

## **EARLY EVANGELICAL REVIVALS IN AUSTRALIA**

This Book is available through Koorong Bookstores for \$55.

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This book tells the story of movements of the Holy Spirit in this southern land up to 1880. The various denominations grew as a result of immigration from the British Isles. Most of the Protestant churches were boosted because of the revivals which had occurred in the “Home Lands.” Varying Church growth also flowed from the revivals in Australia.

The early revivals in Australia were mainly Methodist, although the spirit of Evangelicalism was widespread, and the impact of the 1859 Revival was felt by all of the churches. Before about 1860, the records of these revivals have come to us mainly through biographies. After that date, the Wesleyan Methodist denominational newspapers were the main ones which both tell the story, and have survived until the present. The main exception was in South Australia, where both the Primitive Methodists and the Bible Christians were stronger than they were in the other states, and some of their papers have survived.

In this book, these revivals are described, and other observations are included at the end. It is the author’s hope that the accounts of these revivals will not only

illuminate Australia's own history, but will stir Australians to pray for greater movements of the Holy Spirit today, and in the future.

## **THE AUTHOR**

**Robert Evans** was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1937. His family's religious background was in a tiny hyper-Calvinist Baptist denomination. He trained for the Methodist ministry, and was ordained by the New South Wales Conference in 1967. He served as a circuit minister, and subsequently also in the Uniting church, retiring in 1998.

He graduated from the University of Sydney, majoring in philosophy and modern history. In his researches he has specialised in studying modern evangelical revivals, the great awakenings, and the literature relating to these movements, assembling a large library about these subjects.

His first major book was "Evangelical Revivals in New Zealand", written jointly with the Rev. Roy McKenzie, and published in New Zealand in 1999. He is also an amateur astronomer, widely known for his visual discoveries of many supernovae in other galaxies, mostly using "backyard" telescopes. His awards include the Medal of the Order of Australia for contribution to science.

***EARLY***  
***EVANGELICAL***  
***REVIVALS***  
***IN***  
***AUSTRALIA***

*A "Study of" Surviving Published Materials*

*about Evangelical Revivals in Australia*  
*up to 1880*

*by*

*Robert Evans*

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## PREFACE

It is a privilege, and a source of wonder and praise, to study the great works of God. Amongst the many interesting examples of these are the mighty workings of the Holy Spirit, as seen during times when the Spirit of God is poured out in the Great Awakenings and revival movements in the history of the Christian Church.

This book seeks to study those movements which occurred in the early days of white settlement in Australia, up until about 1880.

In a project of this kind I have become indebted to a wide range of people.

The main library that supplied my needs, and that I have depended upon very heavily is the library of the Uniting Church Records and Historical Society here in New South Wales. I am indebted to the Archivists over the period of research, Mrs. Joan Mansfield and Mr. Daryl Lightfoot, as well as to the Rev. Eric G. Clancy, and the other friends at the library.

The main theological library I have troubled is the Camden Library at the United Theological College, near Parramatta.

The State Archives of Tasmania, the State Library of Victoria, and the Mortlock Library of South Australiana, have each sold me key photocopies and microfilms. The Mitchell Library in Sydney also has copies of a rare periodical that I searched.

Every student in the field of evangelical revivals in Australia (as in many other countries) is seriously indebted to Dr. J. Edwin Orr.

Here in Sydney, Dr. Stuart Piggin has also been very encouraging in all that I have tried to do in this area of research. The subject is a major interest of his, and his writings on revival are of great interest and value.

Other individuals to whom I am indebted include Mrs Mavis James, who is linked somehow to the Rev. Walter Lawry; Mr. Graeme Wilcox, who is a descendent of James Rutledge; Mr. Walter Ashby of Hobart, Mr. Travis McHarg of Melbourne, Mrs Margaret Lamb of Wollongong, Mr. J. R. Harbison, who is the historian amongst the members of the National Trust at Moonta, in South Australia. Mr. Colin Watson, who cares for the Uniting Church Archives in Adelaide, has also helped me considerably.

The photographs have been copied from old sources. I am indebted to Bathurst City Uniting Church for the 1861 portraits. Mr. and Mrs Reg. McDonell have helped in preparing all of the photographic materials for use in the book.

Encouragement in this work has come from many people. I am thankful to you all. My wife, Elaine, has continually offered her love, and is a great source of encouragement. She has put up with my behaviour during the many, many hours spent in this research, and in the time I have spent at the computer doing the actual writing and editing, and has accepted the expense that it has cost us both.

Our prayer is that this story of the mighty acts of God will bring praise to His Name, and will spark a renewed interest in a sweeping revival in Australia in the near future. God grant that it may be so.

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to draw attention to, and to delineate as far as possible, the evangelical awakenings and revivals in the early years of Australia's history since white settlement.

I first became interested in evangelical awakenings and revivals in the mid-1950's, soon after I left high school. Like most others who develop an interest in the subject, my knowledge began with reading about the major British and American movements.

There was a prevailing belief at that time in the circles where I moved in Sydney that Australia had never been blessed with widespread revivals. Before long, as I read what I could about the subject, it became clear to me that at least some revivals had happened here, even if they were not as epoch-making as some of the British and American ones.

The researches of Dr. J. Edwin Orr have served to open up the subject for us all. His researches have done this regarding the history of God's work in many countries, and this is true for Australia, as well. He has visited Australia many times. His book "Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas" was published in 1976. The book, of course, covers many more countries than Australia alone. Only a few fairly brief chapters apply to Australia. But even that was a landmark.

I first heard him speak about revival in 1957. During his visit to Australia in 1979, there were many opportunities to discuss the whole area of interest with him. It was a privilege to have him as guest in our home. Twice I visited the Orrs in California, and he helped me with my collection of materials.

He hoped that other historians would take up the task where he had left off. He died in 1987. There has been a response. For example, several recent publications written by the Rev Brynmor P. Jones have publicly taken up this task, so far as Welsh revivals are concerned. Dr. Stuart Piggin has also published material on Australian evangelicalism, which looks a little at the revival scene. Other historians have taken up the issue in more restricted areas of interest.

Up to the time when I began to prepare this book, however, no extensive or comprehensive history of evangelical awakenings and revivals had been written about Australia.

After I had been working on the first stages of this book for several months, the suggestion arose to work on a similar project about New Zealand with a newly acquired Kiwi friend, the Rev. Roy McKenzie. Roy is a Presbyterian minister. Keenly interested in this subject, and he was ready to start immediately. Together, over the next eight months, we brought together the text of a book of about 370 pages entitled "Evangelical Revivals in New Zealand." Some more months were spent in editing the manuscript, and preparing master copies for the printer and publisher. This was a great experience for me, in preparing a large manuscript for publication, and also in finding out how little I knew about the history of New Zealand, its evangelism, and its church and missionary history. By mid-1999 I was able to return to the Australian project.

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Originally, my purpose in writing this book was to produce a fuller, overall history of such movements in Australia, and hopefully to bring the story up to the middle of the Twentieth Century, at least.

As my work proceeded, however, it was quickly realised that this original purpose could not be carried out, within the confines of one book. Several factors operated here.

1. The first major problem was that there was too much material. So it was evident that more than one volume would be involved, if I was to finish the task. Or else, if I wrote one volume about part of the story, others could tell other parts. So, I made a decision to draw a line at the year 1880, and to prepare my book about the events before that date. If any second volume should ever appear from me, perhaps it will tell the next stage, between 1880 and 1914.

2. The main difficulty, however, was that - while extensive accounts of revivals amongst the Wesleyan Methodists in Australia exist, from which to tell my story, this was not true for any of the other churches or denominations.

To a smaller degree, but not in a satisfactory way, there are some accounts of revivals amongst the smaller Methodist denominations - the Primitive Methodists and the Bible Christians.

So far as I can tell at present, there is hardly any information about local revivals in Australia amongst Presbyterians and Congregationalists before 1880. I have found a little, which has been included, but not much.

It is for this reason that so many Australians who are interested in their heritage in revivals, and in the great works of God, but who do not come from Methodist roots, will feel disappointed, with this book. They will look for a glorious Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregationalist or Baptist heritage in these matters, and not be able to find very much here. Certainly, such a heritage in revivals exists for them in other parts of the world, but the evidence here is largely lacking.

3. I feel quite confident that the Presbyterians and Congregationalists in those early days before 1880 saw some events which would be well worth recording in a history of revivals. Certainly, many of them wanted to see widespread revivals, and prayed much for them to happen. But I have not been able to gather much evidence to show that these revivals occurred here.

It may well be that the lack of recording of spiritual events is a problem in some of these cases. It may be that a record was made, but was not published, and a manuscript or minute book exists somewhere.

4. I have felt that some of the more Calvinistic people in these early denominations used the word "revival" in a more restricted way than the Methodists did. I cannot prove this, but perhaps they would have used the word "revival" to describe a widespread movement, if it had happened, but did not apply it to successful evangelism in the local church. I am sure they had some good evangelism. Methodists gave the word a wider application than that.

5. In many instances, Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian documents and minute books may have existed up to the time of Methodist Union in 1902. But after that date they were not valued, and were not preserved. This was in part due to a lack of appreciation of the historical value that these documents might have in the future. It was also in part due to the fact that the Wesleyan body was much larger than the other smaller Methodist denominations, and the contributions which the smaller bodies brought into the union tended to be undervalued; perhaps even despised by some. In any case, many of the Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian documents have not survived. The even smaller Methodist bodies would normally have even less chance of seeing their papers survive.

6. In the Nineteenth Century, there were many church publications, newspapers, periodicals, etc., which were only published for a short period, perhaps for a few years, or less. It would have been a simple matter for all the issues for these publications to be lost. No doubt this has happened in quite a few instances. Even some of the productions of a more substantial kind are partly, or wholly lost.

7. Even amongst the Wesleyan Methodists, many of the personal journals or diaries which were written by its leading figures have never been published. In some cases the manuscripts may be lost. Perhaps they still exist somewhere, but no historians or librarians know where they are. Perhaps they are in a library somewhere, but the information of their whereabouts has not been spread to others who might like to know.

For the Wesleyans in Australia, this is a little disappointing, because one of the very strong features of early Wesleyanism was its wonderful literature in biography and spiritual experience. Such publications were a great inspiration to the following generations.

Of course, we must be thankful for the biographies that have been published, and for the spiritual inspiration that they contain.

8. As a result of these factors, the account of Australian revivals presented here is heavily dependent upon Wesleyan Methodist source materials.

I would certainly be glad to hear from anyone with information about revivals that I have missed, for some reason, and especially if this applies to the, other denominations that have not been covered so well here.

## DEFINITIONS

### **What is an Evangelical Revival?**

Normal church life can go on for many years without there being any revival. Normal church life can include people being converted, and growing in the knowledge of God and in the graces of the Spirit. Indeed, many churches have depended upon what they can do in such normal times to represent the entire history and meaning of their existence.

If churches grow, in normal times, it is usually because of political, economic, social or cultural factors which play in their favour, and help produce the more favourable circumstances in which the church is able to grow. So, while good spiritual factors probably will also play a role in such growth, they tend to be secondary factors.

Whether at normal times, or in times of revival, it is the work of the Holy Spirit which directs people to faith in, and obedience to Christ, as revealed in the New Testament. This work of the Spirit includes conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment, in preparing a person to become a Christian, and to progress in that life of Christ. It is also the Spirit's work to create "the new birth" within the repentant.

The key fruit of this life in Christ is the believer's growth in Scriptural holiness.

A revival movement is primarily a work of the Holy Spirit of God, which brings about a resurgence of spiritual life, holiness, power and effectiveness, regardless of what roles may have been played by any or all of the social and cultural factors, etc., referred to above. Certainly these other social factors may play a role, but they are no longer the primary ones. Also, many human customs, beliefs, and other factors, may appear in connection with a revival movement. Some may help the spiritual quality of the movement. Others may produce a situation where people think that more harm than good is coming from the revival movement.

An evangelical revival is an upsurge and a reappearance of the fundamental pattern of

the evangelical workings of the Holy Spirit, as foretold by Christ in Saint John's Gospel, and as fulfilled in the events of the Day of Pentecost, and subsequent similar events, as described in the New Testament.

It is also possible to try to define evangelical revival by listing factors about these movements. For example, someone made lists of the symptoms and fruit of revivals sent from heaven.

The **symptoms** of evangelical revival are (1.) preaching the Word with unusual effect, attended by an unusual thirst to hear the Word of God; (2.) the prevalence of anxious enquirers, and (3.) earnest desire for God - expressed in much secret and social prayer.

The **fruits** of evangelical revival include (1.) sorrow and shame at our former lesser spiritual state; (2.) hearty renunciation of sin, and fuller dedication to God; (3.) a high and loving esteem for communion with God, and for all the means of grace; (4.) a spirit of charity, humility and teachableness; (5.) zeal for reaching others for God, and (6.) great concern to adorn the Gospel well, and to be a living recommendation of it.

Down through the history of the Christian Church, there have been many events which fit into this pattern. and which, in recent centuries, people have called "revivals. "

Revivals have also usually been the key to the great growth periods in the Church's history.

The history of revivals, and of the results of these revivals, is the history of the growth of the Christian Church in its true spiritual quality. The subject of Church History, when it is approached this way, is always "a cordial for drooping spirits."

An "evangelical" revival - that is, a revival to which the word "evangelical" is prefixed - is one base in Protestant evangelical theology, as it came from the Reformation. In English speaking countries, this tradition is usually seen as modified by the English Puritans, and by the theology and experience of the Great Awakenings and the Methodist Revivals, in the times of John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards.

This means that revivals which are associated with other theological streams within the overall Christian framework would not necessarily be called "evangelical" revivals, but they could be called revivals associated with this other stream in the life of the Christian Church.

For example, the revival in the High Anglican Church associated with the life and work of Pusey and Newman may well be called a revival, but it would not be called an evangelical revival. On the other hand, the revival associated with the life of Saint Francis of Assisi would be called a revival within the Roman Catholic Church. But, because of many features about it, this revival might also be called an evangelical revival, despite the fact that it occurred before the Reformation.

As a result, in thinking about, or writing about, evangelical revivals in particular, nothing is implied by way of criticism of the many other streams within the Christian Church. There is no implication that people in these other streams are lacking in value to the work of God, or that they lack in Christian saintliness.

An "Awakening" is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit directly upon a community or country, causing people who have not necessarily any connection with the church to realise their need of God, and seek the Lord. It usually, but not always, is associated with revival in the churches.

The Great Awakening, for example, is a term used to apply to the impact of the revivals around 1740 in Massachusetts upon the whole American scene. The impact of the English movement was brought to America by George Whitefield. But it was also an indigenous thing, arising partly through the work of Jonathan Edwards, and others of similar mind. It affected Virginia and the South some years later.

The Second Great Awakening is a term used to apply to the many revivals which

occurred in many parts of the world between 1792 and 1830. These revivals had an enormous formative impact in Britain and the United States especially, and upon missionary work around the world. This impact continued for many years.

### **Methodist Ethos - They Saw Themselves as "Revival" Churches**

In the documents that I have perused during my research, I saw repeatedly that the Methodists in the Nineteenth Century saw themselves as being part of a great tradition of revival. It was the main key to their existence, and to their future prosperity. The Methodist Church owed its birth to revival. All of its great growth in the past was due to revival. They expected that its future growth would only be possible through revival.

The Methodist class-meetings and organisation, and the system of travelling preachers, in the days of John Wesley, arose because of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon their activities, and throughout the English, Welsh, Irish and American scene in which the preachers operated. This was augmented by the great evangelistic work of George Whitefield, perhaps the greatest evangelist that the world has seen. In Wales, the preaching of Howell Harris and Daniel Rowland, and others similar to them, played a vital role in transforming the scene in that country. Amongst many great personalities in American Methodism, Francis Asbury saw revival as the key to the existence and growth of the American Methodist Episcopal Church. The early Methodist Church, when it became a separate thing, therefore, was a revival church.

At the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, a number of divisions occurred within the British Methodist scene. But, without exception, these groups all saw themselves as revival churches. The Nineteenth Century was a period of unparalleled growth of Methodism in Britain and in the United States.

So, the heritage was in revival. Their growth occurred because of revivals. Their only hope of continued growth was to see more revivals. This was their universal self-understanding. This is what they brought to Australia, during the period covered by this book, up to 1880.

Another way of looking at the issue is this:- In early Australia, the Anglican Church grew because of all the people coming from England who had links of some kind to the state church they had left behind. The Presbyterian Church grew because of immigration from Scotland, especially promoted by John Dunmore Lang. The Congregational Churches grew because people who had been members of that denomination at home in England migrated to Australia. The Roman Catholic Church grew for the same reason, because Catholics migrated here from Ireland.

The Methodist Churches in Australia grew in part because miners came here from Cornwall, and from other mining areas of the old country. But that is not the whole story. The Methodist Churches also grew because the Methodists were better than others in winning converts once people arrived here. It was the revivals which caused the extra growth. This was especially true in South Australia, where Methodists would have come to comprise perhaps ten percent of the population of South Australia in the Nineteenth Century by immigration alone. But, by the year 1900. Methodists comprised twenty-five percent of the South Australian population. The extra percentage was achieved by revivals, and persistent evangelism.

## Methodist Organisation

In order to appreciate what I have written about the Methodist revivals in Australia, it is necessary to know a few details about the Methodists first.

Regarding **church organisation**, each area of the country was organised into a "circuit" of churches (or chapels) and other preaching places (a home or a school hall). Usually a minister was in charge of each circuit. However, the minister could not conduct all of the services in a circuit. He was heavily dependent upon lay people who were recognised by the church as "local preachers", within that circuit.

The governing body in the circuit was the "Quarterly Meeting," which was always chaired by the minister. If more than one minister worked in a circuit, one of them would be appointed by the Conference as the "superintendent."

Circuits were arranged into "Districts", which met once a year, presided over by the "Chairman of the District." Districts, in their turn, belonged to an annual "Conference," and a President of the Conference was elected by his peers for a one-year term. The President had considerable power in between the annual Conference meetings. The President spoke and acted for the church, and he had to be obeyed.

In the case of the Wesleyan Methodists, before 1854, Australia and the whole South Pacific, was one missionary district, under the control of the Mission Board in London. In 1854, the colonies became separate districts within an Australasian Conference, which included New Zealand and the Pacific. That represented autonomy from English control, although they always looked to England as a kind of father and mother Spirit.

Finally, in 1874, three Conferences were formed, one covered Victoria and Tasmania, another covered New South Wales and Queensland, and the other covered South Australia and the Northern Territory.

Over these colonial conferences and districts there was a General Conference, which had power to make the rules for the lesser bodies.

**Church membership**, in those days, was governed by the rule which had come down from the time of Wesley himself. It was that - in order to be a member of the Methodist Church it was necessary to attend a class-meeting once a week.

For missing class meetings without reasonable excuse, a member could be admonished, perhaps suspended, or could be struck off the list of members. As the story unfolds, the reader will see that this system of determining who was, or was not, a member of the Methodist Church, held a number of problems within it, although it also had many strengths.

## Methodist Doctrinal Emphases

The main strength, which Wesley had upheld, was that every member was compulsorily nurtured in the spiritual life, within the confines of a supporting, praying group of people, who were all supposed to be thirsting for holiness, and keen to win others to Christ at every opportunity. Every member was a core group member. There were no lukewarm members. As we shall see, this ideal performed well enough during the very early days in Australia, but it slowly deteriorated during the period we have under review.

Apart from these core members - the regular attenders at class-meetings - the Methodists had a much larger number of people who attended public worship, and it was amongst these people that much of the soul-winning was done. Naturally, there was also some evangelism amongst people who had no close connection with any church.

**Conversion and Assurance.** When a person was converted, or born again by the

Spirit of God, and became a practising evangelical Christian in the proper sense of the word, the Methodists believed that this should be a recognisable, experience which would occur to a person in such a way that they would know that it had happened, and would probably know when it happened.

An important part of this was that a person would receive from the Holy Spirit a sense of assurance, or an inner witness of the Spirit, that they were in fact forgiven by God, and that the Holy Spirit had come to take possession of their lives.

This assurance had been a major factor in John Wesley's own experience, and he emphasised it for all his followers.

As a result, when a call was made for people to respond to the gospel appeal, and they were called to the Communion rail, and to the prayer meeting that usually followed such an appeal, the results were usually listed as - there were so many seekers, or penitents. A smaller number obtained pardon. The rest were still under conviction, or were still seeking.

The seekers or penitents were those who answered the appeal. Those who obtained pardon were those who not only believed that God had, for Christ's sake pardoned them, but that they knew it had happened to them. They had the inner witness of the Spirit. They were sure. The remainder were not sure, or still had questions, problems or uncertainties.

**Entire Sanctification.** Also, believers were many times urged to seek "perfect love" or "entire sanctification." This was always viewed as a crisis experience. which would come as the Spirit of God met the person, as they came to God in repentance and prayer. They would somehow know that the Spirit had met their need. This could take many forms, such as giving them a vision of the holiness of God, or filling them with a great sense of love for God and for other people. It might involve a new thirst to win others to Christ. It was always related to growth in holiness, and could also include a new degree of effectiveness in Christian work. The expression could also be used that it was a spiritual "baptism" of some kind.

This did not deny that growth took place by degrees, or slowly, at other times. It was just that strong emphasis was being placed upon the value of the crisis experience, and God often met them there.

**"Special Services."** Readers of this book will see that special services, of one kind or another, were used by the Methodists very extensively as means in order to promote a revival of vital religion.

Before the time of "California" Taylor's visit, revivals occurred more often as the results of normal church services. But, after his visit, the Methodists began using special services much more deliberately and extensively, perhaps taking a cue from Taylor.

Apparently, the other Protestant evangelical denominations did not use special services in this way at all, until about 1877, when the Wesleyans took note of the fact that special services were being adopted as an appropriate means by the other denominations, as well.

After 1880, special evangelistic services were used very extensively by all the Australian churches, including the Roman Catholics, as a major tool for winning converts, especially amongst the young people linked to the churches, and amongst people on the fringe of the church's life. Such efforts also sought to deepen commitment amongst those who were already involved in the church.

The Methodists, however, had used special services for other purposes apart from their efforts to have a revival. They used them for church and Sunday- school anniversaries, efforts to raise money for church building programmes, or for foreign missions, or for any other special project.

The only "special services" that concern us in this book, however, are the ones used as a means to promote a revival of vital religion, or which were used in

the service of a revival which had begun in some other way.

Readers should learn to distinguish between special services linked to a revival, and ones which are more generally evangelistic, but do not necessarily have much of revival power in them.

In writing this book I have generally tried to include all the instances I where the people actually involved in the events said that a revival was occurring, I to some degree, in their midst.

The reader might easily think that I have been too generous, and sometimes included instances where there was evangelism but no revival. Whatever one might think on that matter, however, I am sure that we can learn good lessons from the whole range of episodes included in the book.

### **Dr. Arnold Hunt's Points about the Early Methodists**

In a taped address about the Moonta Revival of 1875, the Rev. Dr. Arnold Hunt, historian of Methodism in South Australia, has listed **eight** points which he thought were important indicators about the early Methodists in that colony. A quick look at those points will be very fitting here.

(1.) The early Methodists were certain that good growth of their church was normal, and if it did not happen, they would want to know why.

(2.) There was pressure to get results, especially pressure upon the minister. In some of the groups, if a minister did not see a revival during his term of work in a circuit, he could get into trouble for it. He would have to explain why, or he could be officially chastised for it. If there was local economic decline, for any reason, and many church members left the district - this was no excuse. Being, good Arminians, many of them thought that revival could be had at any time that people were willing to use the right means. The reader can reflect upon whether or not such an Arminian view is justified by the subsequent events.

(3.) They believed in, and practised, the central place of prayer in the local church.

(4.) They believed that everyone should have a datable conversion experience.

(5.) Often a tragedy of some kind played a role in the coming of a revival, in a locality.

(6.) Australian Methodism benefited especially from the powerful tradition of revivals which had been experienced in Cornwall. This was clearly true in South Australia. But, as mentioned earlier, if we widen the comment to include the many areas of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, where Methodist revivals had occurred so abundantly, the comment would apply to all of the Australian colonies. Methodist revivals in the "old country" were certainly a great driving force in favour of seeking similar outpourings of the Spirit here.

(7.) Many of the South Australian revivals occurred in close-knit religious communities where there were not very many other options open to a person. This could well have been true in some other parts of Australia, as well, but not as a general rule. This was because a good many of the revivals occurred in larger country towns, or in capital cities.

(8.) Finally, Hunt raises the question as to whether it was easier to be religious in those sorts of communities than it is for us today.

Hunt's points are well worth bearing in mind as a reader approaches this book.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### EARLY REVIVALS

#### in NEW SOUTH WALES to 1858

The early years of the colony of New South Wales were marked by modest evangelical influences, as well as by enormous doses of godlessness and violence.

The godlessness came from the fact that Port Jackson was a penal colony, and for a number of years most of the inhabitants were convicts who were the overflow from the various prisons throughout the British Isles. The violence arose from the way the convicts were often treated, and from their own outlook on life and society.

The modest evangelical influences came from the fact that a chaplain had been sent with the first fleet, and this appointment had been arranged through the influence of members of the evangelical wing of the Anglican Church in England, especially by William Wilberforce and his group. The Rev. Richard Johnson, first chaplain, was chosen because he reflected the outlook of this wing of the Church.

He had a very difficult time in New South Wales, partly because so few of those early settlers shared his stand for Jesus Christ. Many of them made things hard for him, including the Governor, Captain Arthur Phillip. Johnson built the first church in Sydney at his own expense. Church attendance was made compulsory for the convicts, and, perhaps because of this, the church building was mysteriously burned down shortly afterwards.

The second chaplain, who replaced Mr Johnson in due course, was a much stronger character, and made his presence felt more definitely. He was also chosen because of the influences of another group within the evangelical wing of the state Church. The Rev. Samuel Marsden made the missionary work in Australia and New Zealand his life's work. In his early years he had been brought up amongst the Methodists. He shared much of their evangelical emphasis.

The first Wesleyan missionary to come to New South Wales was the Rev. Samuel Leigh, who arrived here in 1814. He was welcomed not only by the handful of active Methodists, but also by the Marsden family, when he reached their place, at Parramatta. Leigh worked without any company of other clergy of his denomination for several years, and his health became affected by the strenuous nature of his pioneering and frontier style of work. In the first year or two, successful evangelistic work commenced around Sydney, starting in a rented room in "The Rocks" area, near Sydney Cove. A number of conversions occurred, in response to Leigh's preaching, and good relief work was done amongst the needy.

Soon after, a church building was erected in Macquarie Street. Leigh had developed a widespread circuit, including Parramatta, Windsor and Castlereagh. Before long, the western end of the circuit developed even more.

A helper arrived a few years later in the person of the Rev. Walter Lawry. This gave Leigh the opportunity to follow the suggestion of his friend Samuel Marsden, and he made a trip to New Zealand, in order to see if the Wesleyans could start a mission there. Upon his

return to New South Wales, he prepared to go to London, to get the Missionary Committee to support this plan.

Conversions also occurred under Walter Lawry's preaching. A few of his converts were soldiers, who soon were posted to Van Diemen's Land, where they started the first Wesleyan class meeting in that part of the world.

Soon, Leigh returned to the southern lands, but spent his time trying to establish a mission to the Maoris. Tribal wars made this task difficult, and finally impossible, with the temporary collapse of the Wesleyan work in New Zealand in t 1827. Leigh returned to Australia for a few years, but his health was so bad that he l could do very little to be helpful, and he went back to England in 1830.

The period through the 1830's was very difficult for the Wesleyan work in New South Wales, mainly because of manpower problems, with ministers passing through to other areas, and those who were in Sydney being unable to perform their duties to the fullest degree, for reasons of health. There were also financial limitations.

The Rev. Joseph Orton arrived to take charge of all aspects of the work in 1832. Although he spent much time travelling to other places, his work in Sydney saw an interesting upsurge beginning on 15th January, 1835. "This evening the Love Feast was held in the Princes-street Chapel. At the commencement, the meeting was rather dull; about nine o'clock, there was an evident feeling among the people, which gradually increased. I requested that those who were really seeking the forgiveness of their sins, would simply express their feelings, and many were led to do so. The expression of feeling so much increased, and as it was getting late, I concluded the public service and requested as many as thought proper to remain. The penitents were collected near to the pulpit, and we commenced our supplications. The Lord was pleased to answer prayer. The meeting continued till, a little past midnight, during which time a most powerful manifestation of the presence of God was felt. Six persons found the pardoning mercy of God; principally young persons; amongst whom it rejoices my heart to record was my own beloved daughter I count this blessed season the beginning of better days amongst us as a Society. My heart is excited more ardently than ever to cry 'Lord, revive Thy work.'" (1.)

Sunday School work progressed steadily, and new work was begun in several locations as the settlement of Sydney town expanded. Despite this encouragement, the decade was a difficult period, and the state of affairs in the Wesleyan work was not prospering as might be desired.

The year 1838 saw the arrival of a layman, John Vidler, in the Illawarra area, to work as a farm labourer. "He held his first service some time before Christmas, 1838, in his own hut, built of blankets on a rough frame, work; his congregation being his wife, himself, and his brother James. Holding occasional services at Dapto, he met Mr. William Bursall and Mr. Robinson, who had been praying for the arrival of a Wesleyan, so they said, for seven years. Next year he took a farm at Dapto, preaching regularly in his own house. A revival soon broke out, when thirty persons were converted and formed into a Society which Mr. Vidler met." (2.)

Persecution soon developed, from the Anglican minister in Wollongong, who complained that Vidler was stealing his congregation. The minister prevailed upon the owner of the farm that Vidler rented to terminate his use of the property. Another land-owner offered Vidler one of his farms free of rent, but his generous offer was declined, and Vidler moved across to a farm in the Campbelltown area, near the Cow Pastures, for seven or eight years. This is where we will meet him again, a little later in our story.

## Revival at Parramatta

This revival introduces us to a young man, born locally, named John Watsford. In later years he became a famous missionary, pastor and evangelist.

Watsford was born at Parramatta on 5th December, 1820. His conversion occurred in 1838. He attended a prayer meeting, and became powerfully convicted about his sins. After the meeting, someone followed him. It was a leader from the church, who said he had felt moved to ask Watsford to attend a new young men's class. This event, at a "psychological moment", caused him repeatedly to spend nights reading his Bible, and earnestly praying for forgiveness. His distress deepened, until, in desperation, he prayed, "I cannot live another day like this. The load of sin is crushing me down to hell. Have mercy upon me, and pardon all my sin, for Jesus Christ's sake, who shed his blood for me." In an instant he saw the plan of his salvation. His sin had all been laid on Jesus. He trusted in Christ as his present Saviour, and the burden of his sins rolled away. His joy was very great.

Soon after, a copy of "The Life of John Smith" by the Rev. Richard Treffry, Jr, came into his hands, and through this he learned of the necessity of his life being totally surrendered to God; of him being fully sanctified, and that he must work for God.

"Baptised with the Holy Spirit, I had a great longing to bring others to Jesus. I began by distributing tracts." He became a Sunday School teacher, and by July 1839, was received as a local preacher, and began studying for the ministry.

His autobiography is a mine of interesting information about church life in Australia in the Nineteenth Century. He tells of the first revivals that he saw in and near where he lived.

"Some of the local preachers and leaders in Sydney and Parramatta were men of great spiritual power, men who believed in prayer and fasting, and who did not depend upon a stranger coming now and then to hold special services and bring sinners to Christ. They believed in the Holy Ghost, and pleaded for His coming in connection with the ordinary services. As a result, there were "showers of blessing", glorious revivals, wonderful displays of the Holy Spirit's power in convincing and saving men. We used often to see a whole congregation broken down and unable to leave the church; and numbers, night after night, coming to the house of God and finding salvation, and this no matter who was conducting the service." (3.) He then proceeds to give some information about some of these events.

"The first revival in Parramatta that I know of was in 1840. Religion had been in a low state. The minister of the Circuit was a good man, but old and nearly worn out. He was greatly opposed to noise, and marked the men who were very much in earnest. It was the custom then to call by name a few persons to pray in the prayer meetings, and any who were at all noisy were never asked. Two of our most excellent and devoted local preachers, who were always seeking to save souls, were placed on the list of persons not allowed to take part in the prayer meetings. Very soon I was added to the number.

One day the two brethren to whom I have referred said to me, 'We are going specially to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the revival of God's work, and we want you to join us. This is our plan: Every morning and evening and at midday to spend some time in pleading with God to pour out His Spirit; to observe every Friday as a day of fasting and prayer; to sit together in the meetings, and, though not permitted to pray aloud, silently to plead for the coming of the Holy Ghost.' I think they were a little afraid of me, as they gave me this caution: 'Now mind, you must not say a word against our minister, or have any unkind feeling toward him, because he does not allow us to take part in the meetings. He knows what he is doing, and has his own reasons for it. If we complain, or speak against him, the Lord will not hear our prayers.' We carried out our plan for one, two, three weeks, no one but God and ourselves knowing what we were doing.

At the end of the fourth week, on Sunday evening, the Rev. William Walker preached

a powerful sermon. After the service the people flocked to the prayer meeting, till the schoolroom was filled. My two friends were there, one on each side of me, and I knew they had hold of God. We could hear sighs and suppressed sobs all around us. The old minister of the Circuit, who had conducted the meeting, was concluding with the benediction, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God' here he stopped, and sobbed aloud. When he could speak, he called out 'Brother Watsford, pray.' I prayed, and then my two friends prayed, and oh! the power of God that came upon the people, who were over-whelmed by it in every part of the room! And what a cry for mercy! It was heard by the passers-by in the street, some of whom came running in to see what was the matter, and were smitten down at the door in great distress. The clock of a neighbouring church struck twelve before we could leave the meeting. How many were saved I cannot tell. Day after day and week after week the work went on, and many were converted. Among them were many young persons." (4.)

