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Spin Doctors or Informed Lobbyists? The Voices of Four Presbyterian Ministers in the Emigration of Scots to the Antipodes, 1840–80

Jill Harland

This essay seeks to analyse and evaluate the influence and pro-active behaviour of four Presbyterian ministers, who experienced first-hand the emotional upheaval caused by the Disruption in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1843 and contributed to the initial migratory trends and subsequent chain-migration of Scots, Orcadians and Shetlanders to the Antipodes. The ministerial careers of the Reverend Dr Thomas Burns, Reverend Peter Barclay, Reverend Charles Simmers Ogg and the Reverend Dr Dunmore Lang were significantly shaped by the famous secession from the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Consequently, the expression of Free Church principles led ultimately to their commitment and allegiance to colonial emigration schemes between 1843 and the mid-1870s. For Lang, involvement in such ventures commenced in 1837 when he recruited 4,000 Highlanders for the Australian state of New South Wales.¹

It is imperative that the terms ‘spin doctor’ and ‘lobbyist’ are defined prior to discussing the ministerial career paths of the four selected Presbyterian Ministers. As defined in Cambridge Dictionaries Online, ‘a spin doctor’ describes ‘a person who provides a favourable slant to an item of news ... or one involving a potentially unpopular policy.’² On the other hand, a ‘lobbyist’ participates ‘in the process of influencing public and governing policy at all levels, federal, state and local.’³

Historical Legacy

Since the early seventeenth century clerical ministers had held considerable influence either in the creation of colonial settlements or acting as individual missionaries and pastors to the New World. The

¹ ‘John Dunmore Lang,’ www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index/australia/scotaus3.htm [accessed 5 November 2013].

² <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/spin-doctor> [accessed 7 November 2013].

³ <http://legal-dictionary.the-freedictionary.com/Lobbying> [accessed 7 November 2013].

Pilgrim Fathers, for example, sought religious freedom and settled in New England in Massachusetts in the 1620s. Almost a century later Armagh-born Quaker James Logan acted as William Penn's chief colonial agent and was 'an avid land spectator' in the re-settlement of Ulster Presbyterians to Pennsylvania.⁴ Not only Protestant religions were represented, as illustrated by Captain John McDonald who recruited 210 Catholic Highlanders and became the founder of the first Scottish Catholic Settlement on Prince Edward Island in May 1722.⁵ A year later, McDonald settled some of these poverty-stricken migrants on his family estate at Tracadie. A man of many talents, during his lifetime he was a 'priest, landed proprietor, colonizer and land agent.'⁶

Early colonial migration also quickly became associated with the biblical iconography of the flight of the Israelites from Egypt. Reverend Norman McLeod's odyssey from Nova Scotia to Australia and then to Waipu in the North Island of New Zealand in the mid-nineteenth century, accompanied by over 700 Highlanders, has been likened to that of the 'ancient Israelites' where 'the tribe was long the human symbol of security.'⁷ So too, the Reverend Thomas Burns was frequently compared to famous biblical and authority figures. As part of the 1898 Otago Jubilee in New Zealand, Reverend William Gillies of Timaru paid tribute to the 'pilgrim leaders' of the colony, Rev. Burns and Captain William Cargill, by composing a poem entitled *The Moses and the Aaron of the Settlement*:

On roll of fame, let church and state emblazon bright
The names of those who nobly led the Pilgrim bands
Across the seas to settle on Otago's shores
And plant amid its wilds a home, a church, a state –
These pilgrim leaders bore the honoured Scottish names

⁴ Kerby A. Miller, Arnold Schrier, Bruce D. Boling and David N. Doyle, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Revolutionary America 1675–1815* (New York, 2004), 143.

⁵ 'Significant Scots: Captain John McDonald, "Glenalladale," http://electricscotland.co/history/other/macdonald_john_captain.htm [accessed 8 November 2013].

⁶ Ian Ross Robertson, 'McDonald, John (d.1874)', in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (University of Toronto, 2003) X, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mcdonald_john_1874_10E.html [accessed 23 January 2014].

⁷ Flora McPherson, *Watchman against the World: The Remarkable Journey of Norman McLeod and his People from Scotland to Cape Breton Island to New Zealand* (Cape Breton Island, 1962), 2.

Embalmed in story and in song
Cargill and Burns.
And they were the Moses and the Aaron of the camp.⁸

At the ceremony Gillies explained that Burns ‘was called the Aaron and Captain Cargill, the Moses, of the settlement, but as the Dr [Rev. Burns] was superior intellectually to the captain, and was also more skilled in affairs, he was really in great measure Moses as well as Aaron.’⁹

As affirmed by Kerby Miller, ‘Even into the nineteenth century Presbyterian emigration retained the flavour of a communal exodus compelled by religious and political oppression.’¹⁰ Following the Disruption in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland on 18 May 1843 and the subsequent creation of the Free Church, a more complex relationship emerged between clerical ministers and their congregations. Many Scots were torn between ‘traditional Presbyterianism, evangelicalism and modernity.’¹¹ As T. M. Devine explains ‘It seemed a huge blow to the nation’s sense of identity at a time when the forces of assimilation and anglicisation were becoming even more powerful.’¹² Indicative of this tendency was John Dunmore Lang, who appears to have possessed an ‘evangelical aversion to the common system of patronage’ and was a member of the clergy who actively challenged the moderatism inherent in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland prior to the Disruption in 1843.

The Reverend Dr John Dunmore Lang: The Early Years

The Reverend John Dunmore Lang was born at Greenock in 1799. His father, William Lang, owned a small farming estate in Ayrshire. John was educated at the University of Glasgow but was lured to Australia by his brother George who had emigrated to New South Wales. Lang arrived in Sydney Cove in May 1823 and became the minister of the first Presbyterian Church in Sydney. Family money was utilised to fund Lang’s frequent visits to Britain between the years 1824 and 1825. However, he returned from his third visit to Britain, taken between 1833 and 1834, with more ministers and teachers as well as a printing press and tradesmen to operate it. Lang’s newspapers the *Colonist* (1835–40), the *Colonial Observer* (1841–4) and the *Press* (1851), functioned in

⁸ *Otago Witness*, 17 March 1898.

⁹ *Southland Times*, 13 October 1891.

¹⁰ Miller, Schrier, Boling and Doyle, *Irish Immigration in the Land of Canaan*, 159.

¹¹ Andrew Holmes, ‘The Shaping of Irish Presbyterianism’s Attitudes to Mission,’ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 57 (2006), 711.

¹² T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation 1700–2000* (London, 1999), 23.

a number of different ways, including the promotion of his immigration schemes, to defend him from opponents both in politics and the presbytery and to 'improve colonial morality'.¹³

Lang successfully lobbied the Secretary for the Colonies, Lord Bathurst, to recognise the legal status of the Church of Scotland in Australia while also pursuing a policy that kept governing authorities in the United Kingdom well-informed of reactions in the new colony in the Antipodes. Marjory Harper has observed that 'There has always been more or less communication between New Zealand and the colonies of New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land since the first establishment of these colonies'.¹⁴ As Presbyterian minister and historian Charles, Edward White (1869-1954) affirmed, 'With the arrival of the Rev. John Dunmore Lang, the embryonic Church at Ebenezer was definitely linked with the growth and life of Presbyterianism in Australia'.¹⁵ White suggests Lang possessed highly developed communication skills:

His contacts [in Britain] aroused much interest not only in the Church but in the secular affairs of the community, and amongst the most valuable fruits of his visits was the number of immigrants of a very desirable type who he induced to make Australia their home. On this occasion he secured something like twelve Ministers and four probationers.¹⁶

As early as 1835, Lang launched an attack on the lack of qualifications among missionaries in Australia whom he compared to 'taking Tom, Dick and Harry from their benches, their lathes and their looms and transforming them all at once into the Rev. Thomas, and the Rev. Mr Richard, and the Rev. Mr Henry'.¹⁷ In 1837, Lang led a breakaway movement which formed the Synod of New South Wales; three years later the 'Synod re-united with the Presbytery and the body thus formed was called the Synod of Australia'.¹⁸

¹³ D. W. A. Baker, 'Lang, John Dunmore (1799-1878)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lang-john-dunmore-2326> [accessed 23 September 2013].

