

VOLUME 2

THE ORIGINS 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

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BY

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SECTION 3

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NATAL PRESBYTERY.

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## CHAPTER 1.

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### THE EARLY HISTORY OF NATAL

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In 1836 there began a movement of farmers from the Eastern Frontier which is known as "The Great Trek".<sup>①</sup>

It was a movement which denuded of Europeans the areas we described in the previous section as "The Missionary Presbyteries," and, it left large tracts of the Eastern Frontier with no Europeans on the farms at all.

The reasons why the Dutch farmers trekked away in such numbers were such things as the policy of the Government with regard to the Natives; the dissatisfaction caused by the refusal of people in Britain to appreciate their difficulties with uncivilised natives; the order forbidding ownership of slaves; the droughts and the failures of the crops. But, perhaps the greatest reason of all lay in the character of the Boer himself.<sup>②</sup> The wander-fever was still in his veins, the call of the wild was still in his ears, and he turned longing eyes toward the

1 D. Fairbridge "History of South Africa" p. 205

2 Boer is an Afrikaans word meaning "Farmer"

great tracts of empty country to the North, and so oxen were inspanned, the long tented wagons were piled high and thousands of them set off from the Eastern frontier to the North, driving their flocks and cattle before them.

They moved northwards in bands, each band having its own leader and as they moved north they moved further and further beyond the control of the hated Cape and British Government.

We must now consider the story of Presbyterianism in the new lands in which the Boers of the Great Trek made their homes. The first of these is Natal.

### NATAL

Natal had long been known to the white man. A European settlement had been attempted in 1721 - but it had to be abandoned shortly afterwards. Natal's first entry into recorded history was when Vasco da Gama sighted the Bluff at the entrance to the present town of Durban on Christmas Day, 1497, and called the land Terra Natalis.<sup>①</sup> In 1576 the coast was explored by Manuel de Mesquita Perestrello, directed by King Sebastian of Portugal to

1 D. Fairbridge "History of South Africa" p. 213

2 Ibid. p. 213 also E. Walker "History of South Africa p.15 and 21

make a chart of the harbours, and he has left us a description of the country on whose shores he had been wrecked in the "Saint Benedict" in 1554.<sup>①</sup>

In 1685 the "Johanna" an English ship, was wrecked near Delagoa Bay and the survivors passed through Natal on their wonderful overland journey to Cape Town.<sup>②</sup> Other English ships called there from time to time, the "Good Hope" being wrecked on the Durban bar in 1685 and in the following year the "Stavenisse", a Dutch East Indiaman, was wrecked slightly farther to the south.<sup>③</sup> The survivors from both ships made their way to Cape Town a year later in a boat which they had built, occupying only twelve days on the journey. On their arrival they showed the amount of ivory which they had acquired, and the Governor, Simon van der Stel, speedily despatched a ship to Port Natal, as the bay was now called, to take possession of the port and open up a trade in ivory.<sup>④</sup> The bay was purchased from the Amatuli tribe for goods worth about £50, but no settlement was made until 1721. This, as already mentioned, was soon afterwards given up, and it was not until after the Cape had passed from the Dutch to the British that any

1 Ibid.

2 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol. 6 p. 220

3 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 213

4 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol. 2 p. 297  
also D. Fairbridge "History of South Africa" p. 213

further attempt at settlement was made.

CHAKA

Meanwhile stirring events were shaping the future of the land. We have already seen how the great Bantu race had swept down from the north, driving the Bushmen to the mountains and the Hottentots to the sea-shore. <sup>①</sup> These Bantus or Kaffirs were divided into many tribes and clans, and one of the least of these was the Zulu tribe, living in kraals on the banks of the Umfolosi River, north of the country which today is called Natal. The Zulus were a fine and handsome folk, but without power or influence. They were sellers of small wares and had become vassals to the more powerful Abetetwa tribe. This insignificant people had for its chief Senzagokona, to whom <sup>N</sup> was born somewhere about 1783 a son who was named Chaka. <sup>②</sup>

Tall, athletic, strong, ambitious, cruel - all these things and many more was Chaka. No one in the tribe could throw an assegai so far as could the chief's son: none was more swift-footed. When little more than a boy he quarrelled with his father and took refuge with the Abetetwa tribe of which Dingiswayo, lord over the Zulus, was the head, and quickly rose to a high position in the

1 Vide Page 140

2 E. Walker "A History of South Africa"  
p. 184 - 185

Abetetwa army. On the death of his father Senzagakona the successful young soldier was appointed by Dingiswayo to the Zulu chieftainship, and when Dingiswayo in his turn was gathered to his fathers, Chaka was elected over-lord of the Abetetwa in his place.

All the world must have seemed to lie at Chaka's feet when he looked from the heights of the Drakensberg towards the Indian Ocean and felt himself lord of the wide fields of millet, of the antelopes and quaggas of the veld, of the hordes of warriors who clustered round the beehive huts of the kraals. Great ambitions gripped him, as they gripped Napoleon, and were to grip others after him. All the world should truly be his, he told himself, and to attain his heart's desire nothing should stand in his way.

Does a man never count the cost when he sets out to gain the whole world and loses his soul?

So Chaka drilled and trained his people, until the little Zulu nation had become one vast and splendid army, stronger than the Abetetwa. He armed them with short broad-bladed spears and the stabbing in the place of the throwing assegais. He ruled by a <sup>harsh</sup> ~~stern~~ tyranny. Stern

and cruel to his own nature too, Chaka caused all sons born to him to be killed, lest they should one day rise and contest his power. But, even as the old Norse legend tells us how all the trees of the woods were placed under a spell and only the weak mistletoe was forgotten, from which the arrow was made that killed Baldur the Beautiful, so Chaka forgot or overlooked his brother Dingaan.

The great Zulu nation being drilled and trained, Chaka placed himself at the head of his troops and swept over Natal, murdering every man, woman, and child and burning every village. 'Kill! Kill!' was his warcry, and before him whole tribes fled in terror, fighting their way through other tribes which barred their flight until all South Africa outside the European border was a scene of battle and slaughter.

Of the stories which are told of Chaka's cruelty one-tenth cannot be set down here. A very old Zulu, who lived to see Chaka's people submit to the white man, used to tell of a day when being a boy running about the fringe of the royal kraal, he saw the king watching the vultures which circled round the hill upon which his victims were

executed.

"My birds are hungry," said Chaka, "take those men digging in that field and kill them."

In a moment the order was carried out, for no one resisted Chaka.

"They are still hungry," he said after a time, "throw more people to them." And again he was obeyed, and yet again.

An Englishman, to whom the Zulu told this story said "But that was very cruel."

"Inkose," and the old man drew himself up and raised his hand above his head in the royal salute, "he was a KING."<sup>①</sup>

What was the secret of the power which held a strong and warlike nation in subjection to one man? To all Chaka was as a god - to all but his brothers Dingaan and Umhlangana, who, with an old servant and a small band of conspirators, seized him under the cover of fair words and stabbed him to death in September, 1828.<sup>②</sup>

An evil chief was his brother Dingaan who succeeded him, and his first act was the murder of Umhlangana; but we must leave him for a while and follow the fortunes of

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 214

2 Ibid. p. 215

the white man in these lands to the north of the Cape Colony.

The English in Natal

In 1823 a company was formed in Cape Town for the purpose of trading with the Natives of Natal. <sup>①</sup> A small ship called the "Salisbury" was chartered by the merchants who formed the company and sent on a voyage of exploration under the command of James Saunders King, an ex-naval officer, who had with him his friend and fellow-sailor, Francis George Farewell and James Thomson a Cape Town merchant. After a stormy and disastrous voyage the ship returned to Table Bay with a report which damped the company's ardour. <sup>②</sup> Farewell, however, retained his faith in the enterprise, and with twentyfive others purchased a little trading-sloop called the "Julia," which set sail in April, 1824 with a small party led by Henry Francis Fynn and arrived in Natal after a voyage lasting sixteen days. Mr. Farewell followed in May in the "Antelope" with the remainder of the party. <sup>③</sup>

When we stand on the Berea today we look down on the <sup>④</sup>

1 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to Natal" p. 1

2 Ibid. p. 1

3 Ibid. p. 2

4 The Berea is the hill which overlooks the present City of Durban.



prosperous town of Durban, on the great steamers which lie at her quays, on comfortable houses set in beautiful gardens. However, the eyes of these adventurers of 1824 rested on a wild country, and grouped among the bushes of gardenias and in the shade of the palms were the huts of the fierce Zulu people, who might or might not prove friends. Some of those who had set their hand to the plough turned back when they saw the natives and in December 1824 the "Julia" set sail for Cape Town with eleven Europeans aboard; the wind and waves of the coast proved an even sterner foe than the Zulus and she never made port. ①

A little handful of five Englishmen had stood on the Point and watched their comrades sail away. Then they turned and looked each other in the eyes and knew that their lives and much more than their lives, depended on their own courage and God's providence.

A good beginning was made. The tyrant Chaka, then at the height of his power, had been badly wounded in an attempted assassination and during a visit of the white men to his kraal Henry Fynn had treated his wounds with such skill that they healed rapidly. ② From that moment he looked

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 217

2 Ibid. p. 217

upon the Englishmen as his friends, and on August 7th 1824 he had granted to "F.C. Farewell & Company" a large tract of land including the present harbour of Durban. <sup>①</sup> On August 27th the Union Jack was hoisted, a royal salute was fired and the land declared a British possession. <sup>②</sup> Shortly afterwards the country between this district and the Umzinkulu River was granted to Henry Fynn and as hundreds of destitute natives, whose tribes had been swallowed up by Chaka, made their way to these territories the white men soon found themselves in the position of petty chiefs.

The Europeans lived exactly like Native chiefs and grouped themselves in three camps corresponding to native kraals. <sup>③</sup> A bitter feud broke out between Farewell and King, and King moved his kraal to what today is called "The Bluff." Unfortunately he took ill in 1828 and in September of that year King was buried on the Bluff.

On September 23rd 1828 Chaka was assassinated and his brother Dingaan found ~~and~~ <sup>by</sup> murdered his way to the throne. The new chief invited the Europeans at the Port to remain under his protection and they agreed. <sup>④</sup>

1 Ibid. p. 218

2 Ibid.

3 A detailed description is given in Natal Publicity Association's pamphlet "The Emigrants to Natal"

4 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 218

It was felt by the Europeans that their number ought to be augmented, so Farwell set off to Cape Town. Unfortunately he was murdered by the Amakwebi tribe on the return journey in 1829.<sup>①</sup> At the Port two of the remaining Englishmen, John Cane and Henry Ogle, divided his land between them and also became chiefs under the Zulu king.

Within the next few years various other young Englishmen made their way to Natal as traders or ivory hunters. They all lived under the favour of the Zulu chief, though the tattered flag of Britain still fluttered above their heads.

In May, 1832 it occurred to the authorities in London that, somewhere at the ends of the earth Britishers were taking possession of territory in their name and Goderich, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, instructed the Governor of the Cape, Sir Lowry Cole, to send an officer who should take charge of the Natal settlement.<sup>②</sup> The salary offered was, however, so slender - £100 a year - that no one could be found willing to accept the post.<sup>③</sup>

### 1835 - Durban Founded

In June, 1835 the town of Durban was founded and

- 1 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to Natal"
- 2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 219
- 3 Ibid. p. 219

received its name from Sir Benjamin D'Urban though at that time the European population numbered only thirty-five.<sup>①</sup> The pioneers gave the name of Victoria to the district which they occupied and sent a petition to the British Government that it might be recognised as a British Colony.<sup>②</sup> Unfortunately Lord Glenelg was then Secretary of State for the Colonies and the petition fell on deaf ears, he being "deeply persuaded of the disadvantage of colonies to the Mother Country"<sup>③</sup> So the British residents of Natal were left to work out their own salvation and to hold that outpost of the Empire in the teeth of difficulties and discouragement. The solitary recognition granted them by the Mother of Parliaments was the passing of a Bill by which all British subjects south of the twentyfifth parallel of latitude were liable to arrest and punishment for any offence against the law.<sup>④</sup>

In 1834 Dutch farmers from the Cape visited Natal under Pieter Uys. This was in the nature of an exploratory visit, and was later to lead to an influx of Dutch farmers into Northern Natal with devastating results on the attitude of the Zulus.

1 J. D. Russell "Old Durban" p. 2

2 Ibid. p. 2

3 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 219

4 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 221

In January 1835 Captain Gardiner, previously of the Royal Navy, visited Port Natal to establish a Christian Mission; <sup>①</sup> on 23rd June, 1835 at a public meeting the citizens resolved to lay out a city named D'Urban in honour of the Governor of the Cape Colony. <sup>②</sup>

In setting out the city they made provision for a Church and a hospital and including Captain Gardiner, his interpreter George Cyrus, and his wagon-driver, Richard King, "The whole white population of the port of Natal did not amount to 35 souls, most of whom were elephant hunters who lived there only for a month or two each year." <sup>③</sup>

In 1835 the first American Missionaries arrived, and Dr. Adams and Aldin Grout established themselves in Natal. <sup>④</sup> They were protestant Independents from <sup>the</sup> United States of America. Their stations were on the Natal South Coast.

In 1836 Captain Gardiner returned to England to report on the possibilities of sending Missionaries to the Zulus and on his return he brought with him Rev. S. Owen <sup>⑤</sup> of the Church Missionary Society (Church of England). This missionary was stationed at Dingaan's kraal accompanied by his wife, his sister, a maid servant and an interpreter

- 1 J. Du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 235
- 2 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to Natal" p. 3
- 3 Ibid. p. 3
- 4 J. Du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 219 ff.
- 5 Ibid. p. 238

named Richard Hulley.

Captain Gardiner tried to exercise authority as Magistrate in Durban under Cape of Good Hope Parliament Bill which made crimes committed by British subjects in any part of Africa south of the 25<sup>o</sup> Latitude cognisable in the Cape Courts. The Europeans in Natal, however, refused to submit to his control.

Dingaan, of course, claimed the whole of Natal between Drakensberg and the sea as far south as the Umzinkulu River and as far North East as the Tugela River. As far as Dingaan was concerned the Europeans were there "on sufferance" <sup>(1)</sup> There were six Mission Stations (three north of Tugela) occupied by two doctors and four Ministers of the American Presbyterian Church, one minister of the Church of England and the retired Captain of the Royal Navy, Captain Gardiner, when the Dutch farmers began to enter Natal from the North.

In Durban the principal trader was a Mr. Alexander Biggar who was mainly concerned with the Ivory trade, one of his young assistants being a lad of nineteen called Thomas Holstead. <sup>(2)</sup>

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa "  
p. 223

2 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to  
Natal p. 4

### The Treachery of Dingaan

On 27th October, 1837, Mr. Piet Retief, leader of the Dutch farmers from the Eastern Frontier, who had crossed the Natal border, received an agreement from Dingaan regarding their coming into Natal to settle on land south of the Tugela River.<sup>①</sup> On 8th November, 1837 Piet Retief returned and received a document signed by Dingaan and drawn up by the Missionary Rev. S. Owen, in which the Zulu chief stated he was willing to grant the land asked for but the farmers must first recover and restore certain cattle that had recently been stolen from Dingaan by Sikonyela, a rival chief.

On 3rd February, 1838 Retief and his party returned to Dingaan with the cattle. He duly signed the document drawn up by the Rev. S. Owen but before the Dutch party could leave, Dingaan had them all cruelly murdered.<sup>②</sup> The same day ten thousand Zulus took up arms and on 17th February they burst on unprepared Dutch encampments at what is now called Weenen (the place of weeping).<sup>③</sup> Men, women and children were barbarously butchered. Here too died Thomas Holstead and George Biggar who had come up from Durban to

- 1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 229
- 2 Ibid. p. 230 ff.
- 3 Ibid. p. 230



enquire about trade with the emigrants.

After some quarrelling among the Dutch leaders, eventually Andries Willem Jacobus Pretorius was elected Commandant General. <sup>①</sup> In addition the Dutch had sent Mr. Landman to the Port on a mission in compliance with a request of the British settlers. By this time the European population in Natal had increased; including the Dutch, there were 640 males and 320 women and children in the Province. <sup>②</sup> On 16th May, 1838 Mr. Landman, with the concurrence of the few remaining Englishmen in Durban took possession of the Port in the name of the "Association of South African Immigrants."

The Cape Governor ordered them all to return to the Cape, but they were determined to remain, and the Dutch, under Pretorius, prepared to avenge the death of Retief and those who fell at Weenen. On December 16th 1838 Pretorius inflicted a terrible defeat on Dingaan at Blood River. Before the battle began they made the following vow :

"Broeders! Landgenote! Ons staan in hierdie plegtige oomblik voor die Heilige God van Hemel en aarde om aan Hom 'n gelofte te doen, dat as Hy met ons sal wees en ons vyand aan ons sal oorlewer ons sal die dag van die oorwinning as 'n Dankdag en 'n

1 Ibid. p 231

2 Ibid. p. 231



Sabbat tot Sy eer sal vier, en dat ons ons kinders sal vermaan om hierin te volhard selfs vir ons verste nageslag." ①

The Church built in Pietermaritzburg and the annual celebration of Dingaan's Day bear witness to the keeping of this Pledge.

The Commandos under Pretorius returned after the battle to find that in November, 1838 Major General Napier, the Cape Governor, without instructions from Britain had sent a company of the 72nd Highland Regiment to Natal to take temporary military occupation of Port Natal (Durban).

The Dutch, after Blood River, had formed a Volksraad, and they were greatly agitated at the arrival of the Regiment because it seemed to them that the British were coming to Natal with the object of over turning their government. Their fears were groundless, however, for the 72nd Regiment had long been hoping to return to Britain and in any case the Imperial Government was by no means disposed to extend the Colonial Territories. On 24th December, 1839 the troops embarked from Port Natal in the vessel sent for them, and the Dutch farmers saw the symbols of British Sovereignty disappear. ② In a letter to the Volksraad, Captain Jarvis

- 1 P. Engelbrecht "Die geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid Africa" p. 296 - This vow made by the Dutch before the Battle of Blood River is the origin of the South African Public Holiday on 16th December each year. The Day of the Vow it is called (Gelofte Dag)
- 2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 224

stated that they were still considered British subjects.

Four months prior to the departure of the troops the Volksraad had been persuaded of the sincerity of Panda, the Zulu who broke away from Dingaan in 1838; the Boers therefore assisted Panda and together they defeated Dingaan again on 30th January, 1840. Dingaan fled to Swaziland where he was assassinated by a Swazi. Panda thus became Zulu chief on 1st February, 1840. He was ordered to move his followers north of the Tugela River and Mr. Pretorius on 4th February, 1840, issued a proclamation in the name of the Volksraad, taking possession of the land between the Tugela and the Umfolosi Rivers from the Drakensberg to the sea, and declaring St. Lucia Bay and the coast southward to the mouth of the Umzimvubu to belong to the Dutch emigrant farmers as "The Republic of Natal." ①

Three magisterial and three ecclesiastical districts were formed, namely Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Weenen.

Having the administration settled, the Volksraad deemed it advisable to correspond with the Cape Governor, Sir George Napier on the subject of mutual recognition. Unfortunately for the Boers on 1st June, 1840 the Secretary

1 Ibid. p. 228

for State agreed that "we are not averse to the principle of extending colonies...."<sup>①</sup> He instructed troops to be sent to renew possession of Natal, but conditions in the Cape made it impossible to do this at once, as the Governor knew the Dutch would resist. This change of attitude in London meant the end of the "mutual recognition" correspondence between the Volksraad and the Cape Governor.

The Republic of Natal, however, began to act in such a way that the Cape Governor had to act too. The Dutch attacked Faku, the Kaffir Chief to the south of Durban. This made the Kaffirs move into the Cape with disastrous results on the Eastern Frontier. Thus it came about that on 28th January, 1841 Captain T.C. Smith of the 27th Regiment at the head of two Companies and fifty men from the Cape Mounted Rifles under Captain Warden, entered Durban and took command of the City.<sup>②</sup> After considerable arguing by letter between the British authorities and the Volksraad on 21st February, 1842 the Volksraad determined to resist by force. They were encouraged in their resistance by an unusual incident. A Hollander, Mr. George G. Onwy tried to form a company in Holland to trade with the Natal farmers. He

1 Ibid. p. 229

2 Ibid. p. 229

published a pamphlet "The Emigrants at Port Natal," in which he emphasised the past greatness of the Netherlands and applauded the Dutch farmers in Natal as worthy descendants. This, and the arrival of one Dutch ship, gave the Burghers the idea that Holland was behind them.

Meanwhile the Dutch attacked Captain Smith's little army at the foot of the Berea in Durban. He had to withdraw, and the need for reinforcements was obvious. Dick King, an old resident of Natal, rode six hundred miles to Grahamstown for help, which duly arrived in time by sea.

Colonel Cloete was senior soldier, and he assumed command of all troops in Natal. After the defeat of the Boers, Colonel Cloete called on them to acknowledge the Queen. The Volksraad eventually had to accept Colonel Cloete's reasonable terms and on 4th September, 1842, Natal became a British Colony distinct from the Cape of Good Hope. Colonel Cloete then visited Panda and agreed to the old boundaries and in 1844 a similar treaty was arranged with Faku, the Xosa.

In May, 1844 the British Parliament insisted that Natal should be part of the Cape Colony. Until this time the

1 Op. cit. p. 2

2 This famous ride was commemorated by the erection of the Dick King Statue in Durban.

3 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 229

Volksraad had been functioning but from now on it closed down altogether.

On 22nd November, 1845 Sir Peregrine Maitland, the Cape Governor, named as members of an executive council in Natal, the senior military officer, the secretary to the Government, the collector of customs, and the Crown Prosecutor. With the arrival of these officers on 4th December, 1845, the new administration was established.

This, then, was the situation when the Scottish Presbyterians of Pietermaritzburg began to collect money to build a Church.

#### EMIGRATION TO NATAL - 1849 - 1851

Reference has already been made to the reluctance shown by the Colonial Office to declare British sovereignty over Natal.

In opposition to this official apathy towards colonial expansion, was the new theory associated with the names of Charles Buller and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, that emigration from the Mother Country, wisely planned and directed, offered great social and economic benefits to all concerned.

The creation of "new Britain" overseas, with institutions in harmony with British freedom and constitutional progress was, they said, beneficial to Britain.

Great Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century, was fallow ground for these new ideas. Despite the wealth pouring out of her manufacturing towns, despite the prosperity apparent on the surface in her great cities and noble country mansions, there was desperate poverty and a bitter struggle for existence in countless humble homes.

"Many of the worst slums jostled the dwellings of the rich and the haunts of fashion. There were rookeries of thieves....under the very noses of the lawyers in the Temple and the legislators in Westminster, and behind the new plate-glass windows of the fine shops of Regent and Oxford Streets the urban poor squatted in worse than farmyard filth and squalor. But few troubled about the poor, who were left to the Vestries and Providence, everyone was too busy making money or spending it." <sup>1</sup>

Conditions were not much better in the agricultural areas, where farm labourers toiled for starvation wages. New methods, involving the use of machinery, were gradually superseding the age-old agricultural economy, and the small freeholding farmer was little better off. Unless he could make his farm pay on the old methods a run of low prices

1 Quoted in Natal Publicity Association's Pamphlet "Emigrants to Natal" p. 7

might force him to sell his land to a richer neighbour.

At the best he could expect only a life <sup>of</sup> to~~o~~ll and anxiety for himself and his family.

It is easy to understand then that the theories of Buller and Wakefield were eagerly accepted by reformers and philanthropists, who began to see in the great land spaces overseas room for a new way of life for thousands of families condemned, it would seem, to be exposed in the Old Country to the perpetual menace of hopeless poverty.

In the case of Natal, the writings of travellers and missionaries gradually drew the attention of such people to the advantages the country offered. Nathaniel Isaacs published his "Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa" in 1836 and in its Introduction expressed the hope that

"the time is not far distant when the government of Great Britain may view the advantages which the port of Natal offers for the extension of commercial enterprise." ①

In Natal the Lieutenant Governor appointed a Commission to report on the best methods of encouraging immigration. ② It recommended a system of land grants, whereby an equivalent of the settlers' passage would be returned in the form of land,

1 Op. cit. p. ii

2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 234



and suggested that the best type of immigrant was the practical farmer with a small capital of from £200 - £500.

In Great Britain a number of "Natal Companies" were formed, which offered schemes which would, as the prospectus of one of them explained, "enable the Emigrant to avoid many of the difficulties and disappointments which almost necessarily attend those who take such a step trusting in their own resources."<sup>①</sup> One scheme, which attracted considerable interest was that sponsored by "The Christian Emigration and Colonization Society"<sup>②</sup> Its organising Board was made up for the greater part by Methodist clergymen, and it had a Colonial Committee under the direction of David Dale Buchanan, founder and editor of the "Natal Witness." Its object was "the colonization of Port Natal.... with Christian families." The scheme which undoubtedly attracted the greatest interest was that advertised under the title "The Natal Immigration and Colonization Company;" it was promoted by an enterprising Irishman, J.C. Byrne.<sup>③</sup> Although inspired only by self-interest, he was a plausible and persuasive speaker. He established himself in an impressive office in London, published an attractive

1 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to Natal" p. 6

2 Ibid. p. 6

3 Ibid. p. 7



prospectus entitled "Emigrants' Guide to Port Natal,"<sup>①</sup>  
 brought out a journal which he called "The Echo"<sup>②</sup> dealing  
 with various aspects of life in the new colony, and travelled  
 up and down the English and Scottish countryside to lecture to  
 interested audiences. What he lacked in principle he made  
 up in showmanship.

Schemes like this for large-scale emigration did not,  
 of course, appeal to all. Men like the Yorkshire farmer,  
 Richard Hackett, formed his own party,<sup>③</sup> and chartered a ship  
 for their conveyance to Natal. So did John Lidgett and  
 Henry Boast. (The village of York, near Pietermaritzburg,  
 was established by Henry Boast in 1850; the district of  
 Lidgettton, in the midlands of Natal, still bears the name  
 of John Lidgett).

The Byrne scheme was, however, the most far-reaching.  
 Through his efforts and those of his agent, John Moreland,  
 communities were founded in Pinetown, Richmond, Byrne and  
 Ladysmith,<sup>④</sup> as well as at several places along the North  
 Coast. (Verulam was settled largely by those who had  
 enlisted under the auspices of the "Christian Emigration  
 and Colonization Society," the affairs of which became

1 A copy can be seen in Durban's "Africana Museum"

2 A copy can be seen in Durban's "Africana Museum"

3 Natal Publicity Association "Emigrants to Natal" p. 7

4 These are all well known Natal towns today.

involved in 'Byrne's scheme.)

It is, alas, not possible to make anything of a hero of Joseph Byrne. He was, unfortunately, a man of no principle, indeed something of a rogue. His blatant misrepresentations and callous indifference to the interests of his clients, as well as his subsequent bankruptcy, involved them in many of the difficulties and setbacks which attended their first years in Natal.

The settlers themselves are those to be honoured. Upon their fortitude and resourcefulness, upon their Christian qualities of good-neighbourliness, sobriety and endeavour are based much that is good in the Natal of today.

#### THE FIRST PRESBYTERIANS IN NATAL (English Speaking)

The American Board Missionaries In 1806, four students of William College, United States of America, were forced to take shelter in a haystack from a sudden storm, and while there they pledged themselves to work for Foreign Missions if God would but rescue them from the perils of the storm. <sup>①</sup> Out of this "haystack meeting" of Samuel Mills and his three friends grew the great work of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (A.B.C.F.M.), which was

1 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 219

finally established by charter in 1812. The first fields to be occupied were India, Ceylon, the Levant and the Sandwich Islands, but in 1834 in response to an appeal from Dr. Phillip of the London Missionary Society the American Board sent Missionaries to South Africa. <sup>①</sup>

The American Board Mission has always been "Independent" as far as church Government is concerned, but, because so many of the missionaries sent by the American Board to South Africa were Presbyterians, the South African Presbyterians always regarded them as being very closely associated with them. Whenever American Board Missionaries were in the area of the meetings of the Natal Presbytery they were always invited to attend.

In the "Missionary Herald" of January, 1835 the departure of these Missionaries is described as follows :

"The party which is destined for the maritime community, situated between Port Natal and De La Goa Bay, will probably be landed at Port Natal. The other, destined for the interior, must go by the way of Cape Town. These missionaries will labour among the Zulus of Natal. The Zulus all speak the same language, and all recently were under the same head.....  
 Rev. Daniel Lindley, Missionary; Rev. Alex E. Wilson, Missionary and Physician; Rev.H.L.

1 Ibid. p. 220

Venable, Missionary (with their wives) are to occupy one of the interior posts. Rev. Aldin Grout, Missionary, Mr. G. Champion Missionary; and Doctor Newton Adams, Physician (with their wives) are to occupy the maritime area..... The party embarked at Boston on December 3rd, 1834." ①

The fortunes of these American Missionaries became intertwined with the Boers of the Great Trek, for, as a result of wars between the Black man and the Boers, all the "interior party" referred to in the "Missionary Herald" had to seek refuge in Natal. Meanwhile, the "coastal party" under Dr. Adams had, in 1839, established a station at Umlazi near Amanzimtoti which is just outside Durban. ②

After the treacherous murder of Piet Retief and his party by Dingaan the American Missionaries in the interior were, for a time, completely scattered, and the war which followed the massacre made their work impossible, so they all removed from the colony. Of the original band of six only three - Adams, Lindley and Grout - were permitted to return.

In 1841 the American Board resolved to discontinue its South African work, but Dr. Adams, nevertheless, decided to continue Adams Mission at Umlazi at his own expense. ③ Lindley,

1 Quoted in J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 220  
2 A. Taylor "A History of Adams Mission College" p. 3  
3 Ibid. p.8

too, refused to be discouraged, and began work in the Pietermaritzburg area among the emigrant farmers.<sup>①</sup> He was an ordained Presbyterian Minister and thus the very first Presbyterian Services to be conducted in Natal were those conducted by Rev. D. Lindley of the American Board Mission when he conducted services in English between 1842 and 1847 for the emigrant Dutch farmers.

It was ten years after they first set foot in South Africa before the American Missionaries began to see any fruit for their labour. In 1845, however, there were abundant signs that a spiritual awakening was not far off.<sup>②</sup> Large audiences gathered on the Sabbath to hear the missionaries preach, and some hundreds attended the Sabbath Schools. Dr. Adams, especially, was indefatigable in his efforts to carry the Gospel to the heathen who surrounded his station. The first convert was a woman named Umbalasi, who had fled to the station in a state of starvation. After a time of probation she was baptised and admitted to the Church in 1846.

The Missionary force was augmented in the same year by the arrival from America of Rev. James C. Bryant.<sup>③</sup> Mr. Bryant occupied the station originally commenced by Rev. D. Lindley,

1 Ibid. p. 9

2 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 236

3 Ibid. p. 236

but he subsequently withdrew to Umsundusi. He was never in very robust health, and was, therefore, relieved as much as possible from the difficult work of being an ordinary missionary. He was a gifted linguist and quickly mastered Zulu; he was then employed in translating portions of the Bible and composing Zulu hymns. In 1850 he fell a victim of consumption, being the first American missionary to die on South African soil.<sup>①</sup>

After sharing for six years the life and fortunes of the emigrant farmers, Lindley resumed his connection with the American Board in 1847, and commenced the station Inanda, twenty miles north-westward from Durban. In the same year Lewis Grout reached the field and opened a station at the source of the Umsundusi River. Meanwhile Dr. Adams found it advisable to transfer his station to a site which was more central to the sphere he was trying to work, and he established himself, accordingly on the Amanzimtoti River, some ten or twelve miles further from Durban than the Umlazi River.<sup>②</sup> The latter station was given into the charge of Silas McKinney, who subsequently commenced a new work at Umkomasi, forty-five miles from Durban.

1 Ibid. p. 238

2 A. Taylor "A History of Adams Mission College" p. 29

During the years 1847 to 1850 there was a very rapid expansion of the work of the American Board in Natal. By 1850 no less than twelve stations had been established, and at the annual meeting of the mission, held at Umsundusi in September of that year, fourteen missionaries were present. ①

The Mission had now established itself firmly among the natives of Natal, and was entering a period of steady growth and increasing prosperity.

A "GREAT TREK" FROM NATAL.

In 1846 ten thousand Zulus poured across the Tugela River to escape the cruelty of Panda, ② and this huge influx created a general feeling of insecurity among the Dutch Farmers. They complained that all the old evils of the Cape Kaffirland were upon them again, and they requested the military authorities to chase the Zulus beyond the Tugela River.

In 1843 Natal had been proclaimed British territory and annexed to the Cape Colony. ③ The supreme authority in Natal was, however, the military who had the final say in almost all matters. The Volksraad (the old Government of the

1 J. du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 240  
2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 228  
3 Vide Page 363



Dutch emigrant farmers) was, however, still allowed for a time to attend to civil and judicial matters. It was to this body that the farmers first appealed. The Volksraad then asked the military Commander to drive the Zulus away but he refused, saying that his instructions were to prevent any further violence. The Boers were disgusted and resolved again to trek and seek independence and a home outside the borders of Natal. <sup>①</sup> The Boers moved away from the Pietermaritzburg area in large numbers, and today the Dutch are a minority in Natal as a result.

However, the immediate effect of this trek was to remove the majority of Rev. D. Lindley's congregation from him, so he rejoined the American Board, who had, by this time, reconsidered their decision to cease work in South Africa.

About this time, too, the necessity for strengthening the European population in Natal became apparent, so efforts were made to direct attention to the suitability of the country as a field for British emigration. The various schemes for immigration have already been mentioned <sup>②</sup> but the results were so satisfactory that between 1848 and 1850 thirtyfive vessels embarked, bringing 3,792 persons from

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 231

2 Vide page 369 ff.



Great Britain to Natal.

From the point of view of this present history this large scale immigration meant that there was an urgent need to establish English speaking Presbyterian Churches for the Scottish folk who made up a large portion of the emigrants.

CHAPTER 2

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CENTRAL NATAL CHURCHES

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THE FORMATION OF THE NATAL PRESBYTERY

The Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg had been in existence some three years when a need arose for the existence of a Church Court. A Mr. Charles Scott had come out from Scotland to labour at Pinetown, a few miles outside Durban, and it was necessary to ordain him.<sup>①</sup> It thus became essential to form the Natal Presbytery, and the formation of this important body is described in the minutes as follows :

"At Pinetown the eleventh day of May, 1852, which day the Revd. Messrs. William Campbell, Lindley<sup>②</sup> and Rosselt<sup>③</sup> being met together constituted themselves as a Presbytery, the Revd. William Campbell acting as Moderator. The Edict of Charles Scott's Ordination having been returned, duly served and due notice having been given to the people that the Presbytery were now met and were ready to hear any objections which might be made to the life or doctrines of the Revd. Charles Scott, - but none having appeared, the Presbytery resolved to proceed to the ordination, whereupon the Moderator proceeded to the pulpit and having preached from Luke 2, Vs. 13 and 14, he put to Mr. Charles

1 Vide Page 457

2 An American Board Missionary

3 An American Board Missionary

Scott the questions appointed to be put to all Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Natal previous to Ordination. Mr. Charles Scott having returned satisfactory answers, he was then by solemn prayer and imposition of the hands of the Presbytery set apart to the office of the Holy Ministry. He then received the right hand of fellowship from the brethren present, and was admitted to the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian Congregation of Pinetown, Natal, and to all the rights and privileges belonging thereto. The Moderator afterwards delivered a suitable address to the Minister and people on their respective duties. Divine service being concluded, Mr. Charles Scott subscribed to the formula and his name was added to the Roll.

After the above proceedings the Revd. C. Scott having been admitted as a member of Presbytery: It was resolved that the Revd. Messrs. D. Lindley and Wm. Campbell and C. Scott form themselves into the first Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Natal. The Revd. W. Campbell to be Moderator for the ensuing year, and the Rev. C. Scott as Clerk. The Presbytery having closed with prayer, adjourned to meet at such time and place as the Moderator may see cause to appoint." ①

The next meeting of the Presbytery was two years later, when in 1854 they met to consider :

1. The Code of discipline.
2. The History of the Pietermaritzburg Congregation.
3. The proposal that an organ should be bought for the congregation. ②

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery p 2 It is interesting to note that they formed themselves into a Presbytery after and not before the Ordination of Mr. Scott.

2 Ibid. p. 3

*So, who appointed the questions?*

With regard to (1) Mr. Campbell was instructed to draw up "A code suited to the circumstances of Presbyterian Churches in Natal;" with regard to (2) Mr. Campbell agreed to write a Narrative. With regard to the organ, it is recorded :

"Mr. Campbell having stated that some of the ladies of his congregation, with his concurrence and that of the Managers, have proposed to raise the necessary funds for procuring an organ to be employed in improving the Psalms, and having requested the opinion of the Presbytery in regard to this proposal, the Presbytery after deliberating on the subject, resolved that if in the opinion of the Minister and congregation it would tend to assist the congregation in singing the praises of God, they could see no reasonable objection why it should not be carried out." ①

But we must turn now to the history of the Church which thus obtained an organ by sanction of the Presbytery in 1854.

#### FIRST CHURCH PIETERMARITZBURG.

##### The Ministry of Rev. William Campbell 1851-1873

The beginnings of the Church in Pietermaritzburg go back to the evening of October 28th 1850 when a gathering of Presbyterians, held in the Congregational Chapel, resolved to form themselves into a congregation under the name of "The Presbyterian Church of Natal." ② This important

1 Ibid. p. 4

2 Ibid. p. 5 on which page Mr. Campbell's "Narrative" begins.

meeting was addressed by Rev. William Campbell, minister of the Free Church of Alexandria, in the Presbytery of Dumbarton, Scotland. Mr. Campbell had, shortly before, arrived at Port Natal on twelve months' leave of absence, and had been charged by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland to unite all the different denominations of Presbyterians in Natal into one body, without any reference to the particular views held by each at home,<sup>①</sup> the causes of which could only exist there, and therefore could not form a subject of division in a colony such as Natal.

Mr. Campbell, who was accompanied by his wife and family, after dividing his services between Pietermaritzburg and Durban during the next five months,<sup>②</sup> was invited to settle in Pietermaritzburg as the minister of the young congregation there.

In 1853 Mr. Campbell, then Clerk of the Natal Presbytery, wrote a "Narrative" into the minute describing the events as follows :

"The Revd. Wm. Campbell for sometime minister of the Free Church in Alexandria, Dumbartonshire, was commissioned by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland to visit Natal for the purpose of ministering to the spiritual necessities

1 Ibid. p. 5

2 Ibid. p. 5

of his fellow countrymen who were at that period emigrating in considerable numbers to that new Colony. Taking into account the important nature of this commission together with the state of Mr. Campbell's health at that time, the Free Presbytery of Dumbarton sanctioned his leave of absence from his ministerial charge in Alexandria for the period of 12 months, or until such time as he might be able to organise a new congregation in the distant land which he was about to visit. Being thus commissioned and commended by the prayers of the Presbytery to the work of the Lord in South Africa, he embarked along with his family and a company of emigrants on the 14th June, 1850 on board the ship "Unicorn," and after a prosperous voyage of 3 months and 4 days arrived safely in this Colony on the 18th September of the same year.

Finding that a few friends of the Presbyterian cause had met in Pietermaritzburg previous to his landing, and had published an address calling upon their brethren in all parts of Natal to unite with them in forming a Presbyterian Church on a liberal and non-sectarian basis, he resolved to take advantage of this movement.

During a detention of six weeks at the Port he preached regularly every Sabbath day to the Presbyterians in Durban and met with them for consultation, then he proceeded to Pietermaritzburg where he preached for two Sabbath days and addressed a small meeting of Presbyterians in the Congregational Chapel on the evening of the 28th October, 1850. At that meeting it was resolved to use their best endeavours to form a Presbyterian congregation in Pietermaritzburg on such a basis as would embrace all Presbyterians who might be prepared to adhere to the Westminster Standards in their original non-sectarian acceptation.

At the said meeting it was also unanimously resolved to invite the Revd. Wm. Campbell to settle with his family in Pietermaritzburg for the purpose of preaching and administering the ordinances of religion among them, at the same time promising to raise a sufficient income for his support.

Having obtained the use of the Dutch Reformed Church every Sabbath day, he commenced his labours early in November of the same year, and by the blessing of God, had so far organised a Congregation as to feel warranted to dispense the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper among them for the first time on the 16th of March, 1851.

There were 37 names at that period on the Communion Roll, 30 of whom together with some 10 members of the Dutch Reformed Church were present at the first communion, whilst the elders of that sister church assisted at the table.

This was a scene in itself truly interesting and encouraging and well fitted to call forth the exclamation "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." On the thanksgiving Monday of this Communion Season, after the Minister had retired, the Congregation unanimously agreed to present a formal call to him praying that he might continue his labours among them as their stated Pastor. On receiving this call which was signed by 31 members and 61 adherents, Mr. Campbell at once wrote a letter of acceptance which together with the call were transmitted by George Macleray Esq. on behalf of the congregation to the Revd. John Bonar, Convener of the Free Church Colonial Scheme, with a request that he might be pleased to prosecute the accompanying call before the Free Presbytery of Dumbarton.



Mr. Bonar readily complied with this request and in the course of the same year transmitted an extract of the minutes of the Free Presbytery of Dumbarton bearing date the 6th of August, 1851. This document, which was publicly read to the Congregation at the close of the forenoon service on Sabbath the 21st December 1851 contained the statement that the Presbytery on hearing of Mr. Campbell's acceptance of the call to the newly formed Presbyterian Congregation of Pietermaritzburg dissolved the connexion between him and the congregation at Alexandria, expressed their great satisfaction with the success that had attended his mission to Natal, recorded their sympathy with him in the sphere of labour to which the Great Head of the Church had called him, and their prayer that the Lord may prosper His cause under Mr. Campbell's ministry there. The Presbytery further recommended the Moderator of the Kirk Session to take an early opportunity of stating the fact of Mr. Campbell's success to the congregation at Alexandria.

Therefore the Presbytery did by solemn prayer and supplication commend Mr. Campbell and his new flock to the countenance and care of the great King and Head of the Church, praying that the connexion between them and Him may be hallowed and ever fruitful to the glory of God and their mutual comfort and spiritual prosperity." ⑥

This is a simple account of the origin of the Presbyterian Church in Natal and of the formation of the Pastoral tie between the newly formed congregation in Pietermaritzburg and the Rev. Wm. Campbell.

1 Ibid. p. 5 ff.



At the dispensation of the Lord's Supper in October 1851 ten names were added to the Communion Roll and eighteen at the Communion Season in April, 1852, another eighteen were added at the end of that year, making in all 83.<sup>①</sup> By the end of 1853 the number had been reduced to 55 because some had left for other parts and some had been removed from the Roll according to the strict discipline exercised in the Church at that time.<sup>②</sup> Numbers were not very large but the arrival of some Scottish immigrants and the promise of more to come encouraged the Pietermaritzburg Presbyterians to take steps to build a Church.

#### The erection of a Church Building

The erection of a Church to seat 300 persons, with a gallery for another 100, was immediately taken in hand, at an estimated cost, exclusive of gallery, of about £700

"an equal amount being visualised as necessary for the building of a Manse and School Room." <sup>③</sup>

A valuable site opposite the Colonial Office in Church Street was gifted by the Government which also voted £100

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session First Church Pietermaritzburg  
Vol. 1 p. 27
- 2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 38
- 3 Professor Petrie "Cuttings and papers on Pietermaritzburg  
Presbyterian Church History"

per annum as a temporary allowance for the minister. A personal donation of £20 was given by Lieutenant-Governor (later Sir Benjamin) Pine, who showed himself a generous and sympathetic supporter. By October, 1851 the sum of £222.10s. -d. had been collected towards the Church Building Fund. Tenders for the building were accepted in the course of 1852 and in the ~~Session~~

Minutes of the Board of Management :

"the Commissioners of the Municipality are thanked for supplying stone and sand free, the hope being expressed that the same will apply to any further stone and sand required."①

Financial Strain

The effort involved in the building of the Church and in the provision, at the same time, of a suitable Manse imposed on the infant congregation an excessive strain with which the ordinary revenue in the shape of Sunday collections and seat rents, was quite unable to cope. Almost every page of the contemporary records speaks of the grim financial struggle.

"Give till it hurts - and then some!" ②

1 Op.cit. Vol.1 p. 25

2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 59

was the slogan of one of the Treasurers of the day - and while there were not wanting those who did so, as is gratefully acknowledged, those who were reasonably suspected of doing less are admonished in language which would probably be deemed too forthright for present day ears.

The Board's Minutes state the situation in these terms :

"All of us are ready enough to expend freely on comforts and even luxuries for our frail and perishing bodies, but the interests of our immortal souls are apparently esteemed of far less consequence; we will readily give to gratify a whim or our appetites that which we will grudge or deny to the service of God." ①

In these circumstances Mr. Campbell decided to tap outside sources. He describes it as follows in his Narrative in the Presbytery Minute Book :

"Soon after the Committee of management took the necessary steps to commence the erection of a Church of the plain Gothic order, capable of accommodating 300 persons, and were able to report on the 18th April, 1853, that their subscription list then amounted to £470. This being too small a sum even to cover the expense of the mason work and of the roof an earnest appeal was made in June 1853 to friends far and near for help. This expedient

1 Op. cit. Vol 1 p. 69

having also signally failed, the urgency of the case was such that the Minister with the full concurrence of the Managers and members of the congregation resolved to pay a visit in person to Cape Town and the other chief towns through the Cape Colony in order to solicit subscriptions to assist in completing the building then in course of erection.

It may be proper here to state that before this plan was thought of nearly £500 had been raised by local subscriptions and other efforts including the sum of £60 from a few friends in Glasgow forwarded to Geo. Macleroy, Esq., one of the Managers, and some other small subscriptions and donations of ladies' work from Belfast and Largs.

In consequence of the depressed state of matters in Natal, and the inability of the Committee to proceed with the building without funds, having first obtained a promise from the Revd. H. Pearse and two of the American Missionaries of an occasional supply of preaching in his absence, the Minister set sail from Natal on the 12th November, 1853, via Algoa Bay to Cape Town. The Lord so prospered him in this undertaking that he accomplished his voyage to the Cape, travelled back overland to Grahamstown, visiting most of the chief towns, and returned by sea from Port Elizabeth to Natal on the 17th March, 1854, bringing along with him the large sum of £560, as the result of his mission." ①

### The Church opened

In his "Narrative" Mr. Campbell describes the opening of the Church at Pietermaritzburg as follows :

"By the first of October of the same year the building, though not by any means finished,

1 Op. cit. p. 9

was sufficiently ready to be opened for public worship. On that interesting occasion the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was dispensed, and the Minister was assisted by his co-presbyters, the Revd. Messrs. Lindley and Scott, whilst the Revd. Dr. Faure of the Dutch Reformed Church also took part in the evening service. When we take into account the many acts of kindness on the part of the Ministers and members of other evangelical demoninations, the many obstacles that have been overcome by the good hand of God helping us, when we contemplate the beautiful house erected in this strange land for the worship of the God of our Fathers, the holding of our solemn assemblies, and the regular observances of Christian ordinances, according to the simple and scriptural method to which we were accustomed in our fatherland, well may we say 'The Lord hath done great things for us.'" ①

The Kirk Session

Mr. Campbell worked for nearly six years in Pietermaritzburg before he formed a Kirk Session. A Board of Management had been formed in 1850 but whenever he wished to serve the Communion he had obtained assistance from the Missionaries of the American Board Mission and from Rev. Dr. Faure of the Dutch Reformed Church.

In January, 1856 the Presbytery strongly recommended that Mr. Campbell should form a Kirk Session. At first he explained that it had been

"very difficult to obtain suitable men to take up the office" ②

1 Op. cit. p. 10

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 28

He promised to take the necessary steps and report to next Presbytery and on 18th August, 1856 the Presbytery records the formation of the Session as follows :

"The Presbytery, having recommended the desirableness of taking the necessary steps of securing a suitable number of Elders to form, with the Minister, a Kirk Session, after considerable delay, chiefly in the hope that the Lord might be pleased to enlarge the Church and to increase the number of persons eligible for this sacred office; at length however the time arrived when the Minister, with the advice and concurrence of the Deacons, resolved to take the usual steps according to the laws and usages of the Presbyterian Church for the election and ordination of three Elders, due intimation having been made from the pulpit fourteen clear days previous to the day of election. At the same time the Minister preached on the subject, urging the communicants to look out for three suitable men of good report to act as ruling Elders among them. The congregation being assembled at their Annual meeting on the evening of the 30th April 1856 at the close of the usual thanksgiving services and after the reading of the annual report presented by the Deacons or Managers, the Minister proceeded to open the sealed lists in the presence of the congregation, the result of which was that Messrs. Meek, George Macleroy and Wm. Martin were declared to be duly elected; thereafter the Minister conferred with these brethren and on Mr. Geo Macleroy declining to act, Mr. Geo. Thompson being next highest on the list of Elders elect also declined, thus leaving Mr. Meek and Mr. Martin who consented to act, solely on public grounds, and from a sincere desire

to co-operate with the Minister in seeking to advance the spiritual interests of the Church.

In the absence <sup>of</sup> a Kirk Session, and it being found impracticable for his co-presbyters the Rev. Messrs. D. Lindley and C. Scott to attend, the Revd. H.E. Faure, D.D. Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in the City and Mr. P. Ferreira a member of his Kerkeraden, being met with the Rev. Mr. Campbell, Moderator constituted themselves as a Session on Sabbath forenoon 1st June, 1856. On said occasion the Moderator did, after a sermon from Col. III v. 4 put to Messrs. Meek and Martin the questions appointed to persons before their ordination to the Eldership, and they having given satisfactory answers to the same, he did by solemn prayer to Almighty God set apart the said Messrs. Meek and Martin to the office of Eldership, admitting them to all the privileges in the name of the Lord Jesus, the other brethren receiving them also along with the Moderator with the right hand of fellowship, after which the newly ordained Elders and people were severally addressed on their respective duties." ①

Mr. Campbell tours Canada and United States of America in search of Funds

Despite the fine sum of money procured on his trip to Capetown Mr. Campbell found that the Church was in financial straits again and so he decided to go on another fund raising tour. This time he received permission to collect funds outside South Africa. ② Setting out towards the end of 1856 Mr. Campbell toured Canada and the United States

1 Op. cit. Vol 1 p. 28

2 Details are quoted in "Notes on Pietermaritzburg Church History" by J. Smith in Professor Petrie's "Cuttings and Papers"



of America, and then Great Britain and Ireland,<sup>①</sup> supply being provided during his absence mainly by Dr. Faure of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Rev. Chas. Scott of Pine-town.<sup>②</sup> June of 1858 saw him back in Natal, his second journey having realised "from first to last, a total of £1,225. 11s. 4d., including expenses."<sup>③</sup> A regrettable incident in his British tour was "a serious accident (not further explained) which befell him in Manchester and which "laid him up in a state of helplessness and suffering for more than two months, thus arresting the further progress of his work."<sup>④</sup>

### The Manse

Mr. Campbell had undertaken his travels with the object of collecting sufficient funds for two main purposes :

- (a) the liquidation of the debt on the Church,
- (b) the provision of a Manse, to which latter, if it should be built, he disclaimed any personal title; it would be equally with the Church, the property of the congregation.<sup>⑤</sup>

Mr. Campbell's tour having been so successful the Manse project was now proceeded with. In March, 1859 a suitable

- 1 Ibid.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4. Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.

site in Burger Street was purchased for £56;<sup>①</sup> tenders for building were accepted in the course of the following year and Mr. Campbell was able to take occupation on April 1st 1862. It was the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream, but alas the rejoicing was short-lived. The depression which had spread throughout South Africa affected the income of this new Church and as a result commitments other than the manse project began to absorb Mr. Campbell's hard-earned revenue. Only twelve months later comes the discouraging statement that

"the land adjoining the Church was sold in three lots for £1,050 as the only means of paying the debt on the Manse."<sup>②</sup>

The cession of the valuable ground referred to was destined seriously to hamper the greater usefulness of the Church as time went on.

### The Country Districts

It is to be noted that the Presbyterian Church of Natal, true to its title, considered the outlying districts to be its care no less than the town; a list of the "Country stations" visited by Mr. Campbell, speaks of

- 1 Minutes of Board of Management First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol 1 p. 182
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 246 (vide also Prof. Petrie's "Cuttings and Papers")

"Nottingham, Mooi River, Prince's Bridge and Fox Hill."

Each of these was visited once in two months; Richmond once a month; and occasional services were conducted at Camperdown, Bushman's River and Cathkin. Mr. Campbell reported to the Session in 1862 that the average attendance at all stations was one hundred and fifty persons each Sabbath.<sup>①</sup>

### The Chaplaincy

In addition to this formidable list of outstations Mr. Campbell was also the unpaid chaplain to the Scottish soldiers at Fort Napier.<sup>②</sup> Throughout his ministry Mr. Campbell was dogged with either Church or personal debt, and the depression which hit all South Africa for almost twenty years made his work difficult at Pietermaritzburg. However, in 1857 he was delighted to receive the following letter :

"War Office,  
Pall Mall, S.W. 8.  
8 Oct., 1857.

Sir,

The Sec. of State for War having had under his consideration your letter of 1st inst., requesting

1 Minutes of Kirk Session First Church Pietermaritzburg Vol 1 p. 104

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 48

a Modification of Rev. Mr. Campbell's appointment as officiating chaplain to the Presbyterian troops stationed at Fort Napier, Natal District, Cape of Good Hope, I am directed by Lord Panmure to acquaint you that his Lordship has decided on granting Mr. Campbell a fixed allowance of £60 per annum provided he will undertake the Presbyterian duty for the whole Colony of Natal and pay periodical visits to outlying stations.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
(Sgd) C.R.Clegg." ①

In 1863 Mr. Campbell wrote to the Colonial Committee in Scotland quoting the following extract which shows something of the progress made at Pietermaritzburg from 1850 to 1863 :

"In 1850 there were 24 Presbyterians who were members of the Church..... and today we have 111 persons on the Communion Roll. The general attendance at the Ordinances of worship has been very encouraging of late, and the number of communicants at the celebration of the Lord's Supper on the 19th inst. was much greater than on any previous occasion. O that the Spirit were breathed from on high, then this would be the name whereby we could be called "Jehovah Shamma, The Lord is there" It is pleasing to record the fact that the Church which is now respectably filled with devout worshippers every Lord's Day is entirely free from debt, and when the Church land which has been lately disposed of shall be paid up, it is expected that the Manse will also be in a similar position, thus compensating the present Minister in some

1 Professor A. Petrie "Cuttings and Papers"  
on Pietermaritzburg Presbyterian Church History.

measure for his exertions, and bequeathing to his successors a Church and Manse as Memorials of the past and illustrations of the Scripture "Who hath despised the day of small things." ①

### A Year of Expansion 1864

Despite the financial depression which had caused the Church at Pietermaritzburg to sell some of its land and despite the numerous services already conducted by Mr. Campbell the congregation decided to assure the future of Presbyterianism in the province by applying to the Government for sites for Churches in other cities of Natal. Consequently at the request of the Pietermaritzburg congregation the Presbytery made an application in 1864 to the Lieutenant Governor of Natal

"for sites in the several townships of the Colony where Presbyterian ordinances of worship might be started." ②

The result was that at the meeting of Presbytery on 17th February, 1864 Mr. Campbell reported that sites had been allotted to the Presbyterian Church in the following towns :

"Nottingham Road, Scottsburg, Greytown, Colenso, Estcourt, Newcastle." ③

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol 3 p. 158
- 2 Quoted in J. Smith's "Notes on Pietermaritzburg Church History" included in Professor Petrie's "Cuttings and Papers" (vide also Minutes Natal Presbytery Vol 1 p. 108)
- 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 1 p 111

Mr. Campbell, who had for some time been taking occasional services for the Presbyterians in some of these areas, agreed to undertake the gigantic task of trying to establish regular Presbyterian Ordinances of Worship in all these villages.

This project was greatly assisted by the arrival in Natal of Dr. Duff in May, 1864. Dr. Duff, famous missionary and now Convener of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, was in South Africa inspecting the Free Church work, and he was present at a memorable meeting of Natal Presbytery on 25th May, 1864.<sup>①</sup> At this meeting two matters were stressed, namely

- 1) the financial situation.
- 2) the obvious need for a labourer to assist Mr. Campbell with the country work around Pietermaritzburg.<sup>②</sup>

The minutes read as follows :

"Dr. Duff kindly offered to do his utmost in the furtherance of the desire of the Presbytery to obtain a labourer to assist Mr. Campbell....He promised to place the grave of the Presbytery before his Committee asking them for the necessary financial support.....It was agreed to leave the selection of the man to Dr. Duff."<sup>③</sup>

- 1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 116
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 116
- 3 Ibid. Vol 1 p 117

The result was that when Dr. Duff returned to Scotland he reported the matter to his committee and at the meeting held on 15th November, 1864 we read in the Colonial Committee's minutes :

"Being well satisfied with the qualifications of Mr. John Smith, preacher of the Gospel, whom we have reason to believe is willing to go to South Africa.....he is hereby appointed to Pietermaritzburg under the care of the Natal Presbytery, and the Convener is requested to complete the necessary arrangements in terms of his report." ①

Thus it was that Mr. John Smith, destined to become the first Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa set sail for South Africa, arriving in Pietermaritzburg in May, 1865. Mr. Smith was, at that time, assistant to Rev. Mr. Wilson of the Territorial Church, Fountain bridge, Edinburgh. ②

Mr. Smith had been only three months in Pietermaritzburg when the congregation agreed to give him a call as "colleague and successor to Mr. Campbell" and, at a meeting of Presbytery held on 14th October, 1865 the call was sustained. ③ Three days later Mr. Smith was ordained by Natal Presbytery in the Church in Pietermaritzburg. ④

1 Op. cit. Vol 3 p. 244  
2 Professor Petrie's "Cuttings and Papers" where Mr. J. Smith mentions this fact in his "Notes on Pietermaritzburg Church History"  
3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 1 p. 132  
4 Ibid. p. 133



Years of difficulty 1865 - 1870

The arrival of Mr. Smith made it possible for the work at the various outstations to increase in size, and the Session minutes are at first full of praise for

"the zeal and devotion and service of Mr. Smith." ①

In the beginning, as Mr. Smith said many years later

"the settlement promised to be a happy and hopeful one, both for the ministers and for the congregation." ②

However, difficulties began to affect the situation, and the results were to affect the Presbyterians in Natal for almost a hundred years.

The first difficulty was the increased financial depression. This resulted in the ministers of all the Churches in the Presbytery having to carry on with what salaries congregations could afford. In Durban, for example, one of the ministers had to leave, not because the congregation did not want him, but simply due to the lack of adequate financial support. In Pietermaritzburg

1 Op. cit. Vol 1 p. 161  
2 "Presbyterian Churchmen" May 1920

both ministers salaries were reduced, and Mr. Smith had to face a cut in his small stipend of £100 per annum, with the promise that when the congregation was in a better financial position all would be repaid to him. This promise was later to be the source of much unpleasantness.

In their financial straits the Presbytery appealed to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh. This Committee did what they could, but were unable to increase the grants any further. In this connection Dr. Duff had the following statement recorded in the Colonial Committee minutes :

"Having visited Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal, and made myself acquainted with the work, I am convinced that we should do all in our power to avoid the tragedy of Mr. Campbell and Mr. Smith having to quit the field. I here and now give my "widow's mite of £5" and call on others to do the same."

In this way £50 was sent in 1867 to the struggling labourers in the distant field in Natal.

But the Natal Presbytery turned not only to the Free Church in Scotland, they solicited help from the United Presbyterians as well, and from this source they received another £50 in 1867.

1 Minutes of Board of Management Vol 2. p. 8  
2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 211  
3 Op. cit. Vol 3 p. 342  
4 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 1 p. 238

In 1868 the Presbytery wrote to the Irish Presbyterian Church asking for aid, and to their delight a donation of £50 arrived in January of that year.<sup>1</sup>

All the money so received was divided out among the ministers of the Presbytery, as the congregations were quite unable to pay them at this stage of their history.

In 1867 Mr. Campbell sent the following report to the Colonial Committee :

"The congregation, though chiefly composed of working people, was for a short time enabled to meet its current expenditure (£470 per annum or £4 on an average from each communicant) but owing to the great depression in trade, the revenue has greatly fallen off, and in all probability the deficiency at the end of the current financial year will not be less than £500. I appeal for a grant of at least £300 in order to meet this deficiency, which may deprive the congregation of one of its ministers and thereby cause calamity. I simply lay the facts before you."<sup>2</sup>

The Committee had again with reluctance to refuse any further financial aid.

