

A HISTORY OF  
THE NEW CHURCH



IN AUSTRALIA  
1832—1980

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**1832 — 1980**

I. A. ROBINSON

*"We do not know who you may be, and although posterity has never done anything for us, we will do something for posterity.....".*

Benjamin Barnes, Chief Engineer  
Vincent Lambert, Works Manager

The Murray Bridge, Echuca  
October 2nd, 1877.

To Rev. Richard H. Teed, whose Sermons were the inspiration of my youth.

National Library of Australia card number  
and ISBN 0 9594837 0 5

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### METRIC CONVERSION TABLE (Approximate):

1 mile = 1.61 km. — 10 miles = 16 km.

1 acre = .405 ha. — 5 acres = 2 ha.

£1 (1 pound) = \$2.

1/- (1 shilling, — 12 pence) = 10 cents.

1 foot = 30.5 centimetres

1 inch (12 inches = 1 foot) = 25 mm.

(1" = 1 inch. 1' = 1 foot.)

## INTRODUCTION

The Psalmist, when addressing the Lord, exclaims, “A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night” (Psalm 90:4). As this is so for one thousand years, how much more will it be true for one hundred years.

Yet it must be both right and good for us to commemorate that one hundred years have passed since the holding of the first Conference of the Association of The New Church in Australia. It was in February, 1881, that the infant Societies of The New Church in this country assembled for that historic meeting. The publication of this book, and the Convocation in January, 1981, stand to celebrate this first centenary of the Association. The Doctrines also tell us that it is fitting to mark such an event, as we are taught that “in the world there cannot but be times and measures” (*Arcana Coelestia*, 493). We are equally assured that even though the Lord is eternal, being Himself the Author of time, that He is always with us, as “God is present in space apart from space and in time apart from time” (*True Christian Religion*, 30).

Why should we celebrate one hundred years rather than any other span of time? As we all know, there is a universal fascination with the number one hundred, be it the years of a person’s life, or the number of runs scored on the cricket pitch. More importantly, the number one hundred in the Word of the Lord signifies “what is full” (*Arcana Coelestia*, 2636); what is full, that is, with blessings from the Lord.

When we apply this signification to the Church, we consider how the Church can come to be filled with blessings from the Lord. This happens when we reflect on the number one hundred as the multiplication of ten by ten. The first essential ten is the Ten commandments, or all the Doctrine that the Lord gives us. This ten must then direct, or be multiplied by, all the efforts made by men and women through, as it were, the ten fingers of their hands. When we have this multiplication of ten by ten we have a state that is full of blessings from the Lord, a true centenary in the life of the Church.

As we turn the pages of this History of the New Church in Australia, we shall certainly be looking back to the past, reading, inevitably, of both the strengths and weaknesses of men and women. However, as we read, can we also look forward, praying to the Lord to strengthen us in our work for Him and His Church in the future? The Church in any day and age will be only as strong as the men and women who are its members. May we, in our on-going Churchmanship, receive strength from the Lord into the efforts of our hands, to the measure of our commitment to, and constancy in, the teachings of the heavenly Doctrines now revealed by Him to all mankind.

John E. Teed  
President  
The New Church in Australia.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It has been said that there are as many versions of history as there are people who write it. Napoleon is said to have gone further than this, and to have remarked that "History is a set of lies agreed upon".

The latter statement seems to imply a conspiracy. Perhaps it sometimes applies; but more often, I think, the reader has no option but to agree with, or to believe, what is written. By falling into this trap I came close to discovering the truth of the first claim above, which is attributed to one Alec Brierly. Many, many, times have I written a version, only to discover, often apparently by the merest chance, that I have been led up the garden path. The difficulty seems, in the present case, to stem from (a) the fact that much has been written from memory, long after the event; and (b) that in many instances a *conclusion* has been drawn from a particular set of circumstances, and written down as fact.

This account of the establishment and subsequent fortunes of New Church Worship and Societies in this country will be found to be at variance in a number of places with what has been written in the past. Because I have written little from memory, my own or others; and have tried to avoid 'drawing conclusions' and writing as facts what might have appeared as probabilities, I believe that this present History is more factual than many of the sources to which I have had recourse. If therefore it is seen to differ from any previous accounts, it should not lightly be charged with inaccuracy. I do not by any means claim infallibility, and should have liked to have been able to have spent even more time on travel and research; but of most of the variations I shall have been aware, and will have ensured, so far as I have been able, that the version given here is the correct one.

There remains of course the question which confronts every historian, and which perhaps justifies Alec Brierley's assertion; what to include and what to omit. Here, the choice has necessarily been in the last resort my own, although my decisions have in some cases been modified by advice from others. I am indebted to those who have read various sections of the History and have favoured me with their comments, but I must take the final responsibility; and I am sure that other writers would have chosen differently.

I have tried to avoid the over-emphasis of some experiences through which the people and the groups of people who have taken part have passed; but I have taken the view that History must embrace both sides of the coin, and must reveal the weaknesses as well as the strengths of those who have made it. Too often, in my view, have writers swept under the carpet too much that was part of our story, and from which we might have learned salutary lessons. In making such constant choices, I have tried to treat more fully of events that have seemed to have been the most significant, either as indicating the climate and divergence of the thought of the times, or as having had an identifiable effect upon the future.

Of people as individuals, I have noticed the more those who have seemed to have been, for want of a better word, more prominent in the Church, and those who, after perhaps several generations, still have descendants connected with it. Many, many ardent and faithful lifelong worshippers and workers, not a few of whom I have known personally, have been accorded no mention. Were I to do justice to all, their number would perhaps amount to thousands. I can only say to them ... I have been

conscious of you all; I am very, very glad to have known you, and I am sorry that I have not been able to introduce you to my friends, my readers.

The plan of the work will be plain; Society by Society, in order of their foundation. It has been adopted as less prone to repetitiveness and overlapping than a chronological order throughout. It will also enable ready reference for those more interested in a particular Society. The chronological and statistical tables will also be found of interest, to the present and to future generations. Biographies I have appended; in the main of people who have been outstanding in spheres other than that of the church. Some are lengthy ... how otherwise could I do justice to a Jacob Pitman or a George Marchant, to the exciting Chauncy family, of whom so little has been known, or even to a Bugnion, that most gentlemanly, polished and persuasive enigma?

There is one striking circumstance that has come forcibly to my notice, and which I leave with the reader: the outstanding devotion, dedication and leadership of so many and so many who found the New Church only in adult life; ... 'like a ray of light darting into my benighted soul', ... 'like one who awakens from a dream to find himself quite defenceless' ... or 'as a famished man takes to a substantial diet placed providentially within his reach'. Their names are legion: Pitman, Holden, W. S. Chauncy, Deacon, Mocatta, Brereton, Jackson, Spencer, Garsden, Hurman, Marchant, S. W. Hart, Harle, Mein, Ball, Keen, C. W. Morse, Engish, Royce, Ellis, Heldon, Kirsten, J. H. Bennett, Leech, Watson, Uren, Revs. J. J. Thornton, C. D. Brock, H. W. Hickman, I. A. Arnold, T. A. Moffatt; all of these and so many more.

Justice I have not done to the women of the Church; so many of them are so unknown. They were there, mostly in the background, from Emma Pitman, who was sent to bed for a fortnight by the Lord to teach her gratitude, but who never failed to have her one room ready on time for Worship; Theresa Poole, ever faithful and cheerful, and writing her poetry and her wonderful Preface to the Beatitudes, although reduced to poverty; and buried in her wicker cradle; Elizabeth Noar, the goldfields midwife; Isabella Hawley, forever organising Sunday Schools; Sarah Anne McLachlan, the most beautiful of children, and just as lovely a woman, with her few brief years of happiness in Sydney; and on through the generations. For the most part one knows little of their lives. How I should like to have known them, and how I look forward to someday, 'in the illimitable hereafter', meeting them!

I am very conscious that the later years of each Society have been sketched in less fully, and passed over more quickly, than the earlier ones. To this, my own self-criticism, I can only reply that they do indeed seem to have been less full of people and of action, of turbulence as well as of growth, ... a more sedate and middle-aged period perhaps. Then again, the foundation years of each Society are more historically interesting; and the years before and around the turn of the century more exciting. Perhaps it is the glamour of antiquity which always lends piquancy to History that is responsible. When in a future century another History is written, perhaps the writer will start, not where I have left off, but much earlier. Then, what is comparatively recent now will be old and will have attained its own appropriate aura. Future Historian, I hope that you will have as much pleasure in your research as I have had in mine !

Finally, if in one or two places I have appeared to have passed judgement or to have expressed a personal opinion, I shall have done so because, having arrived at such a conclusion through careful research and having felt that justice to the subject required its expression, I have at the same time been faced with the physical impracticability of citing all of my reasons and sources.

I trust that this History, looking backwards as all history must, will nevertheless be seen as a springboard from which the New Church in Australia may move forward into the "unfathomable future", and from which it may benefit as from lessons learned in the school of life.

I. A. Robinson

Melbourne,  
January, 1980.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank most heartily and most sincerely all those who have so willingly helped me. In the sphere of research I am greatly indebted to those new-found friends who, though not themselves of the New Church faith, have yet been so very willing, even eager, to assist. To Margaret Goyder Kerr and her sister Patricia Ross, great-grand daughters of that remarkable labourer in the vineyard, Rev. D. G. Goyder; to Elizabeth Pascall and Lady Barbara Hoyle, whose families are descended from John Preston; to Lady Mary de Crespigny, Dame Nancy Buttfield, Noel Byrne of G.M.H., John and O. J. Masterman, Roger and Bruce Ireland, Geoffrey Dutton, Glenys Fawcett of W. A., Mary Deakes of Tasmania, and all the others; and to those many in official positions who have gone beyond the bounds of duty, I owe especial gratitude.

I do not forget those very many New Church folk throughout Australia, Britain and America who have also been kind enough to help as I have called upon them. Amongst these there are some whom I cannot forbear to mention by name ... my very dear friends Dr. Myra Hurman and Mrs. F. W. (Mora) Fletcher; Miss Kate Pitcairn of Bryn Athyn; and Rev. M. D. Gladish of the Hurstville Society, whom I have driven I am sure almost beyond the farthest limits of human endurance. Without his long hours of research and typing the history of the Hurstville Society could not have been attempted; although, once again, for what now appears in print I myself am solely and entirely responsible.

Then there are those who have written before me; those who have supplied photographs; and those who have read part or all of the manuscript and who have offered invaluable constructive criticism and suggestions, ... especially amongst the latter the Rev. John and Mrs. Mary Teed.

I.A.R.

## THE NEW CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND THE ADELAIDE SOCIETY

#### THE EMIGRATION OF JACOB PITMAN

Of all the brief statements that have changed the course of History, none could have greater significance from the point of view of the New Church in Australia than that made, at a date unknown, but certainly within a few years of 1830, by the young Isaac Pitman to his older brother Jacob.

"Why, Jacob", he said, with an open book in his hand, "Here is an author who shows that Jesus is the only God".

These historic words, embracing as they do the whole charter of the New Church, were to lead under Providence to the first institution of New Church public Worship in the Southern Hemisphere; to the formation of the Adelaide Society; and to the conversion of many of its earliest members.

Jacob Pitman was a simple and transparently honest man, not gifted or endowed with a strong personality, nor with great educational, intellectual, organisational, or other outstanding ability; but he received his brother's words, "as a ray of light darting into my benighted soul"; and his one qualification as Founder and Minister of the Adelaide Society was his clear perception and great love thenceforth for the Doctrines of the new Church. His 21 years in South Australia were full of disappointments, troubles, heart-searchings, hard but unrewarding work and turmoil; and these experiences serve to highlight his single-minded application to his self-ordained task of establishing there the knowledge and love of the Truths of the Second Advent.

With his wife and two children, Jacob Pitman arrived in the infant Colony of South Australia on the sailing ship '*Trusty*', on May 17th, 1838. They had left England more than 5½ months earlier, on November 30th, 1837. On board ship also was one William Holden, a tailor, from Chichester, Sussex, with his family. Mr. Holden had arranged to sail on an earlier vessel, but because of an outbreak of measles on that, had transferred to the '*Trusty*'. This he looked back on after years as a fulfilment of the Divine promise: "I will bring the blind by a way that they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known" ... Is. 42:16. Well might we also echo and add to this thought, when we call to mind the long lifetime of William Holden in the service of the new Church in South Australia. During the nearly half a year at sea, Jacob Pitman not only introduced Mr. Holden to the New Church, but also taught him shorthand, which enabled him to obtain, in November, 1851, a position on the staff of the '*Register*' newspaper; an appointment he was to hold until he was in his 90th year, and within six months of his death.

Jacob Pitman brought with him a complete set of Swedenborg's theological works, presented to him by the 'London Printing Society' (The Swedenborg Society), and many collateral works and periodicals. He kept by him a New Church liturgy and a Hymn Book, and on fine Sundays he conducted Services of Worship for his fellow passengers. Mr. Holden (then a Calvinist) remarks on the singularly impressive character of these simple Services, held as they were in complete isolation from the rest of the world; and also that it was noticed that they nearly always had fine weather on a Sunday. Here is his description of their arrival in Adelaide: "At length our voyage ended. We landed at the 'Old Port', May 17th, 1838, and having carried our wives and children upon our backs through the shallow water to dry land, we were



*The First Dinner to the Aboriginals, Adelaide, 1838.* Water-colour by Mrs. M. S. Berkeley. Collection, the Art Gallery of South Australia.



*The First Government House, Adelaide, from the River Torrens.* Water-colour by Mrs. M. S. Berkeley. Collection — The Art Gallery of South Australia.

conveyed seven miles through the bush in a bullock dray and deposited on a well-timbered plain. This, we were informed, was the City of Adelaide, ... the Metropolis of the Land of Promise, and here we were left to assist in turning the material wilderness into a fruitful field; to make the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose".

Mr. Pitman hoped to be able soon to interest others in the Colony in the New Church teachings, and was much disappointed when little or no response was forthcoming. Mr. Holden recounts this with the story of his own final conversion: "Well I remember how sorrowfully on one occasion he applied to himself the sacred text, 'I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top' ... Ps. 102:7. I often wondered what induced him so frequently to request me to read the Writings of the New Church, seeing that my prejudices in favour of orthodoxy were so strong. I had made the fortress of Calvinism my city of refuge 'from the windy storm and tempest', and dreamed that nothing would ever entice or drive me thence. But, after reading 'The Four Leading Doctrines', the 'Brief Exposition', 'Noble's Appeal', and several other of the defensive works of the Church, I awoke from my dream to find myself quite defenceless. The battering ram of genuine truth had demolished my imaginary stronghold; there was not left one stone upon another that was not thrown down. This final disintegration occurred in 1842."<sup>(1)a</sup>

For Jacob Pitman, a carpenter by trade, the first concern on arrival had been to build himself a house. Before leaving England he had borrowed £50 from his father (which he was still hoping to repay in 1855); and he had brought with him a bundle of timber, which he sold at 400% profit. His family was first housed, with free rations, in one of the huts provided for 'free passage' immigrants. It was not waterproof, but he was able to make it so with tarpaulins he had brought with him. His wife and children were weakened by the voyage, and his wife was miserable; but "... the Lord has mercifully confined her to her bed for ten days to teach her gratitude". He took work as a carpenter for wages, and at 12/6 a day was "ten times better paid than in England". Having to move from the quarters provided by August 1st, he bought land in Rundle Street East, for £62 on 18 months' terms, and built his own house, of brick, in July. Besides the kitchen, it was of only one room, 16 feet x 12 feet, which served both as living room and bedroom for his family. Until May 1854, sixteen years later, there was no stove but an open fireplace only. But still it was "such a house as my dear mother longed for all her life." He also built a shed, a fowlhouse and a "large workshop with five benches", and established a vegetable garden.<sup>(2)</sup>

#### FIRST PUBLIC WORSHIP \*\*\* FOUNDATION OF THE SOCIETY \*\*\* MR. PITMAN'S ORDINATION.

Throughout the first six years, the family attended the Church of England, but Jacob Pitman "continually longed for communion with those who could, with us, worship the Lord, the Saviour, in His Divine Humanity." He had erected shelves in his living room, on which all his books were displayed. Now he erected an Altar in it also, and dedicated it to 'the only wise God, the Saviour'; and gave notice that he would open his house every Sunday "for the Worship of the Lord, according to the Doctrines of the New Church." The first public Service of Worship was held in his living room on July 7th, 1844. Present, besides Mr. Pitman's family, were two persons, William Holden and Smith Owen Smith. This Service, and this date, are



*North Terrace, Adelaide, in 1839* Water-colour by Mrs. M. S. Berkeley (Martha Snell-Chauncy) — Collection — The Art Gallery of South Australia.

(a) Refer to the Biographical Section, page 177.



*Adelaide, South Australia, 1978. North Terrace is adjacent to the railway terminal.*

significant as marking the first publicly proclaimed group Worship of the New Church in Australia and in the Southern Hemisphere. There was not yet an organisation, or a Society by that name; yet since from that date meetings and Worship did not cease, it has from that time been regarded as the date of the birth of the Adelaide Society and observed as its Anniversary.

Here, in Mr. and Mrs. Pitman's modest home, they worshipped every Sunday for the next three years, having two Services from late in 1844. By this time there were six children in the Pitman family, "but Mrs. Pitman never failed to have the room ready." In the first year the attendance rose to seven or eight, including children old enough to attend. A difficulty was that, "during the rainy season the City of Adelaide was a kind of Dismal Swamp on a small scale. The footpaths were unpaved, and often ankle deep in mud." There was only one Liturgy, and the little group's difficulties can be further gauged from this extract from Jacob Pitman's letter of 1845 to his previous Minister in Bath, England, Dr. Barnes:

"The following incident will show the desirability of having another copy of the Liturgy. One of our friends, [William Holden] was in the habit of taking the Liturgy some nine miles into the bush [Hope Valley, 9–10 miles into the hilly country beyond the River Torrens] on Sunday evenings after Service, to read to his family and neighbours during the week evenings; and on one occasion, when crossing the river on a tree, the night being dark, he missed his footing and fell in ...the poor Liturgy suffered the most. It will never be the same again."<sup>(a)</sup>

There was only one Hymn Book, so the lines were read two at a time, and then the two lines sung, to the accompaniment of Mr. Poole's 'cello, ... "but we got along pretty well."

On the first Anniversary, July 6th, 1845, there were 14 adults present at the morning Service, nearly all of whom had first been introduced to the Doctrines after their arrival in Adelaide, and several children: the largest congregation up to that time. On that occasion, for the first time, Mr. Pitman addressed them "from the resources of his own mind", rather than adopting his usual practice of reading a printed Sermon or a passage from the Writings. After this Service he wrote:

"I had an ardent desire to administer the holy ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and thus to inaugurate them into a Society; but alas! I could not, I durst not, unless my life was more in accordance with the holy truths my lips profess. I have been unfortunate in business and much afflicted in mind of late, and a reproach to the cause I love. May the Lord deliver me from evil and replenish me with pure affections of goodness from Himself."

In January, 1846, a donation of books was received from 'The Society for Printing and Publishing the Writings' in London. A meeting was held on the 28th of that month at which the books were sold. The proceeds were sent to London for a further supply. In that year the Anniversary was celebrated at the home of Mr. Botting, with about 50 present including children; most being present by invitation and not necessarily particularly interested in the Doctrines. But thoughts had now again begun to turn towards the formal inauguration of a Society; and in August, 1845, Mr. Pitman had written to Dr. Barnes for advice. The reply was received in April, 1846.

(a) There is another version of this story, which states that the only New Church Hymn Book in the Southern Hemisphere, with music, was totally lost.

Dr. Barnes saw no likelihood of a Minister coming from England, and advised as follows: "Call all of your Society together at once, and inform them of the necessity of here being a head, a Minister, and before you part, let them choose one, if you prefer it, by ballot; or rather by lot, if there be twelve men present. Previous to doing this, let the prayer of our Lord be solemnly repeated; and each man as he draws his card [one with the word Minister written on it] 'exclaim in faith, 'The Lord direct'. In this way was the first Minister in England chosen; Robert Hindmarsh.<sup>(a)</sup> This he told me himself. You must do this, dear friend, or you will never come into a state of order. I take it the lot will fall upon yourself, and I do not flatter you when I say I do verily think you in all respects fully competent. If the individual to whom the lot may fall should not be competent to perform the duty of preaching, let him still be the Minister; that is, let him give the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and let him immediately baptize all who desire it, especially all the children of the Society, who, when they come to the age of reason, should be duly informed of the ceremony they have been subjected to."

The outcome is told by Mr. Holden:

"It was accordingly determined to invite all the known recipients in the Colony, by one month's notice, to meet on Sunday evening, October 4th, 1846, at Mr. Pitman's house. Dr. Barnes had assumed that there would be twelve adult receivers present; but as it was thought by some that the attempt to organise a Society at that time was premature, it was agreed to make the number of attendants at the meeting the test of this doubtful point. Did this simple test decide the question? The reader must judge for himself; the facts are these: A special Service had been arranged, which included the reading of Dr. Barnes' letter and of the twelve articles of faith, to each of which it was required that everyone should respond, 'I believe in this article of faith'. At the usual time of opening the Service, 6.30, there were eleven male adults present. The usual liturgical Service was commenced. But during the reading of the first Lesson, the door opened and the twelfth entered and quietly took his seat. I can neither describe nor forget the thrilling sensation which this produced. Mr. Pitman finished the chapter, and having ejaculated, 'Mysterious are the ways of Providence', or words to that effect, began at once to read the special Service. Of the twelve adult males then present certainly only two, and I think only one, besides myself, is still [1891] left in this dark world. Shall we ever in the illimitable hereafter meet again? We were all novices at that time, and a Mr. Bradford, ... a dear old gentleman who at his death left a small legacy to the Society, ... declined to give an affirmative response to one of the Articles, on the ground that he had not sufficiently investigated the subject to which it referred to be able conscientiously to say he believed it to be true. Consequently, as there were but eleven consentents present, the project was of necessity deferred. But the question of organising a Society was not lost sight of. Dr. Barnes' words, 'You must do this, or you will never come into a state of order', were constantly recurring to our thoughts."<sup>(b)</sup>

- (a) Robert Hindmarsh was chosen, both independently and by lot, not to be Minister, but to ordain. He ordained his father, James Hindmarsh, and Samuel Smith, as had already been decided. By virtue of this, he was reckoned, by the 1818 Conference, to be an ordaining Minister, "chosen by Heaven".
- (b) The number 12, although it had been mentioned by Dr. Barnes, was finally fixed upon in Adelaide in consideration of the circumstances that that was about the number that they could expect at the meeting, and that it was a most significant number in New Church thought.

On February 1st, 1847, Mr. Pitman wrote as follows to "The recipients of the Truths of the Lord's New Church in South Australia":

"My Christian Friends: After much prayerful consideration respecting the organisation of a New Church Society and Ministry in this province, and with an ardent desire to be useful in the vineyard which the Lord in His Divine Providence has planted in this country through the instrumentality of His unworthy servant, I am induced to offer myself as a candidate for the Ministry if so be that it is your *unanimous wish expressed in writing* that I do so. And that you pledge yourselves to assist me in the responsible duties of the office by your presence, your prayers, and your united efforts to spread the glorious truths of the new Dispensation and to live accordingly.

Trusting in the L.J.J., [Lord Jehovah Jesus] for every assistance I may need to perform with affection, meekness and fidelity the sacred duties of a Minister, I subscribe myself, your humble and obedient servant, Jacob Pitman."

The reply, signed by 19 recipients (some of them lived too far distant to often attend Services), read:

"Dear and respected Sir,

We, the undersigned recipients of the truths of the Lord's New Church in South Australia, in soliciting you to accept our choice and approval of you as a Minister, beg to express our appreciation of the value of your services during the past, and our conviction of the purity of the motives by which you are actuated in offering yourself as a candidate for the Ministry, the duties of which office we doubt not you will, by Divine assistance, faithfully discharge. We also hereby pledge ourselves to assist you in the responsible duties of the office by our presence, our prayers and our united efforts to spread the glorious truths of the New Dispensation, and to live accordingly; and may the Will of our glorified Redeemer be done."

After the usual morning Service on Sunday, March 14th, 1847, Mr. Holden conducted the Service of Ordination from the British Conference Liturgy, omitting the Laying on of Hands; during which Mr. James Munro, in the name of all the recipients, presented to Mr. Pitman a copy of the Word, accompanied by this Address:

"In the name of the recipients of the truths of the Lord's New Church in this Province, I present you with this copy of the Holy Word, as a token that we have chosen you to be our Minister, and we humbly pray that the Lord may enlighten your mind to understand its sacred contents. May He enable you to expound it to our mutual edification and to the glory of His Holy Name; and may His blessing rest upon all your ministrations in this Society of His Church."

After the 'Charge and Exhortation' was read, the Minister knelt and the Blessing was pronounced ... 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.' ... Num. 6:24–26.

On the following Sunday, March 21st, "The recipients of the New Church in South Australia formed themselves into a Society...". Those present signed the Declaration of Faith, ten adults and one child were baptized, and the Sacrament of the Holy Supper was administered for the first time in Adelaide, and for the first time, at least

in public, in Australia, in accordance with the New Church faith. Thus was founded the Adelaide Society of the New Church, the first in the Southern Hemisphere.<sup>(a)</sup>

Those baptized at this Foundation Service were all to remain in close association with the Society ... Mr. and Mrs. Holden, Mr. and Mrs. Randall, Mr. and Mrs. Clisby and their daughter Harriet,<sup>(3)</sup> aged 16, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Newman, Mr. Munro and Mr. F. H. Botting. (Mr. Botting's son, F. W. Botting, was to be a long-time Secretary of the Society. Mr. and Mrs. Randall were not new converts; they had themselves brought a set of the Writings to Adelaide where they landed on February 10th, 1837, twelve months earlier than Jacob Pitman.)

Jacob Pitman already before this time had baptized two infants, ... his daughter Mary, on October 28th, 1838, who died in January, 1840, and Mary Winzer on February 13th, 1845. Now, a fortnight later, April 4th, he baptized four more adults, Mr. and Mrs. Emanuel Spiller, (Mr. Spiller was appointed Secretary of the Society), and Mr. and Mrs. Winzer. The first New Church Burial Service was conducted by Mr. Pitman for John Clisby, the adult cousin of Harriet, in January 1845. On July 16th, 1846, he conducted the Burial Service at their home at Hope Valley, for the son of William and Sally Holden, aged 2 years and 5 months, and "...his remains were orderly interred in their garden".<sup>(b)</sup>

The Adelaide Society now had a form and a name, (It was incorporated in 1888) and a Minister, (although Mr. Pitman did not assume the courtesy title of 'Reverend'; and perforce continued in his daily occupation as a builder). The date of its formation is March 1st, 1847; but it must be distinctly borne in mind that, as already stated, the date of the first public Worship, July 7th, 1844, has always been regarded as that of its first beginning; thus two Anniversaries had already been celebrated before the little group adopted the title of a 'Society'.

The third Anniversary, July, 1847, following so closely upon the Foundation, was an occasion of great rejoicing. It was a Thanksgiving celebrated on a grand scale, probably not again equalled in the annals of the Society, and indeed not often in connection with a New Church Society elsewhere. It was also in part a publicity exercise, though not fruitful in observable results. It was held in the Music Hall, Gouger Street, "with a tea and public meeting at which fully 200 were present". The Hall was fully decorated and tastefully illuminated. A full orchestra<sup>(c)</sup> and chorus were engaged, who presented 11 Choruses and other compositions by Handel, Haydn, Beethoven, Mozart and others. Addresses were given by Messrs. Pitman, Holden and Newman; and at the close 220 tracts were distributed. The event was fully reported in the newspapers. In the same year a weeknight Bible reading and study class was instituted, which continued for about two years.

(a) The names of the 19 foundation members are not known; there are no extant records of membership prior to 1850. Many who joined in 1850-51 are recorded as having joined again in 1861, after the departure of Jacob Pitman, although the reason for this is not clear.

(b) It is noteworthy that the date of the foundation of the Society and the dates of the early baptisms and deaths are all related by Mr. Pitman back to the year 1757, the year of the Last Judgment, as Year 1 of the New Dispensation. The custom was originated by Robert Hindmarsh, thus: 'London, Jan. 18th, 1828-72' ... (letter to Joseph Pegg). In later years, Mr. Pitman expressed the proposition that the year of the Last Judgment should be given as 1758, the year in which it was completed. Even so, the significant year for the new Church is now more often taken to be 1770, the year of the proclamation in the spiritual world. (It becomes an interesting exercise to reflect upon what might have been the situation in the spiritual world between these two years).

(c) Not to be confused with a full orchestra of more sophisticated times and places. It probably consisted of five or six instruments.

The fourth Anniversary was observed similarly on July 13th, 1848, at the Freemasons' Tavern, with again about 200 at tea, 200 afterwards and the same three speakers; the music this time consisting of the singing of hymns, in which members of the South Australian Choral Society assisted. The three addresses were reported almost verbatim in the 'South Australian Register', occupying 2½ columns; or 51 3-inch wide column inches, in minute print.

A severe loss had been that of Mr. G. H. Poole,<sup>(4)</sup> he who had provided the music for the Services with his 'cello. A dedicated New Churchman and an eminently successful missionary, he is often credited with having been the Founder of the Adelaide Society. He had come to Adelaide early in 1840, and in 1844 was one of the earliest members of the little group meeting for worship in Mr. Pitman's home; and seems to have been responsible for attracting a number of others in the first three years. Through a common interest in music he had met his future wife, then Mrs. Walker, (formerly Theresa Chauncy)<sup>(5)</sup> and he eventually brought her and directly or indirectly four other members of her family into the Church, ... her sisters Sophia (afterwards Mrs. Wornum) and Martha (Mrs. Berkeley) and two of her brothers. Of these one, William, was Chairman of the Adelaide Society, 1850-51, and a foundation member, and Chairman, of the Melbourne Society; and the other, Hugh, a foundation member of the Sydney Society. In 1846, Mr. Poole, speaking fluent French, (as also did Mrs. Walker) and at the suggestion of Isaac Pitman, left Adelaide for the island of Mauritius, and was the first to introduce the New Church there. He was to become, in 1850, one of the first small group meeting in Sydney for the study of the Doctrines, at the home of Rev. and Mrs. MacLachlan.

The years 1847 and 1848 however saw increased membership, and already early in the latter there were attendances of up to 20 at Worship, including about 8 children; a remarkable growth in the four years. These numbers and Mr. Pitman's growing family meant that a move had to be made from his home. In November, 1848 the Oddfellows' (Commercial) Schoolroom, between Franklin St. and Weymouth St., was hired, at £10 p.a., and attendances immediately increased to about 30. This however was partly due to the return from London in that month of Messrs. Chauncy, Clisby and Rendall, and to the arrival from the Argyle Square Society of Mrs. Elizabeth Darwin with her two young sons, John and William, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wilson with their three adult children; and of Mr. Goadsby, from Manchester. Mr. Goadsby died in May of the same year, and Thomas Wilson, aged 27, in March, 1849. John Darwin took employment with Mr. Pitman as a carpenter. Also in 1848, in December, a parcel of books arrived, from the 'London Printing Society', "only 15 months after the despatch of the order".

A welcome and significant newcomer in 1849 was Mr. C. N. Wornum.<sup>(6)</sup> A member of a family whose name appears in very early records of the Swedenborg Society, he was to marry in Melbourne, in 1852, Sophia Maria Chauncy. They were baptized with their daughter, Annie-Harriet, by Jacob Pitman in the Cafrington St. Church on October 23rd, 1853, and are recorded as having joined the Society in January, 1854, in the same month as one George John Ireland.<sup>(7)</sup> Over the following years many Reading Meetings and memorable social gatherings were held in their home at Norwood. Their daughter Mary was to marry Grenville, the son of Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Ireland.

Mr. and Mrs. Grenville Ireland, and their daughters Ethel and Ruth (Mrs. J. C. Playfair) were to be lifelong members of the Adelaide Society, and Mr. Ireland, Ethel and Ruth were members in turn of several Australian Conferences. In 1949 the

mahogany Altar table in the Adelaide Church was carved and polished in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Grenville Ireland ‘‘who spent their lives in the service of the Church’’. The present (1980) Secretary of the Adelaide Society, Mrs. Mary Womersley, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Playfair, thus maintaining the tradition of service to the Society established by her great-grandparents, George John Ireland and Conrad Nicholson Wornum.

The move to the Oddfellows’ Schoolroom had been necessary, but it proved to be somewhat unsatisfactory as a place of Worship, and this was very quickly reflected in lessened support and attendances. On June 3rd, 1849, there was an attendance of only 9 at the morning Service. Mr. Holden explains the causes:

“O, what a falling off there was! And why? 1. Our temporary place of Worship was a wooden building, with a cellar in which, during the winter, the water accumulated and a congregation of frogs took it into their wise heads to assemble, there to hold their clamorous croaking carnivals. 2. The unpaved sloppy streets<sup>(a)</sup> seemed to say to pedestrians: ‘don’t venture abroad if you can avoid it’. 3. Several of our friends had removed into the country, and it is to be feared that they who remained were wandering upon Bunyan’s ‘Enchanted Ground’, where they could scarcely keep awake.”

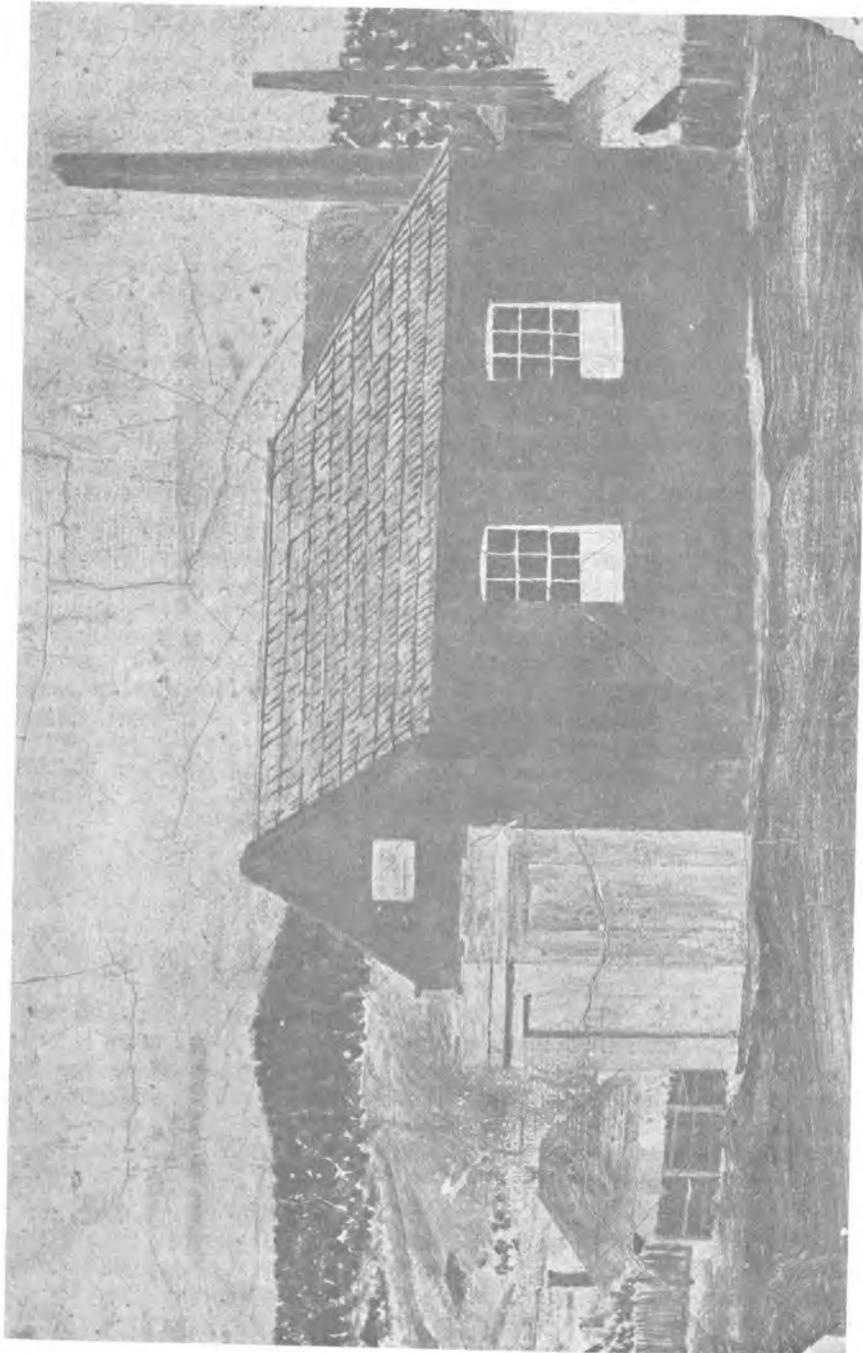
In addition to removals into the country, several of the most devoted members had, by now, left the Colony. Mr. Poole had gone to Mauritius, and Mrs. Walker, with her husband, to Sydney. Sometimes now there were only four or five at Worship, and the evening Services were discontinued.

“Our anniversary (July, 1849) is approaching, but, if we are to judge the prosperity of the cause by the attendance of late, it will be more in character to keep it in sackcloth and ashes than in festal triumph”. At a Farewell to Mr. Pitman, who was moving to Mt. Barker, (he moved back shortly afterwards, to Unley), there were 35-40 present, ... “which contrasted strongly with our meagre attendances for so many months.”

#### THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN CHURCH \*\*\* MR. PITMAN’S RESIGNATION.

In 1846 a Building Fund had been opened, and by April, 1849, had a credit balance of £41/18/2. But a building was now becoming essential, and early in 1850 a 21 years’ lease of a piece of land was taken at Sowter’s Gardens, Carrington Street, “just around the corner from King William Street”, and close to the Supreme Court building. Mr. Pitman erected a little Church there, ... the first New Church building in Australia. It was opened for Worship on July 11th, 1850. (The illustration is from an oil painting by Mr. Holden’s son, John, done when he was aged 15, which still hangs in the Church Hall at Marion). This was the home of the Adelaide Society until 1872; but it stood until 1910, and was used for many years as a day-school. In the latter year the site was bought by Messrs. F. H. Faulding, and the Church was demolished to make way for their stables and fodder storage. “It was a tiny Church”, they remarked in their Journal, “but the congregation was proud of it, and with earnest conviction put up the sign:

(a) Mr. Holden’s mention of unpaved sloppy streets brings to mind the incidents of 1848, when a drunken man was fined for attempting to swim from one end of Hindley Street to the other in the mud, and a bullock was actually drowned in Wakefield Street, near the Town Hall. The Observer wrote ‘Adelaide’s greasy thoroughfares stink in the rain’. There is also the famous anecdote about the man who saw a hat lying in the middle of the street. He went to pick it up, but a voice below told him to leave it alone, it was on his head. When the pedestrian asked why he didn’t come up, he said he would, only his horse was underneath him.



*The Carrington St. Church, Adelaide. The First New Church building in the South Hemisphere. From the oil painting by John Holden, aged 15. Courtesy of the Adelaide Society.*

## THE NEW CHURCH SIGNIFIED BY THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE REVELATION.

But the ten years 1849–59 were a time of mixed fortune for the new Society; of occasional uplift and often of near despair. A few members came, and others moved away; those who remained continually found their loyalty tested to the utmost by the conditions of the period. Tensions and misunderstandings arose easily and often. Jacob Pitman faced severe trials, spiritual, mental and economic. There were times of growth and increased support, rapidly succeeded by near desertion and consequent utter dejection. As early as August, 1845, Mr. Pitman had written to Dr. Barnes, (in the letter quoted above),

"We have been awfully harassed the last few years, and since we opened our house for Worship I have feared many times that I must give it up. O! where are the consolations of religion? Where the peace and joy of the Holy Ghost? They are not enjoyed by me, and I want to know the causes. ... Also clear up this point ... When is a man to be admitted? When he understands enough to make open avowal, or when he has shown by a Christian life that they are written on his heart?"

The year 1851 saw conflict in the Society, and Mr. Pitman in moods of profound depression. He complains that there is "No grateful word, but only a spirit of complaint". "Those who direct the choir sometimes come in after the first hymn, and sometimes not at all"; and he himself has no voice or ability to lead the singing. He urged the Society to replace him with Mr. Day as leader and Minister. He is also too busy to do justice to the position. In 1853 he wrote: "The poor Magdalene had seven devils cast out of her, ... how I envy her". In 1851 three more New Churchmen had arrived, Mr. James Thompson, from the Newcastle-on-Tyne Society, with his two sons. (They moved to the Melbourne Society in 1883). But it was a bad year, not only for the New Church, but for the Colony. The gold rush to Victoria was of such an extent that of a total of 1,915 houses in North and South Adelaide alone 642 were deserted, and between 17,000 and 20,000 men had left for the eastern Colonies. There were 4,000 South Australians (Mr. E. G. Day was one of them) at the Mt. Alexander (near Ballarat) goldfield, and the 'Monster' Burra Burra copper mine lost 1,000 of its 1,100 employees and had to temporarily close.

In 1855 there was trouble over the baptism of the infant child of Mr. and Mrs. Goyder.<sup>(8)</sup> Mr. G. W. Goyder, a son of Rev. D. G. Goyder of Britain, had come to Sydney to his sister, Mrs. MacLachlan, in 1843, and had moved to Adelaide in 1845, where he married and joined the Society with his wife in November, 1851. Now he thought that Mr. Pitman was refusing to baptize his child. The misunderstanding was not overcome until the child had been baptized by a layman, Mr. Munro. The question then arose, was baptism by a layman efficacious? How the question was settled is not known; but eventually the difference between Mr. Goyder and Mr. Pitman was resolved amicably.

In 1855 a series of lectures had been given in the Freemasons' Tavern, Pirie Street, by Messrs. Pitman, Day and John Smith, and had created considerable interest. The announcement of the third of these was accompanied by a special invitation to Ministers of other denominations. None attended; and subsequently a very attractively printed circular letter, (copies of which are still extant) was sent to each of them, appealing to them, not for the sake of enlarging the New Church, but that they

might teach the TRUTH from their own pulpits. In 1857, to commemorate the anniversary of the Last Judgment, a series of 12 monthly lectures was given by Messrs. Pitman, Holden and Day. At one of Mr. Day's lectures, in White's Assembly Room, there was an audience of 300. It was presided over by Mr. Patrick Auld,<sup>(9)</sup> and was afterwards published as an advertisement, and also printed and distributed as a tract.

By this time the strength of the Society lay with the boys and girls now growing up, and a 'Junior Association' was formed under the leadership of John Holden. Its objects were "The instruction of the youthful members of the congregation in the principles of True Religion, and the promotion of their moral and intellectual culture". The Association had an average attendance of 18. John Holden, eldest son of William and Sally, a little afterwards went to America and studied for the new Church Ministry. He completed his studies and became sub-editor of *The New Church Messenger*, but died before the date set for his ordination. Another member was Redman Goldsack, who with his father, Stephen Goldsack, a confectioner, joined the Society in 1859, both father and son being baptized by Jacob Pitman. Redman became the first student to enter the New Church College in London, and as Rev. Redman Goldsack, was the father of Rev. Sydney J. C. Goldsack and the grandfather of Rev. Eustace Goldsack.

In the late 1850's there was yet a third severe commercial depression in South Australia. The Society raised a fund in response to a public appeal for relief work in India. The amount raised was £2/14/0, and Mr. Pitman complained about the lack of an adequate response. This brought strong protests from members. Mr. Wormum pointed out that the funds of the Society stood at 4/10 cash in hand, and a debt of £6/10/0. Another member wrote: "I gave all I had. Were I profitably employed I could give more". Worse still had been the depressions of 1842 and 1850–51. In 1859 Jacob Pitman's material fortunes also succumbed.<sup>(a)</sup> He tendered his resignation as Minister and left the Colony.

So closed what might be termed the first chapter in the history of the Adelaide Society; and with it a chapter also in the life of Jacob Pitman, its Founder ... a chapter in which, amidst the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' he had yet achieved goals dear to the heart of every New Churchman, ... the turning of men and women to the truths of the New Dispensation, and the formation of a Society of the new Church.

On his death in Sydney in March, 1890, William Holden, his companion on his long journey from the land of his birth, one of his first converts to the Doctrines, his life-long friend and supporter, and now the doyen of the Adelaide Society, said of him in a memorial address:

"I take this opportunity of bearing my humble testimony to the earnestness and affectionate intelligence he displayed in his efforts to disseminate a knowledge of the truth during the early days of the Colony's history. I esteem him one of the dearest friends I have ever known. On one occasion he said to me, 'O how I long to go into the spiritual world to realize its stupendous wonders'. Well, he is there now. He has entered the vestibule leading to his future home; he has experienced what a wonderful thing it is to pass from death into life; to be welcomed by the angels of the resurrection to the mansions of eternity."

(a) There were 102 insolvencies in that year (1859), 105 in the year before, and 95 in 1860.



Jacob Pitman.

'The storms that assailed him on earth  
For ever and ever are o'er;  
The madness of guilt and the folly of mirth  
Will trouble his spirit no more.  
This is the feeling that comes o'er him now,  
No pang for his heart and no tear for his brow.' ''

#### E. G. DAY \*\*\* THE SECOND CHURCH.

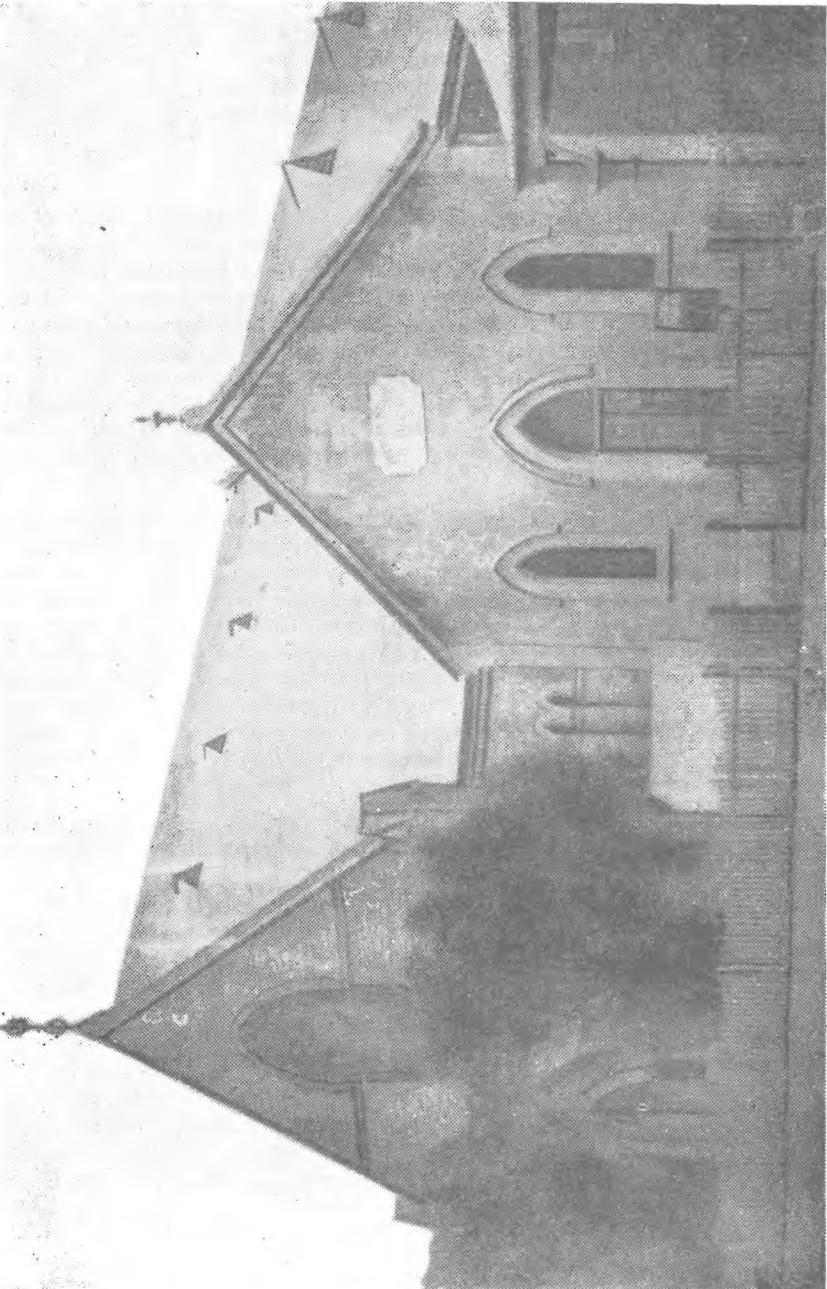
The new Leader of the Society was Mr. E. G. Day.<sup>(10)</sup> He had come to South Australia, already a recognised Lay Reader in the New Church, in 1850, and was now living at Hope Valley, ten miles from the City, where he had succeeded William Holden as a storekeeper and postmaster, and where he was for a time also the local schoolmaster. On his arrival in Adelaide he had been immediately and generously recognised by Jacob Pitman as "completely his superior" in his knowledge of the Doctrines and his ability as a Leader. It now became his practice to walk to the city from his home each Sunday morning, conduct three Services, and walk home again at night. He was to be leader and Minister of the Adelaide Society for 34 years, never in that time accepting any payment for his services, or reimbursement of incidental expenses, nor retaining any fees.

From the time of Mr. Day's accession to the Leadership the Society seems to have settled down to a less turbulent existence. (The same, of course, could be said for the Colony in the same period. The population was now about 112,000, the initial settlement phase was over, the gold rushes had come and gone, and industry was established). In 1860 the new Leader was already calling for greater support; but overall the whole long period of a third of a century in which he was to be at the helm seems to have been a time of consolidation and steady if slow, growth. Thus little History, in so far as it encompasses departures from the norm, was made in this period, although the foundations were being steadily laid for the next epoch. Records also are scanty; and the years, slowly as they then must have passed, can in retrospect be reviewed in a page or two.

There were new members, some of them from overseas, but the greatest strength lay still with the loyalty of the families, now of the second and third generations. Public impact seems to have been less, no doubt reflecting the greater sophistication of the times, but the throes of establishment were over, and there can be no doubt that under E. G. Day's Leadership and Ministry the Society experienced a long period of comparatively peaceful and satisfying life and development. Mr. Pitman had been right in recognising in Mr. Day a man capable of holding the Society together and leading it to maturity.

By 1869, with the lease of the Carrington St. site running out, and the Society strengthened, steps were initiated towards providing a new place of worship. Land was bought in Hanson St. (now Pulteney St.) in the City; a loan of £400 was effected, and a new Church, designed by a member, Mr. Strawbridge, was built. It was opened for Worship on February 18th, 1872.<sup>(11)</sup> In 1873 an allotment of vacant land next to the Church was given to the Society by another member, Mr. Seymour. The Hanson Street Church was to remain in use by the Society for 93 years. A commodious building, in the heart of the city, and architecturally conventional, it was immediately

(a) In 1937, Miss L.M. Darwin, granddaughter of Mr. J. J. Darwin, paid the cost of having the Church lighted by electricity, in memory of her father, Mr. E. G. Darwin, also a staunch and lifelong member.



*The Hanson St. (Pulteney St.) Church and Hall, Adelaide.*

in demand for weddings, and in 1870 Mr. Day obtained a marriage celebrant's licence. The first wedding he conducted was that of Mr. F. W. Botting, son of one of the earliest members and himself a long-time Secretary of the Society. Another was that of Mr. W. G. Rendall to Ellen Darwin, on May 19, 1875. The couple were presented with a Family Bible, which is now in the possession of the Society, inscribed as a gift to "The first youth and maiden born, baptized, educated and married in the New Church in Adelaide". Soon after their marriage they moved to New South Wales, and were very early members of the Sydney Society. In about 22 years, until he resigned his licence in 1892, Mr. Day married 823 couples, including 115 in one year alone. In February, 1878, he travelled to Melbourne in order to greet Rev. J. J. Thornton upon his arrival from Britain. There, on the application of his Society, he was ordained by Mr. Thornton, on February 10th.

In the conduct of worship Mr. Day was assisted and relieved on a regular basis by Mr. Holden and Mr. J. J. Darwin. From 1878 he conducted also a weeknight reading and study group. By 1881 there was an average attendance of about 40 at each of the morning and evening Services, including children. The Sunday School was not re-opened until April, 1885, but then had an immediate enrolment of 50<sup>(a)</sup> and an average attendance of 36. Membership of the Society is given in 1885 as 44, with an adult attendance of 28 a.m. and 23 p.m., even though 15 of the members were living in the country. The Sunday School by this time had declined a little, but by 1887 it was back to its former strength.

In 1884 there was wide support for a proposal that only unfermented wine should be used in the Sacrament. Despite some opposition, the practice was adopted. In January, 1887, a Total Abstinence Society<sup>(b)</sup> was formed, at which time 14 adults signed the Pledge, "To abstain from alcohol and tobacco, and to use every endeavour to discourage the use of these evils". and in conjunction with it, a 'Band of Hope' for the Juniors. In addition, from this time, a special Sermon was advertised and preached each year on 'The Sin of Drunkenness'. In the case of the New Church this movement came late. Even though South Australia had been founded and populated in great part by Dissenters, yet drunkenness in the streets had been a problem from the earliest times. Total Abstinence and Temperance Societies has been formed in connection with most of the denominations from the beginning, and the first Roman Catholic Bishop, Francis Murphy, insisted on his flock signing the Pledge.<sup>(c)</sup>

In this same year a Mutual Improvement Society also was instituted, which eventually absorbed the Total Abstinence Society. It was able to attract an average attendance of about 9, although the enrolled membership was much greater. The hope had been entertained in 1885, that since the areas surrounding the Church, although within the precincts of the City, were still largely residential, the Sunday School would be able to attract and hold local children; but experience had shown that although this did to some extent apply to the very young, yet the older ones could not be held. By now the loan for the building of the church had been paid off, and the

- (a) Most of them from the immediate locality, and not children of members.
- (b) Total Abstinence, or Temperance Societies were established in about the same period in all the Australian New Church Societies, as they had been in Britain. In 1906, when the Auckland, New Zealand Society sought a Minister, it stipulated that applicants must be teetotallers.
- (c) Bishop Murphy was a highly educated and pious man, and not otherwise autocratic or dogmatic. Although remaining a loyal and dedicated Catholic, yet his advanced and tolerant attitudes and teaching caused him to be widely accused of apostasy, and tempted many to think that he was about to change his faith.

Society was free of debt. Membership had risen to 53 (Three years later in 1890, the average attendances at Worship were given as 30 18/52 a.m. and 29 5/32 p.m., with 20 7/12 attending the Sacrament).

Early in 1893 Mr. Day, now 83 years of age, was constrained by his failing health to retire. In his career as a preacher he had at first read Sermons prepared by others; later he wrote his own compositions out in full; but for the last two years of his Ministry, because of failing eyesight, he preached extemporarily. His first such Sermon, delivered on July 19th, 1891, was received with delight. The text was Luke 11:5-8, and within a few days Miss E. E. Darwin had retold its message in delightful and moving verse.

Rev. E. G. Day died on November 13th, 1893, thus having ministered almost to the end. Mr. Holden preached a Memorial Sermon from the text, "There shall be no more death", Rev. 21:4. Here, in part, is the peroration:

"New Churchmen are not 'hero worshippers'. Our late Minister knew and felt more deeply than perhaps any of us has done, that man of himself is mere evil. But we cannot help calling to remembrance how brightly the light of truth shone through him. We cannot but call to mind and admire the innumerable instances during his long and faithful ministration among us in which he directed our thoughts to the wondrous things of the Divine Law. I believe from my heart that comparatively few persons, even in the New Church, possess such a clear and comprehensive insight of the internal Word as was possessed by him. Nor can we help admiring his fidelity to the truth; how earnestly and fearlessly he denounced the evils and follies of the day. ... No one who knew him can deny the fact that his whole life and character, whether as a husband, a father, a friend or a citizen, was an exemplification of the 'Beauty of Holiness': the salutary influence of genial truth upon the heart and life."

On the retirement of Mr. Day, Mr. J. J. Darwin, the young immigrant of 1848 who had taken employment with Jacob Pitman as a carpenter, became Leader; although the greater part of the duties involved fell to the lot of Mr. Holden, who was then aged nearly 85 and still in daily secular employment. At the celebration of the 49th Anniversary in that year there were "about 60 present, not so many as there should have been". On this occasion a Congregational Minister, Rev. J. R. Glasson, addressed the gathering, declaring himself to be "a New Churchman in everything but name". His co-religionist, Rev. S. Lenton, who had attended several Anniversaries, was unable to be present. A Wesleyan Methodist Minister, Dr. Bollen, who had died in 1892, had also often been one of the principal speakers on these occasions, and had, for some years past, been publicly advocating the New Church Doctrines from his pulpit at Port Adelaide. Mr. Lenton, after the death of Mr. Day, at whose funeral he officiated, conducted weddings and baptisms in the New Church, in accordance with their own rituals. Despite this support and occasional help, the Society had been cast into a mood of depression and apprehension by the resignation of Mr. Day, on whom it had depended so much for more than a generation.

#### REV. A. E. BEILBY

In 1894 a letter was received from Rev. A. E. Beilby, Minister of the Blackpool, England, Society, enquiring about the vacant pastorate, since "the idea of coming to Australia had a certain attraction for him". He had been ordained a leader seven years previously, in the Lowestoft Society. An offer was made to him of a stipend of £100 p.a., with free board and lodging, offered by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hastwell, and the

cost of his passage defrayed. He came in 1895, at a stipend of £115, which was increased in his second year to £160; and Mr. and Mrs. Hastwell lodged him without charge for the period of his Adelaide Ministry.

One of Mr. Beilby's first projects was to have a Hall added to the Church. It was built at a cost of £400, borrowed for the purpose, and opened on May 27th, 1896 by the Chief Justice of South Australia. On the October 2nd following the ladies held a Fancy Dress Fair, which was opened by the Mayor and realised a profit of £47. In this year, the first full year of Mr. Beilby's Ministry, there was an addition of 15 new members, making a total membership of 73, and average attendances rose to 57 a.m. and 58 p.m., with an average of 27 partaking of the Sacrament. 'Swedenborg Reading Meetings' were held weekly. Mr. Beilby also initiated a Sunday afternoon class. The Sunday School was recommenced on January 1st, 1896. He instituted 'Coffee Meetings', held fortnightly in members' homes; also a 'Helpers' Union', to care for the Church premises and prepare for Services; and a little later, a Literary Society.

In the second year, 1897, membership rose to 78 and attendances to 54 a.m. and 60½ p.m. Sister Ann Donnell,<sup>(11)</sup> writing in 1953, lists by name 81 people who would fill the Church in this period, plus several unnamed families of children, and places them all in their accustomed pews. There seems no doubt that although such numbers might have attended together on special occasions, thus inflating the average, this would simply serve to indicate that usually the attendance was much lower. Sister Donnell's list is of interest in showing that a large proportion of the adherents at that time were descendants, with their husbands or wives, of the earliest families of the Society, i.e., of the Holden, Ireland, Wornum, Darwin and Day families. By the time that another generation had arisen in their place few indeed would be the representatives of those pioneering families, and few, too, the newcomers to replace them.

Thirty years later Mr. Beilby wrote:

"...The Hanson Street congregation, as I remember them, were not invulnerable to criticism; they could not otherwise have put up with me. Few Ministers can have been better supported than I was through those years. The members were not wholly united among themselves, but that notwithstanding, they rallied round with a devotion that, at this distance, I can only consider heroic. ... A company of young people came forward, considerable in numbers and very vital in quality, possessed indeed of a mental robustness and of a keen spirit of enquiry rather rare among our English Societies. ... Good congregations assembled on Sundays, involving long journeys for several families. They usually brought their lunch and made a day of it. In the afternoon I had an adult class of over a dozen ... sometimes nearly a score. As Teacher I had little else to do than to reply to a fusillade of questions and difficulties. Splendidly attended weeknight meetings were held. A gathering of from 40 to 50 for the reading and discussion of a theological theme was not at all uncommon. And these meetings did not pause when the winter was over, but continued right through the burning-hot evenings of an Adelaide summer, with just one month for recess."

With congregations and meetings so large and so enthusiastic, and so many viable activities, Mr. Beilby would have been the envy of many a later Minister in Adelaide and elsewhere. This period was in fact the high point of the Adelaide Society. Yet, again like many another Minister before and since, he felt hardly satisfied by the end of the year 1897 with the progress that he had been able to achieve. We quote from his Report for that year:

"...The Church is not the parson's, but the people's, every one of whom must be made to feel accountable for it. At present this is hardly the case, as our comparatively small attendances at Divine Worship testify. I make full allowance for the scatteredness of the congregation, some ... nay, many of whom, spite of their geographic disabilities, set a splendid example of devotion. It is of the remainder I am thinking, whose frequent absence, as well as languid, patronising interest, discourages their fellow members and cripples the Church's influence. They will do well to find a place for repentance, and reflect if it be brave or honourable to leave others to bear all the heat and burden of the day. If the duty of public worship broke in on their habits every day some laxity or inattention might be excusable; but it is difficult to sympathise with people who cannot, or will not, spare a few hours out of one day in seven for the open confession of their faith".

Whatever the situation regarding numerical support, the financial situation remained precarious; the stipend and all incidental costs having to be found from current donations. The stipend had been increased to £160 p.a., and each year the Treasurer found it necessary to appeal for greater support for the Minister's Fund. At December 31st, 1897, there was a credit of only £14 in this Fund. There was £6 in the General Fund; and still the mortgage of £400. Collection plates had been introduced for the first time in 1896.

Romance came to Mr. Beilby in Adelaide. His bride was Emily Darwin, of Melbourne, niece of Mr. J. J. Darwin and a trained nursing sister. They were married in All Saints Anglican Church, Northcote, Victoria, on May 18th, 1898. Very soon afterwards Mr. Beilby accepted an urgent call from the South Manchester Society and submitted his resignation. <sup>(a)</sup> As Editor of *The New Age*, he wrote in his 'Notes and Comments' ...

"The prospect of severance from the New World and all its ties and interests now stares me in the face. It appears also that the parting must be speedier than I had hoped. ... I wish to assure the readers of *The New Age*, as I have assured my beloved congregation, of the sorrow and searchings of heart that this resolution has caused me. Considerations climatic, domestic, personal and others beyond number, drive me to it ...".

The financial situation must have been a factor in his decision; free lodging could hardly be applicable now that he was married. A major consideration was the pleading of his elderly father, who had confidently anticipated his return to Britain after only one year. Another may have been the Adelaide climate. In 1926 he wrote of his arrival there:

"I breathe again, in imagination, and with something of the original dismay, the close, hot, dust-laden air: ... I gradually became used to the mad proceeding of being blown upon by a torrid wind, like a blast from a furnace ...".

Of Sydney, he wrote, "It would have been an advantage during my stay there, could I have worn round my neck a notice ... 'Yes, I have seen your harbour, and I greatly admire it.''" (How greatly blessed he was that Sydney did not then have its Bridge or its Opera House!)

(a) He served the South Manchester Society for 24 years, and then his last pastorate at Nottingham, the city of his birth and childhood. Mrs. Beilby was for many years President of the South Manchester Women's League; and during the World War she was Night Sister-in-Charge at the Manchester Red Cross Hospital.

Rev. Arthur Beilby and his wife left Adelaide on September 2nd, 1898, and Mr. Darwin again became Leader. We quote from the eulogium spoken at the gathering held to farewell the departing Minister:

"Mr. Beilby will leave the indelible impress of his large-hearted, strong-brained, magnetic personality; so that his name will be a household word for years to come, and his influence a living power in the Church as long as any remain who have come within its radius."

In the following year, 1899, Rev. W. A. Bates of Brisbane spent five months in Adelaide, and at Easter, during his stay there, the sixth Australian Conference met in the Hanson Street Church. At the end of the year Mr. Darwin was able to report a membership of 92, with 35 in the Sunday School. In 1900 the Society benefitted from several extended visits by Mr. W. J. Colville, <sup>(12)</sup> who though not an orthodox New Churchman, was a remarkably successful preacher. He preached twice on Sundays, and delivered lectures in the Hall on Sunday afternoons and weeknights. His Services attracted congregations averaging 80 a.m. and 169 p.m., reflecting the reputation he had gained as a lecturer in Sydney.

#### REV. PERCY BILLINGS.

The Society had immediately sought for another Minister, the more urgently because of Mr. Darwin's advancing age and deteriorating health, and there was no shortage of applicants. Before his departure Mr. Beilby had handed to the Committee an application from Mr. George Meek, of Southport, England; but because of an unspecified family problem he was held to be unsuitable. Rev. W. E. Brickman, of Baltimore, U.S.A., applied, but was thought to be too young. Mr. Bates of Brisbane was invited, but declined. Mr. F. H. Muston of the Sydney Society applied for the position; and after an approach had been made to the American Convention, so did Rev. C. Mann of Orange, N. J., and Rev. J. R. Stephenson of Pittsburgh.

No appointment was made until late in 1899, when in response to advertisements in 'Morning Light' <sup>(a)</sup> an application, supported by "unsolicited testimonials from influential and representative Ministers identified with the British Conference" (Revs. R. R. Rodgers, J. T. Freeth and A. J. Ferguson) was received, and accepted, from Rev. Percy Billings. <sup>(13)</sup> He arrived on February 11th, 1901, and Mr. Bates again spent three weeks in Adelaide as he took up the pastorate. The stipend of £200 p.a. was able to be met, and increased, through the intervention of Mr. George Marchant, of the Brisbane Society.

In Adelaide in addition to his regular duties as Minister, Mr. Billings almost immediately engaged in Missionary efforts at North Adelaide, and at the more distant seaside suburb of Glenelg; and later at Summertown, about 15 miles distant. Apart from this activity his first two years there seem to have been uneventful; but in 1903 his criticism of members of his congregation, made at a public meeting held in the Church Hall, caused a motion of condemnation to be moved, and the resignation of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hastwell and four others.

In 1903 also the Sydney Society invited him to undertake a lecture and preaching visit, and he spent five weeks there, unfortunately in midwinter, when the excessively wet weather affected the first week's attendances.

(a) Although Mr. Beilby had been commissioned to seek a successor in Britain, and had advised the Society to expect this application.

For this Mission no less than 30,000 programmes were printed, and nearly all of them distributed. Besides the Sunday afternoon lectures and evening Services at Leigh House, Castlereagh Street, he lectured on Wednesday and Friday evenings at the Temperance Hall, and on Thursday evenings at the Protestant Hall, delivering 21 public lectures in all, to audiences of from 80 to 160. His lectures, strongly Doctrinal, and leaning towards the General Church view of the Writings as the Word, greatly impressed the Secretary of the Society, Richard Morse, youngest son of the Thomas Morse who had settled at Rockdale in 1833: Richard Morse resolved to visit Bryn Athyn, which he did in 1904.

Rev. Percy Billings gave him a letter of introduction to the Assembly of the General Church, in the course of which he wrote:

"Our Adelaide Society ... (receives) ... the Doctrines as the Lord's Word and Law; and their general position is, I think, close to that of the Bryn Athyn friends. You will be interested to know that we are gradually making changes here that will prove spiritually beneficial. Two Sundays ago I began reading a portion of the Writings during the morning Service as the Word of the Lord to the New Church".

This letter was printed in the General Church journal, 'New Church Life', and the President of the British Conference sent a copy of it to the President of the Australian Association, Rev. W. A. Bates of Brisbane. Mr. George Marchant immediately withdrew his financial support of the Adelaide Society of £260 p.a., essential for the support of the Minister, thus forcing Mr. Billings to contribute to his own support and that of his family; which he did by operating a small dairy farm.

In an attempt to clarify or to reinforce his position, Mr. Billings, at the Annual meeting of the Adelaide Society in January, 1905, introduced a series of Motions, which claimed, *inter alia*, that the teachings contained in the Writings were the Word 'to the rational mind of man', ... a somewhat peculiar, and one would think, unnecessary, circumscription. These the meeting passed; they read as follows:

- 1 That the Adelaide Society of the New Church declares its acknowledgement that the Teachings contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg are Divine Truths and Laws for Human life and are the Word of the Divine-Human Lord, descended from Him out of Heaven, to the rational mind of man.
- 2 That the Adelaide Society of the New Church declares its belief that an acknowledgement of the Doctrines of the New Church as Divine Truths and Teachings, and as the Word of the Lord for the rational mind of man, given by the Lord to man through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, is fundamental and necessary for the establishment and growth of the New Christian Church and of the true Christian Religion.
- 3 That the Adelaide Society of the New Church expresses the desire and hope that 'The New Church in Australia', at its Conference to be held this year in Melbourne, will declare that it acknowledges the Teachings contained in the theological writings of Swedenborg to be Divine Truths and the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ to the rational mind of man; and that it acknowledges the Coming of these Teachings to be the coming of the Lord, the Teacher, to man, and that this coming was effected through the instrumentality of Swedenborg.
- 4 That this meeting has full confidence in the Minister of the Society and in his teachings and trusts that he may long continue his ministrations in Adelaide.

