRESBYTERY OF ADELAIDE

As the Mission work of the United Presbyterian Missionaries spread further and further into Kaffraria and East Griqualand those in charge of the missions and churches nearest to the old station of Emgwali began to urge the necessity of having two Presbyteries. The Presbytery meetings had been held at Emgwali in the beginning but the distance between Emgwali and Sulenkama was over 500 almost trackless miles and it made the holding of Presbytery meetings extremely difficult.

In 1888 the Presbytery of Kaffraria wrote officially to the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church asking for permission to split the Kaffraria Presbytery into two,^① namely The Presbytery of Adelaide which would comprise the congregations of Glenthorn, Adelaide, Takastad, Somerset East, Glenavon and all the Native Missions in those areas and the Presbytery of Kaffraria (United Presbyterian) which would comprise all

1 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p. 316

the other Mission Stations.

The Foreign Mission Board agreed to submit this request to the United Presbyterian Synod of 1889 and the proceedings of that body read :

"The Synod called for the report of the Foreign Mission Board which was presented by Mr. Buchanan. The report was received. It was moved, seconded and approved and unanimously agreed as follows :
The Synod empowers the Board to make such arrangements in regard to the division of the present Presbytery of Kaffraria as may secure the most efficient transaction of ^① the business connected with that Mission."

The result was the formation in 1890 of the Presbytery of ^② Adelaide. The new United Presbyterian Presbytery met for the first time in February 1890 at Adelaide where Rev, Peter Davidson constituted the Presbytery with prayer. ^③

The four churches which constituted the Presbytery of Adelaide were first and foremost Churches for Europeans though each of the congregations had a mission for the natives attached to it and it was a splendid answer to those who sometimes complained that in South Africa the Scottish Churches preferred the interest of the Kaffirs to those of their own countrymen. The Presbytery of Adelaide found a way of reconciling these interests to the benefit of both as

- 1 Proceedings of U.P. Synod 1889
- 2 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p 371
- 3 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Adelaide Vol 1 p. 2

W. Sloman says in his book on the United Presbyterian Mission in Africa :

"Here indeed lies the true Foreign mission work of the Colonial Presbyterian Churches, and the more heartily they engage in it the more surely do they show themselves not only worthy descendants of the stock from which they sprang, but true members of that spiritual Israel the glory of whose sonship is to make Salvation known." ①

Let us, therefore, examine in more detail the story of the establishment and growth of the churches which make up this Presbytery destined in later days to become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

GLENTHORN CONGREGATION

This town is in the beautiful Mankazana Valley where the Scottish Company of the 1820 Settlers made their homes. Their poet, Thomas Pringle describes it thus :

"Having bade farewell to Scotia's mountains blue they found a new home under the shadow of the Winterberg in a country beautiful and inviting diversified with glens and mountains and forests" ②

The Church at Glenthorn was built on his own land and at his own expense by John, the brother of Thomas Pringle, the Poet. ③
It was completed by December, 1840. In the beginning there

1 W. Sloman "The Story of the Kaffraria Mission U.P. p.42

2 Quoted in D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 189

3 Vide "The Pringle letters"

was no settled minister at Glenthorn, the few Europeans who attended being dependent on the Missionary at Chumie (Rev. A. Chalmers) for Communion Services, and on the preaching of Mr. Pringle himself on ordinary Sundays. ①

1853 - 1868 The Ministry of REV. J. CUMMINGS

Matters proceeded in this way till after the War of 1853 when the United Presbyterian Mission work was all but wiped out. At that time Tiyo Soga, Mr. Niven and Mr. Cummings were all at home in Scotland and they pleaded with the Foreign Missions Board to be allowed to try once more to establish work on the Eastern frontier. Mr. Cummings and Mr. Niven therefore returned to South Africa, only to find that all doors were closed to them as far as recommencing the Mission work was concerned. ② Mr. Niven returned to Scotland and never returned again, but Mr. Cummings was approached by Mr. John Pringle with a view to his serving the European congregation at Glenthorn. ③ To this Mr. Cummings readily agreed and in March 1854 without any regular induction Mr. Cummings began his ministry among the folk at Glenthorn.

The early years of Mr. Cummings' ministry seem to have been devoted to developing not only the European work but also

1 Ibid.

2 Vide Page 248

3 Vide "The Pringle Letters"

a mixed mission work among Hottentots and Natives. In all this he was greatly supported by Mr. John Pringle, who was not only the donor of the Church, but also the chief subscriber to the stipend paid to Mr. Cummings.^① No call was made on the Foreign Mission Board for financial assistance and Mr. Cummings was paid £200 per annum. This money was raised from the handful of Europeans to whom he ministered and also from the increasing number of coloured folk who attended the Mission.

The Mission services at Glenthorn were held quite separately from the European services. They were held in the same church but at a different time; the native services were in the afternoon and the European services in the morning.^② As was the case in other parts the reason for this separation was largely the question of language; the Europeans could not understand Xosa and the natives found the English of the Presbyterian pulpits quite beyond them.

Mr. Cummings had the joy of seeing great progress made in his European and Mission charges at Glenthorn and in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record of June, 1864 he writes to say :

1 Vide "The Pringle Letters"

2 Ibid.

"While the temporal circumstances of the natives have been extremely trying it is interesting to note that the Church has increased in numbers beyond any former period. Thirtytwo who were in the Catechumens Class have been added to the Church. The English congregation has increased by five and they recently subscribed £53 towards the Mission work."①

Mr. Cummings and Mr. Pringle formed a splendid combination and under their devoted leadership the Glenthorn cause was slowly but surely advancing, when suddenly on 10th May, 1864 there befell a most grievous blow upon the Presbyterian community at Glenthorn for Mr. John Pringle died. Mr. Cummings was deeply moved and he wrote as follows to the United Presbyterian Missionary Record :

"Mr. John Pringle the venerable proprietor of Glenthorn, died on 7th of last month in 73rd year of his age after a long and a lingering illness, and his remains now lie buried under the shadow of the little Church in the erection of which he was such an honoured instrument. It is a melancholy pleasure for me to write to you on this occasion inasmuch as his name has been intimately associated with the Missionary cause of our Church in South Africa BEFORE and ever since I entered into this country. It was with lively interest that I heard of his zealous efforts to promote the Redeemer's cause among both dark and fair around here ere I left Scotland in 1840 and little did I anticipate that a blessing so rich and so divine should have attended them. In the Church that he built the Gospel of a once crucified but now exalted Saviour has been preached

1 Op.cit. June 1864.

to tribes of many a hue and to people of varied languages and were it even now to be swept away it would still be embalmed in the hallowed recollections of many when Time itself should be no more. By it, he, being dead, yet speaketh.

It was shortly after the last Kaffir War that symptoms of that malady, which ultimately terminated in death, began to make their appearance. Naturally of a robust frame, it gradually sapped his vigour from year to year till he was finally confined to bed. Most graciously, the latter portion of his life was freed from those racking pains to which he was formerly subjected. In patience he possessed his soul. He was long wearied from the world, and seemed to feed on the blessed truths and promises of the Gospel. Intensely active in his habits, he was still a lover of peace. Amongst his last sayings was one on which the mind delights to dwell. Asking how he felt, he said to me with peculiar emphasis "It is peace without, and peace within"

How delightful to know that so many Pringles in our Church have had their names recorded in that Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure." ①

After the death of Mr. Pringle the congregation managed to meet its obligations because Mr. Pringle's family continued his generous example and a year later, in 1865 Mr. Cummings wrote to say :

"The English congregation has now 14 members in full communion. The Kaffir congregation has 93 members and the Hottentot congregation 44." ②

In 1865 Mr. Cummings had employed Plaatjes as a full-time interpreter and assistant and in 1867 he reported the

1 Op. cit. August 1864.

2 "Pringle letters."

following incident :

A few of the local farmers ejected from their farms fifteen God fearing families for what seemed to Mr. Cummings to be a very unsatisfactory reason. The chief instigator of this ejection, a local Boer, apparently ashamed of what he had done then approached Plaatjes inviting him to hold services for his native servants. For this purpose he offered his wagon house,^① and thus the Mission work was extended.

Mr. Cummings gives a picture of his work in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record of June, 1867 when he says :

"My work is as follows :

Sabbath Services There are three classes to whom Gospel is preached - English, Caffres Hottentot. The English congregation has been more numerously attended than in any former year, there being twentythree members of whom four joined for the first time.

The Native congregation is sometimes overflowing. On Sabbath the natives meet in the schoolroom for devotional exercises during the time of the English Service in the Church. The exercises are conducted by the native elders. Immediately afterwards the children, the youth of both sexes and others of more mature years (numbers 40 - 50) meet in the Church when they engage in reading N.T. learning the first or second book of Lessons or repeating the shorter Catechism. The class is superintended by a Caffre or Hottentot elder. After the Sabbath School the general native service is held in a combined form. What I say in Kaffir, Plaatjes translates into Dutch, and

1 Ibid.

although this nearly doubles the time of service, still the people prefer sitting for two and a half hours to holding separate meetings.

Membership

Native Church - 72 Caffres, 41 Hottentots.
English congregation - 21 members." ①

The year 1868 was an important year for Mr. Cummings and the Glenthorn congregation because it was in this year that Mr. Cummings felt that he ought to resign his charge and join once more the Mission work among the natives. In the United Presbyterian Missionary Record for June, 1868 the situation is described thus :

".....But circumstances have occurred which have induced Mr. Cummings himself, the brethren in the Kaffir Mission, and the Committee to think that it is his duty to leave this place and to join the labourers in Kaffraria. The Church and the house are the property of the owner of the Glenthorn estate; a new proprietor has come into occupancy and Mr. Cummings feels that at any moment the doors of the Church may be closed, that his position is very insecure and that he has not that liberty which is essential to right evangelistic labour. This restricted position caused the brethren at a meeting held last summer to suggest that when Mr. Soga should leave the Emgwali station that Mr. Cummings should take his place.

The Committee, looking at this uncomfortable position at Glenthorn and at the importance of concentrating ^{on Mission work} as far as can be dutifully done, their agency have given their opinion that Mr. Cummings should go to Emgwali along with Mr. James Davidson. With this view Mr. Cummings

1 Op. cit. June 1867

accords. He feels deeply at leaving the flock which he has gathered at Glenthorn "as a sheep without a shepherd" What is to be done about them is not yet decided." ①

The result was that Mr. Cummings returned to Emgwali to take the place of Tiyo Soga and the cause at Glenthorn

"underwent a very severe trial during the following year" ②

No reports were sent from Glenthorn for 1868 - 1869 but it was recorded that

"Nothing has occurred to render doubtful the course which Mr. Cummings followed in relinquishing Glenthorn." ③

1870 - 1872 The Ministry of REV. ROBERT LESLIE

The decision with regard to a successor to Mr. Cummings was eventually made by the United Presbyterian Kaffraria Presbytery when it met at Emgwali on 13th April, 1870. ④ Rev. Robert Leslie wrote to the United Presbyterian Missionary Record as follows :

"The Presbytery met at Emgwali on Wednesday 13th April and it was then decided that I should go to Glenthorn. Before leaving home you spoke a good deal to me about Glenthorn and on seeing a great number of people here without a minister I certainly had a strong desire to have the matter settled as it has been by the Presbytery.

1 Op. cit. June 1868

2 Ibid. December 1870

3 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 2 p. 386

4 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 9

On the first day of our South African winter, 1st May I began my labours. The small European congregation met me at 10 o'clock, when I held a service just like a regular diet of worship in our home Church; at 12 the native Sabbath School was held when attendance was 60. At one o'clock the native congregation assembled, when the little Church, which when full holds 200, was packed to every corner. Many of them seemed much affected, especially when I made known the decision of Presbytery regarding my coming here..... this is one of the oldest Mission stations in South Africa." ①

Mr. Leslie soon settled down to his work, and it was said of him that :

"he goes aggressively into the midst of the surrounding sin and superstition." ②

In 1872 he reported as follows to the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church :

"This old station justifies its re-establishment..... I continue to preside over services for Europeans and natives each Sabbath Day. The European service is small (average attendance 21 with only 11 members) because several of the families have left the district recently."

