

Early Settlement in Lanark County and the Glasgow Colonial Society

by E. A. McDougall (1914-1996)

The end of the Napoleonic Wars coupled with the depressive effects of the Industrial Revolution brought unemployment and overwhelming poverty to the British working class after 1815. To alleviate the distress of the poor and possibly lessen the chances of violence in the streets, one means considered by government was to assist impoverished families, willing to emigrate, to settle in British North America. Similarly, disbanded army personnel might be settled on the land. To transplant loyal British subjects to Upper Canada would benefit the colony as well as Britain - there was too much vacant land in the colony, situated precariously close to the American border and the rapidly expanding settlements behind it. Lord Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, accepted the idea and quickly took steps to implement it.

Land, formerly the hunting ground of the Indians, was quickly purchased for the purpose. It lay in Upper Canada, north of the Rideau River which flowed generally north and east from the Rideau Lakes to empty into the Ottawa River at Bytown (Ottawa). The land was high enough above the St. Lawrence River and the American border to provide, when peopled with loyal Canadians, a second line of defence should hostilities with the United States again trouble the colony. Townships were surveyed and prepared for settlement whilst Bathurst advertised in Scotland his proposal to grant free passage and 100 acres of land to emigrating families. Almost as quickly as the land was surveyed Scots arrived in the townships. In the following years more townships were surveyed and more settlers from Ireland and Scotland settled on the land, although not on as generous terms as the first settlers, until by 1824 all the townships now comprised in Lanark County had been surveyed and partially settled.

This paper will consider the efforts made by emigrant Scottish Presbyterian settlers in Lanark County to bring Church of Scotland clergymen to their townships and conversely, the measures adopted by the Glasgow Colonial Society to meet the ministerial needs of the Scottish emigrants.

In Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire, Scotland, the weaving industry was hard hit by depression. Unemployment was rife in the counties and wages plummeted. Some of the distressed families were considering emigration to the colonies and to forward the idea Emigration Societies were formed throughout the stricken area. Two high-ranking Scotsmen, Sir Archibald Campbell and Mr. Kirkman Finlay successfully petitioned¹ government for assistance to the



Kirkman Findlay (1773-1842)

¹ Robert Lamond, *An Account of Early Settlement in Upper Canada, Occasional Papers*, (San Francisco Reprint Series No. 12, 1940), p. 8.

Emigration Societies. Land was granted in Lanark County, transportation from Quebec to Lanark County but not the cost of the ocean voyage from Greenock to Quebec. Fortunately for the weavers, a small Committee on Emigration to His Majesty's Settlements in Upper Canada was formed by public spirited citizens in Glasgow and its environs to help the Emigration Societies raise money for the passage to Quebec, to watch over the Societies' funds, and to act as intermediaries between the Emigration Societies and the shipping companies in whose ships the emigrants were to sail. One of the five Committee members was Kirkman Finlay, the same man who had earlier petitioned government on behalf of the weavers.

In the sailing season of 1820 and 1821 ships sailed from Greenock to Quebec with the emigrating weavers and their families. Lord Dalhousie, the new governor-general of the Canadas, a Scotsman and a good friend of the Scots in British North America, had arranged the settlement of the Scots in a newly surveyed township of Lanark County. He later wrote of the settlement,

I gave them a new township ten miles square and called it Lanark, close adjoining the Perth settlement. They reached it at the same time as I did and in two days after, I saw the first of them, with a Captain Marshall as Superintendent, and a surveyor attached to him, set forward into the woods to occupy their lot.²

Dalhousie also saw the neighbouring township surveyed and named Dalhousie in his honour. Dalhousie township was also settled by the Scots.



**George Ramsay (1770-1838),
9th Earl of Dalhousie**

On the 23rd of January, 1821, back in Quebec, Dalhousie wrote the Duke of Hamilton³ to suggest that contributions be sought in the Glasgow area for the building of a church in New Lanark, a small village in Lanark township pleasantly situated on the Clyde River about 15 miles from Perth. This was done and in 1823, £280 were sent to Canada from Scotland for the purpose. Soon a stone church with eight windows was built.⁴ It had a gallery across the back and room for three hundred persons. But although the emigrants had sought a minister even before leaving Scotland, one was not easily to be found.

