St. Stephen's
1875—1975

The Centenary Service

Praise:	Hymn 387 “The Lord’s my Shepherd” (Tune: Wiltshire
Prayer:	
Praise:	Hymn 489 “I joy’d when to the house of God” (Tune: St Paul)
Reading:	Old Testament : Isaiah 51, 1-11
Praise:	Hymn 4 “How lovely is thy Dwelling place” (Tune: Harington)
Reading:	New Testament: Romans 12, 1-15
Anthem:	
Prayer:	
Praise:	Hymn 396: “Behold the amazing gift of love” (Tune: St Stephen)
Sermon:	
Offering:	
Praise:	Hymn 72 “O God of Bethel” (Tune: Salzburg)
Benediction:	

The Service was conducted by the Rev Stewart Lamont of the B.B.C.
Preacher was: Rev Ronald S. Thomson, Minister Emeritus of St Stephens.

I. The Embyro Parish

The coastal strip of South Angus witnessed the very earliest settlements of pre-historic man in Scotland. The climate has always been agreeable, the land immensely fertile, and the firth, until modern times, teeming with fish. As our story opens in the last years of the 18th century the sleepy little community of Broughty Ferry dreams peacefully on as it has for centuries. It is self-sufficient with fishing, seasonal work on the farms of the hinterland, and peat to be cut from the links. A ferry plies across the firth as it has done since the dawn of history. The castle is mouldering away on the ebb tide of a singularly undistinguished military career. Two small breweries in the village lighten the passing years of a people famous for their longevity. But events are overtaking Broughty Ferry — her long idyll is drawing to a close.

From the middle of the 18th century onwards Dundee enjoyed a considerable expansion in her linen industry. Flax cultivation in the district covered many thousands of acres and large quantities of hemp were imported from the Baltic. As the Industrial Revolution gained momentum the population of Dundee expanded enormously. This had an immediate effect on the farming and fishing communities in South Angus. Self-sufficiency was no longer the ideal — specialization and regular delivery to the burgeoning town became the order of the day. The earlier example of Hunter of Grange, one of the greatest of the agricultural pioneers, had made the farmers of the area the most innovative in Scotland. It was not long before huge dairy herds were noted on the larger farms sending milk, butter and cheese to Dundee on a regular basis. The smaller farms tended to specialize in fodder, which they sold to the larger farms, or vegetables which they sent up to Dundee. The fishing fleet expanded and an ice house was built in the Ferry to regulate supplies to the town.

The expanding population had another effect on the Broughty Ferry area. The shore had long been famous for bathing, and from the turn of the century every Sunday in summer saw long streams of the working class from the urban slums heading out towards the Ferry. The village rose to the challenge and within a few years over a dozen pubs had been opened. This had the secondary benefit of giving an immediate retail outlet to the smuggling which the " fisher-folk " had always enjoyed but which, during the later years of the Napoleonic War, reached endemic proportions.

Another event which was to have considerable consequences for the future of the Ferry was taking place unnoticed in far-off Calcutta. A small quantity of jute was loaded onto a ship of the East India Company in 1796 and sent to London. There between 1800 and 1811 extensive research was carried out into the cultivation of jute and other fibres. Nothing of great note occurred until a Dundee merchant, Thomas Neish, in a fit of absence of mind, bought a consignment of jute in 1822. Rather at a loss what to do with it, he managed finally to sell it to the firm of Bell and Balfour, assuring them that they would be able to spin it on their flax machinery. To no one's surprise this proved impossible. Some years later Neish repeated the deal with Balfour who by then had a new partner called Melville. On this occasion they achieved a break-through and succeeded in spinning at their Chapelshade works. The relative failure of the flax crop in the following years and rapid improvements in production enabled the industry to gain an early hold. The impetus of the two mid-century wars, the Crimean and the American Civil War, kept the machinery at capacity for over fifty years.

With wealth now pouring into Dundee from this and other industries, Broughty Ferry started to expand. The proprietor of the lands in the area had begun to feu in 1790 so there

was ample land available. Many of the wealthier Dundee middle-class took summer lodgings and cottages down in the Ferry and the place became increasingly fashionable in the years after the Napoleonic War. Even the Ferry's perrenial problem of being swamped on a Sunday by the more drunken element of the Dundee proletariat did not detract too greatly from its image. This problem, however, took a turn for the worse in 1828 when a steamboat service started to ferry them down from the city on a Sunday. The Kirk fought that innovation all the way to the Court of Session in Edinburgh before being forced to admit defeat. In spite of this, the area remained extremely popular with business and professional families in Dundee and only the lack of speedy transportation to and from the city prevented an exodus to the Ferry. This was rectified in 1838 with the opening of the Dundee and Arbroath Railway.

