

THE BAPTIST RECORDER

Journal of the Baptist Historical Society of N.S.W.

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BAPTIST BRIEFS

- + This issue see our first guest writer, Rev. T. J. Cardwell, Editor of the Australian Baptist. Each issue we propose to have guest writers who will give us a closer insight into our Baptist History. Anyone who feels that they would like to contribute to "The Baptist Recorder" in any manner should send their copy to the Editor.
- + For all those people interested in Baptist History they should have a copy of the 'History of the Baptist Church in N.S.W.' Rev. Alan Prior wrote this book 'Some Fell on Good Ground' in 1966 and copies are still available from the Christian Education Supply Centre, 617 George Street, Sydney, for \$2.50 and 60cents postage.
- + Last year Dr. David Bollen spoke to us on the subject 'Australian Baptists a Religious Minority'. The Baptist Historical Society in England has published his study and copies of this may be obtained from the Supply Centre also for \$2.50 and 30cents postage.
- + The next meeting of 'The Baptist Historical Society' will be held at the Theological College, on February 16, 1978, when Miss Jean McLean will give a paper on the late Miss Edna N. Hale, who was a missionary in East Pakistan as it then was for over 30 years.
- + Did you know that the Baptist Historical Society is affiliated with the Royal Australian Historical Society? Each month the R.A.H.S. has its meetings at 133 Macquarie St., Sydney on the fourth Tuesday at 6-15pm., where interesting speakers give addresses on different aspects of Australia's history. Members of the B.H.S. are invited to attend.
- + The meaning and Practice of Ordination: with special reference to Baptists in New South Wales, is available from Dr. K. R. Manley. Copies are available upon request.
- + Anyone interested in joining the Baptist Historical Society - England, founded 1908 may do so by forwarding £4.00 p.a. (ministers, students and missionaries £2.00) to the Treasurer, Rev. T.S.H. Elwyn 148 Greenvale Road, Eltham. S.E.91PQ. England.

DID YOU KNOW THAT: The first ordination service in N.S.W. of which we have knowledge was that of William Hopkins Carey, grandson of the famous Baptist missionary, at Parramatta on 16 April, 1851. Carey had been brought to Sydney by Dr. Lang in June 1850 and under the sponsorship of the Bathurst Street church had accepted a call to be the first pastor at
(Contd. Page 8)

"MEN OF WORDS"

Guest Writer

Rev. T. J. Cardwell

The Early Church looked out from among their number "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," to undertake a caring role within the growing church in Jerusalem. This action enabled the apostles to give themselves full-time to prayer and preaching.

In another generation, in fact through several generations, Australian Baptists have sought out seven men with similar qualities and qualifications - but with added gifts and graces - and have assigned to them the responsibility as editor of the denominational paper, "The Australian Baptist."

This worthy journal completes a print ministry of 65 years this coming December, although other papers were produced before and since at State levels. Such a period is a lifetime for many, and during the span seven editors have served with distinction.

In order of appointment they were: J.A. Packer (1913-38); F. J. Dunkley (1939-41); H.J. Morton (1942-49); A.C. Prior (1949-61); I. Emmett (1961-69); D.K. Morley (1969-74) and T. J. Cardwell (1974-). Each have brought their own literary skills and talents, personality and dedication to this demanding office.

Times have changed since the paper made its appearance on January 7, 1913. We do not propose to comment on the changes in style and format nor its success and influence over the years. We merely write of the men who have worn out many pens or typewriters and have suffered "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" during their occupancy of the editorial den.

Several attempts were made to promote a truly national paper. After considerable negotiation, the State Unions, by resolution of their Assemblies, adopted "The Australian Baptist" as their official organ and agreed that no other paper of similar character be sanctioned or recognised.

A Company was floated with a capital of £5,000, representing, 5,000 shares of £1. each. An office was opened in George Street, a move subsequently made to Kent Street, and the present property in Bay Street, Broadway was later acquired.

The first editor, Mr. J. A. Packer, was a journalist by training and vocation. A report from a select committee states: "He is the only one we know capable of undertaking the position." Mr. Packer had given his services gratuitously as editor of the New South Wales paper, "The Baptist", and was employed by a paper known as "Watchman".

In his first editorial Packer wrote: "The year 1913 opens up a new vista to the Baptists of the Commonwealth. The last census disclosed that there are 97,324 Baptists in Australia," and in banner headlines announced that this was "their paper," and expressed the hope that it would reach every known Baptist. "We have no promises to make. The paper must speak for itself," he added. Rev. C.J. Tinsley, the then

"Men of Words" contd.

