

A history of St Ann's Presbyterian Church Paterson



Cameron Archer and Jack Sullivan

Paterson Historical Society Inc.

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by
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and
Jack Sullivan

Paterson Historical Society Inc., Paterson

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Cover: St Ann's in 2004 (photo: Brian Walsh)

Introduction

The preparation and production of this book follows an earlier edition first published in 1990 coinciding with the 150th anniversary of the construction of St Ann's.

This small book created significant interest and was regularly sought by people studying their family history in Paterson and by others wishing to learn more about the district's history.

Since then much more information has been collected regarding St Ann's, particularly from the *Maitland Mercury*. In addition, there have been several scholarly works on the history of the Presbyterian Church in Australia including a detailed index of ministers in 19th century NSW.

We are therefore now in a much better position to write about St Ann's and to place it and its congregation in the context of a wider history of the church in the state. The book ventures into the history of the Presbyterian Church in Australia and also briefly into the history of the Presbyterian Church itself. It is hoped this expansion of the history of St Ann's will make it much more meaningful for readers and those interested in the church in general.

St Ann's has always been part of the mainstream Presbyterian Church, but the Hunter Valley was the centre of the formation in 1846 of the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (the Free Church). As a result there were two different Presbyterian Churches, both operating in a rather small geographical area. It is impossible to study the history of St Ann's without understanding the development and operation of the Free Church.

St Ann's is one of Australia's oldest continuing Presbyterian churches and its survival is a testament to the dedication and faith of both its parishioners and clergy. We hope you will find this book as interesting as we have found its preparation.

Cameron Archer

Jack Sullivan

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Chapter 1

Establishing the Presbyterian Church in Australia

The appointment of Sir Thomas Brisbane, a Scot, as Governor of NSW in 1821 was a turning point in the history of Presbyterianism in Australia. The Lang family were neighbours of Brisbane at Largs in Scotland and their eldest son, George, had shown an interest in emigrating to Australia. Because of Brisbane's appointment he felt confident that he could enjoy the sympathetic consideration of the new Governor.

George Lang travelled to NSW and reported back to his family that the Scots were receiving favourable treatment and there was a need for a Presbyterian minister to establish a church in Sydney. Consequently his brother, Rev John Dunmore Lang, travelled to Sydney and was then followed by another brother, Andrew, and their parents and sister Isabella.

The Lang family therefore focused on a new life in Australia.

Governor Brisbane granted George land in the Hunter Valley at what is now Largs but, unfortunately, George died before he could take it up. Andrew and his parents took up this land, which includes what is now the village of Largs. They named their property *Dunmore*.

This chain of events set the scene for the establishment and spread of Presbyterianism throughout Australia. It also brought to Sydney Rev John Dunmore Lang who was to become one of the colony's most influential figures.

While this book is a history of St Ann's Presbyterian Church at Paterson, the developments at St Ann's are never far from the life and times of John Dunmore Lang or the history and developments of the Presbyterian Church in Australia.

Presbyterianism wasn't new to the colony: a small congregation had arrived at Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury River in 1802 and had dutifully followed its Presbyterian convictions. The group established a small church but had never had a minister. The arrival of the Rev Lang no doubt brought a sense of salvation for the Ebenezer congregation.

The early days of the church in NSW were plagued with uncertainty, conflict and debate. The conflict and debate occurring in Scotland were being played out in the fledgling outpost of the church in Sydney. Lang established a school, newspapers and promoted immigration and was a member of the NSW Legislative Council.

The key problem was the division between the evangelical and moderate ministers. Rev Lang was an evangelical and the Rev John McGarvie and others were moderates. They were working at cross -purposes regarding the role of the church and its task in a pioneer society. The moderate ministers were content to have state aid and support for the church whereas the evangelicals did not want to have any state interference in church matters.

In 1836 Governor Bourke had the Church Act passed which provided substantial aid for the erection of church buildings and offered Government subsidies on stipends up to £200 per annum. This subsidy provided a way forward for parishes such as Paterson to develop and support a minister.



John Dunmore Lang, patriot and statesman, Wynyard Park, Sydney.
(photo: Brian Walsh)

Presbyterian Church in Scotland and Australia

The Presbyterian Church came into being some time after the Reformation reached Scotland in 1560. The leading reformer was John Knox who had studied under John Calvin in Geneva, so the reformed church came to embrace Calvinistic and evangelical doctrines, and gradually a Presbyterian form of Government. The Scottish reformation was a popular movement and it abolished the hierarchical system of bishops in churches. Instead a system of government of the church by elders arose, the word Presbyterian being derived from the Greek *presbyter*, meaning elder.

The Presbyterian Church was therefore very different from the Church of England because Presbyterians were governed through elders, not by the church hierarchy of bishops.

The Church of Scotland was recognised by Parliament in 1592, when its courts received legal standing and the King's absolute jurisdiction over the church's government was abolished.

The next century saw bitter conflict on and off when the Stuart kings attempted to regain control over the Church of Scotland by imposing episcopacy (Anglicanism). This strife ended in 1688 with the ascension to the British throne of the Protestant William of Orange who restored civil and religious liberties. In 1690 the Church of Scotland received establishment status through the Act of Settlement.

The British Government paid the stipends of ministers of religion because of the social and educational benefit ministers brought to the community. This was probably

the case during and after the Industrial Revolution when the growing working class was perceived as a threat to civil order – as were those of convict descent in the Australian colonies. However, the Church of Scotland was endowed as early as 1567, when Christianity was an integral part of society. It was simply the duty of the state to maintain religious ordinances.

An ongoing issue within the church and its relationship with the state was the issue of patronage, which the church had been against. Patronage was the right of lay patrons (usually landowners) to present and have admitted by the Presbytery such duly qualified ministers as the patron nominated (Ward 1989, p. 20).

The Act of Settlement did not fully resolve patronage and in 1712 the British Government reinstated the system.

Various revivals in England and Scotland led to an increasing number of evangelical Christians who looked to a ministry which shared their conviction and commitment. Many belonged to the emerging middle classes, so the resultant force was strongly democratic and anti-establishment. They resented the system of patronage that ensured a ministry of moderates who supported the Tory dominance in church and state.

The evangelical section of the church insisted they have the right to call their own ministers and/or veto the appointment of a moderate.

In 1830 a Whig government came into power in Great Britain and the first of the Reform Acts was passed in 1832. This triumph of democracy had its impact on the Church of Scotland which passed the Veto Act of 1834. It gave the people the right to reject the nomination of a minister they deemed unsuitable. However, this Act was repeatedly overruled by the Presbyteries dominated by moderates, and also by the civil courts. During the 'Ten Years Conflict' appeals to higher courts, the House of Lords, Prime Minister, Parliament and even the Queen, failed.

In 1843, 474 out of 1205 ministers (two-thirds of the evangelicals) left the Established Church of Scotland to form the Free Church of Scotland in a move labelled the 'Disruption'. It was the largest and practically the last of a number of secessions during a century and a half, over the principle of 'spiritual independence'. The Free Church reaffirmed that Christ is the Head of the Church and not the State or secular powers. It became a matter of conscience to reject state aid, because of the conditions attached to it.

A large section of Highland Scots joined the Free Church because of their suffering at the hands of the Establishment through the 'clearances'. The Free Church also defended their cause. The Highlands had been evangelised comparatively late and had experienced a number of revivals in the early 1800s.

Rev John Dunmore Lang was an evangelical, who had hoped to build an evangelical Australian Presbyterian Church. In 1826 the Rev John McGarvie, a moderate, arrived in Sydney to support the Presbyterian cause in NSW.

Lang formed the Presbytery of NSW in 1832, however, by 1837 the division between the moderates and the evangelicals occurred with Lang breaking away to form the Synod of NSW. By 1843 Lang's base was his independent congregation of Scots Church Sydney with the remainder being associated with the Presbytery of NSW.

The 1843 'Disruption' in Scotland had its effect in Australia with the Rev William McIntyre of Maitland and two others forming the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (Free Church) in 1846.

Union discussions commenced as early as 1854, after the death of the leading moderate in the Synod of Australia, the Rev. John McGarvie. A proposed Basis of Union was drafted that same year. A Convenor of the Committee to consider the possible Union of the Presbyterian Churches in the Colony was the Rev J. B. Laughton, former minister at Paterson.

At the time there was debate on the phasing out of state aid to churches, the Free Church not accepting state aid while the mainstream church was still receiving aid from the Colonial Government for its ministers. In 1862 state aid to religion was withdrawn. There was a desire between the churches for cooperation and for a more effective united church and in 1865 Union occurred.

By now the Australian churches were independent from the Scottish churches and were not receiving the supply of ministers for which they had hoped. Despite this a small group remained out of Union and the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia, popularly known as the Free Church, remains to this day in NSW.

In the 1880s a Federal Assembly was formed to have a consultative function and develop guidelines for National Union. In 1901 the General Assembly of Australia was formed which coincided with Federation.

In 1977 Presbyterian Church congregations across Australia voted for union with the Methodist and Congregational churches. The Uniting Church was formed on a parish by parish basis with some congregations joining and others not. The Parish of Maitland, which included St Ann's, voted to continue as Presbyterian.

John Dunmore Lang, MA, DD (1799-1878)

John Dunmore Lang was born at Greenock, near Glasgow, attended Largs School and Grammar School and the University of Glasgow. He married Wilhelmina Mackie at Capetown en voyage to Australia in 1831.

Lang had first come to Sydney in 1823 and set about establishing the Presbyterian Church in the colony. He became the main advocate and spokesman for the church in the colony. He also at various times established a school, a newspaper and was a member of Parliament.

Lang was an ardent nationalist for the developing colony, however, he was also one of its most controversial figures. Key features of his career included:

- involvement in many public spats with leading figures such as the Governor, businessmen, other clergy and politicians
- spending time in gaol for not meeting financial commitments
- publication of over 100 books and pamphlets amounting to over 13,000 pages
- splitting from the established church and forming a separate Synod and later an individual congregation
- member of Parliament for Port Phillip (Melbourne), Sydney, Moreton Bay (Brisbane) and West Sydney at various times
- an inveterate traveller having taken nine trips back to the UK and also America through his lifetime. He travelled extensively within the colony.

While Lang is seen as the Father of Presbyterianism in Australia, his involvement in mainstream church affairs was often from the sideline in his capacity as a member of a splinter group. His leadership impact in the colony was more political than ecclesiastical. It is unlikely that Lang ever graced the pulpit of St Ann's.

Reference: Baker (1985).

Australia's oldest Presbyterian Church

An earlier edition of this book was titled *Australia's oldest Presbyterian Church? St. Ann's Paterson*. There is clearly debate on the issue of which is the oldest church. It is an intriguing question. Between the first and second editions of this book the matter has been further researched and more information has been gathered. For those interested in the history of the Presbyterian Church it probably doesn't matter which is the oldest, but one develops an awe and respect for those congregations and structures which have survived from the 1830s and 1840s through to the 21st century.

By far the oldest and first Presbyterian Church in Australia is the congregation at Ebenezer on the Hawkesbury River, which arrived there in 1802. This congregation constructed a church in 1808-09 and this building has been in constant use as a place of worship ever since. This church, however, became part of a Uniting Church parish upon unification between Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists in 1977.



Ebenezer Church built 1808-9 at Portland Head, Hawkesbury River, NSW by a small group of Presbyterians (photo: Ferguson Library)

Another very early church in Australia is at Kirklands, north-west of Campbelltown in the midlands of Tasmania (see photo next page). It was established in 1836 and on Union became part of the Uniting Church parish. It has since reverted to a Presbyterian Church.

Both the Ebenezer church and the Kirklands church are quaint buildings, in reasonably isolated locations serving a small but dedicated congregation, much the same as they were at the time of their establishment.



Kirklands Church north west of Campbelltown in Tasmania, built in 1836.
(photo: Cameron Archer)

Another church which has been continuing Presbyterian since its establishment is St David's at Campbelltown, NSW. The Rev Hugh Robert Gilchrist preached the first service in this parish on 17 December 1837 and was inducted into the parish on 23 March 1838. St David's was soon built and was opened on 10 July 1842 (Luckett 1992). This church's establishment closely parallels that of St Ann's at Paterson.



St David's, Campbelltown NSW, opened in July 1842 and still a Presbyterian Church.
(photo: Ferguson Library)

The establishment of the Presbyterian Church in the Hunter

The beachhead of Presbyterianism in the Hunter was *Dunmore* at Largs. The Rev Lang's family took up this land grant of alluvial and hill land and farmed it with tenants and convicts for many years. The first recorded Presbyterian service to be held in the Hunter Valley was officiated by Rev Lang at *Dunmore*, Largs in 1827. In 1831 the Rev Thomas Thompson was appointed as first minister in the Maitland area. Unfortunately, Thompson soon transferred to Bathurst because of a serious incident involving drinking. Apparently he was also quite unsuited for an itinerant ministry in a pioneer society.

Subsequent ministers to Maitland district were the Rev William Pinkerton (itinerant from Sydney), Licentiate John Adair – also itinerant, Rev John Garven, Rev John Gregor and Rev Robert Blain. Adair was the brother of James Adair from Cardoness at Vacy.

The Rev Blain was the most enduring, taking up his charge at Hinton and remaining in his parish for many years. The establishment of early schools at Hinton and Largs can probably be attributed to the Rev Blain's efforts.

Rev Lang established himself in Sydney and quickly became an influential member of the community. During the 1830s it was clear that transportation of convicts would end sooner or later. At the same time Lang's fellow countrymen in Scotland were suffering under difficult circumstances due to social change and the industrial revolution. The Scottish Highlands were the most adversely affected part of the country, where the commercialisation of agriculture had led to the notorious 'clearances'. Highlanders were either shipped out to America and Canada or resettled on crofts on the Scottish coast. These plots of land were often too small to sustain a family and additional employment was required. It was a vulnerable existence and failure of crops and/or insufficient employment would literally lead to starvation (Richards 1982).

Lang promoted immigration of Scottish Highlanders and it is suggested that they made up the largest part of the 13,500 assisted Scottish migrants arriving in the colony between 1837-1850 (Ward 1996). The Scottish immigrants were gladly received by the settlers and the expanding rural sector because the colony, at that time, was in a boom phase. Lang also had to source Presbyterian ministers if his church were to expand and service his countrymen who were being lured to the colony. The Scottish immigrants from the Highlands mainly spoke Gaelic, not English, however the Lowlanders were English speakers. The Gaelic speaking Highlanders sought the services of ministers who could preach to them in their native language, Gaelic.

The issue of the Gaelic language pervaded social comment and discussion from the late 1830s well into the 1860s. Upwardly mobile Highlanders would often choose to speak English, particularly in Sydney.

The *Midlothian*, a 414 ton barque sailed from the Isle of Skye on 10th August 1837. Included in her passengers was the Rev William McIntyre and 259 emigrants (*Sydney Gazette* 14/12/1837). The ship arrived in Sydney in December 1837, the voyage apparently being plagued by fever and dysentery. The *Sydney Gazette* (19/12/1837) reported that "no adult male died; and of the 24 deaths which happened, 18 were very young and delicate children and the remainder sickly females". The newly-arrived immigrants assembled on the Sunday after their arrival at Scots Kirk in Sydney for an evening church service in Gaelic. The *Sydney Gazette* (19/12/1837) said that this was

the first time in the colony that a church service was held in the ancient Gaelic language. These immigrants from the *Midlothian* learnt that their fellow countrymen who had arrived previously on the *William Nicol* had been sent throughout the colony to work and were not able to worship or speak Gaelic. The immigrants made representation to Colonel Snodgrass, the acting Governor, to enable them to be sent to one location so that they could continue to worship in Gaelic and not be isolated from their fellow Highlanders (*Sydney Gazette*, 19/12/1837).

The immigrants had been given the understanding by the agents of the British Government that on their arrival in the colony that they could “*enjoy the public ordinance of their religion, under the pastoral charge of a minister of their own communion and speaking their own language, who should be selected to accompany them.*”

Apparently John Eales of *Duckenfield* and Andrew Lang of Largs put proposals to Snodgrass to accommodate the Highland immigrants of the *Midlothian*. Eales’s proposal was considered the most eligible, but the Highlanders preferred Lang’s. As a result, 21 families—about 108 individuals—left Sydney to settle in the Hunter on the *Dunmore Estate* (HRA 1/xix; 506–8). By now, Lang had acquired more land, the property of Mr Standish Lawrence Harris (*Sydney Gazette*, 27/1/1838).

McIntyre did not accompany his fellow immigrants to the Hunter, at that stage remaining in Sydney with Lang. McIntyre was later to come to the Hunter and have a long and controversial incumbency at Scots Kirk, West Maitland. The *Sydney Gazette* (27/1/1838) surmised that Mr McClure, a student of divinity, who arrived on the *Brilliant* from Mull, a speaker of Gaelic, would probably come to *Dunmore* both as a preacher and teacher to the Highland settlement.



Dunmore – the Lang family home at Largs, NSW (photo: Jack Sullivan collection)

A comment on the times

A letter to the editor of the *Sydney Herald* March 5, 1838 expresses an enduring xenophobic view in Australian society regarding immigration. In fact, this letter, slightly changed, could be found in some newspapers today.

HIGHLAND EMIGRANTS.

SIR—I am glad to perceive that the jugglery attending the introduction of the Highlanders into the colony has attracted your attention, but from your article of Thursday it does not appear that you are aware of half the clannishness which has been practised.

Why these Highlanders, who, I believe, generally speaking, are honest and sober, require that their religious prejudices should be attended to before those of other Immigrants I cannot conceive, but this was made the ostensible motive for all the fuss that has been made about settling them together in one district of the Colony; and you are probably not aware that the minister who came out with them, instead of proceeding to the Hunter where the greatest number of the Highlanders are settled, is to remain in Sydney to perform the service of the Scot's chapel on Church hill, while the reverend gentleman who is paid to do the duty is attending to his other avocations —so that it would appear that the talk about placing them where they could receive the ordinances of their religion in the language of their forefathers, from the Rev Mr. McIntyre, was pure invention to hide another object.

In a late Colonist it is stated that a deputation of Highlanders were sent down to the Hunter to inspect various farms and see which they would like to be settled on best. Now this is really too bad; here are men removed from a place where they were literally starving—where in fact many did die from want of food—brought out to this Colony at an immense expense, fed, and in some instances clothed at the expense of the Colonists, and instead of being at once employed as laborers, a deputation! of them is sent about the country, great numbers of them are placed where they will be consumers of labour instead of adding to the stock of available labour in the Colony—nay, if we mistake not, they are at this moment eligible under the regulations to apply for convict servants.

There is one fact to which I would particularly draw your attention, and that is, that very few of these persons can speak English which is a great drawback to their usefulness as laborers. I am aware that we may expect a few Frenchmen out shortly, but then they are coming for a particular purpose, and will introduce new systems of culture into the Colony; while these Highlanders are comparatively speaking useless, and are not equal to the Lowlanders or men from the English Agricultural Counties.

If you think the above worthy of notice, its insertion will oblige.

A SETTLER.

February 22nd.

The *Sydney Gazette* on the same day reported that the Rev Dr Lang had also organised German immigrants from Bordeaux who were to shortly arrive on the *Justine* who would also settle on his brother's property at Dunmore. The *Minerva* left Greenock on 13th August 1837 with 235 emigrants on board. It arrived in Sydney on 25th January 1838 clearing the quarantine station on 15th February 1838 (*Sydney Gazette* 25/2/1838, 15/2/1838). On board the *Minerva* was the Rev Eipper and Rev Schmidt, Lutheran clergymen. It was expected that Eipper would most probably proceed to Dunmore to administer religion to the German immigrants who were soon to be expected on the *Justine*. It was planned that the Rev Schmidt would form a mission to the north of the colony to the aborigines. The *Sydney Gazette* reported in March, 1838 that both Eipper and Schmidt were proceeding to Moreton Bay to form a presbytery of Moreton Bay (Brisbane).

What is Gaelic?

The Gaelic language has its origins in Central Europe, being brought initially to Ireland by the Goidels. About 500 AD the language was taken to Scotland by the Gaels who became the ancestors of the Scottish Highlanders. The Irish and Scottish can both lay claim to having a common origin for their various versions of Gaelic. Irish and Scottish Gaelic share a common written form but developed separate spoken forms from around 900 AD.

Invaders from England tried to impose the English language upon the Irish and Scots from about the 1100s and by 1800 Gaelic speakers were in the minority in Scotland. Today, about 80,000 people in Scotland speak Gaelic.

Reference: *World Book Encyclopedia*



Chapter 2

William Ross and the building of St Ann's 1838-1846

"... a faithful disciple in the vineyard of Christ" (SMH 21/4/1843)

The *St George* sailed from Oban, Scotland on 4th July 1838, arriving in Sydney on 15th November (SH 16/11/1838).

"The Presbyterian inhabitants residing on the Paterson and Williams Rivers, will be gratified to learn, that the Rev. Mr Ross, recently arrived, and ordained by the General Assembly's Committee, is about to undertake the duties of the Ministry in these populous districts. Mr Ross, in addition to his many excellent qualifications, will be enabled occasionally to edify his countrymen from the Highlands of Scotland, by performing Divine Service in their own language. Mr Ross proceeds to this locality, with the recommendation and best wishes of the Presbytery of New South Wales."



The Scottish west coast port, Oban, from where Rev William Ross sailed in 1838.
(photo: Cameron Archer)

The *Sydney Herald* shortly after (23rd November) announced that Ross was off to Paterson.

The Paterson congregation must have been ready for the minister. The *Sydney Herald* on 21st January 1836 had published a subscription list for the building of a church in the township of Paterson. The subscription list covered most residents and landholders from the village and district. It included individuals who were later

associated with the Church of England church. It therefore suggests that the people of Paterson were seeking a church of some description in their township.

Even some families subsequently associated with the Catholic Church were subscribers to the 1836 list. It is therefore unclear whether or not the funds collected in 1836 went to the establishment of a Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterians were the first to have a resident minister in Paterson with Ross arriving in late 1838. Paterson's pioneer Church of England minister, Rev John Jennings Smith, did not arrive until late 1839.

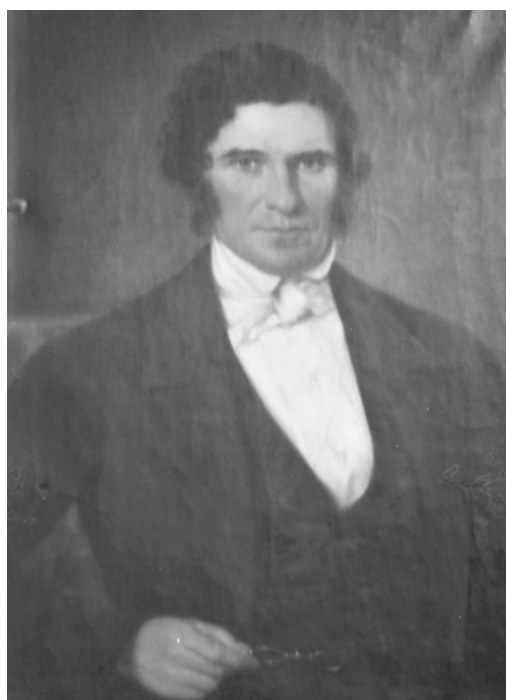
The land for the church was formally vested with the local trustees William Corner, Alexander Park, James Cann, Angus McAlpin and James Lawrie (senior) on 25/3/1838 (Presbyterian Register Book Col 338 Folio 58)

The *Sydney Gazette* 24 November 1838 reported that Rev McIntyre and Rev Ross were the only Gaelic speaking preachers in the Colony. Clearly Gaelic was an important language in the Paterson area in the late 1830s.

WILLIAM'S RIVER.—The Rev. Mr Ross, the Presbyterian minister who arrived in the colony by the St. George, emigrant ship, having been appointed to the Presbyterian establishment of the colony, by the General Assembly's Committee on Colonial Churches, is, we understand, about to take up his station on the William's River. The Gaelic speaking population on the banks of the Paterson, will thus have more frequent opportunities of hearing the gospel preached in their native language than they have hitherto enjoyed in consequence of their distance from the Rev. Mr. McIntyre, the only other Gaelic preacher in the colony. Mr. Ross preached, with much acceptance, in the Rev. Dr. Lang's Church, Church Hill, on Sabbath forenoon.