The publication of these Resolutions caused something of a furore. They were discussed by each of the other Societies, in the pages of the *New Age*, where they were referred to as "The Adelaide Heresy", and in England: from whence Rev. Beilby wrote in commiseration that "poor Adelaide had fallen the first victim" to the General Church doctrine.

Several members of the Adelaide Society protested in print that their import had not been understood, and that if it had been they themselves would have voted differently, and they would not have been carried; also that not all who voted on them were members of the Society. Another pointed out that they did not say that the Writings were the Word, but only that the Doctrine contained in the Writings was so. However, despite their somewhat quaint and original phraseology, their import seemed clear enough to those who wanted to avoid commitment to the General Church interpretation.

The Brisbane Society under Rev. W. A. Bates, carried these 'Counter-Resolutions':

- 1 The members of the Brisbane Society of the New Church, hereby affirm their conviction that the Sacred Scriptures *alone* are the 'Divine Word', being 'Divinely inspired and holy in every syllable' ... TCR 200 ..., and standing entirely alone among all writings.
- 2 We further affirm that we have the strongest rational grounds for believing that the Lord is making His second Advent by giving a clearer revelation of the spiritual sense of the Divine Word, and that this revelation was rationally perceived by Swedenborg, who was appointed by the Lord to communicate information to mankind on these important subjects.

Mr. Bates left on February 8th for a three months' tour of the southern States. In Adelaide, he was strongly criticized for his intervention. The Society, at its quarterly meeting on April 15th, carried a further series of Motions:

- 1 Whereas certain Resolutions respecting the Divine Authority of the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem, passed by this Society at its Annual Meeting ... have caused much adverse comment by professed New Churchmen in Australia, be it hereby resolved:
  - (a) That this Society re-affirms its full acknowledgment that the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem are the Word of the Divine to the rational mind of man; that these Doctrines are the Word of the Lord in the Heavens revealed to men on earth through the Lord's Servant, Swedenborg; that they make one with the Letter of the Word as the Soul or Spirit of man makes one with his natural body, and that they are the glory of the Lord in which He comes in the clouds of Heaven or in the Letter of His Divine Word.
  - (b) That this Society again declares its belief that an acknowledgement of the Doctrines of the New Church as Divine Truths and Teachings, and as the Word of the Lord for the rational mind of man, given by the Lord to man through the instrumentality of Swedenborg, is fundamental and necessary for the establishment and growth of the New Christian Church and of the True Christian Religion.
- 2 This Society expresses its strong disapproval of the action of the President in visiting various members of the Church here and endeavouring to prejudice them against our Minister, as such is contrary to the principles of charity and brotherly

love, which should actuate every member of the New Church and especially one in the important position of President of Conference.

- 3 That this Society declines to continue its financial support of The New Age, unless that publication shall be conducted on the basis of an acknowledgment of the Divine Authority of the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem as the Word of the Lord to the rational mind of man.
- 4 This Society, believing that the Lord in His Second Coming in the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem will "make all things new", acknowledges that these Doctrines are to be applied to all planes and departments of human life, economic and civil, as well as moral and spiritual, and are, therefore, to be the Divine Law whereby all things of man and of his life, individual and collective, shall be made new.

It was resolved that the issue would be brought before the Conference (Easter, 1905), at which Mr. Billings proposed to move a Motion in the terms of the third of the original Adelaide Resolutions. In the event he moved instead a Motion which had not been considered by the Society, to the effect that a series of 54 passages from the Writings, "... are held to be Doctrines of the New Jerusalem; are held to be Doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ; and are therefore acknowledged by this Conference to be true".

It was obvious, as Mr. Spencer, the Leader of the Sydney Society, pointed out, that all members of the Conference could have affirmed their belief in the passages named since they had already affirmed their belief in the whole of the Writings by having signed the Declaration of Faith. But because of the implication that their faith was suspect, the Conference declined to debate the Motion.

Rev. Percy Billings and one of the three Adelaide Society Representatives resigned from the Conference. On the following day, in an attempt to heal the breach, a motion to rescind the decision not to debate the Motion was moved. It was defeated on the casting vote of the President, Rev. W. A. Bates. Mr. Billings and Mr. Strawbridge were present, but having resigned, were unable to vote. They immediately left for home, and the Adelaide Society withdrew for a time from communication with the Association. A conflict had been initiated that was to decimate the Adelaide Society and to trouble the Association intermittently until 1970 and later; the tragedy of which was of course that it was entirely unnecessary, having originated in the attempt by Mr. Billings, working in one branch of the Church, to forcibly impose upon it the distinctive views of another branch. Although he had claimed that the Adelaide Society had always been favourable to the views that he taught, yet Rev. A. E. Beilby wrote from England saying that in his time no such Doctrine had ever been heard of there.

When Mr. Billings attempted to read his prepared report of the conference to the Adelaide Society the meeting ended in disorder and confusion, to such an extent that the report could neither be received and adopted nor refused. One member, Mr. Ebenezer Hastwell, (son-in-law of Rev. E. G. Day) was subsequently expelled from the Society for his opposition to the Minister; but was reinstated by order of the Supreme Court, with costs awarded against the Society. Mr. Bates returned to Adelaide and spent three weeks campaigning against the position taken by Mr. Billings, which served to add fuel to the fire. The Rules of the Society were immediately changed so that recalcitrant members could be more easily expelled.

The combination of these happenings with the associated decline of support within the Society and Mr. Marchant's withdrawal of financial assistance, inevitably led to



*Rev. E. G. Day*



*Rev. A. E. Beilby*



*Rev. P. Billings*



*Rev. C. D. Brock*

*Ministers of the Adelaide Society.*

Mr. Billings' resignation, effective from October 22nd, 1906. His dairy business had been worked by himself, including the hand-milking of the cows night and morning seven days a week. The sale of this business enabled him to pay his and his family's passages to America.

Support of the Adelaide Society, as measured by membership and attendances, declined quite sharply from the period of the episode involving Mr. Billings. The returns presented to the 1899 Conference gave membership as 82, and average attendances at Worship as 54 a.m. and 61 p.m. In 1905, the figures were 62, 39 and 95 respectively. In 1907, average attendances were 28 a.m. and 33 at the only 12 evening Services held. By 1913, membership was down to a total of 40 and attendances to 16 a.m. and 24 p.m. It must be said, however, that decline was the common lot of the four Societies through a large part of the 20th century.

Mr. Strawbridge, a strong supporter of Mr. Billings, was very briefly Leader after his departure; but in the same year, the office devolved upon Mr. J. N. Page, "Dear Pa. Page, who always had peppermints", who had been Mr. Darwin's chief assistant. He retained the position for ten years, and was succeeded in 1916 by Mr. J. R. Cattermole and, in 1919 by Mr. J. T. Deacon. Mr. Deacon had come into the New Church late in life, at the age of c. 55, having been up to that time a Lay Preacher in the Methodist Church. His son, having a friend in the New Church, had taken him there, but his interest had not been finally aroused until on a preaching assignment he had been billeted with a New Church family. His Leadership lasted for 12 years, until the appointment of Rev. C. D. Brock. The quarter century 1906–1931 had been largely a holding operation, with a devoted Leadership supported by the faithful few, and attendances declining from 39 a.m. and 95 p.m. to 13 at the one (evening only) Service. In 1911, for the first time in its history, the Society had suspended morning Services.

#### **REV. C. D. BROCK \* MR. A. S. WATSON \* SALE OF THE HANSON STREET CHURCH**

Charles Douglas Brock had been brought into the New Church by his wife, the former Isobel Tonks, daughter of Mr. R. J. Tonks, long a prominent member of the Melbourne Society and a son of Mr. J. W. Tonks of the Wretham Road, Birmingham Society, and of his wife Christina, daughter of another well-known and active Melbourne member, Mr. Carl Reinhold Berg, a native of Vestases, Sweden. Douglas and Isobel Brock became the parents and grandparents of the several Brock families of the present Adelaide Society, and of the Brock and Rev. Douglas Taylor families of Bryn Athyn.

Mr. Brock had been sent to England to train for the Ministry at the expense of the Australian Association; and on the completion of his training he was invited to become the Minister of the Adelaide Society. He took up his appointment there in 1931. He was a man of boundless energy and unquenchable enthusiasm, and there can be no doubt that these characteristics were hardly able to find sufficient scope within the confines of the now tiny Society. New Church Ministers in Australia have time and again been expected to be able quickly to increase the membership of the Society from 'outside', and as many times this expectation has not been found capable of fulfilment. Mr. Brock, like earlier and later Ministers, was to become to some extent a victim of such optimistic hopes, and to suffer the accompanying suspicion of 'inefficiency'.

The pre-war years in Australia, 1928-1939, were the years of the Great Depression, and Mr. Brock soon became deeply involved in social work, in which his idealism and restless activity found ample expression and more tangible reward. The Church Hall became the headquarters of the Adelaide Unemployed and Distressed Association, of which he was Patron. He also aligned himself with the politico-economic philosophy of Major Douglas ... Douglas Credit. In 1934 his commitment to this philosophy led him to allow himself to be nominated as a candidate for election to Parliament. The Association Council protested, threatening to depose him as President and to withdraw all support. The objection was in great part due to the circumstance that his services were needed in the Church, which had so recently spent so great an amount on his training.

Mr. Brock had not been provided with either a Manse or a car, having to provide both from his own resources. As early in his Ministry as 1933 the financial situation, especially that of the Association, was causing concern, and in that year Mr. Brock, in common with Rev. R. H. Teed of the Melbourne Society, was asked to accept a reduction of £50 p.a. in stipend. These reductions were restored in November, 1937. In the conditions of the time, membership could not be increased.

Evening Services only were held, with average attendances rising from 13 in 1930 to 23 in 1936, but falling sharply to only 14 by 1939.

In February, 1939, with Mr. Brock's term of appointment not due to expire until October, 1940, the Society resolved that, "In view of the serious state of the finances, Mr. Brock be informed that he is to feel at liberty to accept another appointment". However, by July, 1940, the belief that his interests in social and economic reform and assistance were militating against the efficient discharge of his duties as Minister was expressed in the Resolution, "That the majority of members of this Society, being dissatisfied with the state of the Church under the Ministry of Mr. Brock, look to him to make such adjustments in his Church and public activities as will be calculated to promote the more satisfactory growth of the Church in Adelaide." He was given an Advisory Council to help organise the work in the Society. In September there was a conflict of opinion as to whether he should be re-appointed, and in the event he was appointed for one more year only, as a compromise solution.

The World War was now under way, and in August, 1941, Mr. Brock accepted a clerical position in the armed Services, and proffered his resignation as Minister. It was moved that he be asked to accept the Leadership for 12 months, but the motion was lost. Instead he was asked to conduct the Services for 3 months. In fact, he remained Leader until February, 1948, except for part of the year 1947, when he was overseas on a mission connected with his military duties, and when Mr. A. S. Watson became Leader pro. tem. In February, 1948, Mr. Brock became Honorary Minister, a position he retained until the end of 1954, when he resigned in consequence of his intended removal from the State. In several of these years he received an Honorarium varying between £52 and £104 p.a.

By this time, 1955, membership of the Society had recovered from its lowest ever point of 16 in 1946 to 26, although attendances at Worship showed no corresponding advance, still averaging only 14. In 1950 Adelaide had successfully hosted the second official Australian New Church Young Peoples' Conference; and in the same year, ushering in the age of electronics, it had made history in having taken a wire recording of a Service of Worship, which was replayed at the morning Service of the Berkeley, California, Society on September 24th, the Berkeley congregation joining in the hymns of the Adelaide members.

On the resignation of Mr. Brock, Mr. Arthur Watson had again taken the position of Leader. He was appointed a Licentiate by the 1949 Conference, and a Missionary by that of 1955. He had been introduced into the New Church by his wife Myrtle, a daughter of Mr. C. W. Morse of Newcastle, N.S.W. and was re-baptized into the New Church in the Hanson St. Church by Rev. C. D. Brock in March, 1932. He was to remain Leader of the Society until the arrival of Rev. I. A. Arnold in November, 1969. During the whole of this time the Society maintained a policy that only sermons prepared by an ordained New Church Minister should be preached in the Church. For the supply of sermons for use by lay Readers under this policy the Society had been greatly indebted to the headquarters of the General Church of the New Jerusalem at Bryn Athyn, U.S.A.

By 1958 attendances at Worship had fallen to an average of only 9. In 1963 morning Services were substituted for evening, at which time they had been held since 1920. Membership declined very gradually but consistently, although attendances recovered, so that by 1969 both total membership and average attendances are given as 18.

The major change in the fortunes of the Society in this period was the compulsory acquisition of its Church property by a State instrumentality in 1965, the last Service being held there in December of that year. The temporary place of Worship became the nearby Willard Hall, which was to be the home of the Society for nearly six years. Meanwhile, a policy of careful conservation of its financial resources enabled the Society to once again seek the services of a Minister, and early in 1969 an invitation was successfully extended to a young man already known in Australia.

#### **REV. I. A. ARNOLD \* THE CHURCH AT MARION \* THE LATEST YEARS.**

Rev. Ian A. Arnold had come into the New Church in the Melbourne Society, through his acquaintance with a young man of that Society. The new teachings had made an immediate appeal, and within the space of a few years he had seen that his vocation lay in the New Church Ministry. Leaving Melbourne in 1960 he first went to South Africa, there gaining experience in the work that lay ahead of him in Johannesburg, under Rev. Brian Kingslake. Moving after six months to London, he entered the New Church College. He was ordained in June, 1965, and served pastorates of three years in Britain, at Dalton, and, after having accepted the invitation to Adelaide, of 10 months in Mauritius.

A Manse had been bought in the southern suburb of Colonel Light Gardens, (named for Colonel William Light, the Founder and Surveyor of the city of Adelaide), and Mr. Arnold was inducted into the pastorate of the Society on November 30th, 1969, by Rev. J. E. Teed, President of the Association. Apart from his pastoral duties his immediate concern was the establishment of a new place of Worship; and this culminated, on September 5th, 1971, when Rev. E. B. Williams, then President, dedicated the new Church in the suburb of Marion, 6 miles south-west of the City. An attractive building of brick, in a residential area, it was specifically designed in such a way as to be readily convertible for residential use, should the need arise.

Mr. Arnold had adopted several initiatives in these first two years. He had been able to place volumes of the Writings in several city bookshops, where there were some sales; and had also circularized about 800 clergy in the State, 106 of whom were sent, on request, copies of Swedenborg's 'Heaven and Hell'. For a time, in 1971, he



*The Church at Marion, Adelaide.*

had reverted to only fortnightly Services, devoting the alternate Sundays to the visiting of members and enquirers in their homes. He had also delivered several public lectures or addresses to organisations. In the holiday period, December 1970 – January 1971, the Society organised the very successful 10-day Summer School at Mylor, in the Adelaide Hills.

In 1973, when the Australian Conference met in Adelaide, the assembly was addressed by the State Governor, Sir Mark Oliphant. It was also from Adelaide that Mr. Arnold launched the first Swedenborg Exhibition, in Hobart, Tasmania. The attractive Marion Church had attracted some non-members as a venue for weddings, though not on the scale of the Hanson Street Church in the time of Mr. Day; and late in 1974 an effort was made to interest local residents by means of the distribution in the area of missionary pamphlets, though with little evident result.

With the advent of its Minister, and the move to a new suburban location, the Adelaide Society had entertained high hopes of a revival in its fortunes. But few new adherents could be attracted, and the traditional source, the Sunday School, was exceedingly small. The most devastating disappointment, however, was the decision of Mr. Arnold to move to the Sydney Society. His last Service as Minister was conducted on January 19th, 1975. The need for ministerial help was immediately recognised by Rev. J. E. Teed of the Melbourne Society, and for the next four years he adopted the practice of making regular weekend visits to Adelaide at approximately 6-weekly intervals, for the conduct of Worship, classes and meetings. Early in 1979 these visits were re-arranged so that they were made every two months; but then extending over five days and ten days alternately. At this time also Mr. Norman Binks, having served for many years, relinquished the Chairmanship of the Committee, and his brother-in-law, Mr. W. W. White, the Secretaryship, a position he had held for 28 years. Mr. Ian Brock, eldest son of Rev. C. D. Brock, became Chairman, and Mrs. John Womersley, great-granddaughter of George John Ireland and also of Conrad Nicholson Wornum, and granddaughter of Mrs. G. H. Poole, became Secretary. It was Mr. Grenville Ireland who had first introduced the White family to the Doctrines, through Mr. W. W. White's father. From the time of the departure of Rev. I. A. Arnold no official Leader had been appointed, though once again, Mr. A. S. Watson had, in substance, filled this role. Overall, the changes that had taken place

over the past 15 years ... the move from Pulteney St., the sojourn at the Willard Hall, the Minister who had come and gone, and the move into the new Church at Marion ... had had little effect, either negatively or positively, on numerical strength, so that by 1980 the Society reports membership of 16 with attendance at Worship averaging 13.

Throughout these difficult later years, and indeed for many years past, the Society, consisting now largely of members and descendants of the Ireland, White, Brock and Watson families, was assisted very substantially, often as preacher and organist respectively, by Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Norton, formerly members, but now members of the General Church. It also had the benefit of the occasional conduct of Services by the Minister of Hurstville, New South Wales, General Church Society.

In 1980, Adelaide, conscious of its inalienable place in history as the first New Church Society in Australia, and with its own attractive Church and comfortable Manse, looks forward to the time when it will once more attract the services of a full-time, resident Minister. He will find a small Society, perhaps a shadow of its former self, but still infused with the serene, unconquerable spirit of one of its noblest and most faithful souls, William Holden ... "I could not, somehow, feel despondent. On the contrary, I felt inspired by hope ...".

## VICTORIA AND THE MELBOURNE SOCIETY

### THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS \*\* THE FIRST CHURCH.

The History of the Melbourne Society commences, not with the first New Church families to arrive in Victoria in 1843 and 1849, but in 1853, when the first meeting was held; and in which those earliest families had no part.

It may also be somewhat unique in that the firm intention of forming a Society in Melbourne was not conceived in that city, but in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1852. There, late in that year, several members of the Glasgow Society determined to emigrate to Melbourne, and they took with them not only their own libraries, but also about 40 volumes of New Church works presented to them by their Society, and a number of tracts, with the express purpose of establishing a New Church Society in their new home as soon as it might be possible.

The only two members of this group whose names are known are Charles F. Henry and Andrew Ferguson. They may have had contacts already in Melbourne; and all of them would probably have known Rev. D. G. Goyder, Minister in Glasgow until 1848, whose son and daughter were both by this time attached to the young Society in Adelaide. The first months in the Colony were, no doubt, fully occupied in the setting up of homes and businesses, and probably in meeting other known New Churchmen; but within a year they were sufficiently settled to make a commencement.

A meeting was called by public advertisement for Sunday, September 18th, 1853, at the City Temperance Hotel, 109 Bourke Street, the proprietor of which was a New Churchman from London, Mr. George Slater. This meeting was in fact the first of the Melbourne Society and this date must be regarded as that of its Foundation, even though the name was not adopted until one month later. Officers were appointed by it, regular weekly meetings commenced, and records, still extant, kept and preserved continuously thereafter. Those present were Charles F. Henry, Andrew Ferguson, George Slater, Adam Binney Walker, Thomas Docking, Joseph Purcell and Mr. and Mrs. James Port.

Of these Adam Walker and Thomas Docking were to be, in the next year, on May 3rd, 1854, members of the group making the first attempt at organisation in Sydney ... 'The First Sydney Society'; George Slater, in 1865, was a foundation member of the Brisbane Society, and in 1875-76 played a significant part in the establishment of the Sydney Society, thus having an active part in the formation of three New Church Societies.

The meeting resolved that it was formed "For reading and conversation on the Word and the Writings of the New Church". Charles Henry was appointed Secretary and Andrew Ferguson Treasurer. Similar meetings were held at the same place on the three following Sundays, and then continued at the Mechanics' Institution, Collins Street, on the site of the later Athenaeum, which had been engaged for Worship at a rent of £1 per week. Attendances are not known, excepting that it is recorded that at the second meeting there were 16 persons present, 8 of whom were from Scotland.

On Wednesday evening, October 19th, a meeting was held at Andrew Ferguson's warehouse, 101 Collins Street, to be devoted to making arrangements for the formal inauguration of a Society. Those present were the same as at the meeting of September 18th, excepting that Mr. Purcell and Mrs. Port were absent, and there was one newcomer, William Chauncy, late Chairman of the Adelaide Society; and they



*Collins St., Melbourne, in 1853. S. T. Gill. Latrobe Collection, The State Library of Victoria.*



*Collins St., Melbourne, in 1853, looking west from Russell St. E. Thomas. Latrobe Collection, The State Library of Victoria. The Mechanics' Institution is obscured by the third building on the right.*



*The City of Melbourne, 1980. the intersection of Collins St. and Russell St. at centre foreground. Photo, The Herald & Weekly Times Ltd.*

formed themselves into a Committee for the purpose named. Mr. Ferguson was appointed President pro tem. The Committee then resolved that the name 'The Melbourne Society of the New Church', be adopted, and that membership should consist "in the first instance, of those who have been already associated with the New Church in England or elsewhere, and others who may wish to enter the Society, on being introduced and recommended by two members at a General Meeting and on signing the Declaration of Faith."

From the date of this meeting Services of Worship were held every Sunday, using the American New Church Liturgy, conducted by members alternately and including the reading of a Sermon and the singing of Hymns. The place of Worship was the Mechanics' Institution, and Committee meetings were held after the Service. At that held on November 6th, Mr. Chauncy was appointed Chairman. Advertising continued, and by the end of the year there were 16 enrolled members (whose names and origins are for the most part lost). At the meeting held on January 8th, 1854, Mr. Port was authorised to baptize Mrs. Edwards; and in April, Mr. Chauncy was authorized to baptize Mr. Port.

The determined manner in which the aim of securely establishing New Church Worship in the Colony on an orderly and lasting basis was pursued may be seen in the circumstance that as early as February, 1854, just five months after the first gathering, a special Committee meeting was held to consider the subject of a Ministry for the Society. It was resolved that approaches be made, through Mr. Pitman, to Mr. E. G. Day and to Mr. Holden of the Adelaide Society, both of whom were well known to Mr. Chauncy, to see if either of them would settle in Melbourne and become Reader to the Society; Melbourne to pay their removal expenses. The approach was unsuccessful. Mr. Port complained about the poor attendance at Committee meetings. At the May meeting there were only three; and at the June meeting, two new members were appointed, Mr. Meikle and Mr. Alex. Miller.

On July 2nd a new Order of Worship was drawn up, and on July 11th the first Quarterly and Social meeting was held, with 29 persons present. Membership was already 24, and average attendance at Worship about 20. The printed report of this meeting states that attendances would be much larger, excepting for the considerable distance from members' homes; and also that about 30 who had attended the meetings had left the town or the Colony.<sup>(a)</sup> The origin of the members of this time, whether by immigration or conversion, is not known. A Library had been established with books sent from the Glasgow Society and others supplied by members.

In this year (1854), with the Society still barely a year old, advertisements for a Minister (most probably a self-supporting one), were placed in England (in the Intellectual Repository), and in America. A Building Fund was opened, and an application made for a Government grant of one acre of land in Lonsdale Street, City, for a Church. In this application it was claimed that there were about 100 New Church people in the Colony; but the enrolled membership was too small, and the application was refused.

By the end of 1854, there were 30 members on the roll, and 103 books in the Library, many of them having been given by Mr. Henry. At the first Annual Meeting, on January 2nd, 1855, there were 27 members and friends present<sup>(b)</sup>.

- (a) *Thus duplicating the experiences of the Adelaide Society in the same period. Transport of course was solely by foot or horse; and most suburban streets and footpaths were still simply unpaved and unlighted tracks, turning to mud in the wet seasons.*
- (b) *Many records from this period and the years following are lost, some by fire. Membership and attendances are not accurately known again until 1881.*

The following Report of the Committee was read:

"The Committee would in this, their first Annual Report, gratefully acknowledge the interposition of the Divine Goodness, as exemplified in the establishment and onward progress of this Society, and trust that it may continue to increase, not only in numbers, but in spiritual strength, and that it may be as a centre from which the light of truth shall be disseminated throughout the length and breadth of the land. It is needful, however, that every member should feel the extent of his individual responsibilities, for as the outward Church is composed of innumerable parts, its organization must fall asunder unless each one performs those particular uses for which he is especially fitted. It is only thus that the harmony of the whole body can be preserved, and the general uses of the Society fully developed; while in the endeavour to promote the peace of Jerusalem, we shall best advance our own spiritual state. And as all, whether male or female, have some means open to them by which the extension of Divine Truth may be promoted, the Committee would urge affectionately upon every member of the Society the importance of doing all that in them lies to promote this sacred end".

In this year Rev. D. G. Goyder, now living at Ipswich (England), offered his services as Minister, but although promises amounting in all to £114 p.a. had been received, and although 'the friends at Geelong'<sup>(a)</sup> had offered their support, the Society felt as yet unable to commit itself to a paid Ministry. In August it was decided that the Sacrament, and if required, Baptism, be administered quarterly. Mr. Chauncy agreed to perform these functions, but only temporarily. Mr. and Mrs. Fawcett were baptized by Mr. G. C. Adcock, a newcomer from Britain and a confirmed New Churchman. Possibly a member of the Derby, England family, where Mr. W. J. Adcock was Leader of the Society (although this has not been authenticated), he must be regarded as the first de facto Leader<sup>(b)</sup> of the Melbourne Society, although that title does not seem to have been used. He was now appointed Reader, at £20 p.a., contingent on this amount being available.

In May, 1857, to mark 'the Centenary of the New Church' a gift of many of Swedenborg's works was made to the Melbourne Public Library. The Librarian, (the first, the Library had been opened in February, 1856) was Augustus Tulk. A further such gift was made in 1858.

In 1858 it was found necessary to set up a fund for the relief of members in distress. In November, 1861, evening Services as well as morning were commenced, and continued for some months. They were revived again at some time before 1864. But in December, 1862, concern was expressed by the Committee about the weak condition and poor prospects of the Society, and means were sought to bring about "greater prosperity and a manifestation of more spiritual life." Social meetings were much better attended than Services of Worship. Early in 1863 several members left for other colonies or for country districts, and after 10 years of struggle there was serious thought of disbanding. The Society, "had been in a depressed state for a length of time."

(a) Nothing is known of these friends at Geelong. Jacob Pitman moved to there in 1859.

(b) In January, 1864, he was presented, at the Annual Meeting, with a handsomely bound Cassel's Illustrated Bible, in appreciation of his services.

Fortunately, no such despairing step was taken; and although the second decade saw little early growth, with a number of changes in fortune and in the place of Worship, with all the attendant debates and difficulties, yet the Society emerged from it with an accession of many dedicated and devoted members, and its own Church.

The first two new members in this period<sup>(a)</sup> and two who, with their families, were to have a profound effect upon the fortunes of the Society, were Henry and Alfred Noar, who were admitted in October, 1863. (Their mother Elizabeth joined soon afterwards).<sup>(14)</sup>

Henry Noar was to marry Maria Crooks, who had come to Melbourne with her parents from the Argyle Square Society, and both were to remain life-long workers in the Melbourne Society, as were several of their children and their son-in-law, W. E. Pye. Alfred Noar married Isabel Graham Adcock, niece of G. C. Adcock. Their son Alfred was to become prominent in the Society, and Secretary of the Association for 16 years. The present-day descendants of Alfred and Isabel Noar include members of the Robinson, Leishman, Jayes, Ryan, Perry, Pankhurst and Boulton families of the Melbourne Society and the Hart, Hickman, Stoneham, Hosking, Walker, Brown, Boyd, Higgins and Cozens families of the Perth, Sydney and Hurstville Societies.

In early 1864 the headquarters of the Melbourne Society was moved to a room in Spring Street, City. (Some meetings were held in a room of the bookshop of a member, Oswald Foster,<sup>(b)</sup> in Bourke Street). In this year it was resolved that a 'Church Fund' should be started; but it could not be decided whether the purpose would be for the support of a Minister or the erection of a building. The matter was resolved at the next quarterly meeting when 11 voted for a Minister and 14 for a building. In the meantime a more suitable room for Worship was offered by the Borough of East Collingwood, but the rent of £1 p.w. was too high.

In February, 1865, a move was made from Spring Street to a room in Napier Street, Fitzroy, a near suburb, at the home of a Mr. and Mrs. Needham, who, though not members, had had some association with the New Church in England, and who offered the room free of charge. The Society insisted on paying 5/- p.w., but some members of the Needham family caused a great deal of trouble, and it was not a happy arrangement. In November the Needhams moved, and the Society moved back again to Mr. Foster's bookshop, and thence once more to the Mechanics' Institution. Evening Services were discontinued.

The Society was offered a building in Gisborne Street, on the fringe of the City proper, two-story, with two rooms above and two below, on land 25 feet wide, on a fifty years lease, at £40 p.a.; or with 27½ feet of land at £50 p.a. This was at first accepted, with the intention that the building would be moved so as to face the street, or else a new room built on the land; and with the condition that the Society guarantee the lease for not less than 14 years. But Alex. Miller and Isaac Fawcett were opposed, and several heated debates ensued. The project was abandoned.

(a) Although the original Roll book was lost, and it certainly appears that all the entries in the existing book have been made from memory, and are not to be relied upon, until 1897.

(b) Mr. Foster had imported for sale 150 copies of a verbatim report of a public debate between Rev. W. Woodman and Mr. Brindley on the subject of marriage, etc., as set forth in the work *Conjugal Love*. He could not conscientiously sell them, because of the very improper language used by Mr. Brindley. To help Mr. Foster, who could not afford the loss, members contributed 25/-, bought them from Mr. Foster at a reduced price, and had them destroyed.

Another application, in which it was stated that "the number of members in the Colony is several hundred" was made for a grant of land, this time at the 'Water Tank Reserve', Eastern Hill (East Melbourne), and again refused, since actual enrolments still numbered only 24. In January, 1871, another move was made, to the privately owned Assembly Rooms in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy.

This move was followed in the course of the next 2-3 years by the acquisition of a number of new and valuable members ... Mr. Bunney, the Manager of George Robertson's bookshop, who had been a Baptist Lay Preacher and Deacon (he resigned again in 1874); Mr. and Mrs. James Swift from New Zealand; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bell from England; Mr. Alex Pett from the Adelaide Society; Mr. F. B. Gibbes,<sup>(15)</sup> Mr. E. G. Bucknall<sup>(16)</sup> (of Majorca, 100 miles north of Melbourne) with his two sons, Edward Jnr. and Frederick, and others. Mr. and Mrs. Clarke Adcock had come in 1865 from the Argyle Square Society. All of these excepting Mr. Bunney were already dedicated New Church people, and were to play important parts in the Melbourne Society. Mr. Gibbes soon became Secretary, and Mr. Swift, a bank manager, Treasurer. The Bucknall family were to become the great financial benefactors of the Society. In all, 18 new members joined in 1872.

At the Annual Meeting in February, 1872, the Society adopted a completely new set of Rules and a new policy for the management of its affairs, by means of a number of committees ... The General Committee, and Services, Choral, Library, Finance, Building, Sunday School, and Census Committees. There were only about 20 members present at the meeting, and most had to serve on several committees, but the system seemed to work well.

In 1872 also, a small Committee was formed with the object of bringing out a New Church periodical. Mr. Bunney was appointed Editor, and 'The Melbourne New Church Herald' was to appear every second month. The first number appeared in May of the same year. It was an excellent magazine, closely printed on pages 8" x 6", 10-12 pages. But it lasted only 6 numbers, for reasons unknown. A bound set of this first Australian New Church periodical is still retained in safe deposit by the Melbourne Society.

The Society had by this time been in existence for approaching 20 years. The place of meeting had been changed at least five times, in each case no doubt with the hope of more suitable facilities and surroundings. In most cases, certainly at the Mechanics' Institution, the room was available only on Sundays. A permanent home of its own was sorely needed. Accordingly, yet a third application was made for land, this time in the suburb of Carlton, at the corner of Reilly (now Princes) and Station Streets, and now, in view of the considerably increased membership, with success. The land was fenced by the Society, and a decision made to erect a wooden Church on it. But the balance in the Building Fund and in cash and promises was only £150 and this was not enough. This circumstance, in fact, proved to be fortunate since members soon began to realise that the site was too far away. A closer site was sought, and eventually found; on the corner of Albert Street and Brunswick Street, (later Cathedral Place and now Morrison Place), Eastern Hill. An offer of £1,200 was made for the three blocks there, each 25' x 79'6", the Building Committee being given authority to pay £1,300 if necessary, on £200 deposit, with the balance in two equal annual payments. Messrs. Adcock, Fawcett and Swift were the negotiators. They could not get the price below £1,393, but nevertheless agreed to buy, and paid the deposit with Mr. Fawcett's private cheque. Their action was endorsed on June 13th, 1872, and Mr. Fawcett paid back by borrowing the balance in the Minister's Fund and exhausting the

Building Fund altogether. Of the three blocks purchased, one was resold for £400, leaving an area for the Church of 79'6" x 50'. An architect, Mr. Lloyd Taylor, was asked to draw up plans for a Church to cost not more than £800. He had already drawn the plans for a wooden building at Carlton, but now persuaded the Building Committee to build in cut bluestone rather than timber. A New Churchman, although not a member of the Society, he remitted half of his 5% fee. In the event, the church was built of rendered brick, on massive bluestone foundations and footings up to one metre through, and with a slate roof. In 1980 it remains in superb and original condition, although extensively altered internally.

In September permission was obtained, under the 'Act for the Prohibition of State Aid to Religion', to sell the Carlton land. It realised £950 cash. Donations now started to come in, including a bag of 105 sovereigns (£1 gold coin) from Mr. Orme of Diamond Creek, £90 from E. G. Bucknall and £43 from three of his sons. A lottery raised £10.

The tenders for the construction of the Church were opened in October 1872, and although much above the stipulated figure, one from Freeman and Co., for £1,175 was accepted. Mr. Fred Bucknall now offered to have a pipe organ built, which he would loan to the Society indefinitely, and an organ loft was added to the plans. In 1881 Mr. Bucknall converted the loan to a gift. The Harmonium previously in use was given to the organist, Miss Parker, in appreciation of her services. She, with her parents, resigned from the Society shortly afterwards.

The foundation stone was laid by Jacob Pitman, on October 30th 1872, with an inscribed silver trowel presented to him by Mr. Fawcett's daughter Eva. Beneath it was placed a bottle containing copies of the Melbourne daily newspapers, three copies of 'The Melbourne New Church Herald', one of the Society's Rules, one of the booklet 'Who are these New Church People?'; and a short history of the Society written on parchment. The Church was opened and dedicated with a Service of Worship on Thursday evening, March 27th, 1873. On the following Sunday there were three services, the morning one being conducted by Jacob Pitman, the afternoon by G. C. Adcock and the evening by Mr. Bunney. The total cost of the building, with extras and fittings, was £2,778/4/1. To provide the shortfall of £800, Mr. E. G. Bucknall took up a mortgage for that amount for seven years, at 6%. (This was extended until 1910, when his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Edward Bucknall, remitted it). Mr. E. G. Bucknall defrayed the cost of the iron railings in front of the Church, and Mr. George Robertson, the founder of the bookselling firm of Robertson and Mullens, donated the earth closets.<sup>(a)</sup>

In 1878 Mr. Mandeville, a member whose daughter married Edmund, a son of Alfred Noar, wrote out in colour the beautifully illuminated Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer on sheet metal, and fitted them into the dummy windows above the Altar; and in 1895 Mr. H. G. Drummond, a leadlight artist by profession, and Manager of the stained glass department of Messrs. Brooks, Robinson, was responsible for having a coloured glass panel fitted above the doors, incorporating the words, 'NEW CHURCH TEMPLE'. The two stained glass leadlights, incorporating respectively the words 'Alpha' and 'Omega', which in 1900 took the place of the ventilators high in the eastern end of the Church, may still be seen in the Society's

(a) Water closets are mentioned almost from the beginning. Although these are known to have been used in Melbourne there is, remarkably, no information as to their nature. There was no sewerage in Melbourne until after 1897.

Church at Mt. Waverley.<sup>(b)</sup> Also there, the original pipe organ is still in use, and the interiorly illuminated temple repository for the Word, which was made at a later date by Daniel Ashby. In the same year (1900), gas lighting took the place of the paraffin lamps.

The nave of the Church measured 40 feet x 25 feet, and was designed to accommodate 150 people (Rev. J. J. Thornton estimated that it would hold 200 if necessary), and it was thought that "although small, it would be sufficient for a few years". A room at the rear, measuring 20 feet by 14 feet, was vestry, library (with a stock of 350 books), kitchen and meeting room. The membership of the Society was 53, not all of whom lived in the city. Mr. C. J. Nicklin, who came from the Argyle Square Society in 1883 said of this Church, writing in 1886:

"We once knew a man who possessed enough money to buy one suit of clothes, and straightaway bought a dress suit, which he could only wear on special occasions. This seems to have been the policy of those who built the Church, a building which, however beautiful, stands condemned by the doctrine of uses as being absolutely inadequate to the varied wants of the Society; inconvenient for the use of that most important of all church auxiliaries, the Sunday School, and worse than useless for social meetings, which should do so much to build up good feelings between the members of the Society. ... But it's no use crying over spilt milk ...".

He was suggesting that a Hall be added to the Church, and submitted a sketch. "When the Society's ship comes in, we, the young people, hope they, the old people, won't forget it." Mr. Hugh Bucknall, of Rodborough, was also at the same time urging a Hall. It was not built until 1925, although in 1888 a determined attempt was made, but funds were not sufficient.

It has to be reported that even during the course of the recent busy and exciting years, perhaps in part because of the stress of them, there was not by any means always harmony in the little Society. From time to time, throughout its short history of not quite 20 years, various members had been disaffected; many had been called upon, by persons deputed for the task, to enquire about their failing support. Many arguments, often heated, had arisen about whether a building should be provided first, or a Minister obtained; about where to build, the cost, and the name to be adopted. At the Annual Meeting on January 9th, 1873, when the building was actually in progress, the most unfortunate and difficult difference arose over the appointment of readers. The underlying reasons for it have not been recorded, but it immediately resulted in the loss of a number of members, including Mr. and Mrs. Fawcett. There were further heavy losses in 1874.

W. S. Chauncy had long since moved to Wodonga, N.S.W.; Alex Miller had died, quite young; George Slater had gone to Brisbane; and Oswald Foster had resigned. 50 members of the over 100 who had joined since the inception had either died, left the Colony, or resigned. Over most of this period the brunt of the load had been borne by G. C. Adcock, as President and Chief Reader; C. F. Henry the first Secretary, Treasurer since 1856, and also Chairman since 1860; Isaac Fawcett, F. B. Gibbes and W. H. Rogers. Mr. Adcock had to this time baptized 6 adults and 21 of the 24 children.

(b) They were not designed by Mr. Drummond, as has been thought; nor by his associate, Mr. J. W. Brown, Mr. Ashby arranged for their manufacture and installation. The designer is not known.

The year 1873, the first in the new Church, was a somewhat disappointing one. It had been expected that greater public interest would result. One complaint was that there was not even any public criticism; the Society was simply ignored. Attendances were only slightly increased, and out of the 45 members in the City, "30 attended more or less regularly, the other 15 purposely absenting themselves". The Sunday School attendance was not satisfactory. There was trouble with disorderly characters frequenting the area behind the Church, and the police had to be asked to keep an eye on it. (To a degree, this problem was to persist while the Society remained there). The Librarian, George Charnock, although a devoted New Churchman and a diligent Librarian and Missionary, gave much cause for concern. He was a retired school-teacher, and of little means,<sup>(a)</sup> and sometimes taught a class of boys in the Vestry, also at times conducting an adult doctrinal class there. He often actually lived in the Vestry; at other times with members of the Society. He was of slovenly habits, and had to be told to dress respectfully for Service ... "at least to wear a black coat; for it is not fair to expect any garment to last for ever, and he might give his drab coat a rest on the Sabbath; if he cannot afford one, it will be bought for him ... and to dust and tidy the Church is part of his job". (He was paid a small weekly sum). Eventually he had to be removed from his office as caretaker. But he continued to act as Librarian, and it is recorded that in the years of 1870–1880 inclusive he sold the stupendous total of 8,700 New Church books; 1,000 of them in 1870. This is recorded in the Minutes of the Society, but to whom, or by what means, he sold them, must remain largely a mystery; although it is known that he canvassed extensively from door to door in East Melbourne and nearby Fitzroy. There were 1,200 entries in the lending library.

The Parker family resigned, and Mr. Henry Noar resumed at the organ, but had to be asked not to play so loudly. His wife, formerly Maria Crook, had been an early organist, but when family cares overtook her she taught her husband to play in her stead. Their daughter Isobel was a later organist.

#### THE FIRST MINISTER \*\*\* REV. J. J. THORNTON \*\*\* THE RODBOROUGH CHURCH

Many members saw that a Minister was very necessary, and subscriptions started to come in for the Minister's Fund. In January, 1875, the Committee recommended that Rev. J. Hyde, in Britain, be approached. Whether the approach was made is not clear, but in any case Mr. Hyde died at about this time. In the same month a Mrs. Williams offered her services as Reader, but this offer was declined because the office was reserved to members of the Society. George Mocatta wrote from Sydney suggesting a Missionary Minister to serve all the Societies, but this was contrary to the policy of the Melbourne Society. 'Bishop' Bugnion preached in the Church on two Sundays, in the afternoon.

The General Fund was very low, and a constant source of anxiety. Mr. E. G. Bucknall offered, as a missionary effort, to defray the cost of having a copy of Swedenborg's 'True Christian Religion' sent to every Minister and theological student in the Colony. Advertisements were placed in the daily papers and every denominational paper. By the end of 1876 nearly 100 copies had been distributed. In September, 1876, Mr. Bucknall initiated a similar distribution of 'The Apocalypse Revealed', and 300 copies were ordered from London. 67 had been sold by the end of

(a) although in 1873, he was only 51 years of age.

the year 1877. In 1889 a similar project was carried out by the Society with respect to the work 'Heaven and its Wonders, and Hell'.

In 1875 Mr. E. G. Bucknall divided his property between his sons, and Edward Bucknall Jnr. wrote with a promise of £100 p.a. for the support of a Minister (he afterwards increased his contribution to £150 p.a.) "with the hope that the Committee will adopt such means as will secure a man satisfactory to the members; one who is not only talented but earnest, humble, and loving the Lord; who has in his heart the extension of the Lord's Kingdom".

On July 25th, 1876, Mr. Adcock addressed a letter to Rev. Dr. Jonathon Bayley in London

"entreating that you will render your kind, and, it is hoped, efficient, aid in finding for us an able Minister of the New Church ... we have concluded that the geographical position and the mental and spiritual freedom and activity of the people of this City render it perhaps second to none in the world in importance as a sphere of labour for the ablest of New Church Preachers. I hereby forward you a book written by a Presbyterian Clergyman [the book was 'Homes and Homesteads', by Rev. J. Ballantyne] which will convey to the reader a very lucid exposition of the reasonableness of our conclusions ... We have promises of annual subscriptions from twenty persons amounting to £300 p.a., exclusively for a Minister's salary, which amount we believe but inadequately represents the amount that will be available for yearly salary for the man who will be found working ably and faithfully in this very important sphere ...".

On December 9th a letter was received from Rev. J. J. Thornton of the Southport, England, Society, enclosing a photograph of himself and two references. Mr. Thornton had been a Minister of the Congregational Church, as had his father also. He had transferred to the New Church in 1872, and had been ordained as a Leader in that year and as a Minister in 1874. The letter from Dr. Bayley was not received until late in April; but in it he gave his unqualified approval of Rev. J. J. Thornton. A special meeting in April resolved to send an invitation to him offering a salary of £300,<sup>(a)</sup> to commence on the day of his arrival; £200 to be sent to London for his passage. His telegram of acceptance was received on August 8th.

Rev. John Joseph Thornton arrived in Melbourne on February 7th, 1878, with his wife and four children, having been farewelled at a gathering of 100 at Southport by Rev. Redman Goldsack, he who had been, 30 years before, a young member of the Adelaide Society. He is described as a learned, earnest and sympathetic man, a powerful preacher and of great organising ability. He immediately threw himself energetically into his work ... re-organising the Society (another new set of Rules was adopted in February, 1879), visiting, lecturing, advertising, travelling soon to Rodborough Vale, Majorca, and to the other Societies, and compiling a small Australian Book of Worship. To him, also, fell the brunt of the work of organising the Intercolonial Association of the New Church ... The New Church in Australia.

For 25 years the little Melbourne Society had carried on, kept alive by the untiring devotion of five or six dedicated men. Now, with a Church and a Minister, it was

(a) This was about the salary of a chief clerk or a junior accountant. Incomes at the time might range from £100 p.a. or less for laborers or train drivers through £130-£180 for skilled tradesmen, £500-£800 for solicitors, £600-£3,000 for doctors, to £750-£1,000 or more for company managers and up to £5,000 for a substantial merchant.

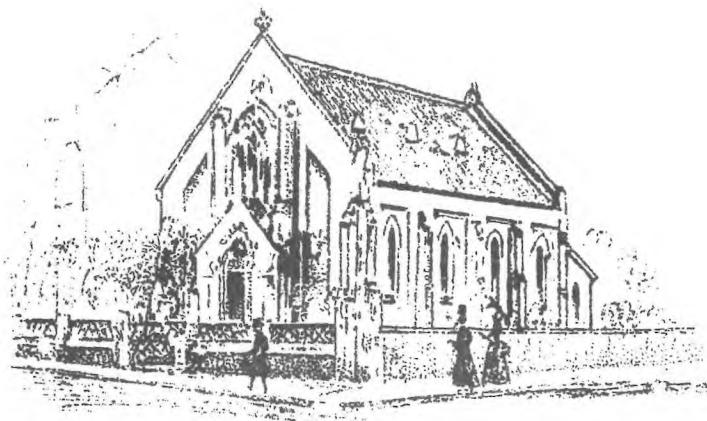
confidently hoped that a great increase of interest, loyalty and devotion would occur. In the event these hoped-for results seem to have been realised in the first three years of the new Ministry, but they were not to be maintained.

The Society had carried out a stupendous amount of advertising in its short life, and Mr. Thornton immediately embarked upon new campaigns of this kind. He gave many public lectures, both at the Church and in the City and suburbs (at Kew Town Hall particularly), and also at Rodborough, Ballarat, Kyneton (where he preached in the Congregational Church), and at Morwell, then the home of Alfred and Isabel Noar. In two years, from May, 1881, he had printed and distributed 2,000 copies of Rev. C. Giles' lectures on The Incarnation and Atonement.

There were accessions of new members (10 had joined immediately before his arrival), and by 1881 membership is given as 80 (of whom between 20 and 30 would be non-metropolitan) and attendances as 61 a.m. and 62 p.m. These figures represented a considerable increase in eight years, in which period attendances were almost doubled, and this was to be the highest point numerically ever reached by the Society up to the present day. Unfortunately the source of the increase, whether from conversion or from immigration, is for the most part not known. A few of the newcomers were children of members, now reaching adult age, particularly of the Noar and Bucknall families. It is continually reported that *local* interest is disappointing. By the time that another five years had passed attendances at Worship were to be more than halved. Mr. Thornton was to report to the Conference held in 1883. "Melbourne Society has been, and still is, suffering severely by the removal of highly esteemed members and friends to Queensland, America, England, India, New Zealand and Tasmania".

Although insufficient to counter the losses, the years 1882-90 saw a large influx of New Church members from overseas ... Mr. and Mrs. James Fletcher; Mr. Daniel Ashby (a brother of Rev. Joseph Ashby), his brother-in-law Mr. H. G. Drummond with his wife and her sister; Messrs. C. J. Nicklin and Ernest and Wallace Braby from Argyle Square. Of these, Mr. Nicklin married Amy, eldest daughter of Rev. Thornton, Ernest Braby met his wife, Minnie Agnes Browne, in Melbourne, and Wallace Braby became the Secretary of the Melbourne New Church Tract Association; but all of these settled soon afterwards in Sydney. Mr. Drummond, previously Secretary of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Society, returned to England with his wife and sister-in-law, to become Rev. H. G. Drummond. Mr. Coppin, Leader of the Theatre Royal Orchestra, joined, and brought with him Mr. and Mrs. Berg; and Mr. R. J. Tonks, from the Wretham Rd., Birmingham Society, who married Christina Berg, and became the father of Isobel, later Mrs. (Rev.) C. D. Brock. Daniel Ashby was to become the long-time Leader, and the Grand Old Man, of the Melbourne Society.

By 1886, there were 28 scholars in the Sunday School, and to cater for the younger generation, a Mutual Improvement Association and a Young Men's Society. In that year also, Mrs. Hawley, widow of John Hawley of the Sydney Society, started a Band of Hope. There was also being produced a small magazine, 'The Bee', which in May, 1886, changed its name to 'The Beehive' and became the official organ of the Mutual Improvement Association; and in September became 'The Beehive and Band of Hope Advance'. It was entirely handwritten and duplicated on pages 6" x 4", 12 pages per issue. The last known number is dated April 16th, 1887. In August, 1886, at a "Question Box" meeting of the Mutual Improvement Association, with several senior members there to answer questions, one of those submitted was "Are we justified in supposing that the present prosperity of the Melbourne Society will



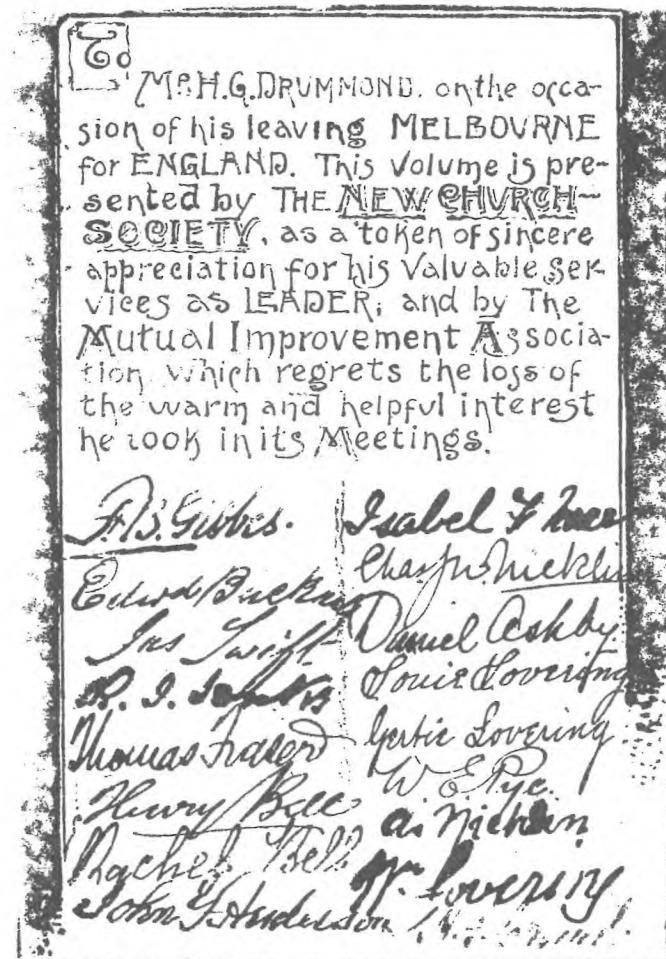
*The Albert St., East Melbourne, Church. From 'The Beehive', January 1st, 1887.*



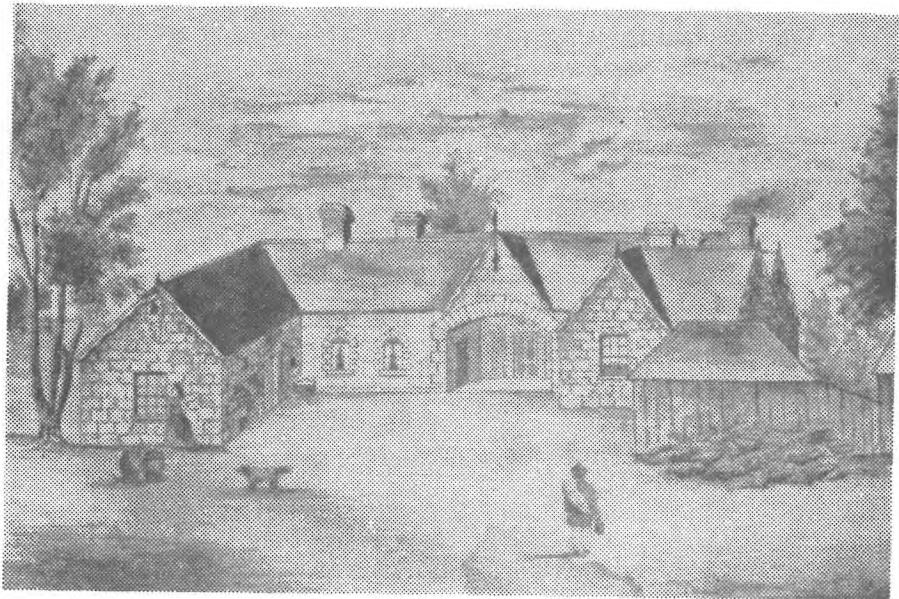
*The Church at Rodborough Vale, Majorca, Victoria. From 'The Beehive', January 1st, 1887.*

continue for the next 12 years?" All members of the Panel answered in the affirmative. Ten years later the morning attendances were reduced by two-thirds, and the evening by half.

As early as April, 1878, Mr. Thornton made his first visit to 'Rodborough Vale', the homestead of the Bucknall family at Majorca, near Maryborough. For the greater part of his fifteen years in Melbourne he visited there often, going every month from 1883; a journey of 90 miles by rail and another 10 by horse-drawn vehicle; and conducting two Services.



*Inscription in the copy of T.C.R. presented to Mr. H. G. Drummond in 1896. Courtesy of Alan Ashby Drummond.*



*The Rodborough Vale Homestead in 1867.*



*The Rodborough Church. From a photograph.*

He visited the Sydney and Adelaide Societies and worked hard at reorganising the Melbourne Society. In June, 1879, already “feeling much in need of a mental rest”, he travelled by ship to Sydney, remaining there for a month. He was also busy organising the first ‘Australasian Conference of the New Church’, which was held in Melbourne in February, 1881. On December 17th, 1882, he dedicated the Church at Rodborough Vale.

This Church, modelled closely on the style of the Melbourne Church, was built by Lillie and Hugh Bucknall, in memory of Lillie’s first husband, Hugh’s cousin William, the sixth son of E. G. Bucknall. Before his death, aged 33, William had expressed his intention of building a Church on the Bucknall property, and his intention was thus put into effect. Built of bluestone, to accommodate 90 people, it still stands, now beside the waters of the Tullaroop Reservoir, and is maintained in excellent condition by a family trust, ‘The Association of the Bucknall Family’. In 1975 it was ‘classified’ by The National Trust of Australia ... “A syncretistic<sup>(a)</sup> Gothic Church maintaining (apart from the iron roof covering the original shingles) its builder’s simple faith and architectural pretensions”.

An inscription in the Church reads: “In loving memory of William Arthur Bucknall, who entered the spiritual world January 1877. The erection of this Church in 1882 was the accomplishment of an intention expressed by him while with us. Matthew 6:10. Mark 14:36.” Not far from it the Bucknall family graveyard may still be seen. The Church in later years has been used by other denominations, with occasional Services being maintained by the Melbourne Society’s Minister and congregation.

Mr. Thornton’s health was not good, and he was sometimes subject to misunderstandings with members of his Society, but undoubtedly he laboured conscientiously and unremittingly at his work. In 1882 and 1883, the money being available, he was paid £350 p.a., but by 1884 the financial situation was again giving cause for concern. G. C. Adcock, who died of a heart attack in the Fitzroy Gardens, almost within sight of the Church, in 1885, James Fletcher and Henry Vincent had been lost by death. C. F. Henry, a foundation member, and one of the most loved and respected, died in 1887, “leaving behind him the grateful incense of a pure and blameless life”.

In 1886 Mr. Thornton received an invitation from the Bath Society, but declined it. In 1888 he made an attempt to hold regular meetings at the suburb of Yarraville, where there were several members, but a meeting place could not be found. The project was finally abandoned when Mr. Hillquist of Yarraville was drowned in the River Yarra in November 1888, leaving a widow and a young baby, lately baptised by Daniel Ashby.

On August 12th, 1888, an ex-Presbyterian Minister, Rev. George Bates, preached twice at Eastern Hill ... “his first Doctrinal sermons in the New Church”. Mr. Bates had spent 6 years studying for the Ministry, in Melbourne and London. On the voyage back from London he had been introduced to the Doctrines by William Newman of the Sydney Society. He had put thought of them aside, but on taking up his work as a preacher he had been forced back to them. He resigned from the Presbyterian Church in June, 1888, and joined the Melbourne Society, where he became choirmaster and an occasional preacher, relinquishing the title ‘Reverend’.

(a) A useful word for the National Trust; but there is no known justification for the appellation. The Church is dedicated to the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only God.

In February, 1890, Mr. Thornton wrote to the Committee asking for 12 month's leave of absence to visit Britain and America ... "I need a long rest, and reunion with the brethren at home. A sense of mental exhaustion requires me to drive myself to study. ... After an absence my services might be received with more freshness and zest. Since coming to this Society I have poured out without reserve all the energy and power I have possessed; I have employed all my resources ... I shall forego part of my salary. ... If the Committee cannot grant me this, I shall carry on. Place the welfare of the Church and the good of the Lord's Kingdom before my comfort or relief". The Bucknall family wrote, urging immediate leave: ... "Mr. Thornton has been looking worn and tired ... we will continue our contributions to the Society as before, and also subscribe something towards his trip". A Special General Meeting was held at which some members spoke in opposition. Some speakers said that, although Mr. Thornton as a Christian gentleman was all that could be desired, they considered him a failure as a Minister – there had been little or no increase in the Church. But all agreed that he needed a holiday, and the leave was granted, on full salary. A suggestion was made that while he was away there should be only one Service. George Bates wrote saying that this would be a tragedy, and offering to conduct one Service every Sunday, providing that someone else would conduct another.

Mr. Thornton left in March for England and America. On the Sunday evening preceding his departure the Church was filled almost to capacity, and after the Service he was presented with an affectionately worded Address. "The leave-taking was thus marked by all the cordiality and good feeling that could be desired". The conduct of Services devolved on Messrs. Gibbes, Bates, Ashby and Drummond. Mr. Ashby was able to make one visit to Rodborough Vale. He was now also in charge of the Sunday School. Mr. Thornton returned before the end of the year, earlier than had been anticipated, and resumed duty in January, 1891.

During his absence moves had again been afoot for the erection of the Sunday School Hall. There was over £500 in the Building Fund. Plans were drawn up and the decision made to proceed. However the health and municipal authorities required a number of alterations, and this involved a protracted delay. In September, 1890, the General and Mutual Improvement Building Society collapsed, and the Society lost all of the £330 invested with it. The building project was postponed indefinitely. In mid-1891 came the failure of the South Melbourne Building Society, in which the Society held a fixed deposit of £320. (In 1895 the Society was able to recover £51 of this amount). In addition to these losses direct contributions from members were still low. Early in 1892 Mr. Thornton urged the Society to reduce his salary by £50 p.a., and his offer was regretfully accepted.<sup>(a)</sup> For a time one of the Sunday Services was discontinued. Despite these financial troubles a Missionary Society was set up in this year, with the help of a visitor from America, Rev. A. C. Richards, and it was proposed to originate a circulating library, in conjunction with lending libraries throughout Victoria and Tasmania.

The next blow to the Society, although relieving the financial burden, was the Minister's resignation. His wife's health had deteriorated and her doctor advised her to return to England. He sailed for England on April 22nd, 1893. There, in June 1912, he was to ordain Richard Hooper Teed, who, in 1925, became the next Minister of the Melbourne Society. There was not enough money to pay Mr. Thornton, and Daniel Ashby advanced the required deficiency, free of interest.

(a) He was not alone. Salaries in the £300 bracket fell by up to 25% in the depression years 1890-94.

Messrs. Gibbes, Ashby and Drummond were appointed Readers. Mr. J. W. Brown presented to the Society his portrait of Mr. Thornton.<sup>(b)</sup> Mr. Albert Bucknall, the youngest son of E. G., commenced monthly services at Rodborough Vale. They were later continued by a Church of England Minister, Rev. G. Berrie, who used the New Church liturgy. How long this arrangement lasted is not known. From 1914 the Church was used by the Presbyterian denomination for their own Services.

#### DANIEL ASHBY

There were now 78 members on the Society's Roll; 59 of them in Melbourne, 9 at Rodborough and 10 in other country districts. Attendances in Melbourne were about 20 a.m. and 31 p.m., less than half those of some five years earlier. In April, 1896, evening Services were discontinued. Average attendance in the morning in 1897 was 43. (Evening Service only took the place of the morning Services in 1908).

Mr. H. G. Drummond who seems to have been tacitly recognised as Leader from the departure of Mr. Thornton returned to England to train for the Ministry, and at the Annual Meeting in April, 1896, for the first time, Leaders were officially appointed ... Daniel Ashby and F. B. Gibbes; although in everything but name, Mr. G. C. Adcock had previously filled that role for 33 years. His son, W. E. Adcock, was now taking a prominent part. In 1897 the Society was incorporated. In 1898 a gift of 200 books was received from America and distributed free to Ministers and theological students. In 1898 Mr. J. H. Bennett of Terang joined, the father of Rev. E. L. Bennett, Minister of the Society from 1950 to 1963. In that year also Rev. W. E. Brickman wrote from Baltimore, U.S.A., applying for the position of Minister. The Society was not in a position to consider this, and the letter was forwarded to the Adelaide Society where Rev. A. E. Beilby had just resigned. No appointment resulted.

In the year 1900 Mr. Ashby delivered a course of nine public lectures in the Church on Sunday evenings: three on each of the topics The Unseen World, The Divine Humanity, and The Word of the Lord.

The untimely death of Mr. R. J. Tonks in that year was a severe blow, as also was the death of Mr. Edward Bucknall. At the Annual Meeting in July, 1901, the resignation of Mr. Gibbes as co-Leader, proffered with profound regret, owing to his failing health, was received, amid emotional expressions of appreciation of his unremitting service for over 30 years. Mr. Ashby became sole Leader, a position he was to hold until 1925. He was also Sunday School Superintendent for 31 years, from 1893 until 1926. A valedictory meeting was tendered to Mr. Gibbes, at which he was presented with a purse of sovereigns, in recognition of the debt owed to him by members. (He died, destitute, three years later, leaving his wife in poverty. Both in turn were granted, in their last years, minuscule pensions by the Society.)

In January, 1902, shares previously donated by Mr. Bucknall had to be sold to pay the interest on the £800 mortgage. Mrs. Bucknall thereupon waived all future payments of interest. In 1908 she remitted the mortgage entirely, and for the first time the Society was free of debt.

The 19th Century may well be looked upon as the one above others that encompassed the Decline of Religion. One can only look back with devout admiration,

(b) Mr. Brown, a close friend and business associate under Mr. Drummond, was a leadlight artist of great merit. After his return to London, he designed stained glass windows for many Churches, including several of the New Church.

reverence and love; even with awe, on the single-minded piety and devotion of the men of the Church in Australia in its latter half ... Pitman, Holden, E. G. Day, J. J. Darwin, C. F. Henry, Gibbes, G. C. Adcock, Brereton, Jackson, Spencer, Garsden ... one would like to be able to name them all, and can even hope that some day one might be granted to meet them in person! What can we adequately say of them and of the faith that drove them on and moved them to continue faithfully and unwaveringly, against all the odds and disabilities attendant upon Colonial life in those days of travel by foot or by horse on roads unmade and unlighted; never flinching or failing ... carrying on, almost until death claimed them. When in the early days of settlement those three or four in each of the four Colonies found each other, their chief delight was to gather together, so few and so isolated, so lonely in their faith, for the reading of the Word, for doctrinal study and for Worship.

They were indeed encouraged and relieved by the brief burst of activity towards the end of their century, which saw the last substantial influx of New Church immigrants, and the maturity of the families of the pioneers; but by the time that this second generation had passed away, the climate had changed.

Daniel Ashby was one, like W. J. Spencer in Sydney, whose life and work spanned this time of change from the enthusiasm and anticipation of the 80s and 90s, to the doldrums of the first quarter of the 20th century. In the long years of his Ministry (which it was in fact, if not in name), he never faltered in his devotion to his task. He was ably and faithfully assisted by W. E. Adcock, the son of G. C. Adcock, J. H. Bennett, and others for shorter periods and in other duties; but to him fell the prime responsibility of holding the Society together. When he so thankfully handed over to R. H. Teed in 1925, at the age of 72, the world was into a completely new era. He did not marry, and in order to be able to devote his time and energies to the Church he refused promotion in his career as a fitter in the Railway workshops. Besides being the Leader and the Principal Preacher, he was also Sunday School Superintendent. He ran the Boys Club, relieved for a time by E. L. Bennett, and took the boys on their annual Camp, ably assisted by J. W. Boston. He married, baptized, administered the Sacrament and conducted funerals. He was also, for 40 years, Secretary of the Association, until 1929, and, for a short time, Editor of *The New Age*. He was to die, at his mountain retreat at Emerald, in February, 1930; and in his memory an Altar, built by an 'Old Boy' of his Boys' Club, Eric Fiven, was installed in the Church in which so many hours of his long life had been spent.

Perhaps of all his activities the Boys' Club had been nearest to Daniel Ashby's heart. Year after year he camped with his young proteges, most often at the Nagambie Lake, near the home of the Edmund Noar family; on the River Yarra at Warburton, the home of Alfred Noar; or at Healesville on the same river, near the two Pye families, descendants of Henry Noar.

But the times took their toll, and although the number of enrolled members remained fairly constant, upwards of 70 in all, with upwards of 50 in the city, yet attendances at Worship and contributions to the funds declined. In 1904-05, the total contributions amounted to £25, and the deficiency of receipts to expenditure was £14. In the early years of the new century attendances at Worship were well maintained at 32-34 average, but by 1913 had fallen to 27, and by 1923 to only 20. In 1923-24 the average attendance is given as 24. Nothing perhaps can better demonstrate the character and faith of Daniel Ashby than the preambles over these years to the Annual Reports of the Committee, of which he was always Chairman:- ... 1901: "Another year has passed away under the merciful care and guidance of the Lord's Divine Providence, and it is with a feeling of deep gratitude for His Divine help that your

Committee presents its report of the progress made in their efforts to extend the influence of the Lord's New Church for the welfare of the Society"; 1913: "... we thankfully acknowledge the goodness of the Lord, who has guided and sustained us ..."; 1919: "We wish first of all to thankfully acknowledge the goodness of the Lord in bestowing upon us many and great blessings, thereby enabling us to continue our work, and also to enjoy the help and inspiration which He in His New Church can give for the growth of true Christian charity in the life of each one," 1922: "Acknowledging that all goodness is from the Lord, and that, so far as we have been able to continue the work and service of His Church, the power and the will to do so has been from Him alone ....". In 1913, he was accorded the rare honour of having his portrait hung in the Vestry, still in the time of his Leadership. He took no salary or expenses, but was given a purse of money in appreciation, in 1910. Despite his serene faith and seemingly unquenchable optimism he felt obliged, in 1906, to make an appeal for greater support, and in 1908, "growing indifference and irregular attendance", were causing concern. In that year Mr. Ashby drew attention to the anomaly of increasing membership but falling attendances. A somewhat surprising feature of the first two decades of the century is the great number of calls for financial assistance being made by people who found themselves destitute; not all of them members of the Society.

In 1905 James Swift, a member for 30 years and Treasurer for 18, died in office; so also did Mr. Conrad in 1914, having been Secretary since 1900. In 1909 the subject of a Missionary Minister, who would work in each of the four Societies in turn, was brought forward at the Conference, and Societies were circularized. In 1910 an offer was made by Rev. S. J. C. Goldsack to come in this capacity; and in 1912 Rev. T. David of San Francisco offered to come as Minister to one Society, "Melbourne to have first offer". For financial reasons neither of these offers could be accepted; but it began to be seen that Daniel Ashby would need relief in the not too distant future. He was now aged nearly 60.

