

*Oxford Terrace Baptist
Church*

*Diamond
Jubilee
Souvenir*

1871- 1931





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OXFORD TERRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, 1931.

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Mr. A. MANDER	-	-	-	Deacon (1880-1882), (1887-1930), Life Deacon (1930)
Mr. R. NETTLETON	-	-	-	Deacon (1914), Life Deacon (1930)
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Rev. A. W. STUART, B.A.	-	-	-	Deacon (1930)

OXFORD TERRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

DIAMOND JUBILEE, 1ST TO 8TH NOV. 1931

Programme of Meetings

Sunday, 1st November:

Sunday School Anniversary.

- 7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting. Leader: Mr. H. Hopkirk.
11 a.m. Preacher: Rev. L. A. North. Anniversary Music. Conductor: Mr. K. G. Archer.
3 p.m. Preacher: Rev. N. R. Wood (Minister of Linwood Baptist Church). Anniversary Music. Distribution of Prizes.
6.30 p.m. Preacher: Rev. L. A. North. Anniversary Music. Offerings at the three services in aid of S.S. Funds.

Monday, 2nd November:

- 7.30 p.m. Children's Anniversary Concert, in School Hall. Offering in aid of S.S. Funds.

Tuesday, 3rd November:

- 7.30 p.m. Reminiscent Social Evening, in S.S. Hall. Chairman: Rev. L. A. North. Musical Items. Greetings from His Worship the Mayor, Representatives of Christchurch Ministers' Assn. and Canterbury Auxiliary of the Baptist Union. Speakers: Rev. Chas. Dallaston, Mr. A. F. Carey, and Mr. E. J. D. Hercus, M.A. Supper.

Wednesday, 4th November:

- 7.30 p.m. Jubilee Commemorative Service, in the Church. Rev. L. A. North will conduct the service. Speaker: Rev. J. J. North, D.D., Principal of the N.Z. Baptist College. Choir will attend. Other Baptist Churches invited to co-operate.

Thursday, 5th November:

- 8 p.m. Musical Festival, in the Church, under the direction of Mr. V. C. Peters, A.R.C.M., L.R.A.M. Organist: Mr. W. Melville Lawry. Tickets 2/- each. Proceeds in aid of Organ Fund.

Saturday, 7th November:

- 6.30 p.m. Bible Class Banquet. Chairman: Mr. A. R. Jordan.

Sunday, 8th November:

- 7.30 a.m. Prayer Meeting. Leader: Mr. E. J. D. Hercus, M.A.
11 a.m. Preacher: Rev. Chas. Dallaston, of Dunedin. Special Music by Choir. Service to be broadcast.
3 p.m. Men's Service. Speaker: Rev. J. J. North, D.D., Principal of the N.Z. Baptist College. Subject: "Men of To-morrow."
6.30 p.m. Preacher: Rev. J. J. North, D.D. Special Music by the Choir. Service to be broadcast. Communion Service, to be presided over by the Rev. L. A. North, to follow.

Thank Offerings at these Services.



REV. CHAS. DALLASTON, 1877-1891.



REV. JOSEPH J. DOKE, 1894-1901.



REV. RANDOLPH S. GRAY, 1902-1912.



REV. L. A. NORTH, 1930.



REV. J. J. NORTH, D.D., 1913-1926.



REV. J. ROBERTSON, M.A., 1926-30.



BAPTIST CHURCH, HEREFORD STREET, 1871.

PILGRIMS

A Sketch of the History of Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, Christchurch, New Zealand.

By E. J. D. HERCUS, M.A.

THE existence of Canterbury as a settlement dates from the closing days of the first half of the nineteenth century, when the "first four ships" furled their sails and cast anchor in Lyttelton harbour. The project of the founders had been to convey to these plains a body of men and women who should be representative of all classes and levels of English society—a cross-section of the stratified life of the Motherland. On the ecclesiastical side the comprehensiveness of their scheme was seriously impaired through its ignoring the existence of Christian faith and organisation outside the Church of England. "We intend," said the first document published by the Canterbury Association, "to form a settlement to be composed entirely of members of our own Church." The support accorded to their proposals came in the main only from the Tractarian party within their Church. To the Evangelicals New Zealand was still a mission-field: they shared with the Methodists the glory of having planted the Gospel among the cannibal warriors of the North Island, and experience there had taught them to regard

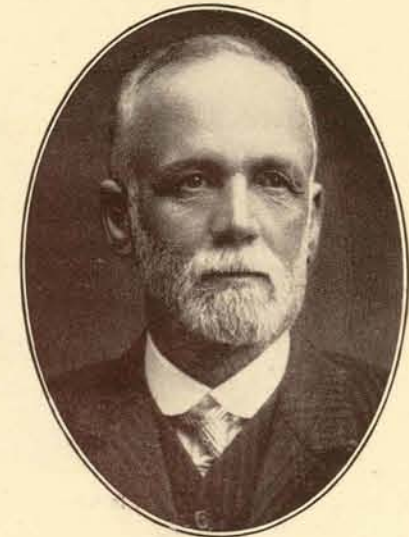
with anxiety the intrusion of their fellow-whites.

At first sight there would seem to be little prospect of successfully building up a Baptist Church and congregation in a community so selected and controlled. But in actual practice, "the Association scheme allowed for emigrants and land purchasers of all denominations, the only condition being the willingness to pay £1 an acre to the ecclesiastical and educational endowment fund. The Magna Carta myth is no greater than the myth which declares that Canterbury was exclusively a Church of England settlement." These words (from a recent able article by the Rev. Gordon M. McKenzie, B.A., in the "Press" of October 10th) recall the prospectus of Artemus Ward's show: no one could go in without paying, but all were free to pay without going in! For confirmation of Mr. McKenzie's conclusion we have but to cite the instance of the senior life-deacon still happily spared to the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church: slightly more than eighty years ago Mr. J. A. Pannett arrived in Canterbury with his Baptist father, only nine months after the first Pilgrims to Canterbury.