Sabbath School This continues to be well attended but nearly half the Sunday School is composed of African adults.

Class for candidates This is held every Wednesday morning when 22 persons attend.

The Lord's Supper The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is observed four times a year, with an average of 107 attending.

1 Op. cit.

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Glenthorn Congregation Vol 1 p 86 Mr. Cummings formed a Kirk Session in 1855. Meetings were held only when need arose and the numbers on the Session varied between 2 and 4 comprising for the most part members of the Pringle family.

Outstations I minister also to the following outstations :

1. Haining The European attendance here is 25 and the native 45. The work here is most encouraging. Haining is 20 miles from Glenthorn, and the services are held on a farm in the district.
2. Lynedale The European attendance here is 30 and the native 60. I hold the service at 12 noon once a month on a Sunday. Lynedale is 30 miles from Glenthorn.
3. Ettrick The European attendance is 30 at a service I hold here on Monday afternoons. Ettrick is 15 miles from Glenthorn.

Itinerating Work Together with Plaatjes I have tried to carry out this branch of a missionary's work. We MUST go from kraal to kraal if we are to have success." ①

Mr. Leslie certainly did not spare himself in his short ministry and the increase in numbers of Europeans was due to his energy in establishing the various outstations about which his report speaks. Mr. Leslie was, however, not to remain at Glenthorn for long because in 1873 he was called to the Mission station at Tutura and once again Glenthorn was looking for a minister.

1873 - 1874 The Ministry of REV. JOHN DEWAR

Rev. Peter Davidson of Adelaide was in charge of

1 U. P. Missionary Record June 1872 (quoted)

Glenthorn during the latter months of 1872 whilst the congregation prepared to call Rev. John Dewar.^① Mr. Davidson wrote as follows about this period in the Church's history :

"This station was committed to my care and superintendance when my dear brother Mr. Leslie, at the call of the Presbytery, was removed to Tutura. When I visited the station it was my practice to spend ten or twelve days at a time, including two Sabbaths. The work among this people is very pleasant. The cordial welcome given by both Europeans and Natives¹⁸ enlivening to the heart. Attendance at Divine Services¹⁸ good on⁷ part of Natives and Europeans. There is a fervour among this people seldom seen at a station. Just because they have several times been treated as if they were a station of minor or secondary importance and been deprived of their Missionary thereby being made to feel their dependence on the Great and Good Shepherd. They that seek the Lord shall not want for any good. The Mission Board² has done well to send them another Missionary."

Unfortunately Mr. Dewar had been at Glenthorn hardly a year when another change was made. Mr. T. Shearer at the Mission Station at Quolora found that the hard life was telling on his health and so he and Mr. Dewar exchanged places in 1874.^③ The report for the year of service he gave to Glenthorn states inter alia :

"On entering into his work at Glenthorn, Mr. Dewar informs us that the Saviour's words came

- 1 Minutes Kirk Session Glenthorn congregation
Vol 2 p. 10
- 2 U.P. Missionary Record June 1873
- 3 Minutes Kirk Session Glenthorn congregation
Vol 2 p. 38

to him "Other men have laboured, and ye have entered into their labours." Mr. Dewar remarks : 'There is a mixture of various races here. We have not Kaffirs alone, nor Fingoes alone. Living for the most part as servants with the farmers, or ploughing the land on the half (as it is called) for the farmers, the natives found here are from different parts of Africa. Indeed it may be said that in the population of this district we have an epitome of the history of the Colony. First we have Dutch farmers, descendants of those who first colonised South Africa. Some of these attend our English Services on the Sabbath. Secondly we have Englishmen and Scotchmen and descendants of each in the race that now holds sway. Thirdly - Hottentots. Fourthly - Caffres and Fingoes.

The membership of the Church is three fewer at the close than at the beginning of the year, 1873. It might have been an increase had we admitted the candidates who have been so long in the candidate class. It was judged better to allow them to wait till next Sabbath Service.

The attendance at church is very good, usually as many as the Church can hold.

Plaatjes, the Evangelist, works diligently in going about among the people, and also acting as Dutch interpreter.

My interpreter, Pope, is worthy of notice. He is one who is known to many in the Church. For long he has been a teacher connected with the Mission at Engwali, etc., latterly he has been laid aside on account of asthma, and due to the climate of Glenthorn has obtained relief. He is an excellent interpreter, a good man and his heart is in his work.

The English congregation attendance very good.

Representatives from all the families in the district come to the services in Dutch and English.

The congregation which meets at Haining, Baviaans River, is very encouraging. I endeavour to be there one Sabbath each month." ①

Despite this auspicious beginning to his ministry Mr. Dewar removed to Quolora in 1874 and was followed at Glenthorn by Rev. Thomas Shearer. ②

1874 - 1894 The Ministry of REV. THOMAS SHEARER

Mr. Shearer's health improved considerably when he came to Glenthorn in April, 1874 and by the end of the following year he was able to report :

"I am much improved in health, and our little Church built in 1840 has had a year of blessing." ③

The Church attendances were much improved after Mr. Shearer went to Glenthorn, for it would seem that he was a good preacher and evangelist. He noted "great heartiness in the worship" ④ during the first year of his ministry.

"strong men and women cried like children when their hearts were touched with the power of Truth." ⑤

In 1874 on 20th July a Day School was opened at Glenthorn. ⑥ for native children

- 1 Annual Report Glenthorn Congregation 1873 p. 3
- 2 Minutes Kirk Session Glenthorn congregation Vol. 2 p. 86
- 3 Annual Report Glenthorn Congregation 1874 p. 2
- 4 Ibid p. 1.
5. Ibid p. 2.
- 6 Minutes of Kirk Session Glenthorn congregation Vol. 2 p. 88

A piece of land was leased about a mile from the Church because Mr. Pringle would not allow a school on his property. There were 46 children on the roll who were taught the Scriptures by Mr. Shearer and the rudiments of ordinary education by teachers employed locally. The school had been built only six months when a tempest destroyed the whole place. It took several months to rebuild and could not re-open again till March, 1875.^①

During Mr. Shearer's ministry the membership of the English speaking congregation increased to 25 at Glenthorn^② itself, and the three outstations continued to have attendances of about the same numbers. Concerning these outstations' services Mr. Shearer says :

"The monthly services are evidently appreciated and we bless God for sure signs of the good work in our midst."^③

In June, 1876 Mr. Shearer wrote to say that he considered it important to start work at Tarkastad. He mentioned that he had already started work there but that he felt the need for a man to spend all his time at this new station.

By 1880 Mr. Shearer was writing to say that the little Church, built by Mr. John Pringle in 1840 was now too small

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 121

2 Annual Report Glenthorn congregation 1875 p. 12

3 Ibid. p. 2

to hold the congregation. He meant, of course, the native congregation, for it was more than large enough to hold the handful of Europeans who attended. He wrote to say that :

"Very soon we shall attempt to put up a temporary building of wattle and daub for the native services." ①

At this time too, Mr. Shearer was in the forefront of the fight to prevent a liquor licence being granted to certain traders who wanted to procure one to sell liquor to the natives. He was successful in his attempt. ②

In 1883 the congregation at Glenthorn started their fourth outstation at a place called Thornkloof. ③ It would seem that Mr. Shearer was not altogether satisfied with this station, for at the end of the first year he says in his report :

"We should like to see more done by the Europeans here for the support of the Gospel Ordinances. We constantly remind them of their duty in this respect." ④

In Glenthorn itself 1883 was an important year because Mr. Robert Pringle, the proprietor of the land on which the Church stands, improved the building at a considerable cost to himself. ⑤

The next ten years were years of slow but obvious

- 1 U.P. Missionary Record July 1880
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Glenthorn congregation Vol 2 p 211
- 3 Ibid Vol 3 p 18
- 4 Annual Report Glenthorn congregation 1883 p. 4
- 5 Ibid p. 2

progress for the Glenthorn congregation. The European and the Native work grew till in 1893 Rev. Mr. Buchanan of the United Presbyterian Foreign Mission Board wrote as follows concerning his visit to Glenthorn :

"The European congregation here numbers 34 there being but a small number of settlers in the district as most of the farms are very extensive. But the members are earnest, and appreciate very highly the ministeries of the Missionary. The Native congregation has 144 members and 31 candidates. There are four Native elders, who, along with the Native evangelist and teachers, give Mr. Shearer much assistance in his work.

We were sorry to find that Mr. Shearer's health, even after his furlough, was not in a satisfactory state. He seems to have suffered somewhat from exposure to the sun in his long journeys to the outstations. We trust, however, that he may soon be able to throw off his illness, and may long be spared to continue the work in which he has been so earnestly engaged in the past, and for which he is so much respected and beloved by Europeans and Natives alike." ①

Mr. Shearer's health, which had never been too good, became worse in the year which followed Mr. Buchanan's visit and on June 20th 1894 he handed in his resignation to the Presbytery. ②

"Presbytery of Adelaide at a meeting on 20th June accepted the resignation of Rev. Thomas Shearer, and expressed their deep sympathy

1 U.P. Missionary Record October 1893

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with him in his illness. On the following day there was a large gathering at the Church of both old and young residents in the valley for the purpose of holding a farewell meeting with Mr. Shearer." ①

The Ministry of Rev. JOHN BLACK 1894 - 1897

After the resignation of Mr. Shearer the folk at Glenthorn turned again to Scotland for his successor. This time the man selected was Rev. John Black who sailed from London on the Grantully Castle on 7th September 1894.

The United Presbyterian Missionary Record for August 1st 1894 says this concerning Mr. Black :

"Mr. John Black was appointed on 17th April 1894 as a Missionary to Kaffraria. He is a member of Tranent Church, studied at Edinburgh University and was licensed by the Edinburgh Presbytery in July, 1892. He did not, however go on the Probationers list as he had resolved to offer himself for foreign service as soon as the way was clear for him to leave home. He has had considerable experience in preaching and in evangelistic labour and has proved himself possessed of a true Missionary spirit. He is a discreet, firm and kindly worker. Mr. Black has been appointed to succeed Mr. Shearer at Glenthorn." ②

Mr. Black proved the article in the Missionary Record to be true for in the years in which he laboured in the Mankazana Valley he became renowned for his kindness and his evangelistic

1 Quoted in U.P. Missionary Record July 1894

2 Ibid August 1894

labours. He was still working at Adelaide when the Moderator of Assembly, Rt. Rev. Robert Barr visited him in 1942, he wrote as follows :

"Yesterday was Black Monday. That is I spent it with that wonderful man of God John Black who took me round his parish where he is so deservedly revered." ①

When Mr. Black arrived at Glenthorn in October, 1894 he was inducted and ordained by the Adelaide Presbytery which records that :

"Rev. Mr. Leith, Moderator of Presbytery presided and Rev. Mr. Meikle preached the sermon." ②

No event of great importance took place between 1894 and 1897 though the Session Minute Book for July, 1895 records a discussion re the purchase of a Pulpit Gown for the Minister. It was eventually agreed :

"That though unnecessary it be agreed to purchase a gown for the Minister." ③

The annual reports tell the story of a congregation making slow but steady progress. In 1895 the Annual Report says :

"The average attendance at the Sabbath Day Services is 95..... The seats are fully let." ④

- 1 "Presbyterian Leader" June 1942 p. 10
- 2 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Adelaide Vol.1 p.
- 3 Op. cit. Vol.4 p.81
- 4 Op. cit. p.3

In 1897 when Glenthorn congregation became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, Rev. John Black was their greatly loved pastor.

