



*Mannofield Church*

---

---

JUBILEE BOOKLET

---

---

1932





Mannofield Church.

## *A Short History of Mannofield Church.*

*1881 - 1932.*



REAT changes take place in the space of fifty years. Our Church is now fifty years old, and there are exceedingly few of the original members still alive. We have still with us one of the original Elders, Mr. William Bowie, who is wonderfully keen and enthusiastic in his attachment to the Church and a most frequent attender at the services. There are several members who were amongst the young folks of the Church in its early years. They have many interesting memories of the old days.

At such a time as this the office-bearers of our Church feel that a booklet should be published, with an account of the history of the Church of Mannofield, together with photographs of several personalities both of past and present days who have taken an active part in the work of the Church. In this part of the booklet we now proceed to give an account of the history of the Church.

The movement which led to the origin of Mannofield Church was mainly promoted by residents in the locality. The Iron Church which had been erected at Craigiebuckler in 1873 had drawn a certain proportion of its membership from the Mannofield district, and in the course of a few years a desire was expressed in favour of securing a church specially for that district. There was one gentleman in particular who took the leading part in the promotion of the new scheme, and that was Mr. William Gordon, solicitor. The Church of Mannofield owes to Mr. Gordon a very great debt of gratitude for his enthusiasm, not only in these initial stages, but for many years right till the day of his death. A petition was drawn up and was submitted to the Presbytery. The petitioners asked permission to erect a temporary church at Mannofield, and they submitted an arrangement whereby the Rev. William Forbes, M.A., the minister at Craigiebuckler, should become minister of the new charge. There were difficulties to be faced and overcome, and the Presbytery was occupied with these for some time. The preservation of the rights of Craigiebuckler Church had to be kept in view, but in the end an amicable arrangement was arrived at. The congregation at Craigiebuckler were then proposing to proceed to the erection of a stone and lime church,



and, by the selection of a site for their new building at a greater distance from Mannofield, the difficulties in the way largely disappeared. In January, 1881, the Presbytery, on a report being submitted by the special committee appointed to deal with the matter, expressed its satisfaction at the harmonious outcome of the negotiations, and formally sanctioned the starting of a new congregation at Mannofield and loosed Mr. Forbes from the charge of Craigiebuckler.

A neat wooden church was erected in the triangular plot of ground in front of the site of the present building, and the opening services in this temporary place of worship were held on Sunday, 27th February, 1881, the preachers on this occasion being two very well known ministers of Aberdeen—the Rev. C. C. MacDonald, of St. Clement's, and the Rev. Henry Cowan, of Rubislaw, afterwards Professor Cowan, beloved by his students and by the whole city of Aberdeen. A fortnight later—on the 10th March, 1881—the Rev. William Forbes, M.A., was formally inducted as first minister of Mannofield, the Rev. George Duncan, of Maryculter, conducting the induction services in the presence of the Presbytery. On Sunday Mr. Forbes was introduced to the congregation by the Rev. H. W. Wright, of Ferryhill.

While the services were continued in the temporary building, two schemes were promoted concurrently—the erection of a permanent church and its endowment, so as to secure for it the status of a Parish Church. There was great enthusiasm, and much success attended both schemes. The membership was increasing, and the original promoters of the cause were greatly encouraged and were most generous in their assistance, both financial and otherwise. Soon a handsome church was built in a most desirable position on the North Deeside public road at its junction with Countesswells Road. The building is a comely edifice, and its appearance is enhanced by the graceful spire, which is a landmark of the district.

One of its ministers described the Church as “standing as a Sentinel at the gates of a great city.” The Church was opened on Sunday, 30th July, 1882, by the Rev. Dr. H. Story, of Roseneath (afterwards Principal Story of Glasgow University, well known for his fire and force in Assembly debates), who preached forenoon and evening to large congregations. In the same year the endowment of the Church was completed, the boundaries of the new parish were fixed, and by decree of the Court of Teinds Mannofield became a *quoad sacra* Parish Church.