¹⁴ Marjory Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles: The Great Scottish Exodus* (London, 2003), 134.

¹⁵ Charles Alfred White, John Dunmore Lang, *New Zealand in 1839: or Four Letters to The Right Hon. Earl Durham, Governor of the New Zealand Land Company, & C, on the Colonisation of that Island, and on the Present Condition and Prospects of its Native Inhabitants* (London, 1839) [accessed 4 November 2013].

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *The Colonist*, 12 November 1835.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

In 1839, Lang visited New Zealand and delivered a lecture in Dunedin on the 'Early Colonisation of New Zealand'. An anonymous New Zealand historian mentioned and quoted by White is thought to be responsible for the following accolade related to Lang's rhetoric:

No man, probably, could speak on that there with more authority than he, for before any scheme had been drafted, or an emigrant had sailed from the English Coast to settle on these distant shores, he had, in a series of four letters, which he addressed to Lord Durham, propounded a plan of colonising these islands [New Zealand], which his known sagacity and large experience entitled to respectful consideration.¹⁹

The inclusion of Orkney and Shetland Islanders as suitable migrants for the colony was proposed by Lang as early as 1839. In 'Letter III: On the Prospect which New Zealand affords for the Establishment of a British Colony', Lang complained of the competition of French and American whalers in New Zealand waters and perceived a solution in which 'a few hundred families of the herring and whale fishing population of the northern parts of England, of the north and west of Scotland, and of the Orkney and Shetland Isles, were to be settled as colonists in New Zealand' and consequently would be able to dominate in both Black and Sperm whale fisheries.²⁰

The Disruption in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland

According to Eric Richards 'the poetic tradition appears to have neglected the Disruption of 1843', a surprising situation given the enormity of the event whereby one third of the Church of Scotland's ministers led by Dr Thomas Chalmers abandoned churches, manse and stipends to form the Free Church of Scotland.²¹ Fortunately, there is a plethora of other literary conventions that encapsulate the emotional nature of the Disruption in northern Scotland from an individual standpoint. The undelivered letters to Orcadians and Shetlanders working for the Hudson's Bay Company in North America from their family members constitute one such example. The letters were sadly unread by their intended recipients; yet they clarify the influence of such an event in the small, isolated islands of Orkney and Shetland. It appears that in

¹⁹ White and Lang, *New Zealand in 1839*, 51.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 51.

²¹ Eric Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions 1746–1886* (London, 1982), 300.

these locations, the Disruption was ‘felt at the grass roots level of the church; consequently, the history of this fracture is complex often dividing families much as a civil war would.’²² Given the nature of such evidence it is difficult to agree with historian James Jupp that the ‘concept of patronage certainly did not extend to the working classes; it was a middle-class struggle.’²³ After 1843, as Devine affirms, ‘Scotland’s greatest national institution was not only broken but was also being increasingly stripped of most of its social authority.’²⁴ An extract from a letter written to Orcadian James Dickson, a blacksmith with the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Vancouver, by his brother-in-law Thomas Isbister in Orkney is particularly poignant as it is dated June 1843, less than a month after the Disruption:

As for the public news of the county: The Ministers of the Establishment great disputes is amongst them 600 of them through the Established Church of Scotland is left their churches because the law would not submit too them ... they wished to have all power too [sic.] themselves which the law would not submit too [sic.] ... we hope providence may bring good out of it in the end.²⁵

The Isbister letter indicated that it ‘would take sheets of paper’ to explain this important change in religious life in Orkney. James Dickson also received a letter from his own brother six days later which was addressed: ‘Dear Brother it is the terriblest time now that we ever beheld on account of religion.’²⁶ As Judith Hudson Beattie and Helen Buss explain, what may seem an abrupt change from the public to the private may not have seemed so to the correspondents, as ‘Both church and family economies were intimately joined in the small, tight communities of Orkney.’²⁷

Reverend William Spence, an Orcadian born in Harray, Orkney, migrated to New Zealand in 1886 and wrote his unpublished ‘Memories of Different Countries and Callings’ in the 1930s.²⁸ Even though Spence dedicated an entire

²² Judith Hudson Beattie and Helen M. Buss, *Undelivered Letters to Hudson’s Bay Company Men on the Northwest Coast of America 1830-57* (Vancouver, 2003), 320.

²³ James Jupp, *The Australian People: An Encyclopaedia of the Nation, its People and their Origins* (Cambridge, 2001), 646.

²⁴ Devine, *The Scottish Nation 1700–2000*, 232.

²⁵ Beattie and Buss, *Undelivered Letters to Hudson’s Bay Company Men*, 123.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 323.

²⁸ Reverend William Spence, ‘Memories of Different Countries and Callings’,

chapter to the changes adopted in the Church of Scotland he admitted that

this is not the place for attempting to write a History of the Disruption, but as one brought up in its atmosphere and deeply imbued with its spirit I feel I must give some passing reference to an event which was one of the great formative influences in my young life.²⁹

Presbyterian ministers who were resident in both Orkney and Shetland were quick to react to the upheaval in the established church. Soon after the Disruption a 'preaching station' was formed at the Dunrossness Free Church, a parish that included Shetland, Cunningburgh and Fair Isle.³⁰ At the Unst Free Church in Shetland, Dr James Ingram and his son and colleague 'came out' in 1843. The latter was 'one of the first ministers 'ordained to a charge by the Free Church.'³¹ In Shapinsay, one of Orkney's northern islands, 'many families connected with the United Presbyterian Church [Seceders] were encouraged to emigrate, several went to South Australia.'³² This was a significant reaction given the negativity of Presbyterian ministers to even temporary migration from both Orkney and Shetland prior to 1843:

Instead of offering an honourable service to their King and Country, or staying at home to cultivate their lands and protect their wives, their children and their parents, for the sum of six pounds per annum [they] hire themselves out for slaves in a savage land.³³

Following the Disruption, the Free Church movement in Australia became known as the Synod of Eastern Australia in October 1846.³⁴ Both Burns and Lang lived at a time when the Free Church, as Jupp has suggested, 'was more concerned with encouraging migration as a solution to pauperism and more active in the establishing of overseas branches ... missionary and colonial

unpublished manuscript, MS- Papers-7780, held at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Reverend William Ewing (ed.), *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland 1843-1900* (3 vols), held at the Shetland Museum and Archives, Shetland.

³¹ Ibid.

³² *The Orkney View*, October/November 1993, 28.

³³ *The Statistical Account of the Orkney Islands by Ministers of their Respective Parishes* (Edinburgh, 1842), 45.

³⁴ White and Lang, *New Zealand in 1839*, Chapter two.

schemes were also frequently placed in the forefront of the Assembly's business.³⁵ Both Lang and Burns were also heavily influenced by the evangelical teaching of Dr Thomas Chalmers, the first Moderator at the initial meeting of the Disruption Assembly on 18 May 1843.³⁶

From his personal experiences in Scotland, Lang was acutely aware that impoverished Scottish Highlanders were seeking government funding to finance their emigration to North America. A year after the Disruption Lang selected 600 migrants and arranged passages for them to Moreton Bay, near Brisbane, in three ships, the *Fortitude*, *Chaseley* and the *Lima*.³⁷ In order to accomplish this, Lang was forced to lobby influential colonial authority figures such as Earl Grey.