In June, 1820, when the ship *Commerce* was docked at Greenock preparing to sail for Quebec with one of the first shiploads of the Lanarkshire emigrants, one of the Presbyterian Scots had handed a petition to the Rev. Mr. Robert Easton, a Montreal Secession Presbyterian minister standing on the landing. The petition, signed by the

² Andrew Haydon, *Pioneer Sketches in the District of Bathurst* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1925), p. 91.

³ Letter, The Earl of Dalhousie to the Duke of Hamilton and Brandon, etc., Castle of St. Louis, Quebec, 23 Jan. 1821, Occasional Papers

⁴ Haydon, *Pioneer Sketches*, p. 107.

Presbyterian emigrants⁵, asked that a minister be sent to their new home in Upper Canada. Easton seemed the logical man to receive the petition because he was in Scotland for the purpose of raising funds to send Presbyterian clergymen to British North America. No answer was received from Easton and over a year later, in September 1821, the Presbyterian Church Committee at Lanark, Upper Canada, again wrote Easton, now back in Montreal. The Committee stated that sites for the church and school had been granted and that a house is now in a state of forwardness to answer the double purpose of church⁶ and school. But again, no answer was received. By March, 1822, a schoolmaster had arrived in the township and it was agreed by the church managers that unless they had some answer to their request for a minister they would apply directly to Earl Bathurst and the Joint Committee in Edinburgh⁷ - the latter committee had sent the Rev. Mr. William Bell to the town of Perth. What the Lanark Committee evidently did not know was that an ordained Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Mr. John Gemmell, was already among them.

Gemmell, a 61 year old Ayrshire Scot and a Secession Presbyterian minister, had been ordained to a 'Lifter' congregation in Dairy, Ayrshire. Because of inadequate payment of his salary, he had turned first to medicine, receiving a medical degree from the University of Glasgow, and then to the printing business. Gemmell and his family emigrated in 1821 to Lanark Township but it was not until August 1822, that he held his first church service in the township. Gemmell never managed to rally Lanark's Presbyterians around him: the ministry was but one third of his professional interests, he outspokenly supported one party, even in his sermons, in a divided community⁸ and by itinerating he visited each community too infrequently - usually once a month. Consequently, in 1824, we find the Presbyterians in Lanark once again in search of a minister.

This time they petitioned the Church of Scotland but with little expectation of success.



Rev. John Robertson
(1797-1843)

It was at this point, in July 1824, that Lanark's school master, Robert Mason, wrote to his former minister, the Rev. Mr. John Robertson, Church of Scotland minister at Cambuland, a Clydeside village near Glasgow. In his letter, along with other news, he wrote of the difficulty the township was having in finding a suitable Presbyterian clergyman. The letter is included in the correspondence of the Glasgow Colonial Society⁹ although it was written before the Society was formed. It was in answer to this letter and others like it written from various parts of British North America that laymen and clergymen in Glasgow and its vicinity felt called upon to bestir themselves on behalf of their colonial brethren. The result was the formation of the Glasgow Colonial Society on the 15th of April 1825. The purpose of the Society was embodied in a Resolution,

⁵ Ibid., p. 106.

⁶ Ibid., p. 106.

⁷ Ibid., p. 107.

⁸ 'Glasgow Colonial Society Correspondence', I, 5.

⁹ Ibid., I, 5

*That this meeting contemplates with deep interest the moral & religious wants of the Scottish Settlers in many parts of British North America and resolve that a Society shall be formed in this city and neighborhood with the view of promoting their improvement by means of ministers, catechists, and schoolmasters to be sent to them and by such other means as may be found 10 expedient.*¹⁰

One of the laws of the Society formulated at the meeting, namely that no minister might be sent out who was not licensed or ordained by the Church of Scotland, may be considered partisan. But when one remembers that the source of funds for the Society's operations was Church of Scotland parishes, it does not seem unlikely or unreasonable that the donors expected their money to be used to send Church of Scotland personnel and no others, to British North America.

Laymen and clergymen worked together at all levels of the Society's business. Possibly because Lord Dalhousie had agreed to accept the position of Patron of the Society and Kirkman Finlay, now mayor of Glasgow, that of its President, other laymen of a high calibre took an active part in the Society's financial and practical concerns. Among these laymen were Mr. Richard Kidston of the shipping line of that name. He proved invaluable to the Society not only because of his help in securing passages for clergymen sailing to the colonies, but in all the other business of the Society as well. Equally helpful was Mr. J. D. Bryce, a Glasgow merchant with an agency in York (Toronto). Bryce travelled frequently to the colonies and on these occasions acted as courier and agent of the Society. He carried letters, parcels and intelligence from the Society to the colonial ministers and brought back invaluable information to the Society. Scottish clergymen were, nevertheless, the backbone of the Society. The secretaries, on whom the burden of the correspondence fell, were clergymen and the principal Secretary, the Rev. Mr. Robert Burns, was the Society's most influential figure and chief spokesman. Word of the formation of the Glasgow Colonial Society quickly reached the colonies.