President of the New South Wales Union, said, "In the editor we have a man tried and trusted: of unique gifts and wide influence. What is needed now is the practical support of our people - deeds as well as words."

Affectionately called "the chief", Packer served tirelessly, both as editor and manager, and after 26 years relinquished his long reign on the grounds of illhealth in December 1938, at the age of 75 years.

The purchase of the present property took place during his term and was almost debt-free when he retired. At a farewell function Packer painted in graphic language the difficulties, disappointments, successes and victories which had come to the Publishing House over more than a quarter of a century. It was largely through his vision, administration, editorship and efforts that the paper became so well established, but regretfully it never achieved the success anticipated nor did his high hopes materialise.

The position was advertised and two applications were received. In view of negotiations for the Baptist Union of Australia to secure a substantial interest in the Company, these were not processed and a member of the Board, Rev. F.J. Dunkley, was appointed to act in a temporary capacity for six months, and later extended until a permanent appointment was made. On November 1, 1939, Mr. Dunkley was officially appointed. Whilst not a trained journalist, he proved that he had the desirable gifts which fitted him for the task.

In sharp contrast with his predecessor he only served for three years and resigned through illhealth. A member of the Board, Mr. H.J. Morton had been appointed editor "for the duration of the war."

Whilst he had no formal training as a writer, Mr. Morton was a deep thinker and possessed a wide outlook. He was able to confound the mighty and well able to silence his critics. The new editor brought to the position a wide knowledge of denominational affairs and in due course proved to be something of a surprise. It may come as a surprise, but he assumed office at the age of 66!

In the first editorial he stated that he would follow, more or less along the old-established lines, but added "provided the material is printable, no writer and no subject would be 'tabu' in its columns."

Morton sought to make the paper, in fact as well as in name, the official organ of the Baptist Union of Australia. He gave detailed attention to things Baptist and things Australian, but was never parochial. In his term, extended beyond the cessation of hostilities, he valiantly sought to strengthen the bonds between Baptists in the various states.

In laying down the task he stated: "No longer can it be said, as it too often was said, that 'the AB is a New South Wales paper!'" This was due to the fact that only New South Wales adhered to the earlier agreement: other States produced their own papers. In resigning Mr. Morton, in characteristic style, said that "he had been working for

"Men of Words" contd.

60 years and felt it is time he had a rest."

The fourth editor, Rev. A.C. Prior, was asked by the directors to accept the responsibility for editing the paper, and assumed office in May, 1949. In a front-page article, "Reflections on Approaching the Editorial Chair," Mr. Prior "pledged his utmost to make the AB the best piece of literature which comes into Baptist homes, to make it an effective tool in the hands of every Baptist who can be persuaded, coerced and bludgeoned into buying it, to further the policy of using the AB to promote the extension and unity of the Baptist Union of Australia, and to increase the effectiveness of the paper in bringing Jesus Christ to our people and through our people to the world."

During his editorship the control of the Publishing House passed from a Board appointed by private shareholders to one solely appointed by the State Unions. Circulation also increased and the paper made a profit for the first time. Mr. Prior often accepted unjust criticism by giving writers the opportunity of expressing the various points of view held by Baptists through Australia and the world.

In his final editorial Prior stated: "I believe that the time has more than come for the Baptists of Australia to provide for themselves a magazine liberated from the disadvantages under which this one has laboured since its inception."

After 12 years this man, who possessed a fearless spirit and fertile mind, handed over to Rev. Ian Emmett. He was chosen from a number of applicants, and his early experience in journalism with the country press made him the logical choice. His service both on the mission field and within the home churches provided a background singularly useful for the editorial task. Mr. Emmett commenced duty on June 1, 1961.

He was a well-endowed and gifted writer and continued to enhance reputation of the paper. Emmett stated that he considered that "the journal exists to express the views, record the acts, and fire the imaginations of Baptists throughout Australia. It's the kind of task that will demand the best. We do not expect that Baptists will never be impatient with us, nor do we anticipate that Baptists will always agree with the opinions which will be expressed. What is important, however, is that we make some contribution of a worthy nature, so that, through our denomination, we might build the Kingdom of God."

