

Photograph of
Rev. Robert Cleghorn
And
Queen Street Baptist Church

A SHORT HISTORY
OF
BAPTIST MISSIONARY WORK
IN
BRITISH HONDURAS
1822-1939

BY
ROBERT CLEGHORN, O.B.E., J.P.
WITH FORWARD BY
THE HONOURABLE C. R. BEATTIE, M.E.C., J.P.

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FOREWORD

By the Honorable C.R. Beathie, M.E.C., J.P.

To have worked for two score years and ten is a record of which not many of us can boast, but when that service has been rendered outside one's own country and in a tropical country, it is all the more impressive.

My friend, the Rev. Robert Cleghorn, O.B.E., was born in Scotland in 1869 and arrived in Belize, British Honduras, on 1st of April 1889. It was surly an unfortunate day to choose, but I fancy it "just happened," as his record is full proof! Accompanied by an uncle, the Rev. Charles Brown, who was in charge of the Baptist Mission in Belize at the time, Mr. Cleghorn immediately "got busy." He took charge of the school in Belize, conducted by the Mission, and later, was sent to superintend country schools, with headquarters at "Crooked Tree" on the Belize River.

In 1892 Mr., Cleghorn was sent to Ruatan, Spanish Honduras, to take charge of the Mission there, and after nearly ten years of very successful service he returned to Belize in 1901, when the Rev. Charles Brown left the country. From then until now Mr. Cleghorn has labored unremittingly for the cause of the Baptist Mission.

Humble, almost to a fault, sincere to the core, and always ready to help in every worthy cause, Mr. Cleghorn has played a prominent and influential part in the life of his adopted country. I say, "adopted," because he now regards British Honduras his home and not Scotland, as his home.

Public service too has received his valued attention. For several years he was Chairman of the Belize Town Board (the counterpart of "Mayor" in other cities) and for twelve years he was an unofficial of the Legislative Council. These services were graciously recognized by His Majesty the King, who in 1935 appointed him an Officer of the most distinguished Order of the British Empire.

It is my belief, however, that the reward, which Mr. Cleghorn most values, is the love so warmly felt towards him by the members of his congregation. This was abundantly proved a fortnight ago, when a service of congratulatory meetings was held in Belize, at which speakers in every walk of life expressed their

admiration for his noble life, his unselfish character, and the spiritual guidance so long and so faithfully offered to several generations of devoted Baptists.

Married in Belize in 1891 to Miss Henrietta McCulloch, he lost his devoted wife in 1930. Three sons and three daughters were born of this happy union. One son and one daughter died in infancy; his eldest daughter died in Scotland in 1916; one son is in Detroit, Mich., and the other in New Orleans, La. The third daughter, now Mrs. Rita Jones, lives with her father in Belize, and is thus the only member of the family whose companionship he can still enjoy.

The Baptist Church has been established in Belize for 117 years (1822-1939), and the present pastor has just celebrated fifty years of active service – truly a wonderful record.

While a wonderful retirement is more than earned, it is the hope of a large circle of friends that he may continue, for some years yet, the labor of love in which his whole interest is centered. May God grant this true Christian gentleman the blessings of good health, peace, and happiness.

C. R. Beathie.

*Belize, British Honduras,
22nd April 1939.*

PREFACE

The great missionary apostle of the early Christian Church, in one of his letters, reminds us that we have “gifts differing.” I am so fully conscious that my gift is not the writing of books that I would have much preferred that someone more gifted in such matters; undertake the task of writing this “Short History of Baptist Missionary Work I British Honduras.”

My sole reason for this attempt is because of several earnest requests made by different friends of the Mission, who, like myself, feel that it might be good to have such a history for the purposes of record, but more particularly for the information of the younger people of the Baptist Denomination. These would other wise have no means of knowing the story of their own Church, and its many struggles in the days long gone by.

As far back as the year 1850 a book entitled *The Gospel in Central America* was written by the Rev. Fredrik Crowe, messenger of he Belize Baptist Church, and it appears that at the time it had a fairly wide circulation. Mr. Crowe’s book contained, among other interested things, an account of Baptist Missionary work in British Honduras from the year 1822, when the Mission was founded, to 1850, when his book was published. Mr. Crowe’s *Gospel in Central America* has long since become well-nigh extinct, and, to the best of our knowledge, few, if any, of the present generation possess a copy.

With reference to this short history, I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness for information regarding the first sixty-seven years, both to Mr. Crowe’s book and to records left by some of my predecessors – chiefly the Rev. Alexander Henderson. For the history between the years 1889 and 1939, I have had to rely largely on my own personal knowledge and experience, having, during those fifty years, been associated with the Belize Baptist Church as one of its ministers.

If, by any oversight, I have failed to mention any important event of the past, or any person or persons that should have had any honourable mention, will my kind readers remember that the

omission has not been deliberate, for when one has to rely on his own memory, such errors are likely to happen?

May I also cherish to hope that this booklet, written in my fiftieth year of my ministry in British Honduras, will serve as a memento of our late Jubilee celebration, and continue to be looked upon as a token of the very happy and cordial relations that have for so long a time existed between the people of this country and myself?

Robert Cleghorn,
Baptist Minister,
Belize, British Honduras.

Chapter I.

BELIZE IN 1822.

The capital of British Honduras is to have derived its name from a Scotch buccaneer, who first used the harbour as a hiding-place. Strange as it may appear, the word Belize is a corruption of Wallace, the name of the buccaneer, which, by English writers, was written Wallis, and by the Spanish Valis, and then Balis or Belize (pronounced Beleeze). The town contained at the time of which we are thinking, a mixed population of about 8,000, and from the harbour presented a rather pleasing aspect. Its wooden houses, especially in the front street, which faced the sea, were handsome, spacious and commodious. Standing apart from each other, most of them surrounded with neat verandahs, they were at once well ventilated and shaded and adapted to the climate.

Considering its size and population, the degree of activity and bustle was remarkable. On the Wharfs, covered with logs of mahogany, numbers of labours could be seen all day, beating off, or squaring the logs with long and with broad axes. Much business was also done in the various shops and stores, while the harbour was always a scene of busy activity. In or about the year 1822, 18,000 tons of shipping, employing 1,000 seamen, reached Belize.

But all was not what it ought to have been. In those bygone days, sad to say, Belize was noted for its impiety and immoral customs. One writer says "there was probably not a more wicked place under heaven." Of course, there were different influences working for evil, namely, the demoralizing effects of slavery, the presence of an idle military force (which consisted of two or three companies of West India regiment), the lack of churches, schools and good books to read, the evil example set to the natives by unconverted Europeans who had

only one object in coming to Belize, namely to make money. It is true there was one place of worship erected in Belize as far back as 1812. This was the Anglican Church; Mr. John Armstrong was placed in charge. But for years the influence of Scotch and English merchants, as well as that of other public functionaries, soldiers, sailors and emigrants on business bent, was, in the aggregate, anything but promotive of the best interest of the people. Little wonder that the "Bay," another name for Belize, was proverbial for licentiousness and every kind of sinful excess; little wonder that vile passions and lust of gain openly triumphed over decorum as well as religion.

Chapter II.

BEGINNING OF THE MISSION.

Previous to 1822, and for several years after, among others doing a good business in Belize was the firm of Angus & Co., merchants of Newcastle, England. In Newcastle, as contractors as well as merchants, they did an extensive trade in Mahogany used in the building of railway coaches, etc. This firm had its own ships, which traded regularly between Newcastle and Belize, bringing cargo for this port and taking away mahogany.

But this house of Angus & Co. blended with their mercantile objects the more elevated and enduring interests of the Kingdom of Heaven. The two members of the firm stationed in Belize, viz. Messrs. Caleb and George Fife Angus, were decidedly Christian men who took great pains to help forward every good work. George Fife Angus who, some years later, gave himself up entirely to Christian work, used frequently to hold Gospel meetings in his own private house in Belize. Being interested themselves in the spread of the Gospel, they made it their business to enlist the sympathies of others, so in 1820 they called the attention of several of the then existing Missionary Societies to his Colony's needs. As a result of these appeals the Baptist Missionary Society determined to send a missionary to British Honduras. In a Baptist Missionary magazine, 1822, the following extract appeared: "as a result of the appeals of the house of Angus & Co., the Baptist Missionary Society has decided to send a missionary to Belize. The communication kept up between Belize and the interior induced the committee of that Society to speak of their proposed Station their as one of 'peculiar importance,' and as presenting a point from which the light of Devine Truth might be dispersed through the districts beyond. In accepting the liberal tender of a free passage made by

Messrs. Angus, they felt it to be their duty to embrace it, and consequently in March, 1822, Mr. Joseph Bourne, of Bradford Academy, was designated at New Court Chapel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and, with Mrs. Bourne, sailed to British Honduras the following month.”

Chapter III.

THE FIRST MISSIONARIES.

Mr. And Mrs. Bourne arrived in Belize in the month of June 1822, but, sad to say, on the third of December of the same year, Mrs. Bourne was removed by the hand of death. Mr. Bourne, however, remained in Belize for twelve years as the Agent of the Baptist Missionary Society. Those twelve years were apparently fraught with much opposition and many difficulties.

In 1823 Colonel George Arthur, who was Superintendent of the colony and a man deeply interested in the moral and religious well-being of its people, as well as Mr. John Armstrong (referred to in chapter 1), were both removed to other spheres, and new successors, of a different type, appointed. From that time Dissenters ceased to receive any encouragement from those in authority, or any co-operation from the Establish Church. Baptist, on account of their anti-slavery convictions, seemed to be specially disliked.