Another difficulty with which the Natal Presbytery had to contend was what they called "The Colenso Heresy"

Bishop Colenso was an Anglican who held "modern" views on the interpretation of the Scriptures. He did not accept the

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 281

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland  
Vol. 3 p. 386

Calvinism of the Westminster Confession and held very liberal views as to how the Sabbath Day should be kept. He was a man of charming personality and he soon began to gather to his Church many of the English speaking colonists of Natal including "unwary Scotsmen" as the Presbyterians described their fellow countrymen who thus became Anglicans.

His whole approach to religion was ~~an~~ anathema to the Free Church ministers in Natal. They had not a good word to say for him. Here are two extracts from reports sent to the Colonial Committee. In 1867 Dr. Duff wrote :

".....and what in all respects is sadder and even worse are the Colenso heresies. To allow our people to be affected by them would be an irreparable calamity. Pietermaritzburg being the Cathedral town of this arch-heretic of modern times - and the greatest, perhaps the most unscrupulous heretic of all times - the Presbyterian Church, under such faithful pastors as we possess, may well be regarded as not only the bulwark of true Protestantism but of Christianity itself. It is not on slight grounds that I say Messrs. Campbell and Smith, etc., are these bulwarks. No men have rendered more signal service in stemming the torrent of the Colenso-infidel heresy. I can also testify to the great earnestness and liberality of the congregation there. At present the colony is suffering a depression of unprecedented severity but if they are enabled now by the generosity of

our people in this land, the Colenso heresies may be stemmed." ①

Mr. Campbell wrote in 1868 to say that Bishop Colenso "that arch heretic" ② had been visiting his (Mr. Campbell's) people in Colenso and Nottingham Road, and "asking in the blindest way after their health." ③

To the zealous Presbyterians of Natal this problem was obviously as serious, if not more so, than the financial strain imposed by the economic depression.

The third problem was a personal one. Since the days when Paul and Barnabas found that even good and saintly men cannot always work together it has been a problem in the Christian Church. Certainly in Pietermaritzburg there was an unfortunate clash of personalities between the two ministers. Mr. Smith was a younger man and obviously a very brilliant man in all departments of his calling. Mr. Campbell was not so young or as able as his colleague, and, moreover, he was a sick man. The result was a split in the congregation, some being for Mr. Smith and others being for Mr. Campbell, who had for so long borne the heat and the burden of the day.

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 393  
2 The name given apparently by Dr. Duff was often used in reference to Bishop Colenso by the Free Church Ministers.  
3 Minutes of Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Vol 3 p. 416

The situation might have been overcome had it not been for events which took place in 1870. In that year the troubles of 1865 - 1870 came to a head with disastrous results on the life and work of the small congregation in Pietermaritzburg.

①

The Year of the "Natal Disruption" 1870

The underlying reasons for the troubles in the Pietermaritzburg Church were, I think, the ones already mentioned, but the superficial reason was the refusal to pay out to Mr. Smith the money owed to him as a result of the depression.

In 1870 the Annual Meeting was told that there had been a surplus at the end of 1869 and a section of the congregation asked whether it was the intention of the Board to pay Mr. Smith the back pay owed him. Mr. Campbell had already been paid all that was owing to him, and this section felt that Mr. Smith should now receive what was due to him. This resolution was curtly set aside, and the meeting ended in an uproar; "The Smith Section" challenged the validity of the proceedings and protested to the Presbytery. ②

Between the meeting of the congregation and the next

1 Minutes of Kirk Session First Church Pietermaritzburg  
Vol 2 p. 10 ff

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 2 p. 40

meeting of the Presbytery Rev. John Smith decided to resign, it obviously having been agreed that "The Smith Section" would request the Presbytery to sanction their leaving the first church in Pietermaritzburg to form a second congregation, of which Mr. Smith would be the minister. Thus, when the Presbytery met on 16th February, 1870<sup>①</sup>, it had before it three matters of the gravest import, namely

- 1) The Resignation of Rev. John Smith.
- 2) An appeal and protest against the validity of the congregational Meeting.
- 3) A Memorial from certain members and adherents of the Pietermaritzburg Church requesting permission to form a second congregation in that City. ②

The Presbytery agreed to take (1) and (2) together, and the proceedings read as follows :

"The Presbytery approved of the Moderator~~s~~ having called a congregational meeting of the Church in Pietermaritzburg in reference to the resignation of the Rev. John Smith. It was then moved by Mr. Buchanan, seconded by Mr. Scott, and agreed to, that the minutes of said Meeting be now produced and read, and that the parties as Commissioners from the congregation be called to appear. The minutes of the congregational meeting held on the 9th inst. and those of the adjourned meeting of the 15th., were then read, and also a Protest and Appeal against certain proceedings at the first of said meetings.

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 42

2 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 42



This protest and appeal having, when tendered, been refused by the meeting held yesterday, a discussion ensued in regard to the votes objected against in the said protest, in which discussion the Revds. Messrs. Campbell, Smith and Buchanan took part; Messrs. Corlett and Bowman having presented themselves as Commissioners from the congregation, the following resolution was moved by Mr. Buchanan, seconded by Mr. Patten and agreed to - the Moderator dissenting inasmuch as Messrs. Corlett and Bowman were not received as representatives of the Presbyterian congregation of Maritzburg.

The Presbytery having heard the Protest and Appeal taken by a large body of the members of the Church in Maritzburg against the validity of the proceedings of the congregational meeting, anent Mr. Smith's case, sustain the same, declaring the reasons for said protest to be good and sufficient; and that, in consequence, all the proceedings of said meeting, are irregular and invalid - all the more so because the protest, when respectfully tendered to the meeting was disrespectfully refused, and its existence ignored. At the same time, as all parties seem equally anxious for a speedy settlement of the main question of Mr. Smith's resignation, and as Messrs. Corlett and Bowman are now present to represent the views of a considerable section of the congregation, the Presbytery agree to receive them, ex gratia, in their representative capacity, and to receive any information which they may be able to impart.

Mr. Smith, having recapitulated his reasons for his resignation, Mr. Campbell offered explanations on his own behalf.

Thereafter the Clerk read a communication from Messrs. George Thomson and George Macleroy in reference to a meeting of members and adherents

of the Presbyterian Church in Pietermaritzburg, held on the 10th inst., praying to be heard by the Presbytery, on behalf of the said meeting, to which request the Presbytery acceded - Messrs. Thomson and Macleroy having appeared.

Mr. Thomson presented and read a memorial, addressed to the Presbytery, by the foresaid parties, a copy of which here follows :

'Unto the Reverend the Presbytery of Natal, the Memorial of the undersigned respectfully showeth

That we, the undersigned, members and adherents of the Pietermaritzburg congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Natal, feel constrained to approach the Reverend Court in this way, in consequence of there being no Kirk Session in connection with the said congregation.

That we have learned with the deepest regret that it is the purpose of the Revd. J. Smith the junior minister of said congregation, to resign his colleagueship with the Revd. W. Campbell.

That during the period of nearly five years, during which he has ministered and laboured among us, we feel bound to say that he has fulfilled the delicate and difficult duties of his position in the midst of unusual and temporal trial and depression among the members of this congregation with prudence, faithfulness and zeal, and they feel it due to him and to themselves to express, in the strongest manner their affectionate appreciation of his whole character, as an earnest, wise and consistent minister of the Gospel of Christ.

That, feeling it would be impossible for us and our families to remain in connection with the aforesaid congregation, with any hope of enjoying comfort or edification, we hereby

signify our intention of withdrawing from the same, and our desire to do so, in a spirit of Christian charity toward those from whom we desire to separate ourselves, at the same time we profess our continued attachment to Presbyterian principles, and our desire to have the privilege of worshipping according to Presbyterian usage, as we have heretofore been accustomed.

That considering our personal attachment to the Rev. J. Smith, our desire to enjoy a continuance of his ministry, and our conviction that his departure from the Colony would be a calamity to the Church, and detrimental to the cause of religion, especially at a time when infidelity and its fruits are so manifest and so powerful as they are in this place - we have resolved to endeavour to retain his services amongst us, and have already taken steps with a view to ascertain what amount of support we can obtain from those in town and country who sympathise with us and favour this object; and further we desire to inform the Presbytery that such progress has been made with this matter as affords a confident expectation of ultimate success, and that only the shortness of time we have had to make necessary arrangements has prevented us from laying before the Presbytery a proposal to erect a second Presbyterian congregation in Pietermaritzburg.

That in withdrawing from the first Presbyterian congregation we deem it necessary in the circumstances in which we are placed to inform the Presbytery of the following facts, namely - that the first Presbyterian congregation is indebted to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland in the sum of £87, and further that in conformity with an express stipulation made with the Rev. J. Smith at the time of his ordination as colleague to

the Rev. W. Campbell to the effect that as soon as the funds permitted it, his stipend would be raised to the amount first promised - an amount at the rate of \$100 per annum, since May, 1868 is due to the Rev. J. Smith; that these debts have been repeatedly acknowledged by the congregation in their annual reports, and in an Earnest Appeal issued by the Managers on 1st Oct. 1867; and that there has been a surplus in hand since May, 1868, which ought to have been applied in payment of these debts. And we further deem it necessary, in severing our connection with the said congregation, to protest against the application of these funds to any other purpose, and leave it with the Presbytery to use its authority to secure the payment of these debts. That we, the undersigned Memorialists, respectfully submit the foregoing statement to the Reverend the Presbytery, praying them to appoint some early day for another meeting to take up the abovementioned proposal to erect a second Presbyterian charge in this city, and to forward to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland the foregoing paragraph of this Memorial which refers to the debt above mentioned in order that the position of the Memorialists with respect to the said Committee may be set right in this matter'

Signed by Geo Macleroy and G. Thomson  
and by and for 55 others.

Pietermaritzburg  
14 February, 1870.

Mr. Macleroy then addressed the Presbytery in support of the Memorial - especially in regard to the proposal for the formation of

a second charge under the pastorate of the Rev. J. Smith.

The different parties having been heard, namely the Revd. Messrs. Campbell and Smith also the representatives of the sectional portion of the congregation, and the protestors, Mr. Smith replied.

It was then moved by Mr. Patten, seconded by Mr. Buchanan and unanimously agreed to, that the parties be removed." <sup>1</sup>

After the removal of the parties the Presbytery decided to give everyone concerned time to consider the matter, and so the Presbytery was closed, to meet again next morning at 10 a.m. when Rev. Mr. Buchanan moved as follows :

"The Presbytery having heard parties, and having taken due time for consideration, find themselves shut up to the necessity of accepting Mr. Smith's resignation, and therefore do now release him from his charge as colleague with Mr. Campbell. In doing so they feel bound to put upon record an expression of their high esteem for Mr. Smith, as an able minister and an exemplary Christian - their approbation of his diligence his faithfulness, his much enduring patience throughout his ministerial career - their admiration of the wisdom and prudence which have guided him through all his difficult course, and especially in this its melancholy crisis - their perfect satisfaction with his statement of reasons for resignation and the painfully conclusive viva voce evidence by which he has indicated and established that statement - their gratitude to the Head of the Church for giving the Colony five years' services of such a faithful

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 42 ff

and efficient witness for the truth in these perilous times - their earnest desire and prayer that means may yet be devised for retaining his valuable services in such a needy field, and the profound sorrow with which they contemplate the possible calamity of his permanent removal from the Colony - and further, they appoint Mr. Scott, their Clerk, to read this finding from the pulpit of the Church in Maritzburg at the close of public worship on Sabbath first." ①

After prayer by Mr. Patten the Moderator then formally declared the Revd. John Smith to be now released from his charge as colleague to Mr. Campbell in the Presbyterian Church, Pietermaritzburg. ②

Mr. Patten then moved and Mr. Buchanan seconded the following resolution in reference to the Memorial presented to the Presbytery by Messrs. Thomson and Macleroy :

"As regards the prayer of the Memorial laid upon our table, the Presbytery finds that as the memorialists seem quite determined, for reasons, which, in the judgment of this court, not only justify, but require such a step, to withdraw from the First Presbyterian congregation in this city; and that their dispersion might result not only in a loss to Presbyterianism, but in many cases, to neglect of ordinances altogether - the Presbytery, approving the course which the memorialists are pursuing, agree to supply them with ordinances for the next four Sabbaths, that they may be enabled, in the

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p 46

2 Ibid. Vol 2 p 46



meantime, more perfectly to mature their plans for the future, and that the Presbytery may be in a position to arrive at a more definite and satisfactory conclusion in regard to the main prayer of the Memorial at their next meeting on Wednesday the 16th day of March ensuing - and in terms of the above finding, the Revd. Mr. Buchanan is hereby appointed to supply the memorialists with ordinances for the next two Sabbaths.

The Presbytery having adjourned to meet in the Presbyterian Church of Maritzburg on the 16th day of March next at eleven o'clock was closed with prayer." ①

The path towards the establishment of the second Presbyterian Church in Pietermaritzburg seemed quite clear. The matter was, however, by no means closed, and at the next meeting of Presbytery the Clerk reported as follows on the reading of the resolution regarding Mr. Smith's resignation in the Pietermaritzburg Church :

"On the appointed day I took my place in a convenient seat before the commencement of public worship. At the close of the prayer after the sermon, Mr. Campbell gave out one or more intimations, the purport of which I do not remember, and then stated that I would read the deliverance of the Presbytery in regard to Mr. Smith's resignation after he should have pronounced the benediction. I was received into the pulpit by Mr. Campbell while the last hymn was being sung, which having concluded, he came forward and closed

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 47



the service in the usual way. I immediately stepped forward, when a great part of those who composed the congregation left their seats in a precipitate and disorderly manner only a few remaining in their places. Mr. Campbell made no effort and showed no desire to suppress the disturbance which had evidently been preconceived.

After coming down leisurely from the pulpit I found no parties on whom I could call to attest the performance of the work assigned to me, which however, with its attendant circumstances, has become sufficiently notorious." ①

The Presbytery was greatly displeased at this report and resolved as follows :

"It was moved by Mr. Buchanan, seconded by Mr. Patten, and unanimously agreed that the Clerk be instructed to communicate with Mr. Campbell for the purpose of ascertaining whether he, Mr. Campbell, would be able to attend a meeting of Presbytery to be held tomorrow at 11 o'clock a.m. in hunc effectum, namely for the purpose of considering said statement, and the duty of the Presbytery, in connexion with the procedure therein set forth; and to intimate the results of this communication to the members of Presbytery." ②

The Presbytery now turned its attention to the formation of the new congregation and records its proceedings as follows :

"The Commissioners from the Memorialists for the formation of a second Presbyterian

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 49  
2 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 49

congregation under the pastorate of the Rev. John Smith, having appeared, Mr. Macleroy on their behalf, reported the progress made in view of their purpose. Mr. Buchanan then moved, and Mr. Patten seconded the following resolution which was unanimously adopted :

The Presbytery having heard the Memorialists and being satisfied with the statements made, and the prospects held out, agree to grant the prayer of the memorial, and therefore do now constitute the memorialists a separate church and congregation. Further in order to expedite a settlement, the Presbytery agree to meet with the Memorialists this evening at 7 o'clock in the school-room, Longmarket Street, to moderate in a call and take action thereon as they may see cause. The Presbytery having adjourned to meet at said place and time, closed with Prayer."  $\phi$

At the next meeting a call in favour of Rev. John Smith was presented and sustained by the Presbytery. The call was signed by 51 members then the following resolution was unanimously agreed to :

"The Presbytery, having heard Mr. Smith's statement, expressed their high satisfaction with the same, their thankfulness to God for restoring their young brother to them, and their joy of hope in the prospect of his continued usefulness, and, considering the very peculiar circumstances of the case, and especially the fact that in now undertaking the pastorate of the Second Presbyterian Church, Mr. Smith is practically only resuming the work of these five years past,

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 50

agree to dispense with the formality of an edict, and to hold an induction or recognition service in the council room tomorrow afternoon at 5 o'clock - the Moderator to preside.

The Presbytery thereafter appointed that the induction service should take place in the Council room at Maritzburg tomorrow at 5 p.m. Mr. Lindley to preside.<sup>①</sup>

After the Induction Service on 17th March 1870 Mr. Smith was instructed to organise the new congregation immediately.

The matter might well have been closed at this stage had there not appeared in "The Times of Natal" on 19th March, 1870 an article condemning the Presbytery and supporting Mr. Campbell.<sup>②</sup> Also in the same newspaper on April 23rd another article appeared stating inter alia :

"Among other matters we noticed with pleasure that this report entirely exonerated Mr. Campbell from having taken any part either by concert or advice with the congregation when they refused to sit and listen to the reading from the pulpit on the 20th of February last of the "unanimous finding" of the Presbytery. The members of the congregation, through the managers, took the whole responsibility of that act upon themselves."<sup>③</sup>

These articles greatly annoyed the Presbytery, who called upon Mr. Campbell to appear and explain the articles and

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 52

2 Op. cit. 19th March 1870 p. 3

3 Ibid. 23rd April 1870 p. 3

his apparent attitude on the morning when the Presbytery Clerk was to have read the edict regarding Mr. Smith's resignation.

Mr. Campbell duly arrived to face the Presbytery, and the proceedings were reported as follows :

"The official report of Mr. Scott, as to the way in which he had carried out his instructions by reading the findings of the Presbytery anent Mr. Smith's resignation from the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church, as also Mr. Campbell's written explanations, were again read. Mr. Campbell then made some additional verbal statements. It was then agreed that the Presbytery pass on to the matter of the "Complementary Address" Mr. Campbell offered explanations with the object of showing that he had no complicity in the framing or in the signing of the Address. Thereafter Mr. Campbell having been called on to lay on the Presbytery Table the address itself, or a certified copy thereof, together with the signatures, declined to comply on the grounds that he considered said Address a private communication for the production of which the Presbytery had no right to insist. The evidence and explanations in the case having been closed, Mr. Campbell, while in the act of withdrawing from the Meeting was recalled by the Moderator, and having been asked whether he admitted the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, he said that he did, and thereafter retired to the vestry. A resolution was moved and seconded but not formally put and passed - to the effect "that Mr. Campbell should not only be censured, but should also be suspended from

his judicial functions, as a member of this Court - aye, and until he shall have satisfied the Presbytery by publicly and explicitly repudiating his own contemptuous conduct, and the offensive language contained in the Address referred to, and by personally disclaiming all sympathy with the same." Messrs. Buchanan, Smith and Patten addressed the Court in support of this resolution, as did also Dr. Stewart and Mr. Van Velden, the Moderator expressing his concurrence. At this stage of the proceedings, Mr. Campbell, having returned, asked permission to address the Court, and offered to produce the address with the signatures, which the Presbytery declined to receive, the investigation being now closed.

As it had thus become manifest that there was a desire on the part of Mr. Campbell to avert - as there was also a strong desire on the part of the Presbytery to be spared the necessity of resorting to suspension, even in the mildest form, the result was that the following deliverance in the whole case was unanimously agreed to :

The Presbytery took into consideration the case against Mr. Campbell, and heard him fully in reply to the two charges preferred against him, namely - First - that contrary to Presbyterian usage, on Sabbath 20th February last, he closed the forenoon diet of worship before the reading of the Presbytery's finding in the case of Mr. Smith's resignation, although at the said diet of worship the Clerk of the Presbytery was present, that he manifestly acquiesced in the conduct of his congregation on that occasion, when they refused to sit and listen to the reading of the Presbytery's finding.

Secondly, that it is matter of public notoriety, that he has received an address dated 28th February, 1870, purporting to be from "members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church, Pietermaritzburg, residing in the country" which address contains expressions of contempt of this Court and its proceedings, such as the Presbytery cannot, without a dereliction of its duty, suffer to pass unnoticed, and inasmuch as he received that address, without expressing his disapprobation of the sentiment contained in it, and thereby practically consented to, and approved of those sentiments, he has been guilty of an overt act of contempt of this Court of Christ's Church to whose authority and decision he was solemnly bound to submit himself. The Presbytery finds, with reference to the first charge, that Mr. Campbell's explanations were utterly unsatisfactory, that he ought to have endeavoured to hinder the unseemly and contemptuous conduct of his congregation on the occasion above referred to, and that whatever blame may attach to others in the matter, he had his duty which he failed to perform; the responsibility of which failure cannot be devolved on the congregation. With reference to the second charge, the Presbytery deem it inexpedient meanwhile to deal with the signers of the address, inasmuch as there is reason to believe that some of them at least were ignorant of its contents, and especially on the reflections and aspersions contained in it against the Presbytery and its members - but with respect to Mr. Campbell, the receiver of the address, the Presbytery declares his conduct to be highly censurable in having received the address, and thereby



acquiesced in the open contempt, therein expressed, of this Court and its proceedings. Further Mr. Campbell having positively refused to comply with the requirements of the Presbytery to produce the signatures to the address, on this count also, the Presbytery finds Mr. Campbell's conduct highly censurable. The Presbytery hereby censures Mr. Campbell accordingly, but finding that Mr. Campbell publicly submits to the censure of this Presbytery, and repudiates, publicly and explicitly, the contemptuous sentiments above referred to, and all sympathy with same, the Presbytery deems it expedient to pass from this case. The Moderator, having, in the name of the Presbytery asked Mr. Campbell, "Do you acquiesce in this resolution?" Mr. Campbell replied, "I do," whereupon the several members of Presbytery expressed their gratification at the result thus arrived at." ①

. . . . .

Thus was set up the Second Presbyterian Church, the original body becoming known by decision of the Presbytery as First Presbyterian Church, Pietermaritzburg.

The split was a sad blow to the Presbyterian community which could ill afford to be divided. Not the least unfortunate aspect of it was the threatened neglect of the country districts through the likelihood of each pastor being occupied in future with town duties.



We must, however, leave for the moment the story of the Second Church and continue the history of the group who remained with Mr. Campbell.

For three years Mr. Campbell continued to serve the remainder of his people in Pietermaritzburg, but it was not at all easy under the circumstances. The two ministers would pass one another in the streets of the town, and in some cases even members, who had previously sat together at the Lord's Table, refused to speak to one another. It was a travesty of the Christian faith, and it told upon the health of Mr. Campbell. On 30th January, 1873 he died having completed twenty three years of exacting service.

During the vacancy which followed, Rev. Dr. James Dalziel, the Presbyterian Missionary in charge of the Gordon Memorial Mission, acted as pulpit supply. At this time an attempt was made to reunite the two Churches, but the First Church laid it down as a condition that

"the congregation be under the sole pastorate of a minister to be sent out from home."

This proviso was rejected by the Second Congregation which expressed the belief that

- 1 Vide Page 434
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol 2 p 94
- 3 Vide Appendix Page 733
- 4 Minutes Natal Presbytery Vol 2 p 121

"it would be impracticable, and unjust to Mr. Smith to ask him to leave the Colony, and that it would be a calamity to the Colony and congregation if he were to leave."<sup>1</sup>

Such then was the position when the First Church addressed a call to Rev. J.E. Carlyle.

#### THE MINISTRY OF REV. J.E. CARLYLE

Rev. Dr. Dalziel, interim moderator of the First Church, Pietermaritzburg, had been in touch with the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland with a view to obtaining a successor to Mr. Campbell, and in September, 1873 it is recorded in the minutes of the Colonial Committee that :

"Rev. J.E. Carlyle, formerly of Brechin, Bombay and Calcutta, being a most suitable person ..... be the nominee of this Committee for the First Presbyterian Church in the Presbytery of Natal."<sup>2</sup>

The appointment was made by Principal Fairbairn and Dr. Blaikie.

The Colonial Committee also agreed to advance £100 for passage and other expenses, and on 20th December, 1873 he arrived in Pietermaritzburg.<sup>3</sup> The Presbytery was hurriedly called together, and on Christmas Day 1873, after

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p 129

2 Op. cit. Vol 4 p241

3 - Minutes Kirk Session First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol. 2 p. 186

the usual preliminaries, Rev. J.E. Carlyle was duly inducted. ①

With the period of Mr. Carlyle's ministry were connected (1) extensive repairs to the Church fabric, against which the Trustees were empowered to mortgage the Manse for the sum of £300; ② (2) the alteration and heightening of the tower for the installation of a clock "ordered from eminent makers in London" which was reported as "having been erected and set in motion" at the Congregational Meeting of April, 1875. ③ It is to be noted that the clock, though provided and installed largely at the expense of the congregation, was regarded as a public institution, the Corporation (after the Colonial Government had declined liability in the matter) agreeing to vote an annual sum of £51 towards its upkeep "as a temporary arrangement." This, the Board while accepting deemed inadequate, but it is stated that

"the clock has proved such a public boon that the Board anticipates that the Corporation will next year vote the full amount of £50 asked for." ④

The Minister's stipend "owing to the increased cost of living" was raised from the beginning of 1875 to £350 ⑤

- 1 Minutes Natal Presbytery Vol. 2 p. 149
- 2 Annual Report First Church Pietermaritzburg 1874
- 3 Op. cit. 1875 recorded in Session Minute Book
- 4 Minutes of Board of Management Vol. 2 p. 121
- 5 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 141

at which figure it was confidently expected to be able to maintain it.

Mr. Carlyle's short pastorate does not appear to have been a particularly happy one. In July, 1876 he applied, on medical advice for six to eight months' leave of absence, which was granted, the Rev. J. Stalker agreeing to act as locum tenens in respect of the bulk of the work during that period. The work at the Church apparently, had not been going too well. Church finance was at a low ebb once again in 1876 and at a Special Congregational Meeting <sup>(1)</sup> it was urged that it was imperative that Mr. Carlyle should resign his charge by March 1st, the stipulated end of his leave. It was frankly declared, for his information

"that there was a strong feeling (1) that the decline in revenue was due to an almost total neglect of country and partial neglect of town visitation; (2) that the necessity of his applying for leave was not unconnected with devoting too much of his energy to interests outside the Church." <sup>(2)</sup>

However, that may be, Mr. Carlyle's health does not seem to have improved, and the expiry of his leave was followed almost immediately by the intimation of his resignation in 1877. <sup>(3)</sup>

- 1 Op. cit. August 1876 recorded in the Session Minute Book
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 2 p. 261

The Presbytery simply noted the occasion expressing the view

"that it is best for Mr. Carlyle's health that he resign so exacting a charge as First Church, Pietermaritzburg."<sup>①</sup>

Mr. Carlyle returned to Scotland at the end of May, 1877.

THE MINISTRY OF  
Rev. JOHN GOULD SMITH 1877 - 1908

Mr. Carlyle's successor was the Rev. J. Gould Smith, who was to see the congregation through the rest of the century and some years into the next. Arriving in Natal in May, 1877 he was unanimously elected and inducted to the pastorate on July 18th at a stipend of £300 with Manse.<sup>②</sup>

The beginning of Mr. Gould Smith's ministry must have coincided with the troubled time of the Zulu War in Natal<sup>③</sup> to which there is curiously little reference in the minutes considering that the Church was converted into a fortified place of refuge during the crisis in 1879<sup>④</sup> and that the church bell was tolled as the body of the Prince Imperial was brought into the City.<sup>⑤</sup> Mention is made, however, of "the loss the Church has sustained in the untimely death of (several of) its number in the said disaster at

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 262

2 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 271

3 Vide E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p 377-385

4 Professor A. Petrie "Cuttings and Papers re Pietermaritzburg Presbyterian Church History"

5 Ibid.

Isandhlwana." <sup>①</sup> Despite the war in the course of the same year (1879) the congregation felt itself in a position to raise the stipend to £400.

The new minister was apparently disposed to heal the seven-year-old breach in the Presbyterian body in Pietermaritzburg by inviting Rev. John Smith, on more than one occasion, to officiate in the First Church pulpit not without strong protest on the part of some of the anti-Smith "diehards!" <sup>②</sup>

The early 1880's witnessed a considerable enlargement of the Church building, consisting of the addition of two projecting gables at the back, which gave the building its final T-shape, while the original roof slates were removed and replaced throughout by galvanised iron. During the alterations, the Church was closed for some months when services were held in the Y.M.C.A. Hall. It was re-opened in April 1882. The total cost of the alterations appears as about £1,550, against which a bazaar held in May, 1882 raised the very creditable sum of £852, while the Trustees were empowered to bond the Manse for £700. <sup>③</sup>

The building effort naturally starved the necessary working revenue, so much so that proposals were made in 1883

1 Minutes of Kirk Session First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol. 2 p. 224  
2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 289  
3 Annual Reports First Church Pietermaritzburg 1882

regarding the sale of the Manse and even closing the Church altogether.<sup>(1)</sup> In this connection a touching gesture of loyalty on the part of the then caretaker is contained in the following letter. It deserves to be placed on record :

"Sirs, As the Church is in debt, please take out of my monthly salary (apparently £3) ten shillings per month until it is paid up. I am, your servant R.F.Wroots."<sup>(2)</sup>

In reply, the Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Wroots declining to lower his salary for the present, but <sup>saying</sup> that the Board would be thankful for whatever subscription he might deem it convenient to give towards the funds of the Church.<sup>(3)</sup>

More drastic cuts than this were decided upon and the Board turned to the minister as a more promising victim than the caretaker. In the course of 1884 the desperate expedient was adopted of requesting him to make a monthly donation to the funds of the Church.<sup>(4)</sup> This he agreed to do. In 1886 he accepted a £50 reduction in salary, in spite of another successful bazaar, which realised £649. According to the Board this amount

"will do no more than pay off the mortgage on Church property, leaving an existing debt

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol. 3 p. 82
- 2 Professor A. Petrie "Cuttings and Papers"
- 3 Minutes of Board of Management Vol 3 p. 126
- 4 Ibid Vol 3 p. 141



of over £200."<sup>①</sup>

The stipend was now reduced to £300 against £250 originally proposed by some Board members.<sup>②</sup> Calmer water was apparently reached, however, by the beginning of 1888 when it was reported that the Bond of £700 had been paid off.<sup>③</sup>

About this time the Sunday School is stated to have had one hundred children on the roll, with an average attendance of seventy five and a teaching staff of eleven, "but further help is required from those willing to act as teachers." Now too, we hear of a "young Men's Literary Association" in connection with the Church, the weekly attendance being about thirty.<sup>④</sup>

Towards the end of 1890 Mr. Gould Smith was welcomed back after six months' leave of absence in Scotland. Revs. Charles Scott, John Smith and W. Turnbull appeared on the pulpit supply list during his absence. The Congregational Meeting of 1893 reports a credit balance of 6s.6d.(!) in the Church accounts "the first time in thirteen years we have had an excess of Income over Expenditure"<sup>⑤</sup> At the end of 1895 the finances had so improved that they gave a gratuity of twenty shillings to the Beadle. In view of the "raw deal"

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p 220

2 Ibid. Vol 3 p 231

3 Annual Report First Church Pietermaritzburg 1888

4 Ibid. p. 2

5 Ibid. 1893 p. 4

meted out to the pastor some years previously in the matter of salary cuts, it is pleasing to record - as an indication that the congregation was disposed to be generous whenever circumstances permitted - that a legacy of £100 which came to the Church about this time was immediately made over to him.<sup>①</sup> He was also the recipient of "bonuses" at various times - £20 "to enable him to have a holiday while the Church was closed for repairs (1898)" - £60 "in recognition of his services (1901)" and again £30 in 1903.

The year 1897 was marked by important sale transactions; the Congregation appears to have considered disposing of all its assets. The Church Clock (for which the Town Council had discontinued its subsidy some time previously) and Bell were sold to the "Greytown Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebration Committee" for £120.<sup>②</sup> The Manse which seems to have been in a chronic state of disrepair was sold for £2,250, the minister being accommodated in another residence in Braid Street for six months as from January 1st 1898.<sup>③</sup> The Board was empowered "to negotiate for the sale of the Church proper."<sup>④</sup> The Government, however, to whom it was offered, decided not to purchase. There was no intention of closing down the

- 1 Minutes Board of Management First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol. 4 p. 76
- 2 Annual Report First Church Pietermaritzburg 1897 p. 2
- 3 Ibid. 1898 p. 2
- 4 Minutes of Congregational Meeting February 1898 recorded in Session Minute Book.

work. The sale of the Church was to have been a preliminary step towards the obtaining of another site for a new Church. In these circumstances, some necessary repairs to the Church fabric, together with the installation of electric lighting were now proceeded with at a total cost of £184. About the same time it is recorded that "all the Cemetery books, plans and records" were destroyed in the Town Hall fire (1898).<sup>①</sup>

There is very little reference in the Pietermaritzburg Minute Books to the Boer War except for the following :

"It was agreed that a collection will be held on the first Sunday in November in order to aid the refugees from the Transvaal now in our midst."<sup>②</sup>

In 1900 the Minutes of the Kirk Session make mention of the

"sad loss sustained by members who lost relatives in the (Boer) War."<sup>③</sup>

Rev. J. Gould Smith was the Minister of First Church Pietermaritzburg in 1897 when along with the other Churches of the Natal Presbytery it became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. It is interesting to note that when the subject of union was discussed by the Kirk Session

1 Minutes Kirk Session First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg Vol. 4 p. 87  
 2 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 141  
 3 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 102

in 1896 the attitude of the elders was at first non-committal. They wanted to make sure what the financial obligations would be. When it was announced that an assessment of 1% on Annual Income was all that was required there was no hesitation on the part of the Kirk Session who record it thus :

"The basis of union has always been acceptable to this Session and now that assurances have been received regarding the financial obligations it is agreed that First Church Pietermaritzburg join with the Presbytery of Natal in becoming part of the proposed Union of Presbyterian Churches." ①

ST. JOHNS PIETERMARITZBURG

The painful steps which led to the formation of a second Presbyterian Church in Pietermaritzburg have already been outlined. ② It was on 17th March, 1870 Rev. John Smith was duly inducted by the Natal Presbytery. ③

In the beginning the new congregation had to meet in the schoolroom in Longmarket Street and the 51 members who signed the call to Mr. Smith soon grew to 68 which is the number of Communicants mentioned in the Session Minute Book in 1871. ④ This number could not be accommodated with comfort

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 382  
 2 Vide Page 403 ff.  
 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.2 p. 42  
 4 Op. cit. Vol. 1 p 31.

in the schoolroom; steps were therefore taken to raise money for the building of a Church of their own. A building fund was started and letters were written to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland soliciting their aid. The Edinburgh Committee was unwilling to assist however, because they still entertained the hope that the two congregations in Pietermaritzburg would come together again.

When Mr. Campbell resigned in 1873 the Presbytery of Natal and the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland did their utmost to unite the two congregations under Mr. Smith. The First Church, however, refused to reunite unless Mr. Smith was removed and so negotiations broke down.

During the vacancy the Durban Presbyterian Church addressed a call to Rev. John Smith, and when it was presented to him at the meeting of Presbytery he asked for a day to consider his decision. ① When the Presbytery met again he refused the Durban call, and by so doing he assured the existence of St. Johns Presbyterian Church, Pietermaritzburg, for there is little doubt that had

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol-2 p. 132

Mr. Smith gone to Durban the breach in Pietermaritzburg would have been healed. As it was, Rev. John Smith was destined to remain in the one church for his whole ministry, for it was not till 1920, fifty years after his induction at St. Johns, that due to failing strength and advancing years, he resigned.

By 1873 the second congregation in Pietermaritzburg had raised sufficient money to start erecting a Church in Longmarket Street, and in the same year it is recorded in the Session minutes :

"That the name of the second Church in Pietermaritzburg be henceforth known as St. Johns." ①

The Church was completed in December, 1873 and officially opened on 10th February 1874 when the preacher was Rev. Mr. Patton of Durban. ② The Moderator of Presbytery, Rev. Charles Scott of Pinetown presided at the opening and dedication service. ③

The congregation of St. Johns went on from strength to strength and from the 51 who joined in 1870 it had expanded to 101 in 1872 and 153 in 1874. ④

Strict discipline was maintained over members of the

1 Op. cit. Vol.1 p. 36  
2 Annual Reports St. Johns Church Pietermaritzburg 1874  
3 Ibid. p. 1  
4 Ibid. p. 3

Church, and the Session minutes are full of cases brought before the Court for misdemeanours. One gentleman, called Mr. Kitchen, was charged with "being inexcusably intoxicated" when the elder called to give him his Communion Token. The elder in question reported that he had "withheld the Token." The Session records that he had done well, and the minister agreed "to admonish Mr. Kitchen privately." The results were splendid, for Mr. Kitchen not only "genuinely repented" but it is recorded that he brought his two children for baptism, and four years later his name appears as a member of a Committee of Board and Session to make arrangements for a series of special services to be held.

Mr. Smith became a great leader not only in the Natal Presbytery, but in the wider church. So much so indeed that he was chosen as the first Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.<sup>①</sup> He had been a strong supporter of the Union of the Churches, and along with men like Rev. John Russell of Capetown had played a leading role in bringing the union about.

By 1885 St. Johns Church was not only self-supporting but also free of debt.<sup>②</sup> They had even returned to the Colonial

1 Vide Page 712.

2 Annual Report St. Johns Church Pietermaritzburg 1885 p. 3



Committee of the Free Church of Scotland the £80 they had been given to defray the expenses of Mr. Smith's journey from Britain to Natal.<sup>①</sup> In 1896 they felt strong enough to make plans for the building of a Hall. A fund was started and the Hall was duly erected and completed by 1902 by which time the congregation had become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

The members had greatly increased by the time of the Union of the Churches and the Annual report for 1896 states

"Numbers on the Roll are now 278"<sup>②</sup>

This is despite the fact that in 1883 a large number of the families in the Upper Umgeni District had been handed over to the new charge formed in that area. By 1897 the number of persons belonging to St. Johns was greater than the number belonging to First Church Pietermaritzburg, and there is no doubt that this was due to the ability and conscientiousness of Rev. John Smith.

#### RICHMOND CONGREGATION

In 1865 the Natal Presbytery obtained from the Government a plot of land in the main street of Richmond, a small village

1 Ibid.

2 Op. cit. 1896 p. 2

twenty five miles from Pietermaritzburg. Richmond was at that time separated from Pietermaritzburg by some of the worst roads in Natal and the gift of the plot of land encouraged the Richmond Presbyterians to take active steps to form a Presbyterian Church there.

For a number of years the Richmond members of the Pietermaritzburg Church had agitated for a separate cause to be established, and the minutes of the First Church Session record discussions on the subject as far back as 1863.

However, it was

"deemed to be best to continue as at present" <sup>①</sup>

which meant that Rev. W. Campbell or Rev. John Smith would go out once a month and conduct a service. On all other Sabbath Days the Richmond members had to trek over 25 miles of dusty roads to worship God in Pietermaritzburg. It says much for their devotion that they came in each week.

However, after ten years of this situation, the members at Richmond decided to take some active steps to form a congregation of their own and to request Presbytery's permission to separate from First Church, Pietermaritzburg.

This plan was given a great fillip when the Kirk Session

1 Op cit. Vol.1 p. 110

of First Church heartily supported it and addressed a Memorial to the Presbytery

"stating that Rev. J. Carlyle and his Session urge upon the Presbytery the necessity that a minister be called exclusively for Richmond." ①

The Richmond members appointed Messrs. Falconer, Strapp and James Hackland to represent them at the next meeting of Presbytery, and on 1st September, 1874, it was moved by Rev. J. Smith and agreed :

"that the Presbytery, having taken into consideration the petition and Memorial presented by certain members and adherents of the First Presbyterian Church, Maritzburg, resident at Richmond and in the adjoining districts, signed in all by 80 members and adherents, transmitted along with a subscription list guaranteeing the sum of £150 per annum for five years towards the stipend of a minister to be settled there, and having taken note also of the engagement to build a Church and a manse at Richmond, - cordially accept the said petition and memorial, and resolve to give the utmost aid in their power to carry out its prayer.

The Presbytery are of opinion that a salary of £250 a year ought to be aimed at as alone adequate for the support of a Minister to be settled at Richmond, and they agree, as soon as that sum can be raised and guaranteed for five years, to form Richmond into a separate charge if remaining meanwhile, as at present, under the care and superintendence of the Minister and Kirk Session of the First

Presbyterian Church, Maritzburg. They further resolve that an earnest appeal be made to the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland and Ireland to aid them in supplying ordinances in the outlying districts of Natal, where no charges have as yet been formed. They propose, in the first instance, to devote £100 a year for such aid, if obtained, to afford a supplement at Richmond, so as to raise the stipend to £250 a year, and to offer a similar sum in aid to forward the formation and support of similar charges of which there is so great need to supply ordinances to the numerous Presbyterian families scattered over the Colony.

Were the sum of £400 or £500 a year granted for five years by the home churches to aid the Colonial cause in Natal it ought to be anticipated that, under God and with the blessing of the Great Head of the Church, the results would be most beneficial, permanently to the cause of evangelical Christianity in the Colony.

The Presbytery further, with the sanction and concurrence of all parties concerned, appointed as a Committee at home representing the four great Presbyterian Churches - The Rev. Drs. Blaikie, Charteris and A. Thomson, Edinburgh, and the Rev. W.F. Stevenson, Dublin to choose a minister for Richmond, and to place in his hands the open call they now transmit. They also request them to aid by their influence their appeal for funds to the Colonial Committee of the several churches, or to raise subscriptions in any other way they may deem fit, and they empower them as regards the collection of funds, to add to their number, if they think it suitable, Christian laymen.<sup>6</sup>

The Committee in Scotland failed to find someone willing

1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 168

to go to Richmond, and the hopes of the people there began to dwindle. Then came the news that Rev. J. Carlyle of First Church Pietermaritzburg was to resign and his resignation was accepted by the Presbytery on 24th April, 1877. This event was to cause an upset between the two sections of the First Church for it was just at that time that Rev. J. Gould Smith, from the Established Church of Scotland, had been found willing to go to Richmond, and he had arrived in Pietermaritzburg that very week.

The Presbytery felt that Mr. Gould Smith should go to First Church Pietermaritzburg and not to Richmond, and Mr. Stalker moved it in the Presbytery as follows :

"Mr. Stalker moved, seconded by Mr. Parker that by request of the First Presbyterian Church, Maritzburg, as laid before the Presbytery by their representatives, and subject to the concurrence of the congregation of Richmond, the Presbytery strongly recommend that Rev. Gould Smith, minister designate to Richmond, instead of going there just now, minister to the First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg, during the vacancy in that congregation. Agreed to unanimously." ②

This was, of course, by no means satisfactory to the Richmond people, and notwithstanding the resolution of Presbytery, they prepared a call to Mr. Gould Smith to be presented at

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol. 5 p.22

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.2 p. 263

next Presbytery Meeting. The First Church congregation also decided to call Mr. Gould Smith and he therefore was faced with making a difficult decision at his very first Presbytery Meeting in South Africa.

The proceedings are recorded thus :

"Mr. John Gould Smith's credentials from the Established Church of Scotland having been produced and accepted, it was moved by Mr. Stalker, seconded by Mr. Parker, and un-animously agreed to, that Mr. Smith be received as a minister labouring within the bounds of this Presbytery.

Mr. A. van Velden was here invited to sit with the Presbytery.

Mr. Falconer was received as a commissioner from Richmond and Mr. Stalker as representing the congregation and Mr. Runciman the Board of Management of the First Presbyterian Church Pietermaritzburg. The Roll of members was read and attested.

After Mr. Falconer had addressed the Presbytery on behalf of the Richmond congregation, it was moved by Mr. Stalker, seconded by Mr. Scott that the Presbytery receive as sufficient the guarantee given by the Richmond congregation and the Established Church at home guaranteeing £150 for two years and the church at home £100 for three years, and agree on this point to modify in the above terms their resolution of 1st September 1874.

The Richmond call was then read and sustained. Mr. Stalker was heard in support of the Pietermaritzburg call which was read and sustained Mr. Paton dissenting on the ground of informality.

The two calls were then put into the hands of



Mr. J. Gould Smith who decided to accept that from the congregation in Pietermaritzburg. It was moved by Mr. Jardine, seconded by Mr. Macfarlane and agreed to that the Presbytery approve of Mr. Smith's decision and take steps for his induction.

Mr. Macfarlane moved that the intimation read to the First Presbyterian Church of this meeting of Presbytery, and its business, be accepted as a provisional edict. Seconded by Mr. Stalker, and agreed to.

It was resolved that the induction service take place this evening at 7.30 Mr. Paton to preach and induct Mr. Scott to address the minister, and Mr. Stalker to address the People." ①

Although he accepted the Pietermaritzburg call, Rev. J. Gould Smith promised to do all he could to find someone for the Richmond Church and his efforts bore fruit when in 1881 Rev. William Dunlop Barrie arrived in Natal and presented his credentials from the Established Church of Scotland. ②

The Presbytery met at Richmond on this occasion and the record reads thus :

"The Rev. William Dunlop Barrie, being present then laid on the table his credentials viz (1) Extract of License setting forth that on the 3rd of December, 1879 Mr. Barrie was duly licensed as a preacher of the Gospel by the Glasgow Presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland. (2) Extracts of ordination, setting forth that on the 18th of September, 1881

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 263 ff.

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 352



Mr. Barrie was ordained to the office of the holy ministry by the Presbytery of Hamilton, in the prospect of his proceeding to the charge of Richmond, Natal, South Africa, by appointment of the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland and (3) A letter addressed to Mr. Barrie from the Colonial Committee intimating his appointment to Richmond and guaranteeing him £75 for three years. The Presbytery next inquired as to the amount raised by the Richmond people for the support of a minister and were informed that a sum of £175 per annum for three years, besides a house, had been guaranteed.

Thereupon it was moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Martin and resolved - That the Presbytery declare their satisfaction with the provision thus made for the minister's support, and agreed to modify accordingly their primer resolutions regarding this matter, and further that the Presbytery do now proceed to erect a regular charge at Richmond.

Thereafter the Moderator laid on the table a request addressed to the Kirk Session of the First Presbyterian Church by eighteen members residing at Richmond and in its neighbourhood, asking the Session to remove their names from the Communion Roll in view of their making application to the Presbytery to be erected into a separate charge.

It was moved by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Smith and agreed to - That, in view of the Memorial from Richmond presented to the Presbytery on the 1st September, 1874 the tenor of which is set forth in the minutes of that date, the petition now referred to be received as sufficient evidence of the desire of the said members to be constituted a separate regular charge.

It was further moved by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Martin and agreed to - That the Kirk Session of the First Presbyterian Church having consented to the removal of the names of the abovementioned petitioners from the Communion Roll (as per Extract Minute of Session presented by the Moderator) the Presbytery now declare those eighteen members shall be and hereby are disjoined from the First Presbyterian Church and constituted into a separate regular charge to be called the "Richmond Presbyterian Church" and to be in connection with and under the jurisdiction of this Presbytery. Also the Presbytery hereby authorise the said eighteen names to be entered forthwith on the Communion Roll of the Presbyterian Church at Richmond as being those of its first members.

There was then laid on the table a form of call addressed to the Rev. Wm. Dunlop Barrie, and signed by twentysix members and thirtyone adherents.

It was moved by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Godfrey and resolved - That the call be sustained and put into Mr. Barrie's hands by the Moderator.

Mr. Barrie having declared his acceptance of the call, and a form of Edict, adapted to the circumstances of this case, being returned certified as having been duly served, it was resolved that Mr. Barrie's induction take place this afternoon at 2 O'Clock - the Rev. Mr. Martin to preach on the occasion, the Rev. John Smith to induct, and the Moderator to address the Minister and the Congregation. The Presbytery thereafter adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock within the same place. ①

Richmond was at last a separate charge under its own minister, and that afternoon Rev. W.D. Barrie was duly

1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 353 ff.

inducted and authorised to form a Kirk Session. ①

A place of worship

The congregation continued to meet for a while in the Methodist Chapel, but it was not long before

"difference of opinion arose as to times of holding services" ②

The result was that the Presbyterians resolved to build their own Church on the site granted to them by the Government in 1865.

Richmond district has always been a reasonably wealthy farming district and it was not long before they had raised sufficient money to erect and pay for the Church.

The building was completed in February, 1882 ③ and opened on 10th March, 1882. There is no record of who conducted the service but it was probably Rev. W.D. Barrie himself.

By the year 1884 the congregation were

"finding it impossible to raise even a sum anything like that formerly guaranteed to Mr. Barrie." ④

The Presbytery investigated the situation and found it was due to

- 1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 355
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Richmond congregation Vol.1 p. 39
- 3 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 281
- 4 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 31

"parties within the congregation not co-operating in the spirit of Christian love." ①

There was one group who wanted the minister to resign and when Rev. Gould Smith reported to the Presbytery at the next meeting he did so in the following terms :

"The Presbytery thereafter took up the Richmond case and called for the report of their commissioner, Rev. J. Gould Smith, who was appointed at the meeting held on 17th September, 1884 to proceed to Richmond and confer with the parties interested. Mr. Gould Smith reported that he had held two meetings with the Richmond congregation on 28th and 29th September and presented a copy of the resolutions passed at these meetings - the general purport of which was that the dissatisfaction being too deep-rooted to be removed the Congregation wished their minister to resign his charge, and that an effort be made to raise not less than £160 to defray his expenses home." ②

During the long vacancy which occurred after the resignation of Mr. Barrie, Mr. Falconer, the Session Clerk took most of the ordinary services, while the Quarterly Communion was conducted by Rev. Gould Smith. As so often is the case during a vacancy the finances dropped badly and had it not been for generous grants from the Established Church of Scotland, ③ the Richmond Church would surely have had to close down.

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 36

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 41

3 The Established Church of Scotland provided £100 per annum for the Richmond congregation.

When Mr. W. Turnbull arrived in Natal as "Itinerating Probationer" in 1889 one of the places to which he had to minister was Richmond, As the Presbytery minutes state

"It was left to the Itinerating Probationer Committee to give what help he deemed possible or expected in this case." ①

Mr. Turnbull gave what time he could to Richmond taking two services each month during the time he was Itinerating Probationer. However, he accepted a call to the congregation of Upper Umgeni ② and so the Richmond congregation had to return once more to the system of lay Preachers each Sunday.

On 29th July, 1890 the Presbytery were informed that the Richmond congregation were in touch with a Mr. Robertson, a Probationer of the Established Church of Scotland, and that provided he could be maintained financially he was willing to accept the call. The Presbytery agreed to support the application to Scotland for a grant in aid to support the minister at Richmond.

On 17th August the Richmond congregation decided to call Mr. Robertson who had, by this time, arrived from Scotland, and he, being present at the Presbytery meeting

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p.

2 Vide Page 527

3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 225

on 11th September, 1890, declared his acceptance of the call.<sup>①</sup> He was ordained and inducted to the Richmond charge on 29th October, 1890 by the Presbytery of Natal.<sup>②</sup>

Mr. Robertson began well enough, but, like many another minister, he found it difficult to smooth out differences between opposing factions within the congregation. Unfortunately, it was Mr. Falconer, the Session Clerk, who resigned on this occasion and transferred to the Methodist Church. The details of his difference with the minister are nowhere recorded, but it would seem that it had something to do with Church Order because at a Presbytery meeting held on 25th March, 1891 he was advised

"that matters at Richmond HAD BEEN  
conducted according to Presbyterian Order."<sup>③</sup>

Despite the Presbytery's efforts, Mr. Falconer, who had conducted the services on most Sundays during the long vacancy, transferred to the Methodist church.

During the next few years Richmond was in constant financial difficulty. On many occasions they could not meet their general obligations to their minister and he had to await anxiously for the arrival of the grant from Scotland.

1. Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 228
2. Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 231
3. Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 239.

In 1895 Mr. Robertson raised the matter of his ordination at the Presbytery, and it was agreed that no limits had been placed upon him in 1889 and that he was free to accept a call anywhere.

Mr. Robertson remained at Richmond till December, 1897 in which month he moved to Cape Town having accepted a call to Woodstock Church. Although he was soon to leave the Richmond Church it was nevertheless Mr. Robertson who was minister there when along with the other Churches of the Natal Presbytery Richmond joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

IXOPO

In 1891 Rev. A.G. Rainer arrived from Scotland to live with relatives at Ixopo, a small village about sixty miles from Pietermaritzburg on the road to East London. The area was predominantly a native area, but on the edge of the native reserves a number of European farmers had established lucrative dairy farms. Some of the farmers were Scotsmen, and when Mr. Rainer arrived they invited him to conduct services as an Itinerating Minister. It would

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 351

2 Vide Page 107



appear that Mr. Rainer moved from one farm to another conducting services, teaching the children the Catechism, baptising babies and doing all those things which are associated with a minister's work.

A monthly service was held in the village of Ixopo itself, though there is no record of where it was conducted. It was possibly in the house of one of the members of it could have been in the Wesleyan Chapel.

On 27th July, 1892 Natal Presbytery was first made officially aware of the existence of Presbyterians worshipping at Ixopo, when an application was received from "The Presbyterian congregation at Ixopo" asking for aid in the erection of a Church, and for the recognition of the work of Mr. A.G. Rainer.

The Presbytery resolved as follows

"After much deliberation the following resolution was proposed by Rev. W. Turnbull and seconded by Rev. J. Gould Smith :

That the Presbytery instruct the Minister of Richmond to take full charge of Ixopo as a preaching station; they further instruct the Clerk to inform Mr. Rainer that before dispensing the sacraments he must make definite application to the Presbytery to be received as a Minister."

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 284

2 Ibid. Vol.3 p 285

In the afternoon of the same day the Presbytery were presented with the application for which they had asked. The Presbytery was, however, not prepared to be rushed in this matter and resolved as follows :

"After further discussion the Rev. J. Smith proposed a motion which was seconded by Rev. J. Laing and agreed, namely :

That the Presbytery, considering it desirable to have the position and work of Rev. A.G. Rainer at Ixopo clearly defined and having heard through the Rev. W.E. Robertson that Mr. Rainer is prepared to apply for admission as a minister of this Church, resolve to request him to make such application in due form at next meeting and meantime to leave the ordering of his work in the hands of the Minister and Session of Richmond."<sup>①</sup>

Before the next meeting of the Presbytery certain unpleasant things were discovered about Mr. Rainer, and it became necessary for him to leave Natal immediately. Ixopo had, however, by this time become a Preaching Station of the Richmond congregation and so Rev. W. Robertson was charged by the Presbytery to do what he could for the Ixopo people.

"Rev. W.E. Robertson reported on the condition of the preaching station at Ixopo. He stated that Rev. A.G. Rainer had left very suddenly at the beginning

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 285

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 286

of October and that arrangements had been made whereby he (Mr. Robertson) would be able meanwhile to hold service once a month at Ixopo. The Clerk read a letter (29th September 1892) from Mr. T.N. Robinson in which he informed the Presbytery of Mr. Rainier's immediate departure from Natal.

It was proposed by Rev. J. Smith, seconded by Mr. F. Jehan and agreed - That the Ixopo preaching station be continued as heretofore under the supervision of the Richmond Minister and Session and that the grant, viz. at the rate of £20 per annum formerly made be continued in the hope that the work at Ixopo may by this arrangement be so fostered and developed that the preaching station may soon be ready to provide for a larger supply of ordinances." ①

Little more is heard of the Ixopo Preaching Station from this date. The Minister at Richmond continued to go out once each month to conduct services for some years but eventually in 1896 even this small amount of assistance ceased. ②

When Rev. W. Robertson resigned from Richmond in 1897 it was found impossible to maintain Ixopo Preaching Station any longer so the Presbytery were informed that Richmond congregation could no longer accept responsibility. ③ From 1897 to 1904 little is known of what the Presbyterians at Ixopo were doing. A Mr. T.N. Robinson wrote to the Presbytery on two occasions asking for financial aid for

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 308

2 Minutes of Richmond Kirk Session Vol. 1 p. 298

3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 402

"Ixopo Preaching Station." He signed himself "The Secretary of the Ixopo Presbyterian congregation," but the Presbytery refused his applications on both occasions. ①

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 324 and Vol. 3 p. 348

## CHAPTER 3

SOUTHERN NATAL CONGREGATIONSPINETOWN

The second Presbyterian Church to be established in Natal was at Pinetown, a small village about twelve miles from Durban. In 1850 Rev. W. Campbell had received and accepted a call to Pietermaritzburg and it would seem that a group of Presbyterians in this tiny village, inspired by the success of the application made by the Pietermaritzburg Scotsmen, decided to apply for a minister as well. Thus it came about that in May 1851 the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland received a letter from a Mrs. Ellison of Pinetown requesting that Committee to send them a minister

"as there are many Presbyterians in this area who cannot attend services at Pietermaritzburg which is 50 miles away.... or at Durban which is 12 miles distant over 'terrible roads'" ①

Mrs. Ellison assured the Edinburgh Committee that £50 per annum would be forthcoming from local sources and that she felt certain

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.1 p. 349

"that with the advent of a minister further contributions would be made." ①

The result of Mrs. Ellison's letter was that a Mr. Charles Scott, formerly a teacher at Inverleithan, and now a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, was found willing to go. ②

Mr. Scott and his family arrived at Pinetown, Natal, in April, 1852 and were received into the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ellison. Services were being held in the Ellison's home each Sabbath Day and although nothing is recorded about it, it seems likely that Mr. Scott conducted the service on the first Sabbath morning after his arrival. It is simply stated that

"only one service has been held at Pinetown each Sabbath since the beginning and some members feel there are many persons who would be able to attend an evening service who could not possible attend in the morning because of domestic duties." ③

The arrival of Mr. Scott created a need for a Presbytery in Natal because he was not ordained. Mr. Campbell of Pietermaritzburg therefore invited Rev. Lindley and Rev. Mr. Posselt of the American Board Mission to be associated with him in the task of forming a Presbytery

1 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 350  
2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 362  
3 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 23

①

for the purpose of ordaining Mr. Charles Scott. In addition to the two American Missionaries, Rev. D. Faure of the Dutch Reformed Church was invited to be present but he could not attend.

As the early records of the Pinetown Church have been lost, it is difficult to say with certainty what took place during the next thirty years. Mr. Scott did not send reports home to Edinburgh and we are dependent upon the scanty Natal Presbytery minutes for what we know about these blank years. Certainly no Church was built, nor did Mr. Scott seek to extend his work in the surrounding areas but despite these things it would seem that the congregation was all but self-supporting. Apart from the renewal of the £50 grant each year the Colonial Committee in Scotland were not asked for any extra financial support.

In 1874 Mr. Scott was elected Moderator of Presbytery but apart from that he seems to have played a quiet role in the Presbytery of Natal. He was rarely absent from meetings but he never once in his long ministry at Pinetown asked the Presbytery <sup>②</sup> to assist him in his work.

No Church was built but by 1875 the Presbyterians were

1 Vide Page 382

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.2 p. 161



using the Wesleyan Chapel for their morning service. It would seem, however, that in later years a quarrel arose over the times of the services and the Presbyterians moved over to the Baptist Chapel in 1896. ①

There was a long correspondence between "The Presbytery Pinetown Committee" and the Natal Baptist Association arranging the time of the Presbyterian service and the amount to be paid each month. The Presbyterians were given permission to use the Church before the Baptist service in the morning and they also were allowed to use the Church for a Sunday School in the afternoon. For this the Presbyterians paid £3 per month. ②

This arrangement worked splendidly but in 1902 the town of Pinetown had grown to such dimensions that a Town Hall was built. The Presbyterians immediately applied for the use of this new building as a Church on Sundays and permission having been granted, they duly moved over from the Baptist Chapel to the Town Hall. ③

It seems strange that for over 50 years the Pinetown Presbyterians were content to worship in buildings belonging to other denominations. Why they took no steps to build

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 397  
2 Ibid. Vol.3 p.397  
3 Ibid. Vol.4 p. 189

a Church it is hard to say. It may be that Pinetown showed little signs of becoming a large town, or it may have been that the local Presbyterians were too easily contented but the fact remains that no Church was built in the first fifty years of the history of Pinetown Presbyterianism.

On 14th December, 1882 Rev. Charles Scott died at Pinetown after a short illness and the Presbytery recorded its appreciation of the man and his work as follows :

"The Clerk, having drawn attention to the recent death of the Rev. Charles Scott, it was unanimously agreed that the following minute thereanent should be inserted in the Presbytery's records and a copy of the same transmitted to Mr. Scott's widow and family.

"Since last meeting of Presbytery it has pleased the Lord to remove by death the Rev. Charles Scott, of Pinetown, which event took place on the 2nd September, 1882. Having come to Natal in the earliest days of its settlement as a Colony, Mr. Scott was ordained on the 11th May, 1852 and was one of the first members of the Presbytery of Natal, Pinetown being the scene of his ministry. Although it was found impossible to organize a regular Presbyterian charge there, owing to the sparseness of the population and other causes, yet Mr. Scott continued to labour on, preaching the Word and in various ways promoting Christian work in the district, as long as health and strength permitted. For many years

he filled the office of Clerk to the Presbytery, and those who knew him in that capacity as well as in private life invariably experienced the greatest courtesy and kindness at his hands. It needed indeed but a little acquaintance with him to be impressed by his Christian meekness and gentleness, and he has, it may be confidently affirmed, left to his friends and ministerial brethren a memory of Christian worth and consistency of rare excellence - none the less precious and fragrant from the fact of his life being spent and his work done in comparative quietness and obscurity. To the surviving widow and children the members of Presbytery desire to offer this expression of their sincere sympathy with them in the great loss which they have sustained in the removal of husband and father, while with them they confidently rejoice in the comfortable assurance that their departed fellow-worker in the ministry of the Gospel has gone to "be with Christ" which is far better." ①

After the death of Mr. Scott no attempt was made to fill the vacancy and although there is no resolution reducing it in status from now on Pinetown is referred to as a Preaching station in all contemporary records. It was placed under a Presbytery Committee who maintained the ordinances of worship by using Methodist lay Preachers or the Missionaries who were labouring in the area. It was agreed that a Durban minister would go out once each quarter to dispense the Sacraments.

