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VOLUME SIX 1973/74

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Editorial

Meetings of the Irish Baptist Historical Society were rather sparsely attended during 1973. The disturbed state of Belfast, the difficulties, even dangers, of being out after dark, go some way toward explaining this, but they do not explain the dearth of younger members attending. A body which relies so largely on the upper age groups must have an uncertain future.

One paper read during 1973 is omitted from this collection, that by Pastor W. Wilson on 'Recollections of some prominent Irish Baptists: Pastors D. Burrows, A. Jardine and J. Shields'. The paper was of so much local interest that it was thought better to give it the wider circulation amongst the churches which the pages of the Irish Baptist would afford. It will appear in three parts in that magazine, one part having already been published.

How often in the Old Testament the Lord's ancient people had to be reminded of their history - the deliverance from Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea, their settlement in the promised land. The reference to history is repeated in the New Testament, for instance in Stephen's speech in Acts 7, or in the magnificent opening words of the epistle to the Hebrews - 'God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.' It is different to believe that in our day Irish Baptists need any less to know the debt we owe to the divine providence of God and the labours of those who have gone before.

H.D.G.

'The Northern Baptist Association'

As the nineteenth century drew to a close Irish Baptists were becoming increasingly aware of their own identity. This may have been due to two or perhaps three main factors. The first was their increasing numbers in the north of the country, others were the Downgrade controversy in the churches across the water and, strangely enough, a national awareness stirred up by the possibility of Home Rule for Ireland. The desire, and indeed the necessity to assume responsibility for the direction of their own affairs had resulted in the formation of an Irish Baptist Union and with it the Irish Baptist Home Mission. It was a perfectly natural development to find emerging from this new and challenging situation, two associations of churches in fellowship with the Baptist Union of Ireland representing the rather different traditions of the churches in the north and south of the country.

The formation of the Northern Baptist Association was directly due to a decision taken at the Annual Assembly of the Baptist Union of Ireland held in Limerick in May 1897. A discussion of ways and means to further the Baptist witness in a more progressive way throughout the country seems to have been going on and the following resolution was put to the Assembly and adopted:-

> *'That the time had now arrived when District Associations in the North and South should be formed under the Baptist Union of Ireland.'*

This resolution was given effect the following October when The Northern Baptist Association 'was successfully inaugurated' at a

meeting held for that specific purpose in the Antrim Road Church, Belfast. The first chairman was the pastor of that church, Pastor C.S. Donald. Mr. R.G. Glendinning of the Great Victoria Street Church was elected vice-chairman and his fellow church member Mr. David McKelvey was appointed treasurer. The first secretary of the Association was Mr. John Nelson and the committee consisted of Pastors J. Taylor, T. Whiteside, F.R. Jeffrey and Mr. B. Webb. The Irish Baptist Magazine reporting the occasion said:-

> *'The Association had begun its work under the most cheering auspices. Its aim is to draw together and to weld into a working unity the Baptist churches of the Northern Province and to be a perennial source of strength to the denomination in Ireland.'*

The work of the Association in those early days contrasts strangely with the pattern that took shape later on. There was a greater awareness of the work outside the north of Ireland. On the formation of the Association fraternal greetings were sent the Scottish Baptist Union. Great interest was taken in the work being done by the Baptist Missionary Society, in India. In fact the emphasis seems to have been put, at the beginning, on those aspects of denominational work that were already well established.

Some of the addresses delivered at the early meetings of the Association throw a good deal of light upon the problems of the times. One such message delivered by Pastor Alex. Jardine, 'lately come to Belfast' is described as being characteristically 'straight from the shoulder' and deplores the drunkenness of the townspeople and condemns the 'moderate drinking' that went on even among the Lord's own. There was plenty of enthusiasm in those times if the stimulating reporting of the Irish Baptist Magazine can be taken at its face value. The following extract would lift the heart of any preacher:-

> *'Pastor A. Jardine - retiring President - occupied the chair, and, in a few graceful words, introduced Pastor George Marshall, Tubbermore, his successor in office, who*

proceeded to deliver the Presidential address. His theme was "Some Considerations in Reference to our Ministry" and for almost an hour he held the close attention of the audience. The frequent outbursts of applause showed how much this magnificent address was appreciated by all present.'

The Annual Meetings of the Association were from the beginning a 'moveable feast' so far as the venue was concerned. They rapidly became occasions for much profitable and happy fellowship. Though necessarily smaller at first than they are in these times, as we indicate further along in this paper, they provided their 'moments' as we can see from the following little peep into the past:-

'On Tuesday afternoon the 18th October we made our way to the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Station to catch the 3.30 train to Coleraine in order to attend the Annual Meetings of the Northern Baptist Association. On arrival we found a number of the Pastors and Delegates waiting, equipped for the journey with bags and umbrellas. As our party wished to travel together we all proceeded and secured our seats. We were comfortably accommodated in a third class carriage, when a brother in search of a seat, looked in on his way down the platform and remarked drily that we were all close brethren. The statement was true enough, for the carriage was so well filled with human beings and luggage that it is doubtful if there was room even for another umbrella. On arrival at Coleraine we proceeded to the Baptist Chapel where we were sumptuously entertained to tea in the Jubilee Hall.'

The objects of the Northern Association were declared to be those of the Baptist Union of Ireland. Within the Association the emphasis was soon put upon evangelistic outreach and church extension. Its existence did not in any way hinder the establishment of other organised groupings of churches such as the Belfast and District Baptist Council and the South Derry Baptist Evangelistic Association which was based in Tobermore in the 1920's and which brought together the churches recently formed at Carndaisy, Coagh, Kilrea and Magherafelt.

A perusal of the Association minutes reveals that its work developed and continued to run on certain very well defined lines. It was discovered that the canvas tent provided a comparatively cheap and portable means of bringing the gospel to rural areas. The story of the Association's growth and usefulness is very closely linked with this form of evangelism. These tents provided pastors with a convenient means of conducting campaigns in their own districts and were very helpful in extending the scope of a church's local ministry. There were occasions when the Association further involved itself by providing the services of evangelists, usually appointed on a temporary basis, as funds permitted. At one time a portable hall was in operation to allow more permanent work to be done and in the interests of open air preaching in fairs and markets a light 'Gospel' Motor Van was kept on the road for several years.

A serious interest in church extension grew out the sponsoring of Summer services in holiday resorts. As a result of ventures in this direction quite a number of thriving young churches are now in existence at the seaside and farther inland.

In addition to this kind of direct involvement in evangelism the Association Committee for many years had the responsibility of interviewing candidates for admission to the Irish Baptist College. Many of the names appearing in this connection are of men who later made full proof of their ministry. The comments of committee members make interesting reading after the passage of the years. It is apparent that few of them were prophetically inspired!

No account of the activities of the Association would be complete without a reference to the present form and worth of the Annual Assembly Meetings which are usually held on the last Monday and Tuesday of September. Here a Chairman and a committee are appointed for the coming year. Reports are given of the work done among the churches, in the tents, and in the open-air. Opportunity is provided for fellowship in prayer, preaching the Word and discussion of themes that are of topical interest in connection with the Lord's work. During these past few years around sixty churches have been represented by some one hundred and fifty delegates at these meetings. The venue of the assembly as we have seen changes from year to year and thus provides an opportunity to bring the work done and the fellowship enjoyed down to a local level. Many feel that this fellowship is of a more intimate kind than that found at Baptist Union Annual Meetings. This may be so, as the Association is happily relieved by the Union from the dusty book-keeping which falls to the parent organisation.

Having looked in a general way at the beginnings of the Association and its field of operations and having considered in a broad way the methods it has used for the furtherance of its objects we now turn to consider in more detail the path which it has trod.

From the formation of the Association until the outbreak of World War I in 1914 the work made quiet progress. It was necessarily at a standstill for the duration of the war. The spiritual awakening in the province which came shortly afterwards gave it fresh impetus; Pastor F.H. Forbes, then of the Ballykeel church, was appointed Secretary in 1926. His enthusiasm and dedication to the work coupled with a good deal of foresight was to benefit the Association until 1938 when he relinquished his post as Hon. Secretary to become the Secretary of the Baptist Union of Ireland.

From then until 1972 the secretarial post was held by Pastor R.A. Boggs of Tobermore., and is now in the hands of Pastor R. Grant of Cookstown.

During the greater part of the Association's history the position of treasurer was held by Mr. S. Boyle an elder of the Great Victoria Street Church, Mr. H.W. Peck of Greenisland, and for many years and presently by Mr. J. Walker, of Ballymena.

During the spiritually exciting days of the 1920's and right into the early 'thirties' many opportunities for evangelism and church extension presented themselves. The Belfast Churches launched a 'Forward movement'. Following a mission in an Association tent at Glengormley cottage meetings were begun and in Ballynafeigh Orange Hall on the other side of the city weekly services were organised. These later led to the formation of the Glengormley and Haypark churches. In provincial areas too things began to move. Churches were established at Carndaisy, Coagh, Dromore, Dunseverick, Kilkeel, Kilrea, Limavady, Lisburn, Newtownards, Portadown and Warrenpoint.

What was happening was a challenge to the Association whose hands were undoubtedly strengthened by such acquisitions. In 1928 a young man from the Newtownards church, Mr. William Wilson, who later served with much blessing as a pastor at Portadown and Grove (Belfast) was appointed as a whole-time evangelist and worked for two years in a fruitful and acceptable way in different districts. Following Mr. Wilson's resignation there was a desire to appoint an evangelist in conjunction with the Belfast and District Baptist Council. The attempt appears to have been an abortive one which the decision noted in the following extract from the minutes did nothing to remedy -

> *'After prayer the secretary conveyed the finding of the Association's sub-committee. It was felt however that the secretary's statement was rather bald, and after a very fractious massage and the application of a mixture of oils there developed the growth of five silken hairs which are to serve as a temporary covering for the bare idea, that is a sub-sub-committee consisting of Pastor D. Burrows (Chairman), Mr. Guthrie, Pastors Grant, Shields and Forbes.'*

That year must have been a very stormy one. The five silken hairs were written to inviting co-operation in missions which a number of pastors were willing to conduct. This approach was well supported by the pastors on the committee and led to quite a number of missions being held over the course of the next few years. From these efforts quite a number of conversions was reported.

The benefit of having an evangelist to work under the auspices of the Association was not lost sight of and in the years that followed the matter was many times discussed in committee. The services of Mr. H.H. Orr, who later became one of the most honoured pastors in the denomination, then in 1933 working as an evangelist with the South Derry Baptist Evangelistic Association, were availed of on several occasions. In June 1934 Mr. Robert Campbell, recently the pastor of the Londonderry Church, was appointed for a period of a few months pending his entrance to the Dublin College. The name of John (Jack) Johnston who has served as a pastor in our churches for so long and now is the Home Mission's Senior Evangelist, first appears in a minute dated 15th May, 1935.

> *'Pastor D. Burrows recommended a young man named Jack Johnston, a member of the Bangor church, for a temporary appointment as evangelist under the auspices of the Association. Mr. Johnston being in the intermittent employ of the Irish Evangelisation Society but at the same time anxious to work with the Baptist denomination. After several favourable expressions of opinion had been given by those who knew and had heard Mr. Johnston the Secretary proposed and Pastor Ravey seconded that Mr. Johnston be appointed for three months at the salary of £10 per month to commence on the 1st June 1935 and to work in the tent under the care and guidance of Pastor Shields in the Warrenpoint and Kilkeel districts.'*

Following this experiment Mr. Johnston was given a further appointment of six months to conduct missions in the churches. A programme

was arranged to cover from October to the month of February of the next year. Missions were to be held at Ballymena, Grange, Carrickfergus, Portadown and Bangor. Unfortunately owing to financial stringency and insufficient applications for Mr. Johnston's services it was impossible to retain him after this term of six months.

No further appointments of whole time evangelists were from that time contemplated. Several reasons for this were discernable. Increasing costs was one but the more active policies adopted by the Home Mission about this time was another. The Home Mission became deeply interested in evangelistic work among the churches in the 1950's and this led to a very practical division of responsibility between the Mission and the Association, the former providing the services of a preacher and the latter providing a tent. At the same time the Association on occasion found it convenient to have the help of students and other young men from the churches to conduct the summer services at sea-side resorts and mission in the tents as well as to do a little colportage work and door-to-door visitation. This was especially helpful at Donaghadee and in the Mournes around Kilkeel.

In the earlier years Conferences were arranged in various centres to encourage and help the Lord's people. It was the intention to establish these on a monthly basis but no regular pattern emerged. Such gatherings as were organised did however do much to provide helpful fellowship and teaching for many members and adherents of the churches.

Pre-World War 11 weather seems to have been as much of a problem as post-war weather, for the Association in 1930 decided at its annual assembly to purchase a portable hall for 'work in the winter'. The relevant minute concludes:-

> *'So great was the enthusiasm that a subscription list was immediately opened with the result that almost £20 was promised.'*

This project went on apace and

> *'After considerable discussion it was decided to accept Mr. Hewitt's estimate (This Mr. Hewitt was a leading East Belfast Baptist engaged in the*

building trade who was responsible for the witness in Sandown Road which existed until the building was destroyed by enemy action during the war) of £55. - £60 for a hut 30' X 18', 11' rarter to ridge 7' walls Roof ¾" T & G sheeting covered with Rubberoid, 4 windows, 2 doors - no seats, no floor. The hut to be purchased when the money is in hands.'

It was pointed out that only a fortnight's notice would be necessary when ordering the hut.

This portable hall, in commission for about ten years had a chequered career. The rent to a borrowing church amounted to two shillings and sixpence (12½p) per week. This rent, on occasion appeared too much for some churches to pay. At one time in order to ease the pastor from the burden of raising this exorbitant sum it was reduced to one shilling and sixpence or 7½p. Use was made of the hall in the 1930's at Omagh, Limavady, Ballymena and Belfast. There were difficulties of many kinds all along the line. On one occasion because of a remark made by a preacher during the course of the services the owner of the site ordered that the hall should immediately be removed. Eventually it was erected on a site near the Silent Valley in the kingdom of Mourne. Pastor Jas. Shields of the lately formed Kilkeel church found it exceedingly useful for the work he had begun at Carginagh. As time went by he gradually gave it the features of a more permanent structure and it became evident that this site was destined to be its last resting place. More than once in Association circles it was jokingly referred to as 'the established church.' The matter of the portable hall was finally resolved as recorded in the following minute dated 27th June, 1949.

