

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

#### **The Apostolic Church — new structures, new controversies (1930-1939)**

**T**he emergence of the Apostolic Church in Australia provides a clear example of how Pentecostal groups could be divided over differing doctrines held with equal passion and conviction. When a movement majors on personal spiritual experience, it enters the realm of the subjective where individual encounters with God have an authority of their own and where the validity of religious belief is assessed by the degree to which it touches the heart. Truth then becomes contingent on testimony and certitude on satisfaction. Couple this with a conviction that the Scriptures are the final authority on matters of faith and practice, and that every believer has the right to interpret them personally, and controversy is inevitable. The spirit of Pentecost was vibrant and dynamic, but like the wind, difficult to restrain.<sup>1</sup>

It was the arrival in 1930 of Scotsman William Cathcart which opened up the new area of dispute — the role of apostles and prophets in the church. For people in mainline denominations, this was a non-issue. For them, apostles and prophets were safely enshrined in the biblical records and to resurrect them in today's world was as anachronistic as equipping paratroops with swords and spears. For Pentecostals, however, strongly committed as they were to the

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<sup>1</sup> An analogy used by Jesus in a slightly different context. See John 3:8 — 'The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'

conviction that the supernatural gifts and ministries of biblical times were still valid, the issue was very much alive.

William Cathcart (1893-1989) was tall, dignified and commanding in presence. 'He was a man who appealed to men,' recalled one of his associates, 'a godly man who preached the word with power and dignity.'<sup>2</sup> People spoke of him as being of military bearing, distant yet compassionate.<sup>3</sup> 'He had a presence,' recalled Kath Kirwan, who was in her late teens when she first met him. 'I was scared of him. You never called him by his first name and he didn't socialise.'<sup>4</sup> He was awesome, agreed Lawrie Wahlquist, remembering his teenage response.<sup>5</sup> He was known as a 'good, solid teacher' and as a quiet, upright man.<sup>6</sup> Born of Scottish parents in Northern Ireland, he was converted at the age of 16. Five years later he fought in France in World War I, from which he was repatriated to a convalescent home for many months. 'He was shell-shocked,' recalled Joshua McCabe. 'I never saw a more miserable looking devil than he was.'<sup>7</sup> During this time, he was given a New Testament and while holding it in his hands, heard God say, 'I am going to heal you. I will give you a shepherd's heart and you will go to the uttermost parts of the earth for me.' While attending a Brethren assembly, he came in touch with an Apostolic church and was healed. On two occasions he saw visions — one (while travelling on a Glasgow tram) of sandy beaches, blue sea and surf, which he later identified as Manly, New South Wales; the other of two men in a sunlit country beckoning him whom he believed represented Australia and New Zealand.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> J.McCabe, personal interview, 18 September 1990.

<sup>3</sup> C.Gadge, personal interview, 2 March 1992.

<sup>4</sup> K.Kirwan, personal interview, 11 September 1991.

<sup>5</sup> L.and I. Wahlquist, interview, 19 November 1991.

<sup>6</sup> M.Hurst, personal interview, 14 August 1991; K.Kirwan, personal interview, 11 September 1991..

<sup>7</sup> J.McCabe, personal interview, 18 September 1990.

<sup>8</sup> P.Grant, 'William Cathcart: From Gloom to Glory,' in *Acts* '88 January 1988; A.Gardiner, 'A History of the Apostolic Church,' in *Acts* '89, November 1989, pp.14f; 'Forward March in Australia,' in the AH 1:8 May 1932, p.2; 'Looking West: a Retrospect of the Work in WA,' in RE 1:2 July 1933, pp.15ff. Further details of the beginnings of the Apostolic Church in Perth are from these sources unless otherwise stated.

In 1929, there were in Perth, Western Australia, six small Pentecostal groups, disunited apparently because of disputes over leadership and a dearth of trained ministry.<sup>9</sup> A school teacher named Miss Flett, who had been a member of the Apostolic Church in the Orkney Islands, persuaded one of these groups to invite the Apostolic Church in Great Britain to send them a pastor.<sup>10</sup> They particularly wanted Andrew Turnbull, Apostolic patriarch and founder of the Apostolic Church in Scotland, to come, but at the 1929 convention in Penygroes, Wales, the church council unanimously settled on William Cathcart. In the light of his own prior sense of calling, he was more than willing.

Since 1923, Cathcart had been in full-time ministry and was currently involved in the Burning Bush Apostolic congregation in Glasgow. He was considered 'a prominent and successful apostle' with 'a profound expository ministry.'<sup>11</sup> On 1 February 1930, together with his wife and small son, he sailed for Perth. About 25 people met them on their arrival. It was Depression time and money was scarce. There was no support forthcoming from England, so Cathcart and two others devised a mixture of different brands of tea and sold it door to door under the name Triune Tea Company. Although there was much sacrifice, they were never in need. They conducted street meetings and gave food to the poor. Cathcart taught the 'Apostolic vision'. A small group of believers led by George Taylor joined the budding assembly and they began to grow. Discussions were held with a third group, who were having trouble paying the lease on their hall. Cathcart persuaded them of the validity of his teaching and they combined their resources under his leadership. Soon they were meeting in an imposing former Methodist church building in Brisbane Street, North Perth.

### **The Apostolic Church**

What was different about the Apostolic Church? Its background lay in the Welsh Revival of 1904-05, where there had been a strong emphasis on the

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<sup>9</sup> These included the original congregation affiliated with Good News Hall and a small Pentecostal Church of Australia group, together with a handful of splinter groups. See Chapters Nine and Twelve.

<sup>10</sup> McCabe claims that the woman's name was Marshall, but Gardiner's published history is probably a more reliable source.

fullness of the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to the other Pentecostal groups in Australia who stressed local church autonomy, the Apostolic Church was centralised and tightly organised. By 1934, the British Church had a detailed constitution of over 200 typed pages which was accepted in Australia in 1939 with little change. Among other things, it set down that tithing was compulsory and that all offerings were to be paid to a central fund from which allocations were made to local assemblies. All pastors were salaried equally and appointed by the Commonwealth Council without consultation.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, Cathcart was reserved and not given to shows of emotion. This approach won the confidence of some who were uneasy with the more flamboyant or expressive behaviour of some Pentecostals. But the most significant factor which distinguished the Apostolic Church from existing groups was their emphasis on the roles of apostles and prophets. Of the five ministry designations listed in Ephesians 4:11 (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) historic churches tended to accept only the latter three. Pentecostal churches accepted all five, but generally used only two — pastor and evangelist — as titles. The Apostolics encouraged and recognised them all (see Table 10.1). The ninth tenet of the Apostolic Church reads —

Church Government by Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders and Deacons.

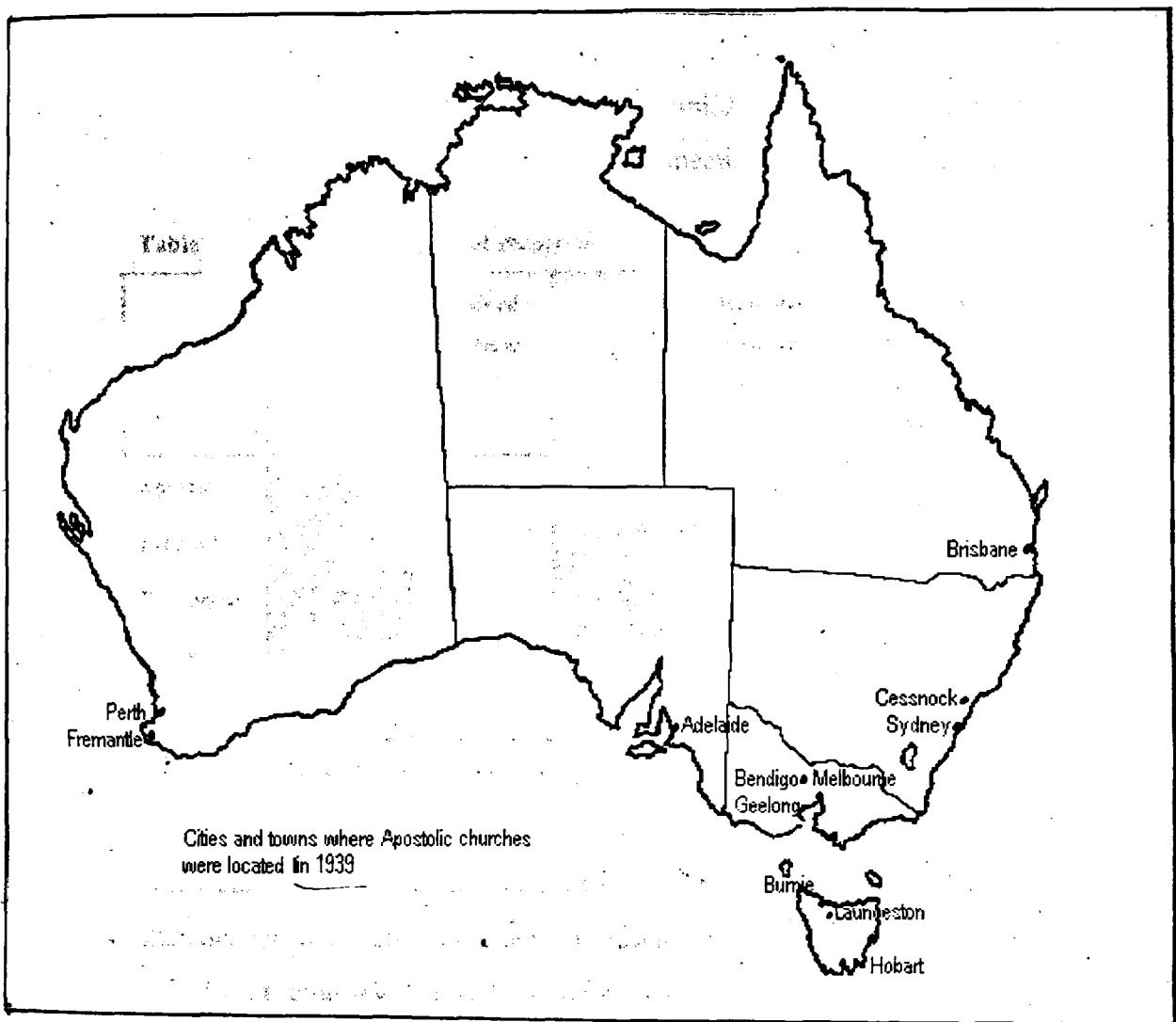
In practice, there were clear lines of demarcation between the various offices. Apostles and prophets plainly stood well above the rest. Apostles exercised a 'governmental role.' Prophets provided guidance and direction. Once the Church was established, there was a yearly Commonwealth Council, two thirds

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<sup>11</sup> Gardiner, 1989, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> For a useful introduction to the Welsh Revival see E.Evans, 1987; B.P.Jones, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> 'I never considered whether I was happy (about the system). I believed it was God's will and did it. That was it. Everybody was the same. It was the combined apostleship decision' — P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991. Years later, one man was sent from Hobart, Tasmania, to Bunbury, Western Australia. The move would divide his family but he if he did not accept the Council's decision he knew he would have to resign. He accepted.



Cities and towns where Apostolic churches were located in 1939

of which was comprised of apostles and one third of prophets.<sup>14</sup> Prophets were urged to give the Word of the Lord in such meetings, including the calling of

**Table 10.1 Comparative table of recognition of ministry gifts**

	Recognised by Historic churches	Ordained or used as title	Recognised by Pentecostal churches	Ordained or used as title	Recognised by Apostolic Church	Ordained or used as title
Apostle			X		X	X
Prophet			X		X	X
Evangelist	X		X	X	X	X
Pastor	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teacher	X		X		X	X

people to office. Based on the Lucan record of the commissioning of Saul and Barnabas, where prophets and teachers were involved, Apostolics argued that when the Holy Spirit spoke, he did so through a prophet (Acts 13:1ff). Hence, the concept of directive prophecy, in which prophets called people into various spheres of ministry.<sup>15</sup> Prophets were ‘set’ in place for this purpose.<sup>16</sup> All ‘inquiries of the Lord’ by Apostles were to be made only in the presence of a prophet.<sup>17</sup> ‘The office of Prophet,’ wrote W.A.C.Rowe, in his text book of Apostolic doctrine, ‘is in vital union with the Apostolic office.’ Indeed, ideally, they worked together as a single gift. They were so intimately linked that either one would be incomplete on its own.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless —

<sup>14</sup> *Constitution*, Chapter 9, preamble. I have a copy in my possession; I presume the Apostolic Church has further copies in its archives.

<sup>15</sup> How this took place in practice was that a prophet would actually name people and tell them that God was calling them to a certain sphere of activity such as evangelism or eldership.

<sup>16</sup> ‘We believe in set Prophets ... we believe in set Apostles, too’ — W.A.C.Rowe, *One Lord, One Faith* Bradford: Puritan Press, n.d., p.250. The word ‘set’ was taken from the Authorised Version rendering of 1 Corinthians 12:28 — ‘And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers.’

<sup>17</sup> *Constitution*, Chapter 30, preamble and I-II.

<sup>18</sup> Rowe, n.d., pp.242f.

The determining and final power of The Apostolic Church in all matters spiritual, moral, governmental and financial, is invested in the body of Apostles of the Church, termed the General Council ...<sup>19</sup>

Constitutionally, apostolic duties were divided so that, where possible, one apostle was in charge of each district with a group of apostles governing each 'area' (ie a group of three to five districts). One of these apostles was to be in touch with Commonwealth Headquarters, and was 'generally responsible for all Governmental and Doctrinal matters in the Area.' Another was to be in active contact with the Missionary Advisory Board and a third with the Finance Board.<sup>20</sup>

There was also a clear distinction between the gift of prophecy which any believer might express and the office of prophet, although prophets, too, were categorised. Some were 'set apart by the authority of the General Council for International work,' others were commissioned variously for Inter-Area, Area, District or local assembly work. While all prophets were expected to give the word of the Lord at any time to the Church, calling people to office was restricted to their sphere of ministry.<sup>21</sup>

Whereas prophecies in public worship services in other Pentecostal churches were usually brief, Apostolic prophecies could last for a quarter of an hour or more. Then an apostle might expound the prophecy in much the same way other preachers would explain the Scriptures.<sup>22</sup> Sometimes, preaching was abandoned altogether to give place to prophesying.<sup>23</sup> In practice, these prophecies, like most Pentecostal prophecies, were basically encouragements to God's people and were the first person format to have been changed to third person, would have seemed much like the kind of exhortation any believer

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<sup>19</sup> *Constitution*, Chapter 12, preamble.

<sup>20</sup> *The Apostolic Church: its Principles and Practices*, 1939, 8:1-5.

<sup>21</sup> *Constitution*, Chapter 30.

<sup>22</sup> Personal knowledge. Prophecies were not always expounded. W.A.C.Rowe 'made a specialty of it.' See A.Turner, interview, 21 November 1990.

<sup>23</sup> L.Wahlquist, interview, 19 November 1991.

might give to another. In 1942, for example, W.A.C.Rowe delivered the following message to the congregation in Adelaide —

I have spoken to you of these facts in order that I might speak specifically to you — for you lack fear, holy fear... and not only you, but every member throughout the world. Living in days of great development and achievement, you lack a holy fear as My People. In order that you may not trespass upon the ground that you ought not to; in order that you will be kept free from such powers and forces (of evil) you need a holy fear. You require a greater and more august vision of Myself. It may be that your conception of My mercy has diminished your conception of My righteousness. Come to Me that I may give you a greater vision of Myself...<sup>24</sup>

The esteem with which such prophesyings were regarded is demonstrated by frequent quotations throughout the *Constitution* and *Guiding Principles* from prophetic statements endorsing or validating the rules or principles laid down. Often, they were profound. Sometimes, they were quite homely. For example, after a clause affirming that a public utterance in tongues should be divided into segments to allow for progressive interpretation, the following extract from a prophecy appears—

When one speaketh in tongues, however long a time it is, it is one tongue; but it is best to be divided for the sake of convenience, and for the sake of interpretation. There is an advantage in this and I would have you remember that aspect. If what I have said is generally known in the assembly, it will save confusion and bring a general understanding so that I may be honoured and glorified.<sup>25</sup>

This entirely new emphasis on the ministry of apostles and prophets was an exciting revelation to many. Cathcart had little trouble gathering a band of people around him who believed the new church was yet a further development of the restoration of New Testament teaching and practice.

