

First Missions – New Zealand

First Missions – Pioneering Workers – New Zealand

New Zealand

Rev July 7, 2026

NEW ZEALAND

Accounts of First Missions in New Zealand:

New Zealand – Workers Who Pioneered New Zealand, 1904-1912

New Zealand – Brief Summary of the First Days of the Work in New Zealand

New Zealand – First Workers in New Zealand

New Zealand – Early Missions Worked in New Zealand

New Zealand – Friends Who Lived in the Hutt Valley, 1901-2006

New Zealand – Purakanui Mission, 1909

New Zealand – Pahia–Roundhill Mission, 1917

Australia and New Zealand ~ First Pioneering Workers:

Australia & New Zealand – FIRST Two Workers to go to Australia & NZ

Australia & New Zealand – The Gospel Coming to Australia and New Zealand

Australia & New Zealand – The Coming of the Gospel to Australia and New Zealand by Del Shepherd

Australia & New Zealand – Data re The Gospel Coming to Australia and New Zealand

Australia & New Zealand – Adam Hutchison's Arrival

Australia & New Zealand – John Hardie's Account

Australia & New Zealand – Ralph & Rene Beattie, Married Worker Couple

See also: Two by Two History Website:

<https://www.2x2church.info/nz-history>

<https://www.2x2church.info/australian-history>

NEW ZEALAND

NORTH ISLAND PIONEERS: Joe Fraser, Jim Hodgins, Maggie McDougall and Francis Hodgins pioneered the North Island in 1905, all from the UK.

SOUTH ISLAND PIONEERS: Adam Hutchison, Joe Williamson, Annie Smith and Fanny Carroll pioneered the South Island in 1905, all from the UK.

First Open Homes: In 1901: Tom & Emily Hastings, Petone, Lower Hutt, in the Wellington Region; Jack & Dot Lowe, near Pukekohe in the Auckland Region; both lived on the North Island.

Who was the first to profess, what year and where?

North Island: Nellie Fake, age 15, in 1905 in Epuni, Lower Hutt, in Maggie McDougall and Francis Hodgins meetings.

South Island: Jack Craig in 1905 or 1906 in Otago in Annie Smith and Fanny Carroll's meetings.

Who were the first native workers to go in the work and When?

First Native Brother Workers: Arthur/Archie Murray, 1907; Jack Craig, 1908

First Native Sister Worker: Alice Begbie, only 19, was one of the youngest to go out in 1907 (there were also others in 1907).

When & Where was the first Gospel Meeting?

When & Where was the first Sunday fellowship meeting?

When & Where was the first baptism?

1907, MARCH: FIRST NZ CONVENTION – The very FIRST Convention took place in the **South Island** in Harper Street, Sydenham, Christchurch. 70 people attended. There had been much response in NZ and several started in the Work at this time. **Alice Begbie**, only 19, was one of the youngest to go out. Eight workers from the UK had arrived just in time for this Convention, after which Brother Workers left for Australia. **After the Convention, Jack Craig** began preaching.

1908, MARCH: SECOND NZ CONVENTION in the South Island took place at Christchurch. Another eight New Zealanders went into the Work afterwards.

1909: FIRST CONVENTION IN THE NORTH ISLAND was held in Wellington in an empty shop on Adelaide Road. The accommodations were in two nearby barns.

1910 CONVENTIONS: The North Island Convention in 1910 was held at Alfred and Daisy Berryman's farm between Woodville and Manawatu Gorge; only one convention was held there. Another South Island Convention was held at Christchurch.

Where have subsequent conventions been held?

Where is the convention now held? 5 conventions held in the North Island; 2 in the South Island.

Who have the Head Workers been? John Fraser: 1905-1909; John Wilson McClung: 1914-1944; Willie John Hughes: 1944-1966; Willie Phyn: 1966-1985; Nathan McCarthy: 1985-2006; Alan Richardson: 2004-current

Native Language? English

TTT Editor's Note: The above information has been compiled by the TTT Editor from various sources. Corrections or additions are most welcome; as well as other historical accounts for this country [Email TTT](#)

Workers Who Pioneered New Zealand, 1904-1912

1904 J. Hardie came to Melbourne, had meetings in Tent in Oakleigh. His companion S. Alexander left him. John went to N.Z. 1904-05

1905 Workers came to Queensland – John Sullivan, J. Little, Polly Hodgins and L. Sargent

1905 Tom Turner, Jim McCreight, Laura Falkiner and Aggie Hughes came to Western Australia.

1906 Workers came to N.Z. John Fraser and Jim Hodgins; Adam Hutchison and Joe Williamson; Annie McDougal and Frances Hodgins; Annie Smith and Fanny Carroll

1906 Workers to N.Z. left Liverpool 10th November – Willie Hughes, Charlie Dudman, Dick McClure, Duncan McLachlan, George Harvey, J. Coran [Corcoran], Ida Davis, Sara Kelly.