Interior of Church.



The original Kirk Session consisted of Messrs. William Bowie, George M'Bain, John Ogg, James Simpson, John Edwards, and William Gordon. Only one of these original Elders is now a member of the Kirk Session, and that is Mr. Bowie, of whom mention has already been made. The four original Trustees of the Church were John Edmonston, George M'Bain, William Gordon, and Hugh Harper. To one of these, both an Elder and a Trustee, Mr. William Gordon, Mannofield Church owed its existence, and it received his warmest support to the end of his life. Mr. Gordon was extraordinarily generous in his gifts. He placed in the Church a beautiful stained glass window in memory of his sister. He contributed most liberally to every scheme for the welfare of the Church. In fact, when any of the older members think of the Church in those earlier days, they can never forget for a moment all that Mr. Gordon did. Mr. Gordon died suddenly on 4th August, 1901, and his funeral was attended by a very large number of friends from all parts of the city, as well as from Mannofield Church. The following is an extract from the Kirk Session Records of 14th August, 1901:—"The Session unanimously resolved to put on record an expression of their deep regret for the death of a beloved member, Mr. William Gordon, who died suddenly on 4th August, 1901.

"Mr. Gordon leaves behind him a gracious record of loving-kindness and friendliness for all, and of devoted service to the Church. From the commencement of Mannofield Church, of which he was the principal founder, Mr. Gordon proved a zealous office-bearer, filling the three several offices of Manager, Elder, and Session Clerk, in a way that gave constant evidence of a warm attachment to the Church. His benevolence was, in fact, unremitting in its exercise. To the great schemes of the Church of Scotland, to the resources of his own Church, as well as to many poor people whom he intimately knew, Mr. Gordon was a generous but unobtrusive giver. Now he rests from his labours and his works do follow him. The Session desire to record their affectionate tribute to his memory."

During the first quarter of a century of its existence, Mannofield Church may be said to have had a comparatively uneventful history. Mr. Forbes spent his whole ministerial life in the same district, and confined himself almost exclusively to the duties of his own Church and pastorate. Many still remember him, and he was greatly respected. He intimated his resignation to the Presbytery in 1906 on his retirement from active service, and before



leaving Aberdeen he was the recipient of a farewell presentation by the congregation.