'It was proposed by Pastor Barrows seconded by Pastor G. Weir that in the light of the grand work done by Pastor Shields in the portable hall that we make it over to him

as a free gift on the understanding that the whole property is being vested in the Baptist Union of Ireland Corporation. Agreed unanimously.'

We feel that the Association was glad to be relieved of a responsibili that had caused it many a headache since the hall was first commissioned some years before. Despite all the vagaries of our weather in this part of the world the canvas tent has retained its popularity and right through to the present time had held its place as a cheap and convenient means of providing temporary accommodation for the preaching of the gospel.

In the early 1930's the possibility of purchasing a Motor-caravan became a matter for discussion. Again and again the matter was gone into and the pro's and con's argued at length. The minutes of the period show how the proposition was passed from the Assembly to the committee and from the committee to the Assembly but nothing of a practical nature resulted.

From the beginning the Association seized every opportunity to bear a witness in the fairs and markets of the province. Although modern marketing methods meant the ultimate passing of the traditional half-yearly hiring fair and the almost equally busy scene of the ordinary monthly fair the memory of large numbers listening to the preaching on these occasions is still with us. Pastors were encouraged to converge on chosen centres and were soon busily engaged in preaching the Word and in seeking personal contact with the by-standers. Such opportunities continued to present themselves right through the dark days of the last war. In order to make such work more readily carried out and to help churches to do like work in their immediate areas a 10 cwt. motorvan was purchased in 1947 and until 1952 was extensively used to carry personnel and equipment for open-air witnessing in rural parts. With the disappearance of petrol-rationing (a relic for some years after the recent war) and the increasing use of motor-cars by our pastors the van gradually lost its usefulness and it was decided to dispose of it.

The fact that the Association's work was mainly of an evangelistic nature did not blind it to the need to establish new churches wherever

possible. The churches at Omagh, Glengormley, Antrim and several other places owe a great deal to the interest shown by the Association. Much was done by it in the ultimate establishment of churches at Portstewart and Newcastle. In these places this was a development of the Summer Services which were provided with the needs of holidaying Baptists principally in view. Local Baptists, at the beginning very few in number, gladly rendered what help they could and gradually thriving causes were built up in both places.

At Portstewart in 1944 a move was made to continue the Summer Services, which for some years had been held in the Town Hall premises, throughout the winter months. About this time the old R.U.C. barracks came on the market and were purchased for a few hundred pounds. This provided a building which could be altered to meet the needs of the church at the time, and which, as the site was a spacious one, ensured the possibility of future and more permanent development. The old Barracks were duly transformed into a comfortable little meeting-house which served the work until quite recently. The pews and pulpit came from the old Methodist church in Maghera. The winter's work in 1944 resulted in the formation of a church and responsibility of the Association came to an end.

The story at Newcastle is somewhat similar. Summer Services under the auspices of the Association were begun in 1954. By 1958 the work had been extended to cover the winter months also. This led rapidly to the formation of a church. From these beginnings a strong church, housed in its own premises erected a few years ago, bears a lively witness in this town.

The Association showed an interest from time to time in the establishment of work at Donaghadee and Larne. After the war a serious attempt was made to get something worthwhile going in Donaghadee and for some time summer services arranged by the Association were held in the British Legion Hall. Various difficulties were faced and finally the responsibilities in this area were taken over the the Hamilton Road Church in Bangor. Up to the moment no great advance has been seen here. Hope for Donaghadee has not disappeared and the near-by Newtownards church is at present showing an interest in this and other towns in the area. The Association minutes of former years tell of a recurring

interest in the town of Larne. Attempts were made to get something going again and again. It was a continual source of disappointment that no matter how the problem was tackled nothing really concrete came forth. The industrial development of this place after the war opened the door and apart from any deep involvement on the Association's part a witness was eventually established with the active assistance of the Home Mission.

The work at Antrim is of later origin. It owes its success in no small part to the rapid industrial expansion of the area. When this begun the Association in co-operation with the Home Mission investigated the possibilities of the district by conducting several tent missions. At the first there was not much to encourage, but gradually with the incoming of several young Baptist families the prospects brightened. Weeknight Bible studies and a Sunday evening service were organised. After some time the need for a regular ministry was recognised. The Home Mission once again came with its help and provided an evangelist to take charge of the work. The church membership is increasing rapidly and a suitable building has been erected in very strategic position.

As the years pass the Northern Association keeps alert to the needs and challenge of the whole province in which it bears its witness for the Lord. A year or two ago it was thought that there might be the possibility of doing something in the border town of Strabane. Several folk there were showing an interest in having services with a view to the formation of a church at a future date. The troubled state of the town and the difficulty of obtaining suitable accommodation meant that after a few months it became clear that the neighbouring village of Sion Mills would be a better place to settle. A work has been going on there since, which is very promising and worthwhile. Modest premises, which can be made to meet the needs of the work at a reasonable cost, have been purchased. The help of the Home Mission has been sought and there is every hope of yet another church being added to the list which the Association has helped to establish during its history.

In its early days the balance between the claims of Belfast and the

provincial areas was fairly well kept. In more recent times the needs of rural districts and provincial towns have come to the fore. This probably has been due to a perfectly innocent and understandable desire to give help where it was most required. The interest taken by the churches as a whole in the work of the Association has in no wise suffered by this apparent inbalance. Year by year this is clearly evidenced by the enthusiastic support given by all the churches in Belfast as well as those in the country. It can truly be said that the Association very definitely expresses the will of Baptists throughout the north to evangelise their fellow country men through the churches and to do what they can to plant the Baptist witness as widely as possible in the province to the Glory of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

R. A. BOGGS

'Union secretaries I have known'

When I accepted the invitation to give this talk I was unduly optimistic. I thought that with a little research I would be able to accumulate a sufficiency of facts with which to give substance to my personal recollections and thus ensure that my paper would have some value as preserving in convenient form information not readily accessible to interested enquirers.

Alas, things haven't worked out that way.

My delvings into the past have not proved as fruitful as I hoped, but they did yield a few things of which I was previously unaware and which I hope may prove of interest.

Now, for the benefit of any here who may know little or nothing about the history of our Union I think I had better begin with a glance at its orgins.

It was formed in 1895. Prior to that the little group of Irish Baptist Churches had been known as the Irish Baptist Association. It was just one of the several associations grouped together in the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland. In those days the Association had a succession of Secretaries, but these were always working Pastors who discharged their Secretarial duties in their spare time.

In 1891 the Secretary was the Rev. S.J. Banks (Irish Baptists were not frightened of the title Rev. in those days as they are today). This good brother was pastor of the Banbridge Church for 27 years. He retired from the Secretaryship in 1891 and died later at what was then regarded as the ripe old age of 84.

Mr. Banks was succeeded as Secretary by Dr. McCaig who at that

time was Pastor at Brannoxtown but he did not fill the office for long as he left the following year to go as tutor to Spurgeon's College.

He was succeeded by Pastor Usher of Great Victoria Street whose reign was also short, because the next year the Rev. C.S. Donald took over.

Mr. Donald was the only one of these men whom I knew personally. He was a Scotchman who spent some years in the Antrim Road Church, and then returned for a period to his native land. Later however he came back to Antrim Road, and continued there until his death. It was of course only during his second spell of service that I came to know him. His secretaryship to the Association was before my time. This again lasted only a very short time because in the following year, 1895, the Association was wound up and replaced by the newly formed Baptist Union of Ireland to which Pastor J.D. Gilmore was elected Secretary whilst still retaining his pastoral responsibilities.

Now Pastor Gilmore was the first Union Secretary, and him I did get to know intimately as I will explain later, but before I go on to speak of him I would like to say a little about an earlier Secretary to the Home Mission whom also I know personally.

The Home Mission was in existence before the Union was formed, and in 1889 Mr. Tom Warner, a member of the Harcourt Street, Church, gave up a good business position to become its deputation Secretary, a post which he filled for 21 years retiring in 1901 although he did not die until 1926, a year after I took over the pastorate of Harcourt Street.

Tom Warner was one of 3 brothers, sons of Mr. Cyrus Warner, a very saintly old gentleman who with his family was active in the life of the congregation before it moved from Lower Abbey Street to Harcourt Street.

Each of the sons was a personality in his own right. Willie the eldest closely resembled his father. He was very gentle, kindly, spiritually minded. He was Secretary to the Abbey Street Congregation at one time and in that capacity he wrote the letter of invitation to Hugh D. Brown to accept the Pastorate.

farmer whose bearing was rather that of the dashing Cavalry officer of those days. He was a genial extrovert, a good mixer with quite an appeal to men for whom he conducted a Bible Class for years. He was elected President of the Union in 1926 and his Presidential address was characteristic of the man. He entitled it 'Reminiscences of a Common Soldier for the Common day.' He accompanied Pastor Gracey on a trip to the States in 1927 to try to interest Baptists there in our Irish situation. His general approach was very different from Mr. Gracey's, and he did succeed in interesting Mr. Colgate, the big soap man, in our work. This brother in his turn interested some of his friends, with the result that quite a useful sum was obtained for the College. spread, if I remember aright, over a period of 5 years.

Tom was more conventional than Charlie but as I have said he was also a distinctive personality. He was a very acceptable speaker with a great sense of humour and a great fund of stories which he could tell with great effect. In addition to acting as Deputation Secretary he acted as Editor of the magazine for some years. Here his notes and comments always covered a number of interesting topics but he was inclined to be too expansive, sometimes appropriating about 5 pages of the Magazine for his own contribution.

When he retired from his Secretaryship he was presented with an illuminated address, a way of expressing appreciation of services rendered which was very popular in those days but which has completely gone out of fashion since then.

I come now to say something about John Dinnen Gilmore, the first Secretary to the Baptist Union of Ireland.

He was born in 1857 and died in 1929. His first Christian service was under the auspices of the Irish Evangelizion Society. Feeling his need of training he applied to and was accepted by Spurgeon's College as a student but at the termination of his course there the state of his health was such that he was advised to seek a more congenial climate and so it came about that he emigrated to New Zealand. His fiancee, a daughter of R.H. Carson and grand-daughter of the famous doctor, later followed him to the land of his adoption. He spent 10 years in New Zealand, serving two churches in succession, Sydenham and Auckland.

Returning to Ireland he became Pastor of the Brannoxtown Church in 1893, moved to Cork in 1896 and from there to Phibsboro, Dublin where he continued until in 1912 he accepted the invitation to become full time Secretary to the Union. He filled this post until his death in 1929. His colleagues marked their appreciation of his services as Secretary by calling him to the Vice Presidency of the Union in 1902. His Presidential Address the following year was entitled 'That which was lacking', the details of which he listed as Apostolic Faith - Zeal - Earnestness - Self Denial - Prayerfulness - Liberality and the Holy Spirit in Apostolic Measure.

Transcribed, the address ran to 20 pages of the Magazine and the anonymous writer who reported the meetings was usually frank in his comments. Having described it as 'an address which despite its prodigious length was listened to attentively and was well received.' 'It might' he said, 'with advantage have been shortened. The second, third and fourth divisions overlapped one another and the same ground was travelled over two or three times. 'Zeal' which was the subject of the second division and 'enthusiasm' which was the subject of the third division, are the same thing. 'Self-denial' which is the subject of the fourth division is dealt with in the second division. Nevertheless the address was good.' That sounds very like what I might have occasion to say to one of the students in the Homiletics class, and, applying the methods of the Higher Critics to the text, I have little doubt but that the writer was Ambrose Bury, Principal of the College, who taught me anything I know about Homiletics.

I came to know Mr. Gilmore in 1905. I was myself converted in that year, and finding the Episcopalian Church with which I was connected rather lacking in Evangelical teaching and evangelistic fervour I began to attend Phibsboro Baptist Church, where in due course I was baptized and received into membership. It was Mr. Gilmore who urged and encouraged me to think of full time service and when I returned to Dublin in 1925 as Pastor of Harcourt Street I had him as a fellow elder for 4 years up to the time of his death. He was indeed a good friend.

Thinking back there are several things about him that stand out. As

a preacher my judgment would be that his matter was better than his delivery. He had a real gift for homiletics. Many of his sermon outlines appeared from time to time in the Irish Baptist and any hard pressed pastors who are seeking ideas for sermons would find these every bit as good if not better than those they will find in 'Handfuls on Purpose.' He also conducted a Local Preachers Page for a period in the magazine. As a man he was always very good company. He had his weaknesses as we all have. One of those in his case was his fondness for his pipe, an addiction which was frowned on by many of his Church members.

I remember one occasion when we both happened to be in London at the same time. We arranged to have lunch together one day at a certain restaurant and when the meal was over J.D. proceeded to light up. A waitress immediately approached him and courteously told him that smoking was not allowed in the Dining Room. He accepted the ruling without demur, and said to me 'Let's get outside then.' When we reached the door he did light up and then stepped out unto the footpath quite contented, only to find that he had walked into one of the Phibsboro members whom he least expected and least wanted to see just at that particular moment!

Now during my first four years in Harcourt Street which were the last 4 years of Mr. Gilmore's life, the Union and Home Mission Headquarters were in 45 Harcourt Street in Dublin - the then home of the College. There was absolutely no comparison between the work done there and the work today in 3 Fitzwilliam Street. Mr. Gilmore was regularly away for three or four months every year on Deputation work and the office was looked after by one lady assistant Miss Kathleen Macdougald. On most days attendance for a couple of hours was all that was needed. Today we have 4 ladies on the staff and I can testify that they are all kept busy. The growth in the office work has been enormous.

When Mr. Gilmore died the finding of a successor posed a problem. Some years earlier we were all convinced that when the time came Pastor Richard Hodgett would unquestionably succeed him. This young man, a graduate of the College had served with distinction in the pastorate in Shankill and Ballymena and for some years had been very active in

Denominational affairs. He seemed to be marked out for the secretaryship but quite suddenly and unexpectedly he died in 1927 and was not there to be called on as we had hoped he would be. After much anxious consideration which I clearly recall the Committee invited Pastor J.W.S. Fraser to take over.

Pastor Fraser was a Scotchman, at that time about 45 or 46 years of age. He had received a business training as a young man and then entered whole time Christian service under the auspices of the Scottish Evangelistic Association.

