

Reverend John Auley Steele

22nd September 1884 – 10th June 1965

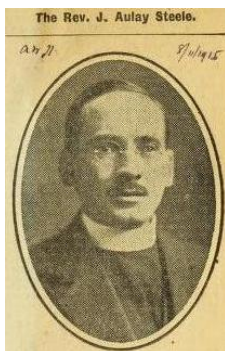
John Auley Steele was born on 22nd September 1884 at 8:15 am, at Glenkin Cottage, Main Street, Renton. The informant on the following day at Renton was John Steele the child's father.

A surviving entry in an as yet unidentified Church directory, headed 'Mannofield', narrates that J. Auley Steele was educated at St Peter's & Scottish High School, Bombay, and thereafter at the Universities of Bombay and Glasgow. According to the Registrar's Handwritten Roll of Graduates, he graduated from the University of Glasgow in 1906, with the degree of M.A.

The directory also indicates that he was licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow in May 1909, was an Assistant at Keith 1909-10, was in Buenos Aires (*Iglesia Presbiteriana San Andres*) 1910-14 and 'ord.' (presumably ordained) for work in Argentine 7th January 1912 and at St. Georges Parish, Glasgow, 1914-15'.

The detail concerning the Argentine explains his absence from the 1911 census and is corroborated by the Scots in Argentina web site, which lists 'J. Auley Steele Glasgow' as the Camp Assistant for 1912, under the heading of *Assistants in St. Andrew's, Kirk Session and Committee of Managements, Etc.* On the founding of a church at Talleres in 1913, J. Auley Steele donated the minister's robes.

A newspaper cutting dated 8th November 1915 provides a further useful resume of his career to date:



Above is a photo of the Rev. J. Auley Steele, the minister-elect of Mannofield Parish Church, Aberdeen. Receiving his early education at Bombay, he took his arts and divinity courses at the University of Glasgow, with the following distinctions: Morgan bursary (£100), John Adam bursary (£54), Burnside prize for knowledge of the English Bible (£10) for two successive years, Downhill prize for public speaking (£10), and prizeman in Church history, Biblical criticism and Hebrew. He graduated M.A. in 1906. Licensed in 1909 he was assistant minister of Keith Parish Church 1909-10, and from 1910 to 1914 was in the Argentine, being assistant minister to St Andrew's Scots Church, Buenos Ayres, with charge of the whole work in the interior of Argentine. Since last year he has been minister-in-charge of St George's Parish Church, Glasgow. Mr Steele is 30 years of age.



Image courtesy of Mannofield Parish Church History Group

J. Aulay Steele M.A. was admitted to the charge of Mannofield Parish Church, Aberdeen, on 3rd December 1915. According to the *Mannofield Parish Church Blotter Calendar and Year Book 192*, p. 9, he was inducted on the 4th.

John Aulay Steele married Ethel S. Hendry on 22nd February 1916 at St Matthew's Parish Church, Glasgow, after Banns according to the Forms of the Established Church of Scotland. He was a bachelor aged 31 and was designated as Minister of Mannofield Parish. His usual address was entered as 94, Hammerfield Avenue, Aberdeen. The Register was signed by Alex. Spark of St Matthew's and by William J. Smith of St Marnock's, Kilmarnock, assisting, also by three witnesses: W. M. Milne, Rob. Gordon and Frances N. Steele, presumably the groom's sister.

John Aulay Steele, entered as present, was Minister of Mannofield Parish when he acted as informant on his son John's birth certificate on 19th March 1917 at Aberdeen.



Mannofield Parish Church, as featured on the front of the Mannofield Parish Church Blotter Calendar and Year Book 1924.

The *Mannofield Parish Church Blotter Calendar and Year Book 1924*, p. 5, contains the following Preface:

This Year Book contains full information about the various agencies of Mannofield Parish Church at date of writing. It should serve not only as a record of the past and a report of the present but as a useful guide to those who may be asking what they can do, or where they may go, to find a sphere for their Christian activity. A measure of success has attended our work in the past difficult years. We have held our own and something more. Despite fluctuations, our membership has been maintained and even slightly increased. During the present ministry, the reported Christian Liberality, even in the face of adverse economic circumstances, has increased by 50 per cent., and the Congregation's givings toward general Church objects outwith its own bounds has increased by 30 per cent. We have raised £120 for a beautiful War Memorial, and a sum of over £400 has been found for the reconstruction of the Church organ. To our active Women's Guild, seconded by the givings of our membership, and working hand in hand with the respective Special Committees, the Church Funds by

the Committee of Management has, likewise, conserved our position. The various organisations, notably the Sunday School, are in a sound and hopeful state, and recently their number has been added to, in the shape of a healthy



The Rev. JOHN AULAY STEELE M.A., Minister of the Parish, as he appeared in the Mannofield Parish Church Blotter Calendar and Year Book 1924, p. 7.