Due partly to the flatness of the land and the co-operation of the owners, this was relatively the cheapest line of track constructed in the history of British railways. It was certainly a major turning point in the development of the Ferry. A year or so later the Rev. Samuel Miller was predicting in the Scottish Statistical Account: " Doubtless many of the citizens of Dundee will be glad to exchange the smoke and bustle of the town for the freshness and retirement of a country villa from which the railroad will transport them, at almost every hour, to their business and counting houses in fifteen minutes.". For some the coming of the railway was a mixed blessing. One such was the long distance runner the sub-post office had employed to pad out the miles between the village and Dundee twice a day. He was made redundant.

Describing the village in these last years before take-off, Miller noted its lack of amenities as well as its beauty. " It presents a clean and neat appearance; and from the river, the view of the village in front with the villas of the more wealthy on the sloping background is very picturesque. The streets, most unaccountably, are neither paved nor Macadamised, so that the blowing of fine sand on which the village is built, is very disagreeable in dry weather." But improvements were on the way. The roads were finally paved and in 1853 gas lighting was introduced. By 1863 the village had become sufficiently populous for some of the leading members of the Community to decide that the time had come to form it into a burgh under the General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act. The boundaries of the burgh were only drawn after great bitterness and the Members of Commission, the forerunners of the Town Council, given severely restricted powers. Gradually they gained more control though it required the cholera epidemic of 1866 and shocking mortality figures from the " fisher-folk " before they were given powers over the water supply.

The harbour was built in 1872 but six years later, the opening of the Tay Bridge pointed to the eventual demise of the ferry service. It had a reprieve, however, when a year or so later the Tay Bridge and a passenger train fell into the river. When the bridge was re-opened in 1887 the North British Railway Company, who owned the ferry as well, tried to discontinue the service. They were hamstrung by the terms of the monopoly they had insisted upon and jealously guarded over the years. When in 1892 they presented a bill to the House of Commons it was defeated by the Commissioners of Police in Broughty Ferry. But in the long run the service was doomed. Also in the early 1870's the idea of forming a tramway between Dundee and Broughty Ferry was mooted but due to " burdensome conditions being imposed upon the promoters " the plans were shelved for over thirty years.

It was around this time, in the mid-Victorian years of confidence and prosperity, that the need began to be felt for a new parish church for the west end of the Ferry.

1915
East Trancept

II. A Victorian Church for the Ferry

In 1869 a group of wealthy and influential men from the west end of Broughty Ferry decided that the time had come to open a church to serve their area. The Parish Church, now known as St. Aidens, was manifestly too small to cope with the expanding population. The group included two or three merchants, a builder, *a* well-known East Coast architect, T. S. Robertson, and a forceful little lawyer from Westfield Road, J. P. Kyd. They held a public meeting, had themselves elected as a steering committee, and gained permission from the Presbytery to establish a " chapel of ease " — the technical term in these days for a church extension. They hired the Public Hall for a year, employed a beadle, bought a Bible, a Psalm Book and a Preaching Gown, and then went out to find a missionary. After some initial troubles, they managed to obtain the services of the Rev. Robert Scott from Glasgow. At this point they started to refer to themselves, rather prematurely, as the "West Established Church".

They were men of considerable action. Within six months they acquired the site for a church from the Countess of Home. Robertson drew up elaborate plans for the new church — which had to be curtailed due to lack of finance. By the summer the tenders were in and work started in the autumn. In the spring of 1871 Robertson advised them that the masonry work of the modified plans was almost complete and they would have to decide whether to complete the spire or leave the shell called for in the revision. Money had been specially donated for the spire so he was allowed to proceed. By autumn gas lighting had been installed, water laid into the building, and the grounds laid out in gardens. The building was ready for use by the winter. It had been a period of frenetic activity and Scott was exhausted. He could not face the prospect of the long negotiations involved in the upgrading of the ecclesiastical unit from a " chapel of ease " to a parish church. He left early in 1873 for the Parish of Craig.