### **Revival at Windsor**

Watsford's description of the revival followed his own experience of it. In 1841 he was on the first step in becoming a minister, and was appointed to help in the Windsor Circuit, under the guidance of the Rev. Frederick Lewis, whom Watsford describes as "a Welshman, full of fire and love, who knew how to bring sinners to Christ, and to whom I owe a great deal." (5.) At Windsor, he says, they "had a blessed revival."

"In those days we did not so much arrange for special services or missions; we looked for God's blessing in connection with the ordinary services. At one of the meetings the Holy Spirit came mightily upon us. We were compelled to continue the meetings night after night. Numbers flocked to them, and we had some remarkable cases of conversion. Among these were some of the best customers of the publicans, and no wonder that they cried out against us. One of them especially did all he could to annoy and persecute me in his little way. Whenever I went down the street past his house he cried out after me, 'Amen! Hallelujah! Bless the Lord!' But he never injured me in the slightest degree. It was the best advertisement I could have. The people came to the meetings to see what was going on, and the power of God laid hold of many of them."

Conviction of sin could be very powerful, at times. When that happened, deliverance created overflowing joy, and triumph in Christ.

"In the Sabbath School at Windsor we had a most blessed work. I was giving an address in the school one Sunday afternoon, when the children were greatly impressed. I closed the school, and asked those who wished to decide for Jesus to remain. Very few left. About seventy young persons, from eight to sixteen years old, gathered in great distress around the Superintendent of the school and : myself, while we prayed for them. Many of them were soon rejoicing in Jesus. Two cases were particularly interesting. A little girl, seven or eight years of age, was weeping bitterly and praying to God to save her. Her mother, who was a teacher, was kneeling by her side and praying for her. Presently the dear child cried out, 'O mother, I do believe; Jesus does save me.' The mother, doubting that her child understood "what believing was, asked, 'But what is believing, dear'" 'O mother,' replied the little one, 'believing is just seeing Jesus with your eyes shut.' Had not the Good Spirit opened the eyes of her heart so that by faith she saw Jesus and trusted Him'? That child is now growing old, but she is still a member of the Church, and has been ever since that memorable hour when Jesus saved her.

The other case was this: My superintendent had two charming little girls, one about eight years old, and the other six. They were always ready for play with me. If my study door was open, dear little Mary, the youngest child, would soon find her way in. She was not sent to the Sabbath School; but that afternoon, hearing the singing and praying, she got out of the

parsonage yard, and found her way to the door of the schoolroom. I was kneeling at the time, praying for the children. when I felt someone come very close and kneel down by my side, but had no idea who it was. I closed my prayer and looked down. There was little Mary. with her hands put together, praying most earnestly. I spoke to her about Jesus, and ever afterwards Mary would have it that she was converted that day, and I thoroughly believe she was. Nearly forty years later I visited England. A few days after landing I received a letter from a lady, urging me to go and see her as soon as I could. She signed her name, but added, 'You will not know me by this name, but you will remember the little Mary L (Lewis) you knew and loved as a child.' I went to see my old playmate, and rejoiced with her as we talked over that never forgotten day." (6.)

### **Revival at Castlereagh**

The noted early leader in the Castlereagh area had been a man named John Lees. He was a spiritual tower of strength in that district, and enquirers were helped to know God in his home. He donated an acre of land to the Wesleyans, and built a chapel. He tilled the land, sowed wheat on this land, had the harvest ground at the mill, and sent the flour at no cost to the Wesleyan missionaries toward their food supplies. In 1836, John Lees died, and the spiritual mantle seemed to fall on his youngest daughter, Mrs Gorman, who lived in the same house. Before the revival began, John Lees Jr's wife was also converted through reading a booklet.

Watsford has a brief account in his autobiography of what happened during the revival, saying that the whole neighbourhood at one time seemed moved by Divine power.

In the case of this revival in the Castlereagh area, however, we have another important source of information as to what happened, apart from Watsford's account. One of the first moves made by the Rev. Frederick Lewis was to arrange for a teacher to come to Castlereagh, in order to use the church hall as a school during the week. A Christian teacher would be chosen for this work, and it would become a method of evangelistic outreach. This method had been used for years in Scotland, with good results, as well as in many other places.

In January, 1841, Lewis brought out to Castlereagh a young teacher and local preacher named James Rutledge, in order to introduce him to the people, and show him the job of teacher that was on offer. Rutledge had not yet decided to take the job, but, he immediately saw that the Spirit was at work. No sooner had Lewis arrived at Mrs Gorman's home than people began coming to the house in order to enquire about spiritual matters.

At the meeting that followed, Lewis offered the prayer "Lord, if You will not come with him, then let him not come." Rutledge accepted the job, and found himself in the midst of a revival, in which he took a very active part. Generally, it was Rutledge's job to preach each Sunday evening, as well as at other times during the week.

The revival had begun some time earlier in the following way. A lady lived in the area who had a strict religious upbringing in England, but had got on the wrong side of the law in her youth. She had been transported to Australia as a convict, and had married a farmer in the Castlereagh area. She had lost all her religious connections by this time. But, on a certain day she had the desire to read something. So she went to a neighbour and asked for anything that he had to read. He had only some old religious tracts which had been left in the house by a travelling preacher some years before. He gave her these tracts. She had not really wanted to read such things as that, but took them, and started to read. The first tract did its job very well, and she became deeply concerned about her relationship with God. She often talked to Mr. Lewis, as she had to his predecessor, Mr. Wilkinson, seeking peace of mind, but finding none.

At last, while engaged in private prayer, she obtained the blessing she had so earnestly sought at the Throne of Grace. She was so filled with joy she forgot everything else, even her domestic duties. She called her husband to dinner, forgetting that she had not done anything to get it ready. How she wished she had friends like-minded with herself to whom she could make known her feeling. Thus, Mrs Byrnes (for that was her name) and Mrs John Lees Jr, became friends, and arranged to meet weekly for mutual encouragement, and to pray for the conversion of their husbands. Not long afterwards, the two men were converted. It was through this little group, and through the periodic Wesleyan services, that the revival movement began to work slowly through the district.

One of the first suggestions about an outreach activity was that they should organise a large tea-meeting. Rutledge had seen this done with good success in the part of Ireland he had come from. There were now four main ladies in the fellow-ship group, and they did the work, and covered the expense, for the tea meeting. The meeting was to serve the dual purpose of a social gathering and a Love Feast. The Friday previous was observed as a day of prayer and fasting. "The Lord was eminently present and His power and willingness to bless was abundantly manifest in the conversion of sinners. The heart of the Rev. Lewis was full to overflowing. I had seen glorious meetings during the centenary celebrations in Ireland in 1839. But none more manifest the power of Divine grace I ever saw before. For months after the Lord added to our society such as had given their hearts to God. On one Sabbath evening after service many of the people remained behind to spend the time in praise of God."

Rutledge said that no tongue or pen could describe the feeling that came over them all as they sang one of the hymns of praise.

The work spread, because there was so much enthusiasm among the young converts to get everyone to praise the Lord. They were unwearied in their tract distribution, visiting the sick and dying, and always seeking to have everything that they did and said seasoned with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rutledge thought that these revived local Christians fulfilled the description of the life-style of the believers described at the end of Acts, chapter 2, more closely than any other group of people he has known about, before or since. "They continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking of bread from house to house, and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (5.) "

Another noted character whose conversion may be regarded as a miracle of grace was named Nathaniel P. (Rutledge's account calls him M.... P.... Udy uses the name Nathaniel. Watsford tells the story briefly, but does not give a name.). This man had been transported for life with his three brothers for highway robbery in England. They were the terror of that part of Yorkshire where they lived. These daring fellows were characters that hesitated not at any villainry (sic). At length, by clever stratagem, they were caught, tried and transported for life. Their lawless spirits could not put up with restraint, and as soon as they were assigned to private persons, this man, his brother, and another desperado, took to the bush once more as highwaymen. The pursuit after them was too sharp, and they had to betake themselves to the wild fastness of the mountains. Here they remained for three months suffering from hunger and privations. At length they were reduced to such straits that they ate their dog. But it was no use. They had to come in and give themselves up to justice. They were sentenced to three years penal servitude at Moreton Bay.

They had found that the way of the transgressor is hard. So severe was the servitude of the gang they were in that sometimes they cast lots to determine who was to murder some poor fellow-sufferer, who was equally tired of life, so that those who witnessed the deed could have a little respite while attending court to give evidence. In due time Nathaniel was due for a ticket of leave, and he was sent to the Penrith district. Here he got employment on a farm and got married to a young woman, a native of the place. Marriage, however, did not

cure him of his dissipated habits. He still frequented the public house that was in the neighbourhood and, coming home drunk, would ill-treat his young wife. One day, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Stanton, a respected settler who was also a member of the Society, went out to collect subscriptions for missions. Nathaniel was waited upon. How they could expect a man like that to give anything to such a cause was a question they could not answer, but they drew the bow at a venture, made their business known, and he, feeling flattered that he appeared so respectable in their sight that he might be expected to give a subscription, said readily, 'I will give you five shillings.' The money having been received, and the name entered, Mr. Lewis said, 'You have now given five shillings to the cause of God. When will you give God your heart?' This was a strange question to him: he had never heard the like before, and after some further conversation he consented to come to the chapel the following Sunday. He came, and went home with the arrows of conviction sticking fast in his soul. In a few weeks he obtained peace. And, to use his own words, 'A waggon load of joy.'

One night, in going home from a prayer meeting at the house of John Lees Jr, in company with Mr. Stanton, Nathaniel said, as he passed over a creek, 'Look at this green spot: just twelve months ago I made my wife get down on her knees while I gave her five minutes to pray for her soul before I murdered her for daring to follow me to the public house. While on her knees she looked up so pitifully and said: "Ah! Nathaniel! If you kill me, you will kill another." I relented and postponed the expectation of my design until after her confinement.' Before that time arrived, he was a new man, and his wife's life was saved.

One would have imagined that she would have been gratified to the cause that had been instrumental in effecting such a change in her husband's life. It had no such result. The carnal mind that is at enmity against God, stimulated by the bigotry of ungodly relations, made her oppose his connection with the Wesleyans and she carried it so far as to threaten to leave him if he would not give them up. One day she pursued her irritating contentions so far that he lost all patience with her, and threatened to beat her. She dared him to do it, saying it was against the rules of his Society, and if he attempted it she would have him expelled. He then told her that as she was determined to have him out, he would give her a taste of what the result would be, and he then took a strap and laid it smartly over her back and shoulders. She immediately set off and told some of the leading members of the Society, who were not to meddle in a case that seemed so extraordinary. She would snatch the Bible out of his hands and throw it out of the window, and do all she could to annoy him. One day he was reading the Bible, when his wife laid hold of it and threw it on the floor. He immediately rose and went into the garden. He had not been there long when one of his children came running to him and said, 'Mother's crying so; come father, and see her.' He went into the house, and found his wife with the Bible in her hand, weeping bitterly. She had taken up the book to throw it out of the window, when a sentence caught her eye and pierced her heart like a sharp sword. The hand of God was on her. 'Come away to John Lees,' said her husband, and taking a child under each arm, he led his wife, without shawl or bonnet, crying as she went, to John Lees, and there very soon, while prayer as being offered, the peace and blessing of God came upon her soul." (8.)

## **Lower Hawkesbury**

"The Lower Hawkesbury was another part of the Windsor Circuit where we had a good work. At one place, then called "Green's", when we went to prayer at the opening of the service, the power of God so came upon us that the people could not rise again from their knees for two or three hours. What a time it was! All seemed broken down; many were saved. One peculiarity about the place was that many who came to service there had to stay all night, for they came from far. The people of the place gladly provided for all who came, and provisions had often to be made on a large scale."

"These were true revivals. The fruit soon appeared in changed lives, in earnest work for Jesus, and in cheerful giving to His cause. What collections we used to have! At one of our missionary meetings at Castlereagh, Mrs Gorman brought in her missionary box. She had collected all the year, and had the silver changed for gold. When the box was at last opened, sovereign after sovereign rolled out. until we counted forty. At one of our meetings Mr. Lewis and I had to stop the people in their giving. We positively refused to take any more." (9.)

## **Cow Pastures**

This was the name of a newly opened locality some kilometres west and south-west of the township of Liverpool, south-west of Sydney. It bordered the Nepean River some distance south of Penrith, and included the settlements of Luddenham, Bringelly, Cobbity, Narellan, Camden and Stonequarry. (The last mentioned place is now called Picton).

Around 1838, amongst the new settlers who came into this area, were a number of very strong Methodist laymen. The most noteworthy of these were Silas Gill, Tom Brown, John Wheatley, Sivyer and Thomas Roots, James Towner, John Vidler and several others. Although lacking almost totally in culture and formal education, this group represented an amazing team of talented soul winners to have in one place at such an early time in a nation's history.

John Wheatley was born at Ashdown Forest, England, on 19th April, 1792. When twenty years of age he heard Dr. Adam Clarke preach, and the sermon made such an impression that he at once met in class, and began to preach in the towns and villages round. It was under his preaching that Tom Brown was brought to Christ. Wheatley's service for Christ was marked by untiring zeal.

Tom Brown was born in Burwash in 1805. He worked in a quarry, and was very powerfully built. He became a prize fighter. He organised a band of "toughs" to break up a preaching service conducted by John Wheatley in Sussex, but the word cut him to the heart, and he immediately took a stand for Christ. After professing to be a Christian for several years, he had a period of being defeated by drink. But in the year of his arrival in Australia, his relationship with God was restored, during a violent thunderstorm. As he grew in the faith, he developed wonderful gifts and graces, which were all dedicated to Christ.

Silas Gill was also tall and physically very powerful. He was born in Sussex in 1807, attended church through his childhood, and was converted through the ministry of the Rev. Thomas Collins. Along with the others, between 1838 and 1841, Gill roamed over this wide area called the Cow Pastures, gathering people for song, prayer and exhortation. "Silas was gloriously happy, and made the country side ring with his shouts of glory and praise." (10.) John Vidler travelled far and wide, going away from home sometimes for weeks together. He carried the Gospel to many a lonely dwelling and preached it to hundreds who had never heard the good news.

Working at first within the orbit of the local Anglican parish, and without the help of

any visiting Wesleyan minister, these men began holding prayer meetings, preaching in many homes and under trees, conducting their own camp meetings, and seeking earnestly to win people to Christ. The number of conversions began slowly to grow.

In due course, a rough timber chapel was built near Brown's place. "Camp meetings were held in Bill Brown's paddock (Tom's brother), near the Chapel, under a large bush-apple tree. Silas Gill was a great singer, and Tom Brown was mighty in prayer. And it was a question often discussed but never satisfactorily decided: Which was the louder, Silas in song, or Tom in prayer. On one occasion, when asked to pray in this little Chapel, Tom Brown carefully spread his large coloured handkerchief on the floor, and then, straightening himself with uplifted face, he said aloud: "Now for a blessing." He was mighty in prevailing prayer. While kneeling at a long form crying for mercy a number of penitents have been set at liberty as he prayed." (11.)

"One story belonging to those early days of his ministry which Silas loved to tell concerned a notorious sinner who treated his wife cruelly. Through the ministry of Silas the man was changed, but his wife remained sceptical about the change. She said to Silas, "Is it true that such a wretch as he is converted?" "Yes, quite true." he replied. "Well, I'll tell you what he did to me the other day.' Then she told how they were ploughing. She was guiding the bullocks, and he struck her to the ground for disobeying orders; then he beat her and kicked her. "That was cruel," said Silas, "but you'll see he'll never do it again." Shortly afterwards, at a love-feast, the penitent husband admitted cruelty, and the wife, convinced, cried, "Lord, have mercy on me." They fell on each others necks and wept. Scenes like this afforded Gill and his associates much joy." (12.) In this way, a work of God steadily developed in the Cow Pastures area.

In 1843, a probationary Wesleyan minister, the Rev. William Lightbody, was sent to the area.

Several of the leading laymen moved to other parts of New South Wales. John Vidler, for example, moved back to the South Coast, to the Jamberoo area, where he spent the rest of his life. Silas Gill went to the Hunter River, and later to the Kempsey area. John Wheatley moved to the Braidwood goldfields. Tom Brown was forced by the inadequacies of his first farm during dry seasons to move to a better farm a little west of Goulburn.

## **Bathurst**

Some writers about these early revivals amongst the Wesleyans report that some degree of revival also appeared at Bathurst in this period. (13.)

Colwell provides a clue in mentioning a report to the District Meeting (for N.S. W.) in 1846, by the Rev. Benjamin Hurst, then minister in Bathurst, that "with sorrow he had to report a decrease in the number of members during the last year; but that, he said, was not surprising when they remembered the religious excitement which had previously prevailed." (14.)

Although reports by the previous ministers did not use the word "revival" to describe what was happening, it is possible to see traces of it in what they said.

The first Wesleyan services in Bathurst were held in 1816 by the Rev. Samuel Leigh, only a few years after the first crossing of the Blue Mountains by the white explorers, Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth. A tiny group of Wesleyans continued to meet there from that time. They were led by an outstanding layman named William Tom, who led the Class, and was responsible for starting preaching places at a number of locations around the Bathurst area.

The first minister to live in Bathurst was the Rev. Frederick Lewis. Lewis reached Bathurst on 21st May, 1836. A letter he wrote on 2nd July that year was published in the

"Methodist Magazine" for 1837, and is quoted by Colwell.

"The population connected with this Station is very much scattered, so I have a great deal of travelling. Last Sabbath week I rode (on horseback) twenty six miles, through a dreary bush between services, and on last Sabbath, forty miles to three appointments. This will prevent me from visiting some of the places as often as I should wish; but I am determined, by God's help, to go to them as frequently as possible, and to preach as often as I can. The people here had been waiting for my arrival with anxiety, and I met with a warm-hearted and friendly reception, not only from what we term 'our own people,' but from others. Such is the friendly feeling of the Clergyman (Anglican), that he is disposed to render me all the assistance in his power. As we have at present no Chapel, he has kindly offered his old Church. I hope this good feeling will continue; and shall do all I can to promote it. Our congregations have been large and respectable. The people seem to listen with great attention. Some have begun to enquire 'What must I do to be saved?', And some have entered into the rest and liberty of the Gospel. The Word of God is evidently sweet to their taste.

Land for the Chapel is already given. We have moneys promised to the amount of about two hundred pounds, part of which is received. Some preparations are made, and we hope in a few months to complete the building. Its dimensions will be forty feet by thirty. We have this day held the first Quarterly Meeting ever held on this side of the mountains. Our pecuniary circumstances are quite as good as our friends had anticipated; and a sense of God's gracious presence seemed to pervade every mind. We closed the day with Divine service." (15.)

The following year, Lewis reported to the District Meeting that some of "", their members who had been unfaithful had been admonished and expelled; though ; the congregations in the town were increasing. "On the last night of the old year . we held our first Watch Night; and, if a delightful congregation, listening with deep seriousness to the word of exhortation, and a considerable measure of hallowed feeling resting upon the mind, can be taken as indications of future prosperity, then we may expect that prosperity much more abundant than that of the past shall crown the labours of the ensuing year." (16.)

There were signs of development, and new areas in which to preach the Gospel. The report to the District Meeting in 1839 said that "The Circuit will be one hundred miles in length, and in its wide extent embraces a great number of places which are not visited by a Christian Minister, and the persons resident at them never hear a sermon." Support for the missionary fund was very good, and received a boost during a visit by three ministers, who, like many others in the country, already had missionary experience of their own. The visiting team was the Revs J. McKenny, J. Watkin and the saintly John Hunt. (17.)

At the end of 1839, Frederick Lewis moved to Windsor, and he was succeeded by the Rev. Daniel J. Draper, who arrived in Bathurst on 26th February, 1840. Draper had only recently married for the second time. His first wife had died from difficulties arising during childbirth, so Draper had to bury both his wife and baby, and look after a young son.

As Lewis had discovered, working in the Bathurst area was very rough. Draper had to cover a large area, and travelling was often through trackless forests, over many large hills, and involved fording many rivers and creeks. In his Journal, he says, "In travelling in these parts, one stands in need of strong nerves and unshaken trust in God; for our ears are frequently saluted with accounts of atrocities committed by armed bushrangers, and our eyes not unfrequently behold scenes where they have for a season spread terror and alarm. I thank God I was assured of His protection, and experienced it." (18.)

The Journal was not kept regularly, but, nevertheless gives evidence of his great desire for the conversion of the people amongst whom he worked, and also expresses much joy because there were many signs of the blessing of God. It speaks of "encouraging congregations. many of whom had come five or six miles". He was "thankful to bear precious

seed to a soil so much neglected"; of "great seriousness and attention being manifested while he exhorted them to love Christ and keep His commandments"; of being thankful to God "that he had been able to be faithful, and deliver his soul in warning the people."

The biographer gives only one sample of a description of a typical Sabbath day's work.

"Sunday, May 17th, 1840.- 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' This morning I was favoured with a comfortable sense of the Divine presence, which proved the earnest of a good day. Preached at 11 a.m. from Joshua 23:8. A good congregation: the Lord favoured me with liberty, and the people heard with very great attention. May their profiting appear to all! Having taken a hasty dinner, I mounted my horse and rode to Springfields (twenty-seven miles), where I arrived a little before six o'clock, and preached to a very respectful and attentive congregation from John 14: 15.

The whole of the families in this neighbourhood are emigrants from Cornwall, who having been some years in the colony are pretty well established. About thirty persons attended the preaching, most of whom are young persons for whose salvation I was very much led out in prayer. Having completed my work for the day. and closed it in the enjoyment of the Divine favour, I felt that 'the sleep of the labouring man is sweet.'" (19.)

The Rev. Samuel Wilkinson followed in 1843, and the same religious interest seemed to continue. In 1844, Wilkinson said the Quarterly Meeting; appointed four promising young men as Exhorters, while he himself paid his first visit to Hartley Vale and Summer Hill. Summer Hill was "32 miles from Bathurst west" and Hartley Vale "45 miles east." At both places the great Head of the church had placed open doors.

The next year disclosed further developments. During that year, according to the District Meeting records, "a quarterly visit to Carcoar has been made This is the principle town south-west of Bathurst. Here we have a few members of Society, and a people anxious to hear the Gospel." This meant that they had a small dedicated core of members in the Class Meeting, but a good congregation of hearers at public worship. By this time, the list of preaching places was quite long (eighteen by 1850), and the number of Chapels was growing, also. "The houses in which service is held are generally crowded with attentive hearers." (20.)

According to Benjamin Hurst, the feeling of attention and interest was declining by the time he arrived in Bathurst, after Samuel Wilkinson's time there, although not all of the signs were bad. In some areas there were good results.

## **Parramatta Circuit**

The fortunes of these churches, especially at Parramatta, fluctuated a good deal as various persons and families came and went. Ministers also came and went. For example, in 1847, the Rev. Thomas Adams, the second minister at Parramatta, reported:-

"This Circuit suffers considerably from the removal of members to other circuits and other colonies. During the past year we have lost thirty from this source, whilst from other Circuits we have only received eight."

In 1848, the report was one of thankfulness for the spiritual condition of the Circuit generally; "we have 145 full members and 12 on trial, being a small increase on last year." Then comes the comment, "In the town of Parramatta especially, we have, of late, been greatly encouraged by evident tokens that God is with us... The word has entered the hearts of some and produced conviction of sin; and several have by faith in the blood of Christ, found a free, full and present pardon..." (21.)

In 1849, the report, probably covering the previous twelve months, was that the Circuit lost 38 members, and gained 17.

Concerning Castle Hill, however, the report says, "of this place we speak with

peculiar pleasure. The state of the society has been improving considerably. The preached word has come to many hearts with power. Several have been awakened, have sought the Lord with deep contrition and at length have obtained peace through believing. Our numbers are increased." (22.)

It was at this stage that the Rev. Nathaniel Turner was stationed at Parramatta. It proved to be his last appointment before he retired. He also had periods of bad health during the three years he spent here. After an evangelistic tour through the Goulburn area, Turner's biography describes some interesting meetings in Parramatta.

"In Parramatta were a few devoted men who felt for God's cause. Their minister's stirring pulpit appeals, and earnest labour for souls, awoke and stimulated their reserve force of spiritual life, and they worked hard. Frequently the Sabbath evening prayer meetings became services of revival power. Several wanderers were restored, and some few penitents found the Saviour. At these times Mr Turner has not always the self-restraint called for. His strength for the day having been pretty nearly exhausted by fifteen or twenty miles' travelling and three services, he would just open the prayer meeting he had called after the sermon, leave the hymn book with some local preacher or leader, run into his house next door, exchange his flannel vest, wringing wet with perspiration, for a dry one, and then return to do battle with the devil and unbelief. He often earnestly engaged in prayer several times in the same meeting." (23.) It proved too much for his health, and there were periods when he could not preach.

Despite this, there is a report for 1851, concerning the previous twelve months. which read as follows:- "The Ryde-Kissing Point Society, which the previous year had been described as the second one of importance in the Circuit, had had a year of great trial. The faithful have had to mourn over the backsliding of several who were brought to God during the revival in the former year" (24.) Apparently there had been signs of the convicting and converting work of the Spirit.

The years following this were extremely difficult, especially in the central areas, because 1851 marked the beginnings of the Bathurst gold rush, and this created mayhem with their normal efforts at outreach and church activities.

### **John Watsford Returns to New South Wales**

Information about any revivals which might have occurred in New South Wales during the early and middle parts of the decade starting 1850 is difficult to find.

Thankfully, this shortage of information was largely overcome with the publication of the "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record", which first appeared in June, 1858.

After the one year that Watsford spent in Brisbane, in 1850, he spent several more years in Fiji, and then returned to Sydney, working for three years in the Surry Hills Circuit, and then in the Goulburn Circuit from 1857 to 1859. (Watsford spelled it "Surrey Hills".)

Carruthers describes Watsford's years in Surry Hills in the following way:- ("In the fullness of his physical strength and the ardour of his evangelistic zeal, Watsford was appointed to 'Sydney East' in 1854, and laboured there till April, 1857. A mighty revival swept the Church and affected the whole neighbourhood. The memory of it lingered for long years, and the effects were felt all over the city and far into the country." (25.)

### **Goulburn**

After April, 1857, Watsford spent three years in the Goulburn Circuit. " Here he met Tom Brown, whom we met earlier, in the story about the Cow an Pastures. Watsford describes the impact of Tom Brown's witness. "He was a big, powerful man, and in England had been a prize-fighter. Soon after his conversion he came to Australia, and for some years

had a hard struggle, on a little farm at Camden, to get bread for himself and family. He removed to Jerriwa Creek, about thirty miles from Goulburn. There God prospered him on his farm, and made him a great blessing to the people.

Jerriwa Creek was one of the worst places in the district, full of cattle stealers. Tom went among them - a holy man, exerting a powerful influence, and preaching Jesus. The change that came over the place in a short time was wonderful. Cattle-stealers were converted and became honest men.

A church of seventy members was formed, and a good brick place of worship was erected. It was indeed a pleasure to labour among the people, and the good work was chiefly the result of Tom Brown's labours. He was the hardest working local preacher I have ever known. Sometimes he would travel (on horseback) forty miles on the Saturday, preach at three different places on the Sunday, and then travel forty miles home on the Monday."

"His sermons and speeches were always good, and he was very popular and very useful." "Tom was always seeking to save souls, and at nearly every service he had some seeking salvation." (26.)

The church at Jerriwa Creek was given the name "Wesley Vale."

A biographical article, written many years later, has this comment about the revival. "During the revival which took place at Jerriwa Creek in the year 1858, or '59, there was considerable excitement and more noise than commended itself to some critics. In defence of these manifestations of the Holy Spirit's workings, he preached a memorable sermon on 'The Valley of the Dry Bones.' His text was Ezekiel 37:7. He said in effect, where there is life there will be noise, and so when the breath of God's Spirit moved upon the slain, and bone came to his bone, there was clattering and noise enough; and so, when the Spirit of the Lord moves upon men who are spiritually dead, and arouses them to a new life, there will be some noise and outward manifestations of the new life within. When John heard the 'voice of the harpers harping with their harps,' and singing a new song before the throne, there was a noise; and when sinners are converted the saints on earth and the angels in heaven shout for joy, and noise is only to be naturally expected. Whatever we may think of his reasoning, we cannot but admire his ingenuity in presenting his case.

The life this simple man lived in doing the work of an evangelist did not exempt him from its incidental perils and temptations. Travelling on one occasion in the company of his minister on some pioneer mission to a bush outpost, he turned to him and said; "The last time I passed here the devil met me and said; "What a foolish old man you are, tiring yourself, and wearing out your old horse and gig in this fashion. It's of no use, and you will do no good." But I lifted up my heart to the Lord, and told the devil to be off, for he was a liar from the beginning.'

These self-imposed labours which he undertook for the love he bore to his Lord and the Church, without any hope of fee or reward, resulted in the conversion of many persons, who in their turn led holy and useful lives.

Many of his sons and daughters were converted in early life. Some passed away to heaven, and others occupied positions of usefulness in the Church which had done so much for them and their father. The services he rendered to the Methodist Church can never be appraised by our poor human arithmetic. Human as he was, with the imperfections and frailties which are in the best of men, the grace of God so triumphed in him that his life and his death were a transfiguration." (27.)

Watsford had a few comments in his autobiography about happenings in the main Goulburn church, in company with Tom Brown. But, in three of the earliest issues of the "Christian Advocate," Watsford provides a lengthy description of the revival at Jerriwa Creek, and then of the way the revival spread through nearby parts of the huge Circuit.

In his first report, after explaining where Jerriwa was, and how it gained the name of

Wesley Vale, he tells how "Mr. T. Brown" had moved there about eight years before, when the area was first being opened up for farming. "Here, far away from the house of the Lord, and the Minister of Christ, he yet retained his religion and was faithful to his God. With a yearning pity for the unsaved, and mighty faith in the Gospel of Christ, he laboured hard to bring others to the Saviour. He travelled far from home, enduring great fatigue, and giving much of his time to the work; in order that he might save some; and the Lord blessed him and made him a blessing. His grounds brought forth plentifully...his children were converted to God, and some of those who had come to reside near him were led to the Saviour. I The Jerriwa began to assume a different aspect - farm after farm was taken up, and soon friend Brown had many neighbours. But many who came there had no religion, and soon drunkenness and other evils prevailed to a fearful extent.

Three or four years ago a very neat slab chapel was built, which will accommodate about one hundred and thirty persons. In this the people still worship God. A Sunday School is connected to the Chapel, in which there are fifty-five children. During the winter of last year the Lord poured out His Spirit in a most remarkable manner upon the people here. On the Sabbath day the power of the Lord was present to heal. At the Meeting on the following Monday evening, the preacher, seeing some in distress, invited them to come to the penitent form - two or three came. Special prayer was offered to God for them, and one or two obtained the blessing - then the work began to spread among the congregation, and many cried for mercy. Some were smitten down, unable to move - and others, to whom this was altogether a new and strange thing, became alarmed and rushed from the Chapel. The Meeting was continued, and not a few that night were saved.

After this, Special Prayer Meetings were frequently held, and the people themselves determined to fast every Friday, and pray especially for the conversion of their neighbours, and since then the work has been progressing. Many have been saved, old and young. About fifty have been added to the Church. Some very remarkable conversions have taken place. The change is very striking. Indeed, the character of the whole neighbourhood has altogether changed. The Jerriwa was noted for drunkenness, and there formerly property was unsafe. Now, as friend Brown said to me the other day, 'If you were to go and stand on the opposite hill, and knock the head of a keg of rum in, and hold out the tin pot, and invite all who wished to come and drink, there, would be ten times more at Wesley Vale Chapel than at the drinking tub; and as to farms and property, all is quite safe now, and religion *alone* has done it.'

The old Chapel has long been too small. Last year a Meeting was held to make arrangements to build a new one. At this Meeting, between two and three hundred pounds were promised. The amount has now reached about four hundred pounds, and a hundred more is to be given by the Chapel Fund Committee. The new erection will be of brick, will be forty-five feet by twenty-four feet, will cost about six hundred pounds, and there is no doubt it will be entirely free from debt. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. T. Brown on the 10th of February last. There were three hundred people present, who had come some of them ten, some twenty, some thirty, and some even forty miles to be present at the interesting ceremony, and interesting it indeed was. Many a heart that loved God's cause was glad that day.

A few days ago I was at Wesley Vale renewing the (membership) tickets. This is always a high day there. There are three classes, with from twenty-five to thirty, members in each; and they are all met (by the minister) on the same day, and a Love-feast is held in the evening. As the places where the classes meet are two or three miles apart, we have to commence pretty early in the morning, and have a hard day of it - but it is always a blessed day. Few are absent on such occasions. Many follow you from class to class, anxious to be present at every meeting. The last quarterly visitation was a most blessed season. At one of

the classes some of the Members were earnestly seeking the blessing of entire sanctification, and a few professed to feel the all-cleansing blood applied. I rejoiced to find that since the commencement of the revival, about nine months ago, there has been but one who has really fallen away.