While the first four ships were still on their way out, the "Castle Eden" and "Isabella Hercus" set forth with further batches of colonists. "In nine months from the beginning of the emigration of the settlers 16 ships were dispatched by the Canterbury Association, carrying in round numbers 2,500 people. In September, 1851, the "Lyttelton Times" estimated the population at about 3,000." That month saw again in New Zealand waters the ship "Lady Nugent," on which John Richard Godley had arrived eighteen months previously to prepare the way for the settlement. Among her passengers was Mr. T. A. Pannett, a member of the Baptist Church at Lewes, with his infant son. The first winter had been a testing time for the immigrants: the 4lb. loaf cost 1s. 8d., and flour was £40 a ton wholesale. Mr. Pannett passed over the Port Hills to the plains, covered with flax and tutu and raupo (there were then twenty houses in Christchurch) and settled on the Newbigger farm in the earlier founded district of Riccarton.

In Christchurch, as in early Christian Rome, the first Baptist Church was the "church in the house." As a boy of nine or ten, Mr. J. A. Pannett would walk with his father four or four and a half miles to attend service in the house of Mr. Allchin, a building of either sods or cob, which stood near what is now Fitzgerald Avenue: here there gathered Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lewis, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Hebden, the two brothers Ford, Mr. and Mrs. Tunmer. The last-named lived at the corner of Manchester Street and Bealey Avenue, and worship was conducted for a time alternately in their house and Mr. Allchin's. An Oddfellows' Hall in Lichfield Street was resorted to later, also a building—possibly erected by those interested themselves—in St. Asaph Street (October, 1867).

The same year (1851) which witnessed the arrival of Mr. Pannett had already seen the first Baptist minister established in New Zealand. Nelson (like Auckland and Wellington) dates its history from 1840, and Baptist lay-preachers held services in the district as early as 1842. On May 3rd, 1851, thirteen people gathered in Nelson to consider the erection of a church: a ship appeared in the offing, and the meeting was adjourned; when the little flock met again that evening a



MR. J. A. PANNETT.

pastor stood in their midst—the Rev. Decimus Dolamore. Eleven years later Mr. Dolamore was invited to Christchurch, and services were begun in the Town Hall. Until then neither Canterbury nor Otago contained a Baptist church building: now Rangiora erected one, and the Lichfield Street building speedily followed. It stood in the middle of a "paddock," somewhere about the present site of Messrs. Ross & Glendinning's warehouse: the Square ("Ridley" Square,—matched with those of Cranmer and Latimer) was itself a paddock in those days, affording pasture to idle bullock-teams. Unfortunately Mr. Dolamore found the Christchurch Baptists all too like the early Corinthian believers: differences of religious views prevented cordial co-operation, and a case of immorality on which the church declined to take action led to his resignation. Another man became pastor, headed a division in the membership, and withdrew to build a church in Hereford Street, on ground now occupied by the Y.M.C.A. On his eventual dismissal from the pastorate the sundered fractions agreed to reunite, sold to the fire-brigade (for £50 cash over mortgage!) the Lichfield Street meeting-house, and worshipped together in the more commodious Hereford Street building. That union of "Strict and Particular" with "General" Baptists (how many could to-day distinguish the terms?) took place at the



Old Church in course of removal from Hereford Street to Oxford Terrace.

beginning of 1871—hence the present “Diamond Jubilee,” which ought in strictness to have been celebrated on February 17th.

But union without purity is not strength; a second pastorate of several years ended in exposure and shame, worth recalling at this distance of time only to give point to the ancient warning: “Whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.” It was a weakened and sorely-tried congregation that in 1876 addressed itself to the Chrysostom of the English Baptist ministry in search of a pastor. “The members of the Church at present”—they wrote—“number about 120. The Church permits members of other Christian bodies to partake of the Communion with them. The Church has been built about eight years; has been recently thoroughly renovated; will accommodate about 400 persons; is entirely free from debt . . . The City of Christchurch with suburbs contains a population of 14,000 or 15,000 persons, and is rapidly increasing. The Church would prefer a gentleman somewhat advanced in years (but would wish to leave it to your judgment) . . .”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was then at the height of his powers: he was not yet embroiled in the conflict and misunderstandings of the Downgrade Controversy; his school of prophets was multiplying his influence. Penge Tabernacle, for instance, had enjoyed the ministrations of one outgoing student, by name Charles Dallaston, and wrote Mr. Spurgeon to

that effect: their letter and the Christchurch letter seemed to answer each other. The student was called into the study, and asked if he would accept the vacant pastorate. On prayerful consideration he did so, proceeded to Ipswich to be married, and before the end of October boarded the good ship Waipa at Plymouth with his bride.

“The Church would prefer a gentleman somewhat advanced in years,” so the cautious Deacons had written. Mr. Spurgeon had made skittles of that proposal. “Single if possible” continued their specifications. Mr. Dallaston had a plan worth two of that. So in January, 1877, good Mr. Simmons, who had chaired the church union meeting six years before, and been first to sign the letter of invitation, proceeded with his wife to Lyttelton to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Dallaston. That night in Hereford Street chapel a prayer meeting was held, presided over by Mr. Cornelius Chidgey. Those present were Messrs. Simmons, Purdie, Clark, Foweraker, Cooper, Martin, Lawrence, and Hewit, with their wives, Mr. Oxford, Mr. Mander and Miss Chidgey. The prayers offered were earnest, the spirit of thankfulness convincing. Soon the strangers felt at home, seeing around them a company of true yoke-fellows for the work of God’s Kingdom. “We preach Christ crucified” was next Sunday’s text, and so began what was destined to prove a vital and fruitful ministry. Of the Pastors’ College students as a whole it might be said that, like



MR. S. R. INGOLD,
Late Secretary.

their teacher, they “used great plainness of speech”: add to this in Mr. Dallaston’s case a voice of bell-like charm, a happy command of apt quotations, a great respect for the clock, and a contagious energy, and the human factors in his success are in part revealed.

True, his nearest ministerial colleague was the Revd. J. Upton Davis, in Dunedin, and as yet there was no through train-service. But all around there were signs of interest and development, a spirit of “followership” without which the best leadership is in vain. Within six weeks of his arrival Mr. Dallaston presided over the opening service of the Baptist Church at Lincoln, where that grand old man Mr. Thos. Pannett had laboured with others. In May, 1876, appeared the first number of the “Canterbury Evangelist,” a quarterly magazine, which a year later altered its name to “Canterbury Baptist,” precursor of the “N.Z. Baptist.”