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 396

In 1897 Pinetown Preaching Station became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa along with the other Churches of the Natal Presbytery.

ST. ANDREWS - DURBAN

First Presbyterian Church becomes Congregational

When Rev. W. Campbell arrived in Natal he records that he found "a group of Presbyterians meeting for worship in Durban." ① This was in 1850. Moreover, for the first six months after his arrival, he tells us that he "conducted services both at the Port and in Pietermaritzburg," ② but that he eventually decided to accept the invitation of the Presbyterians at the capital. This is the earliest indication we have of the fact that Presbyterians were meeting for worship in Durban at least twelve years before a cause was established there.

Russell in his book "Old Durban" mentions that

"from the earliest days there were Presbyterians in Durban who kept the flag flying by an occasional visit from a minister of that kind passing through the town." ③

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 5  
2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 5  
3 Op . cit. p. 49

He gives no date but he must certainly mean that by 1850 Presbyterians were meeting regularly for worship.

Unfortunately, from our point of view, in 1850 the Congregationalists established a ~~work~~<sup>cause</sup> in Durban, and they wrote a letter to the Presbyterians inviting them to join their Church, and a letter was written in reply stating :

"That in view of the difficulties of obtaining a minister from Scotland the Scotsmen worshipping in the Masonic Hall gladly accept the invitation...." ①

Thus the Durban Presbyterian Church became Congregationalist as had happened in Cape Town fifty years previously.

#### The Presbyterians begin again

From 1850 - 1862 there is no record of any Presbyterian cause being established, but during this period hundreds of Scots people immigrated into Natal, ② and many of them made their homes in the rapidly growing city at the mouth of the Umgeni River.

During the years 1850 to 1862 the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh had received several letters intimating the desirability of commencing work in Durban. In 1858 Mr. Campbell had written :

1 Copies of these two letters are in the possession of Rev. D. Ross Congregational Minister in Durban 1953-1955

2 Vide Page 369 ff

"urging that that city (Durban) should be supplied with a settled ministry" ①

In 1860 a Mr. D. Sinclair of Pinetown wrote as follows to the Colonial Committee :

"It is imperative that a minister be settled in Durban very soon... and if a minister cannot be sent the Committee might consider sending a colporteur..." ②

It was 1862 before the Edinburgh Committee received any communication from the Durban Presbyterians themselves, and on 21st May, 1862 it is recorded that :

"A letter was read from Mr. J. Harvey of Durban enquiring if the Colonial Committee could assist the Scotch residents there in establishing a Presbyterian Church" ③

The Committee agreed to give £50 per annum for three years, and to endeavour to send a suitable labourer.

The result was that in 1862 a meeting was held in the Masonic Hall, Durban :

"To consider the advisability of, and if approved, to take steps toward establishing a Presbyterian church in Durban." ④

The Chairman of the Meeting was Mr. James Blackwood and the mover of the main motion was Mr. Archibald Parker and the seconder Mr. James Gavin. Sub-Committees were then formed to deal with matters arising out of the main resolution.

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.2 p. 309  
2 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 36  
3 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 105  
4 Minutes of Meeting of Presbyterians held in Masonic Hall Durban June 1862 recorded in a special Minute Book entitled "Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church"

A fortnight later a draft Constitution<sup>①</sup> was submitted to a further meeting and after a long discussion it was adopted subject to any alterations which the Committee in charge might make. The Constitution, however, was not finally approved of until the 20th October, 1862.<sup>②</sup>

#### A place in which to worship

It is rare to find a congregation which begins by building a Church and then turns its attention to procuring a minister. It is usually the reverse which takes place but in St. Andrews Church, Durban, the people got together to consider the erection of a building and the purchase of a site before they had found a suitable minister.

The matter of a site suitable for the Church came up at a meeting held on 26th November, 1862. The first suggested site was "the South West Erf in the Block of Ground bounded South by West Street, North by Pine Terrace, East by Church Street and West by Gardiner Street" a site which would now be of immense value.

This site however proved to be unobtainable and at subsequent meetings many other suggestions were made, one

- 1 Vide First page of Minute Book of St. Andrews Kirk Session Vol.1 where a copy is pasted in.
- 2 Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 6



for instance was the site at the corner of West and Aliwal Streets, and another was at the foot of Gardiner Street. Ultimately it was decided to purchase a leasehold site at the corner of Field and Commercial Roads, belonging to Mr. I. Forde's Estate, and at the meeting of the Committee held on 10th March, 1863 Mr. Welsh reported that he had bought the leasehold site in question for the sum of £36. ①

A Minister

This matter having been disposed of the question of appointing a Minister then came up. Rev. J. Buchanan had come to Durban from Scotland because of his health. He had arrived in June, 1862. He was not a strong man physically and had taken leave from his previous charge in Bothwell in 1858 in order to seek new strength in the warm climate of South Africa.

He soon became the leader of the Presbyterian community in Durban and had gathered round him

"a congregation of worshippers numbering about 150 at the Morning service and nearly as many at the Evening Service." ②

He was however, not as yet Minister, and he wrote to the

1 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 21

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.3 p. 131

Colonial Committee saying

"I give occasional services to the Presbyterians in D'Urban but am still not asking for release from Bothwell." ①

At the momentous meeting in the Masonic Hall on 25th August, 1863 all this was changed, for, having disposed of the problem of a place in which to worship, the question of a permanent Minister was raised.

"It was suggested by Mr. Blackwood that an invitation should be addressed to Mr. Buchanan." ②

Mr. Buchanan stated that he was reluctant

"because of the uncertainty of his health" ③

However, he did feel much stronger since coming to the warmth of Durban. He felt he should leave the matter in the hands of the meeting. Mr. Buchanan having retired on the motion of Mr. Parker seconded by Mr. Livingston, it was decided to proceed with a call. ④ A form of call having been produced and approved, the Secretary was instructed to fill in the name of Mr. Buchanan and the call was then left for further signatures at Mr. Lyall's store in Pine Terrace and also at Messrs. Blackwood, Couper & Co's store in West Street. It was agreed that a salary of £300 per annum be the minimum

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 132  
2 Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 41  
3 Ibid. p. 41  
4 Ibid. p. 41

sum to be allowed to Mr. Buchanan, this sum to be over and above the allowance that might be given by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

The call was duly completed, laid before the Presbytery and on the 6th May, 1863 it was sustained.<sup>①</sup> Thursday the 21st May was the day arranged for the Presbytery to induct Rev. J. Buchanan. At this same meeting of Presbytery a Presbyterian Church of Durban was duly recognised and received as forming one of the congregations in connection with the Presbytery of Natal.<sup>②</sup>

In July, 1863 the Minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland read :

"The convener laid on the table a letter from Rev. J. Buchanan D'Urban South Africa stating that he had resigned his charge at Bothwell and had accepted a call to the Presbyterian Congregation in Durban."<sup>③</sup>

The Ministry of REV. J. BUCHANAN 1863 - 1874

The Preliminary work had been accomplished and now all that was required was to put the affairs of the Church on regular lines.

Having obtained a Minister the congregation next

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.1 p. 165  
2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 166  
3 Op. cit. Vol.3 p. 169

proceeded to the election of Elders. Messrs. Sinclair, Lyall and Wood were then elected and ordained according to the laws of the Church. The date was July, 1863. On the 6th October, 1863<sup>①</sup> the following were elected as the first Managers

Messrs. Blackwood, R. Steel, C. Parker, Dill Gavin, L. Livingston and B. Arbuckle (Senior).<sup>②</sup>

Years of Trial

The Church certainly got off to a fine start but the next ten years were to be years of real trial for the Durban Presbyterians. Along with other congregations in the Presbytery they suffered the deprivations caused by the prolonged economic depression and they were hard put to it to find the money for Mr. Buchanan's salary. Fortunately being a port and an industrial city Durban weathered the storm better than its sister town of Pietermaritzburg but there were many months during the period 1866 - 1870 when there was no money to pay the Minister.<sup>③</sup>

In addition to the problem of finance the Durban congregation had to face the problem of a sick minister.

- 1 Minutes Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 10 (later called St. Andrews)
- 2 Minutes Board of Management Durban Presbyterian Church (later called St. Andrews)
- 3 Vide Minutes of Board of Management

Mr. Buchanan was out of his pulpit as he wrote to the Edinburgh Committee in 1866

"for 21 weeks this past year"<sup>①</sup>

and there was not one year between 1863 and 1874 when Mr. Buchanan did not receive special sick leave. In one doleful letter he gives us this picture of the situation

"You ask an account of our Church matters here. I am very sorry that I cannot give you something more cheering, but I shall try to give you at least a truthful representation. Our chief difficulty for these three years has been the terrible commercial crisis which has not only reduced the givings of the people but alas also scattered our congregation to the ends of the earth. It cannot even yet be spoken of as a thing of the past. At the same time the general feeling is that we are now emerging slowly from the depths, and that, although the process must in all probability be slow we are likely to get our heads above water and recover the buoyancy and vigour which have been lost. Our Church in Durban presents quite the aspect of one battered by severe storm it is so different from what it once was. The multitude of families and individuals that have left us is so great that I am amazed we have even had the turn out that we have. Many have gone home, or at least away from the Colony, in search of employment; many more have been scattered over the Colony and no corresponding numbers of immigrants have appeared to fill up their vacant places. Still our attendance is on the whole fair - certainly far better than I could have expected after such a time of sifting.

1 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland  
Vol. 3 p. 338

Those who are left to us seem disposed to do what they can towards maintaining our position - their efforts, in some respects at least, are very praiseworthy. This, however, I must distinctly note, viz. that although our outward history during these terrible years has been tame enough and unaltered to a worldly eye, yet in our inner history there has been much, very much, to fill our hearts with joy and our mouths with praise. There has been nothing worthy of the name of revival but we have had a very large number of cases of individual interest, both young and old have been 'born again' now through one agency and now through another. Besides two ordinary services and the Sabbath School every Lord's Day, we have a Ladies Prayer Meeting every Monday, a Young Womens class (conducted by my wife) every Wednesday afternoon, the weekly prayer meeting on the same evening and a Mothers Meeting once a month.

It grieves me to add that I cannot give any cheering tidings of us Ministers. First of all with regard to myself I have to report a period of silence just closed. I have been again 22 sabbaths out of my pulpit, 15 of these I was unable to be present even at services. I am now better again and have resumed my work a fortnight ago but my strength I feel to be yet green. ①

The final problem was one of policy, Inspired by a great enthusiasm the Durban Presbyterians applied for sites to build Churches in the surrounding districts and they

1 Free Church Missionary Record 1872.

obtained them from a benevolent Government. Sites were obtained at Addington and Umhloti and immediately the Kirk Session started services at these places. This meant not only added expense but an added strain on an already sick minister.

In 1864 Mr. D.P. Wood, one of the leading businessmen of Durban and also the Session Clerk of the Church, went home to Edinburgh to put the situation to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church. The minutes describe the interview as follows :

"Dr. Duff introduced D.P. Wood, Esquire, Merchant, Natal who addressed the Committee regarding the spiritual destitution and especially the need for Presbyterian Ministrations in and a round D'Urban. He requested the Committee to appoint a Minister to itinerate there and aid in supporting him for a limited time. Mr. Wood further expressed his willingness to give a personal guarantee for a salary of £200 per annum for three years provided the Committee would make a grant of £50 for the same period. The Committee agreed with thanks and the Convener and Secretary were requested to look out for a suitable labourer for this important field." ①

True to its word the Committee set about trying to find "a suitable labourer" and in December of the same

1 Op. cit. Vol.3 p. 227



year they found Mr. James Patten M.A. of Free St. James congregation Glasgow who was willing to do. The minute reads :

"having learned that Mr. James Patten M.A. Preacher of the gospel is willing to give himself to the work of the Ministry there we hereby nominate and appoint him to the ministry in the town of D'Urban and its vicinity and the Committee do heartily commend Mr. Patten to the fellowship of the Presbytery of the bounds and earnestly desire on his behalf the grace and guidance of the Great Head of the Church and the good offices of all who love the Lord Jesus. The Committee further requested that a letter be addressed to the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow asking them to take the usual steps with a view to Mr. Patten's ordination as early as possible." ①

The Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow however, did not ordain Mr. Patten because having been offered a free passage to Durban in one of Bennies ships he left before the ordination could be arranged. He arrived in Durban on 9th May, 1865 and was ordained by the Natal Presbytery on 29th November, 1865. ②

He arrived when Mr. Buchanan was very ill so the Durban congregation decided that it would be wisest to appoint Mr. Patten as colleague to Mr. Buchanan instead of

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 250

2 Minutes of Presbytery of Natal Vol. 1 p. 211

using him as an unordained Probationer in charge of Umhloti and Addington.<sup>①</sup> To this the Presbytery readily agreed and duly ordained Mr. Patten as colleague to Mr. Buchanan.

Unfortunately the finances of the congregation could not stand this burden and within a few years Mr. Patten had to resign because there was not enough money to pay the salaries of the two ministers. He therefore returned to Scotland in 1870.<sup>②</sup> In one of his letters he wrote as follows :

"A short time ago I addressed a letter to you in which I referred to the sore crisis through which this colony has been passing for more than ten years intimating the probability of my having to quit the field. At the time I wrote I had merely consulted my Managers or Deacons, and they, while deploring it, could see no alternative. However, a congregational meeting was called which was loyally attended resolving to leave no stone unturned to prevent this calamity. As a result these excellent people "pledged to give to the utmost." I know of one instance of a member who had the prospect of losing his situation in a few months who immediately increased his subscription by £10 and many others were moved by a like noble spirit. The next resolution was to draw up a petition to the Colonial Committee and this is to be presented by one of our elders (Mr. D.P. Wood) who is going home on a visit. He hopes to

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 1 p. 241

2 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 391

arrive on the "Prince Alfred" in July. Most heartily do we wish him success for it is not simply the prosperity of the Durban congregation that is at stake. We have two out-stations at one of which we preach every Sabbath afternoon and at another (16 miles distant) where we preach once a month. At this latter station the results have been singularly gratifying. Most of the people who attend are Scotsmen engaged in sugar and coffee planting - and till this service was established they were wandering as a sheep without a Shepherd. The Wesleyans it is true have a service in the neighbourhood conducted by local preachers to very few of whom one can listen with comfort or with profit. The consequence is our people will not attend so that if we were to discontinue our service (which would be the immediate result of Mr. Buchanan or I having to leave) every man would do what seemed right in his own eyes and the probability is that not a few of them would become a prey to Bishop Colenso the well known Natal heretic. You will be glad to hear that Mr. Buchanan's health is so far restored as to enable him to preach once every Sabbath but unless the finances show a great increase as a result of the meeting mentioned above I cannot see them supporting two ministers much longer." ①

Mr. Patten was proved correct because before the year was out in the month of June he had to resign and return to Scotland

"because there is insufficient money to support two ministers at The Durban Presbyterian Church." ②

The congregation was very upset at the news of Mr. Patten's resignation and the Kirk Session minutes express the sorrow

1 Free Church Missionary Record 1870.

2 Minutes Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 2 p. 12

everyone felt at this state of affairs. Mr. Patten set sail from Durban in August, 1870.

It seems strange that when finances were so low the Presbytery should have taken the step they did, because, the month after Mr. Patten's letter the Presbytery wrote to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking for them to send a Probationer to look after Umhloti and Addington.<sup>①</sup>

Despite the experiences of Mr. Patten a Mr. Donald McLeod was found willing to go to Durban.<sup>②</sup> However the Durban Presbyterians discovered that Mr. McLeod held very strong views about

"The use of instrumental music in Church to assist the singing of the psalms"<sup>③</sup>

and so letters were written saying that

"Mr. McLeod's views on this subject would interfere very seriously with the success in the work in Durban and that much to their regret they cannot accept him in Natal."<sup>④</sup>

In 1872 Mr. Buchanan received nine months leave of absence. While he was away Rev. Dr. Dalziel acted as on **pulpit supply**. On his return Mr. Buchanan intimated his desire to retire as soon as another Minister could be

1 Minutes of Presbytery of Natal Vol.2 p. 37  
2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.4 p. 121  
3 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol,2 p.18  
4 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 4 p. 129

obtained. He addressed the congregation in the following terms on the evening of 28th November, 1872 :

"Surely I need not apologise for calling you together on my account. You are all sufficiently acquainted with my present circumstances, to know the painful necessity which was laid upon me to ask a meeting of Presbytery to consider my resignation. It was my ardent wish and hope that I might be enabled to hold on in my charge, until my successor should have been appointed, but it has pleased our Lord to determine otherwise. I am under stringent medical injunction to go aside at once, and "rest for a long while" and my own judgment approves of the decision. I have therefore to ask of you, and I do hereby ask that you will forthwith release me from my pastorate in Durban, and make such immediate arrangements, as you may judge best, for the supply of the pulpit. Of course I shall be glad to retain my place as a member of the Presbytery although for a time, I may be unable to attend the Meetings. I need not assure you that it is with no small grief that I lay this new burden upon you - but in fact, it is not I, but the Great Head of the Church Himself whose we are, and whom we serve. May his presence ever be with you all." ①

During the vacancy which followed Mr. Buchanan's resignation an approach was made to Rev. Dr. Dalziel of Gordon Memorial Mission, ② inviting him to become minister of the Durban Presbyterian Church. Dr. Dalziel refused stating in his letter :

- 1 Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 61
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.2 p. 68

"I feel called to be a Missionary and prefer to carry on my work in Northern Natal." ①

The Durban Presbyterians then wrote to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland stating

"We offer a stipend of £450 (an increase of £100 on what Mr. Buchanan is receiving)." ②

and the Committee were requested to find a suitable Minister.

Mr. Buchanan agreed to continue taking services despite his resignation for he realised the difficulty in which the congregation was placed, but in April, 1874 he had to stop even the pulpit supply work because his health collapsed altogether. ③

Ministry of REV. J. PATON 1876 - 1877.

It was to be a long time before the Durban congregation was to have a settled minister. Despite the efforts of the Edinburgh Committee no one could be found for the Durban Church till 1876. It was in May of that year that Mr. James Paton arrived in Durban having been sent out by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland ④

- 1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 70
- 2 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Vol.4 p. 200
- 3 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.2 p. 124
- 4 Minutes of Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Vol.4 p. 371



Eventually Mr. Paton received the call to the Durban Church but it was not as unanimous a call as might have been expected after so long a vacancy.

A group of persons in the congregation wanted to call someone else namely Rev. John Smith of St. Johns Pietermaritzburg and Mr. Paton was called "on a majority vote."<sup>①</sup> When the call came before the Presbytery a Mr. D. Steele challenged its validity because

"according to Rule 4 of the Constitution of the Durban Presbyterian Church a two thirds majority is required in the case of a call to a minister and I contend that two thirds means two thirds of all the members and not just of those present."<sup>②</sup>

The Presbytery under the Moderatorship of the Rev. Dr. Dalziel then met with the congregation and it was duly agreed to sustain the call despite Mr. Steele's objection. It was, however, a bad beginning and Mr. Paton was soon to find out how hard it is for a Minister to lead a split congregation. He was ordained by the Natal Presbytery on 13th October 1876 in Durban<sup>③</sup> but on the 5th December, 1877 he handed in his resignation.<sup>④</sup>

The Presbytery was full of sympathy for the young man who had had such a trying time at the Durban Church

- 1 Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 81
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 2 p. 216
- 3 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 219
- 4 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 268



and they resolved as follows in accepting his resignation

"It is agreed that Mr. Paton's resignation from the Durban Presbyterian Church be accepted with regret. His has been no easy task and he has accomplished much in his short stay." ①

Mr. Paton remained in Durban till the end of March 1878 and then he too, like his namesake before him returned to Scotland.

No sooner had Mr. Paton resigned than the Durban congregation addressed a call to Rev. John Smith of Pietermaritzburg. The call came up for consideration at the Presbytery meeting held on 6th February 1878. ② The minutes record the incident as follows :

"A call from the Durban Presbyterian congregation to the Rev. John Smith Pietermaritzburg was read and on the motion of Mr. J. Gould Smith seconded by Mr. Stalker, it was unanimously sustained and placed in the hands of Mr. John Smith. Mr. Smith at this stage declined to make any statement and in accordance with a request from Dr. A. Bonner it was agreed to adjourn till 7.30 p.m." ③

That evening Commissioners from St. Johns Church, Pietermaritzburg and from the Durban Presbyterian Church stated their case "at some length" ④ each vieing with the other for

- 1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 269
- 2 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 278
- 3 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 278
- 4 Ibid.

the services of Rev. John Smith as minister. Mr. Smith listened to all that was said and then when called upon to state his mind in regard to the call, he declared

"that for two reasons principally namely that his present congregation was likely to suffer more by a vacancy than the Durban one, and that the Durban congregation were more likely to succeed in securing a Minister he had been led respectfully but regretfully to decline the call.

Parties having then been removed from the Church the Presbytery after consideration, unanimously agreed to concur in Mr. Smith's decision."<sup>1</sup>

When these happenings took place in Pietermaritzburg Mr. Paton was waiting in Durban to catch the ship that would take him back to Scotland. It is small wonder if he returned to his homeland with somewhat unpleasant memories of Durban and its Presbyterian Church.

#### The Ministry of REV. P.W. MARTIN (1880-1885)

No approach was made to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland when Mr. Paton left and when Mr. Smith refused the call. This time they appointed a small committee consisting of Messrs. D.P. Wood and James Blackwood and commissioned them

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 280

"to find a suitable minister while overseas." ①

They searched earnestly and finally the two Durban elders decided upon Rev. P.W. Martin of Ipswich in the Presbytery of London. The congregation was quite agreeable to accept their selection and Mr. Martin arrived in Durban on 1st October 1880 and the arrangements were made for his Induction by the Presbytery on 5th October 1880. ②

With the coming of Mr. Martin the Church may be said to have made a new beginning. Its early trials were over and although it had still many difficulties to overcome yet it tackled these difficulties in a new spirit encouraged no doubt by the thought that it was now the parent of two healthy offspring, namely Addington Church and Berea Church. ③ Mr. Martin was apparently a man of great power as a preacher and also a very capable organiser. In his all too brief term of office terminated by his serious illness, he brought the Church into a very strong position both numerically and financially. When he came to the Church the membership was 183. ④ By June of 1882 the numbers on the Roll had increased to 294 and by June the

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 2 p. 201
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 2 p. 352
- 3 Vide Page 490
- 4 Vide Page 500
- 5 Annual Report Durban Presbyterian Church 1879 p. 2.

following year the membership was 394.<sup>①</sup> At one communion (September 1881) no fewer than 43 new members joined, 28 by Certificate and 15 by Profession of Faith.<sup>②</sup>

No less startling is the reading of the financial progress of the Church. In 1879 the total revenue had been £273,<sup>③</sup> in 1880 when a special effort was made it rose to £577.<sup>④</sup> In 1881, the end of Mr. Martin's first year it was £930<sup>⑤</sup> and in 1883 the income had risen to £1,019.<sup>⑥</sup>

Meantime the question of another site for the parent Church had arisen. On 20th February 1884 a meeting was called to decide whether to go on with repairs to the old Church at a cost of £600 or to look out for another site. It was wisely decided to obtain a freehold site in the town and after several enquiries it was agreed to purchase the present site in Commercial Road at a price of £600.<sup>⑦</sup>

Several years passed, however, before the new Church was constructed.

On 5th December 1884 Mr. Martin gave notice to his Session that owing to the serious illness of his wife and himself he would require to leave Durban. He carried on until 30th September 1885 when he parted from the congregation.

1 Ibid. 1882 p. 3

2 Minutes Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol 2 p. 368

3 Annual Report Durban Presbyterian Congregation 1879 p. 4

4 Ibid. 1880

5 Ibid. 1881

6 Ibid. 1883

7 Minutes of Congregational Meetings of Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.1 p. 91

with deep regret on both sides. <sup>①</sup> Mr. Martin did not long survive his severance from the Church as he died in April 1888 in London. <sup>②</sup>

The Ministry of REV. J. HENDRY

After the resignation of Mr. Martin and up to the induction of Mr. Tees in 1892 there seems to have been a lull in the activities of the Church. The reports of the Session meetings show long intervals sometimes as long as six months between meetings and the reports after Mr. J. Roger became Session Clerk are models of brevity. The Managers may have kept records of their meetings, but if so the minute book appears to have been lost. The membership appears to have kept fairly steady <sup>in</sup> -/December 1887 200 names were on the roll of which, however, 80 were on the country list. <sup>③</sup> In those days more interest was taken in the country than in later days. We read for instance of the Minister taking services at Umhali and Stanger. <sup>④</sup> The number of those who took Communion seems, however, to have been small. Only 42 members took Communion on 7th November 1885 but this figure increased to 84 on 1st July 1888. <sup>⑤</sup> Many of the

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 2 p. 397
- 2 Recorded in Minutes of Kirk Session Vol 3 p. 12
- 3 Annual Report Durban Presbyterian Church 1887
- 4 Ibid. 1886 - 1888
- 5 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church

activities started by Mr. Martin died after his departure and by the time the new minister arrived a year later there was little activity at the Church other than the Sunday services and the Sabbath Day School.

It was 28th July 1886 before Rev. J. Hendry was inducted.<sup>①</sup> Mr. Hendry had come out to South Africa from the Presbyterian Church in Manchester because of ill health. He had been ordained by the Manchester Presbytery in 1884.

There is nothing to record of any importance during Mr. Hendry's ministry, except that the Building Fund for the new Church was started.

Mr. Hendry did not stay long with the Durban Presbyterians for in July 1889 he accepted a call to Kimberley.<sup>②</sup> Not that there was any trouble in the congregation, it would seem that he was attracted by the great opportunity afforded in the Diamond Fields of Kimberley to which newly established city so many Durban Presbyterians had fled. Diamonds had been found in large quantities in Kimberley and in consequence it had become a very wealthy town. So much so indeed that they could offer a stipend exactly twice as much as the Durban Church were paying. The result was that

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 104

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 192

on 1st July 1889 Mr. Hendry's short Durban ministry ended when he accepted the Kimberley call. The Natal Presbytery's comment is simply

"it is agreed that the translation is expedient" ①

The Ministry of Rev. ANDREW MITCHELL (1890 - 1892)

After the departure of Mr. Hendry the congregation looked again to Scotland for a Minister and the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland recommended a Mr. Andrew Mitchell. Rev. Mr. McHardy interim Moderator reports

"At a meeting of the congregation held on 16th February 1890 the name of Mr. Andrew Mitchell, preacher of the Gospel, was inserted in the call his being the only name brought forward." ②

Mr. Mitchell was a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland and it was therefore necessary for the Natal Presbytery to arrange for his ordination. In his trials for ordination the Presbytery instructed him to preach on

"Predestination" The comment on his sermon is

"he proved himself a worthy preacher of the Word" ③

1 Ibid. Vol.2 p. 192

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p.41

3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p.210



He was duly ordained on 26th March 1890. ①

It is recorded that

"at the close of the service Mr. Mitchell received a cordial welcome from the people of his charge" ②

but between that happy day in 1890 and 30th March 1892 Mr. Mitchell felt that the welcome was not quite as cordial as it might have been.

The Kirk Session Minutes do not record any disputes of a serious nature between Mr. Mitchell and his office bearers but there must have been some discord because after two years he wrote thus to the Presbytery resigning his

charge.  
"....the gist of all the reasons for my resignation is lack of moral support on the part of the office bearers of the Church." ③

The Presbytery were very distressed at the situation and accepted his resignation

"with the very greatest regret" ④

after insisting on hearing Commissioners from the Durban congregation.

Mr. Mitchell then returned to Scotland and to the regret of his many Durban friends he passed away on 1st April 1896. ⑤

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 212
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 212
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 274
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 274
- 5 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 400

The Ministry of REV. WILLIAM TEES 1892 - 1907)

For some time an endeavour was made at home to obtain a Minister through a Committee consisting of Rev. J. McHardy (Interim Moderator) and Mr. A.M. Campbell. Meantime services had been taken by the Rev. William Tees who had given up his Church in Grahamstown and had come to Durban of his own accord. On the 25th August, 1892 when negotiations with the last of the candidates in Scotland had broken down it was resolved to approach Mr. Tees.<sup>①</sup> He agreed to take up the work and was inducted on the 11th October 1892.<sup>②</sup>

The coming of Mr. Tees practically coincided with the opening of the new Church in Commercial Road. The last services to be held in the old Field Street Church were held on 10th October 1892 and the opening services in the new Church were held on 16th October 1892.<sup>③</sup> The new Church was a magnificent building built in the shape of a miniature Gothic Cathedral and it was and still is the best example of Gothic architecture in the city of Durban.

The congregation during the earlier years of Mr. Tees' ministry increased very quickly in numbers. In 1894 it was

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.3 p.201
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol-3 p.279
- 3 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol.3 p.214

stated

"there were 171 bona fide members and that the country roll numbering 23 had been allowed to lapse."<sup>1</sup>

By 1897<sup>2</sup> the membership had increased to 217 and by 1898 to 250.<sup>3</sup> At the Communion held on 6th September 1896 108 persons communicated.<sup>4</sup>

During this period many welcome gifts were made to the Church. Mr. John Nicol agreed in 1897 to bear the cost of lighting the Church with electricity and in the same year Mr. A. McDonald presented to the Church a Baptismal Font in memory of Rev. Andrew Mitchell who had recently died.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most welcome gift of all was presented by Mr. A.M. Campbell who agreed to present the Church with a Pipe organ in 1896.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Tees was a man of many gifts and during his ministry the Durban Presbyterian Church became well known. Mr. Tees gave a weekly lecture apart from his usual Sunday and other duties and these lectures became quite a feature of Durban life.

In 1897 when the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa was held ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

- 1 Annual Report Durban Presbyterian Church 1894
- 2 Ibid. 1897 p. 3
- 3 Ibid. 1898 p. 3
- 4 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 3 p. 321
- 5 Annual Report 1897
- 6 Ibid. 1896

the meeting ~~took place~~ in St. Andrews Church Durban where ministers and people had long been supporters of the cause of Union.

ADDINGTON CHURCH

Addington is that area of Durban nearest to the Harbour entrance and in the early days of Durban's history there was a deal of rivalry between Addington and Durban. At one stage Addington tried to become a separate town with its own Mayor and Council and had this been achieved the results could have been disastrous for Durban. The Durban Presbyterian Church, opened in 1863, was only about two miles from the Presbyterians living in Addington but it was nevertheless deemed expedient to consider the suggestion from the Addington members of the Durban Church

"that a site be obtained in the Addington area for the purpose of erecting a Church" ①

Mr. Buchanan was Moderator of Presbytery at this time and also Minister of the Durban congregation. He reported the matter as follows to Presbytery in May 1864 :

"The Moderator also reported that an application had been made by him for a site in

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 1 p. 61

Addington; a plan had been submitted by the Surveyor General in which a central site had been marked off as reserved for a Presbyterian place of worship in that locality. Mr. Buchanan further reported that steps were being taken towards raising the necessary funds for the erection of a place of worship on that site." ①

Good use was made of the land eventually granted to them and on 3rd April 1866 the Church at Addington was opened. ②

It was from the beginning a Preaching station of the Durban Church who provided all the money necessary to erect the first building.

Mr. Buchanan whose health was never too good found the work of his own congregation plus that of Addington almost too much for him and the situation might have become very grave had not Mr. Patten arrived as "colleague and successor" to Mr. Buchanan in 1865. Mr. Patten devoted much of his time to Addington and it is recorded in the minutes of session

"Mr. Patten reported that the weekly attendance at Addington was 80 in the morning and 60 in the Evening" ③

There is unfortunately no record of the first service to have been held at Addington as neither the present Addington records nor the first minute book of the Durban Kirk Session

- 1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol . p.181
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Durban Presbyterian Church Vol. 1 p. 139
- 3 Ibid. Vol . p.152

make any reference to it.

Until the year 1880 the Addington congregation was administered as a Preaching Station of the Durban Church and the times of the services were so arranged that the Durban Minister could take both his own and the Addington service.

Mr. David Russell

By 1880 numbers had risen considerably at Addington and moreover a layman called David Russell had been preaching with such success that a move was initiated not only to separate Addington from the Durban Church but also to obtain the services of Mr. Russell as their Minister.

Mr. David Russell was a layman, a Congregationalist, who devoted most of his time to Evangelism. He was a great preacher and a fine personality and a well-known figure in Durban. It was therefore no surprise to the Presbytery when

"There was laid on the table a letter dated 4th October 1880 addressed to the Clerk of Presbytery intimating the intention of the Addington portion of the Durban congregation to lay certain matters before the Presbytery.

1 M. Cowley Dick "David Russell"

Mr. Jehan presented two memorials addressed to the Moderator and members of the Presbytery of Natal, dated Addington October 6th 1880. The purpose of this first memorial was a request that the Presbytery would grant permission to mortgage the land on which the Addington property of the Church is situated the purpose of the memorialists being to erect a new Church thereon and it being necessary to raise a part of the required funds by loan. This land it appeared from the Title Deeds which were laid on the table is held in freehold and is vested in the Moderator of the Presbytery and his Successors in office, solely and exclusively for the purposes of the said Presbytery. The purport of the second memorial which was signed by 22 members and 30 adherents, was a request that the Presbytery would constitute the Addington Branch of the Durban Church into a separate charge and ordain Mr. David Russell to the office of the Ministry and as pastor of the new charge."①

The result was that the Presbytery resolved as follows :

"The Presbytery resumed consideration of the memorials from Addington in terms of the adjournment yesterday and having heard further statements thereon from members of the deputations introduced yesterday, after deliberation adopted the following resolution as the finding of the Court respecting the matters submitted in the memorials namely

The Presbytery having heard and considered the Memorials presented from the Addington portion of the Durban Church and considering

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.2 p.352



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that the memorialists and those whom they represent have not yet been formed into a separate sanctioned charge and that certain most important points still require elucidating, resolve to authorise the Moderator to give the necessary power to mortgage the land at Addington in order that a new church may be proceeded with - on condition that the office bearers of the Durban Church are satisfied with the financial relations between the two portions of the congregation. The Presbytery further resolve to allow the other matters referred to in the Memorials to stand over in the meantime. This resolution was proposed by Rev. J. Smith, seconded by Dr. Bonnar and unanimously agreed to." ①

There were a number of people in the Durban Church who were opposed to separating Addington from the Town Church and this resolution had the effect of delaying the matter. Two years later it was pointed out that nothing had yet been done either to separate Addington from the Durban Church or to ordain Mr. Russell. The Presbytery again referred the whole matter back to the Durban Session and the Presbytery at its meeting on 27th July 1882 were informed that the Durban Congregation were still not prepared to disjoin Addington and so the Presbytery

"under these circumstances passed from the subject" ②

1 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 353

2 Ibid. Vol. 2 p. 391

On 14th July, 1883 Mr. David Russell who was now representing the Durban congregation as a Presbytery Elder, petitioned the Presbytery to be ordained as a minister

"the petition set forth the following reasons which induced Mr. Russell to prefer his request

(1) That he had been engaged as a worker in the Addington Branch Church for over seven years and as an Evangelist under the Durban Session since September 1878; and that God had crowned his work with success

(2) That the Addington congregation had repeatedly wished him to become their Minister and had presented a Memorial to the Presbytery (7th and 8th October 1880) asking for his ordination to the office of the ministry, the reply to that Memorial being that he had not approached the Presbytery on the subject. At Mr. Russell's request the question remained in abeyance till the new Church was built and paid for whereupon he had received a Memorial from the Addington people urging him to apply for the Presbytery's license;

(3) That he was of opinion that the Addington congregation had become so important as to require an ordained Minister. Mr. Russell adverted to the disadvantage under which he laboured from his not having pursued the customary studies for the ministry and to the difficulty which on that score, might present itself to the Presbytery against their granting his application to which he was assured the Presbytery would give their best consideration." ①

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 18

The Presbytery considered the matter at some length but insisted that the first thing to be done was to erect a regular charge at Addington and then they said they were prepared to consider any application from Mr. Russell which may be made to them. ①

On 30th January 1884 a petition from Addington to disjoin from the Durban congregation was again debated and this time their crave was granted. ②

Addington now a separate congregation next turned its attention to the task of finding a Minister. Unfortunately Mr. Russell was under the obligation of serving the Durban Kirk Session as Evangelist until April 1855 and they would not release him. Moreover Mr. Russell was himself now uncertain about the desirability of accepting a call as he felt more suited to the evangelistic work he was doing and stated that when released by the Durban congregation he wished to travel round the country conducting Evangelistic Missions. ③ An Interim Moderator was therefore appointed namely Rev. John Smith.

The Ministry of REV. W.J. HARDY

Application was made to the Colonial Committee of the

1 Ibid. Vol. 3. p. 20  
2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 34  
3 M.C. Dick "David Russell"

Free Church of Scotland for Fifty Pounds per annum and a Minister and that ever helpful Committee supplied both the money and the man. On 31st July, 1884 the Presbytery recorded

"That it be left to the temporary Session to fix a suitable date for the Induction of the new Minister into the pastoral charge of the Church and congregation at Addington. That the Moderator of Presbytery preach and preside on the occasion and the Clerk address the Minister and the congregation." ①

Thus it was that the Rev. William James Hardy M.A. the Minister designate for Addington Presbyterian Church laid on the table the following documents which were read to the Presbytery

- 1) Extract minute from the records of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland dated 12th May 1884 appointing Mr. Hardy to the charge at Addington and
- 2) a certificate from the Presbytery of Kincardine O'Neil of the Free Church of Scotland dated and given at Ballater on 12th August 1884 setting forth that Mr. Hardy was on 15th February, 1882 ordained as colleague to the Rev. David Scott Ferguson, Free Church, Strachan, and that on his accepting the appointment to Addington he was, at the date of the Certificate, duly loosed from his pastoral charge in Strachan. ②

1 Op. cit. Vol.3 p.41

2 Ibid. Vol.3 p.58

He was inducted to the pastoral charge of Addington on 21st October 1884. ①

The work at Addington progressed very favourably under Mr. Hardy's ministry and we read in the Session Minutes

"That over 100 persons attended the morning diet of worship" ②

Moreover the financial troubles which beset other Natal congregations seem to have been absent from the Addington cause.

All was going splendidly when suddenly, almost without warning Mr. Hardy resigned and stated that he wished to accept a call to the new congregation being formed on the Berea in Durban. The Berea Church being on a hill

"he thought it would be better for his health" ③

The Addington people were very <sup>much annoyed</sup> ~~astonished~~ at this but they did not oppose his resignation in the Presbytery when it met on 16th February 1886. ④

The ministry of REV. JOHN LAING 1886

Mr. Hardy was appointed Interim Moderator and an approach was made to Rev. J. Laing who so recently had left

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 61
- 2 Op. cit. Vol. 1 p. 68
- 3 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 84
- 4 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 98

Upper Umgeni Congregation under sad circumstances.<sup>①</sup> He agreed to accept the call provided the Presbytery would sustain it.

On the 28th July 1886 the Presbytery met to consider the situation.<sup>②</sup> The Rev. W.J. Hardy reported that the congregation of Addington wished to call Rev. John Laing and he laid on the table a call signed by 49 members and 23 adherents. He also reported that Messrs. Jehan, Airth and Nicholl were appointed Commissioners to the Presbytery to speak on behalf of the congregation.

After deliberation as to the manner of proceeding it was resolved to consider first the status of Mr. Laing before deciding about the call. It was moved by Rev. W.J. Hardy and seconded by Mr. James Forbes

"That the Presbytery, after hearing statements by various members, being satisfied with the late life and conduct of Mr. Laing, is now prepared to remove the prohibition laid upon him by the motion of Presbytery on the 30th July, 1885."<sup>③</sup>

The Presbytery were obviously satisfied with Mr. Laing and felt that he had made amends for any past mistakes and it was proposed by Rev. James Gray and agreed

1 Vide Page 525 and 526

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 99

3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 100

"that the Presbytery record their devout gratitude to God that the name of Mr. Laing has come before it in the present way and expresses its prayerful hope that any detriment that may have accrued to religion from past events may by Mr. Laing's future labours and good works be entirely done away." ①

Thereafter the call to Mr. Laing was duly sustained and he was inducted at a Public Service held in the Addington Church on 4th August 1886. ②

He certainly made amends in his new charge for he became a well loved and respected Minister in Durban. His brethren elected him to the office of Moderator in 1894 and through the years of his Addington ministry Rev. John Laing became renowned as a Pastor. He had known much trouble himself so perhaps that is why he was so well suited for the work at Addington.

Rev. John Laing was Minister at Addington Church when it became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

BEREA

When the original Durban Presbyterian Church had been established the founders had concerned themselves only with

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 100

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 112



the people living on the level stretch of land between the sea and the range of hills called the Berea. Few folk had dared to build their homes on the Berea in 1860 but by 1880 more and more of the wealthy Durbanites had moved up to the hill to get away from the humid heat of the plain below.

In this way the Berea became a 'well-to-do' residential area while the town in the valley became more and more industrialised as the years passed.

In 1880 transport facilities were almost non-existent and it ~~was~~<sup>was</sup> very difficult and most inconvenient for the Berea members of the Durban Church to be at service every Sunday. Moreover, the roads from the town to the Berea were not good and they passed over a huge swamp land.

Thus it came about in 1884 on 22nd October that the Natal Presbytery was presented with a petition from the Berea Presbyterians asking for permission to form their own congregation. It is recorded as follows :

"A Petition from certain Presbyterians residing on the Berea was presented to the Presbytery and was read. The Petition set forth that in the opinion of the Petitioners it was desirable for various reasons that

ordinances should be provided for Presbyterians resident on the Berea, and that a separate charge should be established there as speedily as possible. The petition contained certain resolutions adopted at a Meeting held on the Berea on 13th October 1884 the Rev. Mr. Martin presiding - amongst them being the appointment of Mr. Forbes, Dr. McKenzie and Mr. S. Nicol as Commissioners to meet the Presbytery in support of the Petition; and also a proposal that the salary to be offered to a Minister be £350 to rise to £400 as soon as the funds permit (without allowance for house) and to be guaranteed for a term of three years, the appointment of a minister to date from 1st July 1885. The Petitioners therefore prayed the Presbytery 'to grant their disjunction from the Durban Church and erection into a separate charge to take effect from the date abovementioned or as soon thereafter as a Minister shall have been appointed.' The petition was signed by 48 members and 23 adherents of the Durban Presbyterian Church and also by 15 other Presbyterians making 86 persons altogether." ①

The Presbytery were then presented with extracts from the minutes of the Durban Kirk Session and congregational Meetings indicating while they regretted the need for this third Presbyterian Church in Durban they had no objections to offer to its establishment.

After prolonged discussion and deliberation the Presbytery unanimously adopted the following resolution

1 Ibid. Vol 3. p.57

which was proposed by Rev. John Smith and seconded by Rev. J. Gould Smith namely :

"That the Presbytery express their cordial approbation of the movement to establish a separate congregation on the Berea and resolve to give their support and help to the Petitioners in their effort to obtain a pastor and services for themselves. The Presbytery further express their gratification at finding that the Minister and office bearers and people of the Durban congregation sympathize with this new movement. The Presbytery therefore resolve to grant the prayer of the Petition - to take steps to procure a minister for the new charge, and on his appointment or arrival in Natal to erect the congregation on the Berea into a separate charge. It was moved by Rev. J. Smith seconded by Rev. W.J. Hardy and agreed. That the Rev. P.W. Martin be associated with the Berea Petitioners and to take steps to secure a minister. The Moderator formally intimated the decision of the Presbytery to the Commissioners who were still present, and who thereupon declared that they acquiesced in the same." ①

The Ministry of REV. W.J. HARDY 1886.

The task of finding a Minister for this new congregation was no easy one and despite letters to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland no one could be found willing to go.

Mr. Hardy, the Minister at the Addington congregation wrote home to Scotland on 17th November 1885 saying

1 Ibid. Vol.3 p.58

"I conduct services regularly for the congregation on the Berea..... the congregation grows steadily the average attendance at the principle service being 200 - 250. The number of communicants is 76." ①

*In this the spelling in the Minutes !!!*

Mr. Hardy was greatly attracted by the possibilities on the Berea and wrote to the Edinburgh Committee to say that he was considering resigning from Addington to accept a call from the Berea people who had approached him in that connection.

Matters came to a head when Mr. Hardy resigned from Addington at a Meeting of Presbytery held on 16th February 1886 :

"It was moved, seconded and agreed to That Mr. Hardy's resignation be accepted and he be released from his pastoral charge at Addington - his resignation to take effect as from the end of the current month." ②

On the very next day the Presbytery was called together again to consider a call from the Berea congregation to Mr. Hardy and it was moved seconded and resolved :

"that the call on the table be sustained by the Presbytery and put into the hands of Rev. W.J. Hardy. The Moderator accordingly placed the call in the hands of Mr. Hardy, who intimated his acceptance thereof.

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol.6 p.84

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p.98

Wherefore the Presbytery resolved to take steps for Mr. Hardy's induction as Pastor of the Berea Church congregation. ①

Mr. Hardy soon set about the task of erecting a Church and by May 1888 he was able to report as follows to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland

"Pleasing progress has been made in all departments of the work but the greatest news concerns our Church Building. Our new Church was opened on 14th January 1888 and I rejoice to inform you that it seats 200 persons and that all seats are fully taken up each Sabbath morning." ②

The congregation on the Berea was free of debt in 1891 and they had but few early difficulties with which to contend. Their minister's health, however, was always a source of anxiety and in 1891 the Presbytery granted him leave of absence in the following terms :

"That the Presbytery cordially accede to the request made by Rev. W.J. Hardy and the office bearers of the Berea congregation, that leave of absence for six months from 1st May be granted to Mr. Hardy, and that the Presbytery record an expression of their earnest hope and prayer that their brother may derive great benefit from his visit to the home country and return in every way refreshed and strengthened for his work in Natal." ③

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 99

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland  
Vol. 6 p. 319

3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3. p. 249

Unfortunately the holiday did not have the desired effect and in 1892 at the Meeting of Presbytery held on 30th March Mr. Hardy tendered his resignation. At first the Presbytery refused to accept the resignation but eventually they did so and on 4th May 1892 they resolved :

"That the Rev. W.J. Hardy's resignation of the pastoral charge of the Berea Presbyterian Church be accepted; and that there should be recorded in the minutes of the Presbytery an expression of their sympathy with Mr. Hardy in the trying circumstances in which in the providence of God, he is now placed - their admiration of the zeal and faithfulness and their gratitude to God for the success with which, in spite of ill-health he has carried on his work as Minister first at Addington and then on the Berea and their earnest hope that his health may be so far re-established as to permit of his resuming ministerial work, and that he may enjoy in richest measure the blessing of God, sustaining, guiding and comforting him in all his future life and work." ①

Alas on 20th July 1892 Mr. Hardy passed to higher service and the Natal Presbytery meeting a week later recorded their sympathy as follows :

"The intimation of the death of the Rev. W.J. Hardy was received with very deep regret by the Presbytery and as his name was continued on the roll of Presbytery (as Minister emeritus) notwithstanding the

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p 286

acceptance of his resignation less than three months ago, it was deemed fitting that a brief record of the estimation in which Mr. Hardy was held should be made. From the first when he was inducted into the charge of Addington 1884 he took deep interest in the work of the Presbytery. Regular in his attendance at the meetings, so long as his strength permitted, he was ever ready with his counsel in matters of importance as they affected the Presbyterian Church in the Colony; ever ready too with his help to individual congregations in times of need.

His appointment as the Presbytery's Commissioner to the Transvaal for the purpose of extending our Church there was a testimony to the confidence reposed in his tact and energy; and the results of that mission bore out the wisdom of the appointment.

The Presbytery would also gratefully acknowledge the pulpit ability, the power for organization and the winning manners of their late brother as being abundantly manifested in the establishment in a very brief period of so successful and influential a congregation as that of the Berea. Entering upon his labours there in 1886 there was but a handful and when his first illness began in October 1890 the congregation was so consolidated that it was able to bear the strain to which it was subjected during the many months their Pastor was laid aside, remaining still bonded together in strength.

In many other ways his zealous energies benefited the Church and the Colony; so, while we mourn our loss of a brother beloved, we have to acquiesce in the will of Him who is King and Head of His Church,



and take comfort from His assurance concerning such as our late brother "They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." ①

The Ministry of REV. A.S. MCPHEE

Rev. J. Laing who had been Interim Moderator at the Berea Church reported to the Presbytery on 30th November 1892 that he had been in touch with Rev. A.S.McPhee M.A.B.D. formerly Free Church Minister at Singapore and that he had agreed to accept the call to the Berea Church. ②

Mr. McPhee arrived on 8th December 1892 and was inducted to the pastoral charge of the Berea Church on 15th December 1892. ③

During the next few years Mr. McPhee concerned himself with the upbuilding of his congregation and his annual report for 1896 stated gleefully :

"more seats have been rented than ever before..... and the number attending the services average about 250." ④

of 505 seats 200

Like so many of the Natal Ministers Mr. McPhee did not send many reports over to Scotland but there was one subject on which he was quite convinced and on which he wrote to the Edinburgh Committee namely, the Union of the Churches :

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 294
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 299
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 304
- 4 Op. Cit. 1896 p. 3

"I am most heartily in favour of the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa which I expect to come into being next year...." ①

Thus there was no doubt about Berea Church joining the Union when it was finally achieved in September 1897.

GREYVILLE CONGREGATION

Greyville is a suburb of Durban and in 1890 it was a new and rapidly growing residential area. Rev. J. Laing of Addington Church decided to commence a Sunday School in the area for the children of his members who had recently moved there.

The Sunday School was started in 1891 but on 23rd October 1892 Mr. Laing started a Church service in a Hall on the corner of Umgeni and Bishop Roads. This Hall had been subscribed for by the Presbyterians living in the area and it was duly opened by Mr. Laing on 28th October 1892. ②

He began by conducting an afternoon service

"attended by some 40 persons" ③

and he reported

"that the Sabbath Morning School had over 100 children with 5 Teachers taking part in the work" ④

- 1 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 8 p. 73
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 290
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 296
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 296

It is interesting to note that at the same meeting of Presbytery at which Mr. Laing told of the encouraging prospects at Greyville it is recorded that

"Rev Edward Hewitt M.A. a Probationer from the Free Church of Scotland presented his credentials." ①

Mr. Hewitt was destined to play an important part in the history of the Greyville Church for no sooner had he arrived than it was agreed that he should take services at Greyville.

Mr. Hewitt had been licensed by the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow on 16th May 1889 and he had been serving as a probationer in the Arbroath Presbytery till sent to South Africa. ②

#### Greyville becomes a Sanctioned Charge

Mr. Hewitt's labours at Greyville bore such fruit that at the very next Presbytery a request was made

"to erect Greyville to a charge in full standing" ③

It is recorded as follows in the Presbytery Minutes :

"The Rev. J. Laing read a report prepared by Rev. E. Hewitt showing the progress of the work during the past five months. Mr. Laing stated that he

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p. 297  
 2 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 297  
 3 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 305

had held a meeting with the Greyville people on the 22nd instant at which meeting the following resolution was adopted namely 'That we approach the Presbytery of Natal with a memorial to be signed by the members and adherents of the Greyville Preaching Station requesting the said Presbytery to erect them into a separate congregation'. He also presented a memorial, forwarded through the Addington Session, signed by 37 'members of Presbyterian or other Protestant Churches, worshipping at the Presbyterian Preaching Station, Greyville' asking the Presbytery to congregate them and recognize them as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Natal. There was also presented a paper of concurrence with this memorial signed by 20 'adherents of the Presbyterian Preaching Station at Greyville and statedly worshipping there.' Mr. Laing further stated that the feeling among the Greyville people was in favour of Mr. Hewitt being ordained a minister without charge in the meanwhile - that they promised a minimum sum of £50 per annum towards the support of a Minister - and that current expenses to date had been met by the contributions of the people, except the loan of £10 received from the Church Extension Fund, which however was to be repaid forthwith. Mr. Laing dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to twenty communicants last Sabbath evening.

It was agreed - That the Presbytery receive Mr. Laing's report concerning Greyville Preaching Station and the Memorial in connection therewith, and proceed to consider the same.

After deliberation it was resolved on the

motion of Rev. W. Tees seconded by Rev. W.E. Robertson, - That the prayer of the Memorial be granted and that the Memorialists be now constituted a separate congregation in connection with this Presbytery - thos who have signed the Memorial being hereby disjoined from the same."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Hewitt then asked the Presbytery to leave the matter of his ordination in abeyance for a while. It would seem that he wished to consider whether or not he would stay at Greyville. However, at a meeting held on 26th July, 1893 Mr. Hewitt agreed to be ordained.<sup>2</sup> This important event took place on 9th August 1893 when Rev. John Laing presided as Moderator of Presbytery.<sup>3</sup>

As soon as Mr. Hewitt had been ordained the Greyville congregation addressed a call to him and this was duly sustained at a meeting of Presbytery held on 18th August 1893.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Hewitt's early ministry at Greyville saw splendid results in Church attendance but he ran into financial problems.

The erection of the Church building caused such a strain on the Greyville Church's finances that they could not pay the minister's stipend. Mr. Hewitt felt that under

1 Op. cit. Vol 3 p. 306 -  
2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 318  
3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 322  
4 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 328

the circumstances he ought to resign and he submitted his resignation to his office-bearers. <sup>①</sup>

This unhappy state of affairs was reported to several of the wealthier members of ~~the Durban~~ the Durban congregation and four members who wished to remain anonymous guaranteed £50 each for two years to enable the congregation to get out of its financial difficulties. <sup>②</sup>

This generous gesture had the desired effect for Mr. Hewitt withdrew his resignation and on 25th November 1895 the Presbytery agreed

"That the Clerk be authorised to give the Rev. E. Hewitt letters accrediting him to any place he may see fit to visit with a view to obtain funds to reduce the debt remaining on the Greyville Church." <sup>③</sup>

Mr. Hewitt thus managed to survive the early difficulties connected with the finances of Greyville and by 1897 he had established a splendid congregation. So well had the finances improved that in 1897 the Session Minutes read

"It is agreed that steps should be considered for the building of a Church Hall the matter shall be referred to the Board for discussion." <sup>④</sup>

The debt on the Church had been almost liquidated by

- 1 Minutes of Kirk Session Greyville Church Vol. 1 p. 59
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 1 p. 70
- 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 361
- 4 Op. cit. Vol. 1 p. 206

1897 due to the excellent work of Rev. E. Hewitt.

It was some years before the Hall was eventually built but the above Minute reflects <sup>the</sup> spirit of the congregation when it became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.



CHAPTER 4

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NORTHERN NATAL CONGREGATIONS

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NEWCASTLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

It was 1884 before the Natal Presbytery heard any official information about the formation of a Presbyterian congregation in Newcastle. But as Rev. J. Gray says :

"The people of Newcastle have for many years met together for occasional services prior to this present application." ①

Just how and when the original meetings took place we do not know for certain but sometime during the years 1870 to 1880 a group of Scotsmen began to meet at the home of Mr. A. Dunton

"for the purpose of devotional exercises and the study of the Word." ②

Unlike most other centres in South Africa where it was Free Churchmen who predominated in Newcastle the Presbyterians were for the most part from the Established Church of Scotland. Newcastle was, as the name indicates,

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p.18

2 Ibid. Vol 3 p.16.

a coal mining centre and during the 1870's a large number of Scotsmen had been brought out to work on the Coal mines of Northern Natal. These mines were scattered in a wide circle round Newcastle and at weekends the Scots of the district used to gather for entertainment in the town. It was for the churchmen among the Miners that the "occasional services" were held.

In 1884 at the Meeting of Presbytery on 30th January Rev. James Gray Minister of Harrismith congregation read a letter to the Presbytery :

"relative to a movement by the Presbyterians at Newcastle in the direction of forming a congregation there." ①

The Presbytery agreed to take any steps necessary to assist in this project but nothing is heard of the congregation at Newcastle for another five years.

During this <sup>ESE</sup> five years the people in charge of the work got into touch with the Foreign Mission Committee of the Established Church of Scotland and the result was that in 1884 Rev. James Smith an ordained Minister of that Church arrived at Newcastle to commence his labours. ②

He began well for within a short time the congregation

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p 33

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Newcastle Church Vol 1 p 10

had built and paid for a small Hall in Harding Street. There is no record of the opening services but there is ample evidence that much of the money came from two local families namely the Duntons and the Malcolms. <sup>①</sup>

In addition to his work at Newcastle Mr. James Smith also catered for "occasional services" at Dundee, Dannhauser and Volksrust, small villages on the outskirts of Newcastle. <sup>②</sup> Apart from these facts we know little of Mr. Smith's early work.

In 1889 the Natal Presbytery received an application from the Newcastle congregation to be accepted as part of the Natal Presbytery. It is recorded in the Presbytery minutes as follows :

"The Clerk read a Memorial dated Newcastle March 15th 1889 addressed to the Presbytery by certain communicants and adherents 'who expressed their earnest desire to be constituted a Presbyterian Church and congregation of Natal and to be received as such into fellowship with and under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery.' The Memorialists further declared their memorial might be taken as equivalent to a call addressed by them to the Rev. James Smith who had been labouring among them for a considerable time and whom they desired now to have recognised and settled over them as their Pastor.

1 Vide Minutes of Board of Management Newcastle Church 1885 and 1886

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Newcastle Church Vol.1 p.49

Nineteen names were appended to the Memorial. Explanatory letters (5 February and 23 March 1889) from Rev. James Smith were also read, together with a Presbyterial Certificate (13 October 1884) from the Presbytery of Dumbarton in favour of Mr. Smith.

After deliberation, it was proposed by Rev. W.J. Hardy seconded by Rev. Jas Hendry and unanimously agreed -

That the Presbytery receive the documents from Newcastle which are now on the table, and that they cordially grant the prayer of the Memorial and accordingly receive the Memorialists as a congregation and also receive and recognise the Rev. James Smith as their Pastor, both congregation and Pastor to be henceforth in fellowship with this Presbytery and under its jurisdiction. The Clerk was requested to send an extract Minute of the Presbytery's resolution to Rev. James Smith, with instructions that it be read at least once to the congregation assembling at Newcastle.

Resolved on the motion of Rev. J. Smith, seconded by Rev. W.J. Hardy -

That a Committee be appointed to arrange for formal services in connection with the reception of the Minister and congregation at Newcastle; if such should be desired; the Committee to consist of the Moderator of Presbytery and Revs. Messrs. Hendry and Hardy."①

Thus it was that Newcastle and Rev. James Smith came under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Natal.

In the following year, 1890 the Presbytery elected Rev. James Smith as Moderator, but he had only been in office

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p. 191

for a few months when he died much to the sorrow of his brethren. The Presbytery expressed their regret as follows :

"The death of the Rev. James Smith Moderator of the Presbytery of Natal and Minister of the congregation at Newcastle, having occurred since last ordinary Meeting of Presbytery, his brethren both Ministers and elders, desire to recognise the hand of God in the sad event which took place unexpectedly at Pinetown on 7th January 1891. They desire also to place on record their expression of their high esteem for their departed brother and their deep sympathy with those who have been bereaved by this stroke of Divine Providence.

'Having in the first instance, visited Natal in quest of health, Mr. Smith was led eventually to resign his charge of the Established Church Congregation of Balderhock Scotland and to enter upon work at Newcastle in the end of the year 1884. For six years he occupied that field, labouring in it up to the full measure of his strength, the proofs of his diligence and success being visible today in the congregation which he formed and also in the new church, erected during the last year of his life and just completed at the time of his death.

With the widow of their late brother the Presbytery deeply sympathize in the great and sudden trouble which has overtaken her and her children. Their earnest prayer is that she may be comforted on every side by 'The Father of mercies, the God of all Comfort' May the Father of the Fatherless turn His Hand to their mother, guiding them through life and preserving them unto His Heavenly Kingdom.

