THE DECISIVE DECADE

Some aspects of the development and character of the Methodist Central Mission, Auckland, 1927-1937

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by

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INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 1927 the Alexandra Street Church slumbered and decayed in the heart of Auckland City. A young and energetic Home Missionary was appointed to this Church as a social officer to facilitate mission and social work. By the conclusion of a decade, the church, known as the Methodist Central Mission, was the centre of a vital and important social and evangelical outreach into the whole of greater Auckland.

What had brought about this change? Its birth pangs are obviously to be found in the depression, and the efforts of the Methodist Church to become involved in the enormous problem of providing relief for the unemployed. But its development through childhood and into the adolescence of the 'institutional era' can be attributed to the two Missioners, Reverends C.G. Scrimgeour and A.E. Orr.

The study which follows is subtitled: Some aspects of the development and character of the 'Methodist Central Mission' 1927-1937.

It cannot purport to be a complete study of the work conducted from what is now known as the Methodist Central Mission. Rather it is a comment on aspects which have caught my imagination and for which sufficient information is available for comment to be made. It is hoped that what is written adds to the understanding, and allows for a reassessment, of some of the impressions that exist regarding what occurred.

I could have chosen to comment on such sensational aspects as the help given by Mr. Scrimgeour to Mr. Jim Edwards, a well known communist orator fleeing from the police following the 1932 riots, or on the more mundane activities conducted at the Mission, which one would expect to find as part of the regular life of any Methodist Church. Aspects such as these have not been commented on because they are covered in other publications.

Finally, while I am indebted to those who provided much of the information on which this study is based, the responsibility for what is written and the emphasis given in it is entirely my own.

ABBREVIATIONS

Bd M. Board of Management
H.M.B. Home Mission Board
M.C. Minutes of Conference
NZH New Zealand Herald
NZMT New Zealand Methodist Times
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CHAPTER 1

'THE SCRIMGEOUR PERIOD'

At the 1927 Conference of the Methodist Church of New Zealand the decision was made to constitute the Alexandra Street Methodist Church, along with two of its offshoots, the East Street and France Street Missions, as a Home Mission Station. This ratified the action already taken by the Home Mission Board in appointing Rev. Colin Graham Scrimgeour to take charge at Alexandra Street as from 1 January 1927. This action of the Home Mission Board was in response to the report of a commission to the Annual Auckland Synod of November 1926. The Synod in a remit to the 1927 Conference urged Conference to 'speedily deal with the question of appointing a social officer to organize and carry on mission and social work in the city'.

In this respect the Methodist Church was recognizing the need for an agent to facilitate social work in the city before the need for Church involvement was so recognized by other denominations. The Anglican City Missioner to gain some note during the depression of the 1930's Rev. Jasper Calder, was originally appointed solely as an evangelist to the central city. To fill his time he undertook some court work. It was not long before the extension of his court work into general social and relief work was to make the primary demand on his time.

Methodist work had begun at Alexandra Street, then known as Edwardes Street, on 16 March 1851. This was the first Primitive Methodist Church to be opened in Auckland, and though its membership fluctuated through the years the Primitive Methodist concern for the working class remained most marked. For example, a library was established there, endowed by Mr. David Goldie, a prominent Auckland timber merchant who was a dominant personality at the Mission, and the people were urged to read.

This Primitive Methodist ethos of concern for the under-privileged in society, and for the working class in general, was not necessarily shared, or felt to the same extent by the Wesleyans, who had established a Church in Pitt Street. Primitive Methodism in

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1 Alexandra Street is now known as Airedale Street.
2 In 1896 the Wesleyan Conference united with the Free Methodists and the Bible Christians, and became part of the Methodist Australasian Conference. This group united with the Primitive Methodists in 1913 to form the (independent Methodist Conference of New Zealand, A full account of this may be found in Hames, E.W, Out of the Common Way, Wesley Historical Society (N.Z.) 1972.
3 The Pitt Street Church was the successor to the first Wesleyan Church established in Auckland. This building was in High Street, and until recently housed a legal library for the Magistrate's Court.
Britain originated in a rebellion against Wesleyan Church authorities who had sought to veto the visit of an exciting American evangelist who had been invited to conduct "camp meetings". It grew as a movement, highly suspicious of ministerial control, but actively involved in seeking to meet the needs of working class people. Something of this feeling of prejudice between Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists appears to have spilled over into the New Zealand situation.

Notwithstanding this difference of ethos, Auckland Wesleyans were by no means backward in showing their concern for the common people.

Within the inner city area -they had worked from the Helping Hand Mission in Freeman's Bay from 1885-1904, and the larger East Street Mission, with its seating capacity of 1200, from 1904 until the late 1930's. Both Missions had a strong evangelical base and a warmly evangelistic flavour, but the Helping Hand Mission had, in addition, a distinct orientation towards social work. The Helping Hand Mission was essentially a lay enterprise which began with the concern felt by members of the Pitt Street Church during the depressed times of the 1880's. In the manner of the Victorian period they considered it their public duty to be involved in slum work and they centred their efforts on Freeman's Bay.

Deaconesses had been appointed to both these establishments to give help in needy homes. The Helping Hand Mission made the first appointment in the New Zealand Protestant Church of a Sister given to full time social and benevolent work. This was Sister Blakeley - Mrs A.C. Brown, who was appointed about 1886.