The Preachers’ Plan of 1877 embraced Christchurch, Lincoln Road, Lincoln, Greendale, Dunsandel, West Melton, Yorktown, Oxford, Oxford West, South Malvern, Sheffield: its preachers were J. S. Clarke, J. W. Sawle, J. Hill, G. Johnston, H. Williams, G. Holland, R. Pole, A. Wright, C. Eunson, A. C. Truscott, T. W. Adams, J. Simpson, J. Efford, J. Allen, W. Waters, R. Binstead (who published the magazine) and the Rev. C. Dallaston (who soon took over the editorship).



MR. A. CHIDGEY,
Late Treasurer.

From the outset Mr. Dallaston’s ministry was blessed. At the first church meeting over which he presided sixteen new members were admitted. A mid-winter lantern lecture on “Mr. Spurgeon and His Work” crowded the chapel to the doors. In twelve months’ time the anniversary tea was held in Old St. Paul’s Church, which on various occasions was kindly placed at the disposal of the Baptist congregation. Once Mr. Dallaston had to preach in St. Paul’s itself to the combined congregations, the other minister falling suddenly ill, and found himself somewhat embarrassed, for the text on which he had prepared his discourse was Exodus xi., 7: “The Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel”—which under the circumstances lent itself to unauthorised applications!

Early in 1878 plans were discussed for purchasing more land and enlarging the Hereford Street Church, but they were rejected when it was found that £800 would seat only 87 more persons. On May 22nd, 1878, the Pastor reported having seen Mrs. Moore, the owner of half an acre near the Madras Street bridge, for sale for £1,325. The purchase was authorised: thirty-seven trees were felled, and much grubbing and filling in was done. Within twelve months the chapel was removed to the new site, spending a week-end in the Square en route, to the amusement of passers-by. Hardly had it been re-erected when an

outbreak of fire destroyed the vestries and young men's class-room (July 18th, 1879). Four new rooms were thereupon built on the ground floor.

Church buildings are at best but the scaffolding of the true temple of God. Amid all his labours the pastor found means of opening a new preaching-centre for the southern part of the town, beginning in the spring a series of services in the Oddfellows' Hall, Montreal Street. Within six months the group of members attending these services hived off to form the Sydenham Church (represented to-day by the congregation that worship in Colombo Street South): to it there were transferred in all some twenty-seven members of the City Church. About the middle of 1880 services were begun in a hall in Woolston, with fifty persons present. A year later the Hereford Street Church resolved to build upon the site in Oxford Terrace, a tender was accepted, and a loan of £3,000 raised, bearing interest at 7 per cent. The next stage is best described by a contemporary writer: "On Friday, the 14th of October, 1881, at half-past four, our pastor, the Rev. Chas. Dallaston, laid the foundation stone of the Oxford Terrace new Baptist Church. Upon the platform were numerous ministers and friends of not only the Baptist but other denominations, who by their presence and assistance in parts of the ceremony testified their cordial sympathy with us in the work. The usual documents and papers bearing a record of the occasion and names of the various officers concerned were deposited under the stone. A silver trowel was presented to the Rev. C. Dallaston, having upon it an inscription referring to the circumstance and date of presentation. Three memorial stones were then laid: one by Mrs. Smallwood, on behalf of the members of the Church, one by Mr. Chidgey (Sen.), the Superintendent of the Sabbath School, and one by Mr. Chivers as representative of the congregation. In response to an appeal for immediate or future help a considerable sum of money was collected and laid upon the foundation stone, in addition to many promises of amounts payable during the succeeding twelve months. An adjournment to the old church adjoining then took place, where tea was provided, to which about 300 sat

down." A public meeting followed. The account concludes with grateful reference to the sympathy and help received from members of all denominations.

While the walls of the church were being erected an earthquake took place that removed the top of the Cathedral spire, but left the Baptist Church unharmed. A truly prophetic text inspired the opening sermon of July 9, 1882: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord."

When opened for public worship the building was the largest Baptist church in New Zealand. It seats 650 persons, and on special occasions has accommodated 1,000; its acoustics and heating have in time past presented problems, but they are happily surmounted. For a long time the financial burden of the large interest payable on the building weighed heavily upon the Church. Old records abound in references to bazaars and special efforts. Mr. Dallaston made a tour of Australia in search of financial aid, contracting on the way an illness that led to a furlough in England. Subsequent ministers also felt the pressure of the burden, which was increased when in 1903 the old chapel—then used for the Sunday School—was completely destroyed by fire. Happily the Jubilee witnessed the total extinction of all debt both on the Oxford Terrace premises and on the daughter-church at St. Albans.

In July, 1891, the Church learnt with regret that Mr. Dallaston was about to leave them, having accepted a call to the smaller congregation of Wellington. "You have had my best," he wrote, "both in the pulpit and in pastoral work. A much stronger man is needed." At an earlier stage Churches in Geelong, Dunedin, and Launceston had made overtures to him in vain. Well might the Church he had fostered place on record its "high appreciation of the singleness of purpose evinced by Mr. Dallaston," . . . "a friend tried and proved through many years." In fourteen years and eight months he had seen the membership rise from 98 to 352, a large proportion of whom he had himself won and sealed for Christ.

Early in Mr. Dallaston's ministry he welcomed to the membership of the Church Mr. T. Wagstaff from Sunder-



MINISTER AND OFFICERS OF THE OXFORD TERRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, 1931.

Front Row: Messrs. H. W. Fife, A. R. Jordan, H. A. C. North (Treasurer), H. Burgess (Secretary), Rev. L. A. North (Minister), Messrs. A. Chidgey (Life Deacon), R. Nettleton (Life Deacon), A. Mander (Life Deacon), Rev. A. W. Stuart, B.A.
 Middle Row: Messrs. H. Odell, G. A. Fraser, G. Reddell, C. C. Holland (Minute Secretary), A. W. Nicol, E. J. D. Hercus, M.A., J. Rodger, T. E. Dench, L. B. Thompson,
 Back Row: Messrs. W. Weckesser, J. H. Wilton, W. Adie, T. W. Voller.
 Absent: Hon. Mr. Justice A. S. Adams (Life Deacon), Mr. A. F. Carey (Life Deacon), Mr. J. A. Pannett (Life Deacon), and Mr. G. Wilfred Drayton.