In April 1873 the Rev. James Cooper, the assistant at Elgin, was appointed and the long battle over boundaries began. Finally in the autumn of 1874, the parish of Dundee and the parish of Broughty Ferry allowed the new church an area which included the West Ferry and most of the west end of Broughty Ferry: a district of some 1600 inhabitants. By this time the other major requirement for full status, an endowment, had been secured. This was a capital sum, the interest from which would provide a permanent minimum stipend. In addition to these activities, a vestry had been built, communion plate purchased, and plans drawn up for the two side galleries of the church. An initial petition was sent to the Presbytery of Dundee asking for full status and by the time the ecclesiastical procedures had run their course the galleries had been completed. Finally on July 14th, 1875, the new parish church of St. Stephen's, Broughty Ferry, was established, and Cooper inducted as the first minister.

The church had just over 500 communicant members of whom over one-third were domestic servants — a fact which gives some indication of the social structure of the Ferry. The church was run by two committees: the Kirk Session, made up of the elders, who had control of all ecclesiastical matters, and the Committee of Managers, an elected body who administered the finances and the fabric. The minister was chairman of the Kirk Session but had no position by right on the Committee of Managers. Normally this would be of no significance but during the period of construction it was a potential flash point. It was in fact here that the first signs of stress began to show.

Cooper was a man of tremendous energy and was keen to keep up momentum. From the very earliest days the church had had an harmonium. This was rather avant-garde and permission had to be gained from Presbytery. They had brought the harmonium from the

Public Hall and installed it, along with the choir, in a tiny gallery over the entrance lobby at the north end of the church. Cooper proposed a comprehensive package deal in which an apse would be built on the southern end of the church with a pipe organ and organ chamber, and the tiny northern gallery would be enlarged and fitted-up to seat some eighty persons. He offered to finance this project with the proceeds of a huge bazaar which he would organise with the help of A. *S.* Rae, one of the more active members. The managers offered no objections so the bazaar went ahead realising the colossal sum, for those days, of £1320. When the money was sent to the Managers they decided to build the north gallery, since the increase in seats would raise the money obtained from " seat-rents " and thus put the church on a sounder financial footing, but they refused to build the apse or the pipe organ. They decided instead to invest the rest of the money. When word reached them of this development, Cooper and Rae wrote to the Committee of Management a letter of considerable candour, whose chief effect was to precipitate the resignation of Kyd and several of his lieutenants. The remaining managers asked Cooper to withdraw the letter and replace it with something less abrasive. The minister's second effort said much the same things in slightly more flowery language. Kyd resigned!

Cooper, however, did not have it all his own way. Robertson was still there. Cooper did manage to have Rae brought onto the committee to take over Kyd's former position as Secretary — the real position of power — but found himself forced to compromise over the plans. The pipe organ was acquired but the apse he had set his heart on was blocked by Robertson. The architect claimed that it was not possible to build an apse, that is a semi-circular recess with an arched or domed roof. He could only construct a chancel. This was manifest nonsense as Cooper was only too well aware, but he faced a very delicate situation and a mass resignation was clearly on the cards. Thus Robertson had his way and a chancel was built with all the acoustical problems which were to bedevil music in St. Stephen's for almost a century. A big three manual pipe organ was installed in the chancel and the alterations completed towards the close of 1880. At this stage Robertson and the rest of the dissidents resigned, but Cooper too had had enough. A few months later he left for the East Church in Aberdeen. From there he went into academic life finally becoming Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Glasgow University and Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In spite of this his name never recurs on any of the St. Stephen's minutes until his death forty years later when an invitation from the East Church in Aberdeen to join with them in erecting a memorial to him was turned down.

The Vacancy Committee consisted of the men who had been involved in the conflict with Cooper. Kyd, Robertson were in such control that the election of Rae to the committee was blocked, even though he was Secretary to-the Board of Managers. The man they chose was not unnaturally somewhat of a contrast to the abrasive, energetic Cooper. They chose the quiet, retiring, intellectual, James Leask from Rosemount in Aberdeen. One hopes the founding fathers were satisfied with their choice for they certainly had enough time to ponder their decision. Leask was to minister in the parish for the next 37 years. Within a year the old guard were back and Kyd was once more Secretary to the Committee of Management. Thereafter the building programme came to a halt for well over a decade. It was not till the mid-1890's that the hall was built, though the land had been acquired many years before. From then on, however, many improvements were made to the church, including the introduction of the magnificent stained glass windows. This coincided with the emergence of the second generation of Managers led by the redoubtable trio of Watson, Moncur and Ovenstone. They took over the reins of power after Kyd and Robertson lost out in what was to prove the last major rumpus in the history of St. Stephen's.