When the first world war broke out he was lent to the Y.M.C.A. and served in various camps in England and Scotland. After the signing of the Armistice he returned to Evangelistic work, but in 1919 he accepted a call to the Pastorate of the Baptist Church in Jarrow on Tyne. From there he came to Shankill in 1922 when he shared in the wave of blessing which swept over Belfast in those early 20's. In an article in 1923 in the Irish Baptist he reported that 'Since June 1922 we have had the joy of baptising some 114 on profession of their faith in Christ'.

He left Shankill in 1928 to go to Londonderry and in the following year he returned to Belfast to take up his Secretarial duties. Following on Mr. Gilmore's death the Denominational office had been transferred to this City.

Living in Dublin as I did I had nothing like the same frequent and close contact with Mr. Fraser as I had enjoyed with Mr. Gilmore. I do know however that during his brief term of office he rendered yeoman service and filled his post to everybody's satisfaction. He worked hard. The Deputation work in Great Britain was still part of his duties, and he was actually in London on Deputation work when he died very suddenly and unexpectedly, in the home of a Mr. and Mrs. Nixon, ex members of the Harcourt Street Church. Alderman Chambers, Mr. Corbett, Mr. Forbes and I travelled to England for the funeral and accompanied the remains from London on to Jarrow where he was buried. Curiously enough, one of his sons, Leslie, who trained in the Dublin College and later became Secretary to one of the English Baptist Associations, also died quite suddenly,

just when setting out I think on his annual holiday.

After Pastor Fraser's death which occured in 1935 at the age of 51 the various Secretarial duties were shared by two or three of us for some months until the appointment of Pastor Frank Forbes in 1937. Pastor Forbes was a native of Banbridge born in 1886. In a tribute to him published in the Irish Baptist when he died, Pastor James Shields referred to his first meeting with the late secretary. It was in his native town of Banbridge in a Gospel meeting organized by Mr. Forbes' mother. The meeting was held in a hall which belonged to her, and was indeed part of her dwelling, and Mr. Shields recalled that Frank, who was but a small boy at the time, acted as organist on that occasion. This piece of information surprised both Mr. Thompson and myself when I unearthed it. We had never seen any evidence of musical talent on the part of our friend and we suspect that he must have failed to develop the endowment of his early years.

In 1914 Frank who had been converted early in life applied to the Dublin College and was accepted as a student. After graduating with honours he accepted a call to the Pastorate of the Lurgan Church where he did a faithful work for seven years. Leaving Lurgan he went to Ballykeel, and there again his ministry was blessed of God to the consolidation and extension of the work. After 8 years there he received and accepted a call to Hill Street, Ballymena where it is on record that his patience, faith, and tact transformed a situation which threatened the unity of the congregation. In 1920 he was appointed secretary to the Northern Baptist Association. He claimed that the letters N.B.A. stood for 'No better Association', but he must have overlooked the existence of the S.B.A., initials which obviously stand for the 'Superior Baptist Association.'

His term as Secretary to the Union was fruitful in many directions. A great believer in prayer himself he inaugurated the Monday afternoon prayer meeting in the office which still survives though unfortunately with a disappointing measure of support. A great believer in Evangelisation he launched a programme of evangelism which resulted in many fruitful mission being held, and his realization of the need of outlying districts led to his conception

of a caravan for evangelistic work, for which he succeeded in raising the money and which was put on the road in 1949.

In 1935 he was elected President of the Union. Tributes paid after his home call in March 1952 emphasised his unfailing courtesy, and his wise counsel, his sweet reasonableness and his tireless energy. A brief memoir and tribute which was included in the 1952 Handbook said concerning him, *'He was a true Christian, a trustworthy friend, a wise counsellor, an able Secretary, a staunch Baptist, a faithful Pastor and a tireless worker in the Master's vineyard. He had a store of wisdom, a fund of humour, and a treasure of common sense upon which he drew for the help of others and for the progress of the work of God.'*

The successor to Mr. Forbes is happily still with us and does not call for inclusion in a talk about Pastor Secretaries of the Union. Concerning him all I will say is that good men and true as were the men we have been recalling this morning not one of them had to shoulder the load of responsibility that is carried by our present Secretary nor am I convinced would they have measured up to the demands which the work today makes upon the man in the Secretarial chair. That we have been blessed with the services of such an all round man as Pastor Thompson during the years when our work has been growing apace is surely evidence that God always has His man for the hour.

And now in closing perhaps I may be permitted to offer a few general reflections on our history since I entered the ranks of Baptist pastors in 1913.

As I look back I see many reasons for rejoicing.

The passage of the years has seen a big increase in our numerical strength.

In 1913 we had 43 Churches in the Union with a membership of 2876. This year's handbook lists 83 churches with a total membership of some 7255.

The passage of the years has also brought a wonderful improvement in our financial position. As I have already recalled, in the early years of my ministry and right through the days when Mr. Gilmore and his

successor Mr. Fraser were Secretaries many of our Churches survived only because of substantial Annual grants from Home Mission funds, and these grants were only possible because the secretaries spent many weeks every year doing Deputation work in England, Scotland and Wales.

In 1913 the total income of the Home Mission from donations subscriptions and collections was £2086, and of that sum only £1092 was raised in Ireland. Last year the income of the Mission was £12,396 of which I am perfectly sure not more than £120 or so came from outside sources. Add to the £12,000 odd subscribed to the Home Mission almost £ 5,000 raised for the Orphan Society, over £3,000 for the College and another £3,000 for the Annuity Fund and you have a total of £35,000 provided by our Churches for denominational agencies and activities. In the light of these facts we can surely claim that our people are a generous and loyal people.

Another advance in which we can rejoice is the successful re-construction of the College. After its rather chequered and hand to mouth existence in Dublin it is a special joy to me to see it so much more firmly established in the confidence of our Churches with a teaching staff and a curriculum of which we can legitionately be proud.

And one other feature of our work from which we can draw encouragement is the development of our Missions both Home and abroad.

For all this progress we can but praise God, and despite the increasing difficulty of the times through which we are now passing I believe we can face the future in the confidence that as the hymn puts it.

'His love in times past forbids us to think,
He'll leave us at last in trouble to sink
Each sweet Ebenezer we have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to bring us quite through'

L.E. DEENS

'A History of Baptist witness in Dungannon'

Dungannon, the second largest town in the County of Tyrone, is rich both in tradition and prospect. The history of the town and district can be divided into two distinct parts, with the year 1609 as the watershed. The name derives from Genan, one of the Red Branch Knights of Ulster, whose headquarters were at Navan Fort, 10 miles away. Genan's dun or fortress, played but a shadowy part in the history from its foundation in the eighth century until the arrival of the O'Neills in the thirteenth century. But from then until the departure of the princely family in 1607, the history of Ulster, indeed at times the history of Ireland, pivoted around the prowess and personalities of the clan, which supplied High Kings for Tara in a practically unbroken line for 800 years.

The last of the Tyrone line of princes was Hugh, who inflicted on an English army a resounding defeat at the Yellow Ford, five miles away, in 1598. His triumph was short lived, however for, though he was the best statesman and general the clan had produced, his resources were insufficient to meet the demands of the new age that was dawning. He was the last bright star in the medieval sky. His light went out with the rising sun of British military power, founded on capital and a strong sense of national identity. Hugh, nine years after his victory, had to leave the scene of his former glories and with him went the other representatives of medievalism in Ulster - the Maguires of Fermanagh, and the O'Donnells of Donegal. With the plantation, which began in 1609, Ulster and Dungannon entered the New Age.

The O'Neill lands were parcelled out by King James I among favourites and creditors from Scotland and the English West Country. Dungannon and its precincts were handed over to Sir Arthur Chichester, the English Lord Deputy, and it was he who was responsible for planning the first town in Tyrone. There was a market square, a street for the English (Church Street), and a street for the Scottish (Scotch Street) and one for the native Irish (Irish Street). The town and district came under English law and military protection - a protection that was very necessary, as the woods surrounding the town concealed hundreds of O'Neill's ex-soldiers, who had not given up hope of his restoration.

Their chance came in 1641. In that year, a rising of the dispossessed took place, which resulted in the destruction of cottage and castle alike - and of all the civic progress made over 30 years of planter history. The Free School (now the Royal School) was burned, as were the church (the Anglican Church), the fort and gaol - private houses also like the imposing Jacobean mansion at Castlecaulfield, whose smoke-blackened walls still stand as a testimony. The population, 400 in 1640, sank to a mere 130 in 1650.

And yet by the time of the next great national uprising (1689) in support of King James II, much of the lost ground had been made good. The main buildings in the town had been reconstructed, the population had reassembled, and, thanks largely to the encouragement given to linen weaving by King Charles II, industry had revived. The Rev. George Walker (memorable as the joint governor of Derry during the seige) had no difficulty in raising a regiment of volunteers for local defence during the tense weeks preceding that event. The so-called Jacobite War did far less damage to Dungannon than the 1641 uprising had done.

The war marks another turning point in the town's history. In 1692 Thomas Knox, ex-sovereign of Belfast, purchased Dungannon and its surrounding estates from the heirs of Sir Arthur Chichester. An era of marked expansion now began, symbolished by the festoon of new streets that grew up around the original core - Thomas Street - Perry Street - Ann Street - so called after the members of the Knox family. Members of this family began to represent the town in the Irish Parliament and continued to do so throughout the following century.

The coal and linen industries made rapid strides. Political lustre was added to the industrial, when four great Volunteer meetings took place, the first in the Parish Church and the others in the Presbyterian Church in Scotch Street. These were in support of a free parliament in Dublin and equal civil rights for all. The third meeting in 1783 was marked by the presence of the notorious Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry who rode through the town accompanied by a splendid retinue of Volunteer troops and outriders. Dungannon drew the eyes not only of Irish Patriots but of Scotsmen and English as well.

During the nineteenth century progress continued. The Knox family, whose head, as the years advanced, gained the titles of Baron Welles, Viscount Northland and Earl Ranfurly, represented the borough unchallenged until 1874 when Thomas Alexander Dickson, linen manufacturer of Milltown House, successfully contested the seat. In 1880 he sat for the county, while his son represented the borough - unique situation with father and son in the Westminster House at the same time. It lasted until 1885 when Gladstone's Redistribution Act deprived Dungannon, and all other towns of similar size, of parliamentary representation.

Dungannon today is one of the most progressive towns in Ireland. The visitor is impressed on his arrival by the obvious signs of prosperity about the shops and markets and, by the need for half a dozen banks to cope with the flow of capital.

Though there was a church at Drumglass in the fourteenth century, the first Protestant foundation (Church of Ireland) dates from the early years of the seventeenth. This suffered severely in the wars of that period and, in any case, the growing population demanded increased accommodation. New buildings were raised in 1790 and again in 1867. The last was consecrated as the Church of St. Anne on September 24th, 1869. Well endowed and supported by the Knox family and others, it has long held a prominent position in the Protestant life of the town.

A Roman Catholic Church existed on the Northland Row site in 1795, but the foundation stone of the present building was laid in 1868. A fine example of Neo-Gothic architecture, and one of the most handsome churches in the province, it has seating capacity for 2,000 people.

Presbyterianism has flourished in Dungannon, often under extreme difficulties since 1660. As well as being famous as the meeting place of the Volunteers for three of their Conventions, the Church later had a famous minister in the person of the Rev. Dr. Morrell. He played a noteable part as the Moderator of the General Assembly, and successfully piloted the Presbyterian Church through some dangerous waters at the time of the Disestablishment Act in 1869.

The Methodist Church, built in 1850, houses a tradition that goes back to the three visits of the great John Wesley in the eighteenth century. There are also in the town Free Methodist, Free Presbyterian, Pentecostal and Brethren churches. At Grange, a few miles away, is an historic Quaker Church, once visited by John Bright.

In the first half of the nineteenth century in Ireland there was a group of a dozen Baptist churches in Co. Tyrone. These churches, or some of them at any rate, may have owed something to the influence of Alexander Carson. It is not impossible that some of them came into being through the witness of his converts. All of these churches were very much on their own. They seem to have had no connection with the work of the Baptist Irish Society, although Dungannon seems to have had visits from its missionaries. In 1830, three churches were formed, namely at Blackfort, Dungannon and Seskinore.[2]

Two of the earliest reports sent to the Baptist Irish Society in 1845 read as follows:

'Mr. Mulhern, having visited Dungannon and the promising districts around that rising town, has forwarded an interesting report: "I remained from Saturday until Wednesday. I preached four times to good congregations, baptised three disciples, who have since joined the church in Dungannon, and had much pleasing conference with the brethren on many important subjects. At Mullycar, four miles from Dungannon, there is a small Baptist Chapel, where we had a congregation of about 200 people. There are 17 members in the church, which has been kept small, chiefly through emigration, about 70 of its members having, from time to time, gone to America. After preaching on Monday in the house of one of the members at Dungannon to nearly 100 persons, I went, accompanied by many others, about a mile to the river, where I baptised

an aged woman, whose husband and six children had already been baptised. The next evening I preached in the Court House to a good congregation among whom were several Romanists. We went afterwards out to the river, and I baptised two young disciples. The friends here think it is high time to occupy this post efficiently, and I think Dungannon with a population of 12,000 and the interesting villages around it, present a promising field, which should soon be occupied. I trust the Society will co-operate with the friends here in supporting a minister to labour among them. May the Lord animate them with a spirit of zeal and prayer." [3].

Mr. Mulhern's second report in the same year reads as follows:-

'I lately paid a second visit to Dungannon and its neighbourhood. I arrived on Thursday evening and preached in the Court House both on Friday and Saturday evenings. The congregations were not so good as they would have been, but for the inclemency of the weather, the rain falling in torrents particularly on the Friday evening. On Lord's Day forenoon I preached in a storehouse of Mr. Tener's to a goodly number of very attractive hearers and joined the church in commemorating the dying love of the Redeemer. In the evening I went out three miles in the country where the friends had given notice that I would preach in the open air, as they expected more would come than could be accommodated in the house I had preached in before. The evening however came on wet and we were obliged to keep within doors. The house, not withstanding the inclemency, was crammed and, after about 150 people had been admitted, some had to remain outside. The people heard with eager attention. On Monday I preached in the school house in Mullycar to a good congregation. On Wednesday I preached at Dunnaghmore (Donaghmore) two miles from Dungannon, on the ordinance of Christian baptism, the appointed house proving by far too small to accommodate the numbers that came, and the evening being very fine we took to the open air. The assembly was large and without exception appeared to hear with great attention. Many of them I observed to turn in their Bibles to numerous passages referred to and mark them, while others were busily engaged in taking notes. After preaching I went, accompanied by a number of friends, about two miles to a river, where I baptised three

disciples who were to be added to the church in Dungannon. On Thursday evening I preached in the Independent Chapel in Moy, four or five miles from Dungannon at the urgent request of the excellent minister of that place, Mr. Shaw, who afterwards warmly invited me to preach for him when I may again visit the neighbourhood." [4]

Statistics would seem to indicate that in 1845 the church at Dungannon had 14 members. Unfortunately it has been impossible to determine the exact date of the formation of this church. It is known that the Baptist Irish Society had provided the fellowship with a pastor by the name of J. Bates.[5] It would seem that the church died out shortly after this, probably in the year 1867 due to the severe potato famine, when it is estimated some 500 families at least emigrated. There is no record of any further Baptist witness in Dungannon until the year 1883.