1907 Arrive at Auckland February 1906. Meetings at Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney while in Port. To Wellington for Convention February 1907

1907 John Hardie, Dick McLure from N.Z. to Sydney

1907 March 14th – Workers arrive in Melbourne from N.Z. Willie Hughes, Charlie Dudman, Adam Hutchison, Archie Murray

Lived in Fitroy Mission at Deer Park Footscray, Warrandyte (Sept.). Several decided Deer Park and Warrandyte Mission in Ballarat St., Brunswick in Tent. Mrs. McLure decided, Sam Jones, Sam McMullins, Sandy Hines, Bob Bashford came to Melbourne and helped in Tent at Brunswick

1907 Firstfruits of Work.

Victoria: Ada and Ethel Cousins and others.

NSW: Ruth Harrison and S. Harrison

WA: Syd Mayward and Mrs. Burgess

Q'land: About 6 decided.

1908 1st Australian Convention Northcote

Willie Hughes in Missions at Officer; Cranbourne, Tooradin in Gippsland then at Springvale.

1908 After Northcote Convention

Adam Hutchison, Jimmy McCreight to South Australia; Mission at Woodside May 1908; Mission at Forest Range 1908.

1908 To Tasmania after Northcote Convention: Annie Smith, Fanny Carroll

1909 Convention at Malvern, Victoria. Convention at Woodside, South Australia.

Wilson McClung and Willie Hughes to 1st Woodside Convention 1909.

1909 Ada Cousins, Janet Kerr to Tasmania to labour.

1910 Sam Jones, Bob Bashford to Western Australia.

1910 Sam Jones to South Australia – Worked Bethel Mission. Wilson McClung with Sam Jones; Otto Schmidt, Fred Schmidt, Herman and Marthe Matz decided then.

1910 Otto and Fred Schmidt visit Mildura (had Convention in Melbourne on the way) called at Joyce's Creek.

1911 Herman and Martha Matz came to live in Mildura (October); Con Doecke to Mildura 1911-1912.

1912 Jim Morris decided (April); Wilson and Annie McClung to Mildura; Mission at Irymple and Koorlong. Baptism of J. Morris, Jack and Maude Schmidt at Mildura.

A Brief Summary of the First Days of the Work in N.Z.

The first two preachers to come to N.Z. were John Hardy and Sandy Alexander, then John Hardie went to Australia, where he remained. In 1905 eight workers came to N.Z. from the Homeland and in 1906 the missions were worked. John Fraser and Jimmy Hodgins went to Auckland Province and worked a mission at Pukakohe and about 40 professed. Among them was Teenie Walker, Alice Begbie, Percy Hartland and many others.

Maggie McDougal and Francis Hodgins had quite a few to decide in Wellington, among whom was Jim McLeod, Will Hooper and Harriet and others. Later these went out in the Work.

Adam Hutchison and Joe Williamson went to the Canterbury Province the same year (1906) and worked a big mission at Oxford, a few miles out of Christchurch. Some who professed were A. Cederman, Jim Vallance and Cis Taylor, who later went out in the Work as a result of that mission.

Jim Hodgins died in Auckland.

Annie Smith and Fanny Carroll worked in the Otago Province. They started a mission at Berwick (30 miles from Dunedin). The sisters went out visiting and called on people by the name of Graham, Dairy Farmers, and invited them to meetings. They were shy Presbyterians and would not come, but said they thought that their dairyman would come and he was no less than Jack Craig, a Plymouth Brethren. He used to attend the Brethren meetings but never took part, so they said he had a dumb devil.

Jack Craig started to go to the sisters meetings and after four meetings he came early one night, before the meeting started, and told the sisters as a result of what they had been preaching he had last night made up his mind to make the Lord Jesus his Master. That meant that Jack Craig was the first saint to profess in Otago. After Jack professed he went back to the Brethren meeting and told them all how he had gotten light and they came to the conclusion that he certainly had received something.

Next, the sisters came to Otokia, about 19 miles from Dunedin, and started a mission there and quite a number came out. Among them was the **Blair family**, Gerald Morris and several others. They had a meeting one Sunday afternoon and Jack Craig came along and gave his testimony, so that after that time there were six of the Blairs professing.

My brother Robert would not attend the meetings because the Brethren did not believe in women preachers, but sometime after we had decided, it sort of worked an interest in him and he attended a meeting (he was also a Plymouth Brethren). He became quite interested and the first night he thought he had got light and told the sister workers he had been believing in a dead Christ and later he made Jesus his Lord and Master.