ADELAIDE CONGREGATION

About twenty miles from Glenthorn stands the town of Adelaide, where a number of the 1820 settlers had made their homes. In the early days of its history dwellers in Adelaide told of hearing the cries of lions and other wild animals in the adjacent kloof. However, by 1860 the wild animals had departed, leaving the Mankazana Valley to the Scottish and other settlers.

In 1861 a number of the Adelaide Presbyterians gathered together and drew up a petition which they sent to the Foreign Missions Board of the United Presbyterian Church requesting them to provide a suitable pastor. They stated that they were engaged in building a Church, and that they offered a stipend of £250 and that they would defray the expenses of the passage and the outfit.^①

The Committee opened correspondence with Rev. Peter Davidson of Brechin and he decided to accept the call to this

1 U.P. Missionary Record February 1862
The church was at first intended as a "Union" Church for those guaranteeing the stipend were not all Presbyterians. After the arrival of Rev. P. Davidson, however, it became Presbyterian in both form and name.

new cause at Adelaide.^① Mr. Davidson stated that the state of his wife's health was such as to make him seek a more genial climate and he thought that Adelaide would be a most satisfactory place from all points of view. The Arbroath Presbytery (United Presbyterian) met on 7th January and agreed to release Mr. Davidson and it is recorded that :

"The commissioner from the congregation of High Street, Brechin said 'our very regard for him constrains us not to oppose this resignation.'" ②

He and his family set sail for South Africa in the "Norman" on 4th February, 1862.

Their arrival in Adelaide was a real event in the lives of the community of that town, and it is described in some detail in the "Grahamstown Journal," 24th May, 1862 :

"The last few days have been a season of much rejoicing in this small village, and especially to one section of our community. On Friday last we received among us a new Christian friend and guide in Rev. Peter Davidson. A considerable number of his supporters rode out to meet him and gave him a most pleasing welcome at the Yellow Wood. There were upwards of twenty gentlemen on horseback besides several ladies. These, along with several wagons and carts containing Mr. Davidson and family, as well as some friends from Grahamstown who have taken a lively interest in Union Church, formed a very pleasing spectacle as they entered Adelaide in procession. Mr. Davidson was at once conveyed to a neatly

1 Ibid. February 1862
 2 Ibid.

furnished cottage, which had been provided for him. On alighting from the wagon he attempted to say a few words to the kind friends who had given him such a hearty welcome, but he was evidently too much overcome to find words adequate to express his gratitude. He could only hope that he might long be spared among them, and that both he and they might be a comfort and a blessing to Adéaide.

On Saturday a few other Grahamstown friends arrived. Meanwhile Mr. Davidson had time to take a rapid survey of the new scene of his ecclesiastic labour. No doubt many strange thoughts rose in his mind. How small the sphere of action here compared with his former one, and yet might not the harvest be as rich! Here was a lately formed village, beautifully situated and rapidly rising into importance, inhabited by people of many sects, of many tongues, and brought together in this wild spot of South Africa from many and far distant places. He had come among these to live and to labour. He had left for them his own dear Fatherland and all its endearing ties, and strong in the Lord, was now prepared to bind them all into one Christian brotherhood in which love and peace might dwell.

Sunday was devoted to the dedication of Union Chapel to the Services of God and to the Induction of Rev. Peter Davidson as pastor of its people. The Rev. Robert Johnston of Trinity Church, Grahamstown, preached the opening service. He chose his text 2 Timothy 3 v 7 "Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." The discourse was divided into three parts. The first treating of the school - the Church on earth - which God hath established among men. The second of the Teacher of this School, even the Holy spirit. The third of the Holy Bible, which has been given as a text book in this school. The conclusion was well suited to the occasion.

Mr. Davidson was introduced by Rev. R. Johnston as one of those called by God to be the instrument, in the hand of the Spirit of expounding and unfolding to fallen man the precious words of life which were written in this glorious text book.

The afternoon services were conducted by Mr. Davidson, who, as the basis of his first address, chose Eph. 1. 10 "That in the dispensation of time" We doubt if those present could have heard a calmer or more impressive sermon. Mr. Davidson's preaching is not eloquent nor sublime - it is simple and instructive. It is of that kind which never fails to find its way into the heart. The congregation of Union Chapel are indeed blessed in their pastor. Under his faithful and earnest teaching much good, we are sure, will be effected in their midst.

Rev. W.G. Stegman of the Dutch Reformed Church preached in the evening. Having read the beautiful 5th chapter of Isaiah, he took for the subject of his remarks the fourth verse "What could have been done more....." In the first part he spoke in a general manner of what God had done for his vineyard on earth; in the second part he recounted a few of the many blessings God had showered upon the male portion of the great vineyard; his concluding remarks were affecting. As up to this period he had been, as far as lay in his power, their pastor, he could not but now feel sad at parting from them, but at the same time he rejoiced to think he was handing them over to such a worthy and approved servant of God as Mr. Davidson, and he felt sure that the little good accomplished under his inefficient services would now be doubled and trebled. Thus ended the services of the first Lord's Day in Union Chapel. The collections at the three assemblies amounted to £50. 2. 6d. Of this money £21 collected in the afternoon go to defray Mr. Davidson's expenses to this land; the remainder to the general fund.

To add still more to the kindly welcome given Mr. Davidson, on Monday evening a Tea Meeting was held in the schoolroom. The place was quite crowded, and presented a most comfortable and cheering appearance. Among those present were many from the neighbourhood and a few Bedford friends. After tea was over and the social chit-chat which ever encircles the tea-table had put everyone in a good humour, Rev. W. Stegman kindly took the chair and then followed addresses "short but sweet" from Rev. James Reid, John Cummings, Edward Solomon and Robert Johnston; last of all came a few touching words from Rev. Peter Davidson. Between these speakers Mr. Pann of Grahamstown made a few humorous remarks..... At the close, the chairman presented Union Chapel with a splendid Bible, which had been sent as a gift by Saul Solomon Esq., of Capetown; on the back of it was engraved on a beautiful brass plate "United Presbyterian Church, Adelaide, Cape of Good Hope, 1862"

The Meeting closed at 10 p.m. All seemed to leave the place highly pleased with the manner in which the evening had been spent.

In closing this statement it may not be amiss to add that the whole expense connected with the building of Union Chapel has been defrayed. Upwards of £180 has also been collected to meet Mr. Davidson's expenses, and the balance, I am happy to say, a few kind friends have promised to settle. The Union Chapel is free from debt." ①

Mr. Davidson also wrote describing his arrival at Adelaide and giving a picture of the town and the work he was called to do. In the United Presbyterian Missionary Record of October 1862 his letter is quoted as follows :

"We left Port Elizabeth on the morning of 25th June and reached Grahamstown on the same day a

1 Op. cit. 29th May 1862

little after sunset, and were most cordially met by my very dear brother Rev. Johnston and his excellent wife. I remained here a fortnight, preached thirteen times and attended a minister's prayer meeting. There are many earnest Christian men and women here, and Mr. Johnston is labouring in the midst of a lively, zealous and praying people. We had several very solemn and impressive revival meetings in his Church, and in the other churches I heard from several ministers good fruit is already appearing.

My Church at Adelaide is claimed by Mr. Johnston's Church as their first little but very healthy and hopeful daughter. The one in Kingwilliamstown (for whom I hope and pray that you may find an able minister of the Gospel and excellent pastor) is looked upon as the second - a very large and promising child. The wish of the Grahamstown people is to see a very large family of daughters around them by and by.

His people are not rich, but many of them feel it to be truly a privilege to give of their substance for the support of the spread of the Gospel.

Adelaide

On 8th May we started to Adelaide, Mr. Johnston and several of his congregation accompanying us and others of them following on the Saturday. We reached the Fish River at sunset, and put up there for the night. This river encircles Adelaide in a semi-circle.

Never was a minister more enthusiastically received by a congregation. My arrival in Adelaide was a day of great rejoicing on the part of those who had sent for me.

I have been with them five Sabbaths, and it is truly a pleasure to preach to them. They seem to be thirsting for the water of life. This is evident not only by their attendance and attention on Sabbath days, but at the prayer meetings chiefly. These are held in the Church twice a week, and all are attended by the large portion of the congregation.

The congregation numbers 70 - 80 and about twenty have conversed with me about sitting down at the Lord's Table. This includes those who possess certificates of membership already. The congregation would have been much larger had not the Church of England been first in the field. Their congregation, I understand, is about the size of our own or rather larger, but they have only three or four communicants.

A little more than three years ago there were only three houses in Adelaide, and now there are three hundred. The white population is estimated at 700, and the native at 600. My congregation means to form a mission Church among the natives. In the meantime Rev. W.G. Stegman of the Dutch Reformed Church preaches to the natives. Ten or twelve of them who understand English (they all speak Dutch here) have asked and obtained permission to sit with us. A committee has been appointed to draw up a constitution for our Church, which in its leading features I hope and trust shall be United Presbyterians." ①

Mr. Davidson certainly received a splendid welcome at Adelaide, but the years that were to come were to bring him a bewildering mixture of happiness and sorrow, of success and failure. The first blow which he and the congregation received was on 10th October, 1862 when Mrs. Davidson died. He wrote to the United Presbyterian Missionary Record as follows :

"The tender and considerate kindness of the people here both Dutch and English, especially of one gentleman in our Church was NEVER surpassed.....I may say the whole town

1 Op. cit. October 1862

followed her body to the grave.....
 On Sabbath 19th October Mr. Solomon of Bedford preached to my people making an improvement of the sad dispensation. And Mr. Johnston of Grahamstown preached most appropriate sermons on the Sabbath following. I think, and many are of that opinion, that her happy death in the midst of this people has done great good already and may do much more. And I hope and earnestly pray that I may not be left without the sanctified use of this solemn and deeply moving dispensation of Providence."①

These were the words of a true Christian but his faith was to be tried even more in the days ahead. However, he did not fail then, or ever after, to bear splendid testimony to the faith that was in him.

There were two congregations at Adelaide as there were at Glenthorn. They both met in the same Church but at different times, and, as at Glenthorn, they were run as separate congregations having one minister. Both the European and the Native congregations progressed under the evangelistic efforts of Mr. Peter Davidson, and in 1870 he reported :

"Seven years have now passed since I formed the native Church in Adelaide with only four communicants. The present number is 50; that of the congregation 150. The Income for five years not less than £25 and one year it was above £35....."②

1 Op. cit. December 1862
 2 Annual Report Adelaide Congregation 1870

In 1871 Mr. Davidson, along with the other ministers of the Kaffraria Presbytery,^① had to face an exodus of both Europeans and Natives from their area. Diamonds had been discovered at Kimberley and Coal was being mined in the Stormberg mountains and these two lucrative industries drew away large numbers of the people.

In 1874 Mr. Davidson wrote giving a picture of his work at Adelaide :

"there are always three or frequently four services conducted by me at the central station every Sabbath Day, equally divided between Europeans and Natives, and one service conducted by a native elder in the Native Church. Besides these, on all the other Sabbaths of the month save the first, services are conducted by the elders and evangelists in the district. In the European Church we have a prayer meeting early every Sabbath morning, one in the native Church every Monday evening, a Bible Class for young women every Monday and European Bible Class every Wednesday and a meeting for instruction and exhortation every Thursday for Europeans.

Some years ago one of the office bearers began the practice of inviting his neighbours whether belonging to the Church or not, to join with him in family worship. His example in this has been followed, not only by the other office bearers in the Church, but also by many of the members. Where this practice is observed religion is in excellent condition.