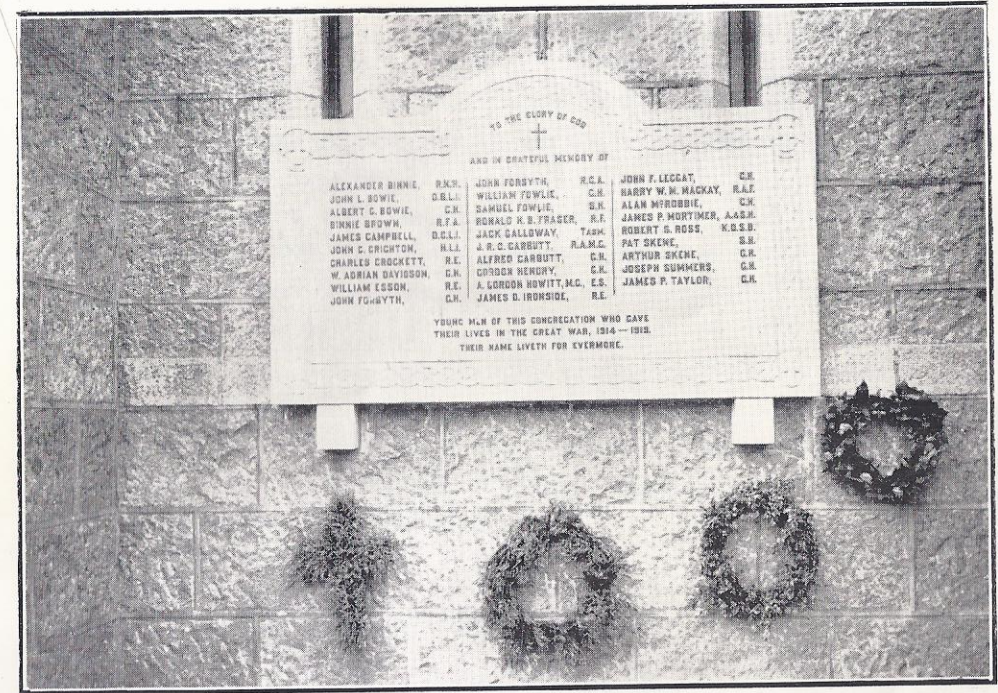
A new era in the history of the Church started with the election and ordination of the Rev. W. Phin Gillieson, M.A. Mr. Gillieson came from St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, where he was licensed assistant. He came with a high reputation, and during his short pastorate of three years he greatly increased the congregation and was the originator of numerous youth organisations which flourished in a remarkable way, notably the Boys' Brigade and the Girls' Guildry. The Sunday School also was more than doubled. Mr. Gillieson attracted to the Sunday services a large number of visitors and strangers. The membership increased by over 200 and the sittings in the Church were almost fully let. One great service that Mr. Gillieson performed was the promulgation of a scheme for a new Hall. Very quickly the money was raised, about £1100 being collected in the space of a year and a half. The Hall was opened on Friday, 9th September, 1910, but by this time Mr. Gillieson had been translated to the second charge of Ayr Parish Church. The new Church Hall is a splendid building, one of the finest church halls in the city. It was formally dedicated by the Rev. Dr. George Milligan, of Caputh, who had recently been appointed Professor of Biblical Criticism at Glasgow University.

One cannot adequately describe what a tremendous asset the Hall has been to the whole life of the Church since the day of its opening. The whole social atmosphere of the Church has been transformed. Many a pleasant and instructive evening has been spent there by members and their friends of a yesterday and to-day.

On the very day that the Hall was opened a welcome social was held in honour of the Rev. W. W. Reid, who had been elected to the charge. Mr. Reid was minister of Mannofield for about five years, and during that period he took a great interest not only in his own Church but in the affairs of the city generally, and more especially in the School Board, where he was a force to be reckoned with.

The Great War broke out during Mr. Reid's ministry in Mannofield, and many of the men of the congregation left for services in the various fronts.

In 1915 Mr. Reid was translated to Dumbarton, and was succeeded by the Rev. J. Aulay Steele, M.A., who was minister of Mannofield until the year 1926, when he was translated to St. Vincent Church, Glasgow. Mr. Steele made many good friends in the Church and amongst his brethren of



War Memorial.



[Photo, by J. W. ROBERTSON, West Cults.]

Harvest Festival Decoration, 1932.



the Presbytery. He has published many articles in various periodicals and magazines, and is the editor of the Report of the Forward Movement Congress held in Glasgow in October, 1931.

Now we come to the present day and the present ministry. An account of these years had better be left to someone in the future to write. Suffice it to say that the Rev. James F. Kellas, of Forteviot Church, Perthshire, was elected to Mannofield in succession to Mr. Steele. The Church to-day has about 1150 members, and there is a large number of flourishing organisations. The attendances at the services are also remarkably good, and the Church workers are very enthusiastic in every scheme to promote the interests of their Church and the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom in the district. May the Blessing of God rest upon us all!

J. F. K.

[For a large part of the above information the writer is indebted to Mr. Alexander Gammie's "Churches of Aberdeen."]