Trouble had been brewing for years between the Managers and the Kirk Session. It was essentially a demarkation dispute, and the chosen battleground was the subject of church music. From Cooper's earliest days the church had employed professional singers as well as the organist and choirmaster. Whose responsibility were they? The managers thought that since they paid them, they should have the right to hire and fire at will. The Kirk Session held that since they were part of the worship, they came under the sole jurisdiction of the Kirk Session under the moderatorship of the minister. A long series of less than friendly letters passed between the two bodies in which each delineated the other's powers in a generally unhelpful way. Finally after more than a decade of periodic squabbling it was Kyd who made the fatal tactical error. He taunted the Kirk Session, writing that: " If the Kirk Session want to raise money for the paid singers the Managers would gladly leave the whole matter to the Session." He was way out on a limb and the Session knew it. The Managers had always rubber-stamped his actions in the past but they would never agree to giving away any control of the church finances. The Session called his bluff and his position became untenable. The Managers dissociated themselves from his remarks and he was forced to resign. The faithful Robertson resigned in sympathy and an epoch in the history of St. Stephen's came to an end.

The first stained glass window was introduced for fairly pragmatic reasons. In summer the sun streaming in through the huge chancel windows had been causing considerable distress to the congregation. Attempts had been made to overcome this problem with perforated zinc shields and later with blinds, both of which must have been truly lovely! In the mid-1890's the Managers finally decided to approach the stained glass firm of Morris and Company to obtain designs from Burne Jones. They were submitted two designs : "The Crucifixion" and the" Stoning of St. Stephen". After considerable discussion they decided to choose the latter design. A year later J. J. Watson of Ballinard gave the first of his amazing series of contributions to the stained glass of the church. With the exception of the three windows in the east transcept, which were given by the sons of J. P. Kyd in memory of their mother, all the windows were given by Watson over a period of twenty years. Even by the standards of that time, it was generosity on a very large scale. It also enabled an outstanding collection to be made of the work of Burne Jones. One is able to trace the maturing talent of one of the ablest stained glass artists of the period.

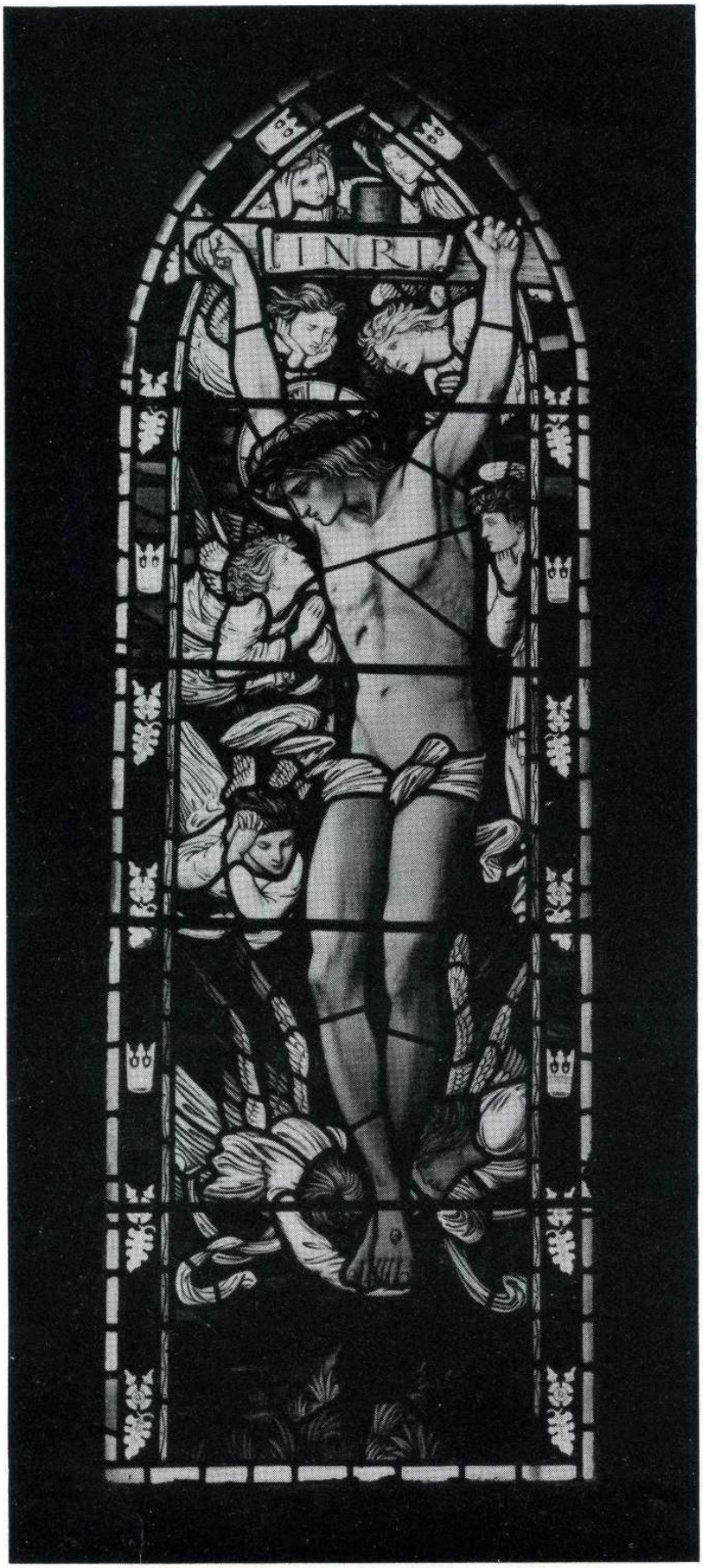
As the century drew to a close, a feature which had been prominent in the Kirk for centuries was also passing away. The stern, perhaps to our generation, the unacceptable face of Calvinism was epitomised by the autocratic Kirk Session. In the time of Cooper the Session still had considerable power in disciplinary cases involving wayward members. These generally involved the baptism of an illegitimate child. The mother, or the parents if they had subsequently married, were asked to appear before the Session, where they were " seriously admonished " and forbidden to communicate at the ensuing celebration of the Lord's Supper. After this the minister was allowed to baptise the child. As with everything else, Cooper entered into the spirit of the thing with considerable zest. He averaged around half-a-dozen cases a year, but hit an all time high in 1877 when he went into double figures. The outstanding disciplinary event in the history of St. Stephen's took place two years later when Cooper and the Kirk Session in great solemnity pronounced the sentence of "lesser excommunication" on one particularly incalcitrant member. It must have been an absolutely splendid occasion, but it was not repeated.