By the late 1920's the regular membership of these places of Methodist outreach had been declining and there were strong moves to close the Alexandra Street Mission and sell the property to the Salvation Army. In a similar move, the decision had also been made to sell the East Street Mission late in 1936. It was considered that if the plan to dispose of the Alexandra Street site was successful the next step was to be for Pitt Street to take over the work formerly conducted at Alexandra Street. This proposal was vigorously opposed by Rev. A.J. Seamer, Superintendent Minister of the Home Mission Department, who argued that Pitt Street had had lesser contact with the needy and unemployment, and that the Alexandra Street Mission should be retained as a centre for social work. It was as a result of his urgings, that the Auckland Synod appointed the commission which made the recommendations resulting in the establishment of the Auckland Methodist Mission in 1927.

Rev. C.G. Scrimgeour was appointed to work in a city which was already affected by the onset of what became the great depression. The Home Mission Board and the

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4 G.I. Laurenson, op.cit. Rev. A.J, Seamer was important, in the establishment of Methodist work in many places. His championing of the unorthodox, and his understanding of the unusual movements and the non-conformist, particularly among the
Conference made what must be viewed as a courageous decision in appointing to this work a young man who had little experience of the workings of the Methodist Church. He was not quite 24 years of age, and had only just completed his third year examinations as a Home Mission Probationer, after entering the work in 1923.

He describes himself as an 'accidental Methodist' who was drawn into the Methodist Church following the disquieting experience of witnessing the death of his mother and the cold perfunctory burial service performed by a minister of another denomination. He resolved that he should do something worthwhile with his life. This he had promised his mother on her death-bed, and he gained support in this from the Methodist Minister stationed at Paraparaumu. He accepted the basic creed of the Christian Church, but could not relate to what he saw as the narrow-mindedness of some people within the Church, particularly about doctrinal affairs. As a teenager he had been introduced to the works of Tolstoy by a work-mate, and he read and discussed the volumes he had access to with his friend. Tolstoy put into everyday language the Christian message as Scrimgeour understood it: a message and understanding of which the four months training that he had at Dunhoime, the then Methodist Theological training establishment, did not change. This limited training, plus his work within three home mission stations, the last being at Kawakawa in the Bay of Islands, was all the experience he had had of the Methodist Church, and all their systems of operation.

The foresight and wisdom that Mr. Seamer showed in advising the appointment of Scrimgeour was shown in the energetic way that Scrimgeour threw himself into finding out what the needs of the unemployed and the down-and-outs were, and in initiating the methods of alleviating the distress he discovered.

One such attempt to find out exactly what the conditions of the unemployed entailed was to gain for Scrimgeour a good deal of publicity. The story of his three days and two nights tramping the city in old clothes, with unwashed and unshaven face, in the company of Mr. L.C. Horwood, a theological student, was taken up by the major daily newspapers. The (Auckland) Sun described it as the means by which 'Mr. Scrimgeour and his friend...gained valuable knowledge which was necessary for a Missioner to get to know what the men do and what they feel so that a definite line of action can be taken to alleviate distress.' The Herald subtitled its article 'Study of Unemployment' and continued to describe what had been discovered in the 'slums and by-ways of Auckland. ...in the search of first-hand information on the unemployed question.'

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Maori, often unsupported by other church leaders, is seen not only with the way he promoted Scrimgeour, but also in Michael King's Te Puea, Auckland 1977, and James Henderson's Ratana: The Man, the Church, and the Political Movement, Reed, 1972.

Edwards, L. Scrim - Radio Rebel in Retrospect, Auckland, 1971, p.8. Scrimgeour was born 30 January, 1903,
Scrimgeour and Horwood discovered that the recipients of church welfare 'considered that the religious helpers of the poor were only parasites. . and that the work of the missions and other charitable organizations afforded only temporary relief, that the unemployed evil is only suspended and that nothing definite is done.'

They were also surprised to discover that there was no talk about Bolshevism amongst the genuinely unemployed. Only the unemployable spoke about this subject. What the men really wanted was work and steady pay.

Unfortunately, this unorthodox, but genuine piece of research was misinterpreted by some within the Methodist Church. In later years after he had left the Church he gained a much wider notoriety as a broadcaster, this incident was described as part of 'his boyish love of the spectacular and the limelight'.

Today this is an accepted method of increasing the awareness and sensitivity of agents employed by the 'Inner City Mission' in Wellington.

As part of their training, members of the team are given a very small amount of money, and required to spend some time in the city fending for themselves: Modern-day Scrimgeours and Horwoods, discovering the conditions for themselves.

The experience Scrimgeour gained from this exercise was, without doubt, of great value to him as he eagerly set about organizing methods of bringing relief to those who came to the mission.

C.G. Scrimgeour began work in a city where the organization of relief work was in a chaotic state. Individual businesses had benevolent funds and the Auckland Hospital Board had a charitable fund. There was little co-operation between each of these agencies and the unscrupulous, professional beggars could live quite comfortably by 'doing the rounds' of the agencies and getting a relief grant from each of them. This was probably but one of the 'tricks of the trade' that Scrimgeour had been made well aware of during his few days as a tramp.

Some petitioners even went to the lengths of placing pillows under their skirts to sham pregnancy, or taking the Missioner to see a wife tucked up in bed in a darkened room: her deathly pallor effected by whiting.