It would do anyone good to pay a visit to the Jerriwa, and to be present at one of the services. Be there before the time if you wish to get a seat, or you will have to stand, if you can find room even to do that. You at once see that you are among an earnest, praying people. The preacher gives out the hymn, and friend Brown raises the tune, and all sing, and they do sing. If you were to request them to sing a little lower, they would probably tell you what a good man is said to have told Mr. Wesley, when he made a similar request, 'We can't, our hearts sing.' They go to prayer, and if you are offended by a hearty, loud 'Amen,' you had better not have come. 'Amen.' 'Glory be to God.' 'Hallelujah!' come from all parts of the chapel. The lesson is read, and they sing again. It is some favourite verse, as 'He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,' &c., and they sing it with all their soul. Then comes the sermon, and pity the preacher if he is easily upset with any interruption, for he has it here. There again, 'Amen,' 'Hallelujah!' 'Glory be to God,' and there are bowed heads, and streaming eyes, and broken hearts there. Again they sing and pray, and on they wrestle, and sinners are saved, and God's house is filled with His glory.

Perhaps you cannot enter into all you have witnessed, you leave the chapel saying, 'We have seen strange things today.' Well, now, just go among those bark huts, where these men and women who have been singing and praying reside, and see how they live - see whether all is real, or a mere sham.

Go and sit down on the bench there with 'Old Tom Brown' and hear him tell what poor and wretched circumstances most of them must have been in had they remained in the old country: hear him tell what the Jerriwa was a few years ago, and what it is now, and then go and see for yourself. You are heartily welcome to their good homely fare. The bark hut at night will not be as warm and nice as your own snug room at home, but they can give you no better just now, for they had to struggle hard to pay for their farms on which they live, and will have no money for a little time to build better houses; but never mind, learn to rough it for a time, stay a week, a month, and if you do not come away wishing that every part of Australia were so blessed, and firmly determined to give more than you have ever given to the Church Extension Fund, then depend upon it your heart is not right, or I am sadly Mistaken." (28.)

The second report appeared in the next issue of the "Advocate," and was entitled "Revival in the Goulburn Circuit." It explained how the revival appeared in the main church in Goulburn, and how it began to spread.

"Last year the spirit was poured out upon our church at Wesley Dale, and many there were converted to God. In other parts of the Circuit, although very frequently the power of the Lord was present to heal, yet the Church was generally in a low and dead state, and sinners were unsaved. In June last, peculiar power seemed to attend the preaching of God's word in Goulburn; the congregations increased; the prayer meetings were much better attended, and our people were led to pray for the baptism of the Spirit.

On our last Quarterly Fast day the Lord answered prayer, and the power of God came down upon the people. We held a Prayer meeting at 7 o'clock, a.m., and there were many present. There was another Meeting at noon, when our very busy business men came up to the house of the Lord, and cried to God for the outpouring of the Spirit. At the Meeting in the evening, our School room was well filled - God was with us, and sinners fell at the cross subdued, and cried aloud for mercy. Those who were seeking the Lord were invited to come forward to the penitent form, and about twenty came. For these earnest prayer was presented to the throne of grace, and six or seven obtained the blessing of pardon. Since then, Meetings

have been held every evening, and at almost every Meeting souls have been born to God. Many of our people have felt the need of purity of heart, and some have been enabled to 'reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' At some of our Meetings there has been the solemn awe that dares not move, and at others there have been much noise and great excitement; but this is not to be wondered at, for at such times men will be natural - when deeply distressed they will weep and cry, and when filled with joy they will shout aloud.

One very interesting feature in this revival is, that the young men are yielding to God. We have held a Prayer Meeting for the last month at 7 o'clock every morning, and these have been seasons of refreshing.

Our people have begun to attend to the much neglected duty of fasting, and the fast day has generally been a high day, a day of abundant blessing. A Prayer Meeting is held on these days at noon, and on such occasions we have indeed been baptised with the Holy Ghost.

Of course the enemy has raged and will rage, but 'our Jesus will stir up his power, and soon avenge us of our foe.' If we are faithful, we shall see greater things, and wonders and signs shall be wrought in Jesus' conquering name.

The work has not been confined to Goulburn, it has spread to Murray's Flats, Maxton, and Bangalore, and there sinners have been converted to God. Blessed be God it is spreading still further.

The spirit of grace and supplication has been poured out upon our people at Gunning and there God is reviving his work. Last Sunday I preached at Gunning in the morning to a large congregation. It was a blessed time; many seemed to feel deeply under the preaching of the Word. I rode on to Wesley Vale and preached in the afternoon to a crowded congregation. The Lord was with us, and many felt the sharpness of the two edged sword. When I had left the Chapel I found eight or nine of our people standing weeping with a man and his wife who were convinced of sin during the service. I led them all into the chapel, and we were not long engaged in earnest prayer before they both could praise their pardoning God.

At Gunning in the evening the congregation was the largest I have ever seen in that place. Many were weeping during the whole of the service. After the sermon we requested those who were in distress to come forward to the communion rail, and eight or nine came. We went to prayer, and six persons obtained mercy. One man had walked seven miles to be saved and he walked home again after 10 o'clock blessing and praising God who had forgiven all his sins. I concluded the meeting again and again, but the people refused to leave the Chapel. It was a season long to be remembered. Glory be to God for this blessed Work. Oh that it may spread - we believe it will. Our people are labouring for it, and our longing hearts are crying out.

0 Jesus, ride on, Till all are subdued.

Why should we not have a revival in every part of the Circuit? Why not in every part of the Colony? What God has done in America, He can do for Australia and will if we labour for it. Thank God.

The promise of a shower  
Drops already from above." (29.)

A third, shorter report appeared in the next issue, giving some more details of the spread of the movement.

"The work of God is still prospering in this Circuit. Last Friday afternoon I met the Children, many of whom have been much concerned for the salvation of their souls. After a short address I collected those together who were earnestly seeking the Saviour, and endeavoured to explain to them the way of Salvation; Many were in great distress, and some

trusting in the Saviour tasted His sweet forgiving love. There have been some deeply interesting cases of conversion among the young here.

Sunday last was a high and glorious day. Our people went to work in all earnest to bring sinners to Christ. Preachers, Class Leaders, Prayer Leaders, Sunday School Teachers, Tract Distributors, all were aiming at this, and the Lord gave His blessing. God was with us in all the services, but especially in the evening.

We had the largest congregation ever seen in Goulburn Chapel. The power of God was present. The school room was thronged at the Prayer Meeting, and many were in distress. There were eight persons at the penitent form crying to God for mercy., and many others in various parts of the room were deeply affected.

Two or three obtained the blessing of pardon.

Glory be to God, the work is spreading, and we are expecting to see many more fall at the cross subdued.

On the Gunning side of the Circuit the Lord is still saving sinners. Mr. Dowson Trites, writes 'We have kept up our meetings with unabated interest. Our people are completely made anew. Glory be to God.'

'We looked for great things last Sunday, we had the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the morning, and I believe every converted person in the Chapel remained with us - it was a blessed season. The evening closed in very wet and dark, but we had an average congregation. In the Prayer Meeting we had a hard struggle, but at last the Lord displayed his power and caused us all to rejoice over souls born to God.

On Monday night two were saved, and two more at the Prayer Meeting on Tuesday evening. Praise the Lord, it is a delightful work. Brother Brown was here on Tuesday evening at the Prayer Meeting. He had been to Bailey's on Sunday, and eight or nine obtained the blessing of pardon and several more were in distress. Four or five were saved at Mundoonan last Sunday week.'

(Watsford continues) In nearly every part of the Circuit Friday is a day of fasting and special prayer for the revival of God's work. Our people are generally labouring hard to save poor souls out of the fire, and we have no doubt as to the results.

Our congregation is considerably increased every week Sixteen new pews were erected in our Chapel when it was enlarged in January last, all of which were soon taken. We shall have twelve more put up this week, and these have all been already taken. Our Chapel will very soon be too small if the members of our Church live fully to God and pray and labour on.

I have commenced a mutual improvement Class, and have already many members, most of them fine young men, who, if faithful, will be very useful in the Church." (30.)

## Concluding Comments

The story so far, in the State of New South Wales, shows us several factors about the revivals which happened here, before 1858.

There was widespread concern amongst the Wesleyan Methodists to see revival. Some of the ministers and local preachers, more than others, had very strong desires, and prayerful burden, for this. They all knew that the outpoured power of the Holy Spirit was the means by which the most effective evangelism was to be done. This was what they all wanted to see. They say that it was the life- blood of Methodism.

There were some talented, very effective, and persistent soul-winners among the lay people.

While God used these people, answered their prayers, and honoured their efforts, the revivals also somehow happened independently of the human efforts made to bring them about. The revivals had a character and life of their own, which could not simply be described as the results of the use of certain means.

While church life achieved many things, and reflected a number of concerns and goals, there was a very strong emphasis on evangelism. Indeed, we could say that the primary goal of Wesleyan church work in this period, by ministers, local preachers and lay people, was to win as many people to Christ as they could. Every other aspect of church organisation and property development was made to serve that goal.

There was also pastoral work, social work, the development of denominational organisation, property development, fund raising, Sunday school work, and the establishment of schools. But none of these things were ends in themselves, nor were any of them the primary goal.

The ministers were not primarily pastors, but were first of all evangelists. Certainly, they did other things, too. But it is not hard to see where their main purpose lay.

The other noticeable factor was that the revivals came through ordinary church activities and efforts, based in substantial individual and corporate prayer. They were not "promoted" in the more modern sense.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### **THE 1859 REVIVAL**

#### **in NEW SOUTH WALES**

Towards the end of 1857, a very widespread revival movement began on the eastern seaboard of the United States, and, in due course, spread around the world.

An in-depth study of the surrounding happenings show that the beginnings of the revival had taken place a little earlier, and in several locations. (1.) The more superficial story of the start of the revival is that it began in a prayer meeting in the upper school room in the North Dutch Church, in Fulton Street, New York, and soon spread to most parts of the United States. It was a revival which rotated almost entirely around special prayer meetings, although various evangelistic efforts flowed from it, in order to take advantage of the new spiritual impulse, and gather in the harvest in a more coherent way.

Within a few years, this revival had spread around the world, wherever the evangelical message was being proclaimed. (2.) The most noteworthy second stage of the revival commenced in the summer of 1859 in Northern Ireland. The revival then broke out in Wales, Scotland, and in many parts of England. An extensive literature of primary sources exists about the British aspects of the movement.

During these British revivals, many evangelists preached widely, enjoying unusual degrees of success, and in many cases laying a basis for years of usefulness in the future. This helped to develop the tradition of mass evangelism in Britain, Australia, and similar places, which became a feature of evangelicalism over the next one hundred years, enjoying a peak period between 1870 and 1918. While we often think that the giants of mass evangelism have been Americans, English evangelists such as Richard Weaver, Reginald Radcliffe, Duncan Matheson, Henry Moorhouse, Lord Radstock, Henry Varley, Thomas Cook, William Booth, A.N.Somerville, John McNeill, Gipsy Smith, and many others, were household names.

Many people in Australia were vitally interested in hearing the news about the revival, firstly in the United States, and later in the British Isles, where most of the new Australians came from. News articles, and others of a more evaluative kind, began appearing in religious newspapers in Australia, to cater for this desire. Such articles often also expressed the editorial desire for a similar revival to occur, and to foster this desire in others. The news articles often simply repeated stories which had been published in the "home" country. The transport system which brought the news to Australia took several months, so the stories which appeared in the Australian periodicals were of events which had occurred six months or more beforehand on the other side of the world.

One journal which was commenced at this time was "The Wesleyan Chronicle", which was published monthly in Melbourne, and was first issued in July, 1857, just before the American revival appeared.

"The Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record" began monthly publication in June

1858, and was issued from the Wesleyan offices in Sydney. It contained a good deal of information about the American revivals, as well as various other matters of interest. Indeed, the first issue contained a lengthy description of some of the revival happenings in New York. The "Advocate" was not primarily a newspaper about revival, but it certainly served to stimulate interest in that subject, amongst others. The price of the paper was six pence - quite expensive for those days.

In England, a weekly paper called "The Revival" commenced publication at the end of July, 1859. The cost was only one half-penny. For many issues it contained enough material about revivals that were currently happening, so that it published almost nothing else. It is a veritable gold-mine of information about such matters. After some years the emphasis passed to evangelism and foreign missions.

Christians in Australia began praying that a similar revival movement would occur in this country. And, in due process, public inter-denominational prayer meetings for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were organised in the main capital cities, as well as in many other lesser places.

### **The Maitland Circuit**

The first Australian revival relating to this period around 1859, which was reported in the "Advocate", occurred in the Maitland Circuit, where the minister was the Rev. Benjamin Chapman. This report appeared in only the second issue of the paper. (3.)

Writing after the July Quarterly Meeting, Chapman's letter to the "Advocate", dated 9th July, 1858, included the following:- "The review of the June quarter brought out some very cheering indications of prosperity. Our statistics showed a net increase of accredited members amounting to fourteen, over the numbers returned March last. We have also admitted upwards of fifty persons on trial for membership.

The Bolwarra and Woodville Societies seem to have enjoyed the largest share of this prosperity, though other parts of the Circuit have been blessed. The good work commenced at Woodville at a Camp Meeting held in April last, and since then the neighbourhood has presented a much improved aspect. It was found necessary to hold frequent meetings on the week evenings; to which the people flocked in considerable numbers. Special services have been held at Bolwarra which were productive of good. The regular means of grace, in that place, exhibit much improvement. The class and prayer meetings are proportionately well attended.

We find amongst the numbers who have lately been convinced of sin, and have begun to seek the Lord, a very large proportion of young persons, the children of our own people, and many of them taught in our Sabbath Schools. During the quarter we have commenced preaching at Hinton and Largs to good congregations, and are establishing a class meeting in each place."

### **Newtown**

Still in the second issue, there appears a report from the Newtown Church, which was then on the edge of suburban Sydney. The circuit included a number of other centres which were then country locations. "We have been favoured with a blessed revival of religion among our young people, and upwards of thirty of them have, within the last few weeks, been gathered into the fold of Christ."

A Sunday School, and a small class of "catechumens", were prayerfully used by the

leaders, hoping "that God would pour forth his Spirit, and so cause the good seed sown in their hearts to germinate, and spring up, and bear fruit abundantly." Special sermons were directed toward the young people, from time to time, and special lectures on Biblical subjects were prepared for them.

"But, perhaps, nothing was a more certain precursor of the revival, and indication of its approach, than a spirit of fervent intercession among some of the Teachers. Their anxious care to see some of the children converted had increased, and, in proportion, the fervency of their prayers. The time had come - the set time to favour Zion."

During the previous twelve months, a number of the church's members had suddenly died, creating a sense that God was teaching a serious lesson to everyone else.

"The last who departed was a pious young lady. Her death was improved by a sermon to the young on our Lord's parable of the Ten Virgins. After the sermon a prayer meeting was held, and at its commencement the Minister invited any who were the subjects of the Holy Spirit's strivings to come forward to him at the Communion that they might be prayed for and directed to Christ. During prayer, a respectable middle-aged female in great distress of mind came up; then, one after another, the youths in the Catechumen class, and boys and girls of the School, with here and there a young man or young woman, until the Communion was filled and penitents were kneeling in other places. They were instructed in the simple way of faith, and exhorted to make the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ their sole, their immediate trust, he having included them in his great work of redemption. Several found peace through believing, and it was judged expedient to hold a public service the next evening. The same blessed results were witnessed night after night, until all, or nearly all, who had been awakened on the Lord's day, with a few others who had been induced by their young friends to attend, were, as is confidently believed, truly converted.

The writer of the article joyfully expected the character of the Newtown Church to change over the following few years, as these forty young converts became more mature in their faith, and took their place in the Lord's work. (4.)

In February of the next year, a revival broke out in another church in this Circuit, at Botany Bay.

"There has been a gracious work in this place. For some time past the members of Society have been quickened into newness of life. The revival of religion in their souls has led them to pour out their hearts in prayer for their neighbours, and to carry to them the means of grace. A small hamlet called the *Woolwashing* was fixed on as a place where a Prayer Meeting might be held and visits paid to the people with great advantage. For several weeks these were tried in faith, and fasts observed weekly. At length on a Sabbath evening, during prayer the Spirit of the Lord strove mightily with the people and there was a loud cry for mercy. That evening three professed to have obtained salvation. Others have since found peace to their souls, and, though the work is not as extensive as we desire to see it, it promises to be deep and permanent." Sunday evening prayer meetings in a local hotel "have been attended by upwards of one hundred persons and have been seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." (5.)

## **Parramatta**

A letter from the Rev. Stephen Rabone, which appeared in the September issue of the "Advocate" gave news of a touch of revival in the Parramatta Circuit.

After detailing matters connected to their meetings in support of overseas missions, the letter says; "I have also great pleasure in informing your readers that during the last few

weeks we have been favoured with a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our Society in Parramatta. In answer to the prayers and supplications offered to God, the Members of the Church are quickened - the work of God is revived in their souls; besides which, thirty persons or more have joined our classes and are on trial for Church Membership.

It is a pleasing fact that the majority of those who have given in their names as candidates for Membership are young persons of both sexes, mainly children of praying parents, who are now rejoicing that their children know the God of their fathers... We hope that we are on the eve of a general outbreak and extension of the spiritual work of God; in several of our country preaching places the signs are cheering and encouraging. The congregations are large, and the praying ones are expecting better days." (6.)

### **Sydney East Circuit**

In his autobiography, Watsford mentions that near the end of his time in Goulburn, he came to Sydney for the main district meetings of the Wesleyans in New South Wales. The visit coincided with some of the Union Prayer Meetings following the American revival. Some of the members of this Circuit were amongst those who prayed in this way. .

"While stationed at Goulburn, I went one year to our District Meeting in Sydney, and was appointed to preach in the Bourke Street Church on the Sunday evening. The praying men had been pleading with God for the outpouring of the Spirit and they did not plead in vain. The church was crowded, and the mighty power of God came upon the people. Fifty persons professed to find Christ that night, and many others were in distress. It was announced that I would preach the following evening. To a congregation which packed the building I preached from 'Quench not the Spirit.' What a time we had! The whole assembly was mightily moved. the power was overwhelming; many fell to the floor in an agony, and there was a loud cry for mercy. The police came rushing in to see what was the matter; but there was nothing for them to do. It was impossible to tell how many penitents came forward; there must have been over two hundred. The large schoolroom was completely filled with anxious inquirers. How many were saved I cannot say, but the number must have been very large. We announced that a prayer-meeting would be held the next morning at seven o'clock, but long before that hour there were scores at the door in great distress. In the evening I preached the 'District Sermon' at the York Street Church, and we had a glorious time. It had been arranged to, have the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but that had to be delayed for an hour or more as so many persons were in great trouble, and we had to pray for them. The next evening I conducted a meeting in the Y.M.C.A. room. People were there from all the Churches, and we had a blessed meeting. At its close I said to Mr Cuthbertson, an Independent minister, 'I am sorry that so many of our Methodists prayed, leaving no time for members of other Churches.' He replied, 'Oh, we do not think whether we are Independents or Methodists with this glorious power on us.' I had to return to my Circuit next day; but I have often thought that I did wrong to go. Had we all united and gone fully into the work, we might have had thousands and tens of thousands saved." (7.)

The meetings were also written up in "The Advocate". When preaching at Surry Hills, Watsford's text was Psalm 32.1. "There were great searchings of heart; the words of the preacher burned into the conscience of the transgressor, and hard indeed was he who did not quail beneath them. Hundreds of the Congregation remained behind at the Prayer Meeting Upward of a hundred souls were crying for mercy, and before the meeting closed, at least forty professed to have found peace. A Prayer Meeting was announced for six o'clock, but the people started to assemble soon after five, so that the meeting commenced much earlier than

the time appointed. The School Room was crowded, and we had a repetition of the blessed sights and sounds of the evening before. On the Monday evening so many came to pray that the School Room would not hold them, and we were under the necessity of having two meetings, instead of one. Oh! it was a glorious season of grace and power! We could not number the persons who were in agony about their souls. Glory be to God! The blessed work still continues, and sinners are saved at every Meeting." (8.) The minister of the Circuit was the Rev. Samuel Ironside, who provided this account. Ironside had previously seen some revival, himself, in New Zealand.

### **The Turon Gold Fields**

The January, 1859, "Advocate" carried a note about a revival in these gold fields. The missionary who went there had to work with a very small group of believers. The communities at Wattle Flat, Sofala and New Zealand Point had been sectioned off from the Bathurst Circuit less than a year before. By October, 1858, he said "we were favoured with a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit." Many people became deeply convicted and concerned, and a smaller number showed clear evidence of conversion. The number of members in this fellowship almost doubled overnight. (9.)

### **Wollongong**

It seems clear, from the following piece that many of the touches of revival which appeared in Australia during this period, were not reported upon in print, or not in a form which has come down to us today.

"While God has been reviving his work in other parts of the colony he has been mindful of us also, his Spirit has been poured upon us, and many have been converted to God.

Some short time ago, many of the members of the Church agreed to pray more earnestly and more frequently that God's work might be revived among us; and in answer to the united prayers of God's people his work has been revived. Sinners have been saved, believers have been built up on their most holy faith, and with hearts filled with gratitude we call upon our souls and all that is within us to bless his holy name for what he has done, and is doing among us.

The work has hitherto been confined to the young, many children of pious parents, and almost all the elder scholars in the Sabbath School are saying 'Oh Lord we will praise thee, though thou wast angry with us, thine anger is turned away and now thou comfortest us.'

God's servants have for many years been labouring here, and have often said, 'Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed': but they did not labour in vain, the 'bread which they cast upon the waters is now ' found after many days.'

Of course we meet with opposition, and our enemies are not careful about the truth of the assertions they make in reference to us; some of them are charitable enough to hint that the Methodists have taken leave of their senses, but not withstanding all the efforts of both Papists and High Churchmen to persuade persons that our Religion is nothing better than enthusiasm, many have been constrained to say- 'It is the Lord's doings and marvellous in our eyes.'

The work still progresses, and we are lifting up our hearts in faith, expecting 'still greater things'.

Lo! the promise of a shower  
Drops already from above,

But the Lord will shortly pour  
All the Spirit of his love." (10.)

### **Windsor Circuit, 1859**

More signs of a moving of the Spirit in the Sydney area occurred at Castlereagh, one of the parts of the Windsor Circuit. It is reported in a letter dated March 24, 1859.

"The readers of 'The Christian Advocate' will rejoice to hear that there has been a glorious revival of God's work here lately. At the last Quarterly Meeting in Windsor, when the question was put 'what could be done to advance the cause of God in this Circuit.' It was proposed and unanimously agreed to, that, a week of special prayer meetings should be held in all the Chapels in the Circuit, in the week of full moon in the month of March. These meetings accordingly commenced here on the night of Sabbath the 13th, instant, after a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Davis, from the words 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation,' characterised . by heart searching faithfulness, and on that and the following night, there was a, deeply solemn feeling during the meetings. On Tuesday night the good work seemed to commence in earnest, and on every succeeding night there was a more glorious work than on the previous one. On Wednesday night there was a goodly number around the penitent form, and two professed to have found an interest in Christ. On Thursday night the number increased, and four were set at liberty - but it was on Friday night that the power of God was seen, and his own people had cause to praise him; the Chapel , was all but filled, and a very gracious time was experienced, after a short but appropriate and most impressive sermon, by the Rev. Mr. Beazley, from the words 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon Him while he is near.' The large Congregation appeared deeply influenced by the presence of the mighty One; the penitents place was again filled and six more, professed to find mercy. Again on Saturday and Sabbath nights the good work went on gloriously during protracted meetings, and five more were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. On the three last nights, the meetings were formally closed two or three times, and still the people seemed unwilling to go away, and it was getting on for eleven o'clock before they finally broke up.

Before this series of meetings, a few of the members of society here agreed to go daily at the hour at one o'clock to a throne of grace, and plead for a blessing on the coming meetings. And God has been graciously pleased to hear prayer, and grant what some have been long looking for, an outpouring of the Spirit of God. God's people have been greatly blessed in their own souls; there appears to be a deeply earnest feeling created among the people, an inroad made on Satan's kingdom, and a goodly number added to the Church such as we hope will be eternally saved. The good work is still going on, and about twenty persons have been added to the society here since the commencement of these meetings. To God be all the glory." (11.)

### **The Call to Special Prayer Renewed in Sydney**

By mid-1859, lengthy reports began appearing in the periodicals about a new, powerful and strange revival in Ulster, which soon spread, without its stranger features, to many parts of England, Wales and Scotland.

Apparently, as the end of the year, 1859, approached, the effort to arrange combined prayer meetings in Sydney had subsided. The arrival and publication of news from parts of the United Kingdom provided a renewed spur. As a result, as the new year began, there were more efforts to promote united prayer for a wider revival.

For example, the following article appeared in "The Christian Advocate and

Wesleyan Record", published in Sydney, early in 1860. It refers to a previous news piece which had appeared in the "Sydney Morning Herald".

"It will be remembered that on Thursday evening last a meeting was held in the large room of the Young Men's Christian Association for the purpose of making arrangements with the various Protestant evangelical denominations of the city with a view to holding periodical union prayer meetings" After describing who did what at the various stages of the meeting, the following conclusion was reached:-

"1. That this meeting, encouraged by the promises of God, and the accounts of the great work which God is now accomplishing in other parts of the earth, resolves to invite the various branches of the Christian Churches in Sydney, to unite in general periodical prayer meetings, for the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the churches and people of this colony.

2. That a weekly prayer meeting be held in some conveniently situated room for six weeks in continuance.

3. That the Committee be authorised to engage the Temperance Hall for these prayer meetings, and that the evening of meeting be Friday.

4. That the meetings commence at a quarter to eight p.m., and close at nine o'clock.

5. That the Revs Messrs Kent, Eggleston, G.King, Dr. Mackay, and Hurst, with the sub-committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, make all necessary arrangements for prayer meetings; and that the secretaries (the Rev Dr. Mackay and the secretary of the association) be the conveners of the committee." (12.)

A few weeks later (15th March, 1860) a short notice appeared describing the second and third of these prayer meetings.

"The third of these meetings was held in the Temperance Hall, on Friday evening last, under the presidency of the Rev. Mr Cuthbertson. The Hall was crowded as usual and the interest, and spirit of devotion appear to increase as the meetings progress. The one held the week before was conducted by the Rev. Mr Allworthy, a clergyman of the Anglican Church. The spirit was excellent. Such meetings cannot be in vain. They spring from a spirit inspired of God, and which is being generally diffused in the Church. The supplications of the six or seven hundred in the Temperance Hall, are joined to those of hundreds of thousands in various parts of the world, who are calling upon God to let His 'kingdom come'. Surely such united prayer cannot be in vain. 'Will God not avenge his own elect that cry day and night unto him?' 'He will avenge them speedily' for the Lord hath said it." (13.)

This notice is followed by a whole page of news about special prayer meetings in several places in England, as well as in Scotland, and Geneva, and then by a notice about the revival which had recently begun in Drysdale, Victoria.

The denominations each made their own call to their people to embark again upon special prayer

## **Windsor in 1860**

Another stage of the revival broke out in the Windsor area. The first report about this revival to appear in the "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record" was provided by the Circuit minister, the Rev. Charles Creed, and was dated July 27th, 1860. Further reports also appeared at a later time.

"A few weeks ago, our minds became deeply exercised about a revival in the Windsor Circuit, and it was arranged to set apart the hour of noon, from twelve to one o'clock, as a time for special prayer and intercession; a few minutes, at least, of the hour to be so spent by

all who desire the prosperity of Zion. Very shortly after, indications of the working, of the Holy Spirit became apparent, the Prayer Meetings were better attended, congregations greatly increased, the Society getting more alive to God, and a general expectation produced that the Lord would visit us in mercy, and make bear His holy arm in the salvation of the people.

The Quarterly Fast day was marked by deep humiliation before God, and penitents began to enquire what they must do to be saved. Then followed our Missionary Anniversary Services: hallowed seasons of the presence of God. The brethren, Revs Watkin and Ironside, felt the power of the Lord, as did other speakers who addressed the various Meetings at Windsor, Sackville Reach, Enfield and Richmond; seldom are more delightful Missionary Meetings witnessed. At Sackville Reach especially, the congregation seemed melted into tears before the Lord.

At the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the greatest peace and harmony prevailed, and during the devotional part our dear brother the Rev. Peter Turner was so overwhelmed by a sense of Divine love that he could not proceed in prayer. (Peter Turner was a powerful preacher, mightily used by God in Tonga and Samoa. He had retired to Windsor.) The Love feast in the evening was characterised by deep feeling: truly a feast of love. Love supreme, love to God, and love to man. Many bore cheering testimony to the power of grace to save; some witnessed a good confession that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The work progressed in the Sunday School. "A great desire is manifested amongst the children to love the Saviour. Many of the older boys and girls are soundly converted to God. Our Prayer Meetings are crowded, and often fourteen, fifteen or twenty penitents press to the penitent forms. The Meetings this week are more deeply affecting than any we have had before, the cries and wrestling of the "weary and heavy-laden may be heard on all sides: young and old pressing into the kingdom. Many have lately been set at liberty, and are going on their way rejoicing, and every night some more weeping prodigals are seen coming forward and seeking mercy. The work reminds me of those glorious scenes in America and other places, of which we have heard. There is but little noise and excitement, but deep feeling, and the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit melting and subduing the hearts of all to the blessed Redeemer.

The revival is extending to other places. At Richmond, similar scenes are witnessed. After preaching on Sabbath evening the 15th, we held a Prayer Meeting, and invited all who were seeking the Lord to come to the communion rail; twelve or fourteen came up, some found comfort. Prayer Meetings were held every night, and on Thursday evening, the 19th, after preaching, they were again invited to come up, and twenty or more instantly pressed forward, and by their very earnest wrestling and fervent prayers manifested the distress of their souls. Some of them were set at liberty, and when the meeting broke up, others went home to weep and agonise for salvation."

The following Friday there were nearly thirty penitents kneeling at the form, and again some found peace. Three attempts were made to close the meeting, but without success. One said, 'I cannot go without the blessing.' He continued on his knees, lifted his eyes and hands to heaven, until he fell prostrate, and had to be supported by others. "Suddenly it seemed as though a stream of glory came into his troubled soul, he sprang to his feet and again lifting his hands and eyes exclaimed 'I am happy, I am so happy!' His soul was set at liberty, and with a countenance radiant with joy, he returned home to tell his beloved family circle what a dear Saviour he had found. The change in him is most remarkable."

On the following Sunday, the sense of God's presence was almost overwhelming. At the Sunday School, in the afternoon, when the Prayer Meeting was held, there were many

penitents, and again after the evening service a large part of the congregation stayed for the Prayer Meeting. "Many penitents came to the communion rail, and toward the close of the meeting we were permitted to witness a scene on which angels might gaze with ecstasy. Amongst the penitents was an old soldier, sixty-three years of age, for whom a pious son had been praying for eleven years. The old man was in great trouble and sorrow for his sins, and prayed and wrestled for salvation. He was directed to trust in Jesus as his Saviour; at length he ventured his whole trust on the Atonement, he exclaimed, 'I do believe Christ died for me, that he saves me now; I am saved'. He rose to praise the Lord, and there was a very affecting time when father and son met each other, and embraced. While the son praised God for saving his father, there was still concern over brothers still not converted to Christ." (14.)

The next page of the "Advocate" recorded a small revival at Wattle Flat, on the Turon goldfields, where the membership of a church had doubled within three months.

This was followed by a report of another Union Prayer Meeting in Sydney. The first ones had been held in the Temperance Hall, but now they were to be held in one of the city churches, taking turns between six churches. The first was held in St George's Church in Castlereagh Street (Free Presbyterian), but the weather was very bad, and only a hundred people were present. The second was held in the Pitt Street Congregational Church, and a report was read about a revival which had occurred in the English town of Warwick.

For several issues of the "Advocate" there were more reports of happenings in various parts of the Windsor Circuit. By the October Quarterly Meeting they said that "what especially filled our hearts with joy, was the addition during the quarter of more than two hundred to the Society. Glory be to God!"

"I need not enumerate all the places where the gracious revival is going on... not only have numbers been soundly converted to God, but many of the members of Society have given themselves fully to God." (15.)

### **Newcastle and Maitland**

In the same issue of the "Advocate" appeared two notices. In the first instance, a meeting was arranged in the Newcastle Wesleyan Circuit to organise special prayer. After tea, one of William Arthur's papers was read, then two or three addresses were given about the necessity of revival, and the way to secure it. "After several had engaged in prayer, all promised to spend a short time each day at the same hour (as nearly as possible) in earnest special prayer for the outpouring of God's Spirit. If ever there was a place where a revival of religion is needed, it is here. Almost the entire population is openly irreligious. Though there are eight Protestant ministers, and a larger number of Protestant congregations in the city and its immediate vicinity, there are very few who attend any place of worship regularly, perhaps not more than one in five." (16.)

In the second notice, it was reported that a revival movement had appeared in the Maitland area, not far from Newcastle. The Rev. John Watsford had recently moved from Goulburn to Maitland. His two years in the Maitland area were marked by much successful evangelism, and by almost continuous indications of revival. This notice was the first one to be published about revival in this area, but other reports soon followed.

"For several weeks past, the Spirit of God has been graciously working upon the minds of the people of this place. About a month ago during a sermon by our much-beloved minister, the Rev John Watsford, the power of God was manifested, and at the prayer meeting at the close of the service, to which nearly five hundred persons remained, many were convinced by the gracious operations of the Spirit of their sinfulness, and were heard on

every hand praying for mercy." The report concludes by saying, "We must not, however, omit to mention that one characteristic of the blessed outpouring of the Spirit is the almost total absence of extravagant noise or commotion; the influences of the Holy Spirit have descended as 'the gentle dew from Heaven', watering and reviving God's people, and softening and subduing rocky hearts." (17.)