Lang was a committed advocate of an independent Australian nation and of a more humane approach to the treatment of Maori tribes in New Zealand. He not only lobbied government officials but was a member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales for almost twenty-five years. In this role, he campaigned for more responsible government, the separation of Victoria and Queensland, the end of transportation, land reform, and state aid to religion. Lang successfully piloted a bill through the Legislative Assembly to abolish primogeniture estates.³⁸ His strategies included public appearances and lectures throughout Britain, frequently raising funds for German missionaries in Australia. Lang was also an early proponent of a transnational approach, acquiring competitive data to aid in the solution of global social ills such as transportation. This global perspective is illustrated in Lang's communication to Lord Durham:

To extend to the farthest regions of the habitable globe, and to perpetuate to the close of time, the noble language, the equitable laws, and the Protestant religion of this favoured land, is indeed an enterprise well worthy of the first of the nobility: and I am confident, my Lord, there is no case in which the British patriot, the genuine philanthropist, the Christian man, has reason to feel more deeply interested in the

³⁵ Jupp, *The Australian People*, 646.

³⁶ 'Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847)' at <http://knapdalepeople.com/fcdisruptiontwo.html> [accessed 24 January 2014].

³⁷ 'Lang, John Dunmore (1799–1878) German Missionaries in Queensland' <http://missionaries.griffith.edu.au/biography/lang-john-dunmore-1799-1878> [accessed 4 August 2011].

³⁸ Baker, 'Lang, John Dunmore (1799–1878)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biog/lang-john-dunmore-2326> [accessed 12 November 2013].

progress of such an enterprise than the one with which your Lordship is at present associated ... the Colonization of New Zealand.³⁹

Visits to Orkney and Shetland by the Reverend John Dunmore Lang and Lady Jane Franklin

The colony of Australia was successful in enticing female migrants from Shetland, and to a lesser extent Orkney, in the 1850s due to a rigorous emigration recruitment program adopted by Lang and Lady Jane Franklin who visited both islands. Prior to their mutual focus on Orkney and Shetland, editorials had appeared in the Scottish newspapers in 1848 encouraging single women to migrate to Australia. Lang's visit to Lerwick involved an address relating to the suitability of the Australian colonies for a significant number of migrants from differing classes.

Primary sources support the assumption that prospective female migrants from the Northern Isles would provide a solution to the disproportionate numbers of Roman Catholic and Anglican migrants flocking to Australia, such as the 'shiploads of young women from the Union Workhouses of the south of Ireland.'⁴⁰ Editorial coverage of Lang's visit published in the *John O' Groat Journal* affirmed that 'it was chiefly to counteract this [the influence of Catholicism] and other kindred effects of the Papacy in Australia that Dr Lang came home to this country.'⁴¹

The *Journal* continued to monitor Lang's visits to Lerwick, Stromness, Kirkwall and Wick through August 1849.⁴² He received a very impressive reception in Shetland, the Presbyterian Church at Lerwick 'was filled to overflowing there being 1,400 to 1,500 persons present.'⁴³ It appears that Lang's sermon was highly successful in promoting Australia as a desirable destination. Early the following week 'a number of persons, of various occupations and particularly not a few unmarried females, of whom there is a great redundancy in the Shetland Isles, expressed their desire to emigrate to Australia.'⁴⁴

Even New Zealand newspapers were providing regular updates of Lang's visits to Orkney and Shetland:

³⁹ 'Prefatory Epistle to the Right Hon. Earl Durham,' London, 6th July 1839, <http://www.enzb.auckland.ac.nz/document/?=2535> [accessed 11 November 2013].

⁴⁰ *John O'Groat Journal*, 6 July 1849.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *John O'Groat Journal*, 10 August 1849.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

When we last heard of the Dr [Lang] he was at the Shetland Islands recruiting for female emigrants as it was stated that women on the Islands far outnumbered the males from the circumstances of there being few families on the islands which had not lost some of their male members by accident at sea.⁴⁵

The *Daily Southern Cross* also reported the same week on the arrival of Lady Franklin who was aboard the same vessel as Lang. Franklin held the position of Vice President of the Ladies' Female Emigrant Society of London.⁴⁶ The newspaper confirmed her

interest in this particular species of migration [single female] and has volunteered to do anything in her power to promote it during her stay in the islands; it is confidently expected that such an interest will be created in favour of the object as to lead to a considerable emigration of females from Shetland to Australia.⁴⁷

The response to both Lang and Franklin's individual recruitment campaigns in Orkney were of a more conservative nature. Lang delivered an address at the Free Church in Stromness on 31 August, where the audience was described as 'numerous and respectable'.⁴⁸ An additional presentation was also given at the United Presbyterian Church at Kirkwall where James Baikie Esq. of Tankerness, Provost of Kirkwall was in the chair. The *John O'Groat Journal* confirmed that in Orkney Lang found an 'overabundance of young women and widows suitable for emigrants to Australia'.⁴⁹ Yet, Orcadian women would take longer than their Shetland counterparts to react to the persuasive skills of Lang; few appear to have left the isles until October 1851 when 'twenty to eighty young females passed southwards by the Queen Steamer, from the Orkneys, all bound for Australia where they expect to find ready places and good wages if not husbands, shortly after landing'.⁵⁰

The *John O'Groat Journal* also reported in the same issue that 'Female migration continues from Orkney to Australia where good wages and/or

⁴⁵ *New Zealander*, 12 January 1850.

⁴⁶ *Southern Cross*, 8 January 1850.

⁴⁷ *John O'Groat Journal*, 10 August 1849.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *John O'Groat Journal*, 5 October 1849.

⁵⁰ *John O'Groat Journal*, 24 October 1851.

husbands are likely to be found.⁵¹ Even though there were a significant number of Orcadian families represented on the *Charlotte Jane* in 1851, including that of Shearer, Miller, Rendall, Lawrence, Moor, Allen, and Drever families, there were only nine single women aged between seventeen and twenty-three, the only exception being Betsy Peace who was fifty nine.⁵² Illustrative of the exodus of Orcadian single men to the goldfields of Victoria there were only four men in their thirties aboard the *Charlotte Jane* to Port Adelaide.⁵³ Shipping records and manifests between 1850 and 1857 also confirm the presence of Orcadians in small kinship cluster group as was the case in the New Zealand sample. The main difference is the increased number of Orcadian single women from both Orkney and Shetland emigrating to South Australia.

Members of the clergy were widely acknowledged to be well-qualified individuals, who had experienced a rigorous training programme including the study of Latin, Greek and Hebrew and were well acquainted with the demands and attitudes of their individual congregations. As Spence confirms 'The Secession Fathers absolutely refused to ordain any man who had not received a university education.'⁵⁴ The study of the Classics alone would have equipped ministers such as Lang, Burns, Barclay and Ogg with the skills of analytical enquiry, an essential component of being effective communicators and lobbyists. Consequently, it is not surprising to find 'It was the province of Otago, in New Zealand's South Island, that was to provide the most striking example of clerical agency in the nineteenth century.'⁵⁵

The Reverend Thomas Burns: The Moses and Aaron of the Otago Settlement

The Reverend Dr Thomas Burns was a zealous advocate for the creation of a Free Church colony in the South Island of New Zealand. The nephew of celebrated poet Robert Burns, he was born in Mossgiel, Ayrshire in April 1876, the third son of Gilbert Burns. Educated at the University of Edinburgh, Burns was destined to be 'one of the oldest ministers in the breakaway group'

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Author's database for Jill Harland, *The Orcadian Odyssey: The Migration of Orkney Islanders to New Zealand 1848–1914 with Particular Reference to the South Island*, PhD dissertation (University of Otago, 2014).

