

## **Adam Turnbull M.D.**

We come now to the Rev. Dr. ADAM TURNBULL, M.D. In 1824 the "City of Edinburgh" sailed to Van Diemen's Land with Mrs. Susanna Bayne Turnbull, widow, and her five sons on board. The eldest was Dr. Adam aged 21, newly married to Margaret Young, daughter of the Post Master General of Scotland. This couple were destined to be involved with the Macquarie River settlers and Kirklands all their lives. The other sons were Francis Moira, John Alexander and Robert. Members of the Young family and mutual friends the Murrays travelled with them. Mrs. Susanna Turnbull had been widowed in 1821, her husband Adam having served in the American War of Independence as a "Regimental (Surgeon's) Mate", then as Apothecary to the Forces under Lord Moira, who served under the Duke of York in the Low Countries.

They all settled in this district, Dr. Adam and Mrs. Turnbull on "Winton" which he named after the estate of a relation, Sir James Sandilands, whose bequest had provided the capital which entitled him to a grant. He remained from 1824-1828 practicing medicine, and there was held the "First meeting at the residence of Dr. Turnbull on Monday, 2nd January, 1826, to consider the propriety of establishing a church in this settlement". This meeting set up a continuing committee who were to work towards establishing a Place of Worship upon the River, after the form and service of the Church of Scotland, begin collecting contributions towards the purchase of land, also towards a minister's stipend, and to do this by assessing each property owner at the rate of one good ewe (value 207-) for every 100 acres of property.

Two sons were born to the Turnbells at Winton, Adam 1826 and George 1828, and both baptised by the Rev. Arch. McArthur "the first ordained Presbyterian Minister in Australia". The family moved to Hobart Town and from the baptismal records we find they lived in Campbell Street where Christina in 1829 and William 1831 were born, but by 1834 when Susanna was born the address was Macquarie Street and father is no longer recorded as surgeon but as Private Secretary [to the Governor]. Though living in Hobart Town and attending St. Andrew's Church, his children were baptised by Rev. John Mackersey, minister of Kirklands, so obviously links were maintained with the Macquarie River district. Next came Margaret Elizabeth Young born 1836.

Dr. Adam's work for the Government continued until 1852 when, after a disagreement with Sir William Denison he lost his job and any hope of a pension.

Frances Moira (a daughter) was born 1837, a son, Alexander 1840, then Elizabeth Young, the last child,

1842.

Dr. Adam evidently did not wish to return to medical work and in 1854 he applied to be received into the Presbyterian ministry. He had been playing a prominent part as an elder in the church so there was no hesitation: he was ordained six weeks later and became the Rev. Dr. Adam Turnbull, and minister

of the vacant charge Kirklands-Campbell Town.

By now, son George had a Government position: his tombstone states he was Clerk-Assistant, House of Assembly. He died at the age of 29 years. Adam would be 28, George 26. Christina had died young. William would be 23, and probably by then farming at

"Winninburn", Coleraine, one of three Victorian station properties owned by "Adam Turnbull & Son": Susanna, \$fl, would become her parents "right hand". Margaret Elizabeth Young was 18, Frances Moira, 17, Alexander, 14, and Elizabeth Young, 12.

It is regarding this period in the history of Kirklands manse that one has to speculate a little. Campbell Town and Kirklands comprised one Charge. The only manse was at Kirklands, so I presume the Turnbull family came here; but the work in Campbell Town was responding, so Dr. Turnbull seemingly concentrated on that town, fostering the idea of building a church there. St. Andrew's, Campbell Town was dedicated in 1855, apparently finished in 1857. At some point Dr. Adam decided that he ought to be living in the town, and by 1862 he was signing marriage certificates with his address "The Manse", Campbell Town.

Heyer states that in 1862 Dr. Adam's salary was £200, and he received £50 for forage [his horse's feed. Equivalent to a travelling allowance?] and £60 house allowance. Presumably his congregation numbered 80 — country ministers qualified for a Government salary of £200 if the congregation was 80 or more. [In the city the count had to be 200 or more.] This was State Aid. Within the next ten years all such allowances had ceased. Probably Dr. Adam was renting Ivy Cottage but maybe the ivy was not so much in evidence as it is today! He actually bought it in 1871 for £325 and finished paying for it in 1874.

In 1859 the Rev. Dr. was sent by the Presbytery of V.D.L. to be an observer of the Union accomplished within the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and reported that he was very favourably impressed. A similar Union in Tasmania took another 43 years to accomplish, in 1896. In 1860 steps were taken to change from being called "The Church of Scotland in Tasmania" to "The Presbyterian Church of Tasmania".

The marriage ceremonies of Margaret Elizabeth Young who married Rev. James Henderson, 1862, Frances Moira who married Henry Shepherd Smith, 1865, and Elizabeth Young who married Charles Archer in 1870, all appear to have been conducted in the manse, Campbell Town, although St. Andrew's was only a short walk away.

Dr. Adam Turnbull no doubt had considerable business acumen — as Private Secretary he was often drafting official despatches for the Governor, and in the church he seems to have been regarded almost as a lawyer. We cannot know today just who planned [or for what reason] the up-date in ownership of the Kirklands property. On 3rd May, 1864 James Gibson, Robert Taylor and James Mercer signed a Deed Poll in which they set out how they would administer the 100 acre property on behalf of the Kirklands congregation, if and when, it was

granted to them. They became owners on 19th December, 1864, they and "their heirs and assigns for ever". The survey for this purpose was made 25th March, 1863, and the Supreme Court of Tasmania granted the land to these three local Trustees on the date mentioned, Queen Victoria only demanding "the Quit Rent of one peppercorn". These Trustees contracted to allow the church to be used for the celebration of divine worship according to the standards of the Church of Scotland, conducted by any ordained Presbyterian minister holding these standards; for the burial ground to be continued as they deemed appropriate; and for the 100 acres to be let so that an income would be forthcoming to maintain manse, church and other buildings. Also fences were to be maintained, and "The residue of the said rents, issues and profits (were to be) applied in and towards or in aid and augmentation of the salary or stipend of the minister." Rents and/or money values must have been greater in the early days because rarely this century was there enough money to do half these things, as minute books of more recent times show. Those who have cared for the manse have had a difficult and unenviable task.

