

THE BAPTIST RECORDER

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

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BAPTIST BRIEFS

- + A Cultural Grant of \$100.00 has just been received from the Royal Australian Historical Society towards the publication of a monograph on Baptist Evangelism and Rev. John Ridley. When the Baptist Foundation of N.S.W. recently gave us a Grant of \$150.00 towards the restoration of old Baptist records, it promised that a further \$100 would be available for the monograph, when required. Rev. H. E. Evans, of Toukley-Gorokan Church is collecting J. G. Ridley records and material, and would be pleased to hear from anybody who has any of this material.
- + The Canberra Church is making plans to celebrate its 50th Anniversary next year. They are seeking some of Dr. Waldock's papers, which would show useful pre-1929 background to his efforts to fund raising for a Baptist witness in the new National Capital. Can anyone oblige? Information should go to Lieut. Comdr. R. K. Robb, R.A.N., 34 Cygnet Crescent, Red Hill, A.C.T. 2603.
- + The Library of Australian History, publishers of 17 Mitchell Street, North Sydney, has sent us its current brochure. This publishing house is devoted to Australian history, and has re-published many out of print books and source material. Anybody interested in knowing just what is available could contact Mrs. Ollif, or obtain a brochure direct from the Library of Australian History.
- + Members and friends may not be aware, but there is in Sydney a Society known as "The 1788-1820 Association which is open to the descendants of persons who arrived in Australia between 26th January, 1788 and 31st December, 1820. Their research office is room 319, 3rd floor, Assembly Hall Building, Cnr. Margaret and York Streets, and is open to visitors. They have issued an Anniversary Pioneer Register, containing genealogical details of 100 pioneers, their children and grand-children. Price \$6. plus postage - enquiries to Mr. M. Stokes, 5991402
- + Any person who is interested in Historical Tours may undertake a conducted tour of the Historic Camden area. Details are available from Camden Valley Tours, P.O. Box 113, Camden 2570.
- + Members who would like to contribute material to the Recorder should contact the Editor.

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FROM THE SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

All Baptist Churches may not be aware that the Mitchell Library keeps a very extensive file of pictures. Many of these are catalogues under

From the Secretary contd.

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"Sydney", then broken down to "Churches", followed by the denominations. The Baptist section contains the pictures of three Churches .. one an old picture, one a newer picture of an old church, and one a more modern church. For the sake of research, it is felt this section should contain many more examples, and Baptists are urged to send pictures of their buildings to the Mitchell Librarian, State Library of N.S.W., Macquarie Street, Sydney. Any type of picture, of any size, is better than none at all, but if they are being done especially 6x8ins. is a good size. As many details as possible, particularly exact location, should be typed on a sheet of paper, which, with celotape, should be attached to the back of the picture. It is hoped, by this time next year, the collection will be much more extensive than it now is, and the Baptist Historical Society would also be happy to receive a duplicate.

Contact should be made with the secretary of any further information is required, Mrs. Lorna Ollif, 41 Galston Road, Hornsby 2077.

Lorna Ollif
Secretary.

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DIARY DATES

19th OCTOBER, 1978 - Rev. L. Thow, Dip. Theol.
"Baptist Response to the
Years of Depression"

15th FEBRUARY, 1979 - Miss F. Leeder
"Life and Work of Rev. A. L. Leeder"

19th APRIL, 1979 - Rev. A. C. Prior
5th Annual Lecture
"The Life and Work of Dr. W. L. Jarvis"

All meetings of the Historical Society are held at the Baptist College, 120 Herring Road, Eastwood.

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A HUNDRED YEARS ON THE LOWER CLARENCE ... Rev. F. A. Coan, B.A.

The Clarence River was missed by Captain Flinders when examining the coast in July, 1799, from Port Jackson to Moreton Bay. Later, two convicts escaped from Moreton Bay, and one lived on the Clarence for about three years, then went on to Port Macquarie, where he was re-captured.