William Ross came to Paterson while the convict era was in its decline. The rules and regulations for convicts were still in force even though transportation was starting to decrease. Convicts had to receive permission from the government to marry.

For example, Henry Taylor aged 34 who had arrived in 1824 on a life sentence was seeking to marry Hannah Woolford aged 23 who had arrived in 1837 with a 14-year sentence. Taylor had gained a Ticket-of-Leave and Woolford was bonded. In November 1839 William Ross made application on their behalf to the Principal Superintendent of Convicts with an application for the publication of marriage banns. At that time the intention to marry (Banns) had to be advertised prior to the marriage occurring.



Portrait of Rev William Ross
(photo: Masonic Lodge Goulburn)

Source: NSW State Records. NSW Colonial Secretary's Correspondence, In letters, "Clergy-Presbyterian-Paterson" 4/2436.91, 1839 [reel 735].

The *Sydney Herald* reported on 26th August 1839 a meeting held in Paterson to erect a church.

Paterson.- A highly respectable meeting was held at the Paterson, on the 16th August, of persons friendly to the erection of a Church, in connection with the established Church of Scotland, in that Township, when subscriptions amounting to nearly £100 were made on the spot. Major Johnstone, J.P., William Dunn, Esq., and Charles Macquarie, Esq., were appointed a Committee, along with John Hector, Esq., W. Lowe, Esq., James Adair, Esq., and Messrs. Innes, Farquhar, Kerr, and Roebuck, to effect the preliminary arrangements. It is proposed to limit the Church at the Township of Paterson, and that the Minister shall officiate, also, at Dungog, Clarence Town, and Hinton; and it is hoped that every person having property in that flourishing and peaceful district, will contribute for this object. The Reverend William Ross has officiated at the Paterson since his arrival, and has rendered himself acceptable to all classes, by his piety and zeal. It is gratifying to learn, as a proof of this, that the members of the Church of England vie with those of the Scottish Church, in promoting his comfortable and permanent settlement there.

Shortly after this, in October 1839 the Rev John Jennings Smith arrived to create the Parish of Paterson for the Church of England. Rev Jennings Smith proved to be a very active and popular minister for the Paterson area.

Ross and his parishioners were quick to commence the building of their church and the following advertisement appeared in *The Australian* in February 1840.

TO BUILDERS.

TENDERS FOR Building a Scots Church at Paterson will be received at the Police Office there, on or before Tuesday, the 10th April. Plans and Specifications can be seen at the Police Office. The Contractor can have ground to burn Brick on within a mile of the site of the Church. Timber can be had within two or three miles of the Township. Shingles can also be split by the Contractor about seven miles from the Township—when split by him, they will be drawn to the Building without any expense or cost to him.

The Trustees do not consider themselves bound to take the lowest Tender.

Security required.

*Paterson, 22nd Feb. 1840
(The Aust 29/2/1840).*

A letter to the editor of the *Sydney Herald* later that year in May again promoted Ross and the church's activity at Paterson.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

To the Editor of the Sydney Herald.

SIR,— You will oblige a Presbyterian and old subscriber to the Sydney Herald, by mentioning that the Scots' Church on the Paterson, under the Rev. Wm. Ross, will be commenced as soon as the requisite site has been obtained from the Government. Nearly £800 have been

subscribed, a great part of which has been paid up. This speaks well for the liberality of the inhabitants of that district. Felix Wilson, Esq., and family, have subscribed Fifty Pounds; and other proprietors have been equally liberal. Major Johnston (sic) has been unceasing in his efforts on behalf of this Church, and a gentleman so much respected and beloved as a Magistrate in the district, cannot plead in vain in behalf of any public institution. Mr Ross has done much good amongst his countrymen from the Highlands of Scotland who have been settled in that vicinity.

I am, Sir, yours obediently.

A SUBSCRIBER.

Maitland.

(SH 25/5/1840)

It should be noted that Felix Wilson, the wealthy absentee owner of *Tocal*, was a strong supporter of the church. The Wilson family, of Presbyterian persuasion, seemed to be very public minded and supportive of the district, despite their Sydney base and interests. A strong local supporter was Magistrate and Napoleonic War veteran, Major Edward Johnstone.

Meanwhile, Bishop Broughton of the Church of England visited Paterson in 1840 and noted that “*in this district, or at least in the lower portion of it around the township, many of the proprietors are of the Presbyterian persuasion*” (Elkin, p. 108).

Prior to the church being completed Ross was very active, marrying couples and baptising infants. The Presbyterian Register for Paterson, located in the Ferguson Library records the marriages and baptisms of Ross from 1837. This is the earliest formal record of baptisms and marriages for the district and provides a unique insight into the life and times of the families. It contains records for many families who still live or are related to those in the district.



Annandale, King Street, Paterson, built by Major Edward Johnstone, magistrate and supporter of St Ann's (details next page). Annandale was rented as a manse during Rev Laughton's ministry (photo: Athol D'Ombra collection)

Major Johnstone - Notable Citizen, Magistrate and Presbyterian

Major Edward Johnstone was born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland and fought in the Napoleonic Wars including the Battle of Alburea 1811, the Siege of Badajoz 1812 and the Battle of Salamanca 1812 where he was severely wounded. He was again severely wounded in the Battles of the Pyrenees in 1813. He then saw service in Ireland and later in the West Indies. His regiment, the 50th, was then sent to NSW, Johnstone arriving with his wife and young family in 1834.

After an expedition to New Zealand Johnstone was stationed in Sydney on civil duties. On 25th January 1836 he was appointed Magistrate at Paterson with a staff of a senior constable, nine constables and a Clerk of the Bench. Johnstone purchased land in King Street in 1838 and commenced to build his residence *Annandale* which still stands today.

Johnstone retired from the military but remained as magistrate in Paterson until 1847. He died at *Annandale* in 1850.

The inhabitants of Paterson, to show the sense of respect in which they held him, shut their shops at the time of the funeral, and with scarcely an exception, followed his remains out of the village, many in carriages and on horseback, to the place of interment, the Presbyterian burial grounds in East Maitland while others on horseback or on foot, accompanied it as far as Tocal Bridge. After passing the Hunter River at Paterson it was met by other of his friends and the Rev. McIntyre who accompanied his body in procession to the grave.

Edward Johnstone had a major influence on the village during his period of service as Magistrate and as a citizen. His role in the establishment and operation of St Ann's would have been considerable. We can assume that the combined efforts of Rev William Ross and Major Edward Johnstone were the reason why St Ann's was built so early in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Australia.

Reference:

O'Neill, Les (1991) *A Scottish Heritage Major Edward Johnstone* (self-published).

Ross was fortunate that he arrived when he did, as it was the end of what were quite buoyant times in the colony, coupled with reasonable seasons. By 1841 the colony was in a financial recession and drought. Despite the hardships, Ross and his congregation had the money to complete their church. The *Sydney Herald* reports

... The buildings and various improvements which, in the good times were being carried on so extensively, are now for the most part at a standstill from the hardness of the times; the Scotch chapel is the only exception; this building, which was left some time with its half raised walls exposed to wind and weather, has again made a start towards completion, and the outside walls are nearly finished. This is the first attempt which has been made to erect a place of worship in our township, and although it is a most paltry looking edifice, the Scotch congregation deserve much credit that they have been the first to establish, within consecrated walls, the celebration of religious worship. We trust it may not be long before other denominations of Christians here shall come forward, to advance with proper zeal the interests and permanent establishment of their religion. It is melancholy to witness the apathy which exists in all such matters. Party feelings or wavering considerations alone give an impulse to Paterson proceedings: the administration of religious ordinances, the dispensation of justice, and the general improvements carried on in the district, all seem tinged with one or other of these feelings...

(SH 14/10/1841)

By February 1842 the *Sydney Herald* again reports on church construction in Paterson.

Considerable improvements are still progressing in the township. The Episcopal Church is in course of erection, and the Presbyterian Chapel, which has been from several unforeseen circumstances much retarded in its completion, is now covered in, and we hear that the inside is likely to be finished during the present year.

(SH 19/2/1842)

St Ann's was opened in 1842 by Rev Ross.

OPENING OF THE SCOTS KIRK, PATERSON - The Rev. Mr. Ross opened the Scots Church at the Paterson yesterday (Sunday, the 27th August) and preached an excellent sermon to a numerous and respectable congregation. Many of the Presbyterian population from adjoining districts were present, and left highly edified with the discourse.

(The Aust 2/9/1842)

The *Sydney Morning Herald* in an article published in April 1843 reports that the church opened in August 1842.

PATERSON.

The Church of St. Ann, Paterson, in connexion with the established Church of Scotland, has now been fully completed, and the Colonial Architect has surveyed it for the last time, and approved of the work.

The church is a neat plain building, sufficiently commodious, and capable of containing three hundred persons. It must be satisfactory to the parties who subscribed so liberally towards its erection, that their money has been expended on the work for which it was solicited; and it must also be a source of much pleasure to them, that by their means the first Church has been erected and completed in the fine district of Paterson. Felix Wilson, Esq. of Sydney, who has taken a lively interest in the promotion of the Scotch Zion here, has expressed his intention of presenting the church with a clock, which will be of great use to the inhabitants of the township, as well as ornamental to the church itself. At the opening of the church, in August last, the ladies of the Paterson and Maitland presented the Rev William Ross with a handsome pulpit gown, as a mark of their respect and esteem for him as a clergyman, and a faithful disciple in the vineyard of Christ. In the course of some time it is expected a parsonage will be commenced for our clergyman, and it is hoped that those who aided the building of the church with their means, will not be backward in lending their assistance in getting up a parsonage.

(SMH 21/4/1843)

The *Government Gazette* advertised on 23 January 1844 details of the granting of land for the Presbyterian Church at Paterson (see Appendix 1). This must have been to formalise arrangements that had been put in place for the church to be built. It would seem that there were no objections to it and the church's ownership of the land was secured.

The *Government Gazette* finalised these communications in July 1844.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GRANTS.- Deeds dated 23rd April, 1844 - 84. Edward Johnstone, Charles Macquarie, William Dun, James Adair, and David Brown, Trustees of the Presbyterian Church, Paterson, 1 acre;

85. Trustees of the Presbyterian Manse, Paterson, 2 roods; 86. Trustees of the Presbyterian School House, Paterson, 2 roods.

(SMH 26/7/1844)

The only recorded Vice-Regal visitor to St Ann's was Sir George Gipps and Lady Gipps who visited Paterson on Friday, November 11, 1844. Apparently, Gipps had been on a visit to the Upper Hunter and stayed over at government cottage in Maitland on the Thursday, gaining his strength following the fatigue of constant travelling. On the Friday Sir George and Lady Gipps visited Paterson. The *Maitland Mercury* takes up the story

Yesterday morning Sir George and Lady Gipps left government cottage a little after six, on a visit to the Paterson, accompanied by Mr. Merewether, Captain Day, and Mrs Day. He proceeded by the Paterson road, and through the beautiful estate of Tocal. The party reached Paterson about nine, and breakfasted at the Paterson Hotel, an excellent breakfast being served up by Mr. Brown. His Excellency was received by Major Johnstone, Mr. Boughton, the Rev. Mr. Ross, Mr. Bedwell, R.N., Mr. Phillips, and a few other gentlemen whom the very brief notice of his visit had allowed to assemble. After breakfast, Sir George visited the Scotch Church, the unfinished Episcopalian Church, the school house, the court-house, and lockup, &c., and the quarry opened in the township. Sir George and Lady Gipps were much pleased with the appearance of the children attending school in the kirk. After calling at the residences of Major Johnstone and the Rev Mr. Smith, the party returned to the Paterson Inn, and shortly after the following address was presented to his Excellency by the gentlemen already named, and the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood.

... The party started on their return to Maitland about twelve, crossing the Paterson by Mr. Phillips's punt, and the Hunter at Hinton. The day was a very fine one, and his Excellency and Lady Gipps appeared to be much pleased with the visit. Not the least gratified of the good folks of the Paterson on this occasion were Mr. Smith's pupils, for whom his Excellency obtained a holiday.

(MM 9/11/1844)

These years were probably golden ones for St Ann's. The colony was starting to recover from drought and recession and there was much enthusiasm and activity with many new arrivals from Scotland. The *Maitland Mercury* reports the annual meeting of St Ann's in 1845.

PATERSON.

The annual meeting of the Maitland Presbytery took place at St. Ann's Church, in this township, on Thursday last. Present, the Rev. William Ross, the Rev. Robt. Blain, and the Rev. Wm. McIntyre. An impressive sermon having been preached by the Rev. R. Blain, on the nature and duty of prayer, an examination of the scholars attending the Scots

school took place by Messrs. McIntyre and Blain, with a highly satisfactory result, both as to the progress made by the pupils, their general appearance, and orderly demeanour. The business of the session was then proceeded with, and satisfactorily concluded, having been commenced and closed in the usual manner.

*April 1st, 1845.
(MM 5/4/1845)*

This meeting included the two most influential and long-serving Presbyterian ministers in the district, Blain and McIntyre. Blain served at Maitland 1837-41; Hinton 1841-60; and McIntyre at West Maitland, Scots Kirk 1841-1862.

Ross was active and respected in the district. He was called upon by a local landholder and boat builder, Mr David Brown, to name his newly-built schooner, *The Paterson Packet*. The *Maitland Mercury* reports

LAUNCH.- On Thursday afternoon, the beautiful little schooner, built by Mr. David Brown, of the Paterson, made her first entrance into that river. In consequence of the additional interest of a boat race, the township was thronged with visitors. Shortly after one o'clock the gentlemen connected with the vessel arrived, and all the arrangements having been made, the props were knocked away, and the little vessel glided gracefully into the dancing waters which were thenceforth to be her horse. The vessel was named, with the usual formulae, by the Rev W. Ross, the Paterson Packet Victoria. She is schooner-rigged, of about 70 tons burthen, and intended for the Paterson and Sydney trade. Upwards of 200 persons were present on the occasion, all seeming to take the liveliest interest in the proceedings. After the ceremony, about twenty of those present sat down to a capital lunch provided by mine host of the Paterson Hotel, Mr. Brown, when every respect to creature comfort was duly paid. A number of visitors from Maitland and Morpeth were present.

(MM 19/12/1846)

Ross became involved in district politics and in March 1843 he is recorded (MM 25/3/1843) as being a member of the committee for the purpose of promoting the interests of Richard Windeyer Esq. as a candidate for the representation of the County of Durham in what was then the first election in the Colony. It is interesting to note that Windeyer's opponent was Andrew Lang who was a Presbyterian where Windeyer would have been Church of England. The subsequent election was quite divisive with a riot occurring at the Paterson Hotel and a Highlander, Duncan McGillavray, being killed (Brown & Threlfo 2001). The subsequent inquiry required Gaelic interpreters. It is interesting to note that Ross, a Gaelic speaker and Highlander, was supporting the other candidate, probably due to relations with Rev Lang being strained.

A meeting was held in Paterson in November 1846 to oppose the renewal of transportation to the Colony. It was attended by locals Boydell, Bedwell, Galt Smith, Glennie, Wilkinson, Dun and Warren. Rev Ross also attended and "*most completely and entirely opposed the introduction of prisoners in any shape. He opposed it on two grounds: first, as an infringement on their rights as British subjects; and secondly, in a moral point of view.*" (MM 28/11/1846)

Ross was asked by the Legislative Council through a Circular Letter (survey) to all Ministers of Religion in the Colony to give an opinion on the state of the Aboriginal population in their district (Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council October 1846). Ross gave a detailed response, clearly describing their situation and lamenting their circumstances. He concludes by reporting: *“If however something be not speedily done, the opportunity will be lost in these parts; the poor neglected Aborigines are fast hastening out of the land of the living; so that it is the duty of the Legislature to preserve the rising generation from that ignorance and degradation in which their fathers have lived and died. The children are few, but still their claims are very great, and though but a miserable remnant, they ought to have a name and place in the land of their ancestors.”*

Ross is recorded as leasing 80 acres of land from James Adair, Cardoness, Vacy. The lease was known as the Home Paddock and he had a right to run 150 head of cattle including working oxen and horses. His lease for this was £60 per annum for a lease dated 1/1/1845 (LTO Book Reference No. 10-994). Just after Ross’s arrival he is reported in the *NSW Government Gazette* 23 January 1839 as having assigned to him one house servant. It is unclear where Ross lived in his early days at Paterson but it seems he resided on a farm in the latter days at least. Unfortunately, his servants’ house was robbed in 1845.

On the 6th instant, the servants’ hut on the farm occupied by the Rev. W. Ross was entered in the middle of the day, in the absence of its inmates, and robbed of a quantity of wearing apparel, and fifteen shillings in silver which happened to be in the pockets of one of the articles stolen. The police have made very commendable exertions to trace the perpetrators of these robberies, but hitherto without effect. It has been remarked that, since the public duties of the late Police Magistrate have ceased, robberies have been more frequent and minor offences have multiplied in this neighbourhood.
(SMH 19/6/1845)

The following year the popular Rev Ross moved to Goulburn, where he remained for 21 years. Prior to Ross’s departure he sold all his possessions at auction in June 1847.

SALE BY AUCTION

Superior Household Furniture, first rate Working Bullocks, &c.,

AT THE “SETTLERS’ ARMS” INN, PATERSON ON

Thursday, the 24th day of June, 1847.

AT TWELVE O’CLOCK, NOON.

MR. JEREMIAH LEDSAM has been honoured with instructions from the Rev. William Ross, preparatory to his departure from this district, to sell by public auction at the “Settlers’ Arms” Inn, Paterson Township, on THURSDAY, THE 24TH DAY OF June, 1847 at Twelve o’clock, Noon.-

A quantity of Excellent HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, consisting of -

Cane-seated Chairs, Sofa, Dining Tables, Dressing Tables, Chest Drawers, Cupboards, Safe, Bedsteads, Wash-hand Stands, &c.

Large Kitchen Tables, and a quantity of Culinary Utensils, too numerous to particularise. (cont’d next page)

AFTER WHICH

A number of first-rate WORKING BULLOCKS.

Mr. Ledsam respectfully invites the attention of the residents of the Paterson district, and the public generally, to the important sale now advertised to take place on Thursday, the 24th of June, instant, at noon.

The Household Furniture to be submitted is of superior description.

Among the number of Working Bullocks to be sold are six which may be equalled, but for excellence are not to be surpassed within the districts of the three rivers.

The proprietor being on the eve of his departure from the district, the property will be sold without reserve.

(MM 9/6/1847)

WILLIAM ROSS, MA (1803-1869)

William Ross was born at Cambusmore, Dornoch, Ross-shire. He attended King's College, Aberdeen (MA 1926), Marischal College, Aberdeen (Divinity). He was ordained in 1838 in the Presbytery of Dornoch.

As a boy he served as a midshipman with the Royal Navy, then resigned and entered Aberdeen University where he successfully undertook his studies.

On 23 November 1836, Earl Grey, Chancellor of the Exchequer, sanctioned a grant of £150 for William Ross to cover the cost of his outfit and passage to NSW. Following his arrival in NSW and taking up his charge at Paterson he married Anne Simpson at Hinton in 1839.

His greatest achievement in Paterson was the construction of St Ann's church which he opened on 22nd August 1842.

In 1844 he was a Moderator of the Synod of Australia and a member of a committee which led to the establishment of the University of Sydney. He organised an immigrants petition to abolish the auction system for land purchasing. His move to Goulburn in 1847 saw the commencement of a 21-year period of distinguished community service.

At the time of Ross's arrival in Goulburn it was a rough and ready frontier town with poor educational and health facilities, sanitation and an environment of excessive drink, gambling, ignorance and despair. Ross is credited as one of those who brought civility and enlightenment to the town. During his career he worked to establish a school, a hospital which is now the Goulburn Base Hospital, a newspaper, Mechanics Institute and Library, and served as a trustee of the Bank of NSW. Ross was also a dedicated member of the Masonic Lodge and his service is still revered as a founder of the lodge in Goulburn. The lodge and hospital both proudly display a portrait of William Ross.

Ross also worked with Caroline Chisholm finding homes for abandoned girl immigrants, and assisted other settlers.

Ross is credited with organising the rescue of some marooned residents in Goulburn's 1852 flood. In 1855 Ross was granted leave to return to Scotland and on his voyage back to Australia on the *Schomberg* he survived a shipwreck on the South Australian coast but lost all his possessions, including a rare coin collection.

In 1850 he supported the anti-transportation movement and in 1867 he was a member of the committee which established St Andrew's College at the University of Sydney.

In 1868 he was Moderator of the General Assembly of NSW and he died on 19 January 1869. A monument was erected to him in the grounds of St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Goulburn. It was removed and dismantled when the church closed.

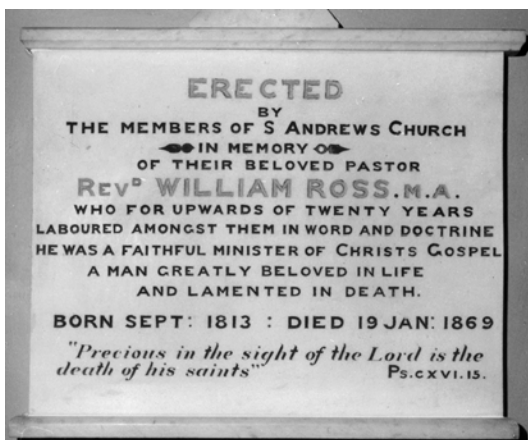
References: Ford, PO (1961) *The History of Wor. Bro. Rev. William Ross, MA*. Goulburn Masonic Lodge; Tazewell, SJ (1991) *Grand Goulburn*, Council of the City of Goulburn.



Early church buildings in Goulburn NSW, dating from the Ross era. The monument was removed and the church demolished to make way for the southern railway. (Illustration from the *Sydney Mail* 15 April 1876: State Library of New South Wales)



The restored grave of Rev William Ross, Mortis St Cemetery, Goulburn NSW (photo: Cameron Archer)



Plaque in St Andrews Uniting Church Goulburn (photo: Jack Sullivan)



Plaque at the grave of Rev Ross (photo: Jack Sullivan)



Aerial view of Paterson 2003, with St Ann's in the foreground at right
(photo: Cameron Archer)



Chapter 3

Christopher Eipper
and
James Laughton 1848-1854

Ross's departure left a major gap in the lives of the Presbyterian congregation at Paterson. The *Maitland Mercury* reports (20/10/1847) on the annual meeting of the Presbyterian Synod of Australia in Sydney. Paterson was represented by Mr Hugh Macmaster. It seems from reading the article there was some controversy regarding the Maitland Presbytery and a new appointment at Paterson. The *Mercury's* report is an abridged article from the *Sydney Morning Herald*. For a considerable period Rev Dr McGarvey (*sic*) and other clergy from Sydney preached at St Anns while the charge was vacant (*MM* 8/8/1878).

Subsequently, Rev C Eipper of Braidwood was appointed to Paterson. Rev Eipper took up his charge in 1848 and remained at Paterson until 1850. Little is known of Eipper and his ministry at Paterson. We know of his arrival in Australia and his former work at Braidwood, however, his period at Paterson was short-lived. At this time the Presbyterian school established by Ross within St Ann's was continuing to operate. Eipper called for a teacher:

A TEACHER for the PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL in connexion with St. Ann's Scots Church. - Paterson, being required to enter upon his duties on the 1st of April, persons desirous of such situation are invited to apply for particulars to the undersigned, and to submit their testimonials of competency and certificates of moral conduct before the 20th of March.

A person able to Precent would receive an allowance from the Church funds for officiating on Sabbath Days.

Preference will be given to one who can speak and teach the Gaelic language grammatically.

CHRISTOPHER EIPPER.

Presbyterian Minister.

Paterson, 24th Feb., 1848.