Richard Kidston (1784-1865)

Soon Lanark Township petitioned the Society for financial help towards the salary of a clergyman, promising on their part to provide their minister annually 46 bushels of wheat. Although both Mr. Kirkman Finlay to whom the petition was addressed and Col. Marshall, the superintendent of the Lanark settlement, expressed their support for the Lanark Township petition, the Society firmly asserted that until much greater financial provisions was raised by the settlers, the Society could do nothing. The petition was not forgotten, however, either by the Society, its president, Kirkman Finlay, or Col. Marshall. In its second report, printed in April 1828, the Glasgow Colonial Society wrote,

¹⁰ Glasgow Colonial Society, Reports.



Colonel William Marshal (1774-1864)

The case of Lanark, Upper Canada, has been repeatedly under the notice of the Committee, and more particularly at the time when Colonel Marshall, the superintendent of the Settlement was in Glasgow. His communications, which were transmitted through the medium of the respected President of the Society, were seriously attended to and although difficulties were found to stand in the way of a favourable answer to the petition of the settlers, the Committee resolved to keep it steadily in view and we are at the present date waiting in expectation of some additional information from Mr. Marshall which may lead to the nomination of a minister.

At the same time neighboring Dalhousie Township was seeking help from the Society. On the 5th of September 1825, the Presbyterians of the township petitioned the Society for help in building a church and supporting a minister. To this request the Glasgow Colonial Society replied that it could give no help until a church was built. Three years later the prospects for help seemed brighter. In a letter of thanks to Lord Dalhousie for his generous donation of books for their library, the Dalhousie Scots wrote:

We further trust, from the very laudable and benevolent exertions of that Society, formed in Glasgow, also honoured by your lordship's patronage, that we will ere long be blest by a Gospel preaching by having a stated minister, which, together with the increase of common schools, enables us to enjoy the pleasure of hoping that the rising and future generations will have every facility afforded them of acquiring that degree of knowledge which (even in common life) is so essentially necessary to form the mind to just and equitable principles, and fit it for the discharge of all the social and moral duties of life, good and loyal subjects of our King, and a firm and unbending adherence and attachment to our uncorrupted creed and to our inestimable constitution, the birthright, boast and pride of every true Briton.¹¹

Some two months later, on a more sober note, a representative of the Dalhousie Presbyterians wrote to the Glasgow Colonial Society of the suitability of their new St. Andrew's Hall - which housed their library - as a church, as follows,

As none of the school houses which has as yet been our 'Kirk' has a stove, I have seen poor old Dr. Gemmell, who is now above 80 years of age and who traveled above 8 miles of a very indifferent road once a month for the last three years to preach to us, so shivering with (the cold) that he could hardly articulate. Now, thank God, through the persevering energy of our Society - the St. Andrew's Society - and the liberality of our respectable

¹¹ Haydon, *Pioneer Sketches*, p. 177-8.

*neighbours this difficulty is removed as our new house can contain a Congregation of at least 200 & be comfortable in the most inclement weather.*¹²

Correspondence between the Glasgow Colonial Society and the townships of Lanark and Dalhousie dragged through 1829 but on 27 April, 1830, the Committee of the Glasgow Colonial Society meeting in Glasgow read a letter from Presbyterians of Lanark and Dalhousie townships intimating their union and that £60.17.6 had been subscribed towards a minister's salary - a satisfactory amount. The Committee therefore agreed to offer a suitable licentiate of the Church of Scotland, the Lanark-Dalhousie charge with a supplementary salary of £70 sterling for three years, an unusually generous allowance offered because the townships' minister would not receive a share of a government grant made to specific Church of Scotland charges. A suitable candidate, the Rev. Mr. William MacAlister was chosen, ordained by the Presbytery of Skye, and on the 14th of October 1830, designated in Glasgow to the Lanark-Dalhousie charge. He sailed almost immediately to New York and from there made his way overland as quickly as possible to the village of Lanark. MacAlister was welcomed by his parishioners and successfully ministered to his congregations until 1842.