Knooap A Prosperous station, very much owing to the labours of one of the deacons who resides there,

1 The Presbytery was still named U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria in 1871. It only became the U.P. Adelaide Presbytery in 1889 Vide Page 265

and who by family worship as above exerts influence in six areas round the village.
Crumie Calvertheim it was formerly called We are trying to put one or two Xosa people to settle here. The Congregation on Sabbath is 30 -40. The Europeans/ regularly present WITH Caffres (I have not seen this elsewhere).
Cowie is/ ⁱⁿ a lively spiritual state. The elder is unwearied in his efforts." ①

The work at the Native Mission in Adelaide was, however, none too easy. In the beginning Mr. Davidson had held the native services in the European Church, but when this had been found impracticable he had moved to a schoolroom nearby. Objections were then lodged by the local inhabitants that the natives were using a European schoolroom, so they moved to a stable and coach house where the native services were held for many months. Unfortunately in 1870 a terrible storm brought the stable down in ruins and they had again to seek accommodation elsewhere. Mr. Davidson describes what followed in this way :

"The same Providence which had planted this infant cause here, continued to watch over it now. At this point in our history the Lord sent the proprietor of the OLD Dutch Reformed Church to offer it to us on MOST generous terms." ②

Thus it was that the native church moved over into the

- 1 Annual Report Adelaide congregation 1874 quoted in U.P. Missionary Record December 1874
- 2 U.P. Missionary Record November 1870

building vacated by the Dutch Reformed congregation who that year (1870) had built themselves a magnificent new Church.

From this time onwards the Reports sent by Mr. Davidson all speak of progress in all departments of the work. It seemed as if this was the turning point in their history. In 1877 a revival became evident among the black and white members and brought Mr. Davidson the joy of seeing many of his congregation 'won for the Lord!' ①

In 1880 Mr. Davidson was at Glenthorn on holiday when a terrible tragedy befell him. His little boy aged five disappeared from the garden of Mr. Shearer's manse. The date was 10th June, 1880. ② The people of the district searched day and night for weeks until they said that he must be dead. The distracted minister refused to believe the boy was dead but alas it was so. An unfriendly native had kidnapped the child and taken him into the forest and put him to death. Mr. Davidson never really recovered from this blow for he spoke about it as late as 1893 as "the terrible blow which befell him." ③

The year 1880 was a bad year for Mr. Davidson and

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Adelaide congregation Vol 2 p 42
2 Ibid Vol 2 p 81
3 "The Pringle letters"

his work, for not only did he lose his little boy, but the fear of war affected both native and European work. He wrote as follows to the Foreign Mission Board in December, 1880 :

"For some months my native congregation on the Lord's Day as well as on week nights dwindled away to one third or a quarter their former numbers. Even those who were present seemed to have no heart in the services. There was no reason why it should be so. To all my enquiries among the office bearers the only reply was a shake of the head or a shrug of the shoulders. At length one of them said to me, on a Sabbath afternoon 'I have come to tell you the cause of all this deadness and indifference in our Church. You know all the different tribes are fighting against one another, Fingoes against Kaffirs and Hottentots against Basutos and thousands of loyal natives from the Colony going up with thousands of white men to fight against the rebel tribes. We have Kaffirs, Fingoes, Basutos, Hottentots in nearly equal parts and they are all carrying on war against each other in their heart. With these feelings they cannot sit comfortably in the House of God and hear the Word, and they know that it would be very wrong to sit down together at the Lord's Table.'"

'We have been speaking to the people about this matter and have been trying to show them how very sinful it is. Many of the people see how wrong it is, BUT.....'

The Income has increased during the year due to the European Sale of Work who by an extra effort collected £19 in aid of extra expenditure or repairs.

The school still flourishes; two native youths

were sent to Lovedale last year. A Liberal grant from ^{the} Government through Dr. Dale (£20 per annum) has been received. The Membership of ^{the} European Church has increased to 32 and the religious condition of the congregation is much improved." ①

It was 1882 before the storm of war was over and in the years of strife the evangelistic minister at Adelaide kept the cause going for both whites and blacks. It is a great tribute to his Christian character that even when the war was raging he still held the two sections of his Church together "in the bonds of peace". ② The attendance was 51 Europeans each Sunday by 1882 and 150 natives and by 1884 Mr. Davidson reported to Scotland that the European attendance was 71 and the native attendance 300. ③

In 1893 Rev. Mr. Buchanan, Secretary of the United Presbyterian Mission Board visited Adelaide, and he wrote home to say :

"We were sorry to find on our arrival that Mr. Davidson was seriously unwell. He had been injured by a fall from the conveyance in which he was travelling home from the Welcome Meeting held at Glenthorn on the occasion of Mr. Shearer's return from Edinburgh. We were glad to notice before leaving a decided improvement in Mr. Davidson's condition, and news received since our return shows that he is able for a moderate amount of ministerial work. He feels now, however, that he must be relieved of the active

- 1 Quoted in U.P. Missionary Record January 1881
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Adelaide Congregation Vol.2 p.106
- 3 Vide Annual Report Adelaide congregation 1882 and 1884

superintendence of the work in which he has for so many years been engaged, and his people, though reluctant to lose his services, have acquiesced in this arrangement. His name has, accordingly, been placed on the list of the annuitants on the Aged and Infirm Ministers and Missionaries Fund, and we hope that very soon a new minister may be secured to take up the interesting and important work which he has been compelled to lay down." ①

By this time Adelaide congregation was under the Presbytery of Adelaide formed in 1889^② and at a meeting of the Presbytery held in Glenthorn on 12th January, 1893 it was agreed to sustain the call from Adelaide congregation to Mr. R. Meikle not yet ordained.^③ The Ordination and Induction was duly arranged to take place at Adelaide on 5th February^④ and in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record for April 1894 it is described as follows :

"Sabbath 5th was set apart as the day for Mr. Meikle's ordination. The interest excited in the ceremony was very great, numbers of European farmers and others from the surrounding districts coming to witness it. We had three services at the European Church. Mr. Dewar of Tarkastad preached the ordination sermon in the morning, in the afternoon the ordination took place, when the retiring minister, Rev. Peter Davidson, resigned his office. The ordination then followed, and the charge was given to the new minister by Mr. Leith of Somerset East. In the evening Mr. Meikle himself preached. The Native congregation

1 U.P. Missionary Record August 1893

2 Vide page 265

3 Minutes of U.P. Adelaide Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 116

4 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 116

was not overlooked, Rev. James Davidson taking the afternoon service and Rev. J.H. Soga the evening.

The services throughout the day were exceedingly impressive and were followed with great interest by the people. The kindly and affectionate welcome given to Mr. Meikle should do much to smooth the way for him and to speed the important work which he has begun." ①

Mr. Peter Davidson continued to live in Adelaide where he had given such devoted service and from time to time he assisted Mr. Meikle in the services. Alas, the years of missionary trial had taken their toll and in 1896 a year before the Union of the South African Presbyterian Churches, Peter Davidson, Missionary and Evangelist, passed to his eternal rest. Mr. Meikle wrote the following obituary for him in the March issue of the United Presbyterian Missionary Record :

"Mr. Davidson was born 73 years ago at Forres, Aberdeenshire, and belonged to a family which gave several sons to the ministry. One brother is one of our missionaries in Kaffraria and another, now retired was a minister in Adelaide, Australia, where he still resides, and a third became a minister in Canada. The family belonged to the congregation of Craigdam a Church that has given many of her members to the ministry. Mr. Davidson spoke often of his Mother, of her deep piety, her great love for the Church, and her warm interest in

1 Op. cit. p.28

mission work, and he used often to say that it was the influence of her strong religious character and her prayers that led so many of her sons to give themselves to the Master's Service. His parents were in humble circumstances and Mr. Davidson had a hard struggle to maintain himself when pursuing his career as a student. For a time he laboured as a Missionary in Glasgow and on completing his course he was called to Shiels, Stonehaven, and High Street, Brechin, and having been ordained over the last named congregation in 1856 laboured there for five years. A remarkable revival took place during the time of his ministry there, and he had the joy of receiving many of the converts into the membership of the Church. Owing to his wife's health he was compelled in January, 1862 to resign his Church in Brechin. He accepted the invitation of a number of people in Adelaide, Cape Colony who desired to form a Church, to be their first minister, and there he laboured for the long period of 33 years. He had many difficulties to contend with during the last years of his ministry but he succeeded in building up a congregation which though never large, has been characterised by much spiritual vitality. At the same time he carried on mission work among the natives and was likewise successful in building up a strong native Church, which has been a great power for good in the district. Two years ago, on account of failing health, Mr. Davidson retired from the active work of the Churches and Rev. Thomas Meikle was sent out to succeed him. From time to time he was able to take a service, even occupying the pulpit on the Sabbath before he died. Although he laboured in a somewhat restricted sphere, yet his ministry was abundantly fruitful and there are many today in various parts of the Colony who are his children in the Lord.

Mr. Davidson was a man of fervent zeal, a man who abounded in prayers, a man who was instant in season and out of season watching for souls. It was truly remarked at his funeral that though his removal Adelaide had lost a great prayer power from her midst.

He was a man of superior gifts, was widely read warm hearted, and of a cheerful disposition. He was beloved by young and old alike. He was ever a man of strong will. In his earlier years perhaps he had more than his share of Scotch "dourness" which made him somewhat intolerant and uncharitable to those who differed from him in belief, but with advancing years while he ever held strongly to his own beliefs, this characteristic disappeared.

It is perhaps a misfortune that his ministry was confined to one sphere, for he had such an aptitude for evangelistic work combined with almost apostolic zeal, that, had he been free to go from place to place, his life's work might have been greater than it has been. His memory will, long live in the affection of his people, and the Great Day will reveal the many seals he had to his ministry."^①

It was the year 1896 and just over twelve months later, Mr. Meikle and his congregation and his Presbytery linked up with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

TARKASTAD CONGREGATION

In June 1876 Mr. Shearer, the minister at Glenthorn wrote home to the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church to say that forty miles from Glenthorn,

1 Op. cit. March 1896

at a place called Tarka, the European farmers held a service every two months, and that as he is the nearest English speaking minister he does what he can for them. He could not go to them every two months so the minister ~~from~~ Queenstown, a Congregationalist, supplied for him when he could not attend. ⁽¹⁾

Mr. Shearer urged upon the Foreign Mission Board that :

"Tarka is a very important sphere in which work can be done for the Master. " ⁽²⁾

and that a man should be stationed there. He reported that every time he had taken the service the attendance had been over 35. Moreover a native service was also held at a farm three miles from the town, at which over 50 were always present. ⁽³⁾

The next step was a petition in June, 1877 from the people at Tarkastad, asking the Foreign Mission Board for a minister, and promising to pay a stipend of £300 per annum and stating that they would require no financial assistance from the home Church. The reply to their petition was favourable and the result was that Rev. J. Dewar accepted the call to this new congregation. ⁽⁴⁾

1 Quoted in U.P. Missionary Record August 1876

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p.201

Mr. Dewar had been at Quolora Mission station but the Kaffir War of 1877 had destroyed the work and the station.⁽¹⁾ He was, thus without a settled charge when the call to go to Tarkastad came to him. He was settled at Tarkastad in May, 1878.⁽²⁾

Mr. Dewar soon settled down among the generous and earnest Presbyterians of Tarkastad and within a year he was able to report :

1. That the native Mission had a weekly attendance of over 200.
2. That the European attendance was up to 60 each Sunday.
3. That steps have been taken to build a Church.⁽³⁾

In the July issue of the United Presbyterian Missionary Record Mr. Dewar wrote to say that the Church had been completed and that the debt was well on the way to being cleared :

"The outstanding event of the year 1879 in the Tarka district was the opening of a neat substantially built Church for public worship. Rev. E. Solomon of Bedford, formerly missionary of London Missionary Society conducted the opening services and Rev. George de Villiers of the Dutch Church, Tarkastad addressed the Dutch people who were present. Ere the meeting closed

1 Vide page 257

2 Minutes of U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p. 221

3 Annual Report Tarkastad Congregation 1879 p. 3

subscriptions were promised nearly sufficient to clear the debt. Mr. George King, the farmer who gave the site gave liberally also of his substance and in many ways encouraged and helped the development of the cause.