More than a few people were intrigued and enticed by what they saw and heard. 'To many it was a revelation of the way in which God is working in these last

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<sup>24</sup> HG March 1942, p.32.

<sup>25</sup> 'Guiding Principles', 6:11. By the 1940's, prophecies were regularly being published in the Church periodical.

days,' wrote one newcomer, 'and we do esteem it a privilege to be in that place, where we can indeed know the Will of God.'<sup>26</sup>

### **William Cathcart**

Nineteen thirty-one began with the news that the Commonwealth Arbitration Court ruled a reduction of wages by ten per cent, further increasing the hardships facing many people. In that year, two Australian icons passed away — Dame Nellie Melba on 23 February and artist Tom Roberts on 14 September. In England, cricketer Donald Bradman scored 334 runs, establishing a new test record; and the first England to Australia air mail was despatched from London on 14 April. And during that same year, William Cathcart was invited to Adelaide by Hines Retchford and J.E.Rieschick who, evidently now disillusioned by Van Eyk, thought they would try again. Together with Jack and Emily Emes, they raised the money for his travel expenses.<sup>27</sup>

Cathcart arrived in Adelaide in January 1932.<sup>28</sup> Only eight people attended the first meeting in Wyatt House in Grenfell Street, but numbers quickly grew.<sup>29</sup> A series of six crowded Sunday night services in the Adelaide Town Hall resulted in a new church being born. People from the two existing Pentecostal congregations joined the Apostolic Church — including local leaders Retchford, Rieschick, Norman Priest and Robert Davis.<sup>30</sup>

In 1931, the Missionary Council in England appointed the warm-hearted and well-liked Joshua McCabe (b.1903) of Edinburgh as a prophet to Australia. Cathcart welcomed the new arrival in Perth in January 1932, and they preached together for several weeks. Soon 200 people were attending regularly and

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<sup>26</sup> RE 1:4 September 1933, p.57f.

<sup>27</sup> *Souvenir Exhibiting the Movement of God in the Apostolic Church*; W.Cathcart, *To Glory from Gloom* Dallas: Christian Communications Trust, 1976, pp.123f; A.G. and F.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990.

<sup>28</sup> AH 1:8 May 1932, p.2.

<sup>29</sup> These were Hines Retchford, J.Rieschick, 'Dad' and Dora Allen, Frederick and Elsie Fleming and their daughters Doreen and Marjorie. See Marjorie Hurst (nee Fleming), personal interview, 14 August 1991. Note that Apostolic records generally quote ten as the number in attendance.

<sup>30</sup> E.Watson claimed that 70 people left one of these churches (personal interview).

McCabe hired the Perth Town Hall for a special series of meetings. There were more converts and new members. Shortly after, yet another of the original Pentecostal groups joined the Apostolics. Before long new assemblies were opened in Victoria Park, Claremont and Fremantle.

Meanwhile Cathcart returned to Adelaide, where a garage in Pulteney Street, once used as a Bible Christian chapel, was purchased, renovated, renamed Zion Temple and opened on 30 October, 1932. Some 200 people were in regular attendance. People who were materially poor were 'rich in spiritual goods,' wrote Cathcart. 'People came in old vintage cars, bicycles galore, sometimes a horse and buggy or two, and some took the old way of walking to the services — some for miles — but who cares when revival comes!'<sup>31</sup> Local assemblies were also established in suburban and country areas.

Soon, bearing in mind a prophecy that Melbourne, Victoria, would be the headquarters of the Apostolic Church, Cathcart left for that city and McCabe moved to Adelaide. In 1936, the Draper Memorial Church building in Gilbert Street was purchased and renamed Zion Tabernacle. It became the home of the Apostolics for over thirty years.<sup>32</sup> A.S.Dickson, an apostle from England, took over the work in Perth.

Cathcart's planned his strategy like a military campaign — an advance was made; ground taken; reinforcements brought in; the ground secured; another advance; and so on. To the Apostolics it was the result of a plan 'prophetically revealed' to McCabe and Cathcart while they were together in Perth. It was 'Divine in concept, prophetic in revelation, manifestly blessed and honoured by God and... scripturally sound in precedent and pattern.'<sup>33</sup>

Cathcart arrived in Melbourne knowing no one except a Daniel Llewellyn, a solitary 'isolated member' from Wales.<sup>34</sup> 'I spent long hours in prayer,' he recalled later. 'My habit was to pray 6-8 hours a day. When I went out in

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<sup>31</sup> Cathcart, 1976, p.124.

<sup>32</sup> AH 1:6 October 1936, pp.88f. The Draper Memorial Church was named after the renowned Methodist evangelist Daniel Draper. See Hunt, 1984, p.40.

<sup>33</sup> Gardiner, 1989, p.15; *Acts* '90 March 1990, p.14.

ministry I would pray all morning.'<sup>35</sup> He hired the Protestant Hall and began to give Bible Studies. Claude Gadge (b.1907), an accomplished trumpeter and singer, became his associate minister and soon established an orchestra.<sup>36</sup> As it became obvious Cathcart was not just passing through, the numbers climbed to 100 on week nights and around 300 on Sundays. On Easter Sunday 1933, the first communion service was held, with 160 in attendance.<sup>37</sup>

Cathcart generally emphasised two themes — church government through apostles and prophets and the second coming of Christ. The Apostolic Church Tenets contained just eight words on the latter theme,<sup>38</sup> but it loomed large in Cathcart's preaching.<sup>39</sup> He was concerned about the Jews and their grip on world finances, and believed the Antichrist might already be alive on the earth.<sup>40</sup> He saw indications that 'so far as the signs of the times are concerned, the end of this age seems to be absolutely at the doors' but was careful to point out that God could extend the 'era of prosperity' and that He had 'veiled the exact

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<sup>34</sup> C.Gadge, personal interview, 2 March 1992.

<sup>35</sup> Cathcart's devotion to prayer was recognised by others. One of his associates recalled, 'He would do all the praying — he would pray through the day.' (A.G. and F.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990. Another said, 'He was a great prayer warrior ... he would pray all day.' P.Grant, personal interview, 1988.

<sup>36</sup> Llewellyn knew Gadge and suggested Cathcart approach him. Gadge's father Stanley had been the first to welcome Valdez to Melbourne and the family had been involved in Good News Hall and the Sunshine revival. Later he became a presiding elder of the Apostolic Church. C.Gadge, personal interview, 2 March 1992; RE 1:1 June 1933, p.8.

<sup>37</sup> Clearly many of these people had come from other congregations. The Apostolics made much of the fact that Cathcart had no existing organisation to initiate the work and that he had not engaged in evangelism but had undertaken the hard pioneering work of gathering a band of believers who would form the nucleus of a new church. See RE 1:1 1933, p.4. Inevitably, this was to create disquiet in the existing churches.

<sup>38</sup> 'His (ie Christ's) Second Coming and Millennial reign on earth.'

<sup>39</sup> As Sarah Jane Lancaster had done before him, he tended to anchor his preaching in contemporary world events. In Adelaide on 23 September 1934, he spoke on, 'The Coming Age-end Climax' and asked the question, 'Will the imperialistic war cloud in the West and the democratic war cloud in the East meet over Palestine before 1936?' He prophesied the hardening of Nazism and Fascism in the West and the awakening of China in the East.

<sup>40</sup> Most Pentecostals believed that just prior to the return of Christ, the Antichrist would appear as a world ruler who would oppose everything godly and institute a rule of terror. See GN 18:9 September 1927, p.15; 19:9 September 1928, p.7; RE 2:3 August 1934, 43ff; RE 2:12 May 1935, pp.223ff..

moment.’ However, he still thought the Second Coming was possible ‘within the lifetime of most of us here.’<sup>41</sup>

A report on the opening of Zion Tabernacle in Adelaide, in August, 1936, states that ‘two outstanding addresses... on the Second Coming of the Lord’ were delivered by Cathcart who was ‘well known as an able exponent of this truth’ and the church, which seated several hundred people, was ‘packed on each occasion, all listening with rapt attention as the speaker showed from the Scriptures how European affairs were dovetailing into the prophecies of the Word of God.’<sup>42</sup>

Cathcart prepared a huge chart, said to be nearly twelve metres long, and 2.5 metres high, which outlined in graphic form the destiny of mankind from Creation to Culmination through five phases — Divine Intervention, Divine Intention, Divine Provision, Divine Possession and Divine Consummation.<sup>43</sup> ‘To give a description of this chart,’ continued the report, ‘is out of the question, as to be appreciated, it must be seen.’ In the chart, Cathcart suggested that the Return of Christ might happen about the year AD 2120, but he was not dogmatic about it.<sup>44</sup>

### **John Henry Hewitt**

In 1933, John Henry Hewitt (1900-1962), a huge, jovial Welshman, came to Melbourne. He was ‘full of bounce and energy’. His preaching was lively and people responded readily to him.<sup>45</sup> In May 1933, Cathcart and Hewitt began a campaign in the Protestant Hall which they were soon forced to transfer to the 1,900-seat Collins Street Melbourne Auditorium for Sunday nights.<sup>46</sup> Thirty

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<sup>41</sup> RE 2:10 March 1935, pp.189, 192ff.

<sup>42</sup> ‘The Opening of Zion Tabernacle, Adelaide,’ AH 1:6 October, 1936, pp.89.

<sup>43</sup> F. Watson, interview, n.d.; K. Kirwan, interview, 11 September 1991. I have a photocopy of a smaller hand-copied version of Cathcart’s chart, prepared by the late John Kirwan, a member of the Adelaide congregation.

<sup>44</sup> This date is given on the chart with a question mark.

<sup>45</sup> K. Kirwan, personal interview, 11 September 1991. See Appendix Ten for Hewitt’s background.

<sup>46</sup> RE 1:1 June 1933, pp.6ff. Further details of the Melbourne meetings are from this source unless otherwise stated.

thousand flyers were printed and distributed; a team of volunteers was organised; three 15-metre red and blue banners bearing Scripture texts such as, 'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever' were hung in the hall. Over 1000 people attended the first meeting. The campaign was characterised by bright singing, led by the evangelist's younger brother Isaac (1911-1977), simple, direct preaching and prayer for the sick. On the opening night, 25 people responded to Hewitt's invitation to confess Christ and about 100 sought laying on of hands for healing. Within six weeks, there were no empty seats. Dozens of handkerchiefs were prayed over and sent to the absent suffering.<sup>47</sup> As the campaign continued, there were impressive testimonies of healing. A sixteen-year-old girl claimed that the sight had been restored in a blind eye. A lame man walked unaided. A little boy whose body was twisted and emaciated showed dramatic improvement. A woman deaf for eighteen years was able to hear. Others testified to healing from asthma, deafness, 'internal trouble', insomnia, blindness of 35 years standing and nervous disorder.

The outstanding healing was that of Ensign H.Jenkins of the Salvation Army who for nine years had used a walking stick, crutches or a wheel chair. A week later she gave a public testimony and walked around the platform to enthusiastic applause from the people. The Salvation Army's *War Cry* was careful not to give away too much, but commented, 'Ensign H.Jenkins who has been an invalid for some years, having to be wheeled everywhere in a chair, was miraculously cured recently, and is now walking about with comfort. Praise God!'<sup>48</sup> On 18 June, the final night, Jenkins again gave her testimony, 56 people responded to an invitation to become Christians and Hewitt personally prayed for 120 sick people. A number of clergymen endorsed the campaign. Hewitt was admired as an outstanding evangelist<sup>49</sup> whose preaching was simple and direct.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> See Chapter Six for details of this practice at Good News Hall.

<sup>48</sup> *War Cry* 13 May 1933 quoted in RE 1:1 June 1933, p.9. Jenkins, later Mrs McFarlane, continued in good health for twenty years until she was killed in a road accident in New South Wales — A. Gardiner, 'A History of the Apostolic Church,' in *Acts '90* October 1990, p.15.

<sup>49</sup> 'He was THE evangelist. He was fantastic,' — A.Turner, interview, 21 November 1990.

<sup>50</sup> The following extract is a useful example — 'It would be no good to show one that he is a sinner, if I could not show a way of escape; and be able to point to One Who is able to save:

The first issue of the new Apostolic magazine *Revival Echoes* carried the excited if overstated two-page banner headline: 'Melbourne in the Grip of a Revival.' A month later it shouted, 'Melbourne Miraculously Moved — Revival Unabated,' with subheadings, '700 Decisions for Christ; 2,300 prayed for; Hundreds healed; Baptismal services conducted; Conclusive Proof the Day of Miracles is Not Yet Past'; and 'Church established in Bible Fashion.'<sup>51</sup>

This latter comment was significant. On Sunday 4 June, at a Breaking of Bread service, 107 people decided to join the new church, with another 40 following their lead over the next fortnight. And Joshua McCabe, who had come from Adelaide for the occasion, prophetically called a number of people into office as elders, evangelists and deacons. On 6 July, Cathcart and his wife and two sons were welcomed to Melbourne where they had now moved permanently.<sup>52</sup> After several months of frustration in finding a suitable meeting place, the Church secured a former Salvation Army building since converted into a theatre, with seating accommodation for 1,300 people. They renovated the premises and, on 12 August, opened the new Coventry Street Temple, the Headquarters of the Apostolic Church in Australia.<sup>53</sup> Having now refurbished three buildings, the Apostolics saw themselves fulfilling a prophecy which had been given in Adelaide that God would use them to rebuild broken altars.<sup>54</sup> Six years later, on Good Friday, 7 April 1939, they opened their own building in Punt Road, Richmond, a relatively short distance from C.L.Greenwood's Richmond

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but Thank God we have One to whom to point... Oh, it is a glorious thing to know when you find yourself a lost, undone sinner, on your way to Hell, that there is One that tells you the way of escape... Where are we to go and wash? To the Fountain of Calvary. Oh, believe that Jesus Christ and his blood cleanseth us from all sin... Jesus... is the Divine Healer. I praise God that we believe, in the Apostolic Church, that he is the Healer... I believe that our Lord (as He is the very same Jesus) can do miracles of healing physically. And He can heal spiritual blindness! Because that is the biggest miracle — *to get you and I [sic] saved!*' — RE 2:6-7 November-December 1934, pp.130-131. See also Chant, 1984, pp.335ff.

<sup>51</sup> RE 1:2 July 1933, pp.22f. In May 1936, the name of the magazine changed to *Apostolic Herald* to bring it into line with the international Apostolic publication. In 1941 it became *Herald of Grace*. See RE 3:10 March 1936, p.182.

<sup>52</sup> RE 1:3 August 1933, p.39.

<sup>53</sup> RE 1:4 September 1933, pp.51f.

<sup>54</sup> RE 1:4 September 1933, p.53.