land, and Mr. Ingold from New Barnett, Herts., England. In 1883 the latter was made deacon, and then secretary in succession to Mr. Price, thus beginning a long and intimate connection of loving service which ended only with his life. Mr. Ingold's father was an original member of the first Y.M.C.A. founded by George Williams, and like the old drapers of that generation our Mr. Ingold may be said to have "lived in" for over forty years. He travelled hardly ever, spent forty-two years in Christchurch and never saw the North Island, but within its self-chosen grooves his soul dwelt deep. He knew everyone, welcomed everyone, was sedulous in kindness, a constant encourager. When they reached their silver wedding he and Mrs. Ingold gave to the Church a sum of money to purchase the site of the present St. Albans building. Once, about 1890, he moved some distance out of town, and thought he must give up his duties as secretary. His fellow-members gave him an illuminated address, but found no

right successor for him, so in the end he "carried on." Towards the last, his powers failing, he stood one day amongst some fellow-officers who were counting a collection and said, half humorously, half wistfully: "I can't help you now." They knew better, for he had reached the stage where his very presence sufficed. "Learn by doing, teach by being"; he teaches still.

As if to emphasise by contrast the wise leadership the Church had enjoyed under Mr. Dallaston came next to its ministry Pastor William Birch. He was a man of good presence and long service in England, mostly, we gather, in work of the mission-hall type. Coming at a fairly advanced age to Auckland he had there revealed an infirmity of temper which threatened the Church with disruption. After little more than a year in Christchurch he repeated the same melancholy performance, and involved all concerned in many and painful vexations. Thereupon the office-bearers wrote to the Rev. Thomas Spurgeon, seeking his good



MR. H. BURGESS,
Church Secretary.



MR. H. A. C. NORTH,
Church Treasurer.

offices in the selection of a fresh pastor. "I think I may point to the fact of Mr. Dallaston's nearly sixteen years' pastorate," wrote Mr. Ingold, "as an evidence that we are not a difficult people to work with. Many of us are poor concerning this world's goods, and we have none rich." Not many months, he thought, would elapse ere Mr. Birch departed for either England or America. This surmise came true in the end: Mr. Birch received an American D.D. degree, went to California, and some years later died in Jersey. The Tuam Street Central Mission did not continue long.

Mr. Spurgeon's enquiries in England resulted in the Oxford Terrace Church receiving as pastor a man of great grace and marked distinction. Were he living to-day he would be but seventy years of age, but his course was finished a year before the Great War. Two years ago there issued from the Christian Literature Depot, Johannesburg, a record of his life, penned by William E. Cursons, F.I.C.S. It is called "Joseph Doke, the Missionary-hearted." To read it is to recall the saying of a French poet that, fair as it is in its waving pride, the grass of the field never comes to its fulness of charm till the sickle has reaped it and the mellowing months have drawn out the fragrance that will not pass. When he received the call the Rev. J. J. Doke was minister of City Road Chapel, Bristol.

He arrived in Christchurch in October, 1894, and for seven years gave himself without stint to the ministry of the Church. Mr. Doke was "a very perfect gentle Knight" of Christ. His father was a Baptist minister in England, his only brother a colleague of Grenfell on the Congo, where (like the brother of the Rev. Knowles Kempton) he early laid down his life on the B.M.S. field. Mrs. Doke was born in South Africa, a descendant of William Carey. Their eldest son William was delicate when young, and when the father first came to Christchurch he said he came "led by the hand of a little child." Refined, artistic, quiet, widely travelled, observant, studious, Joseph Doke lived a many-sided life; orator, preacher, author, social reformer, he touched nothing that he did not adorn. Yet the open secret of his life was not his gifts, but his surrender of them. He was an un-selfed mystic, re-selfed in Christ. At the age of fifty-two he used the proceeds of a novel he had written on South African life to venture on a great missionary trek into North-western Rhodesia. All his life he had been a frail man, but dauntless. Death cut him off on his way back to the South, but it was death of that high order that glorifies God. Still in South Africa he is known as a "voor-trekker" (pathfinder) of the Kingdom of God, and his devoted widow, the daughter, Olive Carey Doke, the



MR. W. MELVILLE LAWRY,
Organist.



MR. V. C. PETERS, A.R.C.M., L.R.A.M.,
Choirmaster.

sons, the Rev. Wm. Doke, editor of the "South African Baptist," and Dr. Clement Martyn Doke, translator of the Lamba New Testament, and Lecturer in Bantu languages at the University of the Witwatersrand,—all in their like-minded careers attest their conviction that the only life for man is the life that walks with God.

A few days after Mr. Doke's arrival the annual Conference of 1894 met in Christchurch, affording him an opportunity of meeting his fellow-ministers. The following year the Sydenham Church had difficulties over a mortgage, and agreed to a proposal of the Union which called in the pastor and officers of the parent Church to manage its affairs for two years. It fell to Mr. Doke to open a new preaching station of the Spreydon Church at Hornby.

On May 28th there passed away in India one who had for more than twenty years been a faithful member of the Church—Miss Hopedill Pillow, sister of Mrs. Toneycliffe. Energetic, resolute and patient, she had said of herself when she applied to the Missionary Society, "I have a hopeful spirit, and am not easily daunted by difficulties." In September, 1889, she went out alone to India. "If a Church of 350 members spares one of their number to go to India," she said, "there are still 349 missionaries left for those around them."

Her furlough was due in 1894, but she was well, and other workers had left. She begged to stay another year. She had a considerable burden of responsibility in supervising native workers, and in the end her strength simply ebbed away. The tidings of her death deeply moved her old friends, and called up in the minister's soul poignant memories of his lost brother. A memorable sermon was preached, the text "She hath done what she could." "Some poor, miserable soul like Judas Iscariot, reckoning only the commercial value of the gift, may say of this woman also, 'To what purpose is this waste?' . . . Yes, if placed on the market that is all it would have been worth. Just over three hundred pence! But broken over Jesus it represented love that is beyond all price . . . worth the 'Well done' of Christ that the full coffers of an Empire could not buy. 'To what purpose is this waste?' My friend, you know nothing of the blessing of self-sacrifice under the constraint of consuming love, if you ask that question. Better six years of noble service on the plane of Calvary, in the light of eternity, than six times six of comfortable mediocrity at home, that knows no heroism, and will deserve no crown! 'To what purpose is this waste?' Speak that treason, if you can, to the Saviour Himself; say it before the blood-stained Cross; repeat it in view of the

vision of the world's needs that greets you on the slope of Calvary; or in the hearing of the Great Commission—and then listen, as the reply comes back from the lips of Christ, flinging a glory about the woman's gift, and investing your miserable indifference with a garment of shame. 'She hath done what she could. Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.'