No relief organization of the time, particularly the Methodist Central Mission, had inexhaustible funds. This lack of funds for relief work was one of the greatest

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7 The Sun, op. cit. 'The investigation had its amusing side, for there are tricks in every trade. Advice was given on the best methods of obtaining clothing, food and beds.'
problems facing the workers at the Mission. In normal circumstances, an established Methodist church would have regular contributions from parishioners of which some would be designated for relief work. The Mission was both short of members and short of funds. Rev. C.G. Scrimgeour recalls attending an evening service at the Alexandra Street Church just before taking up his appointments. He found that those attending numbered three: the preacher, himself, and one other.

In 1929, the Church was able to provide some assistance for Scrimgeour through the generosity of Mrs Smith, of Smith and Caughey Limited. She agreed to pay the two hundred pounds necessary for the salary of Rev. L.C. Horwood, who by this time was a probationary minister. He found time to go carefully through the membership roll and reported to the Board of Management that the actual membership of the circuit was: France Street 30, and Central Mission 27. In 1927 the membership was most likely fewer than this, hardly a sound base from which to obtain funds for social work. Some other means had to be found. This was achieved through the Business Men's Relief Service, which Scrimgeour organized in 1928. Scrimgeour's spontaneity, sympathy with the poor man and open unclerical personality quickly won for him the confidence of the business community. He canvassed all the big business houses, and gained strong backing from prominent businessmen like Mr. Robert Laidlaw, the founder of the Farmers Trading Company. Scrimgeour guaranteed that anyone who was referred to him would be interviewed and that all funds given would be used for philanthropic purposes. A chit system was used, and the chit when presented at the required depot would be redeemed with the goods written on it.

The Farmers Trading Company allowed basic commodities like flour, sugar, and boots to be charged at wholesale rates to the Business Men's Relief Service.

Hundreds of people were helped in this way, and as each applicant was carefully checked, and all aid from the business houses was now being handled by Scrimgeour's relief service, the scrounger was eliminated.  checking the petitioners the staff at the Mission worked closely with the Auckland Social Workers' Association, of which

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8 Minutes of the Board of Management, 29 July 1929. In a Methodist Circuit, the governing body of the circuit is its Quarterly Meeting. At the 'Central Mission,' the Board of Management exercised the same function as the Quarterly Meeting, but its membership is increased, to include representatives appointed by the Connexion. These were usually members of the Home Mission Department and the Ministers of adjacent circuits. A Central Mission has the right to appeal for support beyond its boundaries. This expanded membership is designed to prevent any problems occurring when such appeals are made, and it also recognises the right of neighbouring circuits to refer needy cases to the Central Mission for assistance. G.I. Laurenson, Interview, 29 December, 1978.
Scrimgeour was the Treasurer. Each agency maintained a list of those whom they were aiding, and supplied this list to the Association. Before aid was given to any petitioner a check was made with the Association by telephone to make sure that the person was not "on the books" of any other agency. In 1930 the Mission had over 500 needy families on its books, and therefore, its responsibility. Other abuses were also eliminated. It had been commonplace for men to take the cash equivalent of the goods designated to help their families, and spend it on liquor and cigarettes. This practice was eliminated by marking the chit redeemable only to the petitioner's wife.

In its first year of operation the Business Men's Relief Service dispersed no less than 10,000 parcels of food and clothing, and 5000 beds and meals for workless men. At its busiest over 200 cases were dealt with each day. This cost over one thousand pounds, all but about fifteen pounds coming from contributions made by the business community.

The businessmen of Auckland remained solidly behind Mr. Scrimgeour while he was at the mission. The Relief Service did not lapse until after he resigned from the Church in 1932.

In 1931 they placed four thousand pounds in the hands of the missioner for his work, as well as giving other assistance. For example, during the winter months R. & W. Hellaby Ltd, provided over 250 gallons of soup weekly which was distributed from the newly opened soup kitchen in the Airedale Street building.

This was the first soup kitchen opened in Auckland to cater for women and children, and from 3.30 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. daily anyone who took a billy had it filled - no questions asked.

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10 The Salvation Army provided soup for unemployed men at St. Paul Street and Returned Servicemen could get soup at Fort Street. NZH 15 July 1931, p. 3.
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The needs of the Mission were also effectively advertised among Methodist people. The churches throughout the Auckland province sent both cash and goods to assist. Tons of produce and truck loads of meat were received and distributed. Without this assistance from the city businessmen and the people of the Auckland province much less effective work would have been done. It was a tribute to Mr. Scrimgeour and his organizing ability that this was facilitated.

In addition to occasional support given to the workers at the Mission, like the case of the support of Mr. Horwood already mentioned, additional support came from the Pitt Street Trustees, who paid the stipend of the deaconesses stationed at the Mission for a period of at least two years. The money to pay the stipend came from the revenue accrued from the Pitt Street Buildings, a block of shops on the corner of Pitt Street and Karangahape Road owned by the Pitt Street Church. The Pitt Street Trust also made the one hundred pound grant which was used to furnish the Alexandra Street parsonage for Mr and Mrs Scrimgeour.

From the middle of 1927 Mr. Scrimgeour began to make plans to extend the evangelistic outreach of the Mission. He had grasped that the "moving picture" had become a great draw card, especially for young people. This had been proven by the crowds of children who attended the free community picture entertainments that had been held in the Alexandra Street Church on Thursday evenings.

