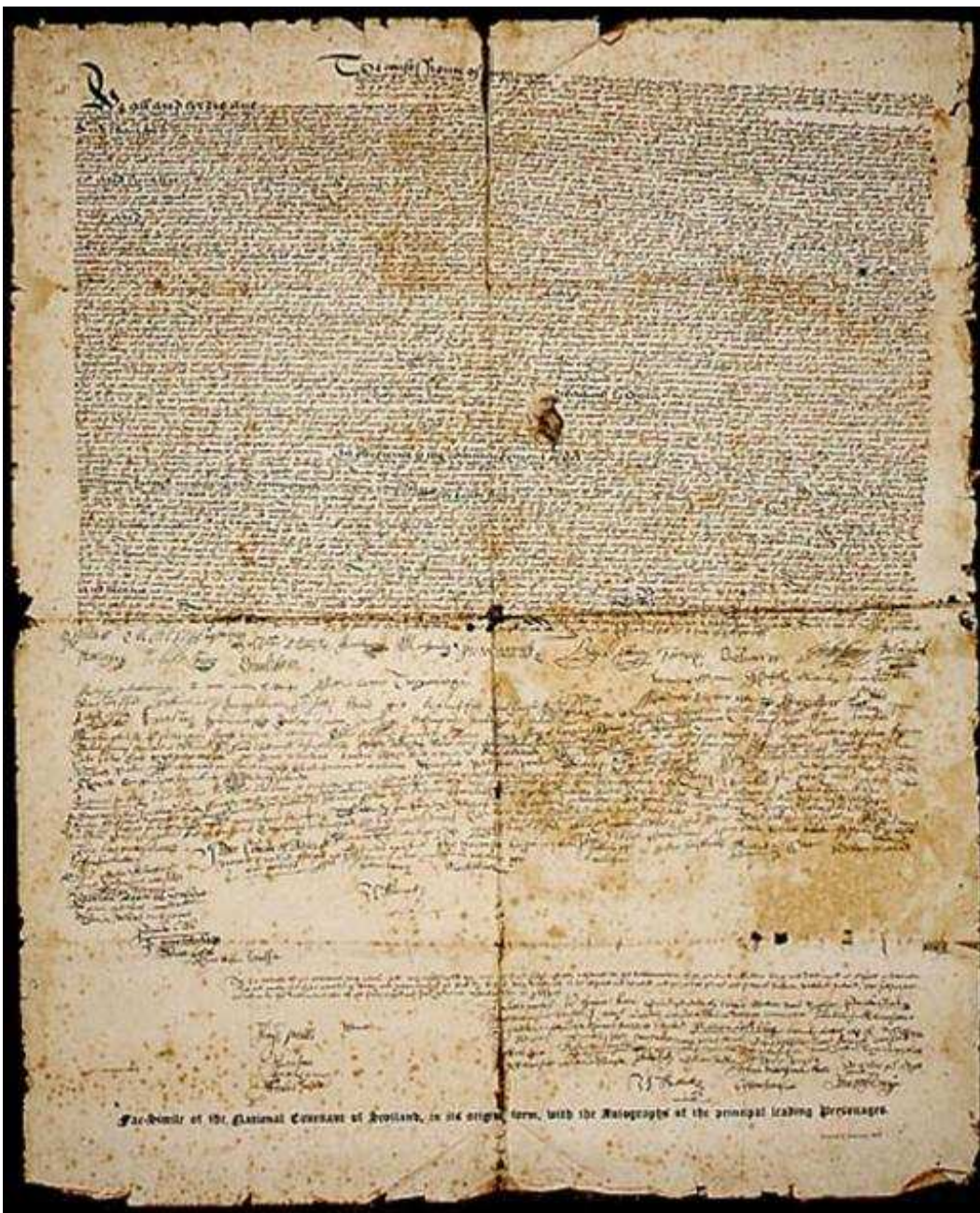


Archives Snippets

E-newsletter

July 2008

National Covenant of Scotland - 1638



We were delighted to recently receive a facsimile copy of the National Covenant of Scotland. The Facsimile is the only copy of the Covenant held in the Archives and as we attempted to decipher the small handwritten 'secretary script', it became apparent why the Covenant was so significant for a large section of the Scottish population. The signing of the Covenant in 1638 eventually resulted in the recognition of a Presbyterian form of Church government in Scotland over that of the English Episcopalian State Church.

The Facsimile is taken from one of the many Covenant Documents that circulated throughout Scotland during 1638-1639. It measures 750mm x 880mm, backed with linen, has been folded into four and shows deterioration along the folds with extensive foxing.

The Facsimile was produced by Frederick T. Schenck of Edinburgh and registered at Stationers' Hall, London. Schenck arrived in Scotland from Paris in 1840. He quickly gained a reputation for raising the standard of lithography from a trade to 'a place among the fine arts'. From 1843 he established his own business and went into partnership with William H. Macfarlane in 1850; the partnership was dissolved in 1859.