"The name of Olney was made dear to us as a Church by his father's devotion to the work of the Lord: Mr. William has made it dearer still." So wrote C. H. Spurgeon in 1890 when his senior deacon was suddenly called from earth. No fitter words could express the feelings of the Oxford Terrace Church when William Olney's son Herbert was taken from them. In 1882 he came out to Christchurch and set up in business, joining the Church with his wife. In 1884 he was made treasurer, and from then until his early death he was constant in varied service, as trustee, deacon, superintendent. "He was," wrote his pastor, "a man in whom was no guile, as impetuous as a summer storm. His the hand that with eager loyalty and indignant strength would have wielded the sword to some purpose in the Garden of Gethsemane, and his the heart that would have broken with distress at one silent reproachful look from Jesus." Even as he lay dying in Springfield the Church, which for a month had been worshipping in the schoolroom, was meeting once more in its wonted surroundings, decorated through his liberality. The visits of his father, and his brother, their words of testimony and encouragement, the generous efforts and gifts of others of his family to enable the church debt to be reduced, should be had in remembrance. We learned with regret recently of the death of his daughter, Miss Ivy Olney, in distant Ceylon.

Considerable interest in the local Chinese marked the period of Mr. Doke's ministry. No fewer than four of the teachers in the Chinese class subsequently sought training for foreign work. Another member, Mr. Wm. Lamb, took up preaching work for six months in Rangiora. Just prior to that Mr. Doke

had officiated at the marriage of his friend, F. W. Boreham. What the popular writer saw in his friend may be judged by the considered tribute he penned to his memory in 1913: "An artist of some distinction, a scholar in the best sense, a novelist of subtle touch and weird imagination, an orator who could rouse his audience to passion or melt it to tears, a preacher of fervent persuasiveness and terrible intensity, a reformer of startling force and dauntless courage, a gentleman to the very fingertips, and withal a soul of exquisite sweetness, saintliness, and charm."

As an instance of Mr. Doke's force and courage—the qualities that in South Africa made him the friend, protector and first biographer of Gandhi, the Indian lawyer—many will still recall how he acted when one Sunday the police swooped down upon 32 Chinese of the city and lodged them in gaol on charges of playing fantan. Many of those charged were pupils in the Oxford Terrace Church classes. In the press, in the pulpit, in the Magistrate's Court the pastor stood up for them, procuring their acquittal and the demolition of the very cells in which they had been confined. No less chivalrous was his action in championing the then unpopular cause of the South African Dutch at the time of the Boer War. Many now believe that war to have been "promoted by our worldly wisdom and pride of power." He boldly said so then, and when the war ended, he appealed on behalf of the distressed Churches in S. Africa. The winds which shook the preacher's soul were those of heaven, and not the fitful breath of popular prejudice. When at length after seven years' labour he felt it his duty to resign his office, his flock recalled with mingled joy and sorrow his faithful and diligent services, the loving fidelity of his exhortations, his tender ministry of sympathy, the earnestness of his preaching. He had shown himself a model of consistency and liberality; 219 members had been received by him into the Church; its debt had been reduced from £2,000 to £900. His remaining eleven years were given to South Africa.

A note in the "Baptist" of December, 1895, cordially welcomes to the ministerial ranks the Rev. J. J. North and the Rev. Randolph S. Gray, of whom the



OFFICERS AND TEACHERS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL, BIBLE CLASS LEADERS, AND TEACHERS IN CHINESE MISSION, 1931.

- Front Row: Miss E. K. Ingold, Miss R. A. Carey, Miss R. Wagstaff, Miss V. E. Odell, Miss E. M. Bell, Miss K. Palmer, Miss E. J. Hueston, Miss N. G. Voller.
- Second Row: Miss E. M. Berg, Mr. H. A. C. North (Deputy Superintendent), Miss H. F. Thompson, Mr. A. R. Jordan (Superintendent), Rev. L. A. North (Minister), Mrs. E. A. Sheate, Mrs. H. Burgess, Mr. H. Burgess, Miss C. Robinson.
- Third Row: Miss N. Ingold, Miss M. E. Collins, Mr. H. Hopkirk, Miss D. G. Ingold, Mr. W. M. Murgatroyd (Secretary), Mr. T. E. Dench, Mr. A. W. Nicol (Treasurer), Mr. G. Reddell, Mrs. A. Stevens, Miss I. R. Voller, Mr. W. T. Jones.
- Fourth Row: Miss A. E. Collins, Miss M. E. Suckling, Mr. W. A. Weckesser, Mr. C. W. Eagle, Mr. S. T. Reddell, Mr. J. Moir, Miss W. Reddell, Miss J. L. Webley (Pianiste), Mr. J. H. Wilton, Mr. A. A. Wilton.
- Absent: Miss V. Halliday and Mr. J. Fraser.

former "after a quite brilliant student career," had accepted oversight of the Spreydon Church, while the latter had become minister in Nelson. It was to Mr. Gray that the Oxford Terrace Church turned when Mr. Doke left them. Those who delight to find in economic conditions the underlying causes of history would doubtless explain his presence in New Zealand by reference to the Melbourne slump of 1890. A native of Ballarat, he was early associated with the Dawson Street Church, which under Dr. Porter's ministry was actively evangelistic. Young Gray at an early age led a Bible-class of fifty members, some of them twice his age. After his marriage to Miss Kersley he moved to Melbourne, where he became friendly with Mr. W. H. George, who had married a daughter of Samuel Chapman, pastor of the Collins Street Baptist Church. In 1891 Messrs.

George, Gray and Kersley settled in Wellington, about the same time as Mr. Dallaston. Employed as accountant by Messrs. Kirkcaldie and Stains, Mr. Gray gave himself whole-heartedly to spiritual work; Mr. Dallaston soon found him to be a great helper and seeker of souls, and after three years sped him on his way to Nelson, where the Church had invited him to labour.