In his advocacy of this method of providing religious instruction, Scrimgeour believed that he was responding to the times. He did not agree that the introduction of motion-pictures into the church meant cheapening a sacred service, as some had suggested to him. He said it depended entirely on how they were introduced. Some preachers, he argued, had cheapened the pulpit, but that was no argument for abolishing preachers. He also believed that this was a way of reaching the young people who were rejecting the inflexibility of the Church, with its rigid system of worship, based on hymns, a prayer, a sermon and a collection. Some criticized these ideas for putting commerce

11 It took some time to convince the Methodists in the Auckland Province that they should support the work of the Mission. For a number of years the Church Courts were urging their people to give to the Mission and commending the work to them. However, by 1931 the Mission 'was rejoicing that we have received the whole-hearted co-operation of Methodist people throughout the Province', NZMT, 5 September, 1931, p.3. M.C. 1932, p.113.

12 A Trust administers all the buildings, properties of the local church, and revenue generated by the use of these, on behalf of the Methodist Church of New Zealand, under the Methodist Model Deed of 1887.

13 For a considerable period the revenue from these shops was used to aid new and worthy causes throughout the Auckland Province. The Pitt Street Trust recognized that the deaconess work of the Central Mission aided people who lived within the bounds of their circuit and made this grant accordingly. G.I. Laurenson, Interview 29 December, 1978.
into religion. Scrimgeour said he was using modern business practices, which stressed flexibility, to change the age-old machinery of the church which was hampering its effectiveness. He was reported as saying that: 'The Church to me is the highest form of business. It is my Father's business. It caters for the greatest needs of humanity, the moral and spiritual uplift, and yet the Church very often lacks ordinary business acumen'. He did not think that there was sufficient return for the time and energy he was expending on the Sunday evening services. He resolved to reorganize - more effectively to meet the needs of his time.

Scrimgeour therefore, began to make enquiries about hiring a cinema. He had some success, and after reporting on the matter to the Board of Management, he was authorized to hire a cinema for three months. Whether anything came of this initial authorization is not known by the writer, but on 29 October, 1928 the Board gave approval for the Strand Theatre\textsuperscript{14} to be hired for Sunday evenings on a trial basis.

Permission was not only required from the Board for this venture: the civic authorities and the police also had to agree. This permission had taken some time to get. The Commissioner of Police had raised no objection, provided the minimum safety requirements for the theatre of at least two firemen and a qualified projectionist were adhered to. The Mayor, Mr. Hutchinson, however took a while longer to convince. His final reluctant permission was not forthcoming until Scrimgeour threatened to make a start with or without it.

The evenings took the form of a short period of community singing and musical items, followed by a section of a film, and then an inspirational address from Scrimgeour.\textsuperscript{15} For the first few weeks excerpts were screened from \textit{The King of Kings}, and the service immediately became a tremendous attraction. The Theatre had a capacity audience of 1500, and it was invariably full. Indeed, on numerous occasions as many as 400 were unable to gain admission. Scrimgeour was also a great attraction. Rev. L.C. Horwood recalls that "Scrim could get on that stage and talk splendidly. I don't know that there was any great depth in anything he ever said. . . often it was quickly prepared over tea an hour or so before the service. . . but he had a way of putting things that made people listen, and he was always interesting."

The Strand services however, were viewed with growing suspicion by many of the orthodox preachers of the city. First of all there was the suggestion that people who would otherwise be attending regular church services were flocking into the Strand.

\textsuperscript{14} The Strand stood on the site of the present Cinerama Theatre.

\textsuperscript{15} An advertisement in \textit{The Sun}, 9 February, 1929 reads: 'The preacher at the Methodist Central Mission at 11.00 a.m. tomorrow will be the Rev. C.G. Scrimgeour. At the evening service in the Strand Theatre, the conclusion of \textit{The Wanderer}, the film story of the Prodigal Son, will be screened. The soloist will be Mr S. Couch'.

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Some of the audience may have fallen into this category, but most were those who would never normally darken the door of a church. These audiences were not always easy to speak to. At the beginning a couple of policemen were employed as a precautionary measure, as sometimes whole football teams would come in and sit together threatening to do all manner of things, none of which ever eventuated.

The President of the Methodist Conference, Rev. J.F. Goldie, wrote very highly of these services and of the work accomplished. He stressed that he had had "testimonies from the most unexpected quarters - men in the streets and men on the trams, who have spoken to me of your work, some of whom never enter church, but who attend your services, and I am sure are greatly influenced for good."

The second reason for viewing these services with suspicion was due to them being held in a cinema on a Sunday evening. The Methodist Church, along with other denominations, had long maintained that the Lord's Day was not a day for public entertainment. The use of film on a Sunday was not an acceptable form of evangelism. There was also the fear that this would be the 'thin edge of the wedge' and that soon others would capitalize on the relaxing of the ban on Sunday cinema openings. This matter was extensively discussed by the Mission Board of Management, but "the suggestion that a dangerous precedent was being created by the exhibition of films on Sunday was disconfirmed by the meeting. The members being of the opinion that the services could not possibly be confused with entertainments, and they reconfirmed their confidence in the present policy. . . ." However, by the end of 1930, the fear that Sunday entertainments becoming acceptable would grow from this, were realized. The New Zealand Methodist Times reported that 'during the winter months (of 1930) as many as seven and eight theatres, several of them within a stone's throw of the Strand, and representing a seating capacity of from 13,000 to 15,000 had been open in Auckland on a Sunday night, and in one only, besides their own, were religious services being held.'