⁵³ Passenger list for the *Charlotte Jane*, <http://www.theshipslist.com/ships/australia/charlottejane1852.htm> [accessed 20 March 2011].

⁵⁴ Spence, 'Different Countries and Callings.'

⁵⁵ Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles*, 134.

during the Disruption of 1843.⁵⁶ Even during the tense period prior to the upheaval in the Church of Scotland, Burns revealed himself as an exceptionally committed minister to his parishioners, as recalled later by his married daughter Jane Bannerman: ‘Our father kept his people well informed as to how things were going, in the church, courts and before parliament, printed matter was circulated.’⁵⁷ He possessed a thorough knowledge of agriculture and his ‘farming skills also made him an ideal pioneer.’⁵⁸ In addition, he had sacrificed for ‘the sake of principle, the status and emoluments of a parish minister, the latter amounting on an average to £400 per annum.’⁵⁹ Two years after the whole of Scotland had been stirred by the sacrifices made at the Disruption Burns with the aid of Dr Alcorn and Captain Cargill formed the Lay Association of Members of the Free Church in Scotland to promote the idea of a Free Church colony, the latter in conjunction with the New Zealand Company.⁶⁰

The concept of a Scottish sectarian settlement in the South Island of New Zealand had already been envisaged by George Rennie ‘the more liberal minded founder of the scheme.’⁶¹ The July 1843 issue of the *New Zealand Journal* provided an effective comparison between Rennie, Captain Cargill and the Pilgrim Fathers.⁶² Also referring to the two men, contemporary author Ernest Northcroft Merrington observed that ‘The Pilgrim Fathers was ever present in their minds.’⁶³ Whilst waiting for the New Zealand Company to purchase and survey land that was later to be referred to as the ‘Otago Block’,

Dr Burns was employed in sustaining the scheme, visiting for this purpose nearly all parts of Scotland and setting forth the advantages of emigration to Otago. For this service he thus rendered *con amore*, he received no remuneration from The New Zealand Company, though he was instrumental in inducing a large extent of emigration, and in

⁵⁶ Tom Brooking, ‘Reverend Thomas Burns 1796–1871: Presbyterian Minister, Coloniser, Community Leader,’ *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* 1769–1869, vol.1 (Auckland, 1990), B52.

⁵⁷ *The Diary of Jane Bannerman*, Ref: C-003, 22, held at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand.

⁵⁸ Brooking, ‘Reverend Thomas Burns’, B52.

⁵⁹ *West Coast Times*, 10 February 1871.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Brooking, ‘Reverend Thomas Burns’, B52.

⁶² *The New Zealand Journal*, 8 July 1843.

⁶³ Ernest Northcroft Merrington, *A Great Coloniser: The Reverend Dr Thomas Burns, Pioneer Minister of Otago and Nephew to the Poet* (Dunedin, 1929), 68.

securing no small amount of capital for the advantages of the scheme, through having persuaded many of his personal friends and others to invest in the purchase of properties.⁶⁴

The promotional and persuasive skills of Burns, were such that many of these friends and purchasers ‘had no idea of making Otago their home.’⁶⁵ Yet, as Harper confirms ‘Reverend Thomas Burns of Portobello had ensured the wholehearted commitment of the Free Church to the scheme and had opened the way for the establishment of Otago as a specifically Free Church colony.’⁶⁶ In the case of Burns, a convincing manner was intensified by the presence of leadership by virtue of example, which is illustrated in his recruitment of James Adam at a public meeting at the Free South Church in Aberdeen. Burns and Dr Alcorn had arrived recently from Edinburgh to conduct a presentation on emigration to the South Island of New Zealand. Adam later recorded his first impressions of Burns in a work entitled, *Twenty-Five Years of Emigrant Life in the South of New Zealand* (1873). He recalled how

I was, however favourably impressed with what Mr Burns said. This gentleman, being a nephew of the Scottish bard, might have had some influence upon Scotch emigrants, if there were any poetry in the life of an emigrant, but he made no attempt to elevate the hard facts of an emigrant’s life into the region of poetry and fiction, I had sense enough to know that toil, and perhaps danger, were the concomitants of life in New Zealand; but the simple fact that Mr Burns had resigned his charge and cast his lot with the emigrants, and would sail with the pioneers, gave confidence in the statements of the reverend gentleman, so that the seed fell into soil prepared and ready to receive it.⁶⁷

As the first ships the *John Wickliffe* and the *Philip Laing*, were sailing to New Zealand in January 1848, the first issue of the *Otago Journal* was being published in Edinburgh. This title, compiled by Alcorn and John McGlashan, was initially created as a promotional tool to publicise the scheme of the Scottish settlement to Otago and as a means of recruiting emigrants to the Antipodes

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles*, 134.

⁶⁷ James Adam, *Twenty-Five Years of Emigrant Life in the South of New Zealand* (Edinburgh, 1876), 6.

more generally. It was, however, quickly utilised by Burns to showcase the idyllic landscape of New Zealand in addition to reprinting his own letters to other Presbyterian ministers throughout Scotland. The following extract from a letter written by Burns to Mr Wallace of Barr on 26 April 1849 is typical of many of the letters printed in the *Otago Journal*. Here, the pastoral literary convention is reserved for the New Zealand landscape experienced by the traveller, yet it is synthesised with a meticulous attention to detail, more reminiscent of a surveyor's report:

Some months ago I rode down to the Waiholā and spent a couple of days visiting the native village about 6 or 7 miles from the mouth of the Taieri River—riding along the whole eastern side of the Taieri Plain then sailed down the river's mouth passing through scenery of the most romantic grandeur. Altogether the Taieri District is the most magnificent plain I ever saw 14 or 15 miles long by 4 and a half and 5 miles broad, perfectly level, being evidently the bottom of a former lake.⁶⁸

Such peaceful and romantic commentary was frequently coupled with a forceful use of language to further the cause of the Free Church in New Zealand. In many of his discourses it is very evident that Burns was appealing exclusively to a select audience of Free Church recruits. Marjory Harper notes: 'Emigrants were assured that throughout New Zealand but particularly at Otago they could settle among like-minded compatriots and enjoy the benefits of a civilised society.'⁶⁹ This special focus is well illustrated in an early letter written by Burns to Mr Lewis Macdonald in August 1845, the subject matter being emigration to the Otago colony in Dunedin. 'Meanwhile pray mention these particulars amongst your friends', he instructs, assuring him 'every effort will be made to interest people of sterling character and no other in this enterprise.'⁷⁰

Indeed, Burns became increasingly more idealistic in his ambitions for a community composed entirely of Free Church compatriots, admitting that 'there is only one other resource left and that is restricting the Free emigrants

⁶⁸ 'Letter from the Reverend Thomas Burns, Otago, to Mr Wallace of Barr, dated 26 April 1849', AG-171, held at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand.

⁶⁹ Harper, *Adventurers and Exiles*, 234.

⁷⁰ Letter from the Reverend Dr Burns to Mr Lewis Macdonald, dated 15 February 1845, Ref: AG-171, held at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum.

to the Free Church men and these to be well selected for they would ultimately become the staple of our population and guardians of our church endowment.⁷¹ Burns, however, was not successful in accomplishing this utopian aim. Yet, with the help of Cargill, he was able to stifle the contradictory voice of the *Otago News*, the colony's first newspaper, which had publicised material criticising both Burns and his involvement in the Free Church.