In 1920 the question of a Missionary Minister was again before Conference, and Societies once more circularized. Melbourne Society was in sympathy with the proposal, and thought that it could contribute £80 p.a. The three other Societies were not in a position to offer financial support; but over the next 4 years the financial situation (of the Association) changed dramatically, owing to donations and undertakings by Mr. George Marchant of Brisbane. He proposed to visit Britain in 1924, and was authorised by the Association to engage there if he could either a 'Missionary Minister', or else a Minister for one of the Societies, which would be expected to find from £110 to £150 p.a. towards his stipend.

#### REVEREND R. H. TEED

In April, 1924, Mr. Marchant passed through Melbourne on his way to England, where he would endeavour to engage a Minister. Both he, the Vice-President of the Association, and Dr. J. H. Bennett, as President, had received letters from Rev. R. H. Teed of the Derby Society, enquiring about the situation in Australia. In England Mr. Marchant could find no other Minister ready to consider coming to Australia.

He attended two Services at the Derby Church, and in the following week spent six hours with Mr. Teed in his home "in very frank conversation". He mentioned certain criticism that he had heard, and was pleased with Mr. Teed's attitude; he admitting that it was fair criticism. He told him of the strenuous life lying before him if he should come to Australia. He was pleased with Mr. Teed's conduct of Services and with his sermons. He wrote to Mr. Ashby:

"I gather that the family are vegetarians, and rarely eat meat. ... He is different from many New Church Ministers, in that he neither drinks or smokes ... He is well liked by his people ... it speaks highly of him that this is his second Pastorate in Derby ... He comes of good New Church stock, and I can hear nothing against him ... No-one will listen to Resolution No. 1 [Missionary Minister], and Melbourne seems the best place to start. He will have you to help him with the New Age ..." .

In November, the Melbourne Society unanimously agreed to an invitation to Mr. Teed. The Association was asked to issue the invitation. To Mr. Teed it was pointed out that, "By far the greater part of the salary will come from the Association, therefore we think it in your interest, as well as ours, that the business part of the agreement shall be between the Council and yourself. ... Our Society is small, and you must not judge the attendance from the numbers on the Roll. ... Still, with a Minister, we hope our members will attend better and that we may be able to win others from outside". Mr. Teed accepted the invitation, by cable received on January 29th, 1925, and his letter followed in due course: "My wife and I ... unite with you in prayer for the Divine blessing upon this great venture ... we will not give ourselves to you by halves; we wish to give ourselves entirely to the New Church in Australia. We come with every intention of staying with you ... I am fully prepared to do whatsoever seems best for the cause. ... I gladly recognise that you, on your side, will loyally support me, both by the exercise of the spirit of devotion to the cause and also financially ..." .

In Melbourne plans were being made to partition off part of the little all-purpose room to give the new Minister some privacy. But Mr. Marchant wrote asking that a price be obtained for building a Hall. In the event a contract for the work was let on June 17th, 1925, for a Hall 25' x 25', with Bookroom, Vestry and kitchen, at a cost of £1,690. The total cost, fitted out, was £1,940. Of this, Mr. Marchant paid £1,500, and Mr. Hugh Bucknall £300. In December of the same year Mr. Albert Bucknall made a gift to the Society of 200 shares in the Maryborough Knitting Mills, the dividends to be devoted to the Minister's Salary Fund. Mr. and Mrs. Teed and their four children arrived in Melbourne on September 3rd, and the Hall was already completed. On the Saturday evening, September 5th, the welcoming Reception and Social was held. A presentation was made to Mr. Ashby and speakers tried to express their gratitude for his devotion over so many years. The Hall was officially declared Open on Sunday, September 26th, by Dr. J. H. Bennett, President of the Association.

On the first three Sundays of the new Ministry the congregations averaged 60, including strangers and isolated receivers. "They listened with rapt attention to the Sermons, and joined heartily in the Services. The addresses were given with vigour and decision; they were well constructed and made a lasting impression".

In November, Mr. Teed took over the Editorship of *The New Age*. In December he had 400 leaflets printed and distributed in the vicinity of the Church. In February, 1926, he preached at Rodborough. By this time there were only 3 avowed New Church people in the district, and all of these living 10-12 miles from the church. A few years later there were none. In April he spent four Sundays in Sydney, and in March had commenced his famous Tuesday evening talks in the Hall. Tea was taken there, and followed by a short doctrinal address, and perhaps a few items of entertainment. At a later time they were held alternately in private homes as 'Drawing Room Meetings'.



*The Albert St. East Melbourne, Church and Hall, 1925.*



*Rev. R. H. Teed, 1925.*

In 1927 Mr. Marchant paid the whole purchase price of a house in the suburb of Hawthorn for use as a Manse. He vested ownership in the Association, with the condition that Melbourne Society pay 12/6 p.w. into a Manse Maintenance fund.

The Ministry of Rev. Richard H. Teed was to last for 25 years, until July, 1950. He served the Society again in 1962-65, when he travelled monthly from his home in Albury, New South Wales. His years in Melbourne were marked by efforts of every kind to attract greater support from members of the Society, and to interest newcomers. He was a powerful and eloquent preacher, delivering his sermons extemporarily with the aid only of a few brief written words as sub-headings.

He gave many public lectures and a series of twelve weekly Sunday evening radio broadcast talks, and lectured frequently to various philosophical societies. He at various times reorganised the Services of Worship, and for a time introduced what he called an 'Open Service', adopting a less formal approach and discarding his vestments. He travelled many times to the Rodborough Church and to the other Societies. He tried morning Services in private homes, and maintained the evening weeknight meetings, for which he each year had a syllabus attractively printed at his own expense.

But he was constantly impelled, in his annual reports and in sermons, to call for far greater support. Membership of the Society remained fairly constant over the years. Attendances at Worship increased markedly with his coming, rising from 23.5 in 1924-25 to a peak of 39 in 1930-31, but fell to a low figure of 21.5 average in 1941-42, in the midst of the second World War. Even this figure was boosted by occasional large congregations for special occasions (as all averages are), and Mr. Teed wrote in that same year: "Within living memory of our oldest members, the Society has never been in so low a state. At Worship, we are normally satisfied to have about 10". Attendances recovered somewhat, and reached an average of 24.6 in the last year of his Ministry. He was undoubtedly unfortunate in that early in his pastorate, Australia entered the Great Depression, and before that came to an end, the Second World War. No efforts of his could overcome the decline in the will to worship, or the lack of interest in the New Church and its teachings. He continually tried variations in the time and the style of services and meetings, but without success. The story of the Society in this quarter century is the story of a hard core of faithful souls, many of them elderly, of the gradual changes brought about by deaths and removals, and of a very few stepping in to take their place.

The social life of the Society was maintained, especially in the earlier period when there were still a few younger people around. In this time Mr. J. W. Boston initiated occasional dances in the Hall. He also cut away part of the floor so that it could be raised to form a stage which was surrounded by drapes, and many memorable concerts and social gatherings were held there. There was a great deal of musical talent ... R. H. May with his 'cello, Cecil Newton with his violin, Clara Noel on the piano, and many fine voices. F. V. Morris, from the Camberwell, London, Society was Organist. He had been married in the Church by Daniel Ashby. Later Miss Norah Stevens became organist, in return for the use of the organ for practice. She joined the Society, and in June, 1950, made a gift to it of 7½ acres of land at Woori Yallock, 37 miles from Melbourne, as a site for Church camps and Summer Schools. She afterwards married a member, Cecile C. Coleman. Mrs. R. H. Teed acted as Organist for many years, and had the rare gift of being able to sing as she played. She also made herself responsible for the floral decoration of the Church, from the resources of her own garden.

The Boys' Club came to an end as the boys reached maturity, but several young families kept the Sunday School alive ... the R. H. Mays, the I. A. Robinsons, the F. J. Bostons, the large Teed family and a few others. Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Williams with their son and daughter were loyal workers, but the family left for Fiji in 1934. Bruce Williams, who had been Sunday School Superintendent from 1932 to 1934, joined the Society in 1946 after army service, and was later to enter the New Church Ministry and to become Minister of Melbourne and later of Perth and Brisbane Societies, and sometime President of the Association. R. H. May was to become Leader of the Society, on the departure of Mr. Teed in 1950. He was a very talented artist and musician and often entertained with 'cello or vocal solos. Mr. and Mrs. I. A. Robinson somewhat uniquely held the positions of Secretary and Treasurer simultaneously for a period of eight years, perhaps thus reflecting the dearth of potential office-bearers.

In 1938 at Shoreham, on Westernport Bay, Mr. Teed initiated the New Church camps, which were to grow into the Australian Summer School movement. There, on the week-end of January 29th-31st, a camp was set up, close to Rev. R. H. and Mrs. Teed's holiday house, and was most successful and enjoyable, "largely due to the untiring attention and lavish care of Mr. and Mrs. Teed ... these dear people possess the happy and priceless faculty of making everyone feel immediately at home ... Mr. Teed gave an inspired address ... after evening Service we sang hymns and songs until early Monday morning, by a bonfire on the beach ...". Camps were held at Rodborough, with the use of the old deserted homestead, in 1940 and 1941, and an interstate 'Young Peoples' Conference' there in 1947, all of them over the Easter weekend, and attracting a number of members from other Australian Societies.

In December, 1938, the Melbourne New Church Women's League was formed, under the inspiration of the Misses Emma and Hetty Vincent, lately returned from a visit to Britain, and whose father had been a student of the Doctrines under Mr. George Charnock at his class in the old Vestry. Encouragement and help was contributed by Mrs. S. W. Hart, President of the Perth League. For a number of years a Journal, *The Women's Outlook*, was edited, typed, duplicated and published, much of the work being done by Miss Caroline Pett, Miss Norah Stevens (afterwards Mrs. Coleman) and Mrs. I. A. (T. R.) Robinson.

A quite remarkable feature of the Melbourne pastorate of Rev. R. H. Teed, perhaps reflecting more adequately than words the power of his preaching and teaching, is the circumstance that in that time no less than five members of the Society moved away and were eventually ordained into the new Church Ministry, Messrs. C. D. Brock, E. L. Bennett, H. W. Hickman, E. B. Williams and J. E. Teed. In 1961, Ian A. Arnold left Melbourne en route for the New Church College in London. The Society had already contributed Rev. H. G. Drummond to the Ministry; so that in its first 108 years seven members had responded to the call.

In 1940, on the death of Mr. Hugh Bucknall, the Society received a legacy of £750 under the will of his late wife Lillie, and a Pulpit, still in use, was erected as a memorial to them. From that year Mr. Norman Bucknall, grandson of E. G., the last surviving Bucknall member of the New Church in Australia, paid the cost of quarterly visits by Rev. R. H. Teed to the Church at Rodborough Vale.

In 1941 timber panelling, since also transferred to the Mt. Waverley Church, was installed as a reredos to the Altar and Pulpit, in memory of Mr. George Marchant. This was dedicated by Mr. William Burl, as President of the Association, on

November 1st, 1941. The occasion was the celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the laying of the Foundation Stone of the Church, and there was present Mrs. Warner, who as a child had attended the original ceremony in 1872. Further improvements were made to the Church in 1945, when a legacy of about £2,500, payable over the next several years, was received under the will of W. H. Rose, a man unknown in the Church. From part of this money central heating and much more effective lighting were added.

Despite these financial windfalls, the Treasurer reported in July, 1947, that expenses exceeded income, and that the General Fund was in deficit by £105. However, in this year, Mr. Teed was able to make history by undertaking a series of 12 broadcast lectures over radio station 3KZ. One of them was given by Rev. C. D. Brock, who was in Melbourne for six weeks in a Missionary capacity on behalf of the Association. They were delivered on Sunday evenings, at 9.15, and were of a very high standard, although bringing no visible result. In recognition, the Association paid £50 towards the cost.

In 1949 there came the first accession of new members from overseas since the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Teed in 1925. They were Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Bremner, from the Paisley, Scotland Society. Their daughter Alexis married Neville Jarvis, from the Brightlingsea, England Society, but now a member of the Melbourne Society, in 1972.

As early as 1931 there had been criticism of Mr. Teed, quite unwarranted, but extending to Societies other than Melbourne, over a series of articles from his pen ... 'Degrees in the Social Evil' ... which had appeared in *The New Age*. These were soundly based on Swedenborg's 'Conjugal Love', but brought a flood of protest, largely expressed in the form of letters to the Journal; thus reviving a phenomenon that had already appeared many times in the Church, in Australia, England and America. Although few members of the Melbourne Society were amongst the protesters, some of whom however wrote anonymously, yet in the 1940s some further causes of disaffection surfaced.

These need not, and perhaps cannot, be enumerated in detail. Suffice it that after nearly 20 years, and with minimal accession of new members, the small Society had become somewhat introspective; and that the freshness and inspiration of the early years under Mr. Teed had faded. By 1944 friction and criticism had reached a point at which it was felt that either a change must be made, or alternatively, that all members must be called upon to re-affirm their loyalty to the Minister. It was moved at a General Meeting that a successor be sought. The motion was lost, and an appeal made for a more constructive and united stance.

There were, however, two other distinct, yet interrelated issues that disturbed not only Mr. Teed and the Melbourne Society, but the Church throughout Australia, from as early as 1930, and lasting at least until 1950 ... (1) Financial ... the majority of the lay officials and membership being acutely conscious of the need to conserve and enhance capital resources, and others at the other extreme urging recognition of the need to meet what they saw as moral commitments, even if necessary at the expense of the use of capital. (2) Lay Leaders as against Ministers. The Church in Australia had almost traditionally been led, and still was in several Societies, by laymen, who were greatly loved and respected; and many people seemed to look to them with a special kind of admiration which was not necessarily accorded to Ministers by virtue of their office.

In regard to the first of these, there had been expressed in the pages of *The New Age* the opinion that a Minister's stipend should depend upon his ability to increase the membership of the Society. In 1925, when Mr. Teed had been appointed to Melbourne at £400 p.a., or £7/13/10 p.w., the basic wage (the lowest legally payable), was £4/7/- p.w. By 1949 it had risen to £6/8/- p.w., but the Minister's stipend had not been increased. He had, in fact, accepted, in 1933, a temporary reduction of £50 p.a. In 1932 he had voluntarily declined the Editor's honorarium of £52 p.a., and this had not been restored. Until the same year the Society had paid half of the manse rent of 12/6 p.w., but Mr. Teed then assumed responsibility for the whole of it. He had been required to pay his own expenses of travel to Conferences, and to provide his own car.

In Melbourne in the early 1940s, with the commercial depression years now past, several members worked towards giving an increase in stipend, but not without opposition. In 1946 the Minister was granted a lump sum of £200 in lieu of increase. In 1947 a small Committee was appointed to consider the finances of the Society generally. It recommended an increase in the wage paid to the Church cleaner to £1 p.w. In August, 1949, the Minister was granted an increase of 12/6 p.w. for two years. The Association Ministers' and Missionaries Sustentation Fund had, for the past three years, had a surplus of income over expenditure of £650 p.a., but this was being added to capital against possible future needs.

Two incidents must serve to illustrate the second factor mentioned above ... Lay Leaders as against Ministers. In 1940, Mr. Teed had been invited to attend the Dedication of the Sydney Society's new Church, which he did, only to discover to his surprise that although he was to preach, the Dedication ceremony was to be carried out by the leader of the Society, a layman. By 1949, Mr. Teed had been in Australia for 24 years, and had been President of the Association for 6 – 1930-33 and 1946-49 – while Rev. C. D. Brock, now no longer active, had been President for 3, and laymen, not always Leaders of Societies, for 15. Mr. Teed now anticipated a second term, but a Lay Leader was appointed in his stead. He had earlier recalled the words that Rev. W. A. Bates, lately returned from Brisbane, had said to him in 1925. "You know, Mr. Teed, they don't really want Ministers in Australia."

In February, 1950, Mr. Teed submitted his resignation to the Melbourne Society, to be effective from July. He retired to Albury, New South Wales, and there quickly became a welcome alternative preacher for other denominations. In 1952 there appeared his second small book<sup>(a)</sup> 'The Sermon on the Mount', published by The New Church in Australia to commemorate his 25 years' Ministry to the Melbourne Society. He continued to edit the *New Age* until June, 1955, and wrote extensively for that and other New Church journals, continuing these written contributions for 30 years more; thus becoming through his literary activities a well known and respected name throughout the New Church world. In the late 1950s he served a short pastorate in the Auckland, New Zealand, Society; and he actively assisted the Sydney Society until 1960, and the Melbourne Society until 1965, as an alternative preacher. He participated in Australian Conferences until 1976.

REV. E. L. BENNETT. \*\*\* WOORI YALLOCK \*\*\* THE MT. WAVERLEY CHURCH

On notification of the impending departure of their Minister, the Society acted without delay. Rev. E. L. Bennett, then serving in Mauritius, was well known to

(a) His first, 'The New Orthodoxy', he had published privately in 1938.

most, having been an active member and Sunday School Superintendent before entering the Ministry. An invitation was sent to him, and accepted. He arrived in Melbourne in August, 1950, only one month after Mr. Teed ended his pastorate. E. L. Bennett was not a powerful preacher, but he was felt to be the ideal man to heal any tensions in the Society. He was a great lover of poetry, literature and music, (and a superb organist) and a gentle and lovable personality. He was appointed directly by the Society, and not, as Mr. Teed has been, by the Association. The stipend offered was £400 p.a., with the Manse rent free. In 1952, in consequence of increased subsidy granted by the Association, it was increased to £500. The old Manse was sold and a new one bought, more suitable, and with better public transport to the Church. Mr. Bennett's full-time Ministry was to last until early in 1962. Attendances at Worship rose slightly, and a little more towards the end of this period, although from 1955 membership of the Society fell sharply, owing to resignations, departures, deaths, and removal from the Roll of names no longer active. The Society took comfort in the well-known formula, 'There are other things than mere numbers'.

"What a blessed phrase", wrote Mr. A. Adcock,<sup>(a)</sup> in 1939, "I regard the man who invented it (he must have been a Church Secretary), as one of the greatest benefactors of the human race. It has brought comfort to, and eased the consciences of, innumerable parsons and Church workers. Fancy! The very thing for which all have been striving for all the period of their Church history; the goal set; when failure comes, to take refuge in 'Well, it's of little consequence, anyway'. A Greek slave lampooned this failing of the human mind two thousand years ago. His name was Aesop, and he wrote the immortal story of 'The Fox and the Grapes.'".

The 1950s were the period of the earliest development of the Summer School facilities at Woori Yallock, on the land given by Norah Stevens. In 1950 and 1951 a secondhand timber building, to serve as kitchen and storeroom, with a veranda 28' x 7', was erected on the property. Camping on the site was initiated on the last weekend of December, 1950, with 19 people in residence. This was followed at Easter, 1951, by the first organised Summer School, and by a similar gathering lasting 13 days, in December, 1951-January, 1952. The project was an immediate success. A third School, with 27 in residence, was held the following year, and in the next a number of new buildings were erected; one for the use of visiting Ministers, and others by members of the Society at their own expense. Most of the building was done by a member, D. A. Robinson, a master builder, and consisted almost entirely of secondhand buildings transported to the site and improved. Summer Schools were to continue year after year, attracting residents from all Australian Societies and from New Zealand, and reached a peak at times with over 70 persons in residence, and over 80 present at Services of Worship. In 1968-69 there were representatives from every Australian Society, including the General Church Society at Hurstville, New South Wales, and from the Auckland, New Zealand, Society.

These numbers necessitated considerable improvement and extension. In 1968 two ablution blocks were built of concrete masonry. The greater proportion of this work was done by two young men who were not members of the Society; Richard Keyworth of Auckland, who remained in Melbourne for two years in order to be able to assist in the project, and Bernard Boulton, of Sydney, a grandson of Bernard

(a) Of Trafalgar, Victoria, but formerly Secretary and, for five years Leader, of the Northampton, England Society; a life member of the Swedenborg Society; and a former Editor of the oldest newspaper in the world, the Northampton 'Mercury'.



*Woori Yallock; The first building, 1950;  
still in use as the kitchen, 1980.*



*Woori Yallock, 'The Centre', c. 1969.*

Rowe, sometime Manager of The New Church Press, London, who afterwards became a member of the Melbourne Society and the husband of Dallas (Robinson) great-great-granddaughter of the early New Church immigrants, John and Elizabeth Noar. Over the subsequent years several further timber huts or 'cabins' for use as sleeping quarters were added, so that by the early 1970s there were already 12 buildings on the site.

In 1969 the veranda attached to the kitchen was doubled in size for the second time, to 28' x 28', and closed in with louvre windows to form an all purpose room for dining, socials and place of Worship. In 1972 mains water supply was connected, the necessary work including 2,000 feet of trenching and pipe-laying; and in 1974 there was a still further improvement with the installation of L.P. gas water heating for the kitchen and showers. All work at the site was at all times done by voluntary labour. The site was officially named 'Karingal', an Aboriginal word meaning 'Peaceful Place', but became universally known colloquially as 'Woori'.

The 'Woori' Summer Schools became the inspiration for others held in hired premises: in South Australia, at Mylor, in 1970-71; in Western Australia at Pt. Peron, in 1973-74; in New South Wales at outer suburban Naamaroo in 1976-77, and at Camp Berringa, Grose Vale, in 1979-80.<sup>(a)</sup> They also led to several romances between young people, and helped spark the call to the Ministry of Rev. John Sutton afterwards Minister of the Auckland Society, who spent part of his honeymoon in camp at 'Woori', and also that of Richard Keyworth. It can be said that the establishment of Summer Schools in Australia was originated by Rev. R. H. Teed, with the first Camp at Shoreham in 1938. In early 1925 he had delivered a Paper before the Midland New Church Sunday School workers in England on the subject of striving for an opportunity for closer and more intensive study and discussion in connection with their work. From that meeting, and through the initiative and perseverance of Rev. E. J. E. Schreck, the idea of a Summer School was initiated. It found fruition at Purley Chase, Warwickshire. The establishment in Australia of a permanent Summer School site was made possible by the gift of land for the purpose by Miss N. S. Stevens (Mrs. C. C. Coleman) who had seen similar projects in operation in America.

In the early 1950s Melbourne Society had begun to think of moving its place of Worship to a new suburban location. By then, with the rapid extension of the city, and the increasing use of the motor car, the membership was moving farther away, fortuitously predominantly to the east and south, and the precincts of the Church were becoming more and more commercialized. The site was no longer suitable. It was also hoped by the more optimistic members that a move to a comparatively new suburban locality would attract local adherents. By 1955 enquiries were being made as to available sites. By the end of 1959 definite moves were being made to sell the existing property. It was sold, in February 1962, for £35,000, to the Ophthalmic Research Institute of Australia, and was thereafter converted internally for use as a General Store in connection with the Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. From the end of the same month Mr. Bennett, then 74 years of age, ceased to be full-time Minister, and for the next 3 years he and Rev. R. H. Teed, helped by lay preachers, were to share the conduct of Services. In that period Mr. Teed conducted one Service and a Drawing-Room meeting each month, and Mr. Bennett two Services.

(a) Grose Vale was the planned venue. In the event, bushfires in the area forced its abandonment, and participants were billeted in private homes in Sydney.

On March 18th, 1962, the decision was taken to purchase a large area of land at Mt. Waverley, a south-eastern suburb. The price paid was £9,900. One of the four allotments, originally reserved for a Manse, was afterwards resold for £1,900. The last Service in the East Melbourne Church was held on July 1st, 1962, and conducted by Mr. Bennett, with Rev. R. H. Teed preaching. The congregation of 140, which overflowed into the Hall, included Mr. A. J. Lyne, Treasurer, 1904-09. From that time Mr. and Mrs. Bennett made a large front room at the Manse available for Worship, and Services were held there until the opening of the new Church.

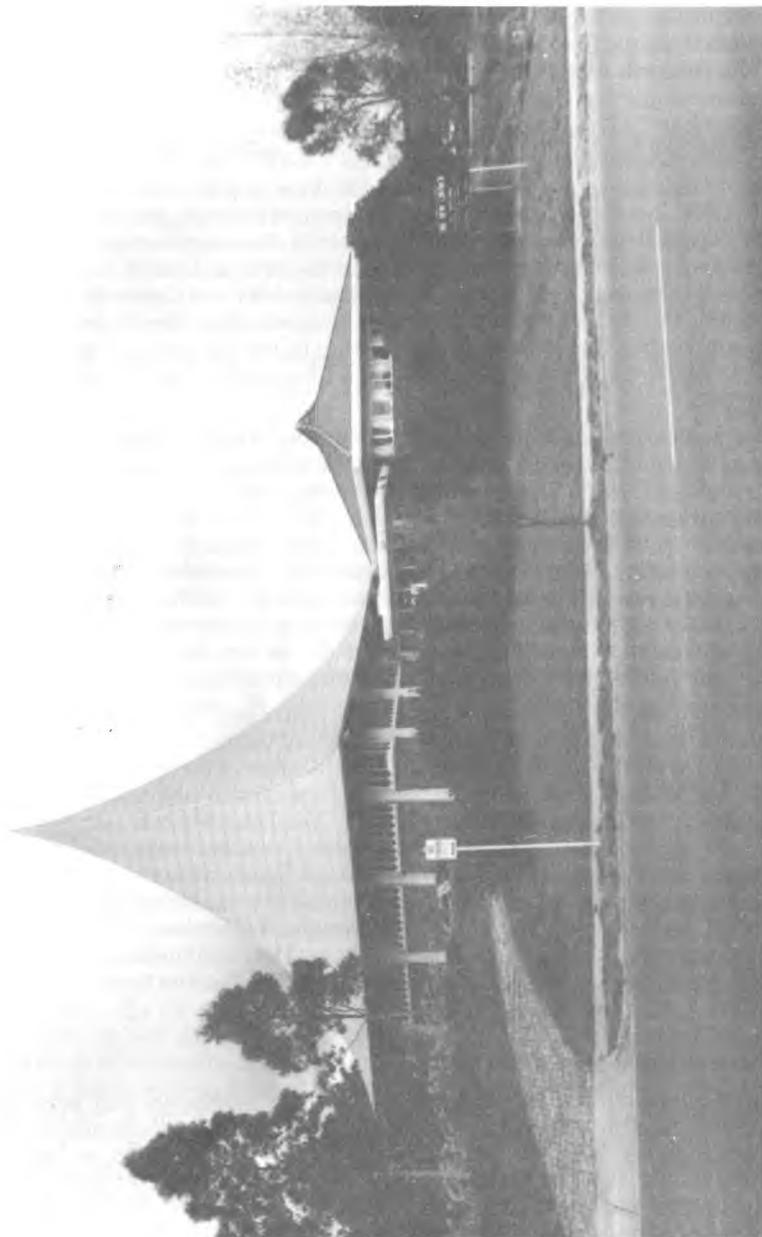
An architect was appointed and asked to draw up plans for a new Church, to cost, with a Hall, not more than £11,000. He submitted a design, accompanied by a model, which though attractive was much more costly, thus duplicating the similar experience involved in the building of the East Melbourne Church more than 90 years earlier. In October, 1963, the tender of Messrs. May and Cormack, for £18,910 was accepted, though not without a division of opinion between those on the one hand who emphasised the depressed membership of the Society, and those on the other who looked to the new location and the new Church as a means of attracting additional adherents.

The unusual and modern design was based on 40 feet by 40 feet squares. The nave was so aligned that one angle faced east, thus forming the chancel, and accommodating the platform with Altar, Pulpit and Lectern; with the organ built into the opposite (western) corner. It was entered from a foyer of the same dimensions and set in the same alignment, but truncated so as to receive the western corner of the nave, and to form part of the eastern wall of a Hall, again of the same size but with the walls facing north, south, east and west and incorporating Vestry, kitchen and toilets. The roomy foyer, with its plate glass walls and doors on the north and south sides, was to prove of incalculable worth as a gathering place before and after Service, and as an alternative meeting room, large enough to accommodate the meeting of the Conference in 1976.

The roof of the nave was of pinnacle design, cladded with aluminium and, of a height from ground level of 60 feet. Windows of alternating colours, with a continuous band of clear glass above, formed the upper half of the walls of the nave on every side. The stained glass windows, organ, Altar, Pulpit and timber panelling, were retained from the East Melbourne Church. The Foundation Stone was laid on May 11th, 1963, by Rev. E. L. Bennett and the Dedication ceremony carried out on August 24th, by Rev. R. H. Teed. The official Opening Service was on October 6th, Mr. Bennett officiating. The Dedication had taken place before the completion of the building, so that a wedding could be conducted in September. The bride was Lorraine Foster, granddaughter of Mrs. Hibbs, who, as Margaret Hodkinson, had come from the Glasgow Society in 1917. The wedding was televised on the national network.

#### REV. E. B. WILLIAMS \*\*\* REV. J. E. TEED

In the meantime the possibility of obtaining a Minister had been thoroughly canvassed, and the prospect of one coming from England seemed remote. Eventually an invitation was issued to and accepted by, Rev. E. B. Williams, an 'old boy' of the Society, and a grandson of H. S. Faddy, one of those who had left the Sydney Society with Richard Morse in 1905, and whose mother, Mrs. E. J. Williams, had been Secretary of the Melbourne Society from 1927 to 1933. He had been ordained in England in 1955, but after serving a short pastorate there, he had been called upon, on the death of his father, to manage and rehabilitate the family pastoral property in Fiji.



*The Mt. Waverley Church, Melbourne, 1980.*

He took up his new pastorate in December, 1964, being inducted by Rev. J. E. Teed, and settling into the new Manse, just completed, next to the Church.

Rev. E. B. Williams came to Melbourne at a time when, numerically, the Society was at its lowest point since 1872, with a total membership of 46, only 32 of them resident in the city; although with an average attendance at Worship of 28-30. His Ministry was marked by his repeated efforts to achieve local acceptance of the New Church amongst both clergy and laity. Opposition in the former sphere was evident, with one or two Ministers openly warning of the danger of association with the unorthodox sect. Members of the Women's League were for a time welcomed at various combined meetings and Services; but although a great deal of work was done in the repeated letterboxing of the immediate area and in advertising in the local press, using often column-length doctrinal statements, and despite the fact that Mr. Williams became well known in local circles, largely due to his membership of the Returned Soldiers' League, yet no enduring local interest in the New Church could be aroused.

However, there was in the period a marked increase in membership, mainly from families coming of age and several newcomers from interstate and overseas, and by 1972, membership had increased to 56. At the end of 1972 Mr. Williams submitted his resignation, in order to serve the Perth Society.

The Society was without a Minister throughout the year 1973. No Leader was appointed, but Mr. J. K. Robinson became Chairman of the Society and a Committee of Management was set up. A substantial panel of lay preachers and readers was available. Mrs. I. A. Robinson assumed the Editorship of the monthly Manual, which she developed into a useful small magazine, and was to continue to edit throughout the next pastorate, that of Rev. J. E. Teed.

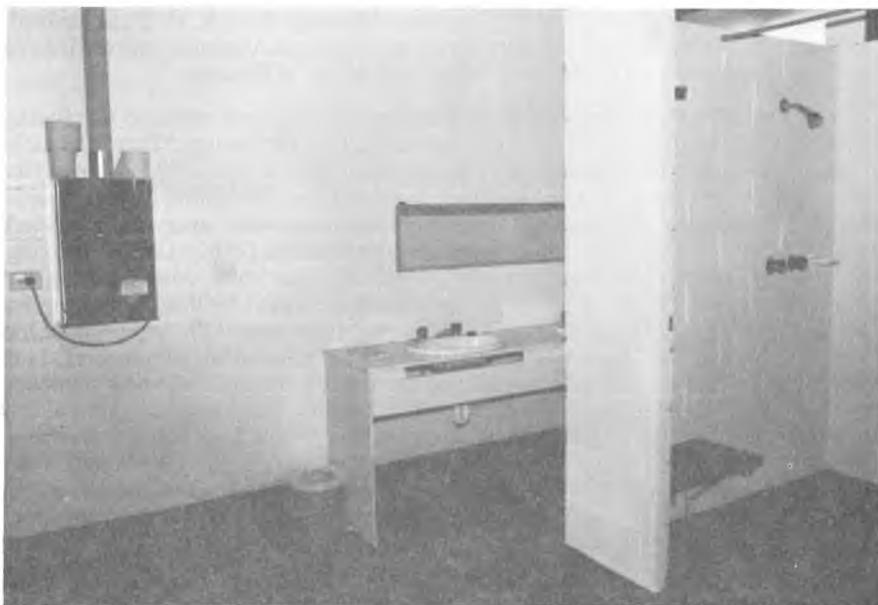
Mr. Teed, a son of the Society's long-time Minister, Rev. R. H. Teed, arrived in January, 1974. He had already served two pastorates in Australia, one of five years with the Sydney Society, and a second, of nine years, in Brisbane.

The new Minister immediately commenced his frequent visits to the Ballarat-Creswick district, some 70-80 miles north-west of Melbourne. There, a nucleus already existed in the family of a great-granddaughter of John and Elizabeth Noar, Mrs. L. T. Robinson, and her husband, a second cousin. Within a short time Mr. Teed was making regular visits there, at about six-week intervals, for Sunday afternoon Worship and doctrinal classes, and the 'Ballarat District Circle', meeting in a private home in the township of Broomfield, was born. Attendance at these meetings ranged from c. 8 to c. 12, sometimes increased by those travelling from Melbourne for the afternoon. In 1979 Mr. Teed commenced the extension of these visits to include Sunday evenings, which he spent in the homes of members. In that year also, at the February Annual Meeting, there came the first three new members of the Melbourne Society from the district, from families previously unconnected with the Church. In the same year the first 'Broomie Camp' was held, based at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robinson, and extending over a three-day holiday weekend, with an attendance of 24, and additional day visitors from Melbourne. The place of meeting also was changed, to the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. R. Robinson, in the city of Ballarat.

Rev. J. E. Teed and the Melbourne Society also extended assistance to the sister Society in Adelaide, which had been without a resident Minister since the departure of Rev. I. A. Arnold in early 1975. There also Mr. Teed undertook regular visits at



*Hygiene Block, Woori Yallock, 1980.*



*Hygiene Block, Woori Yallock, Interior.*



*Woori Yallock Hygiene Block and Barbecue area.*



*Woori Yallock Accommodation Unit, 1980.*

intervals of approximately six weeks; travelling customarily by air on Saturday afternoons and returning on Sunday evening or Monday morning. Early in 1979 these visits were reduced in frequency to two-monthly intervals, but extended in length to cover alternately 1 and 2 Sundays, and 5 and 10 days, with the Adelaide Society contributing a relevant proportion of the Minister's stipend. The Melbourne Society was fortunate in having the services of no less than seven men who were able to act as lay preachers or readers, two of them young New Churchmen from the Brightlingsea, England, Society, who had settled and married in Melbourne; Messrs. N. C. Jarvis and C. J. Skinner.

The late 1970s saw renewed activity at the Society's Summer School site at Woori Yallock. This was made possible, in the main, by the discovery that the facility there could now be frequently let to groups not connected with the Church, thus generating revenue for improvements and maintenance; and by the Government policy of the time of allowing monetary grants for the development of such areas. With a first such grant of \$8,000, plus gifts and loans from several Societies and from the Association, the Woori Yallock Committee set about implementing a programme of further development. The first such projects, completed in 1980, were the building of a service block of showers, toilets and laundry, with septic sewerage, and the first substantial accommodation units. Income accruing from letting will also enable the subsidising of Summer Schools, held either there or in other parts of Australia. A new descriptive name was adopted ... the Australian New Church Instructional and Recreational Centre, shortened to ANCIRC (pronounced ANKIRK); and to differentiate the site from any other which might be established, hyphenated to WOORI-ANCIRC.

The Melbourne Society entered the year 1980 with an increased membership of 69, 48 of whom were resident within the boundaries of the metropolis; and reporting an average attendance at Worship of 43.5, including children, for the previous year. Ample talent is available in all departments, and a growing number of young adults and of families with children of Sunday School age and under, may be seen as a favourable omen for the future. The different age groups are fully catered for by various suitable loosely-bound organisations, e.g., K.L.M. (Kids, Ladies, Mothers) for young mothers, meeting in members' homes on weekdays; Atlas (Ask, Talk, Learn and Sing) for youth and young unmarried; Mini-Atlas for under teens. Monthly doctrinal meetings continue for adults; all of these coming under the constant care and supervision of the Society's apparently tireless Minister.

The 15 years since the move to the new site at Mt. Waverley had seen the extensive grounds surrounding the Church effectively landscaped and planted with trees. The area available made it possible to hold there an annual Fair, which in 1979 brought relief to the Treasurer when it showed a nett profit of nearly \$1,300.

With its fine Church, set in large and attractive grounds, its invaluable asset in its permanent Summer School site, and most importantly its dedicated Minister, loyal and active membership and young families, the Society may well feel that it has every reason to anticipate that the closing years of the 20th century of the Christian era (or the early years of the third century of the New Church) will see its health and strength enhanced, and its usefulness greatly extended.

## QUEENSLAND AND THE BRISBANE SOCIETY

EARLY CONTACTS \*\* A SECRETARY AND A LEADER \*\* THE FIRST PUBLIC WORSHIP \*\* THE SOCIETY ESTABLISHED \*\* 1862-78.

In 1854, only a few months after he had been one of those who had taken part in the formation of the first Sydney Society, George Sylvester Diggles moved to Queensland, where he became the State Ornithologist.

There he could find no people interested in the Doctrines. By 1862 there were several, and by that time a man whose name is lost had presented to the Queensland School of Arts a complete set of the works of Swedenborg. In that year also an avowed New Churchman, John Elliott, arrived; in the next year he was appointed Secretary of the School of Arts, from which vantage point he lost no opportunity of attempting to interest others in the Doctrines.

These two men met together from time to time with the few others whom they were able to gather throughout the years 1863 and 1864; and in the latter year it was resolved that steps be taken towards the formation of a Society. Mr. E. F. Hart was appointed Secretary, although the group itself had no official status or name; and Mr. Backhouse, a lawyer, at whose rooms the meetings were held, addressed a memorandum to Rev. R. Storry, the President of the British Conference. From Mr. Storry, early in 1865, there was received a Certificate authorising Mr. Diggles to act as Leader of a Society and to administer the rites of the Holy Supper and Baptism. The first meeting of which records survive was then held, on May 25th, 1865, at Mr. Backhouse's Rooms. Although a Secretary had been appointed earlier, and despite that there followed a quiescent period of six years, from 1867 until 1873, this meeting is accepted as the date of the formation of the Brisbane Society. It was attended by six men, Messrs. Backhouse, Diggles, Elliott, E. Stronell, I. A. Nicholson, and G. Slater, all of whom signed the Declaration of Faith. Mr. Hart had moved to Ipswich, some 25 miles west of Brisbane, in this same year. George Slater had already been a foundation member of the Melbourne Society, in 1853. On June 15th, four more men signed the Roll, Messrs. Holmes, McDowell, Worrall, and Sandiford. Meetings continued to be held, in members' homes, Mr. Backhouse's Chambers, the Chamber of Commerce room at the Town Hall, and the Temperance Hall, but no records of these survive. The first known Service of Worship was held on March 11th, 1866, at John Elliott's home. The Sacrament was administered to eight communicants by Mr. Diggles, and he baptized four children, two of his own and two of Mr. Elliott's. On April 1st he went to Ipswich and baptized the two children of Mr. Hart. Mr. Elliott died in the same year, and Mr. Hart in 1871.

The meetings were transferred to the office of Mr. Fenwick in Queen St. Average attendance at Worship in 1867 is given as 10, but how many Services were held is not known. Correspondence was entered into with the Secretary of the British Conference, then Mr. Fred. Pitman, and with Mr. Day, the Leader of the Adelaide Society, who urged the importance of regular meetings for Worship. The Chamber of Commerce room was used free of charge, but the meetings were discontinued after a few months. Competent and effective Leadership, and the time to devote to it, were obviously needed, and in September, 1871, a meeting was held to consider means of obtaining a Minister. A letter was sent to Dr. Bayley in London, to which no reply is

known to have been received, offering a stipend of £100 for 12 months, which was all the Society felt able to raise, and guaranteeing the fare back to Britain or to any of the other Australian Colonies at the end of that time, should it be necessary. The success of this venture would depend on the Minister's ability to strengthen the Society. (The stipend of £100 was considerably less than the current wage of a carpenter, and little more than half that of a stonemason.)

Despite the efforts made since 1864, establishment on a secure and lasting basis had not yet been achieved. By 1872 there were several more interested people available, and in October of that year a meeting attended by twelve men and one woman, Miss Lovelock (the future Mrs. F. Sanderson) was held in the Committee Room of the Old Temperance Hall, at which Mr. Garsden was appointed Leader, Mr. Sanderson Secretary, and Mr. Brown Treasurer. But as yet there was no formal formation of a Society; or it may be that the old Society of 1865 was held to be still in existence. Five months later, on March 10th, 1873, a public meeting was held, and this meeting was seen as a "resuscitation" of the original Society. Here is the report of the meeting:

"A meeting of friends of the 'New Church' was held in the Chamber of Commerce, Town Hall, on Sunday afternoon. About 30 persons attended. A portion of Scripture having been read, and some of the leading tenets of the 'New Church' explained, the names of those favourable to the formation of a 'New Church' Society in Brisbane were taken down, and a provisional committee appointed to make the necessary arrangements. After some discussion, it was resolved to hold two Services every Sunday, ... in the afternoon at 3.00, for members chiefly; and in the evening at 7.00, for the general public, when the leading principles adopted by the 'New Church' will be explained and illustrated. The meetings are to take place in the Chamber of Commerce, Town Hall. A similar Society was formed in Brisbane seven or eight years ago; but its adherents were not so numerous then as they are now, and after a few months' struggle the meetings were discontinued. With this in view it was pointed out at the meeting on Sunday that the present movement was merely a resuscitation, a re-building on the old foundation ...".

After this meeting the following letter appeared in the 'Brisbane Telegraph':—

"Sir, ... Observing that your columns are open to religious intelligence, I beg a small space in the Telegraph at your convenience. On Sunday last I heard a celebrated divine at Wharf Street advise his hearers not to go and hear about the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church at the Town Hall. This immediately excited my curiosity, and in the evening I went. The Service was conducted by two respectable citizens of unpretending manners, great simplicity, and devotion. There was nothing in the singing, or prayers, or sermon, that could offend in any way, and perhaps the best part of the Service was its freedom from that priestly and dogmatic arrogance so rampant in the pulpits of our city at the present time. No smell of fire and brimstone after the Service was over. The only allusion that I heard to the other sects was that persons the most opposed to them were those that least understood their views and doctrines. ... Yours truly, GO AGAIN."

The next twelve months seem to have been a period of remarkable activity. John Garsden, from Accrington, England, (although not there connected with the New Church) and now Mayor of South Brisbane, was one of the most active members. He

commenced an advertising campaign, placing an advertisement, with a brief doctrinal statement, in each issue of the monthly 'Queenslander'. This work absorbed most of the available funds. He also commenced a Sunday School, and was able to attract 20 scholars; and delivered week-night lectures. There was no music for the Services, so Mr. Carey started afternoon singing lessons in his home. An harmonium was bought, for £25, in November, 1873, and an organist engaged at £2/10/- per quarter. Mr. and Mrs. Carey had come from the Cathedral Road, Glasgow, New Church Society. Their descendants are the present Hall families of the Sydney Society, where Isabel, the wife of Mr. F. A. Hall, long-time Secretary of that Society, and the grandson of its founder E. A. Newton, is their great-granddaughter. She is also the great-niece of Mr. W. J. Burton, Secretary of the Brisane Society in the early 1900s. Mr. Frederick Sanderson had come to Brisbane in 1872, and was another to now take an active leadership role. In his lifetime he was to hold at various times every office in the Society, and was a member of the Committee to within a year of his death in 1924, aged 77; having thus been an active worker in the Society for over 50 years.

By the time of the Annual Meeting in March, 1874, the first since the re-formation, there were 23 members of the Society. Attendances at Worship are reported as averaging 20 a.m. and 50 p.m. ... the evening Service being of a missionary character. In calling this meeting, 500 circulars were printed and distributed, and there was an attendance of about 100. The meeting was mainly devoted to the delivery of four short Papers ... on 'Views rejected by the New Church', 'Are These Things So?', 'The New Church Organisation', and 'The Relation of Science to Religion', given by Messrs. Slater, Leake, Garsden, and Diggles respectively. During the year 140 volumes had been borrowed from the Library, and 3,000 tracts had been distributed. The Sunday School however had settled to an attendance of about 10.

The year 1874-75 saw some friction, particularly that centred around Mr. Carey and payment for the Harmonium, the cost of which he had advanced. He resigned from the Society in January, 1875, but rejoined almost immediately. At the 1875 Annual Meeting there were substantial changes in the Leadership and officers. Mr. Diggles became President, a new Office; Mr. Gordon, Vice-President; Mr. Garsden, Leader; Mr. Sanderson, Secretary; and Mr. J. G. Brown (the Queensland Deputy-Registrar of Titles) again Treasurer. Mr. Brown remained Treasurer until he left the Colony in 1889, and in all this time he had acted in part as the Society's honorary banker; himself carrying the deficit in the funds on many occasions, until he could be repaid. Membership had reached 40, and the morning and evening Services had now been held for nearly two years without intermission. Attendances were still maintained at about 20 a.m. and 40 p.m. At an Anniversary Tea-meeting in April there was a disappointing attendance of only 65, because of bad weather.

Here, we at a time a little more than 100 years later, ought perhaps to pause for a moment of wonder, and even of envy, at the meaning of these figures. As with the other Australian Societies (excepting Perth) we do not for the most part know the source or origin of the early membership. We do not know how many avowed New Church men and women were living in Brisbane, or present at the meeting of 'resuscitation', early in 1873; but we do know that exactly two years later the Society had 40 members, and a disappointing attendance of only 65 at the anniversary celebration. Perhaps it may be that in their earliest days the Societies soaked up like a sponge all those who were favourably disposed; even though the supply was soon to be exhausted, and not replenished.

The Report of the 1875 Annual Meeting, which was sent to the Secretary of the British Conference, mentioned that some members were already thinking in terms of combining with the other Australian Societies in endeavouring to obtain the services of a Missionary Minister to serve each Society in turn. The finances of the Society at this time, despite being described in this report as "favourable", were anything but strong. The debt had been reduced from £23 to £13.

Late in 1875 the place of Worship became the Temperance Hall, rented at 12/6 per week; and early in 1876 the decision was made to endeavour to buy land and build a Church. By this time membership had increased to 46, although the Sunday School was still further reduced. In this year we find Mr. Reinhold complaining that many of the prayers in the (English) liturgy were for the benefit of the British nation, and this was inappropriate since many of the members were not of British origin. Since Queensland was a British colony, no action was taken. A Building Fund was opened in October, 1876, but in exactly two years, by October, 1878, only amounted to the sum of £37/10/- . Even so the Society was not neglectful of other responsibilities, and in the latter year made a gift of £15 to a member in unfortunate circumstances, Mr. Rowbotham, who had lost a son by death, and whose wife was dying.

It was also in 1878 that the first New Church wedding was celebrated, on October 23rd. Unfortunately, the names of the celebrant and the participants are lost.

#### **THE FIRST CHURCH \*\* THE FIRST MINISTER \*\* REV. W. A. BATES.**

With the aim now in mind of acquiring property it was desirable that the Society should be incorporated. This was achieved in the same year, the legal work being done without charge by Mr. Justice Mein of the Supreme Court, who joined the Society in 1885. (He had been introduced to the Doctrines in Sydney by Dr. Brereton). The next essential was the purchase of land, and for this purpose 20 contributing shares were taken by members in a building society, each of those concerned paying their own fortnightly calls; and three members, Messrs. Brown, Richardson and Lihou made a loan to the Society of £500, at 10% interest. Land was bought in Wickham Terrace for £350, a Bank loan was raised, and a timber Church erected forthwith; "a magnificent building", with a hall, at a cost of £460. The hall was immediately in demand for hire. It was opened for Worship on Sunday, January 5th, 1879, thus less than 6 years after the 'resuscitation'.

Mr. Henry Hurman<sup>(a)</sup> became Secretary at this time. He had come to Brisbane from Camberwell, England, with his brother in 1864. George Slater<sup>(17)</sup> was very actively campaigning; he is said to have personally posted more than 500 books, over a period of several years, including one to every clergyman in Queensland; also a 10 inch advertisement was published each week in the 'Brisbane Telegraph'. These activities eventually provoked a reaction, and bitter attacks upon the New Church were made in the newspapers, followed by a somewhat vitriolic controversy conducted through the medium of letters to the Editors.

In the same year of the opening of the Church Rev. M. Pilkington, of Ramsbottom, England, offered his services as Minister, but the funds were insufficient to enable the offer to be accepted. However it was necessary, in addition to the normal need for leadership with the time and ability to devote to the task, to counter effectively the cult of spiritism, which in 1880 was making

(a) *He was to marry a daughter of members of the Society, Mr. and Mrs. Briggs; and to move to Perth, Western Australia, in 1903, where his daughter was to marry Stanley Royce, who in turn became a most active worker in the Perth Society.*

inroads into the membership and into the interest of non-members, as it was doing elsewhere in this period. It was resolved to again canvass the possibility of obtaining a shared Missionary Minister for Australia, the approach to be made this time through the 'Australasian Conference of the New Church' due to meet for the first time in Melbourne in February, 1881. (It was not until the second Conference, in 1883, that a Missionary Committee was set up, with power to implement this suggestion). In the same year, a student for the Ministry in England, J. F. Buss, offered to come to the Society, and was offered a stipend of £100 p.a., but at that figure was unable to accept the appointment. The 1881 Conference not having produced any movement aimed at obtaining a Missionary Minister, the Society, in October, 1881, advertised in Britain for a Minister, at £150, passage paid, "with the likelihood of an early increase in the stipend" (which however, could still only come from an increase in membership).

At the Annual Meeting in March, 1882, Mr. Garsden relinquished the Leadership, having found that the responsibilities of the office, combined with his duties as Mayor, were too much for his health, and Mr. Lihou was appointed in his stead. Although membership had fallen marginally to 43, and the adult doctrinal class that had been commenced had been discontinued because of lack of support, there was already some talk of selling the Wickham Terrace Church. It had been found to be too small for special occasions such as socials and tea-meetings, and was considered to be in a not sufficiently prominent place. At the Quarterly Meeting in July, 1882, Mr. George Marchant was elected a member.

At about this time a reply was received to the advertisement in 'Morning Light' in England from Mr. W. A. Bates. He had come into the New Church through Rev. Joseph Deans, at Brightlingsea, had completed his training at the New Church College in London early in 1879, and in July of that year, after a short term at Horncastle, had been appointed Leader of the Southport Society. (Although not yet ordained, he was in every way regarded as its Minister. In this period we find many laymen, trained or untrained, offering their services to a Society as Minister; as e.g., Mr. Buss, Mr. O'Mant, Mr. Meek and now Mr. Bates, offered themselves to Australia. The Melbourne Society in 1875 had a similar offer from a woman. Earlier in the century the British Conference had required that a layman serve a Society acceptably as its Minister for at least 12 months before being eligible for ordination).

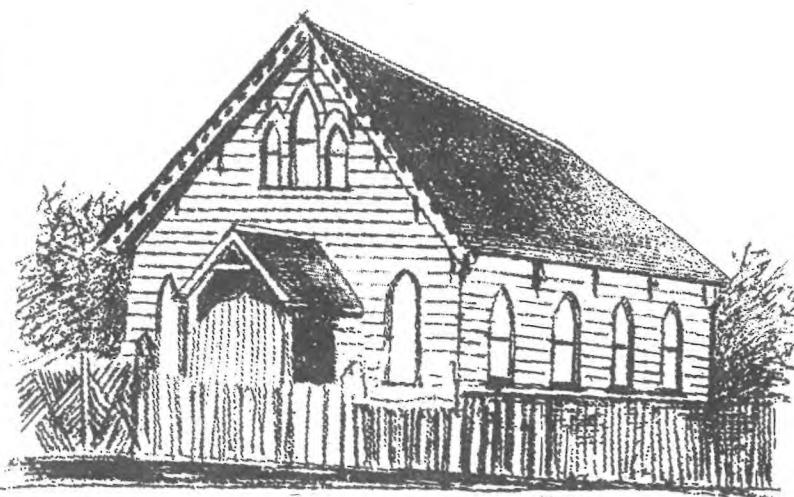
Brisbane Society sent £80 to Mr. Bates for his passage, but stipulated that he must first be ordained. It very soon afterwards sent a second letter waiving this condition, afraid that it might prevent his coming. He signified his acceptance, and arrived in Brisbane with his wife and family on November 10th, 1882. He was from the beginning given the title Reverend, and was ordained in Sydney on May 29th, 1883, by Rev. J. J. Thornton. (Why he was not ordained before leaving England is not clear, since he had completed his College training 3½ years previously). He commenced his Ministry on November 19th, preaching from the text, "Behold, I make all things new". The Church was well filled. A Welcome was extended to him with a tea-meeting on the following Tuesday at which there were 120, uncomfortably crowded, for the meal and 150 afterwards. Thus commenced a Ministry which was to last for over 26 years, until February 1909; although for all but seven of those years the Minister was also in secular employment.

Mr. Bates was not a robust man, and highly strung, but of a very friendly and likeable disposition, and always gentlemanly and charitable. "To be introduced to him was to know him and to love him. He had all the qualities of a great and gifted preacher". His devotion to the Church and to his work was of a high order. A house had been bought for him at Union Street, Spring Hill, within walking distance of the Church, and he entered enthusiastically into the work of the pastorate. His first moves were to establish a monthly printed Manual, and to advertise the Services in the two daily papers. Sunday Schools were established in three areas ... at Wickham Terrace, and at members' homes in the suburbs of Red Hill and Toowong, with a total of 36 scholars. The Annual Meeting, with Tea-Meeting and Social, in 1883, was attended by 80. Membership of the Society was about 50. Attendances at Worship in the year 1882-83 is given as 40 a.m. and 60 p.m., seeming obviously to reflect the stimulus of a new Ministry, and the continued interest of non-members. In the next year attendances fell to 20 a.m. and 40 p.m; although they recovered to the former figure by 1887.

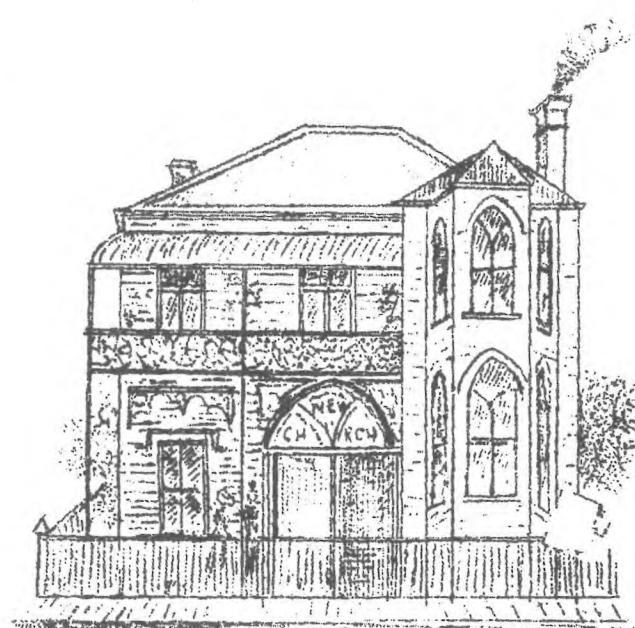
In 1884 an offer was received for the purchase of the Wickham Terrace site. The Church had always been found rather too small, particularly without sufficient ancillary accommodation, and the offer was accepted. The price was £1,500, with the proviso that the Society buy back the building for £250. The allotment next to it, though smaller, was bought, for £650. On this the Church was rebuilt, but set back on the land instead of at street level as before. Then a two-storey Minister's residence, incorporating rooms for the Sunday School and Library, was added at the front. The Church was entered via a passage between the Sunday School room and the ground floor of the residence; the room above the Sunday School becoming the Library. The cost of the rebuilding was £550. £700 was borrowed from the A.M.P. Society, at 8% (afterwards reduced to 7%) to pay off the mortgage of £800; and the Society now had to find £150 p.a. for repayment of the loan, plus £56 p.a. interest. In 1888 the Railway Department drove a tunnel under the allotment, and the Society claimed £250 compensation for anticipated noise and vibration, but received only 7 guineas (£7/7/-). Mr. Bates moved into the 'Church House', at 1/- p.w. rent, and the Spring Hill house was sold, to Mr. Pullen.

The next six years were to see considerable growth and increased activity in the Brisbane Society; but they also embraced a period of friction and anxiety; and before they had come to an end, of decline. It might be remarked that in this respect the closing years of the 19th century saw a close parallel in all of the four Australian Societies ... a period of rapidly and greatly increasing numerical strength, followed by a similarly abrupt decline, almost of stagnation; although the Brisbane Society survived this period very much more satisfactorily than any of the other three, and recovered to the extent that its numerical support perhaps reached its zenith in 1933-36.

At a time probably early in 1886 Mr. G. C. Watson commenced a Sunday School at Rocklea, "a suburban township about five miles from Brisbane", and now an industrial suburb, a venture which was supported by an Episcopalian Minister, Rev. J. Hassell. It attracted "upwards of 20 very intelligent children". Mr. Watson, at his own expense, built a Church there, for which Mr. Bates is said to have donated the land, and where for a time he preached on one Sunday in each month. Early in 1887 an additional Doctrinal class was established at Kangaroo Point, a suburb just across the Brisbane River from



*The First Brisbane Church, Wickham Tce.,  
From 'The Beehive' November 6th, 1886.*



*The Wickham Tce., Church with the Church House,  
Sunday School, and Library in front.  
From 'The Beehive' January 1st, 1887.*

the City. By 1887, commercial depression was beginning to be felt, and Mr. Bates vacated the Church House, taking a rented house at Mowbraytown, the 25/- p.w. rent being paid by the Society. The Church House was let, to a Dr. Ellinson.

Over these years there were many new members who were destined to play an important, active and loyal part for many years; though likewise there were disaffections and removals. Amongst the newcomers were Blakiston Robinson, who, with George Slater, saw the rebuilding at Wickham Terrace successfully completed; Mr. and Mrs. Pullen, who, however resigned shortly afterwards because of a misunderstanding with Mr. Bates over a financial matter, but in which he was the innocent party; Mr. Justice Mein; Mr. Chadwick, for a time organist and choirmaster; W. J. Burton, who, although active earlier, joined the Society in 1886 and was still regularly attending in 1944; Mr. and Mrs. Genn, whose daughter Mary is still very active in the Society in 1980; W. A. Wright, who later became the Book Missionary par excellence for Australia; Miss Olive Matham, who in 1892 became Mrs. W. A. Wright; Mr. and Mrs. Cashmore from Birmingham; Mr. and Mrs. Harle, whose descendants, among them the present Bachelor families, are still active to the 4th generation in the Church.<sup>(a)</sup>

On the debit side there were removals, lessened public interest, and occasional friction. Mr. and Mrs. Pullen had resigned. So, in 1887, did Mr. Genn. It seems that he had regarded Mr. Bates' administration as unsatisfactory, and this led to Mr. Bates' proffered resignation, which was not accepted by the Committee. Mr. Genn then resigned, but he rejoined in the following year, and like Mr. Burton was still regularly attending in the 1940s.

Mr. Watson at Rocklea is said to have been in continual conflict with others because of his enthusiasm for a more evangelical approach (he resigned from the Society in c. 1890). George Slater, always to be relied upon when there was work to be done for the Church, had died in 1886.

Mr. Garsden thought that his work was being compared unfavourably with that of Mr. Bates.

Despite the vote of confidence in 1887, there was still dissatisfaction with the Minister; so much so that in 1889 a Special General Meeting was called at which a compromise Motion was carried ... "That the Society is defective in so far as the visiting of members is concerned, and that the Committee take steps to remedy the defect". Mr. Bates had had two months' leave of absence in 1888. His health broke down again at the end of 1889, and he needed three months' leave. But still there was unrest, and Mr. Bates, "having heard that 3 or 4 members were convening a private meeting with the avowed object, amongst others, of asking him to resign," now gave three months' notice of his resignation, "to preserve harmony". This brought a protest, which was in fact unfounded, that he was under an obligation to give 6 months' notice, not 3.

The year 1889 had been a difficult one for Mr. Bates. Not only had he been faced with the General Meeting to consider his administration; but at Easter he had attended the Melbourne Conference, at which the motion was passed

(a) Mrs. Harle's first husband, Will Rutherford, had bought secondhand copies of T.C.R. and H. & H., and they had thence accepted the Doctrines. With the same two books Mrs. Harle brought her second husband into the Church.

deplored the supposed extremes of the advocates of non-alcoholic wine for the Sacrament, and this Motion had caused a storm on his return to Brisbane, as indeed it did also in the Sydney Society. In October of that year a group of members presented to him, at a private gathering, a purse of gold sovereigns "as an expression of regard".

Apart from any other causes of stress the financial situation was now precarious, and although Mr. Bates was persuaded to withdraw his resignation, which he did on July 15th, 1890, yet he now offered to serve in an honorary capacity, and in September took up secular clerical employment.

Although membership had risen from 52 in 1883 to 76 in 1889, yet attendances had fallen by the latter year to 20 a.m. and 40 p.m. The Minister's stipend had been increased in 1885, after the completion of his first year in office, to £187 p.a., but in 1887 he had accepted a reduction to £130. From the commencement of his honorary Ministry, occasional, but rare, monetary gifts were made to him, including a payment of £98/7/- in lieu of stipend in April, 1893, and an amount of £63 in 1899 on his return from a visit to Adelaide, in the course of which that Society had invited him to become its Minister.

That he did not much relax his work for the Society as Minister, and now also as President, may be seen from the report presented to the annual Meeting on April 22nd, 1891: ... "During the past year Mr. Bates preached 97 sermons, delivered several week-night addresses, superintended the Doctrinal class, baptized eight infants, administered the Sacrament eight times, performed the marriage ceremony once, attended six funerals, and occasionally attended the Sunday School". He was at this time also Editor of *The New Age*, from April until the following February, while Rev. J. J. Thornton was abroad. He was not robust, and neither was his wife, and he had a young family, (his elder son, Harold, as a result of an accident was a semi-invalid) and full-time secular work. In 1890 the experiment was tried of opening the Library one night per week, but this was soon discontinued "because no-one came".

Although when Mr. Bates moved out of the Church House it had been let, yet owing to its real unsuitability as a residence tenants could not be retained, and he moved back into it in February, 1891. In this same year, at the quarterly meeting in October, Mr. Bates was moved to speak somewhat critically. He was speaking on a suggestion from Mr. Patten that tracts he distributed door-to-door. But, Mr. Bates said, it had been tried before; and because no results had been seen, those engaged in the work soon tired and gave up in despair. The great need of the Church was constancy, and New Churchmen should be, above all things, constant in their affections and their work. He very much regretted that inconstancy had been, and was, the bane of the Society.

Despite the financial stringency, the year 1891-92 was not an unhappy one. In October, 1891, the Society decided to invite the Conference to meet in Brisbane in 1892. The estimated cost was £12. Owing to the commercial depression, it did not meet until 1896, and then in Sydney.

At the Annual Meeting in April, 1892, it was reported that "Sunday congregations are improving, and a very happy and peaceful sphere exists in the Society". The Accounts showed that there was 15/10 cash in hand, a bank overdraft of £48/7/-, and a mortgage to the A.M.P. Society for £650, at 7%.

But by this time a whole new dimension had come into the picture, so far as the financial situation was concerned, with the return of Mr. George Marchant, who had resigned in September, 1884, after a membership of just two years. He rejoined the Society in January, 1893, but already, early in 1892, he had offered to advance the cost of alterations to the Church House in front of the Church so that it could again be let. He also promised £52 p.a. as assistance to the Minister, who moved out again in March (1892) from Wickham Terrace to the house in Glen Rosa Road, Ithaca, which was to be his home for the remainder of his time in Brisbane.

Although it had been the Minister's home, the Church House "didn't look like a house, and the ground floors were practically useless, being small and dark". Mr. Bates now had plans drawn up whereby "... the passage would be incorporated into the two small rooms, and the existing Library would become the new passage, with a Church porch added at the front ... so that the Church would look like a Church, and the house would look like a house". The cost of £185 was met by a loan of £200 from Mrs. Marchant; and Mr. Marchant converted the mortgage into a bank overdraft in his own name.

Whether or not this new arrangement attracted tenants is not recorded, but in any case income from this source was now of less importance, and in 1897 the house was removed altogether, trees planted where it had stood, and a Sunday School Hall built beneath the Church, Mr. Marchant paying the whole of the cost. In the same year he remitted the amount of £650 owing to himself, and paid out the £200 owing to his wife, thus leaving the Society free of debt for the first time.

The years 1893 and 1894 were depressing ones, though not for the New Church Society alone. There was first an exceptionally long and severe drought, and this was followed by very widespread flooding of unprecedented proportions. These, together with the collapse of the land boom, caused the insolvency and failure of nearly all of the large financial institutions and of many business ventures.

Membership of the Society fell from 76 in 1889 to 47 in 1894. Worship and Sunday School continued, but the Doctrinal classes were unable to be held regularly in 1894, owing to Mr. Bates' prolonged illness. A morning Sunday School, prior to Service, was started in February, 1894, and the afternoon Sunday School was transferred to Mr. Bates' home at Ithaca. In the same year also monthly Services of Worship were commenced at Beaudesert, 40 miles south of Brisbane, to which district Mr. and Mrs. Sanderson had moved; but they were continued for only a few months.

By 1894 Mr. C. B. Patten was taking a prominent part in the work of the Society, as Sunday School Superintendent and as alternative preacher to Mr. Marchant during Mr. Bates several months' illness in that year. Mr. W. J. Burton was now Secretary and Mr. Henry Hurman Treasurer.

The fourteen years 1894-1908 saw the Society pursuing an uneventful course, excepting for the changes made at Wickham Terrace. Membership fluctuated from year to year, between 44 and 63, and attendances at worship remained fairly constant at around 30 a.m. and 35 p.m. with a Sunday School of up to 40 children. Mr. George Marchant's membership and support meant that the financial situation was not a cause for great concern.



Rev. W. A. Bates



The Ann St. Church, Brisbane.

A severe loss was the removal in 1903 of Mr. and Mrs. Hurman to Western Australia.

Mr. Bates continued in secular employment, although he was remarkably enough able several times to make extended tours or visits to the southern States of up to four months' duration ... twice in 1899, and again in 1900, 1905 and 1906. He was President of The New Church in Australia continuously for 20 years, from 1889 until 1909.

#### LAY LEADERSHIP \*\*\*

#### THE ANN STREET CHURCH \*\*\*\*\* REV. DR. M. F. UNDERWOOD

There had long been thoughts of moving from the Wickham Terrace site, which, although almost on the boundary of the City proper, was not considered to be in a sufficiently prominent position. The opportunity came in 1908, when an offer to purchase for £1,500 was received. Land owned by Mr. Marchant in Ann Street, and valued at £850, was considered suitable, though only 90 metres distant from the Wickham Terrace Church ... but "in a good central position". The decision was made to move, whereupon Mr. Marchant donated the land. The contract price of the Church to be built was £1,860, which with associated expenses would bring the total cost to c. £2,200.

Mr. Bates, still suffering recurring bouts of ill-health, now sought 12 months' leave of absence which he would take in Britain. On February 20th, 1909, he laid the Foundation Stone, of freestone inlaid with an inscription in white marble, of the Ann St. Church. The sterling silver trowel, presented to him by Mr. Marchant, was inscribed along each edge with the motto 'All religion has relation to life; and the life of religion is to do good'; and in the centre with an inscription to the effect that it was presented to him by the Society as a mark of affection and esteem. A mallet was also presented to him, inscribed with his monogram surrounded by the words 'Brisbane Society of the New Church'. He left soon afterwards, on March 17th, for Britain, and was not to return.<sup>(a)</sup>

The design of the new building, prepared by Mr. W. C. Voller, provided for a Sunday School Hall, 38 feet 6 inches by 28 feet, beneath, with anterooms at each side, with the nave of the Church above measuring 43 feet by 28 feet. There was to be a vestry, 13 feet by 10 feet, at the rear, and a porch, flanked by two library rooms (they were not built until the following year, 1910), each 12 feet by 7 feet, at the entrance. The building was in brick with cream and red facings, and finished interiorly in cement render, silky oak and pine, and with mahogany furnishings. A special feature was the lighting, which was to be done with electricity.