No one has ever called Mr. Gray a "great divine," but a "great human" he certainly was, and he consecrated and used his powers of leadership and attraction. His preaching was vital, and his versatile interests magnetic. He gloried in the young life of the Church, alike in class and schoolroom and on the cricket-field. Genial and fluent, with great powers of mind and heart, his wit and repartee, insight and whole-heartedness made him an outstanding platform

speaker. His pronounced executive ability found scope in many ways: for over twenty years he served as secretary to the Baptist Union, and he was also both secretary and treasurer to the Missionary Society. His death at the age of 59 in 1923 elicited a remarkable chorus of testimonies to the truth and tenderness, sweetness and strength, of his rich personality. He was, said one, "a sort of bird of Paradise among his dull fellows." "His denunciation of the drink traffic," wrote another, "was unsparring, but victims of it arrested on the charge of drunkenness would ask for bail, and confidently name Gray as their surety." Mr. Dallaston remarked of him that his voice had healing tones in it. People went to Church to hear him and to see him. Why? Because in the words of his friend Mr. Justice Adams: "It had been his joy and good fortune to see Jesus, as Paul had done on the road to Damascus, and that vision had arrested his whole life." Deeply though he was regretted when his call came to go hence, there was no Dead March played at his obsequies, but a "Hallelujah Chorus" that all felt in truest keeping with his buoyant and radiant life.

Such was the pastor who directed the work of the Church during the ten years from 1902 till 1912. They were eventful years. Christchurch was expanding eastward, and the Canterbury auxiliary appealed to the Oxford Terrace Church for assistance in a work of Church extension. It was felt that the Hornby chapel would prove more useful if it could be transported to Linwood. A site was purchased, and at a cost of £79 (which also covered some renovations) the building was shifted to the rear of the Linwood section. On December 9th, 1903, it was formally opened with a public meeting. We may imagine with what joy the band of workers hailed that date as marking the accomplishment of a scheme long meditated, a definite forward move on the part of the denomination and the parent Church. The auspicious date was destined, however, to become more memorable for a serious loss. The old Hereford St. Church, which had for upwards of thirty years stood on the Oxford Terrace site alongside the present church, and been used as a Sunday School hall, was in need of renova-

tion, and a contract for the work had been let and operations begun. An hour after midnight on December 9th, fire (due probably to a chimney defect) broke out, and reduced the whole building to ashes, even menacing the church.

At half past eleven the same morning the office-bearers held an emergency meeting. The Rev. R. S. Gray presided, with Messrs. Toneycliffe, P. Hercus, Fraser, Mander, Fife, Eaton and Ingold present. The loss of the schoolroom had been acknowledged as total by the South British Insurance Coy., which was prepared to pay all claims in full—£500 on the building and £150 on the contents. Arrangements were made to dispose of the debris and replace with ground glass windows all the panes of glass broken in the church building by the heat of the fire. Five days later, at a further meeting it was resolved by ten votes to four that plans be prepared for a new up-to-date schoolroom in brick. "Brother Chidgey was asked to prepare same"—it is impressive to notice how frequently and confidently during forty years and more his fellow-deacons turned to Mr. Chidgey not only in matters financial but whenever structural alterations were required. Eventually the tender of Mr. Cox was accepted, to rebuild the Sunday School for £2,121. On April 27th, 1904, Mr. A. F. Carey, superintendent, and Mr. Cornelius Chidgey, who in 1863 first started the Sunday School in Lichfield St., laid the foundation stones of the present building, and five months later it was completed.

One result of the disastrous fire was the extinction of the mortgage on the church. Originally amounting to £3,000 at 7 per cent., it had been renewed in London in 1887 for £2,000 at 5 per cent., and in 1903 had by much effort and self-denial on the part of ministers and members been reduced to £700. This the deacons paid off on receipt of the insurance on the Sunday School, but to finance the new building they had once more to borrow, taking an advance of £1,850 in September, 1904, which was finally paid off fifteen years later. "Money talks," and to those who reflect on these figures and on the devotion they represent the very walls of our sanctuary speak eloquently of sacrifice. During one year of Mr. Dallaston's ministry it



MR. A. R. JORDAN,
Sunday School Superintendent.



MISS E. M. GAINSFORD,
Deaconess.

was, we are told, a rare thing to see a new dress in church, the money being diverted to meet promises and subscriptions.

The progress of the branch Church and Sunday School at Linwood taxed the powers of the Oxford Terrace Church: three deacons were specially designated to act with three locally-appointed members in supervising the services. For a time an arrangement was made by which Mr. A. W. Pitt preached alternately at Linwood and at the sister Church in Riccarton (since unhappily abandoned). Later the Rev. D. S. Mason became pastor of the Linwood cause, and in 1910 the building was enlarged. Two years later Linwood cause was formed into a separate Church.

A week before the old church was destroyed, the Rev. Stanley Jenkin was dedicated to the ministry: both he and the Rev. H. E. Edridge heard the call of Christ through Mr. Gray. A week after the new building (erected by Mr. C. H. Cox) was opened, Miss Nellie Gainsford was set apart for Missionary service. Her connection with the Church was already very close. "I do not ask for success," she said. "My work shall be to do the will of Him that sendeth me." In the same spirit of devotion she has this year returned to her old Church as Deaconess, enriched by sixteen years' experience in Bengal—an appointment popular with old and young alike.

Other members of the Church who may here most fittingly be recalled are Miss M. Ingoldsby, who served in the Bengal mission for the first five years of this century; Miss Gladys Peters, who went out some twenty years later, but was invalided home; Nurse Savage, who still serves as a worker of the Poonah and Indian Village Mission, which she joined in 1913; Mrs. Alex. Reese (nee Constance King) who with her husband laboured many years in a Presbyterian Mission in Brazil, and who now lives in Auckland; Mr. Alfred Peters, who after gallant service for Christ in New Zealand found it possible at sixty to go to the Solomon Islands and serve there for ten years. As we go to press we learn that he has finished his course with joy. To another old member of our Church, Miss Clara Waterston, now connected with Grange Road Church, Auckland, fell the great honour of translating the New Testament into the Malu language, spoken by a tribe in the Solomon Islands: not ten New Zealanders in all our country's history have such an achievement to their credit. There may be others, for a brief note published in July, 1906, tells of the departure to the Rev. Lockhart Morton's training home in Adelaide of Mr. W. Rule, "the fourth teacher to leave the Chinese Mission Class for the foreign field."