The Church seats 100 and the average attendance is 62. Services have been regularly maintained through the year except for one month when illness prevented.

On the occasion of the opening in May I asked them to meet every fortnight to which they agreed."^①

Within another year the congregation of Tarkastad had started an outstation at Tarka, where Mr. Dewar held a monthly service.^② The Church at Tarka cost £300 and was built by the farmers themselves. It was opened almost free of debt. In addition to the European service at Tarka, the European elders conducted a weekly service for the natives.

When the deputies, Rev. J. Carstairs and W. Slowan visited Tarkastad in 1884 they reported as follows :

"On Friday we drove from Queenstown to Tarkastad. Saturday was spent in going over Mr. Dewar's Presbytery Records. On Sunday we preached. The Church is a neat structure which seats 250; it cost £1900 and was opened in 1883. There is a debt of £400 outstanding the rest of the cost having been raised by the people themselves. There are twenty-nine members two of them are elders and the attendance is 100 on ordinary occasions. The attendance at the Sabbath School is 110. This little cause

1 Op. cit. July 1879

2 Ibid. July 1880

has been from the first self-supporting, and it is greatly to the credit of such a small community that they have provided themselves with such an excellent and suitable place or worship and maintained ordinances as they have done. A portion of Mr. Dewar's stipend is contributed by a small congregation at Tarka on the north side of the Winterberg fifteen miles away to whom he ministers on one Sabbath in every month. The little Church here cost £300 and was built by the farmers themselves." ⁽¹⁾

In 1887 it was decided to open a day School for the natives, and the homestead of Mr. H. Nash at Swallow Krantz was offered for this purpose. The school opened on 4th April, 1887 with fortytwo scholars. ⁽²⁾

When Mr. Buchanan, Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Board, visited Tarkastad in 1893 he was much impressed with what he saw. Mr. Dewar was in charge of a flourishing European Church in the town, as well as a native Mission and a native day School. In addition, at Tarka, fifteen miles away, Mr. Dewar was responsible for the establishment of a European congregation and a Native congregation. Moreover, at both Tarka and Tarkastad fine Church buildings had been erected which were almost free of debt. No wonder he reported to the Foreign Missionary Board that :

"Mr. Dewar is a true Missionary and a

1 Report of Deputies Carstairs and W. Slowan

2 Annual Report Tarkastad congregation 1887 p 1.

devoted worker for his Lord. He carried to the upland district of Tarkastad with its picturesque flat-topped mountains, the missionary spirit which first led him to South Africa."

Mr. Dewar remained many years at Tarkastad and was the Minister of that congregation when they became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa,^① in 1897.

SOMERSET EAST and GLENAVON CONGREGATIONS

In 1870 Somerset East was a town of 2000 inhabitants, many of whom were of Scots descent. In 1872 one of these Scottish settlers, Mr. Robert Hart of Glenavon left in his will the sum of £1,300 "to endow a Presbyterian Church at Somerset East."^②

The local Presbyterians got together as a result of this bequest and they built a Church which cost £2000. The cost of the building was completely defrayed by 1876, and steps were being taken to build a manse when a tempest struck the town and utterly wrecked the Church.^③ It had to be renewed and the cost was again £2000. The un-
partly
daunted Presbyterians began again and rebuilt and paid for

1 U. P. Missionary Record June 1894
2 John Black "Notes on the Jubilee of Somerset East Congregation"
3 Ibid.

the second building by 1882. ⁽¹⁾

When the first Church was built in 1872 the Presbyterians of Somerset East approached the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church for a minister and the result was the appointment of Rev. William Leith, formerly of Airth. Mr. Leith arrived at Somerset East in May 1874 and began his work. ⁽²⁾

The 1877 Kaffir War had the effect of withdrawing large numbers of the natives from the area but nevertheless, Mr. Leith managed to keep his native missions from disappearing altogether.

After the War Mr. Leith extended his work at a great rate and he became responsible for the establishment of the following outstations between 1880 and 1896, namely

- Glenavon, Cookhouse, Glenburnie, Karenga and Baviaans River. ⁽³⁾

In his Annual report for 1882 Mr. Leith says that :

"The outstations are for the most part under the care of the elders and native evangelists. I visit each one in turn, which means I conduct a service at each outstation once in every six or seven weeks." ⁽⁴⁾

Mr. Leith seems to have been one who was strong on

- 1 Ibid.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Op cit 1882 p. 2.

the importance of Church discipline for his reports often mention :

"cases of backsliding for which we had to exercise discipline." ①

He must have been a man of deep devotion to his work for he never fails to record that

"there were five or six conversions at the services this month." ②

In 1883 Klaas Goyana died; he had been Mr. Leith's assistant in the work among the natives and Mr. Leith writes an eulogy of him in the Kirk Session Minutes in which he says inter alia :

"He was my most trusted helper and the work here is the poorer for his passing." ③

In the same year the deputies, Rev. J. Carstairs and W. Slowan visited Somerset East and they reported that :

"Mr. Leith was doing splendid work after having seen his original Church building blown down. There are fortyfive members with one elder at the European Church; the average attendance each Sabbath is fiftyfive. The congregation is now setting itself the task of clearing the debt of £2000 which remains on the second Church built after the first one had been blown down." ④

Mr. Leith continued to build up the work in his own efficient way, and when Mr. Buchanan visited Somerset East

1 Annual Report Somerset East and Glenavon 1882 and 1883

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Somerset East and Glenavon June 1882
Vol. 1 p. 286

3 Op. cit. Vol. 1 p. 321

4 Report of Deputies J. Carstairs and W. Slowan.

and Glenavon in 1893 he reported as follows :

"A long day's journey (50 miles) brought us from Adelaide to Somerset East, where Rev. Wm. Leith carries on his labours. The town is one of considerable importance with a population of nearly 3000 about two-thirds of whom are white. As in the other towns there is here a Dutch Reformed Church and an Episcopalian Chapel and in addition there is also a Wesleyan Mission.

Mr. Leith's congregation consists of sixty two members and has three elders; while native work is carried on under Mr. Leith's superintendence and with the help of the Native Evangelist both in that town and at two outstations.

We conducted services as usual in the Church in the town and one at the outstation of Glenavon." ①

There was nothing spectacular about the work at Somerset East but the Presbyterian Ordinances of worship were regularly maintained under what were at times difficult circumstances.

It was Mr. Leith who was the minister in 1897 when Somerset East became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

CHAPTER 6

INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES WITHIN THE MISSIONARY PRESBYTERIES

The Missionaries sent out from both the United Presbyterian and Free Churches of Scotland were concerned first and foremost with the conversion of the native, and therefore although it could never be said that they entirely neglected their fellow-countrymen they nevertheless, regarded the establishment of European congregations as secondary to their missionary object. For this reason and also because of the extreme shortage of ministers and the great distances between towns it was not surprising that in many of the larger towns within the Missionary Presbyteries the local Scotsmen formed themselves into 'Independent Scottish Churches' which, although Presbyterian in form and doctrine were nevertheless unconnected with any local Presbytery. For the most part this type of congregation was confined to the larger towns for the Missionaries rightly felt that their duties did not lie in such places, consequently in Port Elizabeth and East London and in Craddock and Grahamstown the

Scotsmen gathered themselves together and approached the Churches in Scotland for financial and ministerial assistance without the assistance of the local Presbytery of Kaffraria.

In a smaller country this might have been differently regarded but when it is remembered that it was a four day journey from Port Elizabeth to Lovedale and a five day journey from East London and that the roads were all but non-existent, then it is easier to understand. The geography of the Eastern Cape was such as to isolate the various towns and consequently the Independent Scottish Churches of East London, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth areas were founded and grew ^{up}/almost independently of the Presbytery.

It should be emphasised that in some cases their development was not entirely independent of the Kaffraria Presbytery. In the case of East London for example after starting independently they eventually came under the aegis of the Kaffrarian Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland. ^①

1 Vide Page 219 ff.

PORT ELIZABETH CONGREGATION

Port Elizabeth, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century, was the second largest port on the South African coast and having a fine natural harbour there soon developed round it a flourishing town. It was here that the 1820 Settlers had landed and it was in Port Elizabeth that many of them eventually made their homes. There were, of course numerous Scotsmen and their families in the town and in 1861 the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland received a letter from a Mr. Joseph Reid of Port Elizabeth stating :

"that for some years the Presbyterians have gathered each Sabbath in the Gray Institute for Sabbath worship conducted by passing Chaplains, missionaries or Wesleyan ministers," ①

The letter pointed out that the numbers of Presbyterians in the city were now such that they felt that they could form a congregation and call a minister and they requested that steps be taken to make an appointment. They could pay they said £120 per annum towards his keep. ②

The Colonial Committee viewed the matter "with delight" ③

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol 3 p 58
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 58
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 58

and approached Rev. John Tait but he declined.^① Then an approach was made to Rev. George Renny^② of Aberlemno who had been recommended as

"a suitable person for that important station"^③

and he agreed to accept the invitation and he was duly appointed.^④

The ministry of REV. GEORGE RENNY 1862 - 1868

Mr. Renny arrived in Port Elizabeth on 28th December 1861 and the opening services were held on the last Sunday of the year. "The Eastern Province Herald," a newspaper published in Port Elizabeth described the opening as follows :

"Rev. G. Renny, formerly of Aberlemno, who was appointed by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland to the proposed Scottish congregation in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, has entered on his field of labour amid circumstances of much encouragement.

The services connected with the opening of the Scotch Church in Port Elizabeth were held in the Hall of the Gray Institute on the last Sabbath of the year, and, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, were numerously attended.

The forenoon service was conducted by the Venerable pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church of Uitenhage, Rev. Mr. Smith, the patriarch of the Presbyterian Churches of this Province,

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 66
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 71
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 71
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 82

most of them having been established during his incumbency and inaugurated by him. He was assisted by the esteemed pastor of the coloured congregation of the town, Rev. Mr. Robson, who was educated in and sympathises with the Presbyterian principles.

Mr. Smith delivered a very able address, at the close of which he congratulated the Scotch Presbyterians of Port Elizabeth on the success which had attended their efforts to obtain a minister of their own persuasion and one who came to them so highly recommended as Mr. Renny. He trusted they would show themselves worthy of him by receiving him kindly, and that they would endeavour to strengthen his hands in the solemn and important work to which he had been called. The rest of the service was conducted by Mr. Robson, who invoked the Divine Blessing on the work which had been begun, on the labours and ministry of the pastor, and on the congregation. Mr. Renny officiated in the evening to a very numerous and highly respectable audience, taking for his text "Christ in you the hope of glory." His discourse was listened to with breathless attention, and was characterised by great eloquence and clearness. His illustrations were exceedingly appropriate, and his manner and action highly impressive. He exhibits great freedom in the pulpit, and by his earnestness and fervour rivets the attention and penetrates the hearts of his hearers.