Craig described the area, then went on to Sydney where he talked about the amount of cedar on the Clarence, and because of this, there was a move to take up land on the Lower and Upper Clarence, particularly among the small farmers who wanted land under the John Robertson Free Selection Act ... and had nowhere else to go for it.

The Grafton Church was commenced about 1872 or 3. by people meeting in a home. In 1875, a letter was written to the Baptist Home Mission, then five years old, referring to the area as a future station. The representative of the Union who visited there was well received, and the President of the Union went again, and he was well impressed. The people at Grafton requested financial help, but did not get it.

In 1876 the Grafton Church was formed, on 9th July. Mr. Hibbard, the Secretary of the Union, went north to preach at the Opening. A bad flood took place in the area, and he had some money sent them to help in their difficulties.

Mr. R. Beecher, B.A., was ordained at the Assembly, and then went to Grafton, as the first minister ordained by the N.S.W. Baptist Union. In 1872, he became the President of the Union, and it must have been the shortest time of any between being ordained and becoming the President.

He agitated for a railway to be built through to Queensland, which was done years later. Most transport was then by way of the River there. In 1877, he came to the Assembly, and spoke on the Clarence, and they appointed a second Pastor, Thomas Henry Jagers, to assist on the Clarence. He had previously served as a Methodist lay-preacher in the Bega district, where alone he had gone out looking for the Clarke Brothers gang of bush-rangers. Evidently he did not catch them, but they disappeared from the area.

Mr. Jagers was ordained in 1877, and married a girl from London. They eventually had three children, and he bought his own house in Lawrence and worked from there, about 20 miles from Grafton. He went there in 1878, but separated from the Lower Clarence Church in 1901, and was followed by E. G. Hockey, who also served for about 20 years. He bought land himself where the Church was built at Lawrence; Mr. Jagers' wife, while his children were still young, died, leaving him to care for them alone.

These people had been clearing and pioneering on alluvial land, and from 1887 to 1893, they had ten major floods on the Clarence. The farmers could not get through the mud to go to Church. This was followed by a bad drought. The big flood was in 1890, and there were other small floods, as well as the ten major ones. After 20 years, he was visited by the President of the Union. Rev. Beecher had already left the area. There were financial problems; Mr. Jagers was then ill, and there was a lack of harmony with the Church people. The President thought the Union was neglecting the field there, and that Mr. Jagers should be relieved. In 1900, a Methodist Home missionary had written to the Union, offering his services. Eventually, E. G. Hockey was asked to take on the Lawrence work, and commenced there on 1st May, 1901; Mr. Pitman was then at the Grafton Church. He could not find a house at Lawrence, and they managed to build a Manse.

In 1905, work was established at Maclean, assisted by Rev. Hockey and at Calliope in 1889. Apia was where the school was started for the Baptist Church, they called it Calliope school.

Maclean had 20 pastors in the first 20 years, some being illustrious men. Rev. Hockey later went to Manly.

In 1959, the three churches were combined as the Lower Clarence Church. Jock Garden was sent to Maclean from Melbourne, then resigned to enter politics. Maclean is the service centre of the district, and there are town people and farmers .. two district types.

In 1932, the approach was by cars and the Clarence, mostly by steamers which were used until the 1950's. The area had geographical isolation.

The Article on the previous pages was written by Rev. Frank Coan, currently the minister of the Manly Baptist Church. Prior to that he was the minister on the Lower Clarence at Maclean where he commenced the writing of a History of the area. The ~~article~~ is a brief summary of a lecture given at a recent meeting of the Historical Society.

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WHAT IS THE BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY??

