



RECORDS AND CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE : BUILDINGS.

RESEARCH REPORT

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, WILLIS ST.,
WELLINGTON.

ABSTRACT.

The land, part town section 168, was purchased by the trustees of the Free Church of Scotland in August 1854, from Rev. Charles Ibbotson of Yorkshire, for £200.

The first church opened in 1856 was demolished in 1875 to make way for a larger structure, destroyed by fire in 1884.

The other half of the section was bought from William Spinks in 1884, for £1,500, to accommodate a larger church. Spinks' cottage was moved back, and still stands.

The present church was dedicated on 11 December, 1885. Architect: Thomas Turnbull. Builder: James Wilson. Contract Price: £5,469. Described as "Decorative Gothic". Built of kauri supplied by Greenfield and Stewart's sawmill, Courtenay Place.

A second entrance was added, probably in 1904, at the request of the Wellington City Council. Cost £200 approximately. In 1920 and 1922 memorial windows were added in the southern and northern ends of the church respectively.

In 1953 a memorial porch was added to commemorate the centennial of the church. Architect, Malcolm Bennie. Builder, Webb and Cree. Cost £1,382.10s. In 1965 a window depicting a carpenter at work was added to the vestibule. This was the Martin Memorial.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, WILLIS STREET, WELLINGTON.

The first Presbyterians in Wellington worshipped at St Andrews, then in Lambton Quay. There is evidence of early dissension between some of the members of the congregation and their Minister, Reverend MacFarlane. The dissension increased in 1848 and 1849 with the arrival of Presbyterians from Dunedin who belonged not to the Church of Scotland but to the Free Church of Scotland.¹ By 1851 there were enough dissenting members to ask for a minister from the Free Church.

In 1851, sixty-nine persons signed a statement to the Free Church of Scotland asking for a minister to be sent to Wellington. He was Rev. John Moir. The session minutes in his handwriting beginning 1854 note that he arrived in Wellington on 3.11.1853 and preached his first sermon in the Atheneum Hall.² In May, 1854 he recorded the names of the first elders elected - Mitchell, Blythe, Lyon, McDonald, Wallace and Michael Quin.

In August, 1854, a plot of land, described as "part town section 168" was purchased from the Rev. Charles Ibbotson, Yorkshire, through his New Zealand agent, C.E. Von Alzdorf, for a sum of £200.³ The other half of the section was purchased by William Spinks who built a cottage on his property.

A church to accommodate two hundred⁴ was opened on 31.8.56. Within ten years it was too small and was twice enlarged in 1866 and 1871⁵. By 1875, the congregation had decided that the first church should be demolished and a new one to seat 600 built on the site. The foundation stone of the second church was laid by the Marquis of Normany on 20.6.1875. To finance the building, the trustees and Managers of the church took out a Mortgage of £1,500 at 8% with John James Williamson of Ohariu.⁶ The architect of the second church was Thomas Turnbull and the builders, Murdoch and Rose. A Management Committee report in 1875 states that "The Church was built of good materials and the work well executed."⁷

On 9.5.1884, the second church and schoolroom were destroyed by fire. A stirring account of the fire was given in the Evening Post on the same date.⁸ Described as the most disastrous fire since that which destroyed the Opera House in Manners Street, the only effects saved were the American organ, the hymn books and notice boards. The church was

insured for £3,000 and the schoolroom for £500 with the Northern Insurance Co. According to rumour, before the embers had cooled, James Smith, a draper and elder, was running among the crowd of 2,000 onlookers with his bowler hat held out, soliciting contributions for a new church building.⁹

To accommodate a larger church and schoolroom it was decided to purchase from William Spinks the other half of the section at a price of £1,500. The original Spinks cottage, which still stands, was shifted back and put to use as a residence for the Church caretaker.¹⁰

By the time the foundation for the third church was laid on 14.5.1885 by the Chief Justice, Sir James Prendergast, James Smith on behalf of the Finance committee was able to announce that £3,140 had been promised or paid towards the cost of the new church.¹¹ The cost of the building was £5,469. The architect was Thomas Turnbull, architect of the General Assembly Library and the builder, James Wilson. The kauri used in its construction was supplied by Greenfield and Stewart's sawmill, Courtenay Place. (James Wilson and Greenfield were both prominent members of St John's.) The church was described at the time as 'decorative Gothic'.¹² The gothic appearance of the original top parts of the windows are similar to those in the General Assembly Library.