On the 29th of April, when Mr. MacAlister was still on a sailing vessel crossing the Atlantic heading for New York, a Church of Scotland minister arrived in Perth, the County Seat of Lanark County, and handed Mr. William Morris, an outstanding Presbyterian citizen of the town, a letter of introduction from the Rev. Mr. David Welsh, a Secretary of the Glasgow Colonial Society.¹³ The clergyman had not been sent to Perth by the Society. He had been chosen minister of a newly-formed Church of Scotland congregation in Perth - in a traditional manner. A blank call and bond for the clergyman's support had been sent to a Scottish minister - in this case the Rev. Mr. Alexander Stewart of the parish of Douglas - with the request that Mr. Stewart present the call and bond to a suitable young licentiate of the Church of Scotland. The bond would, of course, have to be sufficiently large to tempt a licentiate to emigrate to the colonies. Mr. Hugh Scott had, after some delay, been chosen but first delayed and finally refused to leave Scotland. The impatient Mr. Morris of Perth wrote Welsh to ask his help in expediting the appointment. Welsh reassured Mr. Morris and when the appointment was finally made, gave Mr. Thomas C. Wilson, the licentiate chosen, a letter of introduction to Mr. Morris. The attitude of the Glasgow Colonial Society to the Perth appointment is expressed in the Society's 5th Report –



William Morris (1786-1858)

¹² 'G.C.S.', 178.

¹³ Letter, David Welsh to William Morris, 11 August 1829, Queens University Archives, Presbyterian Church Synod 1818-35, Box I, File I.

*The newly-erected Church at Perth has been supplied with a minister, the Rev. Thomas C. Wilson, ordained by the Presbytery of Lanark. In his nomination the Society had no concern; but he enjoys their best wishes, and he may rely on their readiness to do him every service in their power.*¹⁴

In late spring of 1831, a convention of Church of Scotland ministers and commissioners brought a major change to every Church of Scotland congregation in the Canadas. At the convention was created the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. Subordinate to it were Presbyteries, and every congregation and minister in the Canadas was attached to one or other of the Presbyteries, The Lanark County congregations and their ministers, Mr. MacAlister and Mr. Wilson, along with the congregations and ministers of Bytown and Kingston, now formed the Presbytery of Bathurst. No longer could a township call a minister on its own initiative; a Presbytery must be consulted. The first township in Lanark County to receive a Glasgow Colonial Society minister after the Presbytery of Bathurst was formed was Beckwith.

Beckwith township was surveyed in 1816 and almost completely settled within six years. Some three hundred Perthshire families, mainly from towns by Loch Tay and Loch Earn, formed the bulk of the Scottish emigrants. They had left Scotland for Beckwith in 1818, through a private arrangement with Lord Bathurst, an arrangement rather similar to the later arrangement made with the Lanark emigrants. To the early Scottish settlers in Beckwith were added Anglican Irish. Of the two national groups, Jean McGill writes in *A Pioneer History of the County of Lanark*,

*Though the Irish immigrants might get along without religious guidance, the Scots were not inclined to be satisfied without their own ordained leader.*¹⁵

Miss McGill had been led to this remark by the fact that in March, 1819, less than a year after their arrival in Upper Canada, a group of the Beckwith Presbyterian Scots walked to Perth to ask the Rev. Mr. Bell, the Secession Presbyterian minister of that town, how they might secure the services of a minister. Bell visited Beckwith and, satisfied with the condition of the people and their desire for a minister, petitioned the Edinburgh Secession Committee (which had sent him to Perth in 1818) for a minister. In 1821 a petition from the Beckwith Presbyterians followed and a year later, in June 1822, a minister arrived in Beckwith from Edinburgh.



Rev. William Bell (1780-1857)

The Rev. Mr. George Buchanan, the Edinburgh minister, was an ordained Secession Presbyterian clergyman. In Edinburgh he had been without a pastoral charge, and he had a large family to support. With some difficulty passage money and adequate outfits for Buchanan and his family had been found.¹⁶ Buchanan remained in Beckwith until his death in 1835. But two years before his death

¹⁴ 'G.C.S.', 5th Report, p. 15.

¹⁵ Jean McGill, *A Pioneer History of the County of Lanark* (Toronto: T.H. Best, 1968), p. 39.