Temple.<sup>55</sup> It was there, later that year, that fifteen-year-old Leo Hart was baptised in the Holy Spirit. 'I used to cycle (there) every Saturday afternoon... to attend a 'Tarry Meeting' as I was thirsty, desperately thirsty,' he wrote 47 years later. His thirst was satisfied and ultimately he was recognised as an apostle.<sup>56</sup> Among those who joined the Apostolics was a Brethren woman named Marion Hart who was baptised in the Holy Spirit in 1934 and for more than 30 years, as 'Aunt Marion', wrote a regular children's column in the various church periodicals.<sup>57</sup>

Meanwhile, Hewitt had moved on to Adelaide where rallies were held in the Adelaide Town Hall and he preached to capacity crowds of 2,000 or so. There were some 500 conversions and two baptismal services were held in the Town Hall when 39 people were immersed.<sup>58</sup> Among them was Philip George Joyder Lovell (b.1914), who would later be the first Australian President of the Apostolic Church, and his wife Muriel.<sup>59</sup>

Hewitt prayed simply with people for healing, either with laying on of hands or anointing with oil — just a couple of drops on the forehead.<sup>60</sup> There were reports that cripples walked, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, a lame girl was healed, cancers disappeared and bedfast people got up well. A woman who could not normally stay on a chair for more than a few minutes sat and listened to Hewitt for two hours and was cured.<sup>61</sup> Others recovered gradually.<sup>62</sup> Hewitt was asked to officiate at the funeral of a woman dying of cancer. He visited her in hospital, prayed for her and told the family she would

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<sup>55</sup> 'Apostolic Church Melbourne Opening Ceremony' brochure, 7 April 1939.

<sup>56</sup> L.Hart, *Journey with Jesus*, published by the author, 1986, p.5.

<sup>57</sup> M.Hart, *I Remember*, published by the author, 1983. The first column appeared in RE 1:10 March 1934, p.172.

<sup>58</sup> RE 1:4 September 1933, pp.56ff.

<sup>59</sup> Lovell, had been searching for God for twelve months. One day his employer, a Seventh Day Adventist, told him how he had attended a 'strange sort of meeting' where a little deaf girl had been healed. He himself had tested her hearing. Lovell went to see for himself. It was a John Hewitt rally and there he found what he was looking for. See P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991.

<sup>60</sup> A.G.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990.

<sup>61</sup> F.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990.

not die. She did die — but not until thirty years later.<sup>63</sup> ‘There was a consciousness of the presence of God I’ve never known since,’ recalled Phil Lovell.<sup>64</sup> ‘Adelaide Amazed, Critics Confounded,’ declared *Revival Echoes*.<sup>65</sup>

Extra seating accommodation was found for the regular services at Zion Temple. On 30 July, the campaign concluded and Hewitt moved on to Perth. Earlier that day, about 175 people attended a communion service at the Temple and 30 people were accepted into membership. McCabe, now back from Melbourne, prophesied 29 people into office. Over succeeding weeks, there were more conversions and more baptisms in water and in the Spirit.<sup>66</sup> In Perth, as in Adelaide, hundreds of people attended Hewitt’s rallies in the Unity Theatre. There were some 650 converts. People testified to healing from cancer, deafness, lameness (a lad with leg irons no longer needed them) and blindness.<sup>67</sup>

Meanwhile, growth in Adelaide continued with new people being added almost daily to the church. Teenagers Frank Elton and his friend, rode their motor cycles past the Apostolic Church one night in 1934, decided to investigate, and went in with no intention of staying. But Frank turned to the Lord.<sup>68</sup>

Like their Pentecostal brothers, the Apostolics eschewed the things of the world. The *Guiding Principles* of the Church noted that cleanliness, modest apparel and neatness were appropriate for witnesses to Christ.<sup>69</sup> Women were not permitted to attend meetings wearing makeup or jewellery and had to don

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<sup>62</sup> RE 1:3 August 1933, pp.40f.

<sup>63</sup> A.G.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990.

<sup>64</sup> P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991.

<sup>65</sup> RE 1:3 August 1933, pp.40f.

<sup>66</sup> RE 1:4 August 1933, p.58.

<sup>67</sup> RE 1:5 October 1933, pp.72f.

<sup>68</sup> F.Elton, interview, 11 September 1991.

<sup>69</sup> *Principles and Practice*, 1939, ‘Guiding Principles’ 15:6.

hats in church. In Adelaide, if a woman didn't have a hat they would supply a handkerchief! Smoking, drinking, theatres and dances were all forbidden.<sup>70</sup>

The Adelaide Apostolic Church weekly calendar was full. Every day of the week was provided for —

Sunday 11 am — Breaking of Bread

Sunday 3 pm — Divine Healing

Sunday 7 pm — Full Gospel Meeting

First Monday of each month 7.45 pm — Missionary Meeting

Tuesday 7.45 pm — United Meeting Apostolic Worship

Wednesday 7.45 pm — Apostolic Witnesses

Thursday 3 pm — Divine Healing

Friday — Open Air Meeting

Saturday 3 pm — Tarrying

Saturday 7.45 pm — Gospel Rally<sup>71</sup>

Such a program was normative for many early Apostolic churches.<sup>72</sup> One wonders how the people found time for anything else. But after the exciting launching of the church through the Cathcart and Hewitt campaigns, there was a tide of momentum that carried them along with it.

Overall, the numbers were still relatively small. More than 200 people attended the first Sunday morning worship service in the new Zion Tabernacle. There were probably, at this time, about the same number at the Pentecostal Church and between 50 and 100 regular attenders at the Apostolic Mission.<sup>73</sup> There were also a handful of people in branch assemblies in the suburbs and the

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<sup>70</sup> M.Hurst, personal interview, 14 August 1991; K.Kirwan, personal interview, 11 September 1991.

<sup>71</sup> From a photo of the notice board at Jubilee Temple, c.1934. See also S.Russell, interview, 17 September 1991.

<sup>72</sup> Eg the Ballarat congregation conducted a similar program in 1937. See C.Crawford, 'The first ten years of the Apostolic Church, Ballarat,' unpublished essay, Adelaide: Tabor College, 1983.

<sup>73</sup> AE 8:3 July 1935, p.3. This report of a crowd at the Rechabite Chambers indicates a maximum attendance of about 300 at a special gathering, given the size of the building. See also the Apostolic Mission record book, Nov 1929 — July 1940; photo copy in my possession.

country areas.<sup>74</sup> By contrast, in the 1933 Census, 164,531 South Australians called themselves Anglicans, 127,978 claimed to be Methodists and there were 19,081 Baptists. Had the Pentecostals examined the Census figures, they might have been encouraged, however, to note that only 284 were recorded as Christian Brethren.<sup>75</sup>

## Reaction

The aspect of Apostolic practice that proved to be most controversial, was the role of 'set' prophets. The official documents are careful to point out that no prophetic calling was to be pursued without apostolic confirmation.<sup>76</sup> Yet in practice, this seemed to be forgotten at times. In Melbourne in June 1933, in one service the following occurred —

The Lord called His servant Ellis to be Assistant Pastor in Melbourne, 10 elders, 4 Local Evangelists, 9 Deacons and 6 Deaconesses, and these were ordained to office. After Pastor Hewitt had expounded on the Prophetical ministry, he laid his hands upon several officers who were called, ordaining them to their part in the Lord's work. Many who had never been in an ordination service before were filled with amazement and wonder, and many were heard to exclaim, 'We never saw it in this fashion.'<sup>77</sup>

Similarly, in Adelaide, two months later, 'the Lord proceeded to call a number of men and women into office' as McCabe named them as he prophesied. There was one assistant pastor, nine elders, eight deacons, one interpreter and ten deaconesses. Immediately, they knelt before Hewitt who laid hands on them and ordained them for their respective ministries.<sup>78</sup> Alan Geoffrey ('Dick') Bain (b.1910) recalled how he was called to be an evangelist in a meeting in Adelaide

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<sup>74</sup> eg Kadina, Hope Forest, Strathalbyn. See AE 1 8:2 May 1935, p.9; RE 2:11 April, 1935, p.210f.

<sup>75</sup> Vamplew (ed), 1987, p.424.

<sup>76</sup> Turnbull, 1959, p.178 — 'Many calls and changes have been made through the word received through the prophets, but it is not acted upon until it is first of all confirmed by the apostleship, who bear the final and first responsibility.' See also P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991 — 'The word of a prophet was never just taken... The word had to come to the apostleship.'

<sup>77</sup> RE 1:2 July 1933, pp.24,30.

when he was resident in Port Pirie. The prophet, who did not know anything about him, began, 'I am calling my servant who is at present in Port Pirie ...'<sup>79</sup>

No doubt Hewitt, as an apostle, felt he had the right to act promptly, but to others it seemed as if due consideration had not been given. Excited as many people were about it, some of those called were not in reality equipped for the allotted task. They might have been designated evangelists or elders but this did not make them so. Even worse, on occasion they were not even living consistent lives.<sup>80</sup>

Secondly, pastors of existing churches became understandably disturbed when members of their congregations were called into office in the Apostolic Church or were so attracted by the new ministry that they transferred their memberships. Years later an Apostolic historian claimed that by merging several congregations in Perth, the Church was promoting unity, not division.<sup>81</sup> Not everyone saw it that way. Charles Greenwood claimed that 65 of the 147 new Apostolics in Melbourne in 1933 had formerly been members at Richmond Temple.<sup>82</sup> The Foursquare church at Auburn lost most of their members.<sup>83</sup> About a third of the Pentecostals in Adelaide joined the new movement.<sup>84</sup>

Thirdly, some pastors left the Pentecostal Church of Australia or the Apostolic Faith Mission to become Apostolic. Norman Priest was a graduate of the Victorian Bible Institute. Robert Davis was a member at Good News Hall and an elder in the Pentecostal church in Adelaide. Cecil Harris and Len Jones had been Pentecostal pastors. George Dryden was formerly a Foursquare pastor. William Kay had been leading an independent church in Sydney.

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<sup>78</sup> RE 1:4 September 1933, p.57.

<sup>79</sup> A.G.Bain, personal interview, 20 August 1990.

<sup>80</sup> L.Harris, personal interview; GN 24:4-5 April-May 1933, pp.12f; S.Beaumont, 'Cyril Maskrey: former Apostolic pastor,' unpublished essay, Adelaide: Tabor College, 1986. On the other hand, according to Lovell, there were very few cases like this. P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991.

<sup>81</sup> Gardiner, 1989, p.15.

<sup>82</sup> Greenwood, *Life Story*, p.65.

<sup>83</sup> T.A.Bentley, personal correspondence, August 1994.

<sup>84</sup> L.Wahlquist, interview, 19 November 1991.

On the other hand, when Hewitt drew 2000 people to the Adelaide Town Hall only a few hundred of them at the most could have already been Pentecostal. The vast majority were either from traditional churches or no church. Furthermore, the Apostolics did not see themselves as setting out to target other Pentecostals<sup>85</sup> and there is evidence that Cathcart went out of his way to avoid enticing people from existing churches, on at least one occasion closing a campaign early when it began to happen.<sup>86</sup> The other Pentecostals were not convinced. For people who claimed to be filled with the Spirit, they responded with surprising acrimony. In Sydney, Philip Duncan, who also lost members to the new movement, wrote a tract entitled, 'The Blasphemous Lie of the Set Prophet,' in which he raised all these issues.<sup>87</sup> This pamphlet and another entitled 'The Apostolic Church Error' were both published in the *Australian Evangel*.<sup>88</sup> F.B. Van Eyk published a series of articles with the title, 'The Present Apostolic Church and Prophetic Delusion.' He began in plain terms—

The Apostles of old always seemed especially anxious not to build on other men's foundations (Rom 15:20) not to boast in another man's line of things ready to hand (1 Cor 10:6) but the present Apostolic movement in Australia seems to delight in

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<sup>85</sup> 'To my knowledge, there wasn't any attempt to persuade people to leave, but associated with this movement was this new doctrine ...' P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991.

<sup>86</sup> P.Lovell, personal interview, 6 September 1991.

<sup>87</sup> P.Duncan, 'The Blasphemous Lie of the Set Prophet,' pamphlet, n.d. but c.1934. Duncan did not mince matters — 'A new sect has arisen in our city claiming apostolic blessing and introducing a new form of church government, which is unscriptural in its origin and evil in its effect, yet, incredible though it seems, there are those who are guiled and ensnared in the lure of the new altar.

'Preliminary meetings are held until the 'SET PROPHET' arrives. In the church he speaks as the oracle of God, and his word is claimed to be as 'INFALLIBLE AS THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD.'

'This abominable and blasphemous assertion is received by many who allow themselves to be called into office as Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, etc., and are sent by the spoken 'Word of God' through the Prophet whither he demands...

'The spirits of Peter, Paul, Luther or Wesley shall rise in contemptuous judgement on these home-made apostles and pigmy [sic] prophets who presume to have divine right to establish from the unqualified — and often unsanctified — office in the Church, which call for dignity, experience and spiritual excellence.'

<sup>88</sup> AE 7:3 June 1934, p.9.

building on other men's labours; and indeed the whole of its work today in Australia stands upon the ruins of other Pentecostal churches.<sup>89</sup>

Van Eyk raised a succession of objections. Many prophecies which he had witnessed were nothing more than human invention. The use of the first person gave the prophecy divine authority yet the Apostolics taught that elders had a right to decide whether it was truly of God or not. Prophecies were being substituted for the Scriptures. It was God who appointed prophets (1 Corinthians 12:28), not man.<sup>90</sup> There was no single case in the whole of Scripture where anyone was called to office by prophecy. Indeed, if this was how people were called, why did Paul go to such lengths to detail the required characteristics of church leaders? In Acts 13:2 there was no indication of how the Holy Spirit spoke — it may or may not have been through prophets.<sup>91</sup> When prophets tried to direct Paul he ignored their advice and proceeded according to his own leading (Acts 21:1ff). Much harm was caused by recording prophecies — it lent them undue authority. The gift of prophecy was often displayed through inspired preaching where it was of greater significance. When elders were appointed in first century churches (Acts 14:23) it was by the raising of hands, as in voting. In the first Church Council in Jerusalem, where there was much discussion (Acts 15:1ff) why did no prophet simplify the process by telling them the mind of the Lord? And how could a prophet call someone to office who was brought home drunk a few days later? Van Eyk stressed that he firmly believed in both prophets and prophecies, but not in the regimented Apostolic way.<sup>92</sup>

*Good News* warned against listening to false prophets and assumed apostles.<sup>93</sup> Another person claimed the Apostolics would come 'as sure as crow to carcass'

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<sup>89</sup> F.B. Van Eyk, 'The Present Apostolic Church and their Prophetic Delusion,' GC 3:2 August 1934, p.20.

<sup>90</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:28 — 'And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...' (AV).

<sup>91</sup> Acts 13:2 — 'As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them' (AV).

<sup>92</sup> Van Eyk, 'GC 3:2 August 1934, pp.20ff, 3:3 September-October 1934, pp.45ff.

<sup>93</sup> GN 24:4-5 April-May 1933, pp.12f.

to take over an existing church.<sup>94</sup> A decade later Leo Harris published a booklet entitled, *Church Government — Babylonian or Biblical?* which was clearly directed at Apostolic teaching.<sup>95</sup>

Stung by the many criticisms, and hurt by the viciousness of some of them, the Apostolic Church's Commonwealth Council thoroughly examined the question of 'governmental prophecy'.<sup>96</sup> They expressed their unanimous belief that Paul and Barnabas had been called by prophecy to the work of apostleship (Acts 13:1ff)<sup>97</sup> and that there had been prophetic input in the first Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:28); that Judas and Silas had exercised 'direct prophetic ministry' (Acts 15:32); that prophecies of directive nature were recorded elsewhere in Acts (20:23 and 21:4); and that the prophecies given to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:18; 4:14) were 'of a revealing, instructive and encouraging nature.' Nevertheless, they admitted that there was insufficient biblical evidence to assert that callings to the 'ascension gifts'<sup>98</sup> should be made only through prophecy. On the other hand, despite the difficulties they had faced, they 'emphatically' reaffirmed their belief in 'prophetic ministry through ordained and approved channels,' remembering that both Scripture and their own experience made it plain that no prophetic ministry and no prophet was infallible as there was always the possibility of the human element being present. Furthermore, there was ample evidence that New Testament apostles were often led by direct revelation (eg Acts 27:22ff; 2 Corinthians 12:1ff; Galatians 2:1ff).<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Quoted by T.A.Bentley, personal communication, August 1994.