For some months there was growing pressure upon the Mission to discontinue the use of films. It was said that this merely emboldened other organizations with the result that 'Auckland's Sunday night was rapidly becoming a night of entertainments.'

Many blamed the Mission that the situation had arisen, and others stated that they were unable conscientiously to support the Mission, as the Sunday night service was tying the hands of the civic authorities, hindering their attempts to prohibit Sunday entertainments. Eventually, the decision was made to stop the use of films, this being effected by 10 October, 1930. A few weeks afterwards the City Council prohibited Sunday entertainments.

The other was the service held by Rev. Lionel B. Fletcher of the Beresford Congregational Church in the Majestic Theatre 246 Queen Street).
Immediately, the numbers attending the Strand Service dropped dramatically. Deprived of the former collection takings, the Mission, with its meagre resources, could no longer afford to hire a cinema the size of the Strand. At a special meeting of the Board of Management on 23 October, 1930, 'called to determine the immediate policy of the Mission. . . , it was resolved that the Lewis Eady Hall be rented for the evening service, commencing November 2nd (Terms three pounds weekly, two pounds ten shillings, if taken for 6 months).

The services in the Lewis Eady Hall lasted until 18 January, 1931. During this period the congregation averaged 100. The Board of Management, therefore, decided that as the collection did not cover the expenses each week and the Airedale Street Church would seat 200 comfortably that from 25 January the services would be held there. This ended a bold experiment in evangelistic outreach. The rapid decline in attendance which followed the cessation of the screening of films would indicate for some that this was not an effective form of evangelism. However, as only scant information is available about what contacts were forged between individuals attending these services and the Mission such a judgment is not altogether fair. The minutes of the Board of Management record that: "Testimonials as to the help received by the Mission and the services had been received by the Missioner (Scrimgeour) and the Assistant Missioner (Rev. L.C. Horwood)."17

In 1930 the Rev. E.T. Olds was appointed to the Mission as Superintendent Minister. The suggestion has been made to the writer that this was to 'put Scrim's theology in order', and to curb his tendency to make pronouncements on social questions. Scrimgeour, his lack of experience notwithstanding, had been appointed by the Methodist Synod as its representative on the Auckland Ministers' Association, and then, by this group as its Secretary.

In this capacity he made statements to the press on matters which were referred to him, and 'there were all sorts of social questions on which he expressed views that were advanced, to put it mildly, and his critics, like most shocked people, did not usually put it mildly.'

Scrimgeour made it quite clear what he believed to be the task of a social worker, and where the roots of unemployment and distress which surrounded his work lay. In his report to the Church in 1931 he wrote: 'A general survey of the whole problem of social life in the City must only emphasize the great necessity for the contribution that our Church has to make in this sphere, and while relief generally may be regarded in the light of a palliative we dare not withhold it. It seems the greatest usefulness

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17 Minutes Bd. M., 21 October, 1929. At the same meeting Sister Bessie McFarlane reported 'that several adherents of the Strand services had spoken very appreciatively of the Strand Theatre services'.

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towards which we can direct our social effort in the future will be the rehabilitation of the unemployed and their families. To successfully accomplish this work it is not only necessary to meet the temporal needs of the people but to assure them that even though our social system can find no place for them 'He that bids the weary and heavy-laden to come unto Him will in no wise cast them out.'

Likewise, when he made his first radio broadcast following the riot outside the Town Hall in April 1932 he said that the rioters were "just people who were mistaken in their methods, but that they were desperate people, and they did not set out to create a riot, but if the battens that they used are effective in drawing the attention of the government and the people of New Zealand to an unnecessary situation, then that's the best use the Methodist Church has been put to in the last hundred years."

Naturally this broadcast wasn't well received. People could agree with supporting charity: but Scrimgeour made it clear where he felt their social responsibility lay. John A. Lee saw the broadcast differently. 'It happened that the Scrim broadcast was the one that steadied - the one that realized riot was rooted in distress and that the need was to end riot, not by subjecting the hungry to greater punishment and stress, but by dealing with causes."

It may well be true, then, that there was a feeling that Scrim needed curbing. The suggestion, however, that an ordained minister be appointed came from Scrimgeour himself. He wrote to the 'M.M. [Methodist Mission] executive [of the Board of Management] stating that the work had grown to such proportions that he felt that the time had come for a suitable ordained minister with special gifts for that position to be appointed to take charge of the general and evangelistic work, so as to permit his (the present Missioner's) time being devoted almost entirely to social work.' This proposal was agreed to, and Rev. E.T. Olds was eventually appointed.