In the winter of 1905 Mr. Gray took the bold step of circularising men who

don't attend Church, and asking "Why?" "Because of the social unrighteousness of the Churches," retorted some. He addressed as a result about 250 working men. Mr. Gray was not one to spare himself. In 1907 his doctor ordered him a rest, and he was out of the pulpit four months.

Two years later the Church appointed a Deaconess, Sister Grace, whose activities extended through Mr. Gray's pastorate and that of Mr. North, embracing thus the strenuous years of the Great War and the tragic epidemic with which it concluded. "She has proved herself in all possible ways," wrote Mr. North of her eleven years ago. Similar expressions on behalf of the Church marked her retirement after eighteen years' service. The Mothers' Meeting which she so long conducted now flourishes under a committee of the Dorcas Society.

In 1911 the Pan Baptist Congress was held in Philadelphia. It was felt within the denomination that Mr. Gray, as Union Secretary, would be a fitting choice for delegate: the deacons accordingly "having regard to the pastor's strenuous labours in Christchurch during the past seven and a-half years" recommended that he be granted a furlough long enough to let him make a trip to England and America. The subject on which he addressed the Congress was "The Church and the Working Man."

The long connection of the Rev. D. Dolamore with the work of the denomination may be said to have concluded at the beginning of July, 1912, when he saw the foundation-stone of the St. Albans church laid: a fortnight later he passed away, in the ninety-third year of his life and the sixty-second of his residence in New Zealand. Simple in faith, intense in his piety, absolutely loyal to his Master, he was humbly anxious to proclaim the love of God.

A special fund was raised in 1912 for the purpose of placing a tile roof upon the Oxford Terrace church, and erecting the church at St. Albans. Radiators were also introduced into the church at that time.

The year closed with a farewell to the Pastor, who was leaving Christchurch

for Dunedin. Mr. J. G. Fraser was President of the Union, and his cheerful wisdom as chairman saved the occasion from becoming too much of an ordeal to all concerned. Mr. Gray had certainly endeared himself to all in the Christchurch Church just as he had done in Nelson.

Disappointed in their hope of recalling the Rev. F. W. Boreham from Hobart to the scene of his marriage by Mr. Doke in 1896, the members of the Church sent a unanimous invitation to the Rev. J. J. North. He was no stranger: for seven years he had ministered to Spreydon Church, for three to Oamaru, for eight in Wellington. His settled habits of wide reading and sedulous preparation for every public engagement, his reformer's zeal, keenness in debate, solicitous and diligent pastoral care, all combined to qualify him for his post. Essentially non-conformist in tradition, outlook and self-expression, his sturdy independence proved attractive to many, no less than his command of graphic phrases. Those who recall his vivid children's addresses and the power and wealth of his sermon illustrations are not surprised to learn that his uncle was a distinguished painter.

Early in his ministry at Oxford Terrace Mr. North introduced the monthly magazine, now in its nineteenth year. The "Baptist" also attests his diligence with the pen, and his belief in publicity. From time to time articles by him make their way into the daily papers, and on occasion he has stood forth as a champion of loyal Protestantism and foe of the kindred vices of intemperance, impurity and gambling. His is no cloistered view of Christian character: his Master, he remembers, refused to pray that His own be taken out of the world, whose salt they were. Whatever may be thought of the wisdom of attacking cherished superstitions and hoary abuses, Mr. North has formulated his own line: "Our Lord," he holds, "is the model of true method. He did not find it possible to teach the Gospel He brought without constantly comparing it with the system of legalism championed by the Pharisees. But the system of the Pharisees was the nearest parallel anywhere to be found to Romanism."

The organ set up in 1882, played in turn by Mr. Corrick, Mrs. Graham, Mrs.



INTERIOR OF CHURCH.

Partridge, Miss Sorrell, Miss Packer and Miss Coleman, was in 1915 dismantled in favour of the present instrument by Bevington's, which the Shaw, Savill Company and the N.Z. Shipping Company generously conveyed free of charge through waters menaced by submarines. The generous interest of Mr. J. A. Pannett and Mr. A. F. Carey and the architectural arrangements made by Mr. Chidgey are gratefully recalled. Three years later (July, 1918) the new Infant Classroom was opened.

Very memorable was the celebration of Peace Sunday, on July 20th, 1919. Sergeant Hiddlestone—the first man from the Church to leave for the front in August, 1914—read the roll of the fallen. Nearly all the great battles of the east and west fronts were represented. Sergeant Hartigan—who with Mr. V. C. Peters was on the "Marquette"—sounded the Last Post. Speaking from the pulpit, the treasurer (Mr. Chidgey) said that in all the history of the Church no financial effort that had ever been made had met with so ready a response. The number of contributors had no parallel. The people had a mind to give. The Pastor recalled how the initial gift in this combined effort, which raised

upwards of £1,460 and cleared all debt off the church property, had been a gift of £20 spontaneously sent in as soon as the Armistice was signed from a family whose only boy fell in France.

A painfully sudden accident at the Christchurch station towards the close of 1919 removed Lim Lang, a member of the Chinese Class, whom Mr. Doke had baptised twenty-two years before. A few days earlier he had asked to be taught the hymn, "Wonderful words of life:" "I love it; I want to know more of it," he said. He was not the only trophy of the Chinese work. In October, 1913, the second issue of the Church Magazine states: "We hear with great pleasure that one of the old scholars of our Chinese Class, Thomas Yip Ting, is now pastor of a native Church in the Canton Villages district."

In October, 1922, the Church wished their pastor God-speed as he set his face towards India and Europe. He had in the course of his twenty-seven years in the ministry held every office within the gift of the Baptist Union, and his brethren felt they could send no fitter representative to the Baptist World's Congress in Stockholm. Three months were given to India, where Mr. and Mrs.