In December, 1885, an organ was donated by James Smith. It was built by Messrs Lewis & Co. of London. James Smith's son, A.P. Smith, left a legacy of £1,000 for its restoration in 1949, and the original organ is still in use although substantial repair work was carried out in 1950.

By 1899, more land was needed to extend the Sunday School facilities in McDonald Crescent. Negotiations were entered into with the Hunter family to purchase land in this area. A minute in the Manager's Book for September 1899¹³ refers to the land as "1 rood, 12 perches which is at present over-run by fowls and is a rubbish dump." The asking price was £600. Negotiations dragged on until February 1901 when the land was finally purchased for 'a reasonable sum',¹⁴ and a letter sent to Mr Hunter accepting his offer. Meanwhile Thomas Turnbull had been instructed to prepare plans for the schoolroom and additions (19.10.1900) and the new rooms were opened in 190

In May 1901 the builder, James Wilson was asked to repair the finial on the spire. Thomas Turnbull was requested to supervise this work.

A photograph of the Church in 1885¹⁵ shows only one entrance. However when the church was photographed for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 1913,¹⁶ there are clearly two entrance doors. There is no specific reference to this alteration in the Church records but there is a letter to the Town Clerk dated 1.7.1904,¹⁷ about certain alterations to the church and schoolroom. Furthermore, the Annual Report for 1904 referred to alterations which were made necessary by the City Council's regulations for better egress from public buildings in the case of fire or panic. The work cost over £200.

In 1920, as a memorial to the dead of World War I, Hon. J.G.W. Aitken donated two memorial windows at the south end of the church above the organ. These windows depict Jesus with a lamb and Jesus with a child.¹⁸

Hon. J.G.W. Aitken, who died in 1921, was the first layman to be moderator of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand and as a memorial to him, three stained glass windows were installed at the northern end of the church. The windows depict the story of the Good Samaritan. They were dedicated in 15.7.1923¹⁹ and the stained glass reinforced in November 1946.

In 1935, as a memorial to the Session Clerk, M.D. Menelaus, an oak communion table was built for the church. The oak, which was imported from England, was constructed by Alexander Martin from a design by Gray Young.²⁰ The carving was done by C. Styles of Wellington.

At the same time a lectern was built by Alexander Martin as a memorial to Alexander Hopkirk.²¹

In 1953, to mark the centennial celebrations of the church, it was decided to use moneys bequeathed by Mrs Grace Meuli to build a memorial porch. A tender for the work from Webb and Cree for £1382.10 was accepted and the work put in hand.²² The architect was Malcolm Bennie. The porch was erected in timber and re-used many of the existing ornaments²³. At the same time memorial windows representing the contribution made by the women of St John's were installed in the vestibule. These windows show a woman washing Jesus' feet and the women at the empty tomb, i.e. service and devotion.²⁴

Windows in the memorial porch show St John the Apostle and St John the Baptist.

In 1954 the church heating was completely renewed and all windows reglazed at a cost of £448. The cabbage trees along the eastern boundary with Willis Street were cut down and replaced by pohutukawas.

The wooden piles under the steeple were replaced in 1957 and work begun on repiling the Church. This was completed in 1958. Some borer treatment had to be carried out at this time.

In 1959 the dark stain was removed from the pews which are now their original 'kauri' colour. By 1960 the windows of the church had been reglazed and the memorial windows in the front vestibule completed. During this year a Building Fund was established to provide for the eventual replacement of some of the wooden buildings.

A window to the memory of Alexander and Sarah Martin was constructed in 1965 in the west wing of the church vestibule. The window depicts a carpenter at work with his tools of trade. Alexander Martin built the oak communion table and the oak lectern, the Menelaus and Hopkirk memorials.

As a result of the Wahine storm in April, 1968, the church steeple suffered a fracture and remedial work had to be carried out. In the same year, infra red heaters were installed in the church. The next year a vehicular entrance from Dixon Street was provided. In 1970 the pews in the lower level of the church were chshioned.

Social Importance:

When St John's was built for the third time, the Te Aro area was the commercial centre of Wellington. The church reflects the expanding prosperity of the early Wellington businessmen. Their early struggles were mirrored in the small first church. With the entrenchment of their business interests came the second church which was much more substantial.²⁵ By the 1880's these businesses were so well established that the congregation of St John's was able to commission Thomas Turnbull to design the present, impressive structure.

Although faced with the continuous problem of population movement to the outer suburbs, St John's has remained the place of worship for many families who have a long association with the Church. As well as commercially prominent families such as those of James Smith (who still belong to the church), R. Hannah and John Kirkcaldie, St John's was the church chosen by many public servants. The Young Mens' Bible Class founded by Sir George Troup attracted many Government cadets and over the years those who worked in Wellington tended to remain church members.