Encouraged by few loyal supporters, among whom were the Angus Brothers, Mr. Bourne labored on, and in 1825 had completed a Mission Hall and minister's residence. The building was once commodious, hand-some, and well situated by the sea-shore, on the North side of Belize, on the site now occupied by the prison

Mr. Bourne, being a carpenter by trade, diligently directed and assisted in its erection. On April 12th, 1825, one Mr. R. J. Andrews, who had recently arrived to join the firm of Angus & Co., stated in letter to the Church at Newcastle "that the church in Belize consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Potts and a few natives, and that on the Lord's Day the number who sat at the Lord's Tab was seven." Mr. Bourne, on the 24th of the same month, wrote, "Last Ordinance Day we had twelve in number, including white and colored." The largest number of

communicants ever reported by Mr. Bourne to the society was twenty-one. In 1827 Mr. Bourne visited New York, and formed a second matrimonial connection by which the mission was greatly helped, as Mrs. Bourne labored among the naïve women, meeting with them for prayer. She also conducted a school that was attended by some young ladies. The number of her scholars was about thirty, and not being of the poorer class, they proved a source of considerable emolument.

In 1834 Mr. Bourne served in connection with the Missionary Society and left the Colony. By this time the pious and active agents of the house of Angus had died or left the settlement, and their places supplied by others less devoted to the Gospel, so that in this year the prospect of the Mission were dreary in the extreme, though the readiness of the people to be taught seemed to call more loudly than ever for the efforts of the faithful.

Chapter IV.

ARRIVAL OF ALEXANDER HENDERSON

The Rev. Alexander Henderson, pastor of a little Church in Hemyock in Devonshire, England, feeling called to the work of Foreign Missions, offered himself; and being adopted by the Baptist Missionary Society, sailed for Belize with his wife and child, in the *Caleb Angus*, landing there on November 20th, 1834. Referring afterwards to this period, Mr. Henderson said that he found the Mission “a wreck.” He commenced his labors by preaching the Gospel and expounding the Scriptures to all, but more particularly to the more degraded classes of people. Slaves, soldiers and discharged prisoners shared largely in his attentions and solicitude. The districts of Freetown and Queen Charlotte’s were frequently visited. He also opened schools on the mission premises, himself taking charge of the older boys and girls, whilst Mrs. Henderson taught the infants. By such efforts the attention of the people was arrested, their confidence in many instances gained, and by the Grace of God, the Mission began once more to manifest signs of progress.

Eight months after his arrival, Mr. Henderson, writing to the Committee on June 15th, 1835, stated that the congregation was almost more than doubled, and the Sabbath school had risen to upward of a hundred. In another letter of August 1st, of the same year, two hundred day scholars were reported, the congregations were steadily improving, and the preaching of the Gospel was attracting more and more, especially that of the young men.

Just about this time, a young Englishman who have arrived in Belize with a body of immigrants who originally intended settling in Vera Paz, Guatemala, became interested in Mr. Henderson’s work and connected himself with the Baptist Church. This young man, Fredrick Crowe by name, was

destined to play an important part in the Belize Mission. He, being well educated, became a teacher in the school, and afterwards an Evangelist and Missionary of the Belize Baptist Mission. Whilst on a visit to England in the interest of the Belize Mission in 1659, he wrote his book, *The Gospel in Central America*.

At this period the increased labors of the station began to demand an augmented agency, as the work has extended to several places in the interior, chiefly up the Old river, so Mr. Henderson, laid the matter before the Committee in England, praying for additional helpers. As will be seen, however, in the next chapter, in spite of the readiness of the English Baptist Missionary Society to comply with Mr. Henderson's request, the Church in Belize was doomed to meet with repeated disappointments so far as European missionaries were concerned. Again and again was the saying exemplified, "man proposes but God disposes."

Chapter V.

SUCCESSIVE DISAPPOINTMENTS

The first additional missionary sent as a result of M. Henderson's appeal to the Home Society was Mr. Henry Philpot, from Canterbury, England. He arrived in Belize on April 30th, 1838, and was received with most affectionate cordiality.

On Mr. Philpot's arrival a spacious residence belonging to a deacon of the church, and situated on the South end of the town, was opened as a preaching station. Here Mr. Philpot preached regularly on the Sabbath for some weeks. He also assisted in the schools, for which he has been specially trained. By his gentle and unassuming bearing he soon endeared himself to all, and his services were generally acceptable. But the hopes raised by his arrival were soon, alas! to be turned to sorrow. On September 7th, just four months after his arrival, his departure to a better world took place. He was interned on the same day in the presence of a numerous and deeply affected company.

Again the Society in England made choice of a missionary for their station in Belize in the person of Mr. Weatherall, a member of the church at Bury St. Edmunds. He embarked at Gravesend with a young bride on June 29th 1839. It was with unusual joy that the church in Belize received the news, and looked forward in hope of the speedy arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Weatherall. But this second attempt to supply the church with an additional minister was destined to fail even more signally than the first. The ship, *Favourita*, on which the missionaries sailed, touched at Trinidad to unload cargo. Here Mr. Weatherall contracted fever, and in ten days after leaving Trinidad his spirit fled and he was buried at sea. Eight days

after this sad event the ship reached Belize. A Baptist magazine of 1839, referring to this occurrence, said: "It was on the 17th of August, 1839, that the anxiously expected vessel was signalized in Belize. The Brethren, on the tip-toe of expectation, were watching for the first glimpse of their expected brother and sister, ready to hail them with joy, when the gloomy news reached them, and overwhelmed them with grief." Mrs. Weatherall remained nine months in Mr. Henderson's home, sometimes assisting Mrs. Henderson in the infant school, until she sailed for England on May 13th, 1840.

A third unsuccessful effort was made early in the next year to supply the church at Belize with workers from England. On January 2nd, 1841, Mr. C. H. Hosken, pastor of the Baptist Church at Clonmel, Ireland, together with Mrs. Hosken and infant child, embarked for Belize, where they arrived on March 29th. Mr. Hosken's coming was hailed by the church with great delight, and his ministry became at once attractive to the people generally, but almost as soon as they landed the climate began to affect them (fever was prevalent), so after three months they left for New York. The Committee's report for 1841 says: "They had both been ill, and Mr. Hosken considered it to be his duty to remove to a climate more congenial to their constitution." In the meantime, God in His providence was raising up faithful, if humble, men right here in Belize.

Chapter VI.

AN EVER-MOMORIAL EVENT

Before dwelling on the story of Native Agency, or how God in His providence raised up men right in Belize, “who should be able to teach others,” we shall in this chapter refer to an ever-memorial event – *the emancipation of the much injured slaves*, on the first of August, 1838. We must not forget that the Baptist in Belize, like the Baptist in Jamaica, were ever loud in their denunciation of slavery.

The writer has frequently heard it said by some of the older inhabitants of the Colony that the slaves in British Honduras had fared better than the slaves in the West Indies, that they were treated more like servants. Perhaps so, and for the following reason, explained in a letter written by George Hyde, Esq., a leading merchant, mahogany cutter and slave owner of Belize, dated as far back as 1825. He says, “As for punishments or ill-usage, you are aware (if ever so desired) we dare not inflict it, so easy is their escape beyond British limits.”

While they were rejoicing in Jamaica and other west India Island, the great event was not unheeded in Belize. Mr. Henderson wrote the Home Committee as follows: “While the ungodly Negroes were celebrating the day in riotous mirth, though without violence, and the late slave-holder was solacing himself with thoughts of compensation, the Mission Church had its method of noticing this important victory of right over might, and of principles over covetousness. The Liberated Christians desired to recognize the hand of God in their deliverance. At the quiet hour of midnight the wide folding doors of our place of worship sent forth their blaze of

illumination, and as the last particles were dropping from slavery's glass the victims of injustice sought the house of God, to render praise and to spend the first hour of freedom in His worship. Oh, it was a solemn season! A little before twelve, I went down and found the place filled with people and the greater proportion slaves. I laid my watch on the table, sitting down quietly till twelve, when I rose, telling them that slavery was no more with them. Then we all fell on our knees and afterwards rose to sing. Oh, what hearty singing! A member, lately a slave, prayed. Again we sang. Another prayed, and again we sang, and continued till after one. Gladness dwelt on every countenance."

In the afternoon of that auspicious day the scholars were regaled with tea and cakes by the liberated slaves, who alone contributed to the expense. More than 200 children were assembled, feasting and suitably addressed. In the evening there was a meeting for worship which was numerously attended. Mr. Henderson preached an appropriate sermon, and afterwards entertained the teachers and many of his friends of the Mission at his own house.

Thus ended the ever-memorable day of the first of August, 1838.

Chapter VII.

NATIVE AGENCY.

About the year 1841 when, on account of ill-health, Mr. and Mrs. Hosken, who had been sent by the English Missionary Society to assist in the work in Belize, left after three months' service, God in His providence raised up a group of men who became noted for their loyalty to Christ and the church, as well as to become teachers of others. A word or two telling how each of these was led to Christ is well worthy of mention.

We have already noted that the work of the Mission had extended along the banks of the Belize River, and consequently chapel or meeting-houses had to be erected. So it is in connection with the building of a chapel at Bakers that the first of our stories is told. The carpenter employed in its erection was the husband of a devoted Christian woman, but he himself a slave to drink. He was known in Belize as "drunken Braddick." It was chiefly on account of his wife and family that Mr. Henderson had employed him.

At Bakers this intemperate carpenter could not freely obtain liquor, and he had to spend many a long night in the lonely house which he was erecting. In the hours of calm reflection which was thus forced upon him, the wrongs, the example and the admonitions of his wife were vividly brought home to his mind. So deep was the impression made that after the opening of the chapel he returned to Belize seeking the salvation of his soul. Not only did he give up his former course, but he gave himself to Christ and to the work of the Kingdom. He became a monument to others of the power of the Gospel and of the goodness of God- a consistent and active member of the Church.