Leask, who was a very shy man, was absolutely mortified with the whole business and tried early on to pass the buck to the Presbytery of Dundee. Unfortunately they would have none of it and he was told to get on with it. Thus over the years one reads of Leask occasionally advising the Session that he has baptised an illegitimate child and would like the

matter rubber-stamped. But one strongly suspects that he only let them know in cases which had attracted considerable publicity and where he was left with no alternative. Certainly by the turn of the century they had almost died out altogether. An unusual exception occurred in the the closing years when one of the Managers was found by the local constabulary somewhat the worse for wear. Unfortunately, his apprehension occurred on what is known as a " slow news day," and excited a fair degree of unkind comment. His resignation was demanded by the Session who later decided to take part in a series of Temperance Services. But the presence of J. J. Watson, chairman of one of the biggest wine and spirit merchants in Britain, cast a long shadow over any general enthusiasm for late Victorian " total abstinence " in St. Stephen's.

Little happened to disturb the tranquility of these pre-war years. Leask quietly carried on with his academic and pastoral career. He was an outstanding Greek scholar and in 1903 received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Aberdeen University. Of course external events did from time to time impinge on the life of the church. The Kirk Session felt compelled to send a deputation to complain about the running of tramcars into the Ferry on a Sunday, especially during the hours of worship. During the Suffragette Troubles, the Managers had to deal with a letter from a Mrs Malcolm " complaining of the exclusion of female members of the Church from the electoral body in connection with appointments to the Committee of Management." They expressed " considerable sympathy " but felt they were in no position to alter the constitution of the church. The matter was soon overshadowed by the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. The First World War which shook Britain so rudely from her Victorian slumbers proved too much for Leask. He had been coasting quietly home, and the horror of the slaughter and heartbreak of those years was more than he could bear. He struggled on, but in the closing months of the War he finally gave in and retired. He was almost seventy and the years were starting to tell.

With the departure of Leask we come to the end of the Victorian period of St. Stephen's. Within a few years all these great early figures would be dead. Kyd and Robertson were already away, Cooper and Rae would follow in 1922, and Leask and Watson the year after. They were all men of immense talent but in their personalities seeming already from another age : an age of extremes, of wealth and poverty, of leisure and drudgery, of success and failure. Society was changing and*attitudes were no longer static. Gone was the image of the unapproachable minister, austere and slightly feared. With the coming of the Rev. Douglas Bruce, ex-lieutenant in the Gordon Highlanders, the face of the modern church begins to appear.