Knowing that Mr. Smith had endeared himself to his own congregation by all his efforts for their good, by his unwearied courtesy and gentleness and by his charity towards all men, the Presbytery desire to express their sympathy with the bereaved flock. They trust that the death of the first pastor may be overruled for good to all the people and that from the good seed of the Kingdom sown amongst them by the Lord's servant, whose earthly ministry is now ended, there may yet be gathered much fruit here and hereafter." ①

The congregation at Newcastle appealed once more to the Colonial Mission Committee of the Established Church of Scotland asking them to send a Minister in place of Mr. Smith. The result was that a letter was received by the Clerk of the Natal Presbytery stating that :

"Mr. A. McFarlane at present under the Presbytery of Perth has been appointed to fill the vacancy and will be leaving Scotland shortly." ②

Mr. McFarlane had been ordained by the Presbytery of Perth in 1890 and it was thus for Induction alone that the Presbytery gathered at Newcastle on 30th September, 1891. ③

Mr. McFarlane's ministry was one of quiet building on the foundations laid by Mr. Smith. He saw for example that the work at Dundee was progressing to a stage where

1 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p. 246  
 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 258  
 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 265

a separate charge would have to be formed. He drew the attention of Presbytery to this fact and the Presbytery applied for a site in Dundee in order to build a Church. This was granted in 1894.<sup>(1)</sup>

During this period the Newcastle congregation suffered a financial set back due to the removal to Johannesburg of several of the wealthier families. They appealed, with the support of the Presbytery, to the Established Church of Scotland who agreed to pay an extra £50 per annum for three years, because of the financial situation at Newcastle Church. The congregation soon rallied, however, and by the time of the Union of the Churches in 1897 they had become self supporting once more.

Mr. McFarlane was the Minister of Newcastle Church when they joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

UPPER UMGENI CONGREGATION

This is the name given to the congregation which meets in the group of small villages around the town of Howick. The names of the villages are Nottingham Road, Mooi River,

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 335



Boston, Lidgeton . Upper Umgeni was, and still is, a farming community.

As early as 1858 Rev. W. Campbell of Pietermaritzburg had conducted occasional services at all these places and when Rev. John Smith arrived as his colleague in 1865 a more regular service was possible in each of them. The unfortunate disruption in 1870 at Pietermaritzburg meant that the country work at "Upper Umgeni" could no longer be maintained and so the Presbytery appealed to Scotland for an "Itinerating Probationer" to be sent to Natal for the purpose of ministering to this "Upper Umgeni" group of Preaching stations. <sup>(1)</sup>

It was many years before this long cherished scheme took a practical form and meanwhile in 1872 the people at Howick wrote to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking for a minister and promising

"£100 per annum" <sup>(2)</sup>

This amount was, however, insufficient and the request was reluctantly refused. Ten years later in 1882 the Edinburgh Committee noted :

"There was submitted (1) Extract Minute of

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland  
Vol. 4 p. 158 (First appeal was made at this time but  
the request is renewed almost every year)

2 Ibid. Vol 4 p. 162

Natal Presbytery of 26th January making application for a Minister for Upper Umgeni. The Memorial to Presbytery was signed by 27 members and 69 adherents with a guarantee from the people of £215/9/- per annum for salary for three years - to be increased if possible to £250.

(2) Letters from Rev. John Smith of 6th ultimo urging the application and suggesting that the Committee might make a grant each year for three years of £100, £75 and £50. Agreed.

The Committee also agrees to "Look for a Minister for Howick." ①

The result of these efforts was that on 16th January,

1883 the Committee in Edinburgh was able to record :

"Having specially considered the qualifications of Rev. John Laing of the English Presbyterian Church at Belford... the interim Secretary with Mr. David Dickson or some other suitable person were appointed a deputation to proceed at the earliest possible date to hear Mr. Laing preach and to report." ②

Mr. Laing proved acceptable and set sail for Natal in June 1883.

Meanwhile the Natal Presbytery met on 25th July and resolved as follows :

"The Rev. J. Smith reported that he had received notice from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland (26th May, 1883) that the Rev. John Laing of the English

1 Ibid. Vol 5 p. 262

2 Ibid. Vol 5 p. 319

Presbyterian Church at Belford had been appointed to the Upper Umgeni charge. The sum promised for stipend (apart from the grants in aid promised by the Free Church of Scotland, Colonial Committee) were reported as amounting to £232/9/-. The people have also already raised a sum of £71/13/- to defray the cost of the Minister's passage and outfit. Thereafter the following Resolutions were proposed, seconded and agreed to :

1) That the Presbytery declare their satisfaction with the report now made and proceed to take steps to erect the new charge in the Upper Umgeni District being virtually pledged thereto by their action with respect to the Memorial presented from the people of the district at the meeting of 26th January 1882.

2) That those members of St. John's Pietermaritzburg, who have duly signified their desire to be connected with the Upper Umgeni Church be - as they hereby are declared to be - transferred from the Communion Roll of the former to the Communion Roll of the latter.

3) That the Clerk of Presbytery be meantime entrusted with the care of all matters pertaining to the new charge, and specially that he be authorised to enter on the Communion Roll of the Upper Umgeni Church the names of such other persons, being duly certified members of the Presbyterian Church, as shall signify their desire to be connected with the said Upper Umgeni Church, and

4) That a Communion Roll, prepared in the manner above specified, for the Upper Umgeni

Church be presented at the Meeting of Presbytery to be held in connection with Mr. Laing's Induction for the purpose of being attested and confirmed as containing the names of the first members of the new charge." ①

Mr. Laing arrived in Howick on 1st August 1883 and the Presbytery met on 15th August in the Howick School room and duly inducted Rev. J. Laing to the pastoral charge of the newly formed congregation of Upper Umgeni. ②

In the beginning services at Howick were conducted in the School room and at the end of the year Natal Presbytery wrote to the Colonial Committee to say

"Mr. Laing has worked well with encouraging prospects of usefulness." ③

A Kirk Session was soon formed and the work seemed to be making fine progress when the Presbytery received disturbing reports about the behaviour of Mr. Laing.

The Kirk Session brought to the notice of the Presbytery the fact that

"Mr. Laing had often been seen in Howick in a state of intoxication" ④

Mr. Laing freely admitted the charges preferred against him and offered to resign immediately. It was decided

- 1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 3
- 2 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 8
- 3 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol.5 p. 344
- 4 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 20

however to allow him to remain until the end of the next month and that he should then return to Scotland. A sum of £60 was subscribed by Upper Umgeni to assist Mr. Laing with his fare.

There followed a long vacancy in which the people of Upper Umgeni became very discouraged. Most of the Elders resigned, several joining the Wesleyan Church and the Interim Moderator, Rev. J. Smith, reported that he was experiencing difficulty in holding the congregation together.

In 1887 the long hoped for Itinerating Probationer was appointed by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.<sup>①</sup> The Presbytery used Mr. William Turnbull to serve all the small country charges including those of the Upper Umgeni congregation and Mr. Turnbull soon proved himself a worthy minister. The Upper Umgeni congregation therefore decided to give him a call, all hope of obtaining a Minister from Scotland having long since disappeared.

At a memorable meeting of Natal Presbytery held in Durban on 27th March 1889 the call

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p 124

"signed by 47 members and 54 adherents" <sup>①</sup>

was presented to Mr. William Turnbull. Mr. Turnbull was present at the meeting of the Presbytery and was in a quandary as to what he should do.

The Moderator inquired of Mr. Turnbull whether he was prepared to give his answer to the call addressed to him by this congregation. In response Mr. Turnbull said that, after careful consideration, he considered it to be his duty to decline the call. The call was accordingly set aside. <sup>②</sup>

On 31st July 1889 the Natal Presbytery met once more to consider a call to Mr. Turnbull from Upper Umgeni congregation. Rev. J. Smith reported as follows :

"The Moderator of Session (Rev. J. Smith) stated that the project of sending home for a Minister had come to nothing - that fresh negotiations having been opened between Mr. William Turnbull, probationer, and the people, he had expressed his willingness to accept a call to the Pastorate provided the people declared their willingness to renew the same; the Session accordingly had prepared and issued to the congregation a Form of Adherence to the former call, and this form had been signed by 42 members and 67 adherents. The Session and congregation desired that this document should be regarded as equivalent to a call and dealt with as such by the Presbytery at the present meeting." <sup>③</sup>

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 194

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 194

3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 199

This time Mr. Turnbull accepted and he was duly ordained and inducted to Upper Umgeni on 1st August 1889. ①

The Service took place at Nottingham Road as there was no church building at Howick the largest centre.

Mr. Turnbull began well at Upper Umgeni and in his reports to Edinburgh he speaks of

"being well supported at all diets of worship" ②

He was also a great asset to the Presbytery and was made Moderator in 1893.

He set about the task of erecting a Church at Howick having obtained a grant of piece of land in 1896. In 1897 he wrote to the Committee in Edinburgh :

"my congregation has contributed willingly and liberally towards the erection of their new Church, but they have been greatly crippled by the prevalence of rinderpest among their cattle. I beg that in these circumstances the Committee would favour them with a grant-in-aid." ③

In the beginning the Presbyterian services had been held in the Howick School room but when the Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1889 permission was granted to hold the Presbyterian Service there provided the times of service

1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 208

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church Scotland Vol 6 p. 381

3 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol. 8 p. 84



did not clash. <sup>①</sup> For many years this arrangement worked very satisfactorily but in 1897 a change had to be made. Objections were made by some of the Wesleyans and Mr. Turnbull wrote home to Edinburgh as follows :

"the use of the Wesleyan Chapel here which has hitherto been granted us for our services is no longer available and the congregation propose to erect a new Church at a cost of £500." <sup>②</sup>

It now became essential for the Presbyterians to build a place of their own and they did so. <sup>③</sup> The Church was completed and opened in January 1898 and it was Mr. Turnbull who was the Minister when Upper Umgeni joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897 together with the other Natal Churches.

HARRISMITH

Harrismith is a small farming town on the borders of the Orange Free State and Natal and it was and still is a centre of great importance to the Railways. Today it is almost entirely an Afrikaans speaking area but in 1880 a number of Scotsmen were employed at Harrismith in connection with the Railway. Moreover several of the local cattle

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Upper Umgeni Congregation Vol. p 114  
2 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.8 p. 94  
3 Minutes of Kirk Session Upper Umgeni Congregation Vol.1 p.182

farmers were also from Scotland and like all Scots they were desirous of worshipping God according to the customs of their homeland. One of the first Presbyterian ministers to conduct a service at Harrismith was Rev. David Russell who conducted services there on one of his Evangelistic tours in 1880. ①

The Natal Presbytery at its Meeting on 12th July 1881 received the first official intimation about the Presbyterian cause at Harrismith when a letter was read to the Presbytery stating

"we have formed a congregation and offer a reasonable sum towards the support of a Minister. We ask the assistance of the Presbytery to procure one." ②

The Presbytery agreed to do all it could to find a Minister for Harrismith and a year later the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland in Edinburgh noted as follows :

"There was read Minute' from the Presbytery of Natal of date 26th July to the effect that they had sanctioned a charge at Harrismith, Orange Free State in answer to Memorial signed by 30 Members and 27 adherents in the town who guaranteed £250 per annum towards the salary of a Minister and making application for a Minister (unmarried or newly married) and asking

1 M.C. Dick "David Russell"

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.2 p. 370

a grant-in-aid from the Committee, to the same amount as they have given to Upper Umgeni.

There was also read a letter from Mr. Martin Moderator of Natal Presbytery 14th August explaining and enforcing the said Minute. Committee resolve to accedd to the grant on the understanding that the selection of a Minister is committed to their hand." @

The Edinburgh Committee found Rev. James Gray in Wooler, England, who was willing to consider the appointment at Harrismith and on 16th January, 1883 they record :

"considering the satisfactory testimony which has been received of the personal and ministerial character of Rev. James Gray of Wooler, the report of his preaching powers from Mr. Melville and Thornton and the impression produced by his personal appearance on the members of the standing sub-committee - it was unanimously agreed to approve of him." ②

Mr. Gray arrived at Harrismith on 20th July, 1883 and on 26th July he was inducted and authorised to form a Kirk Session.

He wrote home to Edinburgh in September expressing his delight at his reception and saying that his actual membership was 41 but that his morning attendances was 60 -100 and that his Evening attendance was 175. Moreover things were in such a splendid state that steps were already being taken to raise money for the building of a Church. ④

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.5 p. 271
- 2 Ibid. Vol.5 P. 309
- 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 24
- 4 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.5 p. 325

Mr. Gray was obviously a man of deep spiritual convictions and a man whose life endeared him to the whole community.

He gives a picture of his work in a report to the Edinburgh Committee in 1886 when the minutes of that Committee read as follows :

"Rev. James Gray reports an interesting revival in his congregation which began under Rev. D. Russell late of Addington who had been supplying his pulpit during a few weeks absence from home. With regard to the state of progress of the congregation I have to report in most favourable terms except from a financial point of view. The services are well attended, the congregation is being well cemented. There is a cordial feeling between pastor and people. The new building which we shall occupy in a few months is very tasteful and its comfort will do much I am sure to make our audiences good. Once a quarter I minister to a little congregation at Vrede 70 miles away and I also have a service every six weeks at Underberg, - 30 miles off. These services are greatly appreciated." ①

From the above it will be seen that Mr. Gray had commenced two preaching stations, one at Underberg and the other at Vrede. These small causes did not survive very long and we hear nothing of them after Rev. James Gray left Harrismith.

1 Ibid. Vol.6 p. 165

2 The Preaching station at Underberg became Congregationalist in 1894

The Church was opened for worship on 1st August 1886<sup>①</sup> and although the finances of the congregation were by no means satisfactory at the time Mr. Gray's reports to Scotland were all extremely cheerful. They speak of "spiritual progress" and the delight of the people at the opening of the new Church.

It is from Mr. J. Duncan, the Treasurer, that we obtain a picture of the other side. He wrote to say :

"Many families have left the district to make their homes in the Transvaal.... A recent drought has reduced the financial resources of the community to an appalling state and we are hard put to meet our obligations." <sup>②</sup>

Despite these difficulties the congregation grew. It survived the financial crisis and by 1889 the congregation was self-supporting. In 1889 Mr. Gray wrote to Scotland as follows :

"the financial condition of this congregation makes it unnecessary to ask for further aid." <sup>③</sup>

In the same year the Presbytery sent Mr. Gray to explore the situation in the Transvaal Goldfields and to report back to Presbytery. This was duly done but one direct result of his visit was that in 1890 a call was

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 93  
2 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol. 6 p. 174 where Mr. Duncan's letter is quoted.  
3 Ibid. Vol 6 p. 379

addressed to Mr. Gray from a newly formed congregation in Pretoria. <sup>①</sup>

On 28th January 1890 Natal Presbytery met to consider this matter and after consideration agreed to allow Mr. Gray to accept the call. Much to the regret of all in Natal, Mr. Gray left at the end of February to take up his new work in Pretoria.

The Ministry of REV. T.B. PORTEOUS

By the end of October 1890 the Harrismith congregation received word from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland that in response to the Harrismith appeal to find them a successor to Mr. Gray, Rev. T.B. Porteous from the Presbytery of Glasgow, would arrive in Durban about the beginning of November and would commence duties with them. <sup>②</sup> The Presbytery gathered at Harrismith on 13th November 1890 and inducted Rev. T.B. Porteous to his new charge. <sup>③</sup>

Within a year (May, 1890) Mr. Duncan the Treasurer wrote to Scotland to say

"I can report favourably on the finances at Harrismith." <sup>④</sup>

1 Vide Page 602  
2 Minutes of Kirk Session Harrismith Church Vol.1 p.112  
3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p.234  
4 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p.14

That was splendid but what doubtless cheered their hearts even more was the welcome news that

"the spiritual condition of this congregation so well established through the ministry of Mr. Gray has been well maintained." ①

Mr. Porteous was the Minister at Harrismith when Harrismith joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

1 Ibid. Vol. 7 p. 14 quoted from the same letter from Mr. Duncan to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland



**S E C T I O N 4**

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**THE PRESBYTERIES IN THE TREKKER REPUBLICS**

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CHAPTER 1

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THE TREKKER REPUBLICS

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When the emigrant Boers left the Eastern Frontier in 1836 they did not all follow Piet Retief into Natal.<sup>1</sup> Another group under the leadership of Hendrik Potgieter went northwards and established a Republic of their own.<sup>2</sup> It included two districts, one to the North of the Vaal River with Potchefstroom as its Headquarters and the other South of the Vaal River with Winburg as its Headquarters. Each of these districts had its own Volksraad and though they knew almost nothing about the art of government these Boers proceeded to write their own Laws.

Between 1835 and 1845 the British Government had formed several Treaty States with the natives, for example the treaties with Moshesh in regard to Basutoland and with Waterboer and Adam Kok in regard to Griqualand. In these states the sovereignty of the native chiefs was recognised. These treaties dealt with some of the land on which the Boers had established themselves and before long trouble arose

1 Vide p. 349 ff.

2 E. Walker "History of South Africa" p.210-218

between the natives and the Boers, who refused to acknowledge the rights of the native chiefs. There was fighting between the Griquas and Boers at a place called Zwaartkopjes in 1845 and in the following year the Governor of the Cape, Sir Peregrine Maitland, was instructed to place the administration of the territory across the Orange River in the hands of a Resident.<sup>①</sup> Major Warden was appointed to this office and the town of Bloemfontein was founded as his Residency.

This proclamation was followed by friction between the Boers and the British, and in 1848 Sir Harry Smith, now Governor of the Cape, recognising that it was impossible to maintain the Treaty States, declared British sovereignty over all the country between the Orange and Vaal Rivers.

A number of the Boers welcomed British rule, as standing for protection against the natives, but others, led by Andries Pretorius, clung to their republican ideals and refused to accept the new order of things. At the battle of Boomplaats,<sup>②</sup> near Smithfield, Sir Harry Smith met and defeated these men, who fled across the Vaal

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 231

2 Ibid. p. 232

River to the north and founded the South African Republic.<sup>①</sup>  
 An agreement called the Zand River Convention was made  
 with these Boers in 1852,<sup>②</sup> by which the British Govern-  
 ment - the Whig administration under Russell, which was  
 opposed to any expansion of the Empire, as entailing  
 fresh responsibilities on the Mother Country - agreed not  
 to interfere with the new Republic. The Transvaal Boers,  
 for their part, bound themselves not to practise slavery,  
 and agreed that all criminals who fled across the Vaal  
 River should be given up to justice.

These emigrants found themselves in a fine country  
 with a high plateau on which the air was always healthy,  
 with rich grass for their flocks, and a lower-lying bush-  
 veld area where tropical fruits would grow freely. Beneath  
 their feet were the gold and coal which were to be the  
 wealth of the country in later years, but of this they knew  
 and heeded nothing as they spread themselves over the  
 sparsely-peopled land, indifferent to modern progress and  
 the world outside their boundaries. Pretorius was their  
 first President<sup>③</sup> and there we must leave them for a time  
 while we follow the fortunes of those Boers who had

1 Ibid. p. 233

2 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 261

3 Ibid. p. 274

accepted British Sovereignty over the territory south of the Vaal River, which is now the Orange Free State.

A nominated Legislative Council had been formed at Bloemfontein and a High Court established, but before long the Whig Ministry, which had consented with reluctance to Sir Harry Smith's proclamation of Sovereignty, decided to hand the country back to the Boers. A Meeting of the European inhabitants was held at Bloemfontein in June 1852 where a resolution in favour of the retention of British Rule was carried.<sup>①</sup> The British Government however adhered to their decision to abandon the country. They were moved, as they explained, by the inconvenience of sending troops to defend overseas possessions which were constantly expanding and especially as Cape Town and the port of Table Bay were all that Britain really required in South Africa.

In 1853 Sir George Clark was sent out as Special Commissioner, with authority to make the necessary arrangements for giving up the land,<sup>②</sup> and on his arrival he called a meeting of delegates to confer with him and decide upon a form of self-government. The majority of the inhabitants, amongst whom were now many British people from the Cape Colony, instructed their delegates to represent to the

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 234

2 Ibid. p. 234

Commissioner that the greater proportion of the white inhabitants of the country, now about 16,000 in number, wished to remain under British rule. The delegates drew up a proposed constitution, providing for the continuance of British control, but Sir George Clark's orders were peremptory, and he found himself in the extraordinary position of being forced to turn for assistance to the Boers who were opposed to British rule and who wished for a republic so that he might hand the country to them, against the wishes of the greater part of the inhabitants.

The representatives of the majority, who were strongly opposed to the proposed course of action, sent two delegates to Britain to plead that she would retain the land on which she had set the seal of Sovereignty and over which she had hoisted the flag which was to them a guerdon of safety and protection. Their journey was in vain, for even before they sailed a royal proclamation had been signed on January 18th 1854, abandoning all claim to the Orange River Sovereignty.<sup>①</sup>

The independence of the country was formally recognised by a Convention signed at Bloemfontein on the 23rd February

1 Ibid. p. 235

1854 by Sir George Clark and the Republican Committee presided over by Mr. J.H. Hoffman, and on the 11th March the Republican flag was hoisted, the land receiving the name of the Orange Free State. ①

The first President was Mr. Hoffman, and the legislative authority was vested in the Volksraad. The President, who was assisted by an Executive Council, was to hold office for five years, and was elected by the burghers from nominations sent in by the Volksraad. It was no easy task that lay before the new rulers, for the country was divided against itself and constantly threatened by the powerful Basuto Chief Moshesh on its eastern and southern borders.

By 1854 the two Trekker Republics, Orange Free State and the South African Republic, had come into being each being Independent Boer Republics.

### Years of Trial

From 1860 to 1870 the whole country suffered from

1 Ibid. p. 235



droughts and economic depression and no part of South Africa was more affected than the two Trekker Republics. They became almost bankrupt and when things were at their very worst in 1867 a little child playing on the banks of the Orange River in Hopetown district picked up a glittering stone. It was given by the child's mother to a trader named Johan van Niekerk and after being carelessly passed from hand to hand the stone was finally sent for examination to Dr. Atherstone of Grahamstown. He pronounced it to be a diamond worth £500. While the country was thrilling with the news a man bought from a Griqua the famous 'Star of South Africa' a magnificent diamond of eighty-three carats weight, which was sold for £11,000. ①

This marked the passing of the old order of things in South Africa. No longer was the 'up-country' to be left sparsely inhabited, tenanted only by natives or by the Dutch farmers whose progress we have already marked. Now, into the north of the Cape Colony, and along the banks of the Vaal River, came a rush of Diamond diggers of all nations, and where the town of Kimberley now stands claims were pegged out and work began with feverish activity.

1 E. Walker "History of South Africa" p. 315 ff.

By the end of 1871 the great mines of Du Toit's Pan, Bultfontein, Kimberley, and De Beers were yielding a rich return.

The Trekker Republics both claimed the new Diamond Fields as theirs but a legal battle ended with the declaration that Kimberley and the Diamond Fields were in the Cape Province and NOT in either of the Republics. Had the result been in their favour, it might have saved the Republics from the disasters which later befell them, for it was sheer bankruptcy which was the main reason leading to the annexation of the South African Republic by Britain in 1877.<sup>①</sup> Due to the brilliance of Sir Bartle Frere the annexation passed off without incident and had he remained in South Africa all might have remained well, but, unfortunately he was recalled because of the methods he adopted in putting down the Zulu Rebellion in 1879.

Mr. Gladstone's Government, which had refused to restore the independence of the Transvaal before the war, now sent orders to Sir Evelyn Wood, who had succeeded General Colley in the command of the British troops, forbidding him to advance; and on March 22nd 1879 acting

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 254

on instructions from the British Government, he concluded a treaty of peace with the Boers. Five months later a Convention was signed at Pretoria by which the Transvaal was given self-government,<sup>①</sup> subject to British suzerainty over the Republic in its dealings with any other country than the Orange Free State. The Transvaal was once again declared a Republic and this time the Boers elected Paul Kruger as their President.

THE TREKKER REPUBLICS 1880 -1900

Four influences affect the history in these vital years, namely Paul Kruger, Cecil John Rhodes, The discovery of Gold and The Kaiser.

Cecil John Rhodes <sup>②</sup>

Cecil John Rhodes was born in 1853 in Hertfordshire. He was the son of a Church of England clergyman and it was his father's intention that he should take Holy Orders. At the age of sixteen, however, his health broke down and so he was removed from School in England and sent to Natal, where his elder brother was farming. This was 1869 the

1 Ibid. p. 260

2 S.G. Millin "The Life of Cecil Rhodes"

year of the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley and two years later in 1871 we find the boy of eighteen amongst the successful diggers with his health restored by the good dry air of the veld.<sup>①</sup>

His story is as absorbing as the tale of Dick Whittington. The World must have seemed to lie at his feet when he determined to return to England in 1872 and prepare himself for life by entering Oxford as an undergraduate. Before leaving South Africa he gave himself eight months in an ox-wagon, trekking in solitude through Bechuanaland and the Transvaal, reading Marcus Aurelius and Aristotle, dreaming his dreams of the future of the fair land of South Africa as one great self-governing dominion within the British Empire. To the service of that Empire and of a united South Africa he dedicated his life.

In 1873 he was sent back to South Africa from Oxford his health having broken down again and again South Africa gave him life. In another three years he was back at Oxford, though the long vacations were spent in the land to which he had given his heart and where his financial interests were growing daily. It was during this time that

1 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 263

the foundations were being laid of the great wealth which throughout his life and in his death he regarded as the means by which his ambitions for South Africa and the Empire might be realised. In 1881 he achieved the consolidation of most of the Kimberley Diamond Mines with the De Beers Company<sup>①</sup> and in the same year he entered South African political life as member for Barkly West in the House of Assembly.<sup>②</sup>

### Discovery of Gold<sup>③</sup>

As far back as 1868 gold had been found at Tati in the Transvaal and its discovery had led President Pretorius to claim an extension of his territory to the north and west. In 1883 Moodie's Reef was found and in the following year the Sheba Mine was opened up and Barberton founded.<sup>④</sup> In 1886 came the discovery of the goldfields of the Witwatersrand, the richest gold-mines in the world, and from that moment the prosperity of the Transvaal was assured.<sup>⑤</sup> In 1886 the town of Johannesburg was founded and grew as if by magic, while from all over the world thousands of people flocked into the country, amongst them many Scotsmen and

1 Ibid. p. 264

2 Ibid. p. 265

3 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 355 ff.

4 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 272

5 Ibid. p. 272

Englishmen. Mining camps and townships sprang up, and the new vigorous population speedily made its presence felt.

Paul Kruger ①

In Order to understand South African history at this period, we must take our thoughts back to the old voortrekkers who, with their flocks and herds, their wives and children, had journeyed northward and established themselves beyond the Vaal and Orange Rivers. We cannot measure the descendants of these men by the standards of twentieth-century Europe, for many of them belonged more truly to two centuries earlier. Having been shut off from the progress of the world they varied little in type from their forefathers of the Great Trek. We must also endeavour to understand the character of the man who dominated them at this important moment of their history.

Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger was born in the Cape Colony in 1825, his ancestor having been a German named Jacobus Kruger who came to the Cape in 1713. ② Paul Kruger as he is usually called, was ten years old at the time of

1 E. Walker "A History of South Africa p. 300 - 301 and p. 403 -415

2 D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa" p. 272

the Great Trek, and journeyed with his parents to the Orange Free State. His education was, of necessity, confined to learning the bare rudiments of reading and writing and the Bible was his only literature. From his childhood he took his part in the fights with the fierce Matabele Tribe which barred the way of the Boers with whom he trekked.<sup>12</sup> He was also a mighty hunter of the game in which the country abounded. His religious outlook was narrow. He was a member of the Dopper sect of the Dutch Reformed Church, a narrow and bigoted form of Calvinism, and he was firmly and sincerely persuaded that he was specially guided by Heaven in all his actions.

When he was fourteen his family crossed the Vaal and were amongst the founders of the Transvaal.<sup>①</sup> At the age of seventeen we find the young man a field-cornet, and ten years later he took command of an expedition against the Bechuana chief Sechele. Sechele was a friend of Dr. David Livingstone and in the fighting that ensued on that day Livingstone's Mission station was destroyed.

Paul Kruger took a prominent part in the political factions which tore the Transvaal and Orange Free State a

1 Ibid. p. 273 also E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 210



few years later. His aim was to unite the two Republics. He took part with Pretorius in a raid into the latter state, in an attempt to overthrow the government of President Boshof. An effort was made by Pretorius and Kruger to induce the Basutos to join them against the forces of the Free State, but without success. When the Pretorius government fell in 1871 in consequence of the discontent felt at the Keate award, he was succeeded by President Burgers, a Dutch Reformed minister of education and integrity. A strong faction was, however, opposed to him, and Kruger was one of those most active in undermining the authority of the President.

When the British annexed the Transvaal in 1877 Paul Kruger took service under the new authorities, but he continued to agitate for the retrocession of the country to the Boers. In 1880 his chance came, when the Transvaal was given back, and it was Paul Kruger with Joubert and Pretorius who negotiated the terms of the Pretoria Convention.<sup>①</sup> In 1883 he was elected President of the Transvaal. In the same year he visited England and took part in the signing of the London Convention. This document, while

1 Vide Page 544

making some concessions, still reserved for Great Britain the power of veto over treaties concluded by the Transvaal with any power other than the Orange Free State. For the next three years the affairs of the Transvaal gradually drifted once more towards bankruptcy but it was suddenly and dramatically rescued from this peril by the discovery of the gold-mines.

### Germany <sup>①</sup>

Germany had joined in what historians call "The scramble for Africa" and she was far from being well disposed to the work of Cecil John Rhodes. In the Germans the Boers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State found kindred spirits, and it seems certain that some of their activities in the years 1880 - 1900 were inspired by the hope that in the event of war with the British Germany would assist the Boers.

We have seen how, in a moment, the fortunes of the Transvaal were changed, so that a land which had been all but bankrupt suddenly found itself the magnet which drew to its gold-mines men from all over the world. To President

1 For details of part played by Germany in South African affairs vide E. Walker "A History of South Africa" Pages 366-368, 402 - 411, 417

Kruger and those who thought with him, the presence of strangers in the country was a thing not to be looked upon with favour, and they speedily set to work to alter the franchise laws laid down by the Conventions, so that the new-comers should have little opportunity of becoming burghers of the Republic. It was a clash of ideals, as well as of interests, and we must remember this if we are to understand South Africa and read her history with sympathy and comprehension.

President Kruger could never regard new comers as having any right to a share in the government of the country. His ideals for South Africa were narrowly bound up with the Boer, and he could not understand or tolerate the idea of a South African nationality in which people whose language, customs and outlook were foreign to those of the Voortrekkers, could freely be allowed to share.

When the British Government gave the Transvaal independence in internal affairs by the Pretoria Convention of 1881, it retained British suzerainty over the country - which meant that in matters touching dealings with other countries the Republic was under the jurisdiction of Great

Britain. Further, it had been agreed that all 'actual and potential British residents in the Transvaal should be entitled to the rights of citizenship after a residence of two years! In 1882 the Transvaal Government raised the necessary period of residence to five years and in 1890 enacted that qualifications for the full franchise should be raised to ten years. This excluded from voting almost all immigrants into the Transvaal. <sup>①</sup>

Meanwhile the productive gold-fields of the Rand, Barberton and other districts had drawn great numbers of Scotsmen and Englishmen to the Transvaal, and the new comers bought from the Boers land and farms which had increased so marvellously in value that the old burghers must have felt as though they had come into the possession of Aladdin's lamp. Wealth poured into the Transvaal's Treasury.

The discovery of gold made Britain more interested in the Transvaal than she had previously been and when her own countrymen petitioned her for help because they were virtually denied the franchise a very difficult situation ensued. The result was that a war broke out between the

1 The Franchise Question in the Transvaal is fully discussed in E. Walker "A History of South Africa" Pages 479 - 485

Boers and the British - a tragic war which resulted in much suffering for both sides.<sup>①</sup> The consequences of this Boer War, as it is called, have affected everyone living in South Africa today.

It was in this maelstrom of conflicting ideas and clashing personalities that the Presbyterian Church was established in the Trekker Republics.

1 E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 488 ff.  
Professor Walker aptly named it "The War that did not end"

CHAPTER 2

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CHURCHES AROUND JOHANNESBURG

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The Presbyterian Churches in the Trekker Republics were commenced in one of two ways. They began as either as "Missions to the Miners" or as the result of Scotsmen, who had emigrated to the newly formed Towns in the Republics and who, wanting their own form of worship wrote to Scotland asking for a Minister to be sent out to them.

BARBERTON

In January of 1886 Natal Presbytery decided to send Rev. James Gray of Harrismith

"to make an inspection of the new mining areas and to report to the Natal Presbytery" ①

The zealous Minister of Harrismith performed his appointed task with great industry and reported as follows both to the Natal Presbytery and the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland :

"In common with everybody else in South Africa for some months I had felt a keen

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 93

interest in the Goldfields with their fabulous treasures, their potential blessings for our languishing country, their rapidly increasing and highly Bohemian population. When the Presbytery invited me to inspect these mining areas I was prompted by the desire to be a personal witness of the strange phases of a miners life. When I arrived that which out weighed all other considerations was the inadequacy of the religious ordinances provided for the mining community. I longed to see whether something could not be done by our Presbytery for the supply of this want especially in the interests of Presbyterians settled there (and still gathering there). I determined, if possible, to go and view the ground having been so requested by Presbytery.

Starting on 12th October, after covering some of the roughest roads in South Africa, I reached Barberton without incident on Tuesday 19th October 1886.

The entrance upon that strange scene it would be difficult to forget. As we drew up in front of the "Hotel" the bright lights, the many people in the street, the crowd in the bars, the hum and bustle were all around. It was as if one had been transported to a busy street of a European town.

It is not my purpose to give experiences such as any other traveller might give and so I pass over the experiences of settling down in that busy Inn and content myself with saying that I went to bed that night with the feeling that if the Church's most urgent call is to step in where sin is most shameless and bold, then there could be no doubt about the call to work in Barberton.



I was overwhelmed with the amount of drinking and still more by the freedom with which coarse, blasphemous and profane talk seemed to be employed by both men and women.

Next day I saw that the camp had a population of 1500 - 2000. There is every conceivable kind of hut and house in Barberton.

There was a deal of quiet orderly business done by quiet orderly persons which relieved my mind of the feeling that everybody was of the noisy and rough description. There may be not be so much more wickedness here than in other places, it is just less repressed by public opinion and more assertive and unblushing.

Besides the free use of coarse language the other most distressing feature of the life on the Goldfields was the almost general neglect of the Sabbath. There is a great amount of work done on that day - chiefly office work and correspondence - BUT there is no attempt to hide it.

Those who do not work enter freely into amusements like Lawn Tennis and Cricket. Those who have not the energy for such things sit around openly reading the newspaper or a novel without even the slightest attempt at concealment. This is surely a matter which, in the great inquiry into the secret springs of life, South Africa will have to answer for. Why they so frequently manage to have a postal service in direct conflict with Sabbath observance I cannot understand.

One of the causes for the decline of young men formerly accustomed to observe the claims of religion is the total want of privacy.

There are almost no private rooms obtainable. They all live in dormitories. It will be apparent that unless a young man is of an altogether superior calibre, it is nearly certain among such companionship he will neglect the open and usual exercises of religion. In all my experience, I only saw ONE young man kneel down and say his prayers before going to bed. He was a new comer and I question whether he would have done it if I had not set him the example.

The laxity of public opinion condemning sin is their undoing. In a word Barberton is just a worldly place - a dangerous place for youth - Many admit "they do as others do because of the abnormal and the temporary state of life."

What prospects for a Presbyterian Church? About the population I have already said enough. The place is still in its infancy - though around Barberton there are 100's of men prospecting. The only other possible centres are Moodie's Reef lying six miles away and Sheba Hill on which site the town of Fairview will probably be built. With regard to Nationality and Church sympathy I should say that Scotsmen and Presbyterians bulk as largely as any others in the gold-fields.

It is not yet certain that Barberton will be the principle town for with the discovery of a new run of reef in another place the people might strike their tents and move even though the Government Offices are still here at Barberton. !! al

Almost everybody in Barberton is hard up, but with the advent of winter and the arrival

of machinery there will be a rush of people and a rapid circulation of money again. At the time of writing it is not easy to gauge the prospects with certainty - my conclusion is therefore that at present nothing like an immediate forming of a congregation can be determined upon.

There are Presbyterians there now enough to form a good strong Church but they are not nearly all fixed down in the town. They are liable to move off if gold were discovered elsewhere.

I think therefore that a young vigorous, capable man not afraid to rough it for a short space and who would be willing to take services at Moodie's Reef and Sheba Hill as well as Barberton should be sent out.

If he were a good preacher with a mind in sympathy with the real or fancied difficulties of the intelligent men in religious matters and able to answer them, and, if he were a man not easily "tempted with filthy lucre" and of a consecrated spirit, I am sure his position would be assured at once. There are many men on these fields who are impatient of the usual methods of Evangelistic work but whose SECRET sympathies are with us. The Spirit of God is already moving in them. I was surprised at the number of thoughtful men I met on these fields. I had expected the miners to be otherwise.

In closing may I say that there is no doubt whatever about the extreme wealth of these goldfields and the certainty of the prosperity of the district. There is just a state of uncertainty as to the future of any one place.

I got the Presbyterians to apply formally to the Gold Commissioner for a site for a Church. I found him to be a man called Mr. A. van der Merwe who had studied at New College Edinburgh. When he completed his studies he did not take his licence to preach The Gold Commissioner's sympathies are with us.

I got a friend, a Presbyterian called Mr. Woodburn late of Durban to peg off a site for us at Fairview and by this weeks mail I intend to send an application to the Government in Pretoria applying for a site for a Church and a Manse at Johannesburg. This township on the hill promises to be very rich in the precious metal. ①

This report occasioned great interest in the Natal Presbytery and when Mr. Gray returned they decided to take no chances regarding where the main gold town was to be situated and instructed that

"applications for Church sites be made in Barberton, Fairview and Johannesburg." ②

These sites were eventually all granted by the Government of the Transvaal and the local Presbyterians in each of these areas proceeded to urge Natal Presbytery and the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland in Edinburgh to send them a suitable minister.

In Edinburgh the Colonial Committee with Mr. Gray's report before them resolved

- 1 This report is "noted" in the Minutes of Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Vol. 6 p. 171 and the Report is printed in full in Free Church Missionary Record January 1887
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p. 109

"to find a suitable labourer for the Gold-fields of the Transvaal." ①

and after consulting with Mr. Andrew Allan a young New College student in his final year they resolved to send him out for licence and ordination by the Natal Presbytery. ② They further resolved that the new congregation at Barberton should receive the generous grant of £300 per annum for two years. ③

The Barberton congregation at this time was meeting regularly in the home of a Mr. A. Fairweather. Mr. Fairweather was from Glasgow and he gathered what folk would come to his house each Sabbath for prayer and Bible Study. In one report sent to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh Mr. Fairweather stated

"that fifty persons were gathering each week" ④

However, the situation in Barberton changed very rapidly and not only did most of the faithful fifty depart but Mr. Fairweather himself left the town for the new gold-fields around Johannesburg at the end of 1886.

When Mr. Andrew Allan arrived in Durban in May 1887 and presented his credentials to the Natal Presbytery the

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol 6 p. 178
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 181
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 182
- 4 Ibid. Vol. 6 p. 184

congregation at Barberton to which he had expected to go had disintegrated. The Presbytery resolved to licence and ordain Mr. Allen <sup>①</sup> but in view of the changed circumstances at Barberton it was decided to send him to Johannesburg to commence his labours there.

The Presbytery, anxious to assure the Barberton Presbyterians of their interest, sent a deputation from Natal to explain matters in person. <sup>②</sup> This Committee travelled five hundred miles over rough country and told the Barberton congregation the reasons which had prompted the change. All was well for the Committee were able to report on their return :

"the Barberton congregation though in a very distressed state nevertheless appreciated the Presbytery's action and have appointed a Provisional Committee for the purpose of keeping the Presbytery acquainted with the state of affairs in Barberton." <sup>③</sup>

The Minutes of the Natal Presbytery record no further communication from Barberton and as the years went on it became a less and less important town from the point of view of the Presbyterian Church. No English speaking Presbyterian congregation has ever been established there

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 126

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 127

3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 135

but the Dutch Reformed Church flourished in what today is a predominantly Afrikaans speaking area.

### KLERKSDORP

In 1887 Gold was discovered at Klerksdorp a small village about forty miles south of Johannesburg. Folk flocked to the town and a mining camp was soon set up in the area. Once again it was Mr. Gray of Harrismith whom the Natal Presbytery sent "to report on the situation"<sup>①</sup> and when he arrived in January 1888 he found that

"a group of Presbyterians have already written to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh requesting a Minister." <sup>②</sup>

Mr. Gray was, however, reluctant to advise the Presbytery to support this application for as he says

"It is uncertain whether Klerksdorp will be one of the main reef towns. Moreover, who ever goes there must be a first Class man." <sup>③</sup>

However, such was the eagerness of the Klerksdorp Presbyterians that they succeeded in persuading the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh to send them a man. They promised to support him if they received a grant of £50 per annum and if the man were sent out at the expense of the

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 183
- 2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 186
- 3 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 186



Committee.

In Edinburgh the Colonial Committee agreed to "try to send a suitable labourer"<sup>①</sup> and

"Rev. Mr. William Gordon Lawrence of Edzell was found willing to go"<sup>②</sup>

When Mr. Lawrence arrived in Durban he was met and received by Rev. W.J. Hardy of the Berea Church. At a special meeting of the Natal Presbytery held in St. Andrews Church Durban on 10th May 1888 Mr. Lawrence was accepted as a member of Presbytery and appointed to proceed to Klerksdorp<sup>③</sup>

"to take the necessary steps to establish the congregation there"<sup>④</sup>

The Klerksdorp Presbyterians set about the building of a manse and the erection of a church and it is to their very great credit that in September 1890 both of these projects were completed. About these matters we have only one note

"The house, though not very ornate is comfortable enough and the Church seats 150. It is a small but pleasant building."<sup>⑤</sup>

Mr. Lawrence's work in the early months followed the same pattern as so many others, namely - A Sabbath forenoon

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.6 p. 378
- 2 Ibid. Vol.6 p. 379
- 3 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.3 p.174
- 4 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 175
- 5 Ibid. Vol.3 p. 221

and Evening Service well attended and a tour round a series of preaching stations every Sunday afternoon. About his work he wrote as follows to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland :

"The attendance at our forenoon service and evening service despite diminished population continues as before. The Men's Guild progresses. We throw the manse open every Wednesday and Thursday evening in order that the young men of our Church may have at least one house they may visit and where they can spend a pleasant evening in a family circle. Every Sunday I preach three times besides travelling 20 to 30 miles. The work is very hard and fatiguing but I intend to continue it as long as I can." ①

The work at Klerksdorp was, however, doomed to failure not because of lack of enterprise on the part of Mr. Lawrence or his office bearers, but simply because the hoped for gold was not found in Klerksdorp in workable quantities. About this situation he wrote as follows to the Colonial Committee in Scotland

"To the deep disappointment of all in this district, the mines have turned out low grade and, under present conditions they are unworkable. As a consequence the population of this township has been sadly reduced. Today the English speaking population does not amount to more than a quarter of the same eighteen months ago.

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol. 6 p. 389

The bright hopes for the place have been blighted and the Presbyterian cause has suffered severely by departures." ①

Mr. Lawrence struggled on for a few months more but more and more folk left the town and settled in Johannesburg and so in November 1891 when Rev. J. Smith of Pietermaritzburg came up to visit the congregation on behalf of the Presbytery, he reported that it was in his view

"wisest to close down the Church in Klerksdorp" ②

That is exactly what happened. The Natal Presbytery agreed to close the Church and Mr. Lawrence decided to follow his congregation to Johannesburg. The Session Clerk of Klerksdorp wrote to the Committee in Scotland saying :

"The collapse of Klerksdorp is one of the most notable that has taken place even in South Africa. Everyone has been bitterly disappointed - the Government quite as much as private individuals. Government buildings that have cost £26,000 have just been completed and there is now no use for them. The Postal Department contains over 700 private boxes and 30 - 40 would do." ③

In the same post the patient Committee in Edinburgh received a letter from Mr. Lawrence stating that he was now

1 Ibid. Vol.7 p.24

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 3 p 282

3 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p. 33

Proceeding to Johannesburg and that he hoped to be of assistance to the Presbytery in that City, inter alia he said

"We much regret that we find it necessary to close our Church. For many months matters have been getting worse and I have been labouring under a great disadvantage. With the continued decrease in population our congregation has diminished down to about 12 and at present we are quite unable to pay our own expenses. After very serious consideration we have come to the conclusion that it is absolutely necessary that we should wind up the affairs of the congregation. Had Klerksdorp and the gold mining industry justified the expectations of the community our congregation should now have been in a flourishing condition. If your Committee is unable to provide the sum required to enable us to retain possession of the buildings would you kindly authorise our Trustees to dispose of the Church property as an immediate settlement is necessary.....The Natal Presbytery is in full possession of all the facts and will doubtless be writing to you." ①

The buildings were sold to the Dutch Reformed Church and the small congregation ceased to exist as from 4th January 1892. The Natal Presbytery minutes record the end of Klerksdorp Church as follows :

"The Presbytery agreed with the remarks of Mr. Smith regarding the closing down of the Church at Klerksdorp and appointed Mr. Lawrence and the Kirk Session to make the necessary arrangements." ②

- 1 Free Church Missionary Record January 1892
- 2 Op. cit. Vol. 3 p.296

JOHANNESBURG

Mr. Andrew Allan was ordained in St. Andrews Church Durban on 1st June 1887<sup>①</sup> and he was empowered by the Presbytery to

"proceed to Johannesburg and to make up a Communion Roll with all convenient speed to send it for attestation to the Natal Presbytery and thereafter to proceed to the election of office bearers"<sup>②</sup>

Mr. Allan found Johannesburg to be other than he had expected and he lost no time in gathering together a group of "fellow Scotsmen". However, he did not comply with every detail of the Presbytery's instructions especially the one regarding "all convenient speed" for it was not till November that he sent his Communion Roll for attestation and in the meantime he had written as follows to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh :

"It was certainly a wise step sending me here - everyone now seems of opinion that this isto be a greater centre than Barberton and that it is likely to be a permanent centre. Gold is here in great abundance. The population is 7000 - 8000 and houses are going up at a great rate.

I suppose the impression at home of the goldfields is that the people are a very

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 140

2 Ibid. Vol. 3 p. 141

rough and disorderly and rowdy set - perhaps rather a low class of people. They will be astonished when I say they are the opposite. The business of this town, even the gold digging and gold speculators, is conducted in as orderly and regular a way as the business of London is. There is no poor mans digging at all. Only those who have capital can go in for it. The class of people about in Johannesburg are, many of them, of the better class of society and all of them in manners, bearing and intelligence above the average society at home.

This is certainly a very different state from what I had imagined. The best intelligence and vigour in the country are flooding into this place. The people at home are not alive at all to the importance of these fields. In a little time this will be a great town.

I have got a good committee gathered round me - 20 in number, but everyone is so busy in a place like this that everything is left to me. We are anxious to build a Church at once as we cannot get a congregation gathered and consolidated until we have a place of meeting. By sheer running about I have got the promise of over £200 already. I cannot begin till I get at least another £200.

I am sure we could have a congregation of 300 if we got a Church soon, otherwise our folk will just go over to the English Church or the Wesleyan.

There are plenty of Scots folk here only many are so accustomed to be without Church

services that they have lapsed. They will need much visitation to get them out again." ①

When Mr. Allan did at long last report to Presbytery that body spoke its mind about the delay :

"After prolonged deliberation on the subject, in the course of which strong comments were passed on the departure which had been made from the line of procedure prescribed in Presbytery's Resolution of 1st June last it was resolved on the motion of Rev. J. Hendry, seconded by Rev. J. Smith :

That the Communion Roll of the Presbyterian Church at Johannesburg now before the Presbytery be received and attested in the usual manner; and further that the Presbytery do now and hereby recognise and receive the Session and congregation at Johannesburg, along with the Rev. Andrew Allan as Moderator and Pastor, as in full connection with and under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Natal." ②

In this way what was to become one of the largest and probably the most influential Presbyterian Church in Johannesburg was officially constituted.

If the Presbytery found fault with Mr. Allan's dilatoriness, the Johannesburg Presbyterians found him a man of amazing energy. As he says in his report

"everyone here is so busy that most matters are left to me" ③

- 1 Free Church Missionary Record 1887
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 3 p 148
- 3 Free Church Missionary Record 1887



and it is to his credit that within eight months of arriving at Johannesburg a Church was opened on the site granted by the Government :

"We have built and opened a Church to seat 300 persons but although I write this letter only a month after the opening services the building is already proving too small." ①

It is not recorded who preached at the opening Service but in all probability it was the industrious Mr. Allan himself. By the beginning of 1891 Mr. Allan had a complete Kirk Session and Board of Management and a Sabbath Day School numbering 150 children. ②

The grant of £300 from Scotland which was to have gone to Barberton was transferred to the new charge and it enabled the congregation to survive the first year without financial loss.

By the end of 1888 Mr. Allan was able to report as follows

"We have cleared the debt on our red brick Church in Market Street and the depression having lifted there is every prospect that we shall not require the grant for next year." ③

Not only did they not require the grant in 1889 but they extended the Church to meet with the increased attendances

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 6 p. 346  
2 Annual Report St. Georges Church Johannesburg 1891  
3 Ibid. 1888 p. 4

at services. Mr. Allan reported as follows in October, 1889 :

"About two weeks ago we had our Church enlarged so as to seat 400. But still many have to go away every Sunday Evening. The plans for our new Church are to be decided on 5th August. We shall begin to build at once. It will seat 700. I am still enjoying my work here immensely. My wife and I feel gratified that we have been called to labour in such an interesting part of the Master's vineyard. We throw the manse open on two evenings every week and the most interesting feature is the great number of young men who come. Dozens of young men have been pouring into the town of late from the home country.

I wish I could impress upon the Committee the importance of sending a number of young men to this field as soon as possible." ①

Mr. Allan's appeal did not fall on deaf ears for within the next few years the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland sent out several very suitable young men whose work along the Gold Reef towns bore great fruit. Meanwhile Mr. Allan's own Church continued to flourish and in the year 1890 despite the political troubles of the "Uitlanders" the congregation increased rapidly.

On 11th June 1894 Mr. Allan resigned<sup>②</sup> and returned to Scotland much to the regret of both the congregation in

1 Free Church Missionary Record 1889

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 131

Johannesburg and the Presbytery. He had been responsible for firmly establishing the first Presbyterian Church in Johannesburg and the Presbytery rightly recorded

"It is with deep regret that we accept the resignation of Mr. Allan who has established the Presbyterian Church in Johannesburg." ①

The Ministry of REV. I.T. LLOYD 1894 - 1904

After the departure of Mr. Allan there was a division in the Johannesburg Church regarding who should succeed him as Minister. A group of the members wished to call Rev. I.T. Lloyd who was at the Pearson Street Congregational Church in Port Elizabeth but another group were very much against his coming in view of his having left the Presbyterian Church to become a Congregationalist. The matter came before the Presbytery on 11th August 1894 when

"After a long conference and statements had been heard from both sides it was unanimously agreed to moderate in a call to Rev. Mr. Lloyd." ②

A week later a special meeting of Presbytery decided to sustain the call, the salary being £720 per annum; ③ the highest stipend paid to any Presbyterian Minister in South Africa.

- 1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 132
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 136
- 3 Ibid. Vol 1 p 138

During Mr. Lloyd's ministry the Church in Market Street proved too small so in 1895 they extended it; <sup>①</sup> but it was obvious to the congregation that a larger building would be required to cater for the growth of the congregation. In 1897 a Fund was started with a view to buying a new site and building a new Church. The new Church was built in Noord Street and when completed it accommodated 1,000 persons. It was opened for public worship on the first Sunday in June 1904. <sup>②</sup>

Rev. I.T. Lloyd was minister of the Johannesburg Church when along with the other Churches of the Transvaal Presbytery it became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

#### FORDSBURG CHURCH

Johannesburg was developing so rapidly in 1892 that it became urgently necessary to establish a second Church in the City, and, when Mr. Lawrence arrived after the collapse of Klerksdorp, it seemed obvious to the Presbytery that he was the man for the work.

Mr. Lawrence was delighted at the prospect of starting

1 Annual Report St. Georges Church Johannesburg 1895

2 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Georges Church Johannesburg  
Vol 2 p 45

work again and he wrote as follows in a letter to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh :

"It was utterly useless to stay at Klerksdorp any longer. The place was becoming more and more deserted and only a handful of Presbyterians remained. The only clergymen there now are a Dutch Reformed Minister and Wesleyan Pastor both of whom were there before Klerksdorp was thought of as a mining centre. On settling in Johannesburg with the authority of the Presbytery I started services at Fordsburg a suburb of Johannesburg which is principally inhabited by working men of all nationalities; and at Maraisburg, a small township about seven miles from Johannesburg; and I also hold services occasionally at Doornkop a village twelve miles from Johannesburg. I deferred doing anything in Johannesburg itself till the Presbytery gave permission. The Presbytery met about three weeks ago and the question of starting a second congregation in Johannesburg came up for consideration. It was agreed that I should be allowed to commence such a cause and so since the meeting of Presbytery I have been on the outlook for a suitable Hall to conduct these services. As yet I have failed to secure one. This difficulty will, I believe, be overcome in a few days.

The services at Fordsburg have not been so well attended as they should be - average attendance is 25. If all the Scotch people in the area attended without taking into consideration the others there should be an attendance of 50 - 60. But unfortunately the young Scotch tradesmen in Fordsburg have been removed from all Presbyterian influence until

now, and they have followed the evil ways of the place. It will take some time bringing them back.

The Services at Maraisburg, a very much smaller place, have been more encouraging, the average attendance being somewhat larger and the people the majority of whom are Scotch show a growing interest with the work. Maraisburg has every chance of growing.

When services start at the second Church in Johannesburg I shall have three services every Sabbath Day and I am looking out for a fourth place (Jeppetownship) if I can find a Hall for a service.

My programme will then be Morning Jeppe; Afternoon Maraisburg; Evening - Marshall township and Fordsburg.

I have secured an excellent deputy viz, Mr. Murdock an old Free Church Elder who belonged to Mr. McPhersons congregation in Dundee. He is a well informed man, a capable speaker and he is as willing as he is able. I am on the outlook for another deputy. You will see I am practically adopting the Wesleyan plan of lay preachers in Johannesburg." ①

When the Presbytery considered the work commenced by Mr. Lawrence they decided that Fordsburg should be regarded as the Second Presbyterian Church of Johannesburg and that Maraisburg, Jeppe and Marshall Township should be Preaching Stations of Fordsburg. ②

This meant a great deal of work for Mr. Lawrence

1 Free Church Missionary Record 1892

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p. 64

but as the following report will indicate, the work was not without its compensations.

"A letter was read signed by Rev. A. Allan and Rev. G. Roby on behalf of Transvaal Presbytery giving in reply to this Committee's Minute of 20th June last, a report on Mr. Lawrence's work at Fordsburg.

The number of Communicants on the Roll is	56
The number of Adherents on the Roll is	46
The Sabbath School	56 Scholars
Teachers	5

In addition there were 39 Baptisms and four Elders have been appointed though not yet ordained.

The cause at Fordsburg is progressing so favourably that the Presbytery expects it to be self supporting within two years." ①

However, despite the success of the work Mr. Lawrence was not satisfied. He wanted to go to the newly started congregation in Pretoria and he argued with the Presbytery about his going there when that congregation called Rev. James Gray. The Presbytery refused to accede to his request. The result, not so much of this refusal, but of Mr. Lawrence's character, was a letter from him to the

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 156



Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking that he be transferred from South Africa. In June, 1894 he left for South Australia to take up work there. <sup>①</sup>

An appeal from the congregation at Fordsburg and a letter from the Presbytery resulted in the following minute appearing in the Edinburgh Committee's records :

"In view of the situation at Fordsburg caused by the resignation of Mr. Lawrence it was resolved to appoint Rev. Andrew Brown of Wanlockhead to the Transvaal Presbytery leaving it to the Presbytery to induct him where they thought fit." <sup>②</sup>

Mr. Brown was inducted to the pastoral charge of Fordsburg on 10th September 1895. <sup>③</sup> A man of great mental and spiritual gifts he was destined to become one of the great men of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

Not long after his arrival a new Church was built and a manse erected. The opening of the Church took place on 23rd April 1896 <sup>④</sup> and from that date the Church progressed at a rapid rate. The Church cost £5,000 and it opened with a debt of £3,000.

In the minute book of the Fordsburg Kirk Session it is recorded in May 1896 :

"There are now 114 members on the Roll and all 300 seats in our new Church are fully taken up each Sabbath." <sup>⑤</sup>

- 1 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 130
- 2 Op. cit. Vol 7 p 312
- 3 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 168
- 4 Ibid. Vol 1 p 189
- 5 Op. cit. Vol 1 p 82

Rev. Andrew Brown was a strong supporter of the Union of the Churches and it is therefore not surprising that in 1897 he and his congregation joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

### JEPPE

By 1894 Johannesburg had spread over a very large area and its population had increased to staggering proportions. The result was that the Church at Fordsburg and the Church in Bree Street were no longer able to cope with the numbers of Presbyterians in the City. The Transvaal Presbytery were thus delighted when a group of Presbyterians living in Jeppetown, a new and prosperous suburb of Johannesburg requested that steps be taken to provide them with the ordinances of worship. ①

Mr. Allan of the Bree Street Church was given charge of the situation and he and his Kirk Session agreed

"That steps should be taken immediately to procure another minister from Scotland to serve the Jeppetown Presbyterians." ②

A letter was accordingly written to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh explaining the situation and stating :

- 1 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 126
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session St. Georges Church Johannesburg Vol 1 p 104

"Not only is there a nucleus of a congregation comprising 30 - 40 ardent church attenders but they have promised financial support to the extent of £150 per annum." ①

Unfortunately just at this crucial time for the Jeppetown Church Mr. Allan's health deteriorated so that he had to resign from the Bree Street Church. ② He returned to Scotland. However, the Edinburgh Committee found a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland a Mr. Robert Bullock Douglas M.A. willing to go to Jeppetown and he was duly appointed

"to work as assistant minister under the Kirk Session of the Bree Street Church with a view to opening up the work at Jeppetown." ③

When he arrived the Transvaal Presbytery ordained him on 17th November 1894 ④ and the man who was in later years to become known as "the great R.B." began his long and eventful ministry in South Africa.

Mr. Douglas had not been long in charge of the Jeppetown work when the folk there decided to apply to the Presbytery to become a charge in full standing. The Presbytery recorded the situation as follows :

"Commissioners being present from Jeppetown Mr. T. McKenzie acting Session Clerk

- 1 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 325
- 2 Vide Page 571
- 3 Minutes Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 327
- 4 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 148

of the Johannesburg Church, with the approval of Session, forwarded a letter in which Jeppetown preaching station requested the Presbytery to form it into a sanctioned charge. The Presbytery resolved that the prayer of the petitioners be granted and that permission be forthwith granted to the new congregation to proceed to a call; that a Meeting of the congregation be held for that purpose on Friday the 10th May 1895. The Rev. I.T. Lloyd to preach and preside on the occasion. ①

It was not difficult to decide the name of the person to whom the call was to be addressed. It was Rev. R.B. Douglas, assistant minister at the Johannesburg Church.

On 17th May 1895 Mr. Douglas was inducted by the Presbytery to the newly established Presbyterian Church at Jeppetown. ②

A plot of land had long been the possession of the Presbyterians at Fairview for when the decision had been made to move from Barberton a plot of land had been granted both in Fairview (Jeppetown) and in Johannesburg. The foresight of the early settlers now made it possible for Rev. R.B. Douglas to go ahead with the task of building a Church. This task he achieved in eighteen months for on 14th July 1897 the new Church (called St. Andrews) was opened at Jeppetown. ③ It was a beautiful building built

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 157

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 160

3 Ibid. Vol 1 p 221

to seat 300 persons and as Mr. Douglas stated in his report for that year

"It is very gratifying to find such a response to the services. The morning service is well attended and on some Sunday Evenings the Church is packed to capacity." ①

Mr. Douglas was the Minister of Jeppetown Presbyterian Church when along with the other Churches of the Transvaal Presbytery it became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

#### CLIFTON

In 1895 a group of Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists living in the Clifton area of Johannesburg had formed themselves into an Independent congregation. They had no Church Constitution and no minister, nevertheless they raised enough money to build a small Church in which regular Sunday Services were held.

By 1897 this small group felt that it would be wisest if they were linked to one of the recognised denominations and so on 4th August, 1897 the Moderator of the Transvaal Presbytery reported that having been requested by the members

1 Quoted in Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 8 p. 82

"he had attended at Clifton Church and conducted divine worship on the 3rd day of August. A roll of proposed members was read from which it appeared that 38 persons were willing to join the congregation and these were accepted as foundation members." ①

The Johannesburg Session reported that they had received an application from the Clifton Church asking them to take over the Church and property at Clifton and they wished the matter to be discussed by the Presbytery.

"It was proposed by Mr. Gray seconded by Mr. McIntosh and unanimously passed that the property be taken over by the Presbytery the congregation being responsible for all liabilities." ②

In this way the Independent congregation at Clifton became part of the Transvaal Presbytery.