In the days following, having been proved and “found blameless,” he was elected a deacon, and at length a local preacher. His gentle deportment, cheerful zeal, and his prayerful and subdued spirit all became a living testimony that “old things had passed away and all things had become new.”

The next to be called as a “chosen vessel unto the Lord” was William Michael, a Carib laborer who had hired himself as a waiting boy to some gentleman in Belize. One week-night when Mr. Henderson was preaching, and lifting up Christ as a Savior for the chief of sinners, Billy, as he was called strolled into the service in a disconsolate mood. His attention was at once arrested, his mind enlightened, and his heart received the Gospel message. It was indeed “glad tings o great joy” to this sick-stricken wanderer, who from that time became a joyful believer and zealous worker. William Michael, although past the meridian of life, attend the Mission School and prepared himself to teach, as he frequently expressed it, “my own nation.” He also helped Mr. Henderson in the work of translation the Gospel of Matthew into the Carib language.

Another fellow helper in the Gospel, who was chosen by God for the work in connection with the Belize Baptist Mission, and who became an instrument in the conversion of many precious souls, was John Warner. Warner was an English sailor who during a spell of drunkenness had been left behind in Belize when his ship left the port. He had been befriended by an old Scotchman called Charlie Adams, who had taken him into his home, nursed him and given him books to read, among others the Bible and the *Pilgrims Progress*. Through reading old Charlie’s Bible John Warner became an enquirer after the way of salvation and, being taught of the Spirit, forsook his former sinful life and accepted Christ as his Savior.

He was introduced to Mr. Henderson, who had the joy of baptizing him and receiving him into the fellowship of the Church. He was still a fairly young man, and was encouraged to submit to a course of training with a view to assisting the school. Thus he became a teacher, and later missionary schoolmaster, at Crooked Tree, and finally minister in charge of the Baptist Church of Ruatan, where Mr. Henderson had, by this time, began work.

Early in 1841, a number of young people who had been trained in the Mission Day School were baptized and added to the Church. Among them was a young man, Joseph Kelly (son of African parents who were also consistent members of the Church), who was sent as teacher in charge of the Mission at Bakers on the Belize River. Joseph Kelly was soon afterwards ordained as a minister, as was also his brother, Edward Kelly, and another young man, Edward Thurton, and for many years the trio did splendid work as native preachers.

Chapter VIII.

THE ENGLISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY ONCE
MORE RESPONDS TO THE CALL FOR
MORE LABOURERS

By the close of 1844 the Home Society, being once more prepared to respond to Mr. Henderson's frequent appeals for more laborers, made the following announcement: "Mr. Henderson, our laborious missionary at Belize, British Honduras, is about, we hope, to see the fulfillment of his desire. Mr. J. P. Butterfield was set apart for this purpose on the 23rd of September, at the Baptist Church, Boxmoor, Harts. Mrs. Butterfield, who will accompany him, is grand daughter to Dr. Carey, late of Calcutta," they sailed on November 13th in the *Echo*. In a letter dated January 20th, Mr. Butterfield wrote: "After a pleasant passage of nearly seven weeks, Mrs. Butterfield, with myself, landed safely in Belize, on Tuesday, December 31st, 1844. On arrival we were welcomed by Mr. Henderson, who came down to the landing-place to meet us. On entering the Mission House we were greeted by Mrs. Henderson and several of the Church-people, and the next day the members welcomed us in a very warmly manner."

Mr. Butterfield's arrival did not, however, bring with it the help that Mr. Henderson had hoped for, but became actually the introduction of a new phase in the history of the Mission. Instead of working harmoniously with Mr. Henderson, Mr. Butterfield refused to work with him at all. It is said that Mr. Henderson's doctrinal views did not meet his approbation; Mr. Henderson being a Strict Baptist, believed in "Close

Communion,” while Mr. Butterfield, being a General Baptist, held to a practice of “Open Communion.”

It is not to purpose of the present writer, in this brief sketch, to dwell on the many contentions which were destined to continue for years, and which, in the end, led to the Church being divided and finally the withdrawer of the English Baptist Missionary Society from the field. Suffice it to say, for purposes of the record, that towards the of 1845 the Committee in England saw fit to arrange for the transfer of a Mr. Kingdom from Jamaica to Belize. Mr. Kingdom was led, on arrival, to side with Mr. Butterfield and, apparently on his recommendation, the Society in England asked Mr. Henderson to come home.

Some years of controversy followed, during which Mr. Henderson withdrew from the Society, and, at the request of many of the members in Belize, who had learned to love him, opened an independent Church, leaving Mr. Kingdom to take over the work of the Missionary Society in the Colony.

A strange situation now arose; Mr. Henderson had the people with him, whilst Mr. Kingdom and Mr. Butterfield held the Mission Properties. Mr. Kingdom, after some five years of unsuccessful striving, was recalled. In the *Honduras Watchman* of April 6th, 1850, the following extract appeared: “It is well known that in consequence of some unhappy differences the premises formerly occupied by and belonging to the English Baptist Missionary Society were disposed of, and the principal members of the Baptist Church now meet in a house in Eve Street.”

From the above it will seem that the London Baptist Missionary Society abandoned their missionary efforts in Central America in 1850, and the Mission in Belize, from that year, became an independent Mission.

Chapter IX.

BAPTISTS IMPRISONED

To those of us who have lived in British Honduras during the past half-century, when all sections of the Christian Church have enjoyed religious liberty; when, among the different denominations, there has been, to a great extent, a spirit of co-operation; and when those who have been in authority have always been courteous to, and in many cases, ready to help the various Churches; it becomes somewhat difficult to believe that there was a time when, in Belize, Baptist were frequently unjustly dealt with, and on numerous occasions imprisoned. There were undoubtedly many reasons why Baptist, in the early days of the Mission, became unpopular, but it was chiefly on account of their unwillingness to be sworn in the courts of Law. It was their conscientious conviction that the scriptural injunction to "*swear not at all*" was binding upon them as a Divine precept, without any limitation. Perhaps a few extracts from a letter written to the Baptist in England, signed by the Deacons of the Belize Church and dated April 7th, 1847, will suffice to make clear the hardships through which the Baptists were passing:

"For several years past we have been called to testify to the truth of suffering, on accounts of various points of duty; but chiefly for declining to be sworn in the courts of this settlement, we have yearly endured in a progressive measure, fines and imprisonment, besides other less direct injuries to a considerable extent." "But at length the enemies of the Gospel have been emboldened to assail us openly in the liberty of the public worship of God, and have craftily framed and enacted a law by which it becomes criminal for us to assemble ourselves

together to exhort one another, laying upon us certain restriction to which our subjection to Christ, the Head of the Church, forbids us to conform.” “In consequence of our persisting in obeying God rather than man, our meetings have become subject to visits of police agents, and our ministering brethren, besides some who have conducted social worship in their own homes, have been summoned to appear before a magistrate, first threatened and then fined for preaching and teaching contrary to this Law.” After several years of suffering and frequent imprisonment it was indeed a happy day when, as a result of their repeated representations to the proper authority, Baptist were informed that “Her Majesty would disapprove of anyone suffering in case of religious scruples to taking an oath, when there was no intention of impeding the purposes of justice.”

Since then Baptist, as well as other bodies of Christians who object to taking oaths, are only required to make a declaration, and all alike enjoy perfect religious liberty, so that in a very liberal sense, “Every man can sit under his vine and under his fig-tree” worshipping God according to the dictates of his conscience, and “none shall make him afraid.”

Chapter X.

MISSION ESTABLISHED IN RUATAN

Ruatan is the largest of a group of islands known as the Bay Islands, lying 125 miles south-east of Belize, and about forty miles off the coast of the Republic of Honduras. It is about thirty miles in length, from three to four miles wide, and is very mountainous. Its present population, scattered mostly along the sea-coast, is about three thousand. Formerly the Bay Islands were under British rule, but in 1859 they were ceded by Great Britain to Honduras.

As far back, however, as the year 1846 the Baptist Church at Belize, in response to an invitation of some of the settlers in Ruatan, sent over as its agent Mr. Francis Curran, who had been for some time an assistant teacher in the Mission school in Belize, and an accredited local preacher in connection with the Belize Mission. Although Mr. Curran spent some time in the island, visiting and preaching, it was not until 1849 that the Baptist Mission became established there.

The real founder of the Baptist Mission in Ruatan was Mr. John Warner, to whom reference has already been made in chapter VII. For some years Mr. Warner had labored faithfully as pastor and teacher at Crooked Tree, up the Belize river, but having not been in the best of health for a time, and desirous of having a change, the Church in Belize sent him as a Missionary to Ruatan where he, along with Mrs. Warner and four children, landed on May 4th, 1849.

Writing to the Belize Church a few weeks after his arrival, Mr. Warner told how he had met with a cordial and encouraging reception from the settlers, and had found a spot suitable for a Mission, at Flowers Bay, not far from the capital. On this property there were two small houses and one hundred

coconut palms in full bearing. The owner, Mr. Elwin, was willing to let the Mission have this Property for \$250.00, and although the Belize Church at first did not feel at liberty to sanction the expenditure, before the end of the year the property was purchased, designed and held in trust solely for the use of the Mission. About this time Mr. Henderson reported to the Belize congregation as follows: AT Ruatan a favorable movement has begun. Brother Warner seems to have his hands and heart full and good prospect of success. He expects to have another baptism this month as several have applied.”

Pastor Warner, with the assistance of the island settlers, was in due time able to erect a necessary place of meeting, and was further fortunate to secure the practical sympathies of a Baptist Church at Bacup in Lancashire, England, so that it contributed regularly to more than half his support. Thus with a little assistance from Belize he was, through the Grace of God, able to establish the Mission, and to carry on the Gospel work for many years, until he was called from earthly to better service above.