In laying down his pen after 7½ years, Emmett stated that the established policy to "appoint an editor and then trust him," was carried out. "I hope that the years ahead will see a greater unity and surrender of merely parochial concerns for the larger task." He appealed that the journal "not deteriorate into a house journal peddling the party line, but always be a forum of true discussion and independent reporting."

Rev. D. K. Morley, the first non-New South Wales appointee, commenced on February 5, 1969. He saw his role as being "able to have fellow-

"Men of Words" contd.

ship in prayer, encourage when the going was hard, stir to greater endeavours, comfort readers in their trials, assist and strengthen to serve, and to inform and inspire."

Mr. Morley brought to his new responsibility experience in the pastoral office and experience in journalism gained from writing for several interdenominational journals. He gave attention to detail and sought to give as wide a coverage as possible to news and events, and sought with marked success to foster our growing recognition of Australia as one country and Australian Baptists as one family.

The seventh editor appointed was Rev. T.J. Cardwell and produced his first paper in this capacity on April 3, 1974. It was not the first time he sat in the editorial chair as he had been associated with the Publishing House in various ways over 20 years. He had exercised a ministry in Christian journalism as a writer and former editor. Cardwell served as a relieving editor for the AB on several occasions and was a part-time copy writer at the time of his appointment. He accepted his appointment as a "call from God," and accordingly stated that he placed his "mind, hand and pen at His disposal."

For the present editor it appeared to be a story book ending to a life-long ambition. However, he would be the first to acknowledge that whilst he worked hard to achieve it, it was also true that "being in the way," the Lord "led" him.

The routine marrying of mind and metal never loses its excitement and romance for journalists, but Christian writers must pray as did Ezekiel, that the Spirit of God will breathe upon the printed page so that it may continually come alive, "Mr. Cardwell said. He seeks to produce a paper with the same Biblically-based, conservative, evangelical outlook as his six predecessors.

Even though all seven men have, at times, felt frustrated by the seemingly lack of response and positive co-operation from some State Unions to promote the national paper, it goes without saying that The Australian Baptist has done much to develop the spirit and outlook characteristic of Australian Baptists to-day.

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FROM THE SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

With a good attendance, the Fourth Annual Meeting was held at the Theological College on Thursday, April 21, when the Annual Report was presented in the first issue of The Baptist Recorder, and the Treasurer's Report was read by Mr. H. Watkin-Smith.

The President of the Union, Mr. A. E. Kelshaw, presided at the election of Office-bearers, who remain unchanged from last year, with the exception that Mr. Ronald Cardwell was appointed Editor of The Baptist Recorder.

"Secretary's Notebook" contd.

Dr. K. N. Manley, the Chairman of the Society, delivered the Third Annual Lecture, his subject being The Meaning and Practice of Ordination among Baptists. Several definitions of Ordination were quoted, including the beginning of the Statement prepared by Staff members of Baptist Theological Colleges in Australia, 1968, that "Ordination is the Church's recognition that God has chosen a particular man for the work of the ministry."

The notes of Dr. Manley's Lecture have been placed in the Archives of the Society.

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Thursday, June 16, saw some of our members, together with its members at the Northbridge church. There we had the privilege of meeting Miss Parker, a faithful member of that Church for the past 50 years, and now their only Foundation member still there.

Mr. J. D. McMillan spoke from a Booklet compiled by the Church for its Jubilee, mentioning that, on 21st April, 1927, the first meeting was held, chaired by Mr. F.W. Winn, then President of the Baptist Union of N.S.W. The recently enlarged Church is on the site of what was the original Anglican church in the area.

The Treasurer, Mr. Graham Wilkins, spoke from a second booklet, entitled "Fifty Years of Giving." A number of historical items had been placed on display, and the evening of fellowship was rounded off with an inspection of the buildings and a delicious supper served by the ladies.

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The meeting of August 18, at the Theological College, included a Paper and a film by Rev. T. Windon, of Lithgow Church, who told us that in April, 1906, Rev. A.J. Waldock was interested in the formation of a Baptist Church in the area, and services were commenced in October of the same year, under the ministry of Rev. Ebenezer Price.

There were many miners in the area, and some of their early members were from Hoskins Steel and Iron Works. Following a welcome tea for Rev. T.E. Leech in 1907, 1000 were present at the concert held afterwards. But more recent membership has been adversely affected by vicissitudes of the mines, including when the State Coal Mine retrenched 500 men in 1930.