At this time Rev. T. Hamilton of Aberdeen was spending a holiday in Johannesburg. His health had broken down and he had resigned his charge in Scotland. He agreed to serve this new congregation if matters could be arranged with the Free Church of Scotland. The result was that the congregation of Clifton presented a call in favour of Mr. Hamilton at the Presbytery Meeting held in Johannesburg on 12th August 1897. ③ Mr. Hamilton accepted the call and was inducted the same Evening. ④

1 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 229

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 230

3 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 237

4 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 237 - 238

Clifton congregation was a very small one as may be seen from the wording of the Presbytery minute recording the acceptance of the call by Mr. Hamilton

"Although there are only 20 members and 6 adherents it was moved by Mr. Gray and seconded by Mr. McIntosh that the call be recognised as a regular Gospel Call and placed in the hands of Mr. Hamilton. He signified his acceptance of the same." ①

In the years which followed Clifton did not become a large and flourishing congregation. Its size did not in any way prevent the Clifton congregation from supporting the Union of the Churches and in 1897 Mr. Hamilton and his tiny congregation became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa along with the other Churches of the Transvaal Presbytery.

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 237



## CHAPTER 3

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### CHURCHES ALONG THE REEF

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#### GERMISTON

The first Presbyterian services in Germiston were held in the home of a Mr. Walker<sup>①</sup> who had emigrated from Scotland to the new and rapidly developing areas around Johannesburg. As an elder of the Free Church of Scotland he soon felt the need to commence regular Church Services and so he gathered his friends in his house each Sabbath morning for prayer and Bible Study. It was not long before the numbers attending reached such proportions that they decided to approach the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking for a Minister to be sent there.

This letter was received by the Colonial Committee and considered at their meeting on 24th August 1889 when it was resolved :

"that the application for a Minister for Germiston Presbyterians be received and that further information be sought from

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland  
Vol 6 p 372

the Natal Presbytery. Meanwhile it is agreed that efforts be made to find a suitable labourer for this sphere." ①

The result was that a letter was received in the Natal Presbytery intimating that a Mr. A. Fenton and a Mr. G. Roby, both probationers from the Free Church of Scotland were willing to go but that the Colonial Committee left it to the discretion of the Natal Presbytery to determine where these men could best be used. ②

By this time the Presbytery had received letters from Mr. Allan of Johannesburg stating that :

"some Presbyterians are gathering each Sabbath for worship in Germiston and are earnestly requesting the Committee in Edinburgh for a Minister." ③

Mr. Allan's letter goes on to state that there is a need for a Commission from Presbtery to come up and investigate the whole Transvaal situation for gatherings such as the one at Germiston were being held all along the Reef and Mr. Allan thought the Presbytery should determine where Churches should be established.

The Presbytery then resolved :

"After deliberation on these matters it was moved by Rev. Jas Gray, seconded by

1 Ibid. Vol 6 p 431

2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 3 p 210

3 Ibid. Vol 3 p 209

Rev. J. Gould Smith and resolved :  
 That the Rev. W.J. Hardy be appointed  
 Presbytery's delegate to visit the  
 Transvaal at as early a date as may be  
 possible to ascertain and report upon  
 the position of affairs at the more  
 important centres, especially Pretoria  
 and Boksburg and to prepare the way for  
 the establishment of Presbyterian con-  
 gregations wherever it may seem advisable  
 so to do." ①

The Colonial Committee then wrote saying that they  
 were prepared to support the Germiston cause to the extent  
 of £350 per annum for three years - a most generous grant  
 and given due to the glowing picture presented to them by  
 Mr. Walker in various letters he had written.

Mr. Hardy set out from Durban in September 1889 and  
 returned in time for the November Presbytery Meeting held  
 in Pietermaritzburg. He reported that

"immediate steps should be taken to estab-  
 lish Churches at Germiston, Boksburg and  
 Pretoria." ②

Mr. Hardy suggested that when he arrived that Mr. Roby  
 should be sent to Boksburg

"As th need there can best be met by a  
 man such as Mr. Roby" ③

and it was also Mr. Hardy who urged that Mr. Fenton be  
 sent to Germiston.

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 210

2 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 213

3 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 214

The new congregations in these areas were duly informed of these decisions and then there arrived a letter from Edinburgh signed by the Secretary of the Colonial Committee stating

"Mr. Fenton has been found unwilling to go to South Africa but Mr. Roby will be leaving on 14th February 1890. Would the Natal Presbytery please take the necessary steps to ordain Mr. Roby.... He will carry his credentials with him." ①

And so when Mr. Roby arrived in Durban he was ordained on 24th March 1890 in St. Andrews Church. ②

On receipt of the information that only one minister was coming out it had been agreed by the Natal Presbytery that Mr. Roby should minister to the folk both at Germiston and Boksburg. ③ As a manse was provided at Germiston it was here that Mr. Roby decided to live.

During the years Mr. Roby was at Germiston the congregation developed steadily. A site for a Church was purchased in 1892 and a Building Fund commenced in the same year. ④ In one of the few reports recorded by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland Mr. Roby stated

- 1 Ibid. Vol 3 p 218
- 2 Ibid. Vol 3 p 227
- 3 Ibid. Vol 3 p 218
- 4 Minutes Kirk Session Germiston Church Vol 1 p 58

"I conduct Morning worship in the Town Hall where 100 - 150 persons gather each Sabbath.....The Evening Service is not so well attended, there being only about 50 persons at each service." ①

The congregation at Germiston made rapid financial progress during Mr. Roby's ministry and by the year 1894 they were paying £150 per annum towards his salary. ②

The manse in which Mr. Roby had started his Germiston ministry was a house rented by the congregation but in 1892 Mr. Roby decided to build his own home. He paid for the plot and for the building with his own money and when he left Germiston in 1895 he donated the house and land to the Church. ③

In 1895 Mr. Roby's health broke down and his Doctors advised him to give up his work both at Germiston and at Boksburg. He intimated to the Presbytery his intention to resign and asked to be released as from 2nd October 1895. ④ In his speech to the Presbytery Mr. Roby emphasised that in his view the time had come to have two ministers, one for Germiston and another for Boksburg and the Transvaal Presbytery agreed that this step should be taken.

Mr. Roby returned to Scotland in December 1895.

- 1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 224
- 2 Minutes of Board of Management Germiston Church Vol 1 p 121
- 3 Ibid. Vol 1 p 138
- 4 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 173

The Ministry of REV. W. McINTOSH 1896 - 1899

The Transvaal Presbytery and the Germiston congregation both appealed to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland asking them to send out a minister for Germiston and

"Mr. McIntosh a probationer from Edinburgh was found willing to go" ①

It was 4th June 1896 before Mr. McIntosh arrived in Germiston and on the same Evening he was ordained and Inducted to the pastoral charge of Germiston congregation. The Presbytery record the occasion as follows :

"Thereafter the Moderator put to Mr. McIntosh the questions appointed to be put before Ordination and received satisfactory answers thereto. Wherefore, the Presbytery by solemn prayer to God and by the laying on of hands, ordained Mr. Wm. McIntosh to the office of the Holy Ministry of the Gospel; and thereafter, the Moderator in the name and by the authority of the Presbytery declared Mr. Wm. McIntosh duly admitted and inducted into the pastoral charge of Germiston congregation and along with the other members of Presbytery, gave him the right hand of fellowship.

The Rev. James Gray addressed Mr. McIntosh and the congregation on their respective duties.

At the close of the service Mr. McIntosh received a cordial welcome from the congregation and his name was added to the roll of the Presbytery." ②

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 8 p 6

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 198

It was during Mr. McIntosh's ministry that the Building Fund reached such proportions that the Germiston Presbyterians decided to build a Church. The building they erected was to be the finest Presbyterian Church Building in the Transvaal for many years. It was built to accommodate 600 people.

The Church was opened on 14th June, 1897.<sup>①</sup> A few months later when the Germiston congregation joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa along with the Transvaal Presbytery Mr. McIntosh was able to report to the Committee in Edinburgh :

"We still have a debt of £2,500 on the Church. This is a larger sum than we should be owing at this stage but "political disturbances" have made fund raising for English speaking causes extremely difficult recently.... We have much for which to be grateful because the membership is now 315 although communion attendance numbers only 240...."<sup>②</sup>

Germiston was to develop into a large Industrial centre and the Church there was destined to become a strong and virile congregation. It says much for the vision of Mr. McIntosh and his people that they built so fine a building. It has never had to be added to since the day on which it was completed.

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Germiston congregation Vol 1 p 104

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland  
Vol 8 p 87



BOKSBURG

When Rev. W. Hardy arrived in Boksburg in September 1889 he found as Mr. Allan had written to the Colonial Committee "a group of Scotsmen who gathered each Sabbath for worship" ①

Their place of meeting was the Wesleyan Chapel and the Minister was a Rev. W. Fairweather from Glasgow. Unfortunately Mr. Fairweather, although without a charge, was only a visitor and had no intention of remaining in Boksburg. However, he gave considerable assistance to the Boksburg Presbyterians during the six months he was on the Reef. He helped to mould them into a congregation and when he left he promised to

"prosecute their case before the Colonial Committee in person" ②

Thus it came about that in May 1890 the Colonial Committee met to consider a letter from the Natal Presbytery regarding Boksburg and also to hear Mr. Fairweather who, true to his word, appeared in person to present the case for the sending of a minister to Boksburg.

As already mentioned the result was that Mr. Roby

1 Ibid. Vol 6 p 361

2 Quoted in Natal Presbytery Minutes Vol 3 p 207

was sent to the Natal Presbytery for service where they deemed it necessary. The Presbytery appointed him to minister to both Boksburg and Germiston congregations. ①

He set about his work with the zeal so characteristic of the young Scottish Ministers who arrived in South Africa at this time but at Boksburg his was a hard task. Boksburg was a tiny village and not as wealthy as some of the other reef towns.

In 1894 the Session Clerk of Boksburg wrote as follows to the Free Church Colonial Committee in Edinburgh :

"The total income for Boksburg is £227/2/3 for the past twelve months. This means that we cannot do without the grant of £120 paid us by your Committee if we are to continue to pay Mr. Roby the agreed salary of £300 per annum.... The population of Boksburg is diminishing and in my opinion it cannot be anything but a hamlet for some years to come." ②

Mr. Roby had managed to obtain a site to build a Church. This site was granted by the Government and was in a most central spot. The collection of funds, however, had been greatly hampered by the rapid changes in the personnel of his congregation. Johannesburg was the goal of all the "wealth seeking reefers" and Mr. Roby's Boksburg congregation

1 Vide Page 587

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 7 p 329

fluctuated in numbers at a most disconcerting rate. The Boksburg Mines had been closed in 1890 and this had resulted in a large scale exodus for people. In 1891 the Annual report states

"We have 94 members on the Roll" ①

In 1893 the Annual Report states :

"The number on the Roll has been reduced to 48 due to numerous transfers of my people to Johannesburg" ②

In 1894 the Annual Report says :

"It is encouraging to note that our numbers on the Roll are 75." ③

However, it is not surprising to find that in 1895 Mr. Roby felt he ought to resign. ④ He had been in poor health for some time and despite the reopening of the Boksburg mines in 1894 he handed in his resignation to the Presbytery.

He wrote to the Colonial Committee saying that he felt his health was such that he could no longer remain and it is recorded in the Colonial Committee's Minutes as follows :

"A letter was received from Mr. Roby to say - The Boksburg Mines which had been

- 1 Op. cit. p. 3 - The report is written into the Session Minute Book
- 2 Op. cit. p 2
- 3 Op. cit. p 3
- 4 Vide Page 588

shut down for years were being opened up and people were gathering again and a steady advance was expected. The congregations of both Germiston and Boksburg were sharing in this prosperity, the collections of the former being now at a rate of £250 a year and at the latter £130 a year.

On the other hand Mr. Roby had felt it was his duty to resign on account of his health and he desired that a Minister should be sent by the end of September to succeed him. He also intimated that Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Gray were writing." ①

The letter from Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Gray urged the Edinburgh Committee to send out two ministers to succeed Mr. Roby. This in itself says much for the success of Mr. Roby's ministry.

Mr. Roby had laid firm foundations at Boksburg despite the fact that no Church had been built in his day. Services were held in the Wesleyan Chapel throughout Mr. Roby's ministry but when his successor came great changes took place.

#### The Ministry of REV. J. TELFER 1896 - 1897

The reopening of the Boksburg mines in 1894 resulted in a large influx of people to the town because the mines were found to be extremely rich in the precious metal. The

1 Op. cit. Vol 7 p 403

rapid increase in the population made it doubly important that a successor be found for Mr. Roby without delay.

The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland found an ordained Minister called Rev. John Telfer who was willing to succeed Mr. Roby and when this news was received in the Transvaal Presbytery they recorded it as follows :

"Letters were read from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland announcing that the Rev. John Telfer, late of Lynn Street Church Glasgow, had been appointed to Boksburg for a period of one year, with the hope on the part of the Committee that a permanent settlement would result. As Mr. Telfer was expected immediately in Johannesburg, the Moderator and Clerk were empowered to receive his papers and to act generally in regard to Mr. Telfer's induction as they thought best." ①

Mr. Telfer arrived in Boksburg on 20th February 1896 and was inducted to the pastoral charge of the Boksburg congregation on the same evening. ②

Mr. Telfer immediately set about the task of raising enough money to build the Boksburg Presbyterian Church. A Building Fund had been established in Mr. Roby's ministry and although there was only £200 in the Fund Mr. Telfer persuaded his congregation to start building within two months of his coming to Boksburg.

1 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 196

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 204

On 21st November 1896 he had the joy of seeing the new building opened and dedicated by the Moderator of the Presbytery Rev. Andrew Brown. ①

Mr. Telfer, however, did not remain at Boksburg despite these encouraging features of his work. He was alarmed at the political situation and the threats made by President Paul Kruger to the "Uitlanders" Mr. Telfer did not wish to live in a land where so many seemed antagonistic to the Queen of Britain and so he resigned in December 1896 after the Jamieson Raid had made War between the Boers and the British almost inevitable. ②

#### The Ministry of REV. C.E. GREENFIELD 1896 - 1899

The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland once again set about the task of filling the vacancy at Boksburg. They first of all approached Rev. G. Renwick of Glasgow but he declined. At the meeting held in Edinburgh on 21st October 1896 they recorded that

"Mr. C.E. Greenfield a probationer was willing to go to Boksburg and is appointed to proceed to the Transvaal Presbytery where he will be ordained and inducted to the pastoral charge of Boksburg... £37/10/- for expenses is granted to Mr. Greenfield." ③

- 1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 208 also Minutes of Kirk Session Boksburg  
Vol 1 p 89
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 210
- 3 Op. cit. Vol 8 p 62

Mr. Greenfield arrived in Boksburg on Christmas Day 1896. He was ordained and inducted to the pastoral charge of Boksburg congregation on 29th December 1896. No events of importance took place during the first year of Mr. Greenfield's ministry. He simply continued the work begun by Mr. Roby and Mr. Telfer and it was he who was Minister of the Church when Boksburg Presbyterian Church became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

### PRETORIA

When the Transvaal became the South African Republic a small town called Pretoria some forty miles north of Johannesburg became the capital of the Republic and the seat of Government. Here it was that our Paul Kruger lived and it was from here with his Volksraad of elected Burgers that he ruled his small empire with an iron hand.

Pretoria thus raised in status soon attracted numerous folk from other parts of the country and among them the ubiquitous Scotsman made his appearance. Wherever Scotsmen went their Church went too. The particular Scotsman who came to Pretoria came for one of two reasons. They were



either civil servants working on the Railways or in Government Service or they were shopowners and businessmen.

Among this group of Scottish emigrants was a Mr. Hugh Crawford who was one of the leading members of the Presbyterian Community. He used to gather his friends in his home for Prayer and Bible Study and it was this weekly meeting that Mr. Allan referred to when he wrote to the Natal Presbytery stating that meetings of Presbyterians were being held in a number of Reef towns including Pretoria. <sup>①</sup>

In 1888 an attempt was made to form a congregation in Pretoria of persons who were neither members of the Wesleyan Church nor of the Church of England. This group was composed mainly of Presbyterians and they moved for their service from Mr. Crawford's house to the Wesleyan Chapel in 1888. Unfortunately the undenominational group did not flourish due mainly to the lack of a suitable minister.

The Presbyterian members of this undenominational group met Rev. W. Hardy on his tour of the Transvaal on behalf of the Natal Presbytery in 1889. <sup>②</sup> The meeting took place in Mr. Hugh Crawford's house and resulted in a decision

1 Vide Page 586

2 Vide Page 607

to form a Presbyterian congregation in Pretoria. The minutes of this meeting read as follows :

"The Rev. W.J. Hardy M.A. who appeared as a Deputy from the Presbytery of Natal addressed the Meeting and explained that he came in response to certain representations made to that Presbytery with the object of eliciting if the Presbyterians of Pretoria were desirous of forming a congregation and establishing a Church.

Mr. Hardy further explained that the Presbytery were prepared to send an ordained Minister who was expected to arrive shortly in Natal from the Home Church to act provisionally as Minister at Pretoria pending the decision of the congregation as to whether they would or would not give him a call.

After a short discussion it was proposed by Mr. Geo Leith and seconded by Mr. W. Keith and unanimously resolved to form a Presbyterian congregation and establish a Church at Pretoria and to form a Committee of those willing to assist in carrying this out. It was also resolved to accept the offer made through Mr. Hardy to send a Minister to act provisionally as the Minister at Pretoria.

The following gentlemen then signified their willingness to become members of the Committee above mentioned - H. Crawford, I. Whitelaw, R.M. Campbell, Geo Leith, R. Halliburton, A Carine, Jas. Scott, I.I. Simpson, A. MacKenzie, C. Robertson, I.I. Smith, H. Sherer, I. Murdoch, I. Anderson, I. Francis, J.S. Marais, J.R. Jones, W. Keith, I. Kirkness, A Cruikshank, W.R. Dawson.

It was further resolved that of this Committee Mr. H. Crawford be appointed Convener and Mr. Geo Leith, Secretary." ①

The Committee thus formed then drew up the following petition which they forwarded to the Natal Presbytery :

"This Memorial of certain Presbyterians and others resident at Pretoria, South African Republic, to The Reverend the Presbytery of Natal, sheweth :

1. That until lately the Wesleyan Church in Pretoria has been the only place of public worship available to English speaking Protestants to whom the services of the Episcopal Church of South Africa are not acceptable.
2. That a recent attempt to establish a Protestant Church unconnected with any religious denominations has not met with general support.
3. That in Pretoria there is a large and steadily increasing number of Presbyterians, and that there are others, members elsewhere of congregational and other Churches, who would willingly contribute to establish and maintain regular religious services after the manner and doctrines of the Presbyterian Churches, and
4. That owing to the want of such services and the personal interest of a christian Minister, there is reason to fear that many, and these mostly young men, are falling away from religious observances and religious influences, to the serious detriment of themselves, of the christian Church and of Society.

1 This minute was written on a loose sheet of paper and was placed in the front of the Transvaal Presbytery Minute Book. It was written and signed by Mr. Hugh Crawford and had been called for by the Presbytery in 1911 together with a copy of the Petition.

Therefore we, here undersigned, for ourselves and for those who agree with us, respectfully approach your Reverend court first of all to thank you for the interest in our welfare that prompted the sending of the Rev. W.J. Hardy and for the offers of help and encouragement tendered to us by him on your behalf.

And now by these presents we beg gratefully to accept these offers, and in turn pledge ourselves to support with our influence and with our means, in so far as these will allow, a duly qualified and ordained Minister of a Presbyterian Church delegated by your reverend court temporarily to minister among us; and to this end a guarantee fund amounting to £300 has been subscribed to cover any deficiency in the income of the Church for the first year.

In conclusion we promise to extend to such Minister on his arrival among us our friendship, sympathy and assistance, in the hope that his efforts and ours, being blest of God, may result in the establishment of a strong congregation of Christian men and women and the spreading abroad of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all its fulness, freedom and simplicity.

We have this day elected as a permanent Committee the following gentlemen -  
H. Crawford, I.I. Smith, A. MacKenzie,  
Wm. Keith, J.R. Jones, W. Wright, Geo Leith.  
Mr. Hugh Crawford is Convener and Mr. Geo Leith is Secretary with power to represent and act for us in this matter and to take such other steps as may in the future be found necessary or expedient.

On behalf of Committee (Sgd) H. Crawford Convener.  
(Sgd) Geo. Leith Secretary.

Pretoria 3rd September 1889. ①

1 This petition was written on a loose sheet of paper and placed, with the minute mentioned on previous page, in the Transvaal Presbytery Minute Book.

The Presbytery debated this Petition "at some length" and eventually agreed to send Mr. Gray from Harrismith to Pretoria for two months to assist in the formation of the new congregation there. ①

Once he arrived in Pretoria Mr. Gray soon gathered round him a group of devout Presbyterians, mostly from the Free Church of Scotland.

After three weeks a splendid site was obtained in Schoeman Street and an appeal for funds from local folk resulted in an amount of £410 being donated. This covered the price of the land and so the next task was the finding of a suitable Minister.

To the Pretoria Presbyterians there seemed only one man who would fill their need, namely Rev. James Gray and so they urged him to return to Natal and they would take the necessary steps to call him to Pretoria.

On 28th January 1890 the Natal Presbytery met to consider this call from Pretoria to Rev. James Gray of Harrismith. ② The call met with unexpected opposition in the Presbytery where the matter is recorded as follows :

"The Rev. Jas Gray laid on the table a call addressed to him by certain Presbyterians

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol 3 p 206

2 Ibid Vol 2 p 213

and others resident in Pretoria inviting him to become their pastor. The call was signed by 46 members and 29 adherents.

There appeared for the Harrismith congregation Mr. A. Williamson, whose commission was handed in and sustained; for the Pretoria people there appeared the Moderator and Rev. J. Smith, the former stating that they had been duly appointed to do this, which appointment was sustained by the Presbytery. Rev. James Gray appeared for himself.

It was moved by Rev. W.J. Hardy, seconded by Rev. J. Gould Smith and resolved - That the names of the members appended to the call now on the table be accepted those of bona fide members of the Presbyterian Church and that these members be now thereby constituted a congregation in connection with the Presbytery of Natal. Agreed.

The Commissioners having addressed the Presbytery parties were removed from the Bar.

Thereafter it was moved by Rev. J. Smith, That the call from Pretoria addressed to the Rev. James Gray be sustained by the Presbytery and put into his hands.

At this stage the Clerk read a "protest against Mr. Gray's action in this matter" sent to the Presbytery by the Rev. W. Gordon Lawrence, who had recently arrived in South Africa, having been sent out by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland for work in the Transvaal Gold Fields. The Presbytery dealt with this protest at a subsequent stage of the proceedings.



The Rev. J. Smith's motion was seconded by Rev. J. Gould Smith and agreed to by the Presbytery.

The Moderator accordingly placed the call in the hands of Mr. Gray, who intimated his acceptance thereof, stating at some length his reasons for accepting it.

Wherefore, on the motion of Rev. W.J. Hardy, seconded by Rev. W. Turnbull, the Presbytery did, and hereby do, resolve that the Rev. James Gray be released from the pastoral charge of the congregation at Harrismith and translated to that of the congregation at Pretoria.

Before this motion was put to the Presbytery the Moderator asked the Rev. J. Smith to lead them in prayer; which having been done the motion was carried as above.

Resolved - That the Rev. A. Allan of Johannesburg be instructed to preach and preside at Mr. Gray's induction to this new charge on an early sabbath as may be found most suitable.

Resolved - That the Clerk be instructed to send an extract minute embodying the resolution whereby the Presbytery erected and recognised the congregation at Pretoria as a congregation in connection with the Presbytery of Natal, to be read at Mr. Gray's Induction.

The Presbytery next considered Mr. Lawrence's protest abovementioned which was read in connection with the proceedings in the matter of the Pretoria call to Mr. Gray. On the motion of Rev. W.J. Hardy, seconded



by Rev. J. Gould Smith, it was agreed -  
That the Rev. W. Gordon Lawrence's letter  
be received and that the Clerk be instructed  
to reply to it." ①

Mr. Lawrence was not satisfied with the reply because  
he maintained that Pretoria had been promised to him before  
he left Scotland. On 25th March the Presbytery met and  
the minutes read as follows :

"Rev. W. G. Lawrence's protest. The clerk  
read a letter (5th February 1890) from  
Mr. Lawrence in which he repeated his  
protest against the Presbytery's action  
in the matter of Mr. Gray's settlement at  
Pretoria; also his own reply (4th Feb-  
ruary 1890) to said protest as authorised  
by the Presbytery; also Mr. Lawrence's  
answer thereto (20th February, 1890) and  
also his own rejoinder thereto (27th  
February 1890). Letters 11th and 20th  
February 1890 from Secretary to Colonial  
Committee of the Free Church of Scotland  
were also read in which Mr. Mackintosh  
said that Mr. Lawrence had seen 'all  
documents, so he had no reason to suppose  
that Pretoria would be kept for him, or  
if, vacant, would necessarily elect him'  
Resolved - That the abovementioned letters  
be received and the Clerk's action in  
relation to Mr. Lawrence's protest be  
approved by the Presbytery." ②

Mr. Gray's path to the pastoral charge of Pretoria was  
by no means easy for there was a second complaint regarding  
his Induction. This time it came from another source and

1 Op. cit. Vol 3 p 213

2 Op. cit. Vol 3 p 217

for another reason. Here is how the Presbytery recorded the affair :

"The Clerk read letter (27th February, 1890) from Rev. A. Allan, Johannesburg informing the Presbytery that owing to the alteration of date first fixed for the Induction, he had been prevented from complying with the instructions given him in that matter. There was also read a letter (15th March 1890) from Rev. James Gray in which he stated that having found 23rd February the day first fixed for the Induction, unsuitable, he had arranged with the Rev. James Hendry of Kimberley to induct him to his new charge on 2nd March - which arrangement had been carried out.

It was moved and seconded - That the Presbytery ex gratia recognise and accept as valid the induction of Rev. James Gray at Pretoria on 2nd March 1890 by Rev. James Hendry of Kimberley; that the attention of Mr. Gray and the friends at Pretoria be drawn to the undue liberties taken in departing from the course prescribed by the Presbytery; and that the Presbytery express the opinion that some acknowledgment is due from the friends at Pretoria to Mr. Allan for their treatment of him in connection with the Induction service.

It was moved as an amendment and seconded - That the Presbytery, without expressing an opinion on the matters referred to in the letters of Messrs. Allan and Gray defer the further consideration of them until fuller information be obtained regarding them.

After deliberation the Presbytery went to the "vote" when four voted for the motion and four for the amendment.

The Moderator gave his casting vote in favour of the amendment - which accordingly became the finding of the Presbytery.

The Clerk reported that at Mr. Gray's request he had provided him with a Presbyterial Certificate. The Presbytery approved of the same." ①

"The fuller information" must have been sent privately for the question of the Induction of Mr. Gray to Pretoria was never again raised in the Natal Presbytery.

Mr. Gray set about his work in Pretoria with the same devotion and energy which had characterised his work at Harrismith and it was not long before he had a flourishing congregation. His Annual Report for 1891 states :

"The numbers on the Roll are now 102 and the attendance at the services all a Minister could wish for.... We have spent much time raising money to erect a Church and we hope to have it completed before the next Annual Report appears." ②

The hope was fulfilled for on 10th April 1891 the first Church was opened on the huge site in Schoeman Street. The building would hold only 150 persons so it must have been uncomfortably full on Sunday mornings when as Mr.

1 Op. cit. Vol 3 p. 220

2 Op. cit. 1891 p. 1 written into Kirk Session Minute Book

Gray says in his 1893 report :

"We have a morning attendance of 200 persons or more.... Alas the Communion Services are not so well attended. When the Communion hymn is sung a large proportion of the congregation disperses, even the choir marches out leaving a handful of the faithful. This feature of Church life here is depressing and contrasts painfully with Communion Seasons in Scotland. It can be remedied only by patient life and work and the gradual increase of the spiritual atmosphere." ①

Mr. Gray remedied the situation for in 1897 his

Annual Report states :

"an increasing number of persons have been taking the Sacrament of the Lords Supper at our Communion Seasons during the past year and at the November Communion it was pleasing to note how few retired before the distribution of the elements." ②

The debt on the Church was not paid off before the Union of the Churches in 1897 but in 1895 the congregation was able to dispense with the grant of £150 per annum from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. ③

The debt had no sooner been paid off in 1898 than the congregation agreed to add to their buildings by increasing the size of the Church and by the building of a Manse.

1 Op. cit. p. 2

2 Op. cit. p 3

3 Minutes of Board of Management Pretoria  
Church Vol 1 p 73

Mr. Gray was a saintly man. He was not a flamboyant character and his work was a reflection of his gracious personality. He was a pastor beloved and as the years went on he became a well known figure in Pretoria. People from every walk of life joined his Church and it was no uncommon thing to see members of the Government at worship in the Church in Schoeman Street.

The relationship between the British and the Boers was by no means cordial during the early years of Mr. Gray's Pretoria ministry and the position of British folk inside the Transvaal was at times almost intolerable. President Kruger did as much as he could to get the British to leave the country and so it is greatly to Mr. Gray's credit that many Dutch men and women came to worship in his church. He was so obviously a man of God that he was accepted by both groups as being above the political situation in which he found himself. Even during the Boer War Mr. Gray was able to keep on good terms with Boer and Briton. He was a fine character destined in future years to become Moderator<sup>1</sup> of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and destined to become one of its best loved pastors. He

1 In 1908

remained in Pretoria till 1916 when in the middle of another War he resigned owing to ill health.

The Presbyterian Church of Pretoria was named St. Andrews in 1896 and a year later became part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa along with the other Churches of the Transvaal Presbytery.

### KRUGERSDORP

In January 1897 the Minutes of the Transvaal Presbytery contain the following reference to Krugersdorp :

"The Clerk reported that with Mr. Hamilton he visited Krugersdorp and Randfontein with a view to beginning services there, and had been able to arrange for the Krugersdorp Masonic Hall at a rental of £2 per month. He was instructed to secure it at this rental for six months. Mr. Crawford making himself responsible for any deficiency in the payment. It was then agreed that regular services be commenced as soon as possible. Mr. Lloyd was appointed to begin these on the evening of the 17th January and to meet with the people at the close of service to make the necessary arrangements for the conduct of the work. A Committee consisting of the Moderator with Messrs. McCulloch, Hastings, Campbell and R. Nivern was appointed to secure regular supply for Sunday evenings." ①

The Presbyterian Services held in the Masonic Hall were

1 Op. cit. Vol 1 p 212

conducted by a Mr. T. Aspden a local Free Church Elder who took responsibility for the work under the direction of the Committee appointed by Presbytery. Unfortunately after four months Mr. Aspden asked to be relieved and at the Presbytery Meeting Mr. McCulloch reported that

"At present preachers are being supplied as best we can" ①

Despite these difficulties the congregation increased rapidly. The gold mines in the area were drawing large numbers of people and many of them were Presbyterians. Mr. McCulloch reported to Presbytery in August 1897

"The congregation is progressing and the need to apply for a stand to build a Church is great." ②

The application for a stand was made but the very next month this woeful report appears in the Presbytery Minutes :

"It was reported by Mr. McCulloch that owing to the difficulty of getting supplies the services at Krugersdorp would have to be given up and that there was a liability of £21 sterling. Mr. Lloyd proposed that the Clerk be instructed to write to the Free Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland asking them to send out a Minister with a grant for Krugersdorp. Mr. McCulloch seconded and it was agreed to." ③

- 1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 219
- 2 Ibid. Vol 1 p 227
- 3 Ibid. Vol 1 p 229



Krugersdorp was not closed down for the application to the Presbyterian Church of Ireland resulted in a promise to send out a man and the assurance that they would supply £50 per annum for three years for Krugersdorp. ①

This news arrived at Krugersdorp after they had become part of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in September 1897.

### SPRINGS

In 1896 Rev. J. Telfer of Boksburg visited Springs and was persuaded by the Presbyterians in that town to raise at the Presbytery the question of starting regular services there. ② One of these Presbyterians who was the Manager of the Colliery offered the use of the Reading Room of the Clydesdale Colliery if Presbyterian services could be commenced.

Mr. Telfer raised the subject at the Presbytery and an application was made for a site in Springs while at the same time accepting the offer of the Manager of the Clydesdale Colliery. Mr. McIntosh of Germiston and Mr. Telfer of Boksburg were appointed to make the necessary arrangements

1 Ibid. Vol 1 234

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p191

for services.

When the Presbytery met in January 1897 they were told by Mr. McIntosh that

"it had not been found possible to begin services at Springs. Mr. Telfer had left Boksburg and he (Mr. McIntosh) had found it impossible to carry out the work at Springs." ①

The Presbytery thereupon resolved as follows :

"That when an opening should be found, the Presbytery would endeavour to carry on services in the district as regularly as possible. Messrs. McIntosh, Greenfield and the Clerk were appointed a Committee for this purpose." ②

With the arrival of Mr. Greenfield at Boksburg it became easier to arrange for services at Springs and in May 1897 the Presbytery was told

"Mr. Greenfield is conducting services in the Reading Room of the Clydesdale Colliery on the first Sabbath of each month.... The attendances are most encouraging." ③

The Presbyterians of Springs were not raised to the status of a congregation in full standing till after the Union of the Churches in September 1897, but by that time Mr. Greenfield had built up a very active preaching station of Boksburg congregation.

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 211

2 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 211

3 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 225

THE ERECTION OF THE TRANSVAAL PRESBYTERY

By the year 1890 the Presbytery of Natal had established two congregations in Johannesburg, one at Germiston, one at Boksburg, one at Pretoria and one at Klerksdorp. In addition places like Benoni, Kroonstad (in Orange Free State) and Jeppetown were clamouring for ~~Minister~~ Ministers.

This situation was impossible to handle from Natal because the distance between Durban and Johannesburg was over 500 miles. The roads, moreover, were very bad indeed. It was therefore essential that the Churches on the Reef be under a Presbytery nearer than Natal. A committee under Rev. John Smith was appointed

"to investigate the possibility of establishing a Transvaal Presbytery separate from Natal Presbytery." ①

Maybe it was not only distance which impelled the men of the Natal Presbytery to think in these terms. Maybe they felt that the political situation North of the Vaal River was such that if there was no indigenous Presbytery that Natal would not be allowed to exercise its authority over

the Churches there. The Transvaal Government was by no means well disposed towards British folk, and, their leaders had openly stated that they would never give the British the vote nor allow "outside interference" in the affairs of the Transvaal.

When Rev. John Smith reported to the Presbytery the results of his investigations it was the distance of the Transvaal congregations from Natal that he emphasised.

The Presbytery minutes read as follows :

"The first recommendation of the Report was to the effect that a separate Presbytery be forthwith formed in and for the Transvaal and that Rev. James Gray be empowered to act as this Presbytery's Commissioner in taking the necessary steps thereto and also as first Moderator of said Transvaal Presbytery,

It was moved by Rev. John Smith, seconded by Mr. James MacKillican

That in view of the great distance of the Transvaal congregations from Natal and the very different conditions of life and work in those parts from those which obtain in Natal, the Presbytery resolve to put on record a strong expression of opinion that the formation of a separate Presbytery in and for the Transvaal is highly desirable and should be accomplished as speedily as possible and as a preliminary step thereto, that notice be given to the Ministers and congregations in the Transvaal that (unless good reason be shown to the contrary) they

will be constituted as a separate section of this Presbytery at the next ordinary meeting - the relations between the Natal and the Transvaal sections of the Presbytery to be more particularly defined hereafter.

A second motion was proposed by Rev. J. Laing and seconded by Mr. F. Jehan - That the Rev. J. Gray be empowered to act as the Natal Presbytery's Commissioner to communicate with the other Ministers and the congregations in the Transvaal as to their views regarding the formation of a separate Presbytery in and for the Transvaal, giving them notice that it is the Presbytery's intention (unless good cause be shown to the contrary) at next ordinary meeting to separate them from this Presbytery and to erect and constitute them a Presbytery in and for the Transvaal, distinct from the Presbytery of Natal.

After deliberation the vote was taken, when two voted for the first motion and three for the second - Wherefore the Presbytery resolved in terms of the second motion." <sup>6</sup>

Rev. James Gray of Pretoria then called the Ministers and elders of the Transvaal together to discuss the resolutions of the Natal Presbytery regarding the formation of the Transvaal Presbytery. Mr. Gray reported to Natal Presbytery on 7th July, 1890 on the results of the meeting of the Transvaal Ministers. The Presbytery record reads as follows :

"The Clerk read letter (7th July, 1890) from Rev. James Gray Pretoria, who by resolution

of last meeting of this Presbytery was appointed Commissioner to correspond with Ministers and sessions in the Transvaal on the subject of forming a separate Presbytery in and for the Transvaal. Mr. Gray enclosed letter from Rev. G.J. Roby of Boksburg (23rd April, 1890) and extract Minute of Johannesburg Session (8th May, 1890). All these parties expressed their approval of this Presbytery's action in this matter and their readiness to accept a separate and independent position - a note (31st May 1890) from Rev. W.G. Lawrence Klerksdorp, was also read, in which he expressed his concurrence in the proposal to form a Transvaal Presbytery. After deliberation - the Presbytery resolved to record their satisfaction with the favourable answers which, through the Rev. James Gray, had been received to their communication respecting the formation of a Transvaal Presbytery. On the motion of the Rev. John Laing, seconded by Rev. W.J. Hardy, it was unanimously resolved - That the Rev. Messrs. James Gray, Pretoria, Andrew Allan, Johannesburg and G.J. Roby Boksburg, be now disjoined from the Presbytery and, along with their several sessions and congregations, be constituted a separate Presbytery in and for the Transvaal, - and that Mr. Gray be appointed the first Moderator of the new Presbytery - that he be requested and empowered to summon the other brethren, along with representative elders from all three congregations, to attend the first meeting to be held at such time and place as may be found most convenient - and that he constitute that meeting in the usual way - reporting to this Presbytery in due course.①

The Ministers in the Transvaal elected Rev. James Gray as

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 224

the first Moderator of the new Presbytery and Rev. W. Lawrence was elected Clerk. It was Mr. Lawrence who wrote the report of the first Transvaal Presbytery meeting held in the Johannesburg Church on 30th September, 1890.

Natal Presbytery recorded the story as follows :

"There was laid on the table a letter (dated 27th October, 1890) from the Rev. W.G. Lawrence, Clerk of the Transvaal Presbytery, together with an extract Minute of proceedings of that Presbytery. In these it was stated that the Ministers and Elders of congregations, disjoined by this Presbytery (29th July, 1890) and erected a separate Presbytery in and for the Transvaal, had held their first meeting at Johannesburg on the 30th September 1890 the Rev. James Gray constituting the Presbytery with prayer and being afterwards appointed Moderator for the current year."①

Two interesting matters were dealt with in the early meetings of the Transvaal Presbytery. The first was an accusation from the Natal Presbytery that some of the ministers and elders of the Transvaal had not been ordained properly and that

"The formula and questions set down in the Book of Order had been relaxed and varied."②

An almost fierce correspondence ensued as Mr. Lawrence

1 Ibid. Vol 3 p. 226

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol 1 p 7



denied the accusations on behalf of the Transvaal Presbytery. Fortunately the whole matter was dropped within a few months of its having flared up.

The other matter was the question of forming a Synod out of the two Presbyteries, Transvaal and Natal.<sup>①</sup> The question of entering into Synodical relations with Natal was eventually deferred because it was hoped that the Presbyterian Church of South Africa would soon be formed. That dream had to wait another seven years for fulfillment but meantime the new Presbytery had its hands very full with a host of towns asking for the establishment of a Presbyterian Church in their midst.

The Transvaal Presbytery was always in favour of the Union of all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa and it is therefore not surprising to discover this Presbytery playing a leading part in all the steps which led to the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897.

1 Ibid. Vol 1 p 8

## CHAPTER 4

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### THE ORANGE RIVER PRESBYTERY

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This Presbytery was so called because it comprised congregations on both sides of the Orange River. Had all the Churches been within the Orange Free State the name of the Presbytery might have been otherwise, but, although Bloemfontein and Kimberley are only 50 miles apart, the one is in the Cape Province and the other is the capital of the Orange Free State.

The reasons for the establishment of this new Presbytery were much the same as those which made the formation of the Transvaal Presbytery so necessary, namely distance from Natal and the rapid growth of the local areas.

As in the case of the Transvaal Presbytery it was Rev. John Smith who first urged (in 1899) that the Orange River Presbytery be separated from Natal Presbytery.

"Due to the distance between Natal and Bloemfontein and the consequent difficulty of exercising proper discipline." ①

At the 1899 Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa Rev. John Smith moved a motion that a new Presbytery of Orange River be established. His resolution defined the bounds of the new Presbytery and it was carried unanimously. ①

KIMBERLEY

The Kimberley Presbyterian Church began somewhere between August 1871 and February 1872 when a group of persons met under the title of "The New Rush Free Church Kimberley" for regular Sabbath Morning Worship. ②

Their place of meeting was the Mutual Hall in De Beers Road Kimberley. There was no settled minister, monthly supplies being obtained from passing ministers. Among those who thus officiated at this time were Revs. W. Thompson, Mackintosh, Johnstone, Davidson, Leith, Brown, Solomon, Reed, T. Phillip and N. Smit. During this time a good Sunday School was formed of which Mr. R.M. Roberts was Superintendent. ③

The earliest record which we possess of this congregation is in the Minute Book of what they called

1 Minutes of General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa 1899 B.B. Page 12  
2 D. Mark "The Kimberley Church" p. 1  
3 Ibid. p. 2

"The Church Members Meeting" and on 11th August 1872

they met and recorded their discussion as follows :

"The Committee do report to the first meeting of members that may be held here- after that their intention in forming a Church here was to establish a Free Church and to invite a minister from Britain or America to become minister of the Church and that in the opinion of the Committee it is desirable that the future business arrangements of the Church should be carried on by a joint Committee of Office-bearers and gentlemen elected by the congregation; it was afterwards agreed that the number of gentlemen to be elected should be six (altered to nine). It was also resolved that six gentlemen should be nominated by the ministers as office-bearers to act until the arrival of the stated minister. In accordance with this resolution the following gentlemen have been requested to act and the consent of the Church is now asked to both these acts.

Messrs. Hockley, Bottomley, Darval, Key, Roberts and Kirkman are the deacons nominated, Mr. Hockley to be Treasurer and Mr. Roberts Secretary.

Mr. Murray proposed and Mr. Green seconded That the six gentlemen who have been nominated to the office of deacons be requested to act as such, Mr. Hockley to be the Treasurer and Mr. Roberts Secretary. Carried unanimously.

Proposed by Mr. Crowder and seconded by Mr. Thompson - That the suggestion made by the Committee be adopted, and that there

be a Committee elected at the Social Meeting to be held on Friday night.

The Meeting closed with prayer by Mr. Bottomley." ①

The congregation thus established struggled bravely on for a year or two but in the end circumstances proved too much for it.

Every effort was made to secure a pastor for the Church but South Africa was terra incognita at that time and neither from Britain nor America could a Minister be obtained. ② The result was that the New Rush Free Church was disbanded in 1874. Most of the members joined the Wesleyan Church. ③

The last minute of this little Church is dated November 11th 1874 when it is recorded

"Mr. Thompson moved seconded by Mr. Crowder that services be discontinued for the time being." ④

The attempts to form an Independent Church in Kimberley had been gallant but ineffective.

The Ministry of REV. DAVID BROWN (1878 - 1881)

Kimberley was at this time attracting people from all

- 1 Op. cit. p 1
- 2 D. Wark "The Kimberley Church" p. 3
- 3 Ibid. p 3
- 4 Ibid. p 3 where Dr. Wark quotes the extract from "The Church Members Meeting" Minutes.

over South Africa. The Diamond mine was flourishing and three years after the collapse of the New Rush Free Church the Congregationalists and Presbyterians decided to try again to establish a Church of their own. They determined to unite and form a Church that should meet the needs of both denominations.<sup>①</sup> Hence in a perfectly friendly way and acknowledging the kindness they had always received from their Wesleyan brethren the founders of the Presbyterian Church withdrew from the Wesleyan Church and in due time called Rev. David Brown to become their Minister.<sup>②</sup>

The record of the Session Minute Book gives us the following particulars :

"on the 25th September 1877 about 200 persons met in the Varieties Theatre, Kimberley, in response to an advertisement in the local newspapers inviting all who were interested in the formation of another Christian Church here, either in connection with the Presbyterian, Congregational or Baptist denominations."<sup>③</sup>

Mr. John Adamson was called to the chair, and Mr. Noble was appointed to take the minutes of the meeting. Messrs. G. Bottomley, R.M. Roberts and others spoke upon the necessity of forming another Church and it was resolved

1 Ibid. p 3

2 Ibid. p 3

3 Op. cit. Vol 1 p. 2 - The Session was, at this time, not a properly constituted body but the Minute Book is called "Minutes of Kirk Session"

that the time had arrived when united efforts should be made to form a "Christian Nonconformist Church in connection with the Presbyterian, Congregational or Baptist interests." ①

The following gentlemen were appointed, namely Messrs. John Adamson, G. Bottomley (chairman) G. Beveridge, D. McKay, A. McGregor, E. Drysdale, Jas Ferguson, W. Chisholm (Treasurer) and J.A. Rogers (Secretary).

Failing to obtain a suitable man as their minister in South Africa the Committee put themselves into communication with the Rev. R.G. Balfour, Convener and Rev. J.S. Mackintosh, Secretary of The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, and after about eight months of waiting the gratifying intelligence was received that the Rev. David Brown had been appointed as first minister of the "Kimberley Presbyterian Church." ② Mr. Brown arrived in Kimberley on the 21st August 1878 and commenced his public duties on Sunday (25th August 1878) the services being held in a hall belonging to Mr. Gowie. ③ Mr. Brown was not inducted by any Presbytery. He simply began his work without Induction. He had been ordained by the Edinburgh Presbytery in 1877. ④

1 Ibid. p 3

2 Ibid. p. 3

3 D. Wark "The Kimberley Church" p. 5

4 Ibid. p. 5



Services were at first conducted in "The Academy of Music" and then<sup>1</sup> the Theatre Royal in which place the service continued to be held until the Church was erected in 1879. <sup>①</sup>

The Committee, which had been appointed to secure a site and raise funds for this purpose, ordered the building material from Britain through Messrs. Parker Wood & Co. who presented the Church with an American Organ.

The foundation stone of the Church was laid by Sir Bartle Frere on the 19th May 1881 and by the beginning of April 1882 the newly erected building (which had cost about £5,000) was entirely free of debt. <sup>②</sup>

At the first meeting of Session after Mr. Brown's arrival, it was decided to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper every two months and that a Sunday School should at once be formed. <sup>③</sup> The first election of elders recorded in the minute book took place at a congregational meeting held in the Church on the 11th June 1882 when Messrs. George Bottomley, F.G. Towert, C. Cairncross, R.M. Roberts and J.A. Rodger were elected for a period of three years. <sup>④</sup>

1 Ibid. p. 5

2 Ibid. p. 6

3 Minutes of Kirk Session Kimberley Church Vol. 1 p. 10

4 Ibid. p. 12

The Ministry of REV. J.F. PHILLIP 1881 - 1883

The second Minister of the Church was the Rev. J.F. Phillip who commenced his ministry in Kimberley in March 1881.<sup>①</sup> He resigned in December 1883 but apart from these two facts little is known of what transpired during his ministry.

The Ministry of REV. D. RICHARD 1883 to 1884

After Mr. Phillip's removal from Kimberley in December 1883 the pulpit was occupied for a time very acceptably by the Rev. D. Richard, a Congregationalist Minister who had come to South Africa for his health.<sup>②</sup> Although a Congregationalist Mr. Richard continued the practice started by Mr. Brown of having a Session and Board of Management. Owing, however, to ill health, Mr. Richard left Kimberley in March 1884, shortly afterwards returning to England where he died.<sup>③</sup> During Mr. Richard's ministry the numbers on the roll reached one hundred for the first time in the Church's history.

The Ministry of REV. I.T. LLOYD 1884 - 1889

After the departure of Mr. Richard the Church invited Rev. I.T. Lloyd from the Presbyterian Church of England to be their Minister.<sup>④</sup> He commenced his duties in Kimberley in September 1884 and remained pastor of the Church until his resignation in 1889, when he moved to Port Elizabeth to

- 1 Ibid. p. 21
- 2 D. Wark "The Kimberley Church" p.6
- 3 Ibid. p. 6
- 4 Ibid. p. 7

become Minister of Pearson Street Congregational Church.<sup>①</sup>  
 During Mr. Lloyd's pastorate a Pipe Organ was purchased  
 at a cost of £1,600 a chamber having been added to the  
 Church for the reception of the instrument. It was largely  
 owing to a donation from a Mr. M.M. Steytler that this  
 important work was done.<sup>②</sup>

The Ministry of REV. JAMES HENDRY 1889 - 1891

The congregation decided to call Rev. James Hendry in  
 August 1889. Mr. Hendry was at this time minister of  
 St. Andrews Church in Durban.<sup>③</sup>

Kimberley was a very wealthy little town at this time  
 and therefore had no difficulty in paying the largest  
 stipend paid to any Presbyterian Minister in the country.

Mr. James Hendry did not remain very long at Kimberley  
 despite the size of the stipend. His health broke down in  
 1891 and he resigned and returned to Scotland.<sup>④</sup>

The Ministry of REV. W.H. RICHARDS 1891 - 1904

To Mr. Richards is owed in large measure the credit  
 for building up of the congregation; with his ability as

1 Vide page 484 ff.

2 D. Wark "The Kimberley Church" p. 8

3 Vide Page 485.

4 Minutes of Kirk Session Kimberley Church Vol. 1 p. 147

preacher and as pastor the Church could not but flourish.

Mr. Richards came to Kimberley from the Presbyterian Church of England having been ordained in 1882 in Newcastle. Like his predecessors Mr. Richards began his work at Kimberley without Induction.

The first big effort under Mr. Richards' leadership was the building of a Hall. The decision to build a Hall was come to in August 1895 when a Committee was appointed to see the matter through. Tenders were called for in January 1896 and one for £1,350 was accepted.

Under the Ministry of Mr. Richards the Kimberley Presbyterian Church flourished. Numbers attending the services increased so much that the Church would not hold all the people coming to the services. In 1897 steps were taken to build a larger Church and by 15th January 1904 the new and greatly improved building was opened.

When the Church had been restarted in 1877 those who had attended the meeting in the Varieties Theatre had stated that they wished to form

"A non conformist Church in connection with the Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Baptist interests."

- 1 D. Werk "The Kimberley Church" p. 8
- 2 Ibid. p. 9
- 3 Ibid. p 10
- 4 Vide Page 624

The name Kimberley Presbyterian Church had been adopted because the Ministers (other than Mr. Richard) had all been Presbyterians and because the Church was governed by a Kirk Session and Board of Management. However it was noted by Rev. T. Porteous who visited Kimberley in 1897 that the Church had

"hitherto been something of a Free Lance in the matter of Creed." ①

The congregation, composed largely of Presbyterians, contained Congregationalists and Baptists as well and therefore they had never stated their Doctrines. However in 1902 the congregation decided to accept the Laws and Doctrines of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. Mr. Richards and Mr. Palvie, one of his Elders, were appointed to proceed to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa held in Johannesburg in September 1902 and apply to be accepted as part of that Church. ②

When the application came before the Assembly it was unanimously agreed to accept Kimberley Presbyterian Church into the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

1 Minutes of General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa 1902 p. 18

2 Ibid. 1902 p. 19

BEACONSFIELD

The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland received a letter in October 1890 requesting financial assistance for a Presbyterian congregation at Beaconsfield just outside Kimberley. The letter stated inter alia :

"the congregation was started here about three years ago." ①

The Beaconsfield congregation was commenced as a Preaching Station of the Kimberley Church at the request of the Beaconsfield Presbyterians who found it too far to travel to Kimberley each Sunday. The first services were held in the Beaconsfield Town Hall and the first services were conducted by Rev. I.T. Lloyd of Kimberley Church. ②

The first minister was a Rev. T. Lang who was at one time a missionary of the London Missionary Society. It would seem that he was visiting the Diamond Fields in 1887 and was prevailed upon to accept the invitation of the Beaconsfield Presbyterians to minister to them in spiritual things. He was never inducted as minister of the charge. He was a permanent pulpit supply under the direction of the Kimberley Session. ③

- 1 Minutes Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p. 71
- 2 D. Wark "The Kimberley Church" p. 7
- 3 Ibid. p. 7

Mr. Lang did not remain long for in November 1888 they called Rev. William Yule. who had been Free Church Minister at Lockerbie. Mr. Yule gradually built up the congregation and unlike his predecessor he wrote regular reports on his work. In 1889 in his Annual Report he wrote

"we have raised £300 towards the building of a Church Hall.....The attendances at morning Worship are satisfactory but the Evening Services leave much to be desired." ①

Between the arrival of Mr. Yule and October, 1890 a short sharp depression hit Kimberley and Beaconsfield and it was this which occasioned the first official intimation of Beaconsfield's existence to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh. The first time anything is recorded in Scotland about Beaconsfield Presbyterian Church's existence is in October 1890 when one of the Deacons at Beaconsfield wrote to the Edinburgh Committee asking

"for a grant of £50 towards the Minister's stipend owing to the depression which has struck the town." ②

It was further reported

"we have built a Hall which seats 250... It was opened in January, 1890 but we still owe the builders £150." ③

1 Op. cit p. 2

2 Minutes of Colonial Committee of Free Church of Scotland Vol.7 p.71

3 Ibid. Vol.7 p.71



The ever generous Edinburgh Committee decided to grant £25 per annum for three years to the newly discovered Presbyterian Church at Beaconsfield.

During the next three years the depression lifted from Beaconsfield and the small congregation paid off all its debts and increased in numbers under Mr. Yule's quiet guidance till he was able to report in 1892:

"the debt on the Hall is fully paid....  
Attendances at the morning Service  
average 60 and in the Evening the average  
attendance is 40." ①

At the end of 1892 the congregation received the news that Rev. William Yule had accepted a call to Clifton Hill Congregation in Capetown. ② They wrote immediately to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church saying how very grieved everyone was that Mr. Yule had accepted the call to Cape Town and requested the Committee to do all they could to find another Minister.

The Committee resolved to assist by sending a Minister and by continuing the grant for another year.

It was many months before a Minister could be found willing to go to Beaconsfield. Mr. E. Hewitt a probationer

1 Annual Repprt Beaconsfield Church 1892 p. 2

2 Vide Page 102

of the Free Church of Scotland expressed himself willing to go at his own expense and this was readily accepted by the Committee, but, before the appointment to Beaconsfield could be made Mr. Hewitt was persuaded to go to Durban where he laboured in the new charge started at Greyville. ①

The Beaconsfield congregation decided to look outside the Presbyterian Church when Mr. Hewitt did not come to them and so we find them approaching Rev. A.L. Matson a Minister of the Congregational Union who was at that time visiting Kimberley. Mr. Matson accepted the call and began his ministry without Induction in September 1893. ②

When this news was received in Edinburgh the Colonial Committee of the Free Church recorded it as follows :

"A letter was read from Mr. J.W. Bradley forwarding the Managers report of the Beaconsfield Church and setting forth the work of the Church during the past year and the antecedents of their recently appointed minister Rev. A.L. Matson. The Committee record their satisfaction but resolve to enquire further if there is a Kirk Session at Beaconsfield and whether Mr. Matson is still in connection with the Congregational Union." ③

The Beaconsfield Session Clerk replied :

"The Kirk Session meets once a quarter and Mr. A.L. Matson ceased to be an active member

1 Vide Page 510

2 Minutes of Kirk Session Beaconsfield Presbyterian Church Vol . 1 p. 74

3 Op. cit. Vol.7 p. 261

635

of the Congregational Union when he accepted the Lectureship of the Independent Order of Templars." ①

This information satisfied the Committee and they decided to continue the grant for another three years.

Alas Mr. Matson did not remain long at Beaconsfield for in October 1895 he resigned and returned to England. ②

The Minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland record for the next two years a regular statement which reads as follows :

"Beaconsfield asks if a suitable minister has been found for them." ③

At the time of the Union of the Churches in South Africa Beaconsfield was a vacant charge and so no steps were taken about linking up with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. In 1898 Rev. James Craig, a minister of the Established Church at Whitburn Scotland was appointed to Beaconsfield and when he arrived he persuaded the congregation to apply for acceptance into the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

#### BLOEMFONTEIN

The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland

- 1 Ibid. Vol. 7 p. 270
- 2 Minutes of Kirk Session Beaconsfield Presbyterian Church Vol. 1 p 97
- 3 Op. cit. Vol 7 p. 380

received a letter from Rev. T.B. Porteous of Harrismith Presbyterian Church in January 1896 stating that he had been approached by Presbyterians in Bloemfontein who were most anxious to have a Minister of their own. <sup>①</sup> Mr. Porteous explained in his letter that he was coming over to Edinburgh later in the year and that he would appear in person to explain the situation.

In July 1896 Rev. T.B. Porteous duly appeared before the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland and

"being present was invited to address the Committee. He represented that there was at the present time a fitting opportunity for beginning Presbyterian Services in English at Bloemfontein in the Orange Free State. Several of the most influential men in that city being known to be favourable to such an enterprise he urged that immediate steps should be taken to procure a minister. <sup>②</sup>

The Committee being satisfied that "the several most influential men" would give financial support to the Church when it got going agreed to look for a suitable minister. Meanwhile in South Africa Rev. John Smith of Pietermaritzburg had paid a visit to Bloemfontein on behalf of the Natal Presbytery. Before leaving for Britain Rev. T.B. Porteous had reported to the Presbytery :

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol 8 p. 21

2 Ibid. Vol 8 p. 39

"That he had been approached by several influential Presbyterians in Bloemfontein who had requested his assistance in the matter of commencing Presbyterian Services in English in that city." ①

The Natal Presbytery had thereupon requested Rev. John Smith to visit Bloemfontein and report on the situation.

The result of Mr. Smith's visit was that services were commenced immediately. ② The first service was held on 2nd September 1896 in the Bloemfontein Council Chamber when Rev. John Smith conducted public worship. ③ The response was excellent and it was decided at a meeting held in the Council Chamber on 16th September 1896 that a congregation should be formed. ④

Meanwhile in Scotland the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland had found a Mr. David Guthrie willing to go to Bloemfontein and recorded the occasion thus :

"satisfactory evidence as to character and preaching gifts having been obtained it was agreed to appoint Mr. David Guthrie, Probationer, to the Presbytery of Natal with special reference to Bloemfontein on a salary of £200 per annum." ⑤

This information reached Natal Presbytery at the same time as Rev. John Smith returned to present his report on

- 1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 400
- 2 J. Craig "The History of St. Johns Bloemfontein" p. 1
- 3 Ibid. p. 2
- 4 Ibid. p. 2
- 5 Op. cit. Vol. 8 p. 23

the Bloemfontein situation and the Presbytery recorded its satisfaction that matters were progressing so satisfactorily.

In Bloemfontein the new congregation were obliged to leave the Council Chamber at the beginning of October and they transferred to the Town Hall for three Sundays. <sup>①</sup> The Town Hall was far from being a suitable building for their purposes not the least of the objections being :

"the building is often used for dancing on Saturday night and is not in a proper state for worship on the Sabbath mornings." <sup>②</sup>

The next place to which the congregation moved was the Ramblers Hall where similar discomforts must have had to be faced for this Hall was one built for and by a Sports Club and was used for all sorts of purposes. However, it was in the Ramblers Hall that the congregation worshipped until they built their own Church. <sup>③</sup>

During the period between the arrival of Mr. David Guthrie and the departure of Rev. John Smith the services were conducted by Dr. John Brebner. <sup>④</sup> Dr. Brebner was one of "the influential men" mentioned by Rev. T. Porteous to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh and in any history of the

1 J. Craig "The History of St. Johns Bloemfontein" p. 3

2 Ibid. p. 3

3 Ibid. p. 4

4 Ibid. p. 5

Bloemfontein Church he must be given a special place. He was the chief elder of the Bloemfontein congregation throughout his stay in that city. To the public Dr. Brebner was known as Superintendent of Education under the Government of the Orange Free State and in this capacity he laboured for twenty five years. When he came to South Africa in 1874 the colony was only partly settled. There were few schools. In spite of many difficulties Dr. Brebner organised schools and obtained teachers for them. When teachers were not obtainable from outside he trained them himself. He had to act as inspector as well as Superintendent and in doing so he made long journeys throughout the land. The country schools of the Orange Free State are monuments to his memory. If his life were written it would show the progress of the youth of South Africa during the last quarter of the 19th Century. Dr. Brebner gave his brilliant mind and his indefatigable energies to the establishment of the Bloemfontein Church and it is to his credit more than to any other single person that the progress between 1896 and 1899 was so marked.