(MM 1/3/1848)

Prior to the passing of Public Instruction Acts, education was paid for by the government through Denominational Schools. The records for 1848 indicate that four Presbyterian Schools were in the Paterson area.

PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOLS.

Salaries to teachers of the undermentioned schools.

Woodville£30
Vacy.....25
Gresford.....20
Paterson.....30

(GG 24/10/1848)

THE PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL at Paterson being vacant applications for the Situation of MASTER & MISTRESS, accompanied with certificates of competency and moral character, are requested to be made by the 20th of February to the Moderator of the Synod of Australia, the Rev. George McFie, Pitt Town, Windsor, or to the Rev. Dr. McGarvie, Sydney. The government salary is £30 per annum.

The School is taught in the Scots Kirk, but there is no teacher's dwelling provided.

A person able to Precent will be preferred, and an allowance be made to him from the church funds. (MM 7/2/1849)

In 1850 there were four schools in the immediate locality, all seeking staff.

Woodville - Salary, £35; local board – Rev. Robert Blain, Mr. Donald Cameron, and Mr. Cyrus Gill.

Paterson - Salary, £35; local board – Rev. C. Eipper, Major Johnstone, and Mr. Hector Lament.

Lennoxton - Salary, £30; local board – Rev. C. Eipper, James Asdair, Esq., and Hector Campbell, Esq.

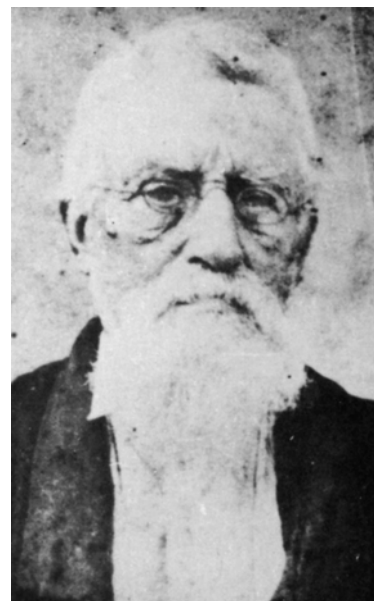
Lewinsbrook - Salary, £25; local board – Rev. C. Eipper, Alexander Park, Esq., and James Tyrie, Esq.

(GG 29/1/1850)

Little is known about the success, or otherwise, of these schools. Rev Eipper resigned from Paterson in February 1850 and was replaced by Rev James Laughton from Carcoar.

William Chaucer was a teacher at Paterson (Wesleyan School) in 1850. In 1851 he served as a probational minister at Paterson after Rev Eipper departed. Chaucer had a chequered career in the Church and was deposed in 1868 for intoxication. He died in 1888 (Ward & Prentis 2001, Ward 1989).

Ward (1989) suggests that St Ann's was named as such during Eipper's term. He states that 'the ecclesiastical use of the name St Ann(e) is virtually unknown in Scotland but is particularly common in Germany'. During much of Ross's period it was called Scots Kirk, however, in April



Rev Christopher Eipper
(photo: National Library Aust,
from Armour 1974)

1843 (*SMH* 21/4/1843) it was referred to as St Ann's. Some suggest Ross may have named it after his wife whose name was Anne, however the spellings are different. The origin of the church's name and its spelling therefore remain a mystery.

Christopher Eipper (1813-1894)

Christopher Eipper was born in Esslingen, Wurttemberg and was educated at the Basel Missionary Institute 1832-36, and the Church Missionary Society College, Islington, London. He refused Church of England ordination because he would not submit to the vows of unlimited obedience to a bishop. He was expelled by the Basel MI and CMS, and LMS refused application.

In March 1837 he was accepted by Dr Lang for an Aboriginal mission to Moreton Bay. He was ordained in London by French and German pastors and also married Harriet Gyles in that same year.

He arrived in Sydney in 1838 as a Lutheran and was admitted as a member of Lang's Presbyterian Synod of NSW. He served as a pioneer minister at this mission from 1838-1843. He returned to Sydney and joined the Synod of Australia and served at Braidwood from 1844-1846. He served at Paterson from October 1847-February 1850 at which time he demitted the charge and retired from the ministry. He later taught at Muswellbrook and Moonan Flat. He died at Charleyong, Braidwood in 1894.

Christopher and Harriet Eipper had five sons and four daughters. Some of his sons became pioneer settlers in the Upper Hunter and lower north-west of NSW. However, his eldest son JW (also Christopher) made a significant mark on Maitland through his editorship and part ownership of the *Maitland Mercury*.

Rev Eipper is best remembered for his publication *Statement of the Origin, Condition and Prospects of the German Mission to the Aborigines at Moreton Bay* (1841).

References: Ward & Prentis (2001).

Australian Dictionary of Biography Vol. 1, 1788–1850, A–H. MUP.



Rev Eipper is buried with members of his daughter's family on the then Hush family property, north east of Braidwood. Inset shows plaque details. Note the inconsistency between year of death on the biographical record and the plaque on his grave.

(photos: Cameron Archer)

There was some time between Eipper's departure in 1850 and Laughton's admittance in November 1851.

The need for a Gaelic speaking minister was still apparent in 1850:

... that they select for that congregation a suitable minister, and that, if possible, a Gaelic-speaking minister be appointed, to meet the peculiar condition of the people—a large number of persons speaking the Gaelic tongue residing there, who would be greatly benefitted by having a minister qualified to converse with them, and to preach to them in their own language.

(MM 16/2/1850)

Church of Scotland.

To the Presbyterians of the Paterson and adjoining Districts.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the PRESBYTERY OF MAITLAND will meet (God willing) in St ANNE'S CHURCH, PATERSON, on THURSDAY, THE 27TH INSTANT, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADMITTING THE Rev. JAMES B. LAUGHTON, late of Carcoar, to be Minister of that charge, when the Members of the Congregation, and all others interested, are respectively invited to attend. By appointment of Presbytery, the Rev. ROBERT BLAIN, of Hinton, Moderator of Presbytery, will Preach and preside.

Mr. Laughton will be introduced to the congregation on the following Sabbath (the 30th) by the Rev. WILLIAM PURVES, of Maitland, who will Preach in the Forenoon of that day, service to commence at 11 o'clock. Mr. LAUGHTON will Preach in the Afternoon at 3 o'clock.

Intimation is also hereby given, that it has been resolved by the Presbytery that Dungog shall be annexed for a limited period to the charge of the Paterson; and Mr. LAUGHTON'S services will therefore in the meantime be divided between the two districts. It is also contemplated that Mr. L will occasionally extend his labours to the Townships of Clarence Town and Stroud, in concert with the Ministers who now statedly visit those places.

N.B.- Collections will be taken at the door of the Church at both acts of worship.

(MM 19/11/1851)

Laughton was duly admitted with Rev Blain preaching on Christian love from John IV, 7–11 (MM 3/12/1851). It seems that at this time Dungog was mainly Free Church and had a small congregation of the mainstream church. It therefore needed to be part of Paterson to survive.

A notice also appeared in the *Maitland Mercury* around this time advertising a service in Gaelic at Lewinsbrook.

THE REV. WILLIAM McINTYRE, A.M., will (God willing) PREACH on SABBATH the 24th instant, at Mr. Donald McLeod's, LEWINSBROOK, in Gaelic, at Ten o'clock, and in English immediately after the Gaelic service; and at PATERSON, in English, at Three o'clock.

(MM 20/2/1850)

By now Rev McIntyre had left the mainstream church and formed the Free Presbyterian Church. These services were direct competition for Laughton's ministry at St Ann's. It is not clear whether the Paterson service was held in St Ann's.

At this time there was some controversy in Paterson as to the route of the road north to Gresford. The government had surveyed the Paterson-Gresford road and the new route seemed to gain the agreement of the public except for the small section just around St. Ann's. David Brown, owner of the land just to the north of St. Ann's and church trustee, prepared a memorandum and presented it to Dr Lang, MLC, regarding this matter (J D Lang's Papers Volume 6 pp 483-84 ML CY Pos 893). Brown was concerned that the new road which was to cut across just below the church would destabilise the foundations. Brown indicated the church had cost nearly £1000 to build. Apparently, the government took heed of these representations and the new road went above the church and is still on that alignment.

This area was used as a quarry in the early days. It is not clear where the sandstone for the foundations of St Ann's came from but this was the closest quarry—just a few metres from the building. The road now goes through the original quarry site for the Paterson village.

Laughton had a large area to service and he is recorded as having preached in a number of locations in 1853.

*SYNOD OF AUSTRALIA'S CHURCH EXTENSION SCHEME. Sermons have recently been preached in various parts of the Maitland and Paterson Districts, in aid of the above scheme, by the Revd. James B. Laughton, B.A. Minister of St. Anne's Church, Paterson; and collections have been made as follows:- East Maitland, £8.10s.; Dunmore, £2.16s.1d.; Stroud, £ 1.18s.1d.; St. Anne's Church, Paterson, £5.3.8d.; Cardoness, £2.4s.; Upper Allyn, £2.19s.3d.; Upper Paterson, £1.8s.8d.; Strath Allyn and Lewinsbrook, £1.18s.9d.; in addition to the sum of £6.15s.1d. collected at the public meeting in the temporary church, East Maitland, June 9th, 1852, making a total for the year 1852, of £33.13s.7d. This amount does not include private subscriptions.
(MM 30/1/1853)*

The church suffered a great loss with the death of Major Edward Johnstone. Johnstone was a long-serving and highly regarded magistrate who served in Paterson until his retirement. He had owned and lived in *Annandale*, one of Paterson's finest residences on the eastern end of King Street. Johnstone supported many public causes and on the day of his funeral all businesses in Paterson closed.

Laughton advertised for new trustees in 1853 to replace Johnstone and others who had resigned or been disqualified.

St. Ann's Church, Paterson.

WE, the undersigned, being duly authorised by the Very Reverend the Moderator of the Synod of Australia, do hereby call a MEETING OF THE SUBSCRIBERS TO THE Erection of Saint Ann's Scots Church, Paterson, and of the Seatholders and Communicants therein, to be holden within the said Church, on MONDAY, the 18th day of April, 1853, at Twelve o'clock, Noon, precisely, for the purpose of selecting qualified persons to act as TRUSTEES of the said Church, agreeably to the provisions of the Act 8 Wm. IV, No. 7, in the room of Major Edward Johnstone, deceased; William Dunn, Esq., resigned; Mr. Charles

Macquarie, disqualified; and Mr. James Adair, disqualified; and for the transaction of any other business connected with the said Church.

(Signed) JAMES B. LAUGHTON,

Minister of St. Ann's Paterson.,

DAVID BROWN, Trustee.

(MM 6/4/1853)

The parish was in trouble, losing some of its long-serving trustees and having a quick turnover of ministers. Some time during this period Johnstone's vacant house, *Annandale*, was used as a manse. It was, however, put up for auction in 1854.

Laughton served as Moderator of the Synod of Australia during his incumbency at Paterson and was a prolific writer on theology. He also won the hearts of the ladies of his congregation, because in September 1854 they presented him with a gold watch to coincide with his birthday and anniversary of his ordination.

Hunter River District News.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS.)

PRESENTATION.- The ladies of the Paterson Scots Church congregation have presented their pastor, the Rev. J. B. Laughton, with a very elegant gold watch (furnished by Mr. Richard Lamb, of Sydney), with the following inscription:- "Presented to the Rev. James Brotherston Laughton (sic), B.A., Minister of St. Anne's Church, Paterson, N.S.W., on the 20th Sept., 1854 being his birthday and the anniversary of his ordination, as a token of esteem and love for his work's sake, by the ladies of his congregation."

Paterson, Sept. 26, 1854.

(MM 30/9/1854)

Later in this same year Laughton departed for a new and larger charge of Bathurst. He auctioned his furniture in mid-December and preached his last sermon in late December 1854.

Important Sale, at the Paterson, of Neat Household Furniture, &c.

MR. A. DODDS has received instructions from the Rev. J. B. Laughton, to sell by auction, at his Residence, Paterson, on TUESDAY, December 19, at Twelve o'clock.

The whole of that gentleman's elegant and useful HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, Comprising an excellent sideboard; dining table, sofa, and chairs, covered with damask, and window hangings to match; excellent ladies' wardrobe; bedsteads, bedding; chest of drawers; stretchers, washstands and dressing tables; with a variety of kitchen utensils; glass and earthenware; casks, bottles, new cross-cut saw, garden tools, &c, &c.

ALSO,

An excellent gig and harness

A valuable draught horse

Saddles, bridles, light pack, saddle, &c.

Terms cash.

Private families and others residing in and near the town of Paterson will now have an opportunity of purchasing really serviceable and elegant furniture, the sale of which takes place in consequence of the removal of the proprietor to another part of the colony.

(MM 16/12/1854)

Hunter River District News.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

The Rev. Mr. Laughton preached his farewell sermon here on Sabbath last, taking for his text II. Cor. XIII, 11. The discourse was an edifying and eloquent one, and was listened to with deep attention by a large congregation, who had assembled to hear him for the last time; and of whom individually, at the close of the service, he took farewell as they retired from the church. Mr. L. proceeds to Bathurst to occupy the larger field of labour presented there, in the room of the Rev. D. K. Smythe, who is about to leave on a visit to Scotland.

Paterson, Dec. 26, 1854.

(MM 27/12/1854)

During Laughton's incumbency Presbyterian services were recorded as occurring at Stroud, Cardoness, Upper Allyn, Upper Paterson, Strathallyn and Lewinsbrook. During Laughton's service as Moderator of the Hunter Presbytery, the Presbytery ordained the Rev James Carter at St. Ann's in 1853 (MM 5/10/1853). Carter then took up the pastoral charge of the Manning district.



The Rev James Laughton
(photo: Ferguson Library)



Rev James Laughton's grave,
Rookwood Cemetery (photo: Jack Sullivan)

James Brotherton Laughton, BA (1814-1883)

James Brotherton Laughton was born at Denton Hall, Cumberland. He attended the University of Glasgow, receiving a BA in 1831, and the University of Edinburgh studying Divinity in 1831-32. In 1837 he undertook Trials for licence with the Presbytery of Dumfries and was later a teacher and tutor on the Isle of Man in 1840. He was also a journalist.

In 1843 he arrived in NSW and taught at Sydney College. In June, 1845 he became Acting Headmaster due to the absence overseas of the Headmaster. This was not a success. Chisholm (1907) quoted by Turney (1989) recalls "... a scholarly man and graduate of Glasgow University, but sadly wanting in those refinements of a manner which is so essential to the character of a gentleman. The cane was his panacea for all juvenile delinquencies, varied by impositions, which consisted in committing to memory so many lines of some Greek or Latin author. He took little interest in the school life of the boys, and evinced no sympathy with them in their gains or amusements. As a consequence, he became very unpopular in the school..."

In January 1846 Laughton, as Acting Headmaster of Sydney College, gave two public lectures in the Northumberland Hotel with proceeds to the Maitland Hospital (MM 27/1/1845; 3/1/1846; 10/1/1846; 24/1/1846)

In 1846 Laughton was deemed insolvent, for reasons unknown.

NEW INSOLVENTS.

5.- James Brotherston (sic) Laughton, of Kent street North Sydney, schoolmaster. Debts, £449.2s.2d. Assets—personal property, £134.13s.5d.; outstanding debts, exclusive of bad and doubtful debts, £21.18s.9d. Balance deficiency, £292.10s.- Clark Irving, official assignee. (MM 8/10/1846)

Laughton was admitted to the Synod of Australia on 31 January 1850 (MM 16/2/1850).

At the time of Laughton's appointment to Paterson there was still a desire for the minister to be Gaelic-speaking. There is no record of Laughton being able to speak or preach in Gaelic. Laughton's stay in Paterson was relatively short, leaving in 1854 for Bathurst where he served until 1865, then Parramatta 1866-1875 and Orange 1877-82.

Laughton was the most academic of the 19th century ministers at Paterson. He wrote extensively and was obviously interested in education. He was active in church politics, promoting union of the various branches of the Presbyterian Church, Clerk of the General Assembly for nine years and was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1870. He was also a member of St Andrew's College Council, University of Sydney.

Laughton married in Scotland in 1840 and had one daughter. No further details are known. In 1873 Laughton married Sarah Blain, a niece of the Rev Robert Blain, Presbyterian Minister at Hinton. They had no children.

Laughton's first years in Sydney must have been quite difficult and stressful as he hadn't discovered his true calling. He later won respect within the church and reached the position of Moderator.

He died in 1883 at his residence Frenndville, Paddington and is buried in the Presbyterian section of Rookwood Cemetery.

References:

Turney, C (1989) *Grammar A History of Sydney Grammar School 1819-1988*. Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Bridges, Barry (2001) *Ministry in Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century* in Ward & Prentis (2001).

MM 3/6/1846, 24/5/1883, 31/5/1883.

Waugh, J (1932) *St Stephen's Bathurst*. St Stephen's Centenary Committee, Bathurst.



Chapter 4

Thomas Stirton 1855-1873

“The longer you know him the more you prize him”
(MM 31/7/1873)

A notice in the *Maitland Mercury* (24/11/1855) informing readers that the Rev Thomas Stirton would be preaching at Paterson at 11 am and at Creebank at 3pm on Sunday 25th November is the first record of Rev Stirton’s incumbency. Stirton served from 1855 to 1873, the longest serving full-time minister in the parish’s history. It was not an easy period, but Stirton kept this small parish going through what were quite difficult times. It was also a time when the Church of England had become fully established in the village and valley and the majority of the population was of Church of England persuasion. Many of the Scottish immigrants had moved further up the coast or inland, leaving a smaller congregation for St Ann’s.

At the time of Stirton’s arrival the congregation were concerned with the establishment of a manse.

Scots’ Church, Paterson.

THE PRESBYTERIANS in the district of Paterson are hereby requested TO MEET at the Church, at noon of SATURDAY, the 23rd instant, to adopt such measures as may be deemed necessary for providing a suitable residence for their minister, and also to consider any other matters connected with his settlement amongst them.

Paterson, Feb. 16, 1856.

(MM 7/2/1856)

Stirton came to Paterson as a single man but married Jane Rae Bell Nivison in 1859.

Jane Nivison was the daughter of Abraham Nivison of *Tillimby*.

St Ann’s continued on, clearly with the dedication of Stirton but also with the assistance of its trustees, particularly David Brown and William Corner. Corner was one of the wealthiest men in the district, gaining his wealth from growing, trading and milling wheat on the Cintra Estate adjacent to St Ann’s. David Brown also owned part of the Cintra Estate, the closest section to the north of the church boundary. By 1856 funds were clearly getting short and the trustees at the time decided to raise money by the letting of seats of the church.

Notice.

AT a Meeting held on the 4th July, 1856, by the Trustees and Members of the Presbyterian Church, Paterson.

It was resolved—

That, in consideration of the required repairs by the Church, including light, cleansing, &c. they deem it necessary that a Fund be raised for liquidating the same; and that it is intended to Let the Seats of the Church, which will commence from the 1st of July instant.

WEDNESDAY, the 23rd instant, is the day appointed when one or more of the Trustees will be at the Church from Ten to Twelve, to receive applications for Seats.

DAVID BROWN, }

WILLIAM CORNER, } Trustees.

Paterson, July 9, 1856.

(MM 12/7/1856)

The issue of mixed marriages was on the agenda for Stirton in 1858.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors of the Maitland Mercury

GENTLEMEN—Can you inform me whether the marriage laws of this land allow a Protestant clergyman to marry one of his own communion to a member of the Catholic Church; or whether the fact of both the parties being of age renders a clergyman who marries a couple without consent of parents or friends secure from punishment? My reason for requesting information on the above points will be readily perceived by the following outline of facts:-

On Monday last a young gentleman, the son of a Sydney notable, who has been rusticating in the neighbourhood during the past month, called upon a Presbyterian clergyman of this town, and made arrangements for his marriage on the following day, at noon. On Tuesday, at about a quarter to twelve, he called with the lady, and requested to be married at once, urging as his reason for haste his desire to reach Newcastle at a certain hour, in time for the afternoon steamer to Sydney. The clergyman consented—good-natured greenhorn that he was—and the ceremony was performed. The married pair then proceeded to a Catholic priest, who had been waited on during the previous day for the purpose, and were about to be married a second time, when the interesting group was thrown into the direct disorder by the unexpected arrival of the two brothers and father of the lady. The ceremony was stopped; and on learning the facts of the case the reverend clergyman congratulated the gentlemen on their timely arrival. The young lady was then requested by her brothers to walk to their carriage, but this she refused, and on their proceeding to remove her, they were rudely pushed aside by their worthy brother-in-law, who struck horror to their hearts by his cold assurance that their “timely arrival” was too late by half an hour. “Your sister is my wife,” said he “we were married half an hour ago by the Presbyterian clergyman.” He then turned on his heel, and left the house with the lady; and before father or brothers had recovered from their astonishment, he got into his cab and drove off, no one knows whither.

What remedy is there, Messrs. Editors, in such an unfortunate case as this for the friends of the lady?

PATERFAMILIAS.

Paterson Township, 17th Sept., 1858.
(MM 21/9/1858)

Two bazaars were run in January 1859 to raise funds for the erection of a manse. It is interesting to note the details of these functions and where they were held in the town. It is also curious to think that the congregation could run these two functions in quick succession and both be successful. Perhaps the press was 'gilding the lily', as is often the case for public functions.

DISTRICT NEWS

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

BAZAAR.—On Thursday last, the bazaar in aid of the erection of a manse for our Presbyterian minister was held, in a large temporary building erected for the occasion near the centre of the town, and caused no little excitement. The day was observed as a general holiday, and all places of business closed in honour of the occasion, and all classes and denominations repaired to the bazaar. We observed a large number of visitors from Dungog, Maitland, Newcastle, and other places.

... The receipts of the day amounted to nearly £160 and but little impression was made on the goods exhibited, the stalls looking nearly as full at the conclusion as in the morning. I understand the bazaar will again be opened on the 26th instant (anniversary day.)

(MM 20/1/1859)

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

BAZAAR.—On Wednesday last (Anniversary Day), the bazaar, in aid of the erection of a manse for our Presbyterian minister, was again opened on the cricket ground, in the rear of the Paterson Hotel, to which the temporary building in which the bazaar was before held was removed. Throughout the day it was attended by a large number of people, including many visitors from Maitland; towards evening it became crowded. A band of music was present to enliven the proceedings.

... It must be truly gratifying to them, and to the worthy pastor of St. Ann's Church, to see all classes and denominations uniting together to bring to a successful termination the object for which the Bazaar was designed.

(MM 1/2/1859)

World events were having their impact on the thoughts and sympathies of people in the Hunter Valley. In the early 1860s the cotton industry in England was in a parlous situation causing great unemployment of cotton spinners. This had been brought about by a shortage of cotton from America. A public meeting was held in Maitland (MM 9/8/1862) to raise funds for "the distressed cotton workers of Great Britain". A meeting was later held in Paterson which involved Stirton and his Church of England

compatriot Rev Addams in collecting subscriptions to assist the British cotton spinners (MM 16/8/1862).

In January 1863 a meeting was held at the church in support of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—A public meeting was held at the Scotch Church, on Thursday evening last, in connection with the Hunter River Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society. The attendance was small, owing in a great measure, to the inclemency of the weather during the afternoon. Dr. Newbury occupied the chair. The proceedings were commenced by the Rev Mr. Stirton engaging in prayer, after which the rev. gentleman gave a report of the proceedings of this branch of the society (which has only been in existence about six months) and its financial position; intimating, also, that a depot for the sale of Bibles has been established at Mr. Corner's...

(MM 22/1/1863)

Later that year they met again and organised to canvass the district for collections.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—The committee of the Paterson branch of this society met at the Scotch Church, on Wednesday evening, to make arrangements for canvassing the district for the annual collections on behalf of the funds of the society. Mrs. Stanbridge, jun., Mrs. Horsely, Mrs Saunders, and Mrs. Gardner were appointed to canvass the town; whilst Mr. Stanbridge, jun., and Mr. Saunders were appointed to collect, in the lower portion of the district, and the Rev. Mr. Stirton and Mr. Bedwell through the upper portion of the district—the collections to be made before the second Wednesday in October.