In 1910 Mr. Marchant paid the remaining debt of £500 on the building. In 1912 a brick caretaker's cottage was built behind the Church, for £400, Mr. Marchant in 1914 paying the balance of £250 still owing on this. In 1916 two large rooms, a Reading Room and a Library, each 18 feet square, were built at the front of the Church, Mr. Marchant again defraying the cost of about £900. Mr. W. A. Wright was appointed Bookroom Steward at £3 per week, paid by Mr. Marchant. (Later, he was appointed Book Missionary, and paid by the Australian Association. He resigned the office, because of failing health, in 1935.)

(a) He served with distinction in several Societies in Britain, and on retirement had given more than 50 years' service as an active Minister.

Services were transferred to the new Sunday School Hall on May 16th 1909, and the first Service was held in the Church on July 18th, when it was dedicated and opened by Mr. Spencer of Sydney, now President of the Association, with an attendance that could only be accommodated by the use of chairs placed down the aisle ... "an occurrence unprecedented in the annals of the New Church in Brisbane"; with another congregation of 80 in the evening. Although the Church was opened with a debt of £539 (in the form of a bank overdraft in the name of George Marchant) this was really no cause for concern, and the Treasurer reported to the Annual Meeting in April, 1910, that the finances were in a flourishing condition. There was a credit balance in the General Fund of three shillings and elevenpence; and £36 had been paid off the debt.

It might be worthy of notice that in 1909, the year of the opening of the Ann Street Church and of the resignation of Mr. Bates, Brisbane Society lost 20 members, 3 by resignation and 17 by removal from the Roll; nearly 1/3 of its total membership of 63. There were at this time 35 Sunday School scholars; and membership increased to 77 by 1923, although attendances at Worship showed no corresponding increase.<sup>(a)</sup>

When it became known that Mr. Bates would not return Mr. Marchant was elected Leader (in August, 1909) and Mr. A. A. Davey, M. L. C., President, a position which he was to hold until July, 1930. Mr. G. T. H. Heeschen was now Treasurer, Mr. Wright (and a little later Mr. W. J. Burton.), Secretary, Mr. W. J. Burton Sunday School Superintendent, Messrs. W. J. Burton and Patten Deacons, and Mesdames Davey and Wright Deaconesses. In 1911 Mr. Marchant undertook a visit of several months to Britain and America, and the Society was fortunate to be able to accept the offer of Mr. F. L. Voller of the Sydney Society to lead it in his absence, which he did most acceptably from April until July. Mr. Voller's sermons and addresses were greatly appreciated, and he also, in June, formed the Brisbane Society Young People's Institute, with an initial 21 members, to meet fortnightly. 150 people attended the Sunday School Picnic held during this time (on June 3rd, 1911). It was also now that Mr. W. W. Young arrived from the Nottingham Society, in July. He and his family were to serve the Society long and well, and to bring into the New Church Mr. Joseph Leech, its Leader for 30 years, and Mr. P. H. K. Larsen, Leader from January, 1974. Both Mr. Young and his son Arthur were to serve the Society as President, and his three daughters, Mrs. Winnie Davidson, Mrs. Maude Whatnall and Mrs. Gwen Larsen have remained active members to the present day.

In 1913 advertisements for a Minister were placed in the American New Church Messenger, and these eventually resulted on the appointment of Rev. Dr. Maro F. Underwood, "a Minister of good standing in the Californian Association of the New Church", who arrived with his wife and son in May, 1914. Dr. Underwood was a particularly capable preacher, contributed very interesting and readable articles to the New Age, and was gifted in his work with the children, opening each session of the Sunday School with a talk on the lesson for the day. In March, 1915, he visited Toowoomba, to which town Mr. Rowbotham (he who had been so much helped in his

(a) In this context it is pertinent to remark that in no Society in Australia has the move into new premises had in itself any noticeable effect on support in the short term. That is not to say that decline might not in any case have been arrested, or that the long term effect might not have sometimes been favourable, as indeed it would seem to have been in the case of the Melbourne Society since 1963. Although high hopes were entertained each time a move was made, yet most or all of such moves had been made necessary by the increasing urbanisation and consequent unsuitability of the areas being abandoned. The strength of the Society concerned was not often directly affected. The Sydney Society's move to the Thomas St. Hall in 1898 may be an exception. In this case the effect would seem to have been adverse.

sad experience of 1878), had removed, and lectured in his home to 17 people. Mrs. Underwood also was immediately active in the Society. She took the Presidency of the Ladies' Church and Benevolent Society, and also the organisation of the choir; and members were not infrequently entertained in the home of the Minister and his wife. But the Ministry was to be brief. It is reported that owing to a clash of personalities between the Minister and the Secretary of the Society, Mr. W. A. Wright, both resigned their positions. In October, 1915, Dr. Underwood bid the Society an affectionate farewell.

Mr. Marchant resumed the Leadership. He was to retain this office until 1923, and indeed to serve for two further years in 1926-28. But his health troubled him in the early 1920s, and the Society was now fortunate to have the services of Mr. Arthur Whatnall, who, like Mr. Young, had come from the Nottingham Society (in May, 1920). He immediately conducted Services, soon became Assistant Leader, and in 1923 very briefly Leader, in which office he was followed by Mr. W. A. Wright, 1924-26. The years 1915-23 saw George Marchant at the height of his powers as a preacher, and he conducted most of the services, though relieved often by Messrs. Whatnall, W. W. Young, Cashmore, Wright, Carrier and others. Mr. A. A. Davey, as President, continued his active support. Many Sunday School and other outings were held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Marchant, in the large grounds there, and the weekly Reading Circle and the Sunday School continued to be well supported.

#### REV. W. R. REECE \*\* JOSEPH LEECH

The need for a Minister was not lost sight of, and in 1920 Mr. Marchant visited America and made it known. In late 1924 he proposed to go there again, this time with the specific purpose of persuading Rev. W. R. Reece to come to the Society. His wife's sudden illness and death intervened, and this visit was cancelled. But contact was not lost, and in August, 1927, Mr. Reece came to Brisbane on a 5 weeks' visit of acquaintanceship. He accepted the invitation, and returned as Minister in August, 1928, Mr. Marchant having provided a Manse, in McLeod St., Herston, and a car, and also having made available sufficient funds to allow the first year's stipend to be met. As with Dr. Underwood, Mr. Reece's personality and preaching were greatly appreciated, but he too was to remain but a short time. In this instance, it appears that the financial arrangements caused differences between the Minister and the Society. Mr. Marchant withdrew his support, without which a Minister could not be paid, and Mr. Reece sailed again for home in March, 1930.

The new Leader was Mr. Joseph Leech.

Joseph Leech had come to Australia from Britain in 1913, and had enlisted in the armed services in early 1916. There he had met Arthur Young, and by him had been introduced to the New Church Doctrines. On his return to Australia he resided for a time with the W. W. Young family, and thus became associated with the Brisbane Society. He joined the Society in January, 1918, and became a particular protege of George Marchant. Mr. Leech had preached occasionally since 1918. He was not a powerful or eloquent preacher, but by his personality thoroughly endeared himself to the congregation, and was able to hold the Society together for the 30 years of his Leadership, conducting Services morning and evening each Sunday for most of this time. He was appointed a Missionary in 1952.

Late in 1930 Mr. Leech applied to the Council of The New Church in Australia for assistance towards implementing his wish to train in Britain for the Ministry. Australia, and the world, were now however in the grip of the Great Depression, and

it appeared that the income of the M. & M. S. Fund would be very seriously depleted. Mr. C. D. Brock was already a student at the College in London, and would be brought back at Association expense in the following year. Mr. H. W. Hickman's application had been received at the April, 1930 Conference, and application to the College on his behalf was pending clarification of the financial situation. Brisbane Society offered £100 towards Mr. Leech's expenses. The Association Council agreed to supplement this with a grant of a similar amount, but could do no more. Mr. Leech's application was received with pleasure, but his training could not proceed. The financial situation was unrelieved throughout the 1930s, the Second World War intervened in 1939, and in the event Mr. Leech was unable to achieve ordination.<sup>(a)</sup>

The 1930s brought an unfortunate episode in the history of the Brisbane Society. George Marchant, in common with many New Churchmen of the time, was implacably opposed, although it might seem without justice or a real understanding of the situation, to what he understood to be the belief and teaching of the General Church in regard to the 'permissions', or 'degrees of evil' outlined in Swedenborg's 'Conjugal Love'; and also to what he saw as any accommodation to the General Church view of the Writings. In the case of the first of these objections, he saw a series of articles by Rev. R. H. Teed which appeared in *The New Age* in 1931 as approaching what he believed to be the General Church position. In regard to the second, or possibly to both, it disturbed him that Rev. Cairns Henderson of the Hurstville Society had addressed the Sunday School of the Sydney Society, and that the President of the Association, Rev. C. D. Brock, had written to the Societies asking whether they would favour inviting Mr. Henderson to address the 1936 conference on the General Church concepts. The latter proposal did not eventuate, but the Brisbane Society brought to the Conference a Motion "That Conference entirely disassociates itself publicly from the Academy (General Church) teaching, Church, and Doctrine". The Motion was defeated on the grounds that in essentials the General Church and the Association Doctrines were identical, and such an all-embracing Motion could not be carried. The Brisbane delegation, in accordance with their instructions, left the Conference, and the Society subsequently seceded from the Association. Mr. Marchant asked the Association to return to him the shares in Marchants Ltd. which he had previously given, which of course it could not do.

Although Mr. Marchant relaxed his opposition sufficiently to change, in 1938, the terms of his gift of £12,000 in company shares, so that the proceeds would be available to the New Church in Australia instead of being devoted as they had been to the English and American Translation of the Word Committees, yet on his death in 1941, he left no further legacy to the New Church. The Brisbane Society rejoined the Association in December, 1945.

To what extent the secession had affected the strength of the Brisbane Society may be debatable. Until that year, 1936, in contrast to every other Australian Society excepting Perth, it had shown a remarkable resistance to the general decline; and the first six years of Mr. Leech's Leadership had seen both membership and attendances increasing very substantially. By the year 1949, when it next submitted returns to a Conference, it had joined those others in the steady declension which had overtaken them some 40 to 50 years earlier. In the light of their experiences, its resilience in the first 36 or more years of the century is notable. During the period of its isolation the

(a) In 1931 Mr. E. L. Bennett of the Melbourne Society travelled to Britain and was ordained as a Minister. Although this was done entirely at his own expense, and involved the Church in Australia in a total outlay of only £25, yet it created a misunderstanding in the Brisbane Society, Mr. Marchant saw it as "savouring of local patriotism", and resigned from the Council.

Second World War had intervened; but neither of the two World Wars, 1914-18 and 1939-45, can truthfully be cited as decisive factors permanently influencing the decline of the Australian Societies of the New Church. In point of fact, they can be shown to have brought several most significant members into the Church. The first brought Mr. Joseph Leech into the Brisbane Society, and the second his son-in-law Mr. R. H. Robinson. This latter conflict also brought Mr. Eric Parker, son-in-law of William Burl, into the Melbourne Society, without whom and whose wife and family that Society would have been demonstrably very much the poorer. In several Societies also post-war immigration brought new members from overseas.

Even though the Brisbane Society was no more able than any other in the longer term to maintain its numerical strength, yet Joseph Leech was a man well able to inspire affection and loyalty. Two Services were conducted each Sunday throughout the time of his Leadership, contrasting again with the other Societies, which had reverted to only one Service many years previously.

In the same year in which Mr. Leech became Leader, Mr. W. W. Young was appointed to the office of President. The two families of Mr. Young and Mr. Arthur Whatnall, friends from their days together in the Nottingham Society, gave Mr. Leech unstinted support, many of them from time to time holding significant offices. The sons and daughters of the two families twice intermarried, Arthur Young to Elsie Whatnall and Albert Whatnall to Maud Young. These and the two remaining daughters of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Young brought their families into the church. Mr. Leech also had unfailing support from his wife and two sons and one daughter; and as these in turn also married, the Sunday School was able to be maintained.

Other active members (although the list cannot be all-inclusive) were often members or descendants of an earlier generation of supporters ... Mr. Genn and his daughter Mary; Mr. H. A. Allington and his family; Mrs. Metzger, great-granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Spink, members before the turn of the century; Mr. and Mrs. Beard, parents of Mrs. F. A. Hall, now of the Sydney Society, and, for a time, the J. C. Hall family; Mr. Roy Tait, grandson of early members Mr. and Mrs. Briggs (and thus a cousin of the Hurman family, now of Western Australia); Mrs. Cooley, daughter of Mr. W. F. Keen, an early member of the Sydney Society, and Mr. and Mrs. Haine, who had joined the Society in 1921. These latter were amongst the few adult converts to the New Church faith in recent times. Mr. Haine, born in Stockholm, Sweden, had searched unsuccessfully for a satisfying religious faith, and had finally found the New Church through his wife's having purchased books from the display at the Ann St., Brisbane, Bookroom. Their son Hector became President of the Society in 1940, and it was he who initiated the overtures which resulted in the rapprochement with the Association in 1945. He has been organist for the Society since 1960, and his wife Margaret assistant organist and several times President and/or Secretary of the Women's League. Hector Haine is also responsible for the very fine printed folder introducing Emanuel Swedenborg which has been used in connection with the Swedenborg Exhibitions.

#### THE MOVE TO ROSALIE \*\* REV. C. V. A. HASLER \*\* REV. J. E. TEED.

In the 1950s Mr. Leech's health began to fail seriously, and he was several times laid aside by illness. In his Report to the Annual Meeting in 1958 he suggested that the time had come when an ordained Minister should again be sought. By this time, also, the cost of the upkeep of the Church and the caretaker's cottage were causing concern. The buildings were now 50 years old, the Society considerably depleted, and Mr. Marchant, the constant benefactor, no longer available.

Early in 1959 it was seen that these two steps, a new Church and a Minister, could complement each other, and active moves were implemented to embrace both of them. In October, 1959, an invitation was issued to Rev. C. V. A. Hasler, then serving in Mauritius, which was accepted, for a term of four years. Sadly, Mr. Leech did not live to welcome him, and to personally hand over the charge he had so faithfully maintained. In March, 1960, the Ann Street Church was sold to the Baptist Union for £42,000 and this excellent price enabled the new plans to proceed. In the same month as the sale land was chosen in suburban Rosalie, about two miles from the City, and soon contracts for the Church, again incorporating a caretaker's cottage, were let. In August, a Manse was bought, in Beryl Street, Holland Park, for £4,500, and Mr. Hasler and his family arrived in September. The Church was officially opened in August, 1961, Services having in the meantime been held in the Hall of the Ann Street Church.

In 1963, for almost the first time in its history, the practice of holding two Services each Sunday was discontinued. For a time they were held morning and evening alternately, and soon afterwards in the morning only, with an attendance effectively equalling the previous total for the day, varying from c. 37 to c. 41.

Mr. Hasler returned to Britain in October, 1964, at the expiration of his contract period; and thus his pastorate, like those of his predecessors, Dr. Underwood Mr. Reece, was a comparatively short one. Like theirs also, and perhaps in part because of its very brevity, it does not provide any historical highlights. All of these three Ministers were apparently well liked, and were efficient and acceptable preachers; but the respective periods of their ministration, while providing trained and full-time leadership and teaching, and giving welcome respite to the laity, yet had little observable long-term effect on the fortunes or strength of the Society. All three of these Ministers, and in particular Mr. Reece, had while in Australia made most useful contributions to the material appearing in print in the Australian New Church journal, *The New Age*.

On the departure of Mr. Hasler, the Society was not left without a Minister, Rev. J. E. Teed arriving from the Sydney Society only several weeks afterwards. He was to remain in Brisbane for nine years, and in that time adopted a number of initiatives, including the institution of a Young Adults Group and the organisation of Young Peoples' Camps (at Somerset Dam in 1966 and at Greenwood in 1972), the introduction in 1967 of Sunday morning Doctrinal classes for teenagers, the distribution of literature in the residential vicinity of the Church, and in 1970 the 'Home Circle' meetings, with topics chosen by the hosts.

But throughout the pastorates of Mr. Hasler and Mr. Teed, the losses through the death of some of the older members, and the removal of younger families and others from Brisbane, could not be compensated by the addition of newcomers or by growth from the Sunday School, and the 15 years show overall a steady decline in both membership and attendances. One who had died, in 1971, was Mr. Arthur Young, who had served the Society then for 58 years, many of them as President, and to whom had fallen much of the work of planning and carrying into effect the move to Rosalie.

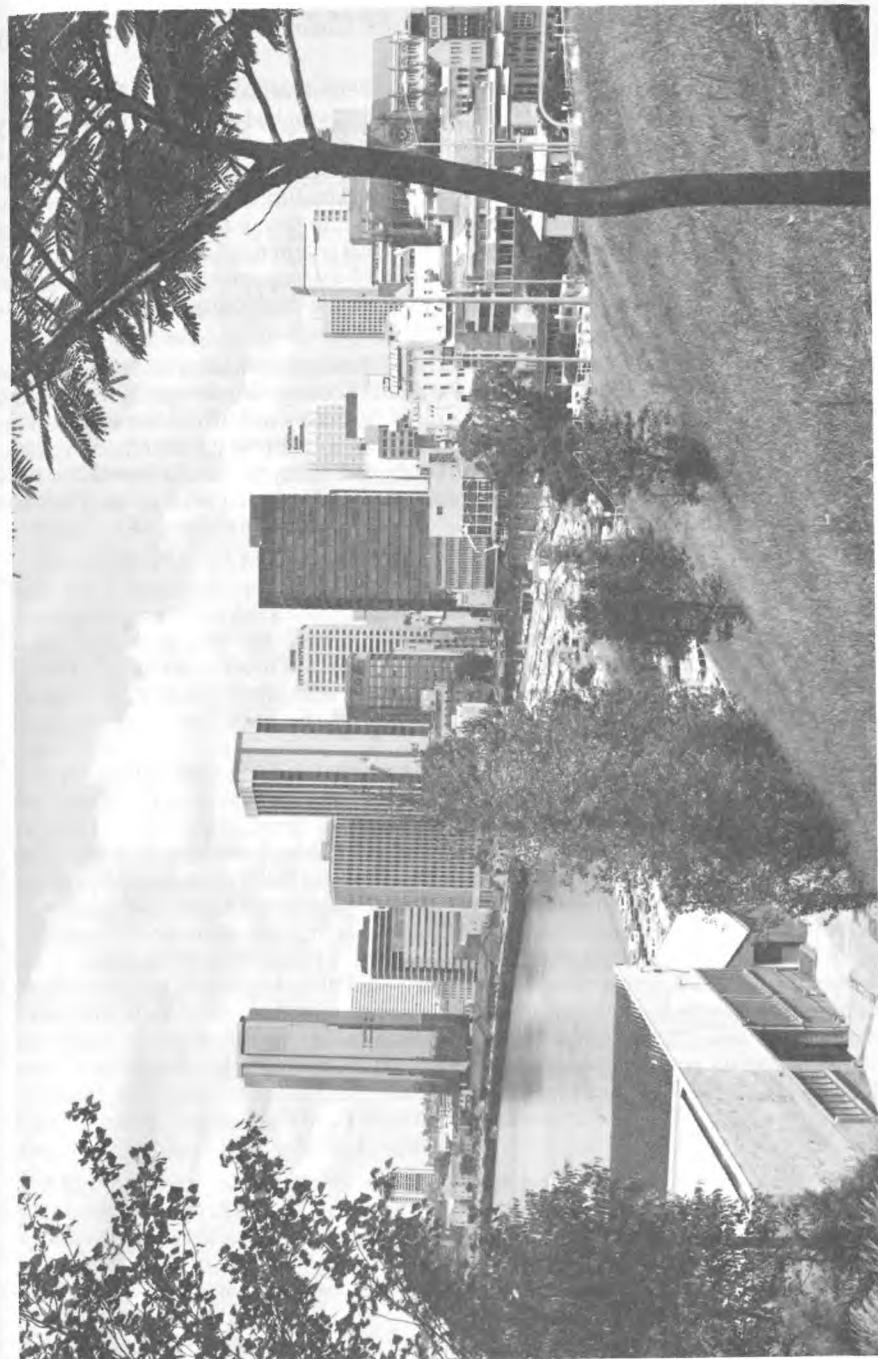
The President of the Society from 1961 to 1968 (and also since 1976) was Mr. R. H. Robinson, son-in-law of Joseph Leech, whose wife Joyce had also served the Society well as organist, Treasurer and auditor. Mr. Teed also had the support still of many members who had served the Society so faithfully under Joseph Leech, and of a very few newcomers such as Mr. and Mrs. Hemsworth, who had occupied the



*Rev. C. V. A. Halser.*



*The Church at Rosalie, Brisbane.*



*The City of Brisbane, 1980. Courtesy Queensland Tourist and Travel Corp.*

position of resident caretakers at the Rosalie Church, and had enthusiastically accepted the Doctrines.

In December, 1973. Mr. Teed moved to the Melbourne Society, and Mr. P. H. K. (Horrie) Larsen, son-in-law of Mr. W. W. Young, who had assumed the Presidency from Mr. R. H. Robinson in 1968, became the new Leader. He was appointed a Licentiate by the Association Council, this being confirmed by the Conference of 1976. In the years since, the Society, now depleted by further removals and deaths to a total membership of 31, and average attendances at worship of 18, has sought the services of a Minister without success. In this most recent time, it has been helped by several visits each year from Rev. I. A. Arnold, of Sydney, and by occasional help in the pulpit by Mr. Alex. Bremner, previously of the Melbourne Society, but now living at Buderim some 60 miles to the north of Brisbane.

Late in 1978 the Brisbane Society resolved to issue an invitation to the pastorate to Rev. E. B. Williams, then serving in the Perth Society, whose sister, Mrs. Judith Boyes, had succeeded Mr. R. H. Robinson as Secretary in 1976. After negotiations the invitation was accepted, to be taken up in March, 1981, at the termination of Mr. Williams' current pastorate in Perth. The Brisbane Society thus looks forward in 1980 to very soon again being under the constant care and instruction of its own resident and full-time Minister.

## NEW SOUTH WALES AND THE SYDNEY SOCIETY

### EARLY NEW CHURCHMEN \*\*\* 'THE FIRST SYDNEY SOCIETY'.

Sydney, New South Wales, has the distinction of having been the home of the first known New Churchman to have settled in Australia, Thomas Morse. Conversely, although the City of Sydney was founded, and the Colony of New South Wales settled, many years before the establishment of the other Australian settlements, yet a New Church Society as a continuing and viable organisation was last formed there<sup>(a)</sup> excepting for Western Australia. (Such an organisation was first formed in the youngest capital city, Adelaide, in 1844-47). On the other hand, and no less remarkably, within six years of its establishment, with 18 members, in 1875, it was able to report a membership of 90 and an average attendance at Worship of 100. This extraordinarily rapid development was in fact due to its late foundation, which took place at a time when interest in the supernatural was approaching the point of its greatest intensity in Australia and all of the Societies the peak of their numerical strength. The period may be looked upon as a breathing space between the traumas of the settlement of the new continent and the materialism and sophistication of the 20th century. In the latter, the New Church might have faced an impossible task in attempting to establish itself.

Although Thomas Morse must be cited as the first immigrant now known to have been fully committed to belief in the Doctrines of the New Church, yet Swedenborg's theological works were known and read in Australia from the time of the first white settlement. Not only did the discoverer, Lieutenant James Cook, himself have some knowledge of them from his friend James Cookworthy, but copies of the books were brought to Sydney at the time of the initial occupation of the new Colony. Robert Hindmarsh, in his 'Rise and Progress of the New Church', included the following report:

"When the first vessel sailed with convicts from this country to Botany Bay, under the care of Governor Phillip, in 1787, Mr. John Lowes, a surgeon, who was employed by the government in that expedition, and with whom I was particularly intimate, was entrusted with a large assortment of books, as a present for the new colony. As he himself was favourable to the writings, it was reasonable to expect that he would take care to distribute them in the most judicious manner, both among the officers, his companions, and among such of the crew and convicts as he might think most capable of profiting by them. I had reason afterwards to believe that he discharged the trust reposed in him with care and punctuality; for in a letter received from him after his arrival at Botany Bay, he informed me that several of the officers approved of the writings, and cordially embraced their contents. But the clergyman who was appointed chaplain to the expedition and to the new colony was much opposed to them, because they were not in agreement with the doctrines of the Established Church. My friend, however, succeeded in distributing them in such a way as gave hopes of much future good ...".

Although there now remains no identifiable result of this first Australian missionary endeavour, yet it may seem probable that in the early years of the first Australian Colony there were men and women who had either embraced the Doctrines or were acquainted with them; but in addition to the demands made upon time and attention by the prime physical necessities of establishment, there were two peculiarly contrasting

(a) None has yet been formed in Tasmania.

factors which would have made their association with one another less likely than in later times. One of these was the scattered nature of the settlement, the distances involved, and the lack of modern transport and telephone communication. The other, strangely enough, was the fact that many immigrants moved a number of times from district to district, and later from Colony to Colony before settling permanently. In the days of exploration and penetration of the hinterlands, the population was a constantly shifting one.

Thomas Morse, a carpenter by trade, came to Sydney in 1832 or 1833. He had been a member of the New Church group in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England, which afterwards formed the Cheltenham Society of 1833-40; and before emigrating he had spent some time in London, where he was a flautist in the choir of the Waterloo Rd. Society, under Rev. Thomas Goyder. Nothing is known of his first years in Australia, but he eventually settled some 6½ miles south of Sydney, near where Cook's River flows into Botany Bay, the first landing place of Lieutenant Cook on his voyage of discovery in 1770. Here he established a farm, and next to his house the first general store in the district. The site was a little to the north of the present suburban Rockdale railway station, on the road that is now the Princes Highway.<sup>(a)</sup> Then, the area was sparsely settled bushland, a prime source of building timber, firewood, charcoal and lime (from seashells) for the City, and nameless.

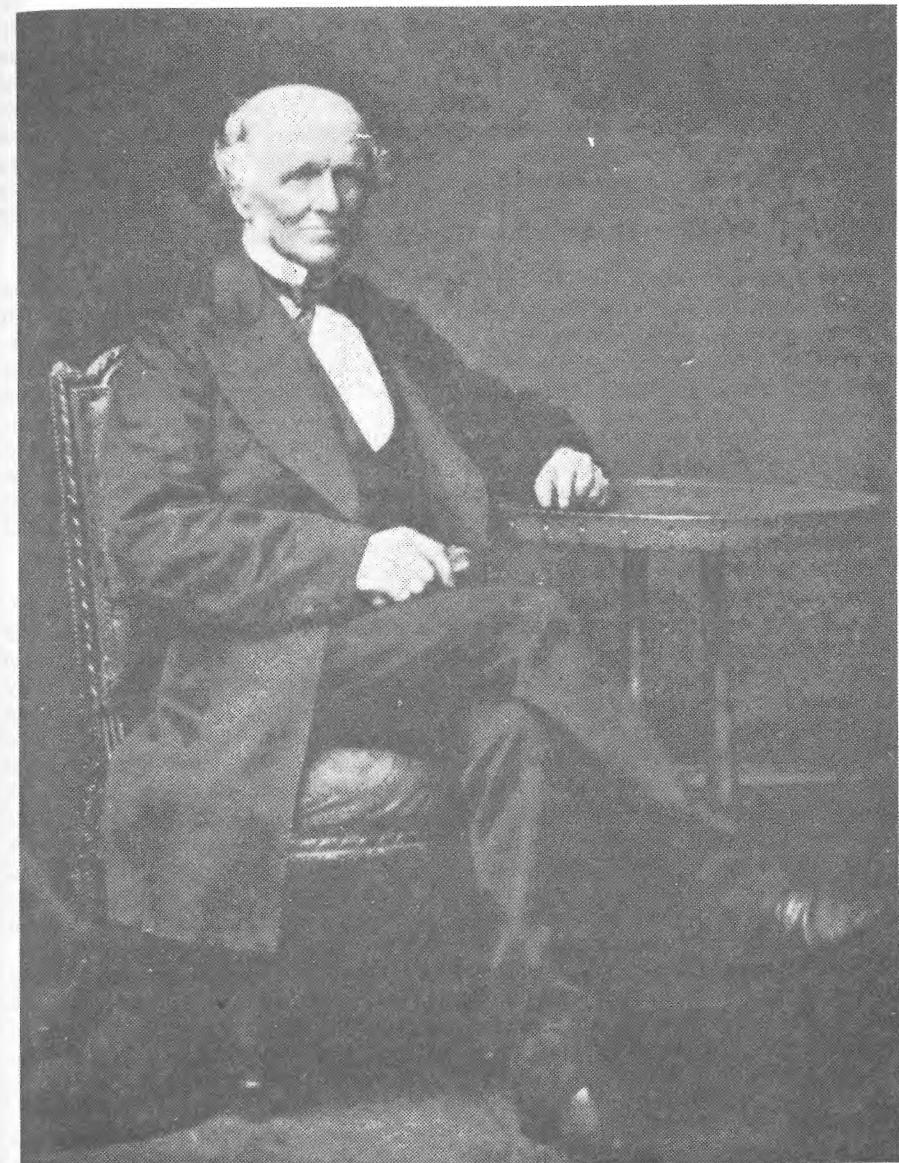
Mr. Morse married in Australia, his wife having been born in the Colony, and at Rockdale they raised a family of 13 children, to whom their father imparted a knowledge of the New Church Doctrines. When the first Church (Wesleyan Methodist) was built in the district in 1858 the Morse family regularly attended it, also observing the Sabbath carefully in the home.<sup>(b)</sup> Richard Morse, in his autobiographical sketch (printed in *New Church Life*, February, 1945) tells of his father being reduced to tears as his son stoutly defended the Wesleyan doctrine of the Trinity. Richard, the 11th child, was to become the Secretary of the Sydney Society and the Founder of the Hurstville Society of the General Church. Only one other member of the family is known to have retained the New Church faith ... the eldest, Thomas. Mr. Morse made no known attempt to form a New Church group or study circle, and is not known to have made contact with any early New Church residents of Sydney, although in his later years he several times visited the Sydney Society. Indeed, a visit to Sydney from Rockdale would for long have been something of a major undertaking, even the main roads being little better than muddy and rocky tracks. There was no railway until 1884.

The next known receivers of the doctrines to come to Sydney were Rev. Hugh Galbraith MacLachlan, a Minister of the Established Church of Scotland, (Presbyterian), and his wife Sarah Anne, whose father was Rev. D. G. Goyder, Minister of the Glasgow New Church Society, and her uncle Rev. Thomas Goyder, known to Thomas Morse. They arrived in 1842 or 1843, and were followed soon afterwards by Mrs. MacLachlan's brother George, who in 1845 moved to Adelaide, and by Charles Gordon, also from Glasgow.

At some time before 1850, a man whose name is now unknown, finding himself ill and unfinancial in Sydney, sold to a prominent City bookseller, a Mr. Moore, more

(a) Geeves & Jervis, 'The Beginning and Development of Rockdale', 1954.

(b) Rev. J. J. Thornton, who visited Mr. Morse in much later times, says (*The New Age*, May, 1889) that Mr. Morse "erected a spiritual alter to the only Lord" in his house. It is not known to have been a PHYSICAL altar. It would seem that the house in which Mr. Thornton visited him would have been his later home, 'Esrom', at nearby Bexley.



Thomas Morse. The first known New Churchman in Australia.

than 50 volumes of the New Church works. There, Mr. MacLachlan, being interested in these books (he had already sent a parcel of them to his brother-in-law in Adelaide), met Mr. G. H. Poole, he who had so recently introduced the New Church into the island of Mauritius. Mr. Poole was already in touch with two other interested men ... Mr. Edward Baly (whose parents had been baptised by Rev. John Clowes), and Mr. Horatio Brett. These five men, with Mrs. MacLachlan, met together at the MacLachlan home on weeknights during the first half of the year 1851 for doctrinal study. In the same year Mr. MacLachlan died, and the meetings therefore ceased. After the birth of her second daughter, on June 10th 1852, Mrs. MacLachlan went to her brother, G. W. Goyder, in Adelaide, where she became Superintendent of a school for young ladies. She joined the Adelaide Society, and her two daughters were baptized by Jacob Pitman. Her son George, in 1869, was a member of the survey party led by his uncle, which made the first survey of the site of Darwin, in the Northern Territory; and he himself later became Chief Surveyor of the Territory.

Mr. Brett, a grazier and wool merchant, returned to England, and on his death in c. 1875 left a legacy of £438 in the hands of the Committee of the New Church Foreign Missions to be invested by it, and to be ultimately used "for the dissemination of the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem in Sydney, New South Wales, and the institution of a New Church there, under the direction of the Foreign and Colonial Aid Society of the New Church." The Committee decided to let the capital increase until the friends in Sydney were able to build a Church, when it would be handed over to them. From it there accumulated the sum of £1,132, which was transferred to the trustees of the Sydney Society in 1896, thus enabling it to establish for the first time its own place of Worship, the Thomas St. Hall, which was built in 1898. Mr. Brett had left an identical sum (£438) to the New Church in Britain.

Newcomers to Sydney in late 1852 or early 1853 were Mr. Geard and Mr. and Mrs. John Hawley. Mr. Hawley had been a member of the Haslingden Society, near Liverpool, England. His wife, nee Isabella Caulderwood, was from Liverpool, but had been a member of the Argyle Square Society for a short time. In 1854 Mr. Baly attempted the formal organisation of a Society. He was able to gather together a group of 17 people, and a meeting was held at his schoolroom in Southend Road (now Oxford Street), on May 3rd of that year "with the aim of giving a public and external form to the New Church in this city." This meeting resolved that it formed "A Society for the purpose of mutual edification and for the promotion of the doctrines of the New Church as taught in the Writings of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg". A committee was appointed, a Secretary (Mr. Baly), a Treasurer (Mr. Hawley); and Minutes taken. These Rules were adopted: 'The Society to be formed of persons above the age of 20 years who have signed the Declaration of Faith annexed to the end of these Rules ... All the transactions of the Society to be entered in a Minute Book ... A Meeting to be held each succeeding Wednesday for the purpose of reading and conversation, to be commenced with the reading of a chapter of the Word and the Lord's Prayer ... The Society to meet also on Sunday evenings for the purpose of celebrating Divine Worship ... The evening of the first Monday in every month to be devoted to the transaction of business ... Two General Meetings to be held each year ... Any person expressing a willingness to subscribe to the Declaration of the Faith, and whose moral conduct shall be found to be unimpeachable, shall be received as a member upon the approval of the majority ... That two visiting members be appointed, whose duties will be to visit members who are irregular in their attendance, and such as desire to join the Society'.

The 17 people present, including six married couples, signed the Declaration of Faith; although only 13 of them seem to have been regarded as members of the Society. Two, Adam Walker<sup>(a)</sup> and Thomas Docking, were already members of the Melbourne Society. These, with John Coxhead and Thomas Heath, are not enumerated as members in Mr. Baly's letter to Rev. Smithson, mentioned below.

Thus was founded the 'First Sydney Society'. It reported its existence to Rev. J. H. Smithson, then Editor of 'The Intellectual Repository' (afterwards The New Church Magazine), and applied to the 'London Printing Society' (The Swedenborg Society), for books. In the former letter the members were described as being "animated by that well-directed zeal which, under the Divine Providence of the Lord, cannot but triumph over every obstacle and surmount every barrier to success". Meetings were held in private homes, and for some weeks in a large rented room in George St., where a Sunday School was started by Mrs. Hawley. On March 8th, 1854, a child, Stephen Riley, was baptized by Mr. Hawley as 'Officiating Member of the New Church'.

But in the event the Society lasted only three months, the last recorded meeting being held on August 4th. Its demise was caused by a number of factors, chief of which was probably the removal of members. There was also the lack of books, and the difficulty of finding a meeting place. Mr. & Mrs. Baly had moved to Paramatta soon after the first meeting and Mr. & Mrs. Diggles to Brisbane. The Sofala (near Bathurst) gold rush of the time possibly also had an effect.

In the following year, 1855, there arrived in Sydney from London, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Harding, with their small daughter Eva<sup>(20)</sup>, and Mr. Harding almost immediately advertised for New Church people to meet at his house. Another attempt was made to form a Society, and Services of Worship were held each Sunday evening. But Mr. Harding moved to New Zealand in December of the same year; and although for a time he heard favourable reports from Sydney, and although up to December 1861 there were several more baptisms performed by Mr. Hawley and Mr. John Coxhead, yet the meetings were not long continued.

From 1856 until 1873, a period of 17 years, there was no further organized group activity.

The friends remaining were still in touch with each other; Mr. Heath was organising meetings in private homes in about 1856-58 "to enquire into the doctrines of different sects"; and Mr. Oxenham, Mr. Coxhead and Mr. Thomas Newman were occasionally speaking in the streets and in the Domain.

Mr. Coxhead, a shoemaker, of Redfern, was studying Latin at his last in order to be able to read the Writings in their original tongue. In 1869 he published a pamphlet of 30 pages entitled "An Essay on the Secret Springs or Primary Principles of all Human Actions", a very practical explanation of the operation of Discrete Degrees and other basic Doctrines. The following lines are also his:

(a) Adam Walker settled afterwards at Maitland, 130 miles north of Sydney. His lengthy reply to Rev. G. G. Howden's article 'Swedenborgianism, or the New Church' which appeared in 'The New South Wales Independent' in February, 1881, is surely a masterpiece of New Church defensive writing. (Adam Binney Walker, a homeopathist, is also known as Dr. Walker).

### Mental Reflections on the Railway.

*The line to Heaven by Christ is made,  
With heavenly truths the rails are laid;  
From earth to Heaven the line extends:  
In life eternal ... there it ends!  
God's Word is the chief engineer,  
It shows the way to Heaven clear  
Through tunnels dark and dreary here,  
It does the path to glory steer.  
God's love the fire, His Truth the steam,  
That moves the engine and the train.  
  
Repentance is the stipulation;  
And that's the only railway station.  
No fare have passengers to pay,  
For Jesus is Himself the way.  
If you repent and turn from sin  
The Gospel-train will take you in;  
The Gospel-train is passing by,  
Jehovah-Jesus reigns on high.*

### E. A. NEWTON \*\* DR. BRERETON \*\* THE SOCIETY ESTABLISHED.

In 1873 another newspaper advertisement appeared, placed this time by Mr. Edward Allen Newton. Mr. Newton, at the age of 18, had settled in Sydney with his parents and their family in late 1853, they having previously been members of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Society. The family seems not to have taken any part in the activity of 1854 and 1855, so soon after their arrival; and whether they had met with any other New Church people in the intervening time is not known. Mr. E. A. Newton was to become the grandfather of Mr. F. A. (Bill) Hall, long-time and present (1980) Secretary of the Sydney Society, of which he and his brother James (Herman), were lifelong active members.<sup>(a)</sup>

His advertisement was answered by only one man, Dr. John Le Gay Brereton,<sup>(21)</sup> who in his 14 years in Sydney had become a well-known public figure. He was a homeopathic doctor, and Edward Newton's profession was that of a herbalist. These two men, who became firm friends, were able to discover the members of the group of 1854, and one or two other interested people. A meeting was called, and attended by Edward Newton, Dr. and Mrs. Brereton, Messrs. Baly, Coxhead, Oxenham, C. G. Blaxland, and Dr. Atherton. Mr. Newton's advertisement, and this meeting, were the first initiatives leading to the formation of the present Sydney Society. A second meeting was held, at which Dr. Brereton became the accepted Leader, and Dr. Atherton was appointed Secretary and Treasurer; although there was as yet no official name and no other formal organisation. For a few months meetings were held from time to time in Clark's Rooms, Newtown; and then Services of Worship each Sunday in the Oddfellows' Hall, Newtown. This was in the second half of 1873.

Now there came a wholly unpredictable event, which, from a time more than 100 years later, can be seen either (a) as having inhibited and delayed progress for 3 years, or (b) as having served as a catalyst in drawing and holding this little group together, in strengthening its members' resolve to form themselves into a Society, and as having

(a) James Newton died in 1894.

at the same time attracted others. It is a peculiarly futile and unproductive exercise to conjecture what progress might have been made without it.

In October, 1873, the following advertisement appeared in The Sydney Morning Herald:...

NEW CHURCH. The Right Rev. F. L. Bugnion (Mauritius and Bourbon) will preach at the Temperance Hall on Sunday, the 19th inst., at 7 p.m. Subject: What is the New Church?

This could do no otherwise than cause intense interest and speculation amongst the little group of receivers and enquirers. The events of the next three years may be seen as an interruption, an aberration, a hiatus: or alternatively as embracing the throes of establishment. Certainly the Sydney Society emerged fully fledged from them. Mrs. Brereton, herself a most intelligent person, was quite emphatic afterwards that "It was Bishop Bugnion's public advocacy and preaching that led to the formation of the Sydney Society, and the establishment of regular Services". As against this testimony, however, or at least tempering it, it must be recognised that Dr. and Mrs. Brereton were swept somewhat off balance by the suavity and the ingratiating personality of the 'Bishop'. What is certainly known is that he was an urbane, likeable, and highly educated man, a very competent and persuasive preacher, and in his preaching and teaching for the most part a consistent exponent of New Church doctrine.

This unexpected happening interrupted the Services at Newtown. 'Bishop' Bugnion preached a number of times in Sydney, until February, 1874, and then suddenly departed. The Sydney group advertised again, on the 15th of that month:

NEW CHURCH. Preliminary Meeting and Service  
at Clark's Rooms, 11 a.m.

Services were continued until July, when Monsieur Bugnion reappeared, and they again ceased. The 'Bishop' preached at the Temperance Hall until November, when he left Sydney for the second time.

Immediately before this Mr. Thomas Newman, a carpenter, had commenced his 'Society' at Redfern, an inner suburb. He first conducted advertised Services at the Foresters' Hall, Waterloo, and afterwards transferred them to his own home at Rosehill Street, Redfern, where he erected a sign outside his house. These meetings continued for about seven years; and it appears that he also performed baptisms there; but although overtures were made by Dr. Brereton's group, there was no amalgamation, and this 'Society' operated quite independently of the activity at Newtown and in the City.

For the next six months it seems that some Services were held at Newtown; whether regularly is not known. But the need was certainly seen for some more definite and concrete form of organisation, and a new commencement was attempted in May, 1875.

A Meeting was called for the 13th of the month, at 157 Castlereagh St., and 12 people attended: Dr. and Mrs. Brereton, Dr. Jackson, Messrs. Newton, Baly, Blaxland, Backhouse, Wornum, Chauncy, Mocatta, and Mrs. Vyner. George Mocatta had come into the New Church from Judaism, though when and where is not known. He became, in 1883, a foundation member of the Auckland, N. Z. Society. Of the other two newcomers, the identity of Mr. Wornum is not known. Conrad Nicholson Wornum was settled in South Australia with a young family, and his eldest

son ... his third child ... could at this time have been no more than a youth. Mr. Chauncy although not given an initial, would seem certainly to have been Hugh, (H.S.).

This meeting formally created an organisation, adopted a name, ... 'The Swedenborg Club' ... and recorded Minutes. It is clear, however, that the genesis of the 'Club' was in reality the meeting of 1873, promoted by Edward Newton, and leading directly, if falteringly, to the formation of the Sydney Society.

The purpose of The Swedenborg Club was to be "To prepare and read papers elucidating the Doctrines of Swedenborg, whether scientific or theological", and weeknight meetings were to be held at the N.S.W. Academy of Arts, (previously Clark's Rooms) at which the opening speaker would be allowed 15 minutes, and others 5 minutes each. George Mocatta was appointed Secretary and Treasurer. Dr. Brereton and Messrs. Backhouse and Mocatta were appointed to draw up a code of by-laws, which were submitted to the Club, and adopted, on June 24th, 1875. The most important of these was that the name be changed to The Sydney New Church Society; (It was incorporated in 1886). Its objects were set out as (1) to promote a knowledge of the Writings of the New Church generally; (2) the cultivation of friendly feelings amongst its members; (3) the diffusion of the Good and Truth of the New Dispensation as derived from the Word through Emanuel Swedenborg; (4) the establishment of a place of worship and the performance of the ordinances of the New Church under an appointed Minister as soon as numbers and funds will permit. A Library was to be established, and brotherly relations promoted with the New Church in England, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane. There were 18 members, ... "Truly a feeble gathering", George Mocatta wrote, "for this, the Metropolis of the oldest of the Australian Colonies".

At this meeting a letter from M. Bugnion was received, in which he offered to become "the independent Priest and Bishop, on a legally secured salary". This proposition was thoroughly debated by the meeting, and by another held on July 1st, but in the outcome the Society "refused to commit itself to an engagement with one who had placed himself in hostility to a large party of the New Church in England, and which would place it under episcopal control". For all that, they would have been prepared to acknowledge him as their Pastor and Minister, and to guarantee him financial support; but they could not recognise him as Bishop. The Secretary wrote in his letter conveying the decision: "I am directed ... at the same time to express to you their sincere sentiments of regard and esteem, also their great regret that the terms of the proposition placed before them should have been such as to deprive them of your services".

M. Bunion's reaction to the letter was awaited, and he was not in Sydney. From now until September weekly meetings (though no Services) continued, but with attendances most usually of only 4, 5 or 6. At the end of September it was resolved that Services of Worship must be commenced, but that this be deferred until after M. Bugnion's return. All meetings were suspended "until their renewal is notified by Advertisement". The 'Bishop' returned in December, and on the 26th of that month preached a Christmas Sermon, in French, at Mrs. Read's Assembly Rooms from the text: 'Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel'. Is. 7:14. In February, 1876, it was announced that he would preach, in French, in the afternoons. But by March he was in Adelaide, and the Society seems not to have immediately resumed activity.

Eventually a meeting was called for August 4th at the Temperance Hall, and the decision made to commence evening Services forthwith. The first was held at Mrs. Read's Assembly Rooms, 75 William Street, on August 20th (1876). Mr. Mocatta was appointed Leader, but in November he left for New Zealand. (He died in Sydney in 1893, and his widow presented his library to the Society). On December 3rd, at the first Annual Meeting, Mr. Edward Baly was elected the first President, Dr. Brereton Leader, Messrs. Slater and Muston joint Secretaries, Dr. Brereton and Mr. Baly Lecturers, and Messrs. Baly, Slater and Muston Readers. There were 15 present at this meeting but 23 new members were accepted, subject to their signing the Roll. Mr. Slater presented to the meeting a complete new set of Rules for consideration, which were adopted at the following Annual Meeting. He had thus effectively taken part in the formation of three New Church Societies, in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney. Dr. Brereton was soon afterwards recognised as a Leader by the British Conference, and a little later was granted a licence to administer the Sacrament.

M. Bugnion had returned from Adelaide in November, and had resumed preaching, in the mornings, and in English, on the 10th of the month. This he continued for a time; but the Society was now prepared to act independently of him, and he soon left Sydney for the last time<sup>(22)</sup>. The Sydney Society had emerged from its three years of suspended animation. In human terms, the strains and pressures of the fledgeling Society can only be guessed at.

Here, briefly, is the timetable of the somewhat confused events of the Bugnion episode:

1873	E. A. Newton advertises. Meetings and Services held.
1873 October	Bugnion advertises, and preaches. Society's Services suspended.
1874 February	Bugnion leaves. Society advertises 'Preliminary Meeting'. Services resumed.
1874 July	Bugnion returns. Society's Services suspended.
1874 November	Bugnion leaves. Services not resumed.
1875 May	The Swedenborg Club formed.
1875 June	The name changed to The Sydney New Church Society.
1875 November	All meetings suspended until further notice.
1875 December	Bugnion returns, and preaches.
1876 March	Bugnion departs.
1876 August	The Society commences evening Services.
1876 November	Bugnion conducting morning Services.
1877 Early	Bugnion finally departs. The Society continues.

The date of the formation of 'The Swedenborg Club', May 13th, 1875, may properly be, and is, taken as that of the Foundation of the Sydney Society.

#### THE NEW TEMPERANCE HALL\*\*\*

#### THE SOCIETY UNDER DR. BRERETON AND DR. JACKSON\*\*

#### THE FAIRFIELD CHURCH.

In January, 1877, the Services of the Society were transferred to the New Temperance Hall, Pitt St., City, and held morning and evening. This was to be the place of Worship for 21 years, until the Thomas St., Ultimo, Hall was built in 1898. Morning

Services were discontinued from the end of April, 1877, and attendances in the next few months averaged about 25.

Mr. Ernest Braby's description of the New Temperance Hall, and of the Services there as they appeared to him on his arrival in 1884, are interesting: ...<sup>(23)</sup>

"There seemed a want of decorum before the Services, which rather jarred on my English training, and this was possibly increased by the gaudy pictures of Roman goddesses and others stuck on the walls. ... Heathen gods and goddesses were indiscriminately mixed with famous statesmen and discoverers and other notabilities. The room seemed more like a low dancing hall than a place of worship. ... There was a restaurant underneath, and occasionally we got a sniff of onions and other cooking. ... I almost decided to apply to the Brisbane Society for membership. I was delighted with the harmonious family spirit there, and the Society seemed more like a Church".

Despite the unsuitable surroundings at the Temperance Hall, and any shortcomings that Dr. Brereton may have had in regard to the organisation and conduct of the Services, the Sydney Society was now off and running, and in common with the Adelaide and Melbourne Societies, the period c. 1875-1900 was to be the era of its greatest growth and activity. Its quite phenomenal early expansion has already been noticed, but the statistics of the first 21 years are of such extraordinary interest, that we recount and add to that reference.

We notice first the membership at the formation, June 24th, 1875, of 18. Next, the enrollment of 23 new members on December 3rd, 1876, and the average attendance at the one Service of Worship in mid 1877 of 25. Only 4 years after this, in 1881, the membership is given as 90, and the average attendance as 100. But two years only later, in 1883, the figures are respectively 54 and 52. By 1887, membership had risen again to 85, although attendance at the one Service, then held in the mornings, remained unaltered. Seven years later again, in 1896, under Mr. Spencer's Leadership, membership is 145, and average attendance 80. Adding still further to the impact of these quite surprising and now unaccountable figures is the circumstance that those last quoted relate to the same years exactly, 1889-1896, in which it was not found possible, because of the severity of commercial depression, to hold a Conference.

It is not possible today authoritatively to account for these sudden and unusual fluctuations. There can be little doubt that the central City location, in the climate of the times, and perhaps also a somewhat less than ideal adherence to doctrinal rectitude, contributed largely to this outcome. The counterattractions of the cinema, the radio, the motor car and television, were not yet competing. Social life still tended to be concentrated around the Church, suburban distances were not so great, and there was still time for studious pursuits. Neither was the question then so much was one associated with a Church, but rather simply *which* Church; and in the period there was a considerable amount of experimentation with the less conventional religious faiths. Dr. Brereton was a prominent public man in the city, with a large private practice, and never afraid to advocate the New Church and its Doctrines. To him, as Leader for the first ten years, must be accorded in the main the credit for the early consolidation and growth. Equally, however, one cannot but notice that very many of the early adherents seem not to have formed a permanent attachment; and that it was still in the time of Dr. Brereton's Leadership that the equally sudden reduction, about halving the numbers, occurred. It is in fact known

that under Dr. Brereton there was considerable disenchantment and criticism, although the reasons have not been fully documented.

Turning to the later years of the period under review, the time of equally astonishing regrowth, under Dr. Jackson and Mr. Spencer, they were fortuitously years which saw a considerable influx of confirmed New Churchmen from Britain, amongst whom may be mentioned, Messrs. Ashby, Keen, Braby, Nicklin, Ball, Wilson, and Biden. This factor alone, however, could still not in itself have accounted for the greater part of the increase; perhaps we must look to two additional circumstances, (a) the return of some members disaffected under Dr. Brereton, and (b) the effect of Mr. Spencer's great outreach and advertising campaigns. These however cannot faithfully be cited as the reasons, and must remain as conjectures.

In 1879, Rev. J. J. Thornton, having been 18 months in Melbourne, and "feeling much in need of mental rest", came to Sydney. There, he stayed for a month with Dr. and Mrs. Brereton, although the doctor was ill and confined to his home during the whole of this time. "Should his life be prolonged", wrote Mr. Thornton, "as I fervently pray that it will be for many years, I think Dr. Brereton will render important service to the New Church. He is gifted with literary ability, a powerful intellect, large resources, a warm heart, and what is wanted in Australia at present, courage and boldness. ... Mrs. Brereton is a thorough New Church lady ...". Mr. Thornton undoubtedly found spiritual stimulus on this visit, but seems to have had little "mental rest". He engaged on a programme of public lectures, preached at the morning Services (there were none in the evening because of the unavailability of the Hall), and attended a 'Social Meeting' which was especially called with the purpose of discussing the formation of the projected 'Intercolonial Association'.

On the evening of the first lecture he had an introduction to Sydney weather: "During the first fortnight of my visit there was continuous rain. On the evening of the first (lecture) the wet was very heavy; too heavy for any but strong men to be out, and we had an audience of 70 or 80 in the small room, which would accommodate about 250". He delivered five lectures in all, one taking the form of a Service of Worship. They had the same room, and "it was much too small for those who wished to hear". The Service was sympathetically described and the lecture reported at length in 'The Town and Country Journal'. Of the third lecture, held in the larger Hall, The Sydney Morning Herald reported that there were about 300 present. Before Mr. Thornton left Sydney he encouraged Mr. Backhouse and Mr. Vernon, (he was the N.S.W. Secretary for the Railways) to conduct the Services during the illness of Dr. Brereton, and persuaded Mr. Biden to become Secretary. Fred Biden was a grandson of Dr. Bayley; his sister Rose was the wife of Mr. Wilson, Treasurer of the Society 1886-89, and formerly of the Paisley, Scotland, Society.

Upon his recovery Dr. Brereton resumed the duties of Leader, and was the most frequent preacher. His health failed again early in 1886 and he was forced to relinquish all activity. His departure seems to have brought to a head a deep-seated conflict within the Society, which is said to have come to the brink of dissolution.

The causes are not known. Rev. J. J. Thornton, in his report printed in the New Church Magazine for June, 1887, says only that "The Society was placed in a very trying position, which demanded much patience and fortitude". Richard Morse, Secretary of the Society in the last year of Dr. Brereton's Leadership, following Mr. Biden, refers to "a period of bitter opposition to Dr. Brereton" ('Souvenir', 1912, p.62). There were difficulties of a physical nature too. Mr. William Newman, by now the principal alternative preacher, was absent on a visit to Britain (although it was

known that he would not accept the Leadership); Mr. Vernon, previously Treasurer, was now an invalid and Mr. Nicklin, who had succeeded him, had left the Colony. Dr. William Moore, a Committee member, was also invalidated. Mr. Thornton came again from Melbourne, and persuaded Dr. Jackson<sup>(24)</sup> to take the office of Leader, a position which he assumed with reluctance.

Dr. Brereton had been a well-known and widely respected public man, and there can be little doubt that it was the general esteem in which he was held, coupled with his simplicity and devotion, rather than his preaching or organising ability which held the Society together in the formative years. His personality was kindly and generous, and he is said to have been approachable as a friend even by the most humble. He was a constant opponent of religious or professional exclusiveness, and a little out of step with some of his contemporaries in his profession. As a preacher he was "eloquent but lengthy, and sometimes led into poetic sidetracks... Once, when he was advertised to speak on a subject, he changed it to the Garden of Eden; but he was so long dealing with the Creation that he never reached the Garden". His Services tended to informality, and were thought slipshod by some. His doctrinal position seems to have been open to challenge in one or two particulars.

Dr. Jackson had resigned for a time from the Society in 1881, in protest at Dr. Brereton's action in addressing the Freethought Society on Emanuel Swedenborg. He made his acceptance of the Leadership dependent on certain stipulations. He required an entirely new Committee; steps were to be taken towards the incorporation of the Society; and the Services were to be conducted in strict accordance with order. "He was", says Ernest Braby, "as different from Dr. Brereton as it was possible to be". His accession was in fact seen as "a revival of the Sydney Society". Mr. Braby became Secretary, Mr. Wilson Treasurer, and Daniel Ashby and W. F. Keen, both just arrived from England, became Committee members. Mr. Newman, Mr. Backhouse, (who had also sat under Dr. Bayley) and Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Gordon, who had been conducting New Church Services in his own home at Fairview Farm, 15 miles from Sydney, became prominent helpers. Dr. Jackson visited members in their homes, travelling in his hansom cab, and "we now had a pastor as well as a preacher". He also took a great interest in the work at Fairfield.

The  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre of land in the Avoca Estate at Fairfield, some 13 miles from the city, or about 20 miles by rail or road, was owned by one Thomas Walker, who engaged in New Church missionary work in the area. It was  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the railway station, and not easy to sell. When Mr. Walker left the district in 1880, he placed the property in trust in the hands of his friend Thomas Newman, of Redfern, for the use of the Church; the larger part to be for the New Church in Australia for the establishment of a college, or for a similar use; and the smaller part for the Sydney Society for the erection of a Church if it was able to do so. Before Mr. Walker's departure, Mrs. Hawley, of the Sydney Society, had come to live in the district, after the death of her husband. Dr. Jackson and several others found the means to have a little brick Church built on the property<sup>(a)</sup> ... "a really absurd place, right out in the bush"; and there Mrs. Hawley conducted a Sunday School, with her two grandchildren as a nucleus, and up to 30 scholars. Dr. Jackson sometimes conducted Services and preached in the Church.

(a) It was bounded by Stella and Vernon Streets, and measured 230 ft. x 48 ft. The Church was built by Thomas Newman. The year of its building is not known. Mrs. Hawley was in Melbourne in 1886, which would make it earlier than Dr. Jackson's Leadership.

On one occasion Mrs. Hawley had invited the Sydney friends to attend the Anniversary and distribution of prizes. She had advertised the meeting, unbeknown to them, and charged 1/- admission, and had also asked Ernest and Wallace Braby to bring their handbells<sup>(b)</sup> to play for the children. They found the Church packed with adult visitors; but their handbells were in great demand, and every item was encored. Mrs. Hawley soon afterwards moved to Melbourne, where she again organised the Sunday School in that Society.

The Fairfield Church was rented from September, 1891, until July, 1895, to a Mr. Thompson, for 5/-, 4/-, and then 3/- p.w., who also used it for a Sunday School, but not for the New Church faith. Mr. Newman transferred the property to the Sydney Society, which, being unable to use it, transferred it in turn to the Association. It was sold, in February, 1896, by Richard Morse as the surviving Trustee, for £28. It is a peculiar circumstance that a remarkably similar incident in regard to a gift of land occurred in 1884. In that year a Mr. Alexander M'Intosh (MacIntosh) offered to Rev. J. J. Thornton a piece of land at Summer Hill (Summerhill) about four miles from the heart of Sydney, for The New Church in Australia, if it would build a College on it; and also marked off a part of it for the Sydney Society. Mr. M'Intosh in the event left a legacy of £1,000 to the Society instead, which it received in 1902.

In 1888 Dr. Jackson lectured at Wollongong, a town 50 miles south of Sydney, to an audience of about 60, only four of them women. It was a very wet evening, "the rain falling in torrents". He spoke for 1½ hours, and the next day received an offer from the Mayor of a Hall rent free, if he would lecture again. He accepted, and conducted a short Service, afterwards giving another lengthy address, on the Sunday afternoon. The contacts there were Mr. Faddy and Mr. Meade. By 1892 there were weekly evening meetings, and a monthly Service conducted by a preacher from Sydney. The establishment of interest there was for the most part due to the work of a Church of England Minister, Rev. J. G. Smith, who hand-delivered door-to-door many hundreds of New Church tracts. He afterwards left the Ministry, and became a member of the Sydney Society, and its Librarian.

Dr. Jackson's Leadership was to last less than two years. He himself suffered a breakdown in health in 1887. From 1889 until his death in 1914 he was to suffer ill-health which completely incapacitated him so far as any public service was concerned. His wife remained a devoted member of the Sydney Society until her death in 1934.

#### MR. W. J. SPENCER \*\* THE THOMAS STREET HALL.

The new Leader was Mr. W. J. Spencer, who was to hold that position for 36 years. He was a newspaper manager, and had been a Lay Preacher in the Wesleyan Church. He had been introduced to the Doctrines in 1874, through the reading of Noble's 'Appeal', and

"... took to them as a famished man to substantial diet placed providentially within his reach; and since that time they have been the chief solace of my existence, and the main object of my study".

(b) They have been used often over the years since, and are still in the possession of members of the Sydney Society.

He was a kindly and gentlemanly man, yet firm, and one of that band of great Lay Leaders with which the New Church in Australia has been blessed. Although for many years under constant and often bitter attack from some who condemned his tolerance of teaching and preaching at times und doctrinal, yet he invariably responded with the utmost charity. He became an earnest and informed student of the Writings, and thoroughly earned the respect and affection accorded him by his congregation.

From his newspaper background Mr. Spencer looked towards advertising as a means of introducing the Doctrines more widely, and in 1888 he instituted a massive campaign to this end. He himself wrote each week and supplied free to each of 37 provincial newspapers circulating in the Australian Colonies and in New Zealand a column of metropolitan news, in return for which those papers inserted free a 10 inch "Practical Christianity" advertisement, and sent six copies of each issue to Mr. Spencer. These were posted to names taken from a Directory; and it was estimated that including the circulation of the newspapers, there were 14,870 families receiving the papers each week. This enterprise was carried on for nearly seven years, at a cost of 18/- per week; there being no postal charge for newspapers at the time. In addition to this work, the book 'The Doctrine of Life' was offered free to all enquirers, and a large stock of literature was available in a city book store. In 1891, 80 copies of 'Heaven and Hell' were received for distribution, and 1,000 copies of the Swedenborg Society's catalogue. In this project one of Mr. Spencer's most active assistants was Richard Morse, a son of Thomas Morse of Rockdale, and for some years Secretary of the Society. One would like to be able to report the visible results of the programme. As has been already suggested it may perhaps have been this that was in part responsible for the vastly increased numerical strength mentioned above, although the connection has not to our knowledge been recorded.

Another initiative taken by Mr. Spencer, at a later time (1913), was his conduct for some years of a Doctrinal course by correspondence, based on Swedenborg's True Christian Religion. This was most probably directed in the main towards the younger members of the Church. One of the students who took this course, now Dr. Myra Hurman (fourth daughter of Henry Hurman, of Brisbane and Perth) and who also knew Mr. Spencer personally, writing in 1979, says, *inter alia*, "Mr. Spencer impressed me greatly as a man with something which made the spiritual real".

In the year 1888 news came of the legacy of £1,000 to be paid to the Society on the death of the widow of Mr. M'Intosh, and it was determined to devote this to a building fund. In the event it did not come to hand until some years after the Thomas Street Hall had been built; and then had to be used for general purposes. Although in the late 1880s the membership was 80-90, yet in these years the effect of commercial depression was becoming noticeable, and the financial position was not strong. It is reported that in 1889 there were 150 present at a social; although attendance at the Reading Circle averaged only 9.

In 1894, with a membership then of 129, and an average attendance for the year (morning Services only), including children, but omitting very wet Sundays (a necessary precaution in Sydney!) of 71, Mr. Spencer proposed that steps be taken to procure a building and a Minister. The latter proposition was

vigorously opposed by Dr. Simmons, assistant Leader, and by Mr. Ball. (It may be conjectured, although there is no substantial evidence, that Dr. Simmons was that doctor who had been interested by Rev. J. J. Thornton on his boat trip from Melbourne in 1879, and who had afterwards visited Dr. Brereton and received New Church literature from him. He and his wife joined the Sydney Society on November 13th 1890.) Mrs. Simmons was for a number of years the organist of the Sydney Society, and not for some time having a copy of Hymns, A. & M., transcribed some hundreds of hymn tunes by hand. The doctor described Mr. Spencer's Sermons as "classical in character"; and Mr. Ball, who seems to have been inclined to excitement and overstatement, described a paid Ministry as "a necessary evil". At the time there were three ordained Ministers in Australia, two of them on a full-time paid basis. It was in that year that Mr. S. W. Hart, who went on to become the Founder and first Leader of the Perth Society, and Mr. H. A. Gibson,<sup>(25)</sup> joined the Society.

In October, 1892, 101 members of the Sydney Society had petitioned the British Conference for the transfer to the Society of the proceeds of the Brett Legacy. (Its transfer had already been requested, and refused, in 1879, because it was invested at only 3% in Britain, and could earn 6% – 8% in Australia). The request was eventually granted, although the money was not received until 1896, when it amounted to £1,132. Building was now possible, and land was bought in Thomas Street, Ultimo, near where the Central railway station was in course of construction, and about one mile south of the City. Ownership of it was vested in the Trustees of the British Conference until 1913; and then transferred to the Sydney Society, with the proviso that if the Society ceased to exist it was to go to the Australian Association; and if that also ceased, to revert to the British Conference; but in any case the land or the proceeds were only to be used for the purposes of the New Church in New South Wales.

The site chosen was at the time in a residential area. It was surveyed by a member, Mr. H. S. Chauncy, and a Church and Hall were designed by another, Mr. W. F. Keen, an architect by profession, to accommodate 250 people; although the Society's then Secretary, Mr. Richard Morse, doubted whether this was large enough. In the event the Hall only was built, at a cost of £720. It was dedicated and opened for Worship in April, 1898, by Rev. W. A. Bates, of Brisbane, who remained in Sydney for several weeks. To mark the occasion Mr. Manfield Newton (he was not related to Edward Newton) delivered a series of doctrinal lectures on Sunday evenings.

The move to the new location brought an immediate reduction in attendances at Worship. The situation was less convenient for some members, and visitors could not be attracted as in the City. To some extent Thomas St. can be said to have acted as a purifier and to have sorted the wheat from the tares. The choice was to prove unfortunate in other ways also. The surrounding area was rapidly losing its residential character. In the year following the move, 1899, houses opposite the Hall were demolished to make way for fish and vegetable markets; other houses over the next few years made way for shops and other businesses, including a large dairy produce store adjoining the Hall and involving horses and stabling. The property was already offered for sale in 1903.

In addition to the factors already mentioned there was the impact made by the interest of the time in Spiritualism and Christian science. These took erstwhile interested non-members away; and Mr. Keen, writing in 1926, even stated that over the years he had counted about 30 enrolled members who had left to join the Christian Science Church. Some, while retaining their allegiance to the Society, were still prepared to examine other philosophies and to point out what they saw as useful teaching in them; no doubt in the process diluting their attention to the New Church doctrines.

From about this time also Richard Morse, the Secretary, and a few others, notably Mrs. William Morgan, were beginning vigourously to oppose the occasional und doctrinal teaching of several of the preachers, and the distribution of Christian Science, Freethought and other literature in the Church.

Richard Morse's especial target, Mr. Ball, for many years an active member and preacher in Sydney, had been introduced to the Doctrines through Isaac Pitman's book, 'The Spiritual Columbus'. With 8 other young men he had left the Congregational Church and taken doctrinal lessons at the Brightlingsea Society under Rev. Joseph Deans. But he retained a very independent doctrinal outlook, and had a very special aversion to what he understood to be the Teachings of the Academy, or General Church.

Mr. Spencer was perhaps too tolerant of the doctrinal wanderings and gaffes which sometimes surfaced in the pulpit and on the platform; but to what extent he was able to control, admonish, or discipline his fellow lay preachers may be open to question. In regard to other than New Church religious and philosophical teachings, while remaining himself an unwavering and dedicated New Churchman, he still believed that others must be heard, and the good in them approved. What stands out clearly throughout the years of controversy is the calm wisdom and the unfailing charity of his attitude. To this researcher, he appears as perhaps the greatest of Australia's many great Lay Leaders, and to have led always by affection and in humility, and never by coercion; yet when he saw that the occasion demanded, firmly. Of his preaching, Mr. Samuel Ball, brother of J. H. Ball, who himself had been a member of the Sydney Society for several years, said, writing from London: "Can I ever forget the great debt I owe your dear and respected leader, Mr. Spencer, for those beautiful addresses which we listened to some 17 years ago? Beautiful, because always based on the bedrock of truth ... 'Thus saith the Lord'." Mr. W.F. Keen wrote "He [Rev. C. H. Wilkins, through whose preaching at Nottingham he had come into the New Church] was the best preacher I ever heard, either inside the New Church or out of it. Yet I can honestly say that at Thomas Street, where there is no Minister, I have heard as good sermons as in London or Nottingham."