When he died in 1899 the Board of Management agreed



to erect a memorial in the Church to Dr. John Brebner.

The inscription on the Tablet reads :

"He was great as an instructor of youth,  
great as a Government servant, great as  
a Scotsman, but he was greatest as a  
teacher and Christian friend to the people  
in the land of his adoption." ①

The Ministry of REV. DAVID GUTHRIE 1896 - 1899

Mr. David Guthrie, Probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, arrived in Durban on 21st November 1896. ② The Natal Presbytery prior to his arrival had decided to ordain him at the Harrismith Church whenever he arrived. Thus it was that Presbytery met in Harrismith on 24th November 1896 and ordained the young man newly arrived from Scotland. ③ He was 24 years of age.

For the next two years Mr. Guthrie laboured faithfully and well in Bloemfontein. One of the first tasks to which he set himself was that of raising enough money to build a Church. He was a most successful lecturer and drew large crowds to mid week lectures on a variety of subjects.

The collections on these occasions all went to "The Building Fund" and within eighteen months the sum of £1,300 had been

- 1 Vide Tablet on Wall of St. Johns Church  
Bloemfontein
- 2 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol. 3 p. 410
- 3 Ibid, Vol 3 p. 410

raised.

The Building was commenced in 1898 and completed in 1899 when on the first Sunday in February the Church was opened for public worship. ①

Unfortunately the Church was no sooner opened when Mr. Guthrie, whose health had been failing for some months resigned. He who had laboured so hard for the erection of the Church, was not able to continue as the Minister. He returned to Scotland in the summer of 1899 when after months of special treatment he was able to resume his ministry. He accepted a call to a church in Banff in 1900. ②

The annual reports of 1896 and 1897 indicate that Mr. David Guthrie had laboured successfully at Bloemfontein. At the end of 1896 he was able to record

"the morning attendances are about 30 and the evening attendances are about 90." ③

The report for the following year indicates that more folk were coming to worship for he states :

"there has been an improvement in numbers attending the services during the year the average being 40 in the Morning and 130 in the evening." ④

These statistics were forwarded to the Colonial Committee

- 1 J. Craig "The History of St. Johns Bloemfontein" p. 7
- 2 Ibid. p. 7 - 8
- 3 Op. cit. p. 2
- 4 Op. cit. p. 2

of the Free Church of Scotland who noted :

"splendid progress at Bloemfontein and Mr. Guthrie reports that a church is soon to be erected." ①

With the erection of the Church the congregation made rapid progress and as the Session minutes state

"Mr. Guthrie has proved a splendid minister.. We deeply regret that his health does not permit his remaining any longer with us... He leaves a congregation which he did so much to found." ②

Bloemfontein was always well disposed towards the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa and so it is not surprising that they joined the new Church in 1897.

#### KROONSTAD

In the Free Church Missionary Record for October 1897 Rev. T. Porteous wrote as follows about a trip he made to Kroonstad.

"From Bloemfontein I proceeded to Kroonstad a town on the main line from Johannesburg. No Presbyterian Minister had ever visited the place before, and I did not know a Scotsman there. I had a most remarkable experience during the day which I spent in Kroonstad. The first Scotsman I met was in a hotel at breakfast table. He proved to be an earnest

1 Op. cit. Vol.8 p. 35

2 Op. cit. Vol.1 p. 45

Christian, and had been a member of the United Presbyterian Church at home. I saw as I passed up the street Scotch names over many of the doors. I entered a shop which had a signboard with the name Mackay. I found Mr. Mackay was a Scotsman and he heard about my mission with great interest. He gave me a long list of Scotch names and introduced me to several of our countrymen. I could only spend one day in the town and I asked those whom I met to come together in the evening and consider the proposal to start a Presbyterian Church. A Mr. Scott gave the use of his store for the meeting. I was told that the majority of the Scotch people attended no church. This was confirmed by the Wesleyan Minister, whom I met and who received me in a very brotherly spirit, and also by the Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church on whom I called. At the evening meeting sixteen Scotchmen, most of them prominent townsmen, saw me, and reported that they had seen about thirty five men who were willing to join us and they know of many others whom they had not seen. It was unanimously resolved that those present should promote the movement. A financial committee and a choir committee were appointed, and a chairman who should convene another meeting in a fortnight. Those whom I met lived in the town, but I was told that a large number of Scotchmen were engaged in connection with the railway, and might be depended on to support the cause. There is clearly a very promising field in Kroonstad." ①

Mr. Porteous left a group of enthusiastic Presbyterians when he departed from Kroonstad and they determined to find a minister. Fortunately Rev. W.J. Warnock, who had come

to Kroonstad in search of health, the previous year, returned to the town in July, 1897. Mr. Warnock was from Belfast Ireland and had had to resign his charge there because of ill health.<sup>①</sup> When he arrived in Kroonstad to stay with his brother the Presbyterians invited him to minister to them. He accepted the invitation and without induction commenced his labours. The first Services were conducted in August 1897 in the Wesleyan Chapel.<sup>②</sup>

In the beginning the work of Mr. Warnock was regarded as "experimental" but by 1898 the congregation had so increased that they applied and were accepted into the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

1 Minutes of Kirk Session Kroonstad Church Vol.1 p.3

2 Ibid. p. 3

CHAPTER 5

OTHER CHURCHES IN THE VICINITY OF THE  
TREKKER REPUBLICS

BULAWAYO

In May 1896 Rev. James Gray of Pretoria received a letter from friends in Bulawayo stating :

"the influx of Scotsmen from the Cape Colony is so great that to walk down some streets of this town is to imagine you are in Glasgow.....We feel that there are sufficient Presbyterians here to start a Church.....We have already held informal meetings in my house and this letter to you is the result of one of these gatherings." ①

Mr. Gray did not visit Bulawayo but wrote back to his unnamed friend saying that he would raise the matter in the Transvaal Presbytery and that he would also write to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

The Presbytery simply 'noted' the contents of the letter received by Mr. Gray and agreed to await a reply from Edinburgh. ②

1 Quoted in Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol.1 p.191

2 Ibid. Vol.1 p. 191

In Scotland the Colonial Committee of the Free Church had agreed to send a Minister for Bulawayo and were in the process of approaching a prospective probationer when they received a letter from Rev. R.B. Douglas of the Jeppe Church in Johannesburg and then Moderator of the Transvaal Presbytery. It is recorded thus :

"A letter was read from Rev. R.B. Douglas requesting this Committee in view of Rev. Mr. Hamilton recently sent out to the Presbytery by the Irish Presbyterian Church being available to delay meanwhile making an appointment to Bulawayo in case they should send him there." ①

The Transvaal Presbytery, however, decided against sending Mr. Hamilton to Bulawayo and the Presbyterians of that City were very annoyed. In February 1897 the Transvaal Presbytery received a letter from the people in Bulawayo thanking them for their efforts on their behalf but saying :

"two of our own people have now been empowered to look out for a minister at home so that the matter is now out of your hands." ②

Unfortunately the "two of our own people" mentioned in the letter were not successful in their attempt to find a minister and the Bulawayo Presbyterians turned once again to the Transvaal Presbytery for assistance.

1 Op. cit. Vol.8 p.49

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol.1 p.218



By this time the Presbyterian Church of South Africa had come into being and Rev. T. Porteous had been appointed Convener of the Church Extension and Aid Committee of the new Church. The matter of finding a Minister for Bulawayo was therefore referred to this Committee. Rev. T. Porteous wrote to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland suggesting that a man should be found for Bulawayo and urging

"that the Committee consider again the claims of Bulawayo" ①

The appeal did not fall upon deaf ears for in the minutes of the Colonial Committee we read :

"Rev. Andrew Douglas of Renton is hereby appointed as Minister of Bulawayo... It is resolved to guarantee him a stipend of £350 per annum for three years it being understood that the Committee's liability will not exceed £150 in its first year, £120 in its second year and £100 in the third year" ②

Rev. Andrew Douglas arrived in Bulawayo in July 1898 and commenced his ministry in that city among a group of devout Scotsmen who were at that time meeting for worship in the home of an unnamed member of the congregation.

#### SALISBURY

In January 1894 Rev. G. Roby of Boksburg received a

1 Minutes of Colonial Committee Free Church of Scotland Vol.8 p.165

2 Ibid Vol. 8 p. 167

a letter from a friend in Mashonaland stating that Salisbury was rapidly growing into a large city and that it was imperative that steps should be taken to send a minister to the city. The name of the man who wrote to Mr. Roby was Mr. R.C. Hendrie and he stated that he had gathered

"a few friends in his own home" <sup>①</sup>

before writing this letter and that they had agreed to support a minister to the extent of £100 per annum.

Mr. G. Roby wrote immediately to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland and at a Meeting held in Edinburgh on 20th February 1894 :

"A letter from Rev. G. Roby was read enclosing an extract from a friend in Salisbury Mashonaland urging the desirability of establishing Presbyterian Services there." <sup>②</sup>

The Committee were disposed to regard the application with favour but felt that more information was required before taking any active steps.

The months dragged on before any further news came from Salisbury. Communications were very slow between Salisbury and Edinburgh in 1894 and it was August before a

1 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol.1 p. 121

2 Op. cit. Vol.7 p. 311

"letter was received from Mr. R.C. Hendrie applying for aid towards the establishing of a Presbyterian Church in Salisbury. The letter sets out the details of what has been achieved locally...." ①

The Committee agreed to assist but were unable to find anyone willing to go to Salisbury.

As far as the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland is concerned no more is recorded about the Salisbury Presbyterians until February 1897, because during the three years 1894 to 1897 the people in Salisbury decided to approach the Established Church of Scotland for a Minister. Unfortunately no one could be found willing to go to Salisbury and so when Rev. Andrew Douglas was appointed to Bulawayo he was asked to do what he could to assist the Salisbury Presbyterians. ②

When the Transvaal Presbytery made this request to Mr. Douglas they surely could not have realised the impossibility of the task. The distance from Bulawayo to Salisbury is 400 miles and in 1898 there were no roads at all.

Despite the lack of a minister the Salisbury

1 Ibid. Vol.7 p. 318

2 Minutes of Transvaal Presbytery Vol.1 p.216

Presbyterians made considerable progress between 1894 and 1903 in which year Rev. James Craig of Beaconsfield received and accepted a call. The progress made is indicated in a short note in the Transvaal Presbytery minutes which states

"The call signed by 53 members was presented to the Presbytery in favour of Rev. James Craig of Beaconsfield." ①

Not only were there 53 members but during the nine years since Mr. Hendrie had first written asking for a minister the Presbyterians of Salisbury had purchased and paid for a site on which they intended to build their Church.

The area around Salisbury was and still is a rich tobacco farming area and it was not long after the arrival of the minister that a Church was built. It was opened for public worship on 10th August 1904 and on that date the congregation transferred from the Wesleyan Chapel where they had moved in 1897.

NAAUWPOORT, COLESBERG, JAGGERSFONTEIN and HEILBRON

Just prior to the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1897 three growing towns on the borders

1 Ibid. Vol 2 p 24

of the Orange Free State began to take steps to obtain a Presbyterian Minister.

In 1897 Rev. T.B. Porteous was appointed Convener of the Church Extension and Aid Committee of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and he set out almost immediately on a "Church Extension Tour" of the whole of South Africa. The first area he visited on his tour was the Orange Free State and in December 1897 he wrote as follows to the Free Church Missionary Record about the three growing towns, Naauwpoort, Colesberg and Jagersfontein :

#### NAAUWPOORT

"I spent a couple of days at Naauwpoort which is a very important railway junction in the north of Cape Colony. The town has a population of eight hundred, almost entirely railwaymen and their families. There is a thoroughly equipped school with an attendance of one hundred and fifty children, but no church. The only religious services are conducted twice a month by an Anglican missionary. I had no introductions, but I soon made the acquaintance of a number of the leading people, amongst them the doctor, two engineers, the chief inspector of the railway section, and the Principal storekeeper. I found that the great majority

of the people were Scotch. They resolved to take steps to start a Presbyterian Church. Our Church will practically have the support of the whole community. The town is growing rapidly. ①

COLESBERG

Colesberg is one of the older towns of the Colony, on the Free State Border. I spent a day there. It had not been visited before by a Presbyterian Minister. There are enough of our people in Colesberg to form the nucleus of a congregation there. I was told by several people that the Presbyterian Church ought to be The Church of the Town. I hope we shall soon be able to start services there. The people have agreed to form a Committee for this purpose. ②

JAGGERSFONTEIN

Returning to the Free State I visited Jaggersfontein, a flourishing town which has grown up in the neighbourhood of a rich diamond mine. It is one of the most important centres in the country. There are about two hundred mechanics employed in the mine. The town with a population of about fifteen hundred, has a thriving trade. Most of the mechanics are Irish and Scotch Presbyterians. I spent three days visiting our people. On the second evening I delivered a public lecture in the Town Hall which was well advertised. There was a good attendance, and at the close I explained my mission. I was assured that

1 Free Church Missionary Record Dec. 1897

2 Ibid. December 1897

a Presbyterian Minister would be cordially welcomed, and if he proved the right stamp of man a strong congregation would soon be built up. There are many young men in the town, and a minister who can attract them will do splendid work. The financial support will be adequate. The Mayor, Doctor, Manager of the Mine and other leading men support our movement. They formed a Committee with the Mayor as Chairman and they intend to take steps to form a Presbyterian congregation in the town. ①

### HEILBRON

This town is within convenient reach of Kroonstad and I have arranged with a Mr. Charlton, an elder of the Free Church of Scotland to conduct services in Heilbron. These services will commence in June and will be held in one of the houses of the members." ②

At the time of the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa these four congregations were only in embryo so there was no possibility of their joining the new Church at that time. However as the years went on each of these congregations became part of the Church. Naauwpoort joined the Presbyterian Church of South Africa in 1901; Colesberg joined in 1903 but collapsed in 1905 and was never resuscitated; Jagersfontein joined in 1900

1 Ibid. December 1897

2 Ibid. December 1897



but the Boer War affected the congregation so much that in 1904 it had also collapsed; Heilbron never applied to become a Church in full standing. It remained a Preaching Station of Kroonstad.

SECTION 5

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THE STEPS TOWARD UNION

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CHAPTER 1

EARLY MOVES TOWARD PRESBYTERIAN UNION IN SOUTH AFRICA

ATTEMPTS TO UNITE ENGLISH AND DUTCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

When the British forces took over the Cape in 1806 the Dutch Reformed Church had been in existence in South Africa for two hundred and fifty four years. Despite this long history, from the time the British Forces landed until the year 1824, the Dutch Reformed Church was not permitted to hold a United Conference of any kind.<sup>①</sup>

The Cape Dutch Reformed congregations were still under the authority of the Classis of Amsterdam, but for a number of years it had been the custom of the Cape Churches to meet together to discuss matters of common interest and to send relevant resolutions to Amsterdam. When the British arrived this custom ceased. However, in 1824 after persistent demands by the Cape members of the Church, Lord Charles Somerset agreed to allow them to meet.

They met in the Kerksaal of the Dutch Reformed

1 Vide Page 24

Church in Adderley Street, Cape Town on 14th May 1824 and they passed many resolutions. Before any of the resolutions could be sent to Amsterdam the permission of the Governor had to be obtained and unfortunately, although he promised to send the resolutions forward, he omitted to do so.

Dr. Theal, the Historian, says :

"It is difficult to imagine the depression of spirit of the Dutch Reformed Church during these twenty years of what to them seem religious oppression."<sup>1</sup>

It was to a Church in this mood that Rev. Dr. G. Thom was called in 1819. Dr. Thom was a Scotsman and he was the first of a group of Scots Ministers who were to exercise a great influence on the Dutch Reformed Church during the next fifty years.

After the Cape Governor had 'forgotten' to send the Cape Dutch Reformed Church resolutions to Amsterdam it is said that a letter was sent to the Established Church of Scotland suggesting that consideration should be given to the question of closer collaboration between the Church of Scotland and the Dutch Reformed Church. The matter never

1 G. Theal "History of South Africa" Vol.4 p. 429

reached the level of the General Assembly and indeed we only know that the letter was written because it is mentioned in the Report of the Glasgow Missionary Society for that year. Writing about the Presbyterian Missionary work Rev. W. Thomson said inter alia :

"Our Dutch Reformed brethren have been much distressed by recent events at Cape Town..... They have discussed writing to the Church of Scotland with a view to their being united with that Church." ①

It is not known whether the letter was sent or not but three years later another Cape Dutch Reformed Conference was held in Cape Town and this time the resolutions were sent to Amsterdam by the Acting Cape Governor, General Bourke, One of these resolutions concerned the formation of a Classis of the Dutch Reformed Church at the Cape. When this was granted an opportunity of uniting the English speaking and Dutch speaking Presbyterian Churches had passed away.

There is no knowing what such a Union might have meant to the history of South Africa had it been achieved in 1824. The opportunity never came again. In later

1 Op. cit. 1824 p. 8 also E. Walker "A History of South Africa" p. 171

years overtures were to be made by the English speaking Presbyterians to the Dutch speaking Presbyterians but never again was it to be the other way.

MINISTERS WRITE TO ONE ANOTHER re UNION

Rev. John Russell asserts that between 1827 and 1871

"there were numerous private letters written between the ministers of the Free Church of Scotland who were serving in the Dutch Reformed Church and the Free Church Ministers who were serving in the Colonial and Mission Fields of the Free Church of Scotland." ①

This is doubtless true but the letters referred to cannot be traced. It seems obvious, however, that men from the same church in Scotland, trained at the same Theological College and serving in two Presbyterian Churches in another Country would at least discuss privately the question of the Union of the two Churches. There is no official record of these discussions at all and certainly they never reached the level of a Presbytery or a Synod debate.

THE MOTION OF DOMINEE FOURIE of PIETERMARITZBURG 1858

In 1858 a debate took place in the Cape Synod of the

1 Magazines of St. Andrews Church Cape Town  
February 1878 p. 26

Dutch Reformed Church regarding Union with the English speaking Presbyterian Churches. This debate was prompted by Dr. J. Fourie Minister of the Dutch Reformed congregation in Pietermaritzburg who moved

"That the Dutch Reformed Church appoints a Committee to investigate the possibility of closer co-operation between this Church and the congregations of the Free Church of Scotland in South Africa" ①.

The motion was seconded by Rev. C. Pears but after discussion the motion was withdrawn.

Dr. J. Fourie was one of those Dutch Reformed ministers to whom the Presbyterian Church of South Africa owes a great deal. Not only did he often occupy the pulpit in First Church Pietermaritzburg but he was also associated with the Presbytery of Natal from its first meeting. In 1858 the Natal Presbytery recorded its appreciation for

"assistance given by Dr. J. Fourie during Rev. W. Campbell's visit overseas." ②

by saying among other complimentary things

"Dr. Fourie is one with us in heart and spirit and it is but the barrier of language which separates his church from ours." ③

1 Ibid. p. 27  
2 Op. cit. Vol.1 p. 42  
3 Ibid. Vol 1 p. 43



That Dr. J. Fourie felt the same way is indicated by the fact that it was he who moved the motion in the Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church asking the Dutch Reformed Church to initiate the step which he hoped would bring about the eventual union of the English and Dutch speaking Presbyterians in South Africa.

Between 1858 and 1897 the political situation made the proposed union between the Dutch Reformed Church and the English speaking Presbyterian Churches less likely.

The Boers, who had trekked away from the Eastern Frontier because of the British Frontier policy, had formed themselves into Trekker Republics where the attitude of a large proportion of the people was by no means friendly toward Britain.

The discovery of gold in these Republics made the independent Boer feel even more independent and the rift between the two groups both in the Republics and out of them resulted in a disastrous War in 1900. The Boer War from the point of view of Union between the Dutch and English speaking Presbyterian Churches simply ruined all immediate hope of co-operation.

By this time, too, the influence of the Scottish Ministers within the Dutch Reformed Church was waning. One of the results of the Anti-British attitude of the Dutch in the Trekker Republics and in the Cape was that the Church no longer looked to Scotland to fill vacant charges. Now, they were busy building up an indigenous ministry some of whom came to believe that all things British were to be avoided. The political situation at the end of the Nineteenth Century undoubtedly ruined the chance of Union between the two Presbyterian Churches in South Africa.

Almost every Church Leader who came out to South Africa from Scotland during this period said that the English and Dutch speaking Presbyterians should unite. Even Rev. Dr. Smith the first Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa said in his address to the First Assembly :

"We must not forget that other Presbyterian Church in the land, our sister Church, the Dutch Reformed Church. It is surely our desire that some day we may be united with this sister Church so that there may be one Presbyterian Church using two languages in this land." ①

1 Proceedings of First General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa p. 19

It was a grand vision but, alas, it was not to be fulfilled, for in addition to the reasons already given the Dutch Reformed Church had by this time grown to mighty proportions, and, had become less interested than ever in discussing union with the English speaking Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

CHAPTER 2

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ATTEMPTED UNION OF FREE CHURCH AND UNITED PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH PRESBYTERIES

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In 1880 a conference was called at Kingwilliams-  
town to discuss Union between the Free and the United  
Presbyterian Presbyteries of Kaffraria. It had long  
been felt that the division caused by the establishment  
of these two Churches in Scotland should be healed  
and it was Rev. Peter Davidson of Adelaide who said

"the reasons which caused the two  
Churches to come into being no longer  
need keep the two Presbyteries apart." ①

It seemed to the men in charge of both the Missionary  
work and the European work in these Presbyteries that  
steps should be taken to unite the Presbyteries and to  
this end the matter was raised at the United Mission  
Council Meeting held at Lovedale in February 1878.

This Mission Council was a Committee of Presbyterian

1 Minutes of United Presbyterian Presbytery  
of Kaffraria Vol. 3 p. 351

Missionaries <sup>which</sup> (and who) met from time to time to discuss matters of mutual interest and it comprised both United Presbyterian and Free Church Missionaries.

At this Council Meeting the Missionaries agreed to take the matter of Union between the Presbyteries to their respective Church Courts and to try to arrange for a Conference to discuss the basis of Union.

As a result the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria appointed Rev. John Don as Convener of the Presbytery Union Committee and the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria appointed Rev. Peter Davidson as their Presbytery Union Committee Convener.

Over the course of the next two years these two Conveners discussed and eventually produced

"A Draft basis of Union" <sup>①</sup>

They got their two Presbyteries to agree to the holding of a Conference in 1880 to discuss their Draft Basis of Union and on 8th January 1880 the official representatives met in Kingswilliamstown to discuss organic Union between the Presbyteries which had been separated since 1843. <sup>②</sup>

1 Minutes of United Mission Council p 142

2 Minutes of 1880 Conference P. 1

The Conference recorded its findings as follows :

"A conference was held between the Free Church Presbytery and the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria, in the Presbyterian Church King William's Town, on the 8th of January, 1880; for the purpose of considering the practicability of forming an organic union between the sections of the Presbyterian Church in this country, so as to constitute a South African Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. P. Davidson of Adelaide, Convener of the United Presbyterian Union Committee, was called to the Chair. The Rev. J.D. Don, Convener of the Free Church Union Committee was appointed Clerk. The Chairman called upon the Rev. Dr. Stewart to engage in prayer.

The Union Committee of both Presbyteries having already agreed separately and jointly, to make certain suggestions amounting to a first rough draft of a scheme, which might at least form the basis of discussion in the Conference; the papers containing these suggestions were read by the Conveners.

The suggestions were then considered seriatim. Various modifications were proposed and agreed to. It was finally resolved that the Conveners draw up a paper jointly, embodying the results reached at this Conference; that this report be printed and circulated among all the members of both Presbyteries, and that copies be sent to all the Kirk Sessions. It was also agreed to hold another Conference about the end of June, date to be fixed afterwards

In accordance with the above resolution, the following statement of results has been drawn up, and is now circulated.

STATEMENT

The subject of Union was discussed under these three heads :

1. Doctrinal Basis;
2. Jurisdiction and Ecclesiastical Relationship to the Mother Churches;
3. Financial Relationship to the Mother Churches.

1. DOCTRINAL BASIS

1. It was recognised that one or other of the bases on which Union has already been effected elsewhere might fitly form the basis in this country. It was agreed that some of these should be submitted for consideration as alternatives.

2. As there are other churches in South Africa holding the same type of doctrine, and having the same form of Government as the negotiating churches, but attached, historically and nationally, to distinct standards; and inasmuch as the formation of a South African Reformed Church (Presbyterian) without respect to distinctions of race or language is a result to which Providence may in time open up the way; it was recognised that the special mention of the Westminster Standards must not be understood as precluding consideration of the question whether any other confession, agreeing with that of Westminster in so far as both reflect the consensus of reformed confessions may not be associated with it in the doctrinal basis.

11 CONSTITUTION, JURISDICTION, etc

Under this heading there was general agreement



on some points; others were left for more mature consideration.

1. The United Church to consist of all the congregations European and Native - in this Colony, and the territories adjacent thereto of the Free Church and United Presbyterian Presbyteries, and any other Church or Churches in the Colony and adjacent territories which shall elect to join the said Church on the common doctrinal basis of the same, or associated standards.

2. The Church to be divided into three Presbyteries, the Western, the Middle and the Eastern.

The following arrangement was proposed; The Western Presbytery to comprise all the congregations west of Lovedale. The Middle Presbytery to comprise all the congregations west of the line of railway from King William's Town to Queen's Town, including Lovedale. The Eastern Presbytery to comprise all the Churches east of that line.

Other suggestions were made, e.g. that the boundary of the Middle and Eastern Presbyteries should be the Kei; and it was fully recognised that any proposal of the kind must, for the present, be merely tentative. The Synod of the United Church would have the power of defining the limits of Presbyteries, altering them at any time, and increasing their number.

3. The said Church to have separate and independent jurisdiction over all the office-bearers and members thereof in all matters of doctrine, discipline, and worship, and generally in all matters affecting the interests of the

Church, and no appeal from any sentence or judgment given in the Synod or Supreme Court to be allowed, except in the two following cases :

(1) Every Minister or missionary to have the right of appeal from any judgment in his own case, affecting his doctrine, life or character, to the Supreme Court of either the Free Church, or the United Presbyterian Church, as he shall prefer; but with the clear understanding that the written evidence in the closed records of this Synod, on which the judgment appealed against was founded, shall be the only evidence allowed before the court appealed to; an authenticated copy of which shall be sent home with the appeal, to enable the said court to review the case and confirm or alter the decision.

(2) Exception to be mentioned in the following Chapter (111 Clause 2).

There was a division of opinion in the Conference on the subject of appeal, and it was agreed to place two other proposals on the record as alternatives to the case (1) above viz :

a) "The decisions of the Supreme Court to be final, except in the case following :

The ministers or missionaries ordained by the Home Churches shall be subject to the Churches which ordained them, so far as their ministerial status is concerned, that is : questions affecting their status and character shall be referred to the Church by which they were ordained, for decision."

b) "That the right of appeal be either extended to all officē-bearers and members, under the condition that a closed record accompany the appeal, or be allowed to none."

4. The rules of procedure to be subsequently determined. The practice of either Church might be followed, or a compilation might suit our circumstances better.

111 FINANCIAL RELATION TO MOTHER CHURCHES

The Conference feeling strongly the difficulty of dealing with this aspect of the Union question, and recognising that nothing can be done without the full sympathy and consent of the Mother Churches, resolved to note on the record several suggestions which might form part of, or help towards the formation of, a working plan for the purpose of securing more mature consideration of the subject, before committing themselves to any definite scheme.

1. The missionaries, supported by the Mother Churches, to maintain their existing relations to their respective Managing Committees or Boards at home. These managing bodies to have full control over the funds contributed, and the employment of the agents paid by them (with the limitation to be hereafter mentioned, vide 3). Correspondence between the managing bodies at home, and the Councils ~~xxxx~~ in this country, to continue as at present.

2. In planting new stations, abandoning existing stations, transferring missionaries to new spheres, or any other matter in connection with which a decision of the said Synod may affect

the property of the Mother Churches, or operations which they support, or may necessitate demands on their funds, there shall be a reference to the managing body in Europe, and the right of appeal.

The decision of such managing body to be final in the case of appeal.

3. When instructions are sent from the managing bodies at home affecting any of the functions which properly belong to local church courts such as the removal of a missionary to another sphere, these should be communicated to the Presbytery of the bounds and should not take effect without being endorsed by the Presbytery or Synod.

4. It being the aim of the said Church to cultivate a missionary spirit in this country, and charge itself ultimately with the support of missions, it shall be understood that any stations which it may plant and undertake to support must be entirely free from home control; and the principle should be recognised that as financial assistance is diminished, control should cease.

5. Financial business between the said Church and the Mother Churches to be conducted as at present.

The conference recognised the propriety of trying to work out a plan for ultimately transacting financial business between the said Church and the Mother Churches by the hands of a General Treasurer. This would favour the growth of organic unity; whereas to continue the present entire financial separation, would tend to perpetuate sectional

feeling and action, and cause the United Church to hang loosely together. Premature change would tend to wreck the proposed Union; but ultimate change is inevitable.

The suggestion noted in <sup>the</sup> next paragraph may be regarded as a first contribution towards such a plan.

6. All new ordained agents from home to be chosen, as far as possible, from the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church alternately; their salaries and other expenses to be met by the Church from which they come. All monies due to such agents by the managing bodies at home to be sent to the Treasurer of this Synod, by whom all paid agents entering the field after the Union shall be paid. In this way a transition might be made from the existing system to another, under which all financial business between the Mother Churches and the United Church should be transacted through its Synod." ①

The Minutes of the Conference were sent to the two Presbyteries for their views and when they discussed the various suggestions neither Presbytery could accept the "Draft Basis of Union." The two points at issue were 'The question of appeal and the Financial Relation of the new Church to the Mother Churches.' The Free Church Presbytery asked "To whom would an African appeal" and the United Presbyterian Presbytery asked "What if one or other of the Home Churches refused to pay for a new station?"

1 Minutes of 1880 Conference p. 1 ff

With these and other criticisms in their possession the Union Committee prepared another "Draft Basis of Union" for the Conference which met at King-williamstown on 7th September 1881.

1881 CONFERENCE

At this second Conference the following was agreed to as a Basis of Union and once again the minutes were sent to the Presbyteries for their views.

1 DOCTRINE

1. That the Word of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the only rule of faith and duty.

2. That the Westminster Confession of Faith and the longer and shorter Catechisms are the subordinate standards of the Church.

But whereas certain sections of the said Confession of Faith which treat of the power or duty of the civil magistrate have been objected to as teaching principles adverse both to the right of private judgment in religious matters and to the prerogatives which Christ has vested in His Church, it is to be understood as follows :

(1) That no interpretation or reception of these sections is held by this Church which would interfere with the fullest forbearance as to any differences of opinion which may prevail on the question of the endowment of the Church by the State.



(2) That no interpretation or reception of these sections is required by this Church, which would accord to the State any authority to violate that liberty of conscience and right of private judgment which are asserted in Chap xx Section 2, of the Confession, and in accordance with the statements of which this Church holds that every person ought to be at full liberty to search the Scriptures for himself, and to follow out what he conscientiously believes to be the doctrine of Scripture, without let or hindrance, provided that no one is allowed under pretext of following the dictates of conscience to interfere with the peace and good order of society.

(3) That no interpretation or reception of these sections is required by this Church which would admit of any interference on the part of the State with the spiritual independence of the Church as set forth in Chap. xxx of the Confession.

3. That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only King and Head of His Church.

4. That the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Mediator, is invested with Universal Sovereignty and is therefore King of Nations, and that all men in every capacity and relation are bound to obey His will as revealed in His Word.

5. That the Westminster Directory of Worship exhibits generally the order or public worship and the administration of the Sacraments in this Church.

6. That the name of the United Church be the Presbyterian Church of South Africa,



and the Supreme Court of the said Church be the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

NOTE As there are other churches in South Africa holding the same type of doctrine and having the same form of government as the negotiating churches, but attached historically and nationally to distinct standards and inasmuch as the formation of a South African Reformed Church (Presbyterian), without respect to distinctions of race or language is a result to which Providence may in time open up the way, it is recognised that the special mention of the Westminster Standards must not be understood as precluding consideration of the question whether any other Confession, agreeing with that of Westminster in so far as both reflect the consensus of Reformed Confessions, may not be associated with it in the Doctrinal Basis.

#### 11 CONSTITUTION, JURISDICTION & CO.

1. The United Church to consist of all the congregations, European and Native, of the Free Church and United Presbyterian Presbyteries of Kaffraria, and any other Churches or congregations in the Colony and adjacent territories which shall enter the Union.

2. The Supreme Court of the Church to be a Synod comprising Presbyteries, the number and boundaries of the Presbyteries to be afterwards determined.

3. The Synod to have two Committees a Colonial and a Mission Committee.

(a) A Colonial Committee for promoting the life, cohesion, and extension of the Church among the colonists, consisting of the ministers of the various European congregations and representative elders, and of such missionaries and elders as shall be from time to time elected. This Committee to correspond with the Colonial Committees of the Home Churches with a view to arouse their interest and secure their help in the development of a Colonial Church.

(b) A Mission Committee for promoting the life, cohesion, and extension of the Church among the natives, consisting of ministers and representative elders from the mission congregations, and of such ministers and elders of colonial congregations as shall from time to time be elected. This Committee to correspond with the Foreign Missions Committees of the Home Churches with the view of securing their continued interest and help in the development of the Native Church.

4. The Church to have jurisdiction over all the office-bearers and members thereof generally in all matters affecting the interests of the Church; and no appeal from any decision of the Synod to be allowed except in questions affecting the life or doctrine of ministers and missionaries, and the Church status of office-bearers and members. This right of appeal is not to be looked upon as a permanent provision, but is reserved for the present during the transition state of the Church, subject to

to the condition that a closed record accompany the appeal, except when both parties are present in the Court appealed to and wish to be heard.

5. The rules of procedure to be subsequently determined.

111 FINANCIAL RELATION TO MOTHER CHURCHES

1. Missionaries and other agents of this Church to be in the meantime maintained as hitherto by their respective Mission Boards or Committees, and retain their present pecuniary rights and privileges.

2. That to secure greater unity of action in this Church the respective Mission Boards or Committees shall be requested to pay all agents here having claims on the Home funds through a Financial Board elected by this Church, composed as follows :

3. The Financial Board to consist of two members from each Presbytery - representing the Free and United Presbyterian Churches respectively - and a General Treasurer who shall receive and distribute the funds received from Scotland and correspond with the Treasurers at Home. The Treasurer to hold office for a limited period, and to be appointed alternately from the United Presbyterian and the Free Church Sections. The financial Board to report to the Synod on all proposed expenditure, whether necessary or practicable considering the funds available. The General Treasurer to be Chairman of the Financial Board.

4. In planting new stations, abandoning

existing stations, transferring missionaries to new spheres, or any other matter in connection with which a decision of the said Synod may affect the property of the Mother Churches, or operations which they support, or may necessitate demands on their funds, there shall be a reference to the managing body in Europe and the right of appeal. The decision of such managing body to be final in the case of appeal.

5. When instructions are sent from the managing bodies in Europe affecting any of the functions which properly belong to local Church Courts - such as the removal of a missionary to another sphere - these should be communicated to the Presbytery of the bounds, and should not take effect without being endorsed by the Presbytery or Synod.

6. It being the desire of the said Church to develop and promote the interests of the Colonial Presbyterian Churches, and to cultivate a missionary spirit in this country, it shall be understood that any congregations or stations which it may form and undertake to support shall be entirely free from home control.

7. The selection of all mission agents supported from home to be left to the Committees of the Mother Churches. ①

This time there was very little criticism. The Draft Basis had been sent down to Kirk Sessions for their comments and in the Free Church Presbytery no adverse

1 Minutes 1881 Conference p. 1 ff.

comments had been received by the time the matter was discussed at Presbytery level. In the United Presbyterian Presbytery only one congregation reported adversely on the proposed union. The particular Kirk Session is not mentioned in the minutes but its views are recorded as follows :

"One Session connected with the United Presbyterian Church, although not opposed to Union, is nevertheless of opinion :

That to attempt the formation of an Organic Union in present circumstances, would be premature. It would disturb the existing relationship between the churches in this Colony and the parent churches in Scotland - a thing which it would be unwise to do until the Colonial Churches are numerically much stronger, and better able to occupy an independent position.

Instead of Organic or Incorporating Union at present, this Session suggests that if practicable, the two Presbyteries in this Country should, with the consent of their respective Supreme Courts in Scotland, form themselves into a Synod or United Synodic Court, for the purpose of co-operating as far as possible in Christian work; and that to this Synod, or United Synodic Court, questions affecting discipline, finance etc. might be referred, and from it appeals freely allowed to the Supreme Courts of the Home Churches; the status of the South African Synod being fully recognised by the Supreme Courts, and due weight given to its decisions." ①

THE 1882 CONFERENCE

Despite this comment both Presbyteries agreed to the 1881 Draft Basis for Union and it looked as if the 1882 Conference, also held at Kingwilliamstown, would see the Union of the two Presbyteries. It would seem that it suddenly dawned upon one or two Kirk Sessions what was about to happen for at the 1882 Conference the delegates were faced with a host of "suggested Modifications" from various Kirk Sessions. Trinity Church, Grahamstown sent in a whole list of objections and the result was that the Union which seemed so near in 1882 was delayed for at least another year.

THE FAILURE OF THE 1884 CONFERENCE

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In 1883 the Conference met at Grahamstown and this time there was a larger group of Kirk Sessions opposed to the Union. The matter got no further. The Joint Committee determined to try again and for the 1884 Conference held in Grahamstown, they invited the Kirk Session of Trinity Grahamstown to draw up their own Modified Basis of Union. This was duly done and sent down to all the Kirk Sessions of the two Presbyteries along with the original Draft Basis of Union. The Grahamstown Kirk

1 Minutes of 1883 Conference p. 1.

Session believed that there should be no organic Union but that the two Presbyteries should be formed into a Synod. The relevant clause from their Modified Basis of Union read :

"That in the meantime it is most desirable that the Presbyteries of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches represented in South Africa should co-operate; and if practicable should, with the sanction of their respective Churches at home, form themselves into a sort of united Court recognised as having the status and exercising the functions of what is called in the Free Church of Scotland a "Synod"

That were such a "United Synodic Court" established, the right of appeal from its decisions should be as freely and fully enjoyed in South Africa as at home, and all questions financial, disciplinary or other, so appealed or otherwise referred to the highest Courts should be dealt with by the Home Church more immediately concerned, with full recognition of and due regard to the authoritative action of the United Court in South Africa." ①

After the 1884 Conference it became clear to the Union Committees of the two Presbyteries that the fundamental division was between those who wished to see the establishment of a separate Church in South Africa and those who did not. In the next two years more and more

1 Minutes of 1884 Conference p. 12



"suggested modifications" were received and the result was that Union was never achieved.

THE LAST CONFERENCE 1886

The last Conference was held in Kingwilliamstown on September 4th 1886 when it was obvious that all prospects of uniting the Presbyteries had for the time being broken down. No Conference was called for the following year.

By this time there was an increasing number of Presbyterian Churches throughout the country many of them independent of the two Presbyteries. Moreover the following year the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria split into two, the one half calling itself United Presbyterian Presbytery of Adelaide, and the other retaining the original name.<sup>1</sup> In 1889 the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria split into two Presbyteries, the one retaining the original name and the other being called The Free Church Presbytery of Transkei.

These splits meant that for the time being all thought of organic Union between the two Presbyteries was dropped.

1 Vide Page 265

2 Minutes of Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria Vol. 6 p. 279

CHAPTER 3

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UNION ACHIEVED

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In 1864 Dr. Duff was asked to address the Natal Presbytery during his tour of the Free Church Colonial and Mission Churches.<sup>①</sup> He chose as his subject "The Union of the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa" and in his address he emphasised the need to unite all the English speaking Presbyterian Churches and the Dutch speaking Presbyterian Churches. The Clerk of the Natal Presbytery records the occasion as follows :

"Dr. Duff gave a stirring address urging upon us the importance of seeking to unite all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa into one Church."<sup>②</sup>

The first part of Dr. Duff's dream took another thirty three years to achieve; the second part has not been achieved even yet.

The movement by which the Union of the English speaking Presbyterian Churches was eventually achieved

1 Minutes of Natal Presbytery Vol.1. p.84

2 Ibid. Vol.1 p.85

started in Cape Town in 1891 when Rev. John Russell placed before his Kirk Session the desirability of taking steps to form a Union of all the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa. ①

Mr. Russell then raised the matter in the newly formed Cape Presbytery and they resolved that they accepted the principle of such a Union as outlined by Rev. J. Russell and agreed that he take the necessary steps to call a Conference to discuss the subject. ②

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETINGS 1892 and 1893

The First Federal Council on the subject of Union of all Presbyterian Churches and Mission Stations in South Africa was held at Kimberley in 1892. ③ It achieved very little because of the absence of a large number of the missionaries who refused to attend. May be their minds still retained the memory of the struggle to unite the two Missionary Presbyteries and therefore they did not want to be involved in fresh arguments. Despite the meagre attendance those who did meet decided

"to meet annually till further notice." ④

In 1893 the Federal Council was held at Port Elizabeth. ⑤  
Once again very little was achieved except that Rev. John Smith

- 1 Minutes of St. Andrews Kirk Session(Cape Town) Vol.4 p.71
- 2 Minutes of Cape Presbytery Vol.1 p.61
- 3 Minutes of First Federal Council 1892 p. 1
- 4 Ibid. p. 4
- 5 Minutes of second Federal Council 1893 p. 1

and Rev. J. Russell agreed to draw up a Draft Basis for Union.

THE FEDERAL MEETINGS 1894 and 1895

In 1894 the Federal Council met at Kingwilliamstown and here for the first time real progress was made. In 1893 the "Draft Basis for Union" had been sent down to Presbyteries and congregations for discussion and to the joy, almost the surprise, of Rev. J. Russell he found several Presbyteries and congregations showing a great interest in the suggested Union. Until 1894 few congregations or Presbyteries had sent representatives to the Federal Council and it was largely due to the zeal and enthusiasm of Rev. John Russell that they continued to meet at all. However, in East London the 4th Federal Council met in July 1895 and it was at this meeting that a real advance was made.

By this time there were seven Presbyteries in South Africa, namely

U.P. Presbytery of Kaffraria,  
U.P. Presbytery of Adelaide,  
Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria,  
Free Church Presbytery of Transkei,  
The Presbytery of Natal,  
The Cape Presbytery, and  
The Presbytery of the Transvaal.

Of the seven Presbyteries the first four owed direct allegiance to the Home Churches, the Presbyteries of Cape, Natal and Transvaal being Independent Presbyteries.

The first attempt at Presbyterian Union had been between those Presbyteries owing direct allegiance to the Churches in Scotland, this new attempt at Union began in the Independent Presbyteries and they were to find the same problems which had ruined hope of Union between United Presbyterian and Free Church Presbyteries in 1886 cropping up again. Each of the Presbyteries had formed "Union Committees" and these Presbytery Union Committees kept the Presbyteries informed about the progress at the Federal Council Meetings.

The 4th Federal Council Meeting at East London was well attended.<sup>①</sup> The delegates from the Missionary Presbyteries had been present for the 2nd and 3rd Federal Council Meetings and this time they attended in full force to present their views on the proposed Union. The following "Proposed Basis of Union" was up for discussion :

1 Minutes of Fourth Federal Council 1895 p. 1

**CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Whereas Organic Union among the different Presbyterian Congregations and Presbyteries in South Africa is desirable as a manifestation of the Spiritual Unity which exists between them; and whereas the welfare and growth in this country of our common Church are largely dependent on the formation of such a Union; and whereas the Home Churches have on more than one occasion expressed their earnest desire that such Organic Union should be formed;

Therefore, we, the undersigned Ministers and Elders, authorised by, and acting on behalf of, the different Presbyteries and congregations we represent, do hereby unite with one another in the formation of a Presbyterian Church for South Africa on the following Basis :

1. The name of the United Church is "The Presbyterian Church of South Africa."

2. The Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments is the supreme Rule of Faith and Practice in this Church. Adhering to the system of Doctrine contained in the Confessions of the Reformed Church, we hold the Westminster Confession of Faith as our Subordinate Standard, and accept the "Twenty-four Articles of the Faith" adopted by the Presbyterian Church of England as a statement of the fundamental doctrines taught therein.

3. The Presbyterian form of Church Government is held to be founded on, and

agreeable to the Word of God.

4. Membership in this Church is based on an intelligent profession of Faith in Christ, sustained by a life consistent therewith.

The following arrangements (subject to revision by the Supreme Court of the Church) are made for Organisation, Administration and Finance.

1 ORGANISATION

A. 1. The Supreme Court of this Church is a General Assembly, consisting of Ministers and Elders representing proportionally the several Presbyteries of the United Church. The Assembly shall meet on such dates and at such places as may be agreed upon from time to time.

2. Subordinate to the Assembly there shall be four Synods

- 1) The Synod of the North;
- 2) The Synod of Transkei;
- 3) The Synod of the East;
- 4) The Synod of the West.

The Synod of the North shall include the Presbyteries of Natal and Transvaal.

The Synod of Transkei shall include the two Presbyteries of Transkei (Free Church and United Presbyterian)

The Synod of the East shall include the Presbyteries of Kaffraria and Adelaide.



The Synod of the West shall include the Presbytery of Cape Town and the congregation of Port Elizabeth.

Power is reserved to the Assembly to alter or modify this distribution as from time to time may be determined.

3. These Synods shall, when possible, meet at least once each year, their respective Presbyteries Meeting as often as may be necessary.

B. The several existing Presbyteries shall on declaring their acceptance of and adherence to the foregoing Constitution be Presbyteries in the United Church. Ministers and congregations not at present connected with any Presbytery shall, on the same conditions, be recognised as Ministers and Congregations of the United Church.

C. The General Assembly being the Supreme Court of the Church, its decisions shall in every case be final. Such of the present Ministers, however, as may seek the privilege shall, on decisions affecting their ministerial standing, have a right of appeal to that Church by which they were appointed to South Africa, subject to such conditions and under such rules as the General Assembly shall hereafter from time to time fix and determine.

11 ADMINISTRATION

1. The General Assembly shall have at least two standing committees - one to be

called the Church Extension Committee, to be charged with forming and aiding new congregations amongst the European population; and another, to be called the Mission Committee, to be charged specially with promoting Mission work among the native and other coloured people of South Africa.

2. Each Session shall present annually to its Presbytery a brief report of its work and condition; each Presbytery shall in turn present to its Synod a report of the work and condition of its several congregations; and each Synod shall present to the General Assembly a report of all congregational and Mission work carried on within its bounds.

3. The Procedure of the whole Church shall be regulated by the Book of Common Order of the Presbyterian Church of England (Edition 1894) as far as its regulations are applicable to the circumstances of the Church in South Africa, the Church reserving to itself the right of providing a Procedure of its own.

#### 111 FINANCE

1. All property vested in Trustees for the benefit of particular congregations or Mission Boards may continue to be so vested, or may be transferred by their owners to be held "In connection with the Presbyterian Church of South Africa" and nothing in these presents contained shall be held in any way to prejudice existing Trusts.

2. The United Church assumes no financial responsibility in reference to arrangements which at present exist between any of its Ministers and the Congregations to which they minister.

3. Nothing in this Union shall be held as in any way diminishing the claims of Mission Stations or Institutions or of Congregations at present receiving help from the Home Churches, on their continued sympathy and support.

4. Nothing in this Union shall in any way affect the rights of the Home Churches, after consultation with Presbyteries, to make or terminate appointments to Mission Stations or Institutions for which they contribute the whole, or the greater part of the salaries.

5. Nothing in this Union shall be held as affecting the management of existing Mission Institutions by their respective Education Boards under the supervision of the Foreign Mission Boards of the supporting Churches, or the relation of such Institutions to the Presbyteries of which the ordained members of their staff are members.①

It was then resolved :

That the next meeting of the Council shall be held at Kingwilliamstown in the last week of July 1896 and in the event of not fewer than four Presbyteries intimating through their representatives their acceptance of the Constitution now adopted, the meeting

1 Ibid. p. 2 ff

may become the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, and be constituted and proceed to business forthwith. Presbyteries agreeing to the Union shall nominate one third of their Ministers and Elders (fractions to be counted as integers) in equal numbers as first representatives to the Assembly." ①

The Minutes then record the discussion as follows :

"The Council having carefully revised the foregoing Constitution unanimously resolved to adopt it, as the constitution of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. The Chairman then led in prayer, giving thanks to God for the great unanimity which had characterised the deliberations of the Council and for the very hopeful issue of their labours in this most important project. It was also unanimously agreed that this Constitution be sent down to Presbyteries and Congregations for adoption by them. Some discussion ensued as to the next place of meeting, and as it was found that the largest representative gathering was likely to be obtained in King Williams Town, it was resolved that the next meeting of Council be convened to be held in St. Andrew's Church, King William's Town, on Tuesday 21st July ,1896.

The Secretary was instructed, in sending out notices of the 5th Council Meeting to add a note to the effect that any Presbyteries

1 Ibid. p. 5

not agreeing to the Union, are expected to send delegates to the Council as formerly.

It was resolved that copies of the Constitution as now adopted be forwarded to the Home Churches, viz. The Established, Free and United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of England, and the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, with the request that they favourably consider and approve of the same; and that the Secretary of the Council be requested to furnish Presbytery Clerks with the deliverances of the Home Churches thereanent. ①

When this Basis of Union was sent down to the Presbyteries and Congregations and while they all awaited the replies from the "Home Churches" a storm broke loose over the whole question of Union. It was quite clear that Union was now very near and those who were opposed to it used all their eloquence and strategy to avoid it.

THE VIEWS OF THE ANTI-UNIONISTS

The trouble came very largely from the ministers and congregations in predominantly Native areas because in the draft constitution it had been decided "to leave colour unmentioned." Throughout the years 1895 - 1897 the minute books of Sessions and Presbyteries are full of comments on the proposed Union. The opinions of the "Anti Unionists" are perhaps best expressed in a paper by

1 Ibid. p. 6

by Mr. Andrew Smith M.A. who distributed a pamphlet round the Church entitled "The Union of the Presbyterian Churches of South Africa - What form it ought to take"

In this pamphlet Mr. Smith makes five points, namely :

- (1) The promise of the Home Churches to continue their support of Missions is too indefinite to be satisfactory.
- (2) The question of self-support by an independent Church will have to be faced sooner or later.
- (3) What will be the exact relation of the European to Native section of the Church? Will the former absorb the latter or the latter, numerically the stronger, submerge the former?
- (4) Will the Native section submit to arbitrary ecclesiastical rules for the purpose of counterbalancing its numerical strength? Or is such an arrangement possible in the system of Presbyterian Church government?
- (5) Government and discipline in the Native Church during its first stage requires the weighty authority and control of the Home Church, just as the antagonistic races in South Africa are indebted for living together in peace and harmony to the authority of the Queen and the Home Government." ①

In his pamphlet he puts it this way :

1 Op. cit. p.2

"A Union is also demanded by Presbyterianism itself. It is out of character to have isolated Presbyterian congregations without general government or combined action, as well as to have Churches divided in separate folds, with no real difference between them. Presbyterianism has aimed at a higher theological and even general education in the ministry than other Churches, and its pastors on the average have higher emoluments. The eminent contributions to ecclesiastical literature by a leisured few, and the great incomes of the higher clergy in a splendidly endowed Church of England, cloak this comparison and create an erroneous impression. In the United States, the Presbyterian Church furnishes men of the ruling class - the members of Government, States' Governors, Mayors, and other of a similar class, out of all proportion to the number of Presbyterians. This is supposed to be due to its free institutions calling forth men experienced in managing public affairs, but no doubt the influence of a cultured ministry is also a factor. It would be unworthy of Presbyterianism, if the Church European and Native in South Africa, should descend in education and character below the level it maintains throughout the rest of the world.

When all the circumstances are favourable, there can be no difficulty in carrying out the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa into one corporate body - but there is a reservation.

This reservation has respect to the form of the Union. It has been proposed to make by this Union a perfectly independent Church, Is that advisable or possible at present?



There can be no ambiguity as to what that involves, if it has a meaning. A Presbyterian Church to be independent must have a Supreme Court, having jurisdiction and authority over the entire body, and from whose decisions there is no appeal.

To see how that stands we may compare it with a Congregational Union, a body which exists for mutual help, not for government, for which it has no authority nor power. It affords a combination for the support of Missions and Theological Colleges; but it does not claim jurisdiction over congregations, each of which has supreme authority in itself, and owns the church property. The deacons with the concurrence of the congregation, can dismiss a pastor - of which there are instances in this country and at Home. The pastor has no appeal to a controlling authority. The general body can give counsel and can arbitrate, but cannot go farther, as it has not authority over both.

A Presbyterian Church is different from this in every respect. It has a general government of the whole Church. It exercises discipline over the ministers in respect both of doctrine and life, and can visit them with censure and deposition, and it can place a member under excommunication, which means exclusion from the entire Church. To maintain the authority of the Church Courts, the Church property is vested not in the individual congregation, but in the entire body.

These things cannot hold with a South African Presbyterian Church for the present. If a Church is a corporate body, not a mere

ghost, like the so-called Church of the Plymouth Brethren, and if it is to have a general or collective government, such as a nation has, the Church property must be vested in the entire body. That cannot be so here. The Free Church of Scotland reserves possession of all its Mission property, with, however, the promise, which it will loyally fulfil, that it will transfer it to the South African Presbyterian Church when that Church is able to assume all the responsibilities - a time yet far distant. The United Presbyterian Church will do the same. That, inclusive of the Missionary Institutions, cuts off three-fourths, if not more, of the property.

The Ministers are also unaware how profoundly ignorant the Colonial congregations are as to the consequences of creating a Church in the form proposed. Are they ready to surrender their Titles, and to hand over their Churches and Manses to the united body? In the membership there are many Independents. Would that be acceptable to them?

If the relation of the Church to property is weak, it is equally so in respect of government and discipline. Were there any serious case affecting the position, the doctrine, or the character of a missionary, would he accept the decision of this Church as final, or would he carry the case by appeal to the Home Church? That is not a doubtful question, and what then becomes of the authority an independent Church ought to have, when one half of its ministers are missionaries. Suppose, again, a talented minister with an attached congregation were to teach dangerous error on the Atonement,

the divinity of Christ, or the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, he would, if brought under discipline, simply leave, taking church and congregation with him, and that field would have to be abandoned, unless a new congregation were formed and another Church built. There is often extreme difficulty in dealing with cases of this sort, as we see from examples at Home. Only the ablest and most experienced theologians can detect the subtleties which teachers of error veil under orthodox language; and the same thing applies to those who perhaps hold the truth in the main, but indulge in mischievous speculations. Such men would never submit to review and censure from imperfectly educated Native ministers, whom they would regard as incompetent judges.

The control of a Native Ministry, when it comes to be in a great majority, will be the real difficulty in the Church. This is nothing new in the history of the Christian Church. The Episcopal system in fact was introduced to meet the irregularities, the ungovernableness, and the downward tendency in semi-civilized or half-educated communities. Its supposed Apostolic sanction was evolved long afterwards to give it its authority. We are not safe from a tendency in the early stage of a Native Church to kick at authority and to be carried away by plausible innovations.

The Wesleyan Church of South Africa, which has loyally accepted Christian equality in the gospel, has admitted ordained Native pastors into the inner Conference, from which European laymen are excluded, which reviews the fitness of ministers, and allocates their spheres

of labour. They protect themselves from the undue influence of numbers in the Native element by limiting the proportion of Native representatives, and before the time comes for removing such limitation, they hope the Native ministry will have advanced to a stage at which this can be done without harm to the Church.

The English Episcopal Church of South Africa has in its bishops a safeguard from this disadvantage.

The Presbyterian Church is a self-governing body, which assumes its presbyters to be so, for all have an equal vote in its Councils. It might indeed, while admitting all Native ministers into the Local presbyteries, as the Wesleyan Church does in the Local circuits, exclude all except a limited number from sitting in the Supreme Court; but this introduces the colour question, so that some other controlling influence must be found during the probationary period of the Native Church.

There are other circumstances repugnant to the creation of an entirely independent Church for the present. It could not supply, nor even control the theological education of its Native ministry, which is wholly done by the Free Church of Scotland, with no aid from the Colonial Churches; but one of the most obvious objections is the extreme slenderness of its numbers. The Colonial ministers amount to twenty-seven. What ratio does such a number bear to the responsibilities which would properly devolve on them of supporting the Missionary Institutions, and of contributing largely to the salary of every Native pastor for

a few years after his appointment? The missionaries, about the same number, must be discounted in this view as they are not located here permanently, and their salaries are wholly paid from Home. The Church, which would include both, is not within sight of self-dependence. It is totally unlike the Presbyterian Churches of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, which are large and have their own Theological Halls, and virtually their Colleges, and which even send out Foreign Missions.

Is there, then, no alternative? Must the Presbyterian Churches either construct an independent Church, or cease to think of Union?

There is an alternative. The Church may be contented to call itself the Synod of the South African Presbyterian Church, and remain for a period connected with the Church at Home, till it can assume the responsibilities - financial, ecclesiastical, and religious - which it cannot now do. Other Churches have waited. The Episcopal Church of South Africa remained until a few years ago a Synod of the Church of England, long after it had as many bishops, deans, and canons as it has yet. An independent position so far was thrust upon the Wesleyan Church by the Church at Home some time ago, long after it had become a large body. The Presbyterian Church may well wait for a time.

Among the advantages of maintaining a close connection with the Church at Home would be, that practically the Church here would enjoy real freedom. It would have all the authority and the respect which the connection with the Home Church would give it. An appeal from its

decisions would be a rare event. It would have the power of ordination to the ministry, and of discipline over the ministers, the office-bearers and members.

Perhaps the most important advantage would be the authority which this connection would give the European leaders to control the Native Church in its infancy, and to deal with the vast preponderance of Native Ministers when that comes - and it ought to be the most immediate effort of the United Church to raise up a Native Ministry.

The most palpable benefit would be the financial. The Home Church gives a large sum of money yearly for the support of three Native Institutions, and three or four Girls Institutions, and it gives grants in aid of the salaries to Native pastors for some years after they are appointed. The Colonial Church gives nothing except for the support of a few Scripture readers or Evangelists. Were the Church to declare itself independent, the Home interest in it would wane, and by and by certain persons, unaware of the real state of matters, and misled by the phrase - independent Church, would demand the withdrawal of these sums, and seek to devolve on the Colonial Church responsibilities which it is utterly unable to undertake.

It will be of great advantage to Native Ministers to feel themselves members of the Free United Church of Scotland, to know its history and traditions, and to imbibe its spirit - and that influence would last for a long period. The Irish Presbyterian Church still retains the pure doctrine, the reverence for the Holy Scriptures, and the strict observance of the Sabbath, which it derived from its Scottish covenanting ancestry.



Against the formation of an independent Church there are such reasons as these. The Church would loosen its hold of the Home Church, and the loss of its authority would encourage revolts, separations and schisms, which are a dishonour to a Presbyterian Church. There are indications in other South African Churches that this is not an imaginary evil.

Financial difficulties would enter on an acute stage. Dissensions would probably arise in the European section of the Church. It is now thirty years since Union was first mooted, and slow progress has been made owing to differences. The movement for Union proceeds mostly from the ministers. It is a mistake to suppose there will be an agreement everywhere - and with reason and foresight there might be unanimity.

The loss to the Native Church would be great were the link broken which binds it to the Home Church. Since the withdrawal of the London Missionary Society from the Native Churches here, they have fallen into a miserably weak state in every sense.

Suppose an adverse vote in a Supreme Court were given by the Native element against the European, that would bind a Presbyterian Church as it could not do in the case of a Congregational Union. Were there no appeal, that would open the eyes of those who would rush into having an independent Church. It would also lead other Churches to affirm that Presbyterianism was a failure in South Africa.

But it will be asked; with what Church would the South African Church be synodically connected? That is not a serious question compared with breaking off from the Church at



Home. The question will probably be settled soon by a Union of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church. The few Established Church ministers would have no difficulty in connecting themselves with the Church here, as so many Established Church members already do. The Free Church aims at a reconstruction of a United National Church of Scotland, recognized as national by the State, but not paid by it, and is strongly attached to the parochial system - for both of which objects it sacrificed its five hundred sectarian schools. The distinctive principles of the United Presbyterian Church are not touched by these aims.

In any case the question could be left in abeyance for a little, with the ordinance that if an appeal Home is necessary, any minister would be allowed to refer the matter to his own body.