The next record we have states that the pastor of the Lisnagleer church held a tent mission in Dungannon. The beginning of the work in Lisnagleer appears to have been the outcome of the 1859 Revival. The church was formed at Donaghmore with 11 members in 1886 and in 1870 the present building was erected in Lisnagleer.[6] Pastor John Dickson - Pastor of Lisnagleer - writes an account the first tent meeting there. *'The tent services at Dungannon commenced on the first Sunday in September 1883 and continued five weeks closing on the first Sunday in October 1883. In the Milltown quarter of Dungannon a very suitable piece of ground for the tent was kindly and gratuitously granted by Hunt W. Chambre, Esq. J.P., agent to Lord Ranfurly. The attendance was very good from the beginning to the close of the whole series of meetings, upwards of 600 people being present on some occasions, and in the first meeting of all some souls were brought to Christ. A considerable number of persons professed conversion at the meetings. The tent had to be lowered for a few days in the fourth week in consequence of a squall of wind, which came on and which somewhat damaged the canvas. Dungannon was visited at the same time by a political squall of Nationalism, so called, or rather Parnellism. Owing to the presence of so many soldiers, police, Nationalists and Orangemen, the town was more lively than religious for a day or two: but all passed of without*

any rioting. Mr. Wainwright, Stockton-on-Tees, Mr. Taylor, Tandragee, Mr. Phillips, Grange, Mr. Whiteside, Ballymena were the preachers, the tent being under the care of Mr. Dickson, Donaghmore. At the closing meeting Mr. Dickson delivered an address on Christian baptism. Four persons from Dungannon have been baptised, and some others are enquiring."[7]

At a result of this mission a few believers met together and formed a church in Lord Ranfurly's Hall in Thomas Street. (Today the Hall is used by the Plymouth Brethren). The new church was under the leadership of Mr. Alexander Patterson, who acted as pastor and as well he was a prominent business man in the town. He carried on a newsagent's shop in Scotch Street on the premises now owned by Mr. Cecil Anderson, who is a chemist. Mr. Patterson was an Auctioneer and Valuer as well as being the local registrar for births, deaths and marriages. Apparently both he and his wife were foundation members of the Lisnagleer church and, on the formation of the church in Dungannon, took charge of the work.[8] So with John Dickson's assistance, the Dungannon Church was formed in November 1884. The minutes of the Irish Baptist Association held in Dublin from 28th-30th June, 1886 indicate that Dungannon was received into the Association. *'The Church at Dungannon was by vote of the Association received and its representatives, Brethren Patterson and Bloomfield heartily welcomes.'*

Mr. Patterson, writing a report to the Association on 1887 said, *'Services are now held regularly in the Hall, Thomas Street, on Lord's days at 12.00 and 6.30 p.m.'*[9] The little church grew from strength to strength to a membership of some 26 people and 11 Sunday School scholars with one teacher. Its progress gained a place for comment in the Irish Baptist Magazine, November 1887. *'The little church in this busy centre of the linen trade is becoming increasingly a power for good, and has evidently a future of usefulness before it. Arrangements have been made to hold evangelistic services each Lord's day evening during the coming winter, and the help of occasional preachers is earnestly invited. It is especially gratifying to note the cordial feeling that exists between the brethren in Dungannon and the neighbouring churches of Lisnagleer and Mullycar. Our brother, Mr. Dickson, the highly esteemed pastor of Lisnagleer, took a leading*

part in the recent anniversary meeting and received from the Dungannon friends a most cordial welcome. Though the churches under Mr. Dickson's care are numerically weaker by the formation of the church in Dungannon, we rejoice to know that he is none the less willing to give the Dungannon friends a helping hand and to bid them God-speed in their endeavour to disseminate primitive Christian truth in this important centre."[10]

The church continued to prosper with the members meetings together on Monday evenings for Bible readings under the capable leadership of Mr. Patterson. Special meetings and evangelistic services were held at regular intervals indicating that the little fellowship was alive to its potential in Dungannon. On November 27th, 1888 Mr. Daniel McGill, a Roman Catholic, who had been converted under the preaching of D.L. Moody, began a series of evangelistic services at the invitation of the church. During his stay, the church made its first move to hold regular services at Moygashel. The interest was well maintained throughout, and souls were saved.[11] They had a visit from a Mr. Robert Clarke, a member of Harcourt Evangelistic Association, who was with them for some time and helped to pastor the work. Dungannon's first resident pastor was a man by the name of Simpson, who was blind, and yet was one who carried on the work with a great measure of zeal and enthusiasm. Mr. Patterson says that *'Brother Simpson rang out the old, old story at the Gospel meetings each Lord's day evening.'* In a letter to the Irish Baptist Magazine Mr. Simpson indicates that the church was really enjoying the blessing of the Lord, *'Dungannon is sitting in the sunshine. The Lord is encouraging the noble handful here by fresh additions.'*[12] In the same year there is a record which states that Pastor John Dickson baptised three on behalf of the Dungannon Church.[13]

In 1893 the Baptist Churches were asked to give their opinions about 'Home Rule' and on behalf of the church Pastor M. Simpson summarised the position as follows:

1. Antagonistic both to civil and relgious liberty
2. Baneful to the commercial prosperity of this country
3. A change of legislation, not progressive but retrosgressive, dragging us back to the sad and servile time of James II, which, if insanely effected can only be remedied by another revolution.
4. Destruction of equitable laws, social peace and order.
5. Elevation to power of our merciless and implacable enemies, whose creed and conduct unfit them to be our supreme rulers.
6. Fair road to Papal ascendancy and the appalling mutilation of the Empire.
7. Grievous injustice to the loyal and peaceful minority of Ireland.[14]

At the Irish Baptist Association meetings in May 1894, Pastor Simpson brought the closing message based on 'The Sight of the Dying Saviour.' Someone commented *'The unique character of the speaker's circumstances rendered his address specially impressive and it was listened to by all with deep interest and attention.'*[15] Pastor Simpson worked hard in those days. *'Mr. Matthew Simpson has his hands quite full by having charge of the Mullycar and Knockconny stations.'*

An evangelist by the name of Wamer held meetings in Dungannon. A report of his indicates the type of some of the members of his church. *'Mr. Wamer drove to Donaghmore, accompanied by Mr. Hanson, a stalwart Puritan, and a member of the Dungannon church.'*

Pastor James Lamont seems to have taken over the pastorate of the church in 1900 after undertaking a month's engagement in Dungannon. He was followed by Pastor Thomas Warrick. *'We have Mr. Warrick labouring in this place, Mullycar and Knockconny. We are waiting in hope that the Lord will manifest His power in drawing souls into His Kingdom. We desire to acknowledge with thankfulness the help which the committee has rendered to this place.'*[16] Shortly after this, trouble developed in the church at Thomas Street and this unfortunately resulted in a split, with Pastor Warrick taking some of the members with him. It is not known what the trouble was about or to where the second church moved. All we know is that up until 1908 there were two Baptist churches at Dungannon known as Dungannon No. 1 and Dungannon No. 2.

The second church, then situated at Station Road, and the present one applied for membership of the Union in May 1907. *'The application of the Dungannon church No. 2 for membership in the Union was then considered, and after some objections had been satisfactorily answered, the church was unanimously received.'*[17] The former church in Thomas Street gradually lost its members, and eventually closed. I am told that the Brethren moved in and purchased the Hall for £500 but, if the split had not occurred, Lord Ranfurly would have given the Hall as a gift to the Baptist cause in Dungannon.[18]

In 1907 two reports from both churches were sent to the Union. They make very interesting reading regarding the prevailing situation in both.

DUNGANNON No. 1

Mr. Patterson writes *'Looking back on our former experiences of hallowed fellowship and times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, with sorrow I now report that the work of this church is at a standstill. We are hoping and praying that the day may soon come when the work of the Lord will be revived on Scriptural and constitutional grounds.'*

DUNGANNON No. 2

Pastor T. Warrick writes *'During the year we have had much to encourage us in our work here, and also some discouragements, which serve to help us bow at the Master's feet. God has been pleased to bless His word in the salvation of souls. There is a hungering for the Bread of Life among the people and, at present, we have more calls to preach the gospel in different parts of the neighbourhood than we able to fill. We have attending our meetings now a number of Godly young men, who are becoming useful and efficient workmen and who are ready to go where the Master calls. We have taken on the responsibility of erecting a new chapel which, when finished, will seat about 300 people. This, we believe, will be the beginning of a new epoch of the Baptist work in Dungannon.'*[19]

Building a new church, at the beginning of the twentieth century, was quite an undertaking for a small congregation. Pastor Warrick seemed to have been the right kind of a leader to inspire the members to step out in faith, trusting God to supply their every need. The little church enjoyed encouragement from the Irish Baptist Association. The editor

of the Irish Baptist Magazine contributed the following:-

> *'More than once in the columns of this paper, attention has been drawn to the new church, which is in course of erection in this thriving country town. The work is practically finished and memorial stones are to be laid in the baptistry at the opening ceremony on Saturday, September 7th, 1907.'*
>
> *'It has been found possible for the small sum of £300 odd to erect a very pretty brick building with ornamental front, capable of seating over 200 people. This happy result has in large measure been brought about by the voluntary labours of several of the members, who gladly gave their time and skill and this saved considerable expense in the shape of wages. We cannot help thinking that this modest and appropriate building will appeal to all who have a knowledge of the peculiar conditions which prevail in the provincial districts of Ireland. To have spent more money and put up a more elaborate structure would be a suicidal policy, for if one thing is clear, it is this, that a small Baptist church in Ireland cannot afford the luxury of a big building debt. All the means and resources are taxed to meet current expenses. Of the sum required, over £163 has been already subscribed, and it is to be sincerely hoped that the remainder shall be forthcoming immediately to enable Pastor Warrick and his noble band of helpers to enter into possession free from debt. It is noteworthy that all money subscribed has been given in small amounts and indicates that a very wide interest has been taken in the building of this church.'*[20]

After much toil and sweat the big day arrived for the opening ceremonies. On the morning of Saturday, September 7th, 1907 the then church secretary Mr. Alexander Hegarty, was putting the final touches to the building when Father Hughes, the Parish Priest of Eglish passed. Seeing Mr. Hegarty brushing at the front of the building he stopped his pony and trap and asked if he could see inside the building. He apparently went inside, had a good look around and then ascended the pulpit. He read the last chapter of the Book of Revelation aloud and, on finishing, placed a guinea on the Bible.[21] The church looked magnificent. It had been built from the red brick

drawn from the Tyrone Brickworks Limited, the builders responsible for the job being R.J. Patton and Sons, who up until recent years, had a builders' and hardware business in the town.[22]

During the afternoon the opening ceremony was preceded by a march of witness through the town of all the members and visitors. Tea for all present was laid on at a local cafe.[23] The opening service was held at 3.30 p.m. when Mr. R.G. Glendenning M.P. presided. The congregation sang the 100 th Psalm. Then Pastor T. Warrick, pastor of the congregation, read a portion of the Scripture from 1 Cor. 2, after which Pastor H.D. Brown, MA.,B.L. of Dublin led in prayer.[24]

Mr. Glendinning said he had been asked by Mr. Warrick to be present and perform a most interesting duty. He was sorry that the lot had not fallen to his friend Mr. McCay or some of the others present, but the pastor was rather urgent and he had consented. He would not speak at length as there was around him an army of talent more capable of speaking and eager to appear before them. He was pleased to come among them and see the commodious church building so comfortable and well adapted for the purpose. He was rejoiced to see that in country towns Baptists were progressing. It was great encouragement for him to come to Dungannon and see such a spacious building. The pastor deserved a great amount of credit for the way he had entered into, and carried out the work. It rejoiced all who were of kindred faith and hope to see so many gathered in the house at the opening services. He hoped that they would be enabled by faith and service to make the best use of it and that they would be having good reports from Dungannon. He and his friends were glad to come at any time to help them with the object that the people might be benefited and brought to a knowledge of the Saviour. He hoped their object might be attained and that much good work might be accomplished by the little church in Dungannon. He hoped that the Baptists would go on and prosper and that all who loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity might have abundant blessing. He was glad to be present to help the work on. He understood that there was an important task, the laying of memorial stones, and there were six good and true workers to perform it. The foundation stones were laid on the steps of the baptistry by Mr. Glendenning, Belfast, Mrs. Hegarty, Dungannon,

Mrs. Reid, Londonderry, Miss Coote, Armagh, Miss Duncan, Aughnacloy and Mrs. McCay, Londonderry.[25]

The building was described on that day in the following terms. *'It is very suitable for the purpose for which it is intended. It is built of red brick and slated, the inscription outside the door being "We preach Christ crucified". Inside the building the walls were wainscotted shoulder length and the boarded roof is supported by massive girders. The pulpit is tastefully wrought in woodwork and on a scroll about it is painted "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving." The house is lighted with jets of inverted gas burners. The baptistry is at the front of the pulpit and behind the pulpit is the committee room.'*[26]

One of the church minute books contains the following information. The year of formation of the present church was 1904. Presumably the church met in some other building until the present building was complete. Pastor T. Warrick had six foundation members namely, Robert Tracey, James Johnston, Alexander Hegarty, Mary Hegarty, Margaret Dunlop and James Pinkerton. In 1905 four new members were added to the church, of whom one was a young lady by the name of Elizabeth Jamison. She was the first candidate to be baptised in the new church. Alas she did not live to enjoy her Christian life for God chose to take her home at the youthful age of 20.[27] Pastor Warrick was held in high esteem in the town and countryside. He was a hard worker and a good visitor. As a result of his faithful preaching and ministry the church membership stood at 36 in 1912, just a year before he left Dungannon.