The church is a prosperous one. In 1897 a Visitation committee called it "wealthy and prosperous".²⁶ In 1911, the committee wrote that St John's affairs were healthy and satisfactory. There were 700 members on the communion roll while attendance at public worship reached 1,000. Seven Bible Classes were in operation. These were the peak years for church attendance, when Dr Gibb was minister and there was even some talk of enlarging the church because the seating accommodation of 800 was inadequate. But the same enthusiastic committee also noted that there was a gravitation of members towards the suburbs which was reflected in the declining numbers of children attending Sunday School. This outward spread of Wellington's population had led to the formation of Presbyterian Churches by St John's members in Newtown, 1880, Brooklyn 1904, and Kelburn, 1908.

St John's played a significant part in the social structure of early Wellington. For the middle classes its schoolroom was a venue for concerts, meetings, educational gatherings, district socials, evangelical services, temperance gatherings, debates and literary groups. In the 1890's there was even a football team which used the hall for practice on Wednesday evenings.²⁷

Before a tea meeting to raise building funds in December, 1885

the Secretary of the Management Committee wrote to the Police asking for a constable to be present because "Last year a gang of larrikins from Quin Street gave a great deal of annoyance and stole a quantity of articles belonging to the caterer."²⁸

This indicates that although St John's was prosperous, it was in an area where there were people in the poorer socio-economic groups. By the 1880's the congregation was taking an active interest in the children of these families. J.G.W. Aitken and W. Allan organised classes for the boys of poor families and this became the Boys' Institute. St John's ran the Institute for many years and the Y.M.B.C. raised money for a building which was opened in 1907. The first secretary, Carl Colemus was appointed and paid by the St John's session.

During the same time, the women in the congregation became involved in schemes of practical aid for those in need in the parish. The Dorcas and Visiting Society was formed to provide garments for the elderly, orphans and the children of the poor. In 1892, when a former church member died in poverty, the Society raised a subscription for his family's needs and invested a sum of money for them.²⁹ In 1895, the Society asked Session for "pecuniary assistance", the money to be used for the poor of the congregation. This was happening at a time when St John's was still in debt because of its new buildings.

In 1902, these women asked Session to appoint a paid female missionary to help people in the area. They undertook to collect £50 of her yearly salary if the church would finance the other £40. In 1904, the Session gave permission for the Dorcas Society to use funds to assist the needy outside the congregation and the first female missionary or deaconess, Miss Lilian Lang, was appointed in 1905. She was followed by two further deaconesses but when Miss Nora Dick resigned in 1915 there was a lapse of thirty years before Miss Nessie Morgan's appointment in 1945. She filled the position between 1945-1949 and 1951-1959. There is no deaconess at the present time.

The Mothers' Club was founded by Miss Lang in 1906 to help the mothers of poorer boys, especially those who belonged to the Boys' Institute. During the 1920's and the depression of the 1930's this group was particularly active.³⁰ They met fortnightly and mothers could purchase cheap second-hand clothes at reasonable prices. During the depression of the 1930's this work was widened to include other members of the congregation. An inter-church committee was set up to work with the Mayor's Relief Fund for

for the needy of the Te Aro flat area. The Women's Association and the Bible Classes assisted with the distribution of relief. One member of the congregation bought two pairs of boots which he asked to be given to someone in need.³¹ There were also many sales of work.

The Mothers' Club folded up in 1942 when the women in the church became preoccupied with knitting for soldiers and later, collecting food parcels for Britain and Europe.

Although the sorts of needs catered for by the activities of the St John's women in these early organisations are now covered by the Welfare State, the annual accounts for 1968-69 include a "Fund for Special Family Assistance", one item being "Wool for cardigans".

Church members now concentrate on providing community services for the inner city area. Clubs aimed at helping the elderly and the young have been run for almost twenty years. "Saturday Night at Eight" is a club for the elderly while the Sunday Afternoon Club provides a meeting place for young people away from home. In 1968 the younger members of the congregation began a club for lonely, elderly people at two o'clock on Saturday afternoons. Troup House, which includes Spinks Cottage, provides hostel accommodation for young men who come to Wellington to study or work.

Historical Importance:

St John's reflects historically the inner city area where it was built. The names on the memorial tablets on the walls are those of men well known in early Wellington - the Kirkcaldie family, James Smith and his son A.P. Smith, William Hopkirk, Sir George Troup.