### **On The Manning River, 1860**

In this revival, the work began in the Free Presbyterian congregation at Tinonee. A number of Scottish people had settled along the Manning River. Efforts had been made by the Rev. William McIntyre to get ministers for more Presbyterian congregations around Australia, and the Rev. Allan McIntyre had come out to supply for the settlers along the Manning. He arrived in 1854, supplied the pulpit acceptably for three years, and following an official "call", was duly inducted in 1857, conducting his first communion service on 13th September, 1857.

Allan McIntyre was described as pre-eminently a man of prayer. He knew how to call down blessings from above. "The fervour of his supplications at times was remarkable and could not escape notice." There were a number of hillside spots where he used to go, many times per day, to commune with the Heavenly Father. Prayer seemed to be his element. Once he called his people together to pray for rain, which was then sorely needed. "The congregation gathered, and after earnest supplication by himself and others, started to wend their way home; but many, before reaching their destination, were drenched with an abundance of rain." Many other instances of answered prayer impressed not only the saints, but many others in the community as well.

McIntyre had three preaching locations along the river, and spent an entire Sunday at each place in turn, once every three weeks. The weekly prayer meeting was held in the church in which he had preached last. One time when he was down at the lower end of the Parish, the house he intended to visit on the Monday was a third of a mile back from the bank of the river, but had a boathouse on the edge. "After breakfast and worship the Rev. Allan went to this shed. The young men of the family were ploughing in the vicinity, and could hear him praying. He remained there most of the day, and they did not wish to interrupt him, as they distinctly heard him pleading with the Lord to grant an awakening in his congregations. On the following Sabbath, as it was to be Communion Sabbath, he was telling the Lord if it were not His sovereign will to grant it, he would take it as an indication from Him that his labours were done on the Manning, and he would leave the field for some other labourer. There was not much ploughing done that day. Preparation time for the Communion passed without any symptoms. Communion Sabbath the church was crowded more than usual, and without seeming effects, further than that the communicants were more solemnised; but Thanksgiving Monday, the last and great day of the Feast (the congregation was as large as the previous day), will be a day to be remembered throughout eternity--a day when He Who is fairer than the sons of men girded His sword upon His thigh and in His majesty went forth to ride prosperously. The Spirit of Truth accompanied the word spoken with power. It was said by some of the elders that there were not three pairs of dry eyes within the walls. Husbands were holding their wives; brothers were holding their sisters. Young women in an ecstasy of love, and old men, almost grandfathers, crying; even lads of twelve or thirteen years of age, crying piteously. Assuredly the Holy Spirit was present in more than an ordinary way. The speaker could be heard above the noise. I believe the Lord strengthened his lungs at the time, and for the occasion.... Individual instances occurred in the

congregation for months afterwards. I have seen him preaching in private houses on a weeknight, and the feelings of his hearers so great that he had to leave the text in hand and take another; and at times some of the hearers could not be removed, and we would have to remain up with them all night. Many souls had he for his hire. The Day will reveal it. It does me good to write of it. None of the congregation knew about the Rev. Allan and the boathouse but the one family, from whom I got my late beloved wife." (18.)

Other denominations also shared in this work. The "Christian Advocate" has several references to happenings among the Wesleyans in the Manning River Circuit which had some resemblances to the revival. So, it appears they were able to benefit from it also.

The Rev. Alexander McIntyre was a Gaelic evangelist who had extraordinary natural abilities as a preacher. In style as an evangelist, he was more like Asahel Nettleton than like any of the Wesleyans, or like Finney. He came to Australia in 1853, to minister especially amongst migrants from the Scottish Highlands, of which there were many thousands.

He ministered first in Ahalton, on the Hunter River of N.S.W. After 1858, he made his headquarters in Geelong. He also spent time in Rocky Mouth (Maclean), on the Clarence River of N. S. W. In addition, he visited Scottish settlements on the Manning and Shoalhaven Rivers. He died in Geelong in 1878.

The great success attending his ministry might, at times, have been classed as revival, if compared with some of the Wesleyan revivals. But it does not seem to have been classed as revival by the Calvinistic writers who have recorded what little we know of McIntyre's work. (19.)

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## *CHAPTER THREE*

### **"CALIFORNIA" TAYLOR'S VISIT**

#### **to NEW SOUTH WALES 1864 and 1865.**

The Rev. William Taylor, of the California Conference, had spent seven or eight months in the second half of 1863 preaching in many parts of Victoria. This was followed, early in 1864, by about three months spent in Tasmania. Upon his return to Melbourne, he spent a few weeks preaching in several places, before travelling to Sydney, arriving in June, 1864. He spent the rest of 1864 in New South Wales, except for a few weeks in November and December, when he was in Queensland. Early in 1865, he spent three months in New Zealand. But he returned to spend three more months in New South Wales, especially covering some of the country towns he had not managed to visit the previous year. He then travelled to South Australia.

#### **A Glimpse of One of the Secrets of His Success**

Taylor recounts a story which provides us a glimpse of the secrets underlying his success. He met a certain Mrs McDonald at his first service in Sydney. Eventually, one day when Taylor was being entertained at her home, she told him this story. " Three months before your arrival in Sydney I was led by the good Spirit into a great struggle of prayer and fasting on behalf of the churches of this city and colony. Iniquity was abounding, and the churches were so formal and dead they. seemed utterly unable to stand the opposing tide of wickedness, much less to move aggressively for the salvation of the people. This burden upon my heart so increased that I was unable to take sufficient sleep and food to keep me up, so that my health was sadly impaired. I was led to pray specially that the Lord would send someone through whom he could stir the hearts of the people of this city and colony, and so bring them into harmony with him, so that he could use them effectively for the accomplishment of their work.

I was finally relieved one night by a vision through a dream. I saw a beautiful chariot without any horses or any visible power of locomotion, moving slowly over the city just above the housetops, and I saw standing in it a messenger from God, a tall, straight man with long beard, and he was sowing seed broadcast, and proclaiming in the name of the Lord. In my dream I wept for joy, and said, 'That is the man the Lord is sending in answer to my prayer'.

In my dream I gazed with tearful eyes at the man's face and figure till an impression was made on my memory as clearly defined as a photograph, and I thought, 'If I ever see that man I shall certainly know that he is the man that God sent.' I awoke and my weight of anxiety was gone from my heart. My prayer was answered, and I said, 'That man will surely come.' At that time I had never heard of you, and knew not that there was such a man in the

world, but from that time on I was on the lookout. Three months afterward I saw it announced that Rev William Taylor, from California, was to commence a special series of revival services in York Street Wesleyan Church. I hastened to the first service announced, and as soon as I entered the door and saw you standing by the pulpit I recognised you at a glance as the man I had seen in the Gospel chariot three months ago." (1.)

## **York Street**

The first news of his meetings in Sydney to appear in the "Advocate" was printed only a few days after the meetings commenced.

"On Sunday last, the Rev. W. Taylor, of California, commenced special services in Sydney, by preaching three times at the York Street Church; the service in the afternoon was intended especially for the children of the Sabbath Schools. On each occasion there was a large and attentive congregation, in the evening especially the Church was densely crowded in every part.

At the prayer meeting, which followed the regular service, a large number of anxious enquirers surrounded the communion rail. We believe it is understood that Mr. Taylor will preach at York Street every evening during this week, and the next. Afterwards, he will visit the several Circuits in Sydney, and then proceed to some of the country districts, holding a week of special services in each place. Our readers will remember that Mr. Taylor's labours have been followed by gracious results in the neighbouring Colonies, and we have little doubt that his coming amongst us will be rendered a blessing to New South Wales." (2.)

The York Street Church was, at that time, part of the "Sydney North Circuit", or the "Sydney First Circuit." It was called "Sydney North" because the city of Sydney did not then spread across to the northern side of the harbour. The north part of the city was that part near Sydney Cove, and "The Rocks." The south part of the city was about a mile or two south, and perhaps south-east, of there.

The second report, a month later, had much more information.

"During the last month the work of God in this Circuit has been graciously revived. For some time past the prayers of God's people have ascended to Him, that: He would pour out His Holy Spirit, and revive His work. 'Thy people will be willing in the day of Thy power', saith the Scriptures.

The arrival of the Rev. W. Taylor, whose success in the neighbouring colonies has so often reached us, had been looked forward to with hopeful anticipation. Earnestly did the Church pray that God would make him instrumental in the conversion of sinners, and faithfully have those prayers been answered. God has truly done for us 'exceedingly above all we could ask or think.'

On Sunday, 16th June, he preached his first sermon in York Street Church, in the afternoon he addressed the Sabbath Schools of the Circuit, taking for his subject the call of Samuel; this was a very interesting service, and produced deep impressions upon the minds of many of the young.

The sermon that evening was very impressive from the text: 'As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live; turn ye, - turn ye, - for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' At the prayer meeting held after the service, about fifty persons came forward seeking the Lord, a good number of whom found peace through believing in Jesus, and could say, 'Oh! Lord, I will praise Thee, for though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortest me.

'Special services were held during the week, Mr. Taylor preaching every evening to

overflowing congregations with similar successes; persons of all ages and various classes, together sought the Lord, surrendering to Jesus, and were enabled to rejoice in sins forgiven. As we returned from these scenes of gladness, we appreciated the feelings of him who on a similar occasion sang

Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood,  
For Jesus is bringing lost sinners to God.

On Sunday, 26th, the Revd. gentleman preached again in the same church; collections were made after each service in aid of the Flood Relief Fund, which together amounted to ninety-one pounds. In the afternoon, a Fellowship meeting was held, at which upward of ninety persons (mostly young converts) testified to the fact that God for Christ's sake had pardoned their sins, and that they then enjoyed peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The special services were continued through the second week; the congregations seemed each evening to increase, and sinners who had long resisted the strivings of the Holy Spirit at length yielded to powerful convictions, and anxiously enquired 'What must I do to be saved?'

The last sermon of the series was strikingly impressive, the text being, 'Enter in at the straight gate' etc.' The prayer meeting on this occasion was continued till past ten. Many sought and found the Lord. During these two weeks upward of 300 persons recorded their names, having been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

Not the least remarkable feature of this revival is that although there was the greatest earnestness manifested, yet there was nothing of that excitement and enthusiasm which has sometimes characterised similar meetings. The utmost order prevailed. The sermons were not in any way calculated to produce excitement. There were the most powerful appeals to reason and common sense, the simple preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus, illustrated by the most simple events of daily occurrence, and narratives of facts, above all, a strong faith in the power of the Word and the Spirit, and in the promises of God. We honour the man whose labours God has so abundantly blessed, we rejoice in his success, but to God be all the glory, remembering the great truth, 'not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.'

We rejoice that these meetings have been followed by a marked improvement in the attendances on the means of grace, especially the classes. The young people have largely shared in the good work, about fifty of the Sunday scholars have joined the Church. A boys' prayer meeting has been commenced in York Street school room at the close of the school, which was largely attended, and is conducted by themselves. We earnestly pray that He who has commenced this good work will save those who have given themselves to Him, and 'bear them along to the Eden above.'" (3.)

### **Sydney Second Circuit**

At that time, this Circuit spread a few miles to the west, past the campus of the budding University of Sydney, the main church in the Circuit being at Chippendale. "The Rev. W. Taylor has also visited this Circuit. He commenced his labours on the 3rd instant (July), by preaching three times in the Chippendale Church. The service at 3pm was designed for the spiritual benefit of the Sabbath Schools throughout the Circuit. On each evening of the week, except Saturday, Mr. Taylor preached to crowded audiences, who, *with one unhappy exception*, listened to him with intense satisfaction. It was found on the last evening that Mr.

Taylor officiated, that one hundred and eighty souls had been savingly benefited by his ministrations. On the Saturday evening, the Rev. R. Sellors, assisted by several brethren, held a special prayer meeting for the good of those who, being penitent, needed further instruction and help, in order to their receiving 'forgiveness with God', when *five* obtained mercy. It is somewhat remarkable that, with the exception of 2 Baptists, 2 Independents, and 6 Episcopalians, all these conversions have been from the congregations of Wesleyan Methodism in this and other Circuits, 131 having been put under the care of experienced leaders, and it is hoped that by this, and other means which may be used, the 'fruit' so mercifully gathered will be preserved unto our Lord's heavenly Kingdom. To Him be all the praise." (4.)

### **Bourke Street, Surry Hills (Sydney Third Circuit)**

"The Rev. W. Taylor preached at Bourke Street Chapel, Surry Hills, on Sunday the 10th instant, in the morning and evening, and addressed the Sunday Schools of the Circuit, and the parents and friends of the children in the afternoon. Each service was well attended, and the earnest and affectionate appeals of the preacher reached the consciences and moved the hearts of many. In the evening, as soon as the preaching was over, Mr. Taylor invited all those who were convinced of sin and seeking pardon to assemble round the communion rail, and as soon as the invitation was given, many both old and young accepted it, left their pews, and together bowed at God's altar, and by so doing silently signified to all present their determination to forsake sin and become disciples of Jesus.

Twenty-seven that evening gave in their names as having been made happy through faith in the Saviour.

Similar services were held every evening in the week, except Saturday, and with each one the Holy Spirit's presence was made manifest in the sanctification of believers and the conversion of sinners. The number of those who, during the week's services, have obtained a clear assurance of reconciliation with God is one hundred and thirty-nine. Of these, 89 were added to our own, 37 to other Circuits, and the remainder to other churches.

One peculiar and very happy feature of this revival is the number of young men who have been converted. The Church looks to them, rejoices over them, blesses God for them, and expects great things from their energy, faithfulness and example.

While we as a Church thank God for Mr. Taylor's labours, we feel that though he has left us, yet the Spirit - the reviving, convincing, sanctifying Spirit - still abides with us, and we hope and pray that we may not by our coldness and unfaithfulness force Him to leave us, but by our earnestness, humility and faith, secure His constant presence with us, to apply every sermon, and save and sanctify with every service." (5.)

### **Newtown Circuit**

The Newtown Circuit joined onto the Chippendale area on the southern side, but it was not classed as a city circuit in those days. It marked the beginning of the country, and the circuit had many outlying centres, spreading as far as Botany Bay, Rockdale, Peakhurst, and other such places five miles or more distant.

"This Circuit has recently been favoured with the ministerial services of the Rev. W. Taylor, from California, and many through time and in eternity will have reason to bless God for them.

He preached in the Newtown church on Sunday, 17th July, morning and evening, the

spacious building being filled to overflowing with attentive hearers; many of whom before the Services of the day had closed were seeking in penitence peace with God, through faith in Christ. In the afternoon, Mr. Taylor delivered a strikingly suitable and most interesting address to the children of the Sabbath Schools, which will not soon be forgotten.

Services were held during the week, Mr. Taylor preaching and holding a prayer meeting every night except Saturday, and each occasion was attended with salvation; men and women, girls and boys were brought into the light and liberty of the Christian life. So that, at the close of the series of meetings that week, we had the happiness of rejoicing over one hundred and thirty-two persons who professed to find peace with God. Those who were members of other churches were directed to inform their ministers of what God had done for them, and to live to Christ, and seek to be useful in the church of their choice. Many others were young persons, children of our Sabbath School, whom we hope will grow up to be pillars in the House of the Lord.

These Special Services were continued the following week by the Ministers of the Circuit, assisted by others, with gracious results. The Lord is still with us, and the members of the Church, maintaining as they are called to do their religious life, we may confidently believe that the reviving and converted influence thus poured forth will continue and increase." (6.)

### **Sydney Fourth Circuit**

This Circuit spread eastward, out toward the coast, and the main centre was at Waverley.

"On Sunday, 24th July, the Revd. Wm. Taylor preached two Sermons in the Wesleyan Chapel, Waverley. A collection was made after each service in aid of the chapel debt.

The Rev. Wm. Taylor likewise preached in the above chapel four nights in the following week. The chapel was well filled during all the services; it was sometimes crowded. A solemn and devout feeling was manifest, and pervaded the whole congregation. The result of the services were many young people added to the Church; and many, we believe, left the Church deeply convinced of their sins, imitating the character and conduct of Agrippa, 'almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.'

The visit of Mr. Taylor to this rising suburb of Sydney will be long and gratefully remembered." (7.)

### **Parramatta**

"Since the issue of the last number of the 'Advocate', the Rev. W. Taylor has visited this town, preaching in the Wesleyan Church, Macquarie Street, on Sunday, 31 st July and the five evenings following. On every occasion the Church was crowded, and the services were pervaded with much Divine power. Many souls professed to find 'peace' through believing; in several cases those who had entered the sanctuary out of mere curiosity were mightily convinced of sin and constrained to cry to God for mercy.

The following is a 'return' of such as made profession of having realised pardon:

Adults 85  
Children, etc. 37  
Total. 122  
of the adults there were -  
Belonging to other Churches 9

Belonging to other Circuits 2  
Previously meeting in class 6

Nearly all the children and young people included in the above return are connected with the Wesleyan Sunday Schools at Parramatta. Arrangements are being made for the establishment of two catechumen classes, one for the boys, under the charge of Mr. James Byrnes; and one for the girls, under the charge of Mrs Rigg." (8.)

**Balmain**

"Since our last issue special services have been held in this suburb of Sydney on the 14th ult. (August). The Rev. W. Taylor preached in the morning and evening, and addressed the Sunday School children at 9am. The large and beautiful church was well filled on the Sunday and through the week. Many from other churches, and some unaccustomed to attend any church were present at the service. During the prayer meeting on each evening anxious enquirers surrounded the altars of prayer, and many professed to find peace with God. Some came, no doubt, from a principle of curiosity, and left resisting gracious influences; but on the whole, the series of meetings were very encouraging.

One or two additional classes have been formed, and the old classes have received considerable increase, while members of the church have been greatly quickened and edified." (9.)

**Open-air Services in Hyde Park**

"On Sunday afternoon, 21st August, it was estimated that about 10,000 persons assembled on Hyde Park to hear the Rev. W. Taylor.

On Sunday, 28th, ult., another service was held on the Park, when about 6,000 assembled to hear the Word of life. On five nights in one week and three nights in another these services were continued.

Several thousand were in attendance on each evening, many of whom, it was evident, belonged to the outcasts of the city. A comfortable rostrum was erected, and temporary gas lights were laid, so that there was an ample supply of light for the entire assembly. Fixed attention and perfect decorum prevailed throughout the entire services, and marked impressions were produced on large numbers in the crowd. At the close of the open-air services prayer meetings were held in the York Street Chapel, which was crowded each evening until ten o'clock.

Many who had not entered a church for years were by these special efforts brought under the influence of the living Word."

At this time, Taylor also delivered a series of his lectures in the city centre. "On Friday evening last Mr. Taylor delivered the last of a series of seven lectures in the York Street Chapel." (10.)

**Newtown.**

"The anniversary services in connection with the Wesleyan Church, Newtown, were held on Sunday, September 4, when three sermons were preached by the Rev. W. Taylor, and the collections amounted to fifty pounds. On the following evening a public meeting was held in the church to celebrate its opening, and also with a view to raising funds towards the erection of galleries."

After a series of long speeches about Circuit finances, and plans for the future of the Circuit, Taylor addressed the meeting, and spoke at length about the sanctity of marriage, and of property, religious and secular education (advocating the need to set up a women's college), and finally about the Christian's duty to tithe. The meeting raised a total of three hundred and forty pounds. (11.)

### **Bathurst.**

"The Rev. W. Taylor of the Californian Conference has lately visited this Circuit, and conducted a series of revival services. Persons belonging to all denominations in the town, and for many miles in the surrounding country flocked to hear him, induced, doubtless, by reading or hearing the descriptions given of him as a preacher of the Gospel. On each occasion of his preaching the Chapel was filled, sometimes crowded, and the congregation very attentive, and it was evident that a powerful influence, more than human, was pervading the minds of the people. The pathetic expostulation, and earnest appeals of the preacher, brought many to immediate decision.

A prayer meeting was held, at the close of each service (Sunday morning services excepted) for the benefit of anxious enquirers after salvation. At the request of Mr. Taylor, many, both old and young, left their seats and crowded around the communion rail, for the purpose of receiving instruction suited to their state of mind. There was 'great joy' amongst us on hearing the cry of the penitents, and witnessing the backslider and the formalist give proof of their intention to lead a new life. One hundred and twenty-six persons professed to have received a sense of pardon. through faith in Christ, of which the following return was made:

Belonging to other denominations. 9  
Belonging to other Circuits. 2  
Belonging to our own Circuit. 115  
Total 126.

Mr. Taylor stated the secondary object of his visit to Bathurst; viz, by the delivery of three lectures, and the sale of books written by himself to raise funds for the liquidation of a heavy debt upon the Methodist Chapel in San Francisco. This appeal to the liberality of the people was generously responded to. The lectures, one on Palestine, and two on Paul and his times, were well attended, and also listened to with deep interest, and many volumes of his books were sold." (12.)

### **Orange**

"The Rev. William Taylor, of California, commenced his series of special services in the Wesleyan Chapel, Orange, on Sunday, September 25th, and continued them throughout the week until Thursday. It was densely crowded on Sunday morning, numbers being unable to obtain admission. In the afternoon the rev. gentleman held an open-air service at which there were probably over eight hundred persons present. The interest shown in the opening services was maintained steadily throughout - the chapel being well filled every evening. In addition to this, prayer meetings were held occasionally in the morning.

Speaking of the preacher, from a purely critical point of view, it is not surprising that those who expected a display of oratory should be disappointed; he is no orator, has no pretensions to it, and never was said to be one, so far as we are aware. Christianity has never profited much by oratory. Tropes and figures may enable the hearer to measure the depth and

breadth of the orator's intellect; but they are, after all, sorry substitutes for living truths drawn from Divine Revelation." (Western Examiner.) (13.)

The Bathurst Wesleyan Church Anniversary was held on Sunday, October, 9th. The local Congregational Minister, the Rev. John Graham, was the guest preacher for the Sunday. After Taylor's meetings in Orange, and probably also preaching a few times in other centres in the district, he was back in Bathurst for the tea meeting, which came a few days after the Church Anniversary. At the tea meeting, Taylor read a letter from Alderman Webb, in which the Alderman offered five hundred pounds towards the church debt if it was matched by gifts other than through the Sunday offerings. Taylor made good use of this generous offer in appealing to the crowd at the tea meeting. The extra five hundred pounds was raised that night. (14.)

## **Mudgee**

After this, Taylor travelled across country, through the gold-fields, to the town of Mudgee. The report in the "Advocate" about his meetings there started with comments about some of the business of the previous Quarterly Meeting. The normal operations of the Circuit were proceeding, and the minister and people were seeing some spiritual results from their work. The Circuit accounts were satisfactory although there was a large debt on the new church and parsonage, and there had been additional costs in paying for a new minister to move his furniture out to a country location. They urgently needed a second minister. Also, two weeks had been set aside for special prayer upon the expected visit of Mr. Taylor.

He arrived in Mudgee on Sunday, 16th October, and "preached twice with great power, and in the afternoon addressed the young people with their parents and teachers. On each of the three following evenings he preached sermons of light and power. On Thursday evening he attended a Bible Society meeting, and on Friday and Saturday evenings delivered two lectures. On Sunday, 23rd, the services were continued, Mr. Taylor preaching morning and night. At the afternoon service (an experience meeting) fifty-three persons testified that 'the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins.' a large number of them only recently being led to the Saviour. The number of persons who professed at the altar of prayer their conviction of sin and determination to 'flee from the wrath to come' was about fifty, and of these some forty were made happy in Jesus. The Lord graciously lead them and keep them.

During the Rev. Mr. Taylor's visit, a gentleman of the district, who from the beginning of Methodist labour in the neighbourhood had helped us, most generously offered to give five hundred pounds towards the object if the whole debt of the church and parsonage could be cleared off during 1865.

The trustees and committee carefully considered the project, and in the spirit of confidence in the Lord, accepted the proposal and committed the Methodist public to the great work of raising two thousand one hundred pounds in the specified time. This, besides a good sum of original promises yet unpaid, and three pounds by a bazaar to be held early next year.

On Monday evening, 24th inst. (October), after tea, the congregation met in the church. Devotional services over, Mr. Wm. Blackman was voted to the chair. In a few appropriate words he indicated the business of the evening, and then called on one of the treasurers to submit a statement of the position of the trust, and the account for settlement that evening.

The statement was to the following effect:- That unless there be some effort made. there would be at the end of 1865, after bazaar, and after receipt of the Church Extension Society grant expected, and after the payment of outstanding good subscriptions, a deficit of

one thousand five hundred pounds upon the Church, five hundred pounds on the parsonage, and one hundred pounds for interest. in 1865: in all two thousand one hundred pounds.

Mr. M. P. Bayly's noble offer of five hundred pounds was announced, and received with demonstration of hearty satisfaction. It was explained to the meeting that there were others than those present who would put down their names that night. and that it was believed the Church Extension Society would help them successfully through, if all would do their best.

Seven hundred pounds was asked for that night, the treasurers intimating that upon that sum being raised that evening, the whole matter hinged. Mr. Taylor kindly advocated the cause, (including) very clearly and convincingly the Divine Law, and our privilege and duty as it respects the Lord's tenth of our property and the treasurers received and gave to the secretary the names and amounts. Six persons promised fifty pounds each, several from twenty to thirty pounds, and a very large number from that sum down to six pounds in the year - most persons preferring to pay in monthly instalments.

The mail coach came to the door of the parsonage at ten o'clock, and Mr. Taylor was obliged abruptly to leave the meeting. Many hastened outside to say 'farewell', but could not do it personally, so they gave three cheers of gratitude and good will. At the same moment, those who could not quickly enough get out had the joy of hearing the announcement that the seven hundred pounds had been raised." (15.)

In his autobiography, Taylor relates an astonishing story concerning the way the Mudgee debts were wiped out. One of the characters Taylor met at Mudgee was called "the orange peddler of Mudgee". The Wesleyans found him as a "poor, penniless, abandoned drunkard", but they loved and cared for him. In a few weeks he not only looked a new person, but he had been converted, as well. "They gave him some money to buy a basket of oranges to start the orange peddling business." That is how he got his name. "He sold oranges and talked salvation. People believed in him and encouraged his trade, and in a few weeks he bought a hand cart and enlarged his business operations.

Two or three years afterward the new church was completed, and the trustees had a breakfast meeting. It is a common thing among English Methodists in raising money to have a breakfast meeting and to invite all their moneyed friends to breakfast. You should never ask an Englishman for money when he is hungry. Take him when he has eaten a good breakfast.

After this breakfast in Mudgee the patrons were invited to walk up and lay their offerings on the table in front of the pulpit. Many responded, some paying five pounds, some ten, some twenty, some of the merchants paying as high as fifty pounds. By and by the orange peddler walked up. Nobody seemed to suppose that he had more than a living. He walked up and faced the audience, and told his experience, giving the date and circumstances of his conversion to God, and added, 'I was a poor, ragged drunkard, an abandoned sinner. These kind Wesleyan people drew me up out of the horrible pit of drunkenness and led me to Jesus, and he saved me from my sins. These people bore with me and kindly led me, showed me Christian sympathy and love, and started me in business. God has prospered me, and today I want to put down on this table all my earnings in the orange trade, above expenses, as a thank-offering to God and to these people for their kindness to me.'

He had a bag in his hand which was supposed to be filled with copper pennies. At the close of his speech he emptied the contents of his bag onto the table, and the clerk counted and reported two hundred and fifty sovereigns in gold."

Several other anecdotes in Taylor's autobiography refer to the period he spent in Mudgee. (16.)

## **Glebe Road**

For the second half of November, and the first week in December, Taylor was travelling to and from, and ministering in Queensland. On 3rd December, for example, he visited the Rev. Nathaniel Turner in Brisbane, on his death bed, as described in the chapter about Queensland.

On Sunday, 11th December, he was back in New South Wales, preaching at the opening of a new Church in Glebe Road. He also spoke at the tea meeting on the Monday evening, in aid of wiping out the relatively small debt on this project. He quoted Dr. Beecher, that "debt is the saddle with which the devil rides the church to death," and urged to them to be rid of it as soon as they could.

One of the speakers, the Rev. Benjamin Chapman, said that when he arrived in Sydney seventeen years previously, Glebe Road had been nothing more than a country track, in such poor condition that one should avoid it. (17.)

Following this, Taylor spent three months in New Zealand, arriving back in New South Wales on April 8th, 1865. (18.)

## **Maitland and Newcastle**

Taylor spent the rest of April, 1865, in the Hunter River Valley. The information about the meetings in Newcastle appeared in the "Advocate" in the form of a letter from the Rev. Charles Creed.

"For a long time past the cause has had to contend with difficulties and trials of more than ordinary character, and amongst these perplexities might be mentioned the very serious calamity which came to our new Church, by the fearful hurricane which swept the coast, some months since; the disaster was almost overwhelming in its depressing influence on our weak and struggling cause.

Yet amidst all, the Lord was not unmindful of us: a few being added to the Society; congregations steadily increasing, and a spirit of inquiry excited amongst the people generally.

This was the state of things, when God in His good providence brought the Rev. William Taylor of California to these districts; his visit to the Maitland Circuit, and the great excitement there, only more extensively roused up the community of Newcastle and the surrounding places; so that when he commenced his series of services, immense crowds attended, such a move, I presume, was never before witnessed in this City. Our church was thronged to excess, numbers were unable to gain admission, although every available place, even for standing was occupied.

Mr. Taylor spent two Sabbaths with us: all the services were most deeply interesting and profitable throughout the entire series. I would however mention the special services on the first Sabbath afternoon, for children of all denominations: the Church was densely packed, there being some six hundred children present beside adults.

The glorious results of the meetings extended to other Churches as well as our own. Many penitents crowded forward to be prayed for, at the various services, and many found peace with God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. About one hundred persons gave in their names, as either having found peace, or earnestly seeking. Of these, more than half, have joined our Church, and most of the others have joined other Churches to which they belonged.

Since Mr. Taylor left us the work has been progressing. Many happy conversions

might be recorded: not a few Sabbath scholars have given their hearts to the Lord. Heads of families, as well as the young, have consecrated themselves to God; so that there is great joy amongst us. The work is not restricted to Newcastle, other parts of the Circuit are being blest, particularly at Hanbury, Waratah. Many have joined the Church, new classes formed, and an earnest spirit pervades the Society.

I may mention a few incidents in connexion with the revival that God may thereby be glorified.

An elder sister going to the communion rail sees her next sister seeking the Lord, these together with a third sister have found peace with God through believing, three sisters thus brought to God, and two of their brothers seeking the Lord. A father yields himself to God at the time of silent prayer. The singing of 'the light in the window' subdues another, who could not rest till he found Christ. One who had felt the joy of believing becomes intensely anxious for a careless neighbour, seeks to bring him to hear Mr. Taylor, but is unsuccessful; the spirit of the Lord, however, laid hold of the man's heart, and he became anxious and troubled; at the request of this friend, the writer, one morning, travelled some distance, and then, accompanied by the friend, sought the man who was at work in the woods, and there in the forest bowed before the Lord in earnest united prayer, until the penitent yielded his heart to God. A large tree which the man had felled, was that against which we knelt, and there the sinner found 'the tree of life', and tasted the manna of redeeming love: the change in the husband has led to the conversion of the wife.

Last Sabbath evening we had one of the most affecting sacramental occasions I have ever had the privilege of attending. Around the table of the Lord were scenes on which angels might delight to gaze: There knelt the very young disciple and the more advanced christian. A devoted Aunt and three orphans; children of her sainted sister, all three soundly converted to God some time ago: A widow and her fatherless daughter: Husbands and wives; there again an aged father and mother, three sons and a daughter all lately brought to God. It was truly a time of consecration and dedication to God. All felt the Divine presence being filled with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

May the glorious work continue to spread more and more, until the whole world shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God." (19.)

## **Back in Sydney**

The reports in the "Advocate" list a number of preaching and lecturing commitments in and around Sydney, and in Parramatta, during the month of May, and also in the first week of July.

For example, he preached at the York Street Church in Sydney on 19th May, and led the worship at the opening of a new church on the "north shore", the previous day. The tea meeting was held in the "North Shore School of Arts", which had enough capacity to hold a very large attendance. This School of Arts was probably at St. Leonards. (20.)

He also visited Chippendale several times, including a visit to the assembled school children from the Chippendale, Hay Street, Glebe Road and Mount Lachlan Schools, run by the Wesleyans. In the vote of thanks to Taylor, the Rev. James Bickford mentioned that this was the fourth occasion within twelve months that Taylor had visited these schools. He also preached at Ashfield (on May 21st), which was then part of the Newtown Circuit. He had previously been offered the use of the Newtown Church to deliver a course of his lectures, in order to raise money for his own financial situation in San Francisco.

## **Braidwood, Goulburn and Yass**

It is not clear from the report about his visit to Braidwood exactly what date Taylor was there. A careful analysis of the dates that are given in the various reports of his activities suggest that the trip south to Braidwood, Goulburn and Yass occurred through late May and early June.

The Braidwood report runs as follows:- "The Rev, William Taylor, of California, preached in the morning, afternoon and evening of Sunday last to crowded congregations in a tent erected at the rear of the Wesleyan Chapel, Duncan-Street. On Monday evening, after the tea-meeting, he gave a lecture on the Apostle Paul. In the narration of a few passages from the life of this great apostle, the lecturer created an interest in his hearers which very few who went to hear him anticipated. His style differs considerably from the usual evangelical standard of oratory, and is interlaced with frequent smatterings of Americanisms which, however, after hearing for a short time are soon lost sight of in the attention which he elicits, and in fact are eventually felt to add force to his observations, and give a clearness to his conceptions and portraiture, Throughout the whole of the lecture, an interest was manifested, on the part of the audience which we seldom have the pleasure to witness at a lecture now-a-days.