The Baptist Union of Ireland continued to take an active interest in the Dungannon Church, and through the medium of the "Irish Baptist" sought to gain financial support from interested churches and Christian friends. The following article was inserted by the Editor of the magazine.. *'We make no apology for drawing attention to the cause in Dungannon again. The cost of the building complete is £450, towards which some £237 has been contributed. In the opinion of one of the clearest headed and shrewdest leaders of our denomination the church would have been cheap at £700, so substantially has the work been done. This happy achievement is due to the energy and devotion of church members, who saved a considerable expenditure by supplying in part the labour free. The pastor of the*

church is in urgent need of another £100 towards what has already been contributed. Some accounts must be met immediately and heating apparatus is also required. It is only fair to say that this should be as much a matter of concern to the denomination as a whole, as to the people in Dungannon. The building belongs to the denomination for the trust deeds secure that. The pastor of the church has borne the burden and heat of the day. He has done nobly in the cause and now we must not desert him when only £100, or even £50, will free his hands and enable him to devote his time and labours to the spiritual needs of the church. It cannot be too strongly urged that a debt on a country Baptist church in Ireland is a burden too heavy to bear. And it is far better to place one cause in working order before proceeding with another building scheme than to give the first impetus to several new causes and then for years afterwards witnessing the straining and striving to meet their liabilities.'[28]

Pastor Warrick, in one of his progress reports to the Baptist Union wrote of the whole project, *'We commenced the building in entire dependence upon God, that He would enable us to erect it independently of bazaars, entertainments, etc. and now a little further help would enable us to crown the effort with success. Do not leave us struggling in debt after such a gallant effort.'*[29] Such was the man's faith who helped to put the Dungannon church on the map of Baptist witness.

Speaking of the Trust Deeds one notes a few interesting points. The church is described as a Calvinistic Baptist Church. Upon trust the building was to be permitted to be used, occupied and enjoyed as a place for the public worship of Almighty God and for the religious and other services connected with the work of a Baptist church, by the said church worshipping within. Upon trust the church shall hold the following doctrines according to the plain, simple and evangelical meanings attached to them.

1. The verbal inspiration and the all and sole sufficiency of the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments as originally given.
2. The Trinity in unity of the Godhead, the essential deity and perfect humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The Personality of the Holy Spirit.
4. The depraved and fallen state of man and the substitutionary sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. The justification of the sinner through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.
6. The Personality of the devil.
7. The natural immortality of the soul.
8. The second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9. The resurrection of the body.
10. The eternal security of the believer and the conscious eternal punishment of those who died impenitent.
11. The binding character of the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and the immersion of believers as the only Christian Baptism.
12. The responsibility of all saved souls 'to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present age.'

One interesting facet of the new work was the Sunday School. It commenced in 1908 with 50 scholars and five teachers. The record of the first excursion and its destination would cause some eyebrows to lift today if it was suggested that the scholars should spend their 'annual outing' in the very same place as the first scholars of the church. *'Our first Sunday School excursion was held on Saturday afternoon, September 4th, 1909. The party started from the church about 2.00 p.m. and journeyed in "brakes" to Mullycar where they were joined by the Mullycar Baptist Sunday School. Notwithstanding the unfavourable condition of the weather in the morning, a dry evening followed, which enabled the children after tea to engage in all kinds of sports in the grounds adjoining the church. The time for returning came all too soon and about 7.00 p.m. all assembled in the church when some time was spent in singing hymns and choruses. After a short address by Pastor T. Warrick, in which he thanked the Mullycar friends for their hearty welcome and for the splendid tea provided and, when each child had received a small bag of sweets, the homeward journey was commenced all feeling that a happy and a profitable day had been spent.'*[30]

On May 19th, 1909 the church was registered for the holding of marriage services. The first certificate No. 436 was issued from the General Registrar Office in Dublin and reads as follows: *'I, Robert Edwin Matheson, Knt.*

L. L.D., Registrar General, do hereby certify that on the 19th day of May, 1909, the Separate Building, known as the Baptist Church, Dungannon, situated in Victoria Road, Dungannon, in the Parish of Drumglass, County of Tyrone and district of Dungannon was duly registered in this office.' The first marriage took place in the church on Wednesday, September 1st, 1909, when Pastor T. Warrick united Sarah Jane Dunlop, second daughter of James and Mary Dunlop, Mulnagore, to George Murray, Milltown, Dungannon. A large congregation gathered to witness the ceremony, which was concluded with prayer by Rev. James Grey from Donaghy. After the ceremony, luncheon was provided in the vestry for the guests, and the happy couple left by the 2 o'clock train for Bangor, Co. Down.[31]

The pastor, right up until he left, believed in putting his back into the work and sought to further it in every way. He writes *'We hold at frequent intervals evangelistic services in six different parts of the country, Orange Halls and schools opened to us at any time.'* [32] The record of his ministry is one of progress and, indeed, he knew the blessing of the Lord for he saw many saved, baptised and added to the church. For example during the year 1909, 16 were baptised and 20 were added to the church. The Sunday School continued to grow with the numbers in that year standing at 70 scholars and eight teachers. Pastor Warrick believed in encouraging the young men, for he had a number of capable preachers, who took the services all around the district.[33] His was a busy life as he sought to make the message of the Gospel widely known.

Up until 1910 Mr. Warrick was unmarried, but his bachelor life was destined to end. On Tuesday evening, June 27th, 1910, a very pleasant function took place in the Baptist Church, when a marble and bronze clock and ornaments were presented to Pastor and Mrs. T. Warrick on the occasion of their marriage, by the members of his congregation as a token of their affection. There was later a large gathering of the church members and friends present to welcome home the happy couple who had just returned from a three weeks' tour of the continent.[34] Three years later Pastor and Mrs. Warrick took their leave of the friends at Dungannon.

Pastor Warrick was succeeded by another student from the Irish Baptist College in Dublin. The minute to this effect reads, *'At a church meeting held on Sunday morning, March 9th, 1913 a unanimous invitation was given to Pastor Isaac. Bell to take up the pastorate rendered vacant by the resignation of Pastor T. Warrick.'* Another minute reads *'Pastor Bell accepted the invitation and commenced his ministry on Sunday, May 4th, 1913'*. He was a good preacher, and a fine singer, but unfortunately during his ministry the church passed through a very lean period. The first World War broke out and all the men in the vicinity moved to Belfast. The local spinning mill in Milltown belonging to Hale and Martin went on short time with the result that the church was scattered and the numbers were depleted to a mere 16 members, and with the Sunday School completely closing down.

It was at a Deacon's meeting held on September 2nd, 1913 that it was first decided to meet for prayer before the morning and evening services, a practice that is still carried on to this day. Pastor Bell, at the same meeting, considered it very important for some two members to give out the hymn books at the door and to show strangers into their seats. This he maintained would show we had an interest in people and induce them to come again. Even today, as one enters the church, one is still assured of a very warm welcome from the deacons on duty. The secretary of the church in writing one of his reports to the Irish Baptist Union spoke highly of Mr. Bell. *'The meetings here are fairly well attended. Mr. Bell as a preacher and teacher is all that could be desired. A better spirit prevails in the meetings than formerly, and we expect showers of blessing in the near future.'*[35]

Mr. Bell found it impossible to continue as the pastor and, after little over a year, he resigned, when he was followed by Mr. Albert Quigley around September 1914. On October 23rd, a social meeting was held to extend a welcome to Pastor A.M. Quigley of Dublin, who had accepted the pastorate of the Dungannon and Lisnagleer Baptist Churches and the outlying stations of Mullycar and Knockconny.[36]

The next three years in the life of the church proved to be very, very difficult. There was much evidence of discord among the members.

'The painful fact of discord amongst the members must be registered. There have been several resignations of membership as a result.'[37] *'The old ulcer of disunion has not yet healed and, as a result, there could not be any real and material progress in the work.'*[38] Despite the trouble there are a few records of baptisms and the odd person coming to a knowledge of Christ as the following shows. *'We are glad to report one very bright and encouraging case of conversion with three baptisms and three additions to the church.'*[39] Pastor Quigley on many occasions drew the members together and sought to unite them in the bonds of love. Alas, having tried his best, he decided that it would maybe solve the whole problem if he himself left. He asked the Baptist Union to relieve him of his responsibilities in the Dungannon Church. In May 1916, he left Dungannon to concentrate on the work in Lisnagleer.[40]

Mr. Don Courtney took charge of the work for a while. He came from the Killymor district and had spent some years as a missionary in China. He was one of those men who never preached a sermon from the New Testament!

Pastor George McKillen came to Dungannon, Lisnagleer and Mullycar in 1919. The church at this time was still facing very many difficulties. He was a very tall man and, at first, rode around on a bicycle. He is remembered for his enthusiasm and outspokenness at the church prayer meetings. I am told that he absolutely detested long prayers. On one particular evening he thought one brother had gone on long enough, so he arose and said *'We will sing a hymn together while our brother is finishing his prayer.'* Doubtless the offender brought his prayer speedily to a finish. He told the people on another occasion that it was a shame to see a Baptist Church with no Sunday School. One of the members, Mrs. C. Phillips, took up the challenge and later that week discussed the matter with Miss Emily Ferguson. The latter was then approached by Mr. Thistle (who was a local breadman) who suggested that both he and Miss Ferguson should commence the Sunday School. Miss Ferguson readily agreed and in her spare time visited New Row and Milltown and gathered up all the children. The school was restarted in June 1919 with some 80 or more scholars at the first meeting and with four Sunday School teachers, namely, Miss Emily Ferguson, Mr. and Mrs. Hegarty and Mr. Thistle. The first Friday in every new year was set aside for the Sunday School Social. For unbroken attendance throughout the year Mr. Thistle gave to each child a brand new five shilling piece, in an envelope with a tract inside for their parents.

Mr. McKillen worked very hard in his three churches. He was responsible for starting a conference on Easter Monday. The Church still holds an annual conference although not on this date. The big event of 1920 was the presentation of a B.S.A. motor cycle - a gift from the churches - to him. It cost well over £100 - *'a project taken up most enthusiastically, and subscribed to most generously by the members and friends of Dungannon, Lisnagleer, Gortmerron and Mullycar churches.'* The presentation was made at Lisnagleer on March 12th, 1920.

The pastor followed in the footsteps of some of his predecessors at Dungannon when he got married while pastor of the church. On Monday evening, July 26th, 1920 the members and friends of Dungannon, Lisnagleer, and district Baptist churches assembly together in the church at Dungannon to pay tributes of respect and affection to Pastor George McKillen on the occasion of his recent marriage. Previously he had been presented with a motor cycle as a token of the high esteem of his worth and services amongst them, but now its value had been enhanced by making Mr. and Mrs. McKillen the recipients of a side car for it.[41] In 1922 Mr. McKillen left at the invitation to the pastorate of the Tobermore Church.

During this vacancy a Mr. Dove appeared on the scene as pastor of the church. He was a man of independent means and refused to accept a salary from the church. He was a powerful preacher, but for some reason the people did not take to him, and so he left Dungannon. This was an up and down period for the church with many preachers coming and going but none willing to accept the challenge of the work. Pastor T.G. Keary of Lisburn ministered for a short time.

From July 1923 to the end of 1928 Mr. H. Jeffrey ministered in Lisnagleer and Dungannon. The number of members ranged from 10 to 14 with four being described as *'not members but adherents and helpers.'* With his responsibilities for Lisnagleer he was unable to take the services all the time, so Mr. D. Courtney and Mr. A. Morrow took the morning services in turn for him.[42] Pastor Jeffrey was another bachelor and while at Dungannon lived at Richardsons of the Black Lough, where he had two rooms and shared the kitchen. He got around the hard way by pedalling an old bicycle. At the services he sang, played the organ and really preached his heart out. On one occasion he was preaching and made the remark that some people believe that men evolved from monkeys.

One of his congregation, a Mr. Rice, suddenly jumped up out of his seat and shouted *'Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, you're telling the truth, there's no monkey brand here'!* The pastor was noted for his emphasis upon getting out around the district and doing door to door work. He conducted many missions, and saw some remarkable conversions during his stay at Dungannon. One of the most noteable was that of Jimmy McKittrick. He was a real drunkard and one whom many thought would never be born again. At a mission in the church he found the Saviour. Shortly afterwards he was baptised. Coming up out of the water he shouted *'Praise the Lord - he has saved Jimmy McKittrick - and mind you He keeps me.'* He went on well with the Lord and began to preach here and there. Apparently he was asked to preach at Dungannon one Sunday morning. He searched all week for a sermon, but no inspiration would come. As he left home on the Sunday morning he still had not received a word from the Lord. Coming up the Moy Road towards Dungannon the hill proved too much for the old saint. He got off his bicycle at Lord Ranfurly's gate and, at that moment, spied the spire of the Roman Catholic church. *'Glory be to God'*, he shouted *'A city set upon a hill that cannot be hid - that's my text.'* And he preached it too!

One Sunday evening there was an old fashioned Testimony meeting held in the church, when Jimmy McKittrick was asked to give his testimony. During the course of his remarks he made the following statement, which shows just what he was living for. *' Brothers and sisters, when the Lord comes again He'll know where to find me. He won't have to search for me in the back kitchen - remember He knows everyone of us.'*

Mr. Jeffrey had also a split on his hands and had trouble keeping the flock together in the bond of Christian love. One or two members left and joined the exclusive Brethren, while one or two more left and went to the Church of God at Verner's Bridge.