St John's has not been associated with any great historical event, although in December, 1918, it was used as an emergency hospital for two weeks during the influenza epidemic. Services went on as usual - in the Town Hall.

During the late 1920's and early 1930's, when J.R. Blanchard was minister, the church enjoyed a measure of vice-regal and government patronage. Hon. J.G. Coates was a member of the congregation and his wife often opened sales of work. In 1928 there was a service to mark the opening of Parliament and these continued in 1931, 1932, 1933 and 1934. At the 1934 service the lesson was read by the Governor-General and the 'Dominion' reported that Miss Jean Batten was also present, together with the Prime Minister, Mr Forbes, and the Hon. J.G. Coates.³² The same paper reported the attendance of the Governor-General at a service in 1936. From 1929 until the late 1930's the evening service from St John's was broadcast every eight weeks.

The members of St John's have not been famous but many have been well-known. The Hon. J.G. Coates was not the only politician to belong to St John's. Hon. J.G.W. Aitken was a prominent member in the early part of the century and the present Leader of the Opposition, Hon. J.R. Marshall, has been an elder since 1950.

The business families like the Kirkcaldies and James Smith (founders of these firms both being directors of the Manawatu Railway Co.), Walter Turnbull, father of Alexander Turnbull who lived near the Kirkcaldies in the select area of Upper Willis Street and R. Hannah were all church members. Although Robert Hannah lived at Khandallah he came to St John's each Sunday. A present church member³³ remembers Mr Hannah, then in ailing health, being carried up Dixon Street each Sunday morning by two retainers.

There were well-known Public Servants too. James McKerrow, a former head of the Lands and Survey Department; Walter Reid, Solicitor-General; A.D. Howitt, Chief Draughtsman for the New Zealand Railways; N.S. Woods, Secretary for Labour; T.H.

Gill, Chief Inspector of Secondary Schools; W. Gray, Principal of Wellington Teachers' Training College in the early years of the 20th century and Captain Johnson, Harbourmaster about the same time.

The part owner of Wellington's first independent newspaper, T.W. McKenzie, was an elder of St John's for many years. Two Mayors of Wellington were among the more prominent of St John's members, Hon. J.G.W. Aitken, Mayor from 1901-02 and a founder of the Boys' Institute. And Sir George Troup, founder of the Young Men's Bible Class and Mayor from 1927-31, best remembered in Wellington for the Carillon and his efforts to have the Dominion Museum established.

The Ministers of St John's often took a leading part in community affairs and often tried to influence parliamentary thinking on certain issues. Although there is a street named for him,³⁴ the Rev. John Moir had little time to spare for community interests as his term as first minister was a difficult one due to dissension among the members.

However, as the population of Wellington began to grow and the members of St John's began to be more prosperous, the second Minister, Rev. James Paterson, was able to give more time to public affairs. Like his predecessor, James Paterson came from Scotland. In his diary he records his first meeting with his congregation in 1868 and found them "a highly respectable congregation - generally liberal".³⁵ He became a Fellow of the University of New Zealand, a member of the Wellington Education Board and a member of the Board of Governors of Wellington College. In 1896 he strongly supported Bible readings in Schools and urged his congregation to vote "Yes" at a national referendum.³⁶ In 1899 he was urging them to vote "Prohibition" at the local option poll because of the "great evils arising out of the drink traffic".³⁷ In 1902 a letter was sent to the appropriate authorities protesting against the running of trains, trams and steamers on Sunday.³⁸ In 1904 after his retirement, Crump Street was renamed Paterson Street in his honour.³⁹

Dr Gibb, his successor, was one of the more famous Presbyterian ministers in New Zealand and became almost a legend in his own lifetime. He was instrumental in founding Queen Margaret's and Scots Colleges as well as an orphanage for children in Wellington.

During his ministry the pulpit was draped in black to mark the death of Richard John Seddon. In 1912 Dr Gibb sent a letter of protest to the Minister of Defence over the Sunday parade at Trentham, especially "target finding" and received a prompt and satisfactory answer.⁴⁰

In April 1913 the city was canvassed in support of a nationwide petition for Bible in Schools. A petition containing the signatures of 133,000 people was presented to the Government in May, 1914. Letters were sent to the Government in 1916 supporting the six o'clock closing and urging a more rigorous inspection of films because of the film "Intolerance". In 1918 the government was written to about liquor sales and the closure of public houses during the Peace Celebrations.⁴¹ After the war, Dr Gibb's public interests were centered in the League of Nations.