We congratulate our Presbyterian fellow-townsmen on their good fortune in having secured the services of so able and devoted a minister and we confidently predict that under so experienced a lead as Mr. Renny, the Scottish Presbyterians will soon become one of the most numerous and influential congregations in the town, and we sincerely tender them the right hand of fellowship." ①

At the conclusion of the service Mr. Renny intimated to the

1 Op. cit. 2nd January 1862

congregation

"his desire that all who were members of the Scotch Church would meet himself, Rev. Mr. Smith and Mr. Robson, who had kindly consented to act with him, in the room of the Gray Institute on the following forenoon for the purpose of being admitted to Church membership and forming a temporary Kirk Session. A goodly number have already availed themselves of the meetings and become members while a greater number signified their adherence to the cause. A public social was held next evening in the same place and was numerously attended. The chair was occupied by Rev. Mr. Smith, who, after invoking Divine Blessing, stated that the meeting had been convened for the purpose of introducing Mr. Renny to his brother clergymen and fellow labourers. The addresses delivered by several ministers on that occasion were characterised by a spirit of brotherly love and kindness. A hearty welcome by different speakers was given to Mr. Renny." ①

The congregation and Kirk Session were thus properly constituted soon after the arrival of Mr. Renny and at a Meeting of the Kirk Session held on 4th January, 1862 it was agreed :

"To draw up a constitution embodying the Principles of the Presbyterian Church and to adhere to its doctrines laid down in the Westminster Confession." ②

Mr. Renny soon set about the task of building up the congregation, and within two months had established a

1 Ibid.

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol.1 p.3

splendid Sabbath School and a weekly Prayer Meeting. By the end of the first year his Annual Report states :

"There are now 120 Communicants, of which 14 have been received during the year. Harmony prevades the whole congregation. Sabbath Day attendances are over 200 in the morning and 150 in the evening. We delight to report the flourishing condition of the Sabbath School." ①

In a letter sent to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church in Scotland Mr. Renny said :

"I have now been in Port Elizabeth for just over one year and I must say that our Presbyterian interest has advanced beyond my utmost expectation." ②

In 1864 the congregation decided to acquire a building of its own and a site was procured on the hill overlooking the Harbour. The situation of the Church was in later years to provide a nickname for the church, namely "The Hill Church" and by this name it has been known for over fifty years. In the beginning however it was simply styled "The Port Elizabeth Presbyterian Church."

At the congregational Meeting held in February, 1864 it was agreed :

"to take steps to build a Church" ③

and a Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Weir was

1 Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1862

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland
Vol. 3 p.161

3 Quoted in Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1864

appointed to raise the necessary funds. No application for financial assistance was made to Scotland, and yet by February, 1865 a magnificent Church had been built costing £4,000 of which £1220 had already been subscribed.

The opening services were conducted on 19th February, 1865 by Rev. R. Johnston of Grahamstown and Rev. A. Chalmers, both from the United Presbyterian Church^① and as the Eastern Province Herald so aptly puts it :

"The Presbyterians in this city are now fully established"^②

With the building of the new Church the progress of the congregation was steady and sure. By the end of 1866 there were 200 communicants and its debt was nearing its final payment.^③ This was all the more laudable in view of the depression which had affected the whole country in the 1850's and 1860's.

Mr. Renny began to play an increasingly important part in the life of Port Elizabeth, being on such Committees as the Library Committee and the Hospital Board. He was, moreover, in a strategic position with regard to the arrival of missionaries from Overseas most of whom spent

1 "Eastern Province Herald" 21st February 1865

2 Ibid.

3 Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1866

a few days in his manse. The congregation had built a house alongside the Church in 1865 and it was a place

"where Christian fellowship and sound advice abounded." ①

Alas, in 1867, due to failing health, Mr. Renny felt obliged to resign and return to Scotland. In a letter to the Colonial Committee he said this of his own work :

"These were important years in the history of my ministry. It was with considerable anxiety and fear that I resigned connection with my former Flock, Aberlemno, separate from Presbyterian brethren of whom I might take counsel and obliged in novel and peculiar circumstances to rely solely on my own judgment in matters which not only affected the prosperity but in some cases the very existence of the Presbyterian cause in this place. I needed peculiarly the guidance and wisdom which is from above. God, however, was pleased not to forsake me in the hour of trial, and now, at the close of five years history, there are many hearts among us ready to crown our labours and anxiety with songs of Thanksgiving." ②

His labours had certainly been crowned with success and it was with genuine regret that the Session Clerk recorded :

"Mr. Renny, dearly beloved and greatly used servant of the Lord, has this day handed in his resignation. It is accepted with deep regret and the hope that a sojourn in Scotland will completely restore him to health." ③

- 1 Quoted from letter from Mr. J. Chalmers in Free Church Missionary Record June 1866
- 2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland
- 3 Minutes Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol. 1 p. 147

He had been responsible for guiding Port Elizabeth Presbyterianism at a most important stage of its history and it was well for the cause that so fine an administrator and so devout a servant of the Church should have been placed there at that time. As he says in his letter he had to rely solely on his own judgment for the nearest brother minister was 80 to 100 trackless miles away in Grahamstown. He had written in 1864 suggesting the formation of a local Presbytery^① and although it had received the agreement of the Committee, nothing came of it. But he left Port Elizabeth knowing that his labours had not been in vain.

Ministry of REV. DAVID N. WALKER 1869 - 1871

After the departure of Mr. Renny, the Kirk Session and congregation turned to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church for assistance in finding a successor. The minutes read as follows :

" A letter was received from the Kirk Session of the congregation of Port Elizabeth South Africa, to the effect that the said congregation had resolved to apply for a minister to this Committee AND the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church,

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol. 1 p.231

offering a salary of £350 per annum and £150 for expenses and passage." ①

During the vacancy Mr. J. Smith, the itinerant probationer from Natal Presbytery was asked to fill the pulpit and this he did with much acceptance. ② Indeed, an attempt was made to get him to remain, but he intimated that he had no desire to accept the call as he was committed to certain work in Pietermaritzburg. He could remain only for three months. Meanwhile Mr. Renny appeared before the Committee in Scotland and stressed the claims of the Port Elizabeth congregation, explaining the importance of the cause and the need for a suitable man. An approach was made to Rev. Mr. Balgarnie of Wolwich but he declined and it was February, 1869 when at last a man was found :

Wool-

"Mr. D.M. Walker, a probationer, was not unwilling to entertain a proposal for his appointment. It was agreed to hear him preach." ③

He was duly accepted and after communicating with the United Presbyterian Mission Board for the appointment was a joint one, Dundee Presbytery was requested to proceed with the ordination of Mr. Walker according to the laws of the Church. ④

- 1 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol.4 p.29
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol.2 p.31
- 3 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol.4 p.48
- 4 Ibid.Vol.4 p.51 The communicating with the U.P. Mission Board was due to the fact that Mr. Walkers appointment was a joint one, both U.P. and F.C. contributing towards his salary.

Rev. D. Walker arrived in Port Elizabeth in July of the same year and was welcomed at a public service on the first Sabbath in August when once again the preacher was Rev. R. Johnston of Grahamstown.^①

Mr. Walker's ministry lasted but two years, for by June, 1871 he had resigned and returned to Scotland. He was a man with quite a different personality from his predecessor and it was not long before he fell foul of the office bearers of the Church. It would seem that he was all but asked to resign for the minutes of the Kirk Session put it tactfully thus :

"Mr. Walker, feeling that he was not in harmony with some of the Session and congregation, felt obliged to resign and return to Scotland."^②

There must have been some friction, but be that as it may, the statistical record for these two years show no decline in either attendance or financial stability. The number of communicants in 1870 was 214 and in 1871, 221 and the congregation was free of debt and paying one of the largest stipends in the country without any aid from Overseas.^③

Mr. Walker sailed from Port Elizabeth in October, 1871

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation
Vol.2 p.86
- 2 Ibid. Vol.2 p.162
- 3 Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1870 p.3

and once again the congregation looked to Scotland for the filling of the vacancy.

The Ministry of REV. CHARLES GRANT FORRESTER 1872 - 1875

The minister who followed Mr. Walker came from the United Presbyterian Church, the Mission Board of that Church having strongly recommended him. He arrived in Port Elizabeth in May 1872^① and was received and welcomed at a service held in the Church on 2nd June, 1872. The service was conducted by Rev. Peter Davidson from Adelaide. This time the minister was greatly beloved of his people and the Annual Reports speak of "growing affection"^② and "increasing spiritual vitality."^③ Port Elizabeth was a rapidly growing town and, with the prospect of a railway link with Cape Town and the Orange Free State and the Diamond Fields, the town became very prosperous. The result was an increase in the congregation and in the collections.

In the United Presbyterian Missionary Record for January, 1875 there appears the following comment :

"There has been a considerable increase of liberality on the part of the people, and it is interesting to note that in 1874 a gift of £30 was made to the United Presbyterian

- 1 Ibid, 1872 p.1
- 2 Ibid. 1873 p.1
- 3 Ibid. 1874 p.1

Mission at Emgwalli. This was an indication of the maturity of this comparatively young church, for most of the local European congregations left the financing of Native Mission work to the friends in Scotland." ①

Unfortunately, this promising ministry of Mr. Forrester was suddenly cut short in a most tragic way. In May, 1875 he had gone on a hunting party with some friends in order to shoot "buck" which abound in South Africa. The party was just outside Dordrecht when they sighted a herd of these animals and all the hunters shot off their rifles. Mr. Forrester was unfortunately a little ahead of the main group and one of the shots struck him in the head and he was killed instantly. ②

The accident profoundly stirred the folk of Port Elizabeth and there was harrowing scenes at the funeral conducted in the Church by Rev. Robert Johnston of Grahamstown. The Eastern Province Herald describes the tragedy as :

"The most bitter blow to the cause of Christ and His Church in this city." ③

The people and Session of the Church did all they could for the bereaved wife and two children and when the family had recovered from the shock the congregation paid for their

1 Op. cit January 1875

2 "The Eastern Province Herald" 29th May 1875

3 Ibid.

return to Scotland and their relatives there.

Mr. Forrester's short ministry cannot be assessed from the statistics given in the formal Annual Reports but even these dry documents mentioned

"the affection of all for the minister and his untiring devotion to the cause of Preaching the Word." ①

The Ministry of REV. ROBERT JOHNSTON 1875 - 1889

Perhaps it was because the ministers sent from Scotland seemed to remain with them for so short a time or perhaps it was because the men already in the country were better known and bringing men from Scotland too much like "buying a pig in a poke" as the Scots say, but after the death of Mr. Forrester we read in the minutes of the Port Elizabeth Kirk Session :

"It was agreed unanimously to recommend that the congregation call the Rev. Mr. Robert Johnston at present minister of the Independent Church in Grahamstown." ②

To this the congregation readily agreed for Mr. Johnston had greatly endeared himself to the people of Port Elizabeth Presbyterian Church during the various vacancies in which he had given freely of his time and services. Mr. Johnston

1 Op.cit. 1874 p. 1

2 Op.cit. Vol 2 p.241

duly accepted the call and transferred from Grahamstown to Port Elizabeth in December 1875.^①

The ministry of Mr. Johnston was not marked by any outstanding event in the history of the congregation. He came to them as a man past middle age and there was a quiet mellowness about his work. The Reports each year show a steady progress in numbers; for example in 1875 when he arrived there were 225 communicants^② and in 1889 when he retired there were 321 communicants^③ and as the satisfied Deacons so firmly put it

"There are no more seats for letting"^④

In 1889 Mr. Johnston felt the work of the pastoral ministry too much for him, and so because of this he resigned to take up the less onerous duties of tutor in the Lovedale Seminary.^⑤ Here he laboured till 1896 when full of years and service he passed to his rest.

The United Presbyterian Missionary Record for March 1896 says this about him :

"We regret to record the death of Rev. Robert Johnston who was one of the famous "Seven" whose departure for the Mission field in 1857 excited so much interest and enthusiasm

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p.253 also Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1875
- 2 Annual Report Port Elizabeth congregation 1875 p.3
- 3 Ibid 1889 p.3
- 4 Ibid 1889 p.4
- 5 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol. 4 p. 18

throughout the Churches. He accompanied Rev. Tiyo Soga to Kaffraria and laboured alongside him for two years at Chumie where they laid the foundations of a new station on that site. Then he accepted a call to Grahamstown and later to Port Elizabeth and has laboured as a Colonial Minister until a few years ago when he retired from the active duties of the ministry and accepted an appointment at Lovedale Institution of the Free Church. Here it was that he died.

He was a fellow student of Mr. Peter Davidson both gave their life work to Kaffraria, and they died within two hours of one another on the last day of the year.