Pastor Warner was buried on the Mission lot just outside the Mission Church at Flowers Bay, where, until this day, his last resting-place is marked by a neatly-erected wooden fence, with a tablet bearing his name and the date of his demise.

Chapter XI.

DEATH OF MRS. HENDERSON

In October, 1849, the Mission experienced another severe loss in the rather sudden death of Mrs. Henderson. She was removed after a fortnight's illness intermittent fever. In a letter dated from Belize on October 21st, Mr. Henderson conveyed the sorrowful news to a relative in England. From that letter we have the following extract: "This morning my beloved wife, Mary Ann breathed her last. Her end was peace, her mind being stayed on Jesus. She confessed to me, just before her departure, that never before was He more precious than then." "My family circle is now broken, and however much we take care of a broken vessel, we do not commonly set our affection upon it. May I be found more devoted to the services of the Lord, who condescends to employ me in His work!"

Mrs. Henderson had resided full fifteen years in Belize, and had there discharged the important and often arduous duties of a Missionary's wife, in whose toils and sufferings she bore her part. When she landed in Belize she was in the full enjoyment of health and vigor and in the prime of life. She at once devoted her strength to the cause in which she had embarked with her devoted husband. For years she toiled daily in a flourishing infant school of over a hundred pupils, besides taking part in the holding of prayer meetings, classes for women, Sunday School work, and visiting, when she could, the aged and sick of the congregation.

The following paragraph, culled from Fredrick Crowe's *Gospel in Central America*, is a fitting tribute to her memory: "Mrs. Henderson shared to trials of the Pastor and of the church, and with them was enabled to out-ride many storms. She was not, however, permitted to see, with earthly vision, the realization of the hopes which have been and are yet entertained by the people among whom she suffered and labored; but a better portion is hers. Her tempestuous life is, we hope, succeeded by the perfect calm, complete security, and unspeakable enjoyment of a haven of eternal rest."

To the friends in Belize it may be of interest to know that Mrs. Mary Ann Henderson was laid to rest in the now long-closed Baptist burial ground, at Freetown, beyond the canal, where the government anticipates shortly to do some filling with a view of turning that portion of the outskirts of our city into something more beautiful and useful than a mangrove swamp.

Chapter XII.

THE POSITION IN 1850.

The English Baptist Missionary Society had by this time withdrawn its agent, and the Mission in British Honduras, from 1850, became an independent Mission. The Rev. Alexander Henderson continued to be Pastor of the Church in Belize and General Superintendent of the Mission. As this year marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of the Church, perhaps a statement of the position of the Mission at that date will not be amiss.

From Church records we have been able to gather the following:

- (1) "At Belize – the central station – a communion of baptized believers, consisting of little over two hundred in full fellowship, sustaining two or three preaching stations, a day school of seventy children, an adult evening school, and two Sunday Schools."
- (2) "At Crooked Tree, in the Orange Walk District, a similar communion of more than thirty members sustaining two preaching stations and a Day and a Sunday School."
- (3) "At Bakers, on the Belize River, a preaching station where the ordinances are administered to the members by a native Pastor (Rev. Joseph Kelly), who also teaches a day school and an adult Sunday School."
- (4) "At Sibun, to the Southward of Belize, a preaching station and Sunday School carried on without expense to the Belize Church by Brother Edward Thurton

assisted by the brethren who lived on or around Thurton's Bank?"

- (5) "At Northern River, northward of Belize, a preaching station carried on, without expense to the Mission, by two leaders, Brethren James Goff and James York, and where, with the assistance of the friends at that settlement, a house of worship is being erected.
- (6) "At Stann Creek, a town next in size to Belize, and lying thirty miles to the South, a preaching station where Brother William Michael preaches and teaches in the Carib language and is greatly encouraged by the large attendance of his own tribe – the Carib Indians."
- (7) "O the island of Ruatan, Pastor John Warner has made a happy and promising commencement both in preaching the Gospel and in teaching a day and Sunday school. He has formed a Church to which converts are being constantly added. A Chapel and a dwelling house have also being erected."

"In addition to these stations others are already contemplated and native teachers are still being raised up to fill them."

"The first book ever printed in the Carib and Waika languages have been printed as the result of Mr. Henderson's labor in translating, and he has now undertaken the Maya, so that the Scriptures, in their mother tongue, may be extended to that people also."

"The Native Baptist Church in British Honduras still burns to be the instrument of spreading to others the Gospel of Christ, which it has received, in deposit, to dispense as a responsible steward."

It appears from the above records, that on account of not having a suitable building in Belize the Day-school which for years had had an average attendance of over two hundred, had to be reduced to seventy, as the old mission premises had to sold.

Chapter XIII.

ERECTION OF QUEEN STREET CHAPEL.

Shortly after the formation of the Independent Baptist Mission in Belize, a lot of land, with two small houses thereon, was presented to the Mission by Mr., George Tillett, staunch friend of Mr. Henderson and a constant supporter of the Church. This lot was situated at the corner of Queen Street and Gabourel Lane, with the front entrance on Eve Street. On this lot was built the Queen Street Church, which became and continued to be, until destroyed by hurricane in 1931, the principal Baptist place of worship in the Colony.

The building was a fairly large two-storied one, the upper flat being the Chapel, and the under flat the School hall and Vestry. The estimated cost of this wooden structure, which was built by Mr. George Braddick and begun in May, 1850, was \$3,500.00.

Half the amount was already been raised by the united contributions of Christian Churches and friends in England, as the result of appeals made by Pastor Fredrick Crowe, who had that year visited England, whilst the remainder was obtained through the voluntary gifts of friends in Belize who were well disposed towards the object. Her Majesty's Superintendent, Colonel Fancourt, was pleased to present the Church with ten guineas for the building, and Chief Justice Temple added five guineas more, whilst several leading merchants and persons of note contributed liberally.

The local press also came forward spontaneously to advocate the cause of the Church, so that from a leading article which appeared in the *Honduras Watchman* of April 6th, 1850, the following brief extracts: "For some time members of the Baptist Society have been meeting in a house in Eve Street – too small for the purpose, inconvenient and incapable of accommodating, not only parties desirous

of attending Devine worship there, but even members themselves. Under these circumstances, and feeling the real necessity of erecting a new building on the lot given by Mr. George Tillett for the purpose, they have decided that the work be now begun. We really believe that this undertaking will prove a great benefit to the Settlement; so this alone, we think, will be a sufficient inducement to procure the assistance necessary to enable them to complete the work – the members of that society, though generally poor, have struggled on and maintained their Church independence; and from their general peaceful and quiet behavior, they deserve some encouragement.”

Many years later a new steeple with bell, a baptismal font, and an inside gallery for the use of the choir were added to this church, and as late as 1928 a fine pipe organ was installed; thus from 1850 to 1931 (a period of eighty-one years) Queen Street Baptist Church was open for the worship of God and for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ.

Chapter XIV.

THE STRUGGLES AND RETIREMENT OF
PASTOR ALEXANDER HENDERSON

After sixteen years of devoted service in Belize, during which no small progress have been made, to find himself no longer the Agent of the Home Missionary Society, but the Superintendent of an Independent Mission, with no very sure source of income, was like making a new venture. Yet strong in the faith that God, who has crowned his efforts in the past, would in no wise fail him, nor forsake him in the days to come, Pastor Henderson faced the future with renewed courage.

Besides ministering regularly to the Queen Street Congregation, he visited, from time to time, the different country stations referred to in Chapter XII. In all this he continued to be ably helped by Pastors Kelly and Thurton, and several other native brethren who had been set apart by the Church as local preachers.

About this time Mr. Henderson was fortunate to meet with a Miss Evans, the daughter of well known residents in Belize, to whom he got married, and who proved to be a real help-mate in the years following. They resided in a comfortable little home in Eve Street not far from the Chapel. The site of this house is now occupied by Mr. Swan. Here were born to them four children, whose names are still fresh in the memories of Belize citizens - Maya Henderson, Miss Adna Henderson, Timon Henderson, all deceased, and Mrs. Winter, who now resides in England.

During the period of which we are now writing, another able helper was raised up in the person of Mr. Isaiah Braddick, a son of Mr. George Braddick, who was still a

faithful deacon and helper in the Belize Church. Shortly after his conversion and connection with the Church, Isaiah Braddick expressed a desire to enter the Christian ministry and, with this end in view, visited England, where arrangements were made for his attending Spurgeon's College in London. During his stay in England he became ill, so much so that his college course had to be abandoned and he returned to Belize without having succeeded in obtaining his heart's wish. Brother Isaiah Braddick, nevertheless, became for many years an active worker and local preacher in connection with the Mission Church.

The Day School at Queen Street continued, until the end of his ministry, to claim much of Pastor Henderson's time and talent. He was a gifted teacher, so that the Baptist school became recognized as one of the best schools in town. The present writer recalls, for many years after his arrival in Belize, meeting with people who with pride informed him that they had been "Old Pastor Henderson's Scholars."

But as the years passed and Mr. Henderson, with increasing age, began to lose some of his early vigor, the day came when the best that might be said of the Mission is that it "continued to mark time."

From the handbook of British Honduras, published in 1925, we take the following:

"Mr. Henderson continued his labors, assisted by Messrs. Isaiah Braddick and Joseph Kelly, until 1879, when failing health compelled him to cease taking any active part in the Church, the services being conducted by Messrs. Braddick and Kelly until the arrival of Mr. Waring" in 1881.

Chapter XV.

MINISTRY OF THE REV. DAVID WARING.