The next thing there was a Church to be formed and, owing to my mother not professing, we could not have the meeting in the home so had it in the barn. **That was the first Church in Otago.** Jack Craig used to walk the 8 miles to attend the Fellowship meeting. Some time after, mother softened and decided it was not right to have the meeting in the barn and invited us to meet in her front room. Later she herself professed and opened her home, which was **the first open home in Otago.**

The first Convention we went to was held in Harper Street, Christchurch. 70 people were there. It was the only Convention in the South Island. The sisters stopped about one year after we professed, then went to Tasmania. **Jack Craig went out from that Convention.**

The next preacher to come along was Harry McNeary. Had some meetings in Dunedin and one or two professed, then Harry and Jim McLeod worked a big mission at Purakanui. A big number professed, among them the Wix family, of whom four went out in the work. So the work went steadily on and now there are 5 Conventions in the North Island and 2 in the South Island.

FIRST WORKERS in NEW ZEALAND

The first two workers, who came to New Zealand, were: **John Hardie and Sandy Alexander**; then John Hardie went to Australia, where he remained.

In 1905, (8) workers came to N.Z. from the homeland [Great Britain]. In 1906, the missions were worked.

John Frazer (sic-Fraser) and Jimmy Hodgins went to the Auckland Province and worked a mission at Pukekohe, about 40 professed. Among them were Teenie Walker, Alice Begbie, Percy Hartland and many others.

Maggie McDougal and Frances Hodgins had quite a few to profess in Wellington, among them was Jim McCleod.

Adam Hutchinson and Joe Williamson went to the Canterbury province the same year-1906, and worked a big mission at Oxford, a few miles out of Christchurch.

Then **Annie Smith and Fanny Carroll** worked in the Otago province, started a mission at Berwick, 30 miles from Dunedin.

The workers went out visiting, called on people by the name of Graham, dairy farmers, and invited them to meetings. They were shy Presbyterians, and wouldn't come, but said they thought their dairyman would come, who was no less than **Jack Craig**, a Plymouth Brethren. He used to attend the Brethren meetings, but never took part, said he had a dumb devil. Jack Craig started to go to the sisters' meetings, came early one night, before the meeting started, and told the sisters that as a result of what they had been preaching, that last night, he made up his mind to make the Lord his Master. **That meant Jack Craig was the first to profess in**

Otago. After Jack professed, he went back to the Brethren meetings, and told them all how he had received light, and they came to the conclusion that he certainly had received something.

Next, the same sisters went to Otokio, about 18 miles from Dunedin and started a mission there, quite a few came out. Among them was the Blair family, Gerald Morris and several others. They had a meeting one Sunday afternoon, and Jack Craig came along and gave his testimony. After that, the Blairs professed. My brother Robert, wouldn't attend the meetings, because the Brethren didn't believe in women preachers, but some time after we had decided, it sort of worked an interest in him, and he attended a meeting. He was also a Plymouth Brethren. He became quite interested, and the first night he thought he had received light, and told the sister workers he had been believing in a dead Christ, and consequently he made Jesus his Lord and Master.

The next thing, there was a church to be formed, and owing to my mother not professing, we couldn't have the meeting in the home so it was held in the barn. **This was the first church in Otago.** Jack Craig used to come the 8 miles to attend the fellowship meeting.

Sometime after that Mother became much softer and decided it wasn't right having the Lord's supper in a barn, and invited us to meet in her front room. Later, she herself professed, and opened her home, which was **the first open home in Otago.**

The FIRST convention we went to was held in Harper Street, Sydenham, Christchurch. 70 people were there. It was the only convention in N.Z.

The sisters stayed about one year after we professed, then went to Tasmania.

Jack Craig went out from that convention to preach. The next preacher who came along was, **H. McNeary [Harry].** He had some meetings at Dunedin and 1 or 2 professed, one being Lizzie Stevens. And in 1908 he worked a mission out at Purakanui just out of Dunedin, he and Jim McLeod had about 40 to profess. Quite a number went out to preach, among them being **the Wix family; of that family 4 went out to preach the Gospel** and Robert Blair went out later.

TTT Editors Note: George & Lottie Wix (brother and sister) pioneered the work in Switzerland.

Harry McNeary left the **Faith Mission** in 1900 to become one of Wm. Irvine's workers, and left the work in 1928, the same year Ed Cooney was expelled.

EARLY MISSIONS WORKED IN NEW ZEALAND

Adam Hutchison and Joe Williamson arrived in New Zealand on the ship WARRIMOO in October 1905. They worked a good mission in North Canterbury where Vallances, McGilverys, Dohrmans (Ernie's grandparents) and Cedermans decided.