It will be said, on the idea of having an independent Church that difficulties in the future can be left to be met when they arise. That does not warrant the precipitate taking of a step which is absolutely irretrievable - the setting up of a self-dependent Church, which is so in name, but not in reality. By a course of action in accordance with the actual state of matters the grave objections of many would be removed, and the Union might be carried out with absolute unanimity. ①

Mr. Smith's pamphlet was widely distributed and did much harm for the cause of Union especially in the Missionary Presbyteries. Rev. John Russell did what he could to answer the points raised in Mr. Smith's pamphlet by writing

1 Ibid. p. 2 ff.

articles in his own Church Magazine<sup>①</sup> but the division in the Church was already there. Mr. Russell's reply and Mr. Smith's attack were really outward expressions of two groups who came to the 5th Federal Council unable to be moved by arguments. The Ministers in the Native Presbyteries wanted colour named in the Constitution. They wanted to ensure that the Church would be controlled by the European until the Native had progressed sufficiently to be allowed an equal share. These men among other objections were anxious to avoid a Native controlled church and so voted against Union.

#### THE FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1896

The pro-Unionists felt that no colour differentiation should be made within Christ's Church and pointed out that even if all the Native Churches joined the Union the Europeans would still outnumber them. It was of no avail. At the 5th Federal Council the Free Church Synod and the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria both refused to join the United Church.<sup>②</sup>

The Home Churches all replied favourably to the letter explaining the desire for Union on the part of the South

1 Magazine St. Andrews Church Capetown July 1896 p. 2

2 Minutes of 5th Federal Council 1895 p. 8

African Churches and each of the Assemblies passed the necessary Resolutions. In Edinburgh the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland recorded their gratification as follows in their minutes :

"The Committee renew the expression of their hearty sympathy with the Movement towards the Union of Presbyterian Churches in South Africa and congratulate these Churches on the prospect of a successful issue to their labours in this direction. They feel very special interest in this movement as being calculated to greatly strengthen and promote the cause of religion in the South African Colonies and states and as an assurance of continued and increased effort for the christianisation of the native races.

The Committee approve generally of the proposed Constitution and with reference to III Finance record the conviction that the proposed Union will not diminish the support hitherto accorded to the Church in South Africa by the Free Church of Scotland." ①

This statement, together with similar statements from the other Home Churches, was read to the 5th Federal Council Meeting and when the subject of Union was put to the vote it was discovered that four Presbyteries were in favour of the proposed Union, namely Presbyteries of Transvaal, Cape, Natal and United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria, and

1 Op cit. Vol.8 p. 131

three Presbyteries were against the proposed Union, namely The U.P. Presbytery of Adelaide and the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria and the Free Church Presbytery of Transkei. ①

The Kingwilliamstown Federal Council realising that it would be impossible to obtain a unanimous vote resolved to meet again in St. Andrews Church Durban on 17th September 1897 and that if at least four out of the seven ② Presbyteries were in favour of Union that the 6th Federal Council would then convert itself into the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

THE FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1897

The Report and Minutes of the 5th Federal Council were widely distributed and the following year all was ready for the momentous meeting. The date was 17th September and the place was St. Andrews Church Durban.

The Minutes record the occasion as follows :

"Reports were received from the Presbyteries of the Transvaal, Capetown, Natal and Kaffraria (U.P.) and the Presbyterian congregation, Port Elizabeth, expressing approval of the amended Basis of Union. Reports were also received from the other negotiating Presbyteries, viz Kaffraria (F.C.)

- 1 Minutes of 5th Federal Council 1896
- 2 In most of the discussions the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria; comprising the Presbyteries of Kaffraria and Transkei, is regarded as one and in the minutes of the Federal Council the Synod is therefore sometimes referred to as a Presbytery

Transkei (F.C.) expressing approval of the Union, but stating that present difficulties prevented them from entering the United Church meantime." ①

Those who refused to come into this Union expressed their reasons as follows :

"While this Synod recognizes the desirability of union among the various branches of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa, and hopes that existing obstacles may be removed in course of time, they are unable to enter into the proposed union at present in consequence of the want of acquiescence on the part of several of the native congregations in the two presbyteries and in view of discussions which have arisen among Europeans on the subject of the native vote in Church courts.

The Synod agrees to indicate two directions in which some modification of the arrangement contemplated in the united Church is necessary in order to remove these obstacles :

FIRST, that some method be devised of adjusting the balance between colonial and mission churches which shall be satisfactory to both races - for example, that a majority of white and a majority of black, separately and conjointly be necessary to pass a proposed measure into a law; or that in view of future eventualities the proportion of votes of both races in the General Assembly be strictly defined and preserved.

SECOND that there be a final Court of appeal in certain questions to be carefully defined, say to a Board at Home representative of the Presbyterianism.

of the British Isles, or even of wider range, such as the Pan Presbyterian Council could easily furnish.

Union on a basis of leaving colour unnamed is no longer possible." ①

Alas, arguments regarding Colour were to divide the Church even before it could get started. The Federal Council was, however, undeterred by the attitude of the Kaffraria Free Church Synod and it proceeded to the step for which it had worked, ② namely, The founding of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa and :

"Mr. W.E. Moore, who said that he had looked forward to this moment for 25 years, moved that the Federal Council do now resolve itself into the first General Assembly.

The Rev. J. Laing seconded, remarking that there was practical unanimity among the Presbyteries, and there was strong feeling at Home in favour of the movement, as was shown in a letter from Rev. Dr. Lindsay, Convener of Free Church of Scotland's Foreign Missions Committee.

Mr. W. Burns Thomson remarked that a Presbytery of the Orange Free State would in no long time be erected and go to strengthen the General Assembly.

The Rev. J.T. Ferguson said the difficulty in the mind of the native Congregations was the fear of losing the Imperial connection

1 Minutes of Free Church Synod of Kaffraria Vol 1 p. 69 also incorporated in proceedings of First General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa p. 6

2 Minutes of 6th Federal Council 1897 p. 2



in uniting with a Colonial Assembly.

The Chairman, said, that, whatever divided the Presbyteries, they were not divided in doctrine. The chain of approving Presbyteries was continuous from the Cape to the Transvaal. As a General Assembly, they would be able to treat with other Churches, and to deal with questions which were a difficulty in South Africa.

The resolution was unanimously adopted, the members of the Council standing.

The Rev. J. Gray suggested that, in view of the vast and solemn importance of the step now taken, the Chairman should lead the Assembly in prayer, which he accordingly did, at the same time constituting thereby the FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA." ①

One of the first matters dealt with by the newly formed Church was to compose a reply to the two dissenting Presbyteries. ② This was done in the following terms :

"The Moderator presented the reply which had been drawn up, at the request of the General Assembly, in answer to the communication of the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria - The General Assembly acknowledges receipt of a copy of the motion which was adopted by the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria as its finding on the question of the Union of the South African Presbyterian Churches, at their meeting held in July last which motion had been sent to the Federal Council, and by that Council passed on to the General Assembly.

1 Ibid. p. 3  
2 Vide also p. 716.



The contents of the Synod's communication have received the careful attention of the General Assembly, which resolved to place on record an expression of its satisfaction with the assurance that the Synod recognises the desirability of union among the various branches of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa, and also of its deep regret that the brethren of the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria have not seen their way to enter the union at present. The obstacles which the Synod has specified as preventing it from entering the union have been considered by the Federal Council and by the General Assembly, but have not been deemed sufficient to prevent the consummation of the union of such of the negotiating Churches as accepted by Basis arranged at the Meeting of the Federal Council held at Kingwilliams-town in July 1896. The General Assembly expresses its sincere and earnest hope that the brethren of the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria will reconsider this matter, and find themselves at no distant date in a position to join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa now formed, assuring them of a very cordial welcome when they do so. With reference to the two directions in which the Synod has indicated some modifications of the arrangements contemplated in the United Church, the General Assembly is of opinion

- (1) that the application of Presbyterian principles will obviate difficulties as to the balance between Colonial and Mission Churches, and
- (2) that the matter of a final Court of Appeal in certain questions has been adequately dealt with in the paragraph relating to this point which was submitted

to Presbyteries and Congregations in the draft Constitution, and which has now been adopted by the General Assembly as part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

A rider was added to the effect that the Synod of Kaffraria should be asked to send one or more corresponding members to the next meeting of the General Assembly, in the event of their being unable to see their way to join the United Church within the year.

The draft reply was unanimously adopted as the reply of the General Assembly." ①

The new Church had now been founded and as the Moderator said in his opening address :

"God forbid that we should divide men within the Church on the basis of colour." ②

From that point of view the new Church has not departed.

1 Proceedings of 1st General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa p. 4  
2 Ibid. p. 18 - The address was printed along with the proceedings

711.

CHAPTER 4

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THE FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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THE OPENING

Friday 17th September 1897 was a hot humid day in Durban but a large crowd of Presbyterians had gathered at St. Andrews Church to witness the formation of the new Church. The local news paper stated :

"Presbyterians from Pietermaritzburg and Durban crowded into the Gothic building in Commercial Road in order to witness the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa." ①

Despite the heat the ministers and elders were dressed in thick black suits and the majority wore beards. ②

The 6th Federal Council had concluded its business in the afternoon and at 8 p.m. when all the delegates reassembled Mr. L. Forbes, a Durban Elder, proposed that Rev. J. Smith of Pietermaritzburg, be the Moderator of the First General Assembly. ③

Two other names had been mentioned as possibilities for nomination as First Moderator namely Rev. John Don of

- 1 "Natal Mercury" 18th September 1897
- 2 Vide photograph of Commissioners to first General Assembly in Session Room St. Andrews Durban
- 3 Proceedings of 1st General Assembly Presbyterian Church of South Africa p. 5

Kingwilliamstown and Rev. John Russell of Cape Town. Mr. Don was not eligible in that the Kaffraria Presbytery would not join the Union and Rev. John Russell would not allow his name to be put forward.

Rev. John Smith having been elected, Rev. James Craig, led the Assembly in prayer and the Moderator took his seat. ①

The Moderator, in response, acknowledged the mark of honour and confidence and remarked that he had ministered in Natal for many years; he believed he understood something of the genius of Presbyterianism in South Africa, and promised to do his best in guiding the deliberations of the Assembly and furthering the interests of the newly formed Church.

Next morning, Saturday 18th September 1897 the Assembly was constituted by the Moderator and it got down to its Agenda.

One of the first items was to pass the following resolution regarding the formation of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa :

1 Ibid. p. 5

"WHEREAS negotiations for Union among the Presbyterian Churches and Congregations in South Africa have been carried on for a period of five years, and full opportunity has been enjoyed for considering and discussing the various questions and interests concerned and involved in such proposed Union;

AND WHEREAS now, in the Providence and by the Grace of God, in the judgment of the brethren now assembled, the time has arrived when, with advantage to all concerned, the Presbyterian Church of South Africa may be formally constituted and inaugurated;

AND WHEREAS four of the negotiating Presbyteries, viz., the Presbyteries of Capetown, Kaffraria (U.P), Natal and Transvaal, together with the Church and Congregation at Port Elizabeth (at present not attached to any Presbytery), have declared their readiness to enter into and become constituent parts of a United Church, on the Basis adopted at the meeting of the Federal Council, held at Kingwilliamstown in July, 1896 (a copy of which is appended hereto);

AND WHEREAS these four Presbyteries have appointed delegates to this meeting of the Federal Council, with authority on their behalf, and as their representatives, to conclude the proposed Union, and to become members of a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY AGREED, in humble dependence on the blessing of Almighty God, and with a deep sense of the responsibilities attaching to this action, and seeking the

glory of God and the furtherance of the cause and Kingdom of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

1. To resolve this meeting of Federal Council into the First Meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa, in terms of resolution adopted at last meeting;
2. To declare the four Presbyteries above-named, together with the Church and Congregation at Port Elizabeth, to be constituent members of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa; and
3. That the Delegates from these Presbyteries, Ministers and Elders, be the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

BASIS

1. The name of the United Church is "The Presbyterian Church of South Africa."
2. The Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments, is the supreme Rule of Faith and Practice in this Church. Adhering to the system of doctrine contained in the Westminster and other Confessions of the Reformed Church, we accept and hold as our Subordinate Standard the XXXIV "Articles of Faith" of the Presbyterian Church of England as a statement of the leading doctrines taught in Scripture.
3. The Presbyterian form of Church Government is held to be founded on, and

agreeable to, the Word of God.

4. Membership in this Church is based on an intelligent profession of faith in Christ, sustained by a life consistent therewith.

5. The Formulas used by this Church in the Ordination and Induction of Ministers, Elders shall refer to the "Appendix" and to the "Articles of the Faith" as expressing the general opinion and belief entertained on the matters to which they refer. ①

It was agreed that this resolution should be written into the Minute Book and it was also agreed that it should be written out and signed by all the members present.

The signed copy was afterwards framed and together with a photograph of the Commissioners to the First General Assembly it was ordered by the Assembly

"For the meantime to be hung in the Session House of St. Andrews Church, Durban." ②

Rev. John Laing of Addington Church, Durban was appointed the first Clerk of the General Assembly and Mr. George Roger an Elder of St. Andrews Church Durban was elected the first Treasurer of the General Assembly.

Having completed these preliminaries this Assembly then passed the following resolution :

1 Ibid. p. 6

2 Ibid. p. 7



"That the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church of England, (Edition 1894) be adopted for the present, and that a small committee be appointed to see what amendments, if any, may be made in it, to make it the more adapted to the circumstances of this Church, and to report to next meeting of General Assembly. (This Committee was appointed at Third Session of Assembly)" ①

Thereafter it was decided to hold a Communion service in St. Andrews Church at 3 p.m. on the next day and the Moderator pronounced the benediction.

THE REPLY TO KAFFRARIA SYNOD (Free Church)

When the Commissioners reassembled on the Monday morning one of the first matters to be discussed was the reply of the Assembly to the objections to Union stated by the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria. This debate lasted all morning and once again all the arguments were voiced in the Assembly. The Assembly's reply was based on the following points ②:

1. The difficulties with regard to the balance between Colonial and Mission Churches would be obviated by the application of Presbyterian principles.

(a) Although some Colonial ministers and congregations are not likely to want to submit to the decisions of a General Assembly in which native ministers and elders may have a majority

1 Ibid. p. 6  
2. Vide. page. 708

vote. It should be noted that at present the actual proportion would be 84 European to 36 Native votes. Moreover we must not for a moment suppose that the natives would always or frequently have opposite interests to the Europeans in matters that come up in the business of the Assembly. It should be remembered that they too are thinking and reasonable men with sufficient confidence in the ministers of the Church to accept their guidance.

(b) With regard to those native congregations who in common with their missionaries fear that they may be overborne and crushed in a Union with Colonial Churches the reply is the same - we are a Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian Principles will not allow such a situation to arise.

2. The difficulties with regard to appeal to the Home Church was met and had been adequately dealt with in the paragraph in the constitution relating to this point.

3. The financial objections were met in the following reply received from the Home Churches

"Participation in the Union will in no way affect their financial relation to the Board."

This was the reply received from the United Presbyterian Mission Board and all the other "Home Churches had replied in similar terms having given the most deliberate assurances that they have no intention of withdrawing their financial support." ①

The Assembly accepted these three points as the basis for

1 Ibid. p. 10

their reply and instructed a Committee composed of The Moderator, Revs. J. Gray, J.T. Ferguson and the Clerk to draft a reply in suitable terms embodying these arguments. This letter was read at a later Session of Assembly and duly sent to the Clerk of the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria.

#### CONSTITUTION OF NEW CHURCH

The Monday afternoon was spent discussing seriatim the Clauses of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.<sup>①</sup> The Constitution had already been discussed in Presbyteries, Sessions and Federal Council Meetings and each clause was passed unanimously.

#### CHURCH EXTENSION AND AID FUND

Having accepted the Constitution the Assembly next established a Church Extension Fund.

"The Rev. J. Gray moved a resolution pledging the Assembly to raise within two years not less than £10,000 as a Thank-offering for the Union now effected, to be devoted entirely to Church Extension in South Africa. How the fund should be collected would rest with the members, but it should be devoted solely to Church Extension. He had reason to believe that the amount could easily be obtained - indeed, if properly carried out, they might reasonably expect to raise something like £12,000 or £15,000.

The Rev. J.W. Stirling seconded the motion.

1 Vide Page 713 ff.

The Rev. W. Ross, supporting the resolution, hoped Missions would also be assisted. Mr. W.E. Moore, the Rev. J. Russell, the Clerk and the Treasurer (Mr. G. Roger) spoke to the motion.

The Rev. A. Brown suggested that the amount should be £20,000 and he moved an amendment accordingly, which was seconded by Mr. W. Burns Thomson. This was warmly supported, and the original motion, being altered to specify the larger amount, was agreed to unanimously." ①

The Assembly appointed Rev. T.B. Porteous as Convener of the Church Extension Committee and it was agreed that he should tour the country within the next three years with a view to seeing where new Presbyterian Churches might be established.

The new Church did not think only in terms of South Africa that day for on the motion of Rev. W. Tees it was agreed to make application to join the World Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System. ②

CHURCH MAGAZINE

On the Tuesday afternoon the Assembly decided that it was essential that a Church Magazine be established

"to forward the interests of the Church" ③

After some discussion on the subject :

- 1 Ibid, p. 10
- 2 Ibid, p. 10
- 3 Ibid, p. 11

"The Moderator said that a Church like theirs without a Magazine would be without a very important means of diffusing knowledge deepening interest, and opening up new fields of labour. He thought the simplest plan would be to charge a special Committee to set the thing a-going.

This was agreed to and the following Committee appointed viz., Revs. Jas Gray and T.B. Porteous and Messrs. Moore and McCulloch, with Rev. J.T. Ferguson as Convener." ①

The First General Assembly lasted only until Wednesday 23rd September and the main business of the Tuesday afternoon and the Wednesday was as follows :

NATIVE MISSIONS

(1) The Assembly agreed to establish a Native Mission Committee so that the New church could "fulfil the command to go into all the world and preach the gospel." ②

This decision was received with acclamation despite a question asked by one unnamed member as to whether there was to be any line of delimitation between the Missionary work of the new Church and the Missionary work of the Kaffraria Synod. The question was unanswered because it was hoped that before long the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria would join the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

1 Ibid. p. 12  
2. Ibid. p. 12

LIFE AND WORK

(2) The Life and Work of the new Church came up for discussion on the Wednesday morning and it was agreed that a delegate from the Assembly should visit the various Churches and seek to stir up enthusiasm among the people. The delegate chosen was The Moderator, Rev. J. Smith.

Under this same subject an even more important resolution was adopted with reference to the future training of Ministers in South Africa. The Resolution read as follows :

"The Assembly declares its opinion that it is highly desirable that steps should be taken with as little delay as possible to provide means for training Ministers of the Church, and agrees to lay this matter before the members and friends of the Church in the hope that funds will be subscribed for this purpose." ①

That Evening a Missionary meeting was held in the Church and Revs. J. Lundie and J.W. Stirling, United Presbyterian Missionaries, gave addresses to a well attended meeting.

CLOSING OF ASSEMBLY

On the Thursday morning the Assembly met to hear the address of the Moderator, Rt. Rev. J. Smith. ②

In his closing address he referred to the "fitting consummation to the labours of years which had been brought

1 Ibid. p 13

2 Ibid. p. 18 ff

about by the formation of this United Church." <sup>①</sup> He mentioned that the desire for Union had grown in intensity as the negotiations had proceeded and he believed that the day would come when all Presbyterian congregations in the country would be in one Church.

The Moderator said :

"Our Church has a distinctive appeal of its own to make, for Presbyterianism is recognised the world over as standing for evangelical truth, for moral and religious progress, for a combination of freedom with order, liberty with law; but above all things, we need, as the secret of the Church's life and power the abiding presence of Our Lord Himself by His blessed Spirit. If God be with us, despite all difficulties and oppositions, our work will stand and our enterprise will grow." <sup>②</sup>

After the singing of Psalm 122 vs. 7 - 10 the Moderator pronounced the Benediction and the sittings of the Assembly were then closed.

It was Rev. P.L. Hunter who wrote as follows concerning this First Assembly :

"Union is not yet complete among the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa. The strongest Church numerically in South Africa is the Dutch Reformed Church which though Presbyterian and at one with

1 Ibid. p. 19

2 Ibid. p. 20



us in Doctrine, and worship is yet separated from us by the barrier of language. Union with the Dutch Reformed Church does not at present seem possible - but it must not be lost sight of." (1)

It was the same writer who rejoiced at the plans of the new Church with regard to Missionary work and he said :

"I do not believe that the claims of Christ's work among the heathen will be neglected by the Presbyterian Church of South Africa but under God a new interest will be awakened in them through the Union - an interest that will bring blessing to Native Churches and return a blessing on themselves. So may the old prophesy be once more fulfilled in the history of this Church. "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation" (2)

The words were to prove true for as the years went on the Presbyterian Church of South Africa extended the Ordinances of worship ~~xx~~ among the European and the native people of South Africa. <sup>has</sup> until it/became one of the strongest Churches in the land.

1 Free Church Missionary Record December 1897

2 Ibid. December 1897

**APPENDIXES**

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APPENDIX 1.

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REV. H.R. VAN LIER - THE HERALD OF THE NEW EVANGELICAL AND MISSIONARY ERA IN SOUTH AFRICA ①

For nearly half a century after Schmidt's departure from South Africa missionary enterprise was at a standstill. But a better day was about to dawn over the southern extremity of the Dark Continent. A new spirit was moving in the Christian world, a spirit which, though first it became vocal in William Carey, was by no means confined to him. The first representative in South Africa of this new spirit of missions was the Reverend Helperus Ritzema van Lier.

Van Lier was born in Holland in 1764, and was distinguished from his earliest youth for his extraordinary talents. His parents resolved that he should become a clergyman, and in deference to their wishes, though much against his own, young Van Lier turned his attention to the study of theology and the Oriental languages. Before the age of 18 he had written and defended a dissertation, which gained for him the degrees of Master of the Free Sciences and Doctor of Philosophy.

His spiritual condition at this time he describes in darkest colours. His attendance at Divine worship had ceased; the Bible, in which his pious mother had instructed him, lay neglected on the shelf; his knees were seldom bent in prayer. Outwardly moral and studious, he yet confesses that his heart was full of pride, self-righteousness and impure imaginings. The occasion of his conversion was the death of an estimable young lady to whom he was ardently attached, and upon whom he looked as his affianced bride. His grief at her decease was so poignant that he flung himself upon his bed desiring earnestly to be delivered by a sudden death from an existence which had become intolerable. At this very stage it pleased God to reveal Himself to the youth whose heart was thus overwhelmed.

1 Extract from "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" Chapter 8 pages 61 ff.

In the providence of God this eminent man was invited to proceed to the Cape, and after some consideration accepted the invitation. On his arrival in Table Bay, whither his fame had preceded him, he was heartily welcomed by Christian friends, and for a considerable time enjoyed the hospitality of their homes. By the departure to Stellenbosch of the Rev. M. Borchers, a vacancy was created in the congregation at Cape Town, and to this Van Lier was immediately appointed. His induction to the pastorate at the Cape occurred on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1786, when he was but 22 years of age. By his earnest evangelical sermons, by his faithful performance of all pastoral and public duties, and by his sincere and simple Christian character, Van Lier exercised a great and most beneficent influence over the members of his congregation.

Though Van Lier's chief concern was the pastorate of his congregation of Europeans, his heart was deeply grieved at the neglected spiritual condition of the slaves and Hottentots. In a sermon delivered on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1789, he insisted upon the necessity of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

Van Lier did not live to see the realisation of the scheme that lay so near to his heart, for within three years of penning this ~~Sermon~~ he entered into rest, at the early age of 28 years. The last scenes were pathetic in the extreme. His sorrowing wife and four little children hung around his bed. Numbers of sympathetic friends visited the sick-chamber. From all of them the dying man took an affectionate farewell commending them to God in fervent prayers. The very slaves were not forgotten, but were summoned to his bedside to receive their master's parting charge. In a powerful and touching prayer he invoked the Divine blessing upon the land of his adoption, upon the Church in which he was born and which he held so dear, and upon the heathen who had not as yet been gathered to the one fold. During the spasms of pain he earnestly besought God for relief, and when relief came he was filled with gratitude, and his lips overflowed with expressions of joy and holy rapture. In the early morning of 21 March, 1793, he passed to his eternal reward.

No man was so widely mourned as Van Lier, or mourned with greater reason. Had he been spared, it is impossible to predict what he may have become for the Church to which he belonged, and for the Kingdom for whose extension he prayed and laboured. As it was, under Van Lier's fostering influence a fervent missionary spirit was kindled in South Africa.

APPENDIX 2

A. QUALIFICATIONS TO BECOME A SCOTTISH MISSIONARY 1796 <sup>(1)</sup>

Before the Glasgow Missionary Society was a month in existence one of its number, the Rev. Thomas Bell, produced as requested a report upon the talents requisite in a missionary and the best mode of introducing the Gospel by his ministrations into a heathen land. The document, which is dated "Glasgow, March 1st, 1796" although couched in the characteristic language of the time, reveals a penetrating and wide-visioned mind. Indeed, it may be contended that if the simple directions the paper contains had been followed the history of modern missions would have been considerably different. The report declared :

"As to the talents requisite in a Missionary, we are humbly of opinion that,

- 1) He should be endued with piety, prudence, and aptitude to teach; of which last, some specimens may be exhibited before the Directors.
- 2) His principles should be examined, particularly as to the ruin and recovery of mankind.
- 3) His bodily constitution should be considered.
- 4) His age should not be below twenty four years, nor exceed forty.
- 5) He should be eligible from any denomination of Christians in the Society.
- 6) He should have some acquaintance with the Rules of Physic, as in knowing the pulse, letting of blood, etc. etc.

With respect to the mode of introducing him and the subject of his Mission to the heathen, we think

1 Extract from R. Shepherd "Lovedale" P

- 1) That two Missionaries should be joined in the sacred work: the one's talent consisting chiefly in informing the mind; the other's in striking the passions.
- 2) That they should be furnished with powers to administer both Word and Sacraments. But whether this should be done by some Presbytery, or by the ministers in the Society, we presume not to determine.
- 3) That previous to their setting out in their sacred Mission, they should, in the presence of the Directors, be solemnly recommended by prayers to God, and enjoined to study the knowledge of the truth, fidelity in their Mission, and unanimity between themselves, as they regard their own conduct, and the edification of those among whom they minister.
- 4) That if circumstances permit, they should be strongly recommended to the notice and protection of such as are in power in the place whither they are sent.
- 5) That having reached the place of destination, they should not immediately begin to teach by an interpreter; not only because this is a cold and circuitous manner of communicating sentiment, but also because he may misinterpret their words, and accordingly defeat the end of their Mission.
- 6) That, under the direction of a Teacher, they should immediately apply themselves to learn the language of the country.
- 7) That, in teaching, they must not ridicule the pagan idols, nor their manner of worship but calmly reason with them, always shewing the utmost benevolence; that they ought not to expose the innocent customs of the country; but, as far as possible, become all things to all men, that they may save some.
- 8) That they should neither directly nor indirectly resent injuries, but endeavour, on all occasions, to overcome evil with good.



- 9) That they should use no party-names, nor unnecessarily discover to the heathen world the multiplied and mournful divisions which prevail among Christians.
- 10) That, as circumstances admit, they should devote a part of every day (the Sabbath excepted) to acquire such knowledge of the language of that country where they minister, that at last, by the good hand of their God upon them, they may be able to translate some parts of Scripture into it, beginning with the Gospel of John, and some of the Psalms, as the XXIII, LXXII, CX and CXXI.
- 11) That from time to time they should transmit an account of their situation to the Directors of the Society.
- 12) That if it please the Lord of the harvest to send forth a succession of labourers, the Directors of the Society should send them out two by two, always associating a young Missionary with an older."

B. THE PELSER CASE <sup>①</sup>

Towards the end of December, 1884, there was considerable agitation among farmers in the Burghersdorp District, Cape Colony, on account of stock thefts due, it was alleged to the presence of a number of natives working on the railway line then under construction. The agitation, as so often happens in South Africa, took on a political complexion. Willem Jacobus Pelsler, a local farmer and also a prominent local politician, exploited the stock thefts for political purposes, and in a letter to the Burghersdorp Gazette threatened rebellion if the Government did not take immediate and drastic action; and in another letter issued a direct challenge by declaring that he meant to take the law into his own hands

On January 15, 1885, he saw a native, Zachariah, crossing part of his farm and getting his gun followed

1 Extract from C. Don "And having writ" Chapter 15

him. He first struck Zachariah and when the latter was moving off shot him in the back and killed him. A few days later the preliminary examination was held, and after reading the evidence the Solicitor-General decided to indict Pelser upon a charge of culpable homicide. On February 12 a telegram from Aliwal North published in the Cape Argus stated that "the Boers in this and the Albert District are buying up all guns and revolvers. They have sworn to release Pelser if convicted."

A few days later it was announced that the Solicitor-General declined to prosecute Pelser, a decision which led to a good deal of adverse comment. Even the Cape Times which showed no particular concern over the killing of the native, considered it "unfortunate that all the rumour and menace should have preceded the refusal to prosecute. If the law were accommodated to the conciliation of any element, be it ever so powerful 'the fountain of justice' would be indeed poisoned at the source.

On April 14, The Cape Mercury, owned and edited by Mr. George Hay, printed a letter from the Rev. John D. Don, in which the following passage occurred :

"I belong to no party. I am not a politician. I never was in Burghersdorp. I know nothing of its people, and I never heard of Pelser before, but I am a member of the community which has to bear the responsibility in the last resort of the Government's unchallenged acts, and a Minister of a Religion which knows no distinction of race, caste, class or colour, and my conscience refuses to put up silently with this offence. 'What has thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.' That poor man's blood cries to heaven, not merely against the wretched murderer, but against the Government which refuses to prosecute, and the country which condones such conduct. I, for my part, will have no share in the responsibility.

Therefore, to clear my own conscience, I solemnly protest, in the name of God, of Law, of Justice and Order, against the manner in which this foul crime has been dealt with."

When Parliament met a question was asked by Mr. J. Rose-Innes (later Sir James Rose-Innes) and papers were laid on the table of the House together with a letter from the Solicitor-General in which he assumed sole responsibility for his conduct, but failed to vindicate himself satisfactorily or to explain his reasons.

Nothing more was done in Parliament and this may have decided the Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Upington, to institute a prosecution for criminal libel against Mr. Don and Mr. Hay which he did on his own initiative. They were arrested under warrant on July 23, and committed for trial not at Kingwilliamstown Circuit Court, as would have been the case if ordinary procedure had been followed, but at the E.D. Court at Grahamstown. At the eleventh hour the Crown Prosecutor dropped the case against Mr. Hay and proceeded against Mr. Don alone.

The trial took place in Grahamstown in November 1885, the Solicitor-General (Mr. A.F.S. Maasdorp) prosecuting and Richard Solomon (later Sir Richard Solomon) with R.W. Rose-Innes appearing for the defence. Sir Jacob Dirk Barry (Judge President of the E.D. Court) was on the Bench. After a four days' trial my father was acquitted. I take the following from the official record - "Hardly had the words 'Not Guilty' escaped from the Foreman's mouth when the building re-echoed with the burst of spontaneous applause. After this had subsided, His Lordship said "Mr. Don, a verdict of "Not Guilty" has been returned; you are discharged. You have the satisfaction of knowing that the principles for which you have contended have been established."

Mr. Don was given a civic reception on his return to Kingwilliamstown and was welcomed by a great gathering representing Europeans and Natives.

The costs of the defence, amounting to £800,

were defrayed by public subscription, contributions coming in from every part of Cape Colony.

Almost every newspaper, including Volksblad, but excluding the Cape Times, warmly congratulated Mr. Don on his acquittal. The result of the trial was recognised as a vindication of the right of free and honest criticism of public officials, as an effective declaration on behalf of the sound administration of justice, and as a warning against those who take life lawlessly and wantonly in the belief that political or other influences may enable them to escape the full penalty of their crime.

Unfortunately these anticipations were not to be fulfilled nor can it be said that the Judge-President's observations that "Mr. Don had the satisfaction of knowing that the principles for which he contended had been established" was justified by subsequent events. The verdict in favour of Mr. Don was in effect a verdict against Pelser and also against the Cape Attorney-General. Nothing further, perhaps, could have been done against Pelser, but it is unfortunately true that crimes such as his have become more frequent than ever. No Union Minister of Justice would dare to do what Sir Thomas Upington did, in his capacity as Minister, and from political motives, but neither public opinion, nor those directly concerned with the administration of the law, have been able to prevent constant and flagrant miscarriages of justice, due either to the jury or to the attitude of the man on the Bench.

APPENDIX 3

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A. THE GORDON MEMORIAL MISSION <sup>①</sup>

The Mission at Umsinga in Natal was undertaken in memory of Hon. J.H.H. Gordon, brother of Lord Aberdeen. After his conversion this young man decided to devote his life to mission work. While studying at Cambridge his life was cut short by the accidental discharge of a rifle and the members of his sorrowing family thereupon decided to found a mission in memory of their deceased brother. In this manner the Gordon Memorial Mission was started under the auspices of the Free Church of Scotland. The Mission Station is situated at Umsinga in the Greytown district of Natal.

The missionary to whom the task fell of establishing the mission was Rev. Dr. Dalziel. Under his direction the Mission gradually overcame the hindrances and difficulties of its early years and has exercised a beneficent influence over the whole district and far across the Zululand border as well.

B. LIFE IN NATAL IN 1850's

1. A Scots family comes to Natal in 1850 <sup>②</sup>

It was early in the year 1850 that the Byrne Scheme of emigration was advertised in Scotland inviting settlers to colonise Natal and to promulgate industry in this new country....One of these advertisements was discovered not long ago when the old wooden frontage of a building in Glasgow was demolished. It read - 'Glasgow to Natal on March 15, under the sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

Under engagement to Messrs. J.C. Byrne & Company the fine first-class sailing ship "Conquering Hero" (A.1.450 tons burthen)

- 1 Extract from J. Du Plessis "A History of Christian Missions in South Africa" p. 363-364
- 2 Extract from Clara Joyner Anderson "Reminiscences & Memoirs of Early Durban and its Pioneers" p 18



succeeds the "Ina." The greater parts of the berths in the above fine ship are engaged. Besides carrying an experienced surgeon, arrangements are in progress for dispatching by this, and other ships to follow regularly from Glasgow, a Presbyterian clergyman and a teacher to be settled among the emigrants.'

Not only did the charge include full provisions on the passage, but emigrants were assured of grants of land on arriving at their destination. The cost of a steerage passage and twenty acres of land was obliterated in the advertisement, but for £10 an emigrant crossed "intermediate" and got 20 acres, while for £22/10/- he had the same comforts on board and a holding of 50 acres. Children under fourteen were carried at half price, along with which went 10 acres of land, a cabin passage cost £35.

The advertisement also stated that 'ploughmen, female domestic servants and tradesmen of all sorts were in great demand at high wages".... This offer of adventure and freedom interested and appealed to many young families, and particularly to my dear parents..... So it was in the "Conquering Hero" that they and other adventurous pioneers set sail bravely from their native land, and it was only after a long, wearisome voyage of three months that they landed safely in Port Natal, on 30th June 1850.....with their family of five little children and all their worldly goods.

Words fail to express my love and admiration of these brave, kind, good people. They endured the perils of the long sea voyage, and the greater unknown hardships of a strange country populated by black, uncivilised people, and teeming with wild animals. All this they braved to make our fair Natal a prosperous and happy home for us, their descendants. Truly of these dear people may we say "Ye are the salt of the earth"

On their arrival in Durban the immigrants were conducted to and housed in barracks which had been prepared for them, but very soon my parents made shift to leave room for the passengers of the wrecked "Minerva" An old East India frigate, the "Minerva" sailed from the East

India docks in May of the year 1850, with 280 emigrants bound for Port Natal, and, on the night of July 3rd, she was caught on the notorious Bar at the entrance to the harbour. By morning she had drifted close to the Cave Rock on the Bluff, and at the first light of dawn the boats used for landing passengers were brought alongside the stranded ship. All the passengers were rescued, but very few of them were able to save any of their belongings, and most of them had brought supplies of goods intended to last them for years.

My father built a shelter for his family with his packing cases for walls, and a carpet for a roof. All cooking was done in the open on a camp fire.....This little shelter was the home of the Joyner family until one room of their own house was built. They moved into it gladly. A young couple named Mr. and Mrs. Thompson begged to be allowed to share it for a few nights. 'Just a wee bit of floor space to sleep on' was all they asked. 'You are welcome' my father said with his kind smile; but he must have wondered where that 'wee bit of space' could be found. It was found, however, and folks were thankful for small mercies in those days.

## 2. A voyage to Natal in the 1850's <sup>①</sup>

The vessels which bore the emigrants were sailers, mostly, though not always, of an inferior class; badly found, poorly manned, horribly provisioned, they were abodes of misery to most of the wayfarers in them. The space between decks, where the latter herded, had been hastily fitted up in the coarsest fashion. The intermediate or second-class passengers had rough pens, miscalled 'cabins', assigned to them, run up on either side, with a rough plank table and backless benches dividing them. The steerage passengers, whether married or single, occupied sleeping berths opening endwise direct upon the common feeding-space, with such curtains veiling them, as for decency's sake, the inmates themselves might provide. Admission to these dark and stifling depths was obtained by ladders fixed to common hatchways, down which the only light available

1 Extract from Sir John Robinson "A Lifetime in South Africa" p. 28



found scanty ingress. Feeding arrangements were equally primitive. Once a week the stores, provided according to a dietary scale, were served out to both classes, the recipients had to do the rest. The rough old 'salt' signified by the style of 'cook' had charge of the 'galley' on deck - an open stove, where he boiled or baked, in the order of their coming, the contents of the nets, cloths or pans.....promiscuously shoved into oven or boiled, as prepared by the owners below. Of the quality of the stores thus dealt with the less said the better. Bought in the cheapest market, subject to no inspection, in too many instances foul, rotten, weavily.... it is marvellous that the stuff so consumed did not breed pestilence amongst those who had perforce to subsist upon it or starve.... Tin pannikins and platters mostly formed the table equipage. Floors and tables were seldom if ever scrubbed. For months or even years afterwards the 'Smell of the ship' haunted the nostrils of the emigrants with a sense of loathing that no words can describe. Long before shore was neared the water supply ran short, and the foul contents of the wooden butts that did duty for tanks was doled out in pints and half-pints for the relief of palates parched by the sun of a southern summer....But why continue this dismal record. I recall it now only by way of encouraging a spirit of contentment with the happier conditions of the present time.

3. First impressions of an immigrant in the 1850's ①

Africa as seen from the sea seemed an idyll. Africa as it proved to be ashore was disenchantment. Natal, when I first landed there, had only seven years been a British dependency. But eight years had passed since the Boer trek farmers fought with British troops for the possession of Durban. Ten years before that the country had been devastated by the hordes of Chaka. Though so young in the eyes of civilisation, the land had already a history, and a bloodstained one.

Somehow, none of us thought anything about that as we drifted over the harbour bar in a

1 Extract from Sir John Robinson "A Lifetime in South Africa" p 35

flat-bottomed surf-boat. It was a fine day, and the sea was smooth, and the bush-clad bluff, which guards the all but landlocked bay, looked as beautiful as Ellen's Isle as we passed along it. Naked figures bounding along the sand-dunes opposite, were taken to be baboons or monkeys, but we were told that they were 'Kaffirs' This was our first introduction to the baffling savage. Not long had we to wait for a closer acquaintance, as the women and children of the party were borne ashore on the backs of laughing barbarians.

Then began our first experience of the Dark Continent. On a sand-mound above the landing place stood a little block-house, with its garrison of a dozen redcoats, who then sufficed to uphold the majesty of British rule at that remote outpost of the Empire. Two or three old carronades.... peeped harmlessly out of the undergrowth. Three or four small thatched cottages, with a more solid brick building in their midst, the Customhouse, represented commerce and civilisation on the threshold of the colony. A winding track, deep in sand, led for two miles through a jungly thicket mantled with sheets of gorgeous convolvulus to what was supposed to be the 'town.' Durban then consisted only of about a score or so of thatched shanties with walls of 'wattle and daub' scattered about a trackless waste of blown sand with slumps and patches of bush to redeem it from desolation. It was no uncommon thing for new arrivals to wander from end to end of the place without knowing that they were there.

The immigrants were mostly encamped in tents pitched on the outskirts of the bush, the rough wooden barracks provided for their accommodation being wholly inadequate for their needs. Some of them, who might have a little money in their pockets, were fortunate enough to secure tenancy of such small hovels....as might have been erected and left by predecessors. Rougher or humbler abodes could hardly be imagined... The floors were of mud smoothed over with cow-dung.... Doors and window places might or might not be filled in with planks, calico or

matting....The little enclosure outside, which did duty for 'cook-house' might or might not be roofed in, but it certainly was without grate or stove. Fires were lit upon the ground, and bits of stone held up the frying-pan, pot or kettle... It is astonishing, when reduced to rudimentary conditions, with how few of the accessories of life civilised men can get along. Though it was the fashion in those days to lament the conveniences and luxuries that had been left behind, I do not know, on looking back, that people were actually much the less happy because they had to do without so much and to be content with so little....It is worthy of note....That the gentler breed of these outgoers faced their privations, in most cases, with a brace disdain of circumstance and a cheerful acceptance of their lot that might well be called heroic.

4. Memoirs of a Missionary's Daughter <sup>①</sup>

(1) In 1850 my father conveyed my dear little mother to her new home in an ox-wagon over rough country where no roads had been made. The journey took three days and two nights, now a motor-car can reach the station in less than two hours. Over the top of Stoney Hill Papa had Mamma descend from the wagon and look over the Esindumbini Valley. "There is our parish and our home," he said.

She looked down and all about. To the west the towering Noodsberg Hills; to the right the Umvoti Jungle; and Zululand beyond. To the east a glimpse of the Indian Ocean far away. All about new native kraals, and 'the cattle upon a thousand hills.'

The scenery was attractive...but oh! if once she went down into that wild valley, could she ever come out of it again?

She turned to my father, and gave him her bravest smile: 'Where thou goes....' she said. <sup>T</sup>

If she recalled her beautiful home now so far away; its churches, schools and friendly houses,

1 Extract from Mrs. Mary Tyler Gray "Memoirs of a Missionary's Daughter" p. 23

she spoke not of them. But how often she was to think of them and of her friends with a lonely heart....

That night the wagon drew up near the hut my father had previously had built, and after a warm evening meal there was devotions to which the driver and attendants came; and then the two young people went to rest, calmly and fearlessly. Although hundreds of primitive Zulus were all about them, and many buffalo, lions, leopards and wild buck inhabited the valleys. They trusted in God and had asked his blessing and his care.

This hut was their home for a while. Then a tiny primitive four-roomed house was built. During the first year some traders, several missionaries and a few colonists called on my mother, but I think she saw only one white woman during that year.....Early in 1851 my oldest brother was born.

(ii) In 1856 my parents went to Maritzburg. On our journey thither the wagon was outspanned in the Noëdsberg, and my very earliest recollection is of hyaenas coming near and sending forth terrible blood-curdling yells. My mother had in her arms a wee baby girl, but as I woke up and cried in terror she clasped me closely to her side. I remember my father rose and lit a lantern hanging in the wagon. He shouted to the driver to crack his great whip, and let the long lash fly out towards the yelling beasts. The Voorlooper was told to pile wood and thorn bush on the smouldering fire. Soon the blazing flames and the cracking of the whip drove the hyaenas off. I can still recall that night!

My second vivid remembrance was of going to the back door of our little house at Esindumbini and picking up a lock of tawny, coarse hair. "See Mamma" I cried, "what funny hair" Mamma looked at it curiously, then with alarm. Just then my father came in. "A lion has been prowling round the house in the night," said he. Then he told us that the Natives had reported a commotion in the cattle kraal, and had found the cattle huddled in a bunch, their horns all pointing outwards. "Something must have frightened the

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beast away," said my father. "I'm trying to find where his spoor went to." "Here! here!" I cried, and showed Papa the tracks at our back door.

## 5. The Fortunes of Settlers in Richmond District <sup>①</sup>

Many of the immigrants brought tents, farm implements, seeds, stoves, provisions and other necessaries. Landing in Natal was a perilous undertaking. Surf boats were sent out to bring the passengers ashore, into which they had to scramble from a rope ladder hanging down the side of the vessel. On one occasion a bundle of rugs was thrown into one of the boats and caused great consternation when a baby was discovered wrapped up in it, happily unhurt.

Owing to primitive conditions it was often weeks before heavy luggage could be landed....

The immigrants on landing in Durban were naturally most anxious to see the land on which they were to settle, so, the menfolk shouldering knapsacks, stout sticks in hand, started off on foot to inspect their farms. Most of them were satisfied with the land apportioned to them, and returned to Durban to make arrangements to trek with their families and belongings. Delay was caused by the buying of wagons, cattle and provisions, but eventually a start was made. There were no roads - only tracks through rough grasslands interspersed with patches of bush and mimosa. At night they camped out in the open or sheltered in deserted farm houses of previous Dutch settlers. Their progress was necessarily slow, and it took a fortnight to cover a distance which today only takes two hours. Their destination reached, they erected their tents, while the less fortunate built what shelter they could. One family ...made use of a four-poster bed which they covered with a tarpaulin lent by a neighbour....Into this brief outline can be read a thousand hardships and difficulties calling for every ounce of courage and fortitude, particularly amongst those brave women who had undertaken such a venture, to whom the Colony owes so much.

1 Extract from Mrs. S.W.B. Shepstone "A History of Richmond Natal"  
p 41



APPENDIX 4

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THE FORMATION OF "THE DOPPER KERK" IN THE TRANSVAAL <sup>(1)</sup>

Churches organised on a Presbyterian basis are essentially republican in form, as James I was quick to point out. In the nineteenth century they showed themselves to be fissile in character. Twenty years after the Great Disruption of the Scottish Kirk a somewhat similar disaster overtook the D.R. Church in South Africa. Liberal doctrines flowing from the universities of Germany to those of the Netherlands, where so many of the South African predikants received their training, caused heartsearchings among clergy and laity alike. Combined with doctrinal difficulties were questions of policy. Were ministers to be appointed as hitherto by the Cape Government or to be 'called' by the congregations, as the Liberals desired? - a question to which Saul Solomon, a Congregationalist, added another: Were they to be paid by the state? Again, were ministers and elders from beyond the colonial borders to be permitted to sit in the Cape Synod, which enjoyed its privileges under an Ordinance issued in 1834 when the Cape had been the only recognised European state in South Africa?

A section of the Transvaalers had already answered this last question in their own way by refusing to be incorporated in the Cape Synod. However, a minister sent by the Netherlands Society arrived at Lydenburg and took up the local cause of union with that Synod, while the Rev. D. Postma of the Zwolle Separatists came to Rustenburg and there found many disciples, including the popular commandant, Paul Kruger. Like the Free State and the north-eastern Colony Rustenburg was full of Doppers, the 'Auld Lights' of the Reformed Church, who were distinguished from their fellows by extreme simplicity of faith and worship, and sometimes by the old-fashioned cut of their clothes. The great point of difference was that whereas the Doppers used hymns in private worship, they held that only

1 Extract from E. Walker "History of South Africa" p 308

the Psalms should be sung in church, as they were part of Holy Scripture and the hymns were not. Some of the Colonial clergy had quarrelled with them on this score, but so far van der Hoff, the minister at Potchefstroom, had avoided doing so, and hoped that Postma would be prepared to work with him.

The issue was tested at two General Assemblies. At Pretoria, Postma refused to use the hymns and, next day, fifteen men, headed by Kruger, gave notice that they had left the Hervormde Kerk and proposed to form a free Reformed Church. Van der Hoff was conciliatory, and all three Transvaal ministers, besides clergy from the Free State and the Colony, attended the General Assembly at Potchefstroom. It was then agreed to exclude Liberals by insisting that no minister should be installed in the Transvaal until his credentials had been passed by the Cape Synod, to leave it to each minister to decide whether or no the hymns should be used, and to give Postma the church at Rustenburg provided the other ministers might visit their supporters in the town occasionally. But after the meeting Postma and his followers refused to rejoin their old church unless the hymns were abandoned, declined to have their headquarters invaded by rival clergy, and pronounced against union with the Cape Synod. The Dopper Kerk thus went its own way, and in due time, as ministers were forthcoming, formed congregations in the Free State and the Colony.



COMPARATIVE TABLE  
SHOWING THE DATES OF THE FORMATION  
OF  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES  
IN  
SOUTH AFRICA  
PRIOR TO 1897.

Green European Congregations  
 Red Mission Stations F.C.  
 Blue Mission Stations U.P.

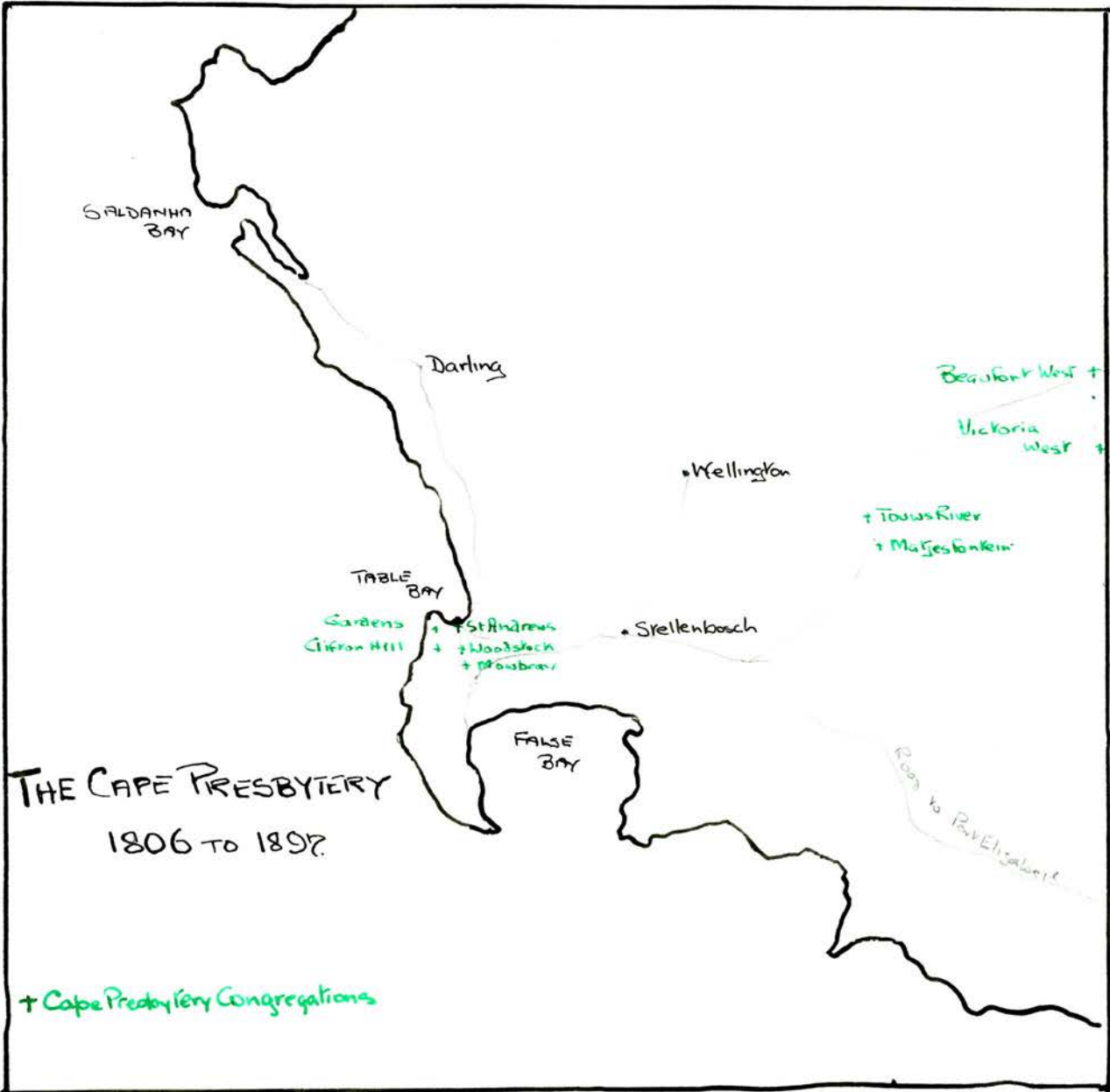
## COMPARATIVE TABLE SHOWING DATES OF FORMATION OF PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA PRIOR TO 1857

SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY	CAPE PRESBYTERY	THE MISSIONARY PRESBYTERIES	NATAL PRESBYTERY	TREKKER REPUBLIC PRESBYTERIES	STEPS TOWARD UNION.
1497-1652 Portuguese Period 1652-1796 Dutch East India Coy. Rule. Rise of Dutch Reformed Church 1796 First British Occupation 1802-1806 Netherlands Rule (Jansen and de Mist)					
1806 Second British Occupation	1806 Calvinist Society among Soldiers at Cape Town				
	1813 First Presby. Church constituted by Berlin	1816 Chumie founded by L.M.S.			
1818 Kaffir War 1820 Settlers brought to South Africa from Britain.	1820 First Presby. Church becomes Congregational.	1821 First Glasgow Miss. Soc. Missionaries arrive.			1824 Approach by D.R.C. to Church of Scotland to unite with them in South Africa
	1824 Presbyterians in C.T. begin again.	1824 PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA FORMED. 1824 First Love Dale founded. 1826 Glenhorne Congregation formed.			
	1828 St Andrews Cape Town constituted.	1827 Trinity Church in Grahamstown formed as an "Independent" 1827 Balfour founded 1830 Butts Hill founded 1839 Pirie founded.			
1834 Kaffir War		1836 New Love Dale founded 1836 Igqibigqa founded	1835 American Board Miss. begin work in Natal.		
1836 THE GREAT TREK starts 1840 Republic of Natal		1840 Glenhorne Congregation formed.			
	1842 Rev. G. Morgan becomes minister of St Andrews.	1842 Missionaries of G.M.S. split into 2 Presbyteries 1843 FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA FORMED			
1846 The War of the Axe. 1846 British annex Natal 1849 British immigrants to Natal	1846 Free Church Scotland start 2nd Presbyterian Church in Cape Town	1847 U.P. PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA FORMED 1849 Alice Congregation formed.	1850 NATAL PRESBYTERY FORMED 1850 First Presby Church in Pietermaritzburg formed.		
1851 the Great Kaffir War 1855	1851 Free Church in Cape Town closes down.	1853 Mt Fortune founded 1854 Rev. Cummins goes to Glenhorne.	1852 Pinetown Congregation formed		
ECONOMIC DEPRESSION THROUGHOUT S. AFRICA	1857 Beaufort West Congregation formed	1857 Emquadi founded			1858 Dr Fournie, D.R.C., moves motion re Union with F.C. Presbyterians in S. Africa. (Motion rejected)
	1861 Victoria West Congregation formed	1860 King Williamstown Church founded 1862 Henderson founded Mbulu founded			
	1866 Victoria West and Beaufort West close down.	1862 Adelaide Congregation founded 1862 Port Elizabeth Congregation founded	1863 St Andrews Durban founded.		
1869 Diamonds discovered Kimberley 1870		1865 Toleni founded 1866 Tatura founded	1866 Addington Services commenced 1870 The year of the Natal Disruption 1870 St Johns Pietermaritzburg founded.	1872 Kimberley Congregation formed.	
	1873 Rev J Russell becomes minister St Andrews Cape Town.	1873 East London (West) Congregation formed. 1873 Urelo founded			
		1876 Somerset East and Glenarson Congregations formed			
1877 Annexation of S.A. Republic.		1877 Tarkastad Congregation formed 1877 Fort Beaufort Congregation formed			
1879 S.A. Republic handed back to Boers.		1879 Columba founded 1881 Malan founded	1880 Addington becomes separate Charge		
			1881 Richmond Congregation founded 1881 Harrisville Congregation founded		1881-1886 Conferences between F.C. and U.P. Presbyteries re Union (Conferences failed)
	1882 Clifton Hill Congregation formed 1882 Woodstock Congregation formed	1882 Cradock Congregation founded			
			1883 Upper Umgeni		



		<p>1881 <u>Malan</u> founded</p>	<p>separate Charge        1881 Richmond Congregation founded        1881 Harrisville Congregation founded</p>		<p>1881-1886 Conferences between F.C. and U.P. Presbyteries re Union (Conferences failed)</p>
	<p>1882 Clifton Hill Congregation formed</p>	<p>1882. <u>Craddock</u> Congregation founded</p>			
<p>1883 Paul Kruger President of S.A. Republic</p>	<p>1882 Woodstock Congregation formed</p>		<p>1883 Upper Umgeni Congregation formed</p>		
<p>1885 Gold discovered on W. Water's ranch Transvaal</p>		<p>1884 <u>Buchanan</u> founded        1884 <u>East London (Cot)</u> founded        1886 <u>Sulenkama</u> founded</p>	<p>1884 Berea Congregation formed</p>	<p>1886 <u>Barberton</u> visited by Rev. Gray</p>	
		<p>1888 <u>Miller</u> founded        1889 ADELAIDE PRESBYTERY FORMED. (U.P.)        1889 F.C. PRESBYTERY OF TRANSKEI FORMED.</p>	<p>1889 Newcastle Congregation joins Natal Presbytery.</p>	<p>1887 St George's Johannesburg Congregation formed        1887 Beaconsfield Congregation formed        1888 Klerksdorp attempt.        1889 Germiston Congregation formed</p>	
				<p>1889 Pretoria Congregation formed</p>	
	<p>1890 <u>Gardens</u> Congregation formed</p>	<p>1890 <u>Gillespie</u> Founded</p>		<p>1889 Boksburg Congregation formed</p>	
			<p>1892 Greyville Congregation formed</p>	<p>1890 TRANSVAAL PRESBYTERY FORMED</p>	<p>1892 to 1897 Federal Council Meetings re. Union.</p>
	<p>1893 CAPE PRESBYTERY FORMED</p>	<p>1893 <u>Mount Fraser</u> founded</p>	<p>1892. Ixopo Congregation joins Natal Presbytery</p>	<p>1892 Klerksdorp Church closed down        1892 Fordsburg Congregation formed</p>	
	<p>1895 Mombray Congregation formed</p>			<p>1894 Jeffreysburg Congregation formed</p>	
<p>1896 Jameson Raid</p>	<p>1896 Matjiesfontein Congregation formed        1896 Tons River Congregation formed</p>			<p>1895 Clifton Congregation formed        1896 Bloemfontein Congregation formed        1896 Springs Congregation formed</p>	
				<p>1896 Bulawayo Congregation formed        1897 Salisbury Congregation        1897 Krugersdorp Congregation        1897 Kromstad Congregation        1898 Heilbron Congregation        1898 Jagersfontein Congregation</p>	<p>1897 First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.</p>
				<p>1898 Coleberg Congregation        1898 Marouboort Congregation</p>	

SKETCH MAPS ILLUSTRATING THE  
RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE TOWNS  
IN WHICH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES  
WERE FORMED PRIOR TO 1897.