An Orcadian family on the northern island of Rousay, adherents of the Free Church, were to hear of the Otago settlement possibly from the individual work of Burns. This small cluster group is the first to be traced from Orkney to Otago and are the only Orcadians aboard the *Bernicia* that arrived in Port Chalmers, Otago in December 1848. The ship had been chartered by the New Zealand Company, at a cost of £1658.13.0.⁷² The kinship group included Hugh Craigie, aged forty four; his wife Margaret (née Marwick), aged fifty one; their son Richard Craigie, aged seventeen; and their stepsons James (thirty-one) and Sinclair Harrold (twenty nine). Also aboard were Agnes Harrold (née Grieve), James' seventeen-year-old half-caste bride from North America; and Barbara Sinclair, Sinclair Harrold's wife, aged thirty-four. It is feasible to suggest that James Harrold was aware of the new settlement in the Antipodes through his work with the Hudson's Bay Company, where he had been employed as a canoeman in 1836.⁷³

Communication regarding the fledging colony of Otago had already reached Reverend Norman McLeod in North America; consequently, 'Even in Cape Breton they had heard of the Scottish colonizing expedition to Dunedin in 1847 and through Scotland had received good reports of it before their own departure.'⁷⁴ Primary sources confirm that the Craigie and Harrold families were well known to Burns during the initial years of settlement in New Zealand. His *Visitation Book* makes reference to all family members as loyal Free Church members of his congregation.⁷⁵ *The Diary of Reverend Thomas Burns 1848–1851* also includes reference to Hugh Craigie and his step-son Sinclair Harrold being in the employ of Burns.⁷⁶ He cites both men as 'having

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² R. J. Stuart, 'Rousay Expatriates: James and Agnes Harrold,' *Orkney Vieu*, 24 (1989), 67.

⁷³ Raymond M. Beaumont, *The Grieves of Oxford House*, Grieve Search File, 2, Hudson's Bay Archives, held at Orkney Library and Archives, Kirkwall, Orkney.

⁷⁴ McPherson, *Watchman against the World*, 145.

⁷⁵ In his *Visitation Book*, Reverend Thomas Burns would use the word 'not' against the names of those who did not attend his church sermons.

⁷⁶ *The Diary of Reverend Thomas Burns 1848–1851*, 87 (16 May 1849) Ref: CO 17, held at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum.

finished taking up potatoes at the Manse' and a few weeks later both 'HC and SH are delving in No 13 taking up beans and carrots.'⁷⁷

It is therefore not surprising to find this industrious family being the subject of an anonymous editorial feature in the *Otago Journal* encouraging further migration from Orkney and Scotland. As Alexander McLintock confirms the journal was 'based in the main on extracts from letters despatched from Otago by prominent Free Churchmen.'⁷⁸

Along with the duplicate map of Port Chalmers now sent, I have put up a sketch of a cottage in the north east valley, erected and occupied by a family from Orkney, who were passengers by the *Bernicia* in 1848, being four men and three women employed at common labouring since landing. By the close of their first year they had in addition to their subsistence fenced and planted on leased ground nearly two acres with potatoes and vegetables finished their home 40ft by 1ft overall and acquired two milk cows and three calves, all paid for. Their whole secret consisted in industry, temperance and living together on the same system of economy and simple cookery they had been accustomed to at home.⁷⁹

Unknown to Burns at the time, these pioneering individuals would become influential settlers of the Taieri River district and would determine the chain migration of many other Orcadian families such as Yorston, Marwick, Flett, Knarston, Leonard, Traill and Reid. Local historians Win Parkes and Kath Hislop suggest that the Craigie and Harrold families 'began settlement at the Taieri River.'⁸⁰ Shetlanders, however, were not well represented at this time for as Susan Butterworth adjudges 'We can be reasonably sure that few Shetlanders came to New Zealand as deliberate emigration before 1860.'⁸¹

Consequently, Shetlanders were more prone to the persuasive voices of Presbyterian Ministers advocating migration to New Zealand ten years later and supported by government initiatives and subsidies. Orcadians, however, by the 1870s had established themselves within cluster groups in Taieri River, Taieri

⁷⁷ Ibid., 87, 88.

⁷⁸ Alexander H. McLintock, *The History of Otago: The Origins and Growth of a Wakefield Settlement* (Dunedin, 1949), 34.

⁷⁹ *The Otago Journal*, November 1849, 86.

⁸⁰ Win Parkes, Kath Hislop, *Taieri Mouth and its Surrounding Districts* (Dunedin, 1980), 25.

⁸¹ Susan Butterworth, *Chips off the Auld Rock: Shetlanders in New Zealand* (Wellington, 1977), 39.

Mouth, Waikouaiti, Milton, Arrowtown, Invercargill and Stewart Island in the South Island of New Zealand. These communities were further intensified by inter-marriage between and within Orcadian families; their reliance and dependence on chain migration of kin from Orkney also minimised the influence of emigrant agents. Consequently, Orcadians, although invited, were not participants in any Special Settlement initiatives organised by the New Zealand government, such as that arranged for Stewart Island in 1873.

The Vogel administration, named after the entrepreneurial figure of Sir Julius Vogel, was to make significant changes to the nature of assisted passages and financial support offered to poverty-stricken emigrants from Great Britain. From 1873 the regular fare of £5 per adult was waived in preference for free travel to the port of departure. This initiative was particularly important to migrants from the isolated northern counties of Scotland, including Orkney and Shetland. In addition, New Zealand residents could now nominate both friends and relatives.

In this new climate, given the increased competition from Australia, Canada and America, seventy-eight emigrant agents were appointed in New Zealand, ten of whom were responsible for Orkney and Shetland. In 1876, a correspondent for the *Otago Witness* reporting on a Presbyterian Assembly, hosted in New Zealand, confirmed that ‘All the Canadian deputies had dwelt in glowing terms upon the attraction of their land for settlers, speaking indeed, more after the manner of emigration agents than of church deputies.’⁸²

The Reverend Peter Barclay: Emigrant Agent for the New Zealand Government

On 25 September 1858, ‘The Reverend David Bruce advised that the Colonial Committee of the Free Church had appointed the Rev. Peter Barclay M.A. as the first minister in Hawke’s Bay’ in the North Island of New Zealand.⁸³ Barclay is recorded to have hailed from Montrose in Scotland. He arrived in Auckland at the age of twenty-nine aboard the *Caduceus* on 19 May 1859, then proceeded to Napier on the *White Swan*, which landed at Onepoto on 6 June 1859.⁸⁴ His first ministry was at St Columba’s at Taradale. Nancye Munro and John Boyd suggest that even though there is a paucity of material for this period of Barclay’s career ‘it appears that the spiritual needs of the settlers in

⁸² *Otago Witness*, 12 August 1876.

⁸³ Nancye Munro and John Boyd, *A Second Glance*, (Napier, 1991), 23.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

the Meeanee-Puketapu district were met by the Rev. Peter Barclay.⁸⁵

Barclay was later to be described as ‘a long resident in Napier, in which he had laboured as a minister for the Free Church.’⁸⁶ A significant part of his early career, prior to his appointment as an emigrant agent for the New Zealand Government, was spent as minister for St Paul’s Presbyterian Church in Napier where he made the acquaintance of Donald McLean, a Maroekakatio farmer who became one of Napier’s first Members of Parliament.⁸⁷ McLean is reported to have taken part in a meeting at the Royal Hotel in Napier with publican Daniel Munn on 9 January 1858 that was to result in the building and creation of St Paul’s Presbyterian Church.⁸⁸ McLean later received a knighthood in recognition of the exemplary work he had undertaken as a government minister. In the 1870s, both Barclay and Reverend Charles Simmers Ogg, would liaise with McLean to achieve success in the field of emigration.