Photo: Grainger, 196, Holborn Street

“League of Young Worshippers” and a newly-launched Company of Girl Guides. The starting of a Mothers’ Meeting, also is contemplated. Three Bible Classes, conducted by the Minister, build upon the foundation-work of the Sunday School Staff, and our organisations, in general, are in good working order.

But no self-complacency is ever justifiable. It cannot yet be said that the whole congregation, or even an adequate proportion of it, takes a just share in the common labour. The development of a wider interest, and a deeper sense of responsibility and unity of effort, is one of the dearest aspirations of the Minister and Kirk Session.

The results that have, so far, been attained are due to the ungrudging, tireless labours of a body of workers, comparatively small in numbers but of praiseworthy diligence, for whom the Minister and Session are thankful and to whom they offer their sincere acknowledgements.

JOHN AULAY STEELE

The Mannofield Church Jubilee Booklet, 1932, remembered him thus:

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 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.

During his time in Mannofield Parish, Rev. J. Aulay Steele additionally served, apparently on an *ex officio* basis, as Chaplain to the 44th Aberdeen Boys’ Brigade Company.

St. Vincent Church was in Kent Road and has since been converted into flats.

The Rev. J. Aulay Steele co-authored the following work, first published in 1934 and reprinted on at least eleven occasions thereafter, to 1960.

Church of Scotland

The Four Years' Course for Bible Classes

VOLUME III

**THE STORY OF
THE CHURCH**

BY

THE REV. J. AULAY STEELE, M.A.

AND

THE VERY REV. A. J. CAMPBELL, D.D.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND COMMITTEE ON YOUTH

The Rev. J. Aulay Steele, M.A., was also responsible for a pamphlet containing a series of six lessons on Christian Missions, published by the Youth Committee, as follows:

- I. GOD AND THE OUTSIDER.
- II. EARLY ATTEMPTS IN ASIA.
- III. THE CONVERSION OF THE BRITISH ISLES.
- IV. THE CONVERSION OF EUROPE.
- V. EARLY ASSAULTS UPON AFRICA.
- VI. REPLANTING IN ASIA.

How long he remained at St Vincent has not yet been established but he was the Minister at Cleish Parish Church, Kinross, from 1945 until his retiral in 1958. In 1947, he was Moderator of the Presbytery of Dunfermline and Kinross, of which Cleish Church was then a part. He also served as Presbytery Clerk.

It was during his time as Minister of Cleish that John Aulay Steele was widowed. Ethel died on 31st March 1954 and John acted as informant at Perth on the following day.

John Aulay Steele, Minister, Church of Scotland (Retired), widower of Ethel Hendry, died on 10th June 1965 at 0:30 pm, at 153 Morningside Drive, Edinburgh. His usual address was 15, Carlton Place, Edinburgh. He was 80 years of age. The causes of death were certified as 1(a) Broncho pneumonia (b) chronic bronchitis with

emphysema and 2 senile dementia. The informant on the 12th at Edinburgh was D.M. Wilson of 26, Viewfield Terrace, the deceased's executor.

John and Ethel had a son, John Hendry Dinning Steele, familiarly Jack, who was born on 10th February 1917 at 5:45 am, at Monaltrie Villa, Seafield Road, Aberdeen.

On the evidence of his daughter Penelope's 1948 birth certificate, Jack married Pamela Higginson on 5th September 1942 at Dalhousie, Lahore, India.

Jack and Pam subsequently had a daughter, Penelope Anne Steele, who was born on 24th July 1948 at 3:20 am, at 160, Broomhill Drive, Glasgow (Balshagray Nursing Home). John H.D. Steele was an aluminium manufacturer's clerk, usual residence 124, Observatory Road, Glasgow, when he acted as informant on the birth, on 9th August at Glasgow.

It is understood that the family emigrated to Australia, c. 1974.