In addition to his duties as Leader and principal preacher (and his early advertising campaign) Mr. Spencer maintained the regular Sunday evening meetings (at some periods Services; at others lectures or study circles) and the fortnightly (weekly from 1902) Wednesday evening meetings for the systematic reading and study of the Writings, work by work. In the pulpit he was relieved by Messrs. William Newman, W. F. Keen<sup>(a)</sup> J. H. Ball and Richard Morse, and occasionally by other members and visitors; as a lecturer or class leader by Messrs. Manfield Newton and F. W. Hellberg.

(a) Mr. Newman died, in Vancouver, Canada, in January, 1904. Mr. Keen returned to Sydney from Broken Hill in May of the same year.

But the first few years at Thomas St. saw continued disturbances, involving accusations and counter-accusations on doctrinal and related matters, which culminated in 1905 with the defection, in some cases temporary, of some 13 members, led by Richard Morse. Membership of the Society had already decreased from 145 in 1896 to 86, although from this time it was to increase again until 1913; thus the loss<sup>(a)</sup> sustained in 1905 is not reflected in the official returns made to the Conference.

From the year 1905 the Sydney Society settled down to a long period of comparatively calm and untroubled existence. Since it was still only 30 years of age many of the early members were still active, some now with families at or approaching adult age. Amongst these latter were Edward Newton and Thomas Morse, (the eldest son of Thomas Morse of Rockdale) whose large families were particularly significant in the social life of the Society, and J H. Ball. Others still playing their part in the organisation and in Worship were Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Keen, Ernest Braby, C. J. Nicklin, whose wife was the eldest daughter of Rev. J. J. Thornton, and Mrs. William Morgan. Dr. Jackson although he was now an invalid, and his wife retained their interest unabated; their son Birnie was to be a later Treasurer for 21 years. Other prominent members and workers, some earlier and others later, were F. L. Voller, William Stuntz, Albert McDiarmid and E. R. White. These and others less prominent constituted a happy and united Society, but newcomers were few and far between, and insufficient to make up the inevitable losses by death, by marriage and removal, and by the eventual disaffection of so many of the growing generation. But there were amongst the too few newcomers some who served nobly. ... W. D. Langford, Peter Banks, William Burl, and others less prominent but equally welcome. Overall, membership and attendances showed a gradual but steady decline until 1923, in which year the average attendance at the only one Sunday Service reached its lowest figure of only 20, although the Society still reported a total membership of 80.

Edward Newton had passed away suddenly in 1912 in his 77th year, leaving his wife, four sons and four daughters,<sup>(b)</sup> all of whom were active in the Society. Like William Holden in Adelaide, his role was never that of Leadership, but rather of 'Elder Statesman'; although he was an alternative Reader, conducted a senior doctrinal class for many years, was for a time Sunday School Superintendent, and served on the Committee. These lines were written on his decease:

IN MEMORIAM  
(EDWARD NEWTON)  
BY ONE WHO LOVES HIM.

*Earth's cares laid down, the Angels' joyous welcome  
Descends in echoes sweet our hearts to soothe;  
We know he still lives on, in greater freedom,*

(a) A loss to the Sydney Society but a gain overall in having led to the establishment in Australia of a Society congenial to those embracing the General Church view of the Writings. The defections are treated under the Adelaide and Hurstville Societies. It was not so much the defections themselves that affected the Sydney Society as the arguments and disturbances which preceded them.

(b) The youngest, Ruby May, Mrs. Kemp, is still able occasionally to attend Worship in 1980, at the age of 96.

*And will in spirit come, that he may smooth  
Rough places in the paths of those he still doth love,  
Dispelling grief with holy influence from above.  
  
Nor need we fear the ties which earth-years lengthened  
E'er will be broken; nay, they are but strengthened;  
We loved him here, but now we love him dearer  
Than when in flesh, for Spirit brings him nearer;  
Oh! solace sweet, to know Death breaks no link of love,  
No! by its aid, we gain reunion above.*

#### THE LITHGOW SOCIETY.

Lithgow is a mining town 95 miles by rail west of Sydney. The first known New Churchman resident there was Mr. H. S. Jones. Services of Worship were commenced in July, 1905, in the home of Mr. Naseby, with four people present, ... Mr. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Naseby, and Mr. Sweet. From that time services were held every Sunday morning until mid-1908, when they were continued in the afternoon. Mrs. Jones and Mr. Ayliffe had joined the group. Mr. Spencer of Sydney conducted a Service there in August, 1907, and Mr. and Mrs. Voller, also from the Sydney Society, visited in October, 1908, Mr. Voller preaching twice, afternoon and evening, in a room which Mr. and Mrs. Naseby had now set apart for the purpose and fitted out with organ, forms, and Library. Mr. Sweet left the district in that year. Here, in part, is Mr. Voller's account of this visit: ...

"There are only a few New Church people there, but they are imbued with fervency of spirit, purity of aim, devotion to purpose, and a live desire to till spiritual ground and sow good seed. Mr. and Mrs. Jones entertained us in a way that is kindness itself. I don't say 'was' kindness, because it is a daily, continuous emotion of heart with them, and never ceases; it never stops to become 'was', but always remains 'is'. And Mr. and Mrs. Naseby too, whom we had never met face to face before, but felt as though we had known for years. Well, all I can say is that they twined themselves round our hearts in such a way that if we had not been compelled to be back in Sydney on the Monday night, we would have gladly extended our stay. These dear good people have made up their minds that they will have a New Church Society in Lithgow, and they will get it, sure enough."

Although the number of members hardly justified the title, yet the 'dear good people' did achieve their object, and the Lithgow Society of the new Church was inaugurated on November 28th, 1908. A meeting for the purpose was held at Mr. Naseby's home on that date, and presided over by Rev. W. A. Bates, of Brisbane, who had come from Melbourne, breaking his journey home for the purpose. The meeting was opened at 7.30 p.m. with devotional exercises, followed by the delivery by Mr. Bates of an address on 'The New Jerusalem'. After this, with Mr. Bates in the Chair, the formal motion constituting the Society was carried. Five signatures to the Declaration of Faith were entered in the Roll Book, and the following Officers were appointed: Leader and Secretary, Mr. Jones; Treasurer, Mr. Naseby; Librarian, Mrs. Naseby. (Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Mr. and Mrs. Naseby had already joined the Sydney Society, in 1907).

Mr. Richard Morse, now the leader of the 'New Society' in Sydney, conducted a Service in Lithgow in October, 1910, with a congregation of seven; but he reports that there were rarely more than three. Mr. and Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Naseby, and also Mr. and Mrs. Wyld, of Dora Creek, some 85 miles north of Sydney, were amongst those who, in 1913, petitioned the General Church in Bryn Athyn for the affiliation of the 'New Society' and the ordination of Richard Morse. (Mr. Naseby had died in September, 1911, and the New Church Burial Service was read at the graveside by Mr. Jones.)

#### WILLIAM BURL \*\*\* THE FIRST CHURCH

William Burl and his wife Annie came to Australia from the Argyle Square, London, Society in 1914. Settling in Sydney in 1915 they immediately joined the Society, and Mr. Burl was soon a Committee member and an alternative preacher. His first introduction to the conduct of Services had been in Perth, Western Australia, where he had been stationed for a short time, and where Mr. Hurman and Mr. Hart had persuaded him to occasionally relieve them of this duty. He became Assistant Leader in 1918, and on Mr. Spencer's death in 1923, Leader, an office which he, like his predecessor, was to hold for over 36 years. Thus the Sydney Society was served by only two Leaders in the space of more than 72 years.

Early in Mr. Burl's Leadership there was an addition of two useful members from Britain ... Mr. Jock Russell, from the Paisley, Scotland, Society, who became a Sunday School teacher until his removal from the City in the 1930s, and Mr. Tom Cronshaw, who was also active and whose wife became Secretary of the Women's League. Mrs. Morgan, President of the Women's League (previously the Ladies' Committee) until her death in 1931 was succeeded by Mrs. William Burl. Another migrant from Britain, Mrs. Skinner, was also active in the League as Treasurer. In that decade too the teenage members of the Society were amongst the first to take part in the Swedenborg Society's study and examination programme.

The suitability and attraction of the Thomas St., Ultimo site of the Society's Hall had in no way been enhanced in the course of the nearly forty years since the Hall had been built. The means and the opportunity to relocate came suddenly and unexpectedly in 1938. In that year the Association Council allocated to the Sydney Society £5,500 of Mr. George Marchant's gift of £12,000 for Church and Manse buildings.<sup>(a)</sup> In November of the same year an approach was made for the purchase of the Thomas Street site, on behalf of the owners of the produce store next door. Mr. Burl "dreamed dreams and saw visions", and immediately called a Committee meeting. Negotiations were entered into, and Mr. Burl suggested to the agents that if they could find a site "within five minutes walk of Wynyard [City tube] Station" meaningful discussions could take place. The end result was the sale of the Thomas St. site, for c. £8,000, and the purchase, for £1,000 less, of a site in Clarence St., City, well within the specified zone, and then occupied by ageing terrace houses. Here the Foundation Stone of the Church was laid by Mr. Burl, on October 7th, 1939. The Church was opened and dedicated by him on February 4th, 1940. Thus it was left, one might say, to William Burl to establish the Sydney Society's first Temple, 65 years after the foundation of the Society.

It was 42 years since the move out of the City had been made, and by this time the location of the Church was in some ways of less consequence. Population had moved

(a) See Biographical Notices ... George Marchant.

farther out; the Church itself had replaced dwellings. The new site, just within the perimeter of the City and close to the railway station was convenient for those coming to it by train and central to all suburbs for those now often travelling by car. But the passers by were fewer and less interested than in the old days at the Temperance Hall. Reported attendances remained as they had been for the past ten years, at an average of 25, and falling off slightly from 1947.

Mr. and Mrs. Burl themselves, with their son and three daughters now formed the nucleus and backbone of the Society. They are represented today by the Burl, Grant and Talbot families of the Sydney Society and the Parker family of Melbourne<sup>(a)</sup> ... Mr. G. W. French, a nephew of Mrs. Burl, was to become President of the Society and for 30 years from 1949 Treasurer of the Association. Mr. F. A. (Bill) Hall, grandson of Edward Newton, whose wife Isabel is the great-granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Burton and of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Carey, all early members of the Brisbane Society, became Secretary in 1942, and has continued to hold that position since, now for 38 years. Mr. and Mrs. Burl's son Wilfred was to hold offices in the Society, particularly that of organist, and to be a Secretary of the Association in later years.

In 1948 the Sydney Society hosted the 'Inaugural New Church Young Peoples' Conference'; (although the 'Camp' of the previous year at Rodborough Vale, Victoria, had also been billed as a 'Conference'). As with the earlier Shoreham and Rodborough camps this also was held over the Easter weekend. It attracted, besides the 8 Sydney delegates, 11 from Melbourne, 4 from Brisbane and 1 from Adelaide. Like the Rodborough Conference it was devoted to the presentation and discussion of Papers on a range of religious, doctrinal and associated topics, which still today make excellent and refreshing reading. The genesis of this movement was due in the main to the initiative of Rev. R. H. Teed, and the spur his 'Open Letter' to the young people of the Church printed in *The New Age*. One might conclude that the loose organisation eventually merged into the Summer School activity based on Woori Yallock in Victoria, and commencing in 1951. The concept of the 'Y.P.', ... a cohesive and integrated Australasia-wide Young Peoples' Movement ... was very much a part of the early Schools; and indeed was viable for some 25 years from the 1948 Conference. It gave birth to 'The Southern Cross', afterwards 'Purple', an attractive duplicated Magazine, the organ of the "New Church Youth in Australasia", which appeared intermittently, sometimes quarterly, from 1962 until 1971, and was produced in Melbourne, Auckland (New Zealand) and Adelaide.

But by 1948 the years were steadily taking their toll of earlier members in Sydney. Lost by death in the early 1930s were Tresa Jackson, widow of Dr. Jackson, Mr. Peter Banks, previously Assistant Leader and Sunday School Superintendent, and Mrs. Morgan, a faithful adherent for 40 years. Mr. W. D. Langford, Secretary for 18 years, died in 1939, and Mr. C. J. Nicklin, son-in-law of Rev. Thornton, late of the Melbourne Society, in 1943. Mr. W. F. Keen, laypreacher and sometime Secretary, whose first wife had died in 1915, had moved in 1919 to South Australia, far, to his sorrow, from any New Church Society. Mr. J. H. Ball, also a prominent early lay preacher, and a member for 60 years, died in 1947; and Mr. Ernest Braby, a member for over 65 years (whose granddaughter, Mrs. Stacy, is a member today), in 1950. With the passing of Mr. E. R. White, aged 84, in the early 1950s, a generation, many

(a) The family of Mr. and Mrs. William Burl is one of the very few New Church families in Australia in which every member has remained an active member of the Church throughout adult life.

of whom had sat under Dr. Brereton and Dr. Jackson, and all of whom had so loyally supported Mr. Spencer and shared his work in the Society, had gone.

Converts to the New Church in Australia had not for more than a generation been anticipated, and hardly even hoped for; and the Sydney Society had had to weather the world-wide depression and war years of 1928-39 and 1939-45 before there would be further replenishment from overseas. The war itself had brought a wave of visitors to Sydney and the Australian capital cities ... members of the armed forces passing through or on leave. Sometimes they brought friends to the Church, and several Societies benefited permanently from this circumstance.

Post-war immigration brought to the Sydney Society from London in 1949 Mr. and Mrs. Harold (Bob) Boulton and their two children and Miss Winifred Rowe, of the Argyle Square Society; Mrs. Boulton and Miss Rowe being daughters of Bernard Rowe, sometime Manager of the New Church Press. New members in that year also were the Misses Cecilia and Annette MacLellan, granddaughters of Mr. W. J. Harding.

In 1950 yet another family came from Britain, that of Mr. and Mrs. Alan Trobridge. Mr. Trobridge, a grandson of Swedenborg's biographer George Trobridge and also closely related to the Pulsford and Presland families, had been a Committee member and a deacon of the Willesden Green, London, Society. In Sydney he became a Committee member and a lay preacher until his removal to a provincial city. Another New Church immigrant in the same year was Mr. John Guerato (Grant) from Trieste, Italy, who became the husband of Nancy, the eldest daughter of William and Annie Burl and herself Treasurer of the Society from 1961 until 1980.

Mr. Burl himself had necessarily been the most frequent preacher throughout his long years as Leader; but from 1950 he and the Society were able to receive occasional help from Rev. R. H. Teed, who had settled in that year at Albury, N.S.W. When he retired from his business activities in 1956 he was able to commence production of the Society's monthly Manual, an activity which has been continued by his successors. That he was already 74 years of age would seem to indicate that the years had brought no diminution to Mr. Burl's determination to serve the New Church as long as health and strength remained. His services to the New Church beyond the confines of the Sydney Society had been many and significant. He had been appointed a Licentiate of The New Church in Australia in 1919 and a Missionary in 1952. He was a member of the Council of that body almost continuously from 1920 and President from 1933 until 1949 and had also held the offices of Vice-President and of Publisher of *The New Age*.

#### REV. J. E. TEED \*\*\* THE MOORE LEGACY \*\*\* REV. B. S. WILLMOTT

The remarkably long delay from the settlement of New South Wales in 1788 to the establishment of the Sydney Society in 1875 is matched by the passage of 83 years from its inauguration to the appointment of its first Minister. This appointment was not made until 1959. In November of that year, with William Burl now aged '77, Rev. J. E. Teed came to take up the pastorate. Born in Australia, a son of Rev. R. H. Teed, formerly of the Melbourne Society, he had already served a pastorate of six years in Britain, with the Kidderminster, Birmingham, Society, and returned to Australia with his wife Mary, daughter of Ralph and Elsie and granddaughter of John le Marquand, of the Jersey, Channel Islands, Society.

This first pastorate of a New Church Minister in Sydney co-incided with a very substantial improvement in the material fortunes of the Society. In the year 1959 the proceeds of a legacy left by Dr. William Moore at his decease in 1911 became available. The Doctor, of whom otherwise little is known, had been an early member of the Committee of the Society, and his name is recorded as early as the date of the first Annual Meeting in 1876. His will having taken 48 years to unravel, and his assets having consisted in the main of Sydney residential land, the income now accruing was very substantial. That part of the proceeds which was to be available for the promotion of the New Church and its teachings was itself divided into two parts; 40% to go as income to the Sydney Society, and 60% to a Library Committee which was to be set up for the purpose of supplying the works of Swedenborg to provincial and country Libraries in New South Wales. The latter provision was varied or liberalised through a court order in 1961 to enable advertising and radio broadcasting to be carried out, and also to enable the work to be extended to other States when the provisions relating to New South Wales should be satisfied; and to include the placement of collateral works.

Rev. J. E. Teed became the first Secretary-Manager of the Sydney Society Library Committee, and embarked on a programme of offering copies of the books of the Writings to public libraries by letter and advertisement. A personal approach was found necessary, and in the course of some three years Mr. Teed covered 30,000 miles in New South Wales by car with supplies of the books ready for placing in Libraries willing to receive them.

In addition to this work, an initiative taken by Mr. Teed was the conduct of regular week-day lunch-hour Services of Worship in the Church, to which it was hoped that local office-workers could be attracted. These had an attendance usually of 10 to 11, for the most part members of the Society, and were discontinued after a period of a little over two years.

Mr. Teed's especial penchant was perhaps for the work of the Sunday School and with the younger generation generally. This was illustrated in his Sydney pastorate by the holding of Family Services and Christmas nativity plays, in addition to his addresses to the children and the regular class lessons. In 1961 he became Sunday Schools Organiser for the Association, thus extending his work for the children throughout Australia. His activities in all of these directions was to be continued and extended through his later pastorates. Serious attention was given in Sydney to a proposal that an attempt be made to establish a second Sunday School in a suburban area as a means of extending the influence of the Church, but questions of practicability and location proved difficult to resolve and consequently the project lapsed.

At the termination of the five years term of his appointment Mr. Teed moved, in October, 1964, to the Brisbane Society. Average attendance in Sydney at the one Sunday Service had increased substantially from c.24 to c.30.

The Society was now well able financially to support a Minister, whose stipend was able to be augmented from the income of the Library Committee. By May, 1965, Rev. B. S. Willmott, sometime President of the British Conference, had succeeded to the pastorate.

In the short interim, in January, 1965, the strength of the Society had been further augmented by the arrival from Britain of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Talbot with their three small sons. This was a homecoming for Mrs. Talbot, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Burl. The family was joined in 1966 by Mr. Talbot's parents and his

sister Dorothy. All of the members of these two families were dedicated New Church people, and entered actively into the life of the Society.

One of the new Minister's early initiatives was the undertaking of regular visits to the few New Church people in the city of Canberra, about 200 miles south of Sydney.

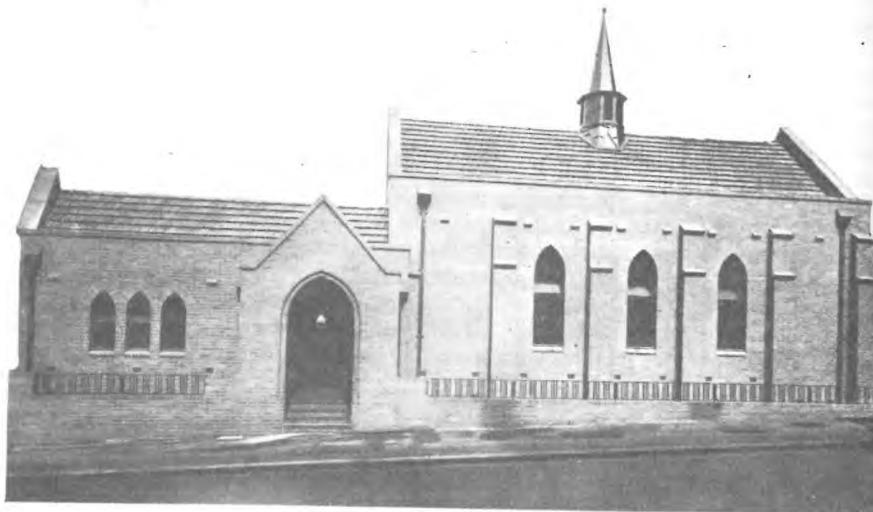
Canberra, the Australian National Capital, had been founded in the 1920s and given its own territory, carved out of the State of New South Wales. The first organised New Church activity there was the Service conducted by Rev. Donald Rose of the Hurstville Society in 1959. Mr. Willmott conducted his first meeting in the city at the home of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Hart, former members of the Perth Society, on September 2nd, 1966. He subsequently visited Canberra usually every second month throughout the term of his Sydney pastorate, often accompanied by members of the Sydney Society, particularly those in the younger age groups. He conducted Worship, doctrinal classes and a small Sunday School in private homes, and gave public lectures at the 'Griffin Centre', the first of these on September 9th 1967. Several more New Church members moved to Canberra, and soon these formed a group of seven adults, and the public lectures were attracting audiences of up to 20.

Another venture new to the Sydney Society was the sponsorship of radio broadcasts by the Minister. These had been initiated in Sydney by Rev. Douglas Taylor, successor to Mr. Rose at the Hurstville Society, in 1966, when he had delivered a series of 15-minute addresses between February and September. Mr. Willmott delivered a series of 20 similar talks from December, 1966 to April 1967. From that date they were continued by Mr. Taylor until he left Sydney in July, 1974, and then resumed by Mr. Willmott as The Swedenborg Programme on behalf of the 'The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre'. Mr. Willmott also delivered a similar series of ten lectures on a provincial radio station in 1970-71.

This period did in fact see the establishment of a satellite Sunday School such as had been envisaged a few years earlier, although it was not a project directly sponsored by the Society nor within the confines of suburbia, but at Bayview, 15 miles north of Sydney. There Mrs. Stella Smith, daughter of earlier members Mr. and Mrs. Carrier, set up the School with a nucleus of her grandchildren, as Mrs. Hawley had done at Fairfield 80 years previously. About 12 pupils were attracted, and the graduation of the children brought about its closure. It had been integrated with the Clarence St. school to the extent that not infrequent visits were made by one school to the other in either direction.

In 1972 the Sydney Society Library Committee agreed to sponsor a quite unique development in the field of publicity, the Swedenborg Exhibitions. These did not in fact originate with the Committee, but were adopted from an idea conceived by Rev. I. A. Arnold while on a visit to Tasmania. There he spoke with the State Librarian in Hobart; and he being most affirmative, Mr. Arnold and Mr. Willmott set about assembling the Exhibition. It was displayed for the first time in Hobart in January and February, 1973. Consisting of books, sketches, maps, letters, testimonials, informative posters, relics and models, and thus of several hundred individual items covering the 'Life, Times and Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg', the Exhibition has since been staged some 16 times in the Public Libraries of capital and provincial cities and in Universities throughout Australia.

An approach was made to the Society in 1970 for the purchase of the site of its Church, now standing on what had become valuable City land. This led to the sale of the property; and the last Service was held in the Clarence St. Church on August 22.



*The Clarence St. Church, Sydney.*



*55 Clarence St., Sydney. Partial view at street level. The entrance to the Sydney Society's Chapel is at right centre.*

1971. The Society moved its headquarters temporarily to a partially converted house in the suburb of Willoughby, a northern suburb in which was the home of the Minister.

Mr. Willmott's Ministry in Sydney was to continue until the end of 1974. In 1975 he settled in Canberra, with the aim of working with his New Church friends there. With the help of his wife Barbara he established 'The Swedenborg Association and Canberra New Church Group'. Mr. and Mrs. Hart had by now moved to Sydney, and the adherents in Canberra were now the five adult members of the two Ridgway families from South Africa and Mr. Basil Lazer, all members of the Hurstville Society, Messrs. Carl and Mark Marchant, sons of Leslie and Rose Marchant, late of Yanco, N.S.W. and grandsons of Alfred Marchant, a brother of George Marchant, former Leader of the Brisbane Society, and Mr. Roy Tait, who moved back to his home city of Brisbane in 1977. Mr. Willmott's independent and somewhat informal 'Group' required affirmation of the Faith of the New Church as in T.C.R.3; and by May, 1977 had 12 members and an average attendance of 11 at the 11 meetings held in the previous twelve months. These meetings were for worship and study, and not formal Services. They continued for several years, with fluctuating fortunes.

#### REV. I. A. ARNOLD \*\*\* THE RETURN TO CLARENCE ST.

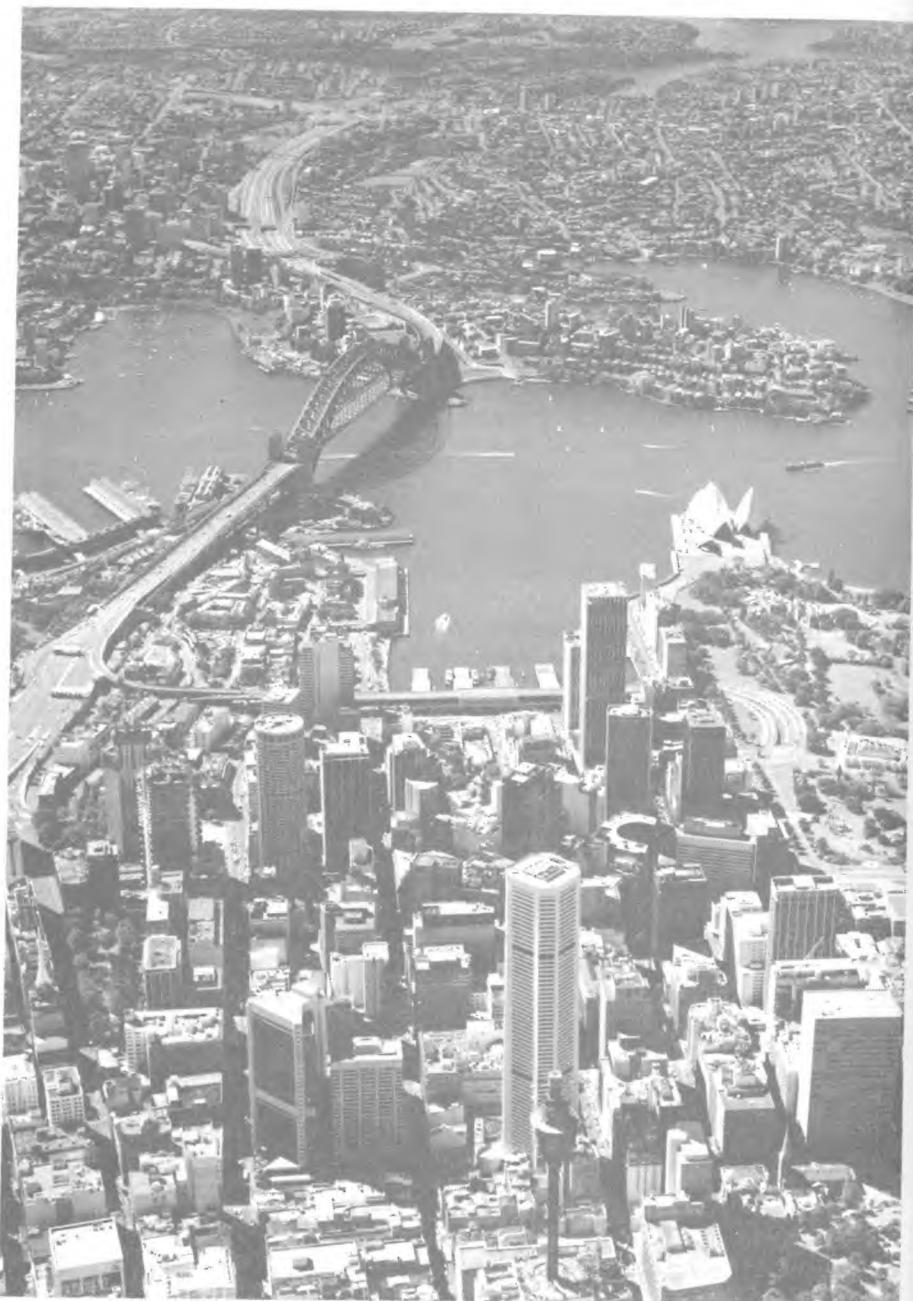
In January, 1975, Rev. I. A. Arnold, until then serving the Adelaide Society, undertook the Sydney pastorate and the management of the work entrusted to its Library Committee.

On the Clarence St. site a multi-story office building had been erected by the purchasers; and under the terms of the contract of sale a ground floor and basement suite was reserved, on a 40 years' lease, for the use of the Sydney Society. The end result was a large room attractively furnished as a Chapel and entered through a spacious foyer from a covered off-street portico; with ancillary rooms providing for office, kitchen/diningroom and library. (In 1979 another large Sunday School and meeting room was also made available).

The Society returned to Clarence St. in 1975. Occupation of the new premises had been delayed for some 2-3 years by the insolvency of the original developing company, but this circumstance may be seen as fortuitous since it made it appropriate to celebrate with the dedication the Centenary of the Society, which had been founded as the Swedenborg Club on May 13th, 1875.

Rev. Obed Mooki, General Superintendent of The New Church of Southern Africa, had been invited to dedicate the new Chapel. This he did on Sunday, October 5th, in the course of an impressive Service. Five new Church Ministers resident in Australia were in attendance, with a congregation of 135 which necessarily overflowed into the library/organ loft and the foyer. Included in the associated festivities was an historical resume delivered by the Secretary, Mr. Hall, grandson of the Founder, Edward Newton. Amongst those present was Mr. Newton's daughter, Mrs. Ruby Kemp.

From the inception of his pastorate Rev. Ian Arnold continued the work of the Library Committee, including the weekly radio broadcast and the correspondence accruing from it, and the staging of the Swedenborg Exhibitions. An innovation sponsored by the Committee was the lecture tour made in 1977 by Rev. Michael Stanley, Ph.D., M.Sc., Principal of the New Church College in Britain; in the course of which he addressed meetings at Universities and educational colleges in N.S.W.



*The City of Sydney, looking north. Courtesy N.S.W. Dept. of Tourism.*

and Victoria. A similar assignment but on a smaller scale was undertaken in 1979 by Rev. Dr. W. R. Woofenden of the Convention, U.S.A., Ministry. Guest speakers on the broadcast programme have included Dr. Stanley, Dr. Woofenden, Rev. Obed Mooki, Revs. E. C. Howe and J. R. Sutton of the Auckland, N.Z., Society, and Rev. M. D. Gladish of the Hurstville Society of the General Church. The audience listening each week to the broadcasts is estimated by the radio station (2KY) to number 10,000.

Since the receipt of the Moore legacy in 1959 and the sale of the Clarence St. property in 1971 the Sydney Society has been in a secure and independent financial position. Since 1970 it has voluntarily declined receipt of any subsidy from the Association for the support of its Minister; and in September, 1974, it was able to make a gift of \$7,000 to the Association to be passed on to serving Ministers in the form of additional stipend. It has in addition given generous help in other directions, notably to the Melbourne Society's Summer School project and to the rebuilding of the Mooki Memorial College in South Africa.

The extensive growth of the city of Sydney, now with a population of over 2,000,000, and divided as it is by its great Harbour and its rivers, has created problems of distance, with many members living up to 15 miles or more by road from the Church, predominantly in the northern suburbs. Accordingly, in 1978 a large house was bought in the suburb of West Pymble to serve as a Manse, and having a spacious lounge suitable for use as a meeting room; and at the same time the building block next door to it already having a large brick storage room and holding potential for future development.

We take leave of this one of the two New Church Societies in Australia's great eastern metropolis, five years into its second century, with a total membership of 56, some 35 of whom live within the precincts of the city, and reporting an average attendance at the one Sunday Service of 39, including the average 10 or 11 children of the Sunday School.

## THE HURSTVILLE SOCIETY.

### RICHARD MORSE \*\*\* 'THE NEW SOCIETY'.

The history of the Hurstville Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem effectively begins in July, 1905. In that month a group of New Church adherents in Sydney, New South Wales, having adopted the General Church view of the Writings, concluded that secession from the Sydney Society was their orderly course of action.

They were led by Richard Morse, a son of that Thomas Morse who had settled at Botany Bay nearly three quarters of a century earlier, who had long been one of the most active members of the Society.

Richard Morse, then aged 46, had for some years been unhappy with the preaching and teaching of several of the lay preachers of the Sydney Society, who were prone to wander from the Doctrines of the Writings and to introduce ideas and interpretations derived from other sources or from their own intuition.

The Leader of the Society was Mr. W. J. Spencer and one of the principle alternative preachers Mr. J. H. Ball. Mr. Morse, as early as 1892, although generally highly praising their sermons and lectures (in his extended monthly reports to *The New Age*) was even then openly criticizing departures from the New Church teachings, notably Mr. Ball's belief in the non-eternity of Hell.

For the events leading directly to the separation, we have to go back to the year 1903, when Rev. Percy Billings, Minister of the Adelaide Society, spent a month in Sydney, preaching and lecturing. His strict adherence to the teaching of the Writings and his reverence for them as the Word, appealed strongly to Richard Morse, and from him he heard of the General Church of the New Jerusalem at Bryn Athyn, U.S.A. He decided to visit America and England, in order to discover at first hand the divergent lines of thought in those countries. In 1904 he attended the meeting of the Convention in Washington and the Assembly of the General Church in Bryn Athyn. Mr. Morse immediately and fully adopted the General Church view of the Writings; and he and his wife were baptized in Bryn Athyn by the first Bishop of the General Church, Rt. Rev. W. F. Pendleton.

Rev. Percy Billings, although he had come to Australia from England as a Minister of the British Conference, had earlier partly completed a course of study for the Ministry at Bryn Athyn. He had given Mr. Morse a letter of introduction to the Assembly of the General Church, in which he revealed that he was introducing the General Church terminology and viewpoint into the Adelaide Society. This he had done on his own initiative, almost unnoticed by his congregation, and certainly without the sanction of the Society, which was hardly if at all conscious of the division in America.

Mr. Billings had put himself into direct opposition to the understanding of the Australian Association in regard to the Writings, and when the contents of his letter were known in Australia Mr. George Marchant immediately withdrew his subsidy to the Adelaide Society, which was essential to the support of its Minister. On the other hand, by the time of his return to Sydney Mr. Morse's opposition to und doctrinal teaching had been reinforced and polarized by his firm conviction of the necessity of adopting an uncompromising attitude in the New Church towards the authority of the Writings as the Word.

The Adelaide Society had carried a series of motions which, although somewhat inconclusive in their wording, were designed to support the General Church viewpoint, and it became known that in order to reinforce his position Mr. Billings would introduce a similar motion into the Conference to be held in Melbourne at Easter, 1905. The 'Adelaide Resolutions' became the subject of vigorous discussion in the pages of *The New Age*. Richard Morse, in April, the month of the Conference, commenced publication of his own independent monthly magazine, ... 'Divine Authority ... The Old Issue' ... in support of the cause to which he had by now fully committed himself.

When the Conference met it declined, under the leadership of Rev. W. A. Bates, the President, and Minister of the Brisbane Society, and of Mr. Spencer, the Vice-President, to debate the motion brought forward by Mr. Billings, which in the event consisted of affirmation of belief in a series of direct quotations from the Writings. Had the motion been debated the Conference obviously could not have voted against it; but to have voted for it would have (a) called into question the confidence of The New Church in Australia in the *whole* of the Writings, and (b) appeared to support the position of Mr. Billings.

Back in Sydney after the Conference Mr. Morse unsuccessfully introduced at a poorly attended General Meeting of the Society, a motion of censure of the Conference for having refused to debate Mr. Billings' motion. There were now two alternatives open to him: either to remain a member of the Sydney Society and there to continue to oppose Mr. Spencer's tolerance of teaching plainly not in accordance with New Church Doctrine, and to try by education to convince members of the truth of the General Church view of the Writings as the Word; or to resign. The former option involved a kind of tacit acquiescence in the position accepted by the Society, and in view of the outcome of the efforts that he had already made seemed in any case to be unlikely to produce the desired result. Resignation seemed the more orderly course.

The definitive step was taken on July 11th, 1905, at a meeting attended by ten sympathizers. There is extant no Minute, as such, of this meeting, the record having been made by Mr. Morse in his diary. After listing the names of those present, it reads as follows:

"Mr. Hellberg and Mr. Downey read passages from the Writings, the former A. R. 641 and A. E. 356 and the latter A. C. 3923. All agreed that the 'Writings' are Divine and that their divinity is not taught at Thomas St., and therefore separation is the orderly course to take".

The date of this meeting was held by a resolution made some years afterwards to be the date of the inauguration of the Society now known as The Hurstville Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, and under the name of Founders' Day is celebrated as its Anniversary.

The momentous decision of this first recorded meeting was confirmed on August 1st, when the following letter was submitted to the Secretary of the Sydney Society:

"Dear Mr. Keen,

It is with very much regret that we herewith resign our membership with the Society. This position is forced upon us by the Leader's persistent refusal to recognise the Divinity of the Writings and thereby the Lord's Authority in His Second Coming; also his sanctioning teaching from the pulpit that is distinctly

opposed to the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Church, and consequently to the objects for which the Society was established.

We are, with all good wishes, Yours sincerely ...”.

The letter was signed by Richard Morse<sup>(a)</sup> and ten other members ... Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Carson, Mrs. Downey, Mr. Dupen, Mr. and Miss Faddy, Mr. and Mrs. (Louisa E.) Morgan, Charles Morgan and Miss Annie Taylor. Mr. Morse pointed out that Mrs. Faddy would have signed, but was absent from the city. At the meeting of July 11th there had been two others, Mr. Hellberg and Mr. Burgess, whose signatures do not appear on the letter. In the record of that meeting Mr. Morse mentioned still another three, Mr. Hawxwell, Mr. Langford and Mrs. Taylor who were neither present at the meeting nor signatories to the letter. There is no further mention of Mrs. Taylor; Mr. Hawxwell and Mr. Langford appear not to have succeeded, since both were afterwards Secretaries of the Society, the former as early as November, 1906. Mr. Burgess died as a member of the Society in 1908. Mr. Hellberg, formerly of the Melbourne Society, had joined it on July 30th, 1901, on the same day as Minnie Faddy, and he is believed to have been the first to have taken the initiative of resignation, i.e., at a date unknown but prior to the submission of the letter signed by the eleven. He strongly concurred in the position taken by Mr. Morse, and apart from the Faddy family is the only member of the group whose descendants are active in the Church today.<sup>(26)</sup>

The number of separationists thus seems to have been about 13. Membership of the Sydney Society had been reported to the 1905 Conference as 86, with average attendances over the past three years at morning and evening Worship as 42 and 37 respectively. (Although evening Services had ceased from April, 1904). Average attendance at the Sacrament was given as only 13; neglect of it by prominent members had been a prime cause of concern to Mr. Morse.

Richard Morse, until his resignation from the position in the week preceding the meeting of July 11th, had been Secretary of the Sydney Society for over 13 years (the best, Mr. Keen said, that we ever had). He had held the same office briefly under Dr. Brereton, until the accession of Dr. Jackson as Leader in 1886. He was also an alternative preacher, and Sunday School Superintendent, an office in which he was succeeded by his brother Thomas. As a child he had attended the Wesleyan Methodist Church with his family, although with a knowledge from his father of the new Church teachings. Always of a devout disposition, he tells in his autobiographical sketch (printed in *New Church Life*, Feb. 1945) that when apprenticed in Sydney at the age of 15 he would travel home to Rockdale every Saturday evening and would walk back the seven miles to the City on Sunday because of his disbelief in the use of public transport on the Sabbath. In addition to his offices in the Sydney Society itself he had been its correspondent to *The New Age* for some years, a member of six Conferences of The New Church in Australia, a member of the Council of that body, and Secretary of its Missionary Committee.

Three other members of the group are of particular interest today ... Mr. and Mrs. Faddy and their daughter Minnie. Mr. Faddy, now living at Surry Hills, Sydney, had been instrumental in the establishment of the New Church enclave at Woolongong in 1892. Referred to then by Dr. Jackson as a chemist, he is

(a) It is a little curious to notice that Mr. Morse did not regard himself as having thereby relinquished his membership of The New Church in Australia. In October, more than two months later, he wrote to *The New Church Magazine* as a member of the Council of that body.

understood by his present-day descendants to have been a fully qualified medical practitioner, and is sometimes known as Dr. Faddy. His father, also a doctor of medicine, was born in the heart of Sydney, near the old Tank Stream<sup>(a)</sup>. Minnie Faddy, as Mrs. E. J. Williams, later became the Secretary of the Melbourne Society, and the mother of Rev. E. B. Williams of the Melbourne and Perth Societies and of Mrs. Judith Boyes, Secretary of the Brisbane Society from 1976.

Another of the signatories was Mr. Peter John Dupen. He was born in England in 1841 of a Roman Catholic mother, who passed on to him a deeply religious conviction and a reverence for the Bible, of which she was a constant reader. A wood-turner by trade, he had emigrated to Australia at the age of 22, where he married, in 1879, and became the father of a family of ten. Some features of the Roman Catholic faith had disturbed Mr. Dupen, particularly confession to a priest. His first acquaintanceship with the New Church came in about the year 1901, with a chance meeting in a Sydney park with Mr. Faddy, who was previously unknown to him. Mr. Faddy, who is said by Richard Morse to have had ‘a peculiar faculty for bringing the Heavenly Doctrines to the notice of strangers’, lent him a New Church book. Mr. Dupen joined the Sydney Society in 1903. Mr. Morse remarked later that his power of concentration in reading was remarkable, and that the Writings and the letter of the Word became almost his sole reading. He became a frequent open-air speaker in the parks on the New Church Doctrines, thus reviving a practice which had been engaged in 50 years earlier by Mr. Freeman, Mr. Oxenham and Mr. Coxhead.

The newly separated group lost no time in establishing its own activities. The first Service of worship was held on Sunday, August 6th, “in a room used for selling wool”<sup>(a)</sup> with an attendance of 12. There was no music, but “The Lord in His Second Coming is worshipped free from the intrusion of dissent, doubt and atheism”. A weeknight meeting for doctrinal study was commenced immediately, at first at the same place, and after the first six weeks in members’ homes. In September Worship was transferred to a small room at the old home of the Sydney Society, the Temperance Hall, (by now renamed Queen’s Hall) and from October Sunday evenings were devoted to systematic reading of the Writings.

An official name could not be decided upon, although an early attempt was made, and the group was to be referred to for many years simply as ‘The New Society’ or ‘The Second (or New) Sydney Society’. There was no constitution. Mr. Morse looked upon lay Leadership in the Church with some distrust, as an inversion of order, and no Leader was appointed, Mr. Morse referring to himself only as ‘the Secretary’. An ‘Order of Procedure’ was adopted for the study meetings, and one of those present was appointed to preside at the next meeting.

However, the ‘New Society’ was unfortunately very soon itself to be divided, the protagonists being Mr. Morse and Mr. Hellberg. While an attempt at analysis and judgement of the causes today may be a somewhat unrewarding exercise, yet it may be said that the matter of leadership was the prime issue. Mr. Morse, having been appointed Secretary, seems to have assumed also the offices of leader and chief instructor, though in an unofficial capacity. Mr. Hellberg, a very capable lecturer

(a) Sydney’s first town water supply; now barrelled underground.

(a) At the Royal Exchange. Mr. Hellberg occupied a room there, and was able to obtain occasional use of the sales rooms.

himself, had a particular interest in Swedenborg's scientific works, the subject matter of which he termed 'scientific theology', and wished to combine the study of these with that of the Doctrines, or 'spiritual theology'. There may also have been a difference of approach to the teaching in the second part of the work 'Conjugal Love'. Rev. Percy Billings wrote in an article published in 'The New Church Messenger' for May, 1907. "The New Society in Sydney emphatically disagrees with the Academy (General Church) teaching on the conjugal question". Mr. Morse certainly did not disagree. He replied in his own magazine (*Souvenir*, 1908, p. 13) that this was a misrepresentation of the most inexusable kind, and that the friends to whom Mr. Billings had referred had practically disbanded by the time the article reached Australia.

But the issues of the use of the scientific works and of the teaching in 'Conjugal Love' appear certainly to have been no more than side issues at the time, the main cause of disagreement being the question of the management of the group. The culmination came on January 23rd, 1906, at a business meeting held at the home of Mr. Faddy, in Bourke St., Surry Hills, when Mr. Morse, Mr. Dupen, Mr. Burgess, Mrs. Taylor and the Misses Annie and Beatrice Taylor left the meeting, which continued in their absence.

Thus there were now two distinct dissident groups, both of which thereafter claimed to be the 'New Society'. Both Mr. Hellberg and Mr. Morse entered into correspondence with Bishop Pendleton at Bryn Athyn, and Mr. Hellberg, on February 26th, applied for recognition and affiliation of his group as a Society of the General Church. This application was signed by 18 persons, although Mr. Morse claimed that a number of these were either minors or without any real allegiance to the Church.

The Bishop and General Council of the General Church replied that while individuals would be granted membership, a decision on the recognition of a Society could not be made until the situation was less confused.

The new division had in fact set back for seven years the recognition by the General Church of an affiliated Society in Australia, although Mr. Morse had hoped for a time for a reconciliation. Writing in his 'True Christian Life' he says "Our numbers have been reduced recently in consequence of disaffection manifested at a position which the Secretary found it necessary to take in the true interests of the Church. But when the sincerity and soundness of that position are realised by the friends, as well as the importance of fidelity to our simple constitution, unanimity on a true spiritual basis should not be found difficult".

Reconciliation however was not to be achieved, and while Mr. Morse's now very small group went on to become the Hurstville Society, the larger group under Mr. Hellberg was not destined to remain a viable entity. Two factors chiefly contributed to this latter result. One of these was the loss of Mr. Hellberg's room at the Royal Exchange. He had met his future wife, Edith Freeman, in October, 1905, when she had first attended a meeting of the New Society. This she had done at the invitation of Mr. Morse, whom she had met at a Service of Worship of the Sydney Society earlier in the same month. Mr. Hellberg and Miss Freeman were married on January 19th, 1906. Early in 1907 Mr. and Mrs. Hellberg left their room at the Royal Exchange, since Mr. Hellberg now had to find other employment.

In the same year also Mr. and Mrs. Charles Morgan moved to Lismore, 540 miles north of Sydney. By 1908 Mr. Hellberg's group was no longer active, and some or

most of its members had returned to the Sydney Society. Some who are known to have done so are Mr. Burgess, Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Downey, and Mrs. Morgan, senior. Mrs. Louisa Morgan, President of the Ladies' Committee (afterwards the Women's League) from 1915 until her death in 1931, was well known to the end as a constant advocate of consistent study of the Writings. She retained her interest in the New Society, in which her grand-children were amongst the first members of its Sunday School, and was present at its 19th of June celebration only a few months before her death.

Having anticipated the events of 1906, it must be recorded that throughout that year both of the new groups continued their separate activities unabated. In November Rev. Percy Billings spent nearly a week in Sydney with his family, en route to America. He conducted morning Service at the Royal Exchange (in one of the sales rooms) administered the Sacrament, and baptized several persons. On this visit Mr. Billings and Mr. Spencer of the Sydney Society attempted a reconciliation by concession, Mr. Billings suggesting as a basis the recognition of the Divinity of the Doctrines contained in the Writings, but not of the Writings themselves, thus not verbal inspiration. This was acceptable to the group aligned with Mr. Hellberg, some of whom attended a meeting for Mr. Billings at Thomas St., but not to those under Mr. Morse, who wrote that they might as well rejoin the Sydney Society.

Rev. W. A. Bates came from Brisbane to meet Mr. Billings, who at Mr. Spencer's invitation preached at the evening Service of the Sydney Society. Mr. Morse wrote that because of this Mr. Bates declined to preach in the morning. If so, he may have been conscious of opposition within his own Society, particularly that of the Society's benefactor, Mr. George Marchant. Although, as reported by Mrs. Hellberg, the visit of Mr. Billings "put new life into our little group for a time", yet the intervention of the factors mentioned above, and perhaps of others, very soon afterwards contributed to its final demise.

But Mr. Morse's devotion to the General Church and its teachings never wavered, and the loss of so many of his followers meant no lessening of his activities. Weekly Worship and the two evening meetings continued almost without interruption, the former still in the room at Queen's Hall and the latter now in a room at Miss Taylor's milliner's shop at 180 (afterwards changed to 134) Regent Street, Redfern. All of these were to be maintained thus for 16 years, until 1921. From 1911 until 1913 the study and reading meetings were held in Miss Taylor's home at 12 Botany Road, Alexandria. In the latter year, when the rent at Queen's Hall became too burdensome, Worship was also transferred to that address. From December, 1913, all three meetings were held at 134 Regent Street, Redfern. That the study of the Writings was indeed carried on systematically may be seen from Mr. Morse's report made in 1912: "— The 10th volume of the *Arcana Coelestia* now occupies the Sunday evening reading meetings, the 9th having been finished early in the year. The Wednesday meetings completed the reading of *True Christian Religion*, and next month will finish *Heaven and Hell*, after which *Divine Love and Wisdom* will be taken up, being followed by *The Divine Providence*".

Mr. Morse continued to produce his monthly magazine, although from the issue of October, 1905, under a new name, 'True Christian Life'. It was no leaflet, but a full-scale, well printed production of up to 20 8-inch by 6-inch pages. It contained doctrinal articles, sermons, and much material, mostly in the nature of news, reviews and comments, contributed by Mr. Morse himself. It was distributed to "nearly all the Clergy in America and Europe, as well as to New Church people in Australia". A great part of every issue was devoted to the Editor's unrelenting criticism of what he

regarded as the und doctrinal and insupportable statements, actions and teaching of leaders and members of the New Church in Australia, and particularly of Mr. J. H. Ball and others of the Sydney Society. They teach, he said, Anythingarianism; and some were more inclined to the teachings of Spiritism, of Christian Science and of T. L. Harris<sup>(27)</sup> than to those of the Writings.

Although this general condemnation was perhaps hyperbolic, and certainly unduly inclusive, yet then as today there were certainly New Church members who regarded the Writings as less than infallible and who were influenced in their beliefs by teachings derived from other sources. Spiritism had already made inroads into the ranks of the orthodox Christian denominations, and had seriously affected even the New Church, both in Australia and in America and Britain. Christian Science and the New Thought had also made an astonishing impact; and Mr. Keen of the Sydney Society, writing in 1926, said that over the years he had counted more than 30 members who had left the Society to join the Christian Science Church. T. L. Harris had been a New Church Minister in America, and although now leading his own cult, yet he was still defended by some New Church writers.

Whether or not Mr. Ball was influenced by any of these three popular philosophies, he was certainly a bitter opponent of the General Church, as extreme on one side as Mr. Morse was determined on the other; and this despite the fact that his brother Samuel, who had been a Member of the Sydney Society from 1887 until 1894, was now a Member of the General Church in England. The Sydney Society's Leader, Mr. Spencer, whose policy of tolerance and of allowing all seekers after Truth to be heard was perhaps carried to extremes, also came in for special attention from Mr. Morse, for allowing unorthodox teaching from the pulpit and for much of his own attitude and actions, e.g., for allowing Spiritist and New Thought and other literature to be distributed in the Church. He had defended his position in the pages of *The New Age* as early as January, 1900, in this letter to the Editor:

"Sir,

Your December issue is just to hand and I lose no time in correcting one at least of the misstatements concerning myself that it contains. Your Sydney correspondent [Richard Morse] says that at the Annual Meeting I made "a strong plea" for the Church of Christ, Scientist. Your correspondent is under a serious misapprehension. I advocated fair treatment for Christian Science in common with every form of religious belief. And I advocated it because the Writings teach it. This is a very different thing. Some of our friends seem as unfairly and bitterly hostile to Christian Science as so many of the old school of theology are to the teachings of the New Church. I maintain that we, who suffer so much from prejudice and bigotry, ought to be the last to countenance them, especially as these vices are so plainly unmasksed and so graphically shown in their native ugliness in the Heavenly Doctrines.

Once and for all I desire to assure your readers, who include so many of my friends, that I have never in my life held firmer or more intelligent belief in the truth of the Doctrines of the New Church than I do today. In what is called the 'New Thought', which comprises Christian Science, Metaphysics, Theosophy and other curious forms of belief, there is much that is undeniably true; and the fact that there is also much that is the reverse does not obliterate the truth. But whatever is true in these beliefs I find more forcibly and rationally stated by Emanuel Swedenborg. His teachings satisfy the intellect as well as the heart. The newcomers, in my opinion, do not. However I believe that in the future we shall find among their votaries many valuable recruits."

Meetings for the study of the Writings had been substituted for the evening Services of the Sydney Society from January, 1899; they seem not to have been long continued.

Richard Morse was one seems to have attacked what he saw as deviation from the truth, misrepresentation, accommodation and euphemism wherever he found them; certainly when within the organisation of the Church. That it was his ability to make critical assessments and judgements, and his single-minded devotion to the New Church and its Doctrines that led to his defection and to the establishment in Australia of a Society of the General Church cannot be doubted. That he also had the faults of his own virtues, and that his logic was sometimes dented by his preoccupation for a time with the ways in which the Societies were attempting to maintain themselves and their morale under lay Leadership, and with their methods and practices, might also be evident. His aversion to anything that seemed to him to depart from the purposes, aims, principles and acceptable standards of the Church might be illustrated by direct quotation from the pages of his 'True Christian Life'. Certainly he made no concessions for the sake of the popularity of himself or of the cause which he represented. Even so, his judgement in concentrating such a large part of his time, effort and resources upon the meticulous and all-embracing examination and criticism of an organisation with which he had severed his connection may be questioned. On the other hand there can be no doubt that he saw the sacred name of the New Church as suffering degradation.

Here are his comments after he had read a report that Mr. J. H. Bennett of the Melbourne Society, after having delivered to the British Conference an Address from The New Church in Australia "added some interesting testimony with respect to the excellent work of Daniel Ashby in Melbourne". Mr. Morse wrote:

"Mr. Ashby is the Leader of the only New Church Society in a State containing nearly a million and a quarter people, but he is also a fitter in the Government railway workshops, and, as such, is under strict discipline. He is therefore free to devote only his spare time to the sacred office. If, under such adverse conditions, our friend can do "excellent" work, what must be the superlative quality of that done by his predecessor? For many years Rev. J. J. Thornton was Minister at a salary of £300. Being a man of culture, originality, and of a mental calibre above the average, he was one to be reckoned with in the theological arena. And, representing as he did the sacred office of the New Church Ministry disentangled from association with secular work, he was able to occupy the public platform upon an equal footing with the recognised professors of theology. With the late Rev. E. G. Day, likewise a profound student of the Heavenly Doctrines, Mr. Thornton laid broad and deep the foundations of a diviner Church life than had previously existed in Australia, although its effects were more noticeable in his own Society, which no doubt accounts for a better external order existing than in the Society in Sydney, which never had a Minister. But what a change has taken place since the passing of the Minister! Appearance replaces reality, and stagnation spiritual growth. Modern socialism is in the holy place, and the Supper is administered in disorder with unfermented wine. On the front page of the last Annual Report appear the names of 28 offices filled by 18 officers. Behind this bold advertisement the average attendance is found to be equal only to the number of offices, and seven less than last year! And when Mr. Bennett gave his testimony, the Annual Report for 1905 stated that there had been no baptisms or marriages, nor had

there been any increase in membership. Mr. Bennett may not have been correctly reported; all the same, it is such published statements that set back the progress of an orderly Church life".

In this, the comparison between the work of Mr. Thornton, a full-time trained Minister and that of Mr. Ashby, might seem inappropriate. The reference to Mr. Ashby as a fitter (Mr. Morse was a civil engineer) was not designed to make friends! Nor was his implied comparison of Mr. Ashby with Mr. Day, who also had earned his living in secular, though less skilled, employment. Mr. Morse may not have been aware that Mr. Ashby had declined to accept promotion in his career in order to be able to devote his life more completely to the Leadership of his Society.

Several further quotations will serve to emphasise the very high standards which Mr. Morse demanded, and will perhaps indicate also that his temperament was not such as to make it easy for him to give way to opinions and methods of others. Light might be thought to be thrown upon some of the factors which may have contributed to the early inability of he and Mr. Hellberg to come to terms with each other's predilections. Perhaps it might be that Mr. Morse's character and training made him a leader, and not one to be led.

"Mr. Keen [his successor as the Secretary of the Sydney society] is a loyal party man, and possesses some of the finest qualities recognised in a good canvasser. But these qualities are, or should be, valueless in the New Church, where justice and judgement must be placed before everything. These remarks are inspired by the various reports which emanate from Mr. Keen's fertile brain. Small things are given prominence at the expense of general accuracy. One may be literally accurate in what is reported; but by suppressing one item here and exalting another there the result is general inaccuracy, which is as wrong as the perversion of particular facts. It is honestly due to the reader a thousand miles away that he or she shall, when reading the reports of Societies, obtain as accurate an idea of their general character and progress as is possible outside personal observation.

"Another notable instance of this general inaccuracy is the last Annual Report of the Melbourne Society. The first page, giving the names of the office-bearers, is an elaborate document, and of the sort the natural man dearly loves. It is of the shop window kind. But as a conveyant of a true idea of the real life of the Society, it fails. It is a very attractive shop window. The Society has a "Choirmaster", an "Organist", a "Ladies' Visiting Committee" of eight, a "Librarian", an "Assistant Librarian", two "Auditors", and an Executive Committee of ten. Past this remarkable shop window the reader ought not to go. Let him pass on, enjoying the mental vision of the immense concourse of people ministered to by the choir and choirmaster; the librarian and assistant librarian; the ladies' committee of eight; the gentlemen's committee of ten; — and the auditors. But what are the facts? The average attendance at Services is 35, including, presumably, the choir, choirmaster, organist, ladies' and gentlemen's committees, and auditors — 20 in all! A further investigation shows that there was no increase in membership, nor were there any baptisms or marriages. Yet this Society seems content to go along year after year, behind an outward show of natural good, while its spiritual existence is crippled for want of real obedience and sacrifice. The Lord ever works according to order, and He will bless any Society that trusts Him and is willing to be led by the truths He has revealed".

"Speaking of the duties of Chairman at a lecture given by Mr. Spencer on the anniversary of Swedenborg's birth, Mr. W. F. Keen says: 'The duties were fulfilled very admirably by our tactful and able friend, Mr. G. Marchant'. That the duties were adequately performed by a respectable, though obscure, member of that Society, would be sentences too impoverished and tame for Mr. Keen's artistic imagination —".

"In *The New Age* this month is a lengthy report of a surprise party given to Mr. E. Newton [the Founder of the Sydney Society] on his 71st birthday. The function was held in the recipient's home. Mr. Keen says that Mr. Newton's daughters were the 'arch-schemers', and that he was 'director-general and organiser'. A 'rousing chorus' from between 30 and 40 voices greeted the recipient, who, being an enthusiast at cricket, was presented with a cake upon which was scored 71 not out —. A sentimental doggerel of 12 lines was also presented. This silly thing is impregnated throughout with cricket slang, and is a palpable disgrace to a New Church paper —".

Mr. Marchant, writing to Mr. Ball in 1939 remarked: "How he [Richard Morse] railed at you and Spencer. Yet I liked him, in spite of his attitude".

Here is a later comment, from "an outsider looking in" at both sections of the New Church organization. Mr. V. Rudder had been a receiver of the Doctrines for about six years; received *The New Age*, *The New Church Magazine*, and *True Christian Life*; but had never come into personal contact with another New Churchman. He wrote:

"Here are two sections of the New Church both carrying on missionary efforts, yet the growth of the visible Church is slow. One section of the Church delivers lectures and distributes literature; the other section seeks to build up a distinctive social, religious and educational system; — Lectures are very good and instructive to those who will listen, literature is enlightening to those who will read. A distinctive Church life is very good for those who are 'inside'. — The old Church preaches a 'gospel', and though when critically examined it is found illogical and unconvincing, it is set forth in the spirit of earnest love for sinners; despite its failures, many who would otherwise have remained ignorant of a loving, saving God are awakened and led to genuine repentance and newness of life. The question that arises out of all this to me is: Where is the Gospel of the New Church? Surely no Church on earth has a gospel of power committed to its keeping like it has! No other Church can teach that 'God is Love' with such absoluteness, being sound scripturally, rationally and scientifically; yet where are its apostles: men so filled with the knowledge of the Lord that they preach eternal life with the burning zeal of conviction? Cold reasonings alone will never arrest the attention of the average man; to me The New Church in Australia seems little better than a society for self-amusement and entertainment; while the other section seems to spend much energy in criticism; but where is the evangelisation? I scarcely ever mention the name of the Church lest I be asked where are the fruits, and I might not know where".

The years from 1906 to 1913 were comparatively uneventful for the 'New Society'. There was no advertising, although a notice of the meetings was placed in the window of Miss Taylor's shop. Visits were occasionally received from New Church people from other Societies or groups. Mr. Worrall and Mr. Burgess of the Sydney society are mentioned; and in 1909, when the Australian Conference met in Sydney, the

Misses Ireland from Adelaide and Gertrude Lovering from Melbourne. In 1909 also a lady visitor from America, Miss Ida Hunt, who remained for six months.

No record of attendances at the meetings is extant. Those known to have faithfully supported them, in addition to Mr. Morse himself, are Miss Annie Taylor, aged 26 in 1906, her sister Beatrice, then aged 21, and Mr. Peter Dupen. It must indeed be seldom that such persistent determination on the part of so few has resulted in the foundation of a New Church Society.

Mr. Morse and the Misses Taylor were closely in touch over the years with Mr. and Mrs. John White and their family at Macclesfield, South Australia, and with Mr. and Mrs. Wyld at Dora Creek and the members of the 'Society' inaugurated at Lithgow in 1908 by Rev. W. A. Bates.<sup>(a)</sup> 'True Christian Life' continued to appear monthly until June, 1907, when the simple statement was printed: "With this issue the publication of T.C.L. will cease. It is hoped that the work will be continued later —". Its production must have entailed a great deal of time, but the cost involved seems to have been a factor in its demise.

In that year, 1907, they celebrated, probably for the first time in Australia, June 19th, "with a feast of spiritual and natural things". The cake was made, and the tables decorated, by Miss Annie Taylor. The table centrepiece consisted of two vases, connected together by "a bar of gold colour with one on one side, in purple, the words 'The Second Advent' and on the other, woven together in blue, scarlet, and fine linen, the inscription 1770//June 19//1907".

This pioneer celebration became an annual event, and often attracted visitors. Mr. Jones, of Lithgow, attending in 1913, expressed his surprise at the number of people present.

From the cessation of 'True Christian Life' in June, 1907, Mr. Morse brought out in June of each year a very similar publication 'The Nineteenth of June Souvenir'. This was still a well produced and printed magazine, of the same dimensions as T.C.L., but of up to 80 pages in each number. It contained much solid and instructive reading matter emanating from General Church sources, interspersed liberally with the Editor's critical analyses of departures from doctrinal veracity on the part of preachers, lecturers and writers in the Australian Societies and the American Convention. In 1913 Mr. Morse agreed with the Editor of The New Age on the evils of vaccination<sup>(b)</sup> — "There are probably few New Church people who do not believe that vaccination is the salvation-by-faith-alone of the false science of the old Church" — but he "could not agree that it was a topic that should find a place in The New Age. Surely there can be no valid reason for appropriating so much space to a matter which does not legitimately come within the scope of the object for which the paper is published".

#### REV. RICHARD MORSE \*\* A SOCIETY OF THE GENERAL CHURCH

By 1913 Mr. Morse had a widely separated circle of 11 sympathisers who were committed to the General Church understanding of the Writings. An application that they be admitted to membership was made to Bishop Pendleton at Bryn Athyn, accompanied by a request signed by 19 persons that Mr. Morse be authorised to perform the duties of the Ministerial office. The result was an Act of Authorisation

(a) Treated under the Sydney Society.

(b) Mr. John Pitcairn of Bryn Athyn was President of the National Anti-Vaccination League of America.

issued by the Bishop on July 21st, 1913, enabling Mr. Morse to "preach the Doctrines of the New Church, to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and the Holy Supper, to consecrate marriages, and to preside over a Society of the Church —" pending ordination,<sup>(a)</sup> and the recognition of 11 members of the General Church resident in Australia.

The 11, who were in fact the foundation members of the Hurstville Society of the General Church, were Richard Morse, Peter Dupen, the Misses Taylor, Alice Barnes and Alfred Kirschstein<sup>(28)</sup> of Sydney; Mr. and Mrs. Jones of Lithgow; and Mr. and Mrs. John White and Miss M. M. White of Macclesfield, S.A. Of the 9 who signed the application for authorisation, although not joining the General Church, four were resident in New South Wales — Mr. and Mrs. Wyld, Mrs. Naseby, Mr. C. W. Morse<sup>(29)</sup> of Newcastle — and five in South Australia — Mr. and Mrs. Grenville Ireland, Mr. E. G. Darwin and John and Clara Barnes.

Richard Morse's goal had now been reached and he had achieved the end so dear to him, the foundation in Australia of a Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem. It was a goal which he could not have foreseen eleven years previously and which he had not set himself until 1905, but in retrospect it may be seen as the climax to which his whole life had been leading — the culmination and crown of his unfaltering dedication to the revealed Truths of the New Dispensation. The name of Richard Morse and the date July 21st, 1913 must stand in history as not only of Australian but of universal New Church significance.

The rejoicing and relief in Sydney in now having an authorized Minister, and in the new sense of acceptance and of belonging; of membership in a spiritual family, must indeed have been great. Mr. Morse adopted the title Reverend, and in December he made a pastoral visit to the members more than 1,000 miles distant at Macclesfield. There again scenes of rejoicing were repeated as he baptized, administered the Sacrament, conducted a Doctrinal class and a Confirmation (the first in Australia) and preached to a congregation of 11.<sup>(b)</sup> Thus closed the historic year 1913.

From and including that year Mr. Morse, now leading an official society, for the first time preserved an annual record of average attendances. The figures for 1913 are: Worship, 5.35; Sunday evening doctrinal classes, 6.23; Wednesday evening class, 5.27. These figures vary very little until 1917, although events were unfolding which would ensure the future of the Society.

In the meantime, still closer links were forged with the parent General Church body in Bryn Athyn in 1914. The occasion was the visit to the Society of Rev. F. E. Gyllenhaal, a missionary pastor, made in the course of a world tour at the request of the Bishop. He remained for 17 days, in the course of which he was busily occupied in preaching, lecturing and visiting. He established a new Order of Service, baptized the four children of Mr. and Mrs. Hellberg and the two of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Morgan, and visited the members at Lithgow. He attended a reception at the Thomas St. Hall of the Sydney Society in honour of Rev. and Mrs. M. F. Underwood, who were travelling to Brisbane, where Dr. Underwood would take up the pastorate of the Brisbane Society; and spent a week at Macclesfield.

Two events which took place in 1915 must not be passed over. The first was the Betrothal Service conducted by Mr. Morse on November 1st of that year for Alfred

(a) Mr. Morse was ordained into the first and second degrees of the priesthood in Bryn Athyn in 1919.

(b) The third time that the number 11 appears in connection with the Hurstville Society. The street number at its present address is 22.

Kirschstein and Beatrice Taylor. This, like the celebration of June 19th in 1907 and the Confirmation Service conducted by Mr. Morse at Macclesfield in 1913, was, so far as is known, the first celebration of its kind to have been held in Australia. Mr. Theodore Kirsten, the eldest son of Alfred and Beatrice Kirschstein, and his wife are active members of the Hurstville Society today, as is their daughter, Dr. Anne Kirsten.

The second significant event of 1915, the importance of which could hardly have been realised at the time, was the coming to Sydney to live of Miss Mora (Martha Mornington) White, aged 22, of the Macclesfield family. She took appointment as a milliner with Miss Annie Taylor.

#### **RECONCILIATION \*\*\* A SUNDAY SCHOOL \*\*\* THE MOVE TO HURSTVILLE AND PENSHURST \*\*\* 1917-1921**

The dramatic turning point in the fortunes of the Society came in 1916 or 1917 with the reconciliation of Mr. Hellberg and Mr. Charles Morgan with Mr. Morse. This not only immediately doubled its numerical strength, but brought a new potential for growth. Although Mr. Hellberg died in 1918, yet his descendants, today bearing the names of Heldon, Hicks, Walsh and MacFarlane, have remained amongst the staunchest and longest-serving members of the Hurstville Society, and constitute one of its largest family groups.

The decisive factor in promoting the reconciliation was the need for religious education for the children. Mr. and Mrs. Morgan had returned to Sydney (in which year is not known) with their two children, and by mid 1917 there were seven children in the Hellberg family. Both of these families, and yet a third, that of Mr. and Mrs. Ferran, were now settled in the district of Hurstville Grove (now the suburb of Hurstville) nine miles southwest of the City and not far from the old Morse home at Rockdale.