1896
East Trancept

The Modern St. Stephen's

The Ministry of Douglas Bruce in the Ferry lasted a short six years but it witnessed a remarkable increase in the vigour of church life. It was especially noticeable in church attendances and the revival of the organisations. In more mundane matters such as fabric his youth and energy were also felt. The acquisition of a manse, mooted forty years before and shelved with so many other things after the departure of Cooper, was finally accomplished. After considering the house at 1 Balgillo Crescent, the Managers finally decided to buy the present manse, then called "Linda" in Camperdown Street. In other aspects of church life changes were taking place. The question arose of individual cups being used at Communion instead of the traditional " common cup ". The Kirk Session and Managers were in favour of a changeover but Bruce decided that the question should be put to the congregation and a vote taken. Individual cups were used as an experiment in the Spring Communion of 1924, and those present voted by ballot. The result was desperately close: 171 to 160 in favour with numerous abstentions. This confirmed the suspicions many of the elders and managers held that this new-found democracy should not be encouraged. The matter was dropped for some ten years at which time " individual cups " were quietly acquired and brought into use.

Like so many of his generation who had come back from the trenches, Bruce was restless. In September of 1924 he accepted an invitation from the Colonial Committee of the Kirk " to undertake a journey to Patagonia for the purpose of visiting some of the 18,000 settlers there existing without the benefits of church privileges.". He was given leave of absence of six months but on his return found he could not settle. Within the year he obtained an appointment to the Scots Kirk in Buenos Aires. He never returned to the parish ministry in Scotland.

As on all previous occasions the vacancy committee chose a man of radically different character. After the effervescent Bruce they chose the Rev. J. C. Conn, a shy, grave, academic from .Elgin. The great event in the early years of his ministry was the final major union of the churches in Scotland. After the splits and disruptions of the late 18th and early 19th century, the Scottish Presbyterian denominations slowly came together during the early 20th century. The other churches in the land were not involved. The Catholic Church ministered largely to the Irish immigrant population who numbered around 25% of the total inhabitants of Scotland. The other denominations such as the English Anglicans, Methodists, and Congregationalists, or the Anglo-American Baptists and Unitarians, were merely tiny pockets of individuality. By the late 1920's the essentially Scottish congregations were mainly in two denominations : the Established Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland. In 1929 they came together to form the present day Church of Scotland.

Prior to the Union, there had been two churches serving the West Broughty Ferry area : St. Luke's United Free and St. Stephen's Established. All over the country the two competing local churches either united or else split the parish between them as an interim solution. The latter procedure was adopted in the Ferry, but the two churches have held united summer services ever since. Other changes took place as a result of the Union including a new model of constitution for the parish churches. In the case of St. Stephen's it meant that the Board of Managers was replaced by the Congregational Board — a change in name rather than function. There was in addition an upsurge in interest in religious music sparked of by the introduction of the revised edition of the Hymn Book. Drawn from two quite distinct traditions in church music, it was a fine combination of psalms and hymns old and new. The product of a wide musical taste it compares favourably in this respect with the latest edition which is already looking insular and dated.

With the coming of the new hymn book, an attempt was made to improve the musical production in St. Stephen's. The acoustics of the chancel were simply dreadful. In this respect we can imagine what it might have been when we listen to the volume of the small organ placed in the **apse** of St. Luke's. To try to improve matters an immensely powerful pipe organ was built in the chancel, the communion table moved to the very rear, and choir seats built out onto the altar. To enable this to be done, the pulpit had to be moved well to the right and here a major problem was encountered. St. Stephen's was built in instalments and the galleries were a later addition. It had been a considerable crush to fit them in and it made the siting of the pulpit critical. If it was to be moved as far right as was necessitated by the new plans, it would either have to be raised in height to retain the west gallery, thereby losing the west transcept, or lowered with the alternative effect. After much soul searching the latter solution was adopted and the whole of the west gallery was lost. It was beyond any question an error of judgement and seriously detracted from the amenity of the building as a place of worship. The quality of the music was only marginally improved and a lop-sided church was a high price to pay.

But Conn's ministry in the Ferry was a happy and peaceful time. In 1935 he received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from St. Andrew's University. In the spring of 1939 he was given leave of absence to preach in the Scots Kirk in Nice — an astonishing piece of luck since such an opportunity would not recur for many a weary year. In fact the only moment of tension in his time came just before the War when the Presbytery of Dundee tried to bring the Kirk Session into line. It was the tradition in the Church of Scotland that the Kirk Session should organise elder's districts and regular visitation by elders. Cooper had not had time to organise this before he departed and his successors had never quite found an opportune moment to bring the matter up. When the Visitation Committee from the Presbytery of Dundee indicated that this should be done without delay, their instructions were met with a hostile silence. The Kirk Session of St. Stephen's was not in the habit of accepting instructions from anyone, far less the Presbytery of Dundee. They decided to ignore the uncouth outburst, but now the matter had been raised Conn fought hard on the issue and threw the weight of his office behind it. In a stormy Session meeting, however, he found himself isolated, and wisely did not put it to the vote, noting only his " keen disappointment ". A decade later the climate had changed and his successor, a noted diplomacist anyway, quietly steered the matter through.