During his time in Dungannon Mr. Jeffrey made the acquaintance of Mr. Jack Atkinson - the Boy Preacher of the Baptist Union. He had a fortnight's mission in Dungannon from December 4th to 18th, 1927. The building was filled to capacity every night and, on Sunday nights, extra seats had to be put in - some even had to stand in the vestry and porch.[43]

Pastor William Weir B.A.,B.Sc., came to Dungannon and Lisnagleer in June 1929. On Monday evening, June 17th, 1929 a recognition service was held in Dungannon Baptist Meeting House to instal Pastor Weir as Pastor of the Dungannon Church. Pastor D. Henderson, President of the Baptist Union occupied

the chair. He gave the charge to the new pastor, while Pastor G. McKillen gave the charge to the church.[44]

He too was faced with a formidable task in Dungannon. Writing to the 'Irish Baptist' on one occasion he shows just how he felt about the task. *'Although there has been a Baptist work in Dungannon for a good number of years our numbers are still small and the work is up hill, but we trust God to bless the work to those who attend the meetings. During the year two were baptised and three were added to the church.'*[45]

He was a bachelor, and lived in Empire Avenue, where his sister Mary kept house for him. Pastor Weir was the first pastor to come to Dungannon with a motor car. This enabled him to get from place to place quickly and was a great asset to him in visitation. During his term in Dungannon he laid to rest Mr. and Mrs. Hegarty, two of the foundation members of the church.

He took a great interest in the Sunday School. On Friday, January 8th, 1932, the children of the Sunday School had a very enjoyable evening at their annual Christmas Social. After tea, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the young folk, a programme of recitations and singing was contributed by the scholars. Pastor Hunter, Armagh, gave a very helpful address, principally to Sunday School teachers, basing his remarks on Elisha and Gehazi. A number of prizes were presented for attendance, three of them being special prizes - the winners having full attendance. Suddenly a loud knocking was heard at the door, which was opened to admit a very realistic Father Christmas, who admidst much fun and laughing distributed gifts to all the Sunday School children from a large Christmas tree. A recitation and a choir piece 'New Year Wishes' followed by the doxology, brought a very happy evening to a close.[46]

Although the work was difficult Mr. Weir enjoyed good success. He saw the members beginning to pull together in unity and harmony. He had the joy of seeing souls saved and a number being added to the church. The roll stood at 19 in 1933, the year of his departure, when Tobermore called again and claimed Mr. Weir, as it had claimed Mr. McKillen some years previously. He did not forget Dungannon, for he was back again in 1936 to hold a mission in the church. *'Mr. Weir is one Gospel preacher who makes no use of pseudo-comic mannerisms, so deplorably common on the Gospel platform today.'*[47]

Mr. F.G.H. Sleath, a young man of about 20 years of age from Longford, and an evangelist, served the Church in 1932. Another evangelist, Mr. T.

emigrated to Canada. Both of these men enjoyed the blessing of the Lord and saw souls saved and baptised and added to the church.

1934 was an interesting year, as it shows that the friends of Dungannon had both a knowledge of, and an interest in, the now famous C.H. Spurgeon. A series of special meetings conducted in the Dungannon Baptist Church in connection with the 'Spurgeon Centenary Missions' lasted from November 4th to 18th, 1934. Pastors Freeman and Carleton of the Coleraine and Banbridge churches were the missionaries. The closing night saw both speakers and a welcome visitor in the person of Councillor Chambers, the President of the Baptist Union, taking the meetings between them.[48]

Records of 1935 show that the annual Sunday School excursion was held on Wednesday, July 31st to *'Washingbay - a delightful spot on the banks of Lough Neagh!'*[49] I'm sure it is hardly likely that the children of today's Sunday School would be interested in going to a place so close to home. Another interesting point is that the church secretary during those years was a young lady! She was a Miss B. Clarke, who lived at Ben Eden, Bush Road, Dungannon.

The Church then extended a call to Pastor S. Ruddock, who was pastor of the East End Baptist Church in Belfast. He accepted the call, and remained as pastor until the year 1942. His, too, was a difficult job having average attendances on a Sunday morning of 13 and not many more in the evenings. One or two families were the backbone of the church during these difficult years. The pastor did not use the pulpit, but just had a reading desk at the front on the right hand side of the church. Again he had little encouragement having to face many internal problems among the members. He was a man who had the high esteem of the people around the district. The pastor was known for his care of the flock and for his prompt visitation in times of sickness and trouble. Mr. Dane Skilling was in Dungannon during this period for some three years, working as a Civil Servant in the town. He was in charge of the Sunday School work and took an active interest in the Mullycar Baptist Church.

When Pastor S. Ruddock left in 1942, Pastor W.J. Rowell was then in charge of the Lisnagleer Baptist Church. An invitation was given to him to conduct the weekly Bible class and prayer meetings. For his expenses he was given the collection that was taken up on the night that he spoke! Like the first minister of Lisnagleer he responded to a call from the Coleraine Church in 1945, where he was pastor until very recently.

A very interesting deacons' meeting was held on September 28th, 1938. Part of the minutes read as follows; *'It was decided to advertise the church services first by a weekly notice in the local newspaper, second by tract handbills distributed from house to house, and third by postcards, and so to ascertain the most profitable way of bringing the services to the notice of the people.'*

Another deacons' meeting was held on October 11th, 1939 - this had had implications in the church to the present day. The minutes read thus: *'Mr. W. McKinstry, treasurer of the church, reported the meeting of the church with the deputation from the Baptist Union of Ireland Committee. He stated that it was the desire of the committee that all money collected or expended in the church should be entered on a slip sent each quarter, and that the collections should be dealt with only by Deacons and the amounts signed for in the treasurer's book after being counted by two deacons or a deacon and pastor.'*

At a church meeting on August 21st, 1945 a report was made on the suggested calling of Mr. G.A. Cawfield, of Carrickfergus, as pastor of the church. On its conclusion, a short season of prayer was entered upon and thereafter the members, after due consideration and discussion, determined to call Mr. Cawfield. The role of deacons was also discussed, and it is interesting reading to note what was decided. *'It was unanimously agreed that the deacons, according to the alphabetical arrangement of their names each month assume the responsibility of the communion table, attendance at the door, visiting sick friends, call on absent members and, at the end of August, arrange for a card distribution to each home in the district inviting members to the meetings.'* The Church at this time certainly believed in keeping the deacons busy!

The call issued to Mr. Cawfield was duly accepted, and on Wednesday, November 7th, 1945, he was inducted to the pastorate. Shortly after he was installed as pastor the work improved, and, with one or two exceptions, has never looked back. The present writer may be allowed a few personal reminiscences. I remember him as a dedicated servant of God, who was willing to give nothing less than his best to the service of the Master he loved. He was a friend of all and especially in hospital visitation he excelled. Often he was asked to visit sick folk, who had absolutely no connection with the church whatsoever. He

believed in the New Testament order of the church, namely, elders and deacons. He saw to it on April 9th, 1946, at a deacons' meeting *'that it was proposed that Mr. Hugh McLean be appointed an elder and thus assist in the spiritual oversight of the church. This was unamously agreed to.'*

He took a great interest in the work of the Sunday School. In 1949 he saw to it that for the first time the scholars entered for the Irish Baptist Sunday School Union annual Scripture Knowledge examination. In that year he was rewarded with two honours and three passes. Little did he realise the implications of this step, for the Sunday School was to win the Gribbon Shield on not a few occasions. He also was very keen on evangelistic work and two noteable missions were held by James Armstrong, now the present pastor of the Armagh church, and Mr. G. Barton. During the former tent campaign lunch hour services were held for the factory workers at Stevenson & Son's factory in Moygashel. As a result many hundreds of workers heard the Gospel. Mr. Cawfield wrote the following report to the Irish Baptist Magazine. *'The work and witness of the church here is being maintained, and it is a joy to report times of blessing and spiritual quickening. The immersion of believers as the only Christian baptism has been stressed in recent weeks and our hearts have rejoiced to see Acts 8:38 re-enacted "They went down into the water and came up out of the water and went on their way rejoicing."'*[50]

Mr. Cawfield was responsible for beginning a very successful work among the young people. He commenced with 16 and soon the numbers topped 40. It was run as a Senior Christian Endeavour Society. Many of the present day members of the church still speak of the benefit they gained from their experience in the "C.E." As a result of this meeting Mr. Cawfield had some seven lay preachers! At times at the Sunday services he would have them taking part leading the meetings. Once a year there was an annual Youth Sunday when the Senior C.E. was in charge of all the meetings.

He was a man whom the children loved. I can well remember his visits to the children's meetings which were under the capable leadership of Miss Nellie McFarland, who has rendered invaluable assistance to this important work for many years. Everyone looked forward to his coming! Thinking about the children's meeting my mind travels back to an incident which happened many years ago. A few of the boys were discussing what we would be when we would grow up. The hopes ranged from firemen to farmers, and from bakers to breadmen! Miss McFarland overhead the conversation and asked if none of us were going to be a pastor or missionary.

Little did two of us then know what the Lord had in store for us. One was to become a pastor and another was destined to be a worker with the Child Evangelism Fellowship. Our leader's hopes then certainly were realised!

Pastor Cawfield saw his prayers answered in the call of God to one of the young people into full time service. *'On Friday, September 15th, 1950 the members and friends of the fellowship gathered to bid farewell to Mr. Silas Henry, one of our young people, who has been accepted for training at Fitzwilliam Street. Pastor Cawfield spoke of another Silas (Acts 16) and made reference to Silas' Prison, Prayer and Preaching. He paid tribute to young brother's life of high integrity and referred to the prominent part he had played in the activities of the church. Mr. E. Condy, secretary of the church, spoke in gracious terms, and Mr. Henry was presented with a cheque and beautiful dressing gown. He suitably replied.'*[51] Mr. Henry has since proved the church's faith in setting him apart for the ministry. Upon the completion of his training he served the Kilkeel Baptist Church from 1955-60. In 1960 he received a call to be the first pastor of Killicomaine Baptist Church, Portadown. All the outward signs show that God has been pleased to bless his ministry.

When Mr. Cawfield first came to Dungannon, he did all his visitation on a bicycle. The 'old' bicycle, as it was called, travelled very many miles. The same man thought nothing of riding to Belfast and remember there was no motorway in those days! He was very keen to learn to drive the motor car. My father agreed to teach him and from what I recall he had some job on his hands. On one occasion I was in the back seat of the car and my father made some remark about our good pastor's driving ability. The pastor took exception to it, and opened the door of the car to get out, while the car was still in motion.

My mother well remembers one day when she was doing her weekly wash. Mr. Cawfield slipped into the house and standing behind my mother in a womanish voice said *'Could you spare a copper for a poor old gipsy woman.'* You can guess the reaction of the one standing by the sink.

It was a sad day for the church in Dungannon when Pastor George Cawfield tendered his resignation. The people felt it keenly, for he was one man who had endeared himself to all by his Christian love. He left Dungannon on July 31st, 1953 to sail, with his wife Ina and his son Brian to Canada, where God has been pleased to bless his labours. At present he is the pastor

of The First Baptist Church, Petrolia, Ontario, Canada.

The Church at Dungannon was vacant until March 1955 when Pastor James Irvine from Dromore accepted a call to the pastorate of the church. When Mr. Cawfield left, the membership stood at 50, an all time record. Pastor Irvine came into a church that was really enjoying the blessing of the Lord. He proved to be the Lord's servant for he was an able teacher of the Word and a good Gospel preacher. During his short stay of three years he saw the work prosper with the membership standing at around 60. One noteable feature during his ministry was the number of tent missions that he held especially in and around the village of Moygashel. In March 1957 he invited Pastor William Mullan from Lurgan to hold a mission in the church. This proved to be a real time of blessing for the Lord did make bare His mighty arm in the salvation of precious souls. Many of the young people came to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, including the writer of this article.

Mr. Irvine was both a good pastor and a good visitor. One was always timorous to miss the Sunday Services or the mid-week Bible Study and Prayer Meeting without a reasonable excuse, for he would have been on the doorstep on Monday morning or on Wednesday morning wanting to know why one was absent. Pastor Irvine resigned from the Church in 1956, and is presently the pastor of the Newcastle Baptist Church.

During the vacancy, which was to last for some five years until 1961, the church went through a difficult period. One or two things during this time are worthy of note. The Sunday School scholars in 1957 for the first time won the Gribbon Shield and sustained a good record since then. The following table shows to some extent the real ability of the Dungannon scholars to top the pole amongst all other schools.

1957 with a mark of 98.59%
1963 " " " " 99.20%
1964 " " " " 99.66%
1965 " " " " 90.60%
1967 " " " " 97.41%

At a Deacons' meeting held on December 17th, 1957 it was proposed and agreed that a proper constitution for the church be drawn up. It was not until June 25th, 1959 that the Constitution presented by the deacons was accepted and approved by the church. Those responsible for it were Messrs.

E.S. Condy, Secretary; W.J.K. Byers, Treasurer; J.E. McFarland; R. McFarland; J.A. Woolsey; H. Gillespie; S.G.G. Smith. All those who make application for membership must agree to accept it and abide by it as long as they remain members of the Dungannon Baptist Church. It reads as follows.

1. That Membership of this church shall be composed of those who through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are savingly converted to God and who, having been baptised by immersion into the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection are walking worthy of their Christian profession.

2. The members are expected to subscribe to the Basis of Doctrine (as set out in the Trust Deeds of the Church).

3. Applicants for Church Membership shall be interviewed by the diaconate of the church upon whose report, if considered satisfactory, the applicant shall be received by vote of the church. Each applicant shall receive a copy of the Constitution.

4. A member of another Baptist Church may be received by a vote of the church on receipt of a satisfactory transfer provided he or she fulfils Rules 1 and 2.

5. Members shall solemnly undertake by the help of the Holy Spirit:
   (a) To support the church and its office bearers by earnest prayer, by attendance at the weekly services and by regular freewill offerings, as the Lord has prospered them, to the finances of the church.
   (b) To bear one another's burdens, and in the exercise of a generous tolerance to avoid any unkindly criticism of each other.
   (c) To work together in unity and love; to make known at home and abroad the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6. The membership roll shall be revised periodically, and members who absent themselves from the Lord's table for a period of three months shall be removed from the Roll, unless a good and sufficient reason for such absence be given.

7. The office-bearers of the church shall consist (normally) of a Pastor, Elders and Deacons. To be elected to office, each nominee shall require to receive a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Special church meeting called for the purpose.

8. The office-bearers shall appoint from their own number a Secretary and Treasurer, such appointments to be confirmed by the church.

9. The church shall meet at regular intervals to receive reports and to transact business. No business (other than ordinary business) shall be brought before the church without due notice of motion.

10. Special church meetings, as required under Rule 7, shall be announced at both services on the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting; the announcement shall include the business to be considered.

11. The Secretary shall keep a record of all proceedings and the first business at each ordinary church meeting shall be the receiving and the confirming of the minutes of the previous church meeting.