(MM 5/9/1863)



Harry Boyle, historian, on the approximate site of the former Ahalton Free Presbyterian Church, Mt Kanwar, built in 1847 during the ministry of Rev McIntyre.

(photo: Cameron Archer)

William McIntyre, MA (1806–1870)

William McIntyre was a Gaelic-speaking highlander who graduated from the University of Glasgow in 1832. He was proficient in Latin and Greek, which later served him well as one of Maitland's leading 19th century educators.

McIntyre was the chaplain on the Midlothian which arrived in Sydney in 1837 with 260 of Lang's bounty migrants from the highlands. McIntyre came to Maitland in 1841 and in 1844 married Mary McIntyre of Pitnacree. Mary was about 20 years his senior and very wealthy, due to the inheritance of her late brother's properties.

McIntyre was one of the leaders of the breakaway Free Church in 1846. This saw the Hunter's Presbyterians split, a schism that remained well after Union in 1865. McIntyre remained a leader of the Free Church until his death in 1870.

During his incumbency he established a Free Church Gaelic speaking congregation at Ahalton near Mt Kanawary and built a wooden slab church which opened in 1847.

He was responsible for the construction of the current Scots Church in Free Church Street, Maitland built between 1847-1849. He also constructed a two-storey brick High School and Manse in Free Church Street between 1855-1859. This became a leading school under McIntyre's management, a most notable graduate being Samuel Walker Griffith, key architect of the Australian Constitution and Australia's first Attorney-General (Walsh & Archer 2000).

McIntyre was a popular minister and had a large following. He is most remembered for his public address titled *The Heathenism of Popery Proved and Illustrated*. This drew a crowd of 1000 people, resulting in a riot before the address even commenced. The address was cancelled but not before McIntyre and his brother were injured, his brother later dying from wounds received in the incident. The lecture was held later (Boer 1986).

McIntyre, like Lang, seems to have had little involvement with St Ann's. It is, however, important to recognise McIntyre's role in the history of Presbyterianism in the Hunter. No study of a mainstream Presbyterian church in the Hunter can be done without a reference to and understanding of William McIntyre and the Free Church.

McIntyre was one of the most influential members of the Presbyterian Church in 19th century Australia. His tombstone reads: "Faithful unto death".

References: Boer (1981,1986, 2001), Bridges (1989), Ward (1993).



Portrait of the Rev McIntyre
(photo: Ferguson Library)



Rev McIntyre's grave in Rookwood Cemetery (photo: Jack Sullivan)



Scots Kirk, Maitland, completed in 1849 during the ministry of Rev McIntyre (photo: Brian Walsh)

Concern was raised in 1863 that Rev Stirton may be removed from the district. His incumbency was dependent upon a government stipend and it would seem that there was some doubt about it continuing.

THE REV. MR. STIRTON.—It is with extreme regret we have heard that it is contemplated to remove the Rev. Mr. Stirton from this district. The rev. gentleman has for some years been the pastor of St. Ann's Church, and has throughout his residence here gained the goodwill, esteem, and affection, not only of his own congregation, but of all classes of the community. His loss will be most severely felt. By his removal, our large and extensive district will be almost destitute of clerical ministrations. The cause of Mr. Stirton's removal is reported to be that there are not sufficient members of the Presbyterian community in the district to entitle us to a minister. This, we think, is an error; there are always large congregations attending his services. We have a neat church, a sum of money in hand nearly sufficient to build a manse, a Government stipend of £150 per year. The latter sum will be lost to the district should Mr. Stirton be removed, under the provisions of the State-aid Bill, as that gentleman will take that stipend with him, probably to enrich some district that is able to support its own clergyman, whilst our district—which is not able to support a minister of the different persuasions—must go destitute; whereas, with the Government stipend, and the contributions of the members of the church, an ample sum would be raised to support a clergyman of each denomination. The members of the Presbyterian Church in this district and the public at large should use the utmost endeavour to prevent Mr. Stirton from leaving them.

(MM 29/10/1863)

The fears must have been unfounded or their publication headed off the threat to Stirton's incumbency because he continued on at Paterson for another 10 years.

Like many Presbyterian churches the congregation valued their singing. Apparently, Mr George Gardiner excelled himself and the congregation presented him with a purse of sovereigns as a small token of his valuable services.

PRESENTATION.—A few days ago the Rev. Mr. Stirton presented, on behalf of the congregation worshipping at St. Ann's Scotch Church, to Mr. George Gardiner a purse of sovereigns, as a small token of their esteem for the valuable services rendered by him in conducting the psalmody of that church. Mr. Gardiner's services were worthy of some recognition. He has gratuitously, for some years, led the psalmody of that church; he has always been regular in his attendance, and at one time exerted himself to form a singing class, by which the services of the church would be more effectually carried out. He deserves the warmest thanks of the congregation, which were manifested by the contributions to the testimonial.

(MM 12/11/1863)

There are few details of where Stirton preached, however, there is one interesting reference to him performing a marriage at Ravenscroft in the Upper Allyn.

MARRIAGE

On the 3rd of September, by special license, at Ravenscroft, the residence of the bride's parents, by the Rev. Thomas Stirton, Mr. James Bignal, Upper Williams, to Margaret, elder daughter of Mr. Eugene Kenny, Upper Allyn.

(MM 24/9/1863)

There is an earlier reference to Ravenscroft Chapel on a marriage certificate of the marriage between John Faint and Susan Lawrance Munsie (sic), both of the Upper Allyn. They are recorded as being married there by Rev Laughton in 1854.



Eccleston Bridge, Allyn River. Ravenscroft Chapel was on the northern side of this river crossing before it was swept away in the 1875 flood (photo: Cameron Archer)

Praise and Preaching

Presbyterians have always had strong views on how their services would be run. Being very anti-Catholic they always avoided any hint of pomp, ceremony and ritualism. Preaching and praise have always been the centre point of Presbyterian services.

St Ann's with its central placement of a high pulpit is typically Presbyterian. Parishioners looked to their minister for a good sermon every week. The qualities of ministers were based around the strength of their sermons not their pastoral care or other characteristics of their work. Frequently ministers would spend days preparing their sermons; the best would memorise them and not refer to notes.

Praise by the singing of psalms only was the Presbyterian way until the mid-19th century. Singing was led by the precentor, a specially-selected and trained member of the congregation who had a good voice. If there were no books or the congregation was illiterate, the precentor would first sing a line and then it would be repeated by the congregation. The precentor would stand directly in front of the pulpit, below the minister. Free Presbyterian services are still based on this format. Congregations stand to pray and sit to sing. Psalms only are sung, without music.

The psalms were held to be divinely inspired, with the human voice being God's musical instrument. Hymns and the organ (derided as a "kist (chest) o' whistles") were rejected as man-made. In 1863 the first minister of a Church of Scotland introduced an organ into his services in Edinburgh. The church also issued a hymn book. There is reference in Baker (1985) of Lang seeking an organ in Great Britain during his trip in 1831. This is inconsistent with other practices in the church at the time, and it seems his quest was unsuccessful.

The purchase of a harmonium by St Ann's in 1867 suggests that it was the first time music was used in the church.

References:

Bridges (2001) *Ministry in Scotland in the first half of the 19th century* in Ward & Prentis (2001).

Baker (1985) p. 79.



St Ann's high central pulpit
(photo: Brian Walsh)

By 1864 the church had been standing for over 20 years and required some repairs. A meeting was called to appoint a committee to oversee this project.

SCOTCH CHURCH—on Wednesday evening a meeting of the congregation of St. Andrew's Church was held in that church to appoint a committee of management to transact the affairs of the church during the ensuing year. Mr. McAlpin occupied the chair. Messrs. W. Corner, A.M. McAlpin, B. Stanbridge, jun., J. White, and J. Smith were appointed the committee of management; after which it was

decided that a subscription list should be opened to re-shingle and otherwise repair the church, when upwards of £20 were subscribed at the meeting; and arrangements were made to solicit further subscriptions from our absent friends. The meeting was closed as it was begun, by prayer.
(MM 9/7/1864)

Stirton called for tenders for unstripping and re-shingling of St. Ann's with good ironbark shingles (MM 6/8/1864). A reference in October indicates that the church was about to undergo considerable repairs and be re-shingled (MM 15/10/1864). There is also a reference to the Wesleyan Chapel being too small, with considerable additions about to be made.

At this time the government paid all ministers of established religions stipends and allowances. These amounts were listed in the press and in 1864 Rev Thomas Stirton was recorded as receiving £150 (MM 19/3/1864).

It appears that through the mid-1860s the congregation was enthusiastic and forward-looking. In November 1865 they decided to investigate the cost of procuring suitable lamps so that the church could be lit with kerosene oil. They also were investigating the construction of a vestry.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—On a Wednesday evening a full meeting of the committee of management of our Scotch Church was held in the church, the Rev. Mr. Stirton in the chair. Business was opened by prayer. The first business transacted was the consideration of several improvements and repairs to the church, and the means to be adopted for carrying them out. It was unanimously decided that a collection should be made in the church at the close of every service; this, together with the pew rents, was considered would be sufficient to meet the requisite expenditure. After which it was decided that the church required better lighting for the evening services, and Messrs. Corner, Cann, and the Rev. Mr. Horton (sic), were appointed a committee to obtain the necessary information as to the cost of procuring suitable lamps and other necessary expenses, so that the church could be lighted with kerosene oil. The next subject considered was the requirement of a vestry to the church. After considerable discussion, it was decided that the lighting committee should also ascertain the probable cost of the vestry, and procure a plan and specification of the building required. Other matters in connection with the church were considerably discussed, and either disposed of or postponed for consideration at the next meeting. The meeting was then adjourned until Wednesday, the 12th of December.
(MM 18/11/1865)

A public meeting of the Paterson branch of the British & Foreign Bible Society was held in St Ann's on 15/9/1864. It was chaired by Rev Stirton with Revs Hills and Waterhouse from Maitland as speakers. About fifty people attended, with the collection totalling £2.11s.6d. (MM 10/9/1864; 17/9/1864).

Enthusiasm and activity continued into 1866 with acceptance of a successful quotation to construct the vestry from Mr Samuel Patfield. At this meeting it was decided to purchase *Annandale* as the manse for the minister.

SCOTCH CHURCH.—On Wednesday a meeting of the committee of management of our Presbyterian church was held at the church, the Rev Mr. Stirton in the chair. The first business transacted was the opening the tender for the erection of a vestry to the church, and the tender of Mr. Samuel Patfield was accepted, the amount being £45.10s. The committee then considered a proposal for the purchase of Annandale cottage as a manse for the Presbyterian minister. After considerable discussion it was unanimously decided to purchase those premises, sufficient funds being in hand for that purpose having been realised at a bazaar held here some three or four years ago for the purpose of building a manse. The amount was then not considered sufficient, and has since been lying accumulating at interest in the Bank of New South Wales. Arrangements were then made as to the transfer of the conveyance of the premises, other business of a trivial nature transacted, and the committee adjourned.

(MM 16/1/1866)

The vestry was constructed but the purchase of *Annandale* did not proceed for some reason, the next purchase by the church being a harmonium.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—The members of the congregation of St. Ann's Presbyterian Church have purchased an harmonium, to be used in the services of the church, and it was used for the first time on Sunday last.

(MM 18/6/1867)

In 1867 St Ann's Sunday School held their first picnic at *Tillimby*. It was most successful and these picnics continued for some years, even after the departure of Rev Stirton in 1870. The first was held on 27 December 1866 and was well reported in the *Maitland Mercury*.

The first annual picnic in connection with the Paterson Presbyterian Sabbath School took place on the grounds of Tillimby, on Thursday, the 27th instant. The children, with the minister and their teachers, assembled at the church about eleven o'clock, and, after prayer and a short address from their pastor (the Rev Mr. Stirton), proceeded in marching order, with a triumphal arch of evergreens tastefully entwined in front, and a profusion of flags and banners with suitable inscriptions, to the grounds, where they were met by many more of their schoolfellows from the upper part of the river, the number of children swelling them to about four score; there was also about a similar number of parents and visitors on the ground to welcome them, as well as having provided a most bountiful supply of the good things of the season for their refreshment.

... Too much praise cannot be given to the Rev Mr. Stirton, Mrs. Stirton, Mrs. Cann, Mrs. Stoddart, and other kind friends for their providing and distributing so applicably the necessaries for the occasion. There is but little doubt that this reunion will long be remembered by the young and old, not anything having occurred to mar the jollity of the young people. When the shades of evening began to approach, the Rev Mr. Stirton assembled the whole company under the canopy, and gave a short address, and a word of admonition to the young, impressing on them the necessity to remember their Creator in the day of their youth.

A short hymn was then sung, and the benediction pronounced. The young people gave three hearty cheers each for our gracious Queen, their pastor, their teacher, and kind friends, dispersed, and wended their way to their various homes, highly gratified with the pleasurable manner they had spent the day.

(MM 3/1/1867)

The second in November 1867 was reported in less detail, but apparently was successful. Another Sunday School picnic was held in November 1870 which included children from the Church of England day and Sunday schools as well as children attending the three private schools in the village. The total in attendance were about 150. All of these picnics were held at *Tillimby*, north of Paterson.

Country News.

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)

PATERSON.

November 22.

PRESBYTERIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL TREAT.—On Thursday, the 10th instant, the children attending Saint Ann’s Presbyterian Sunday school held their annual treat. The children attending the Church of England Day and Sunday Schools as well as the children attending the three private schools, were also invited. The children, in number about 150, assembled at Saint Ann’s Church early in the morning, where they were addressed by the pastor of the church, the Rev. Mr Horton, and then formed into a procession and marched through the town on to Tillimby, where on the beautiful green sward, and under the large overhanging and shady trees every arrangement had been made for their reception. In a large tent ample provisions had been provided in the shape of cakes, sandwiches, tarts, and every other nicety that is usually provided on such occasions, where, on the children’s arrival, they were at once led, and heartily partook of the refreshments provided. Afterwards, cricket, racing, jumping, climbing, swinging, and many other amusements were indulged in by the youngsters to their hearts’ content until evening, when they were again marched into town and dismissed after giving repeated cheers for the Queen, the Rev Mr. and Mrs. Horton (sic), their teachers, and after spending one of the happiest days of their lives...

(Town & Country Journal 26/11/1870)

Sometimes we think vandalism is something new to society. In Paterson in 1868 windows were “wilfully and maliciously “ broken in the Wesleyan Chapel and also in St Ann’s.

BREAKING WINDOWS AT THE SCOTCH CHURCH.—Breaking church and chapel windows has become quite a popular amusement amongst some of our young men. Some time last Saturday night some stones were thrown through the windows of the vestry of the Scotch Church, breaking some of the glass. What a pity some of the police were not handy to place these mischievous individuals, whoever they are, into a place where they would be prevented from indulging in these mischievous propensities for a while.

(MM 2/7/1868)

Stirton had a close association with the Nivison family of *Tillimby* through marriage. He lived at *Tillimby* and had three sons and a daughter. His second son, Percival Fraser, is recorded as dying aged three years at *Tillimby* (MM 25/1/1866). In 1870 Stirton advertised for young gentlemen to board and be educated with his own son.

A CLERGYMAN wishes Two or Three YOUNG GENTLEMEN, from nine to fourteen years of age, as BOARDERS, to EDUCATE WITH HIS OWN SON

For terms, apply to

REV. THOMAS STIRTON,

Paterson.

(MM 16/4/1870)

Stirton represented his brother-in-law, Alexander Nivison (who was blind) on many occasions. In 1868 he represented Nivison along with other locals to Mr Bennett, the Commissioner and Engineer for Roads, when Bennett visited Paterson seeking a suitable site for a bridge (to become Gostwyck Bridge) over the Paterson River (MM 12/5/1868).

Rev Stirton is recorded as having a mishap in a flood while travelling to officiate at the church one Sunday morning.

NARROW ESCAPE FROM AN ACCIDENT.—As the Rev. Mr. Stirton was proceeding from his residence at Tillimby to officiate at the Scotch Church yesterday morning, in consequence of the flood he had to leave the road and go round the side of the mountain to reach the town, and whilst crossing a creek which had become much swollen by the rain, over which an old bridge was existing, but being then covered with water could not be seen, the horse which the rev. gentleman was riding got his feet in a hole in the bridge and fell down, throwing Mr. Stirton into the water. The horse soon extricated himself, and both the horse and its rider escaped injury except the ducking they received from falling into the water.

Paterson, Monday morning.

(MM 30/4/1870)

Again rumours spread in Paterson that Stirton would be shortly leaving the district:

The REV. T. STIRTON.—A rumour is current here that the Rev. Thomas Stirton, minister of Saint Ann's Presbyterian Church, is about removing to another sphere of labour; we have not heard where.

(MM 18/8/1870)

Rev Stirton took offence at this rumour and promptly replied to the Editor.

(To the Editor of the Maitland Mercury)

SIR—In a letter from your Paterson correspondent, which appeared in your issue of last Thursday week, there is a paragraph which refers to me. It says it is rumoured here that I am to leave this district. The rumour did not emanate from me nor any member of my family. We are not in any way responsible for this. I have no intention of leaving, and I must confess that I was astonished at the spontaneous speculations of my neighbours. I have every reason to believe that the rumour arose out of ill-feeling to me. It has a tendency to injure me, and I presume you have no wish to help forward such a feeling. I may mention that

your Paterson correspondent would gladly, I believe, communicate to you anything which would annoy or even be detrimental to me.

I did not intend to take any notice of the report; but, on hearing from a gentleman in the interior with reference to this matter, I feel it is only doing justice to myself to request that you will contradict it in your next issue.

Yours faithfully,

THOMAS STIRTON.

Paterson, 29th August, 1870.

(MM 1/9/1870)

The Paterson correspondent then replied to Stirton's letter.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

(To the Editor of the Maitland Mercury.)

SIR—In your issue of the 1st instant, appeared a letter from the Rev. Mr. Stirton, commenting, in rather uncharitable terms, upon a paragraph which appeared a few days before in one of my news letters, referring to a rumour that the rev. gentleman was about to remove to another sphere of labour. In the first place the rev. gentleman endeavours to insinuate that I was the author of the rumour, and that I originated the rumour out of an ill feeling towards him. I neither originated the rumour, nor circulated it. The rumour was generally current throughout the town, and, at the time, I believed there was truth in it, and therefore gave it publicity.

The late paragraph, however, shows to any unprejudiced mind in whose breast the ill-feeling rests, when he says I would gladly communicate to you anything which would annoy or be detrimental to him. Now I would challenge the rev. gentleman to produce a single instance in which he or any one else can prove that I have acted to him or any other individual in the manner in which he insinuates during the ten years that I have communicated to the Mercury I am fully convinced the paragraph alluded to was written for the purpose of injuring me, with what effect perhaps time will tell.

Absence from home has been the cause of not replying sooner.

YOUR CORRESPONDENT.

(MM 24/9/1870)

It would seem the issue of State support for the Presbyterian Ministry at Paterson was of continuing concern. A public meeting of the congregation was held in late 1870 to discuss the matter and to seek an increase in the State's stipend. The cash outlay needed was higher in a parish like Paterson which did not have a manse or residence.

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—A public meeting of the congregation of St. Ann's, Presbyterian Church, was held on Monday evening, at St. Ann's Church, and was largely attended. The meeting was called for the purpose of urging upon the congregation the claims of the pastor of the church to an increase of salary, upon what is allowed from the

State. The meeting was opened as usual devotionally, when Mr. William Corner was called upon to preside, who stated the object for which the meeting was called, after which the Rev. Mr. Coutts, of Newcastle, and the Rev. Mr. Dougall, of East Maitland, severally the meeting, urging the claims of the Rev. Mr. Stirton, to an additional amount to the Stipend that he received from the Government, which the Congregation should raise amongst themselves. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church considered that each of their clergymen should at least receive at the rate of £300 per annum, at places where there was no manse or residence for the minister, and £250 per year where there was a manse. The present clergyman here has received £150 pounds per annum from the Government. The congregation, therefore, amongst whom their minister laboured was called upon to contribute the remaining hundred pounds towards his support.

... At the conclusion of the speeches of the rev. gentlemen resolutions were passed by which the meeting pledged itself to use its utmost endeavour to support the Presbyterian cause, and to obtain the additional amount required for the support of their pastor...

(MM 10/12/1870)

An interesting report is recorded in the *Maitland Mercury* of 1868, which is taken from the *Armidale Express*. The article refers to the Armidale to Tamworth mail coach being held up and robbed between Tamworth and Moonbi. The only passenger on the coach was a Rev Mr. Sturton (sic) from whom was taken three half-sovereigns. The bushranger is reported to have been Thunderbolt. Whether this was Paterson's Rev Stirton travelling up north for business or other reasons, is uncertain. It does seem like a genuine Thunderbolt act including a few smart comments during the course of the robbery.

TWO ROBBERIES OF THE DOWN MAIL IN ONE WEEK.

(From the Armidale Express, Feb. 1.)

The mail which left Armidale on Monday for Tamworth was stopped and robbed on Tuesday morning, at half-past 1, about eight miles above Tamworth, and seven from Moonby. It appears that a man and a boy, armed, came from behind a large rock at the side of the road, and the man called out several times to the driver, Wm O'Dell, to bail up. The driver said there was a guard in the mail, when the man fired a shot in the air, apparently to induce the guard to show himself, and the boy galloped off. The bushranger accompanied the coach for a short distance, when finding no guard show himself, he obliged the driver to stop, and told him to give him over the bags. O'Dell refused, so the robber took them out himself. O'Dell endeavoured to secrete the bag from Bendemeer, which was heavy, but the robber said he did not think he had got all, so he struck a match, searched the coach, and found the bag mentioned. The only passenger was the Rev. Mr. Sturton (sic), from whom he took three half-sovereigns, and remarked to the driver "Oh, this is your mail guard, is it?" The coach was detained in all about a quarter of an hour. The robber rode off with all the bags, so that both letters and papers went. Fortunately, from Monday being a holiday, there were less letters than usual from Armidale. The man was about 5 feet 7 inches in height, had a sore eye, and wore a light tweed coat and Californian hat. He rode a chestnut horse, with a hind foot white, and

like a blotched M on shoulder. The boy was about 12, and rode a chestnut horse.

... The police believe that Thunderbolt, for whose apprehension a reward of £200 is offered, was one of the robbers...(MM 4/2/1868)

Rev Stirton left Paterson in 1873 to take up the charge as Minister for the Parish of Inverell. Paterson lost its longest serving minister but, more importantly, he took with him the government salary which supported the parish and its operation (MM 19/8/1873). The church and the government wanted to have a minister in the far-flung and booming pastoral areas of the inland. Stirton's departure marked the end of full-time ministry in the village. St Ann's was about to enter a difficult period, but would continue to survive as a place of worship for Presbyterians of the district.

The congregation was sorry to lose the services of Rev Stirton and the *Maitland Mercury* reports their sentiments.

I understand it is likely we are to lose our old friend Mr. Stirton, and I am sure the majority are sorry when this gentleman leaves us. Mr. Stirton has been many years here and he is one of those few gentlemen who, the longer you know him, the more you prize him. But considering the paltry support he receives from us, I don't wonder at his removal. We are a close-fisted community.

Upper Williams, July 28. (MM 31/7/1873)

DUNGOG.

THE REV. THOMAS STIRTON.—This much respected clergyman preached his farewell sermon on Sunday last. His ministrations in this district date more than eighteen years back, and have been uniformly held in high esteem. The strength of the ties of attachment between him and his congregation was very apparent during the delivery of his valedictory discourse; even members of the stern sex could not conceal their emotion, although the reverend gentleman wonderfully controlled his own, and refrained as much as possible from allusions calculated to centre their thoughts upon himself. All who knew him will earnestly desire the consummation of his inmost wish, in his new sphere of duty, viz—That he may be enabled to give himself wholly to the work of the Ministry.