The Society was formed on 18th April, 1974, and the following objectives were adopted:

1. To encourage research into the history of Baptists, especially those in N.S.W.
2. To seek and obtain custody of important Baptist records, and to provide for their careful preservation.
3. To encourage the collating and recording of Baptist history.
4. To foster interest in Baptist history at the local Church level.
5. To assist research students at schools, colleges and universities.
6. To publish articles and historical information.
7. To be alert to Church jubilees, centenaries and other significant anniversaries for Baptists, and where possible, to assist in the provision of relevant historical details.
8. To promote care of buildings and sites of historical interest to Baptists.

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Fees are now due for 1978-79 ... \$3.00 p.a. (Pensioners and students \$1.00)

Forward your subscription to ... Mr. H. Watkin-Smith
375 Macquarie Road,
Springwood 2777

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REV. JAMES GREENWOOD M. A.
BAPTIST MINISTER - EDUCATIONALIST - POLITICIAN

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By . . K. A. Palmer

The Rev. James Greenwood, a graduate of the University of London, was called from Nottingham, England, to the pastorate of the Bathurst Street Baptist Church, Sydney, and inducted as minister on August 6, 1870.

The Sydney Press of that period speaks in glowing terms of James Greenwood as an orator of outstanding merit who had acquired such a reputation for eloquence and scholarship that his congregations at Bathurst Street were remarkable both for size and for the intellectual standing of their individual components.

The Rev. James Greenwood had a passion for an educated Baptist ministry in the Australian Colonies. During the early years of his pastorate he proposed a scheme to educate young men for the ministry. Mr. Greenwood took a leading part in the cultural and educational life of the colony and was always in demand as a speaker for the various societies which existed for the social and religious betterment of the community. He gathered around him some of the finest minds of New South Wales, for his own mind was a veritable storehouse of the best literature, his writings were read by men everywhere, so talented was he as a literary man that later he became the leader-writer for the "Sydney Morning Herald".

During his ministry he extended the Baptist witness in suburbs and country towns; he was continually urging for the establishment of Baptist churches in young towns and suburbs that were then struggling for existence. In 1871 he was elected President of the Baptist Union of N.S.W.

In 1874 the Public Schools League waited on him, requesting that he be their candidate for Parliament. In placing the matter before the church, it was thought that the duties of a politician were inconsistent with the high calling of the Christian ministry.

After a ministry of six years, Mr. Greenwood resigned in 1876 to become the champion, and indeed the initiator and moving spirit of the Public Schools League, a body formed for Free and Secular and Compulsory method of education which was fast becoming the ideal of the major portion of the community.

In 1877 he stood for Parliament, representing the Public Schools League, and was elected a member for East Sydney. Mr. Greenwood was closely associated with Henry Parkes in all stages of the latter's work upon the Education Bill of 1880. This Public Education Bill was largely framed by Greenwood, was introduced by Henry Parkes and placed upon the Statute Book. Greenwood, with his Baptist convictions of a Free Church in a Free State, was wise enough to exclude Denominationalism as a factor in Public Education in New South Wales, which was not only doomed, but dead so far as any practical possibilities were concerned; it was hence -forth to receive no Government recognition and no Government aid.

James Greenwood contd.

The aggressive and powerful Roman Catholic, Archbishop Vaughan, who was demanding larger rights for Roman Catholic Church in Public Education, had been blocked mainly by the sane and eloquent championship of the former Baptist pastor to whom much of the credit of the Public Education system which, with certain amendments, is still in force to-day, is due.

No greater tribute to James Greenwood's talents could be made than that shown in the official records of the "Sydney Morning Herald"; *He was the Leader-writer on the staff of the 'Herald'; while occupying that position he had shown in particular, such a grasp of educational matters that his articles were universally regarded as of the very greatest value. They were, indeed, and still remain, masterly expositions of the whole subject."

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About the writer Kenneth Palmer is a member of the Cleampton Park Baptist Church, and is the Company Secretary for a large transport company in Sydney. He was formerly a member of the Stanmore Baptist Church, and was responsible for the writing of the History of that church to celebrate its Golden Jubilee.

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