12. The office-bearers shall be responsible for the presentation of an annual Statement of Accounts duly certified by Auditors appointed by the Church.

13. All matters pertaining to the church shall be regarded by the members as private and confidential.

On Thursday, March 3rd, 1960 the church had the pleasure of witnessing another two of its members committing themselves to the full time service of the Master. Mr. W.J.K. Byers received a call from the Dunseverick Baptist Church at the latter part of 1959 and on this date he was inducted to the pastorate of the Dunseverick Church.[52] He ministered there with great acceptance and with the obvious blessing of the Lord until 1967 when he received and accepted a call from the Rosemary Park Baptist Church in Bangor, where he is still currently the pastor.

Dungannon Church felt the loss of Mr. and Mrs. Byers for they were two keen and gifted workers. Mrs. Byers (or Evelyn, as she is affectionately known) was the organist, Sunday School teacher and was noted for the way she trained the Sunday School scholars to perfection for their annual Sunday School social. Mr. Byers proved his worth as a real man of God. He was a deacon and treasurer, a Sunday School teacher and a keen open air worker. The writer still recalls the rich times of blessing we enjoyed under the ministry of Mr. Byers in the Sunday School class. It was with great confidence that the Dungannon Church commended Mr. and Mrs. Byers to the work of the Gospel.

At the beginning of 1961 the church extended a call to the pastorate to Pastor William Spence from Ballynahinch. He accepted the invitation of the Dungannon Church and was inducted as its pastor on March 29th, 1961. Mr. Kenneth McCluskey, from Portadown chaired the meeting. Pastor T. Orr gave the charge to the Pastor. Pastor T.J. McNabb gave the charge to the church. Mr. E. Condy extended the right hand of fellowship to Mr. and Mrs. Spence.[53] The Lord's servant enjoyed the blessing of the Lord despite the many difficulties he faced at times. He saw the membership figure reach a record

of 62 persons.

Mr. Spence was a very young man when he came to Dungannon, but he showed great potential as a preacher and pastor. During his term of office the building underwent improvements. In the month of June 1962 the baptistry was completely rebuilt and beautifully tiled. On Sunday, July 17th, 1962 the waters of the new pool were stirred for the first time when a young woman was baptised.[54] During 1965 the complete front of the church building was renovated with the addition of a modern porch. When the work was completed the church was re-opened on Saturday, September 18th, 1965, when a large crowd representing Baptist churches from far and near witnessed the opening ceremony. The special speakers that day were Pastors Robert Clarke and T.J. McNabb. The former, who has since gone to glory, took as his subject *'The Biblical Belief of Baptists'* and the latter spoke on *'Earnestly Contending for the Faith'*.[55]

The Church Secretary - Mr. J.A. Woolsey - at the annual church social gave the following account of the work. *'In his report the secretary thanked the members and friends for their loyal and wholehearted support throughout another year. A great deal of work had been done and this gave much cause for praising the Lord. Recently the meetings had shown evidence of renewed enthusiasm and interest among God's people. He was confident the church was on the threshold of something great in the blessing of God. Despite heavy financial outlay in extensive renovations to the building the church's income had increased. This was both an encouraging and a healthy sign. Plans were afoot for evangelical outreach in Moygashel about two miles from Dungannon and the secretary encouraged the members to pledge their faithful and loyal support in coming days. He saw evidence of the Lord's hand in the securing of the Orange Hall then after some difficulty for after-church rallies on Sundays.'*[56]

One of the most noteable events during Mr. Spence's ministry was the mission which Pastor James Armstrong of Armagh held with the Christian Police Association in June, 1966. One encouraging feature was the success of the children's work under the capable leadership of Constable Cecil Rea, then a member of Armagh Baptist Church, but currently in membership with the Gilnahirk Baptist Church in Belfast.

Far away fields called again and Pastor Spence and his wife and family sailed to Australia in 1966 where he has held several successful pastorate.

The church was to be vacant again until 1972. In many ways these six years proved to be difficult and trying for the church at Dungannon. Like past occasions the church pulled through and enjoyed the evidence of the Lord's blessing. In these years the Lord was pleased to call two more of its members into full-time work. Mr. David McFarland joined the Child Evangelism Fellowship and Mr. Robert Ferguson became a Colporteur with the Irish Baptist Home Mission.

The church at Dungannon never owned a manse. A home was graciously provided for each successive pastor through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Boyd, since gone home to their reward. The members got together and purchased a bungalow from the late Mr. William McKinstry at a cost of almost £5,000. This was a massive undertaking for a small church of some 44 members. The Lord wonderfully answered prayer and even before a pastor was called the church had cleared the debt on the manse. The bungalow, on freehold ground, is situated conveniently to the church and town at Mullaghanagh, Dungannon.

During these years the work of all the departments of the church made progress, not least of all the Sunday School, now under the leadership of Mr. Bernie Shannon. It has always proved to be a most rewarding and encouraging work. The band of teachers are dedicated men and women who love the Saviour, and who are anxious to see the boys and girls saved. Many, who have since grown up and left the Sunday School, have much to thank God for. We got a grounding in the Word of God second to none. The present Sunday School is enjoying the blessing of the Lord, and is seeing the numbers of scholars increasing steadily.

For many years the women of the fellowship have carried on an important work in stirring up missionary interest. Through their monthly meeting of the Women's Missionary Auxiliary they have taken a great interest in the Irish Baptist Foreign Mission and have supported the work in Peru, South America, through their prayers and gifts. The children's work and the Youth Fellowship have been maintained together with the prayer meeting each week.

A new chapter in the history of Dungannon Baptist Church opened with the induction of a new pastor at an impressive service on Friday, September 15th, 1972. For over six years since the departure of Pastor William Spence to further Baptist work in Australia, the church at Station Road has been without a resident minister. It was with a great sense of fulfilment that

a large congregation gathered in the building to welcome Mr. William A. McGilton, his wife and family to Dungannon. Mr. McGilton is a native of Newtownards, where for 16 years he was a member of the Baptist church there. A maintenance electrician with Harland and Wolff, Belfast, he trained for the ministry at Bible Colleges in Surbiton and Belfast. Before he accepted a call to Dungannon he had been pastor in a part-time capacity of Cregagh Hall, Everton Drive, Belfast. During this time he enjoyed the blessing of the Lord on his work and witness and saw souls saved and added to the church.

The charge to the new pastor was given by Pastor T.J. McNabb of the Mountpottinger Tabernacle, Belfast. He said that the call to the Christian ministry is not a profession but a vocation, not a means of livelihood but an investment of life. One who assumes the position of a minister must have an overwhelming conviction that he is called by God to preach. He must be a man with a divine commission behind him, a divine summons before him and a divine conviction within him. Mr. McNabb encouraged Mr. McGilton to be *'a man of prayer, a man of passion, a man of purpose and a man of principle'* setting an example, which others may follow as they follow Christ. Preach the Word; feed the flock; let the light of the judgment seat of Christ fall on your page when you study and on your pulpit when you preach. You are a watchman; you must give account for souls in the day of judgment.

Pastor McGilton, in his reply to the welcome and right hand of fellowship, spoke of his sense of gratitude for the directing hand of God. *'I know that I am here tonight in God's will and in God's purpose'*. He pledged to work for the glory of God; to serve Him as the pastor of the church in Dungannon and to extend the kingdom of Christ in the town and district.

In giving the charge to the church Pastor J.A. Smyth, Knockconny and Gortmerron, based his address on 1 Corinthians 16:10. He drew a parallel between the coming of Mr. McGilton to the church at Dungannon and that of Timothy to the first-century church at Corinth. He stressed that church members had the responsibility of putting their pastor at ease by attending the services of the church, by creating an atmosphere in which strangers might feel welcome and by ensuring that their public testimony was above reproach.[57]

Both pastor and people are enjoying the blessing of the Lord. The numbers are increasing at all the services, souls are being saved and added to the church. The town of Dungannon is a needy district with a population of some 9,000 people. A great door and effectual has been opened for this thriving church in south Tyrone. There is great potential for this little body of believers and the future is full of promise for them. Brethren, pray for them!

G. RODGERS

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'Some lesser known sources of Irish Baptist History'

I am sorry that circumstances have forced me to offer a less ambitious title than the one I had proposed when this years' programme was drawn up, so that instead of producing a substantial bibliography I have had to confine myself to a few sources only. These however have been selected so as to illustrate something of what is available outside the recognised Irish Baptist field and perhaps to encourage other to keep an eye open for similar material. It is impossible for a paper of this nature to be other than scappy but I shall endeavour to follow a rougly chronological order.

By 1650 the Cromwellian wars in Ireland were drawing to a close, by the summer of 1652 they were over. As the country came under Commonwealth control and re-settlement commenced the government sought to replace Catholic and Episcopal clergy with - *'ministers of the gospel'* brought over from England. Initially these men were paid directly by the state, and the Commonwealth Books[1] in the Public Record Office, Dublin recorded the names of some 376 such ministers amongst whom Seymour[2] has identified as Anabaptists the following:

Christopher Blackwood - Kilkenny 1653; Robert Clarke - Galway 1652, Aghalone (Queen's Carty) 1658; John Coleman - Cork 1654; William Dix - Carlow 1653, Belfast c. 1655, Derriaghy 1656; John Hunt - Maryborough 1653; James Knight - Limerick 1654, Drigle 1658; Thomas Patient - Kilkenny 1650, Waterford 1651, Dublin 1652; John Read - Belfast 1654; Philip Tandy - Lisburn 1658; William Wilsby - Co. Kerry 1654, Kilkenny 1655; Andrew Wyke - Dublin 1651, Lisburn 1651, Donaghcloney and Tullylish 1658,

Magheralin 1659.

We know of course that there were Baptists also at Athlone, Clonmel, Carrickfergus, and Waterford. In addition Rutty[3] mentions individual Baptists at Balturbet and Youghal. It was not to be expected that the intruders would be welcomed by the Episcopal clergy whom they replaced, but they seem to have been no more popular in other quarters, judging at least from the comment of Reid the Presbyterian historian about Andrew Wyke to whom he refers as *'void of learning, never educated, in that way, but a tradesman and imprudent'*.

State support of the 'ministers of the gospel' in Ireland did not receive uniform approbation in England. I quote from a tract in the Friends House Library, London, apparently of Baptist provenance, dated *'The 18 day of the second month, 1655'* and headed - *'The Messengers of several Churches in the County of Somerset, and other adjacent counties, assembled at Bridgewater to the churches of Christ assembling in Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, or elsewhere in Ireland....'* *'The second particular we have to mind you of is your dependency of the ministry on the maintenance of the Magistrate, which we do not see to be according to the gospel constitution, especially when Churches are of sufficient ability to maintain their ministry, if they improve their outward substance faithfully and not in superfluities. It's true that it is an ordinance of the Lord that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel.....but we nowhere find it in the gospel that the ministers of Christ should make use of the Magistrates power for to get a coercive maintenance for them.....we cannot but doubt that the large allowance by the state in Ireland hath drawn over many brethren to be preachers there. Not but that we rejoice in the flourishing of the gospel in that nation, and could desire there were more publishers of it: But it would have added to our joy if they had come there on better principles.'*

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 inaugurated a time of persecution for Dissenters, and Baptist records for the period are scarce. My next reference is therefore almost a hundred years later than the one just cited and concerns the *'Accounts of the Education and other funds belonging to the Baptist Congregation meeting in Swift's Abbey, Dublin.'*[2]

The Education Fund was apparently a bequest from John (?) Falkiner and was used as the following entries indicate:- *'1749 Paid Samuel Edwards for boarding and educating Wm. Bolton, £20'; '1768 To send John Lewellin to Bristol - £11. 7. 6.'; '14 Nov. 1775 Paid Thomas Jones for a/c George Osbourne - £11. 7. 6.';* George Osbourne received support from the Fund from 1775 to 1782 though whether as a theological student or for what purpose is not clear. To return to Wm. Bolton, there is an entry in 1750 - *'Wm. Bolton: Samuel Edwards boarded him and, in part at least, educated him. He went to Bristol 1751, Northampton 1752, Daventry 1753.'* He then appears to have returned to Dublin for - *'13 Nov. 1760, Mr. Bolton for Miles Crowley £5'.* This is supported by a pamphlet published in Dublin in 1760. Wm. Bolton, *'A sermon preached in the Baptist meeting house in Swift's Abbey 9 Nov. 1760 on the death of his late most excellent Majesty George 11.'*
Incidentally, 18th Century Baptists elsewhere in Ireland were not without political sentiments. Between 1776 and 1780 when Ireland was denuded of troops as a result of England's involvement in colonial wars, bodies of volunteers were raised to replace them, Volunteers who played a significant part in securing Ireland's political independence in 1782. A list of 150 such Volunteers in Cork in 1778[6] includes nine names which appear to have connections with the Cork Baptist Church.

The meeting-house in Swift's Abbey in which Bolton preached was not the one erected in 1652. That had been pulled down in 1738 and a new one built on the same site.[7] Nor did it long remain the only Baptist premises in Dublin as appears from a note in the Baptist Register, vol. V, 1816-17 which mentions the visit of James Rutherford in 1754 with the information that a second church had been established, apparently fairly recently. This could perhaps have been the body mentioned in connection with *'Mr. Palmers' tour of Ireland'* in 1801. Palmer reported - *Plunkett Street meeting-house was shut up and has been for some months, as the lease has expired.'* Later he says - *'Gregory is like to settle with a congregation raised at Newry; and Gunn at Blackrock... I was at the house of dear Mr. Horne the minister of Plunkett Street ... The people retook old Plunkett Street and I opened it again, preaching from Psalm 8.....'*[8]

The Swift's Abbey church was the subject of comment in 1818 - [9]-

Swift's Abbey meeting-house accommodates the congregation at the present

day, which consists of one hundred and fifty members who hold no tenets different from those in England. In point of ceremony, their baptisms by immersion are performed in a baptistry within their meeting-house and never in the open air as is sometimes the case in England and Wales. They have as yet no college for educating pastors in this country: they are periodically supplied from England and Wales. Their present minister is the Rev. Mr. West.