The fourth Minister, Mr Blanchard, took a keen interest in public affairs. During his ministry, the Prime Minister was approached about gambling, free kindergartens (a petition for which was placed in the church), unemployment and temperance. Mr Blanchard was Dominion president of the New Zealand Alliance.

Later Ministers continued their interest in public affairs. The present Minister, D.T.W. Kinloch listed his outside interests in the Annual Report for 1970: "Scots College Board of Governors, Hon. President of the Boys' Institute, Victoria House Women's Hostel Committee, National Society on Alcoholism, International Relations Committee and the Inner City Committee, among others."

These interests are not very different from those of the Minister when the present church was built, Rev. James Paterson.

Architectural Importance:

Architecturally, St John's is a good example of Thomas Turnbull's gothic style seen to the best advantage in the General Assembly Library. In "Architecture in New Zealand, 1920-1970" Stacpoole and Beaven describe it as "bigger, more assured and better sited"⁴² than St Peter's designed by Turnbull five years earlier.⁴³

It is also a good example of the workmanship of James Wilson the early Wellington builder who built the recently demolished Chief Post Office.⁴⁴ Wilson was for many years an elder of St John's.

Although St Peter's looks similar, St John's is quite unique. The Jubilee Souvenir Booklet 1913⁴⁶ page 19 says that because it was built of wood it was "less imposing than some of the churches in the South, yet probably the finest of its kind in the Dominion."

The original kauri exterior is well looked after and the interior is in excellent condition.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

St John's is classified as Class B. It has a communion roll of over 400 and the excellent condition of the church shows that the congregation regard it with some pride. There seems little likelihood of its being demolished. The land is exempted from Section 117 of the Public Works Act 1908.⁴⁷

An ambitious scheme was approved in principle by the Wellington City Council in 1965. This called for the replacement of the present Sunday School and Bible Class buildings with a five-storeyed "community centre" type building. It was not proposed to demolish the church but the cottage, known as Spinks Cottage, which is part of the Troup House hostel would have to be demolished to make way for the new building. A report on the cottage is attached as a separate Appendix I. It is a well-preserved example of early Wellington domestic architecture and has some historical interest.

It is recommended that the present classification on St Johns stand and that Spinks Cottage be classified as Class D.

Sgd.) M.G. EVANS
19.5.74.

Sources and References.

The Free Church of Scotland which founded the Otago Settlement broke away from the Church of Scotland in 1843. They were not reunited again until 1900. The issue at stake was the appointment of ministers against the wishes of the congregation. The Free Church maintained its right to select ministers.

2. Session Book 1854-1911 Microfilm. Alexander Turnbull Library
3. Copy of Land Transfer Office Deed attached as Appendix I.
4. Photograph of first church with enlargements about 1866 attached - A.T. Library.
5. Photograph of first church with enlargements about 1866 attached - A.T. Library.
6. Authorised by Congregational Meeting Sept. 1875, Managers Letterbook 1854-1911, Microfilm A.T. Library.
7. Management Committee report 1875. Copy held by R. Fowler, Karori
8. Evening Post 9.5.1884, A.T. Library, see Appendix attached.
9. Hearsay - R.B. Fowler, Karori.
10. See Appendix attached.
11. Evening Post Report - Appendix attached. A.T. Library
12. Evening Post Report - " " "
13. Management Book 1854-1911 Microfilm A.T.L.
14. Managers' Letterbook 1902, held in church safe.
15. and 16. Photographs - courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library.
17. Managers' Letterbook - Church safe. No record in City Council records, which start in 1929.
18. Extract from Management Committee report 1920 - church safe.
19. Annual Report 1923. Copy attached as Appendix. Original church safe.
20. Evening Post and Dominion reports - Alexander Turnbull Library. Copies attached as appendices.
21. Session Minutes, church safe.
22. " " " "
23. City Council records 7/1953
24. Annual Report 1953/54, church safe.
25. The names of the Mortgage documents were obtained from L.T. Office records and are included as a separate Appendix.
26. Session Minute Book 1954-1911 Microfilm. A.T.L.

Managers' Letterbook, 1896. Letter to Secretary St John's Football Club "Complaints have been made in the past with regard to damage to the buildings. As the weekly prayer meeting is also held on a Wednesday, there is to be no noise before 8.30p.m."