During the stay in England of Mr. Isaiah Braddick, referred to in the preceding chapter, he became acquainted with certain Baptist in that country, with whom he kept up a correspondence after he returned home, and through their assistance the Church in Belize was able to secure a new pastor in the person of Mr. David Waring.

Mr. Waring, accompanied by Mrs. Waring, son and daughter, arrived in Belize in June, 1881. He found the Mission in a very discouraging condition and everything in connection with it in a state of general decay. By his energy and earnest attention to his duties he not only succeeded in furthering the cause of the Church, but soon filled the people over whom he presided with some of his zeal. About five months after the arrival of Pastor Waring, Pastor Alexander Henderson died, and his body was laid to rest in the Yarborough Cemetery on November 11th, 1881.

No sooner had pastor Waring began his Ministry in Belize than he wisely sought to connect the British Honduras Mission with one or other existing Baptist Missionary Societies abroad. He began making appeals to the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society, and succeeded in getting them to send Pastor Charles Hobson to the Island of Ruatan, and later Mr. James Bryant to Belize as a missionary schoolmaster and agent of the Jamaica Society. Mr. Bryant arrived in Belize in 1886.

After six years' untiring service in the Colony, Mr. Waring's health broke down, so he thought it best to ordain Mr. Bryant, which he did in 1887, leaving him in charge of the Mission whilst he himself went on furlough.

In the latter part of 1887 Mr. Waring arrived in Jamaica, where the present writer had the honor of hearing him preach in the Second Baptist Church in Montego Bay, and again listening to a Missionary address delivered by him in the Falmouth Baptist Church over which the Rev. John Kingdom, then Chairman of Jamaica Missionary Society, presided.

During his stay in Jamaica he met a committee of the Missionary Society in Montego Bay, still anxious to bring about an affiliation of the two Missions, but got no further than promises from the committee to have the matter considered at a future date. Mr. Waring left Jamaica for England shortly afterwards, feeling rather disappointed at not having met with the immediate help he had hoped for. He arrived safely in England, but leaving the tropics for the cold of an English winter he developed pneumonia and died in the spring of 1888. Pastor Waring's death was much lamented in Belize, where he had not only succeeded in reviving the work, but where he had won his way to the hearts of all sections of the community.

Chapter XVI.

JAMAICA BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY
TAKES OVER THE MISSION.

After the death of Pastor Waring the Church in Belize continued its endeavors to bring about an affiliation of the Baptist Mission in British Honduras with the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society. Thus in 1888, when certain resolutions were drawn up by the Church and sent to Jamaica, the Baptist Church and Mission in British Honduras were taken over and recognized as a Mission Sphere under the auspices of the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society.

Shortly afterwards Pastor James Bryant left for Jamaica to receive further instructions from the committee of the Missionary Society. He returned in November with a deputation of two ministers, Rev. E. J. Hewitt, Secretary of the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society, and Rev. P. Williams, Secretary of the Jamaica Baptist Union. The purpose of the deputation was to bring about a proper arrangement of the then unsettled affairs of the Mission.

When in the Colony, Pastors Hewitt and Williams, besides spending a busy and profitable time with the Church in Belize, visited several of the out-stations, where the people hailed them with joy. When on their way from Bakers to Crooked Tree (they traveled by the river by dorey), they stayed for a day or so at a Bank known as McCulloch's Bank – just above the entrance to Black Creek. Two brothers, Joseph and Benjamin McMulloch, each of them having large families, resided on the bank. Mr. Joseph McMulloch had already become a baptized believer and a member of the Baptist Church, but the younger brother, Benjamin, was

leading a reckless life. During a service by Pastor Hewitt, Benjamin decided to begin a new life with Christ as his Savior. He asked to be baptized, and after his baptism he told the minister that he wanted a colleting book, as he meant to begin work for his Master at once. On receiving the collection book and heading it with a considerable sum for himself and family, he in a short time raised sufficient to build a little Church – the May Pen Baptist Church – where services were held regularly until the building was destroyed in the hurricane of 1931.. In after years Brother Benjamin McCulloch became a deacon and laical preacher in connection with the Mission and, as all who were in any way connected with him felt, he was a true man of God.

After spending a further short stay in Belize, and after fulfilling the duties connected with their mission, the deputation took leave of the Church in this city and returned to Jamaica, taking Pastor Bryant along with them.

Chapter XVII.

ARRIVAL OF NEW MISSIONARIES.

The author of this booklet arrived at Montego Bay, Jamaica in June, 1886. He came to Jamaica to assist his uncle, the Rev. Charles Brown, then Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Montego Bay. Strange as it may seem, Pastor Brown was at that time on a visit to Belize, sent by the Jamaica Missionary Society to interview Pastor David Waring, and to make some arraignments with the Belize Church regarding Mr. James Bryant, the Societies Missionary Schoolmaster. When in Belize in 1886, Mr. Brown took the opportunity of visiting the country stations, and had a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with the needs of the British Honduras Mission.

Chiefly, we think, on account of this, when the Jamaica Missionary Society decided in 1888 to take under its auspices the Belize Mission, Pastor Charles Brown was appointed by the Revs. E. J. Hewitt and P. Williams, on behalf of the Society, and asked if he would go as their agent in charge of the Mission in British Honduras. They felt that with the knowledge he already had of the Colony he was well suited for the work. They further urged that he take his nephew with him, as he would certainly need an assistant to take over to river stations. After prayerful consideration Pastor Brown accepted the invitation, and so arrived in Belize, accompanied by his wife and his nephew, on April 1st, 1889.

With reference to what certainly became, to the writer, a never-to-be-forgotten first of April, there are certain events which stand out clearly in his memory. Among them was the tidings brought by the pilot where he boarded the ship,

the S.S. Hondo, concerning the awful tragedy which had taken place on the island of Ruatan – the brutal murder of the Rev. Charles Hobson, Mrs. Hobson, and a Miss. Hinds, who happened to be staying with them. The three were literally hacked to pieces by an ex-soldier of a West India Regiment, of the name Burrell, who thought they had considerable money.

Next was the meeting with two well-known leaders of the Belize Church, who came out in their dorey to meet the ship, which had to anchor a mile from the landing-stage. Captain Peter Benbow and Brother William Jones, after much shaking of hands, conveyed us safely to shore.

Arriving at the Mission House in Gabourel Lane, a newly-erected building, we were welcomed by a number of church workers, chiefly sisters, and among them Harriet Felix, Mary Bennett, Adelia Gill, Rachel Barrow and Elizabeth Joe, who had prepared for the new missionaries a sumptuous meal.

Lastly, at seven in the evening, we reported to the Queen Street Baptist Chapel, when the new Superintendent, Pastor Charles Brown, gave an address, after which more speeches of welcome were made and more shaking of hands. Yet, clear as it all yet seems to the writer, he never for a moment dreamed that fifty years later he would still be in Belize, and attempting to write the story of that, to him, memorable day.

Chapter XVIII.

PASTOR BROWN VISITS RUATAN

Within a fortnight after his arrival in Belize, Pastor Charles Brown, on receiving further tidings of the tragedy in Ruatan, felt it his duty to visit that island right away. He took with him Rev. Joseph Kelly, who had been in charge of the Belize Church in the absence of its regular pastor, as well as head teacher in the Queen Street Day School. Sailing in an island schooner, the *Frances B. Hiller*, after a pleasant passage across the two pastors landed safely in Ruatan to find that the sad tidings of the murder of Pastor Hobson, Mrs. Hobson and Miss. Hinds were all too true. They found not only the members of the Baptist Church sorely stricken over the cruel deed, but the inhabitants of the entire island in a state of more or less excitement.

Pastor Brown spent several weeks in Ruatan, where he did his utmost to cheer the stricken Churches, and made arrangements with hem to leave Pastor Joseph Kelly, for the time being, in charge of the Mission. Pastor Kelly, although now advance in years, gave good service. Making Flowers Bay his headquarters, he used to ride regularly across the island to Half-Moon Bay, another station, and go by dorey or sailing boat to Oak Ridge, where services were held in the dwelling-house of John Cooper.

During his stay in Ruatan Pastor Brown met with two young men in whom he became very interested, viz., Mr. Richard Bennett and Mr. Clarabut Walter, both connected with the Flowers Bay Baptist Church. In less than a year after Mr. Brown's visit they both came to Belize and studied under Mr. Brown, so were able to pass a Government examination and obtained first class teachers certificates. In

after years both gave good service to the Belize Mission as school teaches, and occasionally conducted services in one or other of the country churches.

When in Ruatan, Pastor Brown visited Oak Ridge, a village fifteen miles east of the capital and then a busy ship-building centre. There he met several of the leading men of the island, among them the Cooper brothers who all, in after years, became connected with the Baptist Church. At Oak Ridge he also became acquainted with an Englishman, Mr. John Abbot, and arranged to take two of his children to Belize to further their education. One of the two, Mr. Lewis Abbot, is yet alive, and has, for many years, rendered valuable service to the island as a doctor.

Having visited all the Baptist Churches in Ruatan and having completed his duties as far as possible, Pastor Brown returned to Belize, for whence he immediately sent a report to Jamaica informing the Society about the occurrence of their late agents, and the arrangements he had made for carrying on the Mission.

Chapter XIX.

ADDITIONAL HELPERS

During Pastor Brown's visit to Ruatan the present writer was left in charge of the Church and school in Belize, *pro tempore*, and on his return, on account of the vacancy brought about by the transfer of Pastor Joseph Kelly to the island, was appointed headmaster of the school until further arrangements could be made. During the following year, however, a trained teacher from Jamaica arrived in the person of Mr. James Nathaniel Anglin. Mr. Anglin who had been trained at Calabar College, Kingston, had been in charge of the Baptist Day School at Montego Bay when Pastor Brown was the Pastor Manager there. Knowing Mr. Anglin's ability as a first class teacher, Mr. Brown tried and was fortunate to secure his service for Queen Street School in Belize.