At the conclusion of the lecture, he gave a brief account of his first entry into the Wesleyan ministry, and showed the great progress which the Methodists were making on the Pacific slopes of America, where the principal conference held at periods of every four years, numbered no less than 7,000 ministers. He explained, also, the reasons that had induced him to make the tour of Australia.

The Rev. Mr. Somerville, who occupied the chair, in conveying to the rev. lecturer the thanks of the assembly for the interesting lecture he had delivered, took occasion to mention that Mr. Taylor had considerably assisted the Wesleyan body of this district in lessening the debt on the Church by the collection that had been received, and the proceeds of the tea-meeting, and that for this service that he had rendered he would receive no recompense, not even for his travelling expenses up here. Mr. Taylor made a brief response for the hearty manner in which the meeting had appreciated his lecture, and after prayer the meeting broke up.

Mr. Taylor took his seat on the coach for Goulburn, en route to Sydney, immediately he came out of the meeting-house, amidst the cheers of the departing visitors." - Braidwood Dispatch. (21.)

The only reference to the Goulburn meetings to appear in the "Advocate" states that "on Sunday last" Taylor preached in Goulburn for the Australian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. This was published on 20th June, but we do not know what time lapses were involved before being published.

## **Wollongong, Kiama and Shoalhaven**

This represented Taylor's last tour, of any extent, on this first visit to New South Wales. The "Braidwood Dispatch" somehow discovered that Taylor preached six times in Kiama, and preached four times further south, and gave a lecture. (22.)

The report from Kiama is as follows:- "We have at length had the gratification of welcoming to our little town, the Rev. William Taylor, whose visit here has long been anticipated with much pleasure and interest, also with many an earnest prayer, that during his sojourn, the Holy Spirit might be specially manifested. The ground was somewhat prepared

for Mr. Taylor's labours, by a revival which took place about a twelvemonth ago, when many souls were brought to Christ, under the ministry of our beloved pastor the Rev. Thomas Angwin.

Mr. Taylor's services commenced on Sunday morning, the 25th June, and at an early hour groups of equestrians might be seen flocking down the hill-sides, and by the time the rev. gentleman entered the pulpit, the Chapel was filled in very available space; no less than 500 being present - the largest congregation ever yet seen in Kiama, The Chapel was re-filled in the afternoon, at 3 o'clock, when Mr. Taylor delivered an address to the parents and children of the town, and we trust that some of the admirable hints which he threw out relative to the training of children, will not be forgotten by the former, and we are sure that many of the anecdotes of his Californian experience, with which Mr. Taylor illustrated his remarks to the children, will long be remembered by them.

Mr. Taylor preached again in the evening, to a large and attentive congregation, the arrow of conviction entered many souls. At the prayer meeting which followed, the communion rail was filled with penitents, old and young, crying to God for mercy, the same results attended the services during the two following evenings, and many were enabled to surrender themselves to God.

It had been arranged that on Wednesday the Anniversary of the Chapel should be held. Friends gathered from all parts of the country around, to enjoy the services of the day. Mr. Taylor preached in the morning, a masterly sermon on 'Christian Perfection', and at two o'clock the company adjourned to a large tent behind the Chapel, which had been tastefully ornamented for the occasion, and where a most bountiful luncheon was spread, provided through the liberality of some of the ladies of the congregation. The number that sat down to tea was about 300.

In the evening, a public meeting was held. John Black, Esq., in the chair. The Rev. T. Angwin, the Circuit Minister, made a financial statement to the effect, that a debt of four hundred pounds rested upon the Chapel, appealed to the sympathies of those present to assist in removing it, expressing at the same time, his confidence in their willingness and ability to do so. The Rev. Mr. Zilman then spoke briefly, and was followed by the Rev. W. Taylor, who in the course of an able speech, strongly advocated the duty of consecrating to the service of God yearly, a tenth of our possessions, it being a Divine institution, inculcated by the 'Holy Scriptures', and giving several illustrations where God has specially blessed its observance. At the conclusion of his speech, subscription papers were handed round, and promises to the amount of one hundred and twenty pounds were obtained, which together with the collections of the day, and sale of luncheon tickets, make the proceeds of this Anniversary about one hundred and sixty pounds.

On Thursday night, during the absence of Mr. Taylor in another Circuit, a prayer-meeting was held, when three or four more penitents entered into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. On Friday evening, Mr. Taylor delivered a lecture on 'Palestine', and was listened to with much attention and interest. At the conclusion many gathered around the communion to say farewell, saddened by the thought that they should, in all human probability, never again on earth behold the face of him whose ministration God had so specially owned; but we believe that the influence of his visit will not easily die away. The good work is still progressing, and we hope to see many gathered into the fold of Christ." (23.)

## **Toward an Evaluation**

California Taylor left New South Wales for South Australia on 11th July, 1865.

A Valedictory Service was held in the York Street Church shortly before he left, a lengthy report of which was published, and an editorial on this subject appeared as well, in the "Advocate." The editor included this evaluation. "No visitor to these colonies has made a deeper impression, or one that is more wide- spread. We have welcomed to our coasts men who were heralded with more of official prestige. We have listened to men of larger capacity, and of greater culture. We have witnessed efforts which were stamped with profounder thought, with chaster eloquence, and with a more kindling oratory. But we have not had among us a man whose power with the masses has been so decided and general as that of the Evangelist who has just quitted our shores."

John Watsford, of course, was a kindred spirit. He said Taylor was "the grandest evangelist that ever visited Australia." (24.)

Watsford said, "I had a long talk with him one day about the secret of his success. He said, 'I look to the Spirit. He teaches me. I get my message direct from Him. I go to the meeting expecting the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, and He never fails me.'" (25.)

"No one knew better how to deal with all sorts and conditions of men. The power of the word as it fell from his lips few could resist. I once took an Adelaide physician, a German, to hear him, and the doctor was greatly interested. After the sermon he said to me, 'What is the secret of that man's power? It is not the sermon; I have heard hundreds better. It is not the singing, for I think I could sing as well myself. What is it?' I am afraid the doctor knew little of the power from on high - it was that which made Bishop Taylor what he was." (26.)

These comments by Watsford must not be misunderstood. They are comments which gain their meaning from the background of normal evangelical tradition in the middle of the Nineteenth Century, based in the Reformation, in the traditions of Wesleyan Methodism, and of such evangelists as Charles G. Finney.

They must not be understood as claims that Taylor possessed an "inner light" which provided an inspiration greater than that of the Scriptures. Nor must we think that he had charismatic gifts which gave him a direct line to the Throne of God, leading to infallible guidance, such as one finds in a cult leader, or even in a prophet from one of the Pentecostal Churches. Nor is this an infatuation with "power", such as we find in many parts of evangelicalism at the end of the Twentieth Century.

Perhaps, the best description is found in William Arthur's famous book on this subject, which was linked to revival movements of the period - "The Tongue of Fire" or The True Power of Christianity. Published in 1859, this Irish title went through many editions in a short time, and described the rationale of knowing and experiencing the power of the Spirit to convict and convert hearers, in response to the preaching of the Gospel.

Also, we have emphasised several times that the effectiveness of Taylor's ministry in Australia gained a great deal of its impact from the fact that, in 1864 and 1865, he worked in the afterglow of a widespread revival movement. In some instances, revivals had occurred only a very short time beforehand. When he returned in 1869, this condition no longer applied, and he did not make the same impact as he did on this first visit.

Benson quotes Joseph Nicholson's appreciation of the place of California Taylor in the history of Australian evangelism. "Taylor's great contribution to the religious life of Methodism in Australia consisted not only in the thousands of converts gathered under his direct ministry, and the subsequent labours of many of the converts, but the spirit of

evangelism that was created. The labours of David O'Donnell, Matthew Burnett, John MacNeil, and other Australian workers, and the hearty, sympathetic co-operation given to Messrs Inskip, Torrey, Chapman and Henry, of America, were all traceable to the evangelistic seed implanted by that prince of evangelists - California Taylor."

"The secret of his power with God and men is disclosed in his autobiography. On the way to a camp meeting in the Fincastle Circuit in 1845, he says: 'There, on my horse in the road, I began to say more emphatically than before: "I belong to God. Every fibre of my being I consecrate to Him. I consent to perfect obedience."'". (27.)

### **Revival and Evangelism in New South Wales**

So far as the practise of evangelism amongst Wesleyans in New South Wales is concerned. we have here seen the beginnings of a shift take place. With the work of California Taylor, for the first time, we have an evangelist travelling around the different circuits holding protracted meetings of various kinds, with the aim of winning souls to Christ, of deepening the vitality and holiness of the believers, and boosting the life of the churches.

In one way, the advent of California Taylor was seen by many people as providential, and as a promising sign of the moving of the Holy Spirit. But, like many good things, it became secularised and humanised. In due course, for the first time, there began to be the thought here that revivals might break out because a human being had arrived to do certain things.

Within twenty years, the coming of an itinerant evangelist was seen as something which could be organised, and which therefore came more under human control. instead of people having to wait in hope for other signs from God which were not under human control in the same way.

In the past, special meetings had occurred because the leaders had recognised evidences of what the Holy Spirit was doing in answer to prayer, in convicting and converting people, and in deepening holiness in believers, and the extra meetings were held to capitalise upon these influences from God.

Previously. Methodist ministers were all itinerant evangelistic preachers, but they worked in circuits for two or three years, instead of only for a week or two. Men like Wesley, Whitefield and Asbury (and also men like Lorenzo Dow) had been itinerants who only stayed in any place for a day or two.

This shift in practise was not fully realised at the time, but, as we shall see from editorial comments made in 1877, some of the leaders were starting to realise that the shift had already occurred by that time.

In the United States, the shift had taken place some years earlier, in the 1830s. But the impact of that was not felt here. Practices in evangelism usually spread to Australia from England, and not from the United States, in the 1860s.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### REVIVALS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

1861 to 1876

#### Sources of Information

As noted earlier, our ability to gain information about revivals which occurred in New South Wales during the middle period of the Nineteenth Century was greatly improved by the publication of the "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record", which began circulation from the Wesleyan offices in Sydney in June, 1858.

The "Advocate" was published monthly, and the first volume included the issues which appeared up until the end of 1859. This volume contained four hundred pages. Seeing that the first volume covered about eighteen months, we find that the second volume, similarly, covered eighteen months, that is, the year of 1860, and up to the middle of 1861. All along, there were financial problems arising from the small circulation figures, and an inadequate number of subscriptions. The editors of the "Advocate" mentioned this in their columns, and asked for donations to help keep the paper in production. Issues published in this period contained lists of people who made donations to keep the paper going, acknowledging their gifts. At one stage there were 880 subscribers.

Another paper, probably of Brethren origin, called the "Christian Pleader" was being published in Sydney at the same time, and the difficulties this paper was having, although of a slightly different kind, were also discussed in the "Advocate". Its demise was also noted.

Volume three of the "Advocate" began with the issue for August, 1861, and continued until December, 19th, 1861, after which it seems to have ceased publication for two years and three months. By comparison, volume three was only a fragment, consisting of only 132 numbered pages, although each issue included four pages of advertising, in the form of a cover. These four pages in each issue were not included in the numbering system.

When, in due course, the paper began being published again, on April, 7th, 1864, instead of beginning with volume four, the editors began with a second volume three, number one. The editorial said that friends would rejoice in the reappearance of the publication. So, this second volume three covered the twelve months following April, 1864.

Volume four, number one, "our second year", began on April 1st, 1865, thus providing volumes which covered twelve months of publication.

As a result, there was no publication of the "Advocate" between the end of 1861, and April, 1864. It is most likely that a number of revivals occurred in New South Wales during that period, but information about them is either non-existent, or would be very hard to find.

## **Bathurst Circuit, 1861**

Under the heading "Spiritual Prosperity", the Bathurst Circuit report said:- "At our June Quarterly Meeting it was resolved that during the ensuing quarter special services should be held for the revival of the work of God. Preparatory sermons were preached on prayer for the Holy Spirit, the duty of the Church to the unconverted, religious revivals, and cognate subjects, during the early part of the quarter.

The special services commenced on Sabbath, September 15th, they were well attended and characterised by deep solemnity. It soon became evident that many were feeling after God, and on Wednesday evening, 18th September, four persons came forward as penitent seekers of salvation.

Since then the gracious work has continued, and between forty and fifty persons have been awakened, the majority of whom have found peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name be the glory.'"

Following this, the report from the Quarterly Meeting contained information on Circuit finance, and Church Extension meetings. (1.)

## **Singleton Circuit, 1861**

The next page of the "Advocate" contained a report from the Quarterly Meeting of the Singleton Circuit, in the upper Hunter River valley.

"The Quarterly Meeting of this Circuit for the September quarter, was held on Wednesday, 16th instant (i.e. October.). It is with heartfelt thanksgiving to the Great Head of the Church that, in the number of members we have an increase of twenty-two over last quarter, and a total increase in the two last quarters of thirty- three.

Looking at the September quarter last year, and comparing it with the number now in Society, it will be seen that the number now is more than double what it was then.

The cause of this increase is the special means which were used for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We have had two weeks of special prayer: one week in the June quarter, and another in the September quarter, and the Friday in each of those weeks was observed as special fasts, or seasons of humiliation before Al- mighty God.

During the first week of prayer the Holy Spirit began to work, and sinners began to cry for mercy, and many a time this prayer was offered: 'God be merciful to me, a sinner. '; and He who is 'abundant in mercy' showed forth His power to save. So that the cries of the penitent were turned into praise. But while we rejoice over so many who have been brought into the fold of Christ, we have also to rejoice over many who had been meeting in class for a long period, but living without experimental religion. This is to us the most pleasing consideration that the Church is renovated and in a healthy state.

Many of those who have been converted are young persons (the hope of the church) who had been long cared for, and for whom many prayers had been offered up. The parent rejoiced over the children, and the children rejoiced over the parents, and angels rejoiced over both; and many backsliders have been reclaimed and brought back to the 'Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.' For the last thirty years I have not witnessed more delightful seasons of grace and power. To God be the glory!

At present we are holding Union Prayer Meetings which are well attended, and which have had the effect of awakening many who were cold and lifeless in the cause of Christ, and we believe much good will result from these union meetings. We want a larger baptism of the Holy Spirit. O may it soon come." (2.)

## **California Taylor in N.S.W, in 1864 and 1865**

In other chapters we notice the work of "California" Taylor throughout Australia from 1863 to 1865, and the impact his work made in the direction of revival. Separate chapters deal with Taylor's time in New South Wales, and Victoria.

His visits to the other states, however, are included in the general chapters about those states. Any information which is available about his second visit in 1869 will also appear in the chapters about the separate Australian colonies in question.

## **Revivals Apparently Independent of Taylor's Visit in 1864**

There were, however, several revival movements in New South Wales which seem to have occurred quite independently of Taylor's work, but about the same time that he was present. These will be reported here, but not necessarily in chronological order.

### **Kiama, 1864**

A revival occurred in Kiama, N.S. W., in 1864. The main description of it has been given by the Rev. J. E. Carruthers, in his autobiography, written many years later. Carruthers became an outstanding leader in the Methodist ministry. But this revival occurred when he was quite a young man, in his home Circuit, and made a powerful impression upon him. Carruthers' account is as follows:- "It was in the month of April, 1864, that the Rev. Thomas Angwin landed in Kiama, having been appointed by the Conference of that year to succeed the Rev. J. G. Turner (son of Nathaniel Turner). The steamer had from some cause been delayed and did not arrive till the Sunday morning, and hence the new minister opened his new commission by preaching at the evening service on the dark night of not too favourable a day. Needless to say, there was not a particularly encouraging congregation. But we youths took stock of our new minister. A tall and somewhat gaunt figure, with a slight stoop; a thoughtful face which later on we discovered to be the index of a deeply spiritual soul; eyes that could twinkle with humour and flash with holy fire; a manner that, was at first quiet, but never unimpressive, and rose until there was in it an intensity of sacred passion: and a voice that was capable of tender cadence and of majestic denunciation, as the mood or the subject demanded. Needless to say, all this did not come out in that first service. It was a quiet time. The preacher was physically not at his best. His surroundings were new and strange, and he was still on the 'tumult's wheels' of moving. But the text of that sermon remains with me. One of the illustrations I still vividly remember. The text was: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,' &c., and the illustration was that of a lady anxious about her soul, who in a dream learned the secret of so coming to Christ as to find rest in Him. She dreamt that she was hanging by a rope in a pit, and was in consequence in great distress. Presently she heard a voice below saying, 'Let go the rope.' But, as she looked at the depth beneath she felt she could not trust herself to release her hold. But again the voice was heard, and this time in ineffable tenderness, saying, 'If you do not let go the rope neither can I save you.'" She recognised in the voice that of her Saviour, and let go the rope - to wake up and find that in simple and absolutely trusting Christ she had found rest to her soul.

For about eighteen months the Kiama Circuit rejoiced in the ministry of this saintly man, whose name is still as ointment poured forth in the sweetness of the recollections connected with it. He was a man of weak physique, marked already by consumption as its prey, but of apostolic if not seraphic fervour. Presently every interest in the Circuit began to feel the influence of his character and ministry. Congregations increased. The prayer- and

class-meetings began to fill up amazingly. When, as often happened, either of the other Protestant churches was closed for the morning or evening, scores of Anglicans or Presbyterians would flock to our church, making up an inspiring congregation. But the 'revival' was still waited for. And it came. Well do I remember it. Shall it ever be forgotten? It was on this wise.

It was on the evening of one of the later Sundays in July, 1864. There was a hush about the service even before it commenced. Somehow, on entering the chapel (it was always so called in those days), one felt the speechless awe of a Higher Presence, and an irresistible conviction that 'something' was going to happen. The preacher was unusually earnest and searching. His theme was: 'Say unto them, as I live, saith the Lord God; I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?' (Ezekiel 33: II.) The arrows were sharp in the hands of the King's messenger that night. They were straightly aimed, and shot with all the intensity of a love baptized with the compassion of Christ. Nearly all the congregation remained to the prayer-meeting, but although many were pricked in their hearts they did not openly yield. The next night there was almost equally as large congregation at the prayer meeting. Then began what the good old people called 'a breaking down.' The communion rail was crowded with seekers. Some hoar-headed men were amongst them; a storekeeper in the town, notorious for his fearful temper and furious conduct when under its influence; some gentle-spirited women; a number of senior lads and girls from the Sunday School. Even now the scene does one good to recall. Methinks I can hear the fervent pleadings of the praying men and women of the church as they entreated that God would give the penitents 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.' Night after night for the rest of the week and into the middle of the next, the meetings continued. One night a backslider 'found peace' on his way from his home to the chapel, and testified to the joy of all that he was 'as happy as a king.' He looked it, and lived it from then until his death, a good many years after. How the old folks revelled in it all, and with what joy Sunday school teachers learned that one after another of their scholars had been 'made happy', as they phrased it! When at last the net was hauled in and the results counted, it was found that if there were not one hundred and fifty three, there were very substantial gains to the Kingdom of God. It was a revival that gave workers to the church, teachers to the Sunday school, local preachers to the Circuit plan, and ultimately several ministers to the Australian Methodist Church. Nor did the work cease with the close of the revival services. The spiritual appetite of the people was whetted. Ministers and people alike yearned for greater things; and all through the Circuit there was a lively expectation of a sacred baptism on a larger scale than ever before seen - when suddenly the minister collapsed! The Rev. Thomas Angwin's work was done, and a career that seemed as if it were bound to be one of more than ordinary usefulness and power was prematurely cut short." (3.)

This revival in Kiama is not mentioned in the "Christian Advocate." This indicates that other revivals probably have occurred in many other parts of New South Wales, and in other parts of Australia, about which no published information is available for historical analysis and consideration.

### **Wollongong, 1864**

The town of Wollongong is only a small number of miles north of Kiama. In 1864, a few months after the events in Kiama which Carruthers described, a report appeared in the "Christian Advocate" describing a revival there. By this time, California Taylor was

preaching in various suburban centres around Sydney. His visit to Kiama and Wollongong did not happen until 1865.

"Since the last issue of the 'Advocate', God has graciously revived His work in this Circuit. For more than a fortnight we have held special religious services in Wollongong, and have had the happiness of witnessing many surrender themselves to Jesus. The aged, with the snow of many winters on their heads, have sought and found forgiveness. The young, with life's dower of capacity, and space for usefulness, have consecrated themselves to the service of the Most High. And the strong man has bowed and wept like a child, in awaking from his dreams of fancied security and peace. Upwards of sixty have professed their anxiety to flee from the wrath to come; a large number of whom, like the Philippian jailer, have been enabled to rejoice in believing in God with all their hearts. In some cases, all the members of a family have been saved. Several from other churches have attended our meetings, and have been made happy in the pardoning love of God. Our old members have been greatly quickened; and the work still progresses. For the past three months we have set apart an hour on the Saturday evening to plead for the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon our Societies and congregations. The revival in which we now rejoice we regard as the fruit of that intercession. 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name be the glory, for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake.'" (4.)

### **Orange District, 1864**

About the same time, a revival was reported in Byng, a settlement composed largely of Cornish people. "For several years God's people have mourned over the indifference of the people in general about the salvation of their souls. But few appeared to manifest a desire for their salvation. The Gospel was preached faithfully, and though the people generally paid great attention to the ordinances of religion in the sanctuary, listened attentively to the Word preached, and sometimes appeared to feel under the faithful ministry of God's servants, yet there were but few who gave their hearts to God.

Notwithstanding the low state of religious feeling, there are but a few places where the morals of the people are more creditable than they have been in this neighbourhood. But morality is not grace, and without a change of heart will not be available in the Great Day; for our Lord said to the sincere Nicodemus, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

For this great change God's ministers and people laboured and prayed. But for many years with but little visible effect, so that they were ready to exclaim, 'Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Will he be favourable no more?'

Under these feelings they laboured all but hopelessly, fearing that the people were 'gospel hardened.' But no! The time of God's visitation in mercy came. On Sunday, 7th inst., there was a very gracious feeling among the people. Some wept. One sobbed aloud under the sermon. A prayer meeting was held after the ordinary service, when our young minister, the Rev. Mr. Rabone, invited all who had a desire to save their souls to come to the 'penitent form', that God's people might know whom to more especially pray for, and give them suitable advice and encouragement. One instantly rose and went forward, and three more soon followed. This was a reviving of good days in our little Zion. Since then, the work has gone on gloriously.

16th inst. When Mr. Piddington invited the mourners to the penitent form, the people literally crowded the alley of our little sanctuary, so that in a few minutes the front seats were literally filled with seekers of salvation. The sensation was almost overwhelming to those

who have long prayed for a revival of God's work. Though I have been connected with the Wesleyan Church for over forty years, and have seen revivals in England, in Sydney, and in this district, I never saw the like before. It appeared that everyone present was feeling under the mighty power of God. But there was no noise, no wild excitement. When anything of the kind manifested itself, it was very wisely and prudently checked, without casting the least damp on the spirituality of the service. On several occasions, at the request of the worthy minister, all waited in silent prayer. And what a sacred influence pervaded the place! And what an out breathing was there then after God apparently from every heart.!

Some literally wept pools of tears. The stout-hearted wept. There were about twenty-five in that little sanctuary earnestly and publicly seeking salvation, and blessed be God, the sorrow of several was soon turned into joy. They praised a sin-pardoning God with joyful hearts, and cheerful countenances, without noise or excitement. Since then, most of those who were seeking salvation have found peace, and can rejoice in God their Saviour., others have been humbled in spirit for their sin against God, and the good work is still going on delightfully.

There is one interesting and pleasing circumstance connected with this place, which is, that here the first class of the Wesleyan Methodists that ever met to the west of the Blue Mountains met in 1830 near this spot. The number was three. They are still alive in this place to rejoice over this glorious work. The steady course of time has made visible inroads on their systems. Age and infirmity have confined one to her house, so that she cannot attend the sanctuary where she was wont to worship, to behold there the wonderful mercy of God manifested, but her heart is in the work. Her venerable husband, who is a father of a progeny of about seventy souls, is robust and active, and he enters heartily into this good work. The cheeks of the other, though furrowed with age, and her head is nearly white with increase of years. They are all waiting for their rewards, not through merit, but through the abundant mercy of God in Christ Jesus.

The work of God is prospering in other parts of the Circuit, particularly at a place called Spring Hill. There are some very interesting circumstances about that place which I must reserve for a future communication. Yours etc., G.H." (5.)

California Taylor visited this area in October that year, just a few months after these events.

### **Windsor Circuit, 1864**

Another local revival which seems to have occurred apart from the work of California Taylor took place in the Windsor Circuit, and is described in a report to the "Christian Advocate."

"The usual Quarterly Meeting of this Circuit was held on Tuesday, 4th October, 1864, and though the stewards and office-bearers deeply feel the burden of a rather formidable circuit debt, yet the 'signs of the times' are overall encouraging.

It is with gratitude to the Great Head of the Church that we record success as having attended the labours of his servants during the last quarter. The town of Windsor in particular has been visited with rich spiritual blessing; the office-bearers and members of the church have been stirred up to seek a deeper work of grace, all have heard the quickening voice, and felt the power of the Holy Spirit, and some have been perfected in love.

As a natural consequence, the Gospel has been attended with great power, and several have been awakening and saved. 'Young men and maidens, old men and children' have felt the gracious influence.

Several young men and young women have obtained a sense of pardon, many of the scholars in our Day-school have been awakened, and some having obtained mercy give pleasing evidence of the change wrought within them. According to the Quarterly schedule, after making up losses occasioned by backsliders, removals, etc., we have to report a small increase in full members, and twenty- one on trial. There are still pleasing indications of a continuous work; our congregations, both on the Sabbath and weekday evening are large and deeply attentive; the young people especially being evidently deeply impressed. To God be all the praise." (6.)

### **Goulburn Circuit, 1864**

This revival in Goulburn was apparently prompted by the expectation that Taylor was coming to this Circuit, in some months' time. The report came by means of a letter to the editor of the "Advocate", dated 1st November, 1864.

"Dear Sirs,

I am very glad indeed that I can report a gracious revival in this city and circuit. A few weeks ago, while conversing with some Christian friends about the expected visit of the Rev. W. Taylor, the question was asked, Do we need to wait for Mr. Taylor? Will not God hear our prayers if they are mixed with faith? and it was felt by all present that 'fervent prayer' would avail at the Throne of Grace.

The prayer Meetings were well attended, and God's people pleaded mightily for the promised Spirit, and especially that the word preached by the Rev. Mr. Gaud might be accompanied by Divine power. These prayers were answered. The Gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ told upon the minds and hearts of the hearers, and many were affected to tears. After the Sabbath evening services the people crowded into the school-room for prayer. Short addresses were delivered by the ministers and the leaders, affectionate appeals were made to the unsaved, and night after night came forward to the vestry where they were directed to the 'Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.'

But not these alone; believers were exhorted to a full surrender of the heart to God. Their duty and privilege were set before them, and a deep conviction was produced of the importance of a clean heart; and now many are testifying that 'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.'

As might have been expected, a gracious Saviour who said, 'Suffer the children to come unto me' did not exclude these from a participation in the good things he was bestowing on the people. In the Sabbath School the importance of religion was set forth plainly, and the good Spirit convinced many of the children who yielded to be saved by grace.

In short, old and young, believers and unbelievers, members and hearers, have been moved by the Divine Spirit; and the number of those who have found peace through believing in Jesus is about seventy or eighty.

In these revival meetings there has not been any undue excitement. Nothing has been done to which objection could be made by the most prudent; and a spectator, not under extraordinary influence and not a member of our Church, exclaimed, 'This must be the work of God; man could not do this.'

At the Quarterly Meeting held last month, the flourishing state of the Wesleyan Church in this Circuit was thankfully recognised, and the hearts of all present were filled with joy. Our respected and loved Ministers, the Reverends H. H. Gaud, and W. George were cordially invited to remain another year. They accepted the invitation, subject to the

Conference, and spoke in feeling terms of their love for the brethren and their gratitude to God for the result of their ministerial labours. (7.)

### **Yass and Gunning Circuit, 1865 (Mundoonan.)**

"God has graciously manifested His saving power and love of late, at the above-named place. a small settlement on the Yass River, distant about ten miles from the town of Yass. For some time past, our church there, for various causes, had not made the progress reasonably expected, but the prayers of God's people! have now been answered, and the labours of God's ambassadors crowned with success. in the quickening and edification of believers, and the conversion of sinners.

The week ending 12th August will long be remembered at Mundoonan. The writer preached there three times on the Sabbath previous, and held a prayer meeting after the evening service, at which anyone who felt a desire to 'flee from the wrath to come', was invited to come forward to the altar, to be prayed with, I counselled. and directed to Christ. Nine or ten persons, young and old, responded: to the invitation, six or seven of whom professed to find 'redemption through the Saviour's blood, even the forgiveness of sins' before the meeting closed.

The work begun on Sabbath was followed up by a service every night during the week, a fellowship meeting on Saturday night closing the series.

Altogether fifteen persons professed to have obtained salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

At the fellowship meeting, a very gracious and sensible manifestation of the Spirit's presence was vouchsafed, and all present subdued to tears, felt

The overwhelming power of saving grace,  
The sight that veils the seraph's face;  
The speechless awe that dares not move,  
And all the silent heaven of love.

'Old Tom Brown', of Wesley Vale, who is the Methodist patriarch of this: circuit, was present at the meetings, took an active part in them, and rejoiced much: to see the Lord's arm bared in the salvation of souls. For this gracious visitation, and many other tokens of the Lord's presence in our midst, we are thankful and encouraged to labour on, expecting to witness yet more glorious things. O for a richer baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Come. O Holy Ghost, for Thee we call.  
Spirit of burning, come!"

The report was initialled "W.R." (probably the Rev. W. Robson.) (8.)

### **A Remarkable Experience in Kiama, 1867**

The Rev. George Martin was a young minister in the Kiama area in the few years after the time of the 1864 revival. Much later, in 1905, he published an account of an experience which came to him whilst he was preaching in the Kiama pulpit in 1867. His description is purely about his own inner experience, and does not imply that any revival movement was in progress, such as was described by Carruthers. This account appeared in the form of two articles or chapters in "The Methodist". Despite their length, the real substance of his two articles can be quoted more briefly.

"It was on a Sunday morning in midwinter in July, 1867, that the incident occurred

which I am now about to relate. It was to me the most wonderful event of my life. Indeed, it was so divinely wonderful that I have never ceased looking back upon it. And now, after the lapse of nearly 38 years, it seems to me brighter and more wonderfully radiant than it did at the time of its occurrence. Indeed, at the time of its occurrence I was so completely overcome that for some days I seemed as though I dwelt in a borderland lying between earth and heaven, and I must have appeared somewhat strange to the people around me. But I then failed to take in this Divine visitation in all its bearings on one's life. It would have been well for me had I done so, but I was comparatively inexperienced, and failed to appraise this gracious visitation at its true value. I did not then realise as I have since done, its awful sublimity and its heavenly splendour. In trying to narrate it now I do so simply for the benefit and encouragement of others. For many years it was chiefly hidden in my own heart, but it has been a source of untold strength and blessing to me through life. In all one's trials, when doubt and temptation have come I have always fallen back upon it, and said to myself that it was an experience I could never for a moment doubt. Nor do I, for doubt was impossible. The following is an extract from my journal, which was written just after the occurrence took place.

'On Sunday, July 21, 1867, whilst preaching in the Wesleyan Church in Kiama, from the text James 5:19, 20, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I was borne down upon the reading desk in an agony of supplication and tears. It was far and away the most awful and yet the most glorious manifestation of God which I have ever experienced. I had as clear a sense of the awful presence of God as though I had been immediately before the throne. I was overwhelmed with amazement and with awe. I felt, as Isaiah felt, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips." I saw the ineffable and adorable holiness of God, and in the light of that manifestation I saw, as I had never seen before, the awful guilt of sin, and the astonishing power which it exercises over the human heart.'

"It occurred thus: I was standing in the rostrum of the Kiama Church, and was in the act of preaching. I was in the midst of my sermon, and insisting on personal holiness, as a necessary qualification for successful soul-winning, when in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye - quick as thought - I was smitten down as by a lightning flash. Had it not been for the support of the reading desk, I should have fallen flat down, with my face to the earth, for the visitation was dynamic - very glorious, very terrible, and unutterably awful. No language can set forth the sublime vision, the glory, the majesty, and the indescribable power of God as He thus burst in the awful splendour of His being upon my soul. Outwardly, there was nothing to be seen, but inwardly, to one's whole spiritual being, there was a manifestation of God, so unutterably glorious, and yet so terrible in its blazing intensity of the Divine holiness and abhorrence of evil, that for the moment God seemed as 'a consuming fire'. As I thus lay upon the reading desk I felt as Isaiah felt, 'Woe is me, for I am undone.' I was oblivious to everything save God. The place and the people seemed to vanish. For the moment everything was lost in the vividness of God's presence, and I could only gasp out in broken language, 'O the Great God! the awful God! the holy God!' Indeed, the vision of the Divine holiness revealing one's own sinfulness and sin, was so searching and terrible as to make one for ever stand in awe of God's great and unutterable name. I now mention these things, because where God manifests Himself dynamically, in power and great glory, all irreverence vanishes, and a sense of unutterable awe takes complete possession of the soul." (9.)

Martin commented that this experience occurred in a normal church service, which was not characterised by any sensationalism.