(MM 7/8/1873)



Rev Thomas Stirton's grave, Inverell NSW
(photo: John Hodgens)

Thomas Stirton, DD (1827-1906)

Thomas Stirton was born at Blackhaugh, Caputh, Perthshire. He attended local schools and the University of St Andrews, studying Arts 1845-49, Divinity 1849-53. He was licensed and ordained in the Presbytery of Meigle in 1854.

He joined the Synod of Australia and worked as a Supply Minister for Petersham 1854-55 and was then appointed to Dungog-Stroud, with Paterson added in 1856.

Rev Thomas Stirton arrived in Paterson in 1856, single and aged 29. He was to become the longest-serving minister at St Ann's during the 19th century. Stirton married Jane Nivison, eldest child of Abraham and Mary Nivison of Ohio, Walcha. Jane was not yet 20 at the time of her marriage. Thomas and Jane Stirton had four boys and one girl.

Abraham Nivison had purchased *Tillimby* in 1859 and there commenced a strong association between St Ann's and *Tillimby* during Stirton's incumbency. Nivison was a successful grazier and had six surviving children. A son Alexander was to run *Tillimby*, the largest property in the district and well-known for its quality cattle and horses.

Unfortunately, Alexander was struck by blindness at a relatively early age but remained an astute and capable grazier at *Tillimby*. The Stirton family also lived at *Tillimby*, Rev Stirton frequently representing Alexander with negotiations associated with the property and district. Alexander Nivison lived at *Tillimby* until his death in 1922. The descendants of Thomas Stirton were among the beneficiaries of Alexander's estate.

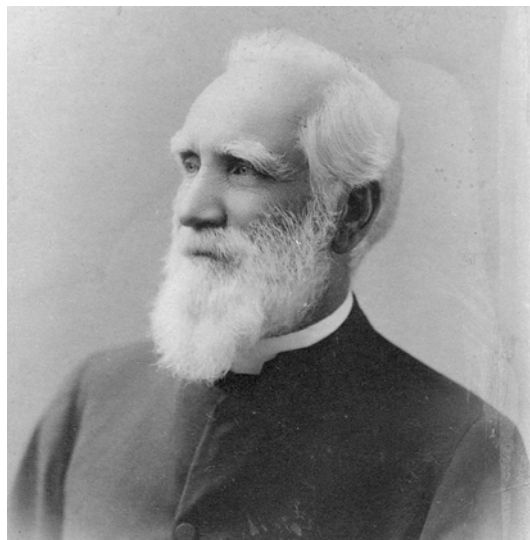
Thomas Stirton was a popular and successful minister at St Ann's. He moved to Inverell in 1873, retiring there in 1898. In 1891 he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity from his alma mater, St Andrew's University, Scotland. He died at Inverell in 1906 leaving his widow and three sons, all of whom were established as farmers or businessmen in north-western NSW.

References:

Bridges, Barry (2001) *Ministry in Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century* in Ward & Prentis (2001).

Oppenheimer J & Mitchell B (1989) *An Australian Clan*.

Maitland Mercury 21/8/1891, 15/8/1906



Rev Thomas Stirton (photo: from the collection of Mrs Helen Loveday, Inverell)

Appreciation for teacher; choir leader

A Mrs Rowe ran a girls' school in Paterson for a period around 1870. She was the leader in the choirs for both St Ann's and St Paul's churches in Paterson. She left Paterson for Yass in April 1872 and received an extensive farewell and address from both congregations.

PATERSON.

PRESENTATION OF A FAREWELL ADDRESS AND TESTIMONIAL TO MRS. ROWE.—At the beginning of the present week it became known that Mrs. Rowe, who has for several years conducted a ladies' school in this town, and was the leader in the choirs, both of St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, and St. Paul's Episcopalian Church, during the greater part of the time she has resided at the Paterson, was about to leave the district, and to proceed to Yass.

...On Saturday afternoon, several of the gentlemen who initiated the movement presented the address and testimonial to Mrs. Rowe. The address and reply were as follows:-

Paterson, March 29th, 1872

(MADAM—Having heard with extreme regret that it is your intention to leave this district, we beg your acceptance of the accompanying purse of sovereigns, as well as this address, as a small token of our esteem. Although inadequate to your merits, we trust it will be a sufficient guarantee of the respect in which you are held throughout this district, as well as the respect which is entertained for your family. In bidding you farewell, we desire to convey to you our earnest hope that success may crown your efforts; and that health and prosperity may attend you in the distant district to which YOU ARE NOW GOING.

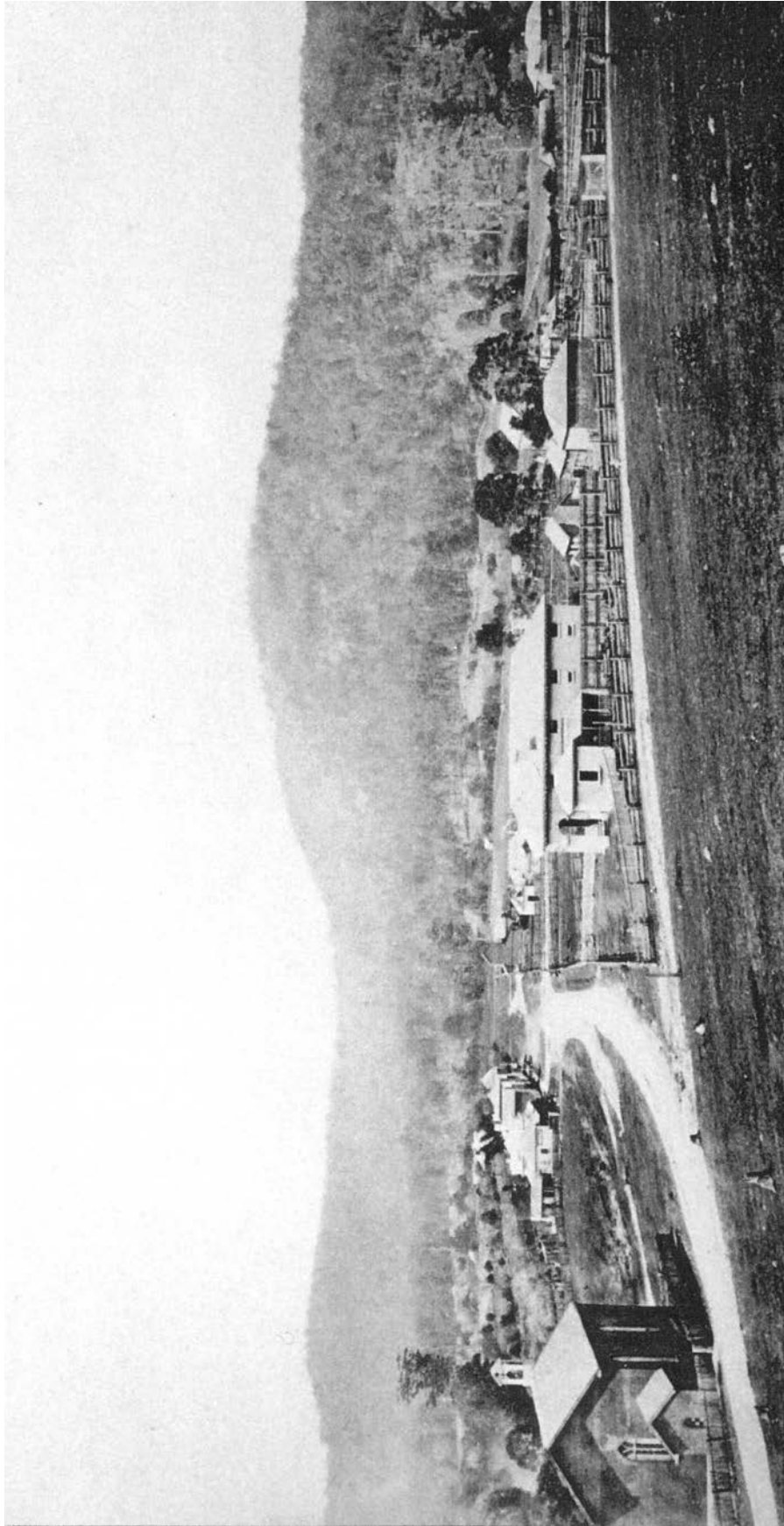
(Here follows about fifty signatures.)

REPLY.

Mrs. Rowe begs to return her sincere thanks to those kind friends who have so liberally contributed to the handsome present this day presented to her and feels that no words can express her gratitude, or the sorrow she feels at leaving all those kind friends who have so willingly supported her during her five years' residence on the Paterson. She will ever remember them when far away; and trusts she will have the pleasure of meeting them all again at some future period.



Servants' quarters at Tillimby, Paterson, now demolished
(photo: Athol D'Ombra collection)



View of Paterson probably taken in the 1870s. St Ann's is clearly visible in the left foreground (photo: Jack Sullivan collection)



Chapter 5

Years of uncertainty and the tumbledown 1874-1877

St Ann's was to enter a new phase of its history in which it no longer had its local minister. From 1873 until the present St Ann's has been serviced from another parish and ministry. The first of what has become a long line of ministers was the Rev Dr Boag of Hinton. Services apparently lapsed following Stirton's departure and in late 1873 Boag is reported as preaching at St Ann's.

THE SCOTCH CHURCH.—We notice that the Rev. Dr. Boag is to preach in St. Ann's Scotch Church next Sunday evening, the pulpit of which church has been vacant since the retirement of the Rev. Mr. Stirton, and even occasional services have been suspended. No steps have yet been taken so far as we can learn to get a fixed pastor for the church.

(MM 29/11/1873)

SAINT ANN'S SCOTCH CHURCH.—Last Sunday evening the Rev. Dr. Boag, of Hinton, preached to a very large congregation (the church being filled in every part) in Saint Ann's Church. No reference was made at the service regarding future services.

Paterson, December 5, 1873.

(MM 9/12/1873)

Following the departure of Rev Stirton, the congregation had the task of raising funds to pay their new minister's stipend. It advertised some of its land for sale in that year.

TOWN OF PATERSON.

FOR POSITIVE SALE, BY ORDER OF THE MORTGAGEE,

THREE ALLOTMENTS

Containing in all 1 acre 1 rood 26 perches of Land, fronting King street, Paterson, and the Paterson River; known as

"THE SCOTCH CHURCH PROPERTY."

For particulars of Title, apply to Mr. R.W. THOMPSON, Solicitor, West Maitland.

H. AND F. WEAVER have received instructions from the Mortgagee to sell by auction, at their Room, Elgin street, West Maitland, on WEDNESDAY, 23rd July, 1873, at Twelve o'clock.

THE ABOVE VALUABLE PROPERTY.

Further particulars can be obtained at the Office of the Auctioneers, Elgin street, West Maitland.

Terms at sale.

(MM 22/7/1873)

The population was not large or wealthy enough to support a full-time minister. Paterson was about to enter a period, which still exists, of being serviced on a part-time basis. The Bush Missionary Society was to fill in some of the need for the Christian gospel in the region.

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

THE BUSH MISSIONARY.

—Mr Druce, the Bush Missionary, has been located in this neighbourhood during the past week, visiting the residents around, disposing of religious books and periodicals, and performing his other missionary labours. On last Sabbath afternoon he collected a number of children in the Wesleyan chapel, and very suitably addressed them on the principles of Christian

religion. In the evening Mr. Druce preached to a very large congregation in the Scotch Church; almost every seat in the church was fully occupied, and the very able address which he delivered was listened to with rapt attention by all present. Mr. Druce, we learn, proceeds to the upper parts of our district, where, we have no doubt, he will be heartily welcomed by all the residents in many places at which religious services are very few and far between. Beyond the Church of England services, held at Gresford and Saint Mary's on alternate Sabbaths, no regular services are held throughout the other parts of the district in connection with any denomination.

(MM 9/10/1873)

The Presbytery of the Hunter met and discussed the situation.

LOCAL NEWS.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—PRESBYTERY OF THE HUNTER.—This ecclesiastical court met in the Presbyterian Church, West Maitland, on Wednesday last. Present: Rev. J. Bonthorne, moderator; Rev. J. White,



Hinton Presbyterian Church, now demolished. St Ann's Paterson was serviced from other parishes from 1873.

(photo: Harry Boyle collection)

Rev. J. Coutts, Rev. Dr. Boag, Rev. W. Mood, Rev. J. Benvie, Mr Scobie, elder, and Rev. W. Bain, clerk. The chief business on the roll was the call from Muscleebrook (sic) in favour of the Rev. J. Laing, Manning River. J.H. Keys, Esq., Bengalla, and J.C. Duff, Esq., Wingham, appeared as representatives from the congregations of Muscleebrook and the Manning; and the Rev. J. Laing appeared for himself.

... The management of the congregations of Paterson and Dungog was left in the hands of the Moderator. Hopes were expressed that before long the people of the district would be prepared for the reception of a minister to labour among them. It was stated that a meeting of Presbytery would be held during the sitting of Assembly, when the case of Paterson and Dungog could be further considered, and the interests of those congregations promoted.

(MM 18/10/1873)

The Presbytery of the Hunter had the Rev Gibson in mind for a united district of Paterson and Dungog. Gibson finally did service Paterson but it was some years later.

SAINT ANN'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Ever since the Rev. Mr. Stirton retired from the pastorate of this church, the Rev. Dr. Boag, of Hinton, has occasionally conducted the services, generally to large congregations. Last Sabbath evening, at the close of Divine Service, the Rev. Doctor announced that the Presbytery of the Hunter had arranged to hold a meeting of the congregation, on Tuesday evening, the 31st instant, relative to the settlement of the Rev. Mr. Gibson as the minister of the united districts of Paterson and Dungog...

The new clergyman, whoever he may be, will have to be supported by the voluntary contributions of the people, and, therefore, it behoves everyone interested in so important an object to come forward and contribute to the best of their ability to so laudable an undertaking.

(MM 26/3/1874)

The debate regarding the attachment of Paterson to Dungog was discussed by members of St. Ann's with the then Moderator, Rev Benvie presiding.

PATERSON.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—On Tuesday evening last, pursuant to advertisement, a meeting of the members and adherents of Saint Ann's Presbyterian Church was held in the vestry of the church, to take into consideration what steps should be taken to secure a pastor for the church. The Rev. Mr. Benvie, moderator, presided. The attendance, however, was very limited, and the business brought forward was merely of a preliminary nature, and was conducted chiefly in a conversational manner. From the tenor of the remarks made it was not considered advisable to again connect the district of Paterson with that of Dungog, if it was possible to support a clergyman for the district of Paterson alone; it being contended that regular services should be conducted at Gresford, Eccleston, and Toryburn, as well as Paterson; and a clergyman would find quite sufficient to fully occupy his time in labouring in this district, and officiating at these places at regular intervals.

... It was intimated that, in the meantime, fortnightly services would be conducted by the Rev. Dr. Boag, of Hinton, and other clergymen, until such measures are taken as will secure a stated clergyman for the district. The subject of a sabbath school for the church was also discussed, there being no sabbath school at all in the town...
(MM 14/4/1874)

In May 1874 Rev John Gibson arrived in Dungog and was inducted as the Minister for Dungog-Stroud (MM 19/5/1874). Gibson's district did not take in St Ann's at this stage. There must have been considerable debate about the fate of St Ann's at the time of Gibson's arrival.

Continuing Free Presbyterian Church

Despite Union in 1865 a small number of ministers and congregations chose to continue as Free Presbyterians. This was particularly evident in the Hunter and on the North Coast of NSW. Rev William Donald (1812-1890), member of the Free Church of Scotland, came to Australia in 1863. In 1868 he joined the continuing Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia (Free Church) and worked as a missionary at Clarence Town from 1868 until he died in 1890.

The Scottish Highlanders were very anti unions because of their experiences at the hands of the landlords in Scotland. These feelings would have remained in those families living in the Dungog and Paterson regions, making them receptive to be members of the Free Church.

The Free Church had also built a church in Dungog in 1856 that operated until the 1880s. It was sold to the Presbyterian Church of NSW in 1892.

The departure of Stirton from Paterson and the church's inability to fill the vacancy provided Donald with an opportunity to extend his ministry. The controversy played out in the *Maitland Mercury* and the text should be read understanding Donald's background and intentions. Despite Union ten years earlier the divisions and acrimony within the church were still being played out in the lower Hunter Valley.

Reference: Ward (1989)

Despite the lack of a minister the gospel was preached in St. Ann's during 1876.

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—The Rev. Mr. Donald, of Clarence Town, preached in Saint Ann's Church, last Sunday evening, the 5th instant, to one of the largest congregations that has assembled here for a very long time past. The rev. gentleman preached here also some few weeks back. On both occasions the services were very highly appreciated by the large congregations that assembled, and a very general hope is expressed that the rev. gentleman will frequently visit us on his pastoral rounds.

(MM 16/3/1876)

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

THE BUSH MISSIONARY.—Mr. E. Druce, the Bush Missionary, has, during the last fortnight, been travelling through this district, preaching wherever circumstances admit, and disposing of his religious literature. Mr. Druce preached in our Presbyterian Church last Wednesday evening; and now we learn proceeds through the William River district and thence on to the Manning River.

(MM 18/4/1876)

Some interesting controversy arose in 1876 at St Ann's. A charge was made that unauthorised parties had been allowed the use of St Ann's at Paterson and this was duly reported in the press.

It was stated that unauthorised parties had been allowed the use of the church at Paterson. The clerk was instructed to communicate with responsible parties, and intimate that the church should be employed only by properly accredited ministers of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales; the Presbytery being at the same time willing to allow service to be conducted by any respectable Presbyterian minister, on proper application to the Presbytery by said minister, and on such terms as the Presbytery might prescribe.

(MM 16/9/1876)

Not long after this a reply to these charges appeared in the *Maitland Mercury* from Free Church minister, Rev W S Donald of Clarence Town. Apparently, the unauthorised parties were the Bush Missionary and Donald. Donald's rather wordy reply is worth reading as it demonstrates the ferment that must have been occurring within the district at that time. St Ann's was caught up in a wider turf war.

PRESBYTERY OF THE HUNTER.

(To the Editor of the Maitland Mercury)

SIR.—In the Mercury of date the 16th inst. there is a report of the proceedings of the Presbytery of the Hunter. This report, I presume, was prepared by some member of the Presbytery, and therefore may be held to be correct. The report contains, amongst other matters, a reference to the Presbyterian Church at Paterson township. The report is as follows:- “It was stated that unauthorised parties had been allowed the use of the church at Paterson. The clerk was instructed to communicate with responsible parties, and intimate that the church should be employed only by properly accredited ministers of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales; the Presbytery being at the same time willing to allow service to be conducted by any respectable Presbyterian minister, on proper application to the Presbytery by said minister, and on such terms as the Presbytery might prescribe.”

... The parties described as unauthorised, are so described, I suppose, because they did not have the authority of the Presbytery of the Hunter. Nevertheless, these parties had the consent and approbation of local authorities for using the Church; and these local authorities, as is well known, had long manifested, in various ways, the interest they took,

both in the Church building, and in a congregation to occupy it. The unauthorised parties who have occasioned this trouble to the Presbytery of the Hunter are, so far as I am aware, only two, viz, one of the Bush Missionaries, and myself. The Bush Missionary on one of his visits to the Paterson asked the use of the Presbyterian Church, and obtained it I believe, in order that he might hold one of his meetings. This, it would seem, has come to the knowledge of the Presbytery of the Hunter, and they find fault with it. As they speak of “unauthorised parties” using the Church, and the word parties indicates at least two offenders, therefore the Bush Missionary must be one of them. The people in the district are, I believe, of a different opinion from the Presbytery in that matter. They think that granting the Church to the Missionary was right. As to the other unauthorised party, although I do not require to explain to the people in the Paterson district that I am the said “party”, I may explain how I came to be invited to hold divine service there. The people on the Paterson connected with the Presbyterian Church were only favoured for years by the Presbytery of the Hunter with service once a month. In these circumstances some were desirous of having Presbyterian services more frequently; and it occurred to them that it could not be out of place to endeavour to obtain them elsewhere. They did obtain these services, and for a considerable time they had an opportunity, with comfort to all parties, of attending upon them: and it does really seem an ungracious thing on the part of the Presbytery of the Hunter to come forward in this high-handed manner, and attempt to stop these services. When these services were proposed, a request was sent to me to “conduct divine service at Paterson on any unoccupied Sabbath when I had it in my power.” When this request was made to me, it seemed as if the Lord had opened a door for my preaching there, and I felt bound to comply with it. I therefore gladly complied with the request, and undertook to preach as desired.

... It is with very great reluctance that I have felt myself constrained to notice the proceedings of the Presbytery of the Hunter in reference to myself, but being so pointedly referred to (although my name is not published) I had no other course...—I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

W.S. DONALD

Mount Pleasant, Clarence Town, Sept. 28th, 1876.

(Received Sept. 25.—ED. M.M.)

(MM 28/9/1876)

Donald must have been keen to extend his ministry from Clarence Town to Paterson and in early 1877 he is recorded as securing permission to use the Court House for his services.

PRESBYTERIAN—For some time past our Presbyterian Church has been entirely closed, but we are glad to notice that the Rev. Mr. Donald intends to continue his ministrations amongst us, having secured permission to officiate in the court-house at regular intervals. The rev. gentleman officiated for the first time at the court-house to a large congregation on Sabbath, the 21st instant, and will again perform divine service that day four weeks.

Paterson, January 29, 1877. (MM 30/1/1877)

Fund-raising commenced to support the church. Mr Thomas Walker of West Maitland delivered an address to a large audience at the Court House. William Corner, Esq., JP, presided over the meeting.

...Mr Walker having heard of our financial difficulty, has most kindly consented to come and lend a helping hand. Ladies and Gentlemen, I beg to introduce Mr. Thomas Walker. Mr. Walker, on rising, was greeted with applause, and said that the subject upon which he proposed to lecture was English, Scotch, and Irish wit and humour. The lecturer then reviewed in a very highly amusing, as well as very instructive manner, the different phases which characterised the English, Scotch, and Irish, in their national wit and humour illustrating the same by various anecdotes in connection therewith, of which the lecturer appeared to be well supplied; and which from the smiling faces which everywhere abounded, and the oft repeated applause which followed their delivery, must have been highly appreciated by the numerous audience. The lecture occupied upwards of two hours in its delivery.

(MM 29/8/1876)

Fund-raising by the church gained enough funds to attract another minister. In addition to this the congregation needed to pay for significant repairs to the church. They did, however, continue to use the church until the tumbledown in October 1876.

NARROW ESCAPE FROM AN ACCIDENT.—On Sunday morning last, as the children and teachers were assembling in the Scotch Church, preparatory to commencing the Sabbath school, a large patch of the plaster ceiling, including some feet in length of the large cornice, came down with a crash. Fortunately the school had not commenced its duties before the plaster fell, otherwise some serious accident would have occurred, as it is just under where the plaster fell that a number of children sit during the school proceedings, and from the heavy nature of the cornice, if some had fallen upon any of the little one's heads, it must have resulted in a serious if not fatal occurrence.

(MM 14/10/1876)

Boag then received approval to have his St Ann's services in the Court House which continued until repairs were completed in 1878 (MM 8/8/1878).

Donald, keen to promote his Free Church services, advertised in Saturday's *Maitland Mercury* in May 1877 that he would be preaching the next day at 7pm.

NOTICE

THE REV. W.S. DONALD will PREACH in the COURT-HOUSE on SABBATH, the 13th inst.

Service at Seven p.m.

Paterson, 11th May, 1877.

(MM 12/5/1877)

The condition of the church was of great concern and in September 1877 a fund-raiser was held for the church. At this time Boag seems to have been the official minister from the Presbytery but he had fallen out with one of the major trustees, Mr William Corner. Corner was a wealthy Paterson citizen and no doubt his lack of support didn't help the fund raising. Boag, however, must have been reasonably successful and they were able to call tenders for repairs later that year.