Barclay’s early correspondence to McLean, however, illustrates the role he played as promotional agent and lobbyist. In a four-page letter written in 1866 to ‘Mr Maclean’ [sic], Barclay supports the stance of a recent migrant Mr Steele ‘who seems in great trouble about a block of land he has bought from the natives near Kai Kara.’⁸⁹ Within the pages of this correspondence Barclay admitted that ‘This is the first time I have seemed to interfere in a land matter, and it is likely to be the last.’⁹⁰

Little did Barclay know that within a six-year period he would be determining the migration and re-location of hundreds of men, women and children from northern Scotland to the Antipodes. It is uncertain as to how his promotion as an emigrant agent with the New Zealand Government came about, due to the fact that Shetlander Robert Stout (later to be a Prime Minister of New Zealand and knighted) had strongly advocated Mr Arthur Lawrenson for the position.⁹¹ Lawrenson had achieved notoriety through his successful relocation of Shetlanders to Queensland, Australia. It is possible that McLean may have intervened on his friend’s behalf. Barclay’s decision to resign as minister of St Paul’s Presbyterian Church after eight years’ service in 1867 was, however, a

⁸⁵ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁶ *Evening Post*, 1 October 1873.

⁸⁷ *Hawke’s Bay Today*, 28 April 2008.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Inward Letters- P. Barclay, Ref No M-S Papers 0032-0152, held at the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ *The New Zealand Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* 1874, Vol 1.D.-1.23, held in the Hocken Collections, Dunedin.

direct result of the tragic death of his wife Mary (née Gordon) in May 1865.⁹² The birth notices in the *New Zealander* for 19 July 1860 also confirm that a son was born to Barclay and his wife Mary at the Manse, sadly no further mention is made in the records investigated of this child.⁹³

On his return to Scotland and prior to any involvement with the New Zealand Government, Barclay 'acted as agent for the [Northern] Presbyterian Church of New Zealand in attracting Probationers and Ministers to take up positions there.'⁹⁴ To intensify such recruitment, Barclay wrote and published *Word and the Work of Christ in New Zealand* (1870).⁹⁵ This consisted of 'a series of sermons and two addresses on the state of the church in New Zealand.'⁹⁶ The proceeds from this work were generously donated to the New Zealand Church.⁹⁷ Two years later, Barclay was to further his promotional skills and 'Church Extension Work' in the service of the New Zealand government.⁹⁸ He appears to have adjusted well to his new position as emigrant agent, for only a few months after his appointment he was busy lecturing to prospective emigrants in Shetland.⁹⁹

In 1873, Barclay published the first edition of his *Notes on New Zealand: For the Use of Emigrants*; the publication was priced at two pence and the initial print run was 5,000 copies. The subsequent edition in 1874 was duly announced by the *Evening Post*: 'For the use of intending emigrants Mr Barclay has written a very useful pamphlet giving full details of the entire colony.'¹⁰⁰ Detailed it certainly was but surprisingly it also contained few of the conventions common to persuasive or promotional literature. His narrative was not reliant on the accentuated use of alliteration, rhetorical questions, repetition or imperatives to urge prospective migrants to book passages to New Zealand. Instead Barclay utilised visual imagery to convey the natural beauty of the Antipodes. The sub-titles akin to those of literary historian Marie Louise Pratt's list of 'colonial knowledge.'¹⁰¹

⁹² *Register of New Zealand Presbyterian Ministers, Deaconesses and Missionaries, from 1840–2008*, 148 (Presbyterian Archives, Knox College, Dunedin).

⁹³ *New Zealander*, 3 October 1860.

⁹⁴ *Register of New Zealand Presbyterian Ministers, Deaconesses and Missionaries from 1840–2008*, 148.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *AJHR*, 1874, Vol 1.D.-1.25.

¹⁰⁰ *The Evening Post*, 1 October 1873.

¹⁰¹ Marie Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturalisation* (New York, 1992),

In-depth knowledge of the colony is divided into sections such as ‘The History of New Zealand’, ‘Prospects for the Colonist’, ‘Mineral Wealth’ and ‘Rates of Wages’ to name but a few. These topics are further enhanced by the inclusion of testimonials from New Zealand residents, a persuasive strategy that had been employed by Burns within the pages of the *Otago Journal*. It was not feasible for Barclay to have personally visited all regions in both the North and South Islands of New Zealand. Consequently, he admitted to a dependency on leading experts in the field such as Ferdinand Von Hochstetter, Professor of Mineralogy and Geology, and author of *New Zealand: Its Physical Geography, Geology and Natural History* (1873).¹⁰² Surprising for a member of the clergy, but indicative of a narrative designed to have wide appeal, Barclay made frequent mention of the lucrative nature of New Zealand’s goldfields:

The mineral wealth of New Zealand is very great. Mention has already been made of the gold diggings in various parts of the country. These have proved very valuable, the yield up to this time being equal to £25 and they are far from being exhausted.¹⁰³

Barclay is able to maintain a comprehensive and involving dialogue while providing practical guidelines and handy hints for the new settler:

The best thing generally for immigrants to do especially for such as have no money and no definite trade is to engage in some work or to take situations as ploughmen, shepherds, overseers. Even if men have little money when they arrive it is generally unwise to take up land at once. The truth is, that any sober, industrious man with God’s blessing on his labours, may create himself a home in New Zealand but he must be sober and industrious.¹⁰⁴

This extensive thirty-one-page booklet also includes complex charts imparting knowledge on rainfall patterns, and even the temperature of ‘the air in the shade.’ To extend the market of the publication in the Western Isles, Barclay also published a version of his work in Gaelic. In all editions emphasis is

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¹⁰² The Rev. P. Barclay, *Notes on New Zealand: For the Use of Emigrants* (London, 1873), 25.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 9.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 20.

placed on imagery and supporting visual stimuli, also an integral part of Barclay's recruitment presentations in Shetland which were frequently targeted toward single women:

Mr Barclay has been lecturing to the inhabitants of this island on emigration in Lerwick and at the Free Church at Hillside. Mr Barclay had large and attractive audiences at the different places and we understand that he succeeded in securing a considerable number of emigrants. The fair sex were completely captured by his glowing account and of them a considerable number have made up their minds to go. For their convenience he had a large and beautiful map suspended in the church on which he pointed out the towns and provinces. He contrasted the superiority of New Zealand to Canada ... and there is no room left to doubt a single sentence.¹⁰⁵

Given his attachment to Napier in the North Island, it is not surprising that one of the largest groups of Shetlanders who travelled to Napier in 1874 aboard the *Clarence* had been directly recruited by Barclay. Writing from Edinburgh in August 1874, he had predicted '[t]hat if the promissory-note system is continued many more emigrants will go next year [1875] than have gone during this year and I reckon that during 1874 about 450 [Shetlanders] have gone.'¹⁰⁶

Yet, not even Barclay could have foreseen the enormity of the Shetland exodus that followed the land evictions involving the scattalds in Quendale in 1874. Between January 1874 and December 1875, 744 Shetlanders departed for New Zealand, with over 50 per cent – 404 individuals – taking passage on the *Honrab*, *Clarence*, *Ocean Mail*, and *Avalanche*, a mere five ships. During this same time, only 125 Orcadians left their native land.¹⁰⁷ The Orkney Isles, unlike her neighbour to the north, did not prove to be particularly fertile ground for emigration agents as confirmed by Barclay following a visit in 1874:

My opinion, however, is that we can look for no very large emigration from the Orkney Isles, of which Kirkwall is the chief town. Still a few good farm labourers may be got and it was worth staying return

¹⁰⁵ *Shetland Times*, 16 October 1873.

¹⁰⁶ *AJHR*, 1875, Vol 1.D.-19.