He also said that factors which lay behind this experience included the fact that it was a period when many Methodists were "more or less saturated with the old Methodist

literature and ideas; and especially with Methodist biography, which was so often glorified by a vivid realisation of the divine presence." Such experiences were then looked upon as a more normal part of a Methodist's spiritual life and heritage. Eventually, by the time he wrote the account of his experience, having an overpowering thirst for "perfect love" and "entire sanctification" amongst Methodists had become much rarer, and the fervour of spiritual life had declined. Various reasons are involved in this decline. As a result, with the passing of time, Martin came to value very highly this revelation of the holiness and majesty of God which had been given to him. (10.)

### **Numerical Growth**

Methodist statistics gave a glimpse of the growth which had taken place as a result of the visit by California Taylor to Australia, and also because of the revivals and evangelism in the seven years from 1858 to 1864.

Figures issued through the Conference, early in 1866, for the previous twelve months, showed an increase of 2,107 in full members. This relates especially to part of the time Taylor had been at work here. The best growth occurred in Sydney, in the Geelong and Ballarat District, and in South Australia. Melbourne was the only area showing a slight decrease. (11.)

The figures for ten years, from 1858 to 1868, were published later. In that period, the number of chapels leapt from 110 to 288. The number of full church members rose from 3,937 to 9,960. The number of Sunday Scholars rose from 8,165 to 23,166, and of Sunday Schools from 115 to 264. The overall number of people attending Methodist worship around Australia doubled from 30,159 to 61,039. (12.)

No doubt, some of this growth was due to immigration. But much of it was due to the results of evangelism, and the efforts associated with the revival movement, as many of the immigrants who had church connections in the old country did not continue their church links when they arrived in a new land.

### **Macleay River Circuit, 1868**

The "Advocate" for the years from 1865 to 1867 does not contain any references to local revivals in New South Wales. The issues for the year 1868 contained only a few references.

"Our Sabbath School Anniversary at Kempsey was celebrated on Thursday last, by a public tea-meeting, in a booth tastefully erected in the vicinity of the chapel. In the evening a meeting was held, presided over by Mr. Rudder, of 'Kempsey House'. The children in the *East* and *West* Kempsey schools, under the superintendence of Messrs Nance and Worboys, were examined the Sabbath previously and acquitted themselves exceedingly well. During the evening, addresses were delivered by Messrs Nance, Worboys, Druce and Lynn, and by the superintendent of the Circuit. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, the church was crowded, greater interest than usual being taken in the Anniversary, from the fact that several of the children in the schools have been converted to God, during the recent revival. The report, read by the secretary, Mr. George Walker, was a gratifying one, and showed an increase in the number of scholars.

We have recently been blessed with a gracious visitation, and many, in different parts of the Circuit, have been brought to experience the forgiveness of their sins. At Frederickton on Sabbath evening last, thirteen persons stood up at the conclusion of the service, and professed to have found peace with God. At Kempsey, a new class has been formed

consisting entirely of Sunday school children. The movement appears to be general throughout the district. Long have God's people here been praying for a revival, and now their prayers are being answered with what we hope (is) but the droppings of the coming showers." (13.)

A little more insight is gained from the report which was published about a valedictory meeting held for the minister, when he left the area the following year.

"The Rev. W. E. Bourne, who has been labouring on the Macleay during the last two years, has at length taken his departure for another field of usefulness, bearing with him the hearty good wishes of all who had the privilege of knowing him. His unassuming manner and uniformly kind and charitable disposition, his patience, together with his unflagging zeal for God's cause, made him a universal favourite, and elicited universal respect and esteem.

A considerable measure of success attended his labours on the Macleay. The increase in full members during the last year being over fifty percent; and though it is not to be forgotten that some earnest lay-men were connected with him in his good work, who heartily co-operated with their minister in all movements for the spiritual welfare of the community, we cannot but feel much is due to the brotherly disposition of our late minister, in producing and sustaining that unanimity of feeling, which at all times existed between him and his coworkers." The report went on to speak about the inscribed address which was to be presented to him. (14.)

### **California Taylor's Second Visit to New South Wales, 1869**

The "Advocate" took hardly any notice of this visit until it was half over. This seems to be a simple indication of the fact that the second visit did not create the great impact which had been experienced as a result of the first visit. While just as many conversions took place in his meetings as beforehand, the overall impact was not the same.

"By the time that this number of the 'Advocate' is in the hands of its readers, Mr. Taylor will have reached the seventh of the fifteen places in this colony, which he has arranged to visit during his short stay amongst us. Our beloved and honoured brother not only works enormously himself, but he makes plenty of work for other people; and hence we have as yet received no written reports from the circuits which he has visited. But the facts arising out of these special services are pretty well known, at least, in Sydney, and may thus be summed up. The services commenced at York Street, and were largely attended and successful. But the impression deepened and the success increased, from York Street to Bourke Street and to Newtown, and rose higher at Chippendale. Parramatta came next, and the word was indeed with power, especially during the last two nights of Mr. Taylor's visit. We are not able to say how many cases of clearly defined conversion took place, but there were many very pleasing and satisfactory instances among young and old. The whole circuit has been moved, and we bless God for this gleam of sunshine in His Church, and pray that it may long continue. From Bathurst we hear of crowded congregations, and at Orange and Mudgee the same will no doubt be the report. We hope that the ministers of the various circuits will send us communications for our next issue. Next to revival-work itself, there is nothing like news about revivals for stirring up the people of God." (15.)

In fact, it was not quite right to say that no reports had been sent in. A few pages later, in the same issue, there appeared a report from the Sydney Second Circuit, about services in the Wesley Church. However, it was true that very few reports about Taylor's meetings were sent in, or were published.

"During two weeks commencing with Sabbaths, 13th and 27th June, we were

favoured with the ministrations and help of the Rev. William Taylor. Large audiences attended the Sabbath and week evening services, while he in his own vigorous and convincing manner, set before them God's requirements of man, and the way of salvation, by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The result has been a gracious work of God and many conversions. Some from other Circuits, some from other Churches, a good many adults; but the work has been chiefly among the young people of our Sunday Schools.

The junior scholars, some of them of tender years, more or less under Divine influence, have been formed into Catechumen classes; boys being taken charge of by the Superintendent of the Sabbath School, and girls by Mrs. Baker, widow of the heroic missionary martyr, Rev. Thomas Baker. The elder scholars, together with adults, who may have been converted or awakened, have joined different classes, so that we hope at the end of the quarter to be able to report a considerable increase of members.

In addition to Mr. Taylor and the Circuit ministers - efficient labour has been rendered by our veteran friend, the Rev. Charles Creed, and a hearty band of local preachers, leaders, and others. To God be all the glory." (16.)

### **Windsor Circuit, 1869**

Because Taylor's visit to the Windsor Circuit was going to be so short, the people began their special efforts in advance of his arrival, and continued the meetings after Taylor left. Perhaps for this reason, this revival developed into an even bigger movement than might have happened normally.

"In prospect of a short visit from the Rev. W. Taylor, we decided to hold a series of special services, to commence on Sabbath, August 1st. The congregations were larger than on ordinary occasions, and the Word was listened to with devout attention. Although none responded to the invitation given at the close of the morning service, to come forward and seek the Lord, yet we were glad to find afterwards, that some were awakened under the Word preached on the Sabbath. During the services of Tuesday evening, the Rev. Peter Turner delivered a short address to the Church. In the course of his remarks, he exhorted the members of the Church to humble themselves, and seek, first, for the revival of the work of God in their own hearts. If prepared to do so, he then urged them to come forward, and confess their sins before God. It was a season, not soon to be forgotten. The Lord was indeed in our midst, and He healed the backslidings of His people.

On Wednesday, the 4th, the Rev. W. Taylor preached to large congregations at Enfield and Richmond. The word came with power on each occasion, and not a few were led to seek for mercy. On Thursday, Mr Taylor, preached twice in Windsor. Many strangers were present, and each congregation in the Circuit was represented. In connection with the four services, we had not less than forty persons seeking the Lord, and the greater portion of them were led to believe to the saving of their souls. The services were continued in Windsor for a fortnight, and for one week in Richmond. In other parts of the Circuit earnest prayer was offered to God, and at their meetings they had to rejoice over the conversion of souls. We are now holding special services at Wilberforce. From the distant places in the Circuit, we already hear the names of over sixty persons, who profess to have found peace with God. Some of these persons have been gathered from the world, others have been sitting in our congregations for years past, others again have been meeting in class for several months, but were not able to rejoice in the love of God, whilst some have come from among the senior scholars of our Sunday Schools.

It is worthy of notice, that most of the scholars brought to God, are the children of the

members of the Church. With the assistance they will derive from the classes already established for them, and careful home training, we may hope therefore, with the blessing of God to preserve them in His Church, apart from the increase of members resulting from these services, we cannot lose sight of the great benefit received by the Church. The power of godliness is more fully experienced, and consequently, the service of God has become more delightful." (17.)

### **Kiama Circuit, 1869**

Here, again, we see an example of a revival movement which commenced some little time before the Rev. William Taylor arrived to conduct his mission meetings.

In this instance, the Kiama minister was the Rev. William Hill. In Methodist annals at this time there were two Rev. William Hills. The Kiama William Hill was a younger man who had recently begun his ministry. The other Rev. William Hill was a much respected senior minister who, about this time, met his death, murdered by a crazed prisoner in a Victorian jail. Hill was visiting the prisoner, and kneeled to pray for him. While his eyes were closed, the prisoner attacked him with a metal bar, killing him.

"At the three principal centres of population - Kiama, Gerringong and Jamberoo - the Holy Spirit has been graciously working but the greatest amount of good has been done in Kiama. Some months ago the elder children in the sabbath school began to feel considerable concern about their souls. Like the majority of young people in similar circumstances they were very reticent as to the cause of their disquietude. However, their sorrow for sin became so intense that it could not be concealed. About this time our respected minister the Rev. W. Hill made a powerful appeal from the pulpit to the consciences of those who were under conviction of sin. At the prayer meeting which was held after the service on this occasion one or two persons came forward as penitents.

During the succeeding weeks prayer meetings were held nearly every night of the week, the penitents increasing in number though with many 'old things had passed and all things become new.' There was such a manifestation of the Divine power pervading those meetings that it was really delightful to attend them. In some cases during the interval of a few minutes, the cry of the penitents was turned into the song of the saved. The good work has not been confined to the sabbath school, several adults who have sat under the ministry for years without deciding for the Lord, have grounded the weapons of their rebellion, and come out on his side.

As a result of the revival, about twenty persons who a short time ago were careless about spiritual matters are now alive to their soul's interests, and trying to lead others to the Saviour whom they found. It speaks well for the new converts that they have all enrolled themselves as members of class, thus showing their desire to progress in their way to heaven. The sabbath school teachers can bless God that their efforts have not been fruitless." (18.)

Although no date is attached to this report, it seems to have referred to events only a few months before Taylor arrived in the Circuit, which happened in August, 1869. Although the "Advocate" published a long report from this Circuit covering the time that Taylor was there, it does not actually say much about what Taylor did there, or say much about the results of his visit. (19.)

### **Braidwood Circuit**

The report from this Circuit was the only other one to appear in the "Advocate" which gave any significant details about Taylor's visit to New South Wales on this second occasion.

From here he went further south, to Victoria.

"Mr. Taylor has just paid us a four days' visit, and has done the cause of God in the circuit and district great service. He preached with great power three times in Braidwood, once in the open air, and four times in Araluen to crowded congregations. His close reasoning and pointed appeals to the conscience, his happy illustrations of the truth, his homely yet well chosen language, and above all, the deep solemnity, the unction and earnestness pervading all were quite irresistible. Many, old and Young, of all shades of religious belief and unbelief were convinced of sin, submitted to God and received Christ. The good work is not confined to our own church. All have profited. Between sixty and seventy souls have been saved. Of these nearly half are members of other churches. Nearly as many more are deeply impressed with the truth and are either seeking salvation or are seriously thinking about it." (20.)

### **Deniliquin Circuit, 1869**

There is an interesting little account of the start of Methodist work in Deniliquin. The nearest minister was the Rev. W. H. Fitchett, who was then stationed at Echuca, on the Murray River, and in Victoria.

The work of God, so far as Wesleyan Methodism was concerned, "commenced in a somewhat singular way. About the close of last year (1868), a tradesman, who had removed from Victoria to Deniliquin a few months before, was led to reflect upon his spiritual state, while anxiously seeking the Lord he became acquainted with a member of our church, who was employing a portion of his time in the distribution of tracts amongst the settlers on the banks of the river. The two met with a third man, also under conviction of sin, and at his house they met nightly for prayer.

In the month of January a cottage prayer meeting was commenced in another part of the town, at this meeting numbers were converted to God. In June another cottage was thrown open for prayer and here also sinners were awakened and led to the Saviour. The meetings are now held in a room hired for the purpose.

The Rev. W. H. Fitchett preached twice in the Court House on Sabbath, October 10th, and promised to recommend the appointment of a minister to Deniliquin... Ministers of other churches are labouring in the district, but our own people look to us, and expect us to care for them. We must not allow the most important town in Riverina to remain unoccupied any longer. It is situated in the centre of a very large squatting district. Some of the stations might be visited regularly, and an occasional visit be paid to the township of Hay, thus preparing the way for the occupation of the place." (21.)

### **Goulburn Circuit, 1871**

This revival was described for the readers of the "Advocate" in a letter from the minister in Goulburn, the Rev. William Kelynack, who was one of the "silver-tongued" orators of Methodism at that time. He looked upon this time in Goulburn as an outstanding period of God's blessing in his ministry.

"Having been recently blessed with a gracious manifestation of God's saving power in this town, I send you a few hurried lines relative thereto. We have had a 'feast of fat things'. We have drunk of the choicest vintage of heaven's mercy. And with grateful hearts and glad tongues, we cry, Hallelujah, 'for the Lord hath done great things for us.'

The first drops of blessing fell upon a Sabbath evening about two months ago. Three or four persons then began to seek the Lord, among whom was the grandson of an eminent deceased Methodist minister, and son and nephew of others who have occupied, and who still

occupy, the foremost ranks of English Methodism. Many prayers have risen to God on his behalf; in a far-off land, after many wanderings the answer comes. He has sought and found the blessing of his father's God.

The work thus commenced, quickened the desires of our people for yet greater things. On the following Thursday evening after service, we held a meeting of the workers in the various departments of the Church. And a very blessed season we had. Each resolved to seek a richer measure of the Spirit's grace, leaving Him to shape our plan of action with regard to Special religious services. On the following Tuesday in the same place, we held a meeting of the officers and teachers of the Sabbath School. The night was bitterly cold, very dark, and very wet. But despite these drawbacks, we had a good muster, and a melting, moulding, humbling, yet exalting and heartening time. Many tears were shed. Many vows were plighted. We were suffered to get very near to God. And as each placed the sacrifice upon the altar of consecration, and offered up their all as a Living sacrifice, the fire of Divine love came down and witnessed the acceptance of the gift.

'Sir,' said one of our friends as we left the room, 'this is worth living for.' He speaking thus, he but gave expression to a feeling that was stirring in the hearts of all. As the wonders of Pentecost began in the baptismal fires of the upper-room, so our Revival leapt forth into fuller life and mightier energy, from the hour when the consecrating flame of hallowing power fell upon our suppliant spirits in the Goulburn school room.

Soon after, our Quarterly Meeting was held. At the meeting in the evening, which took the place of our usual preaching service, several members of the quarterly meeting gave short addresses, bearing upon the prosperity of the work of God. The result was a growing intensity of desire and effort on the part of the people. It was manifest that the field was 'white already unto harvest.' On the sabbath we thrust in the sickle. From that time on, for a period of between four and five weeks, we have been engaged every night of the week, save Saturday, filling our arms with sheaves.

During the meetings about one hundred have come forward as seekers, most of whom profess to have found peace through believing. Several of these were members - many others were from the children of the Sabbath-school. In thus gathering the fruit of their labours, teachers have rejoiced with unspeakable joy, and parents have raised their gratitude in broken words of praise, because their children are now walking hand in hand with them to heaven.

Very affecting have been the scenes exhibited in some of our meetings. Generally they have been characterised by calm earnest decision for Christ. But occasionally there has been an influence, that moved the people with more than an electric power. One evening a young woman who had forsaken Christ, and who wept bitterly her sin, suddenly realised the fact of her forgiveness. Crying out for very gladness, she exulted in Jesus with all her heart, and there was joy in heaven and joy on earth, for from many a lip there rose the cry 'Hallelujah! Glory to Jesus!'

Another evening a mother who had seen her son go forward as a seeker, breaking forth in prayer told the Lord that she felt it would be so, because He had given her the assurance that day in prayer, that He would save him for whom she prayed. At another time a good brother, whose wife had knelt at the penitent form and been made happy in Jesus, broke forth in praise, and told the Lord and the people, that the mercy of that evening's triumph had shed more light upon the Word than all the commentators.

Yet again. In another meeting a father who has wrought hard and long for the salvation of the children in the Sabbath school, said with great emotion, as he witnessed the gladness of other parents in their children's submission to Christ, 'Friends, I have to ask of you a favour, I have worked many years for your children. I have to ask your prayers for my

two boys. Will you pray for them?' 'We will', was the response. A day or two after, that father was kneeling at the form counselling those who were there as seekers. Presently a step was heard in the aisle, looking up he saw it was his own son. Bowing under the burden of his emotions, he gave glory to Jesus. Presently addressing the people, he said in a voice that trembled with feeling. 'Friends, I have had much happiness in my life, mine has been a happy life - but this night crowns it all. I am repaid for all my labours.' He could say no more, tears were his only words. And others eyes wept, and other hearts thrilled. We felt the overwhelming power of saving grace, and the place was filled with the glory of God.

But I must pause, inviting though the theme may be. Before doing so, however, I will allude to one or two other features of the work. We have derived great advantage from a meeting for united prayer at the close of the Sabbath School. The older children have joined us, and with them have been their teachers and parents. This has blended the sympathies of all. The two large school-rooms have been crowded. For five Sabbaths they have proved to many, Tabor Mounts, where the glory of the Master has beamed forth with such Divine enchantment that we have been constrained to say, 'It is good to be here.'

On the first Sabbath evening in this month, a new feature was presented in our Communion Service, when many of the young converts, in the company with many of the older Christians, knelt for the first time at the Table of the Lord, and sealed their new found love to the Saviour, by partaking the memorials of His dying love to them.

A Fellowship meeting at the close of the series of meetings enabled several to testify how great things God has done for them. Then allusion was made by one and another to the debt they owed to the Sabbath School, and they who had there sowed, and prayed, and waited, must have felt abundantly recompensed for all their toil and prayer.

The revival influence has wrought far beyond the town. Some, hearing what great things the Lord was doing for us, have come in several miles from the country districts, and have been enriched with the good things from heaven. They have taken away the fire in their hearts, and through them in some instances the flame has been kindled elsewhere. A good brother from Taralga went back hither with a live coal from Goulburn, and several as a result have been brought to Christ.

Our own local preachers have been re-baptised from above, and at Boxer's Creek, last Sabbath, they had to turn the service into a prayer-meeting, for hearts were cleft, and heads were bowed, and the enquiry was urged by seeking ones, 'What must we do to be saved'."

In the town, our Sabbath morning prayer-meeting, which was formerly attended by two or three members, numbers now between twenty and thirty. Our Monday evening prayer-meeting and Thursday service are most refreshing in point of numbers and in point of influence. While our Sabbaths are days of holy jubilation and victory.

As the fruit of the revival, we have established cottage prayer-meetings, one in South, and another in North Goulburn. We have also taken measures to organise a Tract Society, and already several have offered their services eager to do something for Jesus. To myself it has been a busy and a blessed time. And like as in harvest, the bending back of the husbandman, recks not of labour or weariness, because of the golden sheaves, that lade his waggons and fill his barns, so I have sung and prayed and prayed and preached buoyant as the lark when it goes singing up to heaven's gate, feeling the while, that labour is rest in a labour so blessed and with rewards so bountiful. I am happy in God and happy in the people. The cordiality with which they received me, and their kindness from the first day until now, were sufficient to endear them to my heart, but now that we have both been passed through the blessed fire of God's reviving grace, I feel that we are indeed welded into one. And so I close as I began. Hallelujah! 'Glory, honour, praise and power, be unto the Lamb for ever.'

Who the victory gave  
The praise let Him have  
For the work He hath done.

All honour and glory to Jesus alone.

May 'showers of blessing' fall upon every circuit, and may this brief statement of God's mercy to us, excite the prayer and faith of the watchers upon the Carmel heights of our Israel." (signed) William Kelynack. (22.)

As Kelynack says, the influence spread into neighbouring areas. Another letter appeared from the Crookwell - Taralga area mentioning some of the things which occurred there, including some conversions, but the events seemed less clear-cut than the happenings in Goulburn.

The young minister at Crookwell, who reported this modest spiritual progress, was a probationer, the Rev. T. R. McMichael.

### **Adelong Circuit, 1871**

The area around Adelong and Gundagai was less developed, and more sparsely populated, than the Goulburn district. These towns were further away from Sydney toward the Victorian border. In the next issue of the "Advocate", a letter came from there.

"Gentlemen,

We have been much pleased and encouraged, by the cheering account of the progress of the Lord's work in Goulburn, as shown in the letter of the Rev. William Kelynack, in your last issue.

The leaders and friends of our cause in this circuit, have repeatedly requested me to send you an account of a similar work, which has been going on amongst us for the past three or four months.

In the beginning of the month of May, we had several consultations about the low state of our work in Adelong. We prayed unitedly and separately. We looked for the only answer to our prayers which would satisfy us.

It came on the second evening in June; nine persons remaining to seek the Lord. Thank God, the work has gone on since then, for every Sabbath evening sinners have been gathered in twos and threes to the fold of the Redeemer. Up to this time, about twenty-five have joined our classes, and are rejoicing in unspeakable peace and love, and about the same number are still seeking, not having found the Saviour, have not yet come to class meeting.

Indeed, in our visitation amongst the people we found even with persons of ; different religious views, a very general concern for the salvation of their souls, and I all these things lead us to expect a further blessing from heaven, and a larger harvest of souls."

The letter goes on to say that this spiritual influence had not yet spread to other areas of the circuit, such as at Tumut and Tumbarumba. (The writer spelled it "Tumberumba") The revival had only affected Adelong. A new church had just been built at Tumut, and a gallery was being put into the building at Adelong. The letter was signed by the minister, the Rev. Richard Vallancey Danne, and dated 17th Sept. 1871. (23.)

Figures for the Goulburn District were published in December, when the District meeting was held. For the twelve months, an increase appeared in every classification. General attenders at worship were 5,334 throughout the district, an increase of 168. Sunday School scholars now numbered 1,708, an increase of 218. Full membership was up by 58 to 986. (24.)

## **Lower Clarence Circuit, 1872**

This circuit, spreading toward the coast, east of Grafton, on the north coast of New South Wales, was just being affected by the spread of Methodist influence. Several meetings had been arranged by the local people, and with the help of the Grafton minister. A new church had been built at Rocky Mouth. (A town on the Clarence River now called Maclean.)

This revival seems to have begun like many of the others. There began to be signs of a movement of the Spirit in the lives of even a few people. The preachers were always on the lookout for these signs, and when they appeared, special efforts were made to take advantage of the spiritual impulses.

"This Circuit has been visited recently with a gracious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. During the last three months about twenty-five persons have been added to the church; four or five of that number are still seeking salvation; the others have professedly obtained the remission of their sins through Jesus Christ our Lord. May the great Head of the Church establish, strengthen, settle' those who have trusted in Him for salvation.

We have just held our meetings in aid of Foreign Missions. We hope to send in this year upward of eleven pounds. With spiritual prosperity has come financial prosperity. Our *circuit* deficiency last quarter is hardly worth mentioning . only a few shillings. Nevertheless we have a heavy connexional debt to grapple with. There is moreover a debt of twenty-two pounds on the Rocky Mouth Church, which we hope to wipe off this quarter. Whether we shall, or shall not manage it remains to be seen." (25.)

The Rocky Mouth area had also been strongly influenced by the preaching of the Gaelic evangelist, the Rev. Alexander MacIntyre, as mentioned in a previous chapter.

## **Chippendale. (Sydney Second Circuit.) 1872**

The first information about this revival was provided by one of the editors of the "Advocate," reporting on some hot news. The President of the Conference at that time, the Rev. Benjamin Chapman, was superintendent of the Chippendale Circuit.

"We are glad to be able to inform our friends throughout the Colony, that the Sydney Chippendale Circuit has been visited with a gracious revival. For some time the members of the Church have been praying for a fresh manifestation of Divine power as in the ancient days, and for the past four weeks Special Services have been conducted by the Ministers of the Circuit. The result is, upward of one hundred persons have been led to decide for Christ, and to trust in Him alone for salvation. The services are being continued, and we hope to be able to give an account of the work in our next number." (26.)

The fuller report actually appeared two issues later, in early December.

"The Sydney Second Circuit has recently been the scene of a very gracious work, of which many will be glad to hear, in these days of declension and decrease. It commenced in August last, but not until the 25th of the month were any special services held. For weeks previous there had been signs of a good work in various parts of the Circuit, and it was this which led us to resolve on holding a series of revival meetings.

From August 25th to September 7th, a service was held each evening, and conducted by one of the ministers of the circuit in the Chippendale school room. Not a service was held without some manifestation of saving power, and in one of the meetings sixteen professed to find peace. The result of the fortnight's services at Wesley Church was, that about seventy-five persons professed to find Christ, to the joy of their souls.

We then held meetings in the Glebe-road Church for a week, and with similar success. About twenty-four stepped into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Our next efforts were directed towards the Mount Lachlan congregation, and there too we had some glorious meetings. The penitent forms were crowded almost every meeting. Some who had been awakened in the other services found peace here. We had during the week some remarkable illustrations of converting power as we met within this season of revival. Some had to struggle hard for days for the blessing, others by a bold venture of faith quickly realised the power of God to save. Two out-door services were held in connection with the Mount Lachlan Church.

We continued the Services the week following at Hay-street, commencing with an open-air meeting in the Haymarket. There was little or no diminution of power or success, and in all we had sinners brought to Christ.

The success was such that we were loath to give up, but the respected Superintendent of the circuit had at this time to leave for Queensland, and after near six weeks, special services, night after night, it was found impossible to carry them on, and attend to the ordinary circuit work.

The numerical result of the whole of the services, as shown in our Quarterly Meeting Returns was, that we had upward of one hundred meeting in class on trial, and an increase in our full membership of thirty-seven, but we may mention here, that several from other circuits attended the meetings and got good. (i.e. were converted.)

In these services we have had no help from other circuits, except in one instance, and as a whole we have little of what is generally known as 'excitement'. A short sermon or pointed address, with a Prayer-meeting afterwards, has been in this revival all the special effort we have had, but the attendant power was believably prayed for by many for weeks before it came. The members were united with their ministers in desiring and labouring for a special object - the increase of grace in their own souls, and the conversion of sinners.

We give God the praise, and trust that this brief record will be the means of stirring up other circuits to use the means of grace within their reach for the accomplishment of the same great and glorious end. The Lord's arm is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is His ear heavy that it cannot hear. He waits to be gracious, and His Lord to the churches is; 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.'" (27.)

### **Parramatta Circuit, 1873**

"Since the covenant service which was held on the first Sabbath of the year, about an hundred persons in this circuit have professed to find salvation by coming to Christ and trusting in Him. About eighty of this number were brought to a knowledge of sins forgiven and God reconciled in the special prayer meetings held in Parramatta.

For three weeks a prayer meeting was conducted each day at 7 o'clock a.m. in the old vestry, and these morning meetings were found to be a blessed preparation for the work of the evening. In them many felt their hearts warmed and filled with Divine love, so that there was no room left for evil propensity or base passion, or any of those sensual or carnal things that hinder spiritual growth and prevent prayer from being successful.

The moistened eye, followed by a rush of tears down the cheeks - the strong internal emotion, the shaking voice striving to express in praise and prayer the heart's great joy - these proclaimed the presence of more than ordinary power and influence.

Clearly the gracious Master was there in the midst of His people, and hearts burned within with joy. Then, some testified with humble boldness that they felt the power and efficiency of the all-cleansing blood of Jesus.

At one of these meetings the singing of the following verses were greatly blessed to

some who were present:-

When Jesus makes my heart his home,  
My sin shall all depart;  
And lo! He saith, 'I quickly come,  
To fill and rule thy heart.'

Be it according to Thy word!  
Redeem me from all sin;  
My heart would now receive Thee, Lord!  
Come in, my Lord, come in.

The new Jubilee school-room and class-room ought to have honourable mention in the diaries of these new disciples, for it was in one or other of these buildings that the penitents found Christ and by one He cured their inveterate plagues, pardoning their grievous sins and bade them go in peace.

Fathers and mothers shed tears of sympathy at seeing their children 'striving to enter at the straight gate,' and then tears of joy upon seeing them trust in Christ and by a simple act of faith, cast off their prison garments and strong fetters, and emerge into light and liberty by tasting the blessedness of forgiveness.

Some of the newly saved are children, some are 'young men and maidens', some are strong men and women in the prime and vigour of life, and some are old folks of more than three score years and ten.

To the honour and glory of the Triune God we desire to record these facts, as the happy result of the right use of old well tried and well proven means.

To this moment the ancient promise stands disannulled, and has a fullness and an amplitude which the future must explain. 'Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.' We mention no names of persons who wrought hard in these meetings to bring souls to God, because we want Jesus who 'for lost man's redemption died' to have all the praise.

That proverbially dull place, Liverpool, has been revived. In two nights fifteen stepped into liberty. Five of these were members of one family. The parents who have often prayed for these children (now almost men and women), witnessed their conversion. Unutterable joy beamed in the countenances of this family as they at the end of the meeting cordially embraced each other.

At the present time, the good work is going on at Dundas, and the Holy Spirit is there 'bringing lost sinners to God'. May it spread throughout the circuit, and reach regions beyond. 'The Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers: let him not leave us nor forsake us.' The letter is signed "W. H." probably the Rev. William Hill, whom we met before at Kiama. (28.)

### **Currajong Circuit, 1873**

This circuit had its name changed a year or two later, and became known as the Parkes and Currajong Circuit. This will indicate whereabouts it was situated.

"The week of Special Services in this Circuit has been attended with a considerable measure of success. On Sunday, May 4th, two sermons were preached at Currajong, and two at the union church, Bushmans, by the circuit minister, one sermon in each place being

addressed especially to the young. At the close of the evening service at Bushmans, a prayer-meeting was held, and sinners invited to come at once to Christ; three accepted the invitation, and found peace with God.

The services were continued, either at Currajong or Bushmans, each evening during the week, and some twenty-one persons professed to have found the Saviour, and several others were under conviction of sin.

We would gladly have continued the services for another week or two, but having to leave for a distant part of the circuit on the Monday following, we had to close on the Sunday night.

We trust that the work will still go on and that many more will be saved. Our congregations have increased considerably at both places, and at the Bushmans many have to stand outside. The new union church is nearly completed, however, which will seat many more than the present buildings.

In the mean time we have been holding an occasional open-air service, which has been largely attended, and many in this way have heard the word, who otherwise would not have done so." (29.)

### **Port Macquarie Circuit, 1873**

"The Head of the Church has been graciously pleased to hear the prayers of His people in this Circuit for a revival of His work, and to succeed with His blessing their efforts to save souls. A special service was held on Good Friday, in a little chapel on the Hastings River, at which the good work commenced. Several young persons were awakened, and two of them professed to receive a conscious sense of pardon.

The meetings were continued on Sunday evenings for several weeks, and on every occasion one, or more were brought in. Special services were also held at Ennis with similar gracious results, and now, sixteen or seventeen persons, chiefly young men, are giving pleasing evidence of the change wrought in them.

The Local Preachers have been the chief instruments in this work. They have been very zealous and God has blessed their labours." (30.)

### **Spring Hill, 1873**

For at least ten years prior to this, the Australasian Wesleyan Conference had supported a call by the Evangelical Alliance that a week at the beginning of the year should be set aside by churches of all the Protestant denominations as a week of special prayer, seeking the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the churches, and their work. As time passed, the Australian Wesleyans had chosen a week later in the year, to suit better the summer living conditions in this country.

This revival at Spring Hill occurred in response to the efforts of the people to take this week of special prayer seriously. The first report about it appeared in a letter to the editor, from the minister in the Orange Circuit, the Rev. Charles Olden. "Sirs,

It is my pleasing duty to report that success has attended the special prayers offered in this Circuit during the week succeeding May, 4th. We held a week of Special Religious Services at Spring Hill. This place was chosen because it was central and appeared to be ripe for such meetings.

The first service was held on Monday, May 5th. Torrents of rain fell on that evening so that only a few were present. On the following night the attendance was good, and several persons manifested anxiety about salvation. The number of seekers increased from night to

night, and on Friday evening, at the close of one of the very best love feasts I have ever attended, we resolved to extend the services for another week. It was well indeed. The congregations were large, and at each meeting we had to rejoice over souls newly converted to God. It was ultimately found desirable to hold a third week of services.

During the early part of the meetings nearly all the persons wrought upon were young; but later on the influence extended to those further advanced in life.

It is a good thing to read of cases of conversion. It is far better to *see* them. We fall back upon scenes we witnessed years ago, and we rejoice over the success of early Methodism, and of the disciples; but after all we need to see the repetition of soul converting work. Such a work is so divine, so marvellous, and so blessed, that all turn away from it with a stronger faith in God and a deeper love for souls than where we only read or think of the past.