Under Mr. Anglin the school in Belize soon increased in numbers and efficiency, and began to take high rank among to schools in the city. Mr. Anglin, who was a zealous church worker, soon began to show his talent in other ways. He became choirmaster, superintendent of the Sunday School, Church Secretary and local preacher almost from his arrival, and held these offices with credit, until sickness led him to resign only a few years ago.

Just about the time when Mr. Anglin took over the school in Belize, another young man, Mr. Ebenezer Adolphus, a native of British Honduras, began to prepare himself for the work of a missionary schoolmaster. He secured a first-class teachers certificate, and was first put in charge of a newly-opened mission station at Lemonal, Spanish Creek, and later Transferred to Crooked Tree. Mr. Adolphus, who was a zealous Christian and lover of his people, continued from 1890 until his death in May, 1925, to do splendid work.

The name of Teacher Adolphus will ever live in the memory of the inhabitants of Spanish Creek and of Crooked Tree.

Several other native young lads were trained under Pastor Charles Brown, each of which did more or less good service as school teachers. Chief of these were Humphrey Phillips, Elijah Bonner, Mordecai Bennett and Oswald Bess.

All the recognized schools in the Colony, although denominational schools, received a grant from the Government, so that the above teachers were supported by the Government's grant, plus amounts paid by the Mission.

Pastor Brown further saw fit to divide the mission work into two districts, viz., the Belize District and the Orange Walk District, and the writer, being relieved from school work by the arrival of Mr. Anglin, was put in charge of the Churches in the Orange Walk Circuit. Under this arrangement the mission work began to extend, and believers were constantly being added to the Churches.

Chapter XX.

ERECTION OF NEW CHAPELS
MADE POSSIBLE.

But for a legacy of \$30,000.00 (sols) left for the Mission by a merchant of Belize named John Jex, Pastor Brown and his band of workers could not have exercised such holy daring and enjoyed the marked success which they all did during the next few years.

All the Mission buildings, both in Belize and at the country stations, stood badly in need of repairs, and the need for new buildings at certain places became very pressing. Thus when funds became available Pastor gave immediate attention to those requirements.

The Queen Street Chapel, Belize, was raised, ceiled and had a gallery, capable of seating fifty or sixty persons, added to it. It was also resealed with comfortable pews, and painted inside and outside and made to look like a new building.

A devoted Christian having left a property in Freetown District for the use of the Mission, and there being several members who were beginning to feel that the distance to the Queen Street Chapel was too great for them, a new chapel was erected, and has always supported a need in that part of the town. The Mission also secured two other properties in Belize – one adjoining the Queen Street Church and the other, known as the “Stirling Property,” in Gabourel Lane, thus along with properties already deeded over to the Mission from the Braddick family the Baptist had five dwelling houses which, when rented, brought in a regular monthly income for carrying on the Mission work.

Then the out-stations were not forgotten. The chapel at Bakers, on the Old River, was thoroughly repaired, and a new Mission House erected alongside the chapel.

At Crooked Tree, Lemonal, Bermudian Landing, Thurtons Bank (Sibun River) and Bomba Bank (Northern River) new chapels were erected and teachers' residence either attached to the chapel or as a separate building altogether.

Yet, be it remembered, it was not merely in the erecting of new buildings and the repairing of old ones that Pastor Brown's success lay. He had the joy of seeing the Church in Belize grow in numbers, and of seeing new stations being opened in many part of the Colony. From a life of sin, many came away to delight themselves in God and His good and holy will, and as proof of Divine favor, never a year passed without one or two baptisms having taking place. One of the writer's very memorable experiences was on a Lord's day, at Crooked Tree in 1890, when he had the joy of baptizing twenty-five persons upon their profession of faith in Christ and of repentance before God; and of afterwards celebrating the Lord's Supper with upwards of eighty baptized believers, who had gathered in our "Bush Tabernacle," just before the opening of the new two-storied building then under erection, and that has been the Church home of three generations of Baptist since its opening.

Chapter XXI.

PASTOR CLEGHORN SENT TO RUATAN.

It should be recorded that Pastor Joseph Kelly, who had, since the murder of Pastor Hobson, been in charge of the Ruatan Mission, rendered valuable service in the Island. His years, his keen observation of men and things, and long experience, enabled him to impart most useful knowledge to the young and aged, but his failing strength led him to resign and return to Belize in 1893, where he died on May 26th, 1899.

In that year the writer was transferred from Crooked Tree, British Honduras to Ruatan, where he succeeded Pastor Kelly. As the village of Oak Ridge had, by this time grown in population, and as a new chapel and mission house had just been erected there, Oke Ridge became his headquarters. The membership which was a little more than twenty when Pastor Kelly resigned was augmented by twenty-four who were baptized on the day the new chapel was opened for Divine worship, and soon reached a hundred. Day and Sunday Schools, with an average attendance of about sixty, were also started, and the Sunday School continued down the years with much success.

The other Churches at Coxen's Hole, Flowers Bay and Half-Moon Bay were regularly visited, and new Churches established in the adjoining Islands of Helene and Bonacco. In the conducting of services the Superintendent was locally assisted by a band of preachers chosen for that work, chief of whom were Brethren Abbott, Tatum, Jeffries and Webster at Oak Ridge; Hinds, Bennett, Brooks and Nelson at Flowers Bay; John and Charles Wesley and Absolom Bennett at Half-moon Bay.

During the seven years 1893 to 1900 the Church properties were attended to. The old Chapel at Flowers Bay was taken down and new and more commodious building erected. The Half-moon Bay Chapel was put in a state of thorough repair, whilst new chapels were erected at Helene and Bonacco.

One of the pleasing recollections of the writer's years of service in Ruatan was the very happy and cordial relationship that existed between the Wesleyan Methodists and ourselves. The Pastors of that Sister Church were always ready to work in harmony and to exchange pulpits. On two or three different occasions united evangelistic services were held in every island church throughout Bonacco, Helene, Ruatan and Utilla, resulting in hundreds of people being added to the Churches.

Towards the end of the writers service in Ruatan, the Bay Islands were visited by other religious denominations, among them the Seventh Day Adventist, and preachers belonging to certain Pentecostal missions having their headquarters in the United States of America, resulting in divisions and a falling off, in some places, of members and others connected with the Baptist Mission. In April, 1900, we were recalled to Belize, leaving Brother John Abbott and Stephen Hinds in charge of the Ruatan Churches.

Chapter XXII

PASTOR BROWN GOES ON FURLOUGH

After eleven years of strenuous service in the Colony, Pastor and Mrs. Brown felt they needed a change and rest. Mrs. Brown especially was in a bad state of health, and on their medical adviser's recommendation they left for their native land, Scotland, in April, 1900. Some months after arriving in Scotland Mrs. Brown got worse and died in her sister's home in Hawick. The sad news was conveyed to the Belize Church by a letter from Pastor Brown, read at a Sunday service held in August of that year.

After spending six months in Scotland, Pastor Brown returned to Belize, via Jamaica, where he spent a further two months. From Jamaica he again wrote the Church in Belize, saying that he hoped to arrive in the Colony early in the New Year, but not to stay, as he expected to take over the Second Baptist Church in Montego Bay, then without a Pastor. This arrangement with the Second Baptist Church did not, however, materialize, as that Church afterwards decided on calling a younger man. So Pastor Brown, on returning to Belize, decided to stay for a time.

The writer, who had been recalled from Ruatan to relieve Mr. Brown, was not, on his return, sent back to the islands, but once more took over the Country Churches, with headquarters in Crooked Tree, while the Rev. Charles Tharpe, who had been for some time at Crooked Tree, took over the work in Ruatan.

In the summer of 1901 the British Honduras Churches had a visit from the Rev. Joshua Sobey, who had been for some years in charge of the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society's work in Port Lemon, Costa Rica. He stayed for some time

with Pastor Brown in Belize, but was able to give some weeks to the visit of all the Country Stations, where he held special services, and helped to cheer all by his genuine manner and eloquent preaching.

At this time the actual number of baptized members in the Colony was 353, whilst the followers, adult and children, numbered 1,324. The Baptist then had nine chapels and six day-schools, where some six hundred children were in attendance; two European pastors, a trained teacher from Jamaica, nine native teachers holding Government Certificates, and eleven local preachers.

Up to 1901 there were few roads in the Colony, few, if any, motor-boats on our rivers; we had never seen an airship, so that traveling was very slow (either by dorey or on horse back); thus a great deal of time was occupied in getting from place to place, and it required more or less youth and energy to successfully carry on the work; so as Pastor was getting on in years, and not at all in the best of health, he sent in his resignation and left for the United States in November, 1901.

Chapter XXIII.

JAMAICA BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY
WITHDRAWS FROM BRITISH HONDURAS

Soon after the departure of Pastor Charles Brown from Belize the Church received a letter from the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society asking if it was its desire that another Missionary be sent from Jamaica; and if so, what salary was offered, and would the Belize Church pay his passage. To this letter the Belize Church replied saying that as Pastor R. Cleghorn had, during Pastor Brown's absence from the Colony, filled his place satisfactorily, and as he was still carrying on the work of the Mission, it would be asked that he be allowed to remain, and trusting that (as Pastor Brown had informed them it would be) Mr. Cleghorn be recognized as the Society's agent. To this letter no reply was ever received, and so, after waiting a year from the date of Mr. Brown's departure, Mr. Cleghorn was, in December, 1902, unanimously chosen by the British Honduras Baptist Mission as its chief Pastor and Superintendent.