<sup>95</sup> L.Harris, *Church Government — Babylonian or Biblical?* published by the author, n.d.

<sup>96</sup> *Minutes of the Commonwealth Council of the Apostolic Church*, 22 October 1941 to 27 November 1941, Items 38-40A. Although these minutes are dated 1941, they clearly reflect discussions which had been taking place for some time.

<sup>97</sup> The following biblical references are not quoted as they are sufficiently explained in the text.

<sup>98</sup> ie apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers — Ephesians 4:7-11.

<sup>99</sup> There were also allegations that there was collusion between apostles and prophets beforehand. Every Apostolic person I have interviewed has resolutely denied this eg A.Turner, interview, 21 November 1990; A.G.Bain, interview, 20 August 1990.

They concluded by reaffirming their belief in the Tenets of the Apostolic Church<sup>100</sup> but admitting that their dependence on prophecy had not had 'the fullest Scriptural support' and that in some cases results had not justified their expectations. They believed that it was 'essential to the welfare and progress of the Apostolic Church' that a sound biblical balance be maintained between the functioning of apostles and prophets and they insisted that all future prophetic ministry should conform to biblical standards.

However, the controversy had done its work and there was a significant falling away. Len Jones, formerly of Richmond Temple, joined the Apostolics for a short time, but later withdrew and for a time worked with F.B. Van Eyk.<sup>101</sup> Cyril Maskrey, an apostle who had come from Scotland in 1935, became disenchanted not only with Apostolic doctrines, but with Pentecostalism generally, and wrote a treatise against it.<sup>102</sup> Similarly, pastors Priest, Davis, Cameron, Harris, Taylor and, surprisingly, even Cathcart himself left the Church.<sup>103</sup>

### Consolidation

Over the next decade, the Apostolics consolidated their work in Australia. At a conference in Adelaide, through the words of McCabe, one apostle, two State Prophets, four elders and one local evangelist were called to office. Then Cathcart prophesied that Hewitt was to go to New South Wales for a short time and McCabe was to be the State Pastor for Victoria. Cathcart and Hewitt were both called to 'Commonwealth ministry.' A week later, in Melbourne, three

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<sup>100</sup> In any case, there was no possibility of changing the tenets as the Constitution declared, 'The Confession of Faith as set out herein shall for ever be the doctrinal standard of the Apostolic Church, and shall not be subject to any change in any way whatsoever' — *Constitution* Chapter 3:2.

<sup>101</sup> 'The Reason Why Len Jones Resigned from the Apostolic Church,' GC 3:3 September-October 1934, p.43.

<sup>102</sup> C.Maskrey, *The Pentecostal Error*, Strathpine: Evangelistic Literature Enterprise, (1953), 1987.

<sup>103</sup> Chant, 1984,187f; J.McCabe, 'A Man, sent from God, Whose name was John,' *Herald of Grace* 21:4 July-August 1962, pp.74ff; D.Cathcart, personal interview, 13 September 1993. Cathcart left because he was persuaded by Thomas Foster to accept British Israelism, not necessarily because he was disenchanted with Apostolic practice. He joined Leo Harris in his

new apostles, a State Prophet for Victoria, two pastors and an evangelist were called through another McCabe prophecy. 'The Lord also spoke forming a Commonwealth Council composed of the seven Apostles and Prophets McCabe and Priest.'<sup>104</sup> In order to free Cathcart and Hewitt from administrative ties, It was also decided to ask the British Church to send a skilled administrator and as a result Alex Gardiner and his family arrived in October 1934 and he was appointed President of the Church.<sup>105</sup>

Cathcart now visited Wellington, New Zealand, where he had 'phenomenal success' and where he was later assisted by both Isaac and John Hewitt. After this, Hewitt visited New South Wales and before long seven separate congregations decided to join the Apostolic Church. Hewitt then pioneered an assembly in Brisbane and held campaigns in other cities. Davey Jack established new works in Tasmania. On one occasion, Hewitt was about to fly to Tasmania when there was a word of prophecy advising him to journey 'by way of the sea, and not by way of the air.' He cancelled his flight and sailed south. The plane crashed on which he was booked.<sup>106</sup> By the end of 1934, there were churches in every State of Australia and in New Zealand. All in all, some 40 congregations were established in Australia.<sup>107</sup>

That year, their Centenary Convention celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the State of Victoria. With orchestra, choir, apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors, teachers and people celebrating together, it was a momentous event.<sup>108</sup> While the populace generally were crowding the new and flourishing cinemas, where images of Rudolph Valentino, Charlie Chaplin, Boris Karloff and Mary Pickford filled the screen, or cheering their local Australian

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newly formed National Revival Crusade. Ultimately, Cathcart settled in the USA. T.Foster, personal interview; Chant, 1984, pp. 187f.

<sup>104</sup> RE 1:6 November 1933, pp.88,91.

<sup>105</sup> Gardiner, 1990, p.15.

<sup>106</sup> Gardiner, 1990, p.15.

<sup>107</sup> RE 2:6-7 November-December 1934, pp132ff; J.McCabe, personal interview, 1990; Gardiner, February 1991, p.14.

<sup>108</sup> RE 2:6-7 November-December 1934, pp107, 118.

football team on Saturday afternoons in a year that would see Richmond win the Victorian premiership, the Apostolics found their joy in the Lord —

What a sense of the immediate presence of God filled our hearts as we sat in His presence. His Word came forth in the power of the Holy Ghost... At the close of the service the Glory of the Lord came upon us and throughout the day we felt in the secret of His presence... The ministry of the Word was very edifying. Some accuse the Apostolic Church of having nothing but prophecy but any intelligent thinker... must have been impressed by the lucid, edifying and instructive messages...

At times many were literally dancing with joy as the Glory of the Lord fell upon them; whilst at other times the Lord filled our mouths with laughter. The shouts of joy and praise resounded and re-echoed through the Temple from time to time... whilst at other times our spirits were hushed and mellowed as we realised the presence of Jesus...<sup>109</sup>

In 1935, Hewitt returned to England and two years later joined Cathcart and his brother Isaac in South Africa to pioneer there.<sup>110</sup>

At the memorial service to John Hewitt, 'Dick' Bain spoke prophetically —

My servant could have taken a line of labour that would pay handsomely in the natural and many a time My servant could have had leisure hours but rather he chose to use his knowledge in the purposes of God.

He would not accept deliverance from the wearisome demands of the every day experiences in My will but rather with delight he chose to go the way of the Cross...

I am putting before the lives of the young at this time that they, too, will consider the path, and weigh it well, that they will take before the Lord.<sup>111</sup>

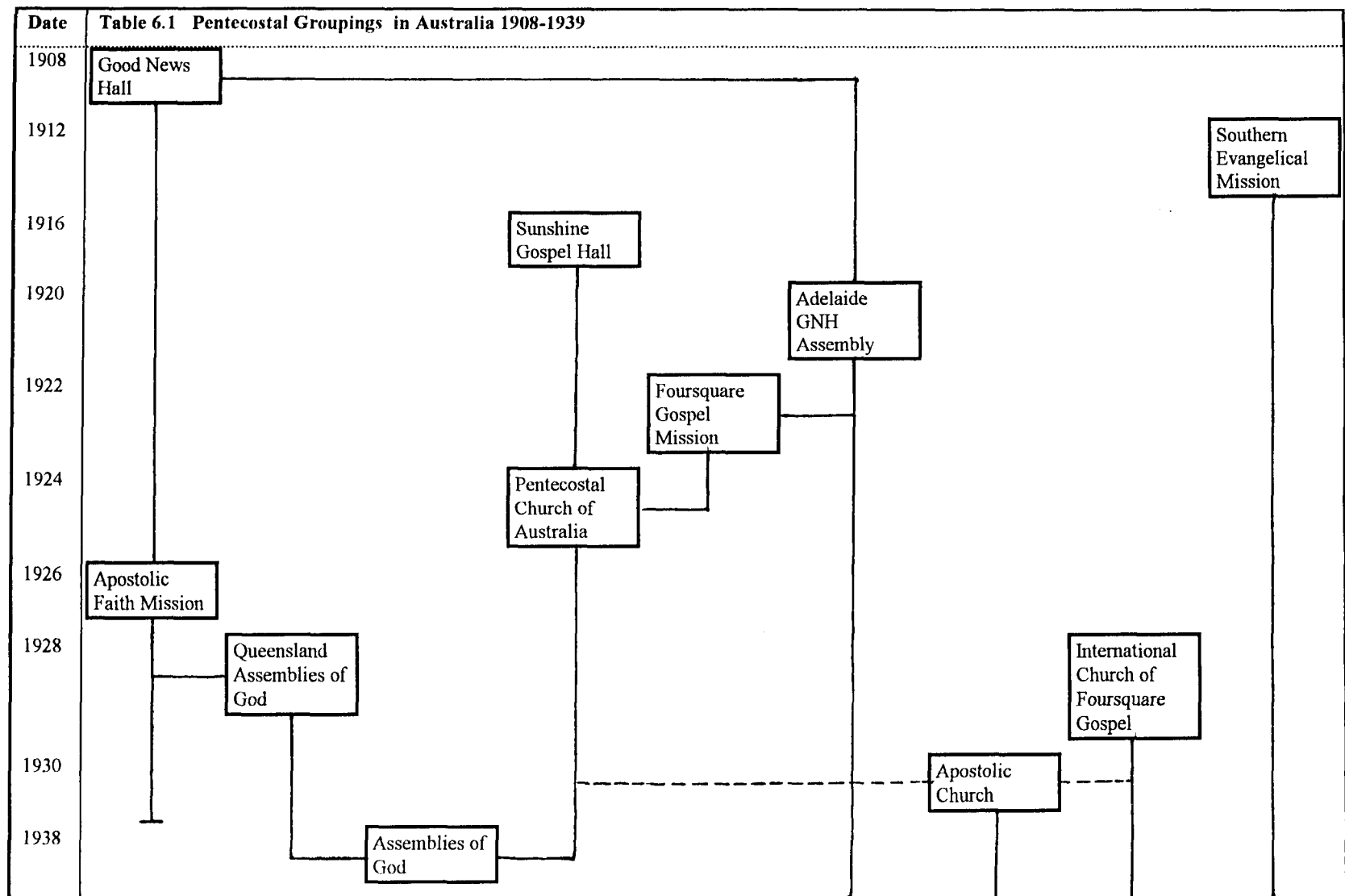
It was a fitting tribute.

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<sup>109</sup> RE 1:12 May 1934, pp.204f.

<sup>110</sup> Gardiner, 1990, p.15; 1991, p.14.

<sup>111</sup> A.G.Bain, 'On Being God's Ploughman,' HG 21:4, July-August 1962, pp.81f.



The emergence of the Apostolic Church in Australia represented an interesting model of what may happen within a movement committed to an experiential model of spirituality. There are both advantages and disadvantages. There are many positive factors. People are excited and enthused about their faith. They are often dedicated and committed to a sacrificial life style. They are unashamed about their beliefs. They tend to adopt conservative values and to emphasise traditional mores of family and community life. On the other hand, they can become unhealthily dogmatic. The certainty infused by one's own experience can create an unhealthy rejection of the experiences of others.<sup>112</sup>

The reaction of existing Pentecostal leaders to the Apostolic teaching was the clash of one set of certainties with another. Both sides saw their position as being vindicated by Scripture. There is no doubt that the effect of growing or declining memberships was also a primary factor. The real problem was not that each side had its own set of values but that they saw them as mutually exclusive and that they allowed them to become causes of bitterness and disaffection. As a result, for years the various Pentecostal groups generally refused to work together, which clearly hindered the development of the movement. While there were some mergers and transfers, they were usually at the expense of an existing group (see Table 10.1).

Today, Apostolic and Assemblies of God leaders sit around the table together, engage in united activities and accept one another's ministers.<sup>113</sup> The old issues have now been resolved and forgotten. Perhaps something was learned from history after all. Or perhaps the spirit of Pentecost was now fluid enough to run between several sets of banks without diminishing the flow.

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<sup>112</sup> 'I know the futility of trying to have a biblical discussion with those who are excited by some new experience and who resent any questioning of its validity' — C.Hill, 'Breaking the Mould,' *Renewal* #259 Crowborough, Sussex, December 1997, p.5.

<sup>113</sup> Personal knowledge. The Australian Pentecostal Ministers' Fellowship Steering Committee, for example, meets at least annually and represents all the major Pentecostal groups in the nation.



**Isabella Hetherington (c.1929)**  
— I.Hetherington, *Aboriginal Queen of Song*, 1929

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### OBEYING THE SPIRIT

#### Pentecostal ministry to the Aborigines (1905-1939)

From the earliest days, Pentecostals emphasised foreign missions. For them, the reason the Spirit had come was to empower them to be Christ's witnesses to 'the uttermost parts of the earth'.<sup>1</sup> Less than five years after the opening of Good News Hall there were Australian Pentecostal missionaries in India; before long they were in Japan, Hong Kong, China and South Africa as well.<sup>2</sup>

Nor were the Australian Aborigines neglected.<sup>3</sup> From the earliest days, there were several remarkable pioneering efforts by a few bold individuals, although formal Aboriginal Missions were not established until the 1940s — in places like Jigalong, Western Australia, where the Apostolic Church worked for a

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 1:8 — 'But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth' (AV)

<sup>2</sup> GN 1:5 January 1913, pp.8ff; 1:6 October 1913, p.20; 19:10 October 1928, pp.16f; 21:3 March 1930, p.16; 21:5 May 1930, p.16; July 21:7 1930, p.15; 21:11 November 1930, p.13; 22:5 May 1931, p.14. In this thesis, I have concentrated on Pentecostal activities in Australia; the subject of Pentecostal foreign missions is extensive and warrants a separate study.

<sup>3</sup> In contemporary usage, it is usual to use the adjective *Aboriginal* as a singular noun and *Aborigines* as the plural noun. However, *Aboriginal Australian* and *Indigenous Australian* are also recommended, especially when Torres Strait Islander peoples are included. In South Eastern Australia, the term *Koori* has become common for Aboriginal people in that area. See *Style Manual* Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service, 1994, p.40; T.Rowse, 'Aboriginal nomenclature,' in Davison et al (eds), 1999, p.10.

quarter of a century (1945-1969) and Daintree, Queensland, a work established by the Assemblies of God.<sup>4</sup>

In this chapter, the dedicated and courageous work of Isabella Hetherington and Ernest and Euphemia Kramer will be considered. Kramer and Hetherington were immigrants who developed a profound love for their new country and who gave themselves sacrificially to Aboriginal communities. Both pioneered new works and proved to be innovative and self-reliant, often forging ahead with little or no support from either people or churches. Both were self-taught, having no formal missionary or theological training, but confident in their own knowledge of the Scriptures, their love for the people they served and the power of the Holy Spirit who had empowered them. Both worked in remote areas, well removed from obvious or easily accessible means of support.

### **Isabella Hetherington**

The saintly Isabella Hetherington (c.1870-1946) devoted forty years of her life to ministry among Aborigines. Her compassion, dedication and determination won her respect and admiration from Christians and non-Christians alike. Initially in the southern States and in later years in Queensland, she exemplified biblical Christianity and courageous human endeavour.