Mr. Ferran, who was born in Mauritius, was of French descent on his mother's side from the Desvaux family, and of the Roman Catholic faith. He, and more particularly his wife (who incidentally was descended through her maternal grandmother from Captain James Cook) had been introduced to the New Church by Mrs. Hellberg's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman, from whom they had had accommodation. Mrs. Ferran became a devoted and lifelong adherent of the New Church and close friend of Mrs. Hellberg.<sup>(a)</sup>

It was Mr. Morgan who suggested the rapprochement, and who himself took the first initiative in attending a meeting of the Society. Both men are first mentioned by Mr. Morse as having been present at the celebration of June 19th in 1917, when Mr. Morgan delivered an appropriate address. On this occasion the attendance was the largest in the annals of the Society to that date; and that the reconciliation was now a reality is indicated by the attendance of 7 adults and 5 children on the previous Sunday, and of 7 adults and 4 children on the one following. A faithful follower now absent was Mr. Dupen, who had died on February 5th of that year.

Thoughts and plans were now centred on the formation of a Sunday School. Sadly, Mr. Hellberg's death (he had by this time changed his name to Heldon) which

(a) Mr. Ferran, who was never perhaps a convinced New Churchman, was Treasurer of the Society from July, 1921 to July, 1924. At that time he reverted fully to Catholicism. He and his wife moved from Hurstville, and separated. Mrs. Ferran thereafter used the name Ferrand.

occurred on June 18th, 1918, intervened, but the Sunday School opened nevertheless, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ferran, on August 4th. Excepting for the decision of July 11th, 1905 and the recognition in 1913, no date can have more significance than this in the tale of the development of the Hurstville Society. The teachers in the Sunday School were Miss Annie Taylor and Miss Mora White.

The Sunday School continued to meet at the Ferran home for nearly 11 months, and on July 22nd, 1919 it was transferred to the hall of the Hurstville Grove Workmen's Institute. Here it was more in the public eye and accessible to newcomers. Children from the surrounding district were attracted and the school grew to an enrolled membership of up to 40.

There was another loss to the Society with the sudden death of Mr. Morgan. Local membership of the Society was now about 9 — Mr. Morse, Miss Taylor, Miss White, Mr. and Mrs. Kirschstein, Mr. and Mrs. Ferran, Mrs. Heldon and Mrs. Morgan. Mrs. Morgan senior and Mrs. Downey of the Sydney society were occasional visitors. A second visit to the society by a Minister of the General Church came in January-February 1920, this time by Rev. Reginald Brown, who preached on February 1st to a congregation of 10 adults and 6 children, and addressed a doctrinal class in the evening.

The prime requirement of the Society now was a permanent home of its own. Although Mr. Morse, Miss Taylor and Miss White were all resident in the inner suburb of Alexandria, it must be in the Hurstville area, to accommodate the local members and the children. Mrs. Heldon drew Mr. Morse's attention to the availability of vacant land close by although within the boundaries of the adjacent suburb of Penshurst. There he bought an allotment with a street frontage of 100 feet and a depth of 364 feet, with attached to it at the rear another section at right angles to it and measuring 100 feet long by 64 feet deep, at a price of £1 per foot of frontage. Here he had his new home built, and named it 'Baringa' — an aboriginal word meaning Light. At 22 Dudley St., Penshurst it is the present home of the Society's pastor.

Mr. Morse had set his house to one side of the property, so that with the wide frontage there would be room for a little Church. For this he himself drew the plans and supervised the construction by the contractors.<sup>(a)</sup> He laid the Foundation Stone on July 10th, 1921. This stone, forming the base of the eastern pillar of the timber building, had cut into it in Hebrew the words 'Holiness to Jehovah'. On September 11th the last Service was held at Redfern, and from that date all meetings were suspended until the Church (it was referred to for many years as the Hall) was ready for occupation. It was opened and dedicated by Rev. Richard Morse at the morning Service on November 27th, with an attendance of 10 adults and 22 children. Still in use today, although extended and extensively renovated, it was designed to seat 60 persons. The original pulpit carried the words 'The Lord God Jesus Christ Reigns', in Latin; the gold Altar cloth 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ' in Greek, and the lectern cloth 'God With Us' in Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

Mr. Morse had taken up residence in his new home; the Sunday School was transferred to the new hall; Miss Taylor and Miss White also moved to Penshurst; and the Hurstville Society was now fully located, not at Hurstville, but at Penshurst. (The name, which came into use over the years, has never to this day been formally adopted).

(a) It has been said to have been built by voluntary labour, but this is an error.

Mr. Morse had already transferred the ownership of the site of the Church (or hall) to the Society, although simply by written agreement, since the Society, which was not an incorporated body, could not legally own it. It did in time acquire its own street number: 24. Miss Taylor had already advanced a loan of £200 towards the cost of the Church. Later she bought and donated to the Society the home at No. 26, again with a frontage of 100 feet. Thus the entire property, including the site of 'Baringa', now has a frontage of 200 feet, an irregular depth of c.364 feet, and an extension measuring 64 feet by 50 feet at the rear of No. 28 Dudley St. (The home on the latter site is owned and occupied by a member of the Society, Mrs. T. R. Taylor). In 1956 a Trust was incorporated; 'The General Church of the New Jerusalem in Australasia Property Trust', and the ownership of the whole of the property at Nos. 22, 24 and 26 Dudley st. is now vested in the Trust.

The new Church attracted few worshippers not already connected with the Society, but the Sunday School continued to flourish. In the year following the opening of the Church (1922) the enrolment was 33. The number rose steadily to a maximum of 70 in 1927; and a maximum average attendance for the year of 43 was reached in 1928. By 1934 the total enrolment was 50 and the average attendance 25. Local membership of the Society had increased somewhat by this time, and average attendance at worship in the latter year was 15, including children; at the monthly administration of the Sacrament 9; and at the weekly Doctrinal class 5.75. Thus, the Sunday School was supported predominantly by children of non-members.

#### A NEW CHURCH DAY SCHOOL \*\*\* RETIREMENT OF REV. RICHARD MORSE \*\*\* REV. W. C. HENDERSON \*\*\* MR. LINDTHMAN HELDON

The Hurstville Society experienced little further development or extension from 1921 until 1930, but in the latter year, on October 7th, there was opened the first, and so far the only, New Church day school to have been established in Australia. In 1929 Miss White had travelled to Bryn Athyn and there undertaken a course of training in the operation of such a school. She opened it on the above date, with five students. Their names are recorded – Nellie and Tommy Taylor, Betty Adams and Fred and Theo Kirsten, all of whom were aged between 5 and 7 years. Within a month there were two more, Alwyn Kirsten and Lois Scheers, both aged 5. By March, 1931, there were 10, and by late in the same year 12. Baptism was required for admission, although a prior trial period could be permitted.

Miss White was assisted in the conduct of the school by Miss Taylor and by Mrs. T. R. Taylor (who was not related). A small weekly payment was made to Miss White by Miss Taylor, and she received a token fee from each child (most of which was spent on school requisites). Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Taylor, previously Anglicans, had first become interested through the Sunday School. They were baptized into the New Church by Rev. Richard Morse in 1927, and became very active supporters of the Society. Their great-grandchildren are now being baptized into the New Church, in the Hurstville Society (Mrs. Taylor has already been mentioned as still occupying No. 28 Dudley St.). Mr. Taylor also played an important part in the Society in connection with the Sunday School and the day school, having a particular flair for working with the children in extra-school activities, especially in the sphere of outdoor recreation. Another parent drawn into the church through the school was Mrs. Stephenson, whose daughters Mrs. Brettel and Mrs. Hall are members of the Society today with children passing through the Sunday School.

Another student to be enrolled in the day school was Ruth Fletcher, now Mrs. Norman Heldon. Mr. Fletcher, recently widowed, had been attracted to the school by the orderly and disciplined manner in which it was conducted, and after his daughter commenced attendance he came to realise that it was not only orderly, but in some way distinctive. He determined to go to the teacher to investigate it further. This led to his introduction to the teachings of the New Church and eventually to his asking of the teacher her hand in marriage. She was happy to consent if he could fully accept the New Church faith. This he felt able to do, and he was to become a most dedicated member of the society. For many years he was its Treasurer, and his work in the maintenance of the buildings was also invaluable. One such project which he carried through was the complete rejuvenation of the chancel furniture in the Church, transforming it from its original dark colour to the present attractive light finish.

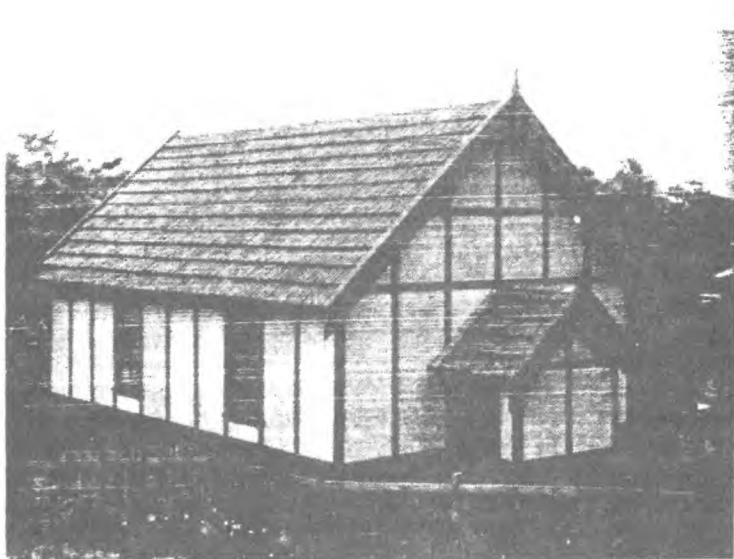
The year 1934 opened with 34 students in the Sunday School and 15 in the day-school. On August 24th of that year Miss White became Mrs. F. W. Fletcher. A teacher to take her place in the day-school could not be found, and in 1935 it was not re-opened. Mrs. Fletcher lives today in her home in Hurstville, still very much alert and interested in the Society for which she did so much, not only as a member and Sunday School teacher, but also for many years as organist.

In retrospect the building of the Hurstville Society through the Sunday School and day school in the years 1918-1934 can be seen as having been due not only to the confirmation of the children in the New Church faith but also to having drawn parents into the Church and in having bound them together in working for a common cause.

Rev. Richard Morse was now 74 years of age, and in May, 1935, Rev. W. Cairns Henderson was appointed Assistant Pastor of the Hurstville Society. He arrived in Sydney from America on August 8th, and was met by a welcoming party of 45 members, friends and children of the Society.

In the next year, Mr. Morse retired, having served as Leader and Minister, somewhat in the tradition of the Leaders of Australian New Church Societies, for over 30 years. From the trauma and shock of separation from the Sydney Society, where his heart had been, from a small beginning and early disappointment, he now saw his 'New Society' firmly and securely established, with property, a Church and now a fully trained and full-time Minister.

The property he himself and his constant lieutenant Miss Taylor had for the most part provided from their own resources, and it had been provided as a means to an end – the furtherance of the truths of the New Church and of life in accordance with them. First-hand acquaintance with the teachings of the Writings he had always and consistently urged, and even throughout the leanest years from 1905 to 1918 he had never ceased to conduct regular weekly meetings for group study, and the Sunday by Sunday Worship. He constantly urged his followers to read the Writings for themselves and thus not to accept his own word for what was to be found there. His strength had lain in his firm conviction that the Writings are the Word, and in his determination that there would be an organisation in Australia in which this would be seen, and in which they would be revered accordingly. Even before his conscious and open acceptance of the General Church viewpoint he had been a keen and careful analyst of the many doubtful and often clearly unwarranted doctrinal positions promulgated in the Sydney Society, submitting them always to the test of conformity with the truths revealed through 'the servant of the Lord', Emanuel Swedenborg. His intolerance was first and foremost for teaching in the New Church organisation which was clearly not in accordance with the Doctrines; even though it had at times extended



*The Hurstville Society's Church at Penshurst, c. 1922.*



*The Church at Penshurst 1977.*



*Rev. Richard Morse.*

from doctrinal principles to organisational practices which he saw as being inappropriate in such a body.

The closing chapter of Richard Morse's life began on October 13th, 1938 when he and Miss Annie Taylor were joined in matrimony by Rev. Cairns Henderson.<sup>(a)</sup> He died, aged 86, in 1944, his wife surviving him until 1967.

Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, of Scottish birth, had come into the New Church from Methodism. He had responded to the call to the Ministry, and had spent two years in training at the College of the British Conference.<sup>(b)</sup> Having while there adopted the General Church viewpoint he had completed his training at Bryn Athyn under the auspices of that body.

His particular penchant was perhaps for order and organisation, and at the Hurstville Society he immediately set about a thorough reorganisation of the committees, procedures and meetings. At the first meeting at which he presided (September 29th, 1935), he advocated the establishment of several new committees in addition to those then operating, and these committees continued to meet not less often than once a month throughout his pastorate.

Religious exercises, study classes and social life were well provided for. Morning Worship every Sunday was maintained, and a 'general Doctrinal class' was held every Sunday evening; excepting that the latter meeting was replaced once a month by an 'evangelical' Service, and once in each quarter by a 'Feast of Charity' . . . a dinner followed at first by addresses by the Pastor or by laymen and later by questions and answers. There was a monthly class in connection with the meetings of the Ladies' Guild, a monthly study circle for the Sunday School teachers, a monthly meeting of the 'Sons of the Academy', a monthly Young People's Social Club meeting, a fortnightly young people's class and a fortnightly newcomers' general Doctrinal class.<sup>(c)</sup> In 1941 yet another fortnightly class was commenced, for the study of Swedenborg's philosophy, which continued for about 18 months. In 1942 the monthly Service was discontinued in favour of a social tea, followed by questions and answers.

In 1938 the Society had been honoured in being the recipient of a visit by the Rt. Rev. George de Charms, who was accompanied by his wife. The visit lasted for only five days, but they were days crowded with activity and enthusiasm. On Sunday morning, October 9th, the Bishop preached to a congregation of 43 and administered the Sacrament to 25 communicants. A Children's Service was held on the same day, in the afternoon, with an attendance of 55. There were gatherings in homes, addresses to the Ladies' Guild and to the Sons of the Academy, a meeting of the Pastor's Council, films of Bryn Athyn, and an address to the ladies by Mrs. de Charms.

Mr. Henderson's pastorate encompassed the period of the 1939-45 world war, and although membership of the Society had risen slightly to 28 by 1943, yet several members had been lost for the time being to the armed services, lighting and

(a) Mr. Morse's first wife, from whom he had been separated for many years, had died some months previously. He had looked with disfavour upon divorce and re-marriage.

(b) Two who were students at the College with Mr. Henderson were Rev. F. F. Coulson and Rev. C. D. Brock, both of whom also eventually joined the General Church.

(c) The particulars are extracted from Mr. Henderson's reports printed in *New Church Life* in 1938, 1939 and 1940. Membership of the Society in 1939 was 25.

travelling were curtailed, and attendances at all functions had fallen. In that year only 6 members attended the Annual Meeting. During these war years many of the usual activities were discontinued. The Christmas Day, 1945 Service soon after the end of the war, saw an unusually large attendance of 29. Soon afterwards Mr. Henderson announced his acceptance of the pastorate of the Kitchener, Ontario Society. He left Australia on July 11th, 1946.

While in Australia Rev. Cairns Henderson had done much to alleviate any sense of separation or opposition between the membership of the Hurstville Society and that of the Societies affiliated with The New Church in Australia. Soon after his arrival he had been introduced by Rev. Richard Morse to William Burl, the Leader of the Sydney Society. Thereafter Mr. Burl, and also Rev. R. H. Teed of the Melbourne Society, visited and were cordially received by the Hurstville Society on a number of occasions (Rev. R. H. Teed had visited the Hurstville Society's day school in 1932, and had then been guest of honour at a social evening in the course of which he had addressed the children of the school). Several times members of the Hurstville Society attended functions at the Sydney Society's Church, these visits being reciprocated by members of the Sydney Society.

Mr. Henderson, despite his many commitments in his own Society, wrote extensively while in Australia for *The New Age*. When he returned to America, Mr. Teed, then Editor of that journal, wrote of him:

"What we would particularly like to stress is that in Mr. Henderson we have one who loves charity supremely; and thus, although he has never failed to be wholly distinctive in his message, he has striven rather for union and mutual understanding than unhappy emphasis on what might seem to divide".

Mr. Lindthman Heldon, the third son of Mr. and Mrs. Hellberg, was nominated by Mr. Henderson for the office of Leader of the Society, and the nomination was confirmed by the Pastor's Council. His Leadership was to last for 11 years, and throughout that time the activities of the Society continued on a reduced scale. Services were maintained each Sunday, and a weekly Doctrinal class was conducted with little interruption. Mr. Heldon was authorised to officiate at baptisms, but was not licenced by the Church to administer the Sacrament, nor by the State to perform marriages. He was granted a small annuity by the Society in recognition of his services; possibly rather in the nature of a reimbursement for incidental expenses.

Incorporation of the 'Trust' was accomplished in this period, in 1956. The Society itself, as mentioned earlier, has never been incorporated, nor has it therefore ever officially registered a name. The name 'The General Church of the New Jerusalem in Australia' was chosen in 1917; but because incorporation (under State and not Federal law) was being considered in 1920, this was then changed to 'The Sydney Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem'. This title fell into disuse at about the end of 1928; and from that time for some years minute books and records only use the term 'the Society'. The first known membership roll, which was commenced in 1935, with Rev. Richard Morse's name as the first entry, is not titled. The name 'The Hurstville Society' has been accepted rather than having been bestowed.

The highlight of the period under Mr. Heldon was the second episcopal visit, this time by Rt. Rev. W. D. Pendleton. The occasion of this 12-day visit was the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Society. In the course of it the Sacrament was administered, for the first time in nearly nine years. Bishop Pendleton also encouraged Brian Heldon, a grandson of Mr. F. W. Hellberg to travel



Rev. Cairns W. Henderson.



Rev. Donald Rose.

to Bryn Athyn and there to undertake a course of studies at the Academy of the General Church, thus pioneering an experience which has since been shared by many young people from Australia.

Useful additions were made to the Church building in 1957, when a small kitchen/Sunday School room was added beneath the chancel. In August of the same year the Society welcomed its third pastor, Rev. Donald Rose.

#### **REV. DONALD ROSE \*\*\* REV. D. M. TAYLOR \*\*\* REV. M. D. GLADISH**

It was Mr. Rose's first pastorate. A young man and unmarried, he was provided with board and lodging by Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Fletcher as part of their contribution towards the cost of his services (as Rev. A. E. Beilby had been in Adelaide by Mr. and Mrs. Hastwell in 1895). As Mr. Beilby had done, Mr. Rose met and married his wife in Australia, the former Noeline Miller, who had come into association with the Society through its Sunday School.

Mr. Rose energetically set about the task of further stimulating the Society. His pastorate was particularly notable for his work with the Sunday School and the young people, his advertising, his widespread visiting of General Church adherents not resident in Sydney, and still further rapprochement with the Societies of the Australian Association.

He commenced a campaign with the object of finding people who might be already interested in the Doctrines, or who could be attracted locally. This campaign he carried on by means of regular newspaper advertisements, by the distribution of leaflets in the neighbourhood of the Church, and by other means. He introduced a monthly Family Service, in the course of which he delivered a special address to the children. He travelled widely throughout Australia and New Zealand in order to visit General Church members and sympathizers far from a Society, and thereby became the first General Church Minister in Australia to extend his sphere of regular activity beyond the confines of the State of New South Wales. This extended sphere of activity has since been maintained, so that since the time of Rev. Donald Rose the Minister of the Hurstville Society has been in effect the resident Australasian General Church pastor. In 1959, on August 30th, in the course of a visit to two receivers of the Doctrines whom he subsequently baptized into the New Church, Mr. Rose conducted the first New Church Service of Worship to be held in the national capital, Canberra. It was held in the home of Mr. Basil Lazer, which a congregation of 10.

In 1959 also he commenced the production of 'The New Church Courier', a bi-monthly small magazine/newsletter (in the Association Societies a 'Manual'), another initiative which has been continued by succeeding pastors.

By 1963, when Mr. Rose was appointed to a pastorate in Britain, he was well known, not only to General Church members throughout Australia and New Zealand, but to a large cross-section of the membership of the Societies of the Association. His youthful zest and his friendly and outgoing disposition had ensured that he would be remembered not only with respect, but with affection. Two at least of his initiatives would continue to be integral and valuable features of General Church activity in Australasia.

Rev. Donald Rose was succeeded by Rev. Douglas M. Taylor, who came to Sydney in August, 1963. Australian-born, he was a son-in-law of Rev. C. D. Brock, Minister of the Adelaide Society in the 1930s, and had been introduced to the

Doctrines by his future wife. He was now accompanied by Mrs. Christine Taylor and their four children. He also was not long from theological college, having served only one short pastorate, at Tucson, Arizona.

Having himself come into the New Church in adult life, Mr. Taylor's pastorate in Sydney was especially marked by his activities of an 'outreach' nature, predominantly expressed in radio broadcasting. His first service of broadcast talks, of 15 minutes' duration, extended from February to September, 1966. His second series was commenced in April, 1968, and continued until he left Sydney in 1974. They were financed in part from the headquarters of the General Church in Bryn Athyn.

In all, Mr. Taylor delivered 323 separate addresses from 150 different scripts. He formed a file of more than 600 names and addresses of persons who had contacted him through having heard them. In his final report from Australia to New Church Life (April, 1975) he observed that for the past 6 years and 11 weeks he had devoted approximately two days each week to the radio work. When repeating a script which had already been used he would devote the time saved to follow-up work. In this way he was able to establish two or three small study groups outside the Society. He was able to report also that as a result of the broadcasts the Society had nine new members, four of whom had had no previous knowledge of the New Church; and also that thirteen others could reasonably be described as being ready for baptism, although not yet having taken that step. The commitment of these new and potential members (apart from those of them who had already been associated with the Society) seems not to have been generally maintained, since only one or two are members today.

However the years of Mr. Taylor's pastorate saw a very substantial increase in permanent membership, which came largely from the young people of the Society now reaching adult age, the several converts made through personal contacts, and from immigration. In the latter category were the Keal family who came in 1961, and the Ridgway and Lockhart families. By 1970 there were 32 members of the General Church living in Sydney and 11 in other parts of Australia. By 1974 the figures were 46 and 17 respectively. Two had come by transfer from an Association Society. Newcomers to Penshurst in 1971 were Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Horner, who also had been members some years before of an Association (Melbourne) Society and who had come to Sydney with their family of four young adult and teenage sons and one daughter with the express purpose of giving what first-hand assistance they could to the Society. They were able to take up residence in the previous home of Mr. Morse, next to the Church. While the Society benefitted from Mrs. Horner's ability as an organist, the great material contribution of Mr. Horner, a carpenter, and his sons was the complete renovation and considerable remodelling of the home, now 50 years old. The most notable improvement consisted of the erection of a large meeting room at the back of the building, and taking advantage of the considerable slope of the site, a two-car garage beneath. The 'Richard Morse Room' named to perpetuate the memory of the Founder and first Pastor, was dedicated by Bishop Pendleton in November, 1973, when after a lapse of 18 years he made his second visit to Australia. On the occasion of this visit the welcoming banquet attracted an attendance of 70 persons, and the Sunday morning Service on December 2nd a capacity congregation of 63.

The Horner family were also largely responsible for the repairs and improvements made to the tennis court at the foot of the Dudley St. property, which is a useful source of revenue for the Society.



*Rev. Douglas M. Taylor.*



*Rev. Michael D. Gladish.*

A number of factors had by now conspired to bind yet closer and more intimately the ties between the Society and the mother Church centred at Bryn Athyn. Some of these had been a visit by Professor C. S. Cole, of the Academy of the General Church, accompanied by Rev. D. M. Taylor, made in 1960, the visit in 1967 of Rev. Robert S. Junge, Secretary of the General Church of the New Jerusalem; the arrival in 1973 of two young ladies of the 'New Church Peace Corps' on a tour of duty in an honorary, assistance and encouragement orientated capacity; and the second visit of Bishop and Mrs. Pendleton in 1973. In the 1960s and the 1970s the courses of study undertaken at the Academy by young people from Australia (which in several cases resulted in an American marriage) and the increasing number of General Church members from America taking advantage of the facility of fast air travel to visit Australia, added a new dimension to this unifying trend.

The unfinished chapter in the history of the Hurstville Society opened on September 1st, 1974, with the arrival of Rev. Michael D. Gladish. Mr. Gladish, who came with his wife and three children, was a recent graduate, as his two immediate predecessors had been, having served a term of only one year, as assistant pastor at Toronto, Canada.

He was not burdened by the time-consuming work entailed in the broadcasting programme, which had reverted to the sponsorship of the Sydney Society's Library Committee, and gave his early attention to the reorganising and re-ordering of the working committees of the Society. He revived the inactive business committee (general committee in the Association Societies) and suggested a concomitant reduction in the number of general meetings, then held quarterly; and re-constituted the Pastor's Council.

Not neglectful of the desirability of maintaining some acquaintanceship in the local community with the New Church and its teachings, he organised the printing and distribution of 1,000 leaflets in the area. Although the visible effect was negligible, this approach was used several times subsequently, including on one occasion a much more extensive distribution and the offer of a free paperback book of the Writings. In 1979 he undertook the task of contacting by mail all of the 600 names recorded by Rev. Douglas Taylor as a result of his broadcast addresses. Some encouraging response has been generated by this outreach work, although on a small scale.

Mr. Gladish continued unabated the practice of making regular tours of Australia and New Zealand in order to maintain close personal and pastoral association with General Church members. In furtherance of this end he developed the New Church Courier into a more effective means of pastoral contact and communication with every General Church member within his sphere of influence.

He developed a rapport with the Ministers of the Association, and this was particularly expressed in his relationship with Rev. I. A. Arnold, Minister of the Sydney Society from January, 1975; a man, incidentally, in a similar age group and family situation and of similar dedication to the cause of co-operation between the two branches of the New Church. The Association Council of Ministers adopted the practice of inviting Mr. Gladish to attend its meetings when practicable (i.e., when they were held in Sydney). In this context it should be noted that occasional contact between the two New Church Societies in Sydney had been maintained since the days of Rev. Cairns Henderson and Mr. William Burl. In addition to various other visits a large contingent of members of the Hurstville Society attended the Centenary celebrations of the Sydney society in 1975, and in 1978 some 26 members of the Sydney

Society reciprocated by attending the re-dedication of the Hurstville Society's Church. Perhaps the most significant evidence of co-operation between the two Societies came in 1979, when a two-page folder was printed as an Invitation and Guide to the services offered by the New Church in Sydney. This attractive folder set out side by side the various facilities available from each Society.

In 1977 an effective plan for the beautification and enlargement of the Dudley St. Church and surroundings was undertaken. Its appearance had been enhanced in 1969 when an impervious granular coating had been applied to the external surfaces of the walls. Now the original porch was replaced by a larger and more modern one, which by the removal of portable partitions would enable the Church to accommodate up to 25 more persons as the need arose. At the same time landscaping was carried out in front of the Church and attractive new signboards erected. The Church was re-dedicated by Bishop Louis B. King in May, 1978.

In the course of this visit by Bishop and Mrs. King the historic first Australian District Assembly of the General Church was held. Before leaving Australia Bishop King was the guest speaker at a specially convened and well attended meeting of members of the Melbourne, Victoria, Association Society.

The General Church of the New Jerusalem today counts 68 members in Australia, of whom 40 live in the Sydney area. The comparable figures in 1918 were 15 and 9 respectively. It will be of interest to notice the sources from which the increase has been drawn.

Predominating in this regard are the immigration in more recent years (since c. 1960) of families already members of the General Church; transfer within Australia from another branch of the New Church; and very early members; with descendants of all these. The early Sunday School and the day school are responsible for some, although not many, of the present-day members; and there are about 8 whose source is more recent direct conversion into the New Church . . . one as a consequence of the radio broadcasting programme, one through marriage, and the others through personal contact.

In 1980, attendance at the one Sunday Service of Worship in the Hurstville Society's Church averages about 31. The number of young families attached to the society is reflected in the Sunday School enrolment of 30. Attendance at the fortnightly Doctrinal class averages c. 15.

The Hurstville Society of the General Church, soundly based as it has been since its inception on the study of and devotion to the Doctrines, is today not only a living but a vigorous and growing New Church enclave; its influence widely spread throughout the Australian continent and extending across the Tasman Sea to New Zealand.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND THE PERTH SOCIETY

Western Australia was occupied as a British Colonial outpost in 1827, and the City of Perth founded in 1839; but it is not until 1892 that we have any record of the New Church Doctrines being known there.

In sharp contrast to the experience of Adelaide, where a New Church Society was founded within 8 years of the first settlement of immigrants in South Australia, the birth of the Perth Society had to wait for a full century from the occupation, and nearly 90 years from the foundation of the city.

If we are to attribute these circumstances to material causes, then we can only cite the much slower development and population growth in the distant West. Possibly also there were indeed receivers there who had little or no contact with their fellows far away beyond the impassable deserts to the east.

When in 1928 the Perth Society was at last established, although it never grew so spectacularly as did the eastern Societies in the heady days of the late 19th century, yet it proved a remarkably healthy and vigorous entity, and well earned the respect accorded it today.

## CAPTAIN FAWCETT \*\*\* DANIEL DARE \*\*\* F. W. HELLBERG

The earliest known subscriber to the Doctrines in Western Australia was Captain A. R. Fawcett, of Pinjarra Park. By 1892 he had been instrumental in having a complete set of the Writings presented to the Victoria Library in Perth. He reported that a few residents were reading these, and he attempted to arouse further interest, but with little success. He was receiving *The New Age*, and had sent a copy to a friend in Syria, who wrote in reply, ". . . but the Swedenborgians have a narrow sectarian side which we must avoid, and agree with their own teaching that Christ's New Church is the universe of those whose lives conform to their highest convictions, and who love the Lord in whatever form He manifests Himself to them". Captain Fawcett died, "after a somewhat severe illness", on March 21st, 1898.

In January, 1894, Daniel Dare wrote from Perth to the Editor of *The New Age* . . . "Sir, In Notes and Comments of December 23rd, 1893, it is stated: 'A student of Swedenborg for more than 40 years has sent 10/- for the New Age Fund'. Suffer me to record that I have been a Swedenborgian for 61 years, having been born of New Church parents. I enclose a money order for £1 for the New Age Fund, and I would like to quote the words of Edward Bulwer Lytton in 'The Lady of Lyons': 'I have a prior claim. Before the face of man and Heaven I urge it. There is the sum twice told! Blush not to take it! . . .' Daniel Dare"

Another early adherent in Western Australia was Mr. F. W. Hellberg, ancestor of the Heldon families of the present Hurstville, N.S.W. Society. He had gone there from the Melbourne Society in 1897, and wrote back from Boulder City, near Kalgoorlie and some 350 miles east of Perth, in August, 1900, asking for tracts with a view to starting a Society. His contacts are not known; although Mrs. E. G. B. Campbell was enquiring from Kalgoorlie in 1898. Mr. Hellberg hoped to interest the Conference of 1902 in assisting him in the formation of a Society in Perth; but he returned at about this time, to settle in Sydney, N.S.W.

## S. W. HART \*\*\* HENRY HURMAN \*\*\* J. W. SHARPLES

Stanley William Hart came to Western Australia from Sydney in 1896. He was born in Richmond, Victoria, the son of William Hart, a sailmaker, but his family had moved to Sydney, where he learnt his trade as a plumber. After seeking for a satisfying religious faith, he had become acquainted with the New Church teachings through having medical treatment from a member of the Sydney Society, Mr. W. H. Hartley. He joined the Society in 1894. Unable in depression years to find work in Sydney, he borrowed £5 and set off for the Western Australian goldfields. Eventually in 1901, he co-founded in Perth the successful manufacturing firm of Lyons & Hart,<sup>(a)</sup> incidentally bringing into the Church his partner, and even more significantly, his partner's son, Mr. Jack Lyons, a constant worker for the Church until his death in 1952.

In c. 1901, Mrs. Gerald (Sarah E.) FitzGerald came to Western Australia, and settled at Fremantle with her sister, Mrs. McRorie. They were members of the Wheatley family who had come to Adelaide in 1850, and both Mr. and Mrs. FitzGerald had been members of the Adelaide Society. Another sister was the wife of Mr. F. W. Botting, long time Secretary of that Society; and a brother, Alfred, was also a lifelong member, although because he lived at Burra Burra, 100 miles to the north (where he was Leader of the Burra Burra Band), he never actually signed the Roll. Mr. and Mrs. FitzGerald had lived for some years in Tasmania, and she had been a member while there (and was when she went to the West) of the Melbourne Society. Several of her children were baptised in Melbourne by Rev. J. J. Thornton.

The establishment of an organised group of New Church worshippers in Western Australia followed the arrival in Perth of the Henry Hurman<sup>(30)</sup> family from the Brisbane Society, in 1903, when Mr. Hurman assumed a position on the staff of 'The Western Australian' newspaper. He almost immediately commenced Sunday morning family Worship in his home, and these simple Services, omitting the Sermon, soon attracted other interested local people – Mr. Hart, Mr. Lyons, who, besides being Mr. Hart's business partner, was also a near neighbour of Mr. Hurman, and Mrs. FitzGerald and Mrs. McRorie, who would travel 13 miles by horsedrawn vehicle. The Services were occasionally held in their home at Fremantle.

The year 1906 saw quite an influx of New Church people – Miss Anne Donnell from Adelaide, and the Misses Edith and Alice Noar and Mr. G. A. Gilbert from Melbourne. Mr. Gilbert had been a very early member of the Melbourne Society, in 1854. The meetings and Services soon attracted congregations of up to 20.

On February 13th, 1906, Mr. Hurman conducted in his drawing room the first New Church Marriage Service in Western Australia, for the marriage of Alice Noar to Mr. J. T. Robinson. The couple were presented with a Cassell's Illustrated Family Bible. John Thomas Robinson was a grandson of that J. T. Robinson who had been an aide to the Governor of Mauritius before settling in Victoria, a few miles from the Bucknall property at Majorca, in c. 1853, and whose great-grandson married, in 1938, Margaret, the daughter of the J. T. Robinson married in Perth. The descendants of these, Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Robinson, are the Leishman, Perry, Ryan and Robinson families of Creswick and Ballarat, Victoria, and the Jayes family of Western Australia.

(a) *The firm was largely engaged in the manufacture of dairy equipment. It is presently largely employee owned, and known for its 'Solahart' solar heating devices. An offshoot is the independent Graham Hart & Co., specializing in hospital sterilizers.*

Two months later, in April, Mr. Hurman conducted a second Marriage Service, this time for his daughter, Alice, now Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Williams was to be, for many years, pianist for the New Church Services, in succession to her brother, who donated the piano to the Perth Society. Mr. Hurman was also called upon, in January 1911, to conduct the Funeral Service for Lucy Noar, sister of Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Hart; and over the following years he was to conduct many infant Baptisms, until relieved on his retirement by Mr. Hart.

Edith Noar was married to Mr. S. W. Hart by Daniel Ashby in Melbourne on May 7th, 1907; Mr. Hart having also been baptized into the New Church by Mr. Ashby on the previous day, although already a member of the Sydney Society. Their daughter, Phyllis, in 1940, married Mr. (later Rev.) H. W. Hickman; and the descendants of these are the Hosking, Brown and Boyd families of Perth. Descended also from Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Hart are the Walker, Higgins and Cozens families of Perth, through their second daughter, Lorna, Mrs. Stoneham, and the Hart families of Perth and Sydney, N.S.W.

From the time of Mr. Hart's marriage the Services of Worship were conducted alternately in the Hurman and Hart homes, but were soon held in the evenings rather than in the mornings. When William Burl, later Leader of the Sydney Society, was briefly stationed in Perth in 1914, he urged that two Services should be held each Sunday. It was pointed out to him that the demand on the two leaders was already heavy, and he himself was thus persuaded to take his turn in the conduct of the Services; his first introduction to such a function.

When Mr. Hurman retired at the end of 1914, and moved to his home at Greenmount in the Darling ranges, some 15 miles by road from Perth, the regular Services ceased for a time, the distance now involved meaning that those travelling to or from Perth had to leave home by 9 a.m., and would expect to return at about 8 p.m. Services were revived after a time, with a Sunday School conducted by Mrs. Hart and Mrs. Hicks, previously Lily Hurman, but these also lapsed and gave way to occasional Services and also Doctrinal classes, conducted by Mr. Hart and Mr. J. A. Beveridge in Perth, and Mr. J. W. Sharples at Tenterden, and later also in Perth.

The first real attempt to form a New Church Society in Western Australia was made by Mr. Sharples, late of the Glasgow Society, at Tenterden, some 250 miles south of Perth, in 1909, and he received a parcel of Liturgies and volumes of the Writings from the Adelaide Society for the purpose, although what progress he made is not known. One young man whom he introduced to the Doctrines there was Mr. F. L. Ellis, who was to become a stalwart of the Perth Society, and whose daughters Valerie and Glenys became respectively Mrs. Richard and Mrs. Robin Hart, now of the Perth and Sydney Societies.

From about the year 1917 there was little if any organised activity, although throughout this time Mr. Hurman, and after his death in 1926, Mr. Hart, continued to conduct baptisms and funerals; and contact between the various families was never lost. In 1925, when Rev. and Mrs. R. H. Teed, en route to Melbourne, made their first Australian landfall at Fremantle, a number of New Church friends had gathered to accord them their first welcome to their new country. By this time, the children of the Hurman and Hart families had reached, or were reaching, adult age; and to these two families and their loyalty the New Church in Western Australia owes its increase in numbers to the point where a Society could be viable.

### THE PERTH SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH \*\* H. W. HICKMAN \*\* THE FIRST CHURCH

Excepting for the brief pastorate of Dr. Underwood in Brisbane in 1914-15, there had been no New Church Minister in Australia since 1909; but now Mr. Hart, the unofficial leader in Perth, saw the possibility of Ministerial help being available, and he appealed to Rev. R. H. Teed for help in the formation of a Society. Mr. Teed lost no time in following up this request, and in April, 1928, he went to Perth to conduct a Mission there, which lasted over 4 Sundays. Two Services were held each Sunday, with congregations averaging 40, and two lectures each week, in the evenings, with attendances averaging about 36.

The Mission culminated on May 4th, with the formation of the Perth Society: Mr. Hart was appointed Leader, Mr. Sharples Deputy Leader, and Mr. Beveridge Secretary. There were 14 Foundation members, with 5 more joining shortly afterwards; Services and meetings were held in the Karrakatta Club Hall, St. George's Terrace, and Doctrinal classes there and at Mr. Beveridge's home at suburban Belmont. The Society was incorporated in 1929, and became affiliated with The New Church in Australia at the 1930 Conference. Mr. Teed visited again in 1931, and Rev. C. D. Brock made a further Missionary visit in 1934.

In the meantime, in 1932, Mr. H. W. Hickman had come to Perth from the Melbourne, Victoria, Society. He had come from Britain to the district of Rosedale, 100 miles east of Melbourne, and had there come into contact with Miss E. Jones, a member of the Melbourne Society, who introduced him to the Doctrines, she having herself received them through her acquaintanceship with Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Tonks, also of the Melbourne Society. He joined the Melbourne Society in November, 1928. In 1930, he attended the Conference in Adelaide, and addressed it with regard to his possible acceptance as a trainee for the Ministry. The Conference received this approach with delight, and recommended to Mr. Hickman that he should move into close contact with a Society and a Minister, and there undertake studies, both secular and Doctrinal; the Council being empowered to review his application when they felt that the time was propitious both from the point of view of the progress of his studies and financially.

Mr. Hickman moved to Melbourne where he undertook courses of study as suggested, the theological segment taking the form of classes in company with Mr. E. L. Bennett, under Mr. Teed. Early in 1932, seeing little prospect of himself entering the New Church College, and in view of the need existing for assistance to Mr. Hart in Perth, he offered to go there to give what help he could. He was invited to take the Leadership and this he did, in May, 1932. The Council of the Association granted him an allowance, as Leader, of £1 per week. This was increased to £78 p.a. by the 1936 Conference, at which Mr. Hickman, to regularise the payment from the M. and M.S. Fund, was recognised by the Association as a "Missionary to the Perth Society".

H. W. Hickman was to serve the Perth Society as Leader and Minister for 36 years, thus taking his place with Rev. E. G. Day of Adelaide, Daniel Ashby of Melbourne and W. J. Spencer and William Burl of Sydney in having led one Australian Society continuously for well over a third of a century; a performance closely approached also by Joseph Leech in Brisbane. The period was to be marked by slow but steady growth in the membership of the Society, and by Mr. Hickman's capacity to retain the allegiance of a large proportion of the young people coming through the Sunday School. He was a deep student of the Writings, and became a forceful and earnest

preacher and a gifted writer, contributing particularly in this capacity to *The New Age*, and also regularly producing and distributing his 'Perth Letter'.

Certain divisions in the Society there were of course to be, since not even a New Church Minister can please all the people all the time. In Perth, perhaps the most significant cause of differences was the question of the wine of the Sacrament, one that had caused division already in other Societies and at other times, and which would do so again. Mr. Hickman came firmly to believe that none but fermented wine must be used, while on the other hand, Mrs. Hart, President of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and, in common with most members of the Noar family, a lifelong opponent of the use of alcoholic beverages for any purpose, together with some others, notably in later years Mr. A. C. Uren, opted equally strongly for freedom of choice. The proverbial irresistible force thus met the immovable object, inevitably with some repurcussions in the little circle.

Nevertheless, under H. W. Hickman the Perth Society in general constituted a tightly knit group of New Church worshippers and students, loyal and devoted to their leader. The consolidation of the young Society, only just more than four years old when he came to Perth, was truly a team effort, with every member involved.

Of those who were most actively and continuously engaged in the various ancillary functions, the names should be recorded of Mr. J. C. Lyons, son of Mr. Hart's partner of 1901, as Chairman of the Committee; Mr. Stanley Royce, who, although he had insisted on being married in his own Anglican Church, had afterwards enthusiastically embraced the New Church faith of his wife, formerly Florence Hurman; two others of the daughters of Henry Hurman, Mrs. Meacham, Sunday School Superintendent for 13 years, and Mrs. Williams; Miss K. Noar, also Sunday School Superintendent, for 8 years; Mr. E. W. Hart; Mr. F. L. Ellis; and Mr. John Pickles. Long-serving in office amongst these were Mr. Royce, Secretary for 18 years, Mr. Ellis, Treasurer for 24 years, and Mr. Hart, a Committee member for more than 40 years.<sup>(a)</sup>

At the 1939 Conference, the Perth Society presented an application for Mr. Hickman's ordination, and although this had the support of the two Ministers present, and was recommended by a Committee of the whole Conference, it was later denied in open Conference by one vote, with one abstention, to the considerable disappointment of the Perth Society. At the next Conference, which on account of the intervention of the World War did not come until 1946, a similar application was again refused. From this time the subsidy to the Perth Society was increased to £110 p.a.

By this time there had been changes in Perth, and some conflict over several matters, but particularly as mentioned above, concerned with the use of fermented wine in the Sacrament, and with the strong desire of some to see the ordination of the Leader. These factors, together with the expenses and difficulties attached to the sending of delegates on the long journey to the eastern States, resulted in the unusual situation that at the 1946 and 1949 Conferences the Perth Society was represented by Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Horner of Melbourne, who lived 2,000 miles away, and had never resided in Western Australia. They had resigned from the Melbourne Society and joined that in Perth in order to be able more effectively to help one so distant and so isolated, more especially in the matter of Mr. Hickman's ordination. Mr. Horner himself had at one time been a Minister of the British Conference. He and his wife later joined the General Church Society at Hurstville, N.S.W.

(a) Mr. Pickles died in 1943, and Mr. Lyons, suddenly, on January 1st, 1952.

Welcome newcomers in 1949 were Mrs. Mary Booth, from the Southport, England, Society, and her three children. Mrs. Booth became organist in succession to Mr. Ellis, and also acted as Sunday School teacher and Superintendent, and President of the Women's League. Of her two sons, the elder, David, was to be briefly Leader of the Society in 1970-71, and the younger, Andrew, the Society's Treasurer. Her daughter, Elizabeth, became the wife of Mr. Bruce Jarvis, of the Brightlingsea, England Society.

Four years later, in May, 1953, there was another accession, with equally lasting effects, when Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Uren signed the membership Roll. They had been brought up respectively in the Salvation Army and the Methodist faiths, and had been first interested in the Doctrines by Mr. Hickman, in c. 1950. For them, as for so many others who have come into the New Church in adult life, the new teachings "meant a spiritual revolution — the body of Doctrine contained in the Writings of the New Church is the Pearl of Great Price which is ever available for our spiritual enlightenment and progress towards the life of Heaven". Mr. Uren immediately became Secretary of the Society, a position which he retained until 1974. They brought into the Church with them a large family, and their son-in-law, husband of their daughter Joy, became the Leader of the Society in 1973, and in 1978, Rev. Trevor Moffat.

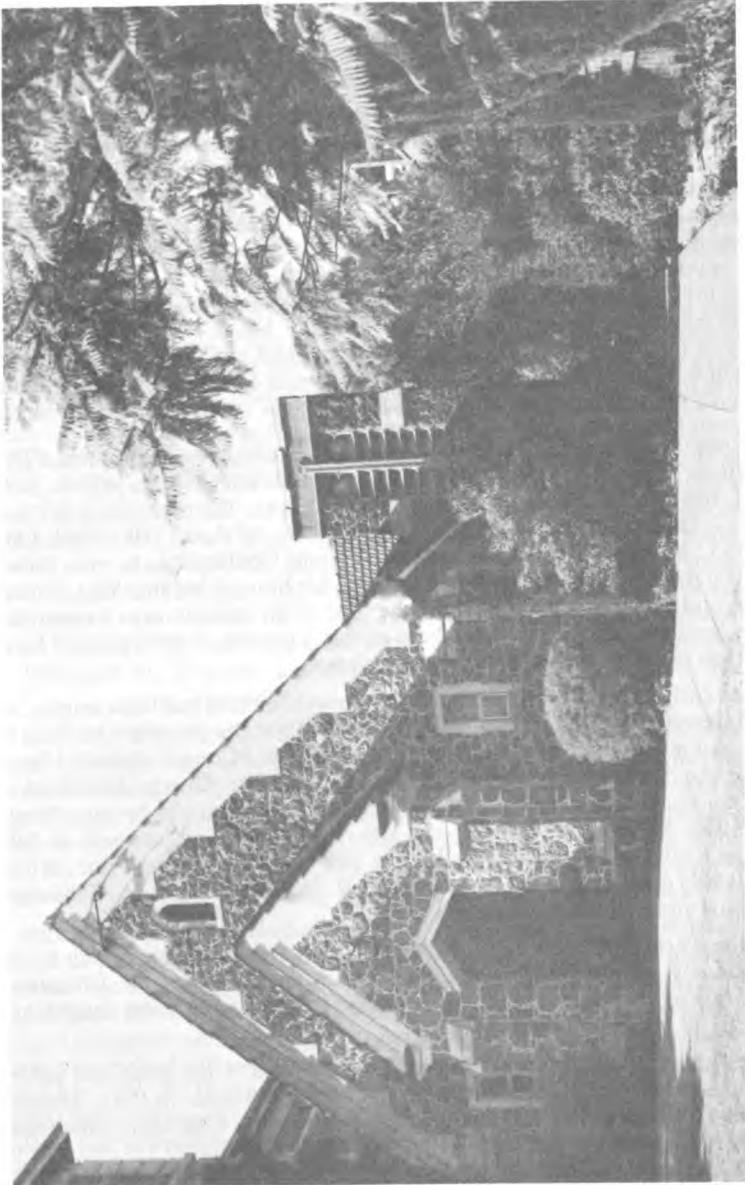
It was not until the 1952 Conference, after Mr. Hickman had submitted a Thesis to Rev. Arthur Clapham, Principal of the New Church College, which had been approved, that Mr. Hickman was to be ordained a leader. The ceremony was carried out by Rev. C. D. Brock, President of the Association, on April 17th, 1952. On April 12th, 1955, in the course of the next succeeding Conference, he was ordained a Minister by Rev. E. L. Bennett, then President. He himself became Vice-President in that year, and President in 1968. From the time of his ordination as Leader in 1952, the Perth Society was granted subsidy to enable payment of the Ordained Leader or Minister, on the same terms as the other Societies.

From as early as 1927 a suitable site for a Church in Perth had been sought, and the 1930 Conference offered a loan of up to £1,000 for the purchase of land for the purpose. But it was not until 1935, when the Association Council allocated the sum of £5,000 to the Society from the £12,000 grant from Mr. George Marchant for the purpose of erecting Churches and Manses, that there could be any thought of building. The Society then purchased a site in a central City location, in Adelaide Terrace, at a cost of £1,200. A Church was built, of local laterite stone, at a cost of £3,686. It was opened and dedicated by Rev. R. H. Teed on Sunday, February 25th, 1940, with a congregation estimated at nearly 80.

Thus the Perth Society achieved its first Church in the same month as did the Sydney Society, nearly 70 years its senior. On the day following the dedication, Mr. Teed solemnized the marriage of Mr. Hickman to Phyllis, the elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Hart.

Lawns, gardens and trees were quickly established at the front and behind the Church, planted largely by Mr. Hickman and Mr. Bob Royce. In 1941, a Manse was bought, in Strathcona Street, West Perth, for £976, or a total cost, with associated expenses, of £1,100.

This Church, of attractive appearance, with pleasant surroundings, and set on the edge of the city, became a popular venue for wedding ceremonies for people in no way connected with it, and often not associated with any Church. This function was discontinued in 1968, under Rev. N. E. Riley, who solemnized marriages only of



*The Adelaide Terrace Church, Perth.*

members, and under the Leadership of Mr. David Booth; but was resumed under the Leadership of Mr. Trevor Moffat and continued under the Ministry of Rev. E. B. Williams, although falling off with the increasing popularity of civil and outdoor weddings. Its extent may be seen from the fact that from January 1st, 1955 to December 31st, 1966, a period of twelve years, no less than 1,010 weddings were celebrated there. Under Mr. Williams, in the years 1976-77-78, there were still 162.

The Perth Society Youth Group was formed in 1947 with four members, very soon reduced to one. This lone member, Valerie Ellis, in the true tradition of the Perth Society, did not abandon the project, and was gradually able to recruit others. The objects of the Group were:

- To receive instruction in the New Church Doctrines.
- To meet for the purpose of enjoying social delights.
- To promote the welfare of the New Church in Perth.

Meetings were held when possible, and later regularly. Membership was initially for the age group 12-21; and afterwards there was also a senior branch, for those aged 20-30. Mr. Hickman for several years from 1948 brought out a journal for the Group, under various titles.

By 1963, the Youth Group was able to hold a 'Camp' in the suburban home of Mr. and Mrs. David Booth with an attendance of twelve, and coinciding with a Presidential visit to Perth by Rev. C. V. A. Hasler, of Brisbane. Weekend or longer Camps at various places were thereafter continued annually, and culminated in the national Summer School held at Pt. Peron, some 25 miles south of Perth in December-January 1973-74, which eclipsed in attendance the Woori Yallock Summer Schools in Victoria, by attracting 86 residents, with other families camping nearby and attending the sessions; and still others visiting from Perth. An attraction of this School, rather than a disability, was the adventure of the long motor drive for residents of the eastern States. No less than 10 cars made the 4,400 mile return journey from Melbourne, and one or two even further from Sydney. This also at a time when 300 miles of the trip each way was made on an unpaved and exceedingly rough road surface.

The Perth Society perhaps really came of age, although now established for 30 years, when for the first time the Australian Conference was held there in 1958. But certainly it had been growing all the time, in strength and in numbers, slowly maybe but surely; and at a time when other Australian Societies were perceptibly declining, Perth was quietly increasing. Membership rose under H. W. Hickman's Leadership and Ministry from 23 to 38. Average attendances at the evening Worship nearly doubled in the same time, from c. 14 to c. 28. This increase came in the main from the Sunday School and from marriages of members, thus demonstrating the capacity of the Society to recruit from these sources.

#### REV. N. E. RILEY

When Mr. Hickman retired at the age of 70, in February, 1968, having served the Church in Perth for 36 years, Rev. N. E. Riley, with his wife and family, came to Perth from the Chester, England Society, to take over the pastorate. He had been only a short time at Chester, and that Society was greatly saddened by his departure. His Ministry had been "One of the happiest in the history of the Society . . . He . . . quickened our sense of purpose . . . and created a feeling of unity within the Church and with its outside associations. He joined in our social life, and pleased everyone. He was presented with a cheque which carried with it the sincere appreciation of all."

He in his turn presented to the Society and dedicated, an Altar Bible, and another Bible for the use of the Sunday School. The following verses were written by Mrs. Riley for the Chester Society's Manual:

#### REMEMBERING CHESTER

It is with sadness and a heavy heart, I find  
 I leave this tiny dot upon the earth,  
 And search for everything I leave behind:  
 For kindness, love, sincerity and worth.  
 Our paths may differ, as from time to time  
 We move among the people far away;  
 Yet forever will this heart of mine  
 Remain in Chester on a warm and pleasant day.  
 I'll see it all as if I'm really here,  
 And think of many friends that once we knew,  
 Of happy times and all the things that cheer;  
 But most of all I know I'll think of you.

Mr. Riley was inducted into his new pastorate by Rev. J. E. Teed on May 3rd, 1968, and he and Mrs. Riley and their three small daughters settled happily into the life and work of the Perth Society.

In 1970, the triennial Australian Conference was held in Perth. This meeting was of historic significance in being the first and only Conference ever held in Australia at which each of the five Societies was represented by its own Minister, and also from the fact that there were in all eight New Church Ministers present, three of them being retired.

Mr. Riley was one who had certainly embraced the General Church view of the Writings as being the Word. He had been brought up in and had ministered to, the Church in Britain, where a quite liberal view of divergence of thought on this subject had been taken in the British Conference organisation. In Australia, unlike Mr. Billings in Adelaide in 1905, he had not attempted to impose his views upon his Society. But there was to be a repetition of the 1905 clash between the proponents of the two points of view, when Mr. Billings had resigned from the Conference after it had declined to debate the issue; and that of 1936, when the Brisbane Society had seceded from the Association after the Conference had declined to pass a motion "publicly dissociating itself from the teaching of the General Church".

Consequent upon a prolonged discussion in the pages of *The New Age*, in which Mr. Riley himself took no part, the Council of Ministers, at its meeting on March 26th, 1970, immediately prior to the opening of the Conference, passed the following Resolution, which it subsequently caused to be printed in the journal, "The Council of Ministers, having given full consideration to the question of the status of the Writings, reaffirms that, in the terms of the Declaration of Faith in the Articles of Association, the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God as stated in Arcana Coelestia 10,235; and that in the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg the Lord has revealed the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem."

At the close of the Conference Mr. Riley resigned his pastorate. At the request of his Committee he devoted the next (May) issue of his Perth Letter to a lengthy statement explaining the reasons for his faith in the Writings as the Word; and in the preamble, an explanation of his resignation:



L. to R.: Standing — Rev. N. E. Riley, Rev. J. A. Arnold, Rev. E. B. Williams, Rev. J. E. Teed. Seated — Rev. R. H. Teed, Rev. E. L. Bennett, Rev. H. W. Hickman, Rev. B. S. Willmott.



*The City of Perth from King's Park. Courtesy W.A. Govt. Travel Centre.*

. . . ‘First an explanation about the subject dealt with in this edition of the Perth Letter.

It is my firm belief that the Lord is the Word, and because all revelation from Him is the Word with us, I therefore believe the Word to be contained in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and in the Revelations of the Second Advent, which constitutes the Third Testament . . . Following the last Conference, at which a remark was made that this Association does not believe the Writings to be the Word, I informed your Committee of my intention to withdraw from the Association and from Leadership of this Society, since I believe that all teaching must be from no other source than the Word, and it is not my wish to act contrary to what is considered to be the foundation of belief of the Organisation in which I serve, nor has it ever been my practice to compel others.

Your Committee has requested that I should present to the members what is meant by the Writings as the Third Testament, that all may know what is involved . . .

Mr. Riley joined the Nova Hierosolymna organisation, and had some support from a few members of the congregation of the Perth Church. He set up ‘The Swedenborg Association of Western Australia’ and engaged in doctrinal classes and Missionary work in Perth for a short time. He afterwards went to the U.S.A., where in 1978 he became a Minister of the General Church.

#### MR. D. R. BOOTH \*\* MR. T. A. MOFFAT \*\* REV. E. B. WILLIAMS \*\* THE PT. PERON CAMP

On the resignation of Mr. Riley, Mr. D. R. Booth held the office of Leader for several months. He was succeeded by Mr. T. A. Moffat, a son-in-law in the large family of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Uren.

In 1972, Rev. E. B. Williams, then serving in Melbourne, saw the need of the Perth Society, and accepted appointment to the vacant pastorate, taking up his new duties in January, 1973. At the Conference of that year Trevor Moffat was accepted as a prospective student for the Ministry, and in August, 1974 he left with his family for training in the New Church College in Britain. He was ordained a Minister in July, 1978.

The Perth Society had been given authority by the 1973 Conference to sell its Manse, the property of the Association, and to buy a more modern dwelling for the purpose. In October, 1973, with the arrival of a Minister now anticipated, it was sold, for \$15,427, and a new home bought, in the suburb of Dianella, for \$26,500. Fortunately, the additional cost was able to be met largely from the proceeds, amounting to \$11,760, of the compulsory acquisition by the Perth City Council of a strip of land in front of the Adelaide Terrace Church, for road widening purposes.

Early in Mr. Williams’ pastorate, the Society had the exhilarating experience of organising and hosting the record-breaking Pt. Peron Camp, December-January, 1973-74. Otherwise the pastorate saw the Society, the youngest in Australia by 55 years, steadily progressing. A feature of these later years has been the large number of baptisms, and the flourishing Sunday School of up to nearly 30 scholars, many of them descendants of the Hart and the later Booth and Uren families, and augmented by that of Rev. E. B. and Mrs. Williams.

With a total membership of 38, and maintaining strong attendance figures with an average of 26 adults plus 14 children for the year 1979, the Perth Society has ample reserves of dedicated younger members. Despite the intended removal of its Minister to the Brisbane Society in March, 1981, it has every reason to look to the future with confidence.

## TASMANIA

No New Church Society has been established in the island State of Tasmania.

However, as early as 1841 there was one settler, Commander Frederick Augustus James Bowen, R.N., who is known to have been a student of the Doctrines. He was a godson of the Duke of Sussex, and had served in the Naval Survey Branch in North America and in Africa. He arrived in the year mentioned in his private yacht, the 'Proserpine', and lived most of his life in Launceston, where he was made a Justice of the Peace. He died in 1876, and his widow Fanny (she afterwards re-married twice, and died in England) in her will made in 1880, left land on the Esplanade in the township of St. Helens, at George Bay on the eastern coast of Tasmania, "to the New Church, for the erection of a place of worship", her two eldest sons to be the trustees. The Commander owned 20 acres in the district, but the area bequeathed to the New Church is not known, nor can anything be discovered as to its reversion. The eldest son, Mr. Fred. Bowen, who lived for a time, and married, in Footscray, Melbourne, is mentioned in the Directory of the Association until 1889.

Volumes of 'The True Christian Religion' were sent to an unknown recipient in Hobart by the Melbourne Society in 1872; and in 1879 an appeal for financial assistance was made to the same Society by a Mr. Percy "near Hobart Town", though no assistance was given.

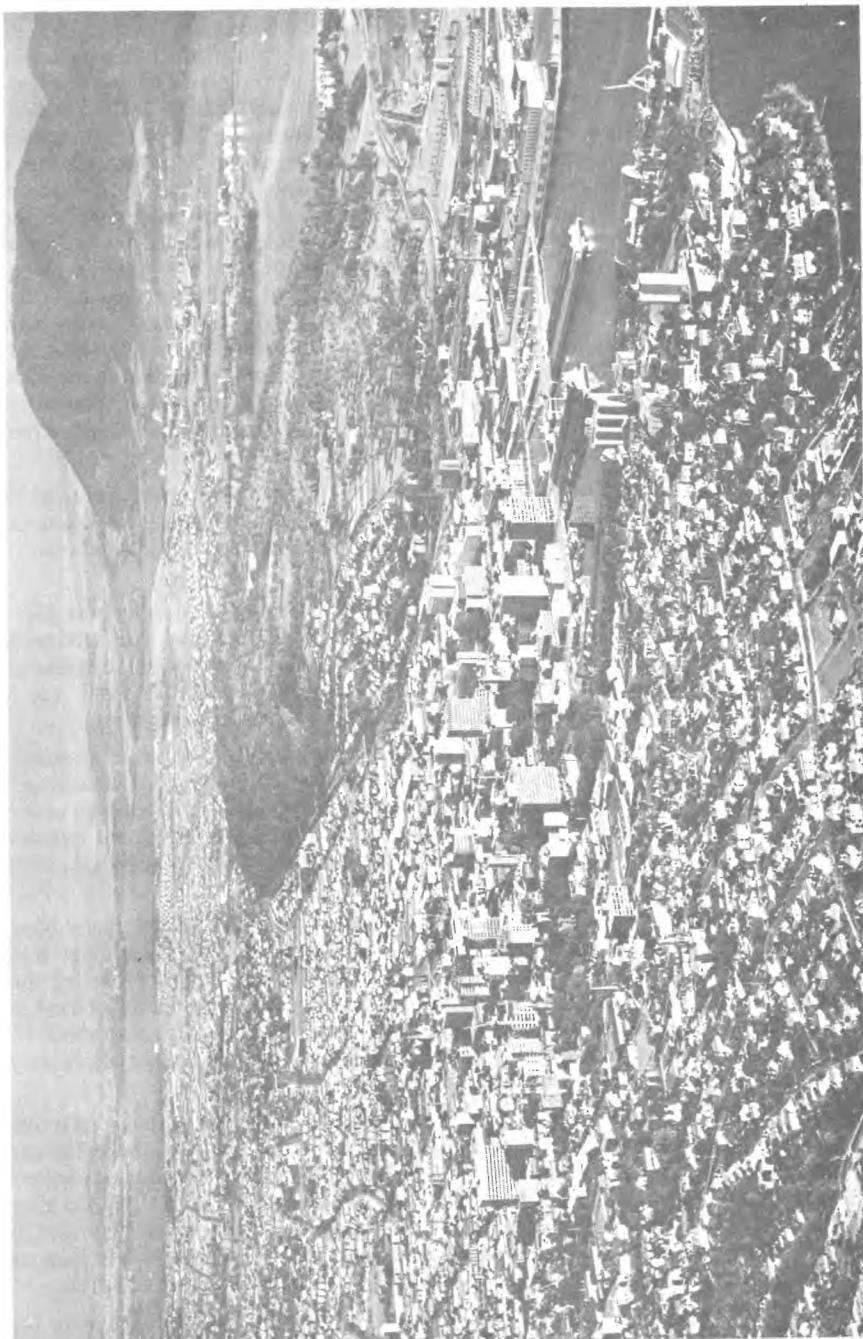
The earliest member of a New Church Society to reside in Tasmania was Mrs. Gerald (Sarah E.) Fitzgerald nee Wheatley, of the Adelaide Society. She lived with her husband a commercial traveller, in the Devonport area of northern Tasmania c.1879-1888. In 1890 she joined the Melbourne Society, and from 1903 was a member of the group meeting under Mr. Hurman in Perth, Western Australia.

In March, 1888, there was published in the Launceston 'Daily Telegraph' an article giving an outline of Swedenborg's life, and commenting favourably on his teachings; and in 1892 Mr. W. H. Browne, a farmer, of Hobart, met Rev. J. J. Thornton of the Melbourne Society and complained that in the Hobart Public Library there was not one copy of any of Swedenborg's works. He offered to take charge of a New Church library there. This was established, on a small scale, in 1893.

In 1904, Mr. Bagley was lecturing in Launceston on the Doctrines of the New Church. The 1912 Census records that there were 4 members of the New Church in Tasmania. One of these may have been Mrs. J. T. Robinson, nee Noar, of the Melbourne Society, who settled there in May of that year, and returned to Victoria in 1927. In 1929, known New Church adherents in Launceston were Mr. Law, Mr. J. E. Brown and Mrs. and Miss Ainsworth; thought it is not known whether or not they were members of any New Church organisation.

For any further known interest in the Doctrines in Tasmania we have to move forward until 1972. In that year, on February 29th, Rev. I. A. Arnold, then Minister of the Adelaide Society, in the course of a visit to his sister, Mrs. Spencer, advertised and addressed a very small meeting of several people on the subject of Life after Death. Later in the same year he formed the 'Hobart New Church Circle', to meet in his sister's home, although this again attracted only one or two. Mr. and Mrs. Spencer moved to Brisbane in 1979, where they attended the Brisbane Society's Church.

Hobart, Tasmania, does however have one distinction which accords it a place for all time in the history of the New Church in Australia. From January 30th until



Hobart, Tasmania. Courtesy Tasmanian Govt. Tourist Bureau.

February 27th, 1973, it hosted the first ever 'Swedenborg Exhibition', opened by the Swedish Ambassador to Australia, Mr. Per Anger.

Noticing thus this brief but never to be forgotten moment of glory of the smallest State and the southernmost city, we conclude the story of New Church activity in each of the States of the Australian Commonwealth separately, and turn to an examination of the foundation and the fortunes, the triumphs and the traumas, of the first 100 years of the continent-wide co-ordinating and co-operating Company, The New Church in Australia.

## THE ASSOCIATION – ‘THE NEW CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA’

When Rev. J. J. Thornton came to Australia in 1878, one of the earliest projects to which he turned his attention was the formation of an Australia-wide organisation of the New Church, distinct from, or embracing, the four quite separate and independent State (Colonial) Societies then in existence; and he must be regarded as the Founder of what is now the Limited Company, The New Church in Australia, known for convenience as the Association.

Mr. Thornton saw the formation of such a co-ordinating and unifying body as a necessity for the orderly completion of the external structure of the Church in the Australian continent, and he found the Societies co-operative. The first formative meeting was held in the Church of the Melbourne Society from Saturday the 5th, to Wednesday the 9th of February, 1881.

How Mr. Thornton achieved the realisation of his dream, the character of the organisation that he created, and the record of its activities and achievements, culminating with the approach of the celebration of its Centenary in January, 1981, must be told here more briefly and concisely than its importance might seem to require. Yet since it was formed from the pre-existent Societies, and to serve their ends and those of their members, its *effects* have largely been told in the preceding chapters. It will most probably be found to be true also to say that its full potential is only now, at the close of its first century, about to be realised; that the seedling planted 100 years ago is about to flower.

At that first meeting the objects of the new body were set out as being, in brief, the promotion of religion, the dissemination, sustaining and upholding of the Doctrines of the New Church, admission into the Ministry, and the sustentation of Ministers and Missionaries; and the erection of places of Worship. A further or ancillary use has been the publication of a Journal.

The name resolved upon was ‘The Australasian Conference of the New Church’. (On early letterheads, before Federation, it was sub-titled ‘An Intercolonial Association’). There were two Ministers present, Rev. J. J. Thornton and Rev. E. G. Day of Adelaide, and four Representatives: James Hastwell, from the Adelaide Society, Francis Blower Gibbes of Melbourne, and Dr. Henry Willan Jackson and Dr. John le Gay Brereton, of Sydney; but the latter representing both Sydney and Brisbane Societies. Mr. Thornton was elected President and Ordaining Minister, and Mr. W. E. Adcock, of Melbourne, Secretary and Treasurer.

Membership, as provided in the Memorandum of Association, and defined or modified in various Articles (some of later date), consists of members ex-officio in virtue of their being either Ministers, Missionaries or Leaders “in connection with and recognised by” the Association, Representatives elected by an affiliated Society, or Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and receivers of the Doctrines who may be elected for a specified term.

At the first sitting there were about 50 ‘members and friends of the New Church’ present, all of whom voted on every Motion, all of which were passed unanimously. They related mainly to affirmation of a belief in the Second Advent, the Internal Sense of the Word, the Divinity of the Lord, the necessity of Repentance, a new life from the Lord and good works; to the basis of membership as being a belief in the Doctrines of the New Jerusalem; and to the name of the organisation.