Shortly after his appointment the new superintendent found it necessary, for the proper management of the Mission properties, to have a Board of Trustees appointed, so in January, 1904, the British Honduras Baptist Trustee Association was formed and incorporated under Chapter 87 of the Consolidated Laws of British Honduras. Under this Trust, the Superintendent of the Mission is President, and, including the Secretary, there must always remain no less than three Directors and two members, and each must be, during his office as Trustee, a member of the Baptist Church.

In 1906, when on a visit to his native land, Scotland, the Superintendent, with the consent of the British Honduras Mission, wrote the Rev. J. H. Shakespeare, then the Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, with a view of finding out whether the English Baptist Missionary Society would be prepared once more to take the British Honduras Mission under its auspices. He was informed by Mr. Shakespeare that as the English Baptist Missionary Society had many responsibilities connected with their African and Indian Missions, that Society could not see its way, just then, to undertake work in Central America, but added that a Baptist Colonial Society had been organized, and that probably at a later date, some assistance might be had through it.

During this visit to Scotland, the Superintendent met Pastor David Tait, of 3, Shandon Place, Edinburgh, once pastor of the Spurgeon Memorial Tabernacle, Leith Walk, who became deeply interested in the story of Baptist work in British Honduras, and who offered his services as agent and secretary of that Mission in the Homeland. Pastor Tait did his utmost to place the needs of the work before the home Churches, but soon found that he could do but little, in a financial way, to assist a Mission still little known; consequently, in a year, or a little more, Pastor Tait resigned his Mission of self-sacrifice and love.

Chapter XXIV.

YEARS OF INGATHERING

The nine years, 1905 to 1914, may be referred to as the years of ingathering. On a Sunday in 1905, at the close of the morning service, the writer had the joy of baptizing, all young people, mostly senior scholars from the Sunday School, and during the period mentioned there was no less than one hundred and sixty-six additions to the Queen Street Church and, with few exceptions, all young people.

On February, 10th, 1909, a local branch of the Christian Endeavor Society was formed in connection with the Belize Church. It began by twenty-nine persons signing the pledge and, in a short time, increased to a membership of four hundred and twenty-six. Ever since its formation, thirty years ago, no department of our Church work has proved more helpful and cheering. On the occasion of the eleventh anniversary, held in 1920, the writer had the pleasure and privilege of addressing a Sunday night service, when some five hundred young people thronged, to its utmost holding capacity, the Queen Street Church.

In 1910 an early morning Bible Study Class was opened, and was soon attended by large numbers of young men, several of whom had become members of the Church and who worked together for the furtherance the Mission. This class, for some time through special efforts, contributed considerably to the providing of funds for the carrying on of the work.

In the month of May, 1910, a band of Baptist young people from Belize, in company with the Pastor, visited the Crooked Tree Church, then under the care of Teacher Ebenezer Adolphus, when a two weeks convention was held. Each morning from five to six o'clock, there were meetings for

prayer, followed by a service at mid-day, when an address would be delivered, chiefly to professing Christians; and then, in the evening, an evangelistic meeting would close the day's proceedings.

All these meetings were largely attended, and during the convention many of the young people at Crooked Tree were led to Christ. Among the speakers on that occasion whose messages were greatly blessed were Brethren G. Wright (many years previously a schoolmaster at Crooked Tree) and John T. York (a devoted leader in the Belize Church).

By the beginning of 1914 the congregation attending the Queen Street Church had so greatly increased that the building had become too small, and it was thought necessary to enlarge the building. For this purpose collecting lists were issued to many of the members, and plans were actually drawn for the additions to the building which, if funds were forthcoming, it was intended to proceed with some time in 1915; but an unexpected event, which entirely changed the urgent need for enlargement, took place in August, 1914, the outbreak of the world war.

Chapter XXV.

THE WAR, 1914 – 1918

During the war British Honduras sent two contingents to the front. In each of them were some of our Baptist lads. With but one or two exceptions they were all spared to return at the end of the war, but most of them were restless and unsettled in mind, so that this, with perhaps the scarcity of employment in the Colony, led some of them to emigrate to the United State or one or other of the neighboring Republics.

As the succeeding years passed, depression in business and every other trade increased, so that it became more and more difficult for most of our people to make ends meet; so it soon became evident that it would be a long time before sufficient funds could be raised for chapel extension purposes. In short, the church members became convinced that the extension of the Queen Street Chapel was not only beyond their means but apparently unnecessary, as the congregations were not as large as before the war. Consequently, after some years of effort, the money raised was, by unanimous vote of the members and contributors, spent on the installation of a beautiful pipe organ which the choir, under the leadership of Pastor J. N. Anglin, had long been hoping to get. This organ was erected by Professor C. L. Barnes, of Kingston Jamaica, in 1928.

During the decade 1920 – 1930, four events took place which we feel ought to be mentioned in this sketch if for no other purpose than as matters of record. The first was the visit of Mr. J. N. Anglin, in 1923, to his native land Jamaica. This was his first visit in thirty-three years, so he made he most of the opportunity in revisiting most of the scenes of his youth, When in Montego Bay he attended the first Baptist Church, and on June 12th, 1923, he received Ordination, as a Baptist

Minister, at the hand of Rev. T. Gordon-Somers, then one of Jamaica's leading preachers. Before and after his ordination Mr. Anglin, in addition of schoolwork, did service as an assistant Pastor in the Belize Church, and continued until ill-health overtook him a few years ago, causing him to retire.

Then, on May 2nd, 1925, the Baptist Mission, and especially the Crooked Tree, Lemonal, and May Pen Churches, sustained a great loss in the removal by death of Mr. Ebenezer Adolphus. For nearly a year previously Mr. Adolphus had been in poor health, yet he carried on till within a week or two of his call from earthly to better service above. He gave to the Baptist Mission full thirty-five years of devoted service.

In July, 1929, Pastor Henry F. Hewitt, a brother of Rev. Edward Jesse Hewitt, so long secretary of the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society, who had been in charge of the Ruatan Mission for some years, was transferred to British Honduras, and became successor to Mr. Ebenezer Adolphus at Crooked Tree. The arrival of Mr. Henry Hewitt was hailed with joy by the country Churches, and for three years he labored with much success. During his ministry many young people of the district were added to the Church, but his ministry at Crooked Tree was destined to be a brief one. He died suddenly on February 11th, 1932.

New Year's Day of 1930 was, to the writer, one of the saddest days of his life. His beloved wife, Henrietta, who for thirty-nine years had been a true help-mate, and had shared the important and often arduous duties of a missionary's life, passed away peacefully in the early hours of that new years morning. She had been in a state of bad health for several months, but in December, 1929, gradually grew worse, until the end came on January 1st, 1930. By her side when she breathed her last sat Mrs. W. H. Harvey, the wife of the Chairman of the Methodist Mission, and who was destined to follow her in a little more than a year later when she perished in the hurricane of 1931. To Mrs. Harvey she confided her readiness "to go and be with Christ which was far better."

The funeral service, conducted by Rev. W. H. Harvey, was largely attended by all classes of the community, and at 4:30 p.m. on that New Year's Day she was laid to rest in Lord Ridge Cemetery by the side of her little son, Earle, who died some years before.

Chapter XXVI.

BAPTIST MISSION SUFFERS GREAT LOSS IN
HURRICANE OF 1931

Should any of my readers care to have a detailed account of the hurricane of 1931, and what it meant for Belize, I recommend them to read the book entitled *cyclone*, by Mr. Ernest E. Cain. All I intend to do in this chapter is to insert the copy of an article which I wrote immediately after the disaster, and which, I think, will give a clear idea of what it meant for the Baptist Mission.

“On the morning of 10th of September, 1930, the writer of this article chanced to be in the beautiful little town of Montego Bay on the North side of Jamaica. On that morning the news reached Montego Bay that in all probability a hurricane would strike the North side of the island that forenoon. Many of the people were anxious, so much so that a brother minister who had an important meeting to attend at an island village postponed his journey for an hour or so, until he could get some more definite news. To him we remarked, ‘If you are so afraid of hurricanes, why not come to Belize, where we are immune from such disasters?’ Alas! We, like many others, *made lies our refuge*, for on the 10th of September, 1931, exactly one year to the day, our beautiful Belize was well-nigh wiped out by one of the worse hurricanes on record.

“As others will be writing up details of the disaster, in a general way, I, in this article, shall confine myself strictly to what it has meant for the British Honduras Baptist Mission.

“This Mission had, at the date of the hurricane, five churches and school-halls, two in the city of Belize, and three along the

banks of the Belize River, and all of them were greatly damaged. Three, viz., the Queen Street Church and school hall, the Bakers Church, and the Church at May Pen, were completely destroyed, whilst the Freetown and Crooked Tree Churches and school hall were thrown off their pillars, had their floors and windows badly wrecked and portions of their roofs carried away. Then in addition to the Church buildings, the Baptist manse and four other dwelling houses were thrown down and more or less badly wrecked. In short, the amount of damage sustained can be fairly estimated at from 18,000 to 20,000 dollars.

“But like all other denominations of our stricken city, the Baptists are called upon to count their losses, not merely in buildings utterly demolished or badly wrecked, but in precious lives so suddenly ended. Besides a few of the children of the day and Sunday Schools, and other adherents at our places of worship, we had lost eight members who were in full fellowship with the Baptist Church. Having been for long years a self-supporting Mission, but now with most of our sources of revenue cut off, and with a membership consisting of people who have, without exception, suffered much loss themselves, it is difficult to say what the future will bring, yet we are confident that the God who has sustained the Mission for a hundred years will not forsake us now. ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth do change, and though the mountains be moved in the heart of the seas. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.’ ”

Chapter XXVII.

“FAINT YET PURSUING.”