From these, Jim Vallance went into the work and went to Australia in 1905 for a few years then back to New Zealand where he laboured as long as able. Ada Cederman went into the work and laboured here until she died in old age. All of the others kept true to the finish.

In 1905-06 John Fraser and Jim Hodgins worked in the Waikato and South Auckland around Pukekohe where a good number decided. The Murrays – Eddie, Jim, Archie and Hunter. Also the Billings – Olive, George and Claude. Teenie Walker, Hartlands – Percy and Amy, Morgans – Walter and Bert, Alice Begbie and Adamsons. Alice Begbie decided when she was 18 years old. Her people were Church of Christ and very opposed to God's Way and restricted her movements, but she managed to get away and make her way to friends and to convention in Wellington in 1907. She went into the work from there, labouring some in New Zealand but mostly in Australia until she died.

Will Adamson had the convention at Pukekohe from 1926-27, where it is still being held. Teenie Walker went into the work in 1908, later going to South Africa and India, then returning to New Zealand where she died in 1967. Percy Hartland went into the work in 1908, going to the U.S.A. in 1921, where he remained until he died 11.4.75. Olive Billings went into the work in 1909 and is now Mrs Dixon, still living in 1981.

There was a convention in Christchurch in 1908 and after this convention these workers left for Australia – Annie Smith, Fanny Carroll, Ida Davis, Sarah Kelly, Alice Begbie, Jack Craig, Jim Vallance and Geo. Billings.

Polly Hodgins and Lizzie Sargeant arrived in Brisbane, Australia, on the ship ORTONA, leaving London on 16th November 1906 and arriving Australia on the 2nd January 1907.

W. J. Hughes and C. Dudman arrived in New Zealand from Liverpool on the ship OSWESTLY GRANGE on the 30th January 1907. From New Zealand they arrived in Melbourne on the 16th March per ship MOERAKI. (They left after the convention at Wellington in February 1907).

In March 1909, W. Hughes, Duncan McLachlan, C. Dudman, Dick McClure, Jim Corcoran, Geo Harvey, Ida Davis and Sarah Kelly came on a cargo boat that called in Auckland for two days. They came to Pukekohe and had an evening meeting. Next morning another meeting. The Glen Murray folks, Murrays and Billings etc. rode the 25 miles on horseback for the meetings. The workers then went on to Wellington and a small convention was held at Hutt. After this, W. Hughes continued on to Victoria, Dick McClure to

Sydney, C. Dudman to Queensland. The others remained in New Zealand for a year or so. Duncan McLachlan worked missions in Taranaki where the Plews family professed and also in Takaka, Nelson, where the Langmans and Stixes? professed.

The following workers went forth from these early missions. Archie Murray, Jim Murray, Geo. Billings, Claude Billings, Bert Morgan, Percy Hartland, Jim McLeod, Jim Vallance. Jack Craig, Robert Blair, Will Hooper, Amy Lawson, Ernie Lawson, Teenie Walker, Alice Begbie, Harriet Hooper, Olive Billings, Cis Taylor, Ada Cederman, Charlie Morgan, Susie Hooper.

1909 Wairarapa, Taurera mission – Geo. Harvey and Ernie Lawson (told by G. Tombs) Result: Geo. and Olive Garrett (nee Dunn), Ben and Mrs Page, Mrs Dunn, Percy Dunn (Snr.), Mrs Barton, Mrs Ihaka (W. Crawford's great grandmother), Mrs Andrews (Mrs Ihaka's sister).

1909 Woodville mission – Hannah Alexander and Teenie Walker (told by Mrs Strong) Result: Miss George (later Mrs Strong), Miss Hanson (an elderly Swedish lady). Later Mrs Strong's four sisters professed; Mrs Wills, Mrs Fulcher, Mrs Taylor and Mrs Withers. Later still, their parents Mr and Mrs George. Mr Fulcher later in life.

The following is a list of where the first conventions were held in New Zealand:

- 1906 Tinakori Road at J. Carr's place.
- 1907 Wellington Adelaide Rd. Newton (75 present).
- 1908 Christchurch at W. Linton's. Harper St. Sydenham (70 present)
- 1909 Carterton, also Christchurch at Linton's.
- 1910 Woodville at Mr Berryman's.
- 1911 Hukanui at Albert Smith's.
- 1915 Mihiwaka at Mr Symes, meetings in hall.
- 1915 Otakia at Blair's.
- 1918 Pahia, 2 years in hall.
- 1921 2 years at Mr Knowlers.
- 1921-1940 Bairds at Mihiwaka.

In years of 1920 onward, conventions were at:-

Methven, Waikanae, Te Rapa, Avondale

Now at the following; Winchester (2); Pukekohe (2); Ngaere (1); Masterton (2).