¹⁶ Robert Small, *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church 1733 - 1900 I* (Edinburgh: David M. Small, 1904), p. 204.

a Church of Scotland minister arrived in the township in answer to a petition sent to the Glasgow Colonial Society in 1831 by Beckwith Presbyterians. In a letter written by an unnamed Beckwith Presbyterian to a Mr. Wilson of Glasgow the background of the petition is given. It reads:

Beckwith, 28 Sept. 1831 - In the beginning of the winter of 1819 the Residents wrote a petition to the Governor at Quebec to see if the Township could be supplied with a clergyman of the Kirk of Scotland, and also some aid from Government for his support. To this petition they received no answer. They then applied to the Revd. Wm. Bell of Perth to see if he would send a Petition to the Old Country for a minister. I believe between 70 & 80 members subscribed two Bushels of wheat for his support. Bell wrote the Petition in which he desired that they would send out one of the profession of Hall and Peddie, Edinburgh. We wished for one of the Kirk of Scotland, but we did not know at that time but these men in Edinburgh were of our own opinion, nor did we know at that time but the Kirk of Scotland might be established in Canada as firmly as in Scotland without any trouble: but now we know otherwise. A minister came out but several breaches in the Congregation have taken place. At last Sacrament there were about 120 Communicants. The present minister is disesteemed, and he cannot preach in Gaelic. A petition was sent to the Society signed by Between 70 and 80 individuals, preparations are making for building a place of worship and the erection is to commence in the Spring of 1832.¹⁷

The petition sent from Beckwith to the Glasgow Colonial Society had included a Bond securing £50 annually for five years for their minister. In reply the Society had written that until a church was built it would not consider the subject.

In November the moderator of the Presbytery of Bathurst, the Rev. Mr. Wilson of Perth, on the authority of Presbytery, wrote to the Secretary of the Glasgow Colonial Society concerning the Beckwith petition. An extract of the letter written 22 Nov. 1832 reads:

We, the Presbytery, have judged it expedient earnestly to request that some information may be sent without delay by the Society in regard to the steps which have been taken, and as to what prospect there is of a minister being sent out. I may mention that a good stone Church has been erected at Beckwith. The people are in general industrious and comfortable in worldly circumstances, and warmly attached to the Church of their fathers. And I know of few country places here, where a faithful minister may be more agreeably situated.¹⁸

It was in answer to proddings such as this from Beckwith as well as similar proddings from the Rev. Mr. Peter McLaren, Church of Scotland minister at Lecropt, near Stirling, Scotland, some of whose relatives had emigrated from Perthshire to Beckwith, that the Glasgow Colonial Society sent the Rev. Mr. John Smith to Beckwith township. In addition to granting Smith 3 guineas above his travelling expenses, the Society paid him £40 per annum for two years.¹⁹

¹⁷ 'G.C.S.', Min. I, 19 Jan. 1832.

¹⁸ 'G.C.S.', Ill, 141.

¹⁹ In 1832 Beckwith was placed on the list of Church of Scotland charges in Upper Canada sharing a government grant.

In 1833, the same year it sent John Smith to Lanark County, the Glasgow Colonial Society experimented with a new method of sending preachers to the Canadas. The idea grew from a successful missionary enterprise of the year before. In 1832, at the request of the Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, the Society had chosen and sent to Canada a young licentiate, the Rev. Mr. Matthew Miller. He was to be the Synod's missionary in the Canadas. He itinerated from one Presbyterian community to another with enthusiasm and it was because of the glowing reports he sent home of the opportunity open to Church of Scotland ministers in numbers of towns in the Canadas, that the following year the Glasgow Colonial Society decided to follow the Synod's example and send missionaries to the Canadas. The Society advertised widely for six young ministers, guaranteeing to each £100 Sterling, one half to be paid on his leaving Scotland, the other when he began his labours under one or other of the Canadian Presbyteries. Six ministers were selected from among the applicant and six missionaries sailed in 1833 for Quebec.

Of the six, two, after itinerating in Upper Canada, accepted charges in Lanark County. The Rev. Mr. John Fairbairn, after itinerating for two months in the Bathurst and Johnstown District, accepted a call from Presbyterians in the township of Ramsay, in which the village of Almonte is situated. The Rev. Mr. George Romanes toured the Home and Gore Districts, and the London and Western districts before visiting the eastern part of Upper Canada. There he accepted a call to Smith's Falls an important new centre on the Rideau Canal.