The united summer services took place as usual in 1939. On the first Sunday back in St. Stephen's Conn announced at the end of the service that war had broken out in Europe. This time the civilian members of the congregation were to be much more seriously involved. Black-outs started immediately and the evening service was replaced by an afternoon service at 3 p.m. in the winter months. Later attempts were made to hold evening services with St. Luke's and St. Aidens in the Regal Cinema but the congregation were not keen on moving around in the black-out. A wire mesh was erected over all the lower windows and the large chancel window. The church officer was given a long ladder and his presence requested at the church during air raids. The hall was requisitioned and special services for troops were held in the church conducted by their own padre. A canteen committee was set up and the church thus put onto a war footing.

Things were fairly quiet for the first year or so, however at the beginning of 1941 the hall was occupied by Polish soldiers and immediately started to exhibit strange and unexpected weaknesses. For example the iron gates at the rear of the hall suddenly fell off one night. They were repaired just in time to be torn of officially as part of the war effort, along

with the rest of the railings. In fact the hall had a fairly bad war. On January 10th 1943 it was burned to the ground. The army had been using it to house stores and after rumours of pilfering on a scale breathtaking even by the standards to which they had become accustomed, an inspection had been ordered for the next day. It was considered an " Act of God ". Whatever doubts Conn and the Kirk Session may have had, nothing is recorded in the minutes.

As the bitter war years dragged on, they had an increasingly damaging effect on Conn. He had always been a shy and sensitive man, and he was by then no longer young. The misery of these years with boys in their parishes being killed and maimed, and families under constant strain and privation, put many ministers under great emotional stress. Towards the end of the war the strain on Conn was starting to tell. In the autumn of 1945 he conducted the last major church business of his career: the question of eligibility of women for the Eldership of the Kirk. The Kirk Session was split up the middle but the congregation voted strongly against: 218 to 61. In December his health finally broke down. After a long struggle to recover he had finally to admit defeat and resigned in May of the following year.

Almost two decades had passed since the great Union and all over Scotland attempts were being made to rationalise the out-reach of the Kirk. The competitive nature of the church building in the 19th century meant that every parish in the land had at least two, and sometimes as many as five, Church of Scotland buildings serving the same area. It was dreadful misuse of funds, tying up men and money, but any attempt to form unions between the former competitors caused intense bitterness in almost every case. In practice it has proved virtually impossible to form unions while both congregations are still strong : it has seemed necessary that one or other of the congregations should be in sore straits, usually financial, before the Kirk has been allowed to rationalise her resources in an area. Given this state of affairs, union with her old United Free sister church, St. Luke's, was hardly a viable proposition. Yet Broughty Ferry was grossly " over-churched " and the Presbytery was keen that some form of union take place. A union with another old U.F. church, Queen's Street, was mooted but problems over boundaries were found to be insurmountable. Finally Presbytery admitted defeat and in the spring of 1947 St. Stephen's was allowed to call the Rev. Ronald Scott Thomson from the Strathbogie Church in Huntly.

Thomson was the most experienced minister to arrive at St. Stephen's, and proved a very wise choice. The long vacancy, the burned-out hall, the church grounds being used as a short-cut by the general public, the whole atmosphere seemed symptomatic of the times. All the war-time dreams were foundering on the harsh reality of post-war Europe. With great spirit, however, Thomson and the men around him got things moving. The problems encountered in rebuilding the hall alone boggle the imagination, for it was a time when building materials were simply not available. But it was accomplished and in February 1951 the Moderator of the General Assembly opened the hall. The vitality of the congregation was also increasing throughout this period and in 1952 St. Stephen's sent out its first missionary, Miss Isobel Batchelor, who went to be a teacher in a mission station in Kenya.

The later 1940's had been an uphill struggle but the '50's witnessed a long run of expansion and success. This can be measured both by the increase in the size of the congregation and the improvements to the life and fabric of the the church. In January 1954 the parish magazine was started, in 1955 the beautiful red Pulpit Bible, still used, was given and a year later the railings around the church were restored by an anonymous member of the congregation. Similar nameless generosity provided the silver baptismal bowl and all the carpets for the church. Finally in 1959 a new vestry was completed. In the early 1960's it was

decided to introduce an afternoon communion service which has proved popular over the years with those who feel uncomfortable in the large morning congregation.