¹⁰⁷ *Immigration Files* (IM15/67).

steamers to make New Zealand better known.¹⁰⁸

This was an unexpected outcome given that Barclay lectured to a large group ‘despite the wretched weather’ and the meeting had been ‘well intimated on the previous day.’¹⁰⁹ A significant number of Orcadians had already arrived in New Zealand by 1860. It is also possible that prospective Orcadian migrants to New Zealand would have been more influenced by a native speaker who heralded from Orkney, as had been the case with recruitment agents for the Hudson’s Bay Company based in Stromness from the late 1800s.

The Reverend Charles Simmers Ogg: Presbyterian Minister and Informed Lobbyist

The impressive numbers of Shetland women entertained at meetings scheduled by Barclay could also have been influenced significantly by the voluntary work undertaken by the Reverend Charles Simmers Ogg in New Zealand. Similar to Burns, he possessed highly effective networking skills and frequently corresponded with other Presbyterian Ministers resident in Scotland. In a letter dated 14 March 1873 to the Reverend James Barclay,¹¹⁰ Ogg focuses entirely on female emigration from Shetland:

I especially ask you to bring the matter of emigration under the notice of the young women of Yell, as we are greatly in need in New Zealand of girls who would take the position of domestic servants ... I want you to try and send us here, from Yell, fifty girls between the age of sixteen and thirty five.¹¹¹

Prior to his own migration to Wellington in the North Island Ogg had been a Presbyterian minister in Shetland. During the period from 1861 to 1868, he had also accompanied 138 Shetlanders from Fair Isle to a new colonial settlement at Chatham, New Brunswick in North America.¹¹² Ogg was born in Aberdeenshire in 1833 and received his training at King’s College, Aberdeen. He arrived in Wellington aboard the *Jessie Readman* on Sunday 15 December 1872 with a commission from the Church of Scotland to take charge of St

¹⁰⁸ *AJHR*, 1875, Vol 1.D.-1.19, held in the Hocken Collections, Dunedin.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ No known relation to Reverend Peter Barclay.

¹¹¹ *AJHR*, 1873, D.-1.19 (enclosure in No. 39), held in the Hocken Collections, Dunedin.

¹¹² Jerry Eunson, ‘Exodus from Shetland,’ *Scotland’s Magazine* (1962), 18–21.

Andrew's Church in the city.¹¹³ His stipend amounted to '£350 of which the Church of Scotland Colonial Committee contributed annually.'¹¹⁴ According to the *Centenary Souvenir of St Andrews Presbyterian Church 1840–1940*,

Mr Ogg's appointment was very acceptable to the officers, and he soon exerted an influence which largely increased the membership. In the first year of Mr Ogg's ministry the revenue of the church rose from £115 to £400. In September 1874, Mr Ogg received a letter from the Secretary of the Colonial Committee approving of St Andrews connecting itself with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.¹¹⁵

It is clear from copious entries in the *Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives* for 1873 and 1874 that Ogg did not confine himself entirely to the rigorous and demanding work within his parish. His expert first-hand knowledge of migration from Shetland to Canada equipped him with the appropriate skills to lobby government officials and newspaper editors with regard to Shetland migration to the Antipodes. Even though he had only been resident in Wellington for less than a year, Ogg was able to identify with emerging migratory trends much as Lang, Burns and Barclay had done previously. For instance, he attested

There is a good deal of agitation in the minds of the Shetlanders at present, on account of the resolutions of the Truck Commissioners, and if the movement is improved by the agents of the New Zealand Government a great many people might be induced to emigrate.¹¹⁶

It is also evident from his correspondence to the editor of the *Wellington Independent* that Ogg was aware of Barclay's appointment as an emigrant agent for the New Zealand government:

The writer should be informed that the Rev. P. Barclay, late of Napier, New Zealand recently visited Skye and other islands on the West Coast of Scotland, with the view of promoting emigration to New Zealand

¹¹³ 'Memorial Minute Rev. C. S. Ogg', *Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*, 16 November 1904, 39.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ *The Centenary Souvenir of St Andrews Presbyterian Church 1840–1940* (Wellington, 1940), 8.

¹¹⁶ *AJHR*, 1873, Vol 1. D.-1.21.

from those places; and that for the information – or gratification – of the Highlanders he has his pamphlet on New Zealand translated into Gaelic. I think I have seen copies of the Gaelic version of Mr Barclay's brochure even in Wellington.¹¹⁷

At a later juncture in the same correspondence Ogg used the opportunity to allude to negative reports of the ineffectiveness of colonial emigrant agents:

It is easy to blame the agents who have the charge of the emigration business at home for their want of success (if they have really been unsuccessful); but reasonable and thoughtful people will inquire whether the eager and illustrious volunteers who would gladly displace the Agent-General, and all the agents would conduct emigration to New Zealand any better than they had done.¹¹⁸

Ogg perceived himself as a volunteer; one who 'would be happy to be of service promoting the cause.'¹¹⁹ He advocated that the most influential manner of recruitment lay not in the persuasive lecture or promotional booklet but in the simple recommendation of established New Zealand settlers, thereby intensifying chain migration.

A Special Settlement Scheme: Stewart Island in the South Island of New Zealand

Following the passing of the Otago Settlement Act in 1871, the Superintendent of Otago, James Macandrew was to 'set apart 100,000 acres in Stewart Island in the South Island of New Zealand as eligible for settlement and colonisation.'¹²⁰ According to the historian of Stewart Island, Basil Howard, Macandrew telegraphed William Pearson, the Commissioner of Crown Lands at Invercargill 'advising him that the government wished to locate at Stewart Island immigrants from the Orkney, Shetland or Western Isles'¹²¹ Pearson was of the opinion that 'Stewart Island is so singularly favourably situated for the proper class of settlers that it is difficult to determine what they could not do.'¹²² Unfortunately, prospective Orcadian migrants did not share Pearson's optimism; those already settled at Stewart Island such as the Harrold, Traill

¹¹⁷ *Wellington Independent*, 2 October 1873.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *AJHR*, 1874, D-1.23.

¹²⁰ Basil Howard, *Rakinra: A History of New Zealand* (Dunedin, 1994), 239.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 241.

and Leask families nicknamed the project 'Pearson's Paradise.' Consequently, the 'Agent General limited the emigration field to the Shetland Islands.'¹²³ Barclay was supportive of this stance; Ogg disagreed however; given his intimate knowledge of Shetland parishioners he asserted:

It would be very unwise to settle people from a remote place such as the Shetland Islands in a special settlement, such as I see has been contemplated at Stewart Island. It must be remembered that a Shetlander, unless he has been out of his native islands, has never seen a tree, scarcely a plough, that he is very ignorant, therefore, of a great many of these arts which would be absolutely necessary in a new settlement.¹²⁴

It is worthwhile noticing that neither Barclay or Ogg appear to have focused on Viking iconography in their communications regarding the Shetland Isles. In sharp contrast Pearson painted a very romantic image of the islanders in their prospective new settlement at Stewart Island: 'Like the Vikings of old he [the Shetlander] could steer his bark to the foreign shores and wage war on the seal at the Auckland, Campbell and Macquarie Islands to the south.'¹²⁵ The Special Settlement appears to have been well publicised by New Zealand newspapers:

The General Government have made arrangements for a ship load of immigrants from the Shetland and Orkney Islands for settlement on Stewart Island. It is intended to erect barracks on the Township at Port William which will be immediately proceeded with. These settlers will be entitled to the free grants of land under the Settlement Act.¹²⁶

Contemporary author and emigrant agent, James Adam initially confirmed an optimistic, if not unrealistic, view of the proposed scheme:

Stewart Island is destined to be the abode at no distant date of thousands of Shetland and Orkney fishermen, who will find abundance of fish all around the coast; and in stormy weather the bays and harbour will be

¹²³ Ibid., 247.