A 33-year-old Irish nurse, Hetherington migrated to Australia on medical advice, after the death of both her parents. Her only brother had died through tuberculosis during her infancy. She arrived on 24 December 1903, and settled in Ballarat, Victoria.<sup>5</sup> Originally working as a governess for a doctor and his

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<sup>4</sup> In both of these cases, it took at least fifteen years from the founding of the movement concerned to the establishing of a formal ministry to Aborigines. Given that it was 33 years after settlement before the first Christian missionary endeavour to Aborigines took place in Australia, that the Methodist Church, for example, had no denominational Aboriginal missionary program from 1855 until 1916 and that the Churches of Christ Federal Aborigines Mission Board was only formed in 1941, this was, by comparison, a reasonably prompt response to the need for ministry among Aborigines. See Harris, 1990, p.181, 21, 801; See R.Guy, *Baptised Among Crocodiles*, unpublished paper, 1998, pp.184, 254ff, 348f; J.Easton, personal communication, 6 February 1995; interview 24 February 1995; S.Cowling, personal communication, 23 June 1992, 6 October, 1992, 17 February 1993, J.Turnbull, personal communication, June 1991; Aborigine Rescue Mission News and Prayer Letter, 1:1 10 April 1946.

<sup>5</sup> I.Hetherington, *Aboriginal Queen of Sacred Song* Melbourne: Saxton and Buckie, 1929, p. 7. Further details are from this source unless otherwise stated. Generally, specific sources on

family,<sup>6</sup> she had a deep desire ‘to go and succour others’ who suffered as her family had suffered — especially the Australian Aborigines, about whose privations she had heard while still in Ireland. She had also been told that they were ‘only Australian blacks’ and virtually beyond redemption, a view held in the days of the early nineteenth century chaplain Samuel Marsden — who described the indigenous Australians as ‘the most degraded of the human race’ and did not believe they were ready or able to receive the gospel<sup>7</sup> — and still being repeated by others a century later.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, this belief was seen to justify much of the abuse and slaughter of Aborigines in the nineteenth century. The compassionate Congregational missionary Lancelot Threlkeld wrote —

It was maintained by many of the colony that the blacks had no language at all but were only a race of the monkey tribe. This was a convenient assumption, for if it could be proved that the Aborigines... were only a species of wild beasts, there could be no guilt attributed to those who shot them off or poisoned them.<sup>9</sup>

The growing popularity of Darwinian theories only served to consolidate this view: Aborigines were plainly lower down on the evolutionary scale. It was as simple as that.<sup>10</sup>

Hetherington was determined to prove this assessment wrong. In several ways, her life echoes that of her contemporary the renowned Daisy Bates (1859-

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Hetherington are limited. See also the *Australian Aborigines' Advocate* 31 January 1912, p.5.

<sup>6</sup> Myrtle Jackson, personal communication, 8 May 1992.

<sup>7</sup> AAA 31 January 1912, p.5f; J.Harris, *One Blood* Sutherland: Albatross, 1990, pp.22ff, 272, 488; Thompson, 1994, p.28; Piggin, 1996, p.46; ‘Aborigines’ in G.Davison, J.W.McCarty and A.McLeary (eds), *Australians 1888*, Broadway: Fairfax, Syme and Weldon, 1987, pp.130f; compare *Sunday at Home*, London: William Clarke, December 1877, p.773 — ‘To save them from extinction, to reclaim them to any of the useful occupations of life, and even to implant in their minds the idea of a Supreme Being, is regarded as impossible.’ The article goes on to refute this view.

<sup>8</sup> Harris, 1990, p.8092; Breward, 1993, p.104; R.Broome, *Aboriginal Australians* St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 1994, p.91. It is of interest that the *News and Prayer Letter* of the Aborigine Rescue Mission established by the Apostolic Church in 1945 noted that while ‘the black man of Australia’ had remained in the stone age, there was ‘a growing conviction that the real character of the Aborigines’ had never been properly understood ‘nor their true merits appreciated’ (1:1 10 April 1946, p.1)

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in Harris, 1990, p.25.

<sup>10</sup> H.Reynolds, *With the White People* Ringwood: Penguin, 1990, p.127; Broome, 1994, pp.92f.

1951). Like Bates, she was born in Ireland, migrated to Australia, initially worked as a governess, had a passion to relieve the sufferings of the Aborigines and was to spend much of her life living among them.<sup>11</sup> From the beginning of European settlement, there were many generous and well-meaning attempts to relate positively to the Aborigines. Australia's first Christian clergyman, Richard Johnson, had worked hard in this area, even taking a teenage Aboriginal girl into his own home. In his address *To All the Inhabitants of Port Jackson*, he pleaded with his hearers to beware of laying stumbling blocks in the way of the 'poor, unenlightened savages' and to consider 'what may be the happy effects' of their observing godly behaviour among the Europeans and as a result seeking God's blessings for themselves.<sup>12</sup> Governor Arthur Phillip's instructions were to live 'in amity and kindness' with the Aborigines, which, initially, he attempted to do.<sup>13</sup> It was not long, however, before cultural misunderstanding, conflict of interests, the settlers' pastoral ambitions, Aboriginal attempts to protect their lands and families, sexual abuse, misplaced Darwinian theories of white superiority and the cruel effects of imported disease and drugs built impenetrable walls between the old and new inhabitants of the land. Inevitably, the uncertain face of ignorance became the ugly face of racism. And equally inevitably, it was the Whites, not the Blacks, who got the better of it. While there were always exceptions, it was the Aborigines who were excluded from the benefits of an increasingly comfortable lifestyle.<sup>14</sup>

After two years of working on her own in 'an Aboriginal camp on the banks of the Murray,' in early 1906<sup>15</sup>, Hetherington was invited to join the Australian

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<sup>11</sup> For a concise overview of Bates' life and work see Annette Hamilton's entry in Davison et al (eds), 1999, pp.63f.

<sup>12</sup> R. Johnson, *To All the Inhabitants and Especially to the Unhappy Prisoners and Convicts in the Colonies Established at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island* 30 October, 1792, pp.67ff..

<sup>13</sup> Broome, 1994, p.27.

<sup>14</sup> Broome, 1994, p.145.

<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, Hetherington is no more specific than this and so far I have been unable to ascertain the precise location of her early work.

Aborigines Mission and served for the next three years in a community located 'beyond the rubbish tip', seven kilometres from Wellington, NSW.<sup>16</sup>

Other Christian missions had been initiated years earlier under the leadership of such household names as Lancelot Threlkeld, Frederick Hagenauer, Carl Strehlow, Dom Rosendo Salvado, John Smithies and John Gribble.<sup>17</sup> While much faithful, persistent, compassionate work was undertaken by people like these, they often felt their efforts were being undermined by the ungodly lifestyle and open vices of many of the white community.<sup>18</sup> In the first decades of the twentieth century, further missions were founded at Roper River (Church Missionary Society, 1908), Mornington Island (Presbyterian, 1914), Croker Island (Methodist, 1915), Goulburn Island (Methodist, 1916), Groote Eylandt (CMS, 1921), Mount Margaret, WA (United Aborigines Mission, 1921), Milingimbi (Methodist, 1921), Elcho Island (Methodist, 1922), Lockhardt River (Australian Board of Missions, 1924) and Oenpelli (CMS, 1925).<sup>19</sup> Hetherington was already actively serving Aboriginal people before most of

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<sup>16</sup> Harris, 1990, p.570. It was not uncommon for Aboriginal camps to be located 'a mile or two out of town — beyond the cemetery, the Chinese gardens or the rubbish dump or on the other side of the river.' See Henry Reynolds and Dawn May, 'Queensland,' in A. McGrath (ed), *Contested Ground* St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1995, p.181; Reynolds, 1990, p.135. The Australian Aborigines Mission was originally called the Aborigines Protection Association. In 1894, its name changed to the La Perouse Aborigines Mission Committee; five years later it became the NSW Aborigines Mission and in 1907 the Australian Aborigines Mission. There was a breakaway group which took the name Aborigines Inland Mission. Finally, in 1929, the two reunited under the name United Aborigines Mission. In the 1970's, the church at La Perouse was transferred to the Aborigines Evangelical Fellowship. See T. Mayne, 'La Perouse Celebrates 100 Years,' in *Indigenous Leadership* #14 February 1998, pp.5ff. The CMS began their ministry to Aborigines at Wellington in 1832, but the work languished in 1843. See Harris, 1990, pp.56, 554f.

<sup>17</sup> Harris, 1990, pp. 255ff, 313ff, 381ff, 458ff; Piggin, 1996, p.46; T.G.H. Strehlow, *Central Australian Religion*, Bedford Park, SA: Australian Association for the Study of Religions, 1978.

<sup>18</sup> Piggin, 1996, p.22; E. Kotlowski, *Southland of the Holy Spirit* Orange: Christian History Research Institute, 1994, pp.113ff.

<sup>19</sup> Harris, 1990, p.689; Piggin 1996, pp.82f; Breward, 1993, p.104. Bain Attwood comments, 'These dedicated men and women were exceptional in regarding Aborigines as fellow human beings ... and at best their missions alleviated the suffering of fringe-dwellers and saved communities from extermination by protecting Aborigines from the worst ravages of colonisation.' See B. Attwood, 'Aboriginal missions,' in Davison et al (eds), 1999, p.8.

these organisations were set in place. 'There were few missionaries in those days,' wrote Hetherington.<sup>20</sup>

A pleasant-faced, demure and 'extremely short-sighted' woman with small round glasses, Hetherington looked serious and caring.<sup>21</sup> During this period, she demonstrated qualities that were to characterise her life — compassion for the suffering, generosity, hard work (she cycled around the area), devotion to Christ and a willingness to serve with all denominations. Here, at the request of a dying Aboriginal 'princess', she adopted Nellie, her weakly three-year-old daughter, who was soon to be the only one of her family of ten still alive. Her father's drinking, their primitive living conditions and the rampant disease that decimated the Aboriginal population in Southern Australian had taken their toll. Alcoholism and illnesses such as smallpox, measles, influenza, tuberculosis, whooping cough and even the common cold, which were deadly enough among Whites, proved murderous among Blacks.<sup>22</sup> But young Nellie Hetherington survived and became a talented musician with both keyboard and guitar, with a gift for singing that softened many a heart. In later years, Hetherington and Nellie were to travel and minister together through many parts of Australia. Clearly, Hetherington loved children. Many of the few extant photos show her with at least one child.<sup>23</sup> In 1910, she took a six-year-old into her home to shield her from pneumonia.<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, while facing a constant battle with sickness and poverty, her first concern was always 'the spiritual side of the work.'<sup>25</sup> She was delighted to tell of 'God's saving and keeping power' in the lives of some new converts and noted that the gospel was 'the only thing that can raise these dear people to that

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<sup>20</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.7.

<sup>21</sup> Hetherington, 1929, pp.8, 26.

<sup>22</sup> Reynolds, 1990, pp. 154, 183f; Broome, 1994, pp.58ff. Broome claims that in the nineteenth century there was a death rate of 80% among Aborigines and that the major killers were alcoholism and disease. Around Port Phillip, for example, the original population prior to contact with Europeans was around 10,000 but by 1853 had dropped to just under 2,000..

<sup>23</sup> For example, the first picture of her in AAA shows her with three small children — AAA 31 August, 1908, p.6.

<sup>24</sup> AAA 28 February 1910, p.8.

<sup>25</sup> AAA 31 March 1909, p.7.



**Isabella Hetherington and Nellie c.1908**  
— I.Hetherington, *Aboriginal Queen of Song*, 1929

which is pure, lovely, and of good report.<sup>26</sup> She was also pleased to record that there were seven weddings in her first year at Wellington.<sup>27</sup> On the other hand, in her three years there, she ‘stood by the death beds of thirteen of these dear people.’ One of them, Maggie Bain, died with such a prayer on her lips that one who saw her observed, ‘Kings might covet such a death as that of the poor Aboriginal girl.’<sup>28</sup> The strenuous work took a toll on Hetherington’s own health and in 1910, she spent four weeks in hospital being treated for pleurisy.<sup>29</sup> In late 1910, she left Wellington and went to Sydney, NSW, to rest.<sup>30</sup> Given twelve months leave, accompanied by Nellie, she travelled through Victoria, partly to regain her health and partly to share the work of the Mission.<sup>31</sup>

In response to many requests to tell her story of the work ‘amongst the dark people of our land,’ this term was extended well into 1912, until she settled for a term at Manunka near Point Macleay in South Australia.<sup>32</sup> This was a small reserve of a few acres with some 50 inhabitants which had been established in 1859.<sup>33</sup> The Government wanted to move the Aboriginal people to Point Macleay, but they were unwilling to go, an attitude which Hetherington supported.<sup>34</sup>

By this time, the violence and bloodshed that had marked much of the previous century’s interaction with Aborigines was largely a thing of the past — although as late as 1926, there was a punitive expedition in Wyndham, WA, which

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<sup>26</sup> AAA 31 May 1910, pp.4,6.

<sup>27</sup> AAA 31 March 1909, p. 7.

<sup>28</sup> AAA 30 September 1910, p.8.

<sup>29</sup> AAA 30 April 1910, p.3; 30 June 1910, p.8.

<sup>30</sup> AAA 30 November 1910, p.1.

<sup>31</sup> AAA 31 December 1910, p.7; 31 March 1911, p.1; 30 June 1911, p.1; 31 October 1911, p.4; 31 January, 1912, p.5..

<sup>32</sup> AAA 30 July 1912, p.1; 30 September 1912, p.1; 31 December 1912, p. 2f. The Point Macleay Mission was originally Presbyterian and became a government station in 1916. The Aborigines’ Friends’ Association continued to supply missionaries until 1923, after which the Parkin Trust accepted responsibility for missionary appointments there. In 1943, the Salvation Army took over this role. See Harris, 1990, pp.370ff.

<sup>33</sup> McGrath (ed), 1995, p.223.

<sup>34</sup> AAA 30 November 1912, p.5.

resulted in at least twelve (probably many more) deaths.<sup>35</sup> However, Aborigines were by no means equal members of society. Australia's new Constitution of 1901 barely referred to them, their right to vote in federal elections was not granted until 1962 and they were not regarded or counted as citizens of the Commonwealth until 1967.<sup>36</sup> Malnutrition, epidemic, disease and bloodshed continued to take a terrible toll. An estimated 300,000 population in 1788 had declined to around 60,000 a century and a half later.<sup>37</sup> 'The evidence that Aboriginal people were dying out,' claims Harris, 'seemed irrefutable.'<sup>38</sup> Not till the 1920s did the birth rate begin to exceed the death rate, even among those of mixed blood. By the late 1930s, there were some 70,000.<sup>39</sup>

Australia's vacillation between what Reynolds calls 'the two great themes of confrontation and collaboration' picked its unsteady way into the twentieth century and will almost certainly continue to be evident in the twenty-first.<sup>40</sup> Although there were still nomadic, tribal Aborigines in the inland, many now lived in fringe camps around the cities while others were in Government reserves which had been first established in 1850 in New South Wales, in 1860 in Victoria, in 1897 in Queensland and in 1850 in South Australia, in an attempt to encourage Aborigines to settle down to agrarian pursuits, to provide basic education for their children and, often, to keep them separated from non-

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<sup>35</sup> Harris, 1990, pp.514ff.

<sup>36</sup> It should be noted that during the nineteenth century, in all colonies except Queensland and Western Australia, where they were specifically excluded, Aboriginal males, as British subjects, did have the right to vote. Only in South Australia was this right actually exercised. When female voting rights were approved there in 1894, Aboriginal women were included. For example, a polling booth was set up at Pt McLeay in 1896 where there were more than one hundred Aborigines on the rolls, of whom over 70% voted. Although South Australians protested that the non-inclusion of Aborigines in the Commonwealth census would nullify the voting rights of Aborigines, the measure was passed. See P.Sretton and C.Finnimore, *How South Australian Aborigines Lost the Vote: some side effects of federation* Adelaide: Old Parliament House, November 1991, pp.2ff.