So God's workmen enter into rest at the close of their day of labour and their works do follow them." ^①

The Ministry of REV. J.R. MACPHERSON 1890 - 1897

After the retirement of Mr. Johnston it was to the United Presbyterians that the folk of Port Elizabeth turned for their next minister and the man selected was Rev. J.R. Macpherson, a young man ordained in May, 1889. He and his young wife took occupation of the manse next to the "Hill" church on 12th June, 1890 ^② and they began a happy ministry among the ever-increasing "Hill Church" congregation.

It was during the ministry of Mr. Macpherson that the nickname "Hill Church" really stuck to the Church. It

1 Op. cit. March 1896

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol. 4 p. 41

is not at all certain who it was who first called it so but in the Press^① and in the Church Magazine, begun in the ministry of Mr. Johnston, the Church is called "Hill Church" from now on.

The Session Minutes during this period are full of discussions on the proposed union of all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa and it would seem that the folk at the Hill Church were just a little suspicious that it would not work out as some hoped.

Some advised that a watching brief be given to their representatives at the various Councils which met to discuss union so that they could make quite sure that the Doctrines and Polity of the new Church would be in accordance with the wishes of independent Scots who, for nearly fifty years, had been beholden to nobody other than themselves.^② Eventually the Port Elizabeth congregation agreed to join the new Church provided their constitution was not changed and so in 1897 they became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

The Hill Church ministers seemed to have been unfortunate with regard to health, for Mr. Macpherson, while still a young man of 28 suddenly died in January, 1897,^③

1 Vide "Eastern Province Herald" 1st May 1892

2 Vide Page 682 ff.

3 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth congregation Vol. 4 p. 348

having been ill for only a few days. It was a sorrowing people who once again gathered in the Hill Church at the funeral of their minister. Some of those present had, as younger men, stood in silence at the funeral of Robert Forrester, also a young minister called early from his earthly labours. ^①

The congregation has ever been noted for its generosity and once again the widow and child were returned to their family in Scotland at the expense of the congregation.

Matters were reaching a climax with regard to the union of the Churches in South Africa when the "Hill" Church sent a call to Rev. James MacRobert of the Free Church of Scotland. ^② Mr. MacRobert was destined to remain in Port Elizabeth for many years (till 1929) and himself to become the Moderator of the Church whose birth pangs he watched with such interest.

GRAHAMSTOWN CONGREGATION

Trinity Church, Grahamstown, took a long time to make up its mind whether it was going to be Congregationalist or Presbyterian. Indeed, it was not till 1918 that the final

1 Vide Page 323

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Port Elizabeth
Congregation Vol. 4 p.186

decision was made and Trinity Church became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. ①

Ministry of Rev. JOHN MUNRO 1827 - 1838

The congregation began on 8th August, 1827 when a Covenant was signed by twelve men to the effect that they would form themselves into a "congregation of Christ's flock." ② The agent of the London Missionary Society in Grahamstown at that time was Rev. John Munro, a Scotsman from Glasgow, and he linked himself with the twelve Covenanters and they formed a congregation which they called "Union Chapel" ③

The Union Chapel was not a Presbyterian Church either in name or form. It was very definitely Independent.

During Mr. Munro's ministry no distinction was made with regard to colour, and the congregation consisted of natives and Hottentots as well as Europeans. ④ The twelve Covenanters became the first deacons, and the first services were held on 18th August, 1827 at the station of the London Missionary Society. ⑤

Grahamstown was not a very large town at this time,

- 1 Minutes of Port Elizabeth Presbytery (formerly The Adelaide Presbytery) May 1918 Vol.8 p.84
- 2 Rev. A. McRobert "Notes on History of Trinity Church Grahamstown"
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.

it being mainly used as a fort to control the marauding native bands who so frequently poured over the Great Fish River. As a result, most of the original congregation were soldiers together with a few local traders.

Things continued in this way for nearly ten years, when Rev. John Munro was recalled by the London Missionary Society, and he returned to Scotland.

During his ministry the mixed congregation had grown considerably, and the European section quite outnumbered the non-European section by the time Mr. Munro left in 1837.^① This was due to the increase in the size of Grahamstown itself and to the fact that a Mission for the natives was started by the London Missionary Society just outside the town in 1835.^②

The Ministry of REV. JOHN LOCKE 1838 - 1847

After the departure of Mr. Munro, the London Missionary Society appointed Rev. John Locke to the congregation at Grahamstown. Mr. Locke like his predecessor, was an "Independent" and continued to run the Church on the lines on which it had been started.

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

The one really important event in the history of the Church, which took place during Mr. Locke's ministry was the building of the Church. A site was procured in Market Street and a building erected which cost £3,000. The Church was opened on 4th March, 1842.^①

When Mr. Locke resigned in 1848 due to ill-health, the congregation was well and truly established. There remained but £400 of the debt to be paid and the annual report for 1847 states :

"The attendances at the morning diet of worship number over 120"^②

The Ministry of REV. W.Y. THOMSON 1848 - 1858

Mr. Thomson, like his predecessors, was also an agent of the London Missionary Society, but we know little more about his ministry than this one fact.^③ During the ten years he was at Grahamstown he doubtless wrote Annual Reports, but these cannot, at present, be traced and we therefore have ten silent years to record.

Two facts, however, we can infer, namely that during these ten silent years the £400 owing on the Church was paid off and that the congregation became entirely European. From

1 Ibid.

2 Op. cit. 1847 p. 3

3 Rev. A. McRobert "Notes on History of Trinity Church Grahamstown"

this time onwards there is no mention of debt or of non-Europeans being accepted as members.

The Ministry of REV. ROBERT JOHNSTON 1859 - 1875

Rev. Robert Johnston had been sent out by the United Presbyterian Church Foreign Mission Board to assist in the re-opening of the stations laid waste by the 1853 Kaffir War. He was at Engwali (Chumie) for some two years, having arrived therein 1857^①, when the congregation of "The Union Chapel" in Grahamstown invited him to be their minister. Much to the regret of his fellow missionaries and the annoyance of the Committee in Scotland, Mr. Johnston accepted the invitation, and he began his ministry on the first Sunday in March, 1859. He was the first Presbyterian minister to be in charge of the Church.

Mr. Johnston changed the form of internal government to suit the traditions more familiar to him, and we find for the first time that a Kirk Session is elected in addition to a Board of Deacons.^②

It is during this period, too, that the name Union Chapel is used less and less and the name Trinity Church is

1 Vide page 251

2 Rev. A. McRobert "Notes on History of Trinity Church Grahamstown"

more frequently applied. Just when the name Trinity Church was given is uncertain. It may have been during the "Ten Silent Years" 1848 - 1858.

Mr. Johnston remained at Trinity Church, Grahams-town, for many years and it was not until 1875 when he left to accept a call to the Independent Presbyterian congregation at Port Elizabeth, that he severed his connection with the "Independent Scotch Church" at Grahams-town.①

During the years of Mr. Johnston's ministry he did much good work in building up a large and influential congregation. Mr. Chalmers wrote in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record of 1865 concerning the congregation :

"You are aware that Rev. Robert Johnston is the minister of Trinity Church, Grahams-town. There we were all welcomed among true friends. It is true that our brother is no longer a labourer in the Mission field, but no man has done more than he for the missionaries and the natives. His congregation is the rallying point, a centre where we can meet and exchange sweet intercourse. His congregation takes a deep interest in our work, and it is not all words they indulge in, for at present his Sabbath School support a native youth from Engwali at the Lovedale Institution, and we have the promise of more help. The Colonists, being cast among the natives, suffering

1 Vide Page 324

often from their depredations and daily spectators of their indolence, dishonesty and untruthfulness, it has come to pass that with them missions are not invested with that halo of romance that hangs around them at home. This feeling of indifference to missions is fast, I think, dying out, and for this we are indebted to such noble, large hearted men as Robert Johnston

The Anniversary of Trinity Church was on 23rd October. Mr. Sclater officiated at morning service, Mr. Soga in the afternoon and I at night. I also preached to a Kaffir congregation of Rev. M. Smith in the afternoon. On Monday a large congregational Tea Meeting - full to overflowing, was held. It was such a gathering I had not seen since I left old Scotland. After tea we adjourned to the Church where the Meeting was addressed by Refs. Henry Calderwood, Sclater, Tiyo Soga and myself. We took the advice of Dr. Duff, who said we should use every opportunity of telling the Colonists what the missionaries are doing.

Better days have dawned. The Colonists have been much maligned, but there is this to be said they are very liberal, and every missionary finds a friendly welcome among all professing Christians." ①

Mr. Johnston not being the minister of a Presbyterian Church, was not obliged to send Reports to Scotland, but his Annual Report for 1869 states :

"The number attending services each Sabbath remain at about 150 - 175 in the morning, and 100 at night. All the seats are let. Great attention is paid to the preaching of the Word." ②

By 1860 the debt had been entirely paid off, and the

1 Op.cit.December 1865

2 Op.cit.1869 p.2.

congregation being strategically situated in what was the main city of the territory, became the rallying point for the Missionaries of both the London Missionary Society and the Scottish Churches.

The Ministry of REV. J.A. CHALMERS 1875 - 1891

After the departure of Rev. Robert Johnston to Port Elizabeth, the congregation at Grahamstown decided that once again they would look to the Mission field for their minister, and they addressed a call to Rev. J. A. Chalmers of Henderson, who accepted the invitation. ①

In 1876 the congregation agreed to become Presbyterian in form and they entered the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria in March of that year. ②

In 1884 the deputies, Rev. Carstairs and W. Slowan visited the congregation and reported on it as follows :

"We were greeted by Rev. John A Chalmers at the station at Grahamstown and with him was Mr. Black, a senior elder of United Presbyterian Church here. Next day was devoted to visiting the Grahamstown office bearers. We also visited Justice Buchanan and had the benefit of his frankly expressed views regarding some aspects of the native question and the results of mission work. In contrast

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Trinity Church
Grahamstown May 1875

2 Ibid. March 1876 also Minutes of United
Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p.184

with the tone assumed by some of the Colonists towards missionaries and mission work, it was cheering to note the hearty sympathy shown by one whose judicial habits and high position lent weight to the sentiments expressed.

A united Prayer Meeting was held on the Wednesday after our arrival, and we had ample opportunity of seeing the good work done by Trinity Church, and noting the splendid attitude to missions. ①

Mr. Chalmers remained as minister of the Church at Grahamstown until 1889 when, due to failing health, he resigned. ②

He had no sooner resigned than the congregation resolved to withdraw from the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria and become Independent once more. ③

Despite this resolution they called Rev. William Tees of the United Presbyterian Church at Rochdale, Lancashire, to be their next minister.

The Ministry of Rev. W. TEES 1889 - 1892

Mr. Tees was minister of a congregation composed of

"almost equal numbers of Congregationalists and Presbyterians." ④

and it would seem that this factor made it somewhat difficult to run. He was, however, a man of great pulpit gifts, and

- 1 Report of Deputies J. Carstairs and W. Slowan 1885
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Trinity Church Grahamstown February 1889
- 3 Ibid. March 1889 also Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 4 p. 217
- 4 "Natal Mercury" Obituary Notice June 1907 where details of Mr. Tees' life are given

he soon made a place for himself in the city of Grahams-town, becoming widely sought as a lecturer not only on religious subjects but also on the English poets, whose works he had so carefully studied.