This Deed Poll gives guidelines for the behaviour of Trustees which to the reader in 1986, are rather strange when one remembers that, as an Anglican belonged to the Church of England, so a Presbyterian belonged to the Church of Scotland, and we read, "the fact of any trustee under these presents becoming a member of the Presbytery of any Presbyterian Church in Tasmania shall be deemed to constitute incapacity to act in the trust hereof". The group or groups of lay people in Tasmania who seceded from the Church of Scotland in sympathy with the Disruption of 1843 and formed the Free Church Presbytery here (1851), were obviously frowned upon by the people of Macquarie River. No doubt to guard against any possible infiltration from such separatists these words were added. The Free Church congregations, which had to import ministers because none here were of that persuasion, eventually came back into the fold in the Union of 1896.

In 1868 an Act would be passed prohibiting further endowments in land for any religious purpose. It is conceivable that here, in 1863/4 Dr. Adam knew of this being in the "pipe-line". Further-more with the difficulties in Mr. Mackersey's time over ownership and the Rev. Arch. McArthur, whose name had been linked with the original purchase, having left Tasmania, it was definitely time to act regarding ownership of this land, and to comply with the Church Act of 1837.

St. Andrew's Church, Campbell Town has many references to the Turnbull family in it. Dr. Adam as its first minister has a memorial plaque set prominently and his daughter Susanna has the only stained glass window in her memory,

"This woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did." In memory of Susanna Turnbull, this window is erected by her friends. She is remembered as Sunday School teacher for 50 years and organist for an equal number of years. In recognition of these long years of service she received a gold and diamond ring.

The famous organ Dr. Adam bought from his friend the Anglican Bishop of

Tasmania, Bishop Nixon, when that gentleman retired and left for Europe. It is a J. C. Bishop production and quite unique, though in need of repair today.

Even the bell up in the tower, when it was cast in London, had this wording put into the mould [the letters stand in bold relief on its surface]

Erected in

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Campbell Town Tasmania

A.D. 1861.

Rev. Dr. Turnbull Minister.

Cast by John Warner & Sons.

London, Patent.

Dr. Adam was active in Presbytery meetings, and Heyer records some of his work, in particular at the time of the doctrinal differences in the 1860s, where he is noted for being a peace-maker.

In 1935 a church hall was erected and named the Adam Turnbull Hall. In the committee room/vestry hang two portraits, Rev. Dr. Adam and Mrs. Turnbull. The likenesses were made when they were quite elderly, perhaps even for their sixty-fifth wedding anniversary. This event was celebrated on 12th October, 1889. They are both shown as grim old people, but he was very respected and loved. His ministry of 21 years had a lasting effect on the district. A descendant, Mrs. Hope Gibson, has an exquisite statuette of John Knox which had belonged to Dr. Adam. The preaching-gown John Knox is wearing was copied exactly, and the Rev. Dr. was presented with the replica on some special occasion. Mrs. Gibson also has his wooden medical case with its many drawers and bottles or containers with their dried up medicines and chemicals.

Another Turnbull relic of those early days is a boot box. When it arrived from "home" it contained boots of all sizes: each member of the family was outfitted and the box passed on to the next family. This one came via the Victorian branches of the family.

The Kirklands-Campbell Town charge was proving too large and it had been proposed in 1869 to divide it; instead in 1871 another assistant, the Rev. Alex. Michie, was called to fill the gap left by the Rev. H. B. Giles — then in 1874 Dr. Adam Turnbull resigned owing to ill health.

Dr. Adam died at the age of 88 in June 1891, and his wife three months later, both at Ivy Cottage which continued to be occupied by Turnbulls until 1948. Both these pioneers are buried in Meadowbank Cemetery, Campbell Town, along with other Turnbulls.

A grand-daughter Amelia Turnbull, married the Rev. William Mabin who came to Campbell Town in 1890 as a missionary student and remained as minister till 1896.

A postscript to the Mackersey and Turnbull stories from the 1865 diary of

James Hugh Mercer, who was by then living in Victoria at the invitation of family friends, the MacGills, "till he found a situation":—

Friday, 8th September James Mercer had been invited to Mackersey's at Kenilworth, so he brushed his best suit, packed it, caught his horse and set off, resting the horse at Cavendish. On arrival he changed and went to the dancing-room where the ladies were already assembled. Dancing was from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. with supper served at 12 o'clock — ladies first sitting, gentlemen the second. "The affair went off in first rate style and reflects great credit to both Mr. and Mrs. Mackersey." Sunday 31st December. "At 10 o'clock I got my horse and left Balmoral arriving in good time for church. Today our new church was opened and my Tasmanian Minister the Rev. Dr. Turnbull officiated, Mrs. Turnbull was there also. I was very happy to see them both looking so well. Mr. and Mrs. Alex Turnbull were there for the first time since they got spliced."

The Victorian stations in the name of "Adam Turnbull and Son" were Dundas, Mount Koroite and Winninburn.