The Facsimile is not dated. However, we know that it belonged to James Riddle who, with his wife, Mary and daughter Ann, arrived in Dunedin on the 'Strathallen' January 1858. If Schenck produced the facsimile when in his own business then it could date sometime between 1843 and 1850.

After the Disruption of 1843, the Free Church of Scotland had a number of significant historical documents copied to remind members of the authenticity and reasons for the stand they took and it is probable that the Covenant would be included along with the signing of the Disruption documents some of which are held in the Archives.

Authorised copies of the Covenant circulated around 'every shire, baillery, stewardry, or district judicatory also ...parishes'. Only copies of the Covenant compiled by three public notaries would contain the signatures of the nobleman. Some of the nobilities signatures attached to this copy are the Earls of Rothes, Montrose, Eglington, Lindesay and the Lords Boyd, Dalzell and Drumlangrig to mention a few.

There are approximately 120 Signatures attached to this Covenant Document many difficult to decipher. Where the signing of this Covenant document took place is not clear and a date is not evident. The ratification by the November 1638 General Assembly at Glasgow is added to the bottom of the document in contrast to those signed after the Assembly where it is noted in the introduction. Additional signatures appear below the 'Glasgow Discrimination', several who had already signed.

The term 'National Covenant' drew on Old Testament notions of covenants between God and Man, and between God and Israel. On the afternoon of February 28, 1638, after prayers were said and the Covenant read, "an immense parchment was

produced, spread on a tombstone" for the signing to begin. Over the next few days it is said that a copy of the Covenant was carried around the city like "a sacred carpet" and followed by "rapturous crowds" encouraging everyone to add their signatures. By subscribing to the Covenant the signatories pledged to defend in the name of God, the rights of freedom of choice in matters of the Church, the abolition of Bishops and the limits of the power of King. Ostensibly about religion, it became the manifesto of a wide range of opposition to Charles I.

If you want to explore this fascinating period of the Church of Scotland's past and how it forms who we as New Zealand Presbyterians are today, the Hewitson Library, Knox College, has a wide selection of books that tell the story of the Covenant, of the struggles of the Covenanters, the years of the disruption including a Bishops' war, Civil War, and rule of Oliver Cromwell in the attempts to quash the rising enthusiasm for Presbyterianism over an



Episcopalian Church and the retention of a Scottish Parliament free from royal power.

<http://www.schoolofministry.ac.nz/5001.0.html>

We thank Doreen Riddell and her brother Lex for acknowledging the importance and value of the Covenant document and donating it to the Presbyterian Church for posterity.



The signing of the Covenant, Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh 1638 (from a drawing by George Cattermole)

Using Parish Records to Converse with your past: Part 1: Family History

From local parish and national church records to reference books and biographical files the resources held in the Presbyterian Archives Research Centre can allow you to trace your Presbyterian family which will add a further dimension to your family's story.

The records provide not only personal details but also highlight the Christian witness revealed in the faith journeys of your ancestors. They help us to converse with our past, they convey prevailing attitudes, they can authenticate or debunk family myth.

Communion Rolls, Baptismal Registers, Parish Histories, Sunday School and Youth Group attendance registers, Property Documents, Rent Books are some of the records used to explore William Hutton and his family.

[Follow the journey of William Hutton and his family through the records of three Dunedin Parishes.](#)

See our web site <http://www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/huttonresearch.pdf> or request a copy to be sent to you. Address at foot of newsletter.

353	Bartholomew Barclay Thomas Hamilton Hannah Hutton	29 th May 1905	15 th Dec 1905
354	William Robertson Wm. J. Hutton Georgia Robertson	14 th July 1906	~ ~ ~
355	Douglas Burner ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	21 st July 1905	~ ~ ~
356	Mary Ann Barclay John Mc Kay Margaret Robertson	21 st April 1905	~ ~ ~
		10 th Oct 1905	24 Dec 1905

Baptisms of two great-grandchildren of William & Elizabeth Hutton from the St. David's Presbyterian Church, North East Valley, Register 1905.

News, Hints, and Coming Events

Making Use of a Display for your Parish Anniversary

An anniversary celebration is a time to bring out our parish treasures of the past and place them on show. Photographs, the old pedal organ, a fashion display or even a fashion show through the decades, communion ware and tokens, bibles and hymn books and music, offering plates, Sunday school material and equipment, awards, competition cups, banners, pulpit falls and cushions.

A display of the above is an occasion for reflection and thanksgiving for all that has gone before and a petition for all that a parish may want to be in the future. It is a visual reminder of the faithful witness to God of past members, a time to recall and honour them, and a time for each member to offer memories.