The workers at the convention in February 1907 were:

John Hardie, John Fraser, Adam Hutchison, Joe Williamson, Duncan MacLachlan, Geo. Harvey, Jim Corcoran, Charlie Dubman, Dick McClure, Willie Hughes, Maggie McDougall, Francis Hodgins, Annie Smith, Fanny Carroll, Sarah Kelly, Ida Davis.

Those who decided in Coldstream in 1914:

Workers: George Wix and W. Pickering.

Albert Joyce, Don Christian, Jack, Isaac and Janie Aicken, Mrs Gray, Will, Bob, Sam, John, Cecil, Maria and Annie, Mrs Steven's, Dolly Steven's, Rose Chisnall, Mrs Clark, Mrs Ruth Aicken (nee Jordon), Clayton Patton and Alice Hinton, Mr and Mrs Jack Laing, Jim Hall, Andy Bremner.

Mission by Adam Hutchison and Joe Williamson.

Cedermans, Ada and sister; Valances, Jim and 2 sisters; McGilverys, Dohrmans

Mission at Purakanui, New Zealand in 1909 By Charlie Steele (1897 – 1993)

I have been asked if I could tell something about the mission that took place in the Lower Harbour and Purakanui districts in the year 1909. Seeing that all but one of those who decided in the original mission have finished their course with honour and that the last one is striving to keep the goal in view and with the hope to finishing worthily by the Grace that God gives, as we seek Him. I will try and relate that which I know off that time.

Purakanui and Lower harbour districts were two very staunch Presbyterian strongholds with services each Sunday, each week held by the students from The Theological College at Dunedin, except one Sunday in 3 months taken by the moderator Mr. Tennant. On the Purakanui side, they held Bible Classes and Christian Endeavor Meetings each week among themselves.

About in 1908, the folk were not at all satisfied with the Church as it stood and had decided to begin at Matthew and read through the Gospels to try and see where the trouble lay; it was at this time that the Mission began.

In 1908, **Harry McNeary and Ted Gregory** had meeting in Christchurch with some deciding, among them was W. Abernethy whose parents, brothers and sisters lived at Lower Harbour. So he asked the workers if a mission could be worked in that part. So in **1909 Harry McNeary and Jim McLeod** came to Dunedin first, had some meetings and some decided, among them was Mrs. T. Giles.

Also in 1909, they came down to Lower Harbour and got use of the school. They were to begin meetings on Sunday evening, but were also present at the Church service Sunday a.m. However, being wet day, the moderator did not turn up, so after a while Harry announced that they were preachers and would be happy to speak to them.

The Elders went out and held a little conference and then agreed for them to take the service. The usual church hymns were used and Harry spoke to them about Jesus's birth, until he was 30 years of age. At the close of his speaking, he announced their own

meetings to be held in the same room at 7.30. In those days attendance at these church services were constantly good. At the evening meeting, the school was full with many more than the regular church goers.

Meetings were held 4 or 5 nights a week, with the interest increasing as the time went by. News of these meetings soon spread to the Purekanui side, and the folks came regular from there also.

After a few weeks some had decided and others were being moved. The church elders were getting upset and wrote to the moderator (Mr. Tennant) that he had better come down to try and save his flock. A meeting was arranged for Mr. Tennant and Harry and Jim to meet and discuss the situation. Many accusations were made about speaking against the ministers, etc., to which was replied that no true servants of God had ever spoken against.

Verses such as Titus 1:10, 11 were used freely. Harry, completing the unfinished verse 11, "For Filthy Lucre Sake," saying that: "this does not apply to us as no money was ever suggested".

This meeting was packed from both sides of the district. From then on, the elders were very upset and very wrath, but the work continued and more decided.

After a month or two, the mission moved first to Mr. Wix's home, who by this time was very exercised and decided in his own home along with others.

The mission was then carried on to the hall at Purakanui with people coming from both districts. The Purakanui people would walk by road to our place and then down to Lower Harbour through our farm, a reasonable walk down, but a stiff climb up hill again. There would be the meeting in the school, and then there would be a congregation outside and much discussion for and against, and then all the way up the hill, there would be a discussion about the meeting. Usually about 15 or 20 would be in this climb.

On one such a occasion, I recollect Mr. Wix saying: "The more I listen to these preachers, the more I am convinced that I am wrong". George Wix replied: "Well Dad, if we are not right, the only thing to do is to get right".

At one such after meeting discussion, one of the elders called out: "Don't you leave us Mrs. Steele," and Harry called out: "Don't get away from the Truth, Mrs. Steele". So it went on, with some of the over enthusiastic folk moving things along.

The week before the mission was to begin in the Purakanui Hall, the young Clergy held, what they called an Indignation Meeting in the Church at Purakanui. An indignation meeting it surely was with the Clergy showing both anger and tears.