Toneycliffe were also visiting the Mission stations. 4,000 miles were covered by rail and river, and the travellers saw "splendour and squalor enough to last a lifetime." From Darjeeling they beheld with reverent awe the unveiling of the glorious Mt. Kinchinjunga, "like the unveiling of God in Christ." A week was spent in Rome, where Mr. North attended high mass, no doubt with mingled feelings. Brief peeps at Florence, Venice and Paris led on to London, where for a month Mr. North conducted service in the City Temple. A gossipy writer in the "British Weekly" paid due tribute to his matter, and in passing referred to his colonial accent, which some of us had fondly deemed imported! There followed visits to the Universities, Bedford, Stratford-on-Avon, the Highlands. When at length, the sabbatic year over, the much-travelled preacher returned, his every utterance was enriched in vividness and power as a result of the impressions left on his sensitive and understanding mind. Almost every leading preacher of the denomination in New Zealand had in the meantime helped to fill the Oxford Terrace pulpit: the congregations were well maintained, and rallied loyally round their minister on his return. He brought many fresh ideas: open-air singing, an enlarged choir, occasional theatre services. Mr. V. C. Peters, whom Mr. Gray had received into the Church in 1908, became leader of the Choir, and began that happy alliance with the beloved organist, Mr. Melville Lawry, which has now been happily resumed.

In 1924 the pastor's aged and honoured parents were both called to their reward. That year's Conference decided that when the Baptist College opened in Auckland its first Principal should be the Rev. J. J. North. Thus after thirteen years of strenuous labour he was given "the wages of going on and not to tire."

Again the Church turned to the Rev. F. W. Boreham, this time for advice. As a result of his suggestion the Rev. J. Robertson, B.A., came to us from Canterbury, Melbourne. His father was an honoured evangelist, and he himself had occupied with acceptance several Churches in Australia, besides serving as chaplain with the troops at the front. A man of fine presence and clear voice, he

rapidly became a favourite "on the air," and many were the visitors welcomed to the Church during his four years' stay in Christchurch. Unfortunately our climate, though it set on his feet their only son, proved less kindly to his mother, and Mr. Robertson felt constrained to return to Australia. He is now happily settled in the Baptist Church of Petersham, Sydney. While in Christchurch Mr. Robertson pursued his studies and gained the M.A. degree. He also became a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. "He has laboured," wrote Mr. Gilmour in "The Baptist," with much zeal. His clear and convincing presentation of the sacred truths has been a source of strength and comfort to us all. Few can forget the whole-hearted manner in which he threw himself into the work of raising the necessary funds to have the church property renovated and repaired."

The Church had in the course of fifty-three years been ministered to by four pastors from England, and two from Australia. Whence could its need now be supplied? Very earnest and thorough enquiries and arrangements engrossed the office-bearers during the early months of 1930. At first no light came. Then in a quite unstudied way it came about that a young graduate of the Baptist College took the Easter services, in the absence of many members of the Church. Two men on the diaconate and others vitally interested saw in him one who could be safely appealed to to undertake the pastorate of the Church. Prayerfully and hopefully their brethren joined in the call to the Rev. Lawrence A. North, and to-day not the least cause of thankfulness in our Diamond Jubilee is a ministry at once humble and daring, frank and faithful, a source of comfort to the old and inspiration to the young. Long may his heart indite good matter, and his speech be of the things touching the King!

* * *

The history of a Church: who can write it? The better the task is understood, the more it will be felt to be impossible. Spiritual things are impalpable, intangible, elusive as a fragrance, subtle as the light. Their true history will not appear till we know even as we are known. Yet at times a veil is lifted,

or through the lens of tears our vision sees the outline of things real, as in this story of one little disciple whose name never reached the Church roll—our Unknown Warrior. She was a bright little scholar, in the fifth standard, though only ten. The love that glowed in her heart and shone in her face won smiles from all she met. In her home she was the spirit of unselfishness. Prayerful in habit, she loved the Bible. When in winter rheumatic fever seized her she bore with quiet patience an illness of twelve weeks. The night before she died she asked her father to read to her. He turned to Revelation xxi.—her favourite chapter. "Don't read that," she said slowly; "I know all that by heart." She asked for an Old Testament chapter, "So that I may have to think about it and forget my pain." Next day her pain was great, but her faith unclouded. She asked that her sister might play some hymns on the piano downstairs. As the hours of darkness wore on she said more than once, "Jesus - comes - for - me - very - slowly." But at the turn of night the watching mother said, "I think He is coming for you now." "Mamma," was the answer, "Jesus - has - come," and so she went home.

"Soon, full soon, we thus together
In the Father's House shall meet,
And the Heavenly Courts for ever
Tread with undefiled feet."

* * *

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. iii., 11.

Turning from these brief and imperfect glimpses of our pilgrim band we hear the inspiring strains to which it marches:

"Part of the host have crossed the
flood,
And part are crossing still."

We hear also three deep and solemn challenges. The first is from the past. "It is the second generation that tests a movement." To say "We have Abraham to our father" is to be bound by all the ties of loyalty to walk in the steps of the faith of the great pilgrim leader. The second challenge is from the present. The times are hard, critical, testing. The Church, the ministry, the religious profession, that cannot now make effective and available the faith by which it lives to a world that cannot live without it may as well now and for ever hold its peace. But the supreme challenge is still from the Cross. There is no going forward possible save as we go back there. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Myself." When the early French missionary Fathers went pioneering into the frozen north of Canada one of them announced that he had seen a cross in the sky beckoning them on. "How big was it, brother?" they asked in jest. "Big enough to crucify us all," was his searching answer.

OUR MEN WHO FELL

Private B. LYONS - - - Fell at Gallipoli
Sergeant L. PRICE - - - Served at Gallipoli and in France. Died in England
Lieutenant C. CAREY - - - Fell at Sling in an attempt to save a comrade's life
Sergeant H. KENDON - - - Fell at Messines
Private L. POORE - - - Killed in action
Corporal A. G. SCARR - - - Killed in action
Private T. DEVENING - - - Fell at the Somme
Bombadier L. DAVIES - - - Fell at the Somme
Corporal ROY CHIVERS - - - Fell at the Somme
Trooper H. GREEN - - - Died of wounds received at Gaza
Private A. WATERMAN - - - Fell at Paschendale
Private H. S. RITCHIE - - - Fell at Paschendale
Flight-Lieut. H. DAWSON - - - Fell at Paschendale
Corporal W. J. RUSSELL - - - Fell at Polygon Woods
Private H. F. KEYS - - - Killed in action
Private FRANK BERG - - - Fell at Le Renuer, Le Quesnoy
Corporal W. CLARK - - - Returned from long service; died during the epidemic
Sergeant C. BLACKIE - - - Returned from long service; died during the epidemic
Private W. FORD - - - - Died in Trentham