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18 In 1931 the Methodist Church made a Statement on unemployment and released its Social Creed. See appendices IV and V.
19 Simpson, T. The Sugarbag Years, Martinborough, 1976, p. 153, A reference to the fact that the rioters, who had been provoked by a police baton charge, had ripped the palings off the picket fence surrounding the Mission to use as weapons. See also The Scrim-Lee Papers; C.G. Scrimgeour and John A. Lee remember the crisis years, 1930-40, edited by Tony Simpson, Wellington, 1976, p.33.
20 NZMT 14 December, 1929, p.9, In his address to the 1930 Conference Scrimgeour reportedly said: "We have a staff of three but we put through more social service than a similar organization with fourteen assistants. I am thoroughly in accord with the appointment of an ordained minister as Superintendent. Dealing with two hundred cases a day for five days is a man's task alone. Prison Chaplaincy in itself is quite sufficient for one man." NZMT, 22 March, 1930, p.13.
This dual appointment of Scrimgeour, who had already proved himself in social work, and Olds, who had won 'golden opinions' during his previous appointment in the Auckland East Circuit, was viewed with great optimism by the Church.

Unfortunately, the potential of these two men working together was never realized. They were not compatible, and their relationship could not have been enhanced when Mr. Olds a reputable speaker undertook some preaching at the Strand Services and attempted to deliver an orthodox address. He discovered that even a few minutes of this was 'resented and ridiculed'.

It was not surprising, therefore, that at the end of 1930, a year which had been plagued with difficulties, particularly the financial difficulties arising from the demise of the Strand services, that it was recommended that the appointments for 1931 revert again to one agent and a deaconess. 1930 was the year of the Napier Earthquake. The Church felt the need to make a strong appointment to give a lead in the reconstruction of the city, and subsequently the 1931 Conference appointed Mr. Olds to this task.

One facet of the work of the Mission which had both evangelistic and social work aspects was that of the "Down and Out" Meetings. The work of this body was directed by, and is a testimonial to, Mr. Frank Williams, Mr. Albert Hamblin, Mr. R. Scelly and Mr. M.R. Souster. This group met in the Alexandra Street buildings on a Saturday evening. In 1927, when C.G. Scrimgeour was appointed Missioner, these meetings were already established, and conducted by Mr. Williams.

He gathered the down and outs in from the streets and served them with pies that were left over from the race meeting. After the pies were eaten Mr. Williams would give an address, and afterwards talk with the men. The *New Zealand Herald* described the work of this meeting as 'another chapter of Harold Begble's work *Broken Earthware* and reminiscent of Jerry Macauley's *Down in Water Street*', while *The Sun* gave the following description, which well captures the mood of the meeting: "They are coarsely clad, unshaven and unwashed some of them. A few are drunk. Most of them have heard the sullen jangle of clanging doors in the Mount Eden Gaol. These men are "members" of the "Down and Out" club. It is Saturday evening. They drift into the room In ones and twos - derelicts from the streets In search of a cup of tea or a bed. It is a sanctuary for them, and perhaps the beginning of a new life - a life without fear or hunger or hatred against the conventional order of things. A silence is broken by the stumbling words of a man

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21 These meetings are not to be confused with the "Down and Out Mission" organized by Mr Harry Johnson. He was an Anglican layman, with a licence to preach, who worked in the evenings from buildings in Hobson Street. He did an important and saintly work, particularly among the elderly, showering them, cutting their nails, and otherwise attending to their needs.
unaccustomed to public speaking. He falters, goes on again. Words fall earnestly, disconnectedly, the speech is that of a simple man, but he is telling a story as old as Christianity itself.

At some stage in 1928 Mr. Williams transferred some, if not all of his work to a hall in Albert Street. Assisted by his wife in this independent venture also known as the Down and Out Mission, he opened the hall each evening. Approximately 40 men slept there, and on three nights a week they were provided with meal tickets. This was financed by goodwill subscriptions from the people of the city. Williams found suitable employment for some 600 men in 1929.

The Down and Out work remained a prominent feature of the work of the Mission throughout the entire period under review. From 1933 onwards the stalwarts of this work were Mr. R. Scelly and Mr. M. Souster, the latter assuming full responsibility for the meeting in 1937.

Like the former workers they were aided by occasional helpers from other organizations who were rostered to help. For example, members of the Methodist Young Women's and Young Men's Bible Classes, the students from the Bible Training Institute, and Trinity College took their turn. Besides helping with the meal, they would also lead the singing of hymns, stage a few simple items, and occasionally a playette based on some bible story. From 1934 onwards large attendances were recorded and between 4,000 and 5,000 meals were dispensed each year. The 1938 Minutes of Conference, reporting on the activities of 1937, report that the hall was often crammed to its capacity. It would appear that these attendances were partially explained by a greater emphasis on evangelism in the meetings. The accent on evangelism is accentuated in the annual reports from 1934. For instance, the 1937 Conference Minutes reported that: 'No one can enter the Central Mission meeting on Saturday evening and not hear the Gospel.'

Perhaps, by comparison, this was a comment on the less polished and less professional meeting prior to 1933.

Among the members of the mission congregation, there were many who were quietly prepared to assist the more outgoing amongst their number who worked directly with the poor and unemployed. One of the earliest groups to be formed was the Women's

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22 F. Winiata, op. cit. Mrs Winiata took part in a number of these meetings in her late teens while a member of the Onehunga Bible Class.

23 1934 nearly 4,000 meals.
   1935 4,000 meals with 80-200 men attending each Saturday.
   1936 between 4,000 and 5,000 meals.
   1937 4,500 meals

M.C., 1935-38.
Committee. The establishment of this committee was initiated on 4 March, 1928 by Mrs Scrimgeour. She told the women who were present at the weekly meeting of the Women's Own\textsuperscript{24} that such a committee was necessary:

"1. To assist Sister Bessie McFarlane when she arrives.
2. To be able to show something definite in the work amongst the women.
3. To be ready to lend assistance in any way necessary to the Mission in general. . . ."