Mr. Wix had asked them before the meeting if he could have a word to explain the stand he had taken; at first they agreed to do so, but later declined, saying they thought: "it better for people to go away with the mind they had."

As the meetings began and continued in the Purakanui hall, there was much opposition and interjections by students coming from Dunedin, there might be six or eight of them on a Sunday night.

Then there would be stones on the roof thrown by those of the baser sort. This was Jim McLeod's first mission, and he would often have to go out to keep peace. On one occasion he took the boys away up the road, saying he would tell them a story, so he told them how he found the Lord and what it meant to him. The names of those who decided in those two missions, were:

Jim Pickering, Mrs. Ward, Walter Pickering, Mrs. Baird, Ada Pickering, Mr. Baird, Jim Keenan Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Kenton, Lizzy Graham, Ettie Kenton, Maggie Young, Lizzie Kenton, Jim Young, Irene Carey, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Wix, Miss Syme, Mrs. Wix, Mrs. Steele, George Wix, Nellie Steele, Mabel Wix, Elsie Steele, Lotty Wix, Charles Steele, Alice Wix, Mrs. King, John Wix, Helen McCullough, Mr. Ward (Mrs. L. Henderson's mother)

All those folks have finished their course with honour, with the exception of one is still in the Heavenly race with a desire to struggle on with God's Grace. (This was written by Charles Steele, he finished the race with honour some years ago).

There were several others who were touched by the mission and made a start, some going on several years, but something happened, and they fell by the wayside. These I prefer to leave nameless and leave them in the hands of our God, who does all things well!!!

There is another list of those who at that time were younger, but who decided later and who stemmed from that first mission, namely: Marg. Wix, George King, Myra Wix, Vene Baird, Stan Baird, Ada Kenton, Bert Baird, Millie Steele, Reg Baird, Allan Ward, Tom Graham, Iris Ward, Mary Graham

Some of these have finished their course well and the others still keep bravely on toward the Heavenly goal.

Mr. and Mrs. Wix moved to Timaru and died there. Mr. and Mrs. Ward moved to Hook in Canterbury, Mr. Ward died there, Mrs. Ward lived to a good old age and died in Christchurch. Jim Pickering and Jim Keenan died in Dunedin. George and Lottie Wix died in Switzerland. Walter Pickering died in Victoria, Australia. Mrs. Steele died in Turakinui in 1928. Maggie Young married Jim Craig and lived in Christchurch—both also died there.

Maybe I should tell you something of the background of those who decided; Mr. Wix was a very devout man and was a Sunday School superintendent for 40 years before the mission came. George Wix was an ardent church worker as well a lay preacher for the church.

Mr. Ward, Mr. Baird, Maggie and Jim Young, Mrs. Graham and Lizzie Graham were all ardent church workers and devout in their service to the church.

On the Lower Harbour side, Walter and Ada Pickering were ardent church workers as was my mother, who was also the church organist. Jim Pickering was not a church goer, but a good living worldly man. Jim Keenan was a heavy drinker and worked as a riveter in the ship yard. Mrs. Kenton and Ettie were also church attenders. Irene Carey was like younger ones not yet initiated to the church. Mabel, Lottie and Alice Wix were devout in their church work, but because of their careers were often away from home, but keenly active in church affairs. John Wix and myself were of the younger ones. Mrs. King was one of whom we were much afraid but remember that we were miserable and mean in our attitude to her.

The Gospel was upheld with no uncertainty and while lifting up the Son of God and what He taught and lived, also to the pulling down of strongholds and on looking back not always with as much wisdom as could be. I should like to add that the struggle within these brave souls for deliverance from their church teaching, upon conviction by the Gospel, was by no means easy. However, the bridges were all completely severed from the day they surrendered to God.

Now I like to tell you some of what took place after the Gospel came:

Mr. Wix was the same devout men for God and a loving father in the fellowship meeting. Mr. Ward was a strong man for God. Davis Baird was a strong and steady soul, as were Jim and Maggie Young, Mrs. Graham and Lizzie. Mrs. King decided after two meetings in Wix's home, and what a transformation in that dear old soul, for we all loved her so much. John Wix and myself were always good friends, John was an inspiration to me because of his zeal for God even in his early teens. Mabel, Lottie, Alice and Nellie were all fully yielded souls and a wonderful help in the Church. I can say of Lottie, as Paul said of Phebe. She was a succourer of many and myself also.

Jim Pickering and Walter were from the beginning brave, steady souls in the Church. Jim Keenan got it very hard at his work, but battled on bravely and was a victor over all his weaknesses.

I wouldn't like to forget those mothers in Israel, as were Mrs. Wix, Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Baird, Mrs. Kenton and my own mother. How much we owe to these brave and Godly souls, who began, continued and finished in the race with God and by His Grace and Mercy.