28. Managers' Letterbook, 1885, Microfilm, A.T.Library.
29. Session Minute Book 1892.
30. Annual Report 1924-25 "Indigent mothers come from far and near to obtain second-hand clothing at nominal prices." "Mothers come from as far afield as Lyall Bay, Brooklyn Hataitai and Island Bay" Annual Report 1926-27 church safe.
31. Session Minutes 1932 (church safe) "Mr Corkhill purchased two pair of boots for a deserving case."
32. "Dominion", 2.7.34, A.T. Library
33. Mr N. Fleming, member of the Board of Managers
34. Irvine Smith "Streets of my City" 1948
35. Diary of James Paterson 1868. Microfilm A.T.Library. Journal of voyage of "Ballarat". Other copies of his diaries held by R.B. Fowler, Karori.
36. Session Minutes, 1898. A.T.L.
37. " " 1899 "
38. " " 1902
39. "Streets of My City" Irvine Smith
40. Session Minute Book 1912. Church safe. The Minister of Defence replied in Jan. 1913 "Regulations on the subject will shortly be issued which will, I trust, be satisfactory to you."
41. Session Minute Book, 1916, 1918.
42. Stacpoole and Beaven page 12, plate 31.
43. Cyclopedia of New Zealand, 1895, lists buildings designed by Thomas Turnbull as: Post and Telegraph Office; School of Design and Offices of Education Board; Bellamys and the corridor connecting therewith; City Council Offices; South British Insurance; Colonial Insurance Coy; St John's; St Peter's; St Patrick's College, Wellington; John Duthies: Hannah's factory and retail shops; Te Aro House (James Smith's shop) Wellington Woollen Mills at Petone and Gear Meat Works.
44. Newspaper cutting - Evening Post 11.5.74. Attached as appendix.
45. The original plans and specifications are missing. There is no trace of them at the Church. It could be that Turnbull kept them.
46. Jubilee Booklet attached. Also Centennial Booklet 1953 attached
47. Certificate of Title attached. Appendix IV.

APPENDIX I - SPINKS COTTAGE.

This is a two-storeyed weatherboard building now serving as part of Troup House, a hostel for young men.

According to "Early Wellington" by Louis E. Ward (1928), W. Spinks came to Wellington in 1842 on the "Ursula". He was elected a vice President of the Mechanics Institute in 1843 and was the first wharfinger on Queens Wharf. He is on record as a resident of Willis Street in 1863. The L.T. Office deed (attached as an appendix) shows Spinks as co-purchaser of lot 168 in 1854 so the cottage was built between this date and 1863. The chimney of the cottage can be seen in the attached photo of the first church and additions, dated about 1866.

Both Ward and Irvine Smith in "Streets of My City", 1948, mention that Spinks ran a store for some time and that the Misses Spinks ran a private school from 1849 to 1879. "The Misses Spinks kept a school first in Dixon Street and later in Willis Street, in a house still standing behind St John's Church" (Irvine Smith). The book also mentions that this private school was one of the longest lasting ones in early Wellington.

In 1884, the land and cottage were bought by St John's for £1,500. The cottage was moved back to its present site to accommodate the larger church building and it was used as a caretaker's residence until 1967 when it was renovated and made an extension of Troup House.

Minor renovations were made throughout the years but the most major work done was in 1954 when a contract was let to Pavitt and Walker for lifting, repiling and renewal of the cottage's foundation timbers. In November 1954 the caretaker reported that the work had caused the chimney to crack and this was repaired. Prior to re-piling, the City Engineer had been asked to report on the condition of the cottage. A report from N.C. Haig was received but neither the church or City Council records have a copy. The Session minutes merely record that there was a report which said that the cottage had a life of 20-25 years if the piles were renewed.

The cottage is a well-preserved example of early Wellington domestic architecture and should be recorded because of its association with education in Wellington and its long association with St John's.

Photos are attached.

"The flames leaped through the windows of the sacred edifice and licked the sides of the building fanned by a strong southerly."

There was a crowd of between two and three thousand. When the spire crashed into Dixon Street, the store opposite caught fire.

A bottle was found in the foundation stone and in it was a copy of the "Evening Post" and the "Tribune", the Church's Annual Reports and some coins.

APPENDIX VI.

EXTRACT FROM N.Z. DAILY MAIL : 11.12.1885

Architecture: Decorative Gothic.

Tower: 168 feet high

Length: 112 feet; Width: 52 feet; Height of ceiling 35 feet;

Top of Spire: 155 feet.

Oblong shape but seats concentric from pulpit. Auditorium 71 feet in length. 20 seats in centre and 21 at either side.

Will seat 540 people. Gallery will seat 240 people.

Organ Chamber: room for 60 choristers in addition to organists.