Rev. George Romanes
(1808-1871)

The year John Fairbairn and George Romanes settled in Lanark County, 1833, was a memorable one for the Glasgow Colonial Society's management committee. It was the most productive, yet the most disastrous, that the Society experienced. Eleven ministers, a record number, were sent to the Canadas, but the Society had overspent its income and until it was clear of debt, agreed to make no new appointments to the colonies. Few Church of Scotland clergymen arrived in the Canadas in 1834 and 1835 and the following year, 1836, brought the union of the Glasgow Colonial Society and the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland (the official Church of Scotland missionary body). With union came a gradual reduction in the responsibilities of the Glasgow Colonial Society which led eventually to its demise. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Glasgow Colonial Society sent no more ministers to Lanark County after 1833, leaving the total of its ministers in the County at four. It is of interest to see how these four men fared in British North America.

Mr. McAlister, the first to be appointed, remained in Lanark, ministering to his joint charge of Lanark and Dalhousie for twelve years. Thereafter he moved to Sarnia, Upper Canada and later to Metis, Lower Canada where he died.

Mr. Smith, sent to Beckwith Township, remained in the charge until his death in 1851.

Mr. Fairbairn, the missionary settled in Ramsay Township, returned to Scotland in 1842 and after the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, accepted a call to a Free Church congregation in Berwickshire.

The second missionary, Mr. Romanes, remained at Smith's Falls until 1846 when he was appointed Professor of Classical Literature at Queen's College. He retired in 1850 and returned to Britain.

The four men, therefore, spent a minimum of nine years in Lanark County, vital years in the rapidly growing and maturing settlements in the Canadas and which brought in 1840 the union of the United Synod of Upper Canada (the Secession Presbyterian Synod) and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. Thus, friction which had separated the two bodies for too long was ended.

Ill feeling between Secessionists and Church of Scotland Presbyterians had been evident in Lanark County when MacAlister and Smith arrived in communities already, some Secessionists felt, adequately served by Secession Presbyterian ministers. The charge does not, however, seem justified. The two Secession ministers were old men: when MacAlister came to Lanark, Gemmell was seventy years of age, when Smith arrived in Beckwith, Buchanan was seventy-one or seventy-two. Not only were they unable to hold their congregations together but the question of successors seems never to have been raised. Young, active, and intelligent Methodist itinerants were making converts in the townships - John Ryerson, the brother of Egerton Ryerson, itinerated in Lanark County with success, in the early 1820's. The Baptists were making similar inroads in the largely Presbyterian townships and Sectarians were wandering through the countryside. A Presbyterian wrote, "*Many of the people are actually wandering from one Religious Sect to another as sheep without a shepherd.*"²⁰ Young, active Presbyterian ministers, Church of Scotland or Secessionist were needed who could take over from the older ministers if the younger generation of Scots was to remain within the Presbyterian Church.

Because the United Secession Presbyterian Church did not commence missionary work in the Canadas until 1832 and then confined its interest to the London district of Upper Canada, the only Presbyterian missionary organization prepared to select and send out a suitable minister from Scotland was the Glasgow Colonial Society of the Church of Scotland. The Society's standards were high. A young licentiate of the Church of Scotland who could produce adequate testimonials from respected Church of Scotland ministers and could preach an acceptable sermon to a Glasgow Congregation of which directors of the Society were a part, was the young man they were looking for. Mr. MacAlister was 26 years old when he was accepted by the Society; Mr. Smith was 32. Both ministers and congregations in Lanark were content with the appointments.

When the Lanarkshire weavers, the Perthshire farmers and other Scots prepared to emigrate to Lanark County in the 1820's it was with the expectation that one hundred acres of government granted land would provide them and their children a comfortable living but their hopes were in many cases ephemeral. Much of the land granted was rocky or swampy and unfit for cultivation. In the 1830's depression hit not only Lanark County but all of British North America hampering even the farmers with fertile land. The disillusionment of new settlers in Upper Canada was a factor in the rebellion of the late 1830s. Presbyterian ministers in Lanark also suffered. Their salary was rarely if ever paid in full. They were forced to travel over very indifferent roads

²⁰ Letter, Thomas C. Wilson to John Geddes, 22 Nov. 1832. 'G.C.S.', III, 141.

often in most inclement weather to preach to small congregations in back settlements. But perhaps because of the disillusionment of the 1830's settlers and ministers were able to look forward to the 1840's with more sober, realistic Canadian eyes.

- *Elizabeth Ann Kerr-McDougall (1976)*