Several cases of conversion at Spring Hill are full of interest, and prove again what has already had ten thousand proofs, viz., - that God alone can change the heart, and that effectual fervent prayer avails with Him. I refer to the case of an attendant, the subject of many prayers which were offered by his now sainted mother. He refused to come to the services on principle. He did not believe in them. He believed in good sound preaching and praying, but not in such meetings. At the close of the love feast, at which he was not present, while conversing with his family, conviction took hold upon him. It came as suddenly as a flash of lightning. He was made to see his real condition, and he sought until he found salvation.

Other cases also were deeply interesting, including that of an aboriginal, who is now meeting in class. In all, over twenty persons were converted.

We have not yet done with special services, but intend holding them in every central place in the circuit, and we have faith in God that He will gather into the garner of His Church a harvest of souls. My colleague, the Rev. J. Monahan, and several local preachers entered heartily into the work, and rendered very valuable service. I trust this is but one of many letters you will receive respecting this week of special prayer; and if it should encourage others who are looking for like results, my purpose in writing will be answered.

Yours faithfully, Charles Olden.

Dated, Orange, 14th June, 1873. (31.)

In the September issue of the "Advocate", a very long report was published from the Orange Circuit, majoring on the fact that the Carcoar and Blayney areas had been cut off from the Orange Circuit, to make their own Circuit, and this would affect the older circuit in a number of ways. Several other local difficult issues were also mentioned. Almost as an afterthought, the writer added, "it is still more gratifying that in many parts of the Circuit there is an increase of spiritual life and power. We thank God and take courage." (32.)

Apparently this writer had additional thoughts after the long report had been sent off, realising that he had not really said anything about progress from the revival at Spring Hill that had drawn comment and attention in an earlier issue. So, a very brief report was quickly sent off."

A few months ago the 'Christian Advocate' contained an account of a blessed revival of religion at Spring Hill. Nearly all then brought to God remain steadfast. Efforts are being made to erect a new chapel there in place of the slab one now in use. Plans have now been accepted by the Committee, and are now awaiting the approval of the executive in Sydney. The new chapel will be 22 feet by 40 feet in the clear, and be built of suitable stone. It will stand on the old site which is surrounded by some of the best agricultural land in the colony. The population around is large, and in all probability will be permanent." (33.)

Certainly, the mobility of populations had been a major problem in many of the old circuits, especially in the goldfields, and in other mining areas. The Macquarie River valley, around Bathurst and Orange had their full share of all that, being amongst the earliest and richest goldfields.

### **Yass Circuit, 1873**

"Dear Sirs,

I was cheered to see in your last number of the 'Christian Advocate' accounts of several revivals of religion, and as I am sure that to hear of the prosperity of our Immanuel's cause in any place will do good to the hearts of all true Christians, I will send you a few lines about the work of God in this Circuit.

For a long time we have been dreadfully discouraged about the work of God - the coldness of some, and the utter disregard of others was appalling. But, glory be to God, He has commenced to revive us again. The Holy Ghost has come down, and sinners have been saved.

A short time since we resolved to have special sermons for a week at Mundoonan - one of the country places in this Circuit most needing the quickening power. During the week before the appointed time to commence the meetings, we made united and earnest prayer to God to vouchsafe to us the soul-converting power.

On Sabbath, the 11th, two sermons were preached, appropriate to the occasion. During both services, God showed forth His power, and gave us to feel that there is still a God in Israel. Burning tears started in many eyes, and ran down the cheeks of those who had not been accustomed to weep on account of sin, or from an apprehension of Divine wrath.

On Sabbath afternoon, the members of Society were called together, and their co-operation earnestly solicited. We prayed and wept together, and consecrated ourselves afresh to God, and to His work. The Great Head of the Church came down and blessed us abundantly.

At 7 o'clock, public service commenced again, and God wrought powerfully among the people. On Monday evening one yielded to the word of the Spirit, and obtained peace through believing in Jesus. Every night during the remainder of the week, the cries of penitents were heard in the chapel, as also the song of those who have been brought up out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and found their feet set upon the rock.

All through these services God wrought in such a way as to demonstrate to the Church and to the world that the power was of God and not of man. Truly it may be said of many at Mundoonan, that old things have passed away, and all things have become new.

Shortly after the efforts put forth at Mundoonan, Brother Phillips went to Rye Park and held special services there. At this place, the members of Society united in prayer, accompanied with fasting, during the week of special services. At the first meetings the struggle was great. The enemy fought hard for the mastery. But He who heareth prayer came down, and the victory was the Lord's. There was a great shaking among the dry bones. Backsliders were reclaimed, and many others were led to yield themselves to the Saviour: and we are glad to say that other parts of the Circuit are beginning to feel the reviving influence. About thirty persons, chiefly young men and women, have found the Saviour to the joy of their souls, and appear established in the faith. Others have been deeply convinced of their lost state as sinners, and are, we believe, anxious enquirers after truth.

May the Lord still ride on. We believe He will, for we still hear at no great distance the rumbling of the chariot wheels, and we hold fast the words of eternal truth, - 'All things

are possible to him that believeth.' We give glory to God for the past, and we continue to cry - Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen." (34.)

### **Chippendale (Sydney Second Circuit.), 1873**

"In considering the spiritual state of this circuit we have every reason for encouragement and hope. We have been permitted during the past three or four months to be engaged in the blessed toil of reaping in the great harvest field. The first visible indications of the revival with which God has blessed us were seen at Hay-street, on Sunday evening, the 27th of July, in the prayer-meeting after the regular service, when in response to the invitation of the minister, a boy came forward to the Communion rail, to give his heart to God.

In the class meeting on the following Tuesday evening, three others, (all children of praying parents) avowed their determination not to rest without the assurance of sins forgiven.

The next Sunday evening we had most unmistakable evidences of the powerful working of the Spirit of God on the hearts of the people. There were no less than twelve young persons kneeling around the Communion rail seeking mercy. Thank God the customs of our Methodist forefathers are not obsolete among us yet. We are convinced that the stumbling block on which many fall who are trying to find their way to the cross, is shame, and we cannot conceive of a surer way of overcoming it than by boldly coming forward in the presence of God's people, and thus declaring a fixed determination to live for God.

Meanwhile a work of preparation had been going on among the members of the Church. A spirit of expectancy was aroused in the hearts of God's people; Ministers, Local Preachers, Leaders and Members, united to plead with God for the conversion of sinners. Soon the little cloud arose, rapidly it spread, till at length God's inheritance in every part of the circuit was visited with 'showers of blessing.'

Arrangements were made for holding special services at each of the four chapels in the circuit. In every place the services were crowned with success, at Chippendale eminently so. The services were held in the large school room, Regent Street, and every evening there was an attendance of about three hundred.

Our usual plan of conducting the services was as follows: an address or a short sermon was given by one of the ministers, at the close of which the prayer meeting was commenced. While our brethren were praying, two or three of the ministers went about amongst the people to give a personal invitation to those who were thought to be desirous of seeking mercy.

The power of God was present with the people, and at the close of the week we had to rejoice over forty new-born souls. During the last quarter between eighty and ninety (many of whom were already meeting in class) have professed to find peace with God. It is a noteworthy fact that a large proportion of those who have been converted are the children of God's people.

This revival has not been transient, as revivals too frequently are, like the proverbial showers of an English April day, coming suddenly and as suddenly ceasing, but genuine deep and lasting in its effects - more like the steady rain which soaks into the hard dry soil and clothes the earth with verdure and luxuriance. The special services have ceased, but the work still goes on, and we have reason to believe that its blessed influence will be deepened and widened week by week.

The two prominent features of this revival have been: (1.) the absence of anything approaching to impropriety or extravagance, and (2.) that it has been eminently *a revival of spiritual holiness*.

This we believe to be at once, one of the causes and one of the effects of every extensive revival of God's work. Many of our people are living day by day in the enjoyment of the blessing of 'perfect love'. Many among us can testify from happy experience that the blood of Christ retains that all-cleansing efficacy which our forefathers knew it to possess.

Thus this revival has been what an eminent English minister affirms that every genuine revival *must* be - 'an increase of life in the members of the church; an increase of power in the services of the Church, and an increase of fruit in the labours of the Church.'

Our Circuit Quarterly Meeting was held on Tuesday, October 7th. We report an increase of sixty (full members) in the year, with sixty on trial. The state of the circuit finances, too, indicate prosperity."

The report speaks at greater length on the details of their finances, and of the programmes that the circuit schools had in hand. (35.) (Italics in the original.)

### **The Goulburn District Meeting, 1873**

At this time, the Wesleyan Methodist operations in New South Wales had been divided up into several Districts. Each year, a District meeting would take place in November at which the attendance of all the ministers was required. This was followed by the Annual Conference in January, which at that time included all the circuits in New South Wales and Queensland. There was also a General Conference every third year, which included the entire Wesleyan work in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

The Wesleyan work was also controlled by these meetings, which were entirely ministerial, and did not then include any role for leadership by laymen - at that level. Lay leadership was fundamental on the local level, of course. Local leadership was an entirely different thing. So, the overall power structure was heavily dominated by the ministers, and was also highly centralised. The congregational element in the power set-up operated only on the local level.

The Goulburn District met as usual, in November, 1873, in the afterglow of the revivals that we have mentioned already. Naturally, much attention was paid to this subject, and the list of questions which were normally asked each year made full opportunity for this to be done.

The published report included this section. "The important subject of the condition of the work of God in the various circuits throughout the districts was largely and closely considered. It was admitted that the progress had not been so great as was expected; and while in several circuits God had graciously poured out His Holy Spirit, and sinners had been converted, and churches much strengthened, it was urged that still greater results might and would be secured if preachers and people within the Church consecrated themselves more fully to God.

A most profitable conversation arose on the question of more efficiently promoting God's work, in which every minister took part. The result of the conversation was to deepen the conviction that our special needs were - a richer baptism of Divine power, a more punctual attendance at the class and prayer meetings, and a more thorough separation from the spirit of the world and its injurious amusements.

The meeting agreed to use its influence in behalf of the Temperance cause, and both by precept and example to urge it upon the attention of the members of our respective congregations." (36.)

## **Hill End Circuit, 1874**

"The Lord has been pleased to visit us at Hill End with very gracious influences. The Special Services following the 29th of April, resulted in a general quickening of believers and in thirty persons professing to have found peace with God through Christ. Since then, the ministers of the various protestant churches have united in seeking to promote a revival of religion throughout the whole community, united public meetings have been held for this purpose once a week, in one or other of the churches.

The mines have been visited daily for a fortnight and the alternate shifts of men, spoken to on the great question of personal salvation for twenty or thirty minutes. To secure this object the visits were made during the dinner hour when the men were on the top, and had a short time to spare, after their meal. Persons were thus reached who could not have otherwise been got to.

A daily prayer meeting has also been established and carried on, during the last month commencing at 10 o'clock a.m., and continuing for an hour, cottage prayer meetings are also being held all over the place with undoubtedly good results, forty or fifty persons in connexion with the Episcopal Church have professed to have found salvation. The work is still going on, and far greater things than have been yet witnessed are looked for at the hands of God.

The united effort involves some inconveniences, such as the want of hymns known to all of the congregations, and some diversity of opinion as to the most effective mode of conducting meetings, but most assuredly it compasses grand saving results that hardly otherwise could be reached. Three or four ministers of different denominations banded together to plead for the salvation of souls, both in private and before crowded congregations, can hardly fail of God-glorifying results." (37.)

## **Adelong, 1876**

"In accordance with the resolution of the Conference, the week of 'special prayer' was held in this circuit last month. We commenced at Gundagai, where the meetings were well attended, and a deep sense of the Divine presence was felt; a number under conviction of sin, sought and found pardon to the joy of their souls.

At Adelong the meetings were continued for a fortnight, a great interest was taken in all the services, the members and prayer leaders sustained the meetings well; many beneath a sense of sin were heard to cry for mercy, and our chapel became the birth-place of precious souls.

We finished these meetings with a Camp Meeting on the Queen's Birthday, held at Adelong Crossing, the central preaching place. The weather was beautiful, so most of our people met together on this occasion. We commenced with a Love Feast in the preaching room at Mr. Lewin's, which was a bright happy season. Then came the morning service in 'God's Great Temple', when beneath the blue canopy of heaven in the shade of spreading trees, the assembly joined together in the worship of the Most High. The service was opened by the Circuit Minister, and Mr. John Cole, one of the local preachers, preached an eloquent and powerful sermon, which made a deep impression on the congregation.

In the afternoon, the Rev. W. Weston preached from the Christian Race, Heb. 12: 1-2, especially addressing words of encouragement to the new converts, to continue in the race, and to contend for the prize; it was a happy golden day.

We are thankful for what we have seen and felt, not only have we additions to our

Church, but the members have been greatly cheered and revived. To God be all the praise." (38.)

### **Murrurundi Circuit, 1876**

The revival in this circuit seems to have come as a kind of rising tide of spiritual concern, especially amongst the Sunday School children, and other local children.

"Methodist brethren who entertain an active sympathy for the spiritual welfare of other portions of the great Christian vineyard than their own, and Methodist ministers who have laboured in this circuit especially, will rejoice to learn that after long continued barrenness, some fruit is here being borne to the honour and glory of the Redeemer.

But it is the old old story repeated again. The Gospel has been preached with plainness, with fervour, with faithfulness, and with power; stirring careless ones to diligence, undecided ones to action, and bringing timid ones and distrustful souls to realise the peace and joy of the believer.

No ostentation or excitement marks the silent working of the gracious influence, but an undercurrent of religious life has been discernible, leading numbers to the House of God, and many to the feet of Jesus, who before were 'strangers to the covenant of promise, without God and without hope in the world.'

In the Sunday School the change is even more apparent; the dull monotonous routine has given place to heartiness of service, to thoroughness of work, and to a general elevation of the tone. This was conspicuous last Sunday at the annual examination and the attendant services, all of which were conducted by the Rev. R. V. Danne.

A gallery, which is now to become a permanent addition to the Church, was specially erected for the occasion, and well filled by an attentive and intelligent company of juveniles, whose replies to the questions of their pastor, and whose rendering of a number of sacred pieces, especially excited the surprise and admiration of the visitors assembled.

The attendance now approaches the number of ninety children, representing a rapid increase during the past few months; appropriate sermons were addressed to the children and parents on Sabbath last by the Rev. R. V. Danne, the subject in the morning being 'What manner of child shall this be?', and in the evening the concluding words of the prophecy of Malachi formed the basis of an exceedingly forcible and impressive address. The church was unusually well filled, and a gracious influence appeared to rest upon the crowded audience.

It is not always desirable to identify the progress of a church with individual exertion, but in this case it is impossible to disassociate the honoured instruments from the results obtained. The pulpit ministrations have not been more assiduously attended to by the Rev. R. V. Danne, or more honoured with success, than have the labours of his zealous and talented partner in life on behalf of the Sabbath School. To strengthen their hands, to remove obstructions from their path, and to become a part of the crown of their rejoicing in a higher sphere, may be said to be the privilege and consummation cherished by their grateful friends in Murrurundi." (39.)

### **Grafton Circuit. 1876**

"In times of drought, the farmer hails with gladness the appearance of clouds, spreading darkly over the heavens, and giving promise of rain; and so, in seasons of spiritual dearth, the servants of God rejoice and are exceeding glad when favoured with any manifestation of Divine power accompanying the preaching of the Word of life.

For some time past this Circuit has been a scene of spiritual dearth, and if there have

been tokens of good, the rising clouds, giving promise of showers of blessing, have too often been as clouds without rain; and deferred hope has caused us to feel a degree of heart-sickness sometimes.

At our June Quarterly Meeting we arranged to hold a Camp Meeting at Ulmarra on 30th August. To that meeting many of our Local Preachers and Prayer Leaders looked forward with high expectation; and on the day previous to the meeting, they gathered in force to erect a booth for the occasion, and having completed the work, they spent some time in earnest prayer for the Divine blessing to rest on the services of the coming day.

On Wednesday, 30th, the weather was most propitious; and though in the very midst of 'corn planting' and 'cane-cutting', a goodly number assembled for the opening service at 11 a.m. The numbers increased during the day, and in the evening the booth was comfortably filled with deeply attentive hearers, many of whom, while listening to the Gospel, were convinced of sin; several inquirers came forward during the evening, and some were made to rejoice in the pardoning mercy of God.

It was apparent to all that there was a great awakening; hence we resolved to have services on the two following evenings, when the power of the Lord was very graciously felt in the assembly; the people seemed moved *en masse*, and a few... who came to mock, were soon only too glad to get clear away, while on each evening several sought and found pardon through Jesus Christ.

The Special Services were continued during the following week with like gracious results; the servants of God being cheered, and strengthened for renewed action in His cause. while a goodly number have been gathered into the Church; I and those mostly young people, or those in the prime of life. May the Head of the Church preserve them by His power, that they may long live to be instruments of blessing to the world." (40.)

This chapter has been brought to an end at the year 1876 for no other reasons than (1.) that it is a convenient year to use in order to stop this chapter from getting too long, and (2.) it was the last year that the "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record" published as a monthly paper, ending in March, 1877. With the 7th April, 1877, "The Weekly Advocate" took over.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### REVIVALS in NEW SOUTH WALES 1877 to 1879

In Victoria, the year 1877 was one of great expectations, because two famous evangelists from overseas were expected. These were the aged Presbyterian evangelist, the Rev. Dr. Alexander N. Somerville, and the English business-man Henry Varley. The prospect of this made many of the churches pray for, and prepare for, revival in their midst.

Although nobody realised the import of it at the start of the year, 1877 also marked the arrival in Melbourne of a young man, who came for his health, and to set up business in his trade of engraving. This was Thomas Spurgeon, the younger of twin sons, born to the famous London preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and his wife, Susannah. The fame of his father propelled Thomas into being an itinerant evangelist as soon as he arrived, and he spent many years preaching in many parts of Australia and New Zealand. Apart from all that, or possibly because of it, there were many local Wesleyan revivals around parts of Victoria that year. The main one occurred in Golden Square, Bendigo.

In New South Wales, there were two revivals which received much attention, plus a few smaller ones, and Sydney enjoyed the visit of Dr. Somerville. The two revivals were in Wagga Wagga, and in Bulli, although the Illawarra movement also affected the whole Wollongong area. Actually, none of these revivals were large, so far as the number of converts was concerned, but these two larger ones, especially, created quite an impact.

#### **Bulli, 1877**

##### **"GOOD NEWS.**

**WOLLONGONG.** - For some time we have felt that our very life as a Church depended upon our experiencing a Revival of Religion, that nothing less than this could save us from being a comfort to evil-doers instead of a warning and rebuke; and so feeling, we were glad to have the opportunity of uniting with the various circuits of the colony in waiting upon the Lord for the bestowment of His converting and sanctifying grace, while we held in the circuit town during the latter part of April the special services arranged for at the last Conference.

But from these services failing to accomplish what we hoped from them, we were much cast down, and so feeling, thought the effort put forth utterly wasted - a mistaken judgment, as the judgment of despondency ever is; for subsequent events have shown that while the direct good we sought by these services was not gained, the indirect good of a keener sense of our own poverty and powerlessness, with a quickened condition of soul leading us to more earnest wrestling with God in private for His mercy for ourselves and the perishing about us, was certainly effected by them. And thus prepared for usefulness by the Lord the Holy Spirit, we have been permitted the joy of harvest. In Bulli, so fair in material beauty, so uncomely in moral aspect, for, whose blessing so many godly men have laboured, some of whom have gone home to rest, and some continue, with us to this day, we have been

graciously allowed to gather of the seed they so faithfully sowed.

By the people of God in connexion with us there, Friday, the 22nd of June, will long be gladly remembered, for on the evening of that day, while we were bowed before the Mercy-seat, the Power of the Highest came down upon us, and within the walls of our beautiful house of prayer was heard the unwonted sound of penitents mourning over their sins, and crying for the Saviour; and anon rejoicing in the blessed experience of His nearness to those who truly seek Him, and of His power to save to the peace of pardon the lately-troubled guilty soul.

For the four evenings previously we had held special meetings, but though the attendance was encouraging and believers were blessed, we could get no response from those we anxiously desired to see coming to the Saviour; and so on till late on Friday night, when we were about closing this series of services, sad at heart for another apparent failure. Just after we had given a partial appeal and were going to our knees for a closing prayer, then the long winter was broken up and the gloomy night gave place to cheering day, for almost simultaneously a dozen persons - youths and maidens, men and matrons, came out as seekers of salvation, of whom more than half before the meeting closed were enabled to rejoice in the liberty wherewith He makes His followers free. The night following (Saturday) our good Brother Wynn led the meeting, and again pardon was the experience of the seeker. On the Sunday afternoon, Bro. J. Roseby, of Sydney, rendered good service by an earnest sermon on the freeness and fullness of Divine mercy. A crowded congregation gathered at night, upon whom a gracious influence manifestly rested, while the Rev. J. W. Brown spoke on the soul seeking work and the Lord seeking season. In the after meeting the alien found the sweetness of adopting grace, and the backslider had restored to him the joys of salvation. And so on during the week that followed; in every meeting the Lord was present to comfort the mourner and to heal the broken in spirit.

For the present we closed these services by a Fellowship meeting on Sunday afternoon, July 1st, at which nearly forty testified to their personal experience of the preciousness of Jesus and the blessedness of His salvation. Among this number were many who had been led into this experience through these special services, and their recital of the way in which the Lord had led them into His great peace filled our eyes with the tears of a grateful joy, and constrained from our hearts to cry -

"O that all men might know

His tokens below;

Our Saviour confess,

And embrace the glad tidings of pardon and peace."

At the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which appropriately closed this service of testimony, some sixty persons renewed their covenant vows, and blessedly felt the Holiest realising in them the sign - 'Infusing His life into the bread, His power into the wine.'

There are certain features of this gracious work worthy of special notice:-

1st. The absence of that form of excitement which frequently mar revival services. - Extravagant expressions and noisy utterances have not characterized these meetings. A solemn sense of God's nearness has prevented such excesses.

There were to be heard the earnest pleading of the believer for the present salvation of those still 'ignorant of the blood which bought their pardon on the tree;' there were to be heard the sobs and deep prayers of the sorrowful and anxious; and anon the praises of those made happy in the Divine favour; but from the sound and fury which too often signify nothing but animal heat and passion, we have been mercifully spared.

2nd. The wide-spread influence of this work - not individuals alone, but whole families have been blessed. Among the very touching incidents of the service of testimony

was to see a young married man rise to praise God for converting grace just lately found, and when he had resumed his seat, to hear a similar testimony from his wife - and these followed by a father and mother and daughter just entering upon womanhood, exalting the Redeemer's name and exulting in His love, to which, within a few days, they had been strangers. Not persons only who usually attend our Church have been thus blessed, but adherents of other Churches have shared in that blessing, have professed publicly their personal experience of salvation through faith in Christ.

3 rd. The revived interest in religion this work has caused throughout the circuit; a degree of expectancy has been aroused by it where something like indifference has long existed, and from this quickened state of feeling among the professors of religion with us we are hoping great things. Out of that stationary condition, which is ever the characteristic of a Church not godly enough to be prosperous, we trust that we are moved into that higher state of experience wherein we may increase and profit by the increase.

In closing this notice of the revival at Bulli it should be said that the brethren of the neighbourhood threw themselves heartily into the work; notably Bro. Wynn and Bro. Cornford, local preachers on our plan, helped by their public addresses; and with Bros. Wiseman, McDonald, Poulter, and others, from Wollongong, rendered service by their presence, counsels and prayers.

The numerical results of this work we are not yet able to give. Some thirty persons came out as seekers of salvation. It is probable that twenty of this number will remain in fellowship with us. The rest belong to other Churches, and of them we hope that they will go to their own homes and show what great things the Lord has done for them.

The Circuit Quarterly Meeting was held last week. There was a large attendance. The Superintendent reported the formation of two new classes at Bulli, and a Christian Improvement Society for men. The finances showed a credit balance of five pounds over ordinary expenditure." (1.)

## **Wollongong**

Since my last communication we have been blessed with times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, both at Dapto and Marshall Mount. At each of these places we have held a week of special services, with very encouraging results. In both these parts of the circuit our cause had very much declined, principally from the removal of our members to other parts of the colony, but their places vacant for many years are now filled by those who we believe are really in earnest about saving their own souls and the souls of others. As the result of these efforts, our old members have been borne forward on the rising tide of Divine influence to a higher experience of godliness. Twenty-six new members, whose ages range from 16 to 60 years, have been gathered into the classes. Seven catechumens have been placed under the care of the Leaders, and members of other Churches have been blessed. Of those to whom tickets on trial have been given, one-third are heads of families - a most pleasing feature in this work; for if the fathers and mothers will consecrate themselves to Christ, we may reasonably expect the children rising up to call Him blessed, and to engage heartily in His service. Father J. Graham, with characteristic devotedness, was with us every evening to assist us with his counsels and prayers, and valuable assistance was rendered by Bro. W. Piper of Marshall Mount, and the brethren Wiseman, McDonald, Poulter and Sanson, from Wollongong. The pastor's wife accompanied him and was made very useful in singing the Gospel, and directing her guilt-burdened sisters to 'the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.' Our best service at Marshall Mount was on the Thursday evening when thirteen persons penitent for sin came out as seekers of God's forgiving grace. That same evening at Bulli a number of those who were blessed during the late revival services

there met for the purpose of praying for a blessing on us, and while they waited upon God for this - while they called - He answered, and gave the knowledge of sins and the experience of pardon to many at Marshall Mount, who for a long time had been most unconcerned about their soul's salvation. We are hoping that the tide of revival blessing will reach us at Wollongong, where indeed it is much needed. During the last week we held the Church Sustentation and Extension Society meetings through the circuit, being favoured with the advocacy of the General Secretary, the Rev. G. Hurst, whose sermons on the Sabbath at Wollongong and Bulli were much enjoyed by large congregations, and whose public addresses at Dapto, Mount Keira, Bulli and Wollongong should have the effect of exciting a very deep interest in and sympathy with the Society, whose claims he advocated. We are glad to be able to say that the collections for the funds are much in excess of the amount contributed last year." (2.)

### **Wagga Wagga, 1877**

#### **"REVIVAL IN WAGGA WAGGA.**

We have received the following interesting narrative from an esteemed correspondent:-

'We are praising God here for many gracious tokens of His saving power and favour amongst us. During the last month it has pleased Him to change a state of dreary spiritual barrenness into one of deep concern for sin, wrestling prayer for salvation and simple faith in Christ, followed by larger religious fruitfulness than was ever before known in Wagga Wagga. Many of our principal people have been quickened in their religious life personally, and doubly blessed in the genuine conversion of their wives, and in some cases of their children also, to the faith and love of God. The tone of deep depression caused by financial anxieties, and an undue dependence upon, and craving for, showy preaching, has, we trust, for ever fled; its place is now supplied by an earnest purpose and well directed effort to bring others to the Saviour, - mere church increase being looked upon as a secondary matter. Minister and people are cordially united in these labours. The former has shown discretion and courage in the prosecution and direction of the work, and the latter have lent a ready and zealous co-operation. Special religious services were announced to commence on Sunday, August 12th. During the preceding week indications abounded, though little noticed at the time, of a providential leading up to the efforts which are resulting in showers of blessings. One of our most influential friends, who had fallen into a careless state, was led in a remarkable manner to feel deep sympathy for our minister in his spiritually cheerless toil. From this he was induced to think of his own personal need of being in sympathy with Christ, and was led at once to give his heart to God; penitence was followed by faith in Christ, and he was rejoicing in God before any of our special efforts commenced.

This case of conversion was a turning-point in our history, awaking hope and increasing faith in God's promises. Another providential indication was the arrival in our midst of a warm-hearted local preacher from Daylesford, Victoria, a Mr. H. C. Reynolds, who, learning of the effort to be made, arranged to remain a week or two with us. Mr. Reynolds is a man of plain parts, but well furnished for evangelistic work. He entered with readiness and zeal into the work, and greatly assisted our minister in bringing the Church into united and direct action. His plain speech and fearless advocacy of religion arrested general attention. We have had no other outside help, but our praying people have, by grace, risen to the work. We have no lack of hearty singers, or earnest men to give soul-stirring addresses in

the meetings. There is a general freedom in prayer; and formal expressions and stock phrases are giving place to words expressing present and pressing needs. The services were commenced as announced, and with additional hopefulness from these first-fruits having been already gathered in, our minister preaching in the morning from Haggai 1:7-10 - a searching sermon, recognised as being singularly appropriate; this was followed in the evening by a sermon to backsliders. The first day's labours evoked the right spirit of self-examination and renewed consecration on the part of the members of the Church, and earnest prayer for the gift of the Holy Ghost. The first week yielded just enough fruit to stimulate without satisfying. Two or three persons came forward as seekers.

To give the movement greater prominence and bring the community more generally under its influence, printed circulars were issued early in the second week, affectionately inviting all persons to come to the special services in the School-room. Plain addresses were given, and very earnest prayer meetings followed, in which all desirous of serving God were asked to come forward and show themselves on the Lord's side, and thus get the counsel and prayers of the Church. These calls were frequently responded to. Delicate women and strong men, Sabbath scholars, and aged people of various social standing, might be seen kneeling and pleading with tears together for salvation; and when compelled by late hours to close these meetings, some were not satisfied without adjourning to the minister's house for further help and counsel.

These late meetings in the house from night to night must have been perplexing to our minister's wife, but she showed no weariness, but gave only gentle encouragement to all concerned. Sunday, 25th August, congregations showed a marked increase, and the services were characterised by earnest devotional feeling and power. At Bruce Dale, where Mr. Carruthers preached in the afternoon, the service was solemn and impressive; the preacher had plainly got the baptism of power. At the close, one middle-aged woman sought and found peace, and her joy showed itself in tears and praises. At the same hour, Mr. Reynolds held an open-air service on the Wharf Reserve in Wagga Wagga, and many who never entered churches were thus laid hold of. That evening, instead of the sermon, stirring addresses were given to a very large company in the Church, the greater part of whom remained to the after prayer meeting, when several came forward as seekers. The meetings continued with growing interest during the week, and on the Wednesday large circulars were widely distributed inviting all classes to an open-air service on the Wharf Reserve, at 7 o'clock, to be followed by a meeting in the old Church at 8 o'clock. These handbills, after announcing the services concluded as follows:- 'All are invited! Our theme is Christ alone: our object, present salvation; our weapons prayer and faith, and the Word of God. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.'

Mr. Carruthers and Mr. Reynolds addressed the crowd in the open air, and succeeded in both removing prejudice and awakening attention. At the close of the open-air service, minister, local preachers, and friends generally, including many ladies, united in singing beautiful pieces through the public street all the way to the School-room, followed by the crowd, when the largest and most miscellaneous company crowded in and stood around at door and windows that ever assembled in the old Church. Three brethren spoke with deepening effect, and the meeting merged into prayer, few retiring. Our old friend, Mr. Riley, rendered good service by a thoughtful, earnest and impressive address. One feature of the meeting was an aged man coming forward to make his peace with God, and his son rising to give God thanks and ask our prayers, that his father might be kept faithful unto death.

It is noticeable that some of the larger and more demonstrative meetings have yielded less immediate fruit than the smaller and more subdued ones. But all have been more or less fruitful. Souls have found peace at early prayer meetings, in the minister's study, and in their

own homes. A very happy impression was made on one assembly by a young lady, who had found Christ in a private enquirer's meeting, coming forward among the penitents. She was greeted by the enquiry, 'Have you lost your faith already?' Her answer called forth devout thanksgiving; 'No, but as I did not come forward publicly as a seeker, I felt it my duty to acknowledge my Saviour publicly.'

A testimony meeting afforded a useful break in these services in which all who had been benefited were freely invited to speak. Many members spoke of their renewed consecration and a large portion of the new converts gave clear statements of their salvation by faith in Christ. One statement was striking. A middle-aged man told how going from his home on business he had walked down to the Church, and entered there casually. Up to that time he had been very comfortable about his state, but in the meeting he was convinced of sin, and led to seek and find the Saviour. The following Sunday, September 2nd, was a blessed day. The morning service was well fitted to help the converts. The subject of discourse was, 'He giveth more grace.' The outdoor service in the afternoon was somewhat marred by the weather. In the evening the evangelistic addresses again took hold of the people, and seekers came forward who had been holding back up to this time. The meetings were again continued through the week with happy, if not with such large results as formerly.

On Wednesday evening another open-air service was held, when a large company listened with fixed attention to a discourse on repentance and the judgement. A conversation, which took place afterwards among men who for years had not entered a place of worship, will show the impression made! Well, when ministers and preachers are coming out into the street after us, it is time we began to think about going to Church ourselves. At one of the later meetings a young man came deliberately to mock and make fun, but remained to pray and confess his sin. Another notable instance was of one who had violently opposed his wife's new-found religious fervour, but who, in just a week afterwards, was on his knees crying for mercy, presently to join his partner in singing the new song of salvation through Christ.

Now that we have brought our special services (which extended over four weeks) to a close, it is gratifying to hear on every hand that the impressions made are deepening and spreading. The last meeting of the series was felt to be a solemn and a hallowed season. Four or five new seekers presented themselves at the penitent form, and there were few in the large building who were not under more or less concern about the matter of present salvation.

At Bruce Dale also, the services have been largely blessed. The local preachers have principally had charge of the work there, and have done their part with an earnestness and self-denial worthy of all praise. But at this place especially we have as yet, only reaped the first fruits. The harvest is ripening, and we expect soon to have a large ingathering.