Then suddenly, at the very height of his success and popularity, Thomson decided to accept a call from the small country charge of Culter. Having been wounded in the War and with new housing being built extensively in the parish, he felt the time had come to hand over to a younger man. This decision was met with very great regret by the congregation who had hoped he would be with them for the rest of his career. With the departure in the autumn of 1962 of the most universally liked of her ministers, the history of St. Stephen's as a single unit comes to an end. The union with the West Church, which had been Thomson's last wish, took place within a few months.

IV. The United Church

The West Church dated back to the time of the Disruption in 1843 when over one-third of the ministers and members of the Church of Scotland walked out to form the Free Kirk. In Broughty Ferry, the minister and a large part bf the congregation left St. Aidens to form the West Church. In the union of 1962 it was decided to use the St. Stephen's church and manse, though the West Church hall was retained. The two congregations merged with a remarkable lack of rancour and it has proved one of the happiest of unions. The minister called to lead the united church was the Rev. G. S. Cameron of Campbeltown. An Irish trained clergymen, he brought the largest-ever family to the St. Stephen's manse.

During his time the church had two very noteable firsts. In 1966 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had decided that women elders would be permitted to attend the next Assembly as commissioners. Thus it was in May of 1967 Mrs Janet Hayward of St. Stephen's and West was the first lady commissioner in the history of the Kirk. She shared this honour with two other ladies. The other outstanding event occurred in the summer of 1972 when the Rev. Stewart Lamont was the first minister to be specifically ordained into religious broadcasting. He had come up through the Sunday School, Bible Class and Youth Club of St. Stephen's and had been licensed in the church the year before. His ordination marked a turning point in the attitude of the Kirk towards broadcasting. Before then it had generally been viewed as a scapegoat for such things as the eventual demise of evening services, which came to an end in St. Stephen's, as in so many other churches, during the '60's. His ordination marked the acceptance by the Kirk of the vital importance of this medium of communication.
There were several alterations to the church during this period, the most important of which concerned the organ. It was decided in 1969 to dispense with the big three manual Hillsden pipe organ and to buy an electric organ. This decision created the biggest controversy since the days of Cooper but discussion was cut short when a firm order was placed because of fears of rising prices. Thus the organ and the choir returned to the back gallery in much the same atmosphere as they had descended all these years before. But time is a great healer. The congregation were soon distracted by the arrival from the USA of the Rev. Bill Plonk. On exchange with Cameron for four months, the mercurial Virginian packed the church through the summer of 1972. In the autumn Cameron returned but the western sun had entered his soul. A little over a year later he was journeying back across the Atlantic to the charge of Nassau in the Bahamas.

The present incumbant came in 1974 from Glasgow where he had been assistant minister in Wellington. Thus St. Stephen's ended her first one hundred years as she had started it, with a minister in his first charge.

1906
West Trancept

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Stephen's

The designs of the windows in the church were all by Sir Edward Burne Jones and were reproduced in stained glass by the Morris Company of Merlon Abbey in Surrey, which was founded by William Morris, a lifelong friend of the artist. It is a unique collection which spans over twenty years of their most productive period of collaboration. One is thereby enabled to trace the development of their art.

The subjects chosen embody very fully the teaching of the Scriptures from the Fall of Man to the Atonement on the Cross and beyond. The Church being dedicated to the proto-martyr, St. Stephen, the principal windows are devoted to a design illustrating his martyrdom. Note should also be taken of the windows in the North Gallery opposite. Acquired at the height of the Suffragette troubles when Scottish churches were targets for female arsonists and unrest was already brewing in the congregation, the window was filled with representations of illustrious women of the Bible. If it was an attempt at amelioration it failed for the Committee of Management had later to deal with a demand for equal voting rights for women in congregational matters.

The principal window in the chancel was donated by "a few gentlemen connected with the church" in the summer of 1893. Three years later the sons of J. P. Kyd gave three windows in the east transcept in memory of their mother. Apart from that, the remaining windows were financed by J. J. Watson of Ballinard. They are detailed below :—

1894	The windows of the east aisle
1895	The windows of the west aisle
1902	The windows on either side of the pulpit
1906	Three windows in the west transcept
1912	The windows in the north gallery
1914	The windows in the side galleries and the openings from the roof lights
1915	The remaining windows in the transcepts completed

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