It was resolved that recognised Ministers should be ex-officio members, and ‘That any person of the age of twenty, of either sex, who shall be in harmony with the three essentials of the New Jerusalem, as set forth in Minute 15, (D.P.259), shall, on expressing a desire to do so, become an associate member of this Conference on subscribing a sum equal to not less than one shilling a quarter; but this, without his being elected, or delegated, by some society belonging to this Conference, shall not entitle anyone to vote as a Representative.<sup>(a)</sup>

1,000 copies of the Minutes were printed; the minutes themselves being preceded by 14 pages of selected passages from the Word and the Writings, . . . “setting forth the will and purpose of the Lord, in the establishment of His Church at this day”; with this Note from the compiler (Rev. J. J. Thornton, assisted by Rev. E. G. Day and Dr. Brereton):

“We record the above selections with the view of showing the evidence, both Scriptural and theological, which has led us to the formation of a General Body of the New Church in Australia. We are not actuated by any sectarian aim, but are in love to all mankind, and we believe that by these means the Lord will make the receivers of the New Jerusalem more universally useful to the human race.

“Our hearts are penetrated with a sense of deep humiliation before the Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty God, and with a confession that of ourselves alone we are nothing but evil, and that our natural desires and inclinations would lead us into sin and shame before Him.

“But we rely entirely on His Divine Love and Wisdom opened before us in the Holy Word — treasures into which we have as yet, scarcely entered — paths of peace and good-will in which we hope to follow Him, and in which we may adore Him, and ascribe to Him alone the merit and the praise of that salvation which He provides for all men.

“We especially pray that we may be preserved in a state of heavenly meekness, teachableness, and obedience towards the Lord, so that for the future, we may be led by Him, and receive from Him whatsoever He wills and provides, both in time and to eternity, and employ the same for the good of mankind.”

The second Conference was held in Sydney in May, 1883, in the New Temperance Hall, Pitt Street, in which the Society was at that time worshipping. At this Conference there were four Representatives from the Sydney Society, two each from Melbourne and Brisbane, and one from Adelaide. Rev. E. G. Day became President. An Executive Committee was set up, the forerunner of the later Council. Membership of the Conference was again under consideration; and the awkwardness of arranging for membership without voting powers, which was to continue as a recognised difficulty for a century. The following Resolution was carried:

“That all persons who acknowledge the three essentials of the Church, viz., 1st, the acknowledgement of the Lord’s Divinity; 2nd, the acknowledgement of the Holiness of the Word; 3rd, the Life which is called Charity; and who have not yet connected themselves with any Society or congregation belonging to the Conference, may, upon giving their assent to its constitution, become members by vote of Conference; but in relation to such matters as pertain to the Societies themselves, they shall exercise no voice or vote.”

(a) The total membership of the four Societies was 258.

At this Conference, on the application of the Brisbane Society, Mr. W. A. Bates was ordained a Minister by Rev. J. J. Thornton. Mr. George Decimus Meek, of Southport, England (later Rev. G. Meek), wrote, offering himself for the Ministry of the New Church in the Colonies.<sup>(a)</sup> His application was supported by Rev. Charles Garrett, President of the British Wesleyan Conference and by two New Church Ministers, one of them the Rev. Joseph Ashby. Attention of the Societies was directed to his "manifest willingness and fitness".

Conference also recorded its conviction that a specifically New Church translation of the Scriptures was required.

Another Resolution, on the plane of social reform, was "Reference having been made to the second Annual Report of the New Church Temperance Society in England, this Conference Resolves: That in view of the immensely prevailing evils arising from the intemperate habits of a large part of our population, this Conference would rejoice to see Temperance Societies established in Australia on the same basis as that connected with the British Conference of the New Church."

At the third Conference, in 1887, at Adelaide, there appears for the first time the name of Daniel Ashby, as a representative of the Sydney Society. He was to be a member of 11 Conferences in all, and Secretary of the Association for 40 years consecutively.

Steps were taken towards Incorporation, and a Committee was appointed, under Mr. Justice Mein, a judge of the Queensland Supreme Court, and a member of the Brisbane Society.

Another far-reaching step was the decision, acting on the suggestion originally made by the Adelaide Society as early as 1879, that a Conference journal should be established, and that its title should be 'The New Age'. Mr. W. J. Spencer of Sydney, a newspaper manager, was appointed the first Editor, and the first number came out in November, 1887. It has appeared regularly without interruption since; for the greater part of the time monthly, but later bi-monthly.

At this meeting also the name of the organisation was changed to 'The Conference of The New Church in Australia'. There was afterwards some misunderstanding over this, since it excluded New Zealand. Mr. Thornton replied that New Zealand had been invited to send representatives to the Conference but had not responded, and he did not want to be held to have usurped their right of choice.

Conference recorded its gratification that Temperance Societies were now established in the Societies. The strength of these might be gauged from the Adelaide Society statistics, which show that at this time it had 31 members living in the Adelaide district, and that its Temperance Union had 24 adult members, with about 34 children attending the Band of Hope (junior branch) in connection with it. The Sacrament in Adelaide was given only in unfermented wine; this also applied in the Sydney Society.<sup>(b)</sup>

By 1889, when the next Conference was held, there had been and still continued, in Britain, a great deal of argument on the respective merits of fermented and un-

(a) *It was not at all uncommon in Britain for a layman to be appointed Minister of a Society, and sometimes even given the courtesy title of Minister; as Mr. W. A. Bates was in Brisbane. In 1884 Mr. Meek presented to the New Church in Australia his English (A.V.) edition of the Bible, incorporating the Apocrypha. His application to the Adelaide Society in 1889 has already been noticed.*

(b) *Every New Church Society in Britain also had either its Temperance Society or Band of Hope, or at least a corresponding member, as also had most of the Dissenting Churches in both countries.*

fermented wine for use in the administration of the Sacrament. Two New Church periodicals, 'The Dawn' and 'Morning Light', were largely devoted to advocacy of the latter; and a pamphlet, 'The Quartet Pamphlet', had been issued by four prominent Ministers advocating the former. Although the debate was about 'Temperance' (really, it was about Total Abstinence) it raged at times most intemperately. Unwisely, as some members clearly saw, the English controversy was brought into the deliberations of the Australian Conference. Mr. Thornton, while "viewing the Temperance movement as one among several other great social reforms which the Church would certainly aid by the spiritual life descending into her from the Lord," moved "That the wine question having been brought before this Conference, and the discussions on the subject elsewhere [Britain], having been received with great pain, this Conference desires to express its deep regret at the effort made to erect teetotalism into an apparent dogma of the Church, and to intrude it as a practice over the Holy Supper of the Lord". (Conference, as already reported, had endorsed the Temperance Societies, in 1883.)

In the course of debate one member described unfermented wine as 'wash', another said that its use in the Sacrament was an objectionable practice, another said "teetotalism is an absurdity" and "the tyranny of teetotallers must be resisted", and one wrote afterwards of teetotallers "thrusting the vile stuff they do on the Communion Service."

The Motion was carried, and immediately raised a storm, both in Australia and in Britain, which extended beyond the New Church, and into unconnected Temperance journals, and even into the Melbourne daily newspapers. It brought a flood of protest letters to the Editor of The New Age (Mr. Thornton), including those from William Holden, Jacob Pitman, Miss Emma Holden, and Ernest Braby of the Sydney Society, who had himself been Secretary of the New Church Temperance Society in Britain and had organised affiliated groups in many of the Societies there. He vehemently denied the accusations that had been made by Mr. Day at the Conference, and asserted categorically that no attempt was ever made by any members of the Temperance Societies to enforce their views or practice on others. Rather, the thrust had come from the other direction entirely.

Sydney Society submitted a 'Memorial' to the following Conference, when a conciliatory Resolution was passed.

It was able to be reported to this Conference (Melbourne, 1889), that Incorporation had been achieved on May 7th, 1888. The Registered Limited Company now became 'The New Church in Australia'. It was still referred to loosely as 'the Conference', but is now more correctly known, briefly, as 'the Association'. There were 17 original subscribers, who thus legally formed the Company. The Articles had been drawn up, and the legal work done, without charge, by Mr. Justice Mein of Brisbane, and Henry Speed of Geelong, an attorney of the Supreme Court of Victoria and a member of Melbourne Society.<sup>(a)</sup>

Daniel Ashby, now resident in Melbourne, became Secretary, a position he was to hold until 1929 (having been re-appointed at the last Conference before his death [1929] he in effect died in harness.) Mr. Thornton was now Editor, Mr. Spencer having retired from the position after a few months.

(a) *Since three of the subscribers were Messrs Keen, Swift and Speed, and one of the witnesses Mr. Hast(e)well, a wit remarked that the Association should make excellent progress.*

The Conference that was to have been held in Brisbane in 1892 had to be postponed because of the great commercial depression, and was eventually held in Sydney, in 1896. By this time, Mr. Thornton had left Australia. Rev. W. A. Bates became President and Ordaining Minister. Rev. A. E. Beilby, the new Minister of the Adelaide Society, became Vice-President. It was Mr. George Marchant's first Conference.

By the time of the next Conference, 1899, Mr. Beilby also had gone. He had come, seen, and been conquered, having been married in Melbourne, at All Saints Church, Northcote, to Emily, daughter of the William Darwin who had arrived in Adelaide in 1848, and taken his bride back to Britain. Mr. Bates was left in the "unenviable and painful position of being the only New Church Minister in Australia". He reported to the Conference:

"I have every confidence in asserting from my own personal observation and careful investigation that the New Church in Australia is on the 'upward grade'. Throughout Australia, the signs of the times are replete with assurances that a new and brighter day is dawning for the religious world. Enquiry, Discovery, Progress, are the mottoes of the age in which we live: We see Enquiry and Progress stamped upon everything material, intellectual and spiritual. The cry of the Age is more light! The New Era has commenced in right good earnest! Let us then hope on and work on, and if the results of our labours appear to be small compared with what we consider the magnitude of our efforts, let us not despair or cease to labour . . .".

By the time of the 1902 Brisbane Conference Rev. Percy Billings had taken up the pastorate in Adelaide, although he was not present. Steps were taken towards effecting the transfer of the Registered Office of the Association from the previous home address of Rev. J. J. Thornton to the place of Worship of the Melbourne Society. The intention seems to have been forgotten. The transfer was effected 59 years later, in 1961.

Conference noted with approval the publication of the book 'Spiritual Law in the Natural World', by a Presbyterian Minister of Melbourne, Rev. Hector Ferguson. It contained New Church teaching, and brought a charge of heresy against its author, which was sustained.<sup>(a)</sup>

The number of copies of *The New Age* printed had been reduced from 350 to 225.

The 1905 Conference in Adelaide, was marked by open dissension over the position taken in the Adelaide Society concerning the status of the Writings. It was Mr. Billings' first Conference. He had trained at Bryn Athyn, and was at this time strongly advocating the Academy or General Church view. In Adelaide, although he had come there from the British Conference, he attempted to introduce the General Church belief and practice. The repercussions had already spread not only Australia-wide, but to Britain also. In an attempt to reinforce or justify his position, Mr. Billings now introduced a motion into Conference which affirmed belief in a number of passages from the Writings. When Conference declined to debate the motion, Mr. Billings resigned the office of Vice-President, which he had held for four days, and his membership of the Conference. The Adelaide Society withdrew for a short time from participation in the affairs of the Association.

(a) Mr. Ferguson set up his own 'Independent Presbyterian Church'.

It was reported to this Conference that the new Australian Sunday School Hymn Book, commissioned by the previous Conference and compiled by Messrs. W. A. Bates, Percy Billings, Daniel Ashby and Richard Morse, had been completed, and 500 copies printed. This very attractive little book, bound in green cloth, had an outline map of Australia in red on the front cover, and contained a responsive Opening Order of Service. It was used in the Schools until c. 1950.

By 1909, the Sydney Conference, Mr. Bates had left Australia, and Conference met for the first time without a Minister, there now being none in the country. Mr. Bates had been President continuously for 20 years. Mr. W. J. Spencer, of Sydney, became President and Editor. Conference initiated an enquiry, to be conducted in the four Societies, as to the possibility of their being able and willing to support a Missionary Minister to work in all of them, if one could be obtained. Because all the Societies were separated from each other by distances of 500-600 miles, this proposal was never really attractive or practical, unless possibly for an unmarried man, but it was continually in mind until 1925, when Rev. R. H. Teed came to the Melbourne Society. Conference was also interested in a report that several of Swedenborg's works had been produced in 'The People's Popular Sixpenny Edition', and that upwards of 40,000 copies of them had been sold in America and Europe in 1907 and 1908. A circular advertising them was produced for distribution in Australia.

The Articles of Association were revised by the 1913 Conference, held in Adelaide.

Owing to the incidence of the Great War the next Conference was not held until 1920, in Brisbane, when Miss Kathleen Noar made history by being the first woman to be a member of a Conference. The delegation from Melbourne was Alfred Noar, senr., and his son and daughter, A. H. and Miss K. Noar.

The brief pastorate of Dr. Underwood in Brisbane was noticed.

The Assistant Librarian, E. G. Darwin, reported on the condition of the Conference Library, held in the Vestry of the Adelaide Church: "The good state of the books is possibly due to the fact that once or twice, some years back, some members of our Ladies' Sewing Committee dusted out the shelves, and re-sprinkled the books with Insectibane; and quite recently Miss Ireland and Mrs. Penny were the ringleaders in treating them in the same dusty way". The Association Library and the Archives are still housed in the rooms of the Adelaide Society's Church.

The 1923 Conference was in Melbourne, when Mr. Spencer retired from the Presidency, and was succeeded by Dr. J. H. Bennett, of Melbourne, until 1930; and the next in 1927, in Sydney, at which once again there was a Minister present; Rev. R. H. Teed, of Melbourne. He had now also taken over the Editorship of *The New Age*. Mr. C. D. Brock's application for adoption as a student for the Ministry was approved, the Association undertaking to pay the travelling costs to England of himself and his family, and to pay him £150 p.a. living allowance during his four years' training.

For the first time a Report was made by the Queensland Society's Book Steward, W. A. Wright. He had arranged to have *The New Church Magazine* sent direct from Britain to 37 Libraries throughout Australia, and was canvassing others. He was afterwards appointed, by the Council, Book Missionary to the Association, with his small stipend paid from the M. & M.S. Fund.

In 1930, the Adelaide Conference, Rev. R. H. Teed became President. The new Society in Perth was not yet affiliated, but Mr. and Mrs. Hart being present, were elected members of the Conference. Daniel Ashby, because of failing strength, had had to resign from the office of Secretary, after 40 years, and Mr. A. H. Noar had taken it up. Mr. H. W. Hickman addressed the Conference on his wish to serve the Church in the Ministry. The Conference received the address with pleasure, and recommended that Mr. Hickman move into close association with a Society, where he could undertake further secular education while still acquainting himself more thoroughly with the Doctrines. The Council was empowered to take further action when the time and circumstances were appropriate. The proviso covered both financial and educational exigencies.

But in 1930 the Great Depression was well under way, and the Association's shares in Marchants Ltd. were returning little or no dividends. The Council was therefore unable to finance Mr. Hickman's training in Britain. Shortly after the Conference Mr. Joseph Leech of Brisbane made a similar application. Both men would in all probability have had to engage in secular education before qualifying for admittance to the New Church College in London. The Brisbane Society offered to find £100 towards helping Mr. Leech to so qualify, and the Council offered to add a like amount. To send either man to England was beyond the financial resources for the time being, but the Council pointed out that Mr. Hickman's application had been first received and must be given priority. In the event the passage of time did not bring such financial recovery as to enable either applicant to be sent overseas.

The coming and going of Rev. W. R. Reece, briefly the Minister of the Brisbane Society from 1928 to 1930, had involved the Association in considerable expense.

By the 1933 Brisbane Conference, Rev. C. D. Brock was Minister of the Adelaide Society, the Association having paid his passage back from Britain. He became President. Conference was concerned at the condition of the M. & M.S. Fund. There was yet another economic depression well under way. During the course of this Conference the first Daniel Ashby Memorial Lecture was delivered by Rev. R. H. Teed at the School of Arts.

The Brisbane Society, under Mr. Marchant; or perhaps Mr. Marchant, acting through the Brisbane Society, was still implacably opposed to any apparent approach to General Church standpoints, and to any fraternisation between the two branches of the Church. Rev. R. H. Teed's series of articles of 1931, 'Degrees in the Social Evil', and Mr. Brock's questionnaire with regard to a suggestion that Rev. Cairns Henderson of the Hurstville Society should be invited to address the 1936 Conference, were seen as indicating a softening of opposition. At the Conference, Messrs. Leech and Young, of the Brisbane Society, moved 'That this Conference publicly dissociate itself from the teachings of the General Church.'

On the grounds that the carrying of such a motion would have amounted to a vote of censure against Mr. Teed and Mr. Brock; and even more that it would have denied the fact that in all essentials the Doctrines of the two branches were identical, Conference declined to pass it. Acting upon their instructions, the Brisbane delegation of Mr. Leech, as Leader, and three Representatives, left the Conference. The Brisbane Society withdrew from affiliation with the Association.

Conference met in Sydney in 1939, but again owing to the incidence of war, not then until 1946, in Melbourne. In the meantime, in December, 1945, the Brisbane Society had sought re-affiliation, which had been welcomed and granted by the Council. Mr. Leech, its Leader, became Vice-President. A motion was moved and discussed, but not carried, "That this Conference views with grave concern the present practice of some prominent and official members of Societies continually absenting themselves from New Church public worship". It was agreed instead "That a letter be drafted, setting out the purpose, uses, and benefits, of public worship, to the individual, to the fellow-worshippers, and to the Angels of Heaven; that such letter be signed by the President and Secretary of Conference, and be sent to every member of the New Church in Australia." A Conference Committee for Church Extension was also set up.

The 1949, Brisbane Conference was fateful, in that it saw Rev. R. H. Teed, the senior Minister in Australia, denied a second term in office, and a layman, Mr. Joseph Leech of Brisbane, appointed in his stead. Since he had served only one previous three-year term since his arrival in Australia in 1925, this was a severe disappointment to Mr. Teed, and was seen by many people throughout Australia as a rejection of the priesthood in favour of the laity. There was also the circumstance that his stipend had not been increased in his 24 years' service, even though costs and wages and salaries generally had risen by 30%. The situation of Mr. Hickman, still awaiting ordination in Perth, was also a matter of great concern to many.

These factors, and particularly the first-mentioned, once again brought animated and prolonged correspondence in the pages of *The New Age*, and a polarisation of viewpoints; and contributed heavily to Mr. Teed's decision, in early 1950, to resign from the Melbourne Society in favour of semi-retirement at Albury, N.S.W.

By 1952, with Mr. Teed now no longer in charge of a Society, Rev. C. D. Brock of Adelaide was appointed President, with Rev. E. L. Bennett, now at Melbourne, Vice-President, and Mr. Teed retaining the Editorship of *The New Age*. He also remained a member of the Association, and of Conferences, by virtue of being an accredited Minister. At this Conference, on April 5th, 1952, Mr. Hickman was ordained into the Ministry by Rev. E. L. Bennett, thus following Rev. E. G. Day of Adelaide as one of the two men ordained in Australia without having completed a formal course of training for the Ministry.

As the retiring President at the 1952 Conference, Joseph Leech, Leader of the Brisbane Society reported, in part, as follows:

"In my Report to Conference my main object will be to point out where my observations over the past three years lead me. There has been, in my opinion, little advancement in our Church over this period, due to the misunderstandings, the oppositions and the lack of co-operation that exist. I have asked myself the reason many times, and I can only come to the conclusion that the opposition to myself, a layman, as President, has overshadowed the more important things, and has become a basis upon which all events have been judged. It seems regrettable that this New Church should be subject to so many human failings. I am convinced that there will be no unity within our ranks until our spiritual objects are placed before our material objects . . . I beg of all our members to have vision in the matter of the growth of our Church. There are many who would be receivers of New Church teachings if we could find the means to present them in an understanding manner. We are dealing with myriads of degrees, and each one must be approached in a singular

way. It is of no use to teach that there is but one gateway into the New Church. There must be gateways on each side as in the city of the New Jerusalem. Each of our members is equipped with qualities to do the missionary work of the New Church. It only remains to have the will. I do not believe that the New Church is meant to be above the head of the ordinary individual. It is the Universal Church of the new age, and cannot be confined to any particular state of mind. We must see that the simple and fundamental doctrines revealed through Emanuel Swedenborg are stressed — that there is one God, and that we must live a life of charity and faith. The way and the opportunity will be opened to us if we are willing to accept our responsibilities. I pray that in the future a more tolerant and harmonious attitude may prevail, for this is the only way our Church may survive."

An historic move, indicating as a straw in the wind the changed role of religion in general and of the New Church in particular, was the decision to dispose of the Rodborough Church, Victoria. It was now 76 years since its dedication by Rev. J. J. Thornton and 114 years since Edward Gittins Bucknall had settled at 'Rodborough Vale', with a complete set of the works of Swedenborg and a resolve to read in his family every Sabbath a part of the New Church Order of Worship and a portion of the Scriptures. There was no longer a member of the New Church in the district.

The Church, in 1960, was transferred to the ownership of a family trust, The Association of the Bucknall Family, and became the Bucknall Memorial Church.

By the time of the 1955 Conference at Sydney, Rev. C. D. Brock, appointed President in 1952, had retired from the Adelaide Society, and had left the country. Rev. E. L. Bennett became President. He soon afterwards also became Editor of *The New Age*. Following upon disagreement between the previous Editor and the Publisher (W. R. Horner), in 1953, this Conference appointed an Editorial and Publishing Board, consisting of the incumbent Ministers and Leaders of the Societies. This awkward arrangement was discontinued by the 1958 Conference, which, for the first time, was held in Perth. Rev. H. W. Hickman was elected President. Conference decided that the Daniel Ashby Memorial Lectures no longer served any useful purpose, and asked the Melbourne Society to consider some other type of memorial.

In 1961, Conference again met in Melbourne. Rev. C. V. A. Hasler, the newly appointed Minister of the Brisbane Society, became President. Also present, for the first time, was Rev. J. E. Teed, son of Rev. R. H. Teed, and now Minister of the Sydney Society. A complete updating and re-printing of the Articles of Association was undertaken.

Rev. J. E. Teed was appointed President at the 1964, Brisbane, Conference, and held office for two terms, being re-appointed at the Sydney Conference in 1967. By this time, he was Minister of the Brisbane Society, Rev. B. S. Willmott was the Minister in Sydney, and Rev. E. B. Williams in Melbourne.

Two important new departures resulted from this (1967) Conference. The Ministers of the New Church in Australia were invited to form themselves into a standing Committee, which became the Council of Ministers; and an Australian New Church College Committee was formed "to advise the Association in the setting up of a New Church College, and to advise the Association as to its policy in regard to candidates seeking recognition as Licentiates, Missionaries, Leaders, and Ministers," this last resulting from a Paper presented to the Conference by Mr. D. R. Booth, of the Perth Society.

By the time of the 1970, Perth Conference, Rev. N. E. Riley had become the Minister there, and Rev. I. A. Arnold Minister of the Adelaide Society. This Conference was historic in that for the first and only time each of the five Australian Societies now had its own Minister; and also for the fact that there were in all eight New Church Ministers, three of them retired, members of the Conference. For the third time the question of the status of the Writings arose, this time more exactly at the pre-Conference meeting of the Council of Ministers; although it had previously been discussed over a period of some months by the Council of Ministers and by the Association Council; and in the pages of *The New Age*. The outcome was the resignation of Mr. Riley. The incident seems to have been the result of a fear that he would influence his congregation towards acceptance of the General Church view of the Writings as the Word.

In view of the circumstance now obtaining, that every Society had a Minister, the difficulty was foreseen that if this situation were to continue, there would need to be some machinery or co-operative method, by which it might be arranged that the Ministers would be enabled occasionally, as the wish or the need arose, to exchange pastorates. Accordingly, a Committee was set up to consider whether it was advisable to appoint a Standing Committee. Such a Committee — The Movement of Ministers Committee — was set up by the 1973, Adelaide Conference; by the 1976 Conference it was changed to the office of 'Movement of Ministers Co-ordinator'; and at the 1979 Conference, at the request of the Council of Ministers, this office was vested in the President, for the time being, of the Association. The situation of having a Minister in each Society was short-lived, ending with the resignation of Rev. Norman Riley after the 1970 Conference.

The 1973, Adelaide, Conference adopted a new initiative, first promulgated in 1967, in the setting up of an Australian New Church College. An application was brought before the Conference for acceptance of Mr. T. A. Moffat of the Perth Society, as a student for the Ministry, and was adopted with the intention that he should be trained by the new College. In the event, it was found that the preliminary work entailed in the establishment of the College and its course of study was not sufficiently advanced, and Mr. Moffat trained in Britain, commencing in 1974,

This Conference, 1973, entertained the Governor of South Australia, Sir Mark Oliphant, who addressed the assembly, and was presented with a copy of the book 'The Swedenborg Epic', by Sigstedt. The Secretary, Mr. D. R. Booth, drew attention to the Centenary of the Association, which would occur in 1981. The incoming President, Rev. B. S. Willmott, was directed to give attention to this matter; and the convening of a Convocation, in Victoria, in January of 1981 was resolved upon by the 1976, Melbourne Conference.

By this time, Rev. E. B. Williams, President 1970-73, had transferred to the Perth Society, at the beginning of the latter year; Rev. J. E. Teed from Brisbane to Melbourne in January, 1974; and Rev. I. A. Arnold from Adelaide to Sydney, in February, 1975. Rev. B. S. Willmott had removed to Canberra and had inaugurated there, 'The Swedenborg Association and Canberra New Church Group.'

Since membership of The New Church in Australia had since its inception been effectively limited by the circumstance that membership automatically bestowed voting rights in Conferences, this Conference (1976) set up a small sub-Committee to consider the establishment of a 'Central Register' to which subscribers to the Doctrines might apply for enrolment. The sub-Committee reported to the 1979 Conference, which decided that the Council should be asked to recommend such

alterations to the Articles as would enable all receivers of the Doctrines in Australia to become members of the Association (The New Church in Australia).

This Conference also adopted, without dissent, a recommendation from the Council of Ministers which a few years earlier would have had little or no support. This Resolution, brought forward in the light of the difficulty of obtaining Ministers for the several Societies needing them, requested the Church in Australia to consider the practicability of Ministers trained in the Academy of the General Church in Bryn Athyn, America, serving in Australian Association Societies.

Another new move was the setting up of a Fund, with the legacy of \$2,000 left to the Association in the previous year by Rev. E. L. Bennett, to enable Ministers from time to time to take study leave overseas. Rev. J. E. Feed accepted a second term as President, thus fittingly enabling him to host the January, 1981, Convocation at Merricks, Victoria, and to continue to work towards the success of this venture with the Secretary of the Convocation Sub-Committee, Mr. Neville Jarvis, of Melbourne Society (Secretary of the Association, September 1973-June 1978).

The New Church in Australia has before it at the present time perhaps more far-reaching and significant questions than have yet at one time demanded its attention. The effectiveness and orderliness of its own Constitution and membership; the nature and functioning of its Conferences; the relationship between the individual 'receivers of the Doctrines', the Societies, and the Association; the orders of lay and ordained Ministry; the legal and financial status of Ministers, whether to be under the jurisdiction of the Societies or of the Association, the provision of Ministerial aid to all its Societies; the relationships between its Ministers and Societies and those of the General Church — all of these will occupy it now in these closing years of its first century, and as it enters upon its second.

In concluding this brief account the financial implications of the Association must be noticed. Until 1921 the funds at its disposal were insufficient to provide for any but its own expenses, but since that year the generous provision of capital by Mr. George Marchant has enabled it to subsidise the training and stipends of Ministers, and where required the provision of Churches and manses. Thus its help in this regard is able to be re-directed from time to time predominantly to those Societies able to attract the services of a Minister but otherwise unable to meet the financial commitments involved. Thus while by its Conferences, usually held triennially, the Association brings together for the promotion of goodwill and the interchange of ideas the members of the far-flung Australian Societies, it is at the same time able to contribute to their material needs, having by these means a vital role in the preservation and promotion of New Church organisation throughout the Australian continent.

"Unless there exists somewhere on earth a Church, where the Word is, and where by means of it the Lord is known, there cannot be conjunction with heaven, for the Lord is the God of heaven and earth, and without the Lord there is no salvation." S.S. 104.

"This new and true Christian Church — will endure to eternity, and this was foreseen from the foundation of the world." Coronis, p. 70.

## Biographical Notices

### 1. WILLIAM HOLDEN<sup>(a)</sup>

William Holden was to remain until his death in 1897, one of the staunchest and most devoted stalwarts of the Adelaide Society, serving thus for 55 years. Although it was he who ordained Jacob Pitman, and although he served in many offices, yet he never sought or accepted leadership roles. He was an educated, kindly, and gifted man, and though keeping aloof from disputes and complaints, he never wavered in his faithful allegiance to the Doctrines and to the Society; outstaying or outliving all of his early contemporaries.

In 1841, unable to find suitable work in the city, he bought from Jacob Pitman an allotment from his land grant (Section 824) near the track over the mountains which is now the Grand Junction Road. There, he established a store and butcher shop, and a little farm. By 1844 he had 3 acres of wheat, 2 of barley, a ¼ acre of potatoes, 12 cattle and 2 pigs. He had some knowledge of the German language, and was able to act as interpreter and spokesman for the German settlers moving into the area from nearby Klemzig. He gave the township thus formed its name, "Hope Valley"; now a suburb in the District of Tea Tree Gully. Having one day gone to Adelaide, he came home to find that his home, store and shop had been reduced to ashes by a bushfire, which had also destroyed other local homes. "But", he wrote afterwards, "I could not somehow feel despondent. On the contrary, I felt inspired by hope — hence the name". He rebuilt, and his optimism encouraged others to do the same. He became a leader in the little community; he promoted the first school, and when it was built in 1849, he gave one acre of land, to be divided into three parts, one for a school, "for the education of youth and the spreading of the Gospel", one for a cemetery, and the third for a parking area for the horses serving both, and a playground for the children. The present-day cemetery on the Grand Junction Road, nearly opposite Parcoola Avenue, extends over the whole area. In the same year, he became the first Hope Valley Postmaster.

Early in 1851, Mr. Holden's wife, Sally, was killed in a fall from a horse. She had set out with her son to visit a friend who had a new-born baby. Riding side-saddle, when she fell her foot remained caught in the stirrup. She was dragged and trampled at full gallop for half a mile, and died by the roadside.<sup>(a)</sup> Mr. Holden left Hope Valley in November, and joined the staff of the Adelaide Register. Almost immediately, owing to the depression and the 'yellow fever' he found himself the only reporter left in Adelaide. His successor in the farm and business at Hope Valley was E. G. Day, who also became the postmaster and the third schoolmaster there. William Holden later in life became Vice-President of the Royal Astronomical Society of South Australia. He had re-married, in c. 1854-55. In March, 1896, aged nearly 88, he was knocked down by a cab. He never returned to work at his office, but on partial recovery continued his literary contributions to his newspaper from his home. He died, aged 89½, on October 11, 1897.

### 2 JACOB PITMAN

Jacob Pitman was born on November 28th, 1810, the eldest son of Samuel Pitman, a weaver and woollen miller of Trowbridge, Wiltshire. He had early been apprenticed to a carpenter, and had afterwards trained as a schoolteacher, taking charge of his first school at the age of 19. (He is first recorded in the Rate Book of the City of Adelaide as a carpenter and piano-tuner). Following in the footsteps of their father, he and his brother Isaac became ardent Sunday School teachers in the Baptist faith. Having married a fellow schoolteacher, Emma Hooper, on December 31st, 1833, he later moved to Bath, Somerset, and his decision to emigrate was taken in time of commercial hardship in the West Country caused by the removal of the woollen industry to Yorkshire, where the newly developed power looms were able to take advantage of the local water and coal as sources of power. His 21 years in Adelaide were troubled ones, although at first he had prospered. Five months after his arrival he had commenced working as a carpenter on his own account. He had built his house in the same year; and a few months later he built two more on the same allotment of land, selling one for £350 and letting the other at £1 per week. By the end of September, 1839, he was able to write home that although he had come to Adelaide with nothing except his bundle of timber, yet

(a) It has been thought that the Holden coachbuilding firm was founded by William Holden, but this is not so. That firm was founded by James Alexander Holden, who arrived in Adelaide in 1854, at the age of 20, and who, so far as is known, was not related. His father was E. T. Holden, of Walsall, Staffordshire.

(b) The headstone of her grave may still be seen, one of the earliest in the little cemetery founded by her husband.

"My possessions are now as follows:

8 acres in Prospect Village, value £160; 4 acres in Payneham, value £60; 1½ acres in Walkerville, value £50; ½ acre of No. 773, North Adelaide, value £150; 4 acres in Tam O'Shanter, value £20; ½ acre in Grenfell St., No. 98, leased for 99 years, value £200; 1/8 acre at 84 Rundle St., leased for 21 years, on which we have two houses, value altogether £300; a 40-acre farm in Hindle Vale, 13 miles south of Adelaide, which we have named Holgate Farm [the name was that of his brother Isaac's first wife, nee Mrs. Mary Holgate] value £150.

Before the end of the same year he had also bought two 80-acre sections at Hope Valley. In October he wrote

"Our existence here has been the happiest portion of our lives",

although his wife Emma, in June, 1841 was still able to write,

"... but we have not any intimate friend, not one of whom we could ask a favour of any sort, nor one of whom Mr. P. could ask advice concerning his business; not one that would be a friend in 'need'. I assure you I feel it very much sometimes . . ."

One cannot think that any of the above "possessions" would have been actually paid for. Jacob, as all were who could, was trying to take advantage of Gibbon Wakefield's iniquitous plan of colonisation. Land speculation caused three major depressions within little more than 20 years of the foundation of the Colony. Neither were the values given above the purchase prices, but his estimates of saleable value. For his 8 acres at Prospect, "valued at £160", the purchase price was £8. He also made it clear that all of his property was valueless until capital and labour were available for its development, "when it will return 1,000%". The first depression came as early as 1840, and Jacob Pitman began to surrender his leases. There is no doubt that he then also lost the ability to continue payments on his purchases. His early ambition and haste to amass property seems certainly to have carried him far beyond the bounds of discretion.

In 1843 he was practising as an architect or designer, as well as a builder. He had a part in the building of the first South Australian Parliament House; and he also designed and built the first substantial Post Office. In October, 1843, he was declared insolvent, with debts of £268. (His insolvency was discharged in March, 1846). With him from England he had brought 100 copies of the first shorthand manual(a) published by his brother, and although he had early distributed some of these in official quarters, yet then 'bricks and mortar' took precedence in the colony. Now he was able to get some work as a teacher of the art.

By 1850, the second commercial depression was well under way, and when in 1851 news came of the discovery of gold in Victoria, the exodus caused a critical shortage of men and of trade in Adelaide. The overland route to Mt. Alexander (near Castlemaine, Victoria), was pioneered by the goldseekers, and the South Australian Government sent army engineers to dig a series of seven wells east of the Murray River for the use of travellers. The journey by bullock dray, crossing the River Murray by ferry at Wellington, could be done in just under three weeks. In the summer of 1851-52 it was estimated that 250 drays a month were using the ferry. Many walked the distance of 550 kilometres. One young wife with a small child and a baby, walked from Adelaide to Kilmore, Victoria, to join her husband. Gold was being carted to Melbourne from Ballarat at the rate of two tons per week. To bring some of this wealth back to Adelaide, the South Australian Government offered a higher price for gold than could be obtained in Melbourne or Sydney, and instituted the Ballarat-Adelaide gold escort. Captain Tolmer, in his horse-drawn "strong spring cart", brought back 5,000 ounces on his first trip, as much as he could carry. Thereafter, he made the trip every month, paying a toll to cross the bridge over the Deep Creek to the Bucknall family of Rodborough Vale, and making the journey in eight days.

Jacob Pitman attempted to retrieve his fortunes on the goldfields, as did E. G. Day, and his absence at Melbourne and the 'diggings' was a cause of complaint in the Society, of which he was still Minister. In 1854-55, he turned his attention to bridge building, and he built or supervised the construction of several bridges across the River Torrens, including the railway bridge, and that across the Onkaparinga at Echunga. In 1856 he tendered for the whole construction of the 25-mile Gawler Railway. In 1859 he was again examined in the Bankruptcy Court.

(a) Isaac Pitman had published his first book on shorthand in 1837. He is often said to have been the 'inventor' of the art, although in fact it had been developed, and even perfected, by the ancient Greeks and Romans. In Rome, facility in the art became a prerequisite to promotion in the civil service. The first book published in England (by Dr. Bright), had appeared in 1588, and the New Testament had appeared in this medium in 1659. But Pitman's system followed the first to use sounds rather than words as a basis; that used by William Tiffin in 1750 . . . hence Pitman's name for it 'Stenographic Soundhand', and, later, 'Phonography'. It gave Rev. J. F. Potts the power to complete his monumental 'Concordance'. Unable to continue writing because of manual cramp, he learned Pitman's shorthand, and was thus enabled to finish the work.

Bankruptcy was not the only trouble to come to Jacob Pitman in that year. His eldest daughter, Melissa, one of the two born in England, and a schoolteacher and governess from the age of 16, was engaged early in the year to Claude Lamley Moody, a fellow lodger at a Melbourne boarding-house. Stemming apparently from his affliction with a slight deafness Mr. Moody suffered the gibes of other boarders, and eventually quite unjustified but nevertheless disturbing tales were circulated about him, which reached Adelaide and required rebuttal and protest. (The couple married, and Mr. Moody was briefly a member of the Melbourne Society. He became chief clerk and tax master in the office of the Prothonotary of the Victorian Supreme Court).

In May Mr. Pitman resigned as Minister of the Adelaide Society and left South Australia to settle in Geelong, Victoria, leaving his family to follow. This arrangement had been necessitated by the illness of his daughter Rosella, aged 19, who died on June 17th.

Mr. Pitman's second daughter, Sarah, was married at Geelong by the first Dean of Melbourne, Very Rev. H. B. Macartney, to Rev. H. W. H. Adeney, of St. Peter's, Ballarat, and later Chaplain of the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne; who lived to be, at 97, the oldest Anglican clergyman in Melbourne diocese. Her grand-daughter, as Mrs. Le Couteur, was well known to the children of the present writer as their early schoolteacher. The fifth daughter, and 7th of Jacob and Emma Pitman's nine children, Harriet Lily, became a professional teacher of shorthand, and, at 43, the second wife of George John Ireland. She was the only one of his children to retain association with the organised New Church.

There were perhaps two main causes of Jacob Pitman's early financial troubles. Firstly, his sadly misplaced confidence in the unbroken prosperity of the new colony; and secondly, perhaps firstly in point of importance, his conscientiousness, thorough workmanship, and kindheartedness. He complained that other contractors were habitually quoting with an eye to how much they would be able to 'scamp' the job; and there can be no doubt that such practices would have been widespread in the three periods of severe trade depression that he experienced in Adelaide. At the time of his second bankruptcy, early in 1859, he also claimed that work was often not given him because of his membership of the New Church, which was then under attack in some quarters as a dangerous and mischievous faith. In Geelong he set up in business as an architect and building surveyor. He had a minor part in the designing of the Dennys Lascelles warehouse which still stands on the corner of Moorabool and Brougham Streets, and was responsible for the iron roof of the verandah surrounding the present offices of the Shire of Corio. His fortunes in Geelong were again somewhat mixed, and he was engaged in a (successful) lawsuit for wrongful dismissal as architect of the warehouse mentioned above. He was also more regularly engaged as a teacher of shorthand, both in Geelong and Melbourne. His son, Clarence, afterwards a Melbourne accountant, became Secretary of the Geelong Football Club.

In 1875, at the age of 65, he returned to South Australia to take up a position as Inspector of Public Buildings at Mount Gambier, 280 miles south of Adelaide. He retired to Adelaide early in 1880, where his wife died in Adelaide on June 4th, 1881. In January, 1882, he left Adelaide and made a tour embracing Melbourne, Auckland (New Zealand) and Sydney, lecturing in those cities on the New Church Doctrines and on shorthand. On January 1st, 1883, he was married by Rev. J. J. Thornton, in the Melbourne Society's Church, to a member of the Sydney Society, Catherine Mary, the widow of Paul Wray Hayden, a veterinary surgeon. Her mother, Anne Yates (nee Noton) had been a member of the Derby, England Society. They settled in Sydney, where Jacob, now aged 73, still continued to teach shorthand, and became an examiner in the subject at the Sydney Technical College. He died in Sydney on March 12th, 1890. Here is his obituary notice (in part) from Sir Isaac Pitman's 'Phonetic Journal':

#### OBITUERI

Mr. Jacob Pitman, an elder brother of the editor of this journal, died at Sydney, N.S.W., 12th March, in his 79th year. He was born 28th November, 1810, at Trowbridge, Wilts, and at the age of 12 was apprenticed to a carpenter in his native town. On completing his seven years' apprenticeship he obtained employment in the works of Messrs. Cubitt, Gray's Inn Lane, London, for about three years, and then entered the Training College of the British and Foreign School Society. After a training of about four months, which in those days was the usual term, he took charge of the Duke of Bedford's School at Tavistock. In choosing the profession of a teacher, he followed the example of his younger brother Isaac, who entered the Borough Road Training College in August, 1831, and at the close of the year was appointed master of the British School at Barton-on-Humber. Another brother, Joseph, passed through the College, and took charge of a school at Horton, Bradford. Three sisters of the family were also trained, and appointed to girls' schools, and another sister spent nearly her whole life in teaching. The secretary of the Society, Mr. Dunn, said to the father of this teaching family, "Send me as many more as you can spare".

Mr. Pitman left England in November, 1837, for Adelaide, South Australia. He took out with him 100 copies of his brother's system of shorthand, then just published under the name of "Stenographic Sound-hand". The South Australian Register, in noticing his death, observed that "he was won over by South Australia's early colonists, and did much to cause his name to live in the memory of men over our people". He arrived in the colony in May, 1838, after a passage of six months. Soon afterwards he opened business at the east end of Rundle Street, Adelaide, as an architect and builder. Among the numerous works the superintendent and engineer over which Mr. Pitman carried out, were the old Post Office, now used as a municipal office, the old railway bridge on the Port Lincoln, over the Torrens; the Paradise and Frome-road bridges over the same river; and the bridge spanning the Onkaparinga at Echunga . . . He was a man of strong religious feelings, and of strict integrity, and was highly esteemed by those who were privileged to make his acquaintance . . ."

William Holden later wrote of Jacob Pitman . . . "He was not a good logician. He does not appear to have arrived at a conviction of the truth as understood in the New Church by the tedious and often deceptive process of reasoning from scientific upwards and inwards, but by the perception of its own inherent light and beauty. As a preacher he was neither eloquent nor profound. He wrote his discourses in phonography, and read them slowly and deliberately, so that all might understand them. They were affectionate, simple, and impressive; occasionally disfigured with quaint illustrations, but always instructive and easily remembered. In respect to the New Church Writings, his favourite reading was Heaven and Hell and the Memorable Relations. These latter he was accustomed to refer to as 'stupendous disclosures', 'amazing revelations', and the like; as indeed they really are. He had no difficulty in believing what most minds are an impossibility. In the glorious future our descendants would travel to England and back in a month, daily navigate the air, speak one universal language, populate the most inhospitable deserts of the island continent, and in general gain such complete control over the elements and forces of nature as to make them absolutely subservient to the will of man".

### 3. HARRIET CLISBY

Harriet Jemima Winifred Clisby came to Adelaide in November, 1838, at the age of eight; and when, nine years later, she gave her first press interview, she was able to recall the five months' voyage in detail. Although the family came on a free passage, her father was not without means; but after three years in Adelaide the family went by bullock dray to settle in the Inman Valley, in "a shanty of eucalyptus bark, open at one end for light and air". There, Harriet helped on the farm, hunted possums, and "brought herself up". They returned to Adelaide in 1845, "hoping Harriet would become a lady". They came into contact with the New Church and Mrs. Clisby and their three daughters were re-baptized by Jacob Pitman. From him also Harriet learned shorthand. She went to Melbourne in 1856, and from June, 1857, edited a magazine in shorthand . . . 'The Southern Phonographic Harmonia'. Assisted by Theresa Poole (Chauncy) then briefly living in Melbourne, she conducted a community home for the rehabilitation of women prisoners; and in 1861 collaborated with Caroline Dexter (Harper) in the production of the two numbers of 'The Interpreter', the first magazine published by women in Australia, and devoted to literature, science and art. She also took a two-year course in physiology and anatomy.

At the age of 33 she went to England with the aim of studying medicine. After nursing at Guy's Hospital, she went to New York, and entered the Medical College and Hospital for Women. She gained her diploma in 1865, one of the earliest women to graduate for the medical profession. She practised in Boston, where she made many friends, including Emerson, Longfellow, Henry James Sr., and Henry Ward Beecher. She founded the Women's Free Religious Meetings, which became The Women's Educational and Industrial Union. She retired to Geneva, where she founded L'Union des Femmes; and settled in London in 1911, where she continued to lecture until 1928.

She never lost her New Church faith, and her 100th birthday was celebrated in her home, with an address and prayers by Rev. Charles A. Hall, and with greetings from the King and Queen. Mr. Hall wrote afterwards: "Any poor service that I was able to render paled into insignificance when the aged doctor broke into speech. With real eloquence and prophetic verve she spoke of the best things, illustrating her points by apt quotation. She said some of the wisest things I have ever heard from the lips of human beings. She brought lumps into the throats of all her guests when she spoke of her call to higher service. The Lord had said 'Harriet, I need you'. She made us all feel that to serve the Lord's need and purpose was the greatest thing in life. We felt ashamed of paltry quests and mean aims, for we saw the heavenly splendour. Surely, the Lord is magnified! I left the consecrated room humbly, yet uplifted, and with deepened conviction and resolution".

Dr. Clisby always counted her years in Australia as amongst the happiest in her life . . . "I love Australia. I have always loved it." She died on April 30th, 1931, and her cremation service was conducted at Golders Green on May 5th by Rev. W. A. Presland.

### 4. GEORGE HERBERT POOLE

George Herbert Poole, a teacher of languages by profession, had been first introduced to the Doctrines in London by Rev. Augustus Tulk. His brother had trained as a schoolteacher with Jacob and Isaac Pitman. He came to Adelaide in 1840, and there established or attempted to establish a vineyard. His influence as a New Church Missionary was in time to extend, directly or indirectly to Mauritius, Durban (South Africa), Sydney and Melbourne.

He went to Mauritius following his appointment to the staff of the Royal College at Curepipe, and was the first to bring the New Church to that island. There he first interested three Englishmen, all of whom however left for India; then Mr. J. H. Ackroyd and the brothers Lesage, and through them Mr. Louis Emile Michel. Mr. Michel became his first real convert, and devoted the remaining 36 years of his life to the promotion of his new faith. He contacted M. Le Boys de Guays in France, who sent him copies of the Writings and other New Church works. Mr. Poole moved to Sydney, Australia, in 1850, leaving behind a small band of sympathizers. Mr. Michel organised meetings of these in a house he rented for the purpose. In 1854 he sent a large number of books to a wealthy sugar planter, Mr. Edward de Chazal, and to the Lesage brothers. All of these, after studying the Writings, became fully converted.

Mr. de Chazal commenced family Worship in 1857, and on January 11th, 1859, 'The Society of the New Jerusalem of Mauritius' was formed. A foundation member, and one of the two 'Speakers' then appointed, also afterwards President and Leader of the Society, was Mr. Napoleon Lesage, great-grandfather of Dr. H. R. P. Coutanceau, and progenitor of the Coutanceau, Wu and Wood families, all of the Melbourne Society. When Mr. Poole returned in 1864 he found an established Society, of 75 members (including children) with a Church, its own printed periodical 'The Echo of the New Jerusalem', and its own Liturgy — surely a most phenomenal expansion. The Society was incorporated in 1877. By 1888 congregations were sometimes as high as 110, although the usual figure was much lower, sometimes as few as 30. The Durban, Natal, Society was formed from Mauritius, in 1877-85, by Mr. Auguste de Chazal.

When Mr. Poole moved to Sydney, in 1850, he became a member of the group meeting at the home of Rev. Hugh and Mrs. MacLachlan. He would certainly already have known Mrs. MacLachlan's brother, G. W. Goyder, who had come to Adelaide in 1845. After spending a little time in Sydney, Mr. Poole went to Melbourne and in 1852 returned to England. In 1856, he came back to Launceston, Tasmania, where he married Theresa Walker, nee Chauncy, now a widow, to whom he had already imparted the New Church faith, in Adelaide. They first settled on the land, on the River Leven, where plumbago and tin were found on their property, but sold after several years and went to Victoria. Mr. Poole offered himself to the Society in Mauritius as its Minister. The Society was satisfied that he had all the necessary qualifications, but could not support a Minister. In 1861, Theresa's half-brother, William, then living at Wodonga, interested Mr. Poole in the establishment of a vineyard on the River Murray, and sold him land at Barnawatha for the purpose. Mr. Poole gathered some associates and proceeded with the project, but the venture collapsed in 1864, entailing the total loss of the investment, including all of Mrs. Poole's resources. Mr. Poole returned to his old position in Mauritius, and his wife followed in April, 1865. They engaged in nearly three years of intense activity on behalf of the Society. In 1866-67 both fell ill with malaria, and on partial recovery, took the first opportunity to leave the island, on a boat bound for Calcutta, in July, 1867. They returned to Mauritius, but made their way back to Adelaide by early 1868, and Mr. Poole took a position as a schoolmaster at Navan, near Riverton, some 45 miles north of Adelaide. His health failed soon afterwards, and his wife nursed him through a long illness, until his death on July 29th, 1869. His grave is in the old Riverton cemetery.

It is of interest that it was in Mauritius that General Gordon, of the Taiping Rebellion in China, and of Khartoum, first came into contact with the New Church interpretation of the Scriptures. He wrote from Jerusalem in 1883 . . . "I also had come to the same conclusion as Swedenborg about this land, the Tabernacle, etc.; that they are *plans worked out in us*. All this I thought before, and still more out here; it is in fact the only interest the Holy Land has for me, for in reality it never was a very important nation or country, and it is only because we *have it in ourselves* that it is interesting . . . not only interesting, but instructive. The kings who built walls or portions of walls were kings who succeeded wicked kings, or had

repented — the building of walls meaning the bringing into control of irregular portions or suburbs of the city, that it, *of self*, after some outbreak of tumult. In fact, I could talk for hours with you on these subjects, and in reality I think it was spiritually given me to see the line of the walls, before I could see it on the ground."

### 5. THE CHAUNCY FAMILY

In all, not less than 7 members of the Chauncy family came to Adelaide in the years 1837-40. They were descended on the maternal side from one Caunci de Caunci (near Amiens, France) who after the Conquest had settled in Yorkshire. Three brothers of the Snell family adopted their mother's maiden name of Chauncy, and used the hyphenated form Snell-Chauncy, although those who settled in Australia, sons and daughters of the second William Snell-Chauncy, usually dispensed with the hyphen. The grandfather of these had lived at Winkfield, Berkshire, although a generation earlier the family home had been at Chingford, Essex (an early Adelaide suburb was known as 'Chingford'; most probably it was the home of Captain and Mrs. Berkley). One of the Snell-Chauncy lines had adopted the old Caunci Coat of Arms and the family motto: 'Sublimus per ardua tendo' . . . 'Through all difficulties I reach to the greatest heights'.

MARTHA CHAUNCY (SNELL-CHAUNCY) married Captain Berkeley of the 40th Rifles in England in 1836, and they came to Adelaide, with Martha's older sister Theresa, on the 'John Renwick', the 13th ship to arrive there. They landed on February 10th, 1837, before the survey of the town had been completed, and lived for eight months in a tent on the banks of the River Torrens. They became deeply involved in the social and cultural life of the Colony. Martha was an accomplished artist and miniaturist, and a number of her paintings of early Adelaide hang in the Art Gallery of South Australia. She and her husband were instrumental in arranging the first Adelaide Art Exhibition in 1847. Captain Berkeley resigned from his position as Clerk to the Resident Commissioner, James Hurtle Fisher, in 1838, because an Inspector in the South Australian Police Force and thereafter experienced several changes of fortune. Some time afterwards, he was appointed Sub-Inspector of Police at Portland, Victoria, where he died in January 1856. His wife and his unmarried daughter Georgina moved to Melbourne, and joined the Melbourne Society, living first at Brighton, and afterwards at their home 'Winkfield', Prospect Hill, Camberwell. In Adelaide, Mrs. Berkeley had taken an active interest in the affairs of the Adelaide Society, and her four daughters were baptized there by Jacob Pitman.

THERESA SUSANNAH EUNICE CHAUNCY came to Adelaide at the age of 30 with Captain and Mrs. Berkeley, Martha Berkeley, her full sister, being six years her junior. She was of an independent and adventurous nature, and also of some means, all of the three sisters having been well provided for in the will of their grandfather. She went to Tasmania, and there met and married Captain John Walker, R.N. retired, aged 42, and in business as a trader. They settled in Adelaide, in Hindley Street, on land belonging to Theresa. There they, like Captain and Mrs. Berkeley, became leaders in the social life of the town. It was also in their home that the first meetings were held which led to the setting up of the Common Council on October 31st, 1840 — the first beginning of Local Government in South Australia. The Walkers moved out of the City proper, and gave the name 'Walkerville', now an inner suburb of Adelaide, to their new area. Their original home there, 'Swanscombe', at 10 Fuller Street, built originally of limestone, still stands, much added to, and is occupied as a residence. The Walkers lived somewhat lavishly, and the Captain lost money in business ventures, being imprisoned for debt in the depression year of 1841, when the British Government repudiated Governor Gawler's Treasury Bills; his deficiency amounting to the very large sum for the times of £23,000. They went to Sydney, where they settled on a Naval land grant at Longbottom, but soon sold this and returned to Tasmania, where the Captain took a Government post. He died in 1855 and in 1856 Theresa married George Herbert Poole, from whom she and her brothers had received their New Church faith. When Mr. Poole died in 1869, leaving her in poverty, she went to her half-brother William at Wodonga, Victoria; and afterwards kept house for her widowed brother Philip, whom she had mothered as a child, and his family of eight at Grey Street, East Melbourne and at Ballarat. Then, for a short time, she became Lady Superintendent of the Alexander College at Hamilton, Victoria. Poor health forced her retirement, and she had a breast removed owing to cancer. She died in Melbourne on April 16th, 1876. Theresa had lived for some years as an adolescent in France, and spoke fluent French. She was a talented musician and a clever sculptress, having obtained a certificate for her modelling at the Paris Exhibition of 1866, while living in Mauritius. She never lost her New Church faith, and left a delightful Preface to the Beatitudes, consisting of an introduction in prose, and eight rhymed stanzas, of 20-36 lines. Her other poems, though often lighthearted and whimsical, are more often deeply devout. Believing that burial in a coffin was unhygienic in delaying decay, and that it was in reality but a relic of the superceded belief in the resurrection of the body, she had a wicker cradle made for her own interment, and in this her body was buried, in the St. Kilda Cemetery, earth being placed on it before it was lowered into the grave. Here, in

part, is her letter, written shortly before her death to the Melbourne 'Port Philip Herald', in which daily paper reference had been made to her wicker cradle:

'To the Editor of the Herald

Mortuary Cradles.

Sir,

As your notice in The Herald of Saturday on the above-named subject concerns me, I desire to offer a few remarks on the subject, which is of far more importance to the living than the dead. The superior claims of basket sepulture are for the living actual, for the dead a pleasing ideal in life. You judge me to be eccentric, merely, I suppose, because I happen to be the first old colonist who is so very unconservative and open to conviction as to adopt a very sensible and sanitary measure . . . I prefer the term mortuary cradle. I hate a coffin. We used cradles, with rockers, on our entrance into this world. Why may we not be buried in one, with flowers, at our exit from it? I am conservative enough to wish a return to a cradle at my second birth, into the spirit world. It is thus recorded of Mirabeau — that his last words were: 'sprinkle me with perfumes, crown me with flowers, that thus may I enter . . .'

It was, she said, an offence against nature to try to preserve that which God had destined to be resolved into its elements.

PHILIP LA MOTHE SNELL-CHAUNCY, full brother of Martha and Theresa, arrived in Adelaide on the 'Dumfries' on October 13th, 1839 (the name La Mothe is his mother's maiden name, she being the daughter of a French ship's surgeon who had been captured by the British and had settled and practised thereafter on the Isle of Man). Philip went to Western Australia as Assistant to the Surveyor-General in 1841, and remained there for 12 years. His 'Notes and Anecdotes of the Aborigines' stems largely from his experiences there. In 1853 he resigned, and with his second wife and his family, "sailed for the goldfields of Port Phillip." In Melbourne, he set up a land survey and agency business in Swanston Street, and tells of walking "ankle deep in mud" from his brother's house at Sandridge (Port Melbourne) to the City, and along St. Kilda Road, where he was in danger at night from bushrangers, to his rented house at Prahran. Unable to obtain any business in Swanston Street, he took an appointment as surveyor in charge of the McIvor (Heathcote) district. The 72 mile journey in a spring cart, with his wife and three children, aged 4, 2 and 6 months, and a maid, took 9 days, on 8 of which it rained, and when they camped at night. (It was four days journey to Pretty Sally's Hill). At Kilmore the mud was so deep that even to ride a horse into the township was difficult.

Philip Chauncy surveyed the site of Heathcote, and the first burial in the cemetery included in the plans was that of his infant son. He went on to Echuca, where he chose and laid out the site of the town, and afterwards spent six years at Dunolly. His wife died in Melbourne in September, 1867, aged 39 years, leaving 8 children, who were cared for several years by his sister, Mrs. Poole, now widowed, at Grey Street, East Melbourne, and at Ballarat, where he was District Surveyor from 1873 until 1878, when he was dismissed by Chief Secretary Berry in his purge of the Civil Service on 'Black Wednesday', January 8th, 1878. He never embraced the new Church Doctrines, although well aware of their essentials. A glimpse at his philosophy, expressed in his booklet written 'in memory of his wife and for the comfort of their children', may not be out of place:

"I have an intuition that the longings for rest from labour and trouble and suffering, and the aspirations for peace and joy which my sainted Susie has from time to time expressed during so many years past *must* be realised sooner or later. Then comes the question of recognition. If my poor faith fail me not, and I too should attain the heavenly state, shall I ever witness the fulfilment of these ardent desires? Archdeacon Crawford and others do not believe there will be a mutual recognition in another life. But notwithstanding the texts which they suppose bear upon the subject, and on which they rest their arguments, I am of opinion, with all due deference to their Biblical learning, that Scripture gives no warrant for such a belief. If I feel any assurance of ever being with my Saviour and knowing Him, I think I can feel assured that my communion with my beloved partner did not terminate with her existence in this life, but that we shall spend a joyful eternity together, and in the company of others whom we have loved on earth. This anticipation is of course not affected by the assertion of our Lord to the sensual materialist Sadducees that 'in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angles of God in Heaven'."

. . . Philip and Susan Chauncy's grandson became Sir Champion Trent de Crespigny, M.D., F.R.C.S., Medical Superintendent of the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

WILLIAM (W. S.) CHAUNCY junior, a surveyor and civil engineer, came to Adelaide on board the 'Appoline' arriving on October 12th, 1840. In 1844, having already firmly embraced the New Church faith, he returned to England with his wife Anna (or perhaps more probably he married there) and they joined the Argyle Square Society. In London he appears to have been very active on behalf of his friends in Adelaide (References, excepting in the case of the one extant letter (below), are simply to 'Mr. Chauncy'. Hugh Chauncy was possibly in London also. The letter is not the original but a transcription made by Jacob Pitman. While the transcribed signature appears to be 'H.S.', there can be little doubt that it should be 'W.S.' This reading is assumed to be the correct one). Early in 1847 the following letter was received in Adelaide:

No. 4, Little St. John's Wood Villas,  
Highbury, London, Dec. 9th, 1846.

To Mr. Jacob Pitman,  
My dear friend,

I beg to acknowledge on the part of the London Printing Society the contribution of four pounds from New Church friends in Adelaide, which the Committee has directed me to expend in the purchase of books for a Library to be formed in South Australia . . .

I have also the pleasure on behalf of the London Missionary and Tract Society to advise you of the receipt of £2, which I have also been requested to lay out in tracts for circulation in South Australia . . . [Here he urges the formation of a branch of the M. and T. Society and also apparently of a New Church Society; then follows what might best be described as a Sermon, and advice regarding the use of public lectures].

All communications for the Society you will in future be pleased to address to me as the 'Foreign Secretary' of the London Missionary and Tract Society of the New Church, 6 King St., Holborn, London.

Yours truly and faithfully,  
W. (?) S. Chauncy."

The peculiarities of this letter are (1) 'The London Printing Society' refers to the Swedenborg Society, although it never adopted that name. (2) The title of the M. & T. Society never included the word 'London'. (3) The M. & T. Society never had a Foreign Secretary. (4) No records can be found of Mr. Chauncy having had an official position in either of the Societies referred to. W. S. Chauncy was a subscriber, from Australia, to the Swedenborg Society in 1852-53-54. In 1848 Mr. Chauncy and two other men attended a meeting of the Committee of the Swedenborg Society as a deputation from 'The Society for the Diffusion of New Church Literature', to request a discount price on the purchase of books.

Besides his activities in London on behalf of the New Church, W. S. Chauncy wrote while there his 'Guide to South Australia', and also formed a private company to build a railway from the copper mines at Kooringa (Burra Burra, now Burra), to Port Adelaide, which he estimated could be built for £35 per mile. He returned to Adelaide in 1849, but the Government refused to grant ownership of the land reservation for the railway line to the company, and the survey was done by Mr. Chauncy at Government expense. In the meantime Port Wakefield was opened to serve the mines; and the railway was not built until 1870.

W. S. Chauncy laid out the site for the town of Goolwa in South Australia, and in 1851 he surveyed the road line now known as 'Chauncy's Line' which runs today as a made road from Mt. Barker to the Callington-Strathalbyn Road and was intended to have been continued east to the Wellington ferry on the River Murray, but now 'peters out' in the wilderness near the Ferries-MacDonald National Park, and where mounds of hand-broken stones may still be seen in the overgrown bush (they were laid ten inches deep on the road, which is still in use).

In 1853 W. S. Chauncy moved to Melbourne, as Chief Engineer of the Melbourne and Hobson's Bay Railway Company, a position which he, like his two immediate successors, was to hold only briefly (The first train to run in Australia made its initial journey over this line on September 12th, 1854). He was a foundation member of the Melbourne Society (which his wife also joined) in 1853, and was the second man to conduct the rite of baptism in Victoria. He moved to Albury, N.S.W. in 1856 or earlier, and then to Wodonga in northern Victoria<sup>(a)</sup>, and joined the Sydney Society on November 13th, 1890. Writing under the pseudonym 'Rusticus' he left a second book, 'How to Settle in Victoria'. This little volume is quite remarkable. It contains detailed information on every aspect of settlement on the land, including availability and purchasing and leasing procedures, climate and rainfall, soils, fertilizers, names of varieties of grasses and vegetables and their requirements, etc., etc. — and yet was published in 1855, less

(a) They are virtually one city, divided by the State boundary, the River Murray.

than three years after the author had come to Victoria and when he had lived in Australia for a total of only eight years, most of them in South Australia as a surveyor. It is also of interest that the book expresses a philosophy of land tenure and public revenue identical with that popularized later in the century by Henry George and thereafter embraced by so many New Churchmen.

SOPHIA MARIA CHAUNCY, full sister of William and Hugh, arrived in Adelaide with Hugh and their father on the 'Superb' on November 22nd, 1840. William Chauncy senior returned to London in 1841, and possibly Sophia returned with him (although she may have returned with her brother William in 1844, or independently). She joined the Argyle Square Society on June 28th, 1848, but returned to Australia (again possibly with William and his family) where she married Conrad Nicholson Wornum in Melbourne in 1852. She was noted for her musical ability and her fine soprano voice.

HUGH (H. S.) CHAUNCY is thought also to have returned to England with his father in 1841, but this is not verified. In 1852 he prepared a plan (which is still extant) of the auriferous regions of Mt. Alexander, Victoria, and in 1856 he had a contract for surveying within the city of Sydney, N.S.W. He was a foundation member of the Sydney Society, and surveyed the site of the Thomas St. Hall for that Society in 1898. It would seem to have been he who was the Mr. Chauncy destitute and aided by the Sydney society in 1897-1900, although here again the difficulty is found that initials or first names are not given. For the same reason the identity of the Mrs. Chauncy who left Adelaide for Sydney in 1886 is not known.

Postscript: Nan Chauncy, the well-known Australian children's writer, was a Masterman by birth, distantly related to the Chauncys of the New Church. She and her husband changed their name to Chauncy by deed poll after their marriage.

## 6. C. N. WORNUM

Conrad Nicholson Wornum, for a time Secretary of the Adelaide Society, was a member of a family of early receivers of the New Church Doctrines, amongst whose descendants are Rev. Eustace and Rev. Herbert Mongredien, of the New Church in Britain.

He was a highly educated man, having studied at the Ealing School, London, with T. H. (afterwards Professor) Huxley, amongst others; at University College, London; and for three years in Germany. His brother Ralph was curator of the South Kensington Museum, London, where he was associated for some years with one Percy Billings, later to be the Minister of the Adelaide Society.

In South Australia, Mr. Wornum first lived at Yankalilla, and then became Manager for a firm of iron merchants in Adelaide, where his knowledge of chemistry was of use in the process of galvanising. He studied surveying, and surveyed the site for the present town of Georgetown; then became sub-Inspector of Lands in connection with valuations. Later, he settled on a farm at Laura, near Gladstone, 120 miles north of Adelaide, where he named his residence 'Horncliffe', after the estate of his ancestors, the Nicholsons, who had been granted a coat of arms by Oliver Cromwell for hospitality received there. He was a devoted and studious New Churchman, and left an excellent 'Epitome of New Church Teaching'. In economic philosophy, he was a Georgist. His family Bible is in the possession of the Adelaide Society. He died in March, 1902, and his wife, Sophia Maria (Chauncy) in March, 1903.

## 7. G. J. IRELAND

George John Ireland, from Bath, England, had run away to sea in 1837 at the age of 10. He had fallen in with a ship's Captain who had made sure that the boys read their Bibles every night, and wrote home from every port of call. In New Zealand, in 1850, he married Marianne Adamina Grenville Smith, daughter of a Scottish lawyer and an Italian beauty from Switzerland, Louise Sophie Peter. (The name Grenville is supposedly from an ancestor of her father, Sir Richard Grenville, cousin of Sir Walter Raleigh, who organised the defence of West England against the Spanish Armada, and was killed in the Azores in 1591). Marianne had been left a teenage orphan, with two brothers and a sister younger than herself, and had come to New Zealand at the age of 20 as a governess and schoolteacher. She was also a talented artist. Mr. and Mrs. Ireland settled first in Sydney, but, with two young children, decided to move to Adelaide, which Mr. Ireland had already visited. Their ship was wrecked en route, on Kangaroo Island, at the mouth of St. Vincent's Gulf, and Mr. Ireland distinguished himself by his ability to organise and carry out rescue work, and to care for the passengers and crew in their temporary camp while awaiting rescue. In Adelaide he established a garden and walnut orchard, 'Grenville Glen' near Crafers, in the Adelaide Hills. Mr. and Mrs. Ireland joined the Adelaide Society in January, 1854. While the origin of their New Church faith is not known, it is probable, though not authenticated, that Mrs. Ireland's family, the

Cowans Smiths, of Glasgow, had been influenced by Rev. D. G. Goyder, who in their time was the New Church Minister there. Their eldest son died at the age of 2½, leaving the second, Grenville, the eldest. He was to marry Mary, the daughter of Conrad Nicholson Wornum and his wife Sophia, nee Chauncy, and to be a lifelong and active supporter of the Society, and a well-known member of many Association Conferences, as also were his daughters Ethel and Mary. Mary Ireland became Mrs. John Christie Playfair, and the mother of Mary, Mrs. John Womersley. Nine further children were born in Adelaide to Mr. and Mrs. G. J. Ireland, five of whom died in infancy. The youngest, Emma Louise Sophie Darton (it may or may not be of any significance that the name 'Darton' was the surname of the second wife of Jacob Pitman's father, Samuel, whom he married in 1857, and that George John Ireland was also from the English West Country), became the second wife of Arthur, grandson of Rev. E. G. Day, and was organist for the Adelaide Society for over 50 years. After the death of his first wife, Mr. Ireland married Harriet Lily, youngest daughter of Jacob Pitman, and a professional teacher of shorthand.