### *Special Jubilee Services.*

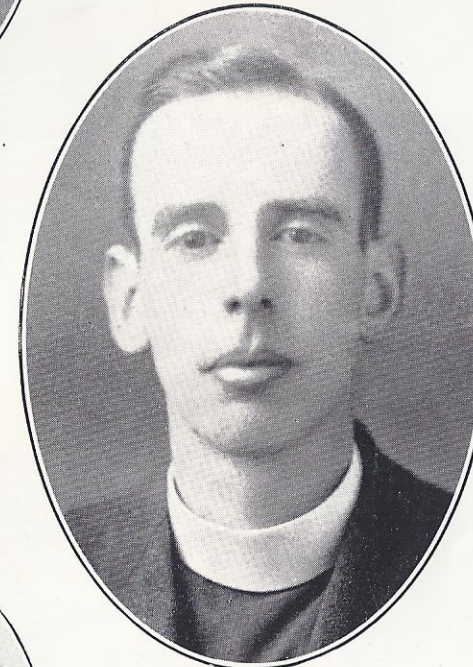
On Sunday, 20th November, 1932, special Jubilee Services were held. The Rev. Albert A. Diack, St. Bernard's, Edinburgh, conducted these services. There were very large congregations both morning and evening. Mr. Diack congratulated minister and congregation on the work that had been done in the past and on the continued progress of the Church. On Monday evening, 21st November, a large company assembled in the Church for the Social Evening. The Rev. J. F. Kellas presided, and was accompanied by the Rev. W. W. Reid, of Dumbarton, and the Rev. J. Aulay Steele. Mr. Reid and Mr. Steele gave very interesting addresses and spoke of several reminiscences of bye-gone days. Mr. Diack was also present, and gave an address. The Rev. John Ross, of Holburn West Church, our nearest neighbour, conveyed the good wishes of neighbouring ministers and congregations. Mr. Kellas referred to Mr. Bowie's long service as an Elder of the Church, and expressed his pleasure and pride that he was present amongst the platform party that night. Hearty cheering greeted these words. Altogether a very happy evening was spent, both with music and speech. Tea was served in the Hall before the meeting, and the Woman's Guild as usual rendered splendid service. It was an occasion which will never be forgotten by those who were privileged to be present.



Rev. Wm. Forbes, M.A.  
1881-1906.



Rev. W. Phin Gillieson,  
M.C., M.A.  
1907-1910.



Rev. J. F. Kellas, B.D.  
1926—



Rev. W. W. Reid, B.D.  
1910-1915.



Rev. J. Aulay Steele, M.A.  
1915-1926.



*The Organisations of the Church and  
their Leaders.*

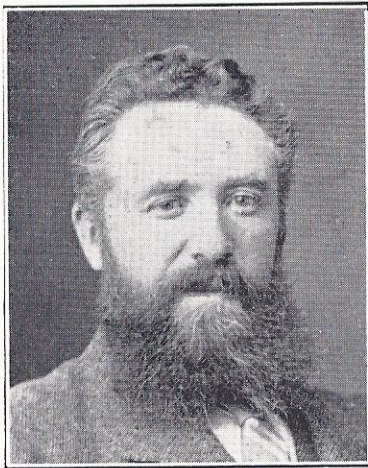
The Kirk-Session.

Moderator	...	...	...	Rev. James F. Kellas.
Session Clerk	...	...	...	Wm. M'Hattie.
Charles S. Anderson.				Norman Harper.
George Anderson.				J. S. Hendry.
W. F. Anton.				Logan H. Jackson.
Alex. Bain.				Thomas Johnston.
Alex. Beattie.				A. G. D. Kissach.
Wm. Bowie.				Lewis Mackay.
Joseph Catto.				Wm. M'Hattie.
David M. C. Donald.				John Milne.
James J. Donald.				Robert Rankin.
Patrick M. Dickson.				George Ross (Forest Avenue).
H. J. Edwards.				George Ross (Gray Street).
James. L. Evinson.				Wm. Stewart.
John O. Fleetham.				George Watt.
Hugh W. Graham.				Alex. Will.