A display is a significant part of an anniversary and by celebrating the past it helps to embrace the present, and envision the future with a clearer focus and purpose.

Don't forget to take a series of photographs of your display to add to the parish photographic collection.

Molly Moller pointing out an interesting detail on one of the display images



On the web site are some helpful hints in preparing your display :

www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/parishhistoryguidesheet7.pdf

Anderson's Bay Presbyterian Church, Dunedin celebrated 145 years at their service on the 22 June 2008. Their display followed a timeline format using photographs and ephemera. They also put on show some artefacts including communion tokens, presentation cups and shield, two silver trowels, and an embroidered pulpit fall.

The first settlers arrived in Anderson's Bay with the first ships in 1848. They were ministered to by the Rev. Thomas Burns. As the district developed James Roy a 'Missionary Preacher' was paid by First Church to carry out a ministry in the Dunedin suburbs. He began fortnightly worship in the local school room which proved so popular that the locals began to plan for their own church. A petition went to Dunedin Presbytery and in 1863 the Rev. J.H. McNaughton was duly called.

Conservation Hint

Although you think it may be a good idea to laminate historical documents to protect them it isn't always wise. Why you ask?

- The lamination process involves heat and pressure and this is not always controlled carefully. Papers can be scorched, inks may run, and some discolouration can take place.
- Highly acidic paper can deteriorate more quickly with the interaction of chemicals found in the plastic coatings.
- The plastic coating used in the laminating process also deteriorates over time becoming brittle and when it breaks down it causes irreparable damage to the original document.
- Lamination greatly alters the aesthetic appearance and texture of the original losing much of the uniqueness of the original document.

If you wish to enclose your document to protect it use a polyester product such as mylar. You can obtain this through a supplier that specialises in conservation materials.

Crumbling History - the Papers of the Rev George Brown 1830-1930



These documents dating from 1860 had been wrapped in a heavy plastic bag and placed in a basement and forgotten for many years.

The heavy plastic had resulted in the material sweating over the years causing moisture to build up and the paper breaking down.

Fortunately the documents in the centre of the pile were salvageable and a reasonable representation of the collection has been preserved.

Next *Archives Snippets* will offer hints on how to safely store your records.

Maintaining the Parish records

Keep the knowledge - Make a record

Good record keeping ensures:

- Good stewardship
- Compliance with legal, fiscal and administrative requirements
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Services are delivered consistently
- Protection of confidentiality
- Continuity in the event of disaster
- Faster retrieval of information
- Less storage space required

The records we create confirm our presence, commitment, obligations, legal requirements, activities and witness in 'Making Jesus Christ known'.

For further assistance to organise your parish records see <http://www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz/recordsmanagement2.pdf>

Presbyterians on Stony Road to World Council of Churches 1948

No Conference through the centuries has been fraught with greater possibilities”, wrote T.C. Brash delegate to the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Amsterdam in 1948. He quotes another, “I felt like a child playing with a paint box trying the effect of mixing all the colours in the hope that some dazzling super colours will result.

Eighteen New Zealanders attended the first WCC Assembly sixty years ago. Four official delegates, Mr. Thomas Brash and the Revs. James Baird, Alan Whitelaw and Alexander Miller represented the Presbyterian Church at this ‘overwhelming and stupendous’ occasion. The backdrop for this historic Assembly however, was set among the scars of a prolonged six year world war. Few who attended would be untouched by the immense sense of personal and national suffering, loss of loved ones, homes, community, educational and work opportunities, uprooting of millions, and disintegration of a moral and social order.

Many would also be alert to the consequential spiritual conflict which arose within the nations represented as a result of the years of war; ‘the loss of belief in the law of God above the will of the State,’ and the loss of faith for many to give meaning to the situations they found themselves.



Sunday 28 August 1948 delegates gathered for the Communion Service in the Nieuwe Kerk, Amsterdam. “The central moment of Christian worship... is the historic moment of our redemption... We are living witnesses of the coming of Christ which is both His coming in history to die for our sins, and His coming in glory with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven. We stand within the moment of fulfilment.” Professor Dodd.

The strong sense for unity pervaded the thinking of many Christian churches from the end of World War 1. Confronting the outcomes of World War II compounded a determination for reconciliation among world churches in aid of the renewal of society. 'Campaigns for Christian Order', began in many countries from the early 1940s, New Zealand included, that aimed to draw Church members and others back to the intention of "God's design" for human cooperation.

The impetus for a world Christian Council was set in motion at Utrecht in 1938 when a provisional constitution was prepared. The war intervened and the provisional council found itself undertaking activities not part of the initial plan. Conditions deemed the formation of the Prisoner of War, Refugee and Reconstruction Departments. The ten years leading up to the Amsterdam Assembly saw the provisional council achieve the almost unthinkable – 'keeping open the channels of inter-church communication between warring nations.'