DISTRICT NEWS.
(FROM VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

MUSICAL AND LITERARY ENTERTAINMENT

On Monday evening last, the members, assisted by several friends, of the Hinton Band of Courage Society, gave a very excellent musical and literary entertainment, at the Odd Fellows Hall, Paterson, in aid of the funds now being raised for repairing St. Ann's Presbyterian Church of this town. G.J. Frankland, Esq., J.P. presided. The hall was crammed to excess, by a highly appreciative audience. The proceedings commenced shortly after eight o'clock, by some preliminary remarks from the secretary, Mr. C. S. Boag, who intimated that the object for which the entertainment was given was to assist the funds now being raised for repairing St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, which most of those present knew had become in rather dilapidated state, for the want of chairs,—in fact it was considered unsafe to be used for public worship, and they had now to hold their religious services in the court-house. They would all agree with him that it was a laudable object for which the funds realised by the entertainment were to be devoted—the repairs of the church—and he was much pleased to see such a large assembly present. Formerly, Mr. William Corner, of this town, took the management of the affairs of the church; but lately, through some disagreement, that gentleman declined to act, and hence he (Mr. Boag) took up the matter to endeavour to get funds to get the repairs required carried out. Several gentlemen of the district had proffered their assistance to the movement, and after some consideration he (Mr. Boag) concluded that an entertainment of a musical and literary character would yield some assistance to the object in view, and being supported by those around him, had arranged for the present entertainment.

... —Votes of thanks were duly accorded to the ladies and gentlemen who had taken an active part in the proceedings of the evening; and who, as amateurs, had acquitted themselves in their various parts so efficiently, and to afford such an excellent treat to the residents of this town, as well as to lend their assistance and talent to a benevolent object... (MM 27/9/1877)

TENDERS are invited until Noon of TUESDAY, 13th inst., for COMPLETION OF REPAIRS TO ST. ANN'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, PATERSON. Specifications to be seen at my Office. The lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.

*JNO. W. PENDER, Architect,
West Maitland. (MM 10/11/1877)*



Chapter 6

John Gibson revival 1877-1882

“In the discharge of his ministerial duties ... he stands unequalled.” (MM 9/3/1882).

In early 1878 Rev John Gibson from Dungog became St Ann’s minister and held services in the Court House.

OUR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—The Rev. John Gibson, of Dungog, has assumed the pastorship of Saint Ann’s Presbyterian Church, and in such capacity preached his first sermon on Sunday evening last to a large congregation. We regret to notice that Saint Ann’s Church itself has fallen into such a dilapidated state that it is unfit to hold Divine service in—and consequently the services of late have been held in the Court House. We notice that steps are about being taken to repair this edifice at once; already tenders have been called for that purpose.
(MM 27/4/1878)

Gibson, a former missionary in Jamaica, advertised and delivered a lecture on the West Indies, charging admission, with the funds going to the repairs of St Ann’s.

DUNGOG AND PATERSON

THE REVD. JOHN GIBSON will preach in Dungog next Sabbath Morning, May 12th, and in the Court House, Paterson, at 7 in the Evening.

Also, on Monday Evening, Revd. Mr. GIBSON, formerly a Missionary in Jamaica, will deliver a LECTURE in the School of Arts, Paterson, on the “West Indies, past and present—their discovery, aboriginal inhabitants, slavery and freedom, scenery, climates, customs,” &c., &c., &c.

Admission—One Shilling; the proceeds to be devoted to repairing St. Ann’s Presbyterian Church.

Paterson.

(MM 11/5/1878)

The *Mercury* also had an article, which was received late but still printed regarding this lecture. It records that the lecture would be delivered in the Odd Fellows’ Hall. It also records that Gibson had been in Jamaica for 11 years.

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

We are glad to learn that the extensive repairs of St Ann's Presbyterian church are to be commenced immediately. Mr. Stanbridge is the contractor, and we believe he will give his best attention and ability to the work, so that St. Ann's Church may again be a credit to the town, and open for regular public worship...

Paterson, May 9.

(MM 14/5/1878)



The Paterson Oddfellows Hall prior to additions
(photo: Geoff Keppie)

Gibson continued to raise funds through lectures and had John Fraser from West Maitland speak to the people of Paterson on some ancient history.

SAINT ANN'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.- We notice that this structure is undergoing a thorough repair, and renovating process, which speaks well of the energy and perseverance of the Rev. John Gibson, of Dungog, who has just recently been appointed the pastor of the church, in conjunction with his charge of the Dungog district. It is now more than twenty years since anything previous has been done, in shape of repairing the structure, and hence it had fallen into a very dilapidated state. We learn that John Fraser, Esq., of West Maitland, will give a lecture at Paterson, on Tuesday evening, the 8th July, in aid of the funds for repairing the church,—the subject being “The Etruscan's and their tombs; or Italy 2500 years ago;” and from the renown of Mr. Fraser as a lecturer, the important subject, and the object to be benefited by the funds, no doubt the lecture will be well attended

(MM 2/7/1878).

Mr. Stephen Stanbridge of Paterson undertook the restoration of the building. Its re-opening was a major event and reported in detail in the *Mercury*. It involved a public tea.

On Monday evening a public tea meeting was held at the spacious public wharf stores, which was neatly decorated for the occasion. The tables were liberally supplied by the ladies of the congregation. About 150 persons sat down to the good things provided, and to partake of the cup which invigorates, but fails to inebriate.
(MM 8/8/1878)

After the tea a public meeting was held in the church. The renovations were not finished but the church was useable. The total cost of the work was expected to be nearly £150. The meeting was addressed by a number of speakers.

The REV. JAMES BENVIE was very glad to be there that night. He was glad to find them so comfortable, as he had heard a great deal about the Paterson, and the Paterson church, which was not very creditable. He was glad to find that the state of dilapidation had passed away, and that when the contractors had finished they would have a neat looking church. He had been sometimes irritated and made inconvenient by Mr. Gibson, when he came to Maitland, through the Paterson, at his grumbling and growling about the Paterson Church; now when he came through and passed the church he would be all smiles, and they would be all happy together. Mr. Gibson had done what he could not have done; he had done what Dr. Boag could not have done; he was worth the whole four of them together in asking money. He (the speaker) could not have done it. Unless they had got such a man they would not have got out of their difficulties. They were very helpless till he came and lifted them out of the gutter. The work of getting money was a self-sacrificing and disagreeable work. He noticed that he had received subscriptions from Sydney; he had pounced on people in Newcastle, and had dropped on a good many in Maitland. He knew when Mr. Gibson was in Maitland a few weeks ago many people were anxious not to meet him, and if they saw him at a distance they would be inclined to cross over to the other side (laughter).
(MM 8/8/1878)

Rev Gibson, clearly a fervent fund raiser, kept up the pace of activities to clear the debts and held a concert in the Odd Fellows' Hall.

PATERSON.

GRAND CONCERT.—On Tuesday evening last the concert in aid of clearing off the debt on St Ann's Presbyterian Church, took place in the Odd Fellows' Hall, and was a great success. The hall was crowded. The Rev John Gibson, the pastor of the church, presided, and opened the proceedings by stating that the object of getting up this concert was to clear their Presbyterian Church from the debt which had been incurred in repairing and renovating the building. He was happy to see that his efforts had been seconded by the many friends who had assembled from a distance to take part in the proceedings, and he was sure the audience were all heartily enjoying themselves. The singers comprised most of the members of the choir of the church at Dungog, several members of the choir of Dr. Boag's church at Hinton, as well as

the choir of St. Ann's Church, assisted by several of the choir of the Wesleyan Church of this place, as well as by a number of other friends from Maitland and other places—forming altogether a united choir of over thirty voices, which, when they sang together (and they did so on several occasions during the evening), rendered music which had very rarely, if ever, been heard previously in this town for its excellency...
(MM 12/10/1878)

Gibson continued his fund-raising in 1879 with a lecture by the Rev Mr Gardiner on Dr Guthrie and his writings. It is interesting to note that the announcement of a new Catholic chapel in Paterson was in the following article.

A LECTURE—A lecture on “Dr. Guthrie and his writings,” is to be delivered here on Tuesday evening next, the 28th instant, by the Rev. Mr. Gardiner, of Sydney, in aid of the Sabbath School funds. No doubt there will be a large attendance, as St. Ann's Presbyterian Sabbath School is the only Sabbath School in the district, and has long been conducted by a number of young people who have always aimed at advancing religious instruction amongst the young—even under many disadvantageous circumstances. Their courage is worthy of every support, whilst the repute of the rev. lecturer, as a lecturer, is most highly spoken of, and in itself should ensure a popular attendance.

NEW CATHOLIC CHAPEL.—We learn that immediate steps are about being taken to erect a Catholic chapel in this town, on the grant of land given by the Government opposite the new Public School premises, and near the Odd Fellows' Hall. (MM 23/1/1879)

Another correspondent from Paterson wrote regarding Gardiner's lecture on Guthrie. The correspondent also recorded details for the establishment of a general cemetery in Paterson. The only cemetery to date was the one behind the Church of England Church. The correspondent's rationale for the new cemetery is particularly interesting. In fact the new cemetery was not established until the 1920s. Until then Presbyterians whose families wished them to be buried in a Presbyterian cemetery were conveyed to Maitland.

PATERSON.

(From a Correspondent.)

We are glad to hear that our energetic and respected member, H.H. Brown, Esq. is applying for a general cemetery for the use of the denominations, as the Episcopalian is the only one where Presbyterians and others can bury, and it is not desirable to bury in the heart of the town, and near a place of worship, where noxious gases must arise under a burning sun. The old notion of the living worshipping with the dead around them, is being fast exploded, and sense, science, and religion are asserting their sway.

I believe the Rev. Andrew Gardiner, M.A., of the Glebe, is to lecture in St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, Paterson, on Tuesday, 28th instant, on “The Life and Work of Dr. Guthrie.” Also, at Dungog, in St. Andrew's Church, on Thursday, 30th.

The weather continues very hot, and a good thunderstorm would do good.

Jan. 18. (MM 23/1/1879)

Rev Gibson kept the interest in the parish through a lecture to the local Orange Lodge. Frank Reynolds from Tocal occupied the chair for this lecture and it would seem to have been in his capacity as a member of the Lodge.

LECTURE.- Last Monday evening the Rev. John Gibson delivered his very interesting lecture on King William the Third, Prince of Orange, and the Battle of the Boyne, in the Presbyterian church, to the members of our local Orange lodge, in commemoration of the ever memorable 12th July, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne. At intervals, the united choirs of St. Ann's church and the Wesleyan church sang several pieces of sacred music, which, with the interesting nature of the lecture, afforded a very agreeable evening's entertainment. F. Reynolds, Esq., occupied the chair, to whom, as well as the talented lecturer, a cordial vote of thanks was tendered and acknowledged. A vote of thanks was also accorded to the united choirs for their services, and the meeting separated.

Paterson, 20th July, 1879. (MM 22/7/1879)

The Sunday School thrived in 1879 with a treat at the Cintra Estate. Cintra just to the north of Paterson and adjacent to St Ann's was then owned by Mr Corner. Corner's daughters were stalwarts of the Sunday School.

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

PATERSON.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TREAT.

On Saturday last the teachers of St. Ann's Presbyterian Church Sunday School entertained their scholars at a treat, which came off in a beautiful shady nook just outside of the town, on a part of the Cintra Estate. The children, in number between sixty and seventy, mustered together as early as ten a.m., and marched on to the ground, where ample arrangements had been made for their entertainment and amusement. These treats, some years ago, were annual, but the teachers have been placed at considerable disadvantage, through there being no settled pastor of the church and these annual gatherings which were then looked upon as a regular festival amongst the entire community, had been abandoned; and the school itself has only been sustained through the self-denying interest and laborious exertions of Miss L. Corner (now Mrs. Holmes), and her sister Miss C. Corner, and one or two others.

... Foot racing was the principal sport, and the prizes were nice trinkets and various books, which were warmly competed for by numerous competitors, affording great interest and lively sport—not only amongst the youngsters, but to both old and young amongst the numerous visitors, who welcomed the ground by their presence during the afternoon. In the way of provisions, which included cakes, tarts, and all the other niceties, which our young lady friends can alone describe, a bountiful supply was provided.

... Amongst the numerous ladies and gentlemen who distinguished themselves by their strenuous exertions in affording amusement to the youngsters were Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Corner, Miss C. Corner, Dr. Faddy, Mr. E. Rye, Miss Harris, Miss Doust, Mr. J. Tucker, and others. (MM 16/10/1879)

The Sunday School continued to blossom with a concert being held in 1880 to raise funds for it.

PATERSON.

(From a Correspondent.)

A highly successful concert was given at the Oddfellows' Hall, Paterson, on Wednesday evening, by lady and gentlemen amateurs, in aid of the Presbyterian Sunday School. The hall was well filled with an intelligent and appreciative audience, who by their repeated plaudits testified their thorough enjoyment of the various songs and readings presented.

... "Within a mile o' Edinbro Town" was charmingly sung by Miss Mary Reynolds, who made her debut on this occasion before a Paterson audience. Probably the admiring glances of some of the young gentlemen amongst the audience, or possibly a recollection of past pleasurable sensations called up by the song, or perhaps both combined, caused the young lady to indulge in laughter towards the conclusion; but if so, the listeners appeared to make every allowance, as the applause which followed amply proved; and no doubt they will anxiously await the next concert, and the pleasure again of listening to the charms of a highly cultivated voice, supplemented by a grace and fascination so eminently calculated to win the favour of the public.

... A reading from Mrs. Caudie's curtain lectures, by Mr. Rodgeron, convulsed the audience with laughter; and was followed by Dr. Faddy's Mimicry of Birds and Animals, an extremely clever and amusing performance. An enjoyable evening was brought to a close with the National Anthem, and three hearty cheers for the Queen.

Friday.

(MM 26/6/1880)

Another concert was held in 1881 to clear the small debt still held by the church (MM 5/2/1881).

CONCERT, PATERSON.

A SACRED AND SECULAR CONCERT WILL BE HELD

ON 26TH INST. (ANNIVERSARY DAY), IN

ODD-FELLOWS' HALL.

Several Lady and Gentleman Amateurs from Paterson, Dungog, and Maitland, will assist.

FRONT SEATS, 1s.6d; BACK SEATS, 1s.

(MM 20/1/1881)

The Rev Gibson had revived and probably unified the Paterson congregation. During his charge the church was restored and services occurring. Funds were raised to pay off the church's debt. The congregation must have been devastated to learn of Gibson's death in 1882 at the manse in Dungog.

SUDDEN DEATH OF THE REV. JOHN GIBSON.—Early last Saturday morning the telegraph flashed the melancholy intelligence that the Rev. John Gibson, the Presbyterian minister of Dungog and Paterson, expired at the manse, at Dungog, at eleven o'clock the previous night. Though no particulars are yet to hand, the death of the

rev. gentleman must have been very sudden, as he was at Paterson, apparently in his usual good health, up to noon on Friday morning, having come up from Maitland by the mail coach that morning, in company with his daughter, who had only just arrived from Queensland on a visit to her parents, after several years absence, and the rev. gentleman had been down to meet her to accompany her up home. They left Paterson by the mail coach for Dungog shortly after noon, and we learn from a private source that he officiated in his ministerial capacity as late as eight o'clock that evening at Dungog. In the late Mr. Gibson we have lost a very zealous and faithful minister of the gospel, one, who for energy and perseverance in the discharge of his ministerial duties throughout the very extensive district over which he was called upon to officiate, stands unequalled, and his loss will be severely felt.
(MM 9/3/1882)

John Gibson (1816-1882)

John Gibson was born in London and was a member of the Congregational Tabernacle, Moorfields in 1834. He worked as a schoolmaster and missionary in the West Indies from 1838-1849. On his return to England he was invited to Australia and arrived in 1850 with his wife Mary Jane whom he had married in Jamaica in 1842.

He joined Lang's Synod of NSW and was stationed on the Clarence River (Grafton) in northern NSW. Baker (1985) p. 351 describes his work

Where he laboured strenuously for the Lord, travelling hundreds of miles every few weeks over field, ridge and flood in order to preach almost every night to keepers of herds and flocks. His reward was tragic beyond human endurance.

Within a year of his arrival with his wife, mother-in-law and five children, his wife fell ill and died. Gibson buried her himself, regretting there was no other ordained brother in the district whom he felt he could ask to perform the service.

Following this three of his sons also died and his mother-in-law became senile and unable to care for the family. Gibson left Grafton for Sydney where he stayed with the Langs for a period before service in Balmain.

Gibson later worked for the Congregational Church in Newcastle and later an unassociated congregation at Campbelltown. In 1866 he was licensed to the Presbyterian Church of NSW and served in Yass 1867-73 and then in Dungog-Stroud 1874-82.

Gibson's life was filled with tragedy and uncertainty. The survival of St Ann's during the late 1870s can be attributed to Gibson's zeal and commitment. Gibson died at Dungog and is buried in Dungog Presbyterian Cemetery.

References:

Baker (1985); Ward & Prentis (2001).



Rev Gibson's grave, Dungog Cemetery.
(photo: Cameron Archer)



Headstone detail for Rev Gibson's grave
(photo: Cameron Archer)



Chapter 7

More years of uncertainty and near demolition 1883-1903

Services, once again, lapsed until Dungog's new minister, Rev David Baird, was appointed.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Since the decease of the late Rev. John Gibson, of Dungog, this church has been nearly shut up altogether and we have been wondering whether this commodious building would again become the habitation of pigeons and the nesting place of swallows. But we are glad to learn that our Presbyterian residents are about to take steps to have services held occasionally. Rev. Mr. Baird, the newly appointed minister at Dungog, has, we understand, charge of this church, and is expected to pay us a visit ere long.
(MM 28/9/1882)

Baird's ministry created some controversy, particularly when he decided to have services in the evenings during the week. The *Mercury* correspondent lamented as to the length of his services and the amount of standing up and sitting down, particularly for those after a hard day's work and a long walk.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—We are glad to notice that our fine Presbyterian Church is to be made useful once more, after being entirely closed for some considerable time. In accordance with an advertisement, the Rev. Mr. Baird conducted in the church last Monday eve week. And notwithstanding that it is difficult for many country people to attend service of a week night, there was a fair congregation. Mr. Baird delivered a very interesting discourse, and all appeared interested in the service throughout—which seemed new to nearly everybody, as many appeared puzzled to know when to sit down and when to stand in different parts of the service. With all due respect to our reverend friend, we would suggest that when he conducts services here on week nights in future, it would be advisable, if he wishes to have full pews in the place of empty ones, to simplify and shorten the service, as a long service and much moving up and down is not pleasant after a hard day's work, and perhaps a long walk, especially as summer approaches. The weariness of our physical nature has a

great effect upon our minds; hence if a preacher wishes to do his congregation good, he must avoid wearying them as much as possible.

... Mr. Baird announced that service would be again held next Monday evening, and it is to be hoped that these services will be increasingly successful. In conclusion we may mention that another evening of the week would be more convenient, as Monday evenings are the evenings on which our local Good Templar Lodge meets and in the natural course of things it is very inconvenient to our friends of the I.O.G.T. (MM 6/9/1883)

The Paterson Methodist Church was located further to the north from St Ann's and from all reports was quite a small building. Little is known of its operation, apart from it being serviced by the Rev James Woolnough of East Maitland. An arrangement was made for the Rev Woolnough to conduct Methodist services in St. Ann's on Sunday afternoons. This had the agreement of Rev Baird and the Paterson Presbyterian congregation.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON SERVICE.—It will be observed by an advertisement appearing elsewhere that through the kind permission of the Rev. D. Baird, of Dungog, and Presbyterian friends here, the Rev. James Woolnough, of East Maitland, will (D.V.) conduct service in the Presbyterian Church of this town next Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock. The Wesleyan Church, or chapel as it is commonly called here, is very awkwardly and inconveniently situated, and appears to have been built in the days of small things as its accommodation is very limited, indeed, far too limited for the congregation that a preacher like Mr. Woolnough is likely to attract in a more favorable position. Hence the idea of obtaining the use of the Presbyterian Church on the occasion of his Sunday visits which was readily acceded to by Mr. Baird and others concerned, and shows a very generous and praiseworthy spirit on their part. The time of service is convenient, and it is to be hoped that it will be taken advantage of by the people generally. The Rev. Mr. Woolnough is a preacher of exceptional ability and we feel confident that those who hear him once will not lack the desire to hear him again and again. And if his eloquent preaching has the same effect here as it has in other places the accommodation of this church will be nothing too large. (MM 29/9/1883)

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—As intimated in our last, the Rev. J. Woolnough conducted divine service in this church last Sunday afternoon week. The afternoon was grandly fine, and a good congregation assembled. We should think there were between 70 and 80 present. The congregation appeared interested in the service throughout. Mr. Woolnough has a very fluent delivery, and his discourse, in which he very lucidly enforced some very beneficial lessons, was listened to with rapt attention from introduction to application. This church has a very disagreeable ring in it, which, owing to the rev. gentleman's clear penetrating voice, had rather an unpleasant effect both for himself and hearers. We understand that these services are to be held once a month; the next falls on the 28th instant. The Rev. Dr. Baird continues to hold week night services fortnightly, and is favoured with very fair congregations, of which he is well worthy. (MM 11/10/1883)

Baird's evening services during the week did not seem to appeal to his parishioners. Arrangements were made in 1884 for Sunday afternoon services to occur fortnightly.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—We have been informed that Presbyterian services are shortly to be held here on Sunday afternoons fortnightly. It seems that the Revs. Messrs. Baird and Lamont, of Dungog and East Maitland respectively, are going to try to manage the services alternately.

(MM 29/3/1884)

Methodist Church in Paterson

The Methodist Church was established in Maitland in 1840. Rev J. Innes and Rev F Lewis preached in the Paterson Valley in the 1840s. Farmer and lay preacher Silas Gill of Woodville commenced services in local houses (MM 7/1/1933).

In 1862 a brick chapel was built north west of St Ann's on land subject to flooding (MM 24/10/1949). Few details are known of its operation and subsequent demise. In 1883 services were held in St Ann's because of the size limitations of the chapel.

A Methodist chapel was also built on the Upper Allyn, but was destroyed by the 1875 flood. It was located adjacent to the Allyn River and nearby property 'Ravenscroft' (see photo of location on page 37). This facility was also used by the Presbyterians.



Paterson's Wesleyan chapel north of St Ann's. The photo also shows flour mills and activity on Commercial Road, possibly taken in the 1870s (photo: Jack Sullivan collection)

Baird's ministry clearly did not inspire his existing or potential Paterson congregation. In the 1890s the church virtually went into recess and three articles appeared in the *Maitland Mercury* in 1893 where Baird was seeking trustees through advertised public meetings. St. Ann's was going through its most troubled and challenging time.

The Rev. D. Baird of Dungog drove over on Wednesday to hold a meeting according to advertisement in our Presbyterian Church, for the purpose of electing trustees for this building, which sadly needs some attention, but no one appeared on the scene, so that the reverend gentleman had to turn homewards without accomplishing anything, though he had the satisfaction of knowing he had fulfilled his duty. This church (St. Ann's) is a substantial old building and contains a very beautiful harmonium, and it seems a pity that it should be allowed to remain in its present unused neglected condition.

(MM 28/1/1893)

DISTRICT NEWS.

(FROM OUR VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS.)

The Rev. Clive Yarrington conducted a mission service in St. Paul's Church last Tuesday evening. There was a very fair congregation present, and the remarks of the rev. gentleman were listened to with close attention. The Rev. J.A. Waddell will conduct a gospel service in the Oddfellows' Hall on Wednesday evening next. It seems a pity to think that our Presbyterian Church still remains closed. Although a comfortable and commodious structure, with a good instrument, it is now a long time since it has been in use.

(MM 1/7/1893)

A meeting of the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church of Paterson has been called for 12 o'clock, Monday, the 14th August, for the purpose of electing trustees for the Church. It is much to be regretted that our residents take so little interest in this church. A good substantial building, with a beautiful harmonium, has been given over to the church mice and the decay of years, for the want of little necessary care and attention. The Rev. David Baird, of Dungog, called a meeting in Paterson last year to consider the matter of trustees, but no one appeared at the time and place of meeting, though Mr. Baird had to travel from Dungog to keep the appointed hour.