Committee room: 16 x 17 feet; Vestry: 17 x 10 feet;

Engine room 17 x 10 feet; Organ chamber 19 x 26 feet;

Vestibule 64 x 12 feet.

Floor of auditorium gradually rises from the pulpit towards the door of the vestibule, the last seat being 2 feet higher than the first.

Gallery: a portion of which is divided from the main body of the Church by an elliptic arch and organ loft corresponding at the other end and is supported by eleven iron pillars

Height 9 feet.

There are six windows at each side with a grouping of windows over the gallery. There are two smaller windows over the organ chamber.

Gaslights: 22 wall brackets - 5 hall lights. 3 beautiful coronas in burnished brass 3 - 6 inches in diameter, each with 36 lights suspended from the ceiling.

4 stands of lights each having four burners.

Pulpit: 5 foot 3 inches from the floor.

28 inlet ventilators a modification of the Tobin principle introduced by the Architect.

Seven Boyles self activating ventilators in the ceiling to carry away stale air.

The Panellings are painted celestial blue. The moulded ribs and panel framings are picked out in different shades of salmon colouring while the walls are a uniform bright salmon colour.

APPENDIX VII.

Rev. Paterson organised St John's very thoroughly. From 1870 he drew up a list of districts for which each elder was responsible. The extent of those districts gives an idea of the area over which St John's exercised a spiritual influence.

A revised list in 1881 reads as follows:-

- I. Kaiwarra, Tinakori Rd, Thorndon to Woodward Street - Mr Young
- II. Ghuznee Street, Wodcombe Street, Upper Willis Street, Polhills Gully, Nairn Street to Cuba Street - Mr Waddell
- III. Woodward Street, Ghuznee Street, The Terrace, Lambton Quay, Boulcott Street, Willis Street to Ghuznee Street - Mr McKerrow.
- IV. Cuba Street and streets intervening to Taranaki Street and Hopper Street - Mr James Smith.
- V. Manners, Dixon Streets, Taranaki Place and Courtenay Place - Mr Fraser.
- VI. Taranaki Street and Tory Street with streets intervening, also streets between Tory Street and Cambridge Terrace to Buckle Street - Mr Hopkirk.
- VII. Marjoribanks Street and Oriental Bay - Mr Robertson.
- VIII. From Marjoribanks Street to Sussex Square and Ellis Street. From Cambridge Terrace to Mt Victoria - Mr McLean.
- X. Newtown, Vogeltown and Patent Slip - Mr R. Hopkirk.*

In 1884, it was proposed that elders meet vessels, welcome Presbyterians, invite them to Church and "endeavour to direct them to respectable lodgings." Session Minutes - 1884.

* Church started at Newtown by Mr R. Hopkirk 1880 recognised as a separate preaching station May 1882.

APPENDIX VIII.

Extract from the Seventieth Annual Report, July 1922 - June 1923.

" Memorial Window to the Late John G.W. Aitken:

This memorial, occupying all the window space in the northern end of the Church was dedicated on 15 July. The window was unveiled by Miss Aitken and Mrs Day, nieces of Mr Aitken and by Messrs Hopkirk, Troup and M.D. Menelaus....

The window was constructed by Messrs Smith and Smith of Dunedin under the direction of Mr John W. Brock, artist. It is original in design and a very fine piece of work. The centre portion is 17 feet in height and five feet in breadth and the two side portions are each 11 feet in height by 2 foot 4 inches in breadth.

On the left is a panel depicting the attack of the thieves on the man on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. This panel is full of rich, low tone colouring and accurately portrays the scene in a lonely part of the highway. This is a fine picturisation of the Good Samaritan assisting the unfortunate man who has been injured.

Extending from the back is the roadway on which the Priest and the Levite are passing by. Away in the distance is a village set as a jewel in the mountains with the sunset sky beyond, the whole being filled by the luminosity of the dying day.

On the right is a picture showing the interior of the inn where the Good Samaritan is in the act of paying the two pence for the care of the stranger."

MENELAUS MEMORIAL.

Extract from Evening Post 20.11.35.

"The table is now completed and will be dedicated at the morning Service next Sunday. In design it is based on the decorative period of Gothic architecture and is built of specially selected and beautifully figured English oak.

The capping mould is an ovolo mould which bears a carving of wheat ear and grape vine, representing the elements of bread and wine set apart at Holy Communion for that "holy use and mystery". On a frieze below the capping mould, in Gothic lettering picked out in bronzed gilt, has been incised the text "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Nine panels in the front and two at each end of the table are richly decorated with tracery and in the centre panel have been incised the letters "I.H.S.", a widely used monogram of the primitive church representing the sacred name of Jesus. In the style of the old cathedrals, the table has been finished with a wax finish which will darken with time into a warmly rich brown hue.