Mrs. King also by her humble spirit was always a Godly influence in the Church.

Now a little about the next movements of some of the younger folk:

George Wix went into the work of the Gospel in 1910 and was a wonderful helper in the Gospel by his faithfulness and humility.

Mabel Wix went into the work in 1912, Lottie also about that time.

Alice Wix went into the work in 1913, went to Australia in 1919 until 1925, then to the U.S.A., between 1926–1959.

Mabel and Lottie Wix went to Australia the same year.

Walter Pickering went into the work in 1911, going to Australia in 1921, where he laboured until his death.

George and Lottie Wix went to the U.S.A. in 1920 and from there on to Switzerland, where their lives were spent until death.

Mr. and Mrs. Ward and family left Purakanui for Canterbury about 1915.

Our family (the Greene's) left for Taranaki in 1914.

Some of we younger ones were still at school and revelled in the minor opposition and names we got, but of course our zeal was not always accompanied by wisdom and discretion. However, opposition is always a help to separation and we value that.

A baptism was held after the mission down in the sea in Purakanui Bay. About 40 odd, including old Granddad McLachlan, well in his eighties, a colourful Scot, who did not get it easy in the home of his son. An old lady, part Maori, Mrs. Mowat by name, opened her home as a dressing place down near the waters edge, although she never did decide.

Of the workers who brought the Gospel to us:

Harry McNeary preached in New Zealand until 1914, then went to Australia, where he died later.

Jim McLeod went to Queensland in 1910 and laboured there until 1922, when he went to Texas, U.S.A., where he laboured until his death in 1971.

Ripples from that Purakanui mission can be seen in many parts of the world.

In Australia, the McNab family heard the Gospel from Lottie Wix; the Nobles in N.S.W. from Mabel.

In New Zealand a good mission was worked by George Wix and Walter Pickering where the Grays, Aickens, Claten Patten and others decided.

In Switzerland a foundation of the Gospel was laid by George Wix, Eddie Shaer, Lottie Wix and Katie Hay.

Ripples have also reached as far as Hong Kong with Jim Pascoe and Gertrude West.

In the U.S.A., also where Alice Wix, laboured for many years until ill health brought her home to die here in 1965.

Tom Graham spent many years of his life in the work until he died in Nelson in 1965.

Allan Ward and Bert Baird also gave a good many years in the work in New Zealand.

Ettie Kenton spent several years in the work in New Zealand, but deafness overtook her completely and she had to give up, but lived with a worker's heart until she died.

As for myself, I went into the work in 1921 and after 3 years in New Zealand, went to Canada in 1924 and look back on those valued years and would long to keep the interest of His Kingdom first in life.

I would like to relate one or two quotations that have remained with me and have helped me along the way:

In 1913, George Wix and Will Hooper were to be companions in Otago. At the Convention, Will testified in his typical humble manner as to what his purpose were as he went forth that year. After he finished George rose, and in his testimony said: "Will has just told us what he has purposed to do as he goes forth this year and I am going him to HELP HIM DO IT".

Another occasion Fred Plews was taking with him a young man, named Charlie, and he said: "Well Charlie, we are going out to labour together, and we must get on well together. I want to look at you and think the best of you and see the best of you, I want you to look at me and think the best of me and see the best in me."

This attitude towards one another never fails, whether in the work or in the church, to produce harmony and fellowship.

Now I think my story has come to an end, but looking back I feel very thankful to our God for his deliverance and for the help and inspiration that all these older ones have been throughout the years; and that I am now where these brave souls were then and with younger ones looking on, I want to keep humble and steady in the race until close of life's little day.

Memories, written down by Charlie Steele 1897 – 1993

Pahia – Roundhill, New Zealand Mission, 1917

In the year 1917, Robert Blair and Jack Bell came to Pahia in the western district of the Southland to hold a series of gospel meetings at the request of certain interested men in the district. At that time the men, in particular had been studying the Acts of the Apostles and noticed, mention being made of the church in the homes of various people who were following the teaching of Jesus and His disciples. They felt a sincere urge to try and interest others in the district to return to this early Scriptural worship in homes but failed to arouse any interest.

At that time they heard about two evangelists working a mission in a country area some twenty miles away and thought it would be a good idea to invite these men in the hope that it would stir up the district, which it certainly did! These three men advised their minister, who conducted the weekly service in the schoolhouse, (the only venue until the new public hall was erected) of their intentions, but he strongly opposed such a move. He himself had confronted Gods servants previously and knew who they were and assured them that he could conduct a mission as he had been active in this work in London. However, he could not deter them and Mr. Jordan, my father, wrote the invitation which was duly accepted. It was a modern day call from Macedonia.