¹²⁴ *The Evening Post*, 1 October 1873.

¹²⁵ *Shetland Life*, November 1966.

¹²⁶ *Tuapeka Times*, 5 May 1872.

found excellent fishing grounds.¹²⁷

Adam was misinformed regarding the participation of Orkney fishermen but records indicate an abundance of fish did exist in the region. Orcadian families had profited from the industry since the 1860s. Yet the five families and two single men from Shetland who arrived aboard the *Euterpe* in April 1873 were within months experiencing difficulties clearing the bush and adapting to a totally alien environment. The fishing technique that had proved so successful in the islands was 'quite useless in the south'¹²⁸ Consequently, the Special Settlement at Port William which had been heralded with fervid optimism came to an end one short year after its foundation.¹²⁹ Howard confirmed the 'official records are silent.'¹³⁰ Yet both the newspapers and individuals such as Adam openly blamed the Shetlanders themselves for the failure of an enterprise which was, as Ogg had warned, doomed from its inception:

After two months, none of them had cleared an acre, or planted a potato, caught a fish and yet the water is teeming with fish. I never heard of insolence displaying itself in a more unworthy and objectionable manner than had been done by these emigrant fishermen at Port William.¹³¹

Barclay, however, appears to have disregarded this criticism as a temporary setback and was by October 1874 advocating the emigration of the entire population of the Fair Isle to Stewart Island. In his attempts to lobby the New Zealand government, Barclay was joined by William Elder, Secretary of the recently formed Caithness and Sutherland Association. Elder has been born in Orkney but had spent his formative years in Caithness, hence his interest in the northern counties. Elder's letter to the Hon. Minister for Immigration in Wellington included mention of Barclay's involvement and a plea to 'transmit' instruction to 'your Special Emigration Agent, Mr Adam' with regard to migration from Fair Isle:

From Correspondence read at the last meeting of our Association, we

¹²⁷ Adam, *Twenty-five Years of Emigrant Life in the South of New Zealand*, 53.

¹²⁸ Howard, *Rakiura: A History of New Zealand*, 109.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 248.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Adam, *Twenty-Five Years of Emigrant Life in the South of New Zealand*, 140.

find that the inhabitants of the 'Fair Island' [an island midway between Orkney and Shetland] are exceedingly anxious to emigrate *en masse* to New Zealand; The Rev. Peter Barclay proposed to take these people to Kirkwall, where they should give IOUs for the preliminary expenses, say £3; but this Dr Featherston refuses to comply with. Our Association, which has for the last twelve months been quietly – but yet we can say without egotism certainly – helping the government in the emigration scheme from the Northern Counties of Scotland.¹³²

But the valiant attempts of Elder, Barclay and Adam were to be of no avail. The population of the Fair Isle, constituting 240 individuals, eventually declined the generous proposition of relocation to Stewart Island. It is feasible to suggest that the unanimous decision was influenced by the failure of the Shetland project in 1873.

By the late 1870s, both Barclay and Ogg disappear from the records of emigration schemes involving the northern counties of Scotland. As Butterworth confirms, 'the exodus from Shetland was completed within a decade, between 1861-1888, the population dropped by 8,000, a quarter, most of this occurred when the rate of migration was by many times the highest in Scotland.'¹³³

During the 1880s New Zealand experienced a crippling economic depression and emigration from Great Britain slowed significantly. Competition from Australia lessened apart from Queensland, the latter being the last colony to be offering assisted passages. The United States was also continuing to entice significant numbers of migrants to their shores, as recorded in a November 1881 edition of the *Bruce Herald*:

We find that in July last 3,566 emigrants sailed from the Clyde, and that of this number no fewer than 3,111 were bound for the States. For Canada there were but 295, and for the whole of Australia and NZ only twenty-six. The emigrant agents of the different States of America and of American emigration companies are much better advertisers than our Colonial agents.¹³⁴

¹³² *AJHR*, 1875, Vol 1, D-1 (enclosure in No. 39) held in the Hocken Collections, Dunedin.

¹³³ Butterworth, *Chips off the Auld Rock: Shetlanders in New Zealand*, 38.

¹³⁴ *Bruce Herald*, 4 November 1881.

Conclusion

The Disruption in the Established Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1843 and the subsequent creation of colonial committees significantly shaped the lives and careers of the Reverends Lang, Burns, Barclay and Ogg. The emotional turmoil would leave a legacy described by Jane Bannerman: 'In after days, when we gathered round the grand log fire in the dear old manse in Dunedin, we talked, oh, so often, of the Disruption Days.'¹³⁵ The ethos of the newly-created Free Church allowed for an entrepreneurial aspect to emerge, which was subsequently incorporated into the colonial ministry. Scottish Presbyterian ministers such as Lang, Burns, Barclay and Ogg were well qualified, excellent communicators and diversified in their approach to the projects of their day. All four men worked consistently to promote emigration to the far-flung shores of New Zealand from some of the most isolated locations in Great Britain, including Orkney, Shetland and Fair Isle.

The more transnational approach adopted by Lang included the emigrant fields of Australia and New Zealand; in fact Lang's proposals for emigration to New Zealand date from 1837. Lang also visited the United States of America and Brazil in the 1840s. In total Lang circled the globe eight times during his lifetime.¹³⁶ Although often controversial in his public life, Lang possessed the foresight to identify the potential of pioneering migrants from northern Scotland, inclusive of Orkney and Shetland that was misunderstood by later provincial governments in New Zealand. Lang, Burns and Barclay all shared the ability to successfully evaluate changing environments and the experience of having physically worked in the relevant migration fields. On one occasion when Lang's horse went lame, he recalled walking eighteen miles toward St Vincent where 'he nearly fainted before reaching his resting-place.'¹³⁷

Burns has in recent years 'received an unfavourable press from modern historians'¹³⁸ and yet his contemporary Adam found that 'as an ecclesiastical leader and far seeing man the Doctor had few equals.'¹³⁹ Lang has been described in the *Scottish Dictionary of Church History and Theology* as 'a minister, politician, journalist and emigrant agent.'¹⁴⁰ In the last of these roles these

¹³⁵ *The Diary of Jane Bannerman*, Ref: C-003, 36, held at the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin.

¹³⁶ 'Dunmore Lang', <http://www.dunmorelangcollege.nsw.edu.au> [accessed 4 December 2013].

¹³⁷ White, *Chapter 2, The Period of Struggle and Conflict*, 4.

¹³⁸ Brooking, 'Reverend Thomas Burns', B52.

¹³⁹ Adam, *Twenty-Five Years of Emigrant Life in the South of New Zealand*, 9.

¹⁴⁰ 'Biography of John Dunmore Lang' *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 11.

ministers could be perceived to have acted as ‘spin doctors’ and yet their liaison with government agencies and contemporary newspapers place them more within the sphere of informed lobbyists. The power of the written word is obvious in the work of Lang, Burns, Barclay and Ogg. According to White, Lang wrote an ‘article for the press or at least a letter to the editor’ almost every day of his life.¹⁴¹ Burns, as illustrated in this essay, was also well-known as a prolific letter writer prior to and following the Disruption in 1843. Barclay’s *Notes on New Zealand: For the Use of Emigrants* successfully promoted the new colony utilising factual data while his colleague Ogg utilised his knowledge of Shetland and Shetlanders to lobby government officials and editors of leading newspapers. While adopting such strategies and means of communication, all four Presbyterian ministers possessed sincere religious convictions and knowledge of the migratory trends from the United Kingdom that permitted them to be an integral part of the peopling of both New Zealand and Australia in the nineteenth century.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 14.