<sup>37</sup> A.Markus, 'Under the Act,' in Gammage and Spearritt (eds), 1987, p.47ff. Breward (1993, p.105) suggests that 20,000 of Aboriginal deaths were the result of inter-racial violence. However, the greatest cause of death and declining population was probably introduced diseases such as smallpox. See McGrath (ed), 1995, pp.124ff, 141; Broome, 1994, pp.58ff.

<sup>38</sup> Harris, 1990, p.550.

<sup>39</sup> Broome, 1994, p.174.

<sup>40</sup> Reynolds, 1990, pp.233ff.

Aboriginals. There was also an expectation that full-blood Aborigines would remain in remote areas and eventually die out while those in the reserves or town camps would ultimately be assimilated into white culture.<sup>41</sup>

Some were employed in rural industries as stock or harvest labourers. Frequently, wages were paid in kind — flour or clothing or blankets — rather than in coin. Discrimination was well-entrenched. Around 1915, a Presbyterian minister could still comment, ‘It would be foolish to argue that all men are equal. The black-fellow is inferior and must necessarily remain so, but he is by no means so inferior as to be unable to rise above the level of a working animal.’<sup>42</sup> Not all Presbyterians were of like mind. The clergyman-anthropologist John Mathew, for example, would have strongly dissented.<sup>43</sup> But in greater or lesser degree, the opinion was still sufficiently widespread. Even the renowned ‘Flynn of the Inland’ generally ministered only to white people; the needs of Aborigines were left to others.<sup>44</sup> Basic rights such as full citizenship, equal education, equal job opportunities and social welfare were withheld. Insults or even physical attacks were common. White men frequently cohabited with black women, but few marriages ever resulted — and the reverse arrangement was almost unheard of.<sup>45</sup> By 1938, 30% of New South Wales’ Aborigines lived in 71 reserves. Here, administrators had extensive powers and the residents’ freedoms were limited. Housing was often below standard, health and dental services were inadequate, children could be

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<sup>41</sup> McGrath (ed), 1995, pp. 67f, 72, 135ff, 183, 223; P.Read, ‘Aborigines,’ in Davison et al (eds), 1999, p.14. That none of these options was acceptable to many Aborigines is indicated by the request from Nellie’s mother to Isabella Hetherington, ‘Don’t let the Government get her, and don’t send her to any home ... and don’t let her go alone to the camps. Take her now before she gets the cough.’ See Hetherington, 1929, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Breward, 1993, p.104.

<sup>43</sup> See M.Prentis, *Science, Race and Faith* Sydney: Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1998, pp.151, 182. Prentis notes that although Mathew regarded Aborigines with the ‘customary condescension’ he had many Aboriginal friends whom he regarded with affection and respect, he gave an Aboriginal name to his youngest child and he appreciated Aboriginal religion.

<sup>44</sup> Breward, 1993, pp.114ff.

<sup>45</sup> Reynolds, 1990, pp.116ff, 179f, 204ff; Broome, 1994, pp.93, 132.

separated from their parents, food and rations were often of poor quality.<sup>46</sup> It was to the people in or near the reserves that Hetherington gave the rest of her life.

During her ministry in Victoria, she had met Sarah Jane Lancaster who initially proffered some financial support and then herself visited the Mission. Hetherington had been looking forward to her visit and 'for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit.' As it happened, there was an outbreak of gastric illness and Lancaster joined her in ministering to the people, and then looked after her, as she, too, became ill. Hetherington recorded how 'dear Mrs Lancaster' personally purchased materials for a tent and dealt with government officials on her behalf.<sup>47</sup>

Just prior to this, in November 1911, at Good News Hall, a woman speaking 'in the Spirit' proclaimed, 'Kramer, the Aborigines'. Ernest Kramer (1889-1958), a flour miller, had arrived in Adelaide from Switzerland in 1889. Here he met J.E.Rieschick who introduced him to faith in Christ.<sup>48</sup> Kramer was baptised in the Torrens River. Around 1910, he cycled to Melbourne where he worshiped at Good News Hall. A natural talent with sign writing soon emerged and he painted signs and texts around the new building. It was here he met and married the diminutive Euphemia (Effie) Buchanan, W.A.Buchanan's sister.<sup>49</sup> They were to spend many years in mission and evangelism among the Aborigines, a ministry to which the Kramer Memorial Church in Alice Springs still bears witness. To this point, Kramer had felt called to India, and actually had his passage booked. At the time, he and Effie were managing a home for aged men

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<sup>46</sup> Broome, 1994, pp.143ff; Markus, 1987, p.47ff; Reynolds, 1990, p.154. Note that Broome claims there were only 22 reserves in New South Wales in 1936.

<sup>47</sup> AAA 30 July 1912, p.5; 31 August, 1912, p.5; 30 September 1912, p.3; 30 November 1912, p.5; 31 December 1912, p.4.

<sup>48</sup> C.Pope, 'A Brief History of Ernest E.Kramer,' unpublished essay, Tabor College, 1986, p.1. Specific sources on Kramer's ministry are limited and difficult to locate. For more on Rieschick see Chapter Seven.

<sup>49</sup> It may have been Kramer who introduced the Buchanan family to Pentecostalism. See F.Lancaster, interview, 18 December 1993. For more on the Buchanans, see Chapters Six, Nine, Twelve and Fourteen. Effie Kramer may well have been the 'sister' referred to in the previous incident, but as few names are used in *Good News*, and in the absence to this point of further reliable sources, this cannot be assumed.

in Melbourne. Late in 1912, Hetherington left Manunka to go to Adelaide and then to Melbourne for the annual Mission Conference. The Kramers met her when Nellie Hetherington sang at the men's home. That same night, 'in a little cottage meeting,' the Kramers offered to help in her service among the Aborigines. 'The Lord put a deep love and yearning in the writer's heart,' Kramer wrote years later, 'for the people in the bush and the aboriginals [sic].'<sup>50</sup> Hetherington soon reported to the Mission her delight that this young couple, who were 'both Spirit-filled,' were prepared to take over the work.<sup>51</sup>

By January 1913, Hetherington, now in her early 40s, was stationed at the Mission's La Perouse base in New South Wales, where in earlier years the Baptist Retta Long (nee Dixon) had worked and there had been significant conversions.<sup>52</sup> She had been spending 'days and nights alone in prayer' that both the Aboriginal people and the missionaries would be filled with God's Holy Spirit.<sup>53</sup> Early in March, there was an unusual expression of God's blessing. The resident missionary there, Miss H. Baker, reported —

The first Sunday of March will be a day ever to be remembered here.

The Christians gathered for prayer as usual at 9 o'clock, and while praying, the mighty power of God fell upon us. No church bell rang that day, but the building was filled with the sounds of praise, and this continued till 2 o'clock without a break. God has visited His people.<sup>54</sup>

A month later, Baker was still rejoicing in the dealings of God. The power of the Spirit was 'still manifest.'<sup>55</sup> Soon after this, she was granted a month's leave, and Hetherington, who was clearly held in high esteem by the Mission,

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<sup>50</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.17f.; AAA 31 December 1912, p.4; E.Kramer, *Caravan Mission to Bush People and Aborigines, Journeyings in the Far North and Centre of Australia*, n.d.; GN October 1913, p.10f; Chant, 1984, pp.61ff.

<sup>51</sup> AAA 31 December 1912, p.4.

<sup>52</sup> Retta Long founded the Aborigines Inland Mission ((1905). See J.West, 'The Role of the Woman Missionary,' in *Lucas: an Evangelical History Review* #21,22, June and December 1996, p.50; Piggin, 1996, p.67.

<sup>53</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.3.

<sup>54</sup> AAA 31 March 1913, page number obscured.

<sup>55</sup> AAA 30 April 1913, p.7.

took her place.<sup>56</sup> It was not long before there were further evidences of God's presence—

One of the dear native women was graciously baptised in the Spirit last Sunday morning. She was under the power of the Lord some five or six hours. I danced before the Lord one whole hour and so did she. She sang in the Spirit<sup>57</sup> for two or three hours and then the Holy Spirit gave the sign to unbelievers, speaking through her in other tongues ...

All church form was broken through. We started prayers in the morning about 8 o'clock and the meeting lasted until 11 at night. Several of the natives were under the power of God. It was a day long to be remembered ...

There was also a revival with the girls who worked in the kitchen. After a reading from Acts 2, some of them asked if they could 'have the Spirit like that.' One girl, named Vera, with her face shining, spoke in tongues. Nellie herself 'longed and thirsted for God' and as the Spirit fell on her, she began to sing aloud and to laugh for joy. She felt that she was being healed of a long-standing chest complaint.<sup>58</sup>

Hetherington, in her own quaint fashion, recounted the astonishing story —

After tea, we went to pray in the kitchen, and immediately the Spirit of the Lord began to pray through 'this clay.' Nellie and Vera fell down under the mighty power of God. How I wish you could have seen my Nellie. At first her little face looked as though she was undergoing crucifixion, then her arms went up to God one after the other. Her hands shook severely and her whole body was lifted off the floor several times. Then her little mouth was opened ... a beautiful smile came over her face and she shouted, 'Praise Him!' and 'Yea Lord, I love Thee' and began to speak and sing

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<sup>56</sup> AAA 31 May 1913, p.4.

<sup>57</sup> In a Pentecostal context 'singing in the Spirit' usually means singing a spontaneous song which has not previously been learned, either in one's own language or in tongues, most commonly the latter. Here, it seems to mean singing a spontaneous song in English which later changed to tongues. Such spontaneous singing, either in tongues or English, has been a common part of Pentecostal worship since the movement's inception. For more on Pentecostal worship practices, see Chapter Fourteen.

<sup>58</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.3.



**Ernest and Euphemia Kramer**  
Photo courtesy Mary Kramer

in other tongues and to cast out demons. Both the girls were under God's power nearly three hours ...<sup>59</sup>

At the end of May, Baker returned and the renewal continued. She herself had a Pentecostal experience of the Spirit. She collapsed to the floor and for some hours her whole being seemed 'to undergo crucifixion'. The next day she both spoke and sang in tongues.<sup>60</sup> 'The most cheering feature of the work at present,' she wrote, 'is the morning prayer meeting.' These were 'times of refreshing' and regularly lasted from nine in the morning till noon.<sup>61</sup>

Inevitably, these expressions of glossolalia became too controversial for the Mission leaders.<sup>62</sup> Apparently, there had already been some emergence of the phenomenon at the Mission's January Conference. Its ongoing expression now proved to be a problem. Although there was clearly benefit to some people, overall, they admitted, the result was usually confusion. Recognised biblical scholars considered it to be unscriptural. Some who originally thought what they experienced was from God later understood it to have come from the devil. The consensus of experienced missionaries and Christian workers was that a warning should be sounded. They were sorry to introduce this controversial note to the columns of their magazine and freely admitted that some testified to genuine blessing through speaking in tongues. But the entry of the movement into the Mission's ranks had brought confusion and unrest. The result of the first six months of 1913 required them to sound a warning. Their duty was to proclaim salvation through the crucified and risen Saviour. Other

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<sup>59</sup> GN No.6, October 1913, p.10; K.Smallcombe, personal correspondence, 1 September 1994.

<sup>60</sup> I.Hetherington, 'God's Work in and through a Missionary to the Australian Aborigines,' GN 1:6 October 1913, p.10.

<sup>61</sup> AAA 30 August 1913, p.6.

<sup>62</sup> The idea of a separate experience in the Spirit was not unknown to the Mission. Retta Dixon, one of their esteemed pioneers at La Perouse, inscribed seven dates in the front of her Bible, which included —

Born again — May 25 1884

Definitely received a clean heart — Nov 9 1888

Baptised — Nov 29 1891

Received into church fellowship — Dec 6 1891

Received the Holy Spirit — Jan 12 1893

See Mayne, 1998, pp.5ff. It was glossolalia which proved problematic.

teachings — and the people who promoted them — were not to be welcomed to the various stations.<sup>63</sup>

It is not surprising that Isabella Hetherington's name appears no more in subsequent issues of *The Australian Aborigines' Advocate*. In 1916, she and Nellie conducted short missions around Victoria. They visited the small group of believers at Freeburgh, in the Ovens Valley, led by William Sloan.<sup>64</sup> A young woman named Ethel Vale had been converted through this ministry and was persecuted by her family as a result. In later years, she was to join Hetherington as a missionary to the Aborigines.<sup>65</sup>

### **Ernest and Euphemia Kramer**

Meanwhile, Ernest and Effie Kramer had begun their own unique ministry.<sup>66</sup> Early in 1913, with their six-weeks-old baby son Colin, they journeyed from Melbourne to the Murray River, where they 'first found the Aborigines,' and then on to Port Augusta, 300 kilometres north of Adelaide.<sup>67</sup> They travelled a further 400 kilometres in a 'covered buggy' pulled by four donkeys beyond Tarcoola in South Australia's far West, following the line of the new East-West railway where they offered their services to the construction gangs and 'many doors' were opened to testify to their Lord. Later they turned north on the long 390 kilometre track to Oodnadatta. They did what they could for black and white alike, without prejudice. God 'does not look at the colour of the skin,' wrote Kramer. 'He is no respecter of persons, and the Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, alone can wash inbred sin from the heart.' They covered over 3,500 kilometres all told.

From 1916 to 1921, they undertook two further missionary journeys, under the name 'Australian Caravan Mission.' With 21 pounds in hand, Kramer purchased

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<sup>63</sup> 'The Tongue's [sic] Movement,' AAA 30 August 1913, page number obscured.

<sup>64</sup> See Chapter Three.

<sup>65</sup> M. Jackson, personal communication, 8 May 1992; Guy, 1998, pp. 175, 187.

<sup>66</sup> Kramer, *Caravan Mission*, n.d. Further details of Kramer's ministry are taken from this source unless otherwise stated. There are no page numbers in the original.

<sup>67</sup> Daisy Bates moved to Ooldea in South Australia's far north in 1920.



**Ernest Kramer's 'Caravan' and donkeys in the Outback**

Photo courtesy Mary Kramer

a second-hand horse-drawn van, decorated it with biblical texts,<sup>68</sup> equipped it with harness, bedding and the like and set off from Adelaide. They were well received by the Methodist church at Port Wakefield and spent a week at Point Pearce mission where they baptised a number of Aborigines by immersion.

The Kramers were less aggressively Pentecostal than many of their associates. Their ecumenical spirit was displayed by their visiting churches of all persuasions on the journey north. On other occasions, they helped property owners with their harvesting. In the far north, they were forced to exchange their horses for donkeys, reducing their travel speed from seven miles an hour to two.<sup>69</sup> At this snail-pace, they arrived at Leigh Creek where they visited a nearby Aboriginal camp.<sup>70</sup> Here they taught the children and anointed a fevered woman with oil for healing. She recovered rapidly.<sup>71</sup> They continued on, offering their services to any who were in need. Kramer recalled —

Thus sowing beside all waters, we have many opportunities of witnessing among pastoralists and others in the great bush, and among outstations, and many have received us gladly. We seek their spiritual welfare, in return they show their appreciation by attending to our comfort and temporal needs, and oftentimes giving us a change from camping on the road.<sup>72</sup>

In this way they continued their slow progress through the Outback. By September 1918, it was decided to return to Melbourne for a break to arrange for their son Colin's education. They stayed for a time with the Buchanans before returning by train in May 1919 to Quorn and thence to Oodnadatta to

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<sup>68</sup> 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins,' — Matthew 1:21 (which Kramer gives as 2:21); 'God is love' — 1 John 4:16 and, 'Prepare to meet thy God,' — Amos 4:12; 'Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man as his work shall be' — Revelation 22:12.

<sup>69</sup> A change which was viewed with wry amusement even by Kramer himself in the light of the text painted on the van, 'Behold I come quickly.' See M. Kramer, personal communication, 1986.

<sup>70</sup> Fifty years later, Aborigines were barred from actually living in the Leigh Creek township. See Peggy Brock, 'South Australia' in McGrath (ed), 1995, p.212.