The table was designed by Mr Gray Young of Gray, Young, Morton and Young, architects and closely adheres to the type prevalent in Presbyterian churches in Scotland and England. It was built by Mr Alex Martin and the carving was executed by Mr C. Styles of Wellington."

Newspaper Photo 20.11.35. A.T.L.

Extract from Dominion 25.11.35:

"A side chair for the communion table was dedicated to Alexander Hopkirk. A second side chair was dedicated to the memory of William Allan" - gift of his family.

"The central chair was dedicated to Matthew D. Menelaus and was the gift of his sister, Mrs Young of Port Chalmers."

Dominion, 30.11.35:

"The chairs are built of the same oak and bear the same finish as the communion table. The backs are panelled and richly decorated with tracery surmounted by a circle in which there are distinctive carvings. The carving on the central

chair is that of the burning bush with the motto "Nec tamen consumebatum", the symbol of the Presbyterian church in every country of the world where it has been found. The carving of the side chairs is a modification of the wheat ear and grape vine which is on the table."

APPENDIX X.

GROWING PROSPERITY OF CHURCH MEMBERS.

1. Names of church trustees on 1854 and 1861 Deeds:

Michael Quin - Farrier
James Wallace - Grocer
John McLaggan - Builder
James Quirk - Draper
William Waring-Taylor - Merchant

2. Names of church trustees on 1876 Mortgage Deed:

W. Smith - Clerk	Muir - Her Majesty's Customs
McLean - Builder	Walter Reid - Solicitor General
T.W. McKenzie - Printer	Laing - Printer
Robertson - Engineer	Walter Turnbull - Merchant (Alexander's father)
Sloan - Tailor	Gray -(Clerk)
Whitehouse - Grocer	Taylor (Clerk)
J. Kirkcaldie - Draper	McDonald (Accountant)
McDonald - Clerk	
Rennie - Accountant	

3. The 1887 Mortgage to finance the cost of the new church and purchase of Spinks' land names as property trustees:

Robert Greenfield, Timber Merchant
Thomas McKenzie, Settler
James Smith, Merchant

The Mortgage of £2,200 was to James Barry and William McDonald (Builder). Security taken over Manse which was lot 438, Woolcombe Street.

4. On 1.2.1900 the Mortgage was refinanced with the Public Trust, £1300 at 6½% reducible to 4%.

5. At a special collection at the Jubilee services in December 1913 enough was collected to pay off the outstanding mortgage of £1,300 on the church.

6. The question of repairs was always a worrying one but in 1930 the Treasurer, Mr R. Fleming made provision for further repairs and maintenance by buying shares in the Metropolitan Building Society. An Endowment Fund was started in 1931. By 1955 there was £10,000 in this Fund. In 1951 a valuation of £50,000 was

placed on the buildings (Session Minute Book 12.51). The 1972 Annual Report shows a sum of \$20,000 in the Endowment Fund and \$13,467 in the Hall rebuilding fund.

APPENDIX XI.

Extract from "Evening Post", 14.12.35.

"Fifty Years Ago - A Shining Example.

"The Presbyterians are neither exceptionally wealthy nor, as compared with other denominations, extremely numerous. They consist, of course, principally of Scotchmen and gentlemen of that nationality are not popularly credited with reckless prodigality. That in a good cause, however, they are willing to contribute most freely and liberally, Mr James Smith showed last night." 14.12.1885.

It was necessary to raise another mortgage in 1887. Details in Appendix X

APPENDIX XII

OTHER CHURCH BUILDINGS.

1. Original Sunday School Building, built 1884, wooden,
Thomas Turnbull.
2. Bible Class, Gymnasium and extension to Schoolrooms - 1902 -
Turnbull
3. Troup House Extension to Y.M.B.C. rooms at rear of Church;
Financed from sale of St John's Hostel, Willis Street,
1956 and funds from Troup family. Cost £4,000.
Architect Gray Young.

Ministers of St John's:

John Moir 1853-1867
James Paterson 1868-1903
James Gibb 1903-1926
J.R. Blanchard 1927-1939
P. Gladstone Hughes 1940-1947
William Temple 1948-1957
J. Kingsley Fairbairn 1957-1968
D.T.W. Kinloch 1969 -

St John's, Wellington.

Photographs supplied with
report on photograph file -

Nos. 3858-3863