One of the few places of worship that remained standing after the hurricane was the Presbyterian Church, a substantial brick building, in Regent Street. The minister of this Church, having previously resigned, left for Trinidad a few weeks after the storm. Thus, as the Baptist had a minister but no Church building, and as the Presbyterians had a building but no minister, an arrangement was once entered into for the two congregations to unite. Under this arrangement, the Baptist had the use of the Presbyterian Church for all their services until the end of 1933, when the new Queen Street Baptist Church and school-hall was erected and opened for worship, and when a further arrangement was made to assist the Presbyterians, in conjunction with the Wesleyan Methodists, until the arrival of a minister of heir own.

During the two years when the Baptist met with the Presbyterians the work of raising and repairing the Freetown Baptist Chapel was attended to. This was made possible largely as a result of appeals made on behalf of the Baptist of British Honduras by the Rev. J. H. Rushbrooke, M.A., D.D., General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, London, who sent chegues amounting to L48 19s. 6d. Very early after the hurricane the brethren at Crooked Tree were able to have the chapel in that district raised, and, as far as possible, repaired. This building has been in constant use ever since, but requires further attention at the present time. In 1933 the Trustees, on behalf of the Mission, applied for and received, from the Government of British Honduras, for the purpose of erecting the Queen Street Church and school-hall, the sum of four thousand dollars; one thousand dollars being a free grant, and three thousand as a loan to be paid back with interest at four

per cent, per annum, interest to be paid for the first fifteen years on two thousand dollars only, and after that on the whole amount then remaining due. The entire loan, with interest, is to be cleared off in thirty years.

The erection of this building was carried out in a very satisfactory and workmanlike manner by Mr. William Campbell, a well-known contractor and house builder in Belize, who has always proved a warm friend to the Baptist Mission.

On Sunday, November 26th, 1933, the building was opened by Lady Kittermaster, in the presence of Sir Harold Kittermaster, K.C.M.G., the Governor of the Colony, and a large gathering of Citizens, representatives of other Churches, and friends of the Baptist Mission. After the opening and dedication ceremonies, brief addresses were given by His Excellency the Governor, ministers of other denominations, the Hon. Sydney Cuthbert, O.B.E., and A. B. Dillon, Esq., O.B.E., Inspector of Schools.

During the following years the work of repairing the Mission dwelling-houses in Belize has gradually been proceeded with. The manse, where the Pastor lives, was thoroughly repaired in May, 1937.

At Bakers and May Pen Stations, where the buildings were completely destroyed, nothing has been done, chiefly because the settlements in those districts have been almost entirely deserted by the inhabitants, who have sought other localities in which to live.

Chapter XXVIII.

THE OUTLOOK IN 1939.

The year 1939 opened with many things calling for gratitude to Almighty God. Ever since the retirement of Rev. J. N. Anglin, in 1935, the Baptist Church in Belize has been ably and loyally assisted by Mr. Andrew F. Bradley, formally a Lay Missionary in the Republic of Honduras in connection with the Methodist Church, and still an accredited local preacher of that denomination. Mr. Bradley has voluntarily given his services to the Church as an unpaid assistant minister, whereby it has been possible for the writer to visit the out-stations from time to time, and to have that assistance which he so much needs for the conducting of Sunday and mid-week services.

Toward the middle of December, 1938, Belize, and especially the Baptist Churches, were greatly helped and blessed through a visit from Rev. Lloyd L. King, Evangelist of the Florida Baptist Mission Board. Mr. King, who had visited Belize two years previously, was cordially welcomed, and during the two weeks of his stay conducted meetings which were largely attended by all classes of the community. At the over-flowing Watch Night Service, the last he conducted in Belize, many present decided to begin a new life and a new year with Christ as Master.

On Sunday, January 1st, Mr. King, in company with the writer, visited Crooked Tree, and there, for four evenings, held special evangelistic services. The whole village was stirred by Mr. King's preaching and singing, and here, as in Belize, not a few decided for the Savior. On the Wednesday, January 4th, Mr. King baptized five, on profession of repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ. Some others at Crooked Tree

are yet awaiting baptism. Mr. A. F. Bradley visited that station on February 26th, and preached to crowded gatherings. At present Mr. Lester Francisco, teacher of the day school, with the assistance of Brother Randolph Tillett, a local preacher, is responsible for all church services.

In Belize the Church has been somewhat handicapped since the hurricane for a suitable place for baptizing, there being no baptistery in the present building; therefore, on March 19th, previous arrangement having been made, a service was held on Robinson Point, a Caye some miles South of Belize, at the close of which thirty-two persons were immersed, upon the profession of their faith. As the Caye had to be reached by boat, Captain George Gough, himself a Baptist, set his motor-boat, *Albert*, at the disposal of the Mission for the day, and in this way over two hundred persons were able to be present and to witness what was a very solemn and impressive service.

Since August of 1937, what was formally the Queen Street Baptist Day School has been recognized as a Government Model School. The Government pays a small rent for the building; the Director of Education for the Colony is the manager, whilst the headmaster is a trained teacher from Jamaica, who at present is assisted by three other native teachers. The school attendance is one hundred and sixty, but all pupil teachers in Belize belonging to the other denominations, receiving Government aid; have also to attend for short periods there.

For many years another Baptist Day School has been conducted in the Freetown Church Building, with Mrs. Ester Munnings as principal. The average daily attendance is sixty-six. This school is now recognized as an Infant School.

April 1st, 1939, through the Grace of God, makes it fifty years he writer landed in Belize, thus the year will be remembered as his Golden Jubilee Year. An account of the Jubilee celebrations will therefore form the next and last chapter of this brief account of Baptist Missionary work in British Honduras.

Chapter XXIX.

THE END.

The opening months of this year of grace, 1939, will never be forgotten by the writer, not so much for the very numerous tokens of appreciation given to his humble services rendered during the past fifty years, but because of the very evident revival of God's work in the Baptist Churches in the Colony. Since the year began thirty-five persons have been baptized and received into Church Fellowship. At the present time some ten or twelve others are awaiting baptism.

On Sunday, April 2nd, an early Communion Service was held in Belize, when those who had recently been baptized were received, and when over one hundred persons partook of the Lord's Supper. We were also glad to record a revival in attendance at all the Churches Services, especially at the weekly Prayer Meetings. The week (April 9th to 15th) was observed at the Queen Street Church in Belize as the writers Golden Jubilee Week. A Jubilee Committee had been appointed and, with the support of the entire congregation, the following programme was successfully carried out:

Thanksgiving Services on Sunday the 9th; Special Week-night Services, addressed by different speakers, on Monday, 10th, to Wednesday, 12th. On Thursday, the 13th, a Public Meeting was held, extract of which are appended. On Friday a great procession of Baptist through the city took place, ending up at night with a Supper. Finally, on Saturday 15th, in the afternoon, a large gathering of Baptist Day and Sunday School children met, when they regaled in the School Hall with ice-cream and cakes.

The following reference to the Thursday night meeting is taken from the weekly *independent* of Wednesday, April 26th, 1939:

“On Thursday night the Queen Street Baptist Church Hall was crowded to its utmost seating capacity by a congregation made up of all classes of the community assembled to pay tribute to the Rev. R. Cleghorn for his fifty years of service in British Honduras. On the platform were His Honor Mr. S. A. McKinstry, the Acting Chief justice, the Hon. C. R. Beattie, J.P., Rev. Canon J. Knox, Rev. W. J. Smith, Rev. R. A. Vipont, M.A., Adjutant Moffett, Mr. A. F. Bradley, Mr. Goff, and others. Behind the speakers, on the platform, were the Baptist Choir and the Eureka. After the opening hymn and prayer by Mr. Bradley, Mr. Goff, the chairman of the Jubilee Committee, in a few well-chosen words, introduced His Honor Mr. S. A. McKinstry, as Chairman of the meeting. His Honor, on rising to speak, said he was delighted to be present on such an occasion, to join with the Baptist congregation in celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Pastor Cleghorn. He said he would begin his address by reading a message sent that day to Mr. Cleghorn from his Excellent the Governor, as follows:

Government House,
Belize,
13th April,

1939.

Dear Mr. Cleghorn,

I understand that you are to-day celebrating your fifty years of service in British Honduras, and I wish to offer you my congratulation.

Your own congregation knows best the valuable service that you have given to the Baptist Church, but we all know and appreciate the value of your services to the Colony as a whole, not only in the responsible offices that you held, but in the example you have set as a citizen.

Yours sincerely,
Allan Burns.

“His Honor continued by saying he fully indorsed the sentiments contained in His Excellency’s message, and agreed

that fifty years of service in one place was something to be proud of. He had not known Mr. Cleghorn for fifty years, but had known him for about thirty years. He had come in contact with him, not only as a Pastor of the Baptist Church, but more particularly during the years of service as Chairman of the Belize Town Board. Mr. McKinstry agreed with His Excellency that the Baptist congregation was best able to speak of Mr. Cleghorn's spiritual work, but all knew that he had also rendered valuable service to the Colony as a member of the Legislative Council, a member of the Board of Education, and other Boards; and referred to his being honored by His Majesty (the late King George V.) by being made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. He prayed that, by the help of Almighty God, Mr. Cleghorn would be spared to render several more years of service, both to the Baptist Church and to British Honduras."

"After His Honor's came other addresses by Rev. Canon Knox (Anglican), Rev. W. J. Smith (Methodist), Rev. R. A. Vipont (Presbyterian), and Adjutant Moffett (Salvation Army), in all of which congregations from the Christian Churches there represented were given to Pastor Cleghorn, and sincere wishes for continual service during some years to come,"

In bringing this brief outline of one hundred and seventeen years' Baptist Missionary work in British Honduras to a close, let my last words be an acknowledgement of our Heavenly Father's never-failing help during those years.

Under the shade of Thy throne,
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thy arm alone
And our defense is sure.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home.