The coloured film which followed beautifully told the story of Lithgow and the Baptist Church there, and both it and the Paper were thoroughly enjoyed by the few Committee members present.

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It now seems abundantly clear that, apart from the Annual meeting in April each year, members are not very interested in attending Historical Society meetings. As our main purpose in existing is the preservation of the documented history of the Baptist denomination, we recognise the prerogative of our people to be, perhaps, currently more

"Secretary's Notebook" contd.

interested in the American way of doing things, than they are in finding out how our own forebears solved their problems and received blessings.

However, unless we can assure them of an audience, it is felt we cannot continue asking speakers to travel long distances, and spend a lot of valuable time compiling Papers for the edification of the Committee alone, so, if we are forced to cut meetings to say, two yearly, members will know the reason.

If members have any ideas which they are themselves prepared to back, perhaps they would let me have them. Also, if you have not yet paid your subscription for this year, due in April, our Treasurer will be pleased to hear from you. If Members require more Brochures or copies of The Baptist Recorder, these can be supplied upon request.

This may be an appropriate occasion to mention that, recently your Secretary attended a day-long Seminar at the University of N.S.W. on the preservation of Records, etc. Many valuable hints were obtained, but it does appear that our Denomination has not really started in this area.

Our volunteers battle on valiantly, and there is no doubt that, in the 4-5 years of our existence we have saved many valuable documents as well as awakening some churches to the value of any old books, documents, pictures they may have.

Nevertheless, it does seem that the Baptist denomination must make up its mind whether or not it does wish to preserve these valuable documents in a professional manner. If it does, the first need is for the Historical Society to have its own premises, at the very least, two rooms which can be kept locked. One of these, at least needs to be air-conditioned, and kept at a constant temperature of 70 deg.

This would be used for storage, and entered only by the Archivist. The other room would be issued to students, and perhaps put on display. Ideally the Denomination should appoint a librarian, archivist, historian (it matters not what he is called, and it could well be a woman) to do a full time job here of collecting, preserving, cataloguing, displaying and issuing material. If necessary, he could be assisted by volunteers from the Historical Society.

Action of this type would bring us into line with the other Churches .. not because it is necessary for us to be like everybody else, but simply because, in this instance, they are doing this job in the correct and professional manner.

Meanwhile, our mail contains the following: a photostat from Rev. T. Windon of a piece in the Lithgow Mercury of 15th June, 1917. Rev. A.L. Leeder had, at the local Town Hall, given an admirable lecture upon Mrs. Gummidge, the Dickens character, in aid of the building fund of the Baptist Church. We have received a further Government grant through the Royal Australian Historical Society, to assist the preservation, propagation, etc. of Baptist History. These Grants are much appreciated, and we have advised the R.A.H.S.

"Secretary's Notebook" contd.

that we will have a representative at their Conference in October.

The Kangaroo Valley Historical Society invited us to the opening of the re-constructed George Walker Bridge on July 31. This is a most historic structure, and it is understood the opening was a huge success. As it is now at the site of the Pioneer Farm and Historical Settlement our Members are urged, if they are ever in that area, to visit the Settlement. The Secretary has done so, and found it a most worthwhile exercise.

It is anticipated that we will mount a small exhibition in the Foyer to the Ashfield Town Hall for the Baptist Assembly meetings on 23rd and 24th September, but by the time most of you get this Paper, you will be able to say, "Yes, I saw you there."

Lorna Ollif
Secretary.

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From page 1 Parramatta. Rev. John Ham, pastor at Bathurst Street, presided at the ordination service. After a statement by Carey and an address by Ham, Carey knelt at the communion table where with the imposition of hands he was solemnly set apart to the pastoral office". (Incidentally the first two deacons were also set apart with laying-on of hands.)

This ordination service was a clear reflection of the British practice familiar to Ham. There were other men in the colony, at the time serving in "Baptist" churches who styled themselves "Rev." but who had had no formal training or recognition.

NORTHBRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH 1927-1977 - A Brief Overview

The work at Northbridge commenced on 21st April, 1927 in Bailey's Hall in Sailors Bay Road, and the first service took place on the 1st May, 1927 with Mr. F. W. Winn as its first preacher. The existing church and property were purchased from the Church of England for £1,850. and was officially opened on September 24, 1927. However, it was not until October 13, 1927 that the church was formally inaugurated. The church commenced with 10 foundation members, and one Miss E. Parker is still in membership after some 50 years.

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Baptist Historical Society

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