In all about fifty persons have come forward as seekers, most of whom have professed to find peace with God. We do not expect to gather all these into our own Church. They are urged to join the Church of their choice at once, whatever that may be. The importance of this revival cannot be measured by numbers, though in this respect most gratifying. Its influence on the Church is of equal import, for God has raised up a band of workers amongst us fit now for any similar ingathering, and disciplined by this labour for well directed and united action whenever opportunity offers. We have never suffered much from dissension in this circuit, but now all petty aims and differences are lost sight of by minister and people in deep sympathy with the Saviour's great commission - to preach the Gospel to every creature. A deep and wide impression has been made upon the public mind, and attention drawn from the externals and belongings of religion to religion itself. Formalism has sustained defeat. The Church has risen into a purer atmosphere; peace, love and unity prevail. Some of our people have got, and more are seeking, full consecration; and all are praying and striving for a more

copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit than ever. It is the Lord's doings, and is marvellous in our eyes. To God be all the praise" (3.)

A little later, a Quarterly Meeting Report appeared.

### **Wagga Wagga.**

.....The Quarterly Meeting held on the 9th instant, was one of the most satisfactory ever held here. An encouraging increase of members was reported, finances were well up, and an earnest tone of gratitude for the past, and hopefulness for the future, pervaded the whole meeting. Amongst other important business transacted, it was decided to invite the Goulburn District-meeting to hold its 1878 sessions in Wagga Wagga. The work of God is still being carried on amongst us. The Sunday evening services especially have been attended with power, and conversions continue to take place. At Mallabo also (one of the country places) there are signs of an awakening and quickening. To God be all the glory." (4.)

Another account of this revival in Wagga Wagga is found in an autobiography by J. E. Carruthers. "Memories of an Australian Ministry." which he published many years later. (5.)

### **Dr. Alexander Somerville in Sydney, 1877**

News about the activities of both Alexander Somerville, and Henry Varley, in Victoria, had been published also in Sydney, raising some expectations about their visits. Somerville arrived a few months later, and Varley came to Sydney the following year.

The "Weekly Advocate" carried the following article:-

"The masses of Victoria are being favoured with plenty of Christian evangelism just now, and the Churches in that colony ought to record a considerable accession of members and an increase of vigour during the next twelve months. The services of the Rev. Dr. Somerville at Ballarat have been of the same happy character as those at Melbourne. Immense congregations gathered to hear him; the Protestant workers of the town co-operated with him very heartily; and his sermons and addresses were instinct with the energy of the Holy Spirit. The following is the list of his provincial engagements in Victoria:- Geelong, August 4 - 13; Maryborough, August 14 -15; Castlemaine, August 16 - 17; Sandhurst, August 19 - 27;

We understand that it is Dr. Somerville's present intention to take Queens- land immediately after Victoria. He is an aged man - seventy years old - and is reported to take the northern colony before the extreme heat of its semi-tropical summer arrives. New South Wales follows next in his programme. Already a large committee has been formed in Sydney to make the necessary preparations for the visit of the venerable evangelist, and meetings for prayer in behalf of the coming services are being held.

The work of Dr. Somerville in Melbourne will be followed up by the labours of the well-known Mr. Henry Varley, whose arrival is thus noticed by the last issue of the *Spectator*:- 'We are glad to notice that amongst the passengers who arrived on Wednesday by the ship *Collingwood*, from London, was Mr. Henry Varley, the evangelist, formerly of Geelong. His name is scarcely less familiar with the Christian community than that of Mr. Moody, for Mr. Varley's labours in London, New York, etc., have been crowned with wonderful success. Having realised an independence by trade, he retired, and has since devoted his money and energies to the diffusion of the Gospel. Among other ways in which he has proved his zeal for the spiritual welfare of others, we may mention that he built, and

has since supported, a large tabernacle in Notting Hill, near London. Since his arrival Mr. Varley has taken part in the mid-day prayer-meetings.

In the crowded assembly on Thursday he offered an earnest and impressive prayer for the young men of Melbourne. It is proposed that Mr. Varley's work shall begin on Monday evening next, when he will deliver an address to Christian workers in the Assembly Hall. On Tuesday and Wednesday evenings he will conduct Evangelistic Services in the Temperance Hall. Last evening a formal welcome was accorded to him by a large number of ministers and others in the Assembly Hall. We earnestly pray that abundant success may attend his labours during his stay amongst us.'

We suppose Mr. Varley will include New South Wales in his round of evangelistic efforts. He will meet a hearty welcome here. We are glad to find also that Mr. Matthew Burnett is successfully prosecuting his special work in the Wesleyan circuits. We clip the following intelligence from the last issue of the Spectator:- 'Mr. Burnett is doing good work at Williamstown, both as an evangelist and temperance advocate. During the fourteen days ending Saturday, the 28th, ult., he was instrumental in inducing six hundred persons to sign the pledge; and in the evening of that day he held a very successful meeting at the Mechanic's Institute, fully three hundred people being unable to gain admittance. The addresses delivered by Mr. Burnett, Dr. Figg (chairman), and the Rev. J. J. Halley, produced a deep impression, and at the close of the programme - which included musical selections and recitations by ladies and gentlemen interested in the temperance cause - a number of the audience signed the pledge. Last Sunday afternoon Mr. Burnett preached to fully two thousand people, at Gellibrand Point, from Luke 15:3, "This man receiveth sinners." Most sincerely do we sympathise with the revivalism which is now passing over the Victorian Churches, and we trust that the permanent results of the work will be all that the most sanguine followers of the Lord Jesus Christ would expect.'" (6.)

### **"REVIVAL SERVICES"**

"United prayer-meetings, preparatory to the visit of the Rev. Dr. Somerville, are being held in the city and suburbs of Sydney, and the churches are looking forward with much prayerful concern and hope to the arrival of the distinguished evangelist. On Last Monday evening, a prayer-meeting was held in the Congregational Schoolroom, Pitt -street, in which ministers of various denominations took part: and a similar meeting is announced for the same place on Monday night week. We are likewise informed that a series of united prayer-meetings has been arranged for by the ministers of the various evangelical denominations in the eastern suburbs, and that the following order has been determined upon - August 28, Wesleyan Church, Paddington; September 4, Congregational Church, Point Piper Road; September 11, Presbyterian Church, Paddington; September 18, Wesleyan Church, Waverley; September 25, Congregational Church, Ocean-street, Woollahra; and October 2, St Matthias' Church, Paddington." (7.)

Meetings were in due course held in Sydney by Somerville, just as there had been in Melbourne. They were very good evangelistic opportunities, but there did not seem to be noticeable signs of revival, over and above what the evangelism achieved.

### **Bathurst Circuit, 1878**

During 1878, the British Conference sent the Rev. Dr. Gervase Smith to Australia as its official deputation to the Australian Methodists. He toured through all the colonies, and visited many of the circuits, large and small. On his trip he was often accompanied by several

other local ministers, some of whom might be high office-holders in their own right. When he visited Bathurst, Smith was accompanied by the Revs. Alexander Reid, Rainsford Bavin, H. T. Burgess, and William Morley.

The Bathurst people sent in this report about "showers of blessing", during their visit. "...while we cannot but feel thankful that the Head of the Church continues to give us men such as these who have visited us, our chief cause for gratitude is that the power of the Divine Spirit has been manifested in our midst, and many have, under His blessed influences, yielded themselves to God, and have been made happy in a sense of His love.

Not that we have received the fullness of the blessing we need, or the copiousness of the outpouring we expect, but we have had gracious indications of the 'showers of blessing' which we believe are coming. During the past fortnight a meeting has been held every evening, and at every meeting we have been gladdened by seeing penitents seeking the Saviour - sometimes two or three, sometimes many more; and not a few have found the Saviour whom they have sought, so that there has been joy in the heart, joy in the Church, joy in the home, and joy in heaven, as a result of these meetings. Believers have been quickened and aroused more fully to lay hold upon their privileges, and in every way the Church has been blessed." (8.)

"I am glad to have to inform you that the good work to which I referred in my last has not been confined to the city, and that very cheering accounts have reached us from Dunkeld, while almost everywhere the congregations show a marked increase. One of the most noticeable features in the meetings which have been held was the absence of any undue excitement. A calmness befitting the solemnity of the occasion was a marked characteristic, and for this we are thankful, as we expect the results will be the more abiding." (9.)

### **Newtown Circuit, 1878**

A series of special services had been held in the Newtown Church. The following report deals with meetings which came after that.

"At the conclusion of the series of services held in connection with the Newtown Church, Rocky Point was visited, and interesting meetings held there. After Newtown and Stanmore, Rocky Point is the most important place in the circuit. The church there is one of the handsomest country churches in the colony, and the congregation worshipping there is large, and generally speaking, in well-to-do circumstances. But the membership has for some time past been numerically small, and the spiritual life, with two or three noteworthy exceptions, very feeble.

The first of the series of meetings was devoted to the all-important work of quickening the spiritual life of the members, and others professing religion, in order that they might be able to co-operate efficiently with the Holy Ghost in securing the salvation of souls. During the remaining evenings of the week various earnest appeals were made to the unconverted to confess their sins, and by faith in Jesus obtain reconciliation with God. The Holy Spirit blessed those appeals, many persons became convinced of sin, and after earnest seeking were enabled to rejoice in the consciousness of the possession of pardoning grace. The services at Rocky Point have added to the classes about twenty-five persons, chiefly adults.

The following week was devoted to Botany Bay. The attendance at all the services was very gratifying, and the Church there was blessed with the spirit of fervent prayer; accordingly every evening there were souls seeking salvation, of these the greater number found the Saviour.

The services at Botany were begun last Sunday week; in the evening the little church was packed in every part. At the prayer-meeting which followed the sermon eleven persons came forward in distress on account of their sins. On the five following evenings there were crowded congregations, and the display of Divine power was marvellous; the older members affirmed that they had never beheld anything like it either at home or in this country. It seemed as if every soul in the neighbourhood would be converted. Before the close of the Friday night service, out of forty seekers, principally young men and women, thirty had obtained clear sense of pardon. Some of the cases were of an intensely interesting character... The converts have in every place been gathered into classes and placed in (the) charge of leaders, who thus far have proved themselves to be admirably adapted to guard and train the new life." (10.)

### **Wollongong Circuit, 1878**

A report also appeared about a series of special services at Wollongong, Mount Keira, Dapto and Bulli, spread over a period of six weeks. About eighty conversions were recorded, mainly at Wollongong and Bulli. The believers felt refreshed in spirit, as a result of the effort. (11.)

### **The President's Letter**

In 1879, again the President of the Conference had to make a belated call for special evangelistic services to be held, because the Conference had omitted to do it. His letter said:-

"Dear Brethren, -

I am reminded that the late Conference did not, in the resolution passed at the close of the conversation on the work of God, set apart, as on former occasions, a week of special prayer in our circuits. Believing it was an oversight, I recommend that special religious services be held in each circuit this year, as early as possible in the next quarter. And will you allow me to suggest that sermons on the subject of the revival of the work of God be preached prior to the time of holding the services, and also that the officers and others of the Church be met for prayer and consultation, with the view of securing earnest and united effort. To be successful at such times, all must be of one accord, as well as in one place. There is failure on such occasions sometimes for the want of suitable preparation and unity.

That God may very graciously visit our Zion is the fervent prayer of the writer," (12.)

The letter was signed by the President, the Rev. Joseph Oram. It was addressed from Parramatta, where he was then stationed, and dated March 17th.

### **Mudgee Circuit, 1879**

Perhaps in response, a very interesting movement was reported from Mudgee.

"My short paragraph of last week briefly informed you of what I now purpose giving you a fuller account. Towards the close of our esteemed pastor's (the Rev. R. Caldwell) triennium, a spirit of prayer and expectancy was upon our people, and soon after the Rev. W. Wilson's arrival this spirit grew and deepened. Knowing that it would be idle to attempt spiritual harvesting where there were no ripe sheaves to gather, it was not till the first of June that it was thought advisable to commence operations.

On that day the preaching of the Word was with power. In the afternoon the Sunday-school teachers met for prayer, and had a blessed time. After the evening service a prayer-

meeting, largely attended, was held; then followed the two weeks of prayer, and each evening showed a good attendance - the average was fully one hundred. All through our meetings there was no excitement, no noise, nothing to offend the most fastidious Churchman or strict Presbyterian, but the Spirit of God was striving with many hearts.

The plan adopted in conducting the meetings was the telling of the simple story of the Cross, and the presentation of Jesus as the only Saviour of mankind, followed by short and earnest prayer by pastor and people. Our own hymnbook, in conjunction with Sankey's, was used. The 'after' meetings for anxious enquirers were well attended, and Mr. Wilson, with a few praying brothers and sisters, strove to clear away all doubts and fears in their minds, so that they might lay hold on Christ as their personal Saviour. Altogether, the names of forty-seven have been taken as having professed anxiety for salvation, but of these all have not yet experienced saving grace.

Before concluding my report I may mention a very encouraging incident. A God-fearing, praying member was moved with intense anxiety for her grandson's conversion. She earnestly pleaded that he might be inclined to attend the special meetings and there find the Saviour. Living as he does some few miles out of town, while his grandmother lives in town, it can well be imagined the joy his presence at the meetings created. (No other means than her prayers had been used.) I believe I am correct in stating that the young man is now happy in his Saviour's love. This pleading for special cases was urged upon us by our pastor, and has been and still is practised in many a private chamber.

To sum up my report, I may state the results of our revival are evidenced by a deeper earnestness in our Christian life, the return to Church membership of several who had lost it, additions to the Classes already in existence, and, most encouraging of all, the formation of a Class for young men, the leader being our minister, Mr. Wilson. Special services are contemplated at Burrundulla and J Collingwood, and wherever else the Lord may show us an open door." (13.)

## **"REVIVALS AND EVANGELISTIC SERVICES"**

As we have seen, quite a number of articles about evangelism, and about revivals, were published from time to time by the editors of the Wesleyan papers. This one was the lead article in "The Weekly Advocate." for May 17th, 1879, in support of the President's call.

"In our last issue there appeared a brief account of the religious revival in the Maryborough circuit, which was the outcome of a week of special services in connection with the Wesleyan Church in that town.

The New South Wales and Queensland Conference, when it had discussed the question as to the state of the work of God amongst our Churches, has generally resolved to set apart a week during the winter months for special religious services. In the press of business at the last Conference the usual resolution on the subject was omitted; but the omission has since been rectified by a letter from the President addressed to the Superintendents of circuits, in which he recommended that special religious services be held in each circuit as soon as possible in the present quarter. This letter appeared in our issue of March 22nd, and we commended it at the time to the attention of all concerned. We have no doubt whatever that the President's suggestion will be heartily taken up, and we earnestly pray that gracious results may follow, not merely in one or two circuits, but throughout the entire colony. The quarter is passing on, and as most of the ministers who interchanged last month will now be settled in their new circuits, we take the opportunity of drawing the attention of our readers to this suggestion by devoting a portion of our space to the very important subjects which appear at the head of this paper.

Whatever individual opinions we may hold ourselves, it should never be forgotten that to a very real extent the history of the Christian Church is a history of religious revival. It is true that the great historic revivals have been separated from each other by long periods of time. But though such intervals sometimes extended over centuries, yet from the founding of Christianity until now, revivals of religion have been continued with more or less frequency. The first great revival, which was the fitting accompaniment to the splendid inauguration of the Christian Church after the ascension of her risen Lord, was confined to no single nation, but was marked by a wide catholicity which overleaped all national barriers, and extended over more than two centuries of time. The twelfth and the sixteenth centuries are epochs in ecclesiastical history which mark great religious movements. These epochs were distinguished by a mighty manifestation of the power of God, and their influence is still felt in connection with the Christian Church. Dr. Neander, one of the greatest of modern ecclesiastical historians, speaks of the revival of the twelfth century as marking 'the commencement of a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit.' Outcast children were cared for. The drunken became sober. Abandoned women were reclaimed from a career of vice, and provided with homes free from temptation. Religious societies were formed, and a spirit of love combined with works of active benevolence largely prevailed. In this century the Church of the Waldenses was formed, concerning whose religious character Gieseler, the German historian, says, 'They were free from all speculative enthusiasm,' and 'they consecrated all their energies to realise once again Apostolic Christendom in all its simplicity, and with all its inward devotion.' To Innocent the Third belongs the infamy of instituting the Inquisition, and the Waldenses were the first to experience the penalties which were inflicted by the most inhuman system of legalised tyranny which the world had ever seen. Persecuted with relentless cruelty, subjected to fire and sword, they endured as seeing Him who is invisible. They lingered for years in the valleys of the Alps making their homes in mountain fastnesses, and maintaining the purity of the Christian faith.

When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones.

In the sixteenth century the voice of Luther awoke the slumbering nations of Western Europe to the tyranny and despotism of Rome. The Reformation, which was inaugurated by himself and his illustrious colleagues, spread to many nations, and soon became one of the greatest facts of modern history. Armed with the mighty forces of the spiritual world, Luther became the champion of religious freedom, and the liberator of modern thought. That great historic revival dealt a blow at the Papacy, beneath which it reels to-day, and from the effects of which it is never likely to rise to anything approaching to the arrogance of the power which it exercised in the medieval ages. The English revival of the eighteenth century under Wesley and Whitefield was productive of the most glorious results. It changed the moral aspect of a great nation, and was one of the means of preserving England from civil discord when the Powers of the Western world were shaken, and the thrones of Europe were tossed about like so many playthings. Out of that revival arose the Churches of English Methodism, together with the Methodist Episcopal Church of America; and from it subsequently sprang the Methodist Churches of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Nor has the nineteenth century been without many remarkable displays of the power of the living God, and sometimes the fires of another Pentecost have swept over the hearts of thousands, and scorners have been confounded and put to shame. Never perhaps was a glorious manifestation of the Divine power more needed than it is now; and as we look back upon the history of the past, it does not seem too much to hope that God's answer to the secret scepticism and to the avowed atheism of the age may be some direct and unmistakable manifestation of HIMSELF.

There is one great lesson which the revivals of the past seem to teach us all. It is this, that a spirit of expectation and desire has often preceded a great outpouring of the Spirit of

God. To awaken such a spirit and to create such a desire is an object that should be kept steadily in view. Such efforts as these which are connected with special religious services, should have regard not merely, perhaps not so much, to the conversion of those who are without, as to the quickening of the Church itself. This was the very first work which some of the great evangelists who were found among the Methodist preachers sought to accomplish. And when this was once achieved the Church became aglow with Divine love. Then, in the ardour of its zeal, aggression was made upon the territories of evil laying without, and sinners were converted to God. In speaking of this subject we cannot refrain from drawing attention to the following admirable counsel, which we take from the *Watchman*, in its issue of the 5th March.

'As special services are now held, they generally and mainly aim at the awakening and conversion of sinners. The sermons, singing, and prayers nearly always aim at this; in fact the entire arrangements and expectations are with a view to an ingathering of souls. This most desirable result is often achieved, and to God be all the praise! But the special services are not always attended with the desired results. Sinners are not converted; perhaps not one single soul is brought to Christ. Then both ministers and people are discouraged, and, without great care, will get into a worse spiritual state than they were before. It may happen that the ministers will complain of the people, or the people of them. So they lose heart and hope, and write bitter things, not against each other merely, but each against himself. These injurious self-accusations are not always reasonable or Scriptural. They sometimes arise from an obliviousness to facts. Three-fourths of the congregation may already be members of Society, and you cannot convert hundreds of sinners when there are no hundreds to convert. Nearly all who attend many of the services are already saved. Can nothing be done for them because they are already members? A good deal might be done for them. They might be brought nearer to God; they might be reconsecrated, and made far more valuable as religious agents both in the Church and out of it. Suppose the special services which had been held for sinners without any conversions had been held for believers only, how different might have been the results? Instead of discouragement and unbelief there might have been a renewed, united, and happy Church.'

Should these services be successful in quickening a dead orthodoxy, and rousing the Church itself to the vigour of spiritual life, such a result would be a revival of the most desirable kind. One of the first effects it would produce would be to lead to evangelistic effort, and then to inspire such efforts with a fervent zeal for the glory of God.

It is one of the evidences of a low state of grace, when we are not pained as we should be by the sins of men against God. All around us men are in revolt against Him, and too often we cease to mourn that it should be so. It is true that in many cases the struggle of life is so hard, and the difficulties attendant upon our personal salvation are so great that our energies seem to be completely absorbed in attending to them. But in a state of true religious revival, when the Spirit of God visits us with His presence and quickening power, nothing is more astonishing than the change which He produces within us. The doubts which have hung upon our souls, and like dense mists have obscured our vision of God, disappear like the dews of morning before the rising sun. All thoughts of our personal salvation are for the time being lost in a wider desire that God should be glorified in the salvation of men. One of the very first results of a glorious manifestation of the Spirit's power would be to kindle throughout the Church a spirit of loyalty to the throne and person of Christ, that our souls would go out in vehement longing for His final victory over the sins of men. Love would crown toil with joy, and in the ardour of an all absorbing desire we should live, and work, and pray, for the wide extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. Sometimes good men are inspired by a spirit of philanthropy rather than by true Christian zeal. Nor would we breathe a single word of

discouragement to philanthropic workers in any sphere where they may labour for the benefit of their fellow men. But nothing is more certain than this, that in a genuine revival of religion all our religious work would become more intensely religious, and we should look and pray for direct spiritual results in connection with our work.

Another aspect in which we may regard such a revival as we are now speaking of would be, that it would lead to absolute dependence upon God, whilst at the same time it would create a spirit of mighty and triumphant faith. An able writer has said, "The very machinery that we have created for the evangelisation of the world comes between us and the living God. A physician, if he know his profession, will treat his patients successfully, whether he has a devout trust in God or not. The builder can rely upon the known properties of stone, and iron, and wood. It is not necessary to pray in order to secure the action of gravitation. Natural forces are uniform in their operation. Fire always burns, friction always creates heat, cold always freezes. But in those high provinces in which the Church has to work we have to deal not with the natural, but with supernatural forces; not with unvarying laws, but with Divine volitions. The regeneration of a soul is of the nature of a miracle. It is not the natural effect of the presentation, or apprehension of truth. The direct action of the Spirit of God is indispensable." It is even so. The presence of the Divine Spirit is always the life and power of the Church; but without His presence we mourn, and languish, and die.

Such then are some of the objects which we may reasonably hope and pray may result from the special services in connection with our Churches in New South Wales. If we are blessed with Divine visitations, so that believers themselves are quickened, and led to seek for the larger blessings of that holy estate which is called in our hymn book 'Full Redemption', then there will assuredly follow the conversion of those who still linger upon the borders of the Kingdom of God, and perhaps even of the openly profane and ungodly. Shall we not hope for this? The following golden words are those of the Rev. Luke Tyerman, in the preface of his book on 'The Oxford Methodists', and we commend them to all our readers. He says, 'The Oxford revival of religion was pregnant with the most momentous issues. And so are most revivals. How often in the history of Methodism, though on a smaller scale, have its revivals of the work of God resulted in consequences bearing some analogy to those of the Oxford movement of a hundred and forty years ago? Who will not pray that such "Divine visitations" may be continued and multiplied, not only in Methodism, but in all the Churches of the Great Redeemer.?' (14.) (Emphasis in the original.)

### **Manning River, 1879**

In April of that year, the Rev. W. G. Taylor came down from Toowoomba to this circuit. Within a few months there were signs of revival.

"Within three months of our arrival in the circuit everything pointed to the speedy coming of a time of spiritual quickening. Much prayer was made to God by the faithful few, and soon we welcomed the droppings of a shower. Arrangements were carefully matured for 'a protracted meeting,' and for nearly a fortnight meetings for prayer and others for preaching were held. My journal will give details of this, the most remarkable work of God that had ever been witnessed in that river district:

*'Sunday, May 25. 1879. - After making prudential preparations we this day commence a series of special services. Our hope is in the God of Israel. For want of room in the church I preached at night in the Protestant Hall, the largest building in the district. The place was crowded, and there were two decisions. The spirit of expectancy is abroad..... Monday. - Church full. Text Luke ix. 61. Nine persons came forward as seekers. Tuesday. -*

Mothers' Meeting at three. Hard conflict at night meeting. Church crowded. A glorious victory. Five persons went home rejoicing in the Saviour. *Wednesday*. - Children's service at three. At night preached on "Saving Faith." Seven persons professed faith in Christ as their Saviour. *Thursday*. - A glorious meeting! Never nearer heaven. Church crammed with people; and, better still, filled with the glory of God. Text, 2 Cor. vi. 2. Thirty-two persons rose asking for the prayers of the congregation. Nearly all found the blessing of forgiveness. The interest deepens as we advance. The entire town is moved. *Friday*. - Another victory. Preached from Rev. iii. 20. Seven souls slain and brought into the new life, amongst them an old man of seventy and an ex-local preacher. *Sunday*. - Three services. At night the most remarkable meeting ever held in the town; the large hall packed, and many standing outside. Six found peace. "

By the following Thursday, at the Fellowship Meeting, "Between thirty and forty new converts spoke, sweetly and pointedly. Gave an address of encouragement to the eighty or ninety who during these meetings had professed conversion, and then six others came forward literally yearning for liberty. The poor body suffers, but, oh, I am happy! Tell me, is there any luxury in this world equal to that of pointing sinners to Christ?"

"Thus commenced a genuine work that soon spread to other parts of the circuit, and ere long we were able to record the names of 180 persons who during this gracious visitation had yielded themselves to God. I was kept hard at work almost day and night. With no help from outside, my strength began to give out. My journal begins to tell of weariness and much pain, of difficulty in reaching home from distant appointments, etc.; but I simply had to keep going and at high pressure, the result being that the whole circuit was soon raised to a higher level, and membership more than doubled, finances lifted out of the bog, new congregations started, and three new churches erected. I confess that after all of these years I read with devout gratitude the record of advance lying before me, knowing as I do what the circuit was and what it became, *absolutely as the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.*" (15.)

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## NOTES

### Chapter One. Early Revivals in N.S. W. to 1858. Pages 1 to 23.

- I. Colwell. "Illustrated History of Methodism." pages 227 - 8. (quoted from Orton's Journal.)
2. Colwell. page 357.
- Watsford. "Glorious Gospel Triumphs." pages 20 - 21. 4. Watsford. pages 21 - 22.
5. Watsford. page 19.
6. Watsford. pages 25 - 28.
7. "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." 1860. page 138. also Udy. "Spark of Grace." page 127.
8. Udy. pages 129 -130. also Watsford. pages 25 - 28.
9. Watsford. page 28.
10. Clancy. "A Giant for Jesus." page 20.
- II. Colwell. page 280.
12. Clancy. page 21.
13. Orr. "Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas." page 25.
14. Colwell. page 251.
15. Colwell. page 246.
16. ibid.
17. Colwell. page 248.
18. Symons. "Life of Draper. " page 42.
19. Symons. pages 42 - 44.
20. Colwell. pages 250 - 251.
21. Barker and Hawkins. "Early Wesleyans of Pennant Hills." page 68.
22. Barker and Hawkins. page 69.
23. Turner. "Pioneer Missionary." page 276.
24. Barker and Hawkins. page 70.
25. Carruthers. "Lights." page 73.
26. Watsford. pages 121 - 123.
27. "Old Time Local Preachers" by Rev. M. Maddern, in "The Methodist." May 27,1911.
28. Watsford. "Wesley Vale, Jerriwa Creek.",  
in "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." July 21, 1858. page 20.
29. Watsford. "Revival in the Goulbum Circuit."  
in "Christian Advocate", August 21, 1858. pages 37-8.
30. Watsford. "Goulbum." in "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." September 21, 1858. pages 54-5.

### Chapter Two. 1859 Revival in N.S. W. Pages 24 to 37.

1. Orr. "The Event of the Century". chapters 2 to 5.
2. Orr. "The Fervent Prayer."
3. "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." July 21. 1858. page 20. Also November 22nd, 1858. page 81.
4. "Christian Advocate." July 21. 1858. page 25.
5. "Christian Advocate." Feb. 3. 1859. page 123.
- See also the reference to Rocky Point, December 8th, 1859. page 385.
6. "Christian Advocate." Sept. 21. 1858. page 54.

7. Watsford. "Glorious Gospel Triumphs." pages 123-4.
8. "Christian Advocate." Nov,22. 1858. page 80.
9. "Christian Advocate." Jan. 21. 1859. page 112.
10. "Christian Advocate." March 3. 1859. page 146.
11. "Christian Advocate." March 31. 1859. page 172.
12. "Christian Advocate." March 1. 1860. page 58.
13. "Christian Advocate." March 15. 1860. page 81. See also December 8th, 1859. page 377.
14. "Christian Advocate." August 2. 1860. page 190.
15. "Christian Advocate." October 25. 1860. page 260.
16. *ibid.*
17. *op cit.* page 261.
18. Robinson. "Free Presbyterian Church." pages 87 - 89.
19. Robinson. "Alexander McIntyre." pages 18 - 24.

### **Chapter Three. "California" Taylor in N.S. W. Pages 38 to 56.**

1. Taylor. "Story of My Life." pages 302 - 303.
2. "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." June 23rd, 1864. page 44.
3. "Christian Advocate." July 19th, 1864. pages 61 - 62.
4. *op cit.* page 62.
5. *ibid.*
6. "Christian Advocate." August 13th. 1864. page 75.
7. *ibid.*
8. *ibid.*
9. "Christian Advocate." September 8th, 1864. page 88.
10. *ibid.*
11. "Christian Advocate." October 4th. 1864. page 96.
12. "Christian Advocate." October 29th. 1864. page 109.
13. *op cit.* page 111.
14. *ibid.*
15. "Christian Advocate" November 24th. 1864. page 123.
16. Taylor. pages 305 - 306.
17. "Christian Advocate." December 20th. 1864. page 134.
18. "Christian Advocate." April 1st, 1865. page 3.
19. "Christian Advocate." June, 20th, 1865. pages 49 - 50.
20. *op cit.* page 50.
21. "Christian Advocate." July 15th 1865. page 67.
22. *ibid.*
23. *op cit.* page 66.
24. Watsford. "Glorious Gospel Triumphs." page 139.
25. *op cit.* page 140.
26. *op cit.* page 139.
27. Benson. "Methodist Crusades." page 7.

### **Chapter Four. Revivals in N.S. W. 1861 to 1876. Pages 57 to 92.**

1. "Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record." November 7. 1861. page 90.
2. *op cit.* page 91.

3. Carruthers. "Memories of an Australian Ministry." pages 30 - 33.
4. "Christian Advocate." August 13. 1864. page 75.
5. "Christian Advocate." August 26. 1864. page 82.
6. "Christian Advocate." October 29. 1864. page 109.
7. "Christian Advocate." December 20. 1864. page 132.
8. "Christian Advocate." September 5th, 1865. page 89.
9. "The Methodist." July 8, 1905. page 2.
10. "The Methodist." July 15, 1905. pages 2 - 3.
11. "Christian Advocate." February 15th, 1866. page 154.
12. "Christian Advocate." February 18th, 1868. page 147.
13. "Christian Advocate." September 5th, 1868. page 83.
14. "Christian Advocate." May 1st, 1869. page 193.
15. "Christian Advocate." July 31st, 1869. page 222.
16. op cit. page 227.
17. "Christian Advocate." Sept. 1st. 1869. pages 241 - 242.
18. op cit. page 242.
19. "Christian Advocate." Oct.. 1st. 1869. pages 252 - 253.
20. op cit. page 242.
21. "Christian Advocate." November 2nd, 1869. page 262.
22. "Christian Advocate" Sept. 1st, 1871. pages 538 - 539.
23. "Christian Advocate." October 3rd, 1871. page 562.
24. "Christian Advocate." December 1st, 1871. page 593.
25. "Christian Advocate." August 31st, 1872. page 745
26. "Christian Advocate." October 1st, 1872. page 754. (This issue is also wrongly labelled as the September 1st issue at one point, and there is a second page numbered 745.)
27. "Christian Advocate." Dec. 3rd, 1872. pages 790 - 791.
28. "Christian Advocate." March 1st, 1873. page 842.
29. "Christian Advocate." July 1st, 1873. page 65.
30. "Christian Advocate." October 1st, 1873. page 113.
31. op cit. July 1st. 1873. page 61.
32. "Christian Advocate." September 1st, 1873. page 97.
33. "Christian Advocate." December 2nd, 1873. page 144.
34. "Christian Advocate." August 1st, 1873. pages 77 - 78.
35. "Christian Advocate." Oct. 31st, 1873. pages 115 - 116.
36. op cit. December 2nd, 1873. page 142.
37. "Christian Advocate." July 1st, 1874. page 65.
38. "Christian Advocate." July 2nd, 1876. page 64.
39. "Christian Advocate." October 3rd, 1876. page 112. 40. *ibid.*

#### **Chapter Five. New South Wales, 1877 to 1879. Pages 93 to 112,**

1. "The Weekly Advocate." July 21st, 1877. page 129.
2. "Advocate." September 15th, 1877. page 194.
3. op cit. page 191.
4. "Advocate." October 20th, 1877. page 232.
5. Carruthers. J. E., "Memories of an Australian Ministry." London. Epworth Press. 1922. Chapter 12.
6. "Advocate." August. 21st, 1877. page 151.

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8. "Advocate." June 8th, 1878. page 78.
9. "Advocate." June 29th, 1878. page 106.
10. "Advocate." August 31st, 1878. page 179.
11. "Advocate." Sept. 21 st, 1878. page 203, and Sept. 28th, page 210.
12. "Advocate." March 22nd, 1879. page 406.
13. "Advocate." July 5th, 1879. page III.
14. "Advocate." May 17th. 1879. pages 49 - 50.
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