#### **8. G. W. GOYDER**

George Woodroffe Goyder (the name had been anglicized from the Welsh Gwydir), the eldest son of Rev. D. G. Goyder, Minister of the Glasgow Society, had trained in Britain as a design engineer, and had come to Sydney, Australia in 1843, to his sister, Mrs. MacLachlan. He went to Adelaide, aged 24, in 1845, and eventually took a position in the Survey Department. He married, in Adelaide, Frances Smith (of the famous instrument-making family), and through his ability and application was promoted to Deputy Surveyor-General by 1854. He was a man of small stature, but with 'personal magnetism'; a dedicated and untiring worker, and a strict disciplinarian, known to have fined his men for swearing, and tolerating no impiety. He now undertook constant exploration and survey work throughout the colony, particularly in the little-known north, and it was said that he came to know 'every inch' of the colony. He was appointed Surveyor-General in 1861. In 1865 he surveyed the rainfall line in northern South Australia, still well-known as the 'Goyder Line'. It marks the limit of a minimum rainfall of 254 mm pa, and attempted agriculture beyond it has resulted in devastating soil erosion. In that year alone, he covered 4,000 miles on horseback in the course of his work. The present railway siding of Goyder, north of Port Wakefield, also preserves his name.

In 1869, with a party of 140 men, including his young nephew George MacLachlan, afterwards Senior Surveyor of the Northern Territory, and with the added title of Protector of the Aborigines, he surveyed 600,000 acres of the Northern Territory, including the site of Darwin, which he personally chose. Two of his party were killed by aborigines in reprisal for the killing of one of their number by William Auld in 1864. Before leaving Adelaide, he had sent his ailing wife and nine children to relatives in England, accompanied by her younger sister Ellen. Some time after his return to Adelaide, his family having already arranged their return passage, but his personal mail having been sent to Melbourne by mistake, he read one morning in the Adelaide newspapers of his wife's death from an accidental overdose of laudanum sleeping draught. Ellen brought the children home, and kept house for him. He soon afterwards went to Britain himself, under his doctor's orders to take a complete rest. On his return he proposed to Ellen, but had to wait for marriage until Queen Victoria had given her assent to a Bill to legalise marriage to a deceased wife's sister. It had been passed in Adelaide some years previously, and family tradition has it that the Queen was not moved to give her assent until the sad case of her Surveyor-General was brought to her notice. Mr. Goyder retired in 1894, and was followed as Surveyor-General of South Australia by two members of the Adelaide Society in succession, William Strawbridge and Theodore Day.

#### **9. PATRICK AULD**

The name of Patrick Auld first appears in the records of the Adelaide Society in 1846, although he was probably active earlier. He was of Scottish birth, but had lived near Manchester, England, and was already a New Churchman when he came to Adelaide in late 1841 or early 1842. He set up in business as a wine and spirit merchant in the city, but from 1846 he conducted his business from his property 'Auldana', at Home Park, in the present-day suburb of Magill, and commenced planting his vineyard there. Auldana became a popular picnic resort for Mr. Auld's New Church friends, and many such gatherings took place there. In 1855 he gave one acre of his land to the Society, but its use or disposal is not known.

By 1862 the vineyard was one of the largest in the Colony. Mr. Auld's wines were successful in exhibitions in London and America. The vineyard eventually passed to the Penfold family, and Mr. Auld's last five years were spent at Onehunga, near Auckland, New Zealand. It was his son William, who was charged with murder (but after a long trial, acquitted), after having shot dead an aboriginal when accompanying the B. T. Finnis expedition to the Northern Territory in 1864. William had already crossed

the continent as a surveyor with the Stewart expedition of 1861-62. His wife was Eliza, daughter of William Strawbridge, for many years a leading figure in the Adelaide Society, of which he was also a member.

#### **10. E. G. DAY**

Edward G. Day was born in London on June 30th, 1810. In adult life he had been re-baptized into the New Church at Cross Street, Hatton Gardens, by Rev. Samuel Noble. In 1837 he married a sister of a New Church Minister, Rev. Thomas Chalklen. Before emigrating, he was already a Lay Reader, Librarian and Sunday School Superintendent at the Cross Street Church. He came to Adelaide on the 'Countess of Yarborough' in 1850 (his shipboard diary is in the South Australian Archives) and was immediately and generously recognised by Jacob Pitman as "completely his superior" in his knowledge of the Doctrines and his ability as a Leader. Soon after he had taken Mr. Holden's place at Hope Valley in 1851, he went to the goldfields at Mt. Alexander (Castlemaine), Victoria, from whence he wrote to Stephen Goldsack, in a letter of warning, that, although a few lucky miners or fossickers made money – "... things here are not what they seem in Adelaide . . . most are disappointed . . . why these things are, the Theologian can perhaps say . . .". He returned to Adelaide, and for some ten years was occupied as schoolmaster, storekeeper and butcher at Hope Valley, and briefly at the inner suburb of Norwood, before eventually moving to 'Luton Cottage', Brown Street (now Morphett Street), Adelaide, and taking a position as a stonemason in the Survey Department, under the Surveyor-General, G. W. Goyder.

His wife, who is said herself to have read the Writings through "many times", died in 1889.

#### **11. ANNE DONNELL**

Rev. Arthur Beilby, a small man, was known as 'the Little Minister' (after J. M. Barry), and was well liked. Unmarried when he came to Adelaide, at the age of 35, he used to join the young ladies of the Society in bicycle rides around the extensive parklands bordering the city. One of them, Anne Donnell, claimed to have owned the first lady's bicycle in Adelaide. Anne tells the story of how she came into the New Church: She had been left an orphan at the age of 12, and in her teens found herself in domestic service with a Mrs. Holden – "my ideal of beautiful womanhood". Next door, Amy Noar, eldest child of Alfred Noar of the Melbourne Society, was likewise in service with Mrs. Steele. Every Monday evening she came into Mrs. Holden's to pass her clean washing through the mangle (a hand-operated roller clothes press). She talked to Anne about the New Church, and eventually took her to a Service. "In some way", says Anne, "I knew that I belonged there. Why? Because everything appealed to my reason . . . I soon knew all the members, and I thought they were all intellectual". When she left Adelaide, Mr. Beilby wrote to her: "It is good to go about the world and to come to know a great variety of good people. To appreciate and love the human in people, in all sorts and conditions of people, is one of the greatest delights anyone can have, and it is also one of his chief duties." "Could he have seen into my future life?" asks Anne, "because all these things have come to me in abundance; the meeting of people and the making of friends. I feel I was surely blessed when the mangle turned out its clean fresh clothes for Miss Noar, and I was pressed into the New Church". Anne Donnell trained in Perth, W.A., as a nurse, saw service in the 1914-18 war, and afterwards wrote a book . . . 'Letters of an Australian Army Nursing Sister'.

#### **12. W. J. COLVILLE**

Mr. W. J. Colville had first come into contact with the New Church in Brighton, England, at the age of 12, and had later attended the Argyle Square Church. He was inclined to embrace 'Faith Healing', and was the author of a book 'Mental Therapeutics'. He is said to have 'affirmed his own Divinity', and to have denied that 'Man of himself is nothing but evil' (Swedenborg). He was an effective public speaker, said to have been able to hold the attention of a mixed audience for over an hour, and never to appear to tire. He had delivered a series of lectures in Sydney on Sunday afternoons on the Ten Commandments, and was engaged by the Adelaide Society as an interim preacher for a remuneration of £50.

#### **13. REV. PERCY BILLINGS**

Rev. Percy Billings had a somewhat chequered career. Before entering the Ministry, he had worked as a schoolteacher, and had also been associated for several years at the South Kensington Museum with the Curator, Ralph Wornum, whose brother Conrad was a member of the Adelaide Society, and from whom he

might have learned something of South Australia. His own brother, F. M. (Fred) Billings, was lecturing at Argyle Square in 1888-89.

Percy Billings went to America, and there entered upon theological studies at the Academy of the General Church; although for reasons now unknown he did not complete his course, and received no diploma or certificate. In June, 1890, he was ordained into the American Convention Ministry. He served a brief pastorate at Cleveland, Ohio, and then returned to Britain. He spent a short time with the Glasgow Society, and then, from early in 1898, at Radcliffe. He was enrolled as a Minister of the British Conference in 1899.

In February, 1901, he took up the pastorate of the Adelaide Society. Although while there he preached and taught as of the General Church conviction, even to the extent of disrupting the Society and splitting the Australian Conference, yet on leaving Australia in 1906 he went to America and again served as a Minister of the Convention, including a period at Toronto, Canada, and two periods at the Kenwood Parish Church, Chicago. Between these two latter terms, he reverted for a time to school teaching and also served as a Minister of the Congregational Church. He retired at the age of 83. His son Rollo Kitto, who was born in Adelaide . . . "one of the most beautiful children it is possible to imagine", became, in 1936, a member of the Convention Ministry; as also afterwards did his grandson; Rev. John Kitto Billings. (Mr. Billings has been said to have left the active Ministry for a time in order to publish a magazine devoted to the interests of women. This appears to be incorrect. The magazine was published by his wife and daughter.)

#### **14. JOHN and ELIZABETH NOAR ALFRED and ISABEL NOAR**

John and Elizabeth (nee Atkinson) Noar came to Melbourne with their two sons, Henry aged 7, and Alfred aged 4, in 1849. From the Manchester Society, they are said to have been friends of Richard Cobden, of Corn Law fame, and are the second known New Church immigrants to have settled in Victoria. Both were already of the second, and possibly even of the third, generation of receivers of the Doctrines.

Two sons of John and Elizabeth had died in England, and in Melbourne five more children were born to them, none of whom survived their first year. John Noar was a stonemason, and is credited with having carved the lion which still stands atop the Red Lion Hotel at Kilmore, Victoria; and also with having laid the tiled floor of the foyer of the Victorian Parliament House. He had a problem with the use of alcohol, and lost contact with his family in about the year 1860.

Alfred Noar's wife, Isabel Graham Adcock, was also a member of a family with a long connection with the New Church. Accompanying her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Clarke Adcock, she came to Melbourne to another uncle, Mr. G. C. Adcock of the Melbourne Society, in 1864, at the age of 22. On board ship also was another New Church woman, Mrs. John Hawley, with her daughter Katie; and Mrs. Hawley and Isabel conducted both a Sunday School and for a time a day school, for the children of passengers.

Alfred, a baker by trade, moved soon after his marriage in 1868 with his wife and mother to the mining township of Gaffney's Creek, in the rugged Gippsland mountains. There, he worked as a miner by day and a baker by night, while his wife became the local schoolmistress and his mother was in much demand as a midwife. (She died, aged 93, in 1910). In subsequent years the family (there were 10 children) lived at Maffra, Traralgar, Morwell, and other townships, finally settling at Warburton, where Alfred Noar, always a keen debater, a man with strong convictions, and apt to express them forcefully whenever a listener could be found, sometimes entertained the poet Bernard O'Dowd in his home, by whom is this doggerel.

The militant Crusader,  
Furious Freetrader,  
Antipodean Gracchus,  
Enemy of Bacchus,  
Virulent Vegetarian,  
Candid Cobdenarian,  
Mystic Swedenborgian,  
Die-hard Henry Georgean,  
Alfred Noar!

Alfred and Isabel Noar never lost their devotion to the New Church, and attended and supported it whenever possible. Their son Alfred was in later years to become prominent in the Melbourne Society, and long-time Secretary of the Association. Their youngest daughter Kathleen made history in 1920 by being the first woman to be appointed a Representative to an Australian New Church Conference. Another

daughter, Edith, became Mrs. S. W. Hart, wife of the founder of the Perth Society of the New Church, and a third, Alice, married John Thomas Robinson, of Warburton, grandson of he of the same name who had been an aide to the Governor of Mauritius at about the time that the New Church was taken to that island by Mr. G. H. Poole from Adelaide, and who had afterwards settled at Weerona, about 20 miles from the New Church Bucknall family at Majorca in c. 1853. The great-grandson of that settler, Leonard, married Margaret, daughter of John and Alice Robinson, and his great-granddaughter Eva married Alan, son of Rev. R. H. Teed, Minister of the Melbourne Society. It may be of interest that although the original Australian J. T. Robinson had no known connection with the New Church, yet his mother was Jane Bacchus or Backhouse, of Yorkshire, a name well known in New Church circles, both in England and in Australia; although not, in the period, at all an uncommon one.

Stemming from the Noar, Atkinson and Adcock families, Alfred and Isabel's descendants now probably constitute one of the largest New Church family groups, with one of the oldest New Church traditions. Of their great-grandchildren, through their daughters Edith and Alice, about 18 are members of New Church Societies; and of the next generation, there are today already upwards of 30 children being reared in the New Church faith.

It may also be of interest to add that John Noar's great-nephew, Harry Vincent Noar was a schoolmaster in Paisley, Scotland to Alex Bremner, who joined the Melbourne Society in 1950. Harry's daughter Agnes was well-known in the 1970s as a prolific and erudite writer for *The New Church Herald*.

#### **15. F. B. GIBBES**

Francis Blower Gibbes was born on August 31st, 1851, at Gretna Hall, on the site of the famous blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green, Dumfriesshire, Scotland (the 'blacksmith', Joseph Paisley, died in 1814). His father of the same name was Flag-Lieutenant to Admiral Collingwood at the battle of Trafalgar. He was educated at Harrow and in France, and afterwards went to his father's cotton plantation in Jamaica. He recalled that the slaves in Jamaica were very well treated; and his experience with them on his father's estate quite convinced him of the truth of Swedenborg's statement that the African races are of the Celestial genius. The slaves were emancipated (in the British Empire) in 1833, and Captain Gibbes came to Australia, where he was granted land on the Patterson River, N.S.W. When he afterwards returned to Jamaica, his son, who had his New Church faith from his mother, came to Melbourne (in 1855). He was an artist by profession, and for 17 years Secretary of the Victorian Academy of Art. In Melbourne, he and his wife had first worshipped at St. Peter's Anglican Church, diagonally opposite the later site of the New Church, where their close friend, Mr. Pringle, also a New Churchman, was organist.

#### **16. E. G. BUCKNALL**

Edward Gittins Bucknall, from Stroud, Gloucestershire, was the son of one Samuel Bucknall, a woollen miller, and of Anne, the daughter of another woollen miller, Stephen Clissold. His uncle, Anne's brother was the Rev. Augustus Clissold, of the New Church. Edward married Sarah Tucker, and they, with their six children, Sarah's young sister Mary, and a young farmer and his wife (who came free of cost under the immigration policy), set sail for Australia on the ship 'Lord Keane' on May 7th, 1843. The party arrived in Melbourne on September 14th, and the Bucknall family are, so far as is known, the first New Church arrivals in Victoria. This was only 8 years after John Batman had first set foot on the banks of the Yarra River, declared "This will be the place for a village", and bought land from the natives.

In a letter written before his departure from England to his brother in America, Edward Bucknall had said, in part, "I have sold my business, and am emigrating purely for the welfare of my children. The condition of this country is such that the prospects of young men are very gloomy . . . In Australia a family of industrious children is a treasure . . . I do not wish to see my children rich, but I do wish to see them procure the comforts and conveniences of life without the bickerings, heart burnings and distressing anxieties which seem to be the inseparable attendant of trade here . . . Our intention is to become farmers . . . When we arrive at Melbourne we shall erect our tent (it's as large as a small cottage), outside the town, the climate being so congenial that we may live in it safe as a house . . . If we are at too great a distance from a place of Worship I shall read a part of the New Church service at my own house, with portions from the Scriptures. I shall consider it my duty to see that the Sabbath is decently observed in my own family; also induce any others to attend who can do so . . . I have been busy learning and observing the habits of bees . . ." (in later years, Mr. Bucknall would send honey to the Melbourne Society up to 7 cwt. at a time, for sale for the funds).

After arrival in Melbourne, the party pitched their tent in Jolimont, close to the township, and near the cottage of the Lieutenant-Governor, La Trobe. There they spent nearly six months, while Mr. Bucknall and the young farmer gained experience on a nearby sheep property. He had paid £200 in advance, in England, for the purchase of Crown Land, but now acquired a property near the present township of Carisbrook, 100 miles north of Melbourne, from a Rev. Donald MacKinnon. The property was of 23,400 acres, or over 36 square miles. For a price unknown, Mr. Bucknall bought the 1,000 sheep already on it, the land being given in with them. Mr. Bucknall immediately named it Rodborough Vale, after Fort Rodborough in Gloucestershire. There, the family prospered. By 1854, Mrs. Bucknall was able to take three of the sons back to Stroud to complete their education. Another son, Albert, one of the two born in Australia, became a boarder at Scotch College, Spring Street, Melbourne, in 1862.

But life was not without adventure. The party had travelled by bullock wagon to their new property, and built their first primitive home on Deep Creek (now Tullaroop Creek). The creek was crossed by the trail taken by the gold escorts on the journey to Adelaide from the Mt. Alexander mines.

The Bucknalls built a bridge over the creek, and exacted a toll from the gold escort parties. It is reported that previously to this, the wagon attempting to ford it had become stuck midstream, and Stephen Blacknall had swum in and cut the horses free. Captain Tolmer of the gold escort had swum the creek 14 times on his famous horse Saunders, a horse groomed and beloved by Adam Lindsay Gordon.

One of the Bucknall sons went from England to South Africa, where he was killed by Kaffirs, another sought his fortune on the goldfields of Western Australia, two were for a time horsetraders in India, and another took his young wife on horseback through the outback bush to Queensland, where his father had bought him a property. Most of them eventually returned home to Carisbrook (Majorca).

Edward and Sarah's only daughter, Caroline, married Alfred Joyce, after whom the district of Joyce's Creek is named, and who became a member of the Melbourne Society. A son, William, married Mr. Joyce's niece Lillie, who after William's early death married his cousin Hugh. It had been William's intention to build a New Church temple on the Rodborough property, and this project was put into effect by Hugh and Lillie after his death. Its ownership was later transferred to The New Church in Australia, but in 1960 was transferred back to the Association of the Bucknall Family, by which it is now maintained. The Rodborough Church had its own Book of Worship; and a local member, Mr. Eley published at nearby Maryborough a tract 'The Doctrine of the New Church', of which Rev. J. J. Thornton spoke highly. Some 6 or 8 members of the Bucknall family joined the Melbourne Society, two served on its Committee, and Edward Jnr. was a member of the Conference of 1883. By 1940 there remained only one member of the Bucknall family who maintained an interest in the New Church, and no other interested people in the district. Those who attended the 'camps' there in the 1940s were accommodated in the old Bucknall homestead (not the first cottage).

## 17. GEORGE SLATER

George Slater, whose enthusiastic New Churchmanship is evident in his active part in the promotion of three Australian Societies, and his devotion to their furtherance and support, had been unsuccessful in business and bankrupt in early life.

In Melbourne he had been the proprietor of the first meeting place of the Melbourne Society, the City Temperance Hotel. When this project failed, he went to Queensland, in or about the year 1864, where he established a small bookshop as one of the first businesses in Queen Street, Brisbane. This venture was very successful, but on moving to larger premises in the same street, he encountered difficulties, and his business was taken over by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch. He became a dealer in homeopathic medicines. He spent several years in Sydney, but returned to Brisbane in 1879, and died at Wickham Terrace on May 12th, 1886, at the age of 63. He had always taken an active interest in public affairs, and it was said in a newspaper obituary notice that at the time of his death "There was no more familiar name in Queensland than that of George Slater". This being so, and his activities in connection with the New Church being so well known, it became widely known as 'Slater's Church'.

By hard work and the strictest personal austerity, he was able to leave an estate in land and property valued at £2,000. In order to reimburse those who had suffered from his bankruptcy some 40 years earlier, he left the whole of this to 31 legatees, in Great Britain, New Zealand, and the Colony of Victoria. Because his death occurred at the height of the financial depression in Queensland, it was not possible to realize his assets until 10 years afterwards. In the meantime, his legatees had been sought, and of the very few still living, only two had any recollection of the debt. In the event, all of the legatees or their heirs, excepting two, were found.

## 18. GEORGE MARCHANT MARY ANN MARCHANT

George Marchant was born at Brasted, Kent, England, on November 17th, 1857. His father was a builder and hotelkeeper; but, contrary to what might have been expected, he himself earned his own living from the age of 10, and was a lifelong advocate in the cause of total abstinence from intoxicating liquor. He had very little early education. His parents were of the Anglican faith, but at the age of 14 he joined the Baptist Sunday School at nearby Bessel's Green. Here, two young ladies from the Chatham New Church Society distributed tracts which spoke of a man seeing into Heaven and Hell, and which were greeted with some derision. This was his first contact with New Church teaching.

At the age of 16 he migrated to Brisbane. He worked there first as a gardener, and then in the country as a station hand. He returned to Brisbane and became a delivery man for a soft drink factory. In 1886 he bought a small soft drink manufacturing business, making and delivering the product himself. He also invented and patented a bottling machine which was afterwards used world-wide. He opened a factory in Bower Street, Brisbane, in 1888, and the business developed into the large Australian public company, Marchants Ltd.

In Brisbane, George Marchant had rejoined the Baptist Church, and by 1878, at the age of 21, he was an active member of that denomination.

An experience which came to him then is best told in his own words:

"... Then one night I had a vision, which so troubled me that I got out of bed and fell on my knees and prayed that the temptation that the vision presented to me might be taken from me. The vision was repeated on the two following nights. I did not know what to make of it. At last I interpreted it as a call to the Ministry. I told the Minister, and soon afterwards preached my first Sermon before a panel of several Ministers. I did not know one word of grammar. While preparing my sermon I had very strange experiences. I found I could talk fluently without mental effort or control of my brain".

With his resolve to enter the Baptist Ministry, he began to spend all his spare time in advancing his education. At this time, he came into contact with the New Church, and joined the Brisbane Society in July, 1882. Next, he was told by a shoemaker about spiritist seances which he attended, where the medium spoke with the dead . . .

"At first I laughed, but as he, sitting on his stool mending a boot, enlarged on his theme, I seemed to gather an insight into my own experiences. I saw him often, and at last agreed to go. The Seance was dominated by a stout old lady, who I afterwards learned had been a well-read member of the New Church. She was supposed to be controlled by Swedenborg. She would sit near a table with a rod in her hand and a card on the table carrying the numbers 1-10. The supposed spirit would spell out by raps upon the various letters the information intended. It was astonishing what an amount of New Church teaching came to me by means of that rod! My mind absorbed it like a sponge. A new world opened before me. At first I firmly believed that Swedenborg controlled the medium, but gradually doubt crept in. I noticed that she had a full set of Swedenborg's works and a good library of collateral literature. Then one day I came across a book by a New Church Minister, Rev. W. B. Hayden . . . 'The Dangers of Modern Spiritism'. I gradually broke from the spiritists and tried to anchor in the New Church, but could not remain there; I had learned to believe that Jesus was only a superior medium. I wandered into every phase of thought. It was not until 1892 that I finally settled in the New Church. The whole of my life has been dominated by the vision of which I have spoken. It was my cloud by day and my pillar of fire by night, and led me onward and upward and finally into the New Church".

Mr. Marchant had turned again to the New Church in 1891, and by 1892 he was preaching in the Church. He has paid tribute to the influence of Rev. W. A. Bates in confirming and developing his New Church faith.

George Marchant's material help to the New Church throughout Australia and beyond was on a scale that cannot be dismissed in a few words; and indeed it is impossible to conjecture what would have been its history had he not adopted the Doctrines, and endowed the Church so substantially.

His initial benefactions to the Brisbane Society have already been mentioned. His action in remitting the mortgage in 1897 enabled the Society to be free of debt for the first time since the Church had been erected. In 1908, he donated the site for the Society's Ann Street Church, and in 1910, after the completion of the

Church, he gave £500 to pay off the balance owing, and gave another allotment of land for the establishment of a tennis court.

In 1912 a caretaker's cottage was built behind the Church, at a cost of £400, and Mr. Marchant again paid off the balance owing, amounting to £250. In 1916, Book and Reading Rooms, costing £900, were added to the front of the Church, and were again opened free of debt owing to his donation. He donated stock valued at £100 to the Library, and then undertook to pay £52 p.a. as remuneration to the Book Missionary, Mr. W. A. Wright. In 1928, when Rev. W. R. Reece came to Brisbane, he provided the Manse, at McLeod Street, Herston.

Mr. Marchant attended his first Conference, as a Representative of the Brisbane Society, in 1896, and immediately became a member of the Association Council, retaining this position until his resignation in 1931. He was a member of every Conference but one from 1896 to 1930, and was Vice-President from 1909 until 1930. He was made a Licentiate in 1909, and was Leader of the Brisbane Society from that year until 1923, and again in 1926-28.

His financial contributions to the Church beyond the Brisbane Society commenced in 1899, when Conference set up a Ministers and Missionaries Sustentation Fund, with promises of about £70 to be paid into it over the following three years. By March, 1902, the Fund had received £71/2/-, of which Mr. Marchant had contributed £60. In 1905 he made a contribution of £17 to the New Age Fund. When Rev. Percy Billings came to the Adelaide Society in 1901, he contributed £260 p.a. to that Society for his stipend. He withdrew this in 1904, because of Mr. Billings' teaching of the General Church view of the Writings.

In 1921, with a view to enabling a Minister to be brought to Australia he donated £400 in cash and the dividends on 3,000 shares of £1 each in Marchants Ltd. to the Ministers and Missionaries Sustentation Fund, and at the same time the dividends on 2,000 shares to the New Age Fund. In 1923, he added the dividends on another nearly 5,000 shares for the use of the M.&M.S. Fund. His intention at this time was that either a travelling Missionary Minister should be brought to Australia, or that any Society able to find £110 p.a. towards a stipend, should receive from the Fund a subsidy of £290 p.a. In 1930 he ceded the sole ownership and control of all of these shares to the Association, providing only that the dividends from those allocated to the M.&M.S. Fund should go to that Fund; and also added 3,700 10/- shares in the Australian Provincial Insurance Company for the benefit of the same Fund. In 1925, when the new Hall was built for the Melbourne Society, at a total cost of £1,940, Mr. Marchant paid £1,500 of this amount. In 1926 he paid the whole of the cost of the purchase of Melbourne's first Manse.

In 1925, he placed the sum of £12,000 in trust with the Association, the principal and interest of which was to be paid as required to Committees set up in Britain and America for the purpose of preparing and publishing a new translation of the New Church canon of the Word. He retained the right to vary this Trust, and in 1938, when the capital remained intact, although part of the interest had been disbursed, he exercised this option and varied the use. He withdrew the allocation of any part of the capital or proceeds to any overseas body, determining that it should be used solely for the purposes of the New Church within Australia. With this proviso, he ceded sole control of the allocation of the principal to the Council of the Association, although expressing the wish that it should be used for the establishment of Churches and Manses in Societies needing them. The Council acceded to this wish, and resolved that of the total £5,000 should be allocated to the Perth Society for a Church and Manse, £1,500 to the Adelaide Society for a Manse, and £5,000 to the Sydney Society for a Church and Manse. The Association Council decided that after the principal had been disbursed, the accrued interest would be transferred to the M.&M.S. Fund, and also that the properties bought would be vested in the Association. In the case of the Sydney Society this latter provision was waived, since that Society held the title to the land at Thomas Street, which it held in trust under the terms of the Brett Legacy. In 1928, his gift enabled the British Conference to purchase the property at Woodford Green, Essex, which became The New Church College.

In addition to all these pecuniary contributions to the Church, Mr. Marchant maintained an active interest in charitable work. In the period after the First World War, and after the second until his death, he helped the soldiers at the front and those returned. He helped substantially in the establishment of the Garden Homes for the Aged at Chermside, Brisbane, and gave his home 'Montrose', Taringa, to the Crippled Children's Society. When it became unsuitable, he bought another large home for the Society, at Corinda. 'Montrose' being handed back to him, he gave it to the Returned Soldiers' Association (now 'Kingsholme'). After his wife's sudden death in 1925, he continued the interest that she had taken in the Brisbane Creche and Kindergarten movement and the Brisbane City Mission, and helped them substantially. For philanthropic and idealistic rather than for financial reasons, he sponsored the idea of building in Brisbane a Temperance Hotel (the Canberra), and contributed £41,000 towards its cost. He had

also given 100 acres of parkland to the municipality of Kedron, only 4½ miles from the Brisbane city centre.

It is by no means to be supposed that George Marchant's character was faultless. Although his wealth was so largely devoted to aiding the Church and charitable causes, yet he had a strong streak of intolerance, and in some instances showed a surprising lack of sympathy. His policy towards individuals was less generous than that which he adopted when concerned with institutions, even going to an opposite extreme. He was not at all untouched by that tendency to domination and lack of understanding of those on the lower rungs which is perhaps hard to separate from the self-made man and from positions of wealth and power.

He was a man of strong convictions, and this was evident in his determined opposition to the use of alcoholic wine in the Sacrament, and in his distrust of what he believed, in some respects no doubt erroneously, were the teachings of the General Church. This latter attitude led him to rescind his support of the Adelaide Society's Minister in 1903; and in 1931 to his sanction of the secession of the Brisbane Society from the Association. He had one son, Christopher, who, though for a time a member of the Sydney Society, afterwards lost contact with his parents and with the New Church, through a difference with his father. The present Marchant, Williams and Ifield families, of Leeton, New South Wales, Canberra, and Sydney, are descendants of his brother Alfred. George Marchant died in 1941, leaving the greater part of his estate to the Queensland Society for Crippled Children.

Having set down an incomplete record of George Marchant's religious and charitable benefactions, something must be said of his wife. There is no way in which this can be better done than by quoting somewhat extensively from the eulogy written after her sudden death on December 13th, 1925, by Mr. W. A. Wright:

"She was one of the sweetest and noblest little souls that it has ever been my privilege to meet. Everybody who knew her loved her. She was always thoughtless of self, but most untiringly and unselfishly thoughtful of others; passionately fond of the young folk; and never forgetful, but exceedingly kind and gentle, towards the old people. Naturally of a quiet, shy, and retiring disposition, she never let her left hand know what her right hand did. She was always ready to help the fallen, the unfortunate, the down-trodden and the friendless, and constantly in the effort to rescue the perishing, not only by temporal relief, but by her kind, sound, motherly advice, words of cheer and hope and trust in the Saviour's help and guidance.

During the Great War she was known as 'The Soldier's Friend'. She was an active worker in all good causes calling for help, giving much of her time and money, in which her beloved husband joined her most heartily.

Mrs. Marchant was a clever artist in oils, an excellent and neat needle-woman, and a good musician, playing, at one time, the piano, the banjo, and the mandolin . . . The charities which she liberally supported and devoted much time to were: The Charity Organisation; The City Mission; The Independent Order of Good Templars; The Independent Order of Rechabites; The Queensland Prohibition League; The Creche and Kindergarten Association; The Hospital for Sick Children; The Brisbane General Hospital; The Wattle League; The Lady Bowen Hospital; The Bush Nursing Association; and The Palm Beach Home for Destitute Children.

Mrs. Marchant loved to help her noble husband in all his 'uplift-moves' for the benefit of his fellow-men, and was his inspiration and a most devoted help-meet. She loved our little Church, and the Sunday School, and every Sunday morning for years tins of rich biscuits have been placed by hands unseen . . . her gifts for those children who stayed for morning Service. Every Christmas she presented gifts of books, cards, etc., to all Church members and friends, as well as to the children. Many enjoyed her hospitality at 'Montrose'."

When Mr. and Mrs. Marchant visited England in 1924, Rev. C. A. Hall said inter alia, "We certainly felt richer and more determined for service after he had spoken. Mrs. Marchant kept silence, but her silence did not hide her personality. We felt her presence. All we dare say about her is that to know her is to love her."

Mrs. Marchant's lifelong motto was, 'If you wish to perform a service, do it now. If you want to say a kind word, say it now'. Here are a few words from her husband's tribute: "She, as well as I, looked upon death as a transition . . . I sometimes wonder whether I will be found worthy to be her mate in the inner and real world . . . affectionately, I am miles behind her . . . we often spoke of the spiritual meeting, and death had no fears for either of us . . . I knew her as the most unselfish of women . . .". Although Mary Jane Marchant was of the Roman Catholic faith, and never formally joined the New Church, yet she attended it regularly from 1892, when her husband re-joined the Brisbane Society.

Her funeral was conducted by Mr. Wright, as Leader of the Society, with a memorial address given by a Methodist Minister, Rev. B. Frederick.

#### 19. W. W. YOUNG

Walter William Young had been bought up by his mother strictly in the Roman Catholic faith, although clandestinely at about the age of 12 he had attended, and been 'saved' at the Salvation Army Young People's meetings. In young manhood he had attended the Anglican Church, the Methodist, Spiritualism and others. When courting his future wife, he had been invited to attend the New Church in Nottingham under Rev. C. H. Wilkins, who, he has written, was "a very clever, brainy, and withal gentle, leader, more like Daniel Ashby than any man I have known". . . and "I soaked it all in; it was like rain on a parched paddock after drought . . . How little our New Church bred boys and girls realise what it is to be spiritually hungry and thirsty . . . Of all of the men I have met, I must say the world's best are our New Church Ministers".

#### 20. EVA HARDING

Eva Harding was a most talented child, even when very young taking a keen interest in literature and learning and in painting. In New Zealand, she painted a miniature portrait of her mother, which hangs today in the Sargent Gallery at Wanganui. She exhibited in London in 1922-23 at the Royal Society of Miniature Painters. She had moved back to Sydney as a young widow with three small children, and had supported them (one, the son, was a deaf mute) by her painting, music, and dancing. Several oil paintings and miniatures executed by her daughter, Cecilia MacLellan, hang in the Mitchell Library. Her other daughter, Annette, became, in 1912, the first Australian to be granted a scholarship under the King Edward VII British-German Foundation set up by Sir Edward Cassell with a gift of £100,000 to enable students to study overseas. Both Cecilia and Annette MacLellan were members of the Sydney Society.

#### 21. DR. JOHN LE GAY BRERETON

Dr. Brereton, who had come to Sydney in 1859, with his wife Mary, was born in Bawtry, Yorkshire, in 1827, the son of a doctor, and he also studied medicine. He was brought up a strict Quaker, but as an adult, because of his disapproval of the Quaker disregard of the Sacrament, he had been baptized into the Church of England. The Quaker love of simplicity and dislike of ecclesiasticism and ritual otherwise remained with him throughout his life. He graduated M.D., M.R.C.S. in 1851, and set up practice at Bradford, where he saw epidemics of typhus and diphtheria, and was converted to homeopathy. Here also, in the home of a parish patient (he was a Poor-law surgeon) he noticed on a table a book with a strange title 'Heaven and Hell', and from curiosity borrowed it — his first introduction to New Church Doctrine. Here also he made the acquaintance of John Preston, who had lately been introduced to the Doctrines by Mr. Semple, a watchmaker, and the two became close friends. Dr. Brereton's practice not yet being extensive, these two men spent a great deal of time together, in the home of John Preston's mother. There, in the words of John Preston's brother Ben, "They communed with each other on the works of the great Seer until, freed for ever from the dogmas of the old Churches, they were able to say to each other 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him'".

In Sydney, Dr. Brereton established a medical practice, and set up the first Turkish Bath in Sydney, in Spring Street, which became a highly successful enterprise. In the 1860s he was occupied in lecturing on the Turkish Bath, cremation, and rational clothing in Sydney, and in places as far distant as Hobart, Tasmania. He became a Justice of the Peace, and was appointed Medical Visitor to the Lunatic Asylum at Tarban Creek (Gladesville). He was instrumental in bringing about radical reforms in the N.S.W. lunatic asylums, although his insistence on these ultimately led to his dismissal from his post at Tarban Creek. He was an ardent and influential opponent of vaccination, and is credited with having prevented its enforcement by law. He was the author of a number of religious poems and of the prose works 'One Teacher: One Law' and 'Genesis and the Beatitudes'<sup>(a)</sup> and had already published a book of poems in London, in 1857. He was well known in the literary circles of Sydney, and a close friend of the poet Henry Kendall. Of his seven surviving children (five died in infancy), none retained connection with the New Church. In 1882, Dr. Brereton retired to his property 'Osgathorpe' at Gladesville (the last lodging place in Sydney of the ill-fated explorer Leichardt), and died aged 59 in October, 1886, of Bright's disease.

His son John (1871-1933), became a prose writer, poet, playwright, an authority on Elizabethan literature, and Librarian of the Sydney University, and published a number of works. He is said to have

(a) First delivered in Sydney as a series of lectures in 1878; and repeated thus in 1885.

been a man of outstandingly kind and generous disposition. He was a benefactor of the poet Henry Lawson and of all young students who might seek his assistance.

#### ADDENDUM — JOHN AND BEN PRESTON

John Preston became the Founder, and until his death in 1888 President, of the Saltaire New Church Society, and Lay Preacher both there and at Baildon. He was an exceptionally gifted artist, but also an accomplished builder, joiner, chemist, photographer and homeopathist and able to make his own suits of clothes; and was said to have been able to take a watch to pieces and expertly reassemble it at the age of 8. On his death, these words were spoken of him in the course of a memorial address.

'He was a steadfast friend, a wise counsellor, a tender, loving father, a fond husband . . . faithful, chaste and pure, through all the long years of his widowerhood . . . never, as he has often told me, feeling for a single day unmarried . . . never parted from her whom his soul so dearly loved.'

They part . . . they could not part;  
Their souls were one'.

To this Society he was a faithful, genuine Minister of Christ, rejoicing with us in all our joys; acquainted with all our griefs; sympathizing with us in all our sorrows; ever mindful of the sick among us; cheerfully bearing our burdens; forgiving injuries; striving for peace; seeking not his own; helpful in all things; 'Worshipping the Lord in the beauty of holiness'."

39 of his Sermons were published posthumously in book form, with a biographical notice written by his brother Ben (Ben Preston, great-grandfather of Professor Sir Fred Hoyle, Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge University, 1958-77, earned his living as a poet, declaiming his own verse to audiences of 2,000 at Bradford).

Copies of 'Sermons by an Artist' by John Preston and 'Dialect and other Poems' by Ben Preston, are in the possession of John Preston's great-grandson, Mr. Peter Preston, of Canberra, Australia. In the opinion of one reader, the Sermons are arguably the simplest, most impressive, appealing and convincing, thoroughly New Church Sermons that one could hope to find. The Poems are often in broad Yorkshire dialect, are strongly sentimental and religious in character, imaginative, showing true poetic insight and expression, and eminently readable. Many of them movingly reflect the poverty and hardship of the economically depressed classes of the times, their inescapable hopelessness, and their faith.

#### 22. 'BISHOP' BUGNION

Francois Louis Bugnion was born in Switzerland in 1832, the son of a travelling schoolmaster. He studied theology in France, Germany and Russia, and was early attracted to the teachings of Swedenborg. By the age of 23 he was widely known for his scholarship, engaging personality, and piety. He was ordained as a Minister of the Lutheran Church in 1846, and then began the evangelical tours that occupied him for the rest of his life. He ministered first to a colony of Swiss Lutherans at Chabag, near Odessa. Then, at St. Petersburg (Stalingrad) he became a naturalised Russian, and was ordained a priest of the Russian Orthodox Church. He was appointed Vicar-General for the Caucasus in 1852. His sympathy with the Mennonite Christian sect brought opposition from the Russian Government, and he fled to London. There, he met T. L. Harris, and with him went to America and formed the Brotherhood of the New Life at Brockton, New York State, and others, himself, in Kansas and Tennessee.

He next went to the islands of Bourbon (now Reunion) and Mauritius, where he gained a following at Port Louis, and then unsuccessfully tried to induce the young New Church Society there to combine with it, and to appoint him as their Minister. He went to London where he was naturalised in 1861, and ingratiated himself with Rev. C. Butler, of the New Church. He obtained an interview with Dr. Bayley, and asked his blessing, which Dr. Bayley pronounced. M. Bugnion then returned to Mauritius, now claiming that in London he had been consecrated as a Minister and Bishop of the New Church. He was again unsuccessful in gaining acceptance by the Mauritius Society, since his teaching was clearly in great part in disharmony with the Doctrines. He left Mauritius and travelled over Europe, America, the West Indies, and to Madras, where he again attempted to establish a following. When he came to Sydney in 1873 he enlisted the help of Dr. Brereton, his aim being to set up in Australia a 'Brotherhood of the New Life', in which he could settle the persecuted Mennonites, mainly from Russia. He prepared in French a 'New Church' Catechism, which was translated by Mrs. Brereton, and published by the aid of her husband, purportedly by 'The New Church Publishing Society'. It was a 115 page booklet . . . 'Bishop Bugnion's abridged Catechism for the use of Christian Believers in Mauritius, Burbon, India, the Southern States [of America], Cuba, Russia, and

Australia'. It was for the most part in accordance with accepted New Church teaching, but including some Harrisite concepts. Following the advertisement of October, 1873, 'Bishop' Bugnion preached in Sydney a number of times, until February, 1874. Attracted by Australia's empty north, he then went on a visit to Port Darwin; and applied to the South Australian Government for permission to settle 40,000 Mennonites and others of his followers in the Northern Territory, which it then administered. He returned to Sydney in July (1874), but left for Madras in November, where he this time succeeded in establishing a Brotherhood. In a letter to Mr. H. S. Chauncy before he left Sydney he had written: "But do not oversight this: Neither Swedenborg, nor Harris, nor any Apostle, are more than simple *expounders* of the Word. The Word of God is the only holy work; and it will always prove sufficient to men of honest walk, keeping the Commandments in love towards Him, ready to do what they can for the welfare of their neighbour".

In December, he returned from Madras, and preached in Sydney until March, when he went to Adelaide and re-opened negotiations for a grant of land in the Northern Territory. In large part through the continued interest of his New Church friends there (Mr. G. W. Goyder was influential in Government circles, as Surveyor-General), he obtained from the Government a grant of £200, and a promise of land and the repayment of his costs, as soon as Parliamentary ratification could be obtained, for the settlement of 1,000 Russian families. By July he had recruited his emigrants in Russia; but war between Serbia and Turkey prevented their departure through the Bosphorus, and the plan had to be abandoned. He returned to Adelaide by October, but soon went on to Sydney, and resumed preaching there on November 19th. He finally left Sydney late in the same year, or early in the next.

Now aided by his daughter, he went to Queensland, and in 1877 the Premier, John Douglas, was instrumental in obtaining for him a grant of 4,800 acres of land near Emerald in the Rockhampton district. He went to Constantinople, and in 1879 had again completed arrangements for an emigration of Mennonites. But this time, the Russian Government stepped in, and forbade their departure. (His brother had a colony of 50 Swiss-Russian immigrants at Lilymere, near Rockhampton, in 1887).

In addition to the Catechism, the 'Bishop' had published two further booklets in Australia — 'The Celestial Church of Sion, being a Brotherhood of the New Life', in Sydney, in 1875; and 'Sion's Liturgy', in Rockhampton, in 1878 . . . "We do not ask surrender of all possessions, nor an absolute obedience . . . but we do urge the surrender of the scriptural tenth for the general wants of the Church". The 'Bishop' died on the steamship 'Euxine' off Naples on May 17th 1880. The Brisbane 'Courier' commented . . . "How much of the genuineness of the enthusiast, and how much the finesse of the adventurer prompted the actions of the projector of the Mennonite colony, it is impossible for us to determine" . . . So it is for the present writer. There can be no doubt that the 'Bishop', even by his claim to such a title, and to ordination in the New Church, was an imposter; yet he was a man of apparently kindly and likeable disposition, and appeared to have a genuine interest in the betterment of the downtrodden.

### 23. ERNEST BRABY

Ernest Braby's father had come into the Argyle Square, London, Society from the Church of England, and he was also a foundation member of the South London (Floodgate Road, Camberwell), Society. He married a daughter of Dr. Bayley; and is said to have been the first to have suggested a Service of Junior Membership (Confirmation) for the New Church. Ernest went to a Congregational boarding school, and the Congregational evangelism, and also the work of the Salvation Army, appealed to him; beside them the New Church seemed to him apathetic. But he was a member of the New Church, and founded The New Church Temperance Society, and Bands of Hope in three Societies.

As a young man he suffered from rheumatism, and sought a better climate in Australia. He came first, with his brother Wallace, to Melbourne; then went to Sydney, but returned to Melbourne and joined the Melbourne Society. But he made his home in Sydney and formed the Temperance Society there in 1886. He recounts that despite his membership of the New Church, and his activities in the English Societies, he left England still feeling that his life might be more usefully spent in one of the denominations devoting more time to social work . . . "However, a complete change occurred after I arrived in Australia in the way I viewed all questions". Shortly before leaving England, he had heard a lecture on the teaching of Henry George. "Like an orthodox Englishman, I vigorously opposed it". But with time to reflect on board ship, he came to see its fundamental truth, and told himself that as an honourable man he had no alternative but to advocate those teachings. His next determination was that he would not take sides on any subject unless he had thoroughly tried to understand it . . . "This naturally turned me to the teaching of our Church, and I made up my mind to study them more deeply. As the years have advanced I have been more and more thankful that I have had the New Church teachings to guide me". In the Melbourne and Sydney Societies he found men with a deep knowledge of the Doctrines, and able to teach; and also a considerable number of

Georgeists — 'Single Taxers'. Very many, in fact, of the most prominent men in every Australian New Church Society were devotees of the Georgist economic/social philosophy, as are some throughout Australia today. In the 1890s all but two members of the Auckland, New Zealand, Society were Georgists. In 1889, in New York City, the New Churchmen's Single Tax League was formed, which for 11 years published a periodical devoted to its aims — 'The New Earth', which had a circulation of 2,000 copies. Henry George remarked that he had stronger support per capita in the New Church than in any other religious body.

### 24. DR. JACKSON

Henry Willan Jackson, like Dr. Brereton, was a medical man with a large practice, and had a number of medico-scientific works to his credit. He had been a brilliant student in England, and had obtained the Diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons when only 21 years of age. He was of the Church of England faith and upbringing, but had been induced to hear Dr. Bayley preach at Argyle Square. He immediately accepted the teaching, and became an admirer and personal friend of Dr. Bayley. For respite from the rigours of practice in the Lancashire district during the famine years of the early 70s, he came to Australia, on the Aberdeen clipper 'Ann Duthie'. He went back to England to settle his personal affairs, and returned, as ship's doctor, on the sailing ship 'Cairnbulg', Captain Birnie. On board was the Captain's sister-in-law, Miss Tresa Allan Marshall. Henry Jackson and Tresa Marshall were married in Sydney on April 23rd, 1873. Their son, named after the Captain, was Birnie Jackson, a lifetime member of, and honorary solicitor for, the Sydney Society.

### 25. H. A. GIBSON

In 1898, Mr. Gibson went to South Africa, and was the first to introduce the New Church into Basutoland (Lesotho). There was already a Society and a Church in nearby Durban, Natal, which had been formed in 1877-85 by Mr. Auguste de Chazal of Mauritius; to which island the New Church had been introduced from Adelaide, South Australia by Mr. G. H. Poole in 1847. One of the Basuto Ministers, Rev. Mafoking, who had been a Minister of the Church of England at the time, tells it to the Rev. Gyllenhaal of Bryn Athyn in 1915: "He [one of Mr. Gibson's first native converts] and his wife met Mr. Gibson, who told them about the great God coming down and taking on the human body; and that He was Christ, the One only God, and not three Gods. He and his wife knew it was truth, so they straightway wished to give the great Truth to their people. They walked all over the country — up mountains and mountains, and through rivers, to tell the Basutos the wonderful truths of the New Church. He went on to say: 'This New Church started with us as a little fire, not so much as a tiny candle; now it has become a great and powerful weapon. When I think of this great Church my eyes want to shed tears.' The whole man's soul beamed forth from his otherwise plain face and transformed it into something almost beautiful . . . They have two Services on Sundays, people coming distances of three hours' walk."<sup>(14)</sup>

### 26. F. W. HELLBERG

Frederick Wilhelm Hellberg was born in Gothenburg, Sweden, a town which figures much in the life of Swedenborg, in 1870, and was baptized into the New Church in Melbourne, Australia, by Daniel Ashby in January, 1894; then also joining the Melbourne Society. He afterwards spent some time in Western Australia, where he attempted missionary work; and he had wished to attend the 1902 Conference in Brisbane to enlist support for his work there. He had already made known his desire to enter the New Church Ministry. Minnie Faddy (Williams) in later times remembered him as a "wizard lecturer" with a particular facility in the use of diagrammatical representation, and attributed to him her thorough training in New Church Doctrine.

Mr. Hellberg's wife, formerly Edith Marie Freeman, had not joined the Sydney Society, although attending occasionally. She had been a member of the Kensington, London, Society at Palace Gardens Terrace, under the Rev. Thomas Child, and had come to Sydney with her parents in 1902, at the age of 22.

Mr. Hellberg occupied a small room at the Royal Exchange, and seems to have been employed there. After his marriage he became a painter and decorator. The change of name to Heldon is said to have been connected with a trade union dispute, although this is not verified. He died aged 48 on July 2nd, 1918, from the influenza epidemic which swept Australia in that year, leaving his wife with seven children, the eldest a girl entering her teens and the youngest, Norman, aged one year.

(14) The quotation is from a letter written from Durban by an Englishwoman and printed in part in 'The New Church Weekly', July 3rd, 1915.  
— Extracted here from Rev. Richard Morse's 'Nineteenth of June Souvenir'.

**27. T. L. HARRIS**

Thomas Lake Harris was the forerunner, and would have been the envy, of the leaders of the modern man-worshipping cults. He had turned from Spiritism to become a New Church Minister in America. In London, in 1860, he was preaching extemporarily at the Marylebone Institute and electrifying crowded congregations with what are said to have been the most eloquent sermons ever preached. They were taken down in shorthand by the famous phonographer, T. A. Reed. He had an immense personal magnetism, and was a fine poet, able to reel off excellent poetry verbally without apparent forethought; indeed, an undoubted genius and a born manipulator of men. Later, back in America, he left the Church and founded his own cult; his disciples becoming his slaves and often making over all their property to him while they themselves were living under his spell in the most abject poverty. He claimed that the Celestial sense of the Word had been revealed to him, and the secret of 'internal breathing'; then that he was the incarnation of the Deity, and immortal. He founded 'The Brotherhood of the New Age', a free-love community at Santa Rosa, California. He had caused major strife in the Swedenborg Society, London, in 1861; yet he was defended almost to the end by prominent New Church writers, notably Dr. Holcombe. Despite his claim to immortality, he died, in London, in 1905.

**28. ALFRED KIRSCHSTEIN**

Alfred Kirschstein is said to have read the Bible through by the age of 10. The story of his early experiences and of how he came to the New Church will be best told in his own words:

'In the days of my youth I had been of a religious and reverential disposition; but in later years doubtful environment and teaching caused me to become of a rather sceptical frame of mind, to which four years' service in Germany's navy contributed no improvement. All this caused me to see the great need for the improvement of human society, and led me to become a believer in socialism.'

On April 1st, 1907, I landed on the soil of sunny Australia [he is said to have 'jumped ship'] having no desire to return to my native country and under its oppressive rule. Not being conversant with the English language, I soon found myself in dire straits. One day I was trudging through the streets in quest of employment, utterly friendless, and without a coin in my pocket. I had not had a meal that day and did not know where or how to procure one. A feeling of deep loneliness and despair overcame me, when, quite involuntarily, I uttered a plea for help to Him whom I had so long forgotten. Almost instantly my sight fell upon a coin lying in the street, and lo! the price of a meal was in my hand.

This incident made a deep and lasting impression upon my mind, and from then I entered upon a new era, both as to things external and internal. My former radical socialism was turned into a kind of Christian socialism, and I began to take a new interest in religion and to enquire into the views of different sects.

But they all seemed to be oddly out of keeping with the Scriptures, and I found no satisfaction for my craving. Now followed several years of sore internal trials, until one day [it was in the year 1912] I was led to enter a bootmaker's shop for the purpose of making a small purchase, and I was soon in conversation with the rather talkative old man behind the counter. An interchange of ideas on religion took place, and after he had listened to my view on the matter he said: 'I think I have something here that will just suit you'. With that he loaned me a copy of 'Heaven and Hell'.

As soon as I got back to my lodgings I began to read this book, and although I could not at all comprehend the part dealing with the Grand Man, and it was so utterly new and strange to me, I knew at once that here at last I had found the truth. I was fascinated with it, and when I came to the statement that what was here written is a Divine revelation, I had no difficulty in accepting it.

As I wanted to know more, I became a frequent visitor at the bootmaker's shop, and 'old John' and I became fast friends. He told me about the Thomas St. Society, where for a number of months I became a regular attendant at the Sunday Services. He also told me about an old friend of his, Mr. P. J. Dupen, whom, during another visit, I met. Shortly after this I was introduced by Mr. Dupen to the Sydney Society of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, where I have since found a lasting abiding-place, ever thankful to the Lord who in His mercy has so wonderfully led me to become a receiver of the heavenly message of His second coming'.

The identity of the bootmaker mentioned by Mr. Kirschstein is not known. Perhaps he was Mr. Coxhead, the author of 'Mental Reflections on a Railway'. It is interesting that conversation with his bootmaker also figures in the path to the New Church of Mr. George Marchant. Mr. Kirschstein was both

Secretary and Treasurer of the Hurstville Society in 1926. The name was afterwards Anglicized to Kirsten, most probably in connection with the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany in 1939.

**29. C. W. MORSE**

Mr. C. W. Morse came from Gloucestershire, England, as had Richard Morse's father, although the two were not known relatives. He had come into contact with the New Church teachings in 1903, whilst a member of the Church of England, in which the tri-Personal doctrine had caused him concern. He and his wife and 8 of their 14 children had been baptized into the New Church at Newcastle by Rev. W. A. Bates in November, 1903. His daughter Myrtle married Arthur See Watson, and thus brought into the New Church the long-serving Leader of the Adelaide Society.

Living over 100 miles north of Sydney, he conducted Worship in his home, and is not known to have been a member of any New Church Society. He became a frequent contributor of prose and verse to the pages of *The New Age*. The following verses are of his composition:

O that my heart were centred, Lord, on Thee,  
In storm and sunshine, and in every thought!  
O that the fleeting things of time might flee  
And leave me free to love Thee as I ought.  
  
Today I find my soul uplifted in Thy light,  
And every toil becomes a pleasure borne for Thee;  
But, O, the morrow brings a killing, chilling blight  
To all my hopes, and robs that light from me.  
  
Fain would I break in freedom from the care  
Of sensuous things which hide Thy face from me;  
The loss of everything in life I dare  
If I could fix my every thought on Thee.  
  
Give me, I pray Thee, Lord, a single eye;  
A deep and everlasting love for Thee.  
For freedom from the yoke of sin I cry!  
Lord, make me what Thou wouldest have me be.

**30. HENRY HURMAN**

Henry Hurman was born in London in 1847, into a family of devout practising Anglicans. He came to Brisbane on board the 'Vanguard' with his parents and a brother and sister, arriving at Moreton Bay in February, 1867. He first tried agriculture, on a lease of 100 acres in what is now suburban Brisbane. A small house was built; but his attempt at growing, amongst other things, strawberries and raspberries, was unsuccessful.

He was largely self-educated, and while working as a gardener in England had studied shorthand and Latin. After the farming venture, he was able to obtain a position in the newspaper world. Shortly before he left England he had come into contact with the New Church teachings, possibly, as did many another notable New Churchman, through Isaac Pitman's weekly Sermon printed in the Phonetic Journal; although he is thought also to have met New Church people. He renewed his interest in Brisbane, and is thought to have brought his early neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Briggs into the Church, and also his brother William.

By 1877 he was Librarian of the Brisbane Society, and by 1879, Secretary. In 1885 he married Alice Briggs, 20 years his junior, and in the same year moved to the goldmining district of Normanton, over 1,300 miles north-west of Brisbane, on the Gulf of Carpentaria, where he joined his brother in the production of the local newspaper. He returned to Brisbane in c. late 1887, and soon became Secretary of the Society for the second time, until April, 1890, and then Treasurer. He rose in his profession to the position of General Manager of the 'Brisbane Courier' newspaper; and in 1903 moved to Perth, Western Australia, as Secretary to the Owner/Manager of the 'Western Australian'. His daughters still today (1980) taking an active interest in the New Church are Dr. Edith Hurman, of Orange, N.S.W., and Violet Royce, Alice Williams, and Effie Meacham, of Perth.

In many ways, Henry Hurman was a remarkable man. With little formal education, he was able in later years to correspond in Latin, French and German, and to help his children with the theory of music. His

bedside Bible, which he read every night, was in Pitman's shorthand. On his retirement to Greenmount at the age of 67, he first rebuilt the small holiday 'shack', and then established an orchard and gardens, despite the difficulties of the unwilling, stony soil, the dry climate, and the absence of a water supply. He died in 1926, and thereafter his wife, now driving the family's first motor car, resumed regular attendances at the New Church Services of Worship at the Karrakatta Club Hall. Alice Hurman was to rejoin her husband in 1935.

## CHRONOLOGY

Lieutenant James Cook leaves England from the home of a student and translator of the Writings, James Cookworthy	1768
Lieut. Cook in the ENDEAVOUR BARK is the first Englishman to sight the eastern mainland coast of Australia, April 20th. Lands at Botany Bay, April 30th. The Proclamation in the spiritual world, June 19th	1770
Robert Hindmarsh advertises, December 5th. First group study of the Writings	1783
'The First Fleet'. First European settlement (convict) in Australia. The founding of Sydney.	1788
The first ever New Church building, Newhall St., Birmingham, opened June 19th	1791
Discovery of Port Phillip Bay, Victoria, and of St. Vincent's Gulf, South Australia	1802
First settlement in Tasmania; Risdon Cove	1803
Foundation of Hobart, Tasmania	1804
First settlement (convict) at Brisbane, Queensland	1824
First occupation of Western Australia, at Albany	1827
Foundation of Perth, W.A. (The Swan River Colony)	1829
Thomas Morse, the first known New Churchman in Australia	1832-33
The first white settlement in Victoria. Edward Henty at Portland	1834
"This will be the place for a village". John Batman chooses the site for Melbourne	1835
First settlement of South Australia. Foundation of the Colony of South Australia and of the City of Adelaide, December 31st	1836
Martha (Berkeley) and Theresa Chauncy arrive in Adelaide, February 10th	1837
Jacob Pitman and William Holden arrive in Adelaide, May 17th. First known New Church baptism in Australia, Adelaide, October 28th	1838
Abolition of penal transportation to New South Wales	1840
First free settlers in Brisbane	1842
E. G. Bucknall arrives in Melbourne with a complete set of the Writings	1843
First public New Church worship in Australia, Adelaide	1844
G. H. Poole takes the New Church to Mauritius from Adelaide	1846
Ordination of Jacob Pitman, March 14th. Founding of the Adelaide Society, March 21st	1847
John and Elizabeth Noar arrive in Melbourne, with sons Henry and Alfred	1849
The first New Church temple in Australia, Carrington St., Adelaide; opened July 11th	1850
Study of the New Church Doctrines in Sydney, at the home of Rev. H. G. MacLachlan. Discovery of gold in Victoria	1851
First public New Church meeting in Melbourne, September 18th.	1853
Foundation of the Melbourne Society. The Newton family in Sydney.	1853
'The First Sydney Society', May 3rd. Edward Baly. First New Church baptism in Sydney, May 8th. George Sylvester Diggles in Brisbane. The Eureka Stockade, Victoria	1854
A complete set of the Writings presented to the Queensland School of Arts. Population of Australia reaches 1,000,000	1858
Pitman leaves Adelaide; E. G. Day Leader. Dr. Brereton in Sydney	1859
The Burke and Wills Expedition	1860
John Elliott in Brisbane. First informal meetings	1862
Mr. E. F. Hart Secretary of the New Church group in Brisbane. Henry Hurman in Brisbane	1864
Attempted formation of a Brisbane Society. First signatures to the Declaration of Faith. G. S. Diggles Leader	1865
First known public Worship in Brisbane. First baptism and Sacrament, March 11th	1866

Second Adelaide Church, Hanson St. (Pulteney St.), February 18th. The first New Church periodical in Australia, *The Melbourne New Church Herald*, May  
 The first Melbourne Church, Albert St., East Melbourne, March 27th.  
 'Resuscitation' of the Brisbane Society, March 10th. Edward Newton advertises in Sydney. First public Worship in Sydney, at Newtown.  
 'Bishop' Bugnion in Sydney.  
 Thomas Newman's 'Society' at Redfern, Sydney, August  
 First minuted meeting of 'The Swedenborg Club', Sydney, May 13th.  
 The Sydney Society inaugurated, June 24th. Garsden Leader in Brisbane  
 First public worship of the Sydney Society, August 20th. George Mocatta the first Leader; Dr. Brereton Leader, December  
 Rev. J. J. Thornton in Melbourne, February 7th. The first New Church wedding in Brisbane  
 The first Brisbane Church, Wickham Terrace, June 5th. Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Fitzgerald in Launceston, Tasmania  
 Ordination of E. G. Day, February  
 Land at St. Helens, Tasmania, willed to the New Church by Mrs. Bowen  
 The first Conference . . . 'The Australasian Conference of the New Church', January. The Church at Majorca, Victoria, December 17th  
 George Marchant joins the Brisbane Society. Mr. Lithou Leader. Mr. W. A. Bates Minister in Brisbane, November 9th  
 Mr. Bates ordained in Sydney by Rev. J. J. Thornton, May 9th  
 A New Church temple at Fairfield, Sydney; the first New Church building in N.S.W. (approximate date only). The Wickham Terrace Church, Brisbane, rebuilt  
 Dr. Jackson Leader in Sydney. Daniel Ashby settles in Melbourne.  
 Second New Church periodical, *The Bee*, Melbourne  
 W. J. Spencer Leader in Sydney. First number of *The New Age*, November  
 Incorporation of The New Church in Australia  
 George Marchant rejoins the Brisbane Society  
 Captain Fawcett at Pinjarra Park, Western Australia. A complete set of the Writings has been presented to the Victoria Library, Perth  
 Daniel Dare and F. W. Hellberg in Western Australia  
 Rev. A. E. Beilby in Adelaide  
 D. Ashby and F. B. Gibbes Leaders in Melbourne. S. W. Hart in W.A.  
 The Thomas St. Hall opened in Sydney. Rev. A. E. Beilby leaves Adelaide, September  
 Rev. P. Billings in Adelaide, February  
 Rev. P. Billings lectures in Sydney. Henry Hurman in Perth  
 Rev. P. Billings resigns from the Conference. The 'New Society' in Sydney, under Richard Morse  
 Rev. P. Billings leaves Adelaide. The first New Church wedding in Western Australia  
 The Lithgow Society in N.S.W. inaugurated by Rev. W. A. Bates  
 The Ann St. Church, Brisbane, July 18th. J. W. Sharples attempts to form a Society at Tenterden, Western Australia  
 Authorisation of Richard Morse. Recognition of a General Church Society (The Hurstville Society)  
 Rev. Dr. Maro F. Underwood in Brisbane, May  
 William Burl settles in Sydney  
 The Sydney Society of the General Church opens a Sunday School at Hurstville  
 Ordination of Richard Morse  
 The first Church of the Hurstville Society, Dudley St., Penshurst, November  
 William Burl Leader of the Sydney Society  
 Rev. R. H. Teed in Melbourne, September  
 Inauguration of the Perth Society, May. Rev. W. R. Reece in Brisbane, August

1872 Joseph Leech Leader in Brisbane, March  
 Rev. C. D. Brock in Adelaide  
 H. W. Hickman Leader in Perth  
 The Brisbane Society secedes from the Association. Rev. Cairns Henderson Minister of the Hurstville Society  
 The Shoreham Camp, Victoria  
 The Sydney Society's first Church, February 4th. The first Church in Perth, February 25th  
 Rev. C. D. Brock resigns in Adelaide  
 Rev. C. D. Brock Honorary Minister in Adelaide  
 Rev. R. H. Teed resigns in Melbourne, July. Rev. E. L. Bennett in Melbourne, August. Gift of land at Woori Yallock to the Melbourne Society. First camp at Woori Yallock, December  
 Mr. H. W. Hickman ordained, April 12th. Mr. A. S. Watson Leader in Adelaide  
 Rev. D. Rose at the Hurstville Society, August  
 Rev. J. E. Teed the first Minister of the Sydney Society, November  
 Rev. C. V. A. Hasler in Brisbane, September  
 The Church at Rosalie, Brisbane, August  
 The Mount Waverley Church, Melbourne, August. Rev. D. M. Taylor at the Hurstville Society, August  
 Rev. J. E. Teed in Brisbane, October. Rev. E. B. Williams in Melbourne, December  
 Rev. B. S. Willmott in Sydney, May  
 Rev. N. E. Riley in Perth, February  
 Rev. I. A. Arnold in Adelaide, November  
 All 5 Association Societies have Ministers. 8 Ministers attend Conference. Rev. Riley resigns in Perth, April. 'The Swedenborg Association of Western Australia'. T. A. Moffatt Leader in Perth  
 Rev. E. B. Williams in Perth, January. The first Swedenborg Exhibition, Hobart, Tasmania, January-February. Mr. H. P. K. Larsen Leader in Brisbane, December  
 Rev. J. E. Teed in Melbourne, January. Rev. M. D. Gladish at the Hurstville Society, September  
 Rev. I. A. Arnöld in Sydney, January. The Sydney Society's Chapel at Clarence, October 5th  
 Centenary of the foundation of The New Church in Australia and of the first Australian Conference. Centenary Convocation at Merricks, Victoria, January  
 1930  
 1931  
 1932  
 1936  
 1938  
 1940  
 1941  
 1948  
 1950  
 1955  
 1957  
 1959  
 1960  
 1961  
 1963  
 1964  
 1965  
 1968  
 1969  
 1970  
 1973  
 1974  
 1975  
 1981

## TABLE OF MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCES

Membership+ of Association Societies and average attendances\* at Worship as reported to the Conferences held in the years shown; excepting for the figures given in the last line, which relate to the year 1979 only.

— indicates no regular or frequent Service.  
a blank space indicates no return.

Year	Adelaide			Melbourne			Sydney			Brisbane			Perth			Total Member-ship
	Mem.	am	pm	Mem.	am	pm	Mem.	am	pm	Mem.	am	pm	Mem.	am	pm	
1881	44	40	40	80	61	62	90			224						
1887	53	33	29	82	50	60	85	52	—	70	35	48				290
1889	54	38	32	80	46	52	90	60	—	76	20	40				299
1896	64	55	53	76	21	32	145	80	—	56	23	30				341
1899	82	54	61	67	48	—	141	56	25	57	30	40				347
1902	72	—	—	66	36	—	114	48	—	44	30	35				296
1905	62	39	95	64	33	—	86	42	37	63	30	35				272
1909	50	—	—	76	—	33	87	—	44							257
1913	40	16	24	72	—	27	90	40	22	53	25	34				255
1920	30	—	73	—	23	75	—	—	67	24	28					245
1923	51	—	16	71	—	20	80	20	—	77	26	26				279
1927	31	—	15	74	—	31	78	30	—	62	25	25				245
1930	30	—	13	75	—	33	70	25	—	71	47	35				246
1933	30	—	20	72	—	39	68	25	—	77	48	17	23	—	17	270
1936	28	—	23	66	9	30	61	25	—	70	50	15	25	—	19	250
1939	19	—	14	71	10	29	65	25	—	60	—	25	—	15	—	240
1946	16	—	14	69	—	24	66	25	—	51	—	28	—	18	—	230
1949	25	—	14	78	—	25	66	23	—	60	26	19	28	—	17	257
1952	25	—	15	74	—	27	69	22	—	62	23	24	28	—	20	258
1955	26	—	14	71	—	28	62	23	—	64	21	19	30	—	24	253
1958	20	—	9	59	—	26	47	24	—	60	24	17	31	—	29	217
1961	21	—	10	45	—	27	44	24	—	61	22	14	30	—	29	201
1964	20	12	—	40	30	—	41	30	—	54	—	37	31	—	26	186
1967	21	16	—	46	30	—	45	30	—	52	41	—	35	—	26	199
1970	18	18	—	51	34	—	54	34	—	44	38	—	38	—	24	205
1973	18	16	—	51	28	—	54	22	—	39	31	—	31	—	20	193
1976	18	16	—	63	36	—	54	28	—	33	18	—	38	—	27	206
1979	17	14	—	66	40	—	56	34	—	30	18	—	38	—	26	207
1979	16	13	—	69	43	—	56	39	—	31	18	—	38	—	40	210

Membership of the General Church throughout Australia is

68

278

+ Membership figures tend to fall slowly, due to the lapse of time between loss of contact and removal from Roll.

\* Average attendance figures are confused by the inconsistent practice in regard to the inclusion or exclusion of children. Under these circumstances it is impossible to obtain a true comparison of the numbers of adult participants.

A HISTORY OF THE NEW CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

1832-1980

I. A. ROBINSON

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