(MM 12/8/1893)

The meeting called for Monday by the Rev. D. Baird, of Dungog, in reference to the election of trustees for the Presbyterian Church at Paterson, met with a similar fate to the one called for last year, no one turning up to meet the rev. gentleman at the time and place arranged for.

(MM 19/8/1893)

The 1890s were a period of drought and financial recession. This would not have helped the Presbyterian cause at Paterson, however, Baird's inability to inspire his congregation would have been reason enough for many to attend another Protestant church in the district, or not attend church at all. By 1897 the *Mercury* reported St Ann's was once again in disrepair.

*DISTRICT NEWS.
(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.)
PATERSON.*

We hear that the Presbyterian Church (St. Ann's), which has fallen into a very dilapidated condition from disuse, is to be thoroughly done up, and occasional services there will be arranged for. The Rev. D. Baird from Dungog will probably conduct divine worship in this building when the repairs are completed. (MM 11/9/1897)

The church subsequently closed for a period.

In 1904 St Ann's was placed under West Maitland Sessions, Scots. It was described in the *Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church* (Cameron 1905 p. 276-277) as "... a substantial structure, was erected, and, although fallen into disrepair, is still standing... The attendance at services is good and it is hoped that a new church will soon be erected."

The transfer of St Ann's to the Scots Session, West Maitland may have been a turning point in its operation. The Rev D. Davis of Hinton was then involved in the administration of St Ann's. Apparently, the idea was to demolish it and build a new church. Davis called tenders for its demolition and he received a tender from George Bridger of Paterson, a builder.

*Paterson
March 28th 1905
To
The Rev. D. W. Davis*

Dear Sir,

I will give you a tender for taking down the Presbyterian Church at Paterson.

I will take down all wood & place in lots to suit & for sale or other purpose. Take down all bricks & clean them from mortar & place in most convenient part of Church ground, remove all timber from inside the Church & place in lots & will take all brick work level with the ground only for the sum of Thirty five Pounds. (£35.0.0).

*George Bridger
Builder*

St Ann's was at a crossroads. Fortunately, Bridger's price must have been too high or Davis and his committee thought again. St Ann's fortunately was not demolished.

A local church committee was formed under the secretarialship of E.J. Cann in 1905. Cann wrote to Davis seeking details on the operation of St Ann's.

*Paterson
August 26th 1905
The Revd. D. Davis
Hinton.*

Dear Sir,

It will no doubt be gratifying to you to learn that at last a movement has been made to have St. Ann's Presbyterian Church at Paterson put into repair, with the intention of having it open for Service. A Committee has been formed here, to look after the affairs of the Church, & judging by the zeal displayed by the members of the same, I

have every hope, that before long, the old Church will be re-opened & have a good number of adherents.

At a meeting of the Committee on Thursday evening last, I was instructed to communicate with you, & ascertain the amount of the Balance standing to the Credit of the Church, and to ask you to kindly arrange for its transference from the Trustees to the present Committee. We also understand that the landed property, adjacent and belonging to the Church has been leased. We would feel obliged if you would supply us with particulars of the Same, and any other matter, concerning the Church, which is in your power to give.

As it is now so many years since the Church had a local governing body, we are rather ignorant of its affairs. However, we trust that you will be able to enlighten us, re the matters previously mentioned, at your earliest convenience.

Yours Ffy.

E.J. Cann

Hon. Sec. St. Ann's Church Committee.

David Baird (1855-1935)

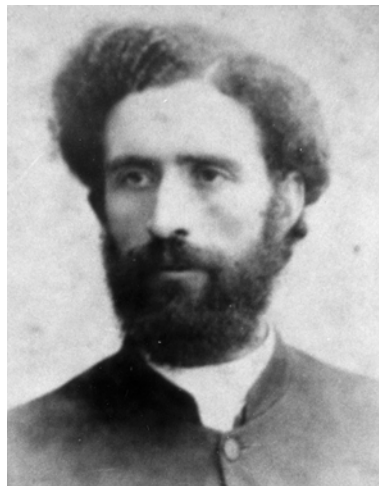
David Baird was born at Darvel, Ayrshire and attended Darvel School and the University of Glasgow. In 1881 he was licensed by the Presbytery of Irvine. In 1882 he married Margaret Shaw and had one daughter and some sons.

He arrived in Australia in 1882 and was appointed to the Parish of Dungog-Stroud in 1883 where he served until 1900. He then moved to Lithgow until 1906 and completed his ministry at Pitt Town-Ebenezer when he retired in 1930.

Some records we have of Baird's service at Paterson reflect poorly on him. But when we read the history of the Dungog Parish he seems to have had a most successful and active ministry, including construction of a church at Stroud in 1887 as well as Union churches at Bandon Grove, Big Creek, Monkerai and Fosterton.

It seems that the Paterson congregation did not inspire Baird, nor he them.

References: Cameron (1905); White (1951); Ward and Prentis (2001).



The Rev David Baird
(photo: Ferguson Library)

Robert Logan—Church Benefactor

Robert Logan was born in the town of Firth, Stirlingshire, Scotland in 1820. He came to the colony with his father, mother, five brothers and two sisters in 1841, settling initially at West Maitland. Some years later the family left there and went to Queensland taking up runs on the Darling Downs. Logan was very successful and became a wealthy man. He left the Darling Downs and returned to Maitland and purchased *Torryburn* on the Allyn river in 1872. Logan's success as a pastoralist and businessman continued and his wealth increased. At the time of his death he also owned *Campsie* and *Cader Idris*.

He donated £10 for the repairs to St Ann's in 1878 but did not attend the re-opening service. He had been out riding all afternoon and felt too tired (*MM* 8/8/1878)

Logan took no part in public affairs but was generous to the community. Robert Logan died on September 18, 1896 at the residence of Mrs Peter Logan, West Maitland. His funeral was officiated by Presbyterian Minister Rev J Benvie and was attended by many leading people from the district, including the then Chief Secretary, the Hon J N Bruncker (*MWM* 26/9/1896). Logan's wife predeceased him in 1875 (*MM* 30/11/1875).

Logan left a large estate with instructions to provide for various relatives (£10,600), Maitland Hospital (£200), Benevolent Society (£200), Presbyterian Widows and Orphans Fund (£250), Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund (£250). After providing for all of these needs the residue of his estate was to be given to the Presbyterian Church Extension Committee. By 1905 £22,500 had been received by the church, who founded the Logan Bequest (Cameron 1905 p. 105). These funds were to provide for the founding of bush parishes.

Torryburn was purchased from his estate in 1898 by Charles Kinniard Mackellar, Sydney surgeon and physician and father of poet Dorothea Mackellar.

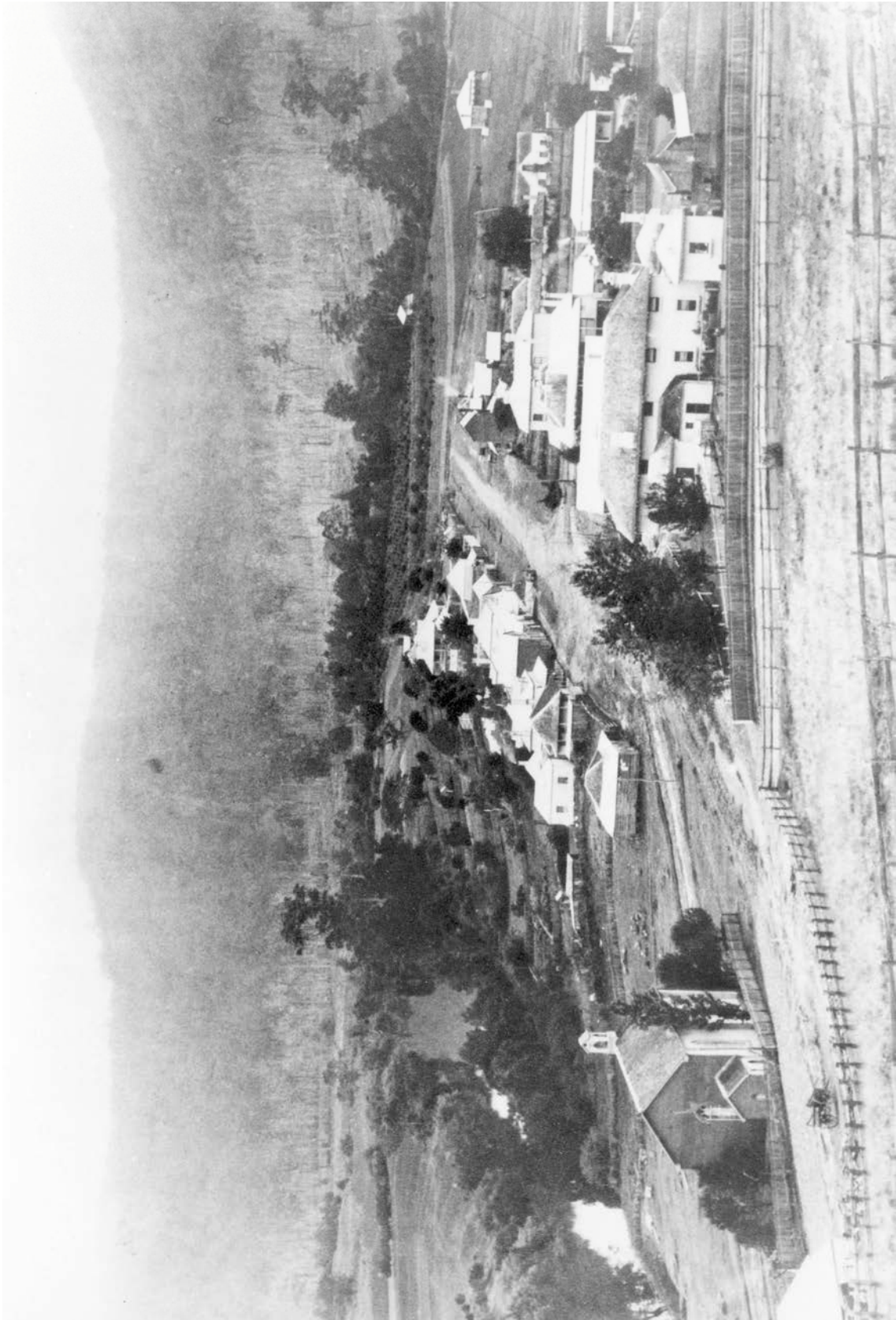
References:

Anderson, V (1997) *The Dorothea Mackellar My Country Paterson Valley Connection*, Paterson Historical Society, Paterson.

Cameron (1905).



Memorial plaque in Scots Kirk Maitland
(photo: Cameron Archer)



View of Paterson and St Ann's prior to the construction of the railway line in 1911. Note the belltower and bell on St Ann's (photo: the collection of Mrs E Boxer)



Chapter 8

Stuart McCook and others - restoration and revival 1904-1938

“...the sound of praise is once again heard within her walls”
(MM 11/6/1910)

With Paterson now belonging to the parish of Scots Church, West Maitland, it once more enjoyed a regular ministry, commencing with the arrival of the Rev Stuart McCook in 1904. McCook served the parish from 1904 to 1923 but there are few details of his ministry. He, however, clearly revived the congregation and took St Ann's into the 20th century.

McCook must have got things moving as tenders were let for renovations to the church in early 1906.

PATERSON.

Tenders have been let and secured by Mr. Thompson, contractor, West Maitland, for the renovating of the Presbyterian Church, Paterson. Mr. Thompson is starting work at once, and services will be held in the old church within a short space of time...

(MM 17/3/1906)

By mid-1906 McCook had regular services and a Sunday School in operation. St Ann's was also used by the Methodists once a quarter.

PATERSON.

The committee of management of St. Ann's Church (Presbyterian) met on Tuesday evening last. Correspondence was received from secretary of General Trustees re church property, also lease and a tender was accepted for church cleaning.

It is now the intention of Rev. A.S. McCook, B.A., to hold service every Sabbath day in the year, with the exception of one each quarter, on which days the Methodists have been allowed the use of the church to hold service. A Sunday school, under the superintendence of Mr. Graham, is now opened and has a good attendance. The new organ is expected to arrive next week and will cost £40. A choir has been formed, with a good number of members, practice for which is held weekly.

July 3.

(MM 4/7/1906)

McCook's ministry was the longest in the history of St Ann's, extending from 1904 to 1923. Apparently, the church re-opened for services in 1906 and the 4th anniversary of this re-opening and the 70th anniversary of the construction of the church were celebrated in 1910. The article celebrating the anniversary included a history of St Ann's, which was recorded in the *Mercury* (see Appendix 2).

The landscape around St Ann's changed dramatically when the railway line went through Paterson in 1911. The union or market building was virtually in the path of the railway and that building was demolished for the passage of the new line. A large railway bridge was built just to the north-east of the church and the important river port terminus to the east of the church was soon to become idle, replaced by rail transport. Also to close around this time was the Paterson Sawmill which had been run by Wilson and Keppie for many years on land below the Presbyterian Church. The sawmill equipment was auctioned in 1912 and the building in 1915.

AUCTION SALE.

PATERSON SAWMILL.

SATURDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 1912, AT 3 P.M.

SWAN, MURRAY, & HAIN have received instructions to sell by auction, on the premises, at Paterson, on SATURDAY, 16th INST., at 3 p.m.

THE PATERSON SAWMILL, consisting of 16 HORSE-POWER ENGINE.

BOILER.

BREAKING-DOWN FRAME SAW.

RIPPING-UP BENCH.

SAWS.

BELTING, and other accessories.

Also,

BUILDINGS, conveniently situated, for carrying on lucrative business.

No reserve.

Terms cash.

(MM 8/11/1912)

Paterson Saw Mill Building

WILSON & KEPPIE have received instructions from the Trustees St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, to sell by auction on the Ground, NEXT TUESDAY, 6th JULY, at Three o'clock,

THE PATERSON SAWMILL BUILDING

Terms cash.

(MM 3/7/1915)

An early photograph of the village on page 72 shows a small bell tower on the eastern end of St. Ann's. This has been removed and the bell is now on a free standing structure to the north-west of the church. If one examines the bell closely, cracks can be seen in it. According to Stan Fry, these appeared following the night of Armistice Day WWI. There was much jubilation in the village and church bells were rung. The St Ann's bell was rung vigorously, causing the cracks.

McCook's ministry continued to 1923. We have no record of McCook's farewells from the church but he must have been effective and popular to have the parish operate in a dynamic fashion after the doldrums of the 1890s, prior to his arrival. The next minister was the Rev William Henderson Bradley who served the congregation until 1930, followed by Rev Hilton Thomas until 1938.

There is some evidence to suggest that Paterson was for a period served by the East Maitland parish. Unfortunately, records for the 20th century are very limited and make it difficult to be clear regarding the full operation of Paterson especially in the first half of the century. Don Goudie (pers. com.), son of the Rev James Goudie, one-time minister in East Maitland, recalls the links between East Maitland and Paterson. This linkage was quite convenient until the 1951 flood removed direct access from East Maitland to Largs via the Pitnacree Bridge.

A copy of Church Notes of the Hinton-Morpeth Charge of the church for May 1926 has Paterson linked to this parish. The churches covered were Hinton, Morpeth, Clarence Town, Paterson, Seaham and Raymond Terrace. The minister was Rev James Ford, BA, BD, who was based at the Manse, Hinton.

Services for May were as follows:

- 2. Clarence Town, 11 a.m. Paterson, 3 p.m. Hinton, 7.15 p.m.*
- 9. Seaham, 11 a.m. Paterson, 3 p.m. Morpeth 7.15 p.m.*
- 16. Hinton, 11 a.m. Raymond Terrace, 3 p.m. Morpeth, 7.15 p.m.*
- 23. Seaham, 11 a.m. Morpeth, 3 p.m. Paterson, 7.30 p.m.*
- 30. Clarence Town, 11 a.m. Hinton, 7.15 p.m.*

The Notes describe a recent Anzac Day service and other events:

PATERSON

Anzac Day was celebrated in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday 25th April, when there was a very large congregation present at the evening service.

The Church was beautifully decorated with flowers, and a large 'Union Jack' flag enveloped the pulpit. Roses, ferns, rosemary and fine wreaths were placed on the table, and in the window recesses. The hymns were appropriate and altogether it was an inspiring occasion.

The lecture of the Rev. Sydney Cox, is to be given on Friday the 30th April. It is entitled 'Acres of Diamonds'.

Holy Communion will be observed on Sunday, 2nd May, at the afternoon service.

A cordial welcome is given to Dr. and Mrs. Thomson into our district and Church.

No other records have been found to explain why St Ann's was part of the Morpeth-Hinton parish in 1926, when other sources indicate that it was part of the Maitland parish.

During some of the period of Rev Thomas's incumbency at Scots (1930-38) services were held at St Ann's on a monthly basis. Rev Thomas's period of service was marked by a farewell sermon in August 1838.

PATERSON.

Farewell to Rev. Hilton Thomas

PATERSON, Wednesday.

The Rev. Hilton Thomas visited the Presbyterian Church and preached his farewell sermon. He chose as his text "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."

After the service, Mr. Lucock of the Paterson parish, made reference to the day's text and then spoke of the work Mr. Thomas had done whilst in the Paterson parish. He said he had shown by his life as an example, that the text he had chosen was a living motto which he, himself, followed.

When asked to come to Paterson to conduct a service, Mr. Thomas had always given of his time and service, although he had had three services on a Sunday. The references made to Mr. Thomas at the Maitland farewell on the previous Tuesday showed the esteem in which he was held in that district.

Mrs. Williams asked the Rev. and Mrs. Thomas to accept a water set as a token of gratitude from the Paterson people.

Mrs. Whybin handed a fragrant posy made by Miss Cann, to Mrs. Thomas.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas thanked the congregation for the gift and concluded by saying it had always been a pleasure for them to visit Paterson.

Solos were rendered by Mrs. Williams and Miss McInnes, after which the congregation informally spoke with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas.

(MM 24/8/1938)

Adam Stuart McCook, BA (1872-1952)

Stuart McCook was born in 1872 at Penrith, NSW. His parents were farmers and second generation Australians, with forebears originally from Ulster. McCook attended St Mary's Public School and then Sydney High School. He matriculated in 1892 to the University of Sydney with a three-year University bursary and a four-year scholarship for St Andrew's College. In 1895 he graduated BA and entered the Theological Hall at St Andrew's and stayed for three years, being licensed and ordained by the Sydney Presbytery in 1897. He served at Gunnedah and later Warren 1897-1904, West Maitland 1904-1923, Albury 1923-1933.

He served as Moderator in 1922.

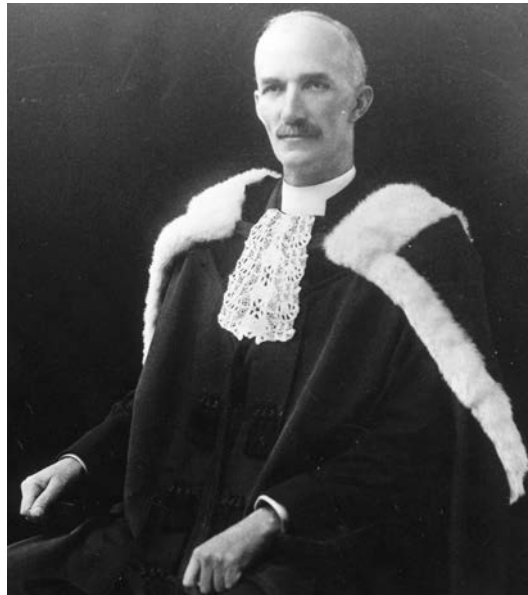
During his Maitland service McCook was appointed as the Presbyterian Chaplain to the 9th Brigade and was attached to the 34th Battalion during World War I. He saw service in various theatres of war in France and later ministered to wounded Australian soldiers in hospitals in London and district.

In 1938 he was given the status of Minister Emeritus giving another ten years of service to the church.

References:

Blue Book (1952) p. 25-26.

The Messenger June 2, 1922.



The Rev Stuart McCook
(photo: Ferguson Library)

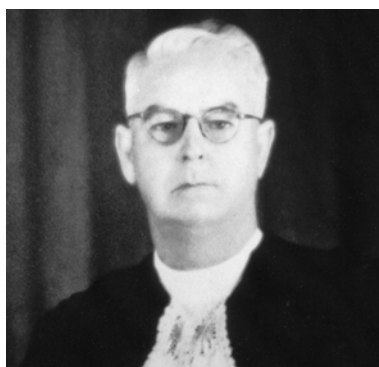
Hilton Edgar Thomas (1887-1947)

Hilton Thomas was born in 1887 at Woodburn on the Richmond River, NSW. He attended Scots College and matriculated to the University of Sydney where he studied Arts and later at the Theological Hall of St Andrew's College. He served at Berrigan 1915-1918, Penrith 1919-20, Campsie 1920-27, Muswellbrook 1927-30, West Maitland 1930-38 and Murrumburrah-Harden 1938-1947. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1946. He married the daughter of Mr and Mrs W J Croker of Quirindi. Their son Ronal McLaren Thomas also became a minister.

Rev Thomas died suddenly while still minister of the Parish of Murrumburrah-Harden.

Reference:

Blue book (1948) p. 26; *The Messenger* 22 May 1946.



The Rev Hilton Thomas
(photo: Ferguson Library)

William Henderson Bradley (1872-1943)

William Bradley was the son of Rev. William Bradley of Seaman's Mission, Sydney. He was trained at the Camden Theological College and ordained to the ministry of the Rockdale Congregational Church in 1893. He later joined the Presbyterian Church, serving at Orange, Narranderra, Guyra, Leura, Mosman, Muswellbrook, West Maitland, Five Dock and Quirindi.

Bradley achieved much in his ministry, with improvements made to his various parishes. Apparently he suffered some 'physical infirmity for which change was essential.' (Blue Book, 1944)

Bradley was survived by his wife and son.

Reference:

Blue Book (1944)



Chapter 9

St Ann's since 1938

In 1938 St. Ann's became part of the Paterson-Clarence Town Home Mission Station. This meant that the church was staffed by student ministers as part of their training.

The first student was P E Lucock who later became a member and Speaker of the House of Representatives. In 1961 St. Ann's became part of Largs–Morpeth rather than linked to Clarence Town.

SPECIAL SERVICE AT PATERSON

Federal Member for Lyne (Rev. P.E. Lucock) was the preacher at a special service in St. Ann's, Paterson, on Thursday night.

The service marked the completion of the link between Paterson and Clarence Town Presbyterian Churches.

The Interim Moderator (Rev. R.A. Caldwell, St. Stephen's, East Maitland) conducted the service with the assistance of Rev. James Bruce, of St. Andrew's, Dungog.

Messrs. Lucock, Bruce and Caldwell were all student Ministers at Paterson.

The Paterson-Clarence Town Mission Station was formed in 1939 by grouping the congregation of Paterson, Clarence Town and Seaham.

Hinton and Raymond Terrace were added in later years. Rev. P. Lucock was the first Home Missionary appointed.

*From December 1, Paterson will be linked with Largs and Morpeth.
(MM 2/12/1961)*

This arrangement continued until 1972 when St. Ann's again became part of the Parish of Scots Maitland.

The first mode of transport for the student ministers was a BSA motorbike. Apparently, this was not well accepted and cars were subsequently supplied. At first some of these were gifts from Sydney but in latter years they were purchased locally. Ken Crouch of Paterson had the job of maintaining these vehicles which at times was not a particularly satisfying task.

The student ministers lodged with the Misses Cann at 5 King Street, now the home of Mr. & Mrs. Eric Clements, and also with the McGill family.



Hatherleigh, 5 King St Paterson, former home of Presbyterians Misses Cann and venue for fetes and lodging for visiting clergy, now home of Mr and Mrs Eric Clements.
(photo: Brian Walsh)

The Misses Cann ran the village's general store and were great supporters of St. Ann's. Miss Edith Martin was their housekeeper and cook and she provided meals for the student ministers. Each year a garden fete was held at the Misses Cann's home and Miss Martin's scones were held in high repute by all concerned. This fete was a valuable source of income for the church.