Mr. Tees was born in Glasgow in the year of the Disruption 1843 and was educated for the ministry in the United Presbyterian Theological College. He was ordained minister of Kingskettle congregation in Fifeshire in July 1874.^① Ten years later he accepted a call to Rochdale but here the climate greatly affected his wife's health and he too became gravely ill. The result was that he gladly accepted the invitation to go to sunny South Africa where Grahamstown were anxious to receive him.^② Mr. Tees left Trinity Church Grahamstown in 1892 when he accepted a call to St. Andrews Church, Durban.^③

The Ministry of REV. ALEX PITT 1894 - 1896

After Mr. Tees left for Durban there was a two year vacancy during which the controversy about being a Presbyterian or a Congregationalist Church occupied the minds of the people. The outcome was that Mr. Tees was

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

the last Presbyterian Minister called to Grahamstown until 1909.^① The man who came to them in 1894 was Rev. Alex Pitt, who was an "Independent" from London. He did not remain long and after two years he left to take up Mission work with the London Missionary Society.^②

The Ministry of REV. W. LIDDLE 1897 - 1900

Mr. Liddle was the minister at Trinity Church, Grahams-town when the subject of Union with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa was discussed. At this time the "Independent" group outnumbered the Presbyterian group within the Church and as a result they did not accept the invitation to be present at the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa held in September, 1897.

It took Trinity Church a long time to make up its mind about coming into the Presbyterian Church of South but in 1918, when Rev. James Gray was the minister, the congregation finally agreed to become fully Presbyterian.^③

Since that day Trinity Church Grahamstown has played an important role in the life of the new Church. Four of its ministers have been Moderators of the Presbyterian

1 During Mr. Tees ministry Trinity Church Grahamstown was really a congregational church with a Presbyterian Minister

2 Rev. A. McRobert "Notes on History of Trinity Church Grahamstown"

3 Ibid.

Church of South Africa and today its minister has a vital role to play in that the Theological Training College for Presbyterian students is attached to Rhodes University, Grahamstown. This has meant that the minister of Trinity Church is appointed Tutor to the students who are at Livingstone House, the Theological Hall for the South African Presbyterian Church.

GLEN LYNDEN CONGREGATION

The 1820 Settlers, who landed in Algoa Bay in May of that year, contained one party of Scottish settlers under the leadership of Thomas Pringle, who was both farmer and poet.^① This group of folk, mainly from the Scottish Highlands, was settled in the Mankazana Valley at a place called Glen Lynden and it was not long before they appealed to the Governor for assistance in procuring a minister.

We are dependent for the story of this church on Rev. George Morgan's pamphlet "Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town" where he describes its story in these words :

1 Vide Page 266

"In March 1826, the inhabitants of Glen Lynden applied to Government for pecuniary aid to enable them to build a Church and maintain a pastor. The Secretary of State immediately granted their request, informing the Lieutenant-Governor that the Clergyman whom the memorialists may induce to join them from Scotland, to take charge of their spiritual instruction, may be allowed a stipend of £100 per annum, in addition to any sum which they themselves may raise, for his maintenance, etc. This intelligence having been communicated to the parties, Mr. Thomas Pringle, who was head of the Scotch settlers at Glen Lynden and who had just returned to England, was authorised by them to select a minister. He made choice of Rev. J. Pears, then pastor of a Presbyterian Church in England, and on this being reported to the Secretary of State, His Lordship issued authority to pay Mr. Pears' passage to the Cape, leaving it to the Lieutenant-Governor to act on the instructions which had already been given with regard to further pecuniary aid. Before Rev. Mr. Pears resigned his charge at Glen Lynden that Church was regularly incorporated with the Dutch Reformed Church.

In the case of Glen Lynden, the Government offered to contribute one half of the cost of erecting a plain Dwelling house for the residence of a Clergyman, and of a building which may serve both as a Place of Worship and a School room." ①

Unfortunately, from the point of view of English speaking Presbyterians, this promising cause was handed over to the Dutch Reformed Church in 1830^② when Mr. Pears was appointed Professor of English at the South African College

1 Op. cit. p. 31

2 Ibid. p. 31

in Cape Town.^① During his short ministry a small Church building had been erected and paid for and while he was minister a small group of 40 to 50 folk had gathered each Sabbath for services. During the week Mr. Pears had conducted a Day School for the children of the district.^②

Mr. Pears was, however, destined for greater things, and when offered the post of Professor of English at Cape Town, he arranged with the local Dutch Reformed Minister that he should take over his English speaking congregation. Mr. Pears remained at the South African College till 1835^③ when he accepted a call to the Dutch Reformed congregation of Albany, and in 1841 he succeeded Rev. George Morgan as Dutch Reformed Minister at Somerset East. He was a man of some considerable standing and ability, and it is notable that the town of Pearson in the Eastern Province was named after him.

This Church, established in 1827 at Glen Lynden, was really the second Presbyterian Church for English speaking people to be established in South Africa, and it is a great pity that it was allowed to fizzle out in this way. However, the Scotsmen in the Mankazana Valley did not remain

1 The Russell Papers also "Ritchie" History of the South African College" p. 98

2 Ibid.

3 Ritchie "History of the South African College" p. 104

without a Church of their own for very long because
by 1840 they had started a new cause at Glenthorn. ^①

FORT BEAUFORT CONGREGATION

This small Eastern Frontier town grew up round one of the Military Forts established by Colonel Harry Smith during the 1835 Kaffir War. It was never a very large town and it simply served as the village supplying the local farming community. This community contained a fair sprinkling of Scotsmen who found it too far to trek to Alice each weekend to go to Church, and so they gathered together at Fort Beaufort in the house of a local Scots trader named Macpherson and here they held regular worship. ^②

By 1877 they felt strong enough in numbers and in finance to approach the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland to ask for a minister. They wrote promising

"£200 per annum from local sources" ^③

and explaining that

"there was every prospect of money being raised to erect a small church and that in due course the congregation ought to be self-supporting." ^④

1 Vide Page 266

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland
Vol. 4 p. 358

3 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 27

4 Ibid. Vol. 5 p. 28

The Edinburgh Committee communicated with the Kaffrarian Presbytery who supported the establishment of the cause at Fort Beaufort, stating that in their view £100 per annum would have to be supplied by the Colonial Committee if the cause was to be properly maintained. ①

At a meeting on 17th September, 1877 it was agreed to pay £50 ② and to appeal to the Foreign Missions Committee for a similar amount. At the same meeting it was agreed to :

"appoint Mr. Berry, a probationer from Aberdeen who is not unwilling to proceed to this important charge." ③

Mr. Berry arrived on the Eastern Frontier in February 1878 and was ordained and inducted to his charge by the Presbytery of Kaffraria on 1st March, 1878. ④

Mr. Berry must have had a great struggle in the early days of his ministry in this little town for most of his congregation were farmers who had to trek many miles by ox-wagon to get to Church, and as he reports :

"Even on the best attended Sabbaths there are but 40 souls at service" ⑤

However, in the three years of his ministry a tiny Church

- 1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 5 p. 258
- 2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol. 5 p. 49
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 5 p. 281
- 5 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol. 5 p. 86

was built and opened in 1881 and although not completely paid for by 1883, the wealth of the local farming community is indicated by the fact that it took only seven years for this small group to clear its debt and to be completely self-supporting.

Even in 1881 the Committee was able to record :

"A letter has been received from Rev. John Berry, Fort Beaufort, asking for the continuance of the grant for only one more year, as there is reason to hope that the congregation would be in a position, at an early period, to support unaided, its pastor." ①

However, Rev. John Berry did not stay beyond the end of 1883 when he wrote saying :

"I feel I must resign from Fort Beaufort as from the end of this year. My reasons are chiefly health and the extreme heat here at certain times of the year." ②

He returned home in February, 1884 having been very largely responsible for the establishment of the English speaking Presbyterian cause in Fort Beaufort.

The Ministry of Rev. J. Hanesworth 1884 -1898

After the departure of Rev. John Berry the Kirk Session of Fort Beaufort invited Rev. J. Hanesworth to

1 Ibid. Vol.5 p.224

2 Ibid. Vol.5 p.328 (letter is quoted)

become their minister and when he accepted the call the Presbytery of Kaffraria inducted him on 29th July, 1884. ^①

During the ministry of Mr. Hanesworth the remaining debt was paid off the Church building, and the congregation became self-supporting.

As the years passed, more and more Presbyterians came to live in the town itself. The coming of the Railway to Fort Beaufort in 1887 brought with it several Scottish Railway workers and as a result the Church membership grew.

In the Annual Report for 1889 we read :

"The membership is now 87, with an average morning attendance of 100." ^②

By 1890 the majority of the Fort Beaufort members were town residents and in the intervening years between 1890 and 1897 the Session Minutes are full of discussions on two matters - one which rightly concerned the Session and the other which technically should probably have appeared in the Deacon's Court Records. These matters are :

- 1) The provision of a manse for the minister.
- 2) The desirability of entering the proposed union of all the South African Presbyterian Churches.

1 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 6 p. 92

2 Op. cit. 1889 p. 2

With regard to the former, the Session Minutes of 1892 read :

"The minister moved into his new home at the beginning of the month, and he reports that he and his family are extremely comfortable." ①

The Annual Report for the same year announced to the congregation :

"That although the manse is now completed it is not yet paid for; we still require £650." ②

But such was the generosity of the people that by 1897 the money had been paid.

Fort Beaufort never has been a large cause, but for quiet and steady progress in the things of the Kingdom it is difficult to beat.

GRADOCK CONGREGATION

In 1882 a group of Christian people of different denominations were persuaded by a Mr. Gattan, a baker in Gradock, to approach the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria with a view to their becoming a Presbyterian Church.

In his letter Mr. Gattan states :

1 Op. cit. May 1892
2 Op. cit. 1892 p.4

"Thirty to forty souls gather each week in my bakery for worship led by a young man called Mr. T. Belfry who is a Baptist. The gathering includes souls from all churches, but they are willing to become Presbyterians." ①

The Presbytery viewed the matter sympathetically and referred the matter to Scotland just about the time the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church had decided to send out Rev. George Carstairs and Mr. W. Slowan :

"to investigate and report on missions in South Africa." ②

As a result the Presbytery received a letter stating :

"It is expedient that all decisions regarding Cradock be postponed till after the arrival of deputies Rev. G. Carstairs and W. Slowan." ③

When the Deputies inspected Cradock they wrote as follows to the Committee in Scotland :

"Cradock is a fine little town with nice houses and good hotels. It was for a time the terminus of the Railway from Port Elizabeth but now the line has been extended. During our two days stay we visited the young Scotsmen in the principal warehouses, and also called upon some of the leading people connected with the congregation..... We feel that despite the good work being done it is but a struggling cause after all." ④

Thus it was that the Presbyterians nearly began in Cradock.

1 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol.4 p.39
2 Ibid*Vol.4 p.28 where the letter telling of the proposed visit by the Deputies is noted
3 Ibid. Vol.4 p.48
4 Report of the Deputies G.Carstairs and W. Slowan 1883

When the attempt to found a Presbyterian Church failed the people of Cradock tried to form a Union Church to which persons of all denominations might belong. Rev. Dr. Porteous touring South Africa in connection with Church Extension ^① visited Cradock in 1898 and he wrote as follows in the Free Church Missionary Record concerning this Union Church :

"I had a long journey from Sterkstroom to Cradock, the next town that I wished to visit. The first acquaintance whom I made at Cradock was the manager of the Standard Bank a great-grandson of Dr. John Brown of Haddington. From him I learned that about three years ago the Presbyterians, along with some others, attempted to establish a union Church. They erected a building and invited a minister and for a short time all went well. Their minister, however, turned out to be a sort of adventurer. The crisis came on a Christmas morning. It appears that the Minister quarrelled with a neighbour and assaulted him, and afterwards preached his Christmas sermon. He was subsequently prosecuted and convicted. This affair wrecked the Church." ^②

The advice of the Deputies from Scotland has proved to be correct for today Cradock is a predominantly Dutch area and the huge Dutch Reformed Churches in the town testify to the true character of the religious life of the people.

- 1 That is Church Extension in connection with the newly formed Presbyterian Church of South Africa
- 2 Free Church Missionary Record May 1898