This congregation supports two schools - a day school consisting of fourteen girls, who are clothed, maintained and educated. This is supported by an annual charity sermon, producing with donations about £210. They also support a Sunday School in which sixty boys and seventy girls are taught. This latter school is distinguished by a remarkable feature: a master is provided who teaches Irish, and about twenty of the children avail themselves of his instruction. It is found that they learn to read the language they have been accustomed to speak with greater facility than a foreign one: they are therefore first taught to read Irish books, and learn to read English through this medium. Warburton adds in a footnote ... *'The Congregations at present in Ireland are - one in Waterford, which consists of 100 members; Cloughjordan, 100; Killtribber, 50; Cork, 100. Besides these, three congregations have been formed within the last year: Thurles, consisting of 70 members; Furban, 50; Clonmel, 40. In the north of Ireland there are eleven small congregations but they have no particular connection with the rest. The whole number in Ireland amounts to about 2000.... They hold the doctrine of adult baptism by immersion as of apostolic authority and deriving from John the Baptist...The Baptists of Ireland are remarkable for their sobriety, practical good sense, and submission to the civil magistrates.'*

While Warburton was writing about Dublin a deputation from the Drapers Company of London was visiting in Co. Derry the estates, centering on Draperstown, which had been granted to them during the 17th Century plantation of Ulster. Like most of the London Companies, and indeed the Irish Society to the present day they took a considerable, and benevolent interest in the activities of their tenants. Under the date 26 June 1817 the duputation recorded - *'It has been noted that many of the inhabitants of Brackaslievegullion and Ballinascreen*

are followers of a seceder from the Presbyterians. This gentleman's name is Carson; he was regularly educated and ordained as a Presbyterian minister: he bore an excellent character for learning and morality. The reasons for his secession do not seem to be known, and are rather attributed to him. In his secession he gave the synod offence by continuing, after his secession to hold the meeting in which he had been placed, under their authority, till he was ejected by legal process: he also gives offence to the synod by sending out low persons, without any education whatever as preachers and ministers of his tenets.' A little later the deputation, discussing the support which the Company should give to various ministers in their area say - *'The same principle applies to the Rev. Mr. Carson who has before been mentioned. He has no regular establishment which can be subscribed to; but whilst he continues to do good as a minister though irregularly, it is submitted that a subscription of ten guineas per annum to him for his ministerial labours may be proper, and would certainly be taken kindly by many worthy persons who attend his pulpit.'*[10]

The background to the Tobermore work is relatively well known, much less so that of a church which appears to have existed at about the same time in Armagh. Dr. Stuart writing in 1819 says - *'There were lately some Baptists in Armagh and its vicinity, and some male and female adults were, according to the rites of their church, immerged (sic.) with great solemnity by their pastor Mr. Hasty in the river Ballnahonemore, and others in the river Callan. This recurrence to the primitive mode of baptism has not been much imitated in that neighbourhood where, indeed the Baptists can scarcely be said to exist as a distinctive religious community.'*[11] The work in Armagh may have resulted from activity by the Baptist Irish Society (founded 1814), though it escapes mention in Principal D.P. Kingdon's valuable booklet, Baptist Evangelism in Nineteenth century Ireland (1965) . One would obviously like to know more about it and what happened to it. This is clearly an area in which the work of our Society is much needed.

Meantime, Baptists had re-appeared in Belfast and, according to Bradshaw's Directory for 1819, a small congregation was worshipping in King Street in a building which he dates from 1811. Much more information about the beginnings of work in Belfast is available in Mr. Dane

Skillings' articles on the history of the Great Victoria Street Church in the Irish Baptist between late 1947 and early 1949. I insert this snippet only to suggest that further research into such readily available sources as Directories might prove useful.

When the first ordnance survey maps of Ireland were prepared in the 1830's a companion parish by parish descriptive account was projected, intended to cover the whole county. Unfortunately the scheme was dropped before completion, but most Ulster parishes were surveyed and the manuscripts are available. (With very few exceptions none was published). These Ordnance Survey Memoir yield the following items:

Parish: Cappagh C.1834. *'A Baptist meeting house stands in Common (Camowen), capable of holding 400 persons on forms. It was built by Mr. Buchanan the present Consul at New York.'*[12]

A small publication by Rev. H.J. Law, The parish of Edenderry (Tyrone Constitution, 1949) throws some light on the church at Camowen. He says that at a Vestry meeting in 1837 held to consider the Government; valuation of townlands it was agreed that the Baptist meeting house at Camowen should be exempted from taxation. He thinks Rev. Samuel Culbertson was probably pastor at the time. He also refers to a headstone in Donaghonie old churchyard *'In memory of David Cook, late minister of the Baptist Church in Camowen who died August 1847 age 78 years, and of Margaret his mother. Also of his niece Margaret Love.'* Law refers to a small pond now filled in which used to be known as the Baptists' Dripping-Pool.

But to return to the Ordnance Survey Memoirs, the 1835 record for the parish of Coleraine includes - *'The Baptist Congregation consists of 30 regular members who receive the Sacrament together every Sunday. George Leslie Carson, Surgeon officiates 3 times every Sunday assisted by members of the congregation who wish to speak or are qualified. The Rev. Robert Dunlop was the last stationed Minister of this congregation but is now 15 years deceased. In 1833 the Rev. William Hamilton seceded from the Methodist Society (in connection with which he was a preacher) and proposed to come to Coleraine to join the present Baptist congregation, over which he presided for two years on trial, for the service of which he*

received £29, but differing from the congregation in sentiments of religious views respecting Church government and discipline, his service was dispersed with and he is now in the capacity of a grocer and delph dealer by means of which he is enabled to support his wife and family and still continue to preach twice every Sunday viz. once at his own house to a few individuals some of whom come from the other Baptist congregation and once at the other side of the water in a private house.

The congregation consists at present of 100, 70 of which are not members but come to hear. Hours of attendance are from 12 till 3 o'clock and from 5 till half past 6 p.m. each Sunday. Order of service is as follows viz. commences with singing and prayer after which a chapter is read and explained, then prayer again, then the Lord's Supper, then singing and prayer after which a collection is made for the poor of their own congregation exclusively, after which an exhortation is given and concludes by singing and prayer. The only expense connected with the place of worship is £5 per annum house rent, half of which is paid by the School Master who holds a school in the house. Benjamin Given is the proprietor. Two or three Baptist congregations viz Belfast, Omagh, Letterkenny and Coleraine have united together to support a Baptist Missionary who is to travel among them and to stop a few weeks in each town to preach and read the scriptures etc.'[13]

In the Memoir for the parish of Ballyscullion, 1837 there are two entries, one entitled 'Origin of Baptists in Grange of Ballyscullion' - *'On July 27th 1809 the Rev. George Gray, Baptist Minister, who was educated under the superintendence of Robert Holden Esq. of Edinburgh a Baptist, came to the old Presbyterian meeting-house of Grange and preached a sermon and established a Baptist congregation in the grange.'* The other entry is as follows:-

'The Baptist Meeting House is situated a little above the Presbyterian meeting house in the same townland. The house is not yet finished; nothing but the walls and roof. It is 24 by 18 feet inside and of stone, slated with 6 oblong windows no larger than the windows of a common farm house and cost about £50 - chiefly by subscription of the congregation, except £21 viz. £16 from Dublin and £5 from Belfast. There is no regular minister. The members speak themselves and are about 20 in number. This is the first Baptist Meeting House which has ever been erected in this part

of the country. It is about 30 years since the Baptist congregation commenced in this parish and held their meetings through the houses in the neighbourhood.'[14]

These exerpts are cited at random, and Ordnance Survey Memoirs are not necessarily accurate, but systematic search of other parishes would doubtless produce further information about other Baptist Congregations. So too would examination of the 1835 (manuscript) valuation records which show for instance an *'Anna Baptist Meeting House'* in the townland of Crilly, barony of Dungannon Lower. About two miles outside Aughnacloy on the old road to Caledon, this may well be one of the eleven churches in Tyrone mentioned by Principal Kingdon, but the identification is uncertain.

My next reference is one of those purely accidental finds which give one so much underserved pleasure. It comes from Margaret A.K. Garner. Robert Workman of Newtownbreda 1835-1921. (Belfast, 1969), p.20. The author talks about a visit to the Workman family by Robert Workman's maternal grandfather, a Baptist minister from Scotland. She says *'On one occasion when they were staying for a summer holiday in Bangor in the fifties, Mr. Kier walked to Conlig on a very hot day intending to take communion at the Baptist chapel there. The Baptists refused to received him and he came back to Bangor tired and annoyed.'*[15] So we have another date for Conlig (of which Thom's Irish Almenac, 1847, shows Mr. Mulhevn as minister) and know thay they practised closed communion.

It is time now for another excursion to the south and I have put together a number of references to the Cork church. There is an article *'The non-conformist communities of Cork city'* in the Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society which includes the following: *'In 1842 when the congregation of the Marlborough Street meeting-house was limited to three families and its minister support out a fund termed the Riggs Bequest, the building was temporarily handed over to the Plymouth Brethren. In 1848 it was re-opened as a Baptist meeting-house.'*[16] J. Windle, Historical and descriptive notices of the city of Cork (Cork,1849) refers thus to the burial ground in St. Stephen's Lane - *'on the headstones (13 in number) occur the names of Allen, Austen, Fowke, Falkiner, Jones, Lapp etc. The oldest monument is that of Edward Falkiner, date 1722.'*[17] According to Charles Smith, History of Cork (1815)[18] another burial there was that of Col. Phair one time governor of Cork, who died in 1682. The Dublin Gazette of 18 Feb. 1870 notifies that burials from that date were to

be discontinued. Another reference whose source I cannot trace at the moment says that one of the stories bears the inscription *'Anna Lapp, wife of Caleb Falkiner'*, the name Lapp being associated with Lapp's Quay. An old woman, presumably in the early 1800's remembered two burials in the graveyard and the local practice of drying washing on the tombstones.

In 1842 the Coleraine church moved from Bell-house Lane to their present site in Abbey Street in the angle formed by Dippers Lane. The occasion was reported in the Derry Sentinel and the report reproduced in the Belfast News Letter of 29 Nov. 1842 - *'Opening of Baptist Chapel in Coleraine. On Sunday last the services in connection with the opening of the new Baptist house of worship, Coleraine, were commenced at twelve o'clock noon. The Rev. Alex Carson LL.D., Tubbermore and the Rev. John Bates, Ballina delivered appropriate sermons on the occasion, and at six o'clock evening the Rev. Frederick Trestrail of Cork preached in the same place. The house on each occasion was crowded by attentive congregations. The collections amounted to upwards of £20. The chapel, which will accommodate 300 individuals has been erected through the untiring exertions of the Rev. WS. Eccles, the much esteemed pastor, and some active members of the church. On the Monday evening following a tea meeting was held in the chapel which was respectably attended. At seven o'clock, tea being over, the Rev. Dr. Carson was called to the chair, and the meeting was addressed by the following ministers: The Rev. Mr. Bryce (Seceders) on "Christian Union"; Rev. Mr. Potter (Independent) on "The necessity of individual effort to propogate the Gospel"; Rev. F. Trestrial (Baptist) on "The nature and duty of prayer"; Rev. Mr. McKay (Weslyan) on " Personal piety"; W. A. Cathcart (Covenanter) on "Sabbath Schools"; Rev. Bates (Baptist) on "Missions".'*

Nineteeneth century newspapers showed a much greater interest in church affairs than do those of today, a tendency particularly marked after the 1859 Revival. By that time every Sunday School treat, every Gospel Mission was news. The task of a denominational historian of the period is selection rather than discovery. As an example, the Belfast News Letter of 13 July 1863 reported what we now call the Assembly Meeting as follows:- *'Irish Baptist Association. The annual meeting of Baptist churches in Ireland was held on July 7th, 8th and 9th in the United Presbyterian Church, York Street. The following ministers were present:- Rev. C.J. Middleditch,*

Secretary of the Baptist Irish Society; Rev. Charles Room, London; Rev. R.M. Henry, Belfast; Rev. W. Eccles, Banbridge; Rev. R. Carson, Tubbermore; Rev. J. Brown, Conlig; Rev. W. L. Giles, Dublin; Rev. Wm. Stokes, Ballina; Rev. G. Thomas Berry, Athlone; Rev. W. Hamilton, Belfast; Rev. C.T. Keen, Ballymena; Rev. Thos. Evans, Waterford; Rev. A. Tessier, Coleraine; Rev. A. Livingstone, Dunfanaghy; Rev. H.H. Bourne, Portadown. The proceedings of the association were commenced by a public service on Tuesday evening. On the following day a public prayer meeting was held at 10 a.m. at which the chair was taken by Rev. W. S. Eccles and the devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Keen, Stokes, Tessier, Bourne, and Carson. At the close of the prayer meeting, after a short recess, the ministers and messengers of the churches met for business. After a short preliminary statement had been made by the chairman, the Rev. R.M. Henry, a report and minutes of a conference held in Dublin were read by the secretary, Rev. W. L. Giles. It was then arranged that the next annual meeting be held at Banbridge, and the following officers were elected for the next year:- Rev. C.J. Middleditch, president; Rev. W. L. Giles, secretary; W. Cherry Esq., treasurer; Rev. Messrs. R.M. Henry, Giles and Carson committee for the current year. Rev. Messrs. Tessier and Keen to preach the annual sermons for the Association, and Rev. R.M. Henry to write the annual circular letter, on the subject of prayer. Interesting accounts were given during the meeting of the progress which the Baptist denomination had made.'

One other very small newspaper entry to illustrate what is readily available though little used - Church Notices in the Irish Times of Saturday 15 March 1862 included, for the following date, Baptist Meetings:- Lower Abbey Street, Rev. W. Leese, and Grosvenor Road, Rathmines, Rev. Philip Baillsby. Information about the English Baptists in Grosvenor Road is doubtless available elsewhere, but if not, church notices like these might prove informative.

Finally we return to the north and look at two pieces of information from Government sources. The Union Handbook shows the foundation date of the Baptist church in Portadown (Thomas Street) as 1924. What then do we make of the Griffith Valuation Note Book which shows, apparently

for 1864, a Baptist Meeting House in Bridge Street.[19] This was on the upper storey of a building, possibly a store and was rented to the Baptists at £10 per year.

Another query is raised by an entry in the Fifty-third annual report of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland,[20] which shows sums received between 1 July 1896 and 1 July 1897 and includes *'Regent Street Baptist Church, Belfast - £1000 (cash)'*. Why should Regent Street have lodged money with the Commissioners, and what was the source of such a large sum?

One could without difficulty produce more, with further research along the lines which these extracts suggest, very much more.

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