Members of the church were most optimistic about the future and saw a need for a church hall. The Presbyterian Church had a recreation hall at the former Greta Army Camp and there was no longer a use for it there. Initially it was given to Speers Point Church and they had partly dismantled it. For some reason that initiative was not pursued and the hall was available for Paterson. The hall was of considerable size with a kitchen incorporated.

During 1961 parishioners travelled to Greta every Saturday and carefully dismantled this structure, numbering and coding the components so that they could then re-assemble it. Stan Fry's truck was used to transport it back to St. Ann's where a site had been prepared. Parishioners worked hard at re-assembling it, putting down piers, steps, the floor, and then the walls. Before the roof could be fixed, a willy-willy came across the river and up the slope, demolishing the partly built hall in its path. The damage was so extreme that there was no chance of repair. The remnants were sold, with the funds being used for church repairs.

The congregation has always been mindful of the physical condition of the building. During WWII a high wind peeled back some of the roof on the south-western corner. The weakness was due to white ants finding their way to the roof timbers. White ants struck again in the floor and floor timbers were replaced using tallowwood timbers from a Dungog property owned by Peter Dixon whose father was a stalwart of St. Ann's. In fact, it was Bob Dixon who was the driving force behind the establishment of Paterson parish as a Home Mission Station.

In the 1950s, Mrs. Henwood of Paterson left £200 for the church's interior to be painted.

A glance through the records of St. Ann's shows the re-occurrence of many names. These include Bevan, Cann, Corner, Crouch, Dixon, Fry, Hestelow, Lawrie, McGill, McInnes, Rumbel, Smith, Upton and Williams. A family's attendance at St. Ann's was often through a marriage link rather than a generational link. In these cases one partner may have had a strong Presbyterian link but the other may have come from Methodist or Church of England families.

The Largs-Paterson Presbyterian Women's Association has also been quite active in the late 20th century. The parish has had an active Presbyterian Fellowship Association as well.

St Ann's—the Building

St Ann's foundations rest on solid rock, the base of the Mt Johnston Range which is part of the high ground adjacent to the Paterson River. Just below St Ann's is the site of the first wharf in Paterson which serviced the Upper Paterson Valley and areas beyond for many years. St Ann's has never moved or cracked in its entire 160-year history.

The first roof was shingled in 1842 and these lasted until 1864 when tenders were called to re-shingle. (*MM* 6/8/1864).

The building was originally red brick and was described as such by a correspondent of the *Town and Country Journal* in 1871. (*T&C* 23/12/1871). According to this article the small Wesleyan church just to the north of St Ann's was also brick.

A photograph of the village before or around 1900 shows St Ann's as unpainted brick with the belltower on the eastern end of the gable. The belltower was later removed and the bell was placed on a pole at the north-western corner of the church. It has since been transferred to a structure at the entry to the church dedicated to the memory of long-serving Elder, the late Ken Crouch.

The photograph also shows the western window being glass. This has since been bricked up. The roof in this photograph seems to be still shingled so it was probably first roofed with iron when restored in the early 20th century. This iron was replaced during renovations in the late 1980s.

The central aisle of the church is sandstone flagging which has been covered by carpet. The most dominant element of the interior of St Ann's is the central and high pulpit, consistent with the Presbyterian practice of focusing on the minister's delivery of the sermon.

Since 1972, St Ann's has been part of the Parish of Scots, Maitland. The most recent restoration has been undertaken during the incumbency of Rev Dr. Paul Logan who provided the parish with a ministry of strength and vision. Recent works have included a new roof and downpipes, ceiling repairs, interior painting, improved underfloor aeration, aisle repairs, carpeting and other general repairs

Long serving parishioner Ken Crouch (1913-1997) is commemorated in the new structure for the bell constructed in his memory. Ken and his wife Heather were long-time worshippers at St Ann's. Ken was Church Treasurer for over 30 years and an Elder for 23 years.

The 150th anniversary was not only the celebration of a church building - it was more the marking of 150 years of perseverance against many odds of the Presbyterian congregation of Paterson. After reading this history, I am sure you will agree that it has been 150 years of hard work, prayer and hope that has sustained St Ann's.

Church and State

The relationship between church and state has been, and still is, a source of ongoing debate in the government of any country. Many Presbyterians wanted to be separate from the state so that they could act independently and not be beholden to the state for revenue or any particular services.

When one views this debate and the outcomes of 180 years of ferment a number of ironies emerge.

The Presbyterian Manse and School in Free Church Street, Maitland still stands today as a monument to the ministry and educational achievements of Rev McIntyre. It has particular social significance due to its association with the riot in 1850 involving Catholicism. It is ironic that the building is now owned and operated as a school by the



Rev McIntyre's manse and school of the 1850s, now part of Maitland's Catholic All Saints College (photo: Brian Walsh)



Tocal Chapel (photo: Dean Morris)

Catholic Church and its protection from demolition was only through state intervention and some financial support from the NSW Heritage Council.

The large *Tocal* Estate within the Parish of Paterson was owned for many years by the Alexander family. CB Alexander died in 1947 bequeathing his property to any Protestant organisation able to establish training homes for children. The Presbyterian Church took up this opportunity and established the C B Alexander Presbyterian Agricultural College in 1965 under the guidance of the then Law Agent for the Presbyterian Church, E A Hunt. While the church did not invest its own money in the fledgling college it was established under its auspices and it appointed the Rev Colin Ford as its first Principal. By the late 1960s it was clear that the College would not be self-sufficient and unless a source of finance could be found it could face closure. In 1970 the state assumed control of the College and it became the C B Alexander Agricultural College run by the NSW Department of Agriculture.

Charles Haxton, TH. Grad (1908-1976)

Charles Haxton was born in Stirling, Scotland as the youngest of eight children. He trained in electrical engineering and at the age of 21 emigrated to Australia to join one of his sisters who lived in Sydney. For a period he worked for the Dunlop Rubber Company and then trained at St Andrew's Theological College. He was ordained when aged 30.

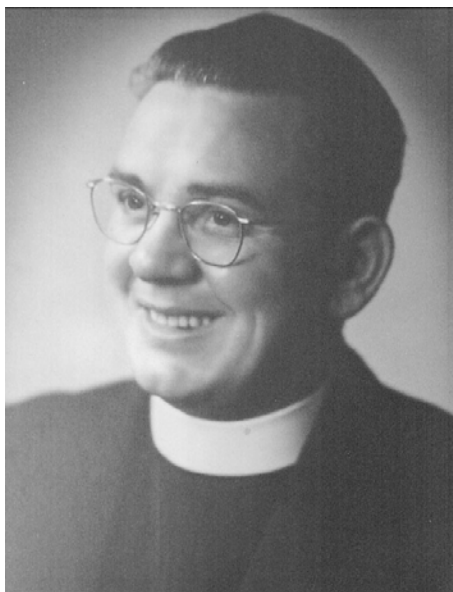
His ministry included Clunes-Dunoon 1938-1940; Lower Manning (Taree) 1940-1943; Thornleigh-Normanhurst 1943-1944; Coraki-Woodburn 1944-1949; Cessnock 1949-1952; Maitland 1952-1974.

He married Johanna Mullan, also youngest of eight, who had come to Australia from Scotland aged three. Two of Johanna's brothers became Presbyterian Ministers and a nephew, Rev James Mullan became Moderator-General of Australia. Charles and Johanna had two boys, David and Ian.

Reference:

Blue Book (1977)

Mr David Haxton (pers. comm.)



Rev Charles Haxton
(photo: David Haxton)

Hendrik Boer TH. Grad. (1929-

Hendrik Boer was born in the Netherlands, and was baptised in the Reformed Church of Amsterdam South, of which he later became a communicant member.*

He emigrated to Australia in 1954 and settled in Queensland, where he worked for General Motors Holden, Brisbane.

He moved to Geelong (Vic.) in 1956, to study there, part-time, at the then recently established Reformed Theological College.

In 1961 he went to Blacktown, NSW where he worked for a year as an assistant minister in the Reformed Church of that place. In 1962 he was transferred to Orange, he completed his theological studies, gaining his Th.Grad** and was ordained and inducted in the following year – April 1963.

His next parish was Canberra where he worked from 1968-1970.

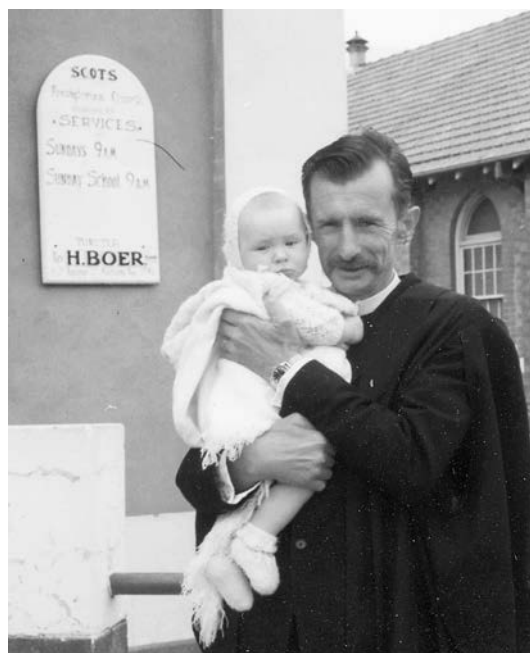
In 1970 he joined the Presbyterian Church in NSW, ministered in Braidwood – 1970, and in Putney – 1971, during which latter period he undertook supplementary studies at St Andrew's College, University of Sydney.

Since then Rev Boer has served the Presbyterian church of respectively Tumbarumba (1972-1975), Maitland (1975-1983), Terrigal (1983-1989) and Gloucester (1989-1992). He is now a minister emeritus and lives on the Central Coast.

Mr and Mrs Boer have five children. Two of their sons entered the Presbyterian ministry. One of these has since taken up an academic position in the field of biblical studies.

* The Reformed Church of Amsterdam South is one of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Together these form the large denomination which resulted from the great 19th century secession from the 'established' church. Note that the name of this denomination is in a plural form: 'Reformed Churches'.

**'Th. Grad.' stands for 'Theological Graduate'.



Rev Boer at the baptism of Elizabeth Stevenson, October 1978, Scots Kirk, Maitland (photo: Catherine Boer)

Paul Gibson Logan, B.A., D.Min., Dip.Ed.Stud., M.A.C.E. (1939-)

Paul Logan was born at Gosford. He attended Cleveland Street Boys' High School and then undertook a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney, graduating in 1964. He then studied at the United Faculty of Theology, St. Andrew's College, University of Sydney. During this time he was a Student Assistant at St James, Burwood (1963); Gunnedah (1964-1965); Granville (1965-1968).

He was ordained at Wagga Wagga in 1968 and served at Tumbarumba (1968-1971); Como (1971-1973); Beacon Hill-Narraweena (1973-1984); Maitland (1984-1994); North Sydney (1994-). During his incumbency at Maitland extensive restoration was undertaken on St. Ann's, Paterson at an estimated cost of \$45,000. In 1990 he was awarded a Doctor of Ministry from San Francisco Theological Seminary, USA.

Rev Dr Logan has served as Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia since 1991 and of the NSW Assembly since 1995. He has been Moderator of various Presbyteries and undertaken a range of other local, state, national and in some cases international roles within the church.

Rev Dr Logan is married to Margaret and has two children.

Reference: P. Logan (pers. comm.)



Rev Dr Paul Logan
(photo: Paul Logan)



Rev Stephen de Plater
(photo: Stephen de Plater)

Stephen de Plater BSc(Eng) BD (1950-)

Stephen de Plater was born in Sydney and attended Marsden High School. He graduated in electrical engineering from the University of NSW in 1974 while working for the State Electricity Commission with computers. He then completed a postgraduate degree in Divinity at the University of Sydney in 1977. During his divinity studies he was a Student Assistant at Artarmon Presbyterian Church and Macquarie Presbyterian Church, Eastwood.

His subsequent service with the church was at Sefton-Chester Hill (1978-82), Coonabarabran (1982-87), Manly (1987-1995), and Maitland from 1995.

Rev. de Plater was a Chaplain with the Royal Australian Air Force 1980-82 and again since 1988. He is currently Principal Chaplain for Protestant Denominations with the RAAF and serves with the rank of Air Commodore. He is married to Jenine and has two children.

Reference: S de Plater (pers. comm.)

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Newspapers - recorded as abbreviations in the text

Aust - *The Australian*

GG - *Government Gazette*

MM - *Maitland Mercury*

MWM - *Maitland Weekly Mercury*

SG - *Sydney Gazette*

SMH - *Sydney Morning Herald*

Other

Blue Book the annual report of the NSW Presbyterian Assembly. An excellent record of the church's affairs. Copies held at Ferguson Library.

HRA Historical Records of Australia

ML Mitchell Library (part of the State Library of NSW).

Appendix 1: Notice of granting of land for a Presbyterian Church at Paterson

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23.

CHURCH GRANTS.

The following descriptions of grants of land and town allotments, which have, from time to time, been appropriated for the purposes of the Presbyterian Church, as hereunder more particularly mentioned, are published for general information, in order that all parties concerned may have an opportunity of correcting any errors or omissions that may have been made inadvertently; being in addition to the allotments advertised on 1st October, 1842, and on 1st March, 6th June, and 12th September, 1843.

At the expiration of one month from this date, if no caveat be lodged, or other cause of uncertainty appear, deeds of grant for the respective allotments will be executed in favor of the approved trustees in each case, under the provisions of the Acts of the Colonial Legislature, 7th William IV, No. 3, and 8th William IV, No. 7, viz:-

25. Paterson, one acre, county of Durham, parish of Houghton, town of Paterson, commencing at the northern extreme of the west boundary line of the land reserved for a public wharf, and bounded on the east by that boundary line bearing south 4 chains; on the south by 2 chains of the north side of King-street, bearing west; on the west by a line bearing north 4 chains and 50 links to the river Paterson; and on the north by the river Paterson downwards to the northern extreme of the west boundary line of the land reserved for a public wharf as aforesaid. Authorised by Sir George Gipps as a site for a Presbyterian Church.

26. Paterson, half an acre, county of Durham, parish of Houghton, town of Paterson, commencing at the north extreme of the west boundary line of the Presbyterian Parsonage allotment, and bounded on the east by that boundary line, bearing south 4 chains and 80 links; on the south by 1 chain of the north side of the high road bearing west 30 degrees north; on the west by a north line of 6 chains and 5 links to the river Paterson; and on the north by the river Paterson downwards to the north extreme of the west boundary line of the Presbyterian Parsonage allotment as aforesaid.

Authorised by Sir George Gipps as a site for a Presbyterian school-house.

27. Paterson, half an acre, county of Durham, parish of Houghton, town of Paterson, commencing at the north extreme of the west boundary line of the Presbyterian Church allotment, and bounded on the east by that boundary line bearing south 4 chains and 50 links; on the south by 1 chain of the north side of the high road bearing west 30 degrees north; on the west by a line bearing north 4 chains and 80 links to the river Paterson; and on the north by the river Paterson downwards to the north extreme of the west boundary line of the Presbyterian Church allotment as aforesaid.

Authorised by Sir George Gipps as the site for the Presbyterian clergyman's residence.

(MM 3/2/1844)

Appendix 2: Report of anniversary celebrations at St Ann's, 1910

ST. ANN'S, PATERSON.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.

The frontal stone of St. Ann's Presbyterian Church, Paterson, bears the date 1840; consequently the fourth anniversary of the re-opening of the church, coincided this year with the seventieth year of its erection. To celebrate the two events special arrangements were made. The service on Sunday, June 5, was conducted by the Right Rev. Robert Jackson, M.A., moderator of the State Assembly. Despite unfavourable weather there was a good congregation, several being in attendance from Vacy and other outlying parts. The moderator preached an appropriate and helpful sermon from the words of Rev. 1 (5-6).

The social gatherings were held on Monday, June 6. During the night and early morning the district had been drenched with rain but in the afternoon fairer conditions prevailed, and at night muddy streets were the greatest discomfort. A goodly number sat down to tea provided in the Oddfellows' Hall at 6 o'clock, and the School of Arts hall was well filled for the public meeting and entertainment at 7.30. A bus containing the Moderator, and the Minister of the parish (Rev. A.S. McCook, B.A.), the Rev. W. Grant Forsyth, of St. Andrew's, Newcastle, and a company of talented Maitland and Newcastle vocalists, had come out from Maitland. The Rev. A.S. McCook presided, and announced apologies for the absence of Revs. A. Smith, D.W. Davies, T.E. Peirce, and A.C. Hirst (Ang.). In an introductory address the chairman gave a short sketch of the history of St. Ann's. The records in his possession dated back to 1837, when the Rev. William Ross, M.A., was minister. With Paterson as a centre Mr. Ross carried on an extensive work among the scattered settlers on the Paterson, Allyn, and Williams rivers, and during his pastorate St. Ann's was built. The elders were Major Johnstone and Messrs. Hugh McMaster and Hector Campbell; and later on Messrs. David Irvine, of Lewinsbrook, and James Tyrie, of Gresford, were added to the session. In 1846 Rev. Dr. McGarvie, from Sydney, conducted a communion service. In 1847 a session minute records the attendance of "Mr. J.S. White, preacher of the gospel"—an interesting note concerning the late Rev. Dr. White, for over 50 years minister of Singleton. The editor of the "Maitland Mercury" had also supplied an interesting extract from that paper dated February 27, 1847, containing an item from the Newcastle correspondent as follows:- "We hear that the Rev. Wm. Ross, of the Paterson, is about to visit Newcastle to perform Divine service weekly at the courthouse, vice the Rev. Robert Stewart, who has left this place nearly three months, and during that period the spiritual wants of the members of the Church of England have been unattended to; consequently we hail the anticipated arrival with sincere pleasure, as the Presbyterians in Newcastle are now of sufficient numbers to support a clergyman." This movement must have resulted in the return of the Rev. Mr. Stewart, for in September, 1847, a Paterson session record is signed by him as minister of Newcastle. After at least ten years of faithful pioneer work Rev. Wm. Ross accepted a call to Goulburn in 1847, and was succeeded next year by the Rev. Christopher Eipper, father of the late editor of the "Mercury." Rev. J. B. Laughton, B.A., was inducted in 1851, and the Rev. Thomas Stirton in 1855. Mr. Stirton remained till 1873, in which year he was translated to Inverell. About this time many difficulties beset the congregation. An exodus of settlers to the Manning and Clarence River districts had been going on for some time; Dungog and district had been cut off and formed into a separate parish; and the State aid had been withdrawn. The charge found itself unable to support a minister, and had to depend upon occasional supply from

Dungog and other centres. But the ebb tide continued, supply eased, the church was closed, and the property fell into disrepair. A sorry spectacle the old church stood—a witness to the stability of a former generation, but now fitted only as some thought for demolition. But some four years ago the congregation was happily revived, the waste places were restored; St. Ann's put on a new garment, and every Sabbath the sound of praise is once again heard within her walls. They were met that night to commemorate with thanksgiving the foundation and reopening of their church.

The Moderator in his address expressed his pleasure at being present, and spoke of the interest with which he had listened to the chairman's statement. Several of those referred to he had known. When minister of Yass he had met Mrs. Ross, widow of their first pastor, at Goulburn. Rev. J.B. Loughton (sic) became Clerk and Moderator of the General Assembly, and one of a band of strong men of the past generation. Dr. Stirton's influence remains throughout a wide area in New England, and his patriarchal presence is not forgotten by many in the assembly. He counselled them to cherish the memory of the grand old pioneers, and assured them that the church, through its Home Mission Committee, would render it impossible for the evil days to fall upon them again. The Church to-day cared for and was able to foster the weak. He congratulated them and their minister upon all they had done, and wished them every blessing in the future.

The Rev. W. Grant Forsyth brought greetings from Newcastle, and was glad to hear of the relation in earlier days between the two churches. His was the daughter church, but she had considerably outgrown the mother. He asked them to remember that the church consisted not of bricks and mortar, but of men and women with immortal souls. Let them always keep their ideals high.

Between the addresses a varied programme of artistically rendered items was given, of which the audience showed keen appreciation, almost every contributor receiving a recall. The following were those who added to the enjoyment of the evening:- Mrs. Pratt, Misses Ehrlick, Graham, Sheddon, and Williams, Messrs. Haynes and Allan Browne, Masters Aubrey and Arthur Kerr.

At the conclusion of the programme a hearty vote of thanks was given to all the visitors, on the motion of Mr. W.L. Ross (treasurer) and Mr. Stewart Corner (secretary). Mr. Ross assured them that the people of St. Ann's were very much in earnest.

The National Anthem and the Benediction concluded a very enjoyable and successful series of meetings.

(MM 11/6/1910)

Appendix 3: List of ministers who served St Ann's Paterson

This list is prepared upon the best available information at the time of publication.

Parish of Paterson

Rev William Ross	1837-1847
Rev Christopher Eipper	1848-1850
Rev John Laughton	1851-1854
Rev Thomas Stirton	1855-1873

(This was the last of the full-time ministers for Paterson as a parish.)

Parish of Dungog-Stroud

Rev John Gibson	1877-1882
Rev David Baird	1883-1900

(St Ann's closed for much of this period)

Parish of West Maitland

Rev Stuart McCook	1904-1923
Rev William Bradley	1923-1930
Rev Hilton Thomas	1930-1938

Paterson-Clarence Town Home Mission Station

List of students who served at Paterson-Clarence Town

	Appointed	Transferred
P E Lucock	17/7/38	13/7/41
C R Randall	20/7/41	6/12/43
W H Stott	12/12/43	25/2/45
R A Caldwell	4/3/45	30/3/47
E A Hayes	6/4/47	15/8/48
J A Greig	22/7/48	3/10/48
E A Hayes	10/10/48	29/10/49
F Turvey	6/11/49	25/11/52
J Bruce	2/12/51	1/3/53
K W Black	15/3/53	6/12/53
K Green	13/12/53	6/3/55
N T Baker	13/3/55	19/2/56
D L Ferrington	8/4/56	30/11/58
J Thompson	18/1/59	22/2/59
I K Robertson	1/3/59	1/5/60
D R Parker	5/6/60	26/11/61

Appendix 4

SYDNEY GAZETTE
TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1839

Original Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Sydney Gazette.

SIR,

Allow me, through the medium of your valuable paper, to give publicity to the following circumstance, as I deem it necessary to make a few remarks on the conduct of a certain Scotch minister, who was in the habit of preaching in our neighbourhood; it appears, however, that he had a secondary motive in his visits, which annoyed me exceedingly – a desire to entice my female servant from her service: I called six months ago to expostulate with him on the subject, the worthy Divine then pledged himself that he would not again ask the girl to leave her situation; you may imagine, Mr. Editor, how surprised I was to find, that instead of keeping his word, he has, even since, been more arduous in his endeavours to entice her away; and has at last succeeded by promising her parents any wages she would ask in the capacity of housekeeper. I suppose that the youthful face of a blooming Scotch girl of 17 years a better recommendation in his establishment of young gentlemen than a discreet matron of more ancient date. Now, Sir, I would ask, when there exists such difficulty in getting respectable servants, if it is not hard that they should be tampered with in this manner? I should feel obliged, by your advising the Rev. Gentleman alluded to, to give his congregation a luminous discourse, taking as his text the Tenth Commandment, in which we are distinctly told not to covet any thing that belongs to our neighbour.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

WILLIAM HINDSON.

Melmerly, Hunter's River }

March 18, 1839. }



St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Fitzroy Street East Maitland, opened 1860, now demolished. For a period St Ann's Paterson was serviced by the East Maitland Parish.
(photo: Harry Boyle collection)



The former St Stephen's Presbyterian Manse in Fitzroy Street East Maitland, built in 1845 and now a private residence. Services were held here from 1845 until St Stephen's opened nearby in 1860 (photo: Les Morgan).

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