The responses of the Presbyterian delegates reflect that kiwi caution and healthy cynicism we are familiar with. Lex Miller the official "Outlook" reporter noted that it was well to remember what 'soft-living Anglo Saxon Christians' consider being pulpit platitudes were in fact 'a slogan to fight for the serving Christian soldier' in other countries. He believed those who criticised the Assembly's pronouncements required to look beyond what was said to who said it. 'Christ is Lord and the Church is One' was said 'all at once and all together' by Orthodox, Calvinist, Quakers, Christian Endeavourers and Salvationists.

Although feeling some pride in the fact that 75% of the delegates had come through the Christian Student Movement, Miller expressed his unease at the dominant 'Anglo-Saxon' gathering and predominance of academic theologians. Among the great theologians present were Karl Barth, Emil Brunner and Reinhold Niebuhr, which caused one delegate to comment 'When I walk through the Conference Hall I seem to meet my whole theological library'. For Miller however, the absence of the lay person and members of 'younger churches' at the Assembly could place restrictions on the eventual outcome of the WCC to achieve their goals of reconciliation.

The ability of Christian Church leaders to work together in spite of conflict impressed Tom Brash but he felt some misapprehension that denominations had the ability to reach across the ecclesiastical divides to support international unity. The message of Amsterdam required to be embodied in the structure of the local churches, 'our opportunity is overwhelmingly great. So is our responsibility', he wrote.

Molly Whitelaw, who accompanied her husband, wrote colourful and enthusiastic articles. Her impressions of a 'stupendous' gathering, with 'an ocean of words and an endless sea of people' make for interesting reading. Molly went on to become very active in the Women's section of the WCC.

Molly Whitelaw writes about the historic WCC Conference Service at Neiuwe Kerk August 1948:

We are placed in one of the rows of chairs directly facing the splendid golden screen behind the pulpit ... above us hang golden chandeliers.

But this service is a momentous historic occasion, the First Meeting of the First World Council of Churches. Every corner of the vast church is packed with people. We turn a little standing up in our places to watch the procession of official delegates come in. It is a moving sight. Something great and grand, simple and austere about the whole setting and that slowly advancing, dignified procession leading Churchmen and a few women from all over the known world. ... I recognise some world-famous figures as they pass, John R. Mott, that grand old man of the Ecumenical movement; the Archbishop of Canterbury; Pastor Niemoller... Archbishop of Eiden ... bearded, black-veiled Orthodox dignitaries... purple cassocked Catholics; saffron-stoled bishops from the Church of Southern India; US pastors in business suits...

The service is the prelude to a packed fortnight of prodigious programme ... We meet for great combined meetings in the vast Concert Hall of Amsterdam. Who of us present at Amsterdam will ever forget the famous Concertgebouw of Music Hall ... pink, beige and green. The organ towering to the ceiling ... the organ-seat hidden by an enormous shower-bouquet of tiger lilies. ...

From the papers of Molly Whitelaw, an extensive collection which includes her work with women nationally and internationally, Girls' Brigade, and many journalistic pieces she wrote along with an extensive quantity of correspondence.

For the 1400 delegates from 147 churches who gathered full of hope and optimism, yet aware of the divided nature of the church, this first Assembly became the symbol and instrument for the new possibility of a universal Christian fellowship. Sixty years on the sense of ecumenical cooperation within New Zealand Presbyterianism has weakened considerably; a sad blow for these early enthusiasts yet no surprise.

Quote from our Past

How is our Taonga cared for in our parishes today?

"Re another matter you wrote about some time ago, i.e. old Church records. We have raked up quite a few, some from under the rubbish thrown under Manse - who by ? I don't know - others from odd corners - some of them date back to 1870.... Now what shall we do with these books of wisdom (or otherwise) ?" Howick PC, 1947

Coming Event

NZ Presbyterian Research Network :

Meeting: 17 July, 2008 in the **Frank Nichol Room**, 5.30-7pm. Nibbles at 5pm.

Speaker: **Dr. Jennie Coleman, Director, ResearchWriteNZ,** www.researchwritenz.com

Plain Faith in Canterbury: Emergence of Religious Identity in the Lincoln District.

This presentation traces the patterns and dynamics of pastoral care and spiritual nourishment in an evolving settler community. From unsectarian beginnings to distinct denominational identities, this process reflects a particular community's response to the establishment of sectarian worship in their midst.

The Presbyterian Research Network is an evolving on-line network which seeks to facilitate connections between resource teachers, scholars, ministers and members of congregations. We aim to have 3 lectures per year, a newsletter and emailing list. The lectures will be placed on-line with a review and we hope to responses and ideas through an email list. Watch this space for further information and email connections .If you are interested in being added to the current list to receive the papers given email Susan Jones jones.rs@xtra.co.nz

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