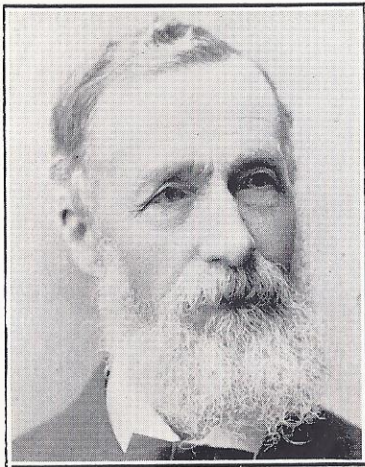
The Congregational Board.

*The Members of the Kirk-Session together with the  
following :—*

Chairman	...	...	...	Rev. James F. Kellas.
Clerk	...	...	...	Wm. M'Hattie.
Miss Arthur.				James A. C. Coutts.
Mrs. Reith.				Alex. Diack.
James L. Archibald.				Wm. Falconer.
Charles B. Archibald.				Robert F. Law.
Colin S. Asher.				



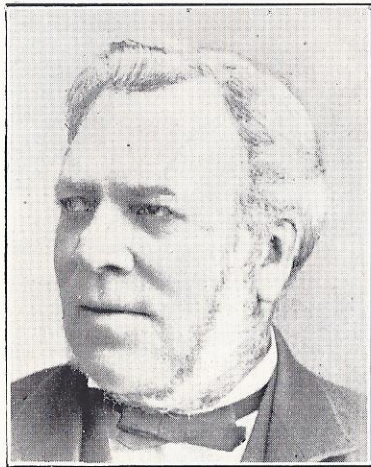
Mr. John Edmonston.



Mr. George M'Bain.



Mr. William Gordon.



Mr. Hugh Harper.

Original Trustees.



**Sunday School.**

*Joint Superintendents* ... { Rev. James F. Kellas.  
... Mr. A. Bain.  
*Secretary* ... Mr. A. Bain.  
*Assistant Secretary* ... Mr. A. Horne.  
*Pianist* ... Mr. Harold Johnstone.  
*Leader of Primary Department* Miss Janie M. Horne.

**The Woman's Guild.**

*President* ... Mrs. M'Hattie.  
*Secretary* ... Miss Margaret Arthur.

**The Men's Recreation Club.**

*Honorary President* ... Rev. James F. Kellas.  
*President* ... Mr. J. L. Evinson.  
*Vice-President* ... Mr. Joseph Catto.  
*Secretary* ... Mr. James Donald.  
*Treasurer* ... Mr. Robert Rankin.

**The Boys' Brigade (44th Team).**

*Captain* ... Mr. James Archibald.  
*Lieutenants* ... { Mr. J. A. Russell.  
... Mr. Robert Archibald.  
... Mr. W. B. Falconer.  
*Pianist* ... Miss P. Scullion.

**The Life Boys' Team.**

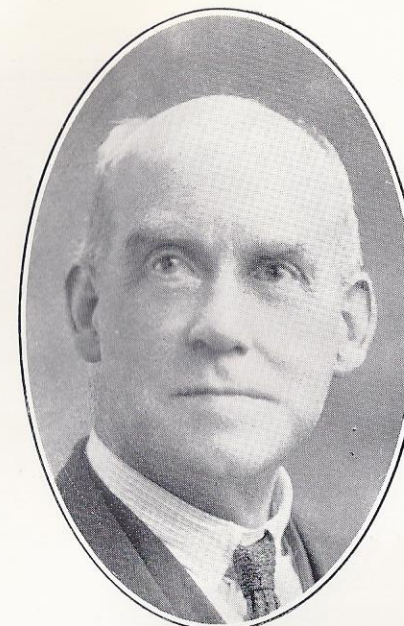
*Leaders* ... { Mr. W. B. Falconer.  
... Mr. John Mavor.  
... Mr. George Reid.  
*Pianist* ... Miss Bessie Webster.