SALDANHA BAY

Darting

Saldanha West +

Victoria West +

Wellington

Tons River  
Mafjesfontein

TABLE BAY

Gardens  
Clifton Hill  
+ St Andrew  
+ Woodstock  
+ Pausbaai

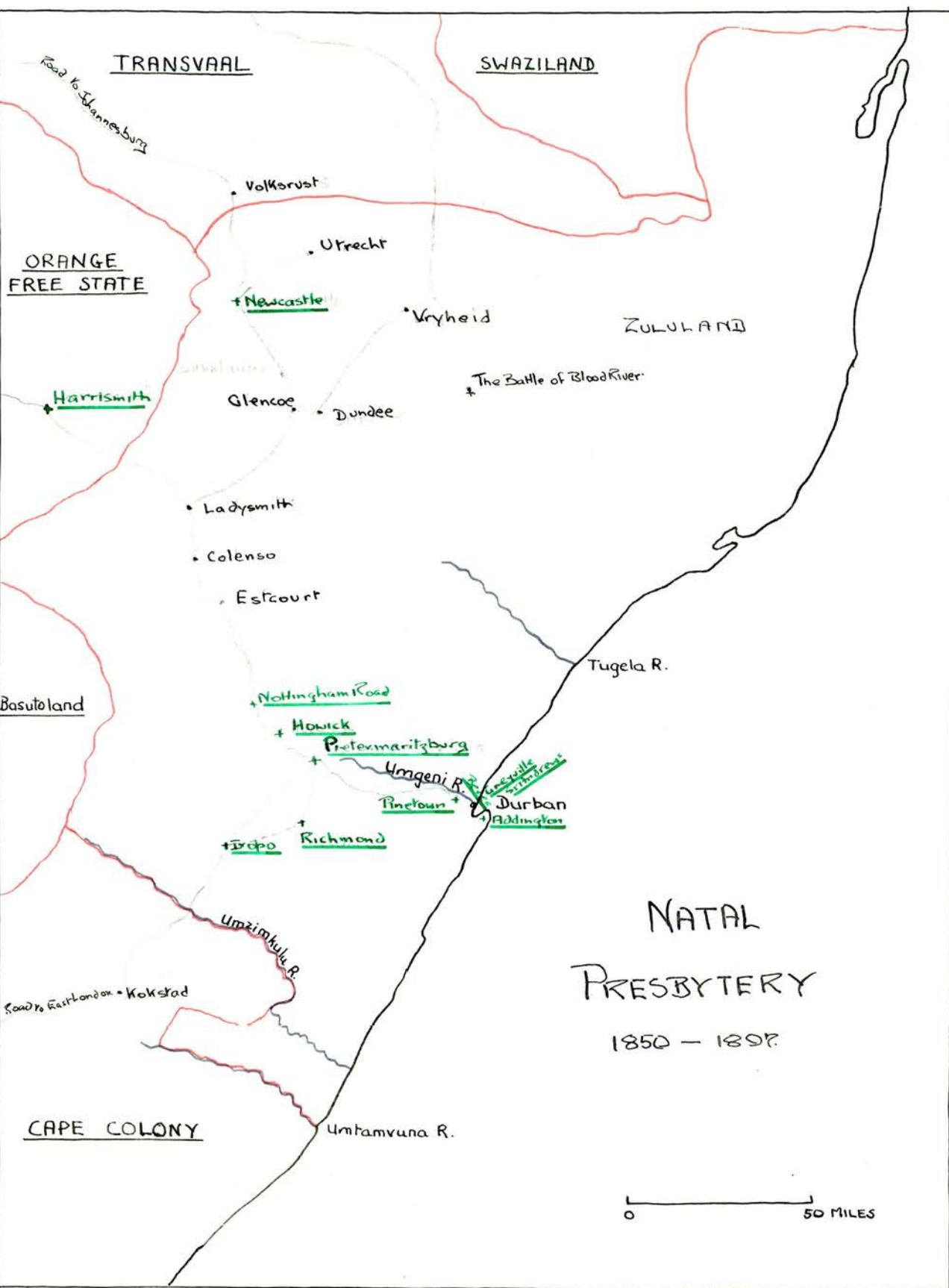
Stellenbosch

FALSE BAY

Road to Paarl/Swellendam

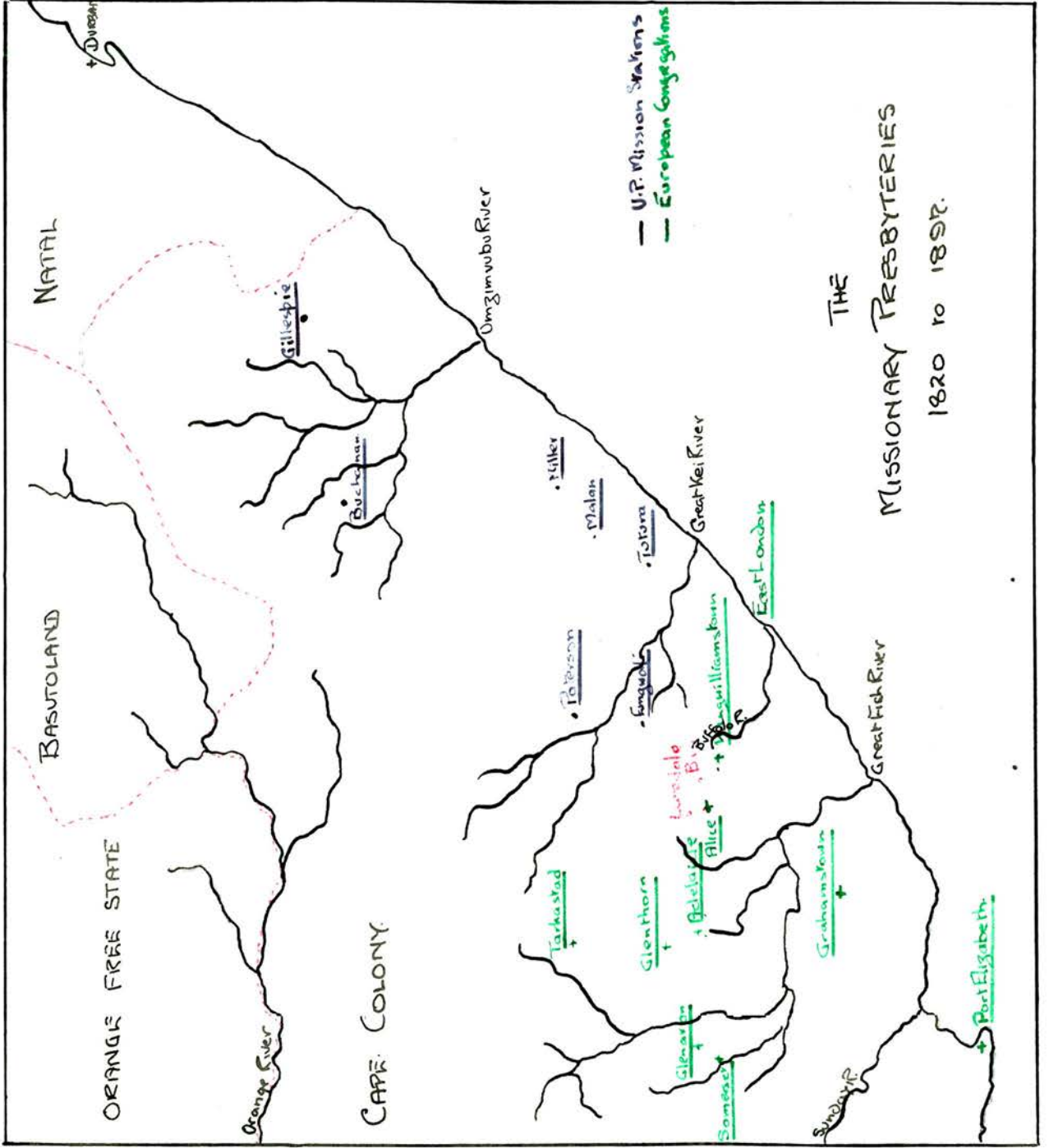
# THE CAPE PRESBYTERY 1806 TO 1897.

+ Cape Presbyterian Congregations

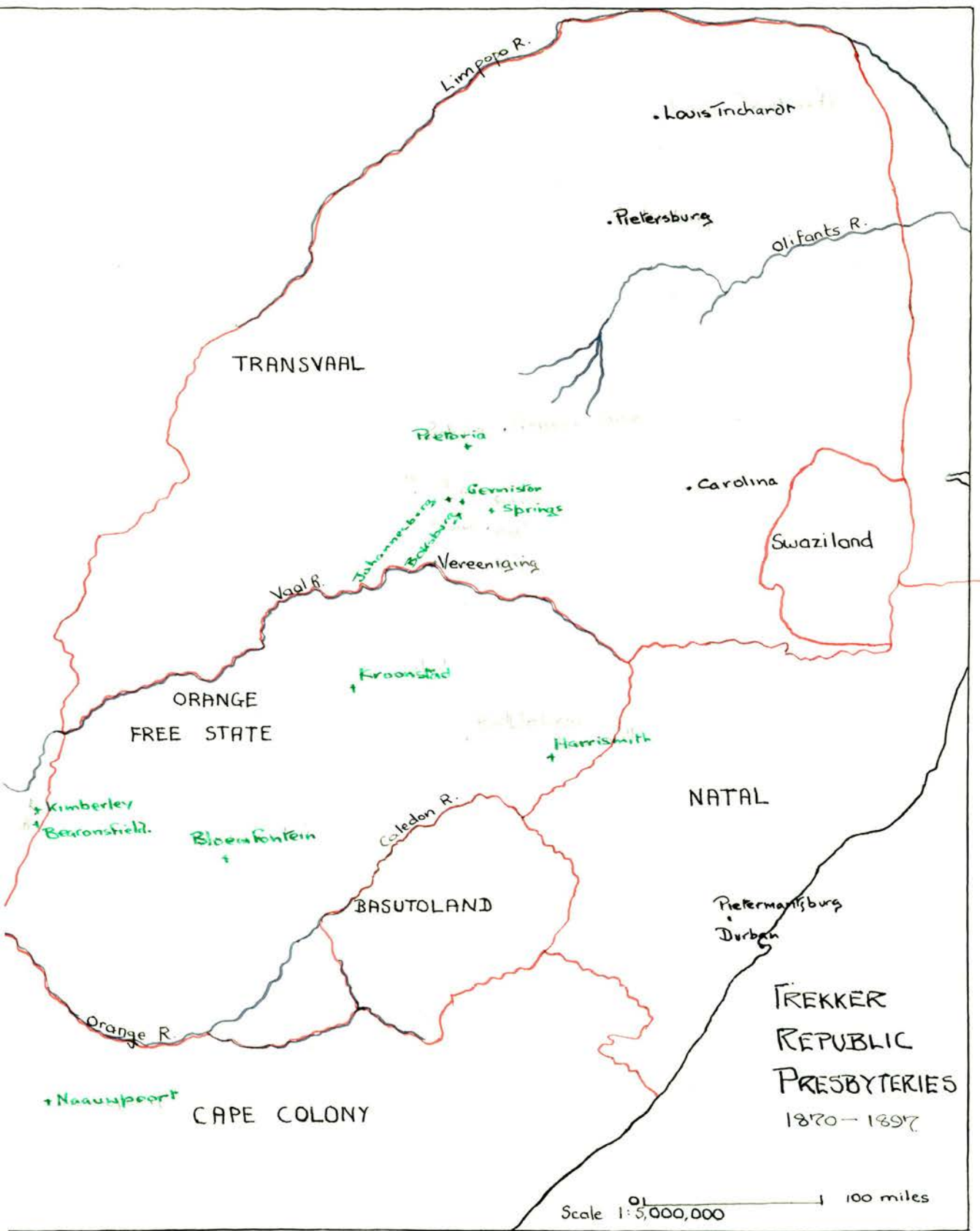


NATAL  
PRESBYTERY  
1850 - 1897

0 50 MILES







TRANSVAAL

ORANGE  
FREE STATE

NATAL

CAPE COLONY

BASUTOLAND

TREKKER  
REPUBLIC  
PRESBYTERIES  
1870-1897

Scale 1:5,000,000 100 miles

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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SECTION 1

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PRIMARY SOURCES

MINUTES OF KIRK SESSIONS

1. Kirk Session Minutes St. Andrews Capetown 1828-1897

These minutes have been very well preserved in four leather bound volumes; and the information contained in them is invaluable to anyone interested in the History of South African Presbyterianism.

In Vol. 1 the Session Clerks adopted the practice of pasting documents of importance opposite the page where reference was made to them, but unfortunately this has resulted in many important documents falling out of the book, leaving behind nothing more than the back pages of the booklet which had been pasted in.

2. Kirk Session Minutes Clifton Hill Church Capetown

These have entirely disappeared. We are dependent for all information about this Church on what appears in the records of St. Andrews Church, Cape Town.

3. Kirk Session Minutes Gardens Church Cape Town

These are in perfect order. They are kept in Cape Town at Gardens Church. The Session Clerk a Mr. A. Bryson, was interested in early Gardens Church History, and has preserved many documents of value in his Minute Book.

4. Kirk Session Minutes Mowbray Church Cape Town

These are in excellent order, and preserved in the vestry of Mowbray Church in Cape Town. No one has yet written a complete history of the Mowbray Church, but in these records there is ample information for such a project - this is especially true of the records from 1900 onwards.

5. Kirk Session Minutes Woodstock Church Cape Town

These are kept at the Woodstock Church, but they only start in 1895. The earlier Minute Books have been lost.

6. Kirk Session Minutes Beaufort West Church

If such a Book ever existed it has long since disappeared. We have been dependent for our information about this congregation on the minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

7. Kirk Session Minutes Victoria West Church

This Book has long since disappeared. The main source of information about this congregation is the Minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

MINUTES OF DEACONS' COURTS OR BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT

1. Deacon's Court Minutes St. Andrews Cape Town 1828-1897

These Minutes are well preserved in three leather bound volumes. They are obtainable in St. Andrews Church Cape Town. They give a great deal of interesting information regarding the finances of the early Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. The Scots folk must have been fairly affluent in those days, and they were certainly regular and generous givers to the Church.

2. Board of Management Minutes Clifton Hill Church Cape Town

The Board of Management Minute Book together with the other Records of Clifton Hill Church have disappeared.

3. Board of Management Minutes Gardens Church Cape Town

Gardens Church has been fortunate in having efficient and careful Clerks to the Board and so all the Minute Books are in good order and carefully preserved.

4. Board of Management Minutes Mowbray Church Cape Town

The Board of Management Minute Books of Mowbray Church are kept in the Vestry at the Church. They are in good order and have been carefully written up from the first meeting.

5. Board of Management Minutes Woodstock Church Cape Town

The Minutes of the Woodstock Presbyterian Church Board of Management are kept in the vestry at the Church. They start from 1895 but although well kept in the beginning the records become very brief in the years 1902 to 1904. They are nevertheless a real value to the student of Woodstock Presbyterian Church History.

6. Board of Management Minutes Beaufort West Church

These Minute Books have disappeared.

7. Board of Management Minutes Victoria West Church

These Minute Books have disappeared.

MINUTES OF ST. ANDREWS CHURCH CAPE TOWN PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

These minutes are kept in St. Andrews Church, Cape Town, and refer to the steps taken in 1824 by Cape Town Scotsmen in order to procure a site and build a Church. The book is in a somewhat dilapidated condition, but legible in most important places.

MINUTES OF CAPE PRESBYTERY

These consist of 8 Volumes from 1893 - 1955. They have been well preserved and contain a fund of valuable information about Presbyterianism in Cape Town. The period 1893 - 1897 is dealt with in Volume 1.

MINUTES OF COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

These are contained in eight well bound volumes, kept in the vaults of Church of Scotland Offices in 121 George Street, Edinburgh. They contain

among other items, references to and quotations from the Annual Reports of the congregations in South Africa. The Free Church of Scotland through its Colonial Committee poured thousands of pounds into South Africa and the ministers whose stipends were fully or partly paid by the Home Church sent home regular reports on their work. It is these reports which makes these 8 Volumes so valuable to the student of South African Presbyterianism, because in many instances these minutes contain the only existing records of some of the Free Church congregations in South Africa which started but closed down. No student of the history of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa can afford to ignore these important Minute Books.

**ST. ANDREWS CAPE TOWN SESSION LETTERS FILED BY REV. J. RUSSELL IN 1878 - The Russell Papers**

In 1878 Rev. J. Russell collected together all the existing letters of historical importance connected with St. Andrews Church, Cape Town. It would seem that he intended to write a history of St. Andrews Church but unfortunately he did not manage to do this. However, the collection of letters which he filed contains copies in his own hand of letters long since destroyed, and they are, today, of great importance to the student of South African Presbyterian history. Unfortunately the letters have not been carefully looked after, and some have become soiled. The box in which they were kept must have been in a damp place at one time for in many of the letters the ink has run.

**CONGREGATIONAL REPORTS**

**1. Annual Reports of St. Andrews Church Cape Town**

Many of these were printed and pasted into the Minute Books of the Kirk Session. The reports from 1873 are very full and well written giving much information about the Church life and work. Those from 1842 to 1873 are very scanty where they exist at all. Prior to 1842 there is no record of any Annual Report in the Kirk Session Minute Book.

2. Annual Reports of Clifton Hill Church Cape Town

These have entirely disappeared, along with the other records of the Clifton Hill Church.

3. Annual Reports Gardens Church Cape Town

These have been pasted into the Gardens Kirk Session Minute Book and from 1890 contain many items of interest. The complete set from the beginning has been preserved.

4. Annual Reports Mowbray Church Cape Town

These have been preserved in the vestry of Mowbray Church.

5. Annual Reports Woodstock Church Cape Town

These are contained in the Minute Book of the Kirk Session. They are complete from 1895.

6. Annual Reports Beaufort West Church

If these ever existed they have entirely disappeared.

7. Annual Reports Victoria West Church

These have disappeared altogether if they ever existed.

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINES

1. In 1878 Rev. J. Russell started a Church Magazine which came out each month. At the end of each year the Magazine was bound and placed in the cupboard in the Minister's Vestry. Unfortunately today there remains only ten volumes, but these volumes contain several items of historical interest written by Rev. J. Russell.



2. "The Gardens Messenger"

This was the official Magazine of the Gardens Church Cape Town. A complete set of all the Magazines from 1896 to the present day is kept in the Vestry of Gardens Church. They contain numerous articles of interest to the student of South African Presbyterianism.

SECONDARY SOURCES

R. Balfour "Lectures on Presbyterianism in the Colonies"

The Title explains quite clearly what this book is about. The section on South Africa though useful gives very little detail.

Anne Barnard "South Africa a Century Ago"

This is a collection of Lady Anne Barnard's letters, describing life at the Cape in 1800. It is one of the few documents describing life during the first British occupation in 1796

A. Bryson "After Twenty five Years"

Mr. Bryson was Sunday School Superintendent and Session Clerk of Gardens Church Cape Town and he wrote a small booklet to mark the Silver Jubilee of Gardens Sunday School. It is an excellent little booklet containing much information of historical value. Few copies are still in existence but one or two are kept in the Vestry at Gardens Church, Cape Town.

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

Professor du Plessis was Professor of Church History at the Dutch Reformed Seminary at Stellenbosch, and his book on South African Missions is still the standard work on the subject. It was written in 1911. Unfortunately Professor du Plessis did not have copies of the Reports of the Glasgow Missionary Society when he wrote the story of the Scottish Missions. His history is therefore not very detailed. Moreover, when he commenced his work he intended to write the history of South African Missions up to 1850 and he explains that he was persuaded by friends to complete the story up to 1900, but, as he says, "the story of the last 50 years is not so detailed as the story of the earlier portion." The book is nevertheless almost indispensable to anyone writing about South African Christian Missions.

Mary Dick

## "David Russell"

Mary Cowley Dick is the daughter of David Russell and she has written an excellent book giving numerous details of her father's eventful life.

P. Engelbrecht

## "Die Geskiedenis van die Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk-in Suid Afrika"

This book, written in Afrikaans is the present day standard work on the history of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.

Dorothea Fairbridge

## "A History of South Africa"

This is a small work written for matriculation students. It is based very largely upon the two standard works by Dr. G. Theal and Professor Walker. It is a very excellent summary of South African History, and a handy size for quick reference.

Herodotus

Herodotus was the Greek Historian who is often called "The Father of History." He was born at Halicarnassus in Asia Minor and in about 484 B.C. and he died at Thurii in Italy about 424 B.C. In Book 2 and Book 4 Herodotus makes mention of Pharoah Necho's voyage round Africa.

Louis Herman

## "A History of Jews in South Africa"

This contains a number of interesting references to early religious life at the Cape.

J.A. Hewitt

## "Sketches of English Church History in South Africa"

This Volume is useful for a sketch of Church of England Church history in South Africa.

J. Jardine

## "A fragment of Church History at the Cape of Good Hope"

This is a small booklet containing a short description of the steps taken to found the

Presbyterian Church in Cape Town from 1824 to 1827. It is not of as much value as its title would lead one to suppose. The facts are accurate but the writer gives very few of them.

P.W. Laidler

"A Tavern of the Ocean"

Mr. Laidler has written a book on the history of Cape Town with a view to interesting the less scholarly reader. His book is full of interesting anecdotes as well as some historical information not found in the standard works by Theal and Walker.

R. Lovett

"The History of the London Missionary Society"

This is a monumental work, and of great importance and interest. The History of the work of the London Missionary Society in South Africa is contained in Vol. 1 pages 481 to 648. His reading of South African History is hardly that of the South Africans; it is that of the London Missionary Society.

Hugh Millar

"The Land as it was and is"

Mr. Millar having toured South Africa returned to Britain where he wrote a book on the country giving not only his impressions but also a great deal of history. It is not an indispensable book to the student of South African history but it contains some information not obtainable in the standard works.

G. Morgan

"Remarks on the State of the Scottish Church Cape Town 1842"

This is a pamphlet of some considerable length by Rev. G. Morgan. It was written in reply to an article in the Calcutta Free Churchman in which Mr. Hawkins accused the Cape Town Presbyterian Church of "being in Erastian bondage to the Government." It is a masterly defence of the Cape Town Church's position, and, inter alia, it gives a considerable amount of information regarding the history of the Presbyterian Church in South Africa.

John McCarter

"The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa." (July)

This is a short and interesting a ccount of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa but it is now very much out of date.

John Phillip

"Researches in South Africa"

This work, although full of exaggerations is an important book for the student of South African History. It caused a great deal of harm to the relationships between the Colonists and the Home Government. It is a very prejudiced account of the relationship between the Europeans and the non-Europeans in South Africa in the early part of the Nineteenth Century.

G. Ritchie

"History of South African College"

In this History Professor Ritchie mentions the work of Rev. Dr. Adamson the first minister of St. Andrews, Cape Town who was also a Professor at the South African College.

G.M.Theal

"A History of South Africa"

Dr. G. Theal was Government Archivist at the Cape from 1871 to 1911 and during that time he wrote a history of South Africa, which today is still one of the standard histories of the country. No student of South African history can ignore this monumental work.

G.M. Theal

"The Records of the Cape Colony"

Dr. G. Theal selected the most important documents connected with South African history and placed them in chronological order, then had them printed in 36 volumes. These books are of tremendous value to the student of South African history, and are obtainable in all libraries. No one can even approach Dr. Theal in the measure of industry, patience and accuracy which he has brought to bear on the investigation of South African historical records. A colleague said of him and his work "Future historians may possibly excel him in architectonic ability, but they can only build on the broad foundations which his researches have so securely laid."

E.A. Walker

"A History of South Africa"

Professor Walker was Professor of History at the Cape Town University before accepting the Chair of History at Oxford University. While at the Cape he wrote his "History of South Africa" which has become the authority to which most students refer today. He owes a great deal to Dr. Theal's book, and this he acknowledges in his preface.

J. Whiteside

"A History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in South Africa"

This volume tells the story of Methodism in South Africa, and is of immense value to anyone writing a South African Church history. It is based upon the very meritorious work of W.C. Holden who wrote "A brief history of Methodism and of Methodist Missions in South Africa with Appendix on the Livingstone Mission (published in London 1877)"

Magazines

1. Manual for Members of the Congregational Church 1847

This book is in the Ritchie collection of Africana and refers inter alia to the establishment of the first Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. The book is not available for public inspection, and has long since been out of print.

2. The Free Church Missionary Record

This was the Missionary Magazine of the Free Church of Scotland, and it was issued each month from 1843 to 1900. Each year the Magazines were bound into volumes, which today are of immense value to any student of Free Church History in any part of the world. As far as South Africa is concerned their importance is due to the fact that portions of the reports sent home by the Ministers labouring in South Africa were printed in the Magazine.



3. Die Kerk Bode

This is the name of the official Magazine of the Dutch Reformed Church. It was first issued in 1824 and a complete set of all issues is kept in the Library at Stellenbosch University.

4. The Presbyterian Churchman

This is the official Magazine of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. The first issue was in 1898 and copies of all issues since then are kept in the Church Offices in Johannesburg. The name of the Magazine was changed to "The Presbyterian Leader" in 1938.

Pamphlets

- a) "Reports of the Committee of the Society for the relief of distressed Settlers in South Africa from 1823 to 1824."
- b) "Extract from a statement of all the facts connected with the late divisions in the Scots Church by Rev. Archibald Barclay. Printed Cape Town 1824."
- c) "Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope by Rev. W. Wright, Printed in London 1831!"
- d) "Correspondence between Donald Moodie, Esq., and Rev. John Phillip D.D. Author of "Researches in South Africa" relative to the production for publication of alleged authority for the statement that "in the year 1774 the white race of Bushmen of Hottentots who had not submitted to servitude was ordered to be seized or extirpated." Printed in Cape Town 1841"  
This is a thorough refutation of Dr. Phillips charges against the Government in "Researches in South Africa."
- e) "Anonymous "Papers illustrative of the case for a Roman Catholic Church at the Cape of Good Hope" (Published in Cape Town 1823.)"



This small anonymous volume contains the correspondence between the Governor and the local Roman Catholics who were pressing for permission to build a church.

All these pamphlets are kept in the Cape Town Library.

Newspapers

- A) The Government Gazette from 16th August 1800.
- B) The South African Commercial Advertiser
- C) S.A. Chronicle and Mercantile Advertiser
- D) The Colonist
- E) The Cape Town Gazette

All these Newspapers are kept in the Cape Town Library.

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SECTION 2

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PRIMARY SOURCES

MINUTES OF KIRK SESSIONS

1. Kirk Session Minutes Adelaide Congregation

The Minute Books of the Adelaide congregation are kept in the present manse. The early Minute Books have been well preserved.

2. Kirk Session Minutes Alice Congregation

The Minute Books of Alice Kirk Session are kept in the Vestry at the Church where at present the "permanent pulpit supply" is Rev. Dr. Shepherd of Lovedale.

3. Kirk Session Minutes Cradock Congregation

As this congregation never really started properly it is probable that no Session Minutes were kept

4. Kirk Session Minutes East London (East) Congregation

These minute books are complete from the beginning of the congregation and they are carefully preserved in a safe in the minister's Vestry.

5. Kirk Session Minutes East London (West) Congregation

There is one Volume of these minutes which has been mislaid. The minutes are therefore incomplete but such of them as remain are kept in the vestry of the present St. Andrews Church, East London. In writing this present history I have not used this source because when I visited the Church the congregation were looking for a minister and no-one seemed to know where the ancient records were kept.

6. Kirk Session Minutes Fort Beaufort congregation

I have been assured by the present Session Clerk that Session Minute Books do exist at Fort Beaufort and that "they seem to be all here" In writing this history I have not used this source.

7. Kirk Session Minutes Glen Lynden Congregation

No one knows what has happened to the records of this early Presbyterian Church. I have not used any of the Glen Lynden congregational records in writing this history.

8. Kirk Session Minutes Glenthorn Congregation

These minutes are contained in 4 Volumes kept at the home of Mr. Eric Pringle.

9. Kirk Session Minutes Kingwilliamstown Congregation

When the Session Clerk began a new book in 1867 he wrote a short summary of the story of the Kingwilliamstown Presbyterian Church up to that date. From 1867 the Records are all complete and they are kept in the vestry of the Kingwilliamstown Church.

10. Kirk Session Minutes Port Elizabeth Congregation

These records have been very well preserved. All the minute books from the first meeting of the Kirk Session are kept in the Church Safe. The present minister displays a keen interest in historical records and he has preserved them for the Church.

11. Kirk Session Minutes Somerset East and Glenavon

These Books are kept in the Church at Somerset East. I have not used them in writing the present history.

12. Kirk Session Minutes Tarkastad Congregation

These books are kept in the Church at Tarkastad I have not used them in writing the present history.

13. Kirk Session Minutes Trinity Church Grahamstown  
Congregation

These are by no means complete. In 1927 Rev. A. McRobert wishing to write a history of the congregation for its centenary, collected together what remained of the old records neglected by many of his predecessors. These books are now preserved in the vestry of Trinity Church and the gaps in the history have been filled in by Rev. A. McRobert in a short statement which he entitled "Notes of the History of Trinity Church Grahamstown." The Session Minutes during the "Presbyterian Period" are for the most part still in existence.

MINUTES OF DEACONS' COURTS OR BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT

1. Deacon's Court Minutes Adelaide Church

These books are kept in the manse at Adelaide. They are complete from the beginning.

2. Board of Management Minutes Alice Church

I have not seen these Volumes but I am assured that they exist and are kept in the Vestry at Alice Church.

3. Board of Management Minutes Cradock Church

All the local congregational records of the Church have disappeared.

4. Board of Management Minutes East London (East)  
Church

These minute Books are kept in good order in the safe in the Minister's Vestry.

5. Board of Management Minutes East London (West)  
Church

These Volumes are kept in an old box in the Vestry at St. Andrews Church East London.

6. Deacon's Court Minutes Fort Beaufort Church

All the Minute Books of the Fort Beaufort Deacon's Court are kept by the present Session Clerk in his house. NAME

7. Deacon's Court Minutes Glen Lynden Church

There is no trace of the congregational records of the Glen Lynden Church.

8. Deacon's Court Minutes Glenthorn Church

These Volumes are kept at the home of Mr. Eric Pringle. They are all in perfect order for the Pringle family have preserved all records connected with their family.

9. Deacon's Court Minutes Kingwilliamstown Church

These Minute Books are kept in the Vestry of the Church at Kingwilliamstown. They are complete as from 1867.

10. Deacon's Court Minutes Port Elizabeth Church

These Minute Books are kept at the Hill Church Port Elizabeth. They are in excellent order.

11. Deacon's Court Minutes Somerset East and Glenayon Church

These records are kept in the Vestry at the Church at Somerset East.

12. Deacon's Court Minutes Tarkastad Church

These Minute Books are kept in the Vestry at the Tarkastad Church.

13. Deacon's Court Minutes Trinity Church Grahamstown Church

Trinity Church Grahamstown changed backwards and forwards between the Presbyterian Church and the Congregationalist Church between 1827 and 1897 and consequently there is no uniformity with regard to the function of a Deacon's Court. Several Volumes of the early minutes are missing. This applies mainly to the Congregational periods.

CONGREGATIONAL REPORTS

1. Annual Reports of Adelaide congregation

Some of these are still in existence and are kept in Adelaide by the Minister. The set is incomplete but it is possible that some years the Annual Report was not printed. The only reports available now are those which were printed.

2. Annual Reports of Alice congregation

Some of the Annual Reports of Alice congregation are obtainable in the Lovedale Library. I have not used them in the writing of this history. They were printed locally.

3. Annual Reports of Cradock congregation

None were ever written as far as I know.

4. Annual Reports of East London (East) congregation

These are kept in the vestry of St. Georges Church in East London where Rev. A. McRobert has carefully preserved them.

5. Annual Reports of East London (West) congregation

A large number of these important documents are lying about in the vestry of St. Andrews Church East London. The present history is very largely based on what is contained in them. Although only a small congregation they always considered it important to have their Annual Reports printed and distributed.

6. Annual Reports of Fort Beaufort

Several of these were pasted into the Kirk Session Minute book and extracts from the Reports were sometimes printed in the Free Church Missionary Record.

7. Annual Reports of Glen Lynden congregation

These are no longer in existence.

8. Annual Reports of Glenthorn Congregation

These are kept by Mr. Eric Pringle in his home at Glenthorn. This congregation did not print its Annual Report each year. In the years in which a Report was printed the practice was adopted of pasting the Report into the Kirk Session Minute Book.

9. Annual Reports of Kingwilliamstown Congregation

These have not been kept but there are a few lying in old cupboards at the Church and some of the Session Clerks have pasted the printed Reports into the Session Minute Books.

10. Annual Reports of Port Elizabeth Congregation

Almost every Annual Report from 1862 to 1955 is kept at the Hill Church in a cupboard and carefully looked after by the present minister.

11. Annual Reports of Somerset East and Glenavon Congregation

These Annual Reports were not printed each year. The Ministers, however, wrote Reports each year on their work for the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. These Reports were summarised in that Committees Minutes or published in the Free Church Missionary Record.

12. Annual Reports of Karkastad Congregation

These Annual Reports were not printed each year but on the occasion when they were printed the Session Clerk pasted the Report into the Session Minute Book.

13. Annual Reports of Trinity Church Grahamstown

For such of these as have been preserved we are indebted to Rev. A. McRobert Minister of the Church from 1927 to 1939. They are kept in a box in the Vestry of the Church.



MINUTES OF PRESBYTERIES AND SYNODS

1. Minutes of the Adelaide Presbytery (U.P.)

These are kept in Port Elizabeth by Rev. H.H. Munro who is the present Clerk of the Port Elizabeth Presbytery. Mr. Munro is interested in historical records and has kept the Adelaide Presbytery Minutes in splendid order.

2. Minutes of the Kaffraria Presbytery (U.P.)

These are kept at Lovedale Library and they are full of useful information for anyone interested in United Presbyterian Missions.

3. Minutes of the Free Church Presbytery of Kaffraria

These are preserved in four volumes kept at Lovedale. The Minutes of the very first meeting in 1824 are also recorded and the books are in perfect order due to the care taken of them by succeeding principals of Lovedale where they have been kept for almost 100 years. The Minute Book was entitled simply "The Minutes of the Presbytery of Kaffraria" until after the split in the Presbytery. The original minute book was, however, re-named by the Free Church Presbytery although a new Minute Book was commenced when the Presbytery changed its name.

4. Minutes of the Free Church Presbytery of Transkei

These are also preserved at Lovedale Library.

5. Minutes of the Free Church Synod of Kaffraria

The Synod of Kaffraria comprised the two Free Church Presbyteries of Kaffraria and Transkei and the record of their meetings is kept at Lovedale Library.

GLASGOW MISSIONARY SOCIETY REPORTS AND QUARTERLY PAPERS

There are two complete copies of these documents. The one is in the Cory Library at Rhodes University in Grahamstown and the other is in the Lovedale Library at Lovedale. In addition to these two complete copies there is a third incomplete copy in the possession of Rev. Dr. R. Shepherd Principal of Lovedale Seminary. For all three of these invaluable documents we are indebted to the Ross Family who for so long laboured as Missionaries at Pirrie. These are the only three copies of the Glasgow Missionary Society Reports in existence.

"THE PRINGLE LETTERS"

Mr. Eric Pringle who lives at Glenthorn today is a great grandson of the famous Thomas Pringle. He has collected all sorts of information about his great grandfather and all of this is kept in his home in Glenthorn. He hopes that one day some one will write a thesis on Thomas and/or John Pringle. If they ever do he has all the information already collected for such a student. Among 'the papers' are letters and articles which refer to our present history.... It is a most useful collection for any student of Presbyterianism in South Africa.

THE GODFREY PAPERS

These are a group of miscellaneous documents relating to the Mission work of the Free Church Kaffraria Presbytery. They have not yet been sorted out and are at present in the hands of Dr. R. Shepherd of Lovedale. There are private letters from the Missionaries to their friends and relatives and other documents of historical value. I have called them the Godfrey papers because they were collected by Dr. A. Godfrey and handed over to Dr. R. Shepherd by him.

NOTES ON THE JUBILEE OF SOMERSET EAST CONGREGATION  
by Rev. John Black

Rev. John Black who was at Adelaide for so long prepared a short History of Somerset East congregation when that congregation had been in existence for fifty years. There are still a few copies of this small pamphlet at Somerset East.

NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF TRINITY CHURCH GRAHAMSTOWN  
by Rev. A. McRobert

In 1924 Rev. Alfred McRobert, now of East London gathered together what information he could about "Trinity Church" He intended preparing a detailed history of the congregation of which he was at that time the minister. He never completed this task but he made his "notes" available to the present writer.

MINUTES OF COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

For Comments see Page 746

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINES

The Jubilee Magazine of St. Andrews Kingwilliamstown  
1933

This is a special issue of the St. Andrews Kingwilliamstown monthly magazine in which Rev. J.N.M. Paterson has written a short history of the Church. It contains several references to the early history not available in other sources.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTIES CARSTAIRS AND SLOWAN 1883

This Report was printed in full in the United Presbyterian Missionary Record.

THE PROCEEDINGS OF UNITED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD

A complete set of these Volumes is kept in the New College Library Edinburgh.

SECONDARY SOURCES

J. Chalmers "The Life of Tiyo Soga"

This life of the famous Kaffir Missionary was written by his life long friend, John Chalmers.

Charles Don "And having writ"

This book is written by the son of Rev. John Don of Kingwilliamstown and contains essays on various South African subjects. Most of the essays are political in character but Chapter 15 contains a description of the famous Pels case in which Mr. Charles Don's father was involved. The Chapter is entitled "Common Assault."

J. du Plessis "A History of South African Missions"

For comments see Page 750

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

For comments see Page 751

D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 751

Rev. E. Hunter "History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa"

This is an excellent history of South African Free Church Missions. It gives the story of the work of the Free Church Missionaries among the natives but says nothing at all about the establishment of the European English speaking congregations at Kingwilliamstown, East London, etc.

J. Laing

"Memorials"

This is really the personal diary of Rev. J. Laing the Missionary. It contains much information of historical value and is indispensable to anyone interested in the history of the Missionary Presbyteries in South Africa. Rev. W. Govan edited the diary and published the book under the title of "Memorials."

R. Lovett

"The History of the London Missionary Society."

For comments see Page 752

G. Morgen

"Remarks on the state of the Scottish Church in Cape Town"

For comments see Page 752

J. Ritchie

"History of the South African College"

For comments see Page 753

R. Shepherd

"Lovedale"

This is the history of Lovedale written by Rev. Dr. Shepherd who was for many years the Principal of Lovedale. He collected all the historical documents he could find and his book is a mine of information about the early history of the Scottish Missionaries of the Free Church. This is quite the best book on the early Scottish Missions and no student of South African Presbyterianism can afford to neglect it.

W. Slowan

"The Story of the Kaffraria Mission (U.P.)"

Mr. W. Slowan was one of the deputies who visited the South African Mission Stations of the United Presbyterian Church and the book is really the story of what he saw on that trip. Mr. Slowan was a careful chronicler and an exact historian and consequently his book is of great value to the student of Scottish Missions on the Eastern Frontier of the Cape.

G. Theal "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 753

E. Walker "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 754

Newspapers

1. The Eastern Province Herald

Copies are kept at Rhodes University

2. The Grahamstown Journal

Copies are kept at Rhodes University

3. The Natal Mercury

Copies are kept in the Durban Library.

Magazines

1. Free Church Missionary Record

For comments see Page 754

2. The United Presbyterian Missionary Record

This is the United Presbyterian equivalent of the Free Church Missionary Record. It was published in almost identical form and its contents are indispensable to the student of South African Presbyterianism.

3. The Presbyterian Leader

This is the name of the official Magazine of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. In 1935 the name was changed to "Presbyterian Leader" from "Presbyterian Churchman"

SECTION 3

PRIMARY SOURCES

MINUTES OF KIRK SESSIONS

1. Kirk Session Minutes Addington Church

These books are in the possession of the Natal Presbytery Clerk. There are 5 volumes and they are alas, not in good order. One book is in tatters, having been eaten by bookworm and cryptotermes brevis. It is very difficult to read some of the pages. The books were left for many years in an old cupboard in the Church.

2. Kirk Session Minutes Berea Church

These are kept today in a safe in the Ministers vestry. They are in good order and where necessary the old books have been rebound.

3. Kirk Session Minutes Harrismith Church

These were handed into the Natal Presbytery Clerk when the Harrismith congregation closed down in 1934. The books are at present in St. Andrews Church Durban.

4. Kirk Session Minutes Ixopo Church

As Ixopo was a preaching station of Richmond no Session Minutes were kept but the Richmond Session Minute Book refers to "The Minutes of the Ixopo Committee" which presumably was a Committee in Ixopo which was responsible for the congregation before it became a Preaching station. This Minute book has long since disappeared.

5. Kirk Session Minutes Newcastle Church

These volumes are, at present, kept in the local Bank, and are under the care of the Session Clerk.



The books have been well kept, new covers having been put on to them by some thoughtful Session Clerk of yesterday.

6. Kirk Session Minutes First Church Pietermaritzburg

These books were handed into the Natal Presbytery Clerk in 1945 when the First Church and the Second Church united to become the Pietermaritzburg Presbyterian Church. The minutes are complete from 1850 - 1945 and are almost indispensable for one interested in Natal Presbyterian Church History. The Volume 1 begins with a Narrative by Rev. W. Campbell in which he gives the story of how the first Presbyterian Church in Natal was founded.

7. Kirk Session Minutes St. Johns Church Pietermaritzburg

These books have been well preserved and are in the possession of the present minister of Pietermaritzburg Church Rev. D. McRae. Rev. John Smith, who was for 50 years minister to this congregation, took a special care of the historical records of his Church.

8. Kirk Session Minutes Pinetown Church

These have entirely disappeared but the Presbytery has a dilapidated minute book in its possession entitled "The Minutes of the Pinetown Preaching Station" This minute book is the record of the meetings of the Committee in charge of the Church at Pinetown after it had been reduced to a preaching station. These minutes have not been well preserved. The best source of information about Pinetown is the Natal Presbytery Minute Book.

9. Kirk Session Minutes Richmond Church

These are kept by the present Session Clerk of Richmond congregation. Much of the history is recorded in the minutes of the First Church Pietermaritzburg Volume 3 but the Richmond Session Minute Books are in good order.

10. Kirk Session Minutes St. Andrews Church Durban

St. Andrews Church Durban has an Archives in which all the ancient Records of the congregation are kept. There are three volumes of the Kirk Session Minute Books covering our period, and they are in good order despite the attack of Bookworm so prevalent in Durban. The covers only have been affected.

11. Kirk Session Minutes Upper Umgeni Church

These are in the possession of the Natal Presbytery Clerk and all four volumes are in good condition. Here and there throughout the books the Annual Reports have been pasted in.

MINUTES OF DEACONS' COURTS OR BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT

1. Board of Management Minutes Addington Church

These Books, like the Kirk Session Books were left in a cupboard in the Church for many years and they are in a poor condition.

2. Board of Management Minutes Berea Church

These have been well preserved and they are kept in a safe in the vestry of the Church.

3. Board of Management Minutes Harrismith Church

These books were also handed into the Natal Presbytery Clerk when the Harrismith Church closed down in 1934. They are, at present, in St. Andrews Church, Durban.

4. Board of Management Minutes Ixopo Church

No Ixopo records remain today. We are dependent for information on Ixopo from the Richmond and the Natal Presbytery Records.

5. Board of Management Minutes Newcastle Church

These are kept in the local Bank along with the other Newcastle Church Records. They are in good order.

6. Board of Management Minutes First Church  
Pietermaritzburg

These were handed with the Kirk Session Books to the Natal Presbytery Clerk and are at present in St. Andrews Church Durban. All the volumes are in perfect order.

7. Board of Management Minutes St. Johns Church  
Pietermaritzburg

These are contained in four volumes kept by Rev. D. McRae present minister of the Church (i.e. present minister of the Pietermaritzburg Church. In 1945 St. Johns and First Church united to form the congregation of which Mr. McRae is the minister).

8. Board of Management Minutes Pinetown Church

No trace of such a Minute Book can be found. If it ever existed it has now entirely disappeared.

9. Board of Management Minutes Richmond Church

These are in good order and are kept by the present Session Clerk at his house.

10. Board of Management Minutes St. Andrews Durban

These are in perfect order, but like the Session Minute Books the covers have suffered through Bookworm attacks.

11. Board of Management Minutes Upper Umgeni Church

When the Session Records were handed in the Board of Management Minute Books could not be found, so these were never handed to the Presbytery Clerk. Today they are kept by Mr. A.J. Taylor, the present Session Clerk. They are in good order.

CONGREGATIONAL REPORTS

1. Annual Reports of Addington Church Durban

Unlike other congregations it would seem that Addington did not print their Annual Report each year. Most congregations however small seemed to print their Reports but Addington adopted the practice of noting in the Session Minute Books "that a Report had been delivered" and the minister did send regular reports to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

2. Annual Reports of Berea Church Durban

These were printed almost every year and they have been preserved in chronological order by the Session Clerk. They were in his house but they are to be placed in the safe in the Vestry.

3. Annual Reports of Harrismith Church

I have not seen the original Harrismith Annual Reports but reference is made to them in the Minutes of the Free Church of Scotland Colonial Committee Minutes. Moreover portions of the reports were printed in the Free Church Missionary Record.

4. Annual Reports of Ixopo Church

No Annual Reports were ever printed for Ixopo. It was a preaching station and therefore all official Reports regarding its progress would appear in the records of the Richmond congregation.

5. Annual Reports of Newcastle Church

These have entirely disappeared. The best source of information regarding the progress of this congregation is the Session Minute Book and the Natal Presbytery Minute Books.

6. Annual Reports of First Church Pietermaritzburg

Many of these Reports have been lost. The custom was adopted of printing the Report and distributing it to the congregation but except where an occasional Report has been pasted into the Session Minute Book most of the Reports prior to 1880 have been lost.

7. Annual Reports of St. Johns Church Pietermaritzburg

Rev. John Smith adopted the plan of printing the Annual Reports along with his Quarterly Magazine in March of each year. A fair number of these Magazines have been preserved and are kept by the present minister, Rev. D. McRae.

8. Annual Reports of Binetown Church

These are no longer in existence.

9. Annual Reports of Richmond Church

We are dependent upon the references to the Richmond Annual Reports which appear in the Free Church Missionary Record and the Minutes of the Free Church Colonial Committee because the original documents have all disappeared.

10. Annual Reports of St. Andrews Church Durban

These are complete from 1863 to 1957 except for the years 1871, 1884, 1889 and 1891. The practice which is still carried on, was to paste a copy of the printed Report into the Session Minute Book.

11. Annual Reports of Upper Umgeni Church

These have not been preserved. There are references to them and quotations from them in the Minutes of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINES

1. The "Messenger"

This is the name of the Magazine of St. Johns

Church, Pietermaritzburg. It used to come out quarterly and there are still a number of copies at the Church. Rev. J. Smith was the Editor.

- 2. Apart from an occasional issue of a Magazine called "St. Andrews" by the Durban Presbyterian Church none of the other Natal Congregations seemed to have bothered about Church Magazines till after 1897.

MINUTES OF NATAL PRESBYTERY

These are kept in St. Andrews Church, Durban, and are in perfect order from the beginning.

Rev. W. Campbell started to write the minutes as from 1854 but he began the Minute Book with a Narrative explaining the history of the Natal Presbyterian Church up to 1854.

MINUTES OF COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

For Comments see Page 746

THE CUTTINGS AND PAPERS OF PROFESSOR A. PETRIE

Professor A. Petrie Professor of Classics at Natal University aspired to the writing of a history of the First Church, Pietermaritzburg and to this end collected all the letters of Rev. W. Campbell which he could find. Moreover he has in his possession the "Notes on Pietermaritzburg Church History" written by Rev. John Smith who apparently intended writing the same story at one time.

These documents, together with Professor Petrie's acute mind and memory are invaluable to anyone who wishes detailed knowledge of Pietermaritzburg's chequered Presbyterian Church History.

MINUTES OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS OF DURBAN  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Durban Presbyterian Church was the only Natal Presbyterian Church which kept a separate minute book for its congregational meetings.



SECONDARY SOURCES

Barbara Buchanan "Natal Memories"

Miss Buchanan has collected stories of Natal prior to 1900 and has re-written them in an attractive style in a book which gives the student of Natal history much authentic material.

Mary Dick "David Russell"

For comments see Page 751

J. du Plessis "A History of South African Missions"

For comments see Page 750

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

For comments see Page 751

D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 751

Mrs. Mary Tyler Gray "Memoirs by a Missionary's Daughter."

This is a pamphlet about Mr. T. Gray, an Anglican, who was a Missionary in central Natal from 1842 to 1872. The pamphlet gives a few glimpses of the work being done by Presbyterians during this time. It is not of very much value, for purely Presbyterian information.

Nathaniel Isaacs "Travels and Adventures in Eastern Africa"

Mr. Isaacs was a Trader who toured Natal in the early 1840's and he gives us a picture of life in Durban in those early days. The book is full of interesting anecdotes.

Mrs. G. Payne

"The Reminiscences of Mrs. G. Payne"

This is a short Booklet written in 1901 by a lady who came to Durban in 1850 as a young girl. Her stores give a vivid picture of life in Durban in the early days.

Natal Publicity Association

"The emigrants to Natal"

This is a duplicated pamphlet issued by the Natal Publicity Association at the time of the Durban Centenary. It gives a short history of the colonisation of Natal and is most useful in that it refers the student to more detailed sources.

J.D. Russell

"Old Durban"

This is a book, long since out of print of which today there are only about fifty copies in existence. It describes in detail what Durban was like from 1850 to 1870. In one of the chapters Russell describes the struggles of the Presbyterians to form a Church. This is an invaluable book to anyone writing about Natal.

A. Taylor

" A History of Adams Mission College"

This gives an excellent detailed history of the work of the American Board Missions who gave such ready assistance to the Presbyterian Church in Natal.

G. Theal

" A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 753

Eric Walker

"History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 754

Magazines

1. Free Church Missionary Record

For comments see Page 754

2. Presbyterian Churchman

For comments see Page 755

Newspapers

1. The Natal Witness

Copies are kept in the Durban Library.

2. The Natal Mercury

Copies are kept in the Durban Library

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SECTION 4

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PRIMARY SOURCES

MINUTES OF KIRK SESSIONS

1. Kirk Session Minutes Barberton Church

The Session Minute Book of this congregation has not been preserved. We are dependent on the minutes of the Natal Presbytery for most of the information about Barberton Presbyterian Church.

2. Kirk Session Minutes Beaconsfield Church

There are kept in a vox at the back of the Beaconsfield Church Organ. The Books are in order and well preserved.

a vox HUMPHA !!

3. Kirk Session Minutes Boksburg Church

The early minute Books are kept in a steel box in 75 Royal Oak Street, Kensington, Johannesburg.

4. Kirk Session Minutes Bloemfontein Church

These volumes are preserved in a box in the possession of the Presbytery Clerk who is the present Minister of Kroonstad.

5. Kirk Session Minutes Bulawayo Church

According to the minister these are preserved in the Vestry at the Church and they are in good order. The information regarding Bulawayo Church contained in the present work is not based upon the Kirk Session Minutes but upon the Transvaal Presbytery Minutes.

6. Kirk Session Minutes Clifton Church

I have not been able to trace this book. It

is not in the box in 75 Royal Oak Street in Johannesburg and this is where the Presbytery Clerk kept most of the ancient records of the Transvaal Churches.

7. Kirk Session Minutes Colesburg Church

Although reference is made in this Thesis to the possibility of starting a Church at Colesburg in point of fact the Church was never founded. There are therefore no Session Minutes to find.

8. Kirk Session Minutes Fordsburg Church

This is in perfect condition, and is in the steel box at 75 Royal Oak Street. This book was blown up with part of the Church during a dynamite explosion in 1896. It looks none the worse for its experience.

9. Kirk Session Minutes Germiston Church

The Kirk Session Minute Books were handed in to the Clerk of the Transvaal Presbytery. They are kept in the steel box in 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

10. Kirk Session Minutes Heilbron

There never has been such a book. Information about the congregation at Heilbron is best obtained from the Kroonstad Kirk Session Minute Book or from the Natal Presbytery Minute Book.

11. Kirk Session Minutes Jaggfontein Church

The first Kirk Session Minute Book is kept in the steel Box in Kimberley Church.

12. Kirk Session Minutes Jeppetown Church

The Presbytery Clerk was also minister of the present Jeppetown Church (now called St. Andrews, Fairview) and he therefore kept all the old Jeppetown Church Records in the same steel box with the Presbytery Records. The First volume is in an excellent state of

preservation considering the fact that it was hidden away in the ground during the Boer War. Why it was hidden I do not know, but, according to the Session Clerk at Fairview, it was thus hidden "for months" It looks none the worse for it, so it must have been carefully wrapped.

13. Kirk Session Minutes St. George's Church Johannesburg

This is kept in a safe in St. George's Church, Noord Street, Johannesburg. Rev. Dr. R.H.R. Liddell the present Minister, is very careful with all such records and the Books are in excellent condition.

14. Kirk Session Minutes Klerksdorp Church

This is still in perfect condition and is in the steel box at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

15. Kirk Session Minutes Kimberley Church

The first Minute Book called "The Minutes of New Rush Free Church Council" is kept in the vestry of the Kimberley Church. Subsequent Minute Books are called "Minutes of Kimberley Presbyterian Church Kirk Session" and these are also kept in the Kimberley Church Vestry.

16. Kirk Session Minutes Krugersdorp Church

These Books are kept in the vestry of the present Krugersdorp Church.

17. Kirk Session Minutes Kroonstad Church

These books are carefully preserved and are at present in the safe custody of the Minister who keeps the books in the Manse.

18. Kirk Session Minutes Naauwpoort Church

For many years this small congregation was under the care of the Kimberley Kirk Session and consequently the early Naauwpoort Session Minute Books are in a box at the Kimberley Church.

19. Kirk Session Minutes Pretoria Church

These are in perfect order and are kept at the Pretoria Presbyterian Church (called St. Andrews, Pretoria today).

20. Kirk Session Minutes Salisbury Church

According to the Minister these Volumes are kept at the Church in a steel safe.

21. Kirk Session Minutes Springs Church

These are kept at the Church in Springs. They are in good order and well bound.

MINUTES OF DEACONS' COURTS OR BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT

1. Board of Management Minutes Barberton Church

These books have not been preserved.

2. Board of Management Minutes Beaconsfield Church

These Books are kept in the Beaconsfield Church.

3. Board of Management Minutes Boksburg Church

These books are kept in the Steel box at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

4. Board of Management Minutes Bloemfontein Church

These Volumes were handed to the Presbytery Clerk of the Orange River Presbytery and are at present kept in a box in Kroonstad.

5. Board of Management Minutes Bulawayo Church

These are kept at the Church in Bulawayo.

6. Board of Management Minutes Clifton Church Johannesburg

These books have not been preserved. We are dependent for information about this Church on the Transvaal Presbytery Minutes.



7. Board of Management Minutes Colesburg Church

This book was never commenced. See Comment re Session Minutes on Page 781

8. Board of Management Minutes Fordsburg Church

The early Fordsburg Church Records are kept in the steel box at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

9. Board of Management Minutes Germiston Church

The early Germiston Church Records are kept in the steel box at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

10. Board of Management Minutes Heilbron Church

The records of Heilbron congregation are contained in the minute books of Kroonstad Church. I have not been able to trace the original Board of Management Minute book of this congregation although there was a local Committee at Heilbron which concerned itself with the repair of the buildings etc.

11. Board of Management Minutes Jaggfontein Church

The first Board of Management Minute Book of Jaggfontein Church is at present kept in the Kimberley Church.

12. Board of Management Minutes Jeppetown Church

These are kept in the steel boxes at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

13. Board of Management Minutes St. Georges Church  
Johannesburg

These volumes are kept in the safe at St. Georges Church Noord Street, Johannesburg.

14. Board of Management Minutes Klerksdorp Church

These books are kept in the Steel boxes at 75 Royal Oak Street, Johannesburg.

15. Board of Management Minutes Kimberley Church

These books have been preserved and they are kept in the vestry of the Kimberley Church.

16. Board of Management Minutes Krugersdorp Church

These books are kept in good order in the Krugersdorp Church Vestry.

17. Board of Management Minutes Kroonstad Church

These books are kept in the manse of the present minister of the Kroonstad congregation.

18. Board of Management Minutes Naauwpoort Church

These books are kept in the Kimberley Church.

19. Board of Management Minutes Pretoria Church

All the Board of Management Minute Books of this congregation have been carefully preserved. They are kept at the Church.

20. Board of Management Minutes Salisbury Church

These volumes are kept at the Church. They are in good order.

21. Board of Management Minutes Springs Church

These books are kept at the Church and they are all in good order.

CONGREGATIONAL REPORTS

1. The Congregations in the Trekker Republics do not seem to have printed their Annual Reports as regularly as the Churches at the coastal towns. This may have been due to the fact that printing facilities were not so easily obtained or it may have been that the cost of printing was so much higher inland than it was at the coast. The congregations in the Trekker Republics did, of course,

write Annual Reports which were sent to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland. This Committee occasionally recorded excerpts from the Reports and sometimes passed the Reports to the Editor of the Free Church Missionary Record and he printed portions of the reports in his Magazine.

- 2. I have used the Annual Reports of the following Congregations in this present work, viz. St. Georges Johannesburg, Pretoria, Germiston, Kimberley, Beaconsfield. Copies of these Reports were available at the Churches either written out in long hand in the Session Minute Book or printed and pasted into the Session Minute Book.

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH MEMBERS MEETING (Kimberley)

Before Kimberley became a Presbyterian Church almost all matters of importance were referred to The Members Meeting. The Records of these Meetings have been preserved in this Minute Book which is kept in the Vestry of the Kimberley Church.

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINES

- 1. None of the congregations in the Trekker Republics produced printed Magazines prior to 1897. I think the cost of printing made a Congregational Magazine too expensive.

NATAL PRESBYTERY MINUTES (Vol 2 and 3)

These two Volumes contain the early story of the Transvaal Churches and the books are to be found in a steel box at St. Andrews Church, Durban.

TRANSVAAL PRESBYTERY MINUTES

These are kept at 75 Royal Oak Street in Johannesburg and are contained in a large steel box. The Minutes are in perfect order, and have been very carefully preserved by the Presbytery.

MINUTES OF THE COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

These are kept in the vaults of the Church of Scotland Offices 121 George Street, Edinburgh. For comments see Page 746-7

MINUTES OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA

These are printed each year in what is called "The Blue Book" Copies of all Blue Books from 1897 to the present day are kept in the Church Offices in Johannesburg.

PAMPHLETS

1. "The Kimberley Church" - Rev. Dr. Wark

This is a small and well written pamphlet describing the history of the Kimberley Church. There is no detail given in the pamphlet as it was written to mark the Jubilee of the Kimberley Church. There is, as far as I know, only one copy of Dr. Wark's pamphlet still in existence. It is kept at the Kimberley Church.

2. "The History of St. Johns Bloemfontein - Rev. James Craig

Rev. James Craig wrote this very short pamphlet (2 pages) to mark the twentyfifth year of the founding of St. John's Church. It is useful as a guide but it contains no details at all.

3. "John Brebner" - Rev. James Craig

Rev. James Craig wrote this pamphlet after the death of Dr. Brebner. It is really a tribute to the man who did so much for the Church and the schools.

SECONDARY SOURCES

R. Hunter

"A History of Free Church Missions in India and Africa"

For comments see Page 766

Andrew Smith M.A.

"The Union of the Presbyterian Churches in South Africa - What form it ought to take"

In this well written pamphlet Mr. Smith expresses the opinions of the "anti Unionists" He urges that the South African Presbyterian Church should be a Synod of one or both the home Churches. There is only one copy of this pamphlet in existence and it is kept at St. Andrews Church Durban at present.

G. Theal

"A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 753

E. Walker

"A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 754

Magazines

1. Free Church Missionary Record

For comments see Page 754

2. Presbyterian Churchman

For comments see Page 755

SECTION 5PRIMARY SOURCESMINUTES OF NATAL PRESBYTERY

For comments See Page 775

MINUTES OF TRANSVAAL PRESBYTERY

For comments see Page 786

MINUTES OF CAPE SYNOD OF DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

These are kept at the Headquarters of the Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town. The minutes are written in Dutch.

MINUTES OF COLONIAL COMMITTEE OF FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

For comments See Page 746

MINUTES OF UNITED MISSION COUNCIL

The Missionaries of the Free Church and United Presbyterian Presbyteries used to meet regularly to discuss matters of mutual importance. This united meeting was called the United Missions Council. The minutes of these meetings are kept at Lovedale Library.

MINUTES OF FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA

For comments See Page 763

MINUTES OF FREE CHURCH PRESBYTERY OF TRANSKEI

These books are kept at Lovedale Library

MINUTES OF FREE CHURCH SYNOD OF KAFFRARIA

These books are kept at Lovedale Library.

MINUTES OF UNITED PRESBYTERIAN PRESBYTERY OF ADELAIDE

For comments See Page 763

MINUTES OF UNITED PRESBYTERIAN PRESBYTERY OF KAFFRARIA

For comments See Page 763

MINUTES OF 1880 CONFERENCE BETWEEN U.P. AND F.C. PRESBYTERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION

MINUTES OF 1881 CONFERENCE BETWEEN U.P. AND F.C. PRESBYTERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION

MINUTES OF 1882 CONFERENCE BETWEEN U.P. AND F.C. PRESBYTERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION

MINUTES OF 1883 CONFERENCE BETWEEN U.P. AND F.C. PRESBYTERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION

MINUTES OF 1884 CONFERENCE BETWEEN U.P. AND F.C. PRESBYTERIES ON THE SUBJECT OF UNION

The original Minutes of all these Conferences are kept at Lovedale but printed copies were distributed. I have in my possession copies of the printed Minutes of the 1880 and 1882 Conferences and in addition to these two copies there is a complete set at Lovedale Library.

MINUTES OF FIRST FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1892

MINUTES OF SECOND FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1893

MINUTES OF THIRD FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1894

MINUTES OF FOURTH FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1895

MINUTES OF FIFTH FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1896

MINUTES OF SIXTH FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING 1897

The original Minute Books of the Federal Council Meetings are kept in the Church offices of the Presbyterian Church of South Africa. Copies of the minutes were printed and distributed and a complete set of these printed copies is obtainable in the Church Offices in Johannesburg.



PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA

These minute Books are kept in the Offices of Presbyterian Church of S.A. Johannesburg

THE GODFREY PAPERS

For comments see Page 764

THE RUSSELL PAPERS

For comments see Page 747

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINES

1. Magazine of St. Andrews Church Cape Town

For comments see Page 748

SECONDARY SOURCES

D. Fairbridge "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 751

G. Theal "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 753

E. Walker "A History of South Africa"

For comments see Page 754

Magazines

Free Church Missionary Record

For comments see Page 754

Newspapers

1 Natal Mercury

For comments see Page 779