During those early days, land was balloted for in 100 acre blocks and many found they had to carve a home out of virgin bush and dwellings perforce had to be simple. My parents lived in two single mill huts joined together with a lean-to at the back to accommodate us three girls and an attached dairy. So there was absolutely no room for guests at that stage and others found themselves in similar circumstances.

One large landowner in the district offered these two servants lodging in an old hotel which had flourished in earlier days when saw milling, flax milling and gold mining had swelled the population. At that time, it was just a storage place for chaff (rats and mice) and fertilizer. I can still recall that dreadful smell of bone dust and wondered as a child how anyone could live in such unfavourable conditions. There was always a cheery smile and welcome when mother would send my sister Edna and myself to present some pies, jam and butter etc. and Jack Bell would come to the bar with its beautifully polished surface and ask us "What would we like today?"

The mission continued for several months and was well attended. Then came the time when those attending were given the opportunity of openly expressing their desire to be a Christian and the response was great. Then Robert turned to his companion and said: "We've got the lot, we've got the lot!" This seemed too good to be true, so after a few more meetings another opportunity was given and although many drew back, quite a large number responded and the greater majority continued on faithfully. The result of choices made then, now reaches into the fifth generation.

One of the leading figures in those early days recognised the truth of what was being preached, but said he knew the old ship was sinking (meaning his religion), but he would stay with it and he did! Prior to the mission being worked, it was customary for the young members of the families to attend Sunday school in the mornings, back home for lunch, and then accompany our parents for afternoon church service. For us, it was a total distance of twelve miles, a long way for young legs to travel and roading at that time was almost non-existing. Because of our strict upbringing, no allowance was made for youthful exuberance, we must walk sedately, no hopping, skipping or jumping! But in retrospect, this discipline was good as it instilled us into a reverence for the Lord's Day, in those days referred to as the Sabbath. The first fellowship meetings were held in Mr. Knowler's home, later on, mid-week meetings were in other homes.

The first convention was held in the newly erected public hall in 1917, also the following year.

The next two years convention was held in the loft above the cow byre on Mr. Knowler's property, where Easter meetings were also held for a few years after. We moved into a new four bedroom home in 1918, this helped considerably in accommodating the visitors, plus expansion, also in other existing homes, it was all so wonderful.

The fact of there being strong opposition in the district made it feel very special to be on the "Lord's side". As children, we knew our own measure of persecution. Gold mining operations were carried out in many areas, and when a "paddock" was worked out, it left a large hole which later filled with water and in such a hole baptism was held. This particular pond teemed with large eels and freshwater crayfish, commonly called crawlies. One could see them going past in shoals and the brave souls who were being baptised had no option but to descend those steps and face the horrors. One local boy seemed to be aware of what was happening,

and next day at school told his mates that old Tony, Mr. Tecofsky, was there, poking them (the people) under with a stick, just like the old method of dipping sheep.

Robert and Jack also worked a mission at Roundhill. At that time there were approximately 600 Chinese seeking for gold, and the place was often called "Canton". They had their gambling den, joss house and temple, and we were strictly forbidden to go near such places when we went to visit the elderly couple who professed in that mission. Being very curious, Edna and I mustered up our courage one day and went and looked in the temple. I had a fleeting impression of idols and clouds of incense before we fled, but how brave we felt we were and how naughty!

The Roundhill mission was held in wintertime and the traveling conditions were atrocious. The track cut through the bush were used by cattle as well as humans, and were very boggy. Sometimes three people would mount our draught mare, Bell, and the mud was so deep in places, the riders had to hold their feet up. But in spite of all the difficulties encountered, a good number attended and Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds made their choice.

It was a wild place in those early days and many stories of dark deeds were handed down. On one occasion Mr. Reynolds, who was the baker, ran out of flour, and it meant a journey of nearly fourteen miles to get more supplies. No motor cars in those days. The Chinese population thought they were being refused and marched to the bake house, armed with sticks, knives and other weapons. The situation looked very grim, but Mr. Reynolds was a heavy smoker, and as they stormed the door, he reversed his pipe and pointed it at them, and it really looked like a revolver. Being terrified of firearms they all fled.

During that mission, a Mr. McGregor, a Brethren, opposed the workers and was always interrupting. Eventually this proved to be too much for Mrs. Hart, Bev's grandmother, and she stood up and whacked him over the head with her umbrella and told him to "sit down!" That ended any further interjections. The same man drowned in the Aparima river, near the traffic bridge shortly after.

When the large Roundhill Gold mining moved in, they cut all water supplies formerly used by the Chinese, so they had no option, but to move on and only two or three old identities remained.

So ended a colourful era.

By R. Jordan, 20th June 1990