The Meeting elected Mrs Scrimgeour President, Mrs MacQuillan Convener, and Mrs Nisbett as Secretary. This group was of great assistance to Sister Bessie, and enabled her to maintain a very effective work among the women and children, -the chief sufferers as the result of unemployment and consequent poverty'.

In later years this group operated a sewing circle. These ladies working alongside Sister Jessie MacKenzie, could not afford to give money, but generously gave of their time to make garments for the poor.

In addition to groups distinguished by their title, e.g. the Sewing Circle, a useful body of workers laboured alongside the missioner to maintain the activities. By 1929 this band numbered between 30 and 40 without whom the work would have undoubtedly suffered.

The work of the deaconesses within the church often goes unheralded, but they need to be given an equal place alongside the Missioners. They too, knew the suffering of working alongside the poor, needy, sick and unemployed. The task involved long hours without any relaxation, and as a result this seriously affected their health. At least two of the deaconesses were forced to withdraw through ill health, Sister Bessie in 1930 and Sister Rita Snowden in 1932. Sister Rita was appointed to ‘Special Service’ at the Kurahuna Maori Girl's Home in Onehunga, for 1933, to allow her to recuperate. She returned to the Central Mission though not fully recovered, in 1934, and worked there for a further five years.

The emotional strain of the situation affected both Missioners and Deaconesses alike. Scrimgeour, a man with 'a great compassion for people in real need-' took the inevitable relapses back into their old ways by reformed drunks, and others, very hard. One observer recalls ‘Scrim put his head in his hand. . . and wept like a child. . . ’ [over one such man].

During 1931 Scrimgeour agreed to take on occasional broadcasting work from the station 1ZR, operated by Lewis Eady Ltd. Originally, he was only one of a team of Ministers, and other church agents, who were rostered to provide a daily devotional.

\textsuperscript{24} Essentially a fellowship meeting, it held stalls and sold home-made goods from time to time to raise funds.
session for listeners. Many of the other contributors were Supernumeraries, and not always in the best of health, or able to adapt their style to this new media. Scrimgeour, with his easy manner of talking, soon established himself as a popular contributor. He took a keen interest in the technical problems associated with broadcasting: using the microphones and talking to an audience with which he had no immediate contact. So that he could gain some useful tips, he took the opportunity to visit the Auckland Telephone Exchange and observe how the problems broadcasters faced, were eliminated there.

Lewis Eadys quickly recognised Scrimgeour's expertise, and whenever a contributor was indisposed, and had to be replaced at short notice, or simply gave up, unable to master this new means of communicating with people they would telephone Scrimgeour, who would hurry down Queen Street from the Mission and take the session. Before the end of 1931 he was not only conducting daily devotional services, but he was working with 'Uncle' Tom, Mr T.T. Garland, on a children's session.

These sessions further extended Scrimgeour's reputation. As 'Uncle Scrim,' he formed a 'very wide circle of friends . . . throughout the whole Dominion', his popularity being measured by the 'scores of letters [that were] received, testifying to the spiritual value of the work'. As he became more immersed in radio work he soon grasped the importance of this medium. At a time when newspapers were the only other mass communicator, the radio could make a tremendous impact.

The Methodist Church, however, was not as convinced as Scrimgeour about the value of this media, and when his proposals that the Church should acquire broadcasting facilities were rejected, he decided that he would follow his 'special call to the broadcasting service'.

On October 1932 he advised the officials of the Mission of his intention to resign at the end of the year.

Both the Mission officials and the Home Mission Board Executive expressed their regret at his decision. At this stage Mr Scrimgeour did not intend to cut himself off entirely from the Church, as he expressed his hope that he would be able to continue to assist the Mission. He also retained his membership of the Social Service Mission and his place on 'the [Preaching] Plan as a Local Preacher'.

These intentions, however, did not last. His devotional sessions took on a new image. On 23 January, 1933, pursuant to the provisions of the Marriage Act of 1908, the

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25 I could find no reference to this offer in the minutes of the H.M.B. or the Executive of the H.M.B. Scrimgeour also mentioned the offer in my interview with him. Edwards, L. p.47. It was agreed that Scrimgeour should be presented with the furniture from the parsonage as a parting gift. Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, 16 January, 1933.
Fellowship of the Friendly Road was gazetted, with Mr Colin Graham Scrimgeour as its officiating minister. Mr Thomas Threager Garland was likewise gazetted on 3 May.

So began the world's first Radio Church. The Fellowship was undenominational, Mr Scrimgeour being 'convinced...that it is possible to deal with life and religion with sufficient breadth to be of help to adherents to all shades of belief. His message had a strong socialist -humanist - Christian flavour, and it appealed to the escapism necessary to give hope in a brighter future to those suffering in the depression.

The programme stressed the need to develop the spirit of working together. 'Uncle Scrim', in response to a request to define the Friendly Road, wrote; "I am often asked the question, what is the Friendly Road? The best answer I can give is that it is an expression of the brotherhood of man, the breaking down of intolerance. Ask yourself this question: 'which would you rather be, a flood-lit cathedral, or a tin tabernacle with a light in the window to hearten some hungry soul?' If you know the right answer, you know the spirit of the Friendly Road".