<sup>71</sup> James 5:14f — 'Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him' (AV).

<sup>72</sup> Kramer, *Caravan Mission*.

collect their van. They now had a small extra cart to carry their supplies. In Oodnadatta, Kramer was dismayed to see the terrible combined effects of poverty, neglect and an influenza epidemic among the Aborigines.<sup>73</sup> His compassion and deep concern for them was obviously a driving motivation for his work —

Still by God's grace, the dear remaining few Aborigines were gathered together. In a nice building? No, in their rags and bags, often amongst the rubbish of tins and bottles, and any amount of dogs; still they sat attentively and heard the Word gladly. Then just at this time the natives fell sick with influenza.

Oh, such sadness and such sights I shall never forget. They were so neglected and helplessly dying like animals, but with the doctor and policeman's help we rigged up an isolation camp outside the town, and then, with four donkeys in the van, the sick were gathered into camp and cared for.

My heart was full of pain, for the sight was sad indeed. Many were carried in one day in hope, and carried out later a corpse ... Oh, how my heart cried out for help for these people in their darkness.<sup>74</sup>

They stayed for six weeks, trying to help the sufferers and 'losing not an opportunity to teach them of the great love of Jesus.'<sup>75</sup>

They recommenced their journey: it was fraught with difficulties. Heavy creeks, sand hills, rocks and stones, scant feed, waterless tracks, blistering heat, loneliness, a tiny van crammed with equipment, slow travel, struggling animals all combined to create enormous obstacles. 'At one time,' wrote Kramer —

We had a terrible struggle to get over thirty-five miles of heavy, sandy country, with many creeks to cross. The donkeys were two days without water; the days were so hot we could only travel very early in the morning; and then after sundown for a few hours. One morning ... a fierce north wind arose and continued for the whole day, just as though it were off a fire. We could not quench our thirst ... The temperature remained at 107 degrees in the van.

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<sup>73</sup> Aborigines were often refused treatment at public hospitals. See McGrath (ed), 1995, pp.94, 231.

<sup>74</sup> Kramer, *Caravan Mission*.

Kramer's ministry was marked by a simple trust in God for every need, characteristic of the ministry of Good News Hall. After reaching Farina, in 40 degree heat, 'the Lord gave the word, Isaiah 33:16'.<sup>76</sup> Encouraged by this, Kramer dug in a creek and found a steady supply of fresh water which kept them for six months. Locals, meanwhile, were paying the large sum of 2/6 for a hundred gallons. When their first daughter Mary was born in a tent in Farina in 45 degree heat, she was 'as healthy as a rosebud' and for ten months slept through each night. When repairs were needed for the wagon wheels, and they had only one penny to their names, the funds were provided. On another occasion, on a visit to town, money was wired to them just in time for them to buy food before the store closed. When the donkeys strayed during the night, Kramer found them after praying. Once a goat fell under the wheel of the van. 'We took our goat to Jesus in prayer, who has power over all flesh,' wrote Kramer. A week later, in fine health, she gave birth to two kids — to the Kramers this was simply another fulfilment of Scripture.<sup>77</sup> After struggling for two scorching days and nights without water to cover the final leg of the arduous, punishing trip to Alice Springs, 580 kilometres north of Oodnadatta, and rain poured down flooding the Todd River, they thanked God it had not come sooner, and so cut them off from the town. Once when confronted with twelve tracks leading in different directions, they prayed for guidance, and a rainbow appeared over one of them, leading them to safety.

Kramer freely offered the gospel to any who would listen, but his major concern was for the Aborigines, who constituted a major part of the pastoral industry's work force in the Far North.<sup>78</sup> He had preached to them on his first journey and

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<sup>75</sup> Although many at Good News Hall eschewed the use of medicine (see Chapters Six and Seven), Kramer seems to have had no such scruples.

<sup>76</sup> 'This is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and water will not fail him.'

<sup>77</sup> Proverbs 27:27 — 'And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household' (AV).

<sup>78</sup> 'A typical large station might employ half a dozen White people ... one or two Aborigines of mixed descent who took superior roles such as stock-camp boss, and twenty or more Aboriginal "ringers" — Peter Read, 'Northern Territory' in McGrath (ed), 1995, pp.273f. Reynolds notes that there were thousands of Aborigines in the rural workforce, including some 10,000 on sheep and cattle stations, and that on average there were about 25 Aboriginal workers, both male and female, per station who did 'practically all the work' (1990,

now on his return, he could report that they were glad to see him again. He was delighted to meet two boys who were still standing firm in the faith and another who had been a steadfast believer for four years. Others greeted them 'with beaming faces' and remembered what he had told them of the love of Jesus.

Using Bible pictures and Christian songs, he preached the gospel and many heard 'the sweet story' for the first time. They 'never grew tired' of his presentation. In Alice Springs, Kramer spent many hours teaching children of mixed blood and conducting open air services.<sup>79</sup> People came from as far as 130 kilometres away. Their daughter Mary, now five years old, would herself gather the children and teach them songs. In one place, an Aboriginal woman who had heard Kramer once before, walked fifteen kilometres carrying a three-year-old on her back to hear the gospel again. Kramer recalled these days with affection—

When they would sight us driving along to this tree, with one donkey in our little cart, they would come running from all directions, old and young, men and women, with picannies [sic] on their backs. We have had over 50 in a gathering.

Again, it was Kramer's deep concern for the Aborigines which motivated him—

To the south-east and west lay the McDonald [sic] Ranges, in their grandeur and possibilities of cultivation; but the cry of my heart went out to the benighted tribes of the aborigines [sic], unknown to me, but not to Him, who gave His life for them. Oh, how I longed that He would prosper and enable us to reach those yet some hundred miles further east, who have never been told of the love of Jesus ...

Even those who worked on the stations were in constant need. They were rarely paid adequate wages and usually lived in squalid conditions, well removed from the more comfortable dwellings of the station owners. Usually,

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pp.196ff). Broome argues that without Aboriginal labour, the stations could not have survived (1994, p.127).

<sup>79</sup> As was the custom at the time, he referred to them as 'half-caste' children. Legislation passed in South Australia in 1911 'for the better Protection and Control of the Aboriginal and Half-caste Inhabitants' actually enshrined this term and a subsequent (1913-1916) Royal Commission sought to distinguish between 'full-bloods' and 'half-castes'. See Brock in McGrath (ed), 1995, pp.225ff. A similar Act in Victoria in 1886 had used identical language. See Broome in McGrath (ed), 1995, p.139.



**Ernest Kramer preaching in the Outback**  
Photo courtesy Mary Kramer

the only ones who saw the inside of the homesteads were women who worked as domestics or who provided sexual favours for the lonely men.<sup>80</sup>

How well Kramer was equipped with a knowledge of Aboriginal culture is questionable. He seems to have learned as he went. He understood the power of what he called the 'Black Fellows' Bone' and saw the love of Christ as an antidote for this. Furthermore, he did not make the mistake of many nineteenth century missionaries — and even some of his own day — who believed it was necessary to civilise the people before they could accept the gospel.<sup>81</sup> His aim, he said, was to encourage the people 'from a spiritual standpoint'. Whereas other missionaries had blamed the Aborigines for being incapable of understanding the Christian message,<sup>82</sup> Kramer prayed that he would have the ability to make it understandable —

We do not profess to civilise them, but to show them 'the Light of Life' which is Jesus, the once crucified, and now risen Saviour, and soon coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords, whom we lift up, praying God to prepare the hearts of the Aborigines to receive Jesus. We seek for wisdom to make the Word plain and simple for these hearers.

Civilisation is not congenial to them, yet before God they have souls to save, which are precious ...

Towards the end of the journey, they visited the 'Finke Mission Station,' no doubt the Lutheran settlement at Hermannsburg, 100 kilometres south west of Alice Springs, where they were 'heartily welcomed' by the pastor and his wife, at that time the remarkable Carl Strehlow, whose ministry was to conclude with his death the following year.<sup>83</sup> Here, Kramer was delighted to hear Aborigines worshipping and singing in Aranda. From the earliest days, missionaries here had

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<sup>80</sup> Broome, 1994, pp.130ff.

<sup>81</sup> This attitude was widespread. See Harris 1990, pp. 260, 474, 802; Reynolds, 1990, pp.90f.

<sup>82</sup> Harris, 1990, pp.271ff, 802. Of course, there were also many exceptions to this approach eg Harris, 1990, p.479.

<sup>83</sup> Harris, 1990, p.405; Strehlow, 1978, pp.7ff; W.F.Veit, 'Strehlow, Carl Friedrich Theodor (1871-1922)' in ADB Vol 12 1891-1939, pp.121f. In later years, Strehlow's son, T.G.H.Strehlow and his wife Bertha developed a friendship with the Kramers and often stayed in their home in Alice Springs — Mary Kramer, quoted in the *Centralian Advocate* 23 July 1991, p.10.

respected indigenous languages and had translated much of the Bible into the local dialect.<sup>84</sup> Kramer was overjoyed to see this willingness to reach out to the Aborigines. 'It was beautiful,' he recalled. 'It made our tears flow.'

Harris refers to the great trek of the Lutheran missionaries Heidenreich, Kempe and Schwartz from Adelaide to the Finke River, from October 1875 to June 1877, with their 2 400 sheep, 44 horses, 23 cattle, five dogs, four hens and one rooster, as a journey which 'stands alone' in the annals of missionary endeavour.<sup>85</sup> There seems little reason to challenge this claim. But Erny and Effie Kramer's much smaller, less publicised and more humble venture must also be seen as a remarkable example of pioneer missionary courage and enterprise. All in all, through extreme conditions and in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties, during 1913, 1916 and 1921, they covered well over 10,000 kilometres in their patient, plodding Outback ministry.

In 1921, Good News Hall urged the Kramers to return to Melbourne and assist in the work there, which, reluctantly, they did. But their hearts were still in the Outback, and they immediately began to make plans for establishing a 'Scriptural Knowledge Institution' in Alice Springs as a shelter for orphans and a base from which to reach the Aborigines.

Smith Wigglesworth's visit encouraged them to seek support for this venture and soon Robert Davis, who was baptised in the Spirit at that time, agreed to join them, although as it happened, this did not eventuate.<sup>86</sup>

In June 1924, *Good News* reported that Philip Adams was again building a caravan for 'a dear brother and his wife' who were, God willing, going 'to the

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<sup>84</sup> Harris, 1990, pp.392ff.

<sup>85</sup> Harris, 1990, p.390.

<sup>86</sup> Davis was converted as a result of the change in his wife when she spoke in tongues after attending Good News Hall. Early one morning in 1919, he was smoking in bed when he saw a vision of Christ and the two thieves and he heard 'the sound of the drip-drip-drip of the blood of Jesus on the linoleum floor.' He was a builder and was responsible for much of the construction work at the Hall. In 1936, Davis was ordained to the ministry of the Apostolic Church. R.Davis, interview, n.d.; see also The Apostolic Church Certificate of Ordination dated 14 November 1936.

back blocks with the full message for these last days.<sup>87</sup> This was a more substantial wagon designed for horses. J.E.Rieschick provided them with all the harnessing they needed.<sup>88</sup> They travelled by boat to Port Augusta and thence overland to Alice Springs.

1925 saw the beginnings of the Pentecostal Church of Australia,<sup>89</sup> and the subsequent movement of people between the different groups, resulting in a loss of some financial support. Nevertheless, they set off, with young Colin, now eleven years old, looking after the horses, although Effie and the other children travelled by Dodge truck from Oodnadatta.<sup>90</sup> In Alice Springs, Kramer leased four blocks of land, where he displayed considerable ingenuity in getting established.<sup>91</sup>

He now began to use camels for his Outback travel, often being away for weeks at a time. Effie conducted services at Alice Springs for Aborigines. Around this time, Kramer became increasingly inter-denominational in his approach, and gave less emphasis to issues such as glossolalia. The Aborigines' Friends' Association offered some support for his ministry.<sup>92</sup> He was also learning greater flexibility — agreeing, for example, to the cooking of certain foods on Sundays because they would not keep in the hot weather if prepared the day before.

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<sup>87</sup> This was obviously a reference to the Kramers and typical of *Good News's* practice — admittedly irregular and inconsistent — of avoiding the use of names in reports. See GN 15:6 June 1924, p.7. Pentecostals shared the Evangelical conviction that the second coming of Christ was imminent and commonly believed there was little time left before that eschatological event. See Chapter Five and Six.

<sup>88</sup> Pope, 1986, p.6.

<sup>89</sup> See Chapter Nine.

<sup>90</sup> Pope, 1986, p.7. Further details are from this paper unless otherwise stated.

<sup>91</sup> According to his family, the house was built of pines from Pine Gap, which were termite-resistant, and bricks hand-made from lime and sand. Kramer designed a system of reticulated water to the house, reputedly the first in Alice Springs, and included netting-covered vents at both ground and ceiling level for air circulation. He also constructed a tennis court from crushed ant hills. In 1924, the Ebenezer Tabernacle was erected, the first concrete building in Alice Springs. See Pope 1986, pp.8ff. See also Jose Petrick, 'Spreading the Gospel,' *Centralian Advocate* 8 October 198..

<sup>92</sup> The Aborigines' Friends' Association was formed in South Australia in 1857 by a group of people concerned for the welfare of Aborigines. It continued to fulfil this aim for many decades. See Harris 1990, p.356.

Kramer was able to purchase the land on which he had built, but a decade later, weary and suffering in health from his Outback travel, he sold the property and returned to Melbourne in 1934, where he became a representative for the Bible Society. He died in 1958 of leukemia. His wife continued to attend a Pentecostal church until her death in 1971. In April 1984, the Australian Missionary Society built an interdenominational building in Alice Springs and named it the Kramer Memorial Church, in honour of Ernest Kramer and his 21 years of ministry.<sup>93</sup>

Ernie Kramer's brother Fritz also had a heart for the Aborigines. He and his wife, who was a school teacher, worked with them at Redfern, Katoomba and Rolands Plains, NSW.<sup>94</sup>

### North Queensland

Meanwhile, in the early 1920s, Isabella Hetherington attempted to purchase some land in Melbourne on which to erect bark huts for dwellings. This enterprise failed, but over a period of several years, a hundred Aborigines were 'instructed in the way of righteousness.'<sup>95</sup> By now, it was 1925, and Nellie found herself singing over a period of three months at the Sunshine Mission Hall and then in the Prahran Town Hall, during the ministry of A.C.Valdez.<sup>96</sup>

Nellie suffered an attack of pneumonia, and on medical advice, Hetherington took her to the warmer climes of Brisbane, where they stayed for five months,

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<sup>93</sup> 'Four Children of Missionary Here for Opening,' *Centralian Advocate*, 1977 (specific date not recorded). Prior to the opening, Sir Douglas Nicholls, himself an Aborigine and then Governor of South Australia, wrote to Kramer's daughter Mary: 'Your father's name was widely respected for the great work he did as a missionary.' See Helen Innes, 'Ernest Kramer One of God's People in Oz,' *On Being*, August 1978, p.44. A photo taken of the church in 1991 shows a 'wayside pulpit' sign which reads, 'GROG is EVIL it will NOT make you happy; the HOLY SPIRIT will make you HAPPY indeed; JESUS CHRIST gives the HOLY SPIRIT to ALL who follow Him.' There may be some echoes of Kramer's teaching here.

<sup>94</sup> F.Lancaster, interview, 18 December 1993; E.Vale in Guy, 1998, pp.265f. In 1948, he visited Mossman and took over the mission for a time. Years later, a mural which he painted bore tribute to his work there.

<sup>95</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.20.