**The Girl Guides (40th Company).**

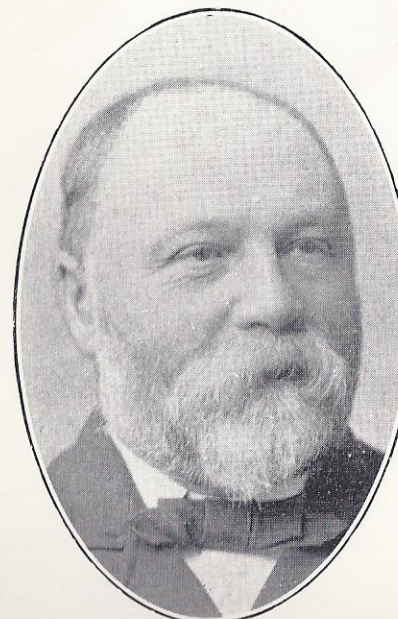
*Captain* ... Miss Helen Wishart.  
*Lieutenant* ... Miss Ruth Reid.

**The Brownies (16th A Company).**

*Brown Owl* ... Miss Agnes Bain.  
*Tawny Owl* ... Miss Addie Crockett.



Mr. Wm. M'Hattie,  
Session Clerk.



Mr. John Edwards.

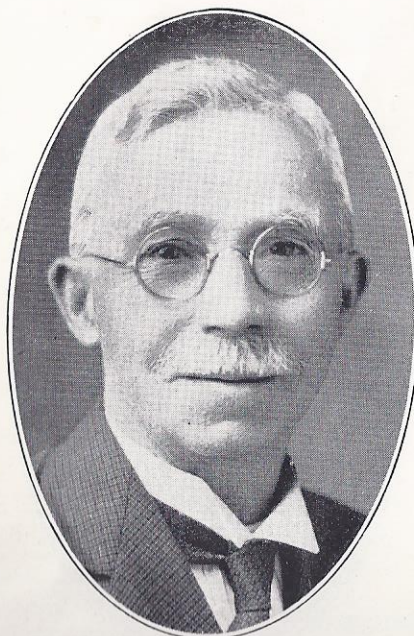


Mr. Wm. Bowie.

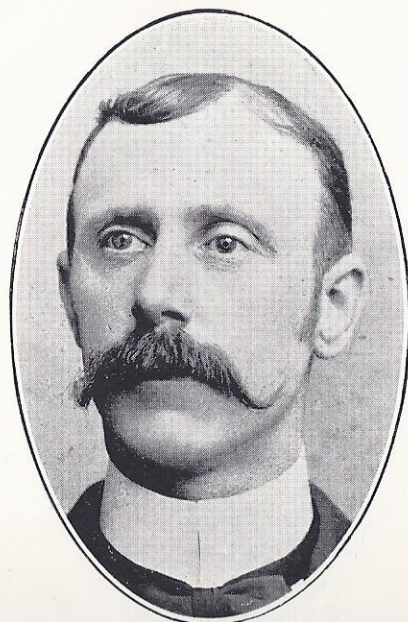




Mr. Alex. M'Gregor.



Mr. A. A. Conn.



Mr. James Forsyth.

Church Officers.

### The Choir.

<i>Organist</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. John Garden.
LEADERS—					
<i>Soprano</i>	...	...	...	...	Miss Christina Dickie.
<i>Contralto</i>	...	...	...	...	Miss E. Grassie.
<i>Tenor</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. Hugh Ritchie.
<i>Bass</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. James Killah.

### The Sunday Evening Class.

<i>Leader</i>	...	...	...	...	The Minister.
<i>Secretaries</i>	...	...	{		Miss Christine Smith.
					Miss Bunty Crockett.
<i>Pianist</i>	...	...	...	...	Miss Norah Greig.

### The Badminton Club.

<i>Honorary President</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. J. A. C. Coutts.
<i>President</i>	...	...	...	...	Rev. J. F. Kellas.
<i>Vice-President</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. Joseph Catto.
<i>Captain</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. A. Hunter.
<i>Secretary</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. B. Wood.

---

<i>Church Officer</i>	...	...	...	...	Mr. James Forsyth.
-----------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	--------------------