<sup>96</sup> For the story of Valdez and the 'Sunshine Revival' see Chapter Nine.

and then on to Maryborough in 1928, where Nellie played and sang for Pastor George Burns of the newly-formed Christian Mission.<sup>97</sup>

Not long afterwards, Hetherington was pioneering Pentecostal mission work among the Aborigines at Mossman, about 80 kilometres north of Cairns, in North Queensland.<sup>98</sup> Her long black dress particularly struck the scantily clothed northern Queenslanders.<sup>99</sup> Later Ethel Vale was to claim that there had never been a missionary at Mossman before.<sup>100</sup> She seems to have been misinformed here. In North Queensland, the non-denominational Queensland Kanaka Mission had been established in 1886 by the renowned evangelical missionary Florence Young.<sup>101</sup> Based in Bundaberg, the Mission soon established branches in other places, including Cairns and Mossman. In 1905, there was a revival of prayer during which people fell on their knees and variously cried and laughed for joy. The movement spread until in places as far removed as Bundaberg and Mossman, there were extensive prayer meetings being held during which missionaries and 'boys' alike cried out for an infilling of the Holy Spirit.<sup>102</sup> To what extent there were Pentecostal manifestations at these meetings is unclear, but one Cairns inhabitant claimed that her grandfather, a South Sea Islander, attended 'Pentecostal' meetings at cane-cutters community camps in and around Cairns in 1904. George Malla Kulla was a recognised leader of these groups.<sup>103</sup> By the time Hetherington arrived 25 years later, most of the South Sea Islanders had been repatriated. But memories of the 1905 revival were still to be found.

In 1897, in an endeavour to counteract the continuing violence and exploitation of Aborigines and their ongoing decimation through alcoholism, opium

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<sup>97</sup> See Chapter Nine.

<sup>98</sup> AE 7:11 October 1941, p.9. There was a significant Aboriginal population in this area. See the map in McGrath (ed), 1995, pp.xxv.

<sup>99</sup> W.Walker, quoted in Guy, 1998, p.176.

<sup>100</sup> E.Vale, quoted in Guy, 1998, p.188.

<sup>101</sup> F.Young, *Pearls from the Pacific* London and Edinburgh: Marshall Brothers, n.d. See also relevant articles in ADEB, ADB. The Young family are still prominent in evangelical work today.

<sup>102</sup> Young, *Pearls*, pp.160ff.

<sup>103</sup> Esther Noble Frost, personal communication, 1 September 1994.

addiction, poverty and disease, the Queensland Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act had been passed requiring Aborigines to relocate to Government missions 'for their own protection'.<sup>104</sup> Although there were many restrictions — Aborigines on reserves were forbidden to take alcohol or opium, they could not vote and authorities had the right to search their dwellings and belongings at any time, to read their mail, to remove their children, to prohibit traditional practices, to confiscate their property — Hetherington believed the Act had been introduced for the Aborigines' benefit and that it would offer relief from their sorrows.<sup>105</sup> So she herself, now in her mid-fifties, moved to the Gorge Reserve to set up a 'Faith Mission' where she and Ethel Vale laboured together.<sup>106</sup> It was not easy. Initially, they lived in a humpy. The two women manually cleared dense jungle scrub and planted a variety of tropical fruits and shrubbery. They established a school and tried to provide medicine for the children. Hetherington personally milked the cow and attended to other menial tasks.<sup>107</sup> She was often without funds but trusted God to supply her needs.<sup>108</sup> She taught, conducted funerals, and cared for the children. She tended to the sick and washed the feet of Aboriginal brothers and sisters.<sup>109</sup> On occasion, she intervened to prevent spear fights between the men. 'She would run right out into the middle of the fight area and stop them,' recalled one woman. 'No one game to throw spear when she out there.'<sup>110</sup> Over one hundred new believers were baptised in water during the thirties, some of them in crocodile-infested streams. Hetherington was not afraid; she just trusted God.<sup>111</sup> She would often pray, 'Lord, send the fire down!' and, to those

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<sup>104</sup> This Act became the model for similar Acts in four other States.

<sup>105</sup> Broome, 1994, pp.97ff.

<sup>106</sup> Wilma Walker, quoted in Guy, 1998, p.235. There was an understanding that missionaries could work on Government missions. See Harris, 1990, p.765.

<sup>107</sup> E.MacNamara quoted in Guy, 1998, p.182. One of the few surviving photos shows her sitting on a stool milking a cow surrounded by dense thickets of tropical trees.

<sup>108</sup> K.Bogle quoted in Guy, 1998, p.187.

<sup>109</sup> K.Bogle quoted in Guy, 1998, p.191.

<sup>110</sup> E.MacNamara quoted in Guy, 1998, p.182.

<sup>111</sup> AE 5:8 July 1939, p.9; J.Done quoted in Guy, 1998, p.180.

present, even the leaves on the big milk tree quivered.<sup>112</sup> Together with Nellie, she held meetings in the local Mossman 'sample shed.' Nellie played the piano and sang with 'a beautiful soprano voice' while Hetherington preached.<sup>113</sup> Ultimately, a house was built for her at Kubirri. Kathleen Bogle paid tribute to Hetherington—

Sister Hetherington was just like a mother to the Aboriginal people. She'd get a dish of water and wash their feet and tend to them when they were sick. She ... would go to their camps, give them a wash and take care of them. Make soup and feed them. She was an angel in disguise.<sup>114</sup>

On 10 and 17 March, 1932, she was presented as 'our pioneer and veteran missionary' at the 'Canvas Cathedral' in Brisbane, where she spoke of her work at Mossman and Nellie sang among others a song entitled, 'The Hope of the Aborigines.'<sup>115</sup> The journey would not have been easy. For a start, there was no road from Cairns, and either a boat trip or a train ride to Kurunda offered the only possibilities. At least one person was so challenged by her message he decided to become a Daintree missionary.<sup>116</sup> In that same year, she addressed the Queensland Assemblies of God conference, with the result that a year later she became recognised as their missionary to the Aborigines.<sup>117</sup> On occasion, Hetherington visited the Pentecostal church at Cairns. A photo taken around 1935, when Maxwell Armstrong was pastor, shows her standing with a group of the church people.<sup>118</sup> She was a slight, diminutive, white-haired woman. She

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<sup>112</sup> K.Bogle quoted in Guy, 1998, p.187.

<sup>113</sup> E.Jenkins quoted in Guy, 1998, 186.

<sup>114</sup> Guy, 1998, p.191.

<sup>115</sup> 'Cooee 6', 13 March 1932.

<sup>116</sup> This was Jack Easton who was converted in a Salvation Army rally in Brisbane in November 1930, then began to attend Booth-Clibborn's Canvas Cathedral. After four years in the army, and a time of life-threatening illness, he became Superintendent of the Daintree Mission from 1945 to 1950, before going with his wife to Papua New Guinea as a missionary, where he was to serve for the next 26 years. See Guy, 1998, pp.184, 254ff, 348f; J.Easton, personal communication, 6 February 1995; interview 24 February 1995.

<sup>117</sup> S.Hunt, *The Assemblies of God Queensland Conference: A Story of its Formation and Mission*, Assemblies of God, n.d., p.21.

<sup>118</sup> This church at Cairns also conducted some outreach work with Aborigines in places such as Skeleton Creek, where there were, at times, significant changes in community life as a result. See GN 18:2, February 1927, p.10; R.Dyer, Len Cook Jr, D.Parker, personal

was also said to be hard-working, set in her ways and on fire for God. Around this time, Hetherington declared that the Mayor of Mossman, who had assisted the work of the Mission in many ways, would not die before he turned to the Lord. Years later, after Hetherington's death, this came to pass.<sup>119</sup>

In 1938, the Aborigines' Progressive Association, under the leadership of William Ferguson, proclaimed 26 January as a Day of Mourning for Aborigines and campaigned widely for justice and equality, actions which resulted in the passing of the New South Wales Aborigines Welfare Act (1940).<sup>120</sup> In the same year, Albert Namatjira held his first exhibition in Melbourne.<sup>121</sup> Of much less import, but sufficient for those involved, after a decade of meetings in tents and sheds, was the opening, in 1938, by Isabella Hetherington, with the assistance of people from Brisbane, of a small building which served both as a Sunday meeting place and a school for the children. People came for miles around to the dedication service. The church was nicely filled, reported Charles Enticknap, and 'dedicated to the glory of God for the salvation of the native sons of Australia.'<sup>122</sup> For Hetherington, this was an achievement to be proud of; she was content to leave political activism to others.

On 27 July 1941, Henry Wiggins, the Chairman of the Assemblies of God in Australia, officially opened a new Mission at nearby Daintree, under the leadership of Hugh Davidson.<sup>123</sup> En route, he visited the Gorge at Mossman where, he wrote, 'nestles Sister Hetherington's Mission for Aborigines.' The

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interviews, 28-31 January 1994, and T.Hallop, personal interview, 15 April 1993. In 1935, Charles Enticknap baptised some Aborigines in Innisfail, where he ministered to both Black and White people — see Chapter Thirteen.

<sup>119</sup> M.Jackson, personal communication, 8 May 1992.

<sup>120</sup> Broome, 1994, pp.166ff; Goodall, in McGrath (ed), 1995, p.87; Davison et al (eds), 1998, p.250.

<sup>121</sup> Broome, 1994, p.169.

<sup>122</sup> AE 5:8 July 1939, p.9.

<sup>123</sup> AE October 1941 quoted in Guy, 1998, pp.223ff. Davidson was Will Enticknap's son-in-law, having married Agnes Enticknap (b.4 September 1907) on 26 October, 1929. See A.Davidson, personal interview, 20 November 1990. Hetherington spoke at the opening of the new Mission, recalling her early days of pioneering at Mossman.

Gorge was 'more lovely than ever' but Hetherington was 'frailer than in past days.'<sup>124</sup>

Four years later, the new Assemblies of God National Chairman, Pastor Philip Duncan, described her as an 'aged worker of 76 summers, bent with age' who wept when they prayed together. 'She lives with the coloured folk,' he wrote, 'and she will die with them, for whom she left and gave her all.' When the Government policy of removing children with a non-Aboriginal father from their families accelerated in the 1930s, she opposed the idea.<sup>125</sup> She was devoted to God and 'passionately in love' with the people she served and on whose behalf she had invested so much.<sup>126</sup> Robert Missenden, a newly-ordained Methodist minister, conducted Hetherington's funeral. Before she died, he said—

I was supposed to pray for her but she prayed for me ... She sat up in bed and said, 'Lord Jesus, I am coming.' Then she lay back and was gone.<sup>127</sup>

One man, moved to tears as he spoke, claimed that the night Hetherington died people saw angels fly from her house to the church, where they heard them singing.<sup>128</sup>

Isabella Hetherington's love for God, her yearning, joyful mysticism and her commitment to His work come through strongly in these words —

I am not worthy of the crumbs that drop from my Master's table, but I am finding out that it is not according to my merits or demerits that He blesses me but according to His riches in glory ... My King has conferred his highest honour upon me, even me, by pouring out His Holy Spirit upon me. I cannot understand this

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<sup>124</sup> AE 5:8 July 1939, p.9; AE 7:11 October 1941, p.2.

<sup>125</sup> K.Bogle quoted in Guy, 1998, p.234. The Queensland State Children's Act of 1911 was the third piece of legislation in Australia to give Government officials the right to remove Aboriginal children from their parents and place them in an institution. See Broome, 1994, p.134. It became standard practice for children to be separated from their parents on Government settlements and missions. See Reynolds and May in McGrath (ed) 1995, p.195.

<sup>126</sup> P.Duncan, 'Daintree Walkabout' in AE 11:11 October 1945, p.3.

<sup>127</sup> Hunt, *Conference* p.21.

<sup>128</sup> This was 31 August 1946. Hetherington was buried in an unmarked grave on which a stone was erected by Arthur Westbrook exactly 49 years to the day after her death. A.Westbrook, interview, 8 April 1997; M. Jackson, personal communication, 8 May 1992.

mystery of mysteries but oh! Who else but God could have produced such a rapturous height of holy delight as possessed my body ... Is it presumptuous to say that I was filled with the fullness of God? ... Oh that I could get entirely out of self and into God, indeed I hunger and thirst after the living God ...<sup>129</sup>

The spirit of Pentecost could hardly be more finely expressed.

Hetherington's dedication to her calling is simply portrayed in a few lines she penned for Nellie to sing —

May I do it to Thy glory,  
Whatsoe'er the work may be;  
May each duty tell to others  
That it is not I, but Thee.

And if Satan should applaud me  
For the work that Thou dost do  
In and through an empty vessel,  
Thou canst hide me from his view.

In the secret of Thy presence  
I am lost to all beside,  
Knowing not of fame or glory,  
But of Christ the Crucified

When the evening twilight cometh,  
'Ere I lay this body down,  
May my reckonings be found faithful,  
So that no man take my crown.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> GN No 6 October 1913, p.10.

<sup>130</sup> Hetherington, 1929, p.32. Hetherington seems to have written several poems. See A.Davidson quoted in R.Guy, 1998, p.250. Most of these may now have perished. There is a poem of some 40 lines entitled, 'In Loving Remembrance of Dear Little FORD,' a three-year-old who died prematurely. I have been told that this was written by Isabella Hetherington. The work itself is attributed to 'J.Hetherington.' It was given to me by Mrs Edna Faulkner, April 1992. Part of it reads —

Then the Bridegroom embraced still one more of His bride,  
Who had braved death's dark river, so deep and wide,  
To sit at the banquet and be the King's guest.  
What felicitous joy! What a haven of rest!

Yes, safe, oh, so safe, in that home of the blest,  
Where no evil thing cometh, and the weary find rest.

Compared with other Christian work among Aborigines, Pentecostal endeavours in the pre-war years were modest, to say the least. Nevertheless, given the small size of the fledgling movement and viewed in the light of the activities of older denominations in their first half-century of existence, the work was not insignificant. It reflected the passion ignited by their experience in the Spirit and their deep conviction that the Spirit was given to empower them for witness and evangelism.

A half-century later, beginning in the late 1970s, there was a widespread and significant charismatic revival among Aborigines at Arnhem Land and Elcho Island in the Northern Territory and at the Warburton Ranges in Central Australia, where hundreds were converted, many rescued from alcoholism and violence and Pentecostal manifestations common. Aboriginal preachers and musicians addressed crowded gatherings. Whole communities were changed.<sup>131</sup> Isabella Hetherington and Erny and Effie Kramer would have rejoiced to see this — it was the kind of growth of the faith they had dreamed of.

I am not aware of any direct connection between their work and this later revival. In some ways they were very different. The recent work has largely been led by Aborigines with comparatively little input from non-Aboriginal people. Nevertheless, in a general sense, the foundation of Christian faith and belief laid down by pioneers like Hetherington and the Kramers — and scores of other Christian missionaries — has plainly been a determining factor.

Isabella Hetherington and Erny and Effie Kramer provide fine models of Australian Pentecostal ministry. Hetherington and Erny Kramer were both immigrants who unreservedly made Australia their home. They were innovative and resourceful. They understood better than many the need to identify with the people they served. They did not try to impose an inflexible Anglo-Saxon 'civilised' model of Christianity on the Aborigines. They were prepared to work with or without denominational or organisational support. Their philosophy of

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He is waiting, dear parents, for you over there,  
When the Lord shall descend with his saints in the air.

<sup>131</sup> The Aboriginal revival has been well documented in J.Blacket, *Fire in the Outback* Sutherland, NSW: Albatross, 1997.

ministry was defined by their understanding of God and the impartation of His Spirit. They clearly felt compassion for the Aborigines; they knew by personal experience the power of the Holy Spirit; they believed they were led by God to venture out as they did; they trusted God to meet their needs when no human aid was at hand. They worked hard; they sacrificed material comforts for the work of the ministry; they openly declared their love for God; they believed it was not unreasonable to ask God for the impossible. They demonstrated, perhaps better than anyone, the spirit of Pentecost.