In retrospect, it would seem, that the Church lost something when its vision did not extend far enough forward to include Scrimgeour and his radio work within its operations. An appointment to a radio ministry would not have been without precedent. In the United States such appointments had been made. Perhaps it was thought that involvement in such work would lower the tone of the ministry. If this was true, then there is some irony in the fact that only five years later, when Sunday evening services of worship were being broadcast from the National Station, that the Board of Management felt that the 'Central Mission evening service should be entitled to a proportion of evening broadcasts.' Further, the mission superintendent, Rev. A.E. Orr was broadcasting from 1ZJ on Mondays and Thursdays, and in 1937 the Radio Church of 'The Helping Hand' was inaugurated.

The Radio Church of the Helping Hand had been operating in Dunedin from 4ZM from 1935. In Auckland, as in Dunedin, this venture allowed devotional material to be broadcast as well as the making of appeals for assistance to the Mission. Was there

For an account of this see: Clements, K.P. 'The Churches of Social Policy, a study in the relationship of ideology to action', Ph.D., Victoria University, Wellington, 1970, p.296f.

An example of this comforting assurance of a brighter future was expressed in the theme song of one of the fellowship's programmes:

'There's a new day in view,
There's gold in the blue.
There's hope in the heart's of men.
All the world's on the way
To a happier day; for the road is open again.'

any essential difference between this, and the radio work of Scrimgeour before his resignation?

While he was at the Mission, every Court to which he was responsible regularly expressed its appreciation and full confidence in the work of the Missioner and his assistants.

As has been already mentioned, in later years, with Scrimgeour a national figure, and with the memory of the depression years growing dimmer in the midst of post-war prosperity, several commentators drew conclusions about the earlier period and Scrimgeour's work at the Mission, that were basically unfair.28 They seemed to forget that these were 'truly desperate days . . . and that Scrim did a good job, a good practical job that was necessary because the poverty was so widespread. Had time been spent doing anything else people would have been dying all around him . . .' 'He made a bigger contribution than given credit for', said the Rev. G.I. Laurenson.

28 See (i) Edwards, L,, p. 11 - a summary of Scrimgeour's activities and social views, for which he was criticized for having 'no idea of time.'
(ii) Reid, A.J.S., p.139 "But Scrimgeour failed to build up any stable organization at the Methodist Mission, and alienated other social workers by his stubbornness in preferring spectacular rather than effective schemes. His boyish love of his career in the Church, yet his open, earnest ingenuousness endeared him to most of those who knew him"!
CHAPTER II
'THE ORR PERIOD'

It was the opinion of the 1933 Conference of the New Zealand Methodist Church that a 'bold forward move' should be made to allow the establishment of an Auckland Methodist Central Mission.

To facilitate this work, Conference appointed Rev. A. Everil Orr minister, under the superintendency of Rev. A.J. Seamer. Mr Orr was a probationer who had just completed his training at Trinity College. He was already known within Auckland. On 9 September 1932 the Trust of the Franklin Road Church, meeting with some representatives of the Ladies Guild, had decided to begin investigations into the possibility of arranging for Mr Orr's appointment to Franklin Road. Rev. Robert Raine in suggesting the special appointment of Mr Orr said 'he knew him . . . and he possessed unlimited energy and spirituality'.

Mr Orr brought to the Mission a definite vision of how things should be conducted. He felt that the work conducted by the previous Missioner was only touching the edge of the problem - acting as a relief agency for those who requested it. He was determined to make the work visible on an institutional basis.

Orr, perhaps because of his theological training, and his background, believed that the first note to strike in his new venture was an evangelistic one.

He believed 'that the emphasis should always be on the spiritual rather than on the material - to him the feeding of men's bodies [and presumably women and children's, too], important though it be, should be placed second to the saving of their souls'. This emphasis, and its effect on the 'down and out' meetings has already been discussed, and it may well be the reason why there is no definite mention of relief work in his first report to Conference. It was probably through this omission that Reid referred to the Mission's virtual ineffectiveness after Scrimgeour's departure. There may have been a temporary diminishing of relief work, but by the second half of 1933 relief work was again evident and growing in importance. A report in the New Zealand Methodist Times of 19 August, 1933 outlines the activities of a Boy's Club meeting on Mondays, where 'the boys have their ailments treated, and so many are

29 Parker, W., In the midst of the city, pp. 30-31. Mr Orr has the distinction in N.Z. Methodism of having spent his entire ministry of 40 years in one appointment. In 1970, with two years to complete, he was one of two in world Methodism to achieve this distinction.
31 See Parker, W. , p.31 for description of Mr Orr's background.
undernourished, they are given a bowl of hot soup before going home', and an account is given of the activities of the down and out meetings ['Men's Fellowship], Mr Orr's work, and the work of Sister Jessie McKenzie. 'Passer - By', who wrote the account, said it was 'a labour of love . of which the Church would be proud'.

It would have been an impossible task to maintain the relief at the level of the later years of the 'Scrimgeour period' following the lapsing of the Business Men's Relief Service. The only funds for relief work were available from the Benevolent Fund, which had been established in the interval between Scrimgeour's departure and Orr taking up his appointment. The Fund was established with 25 pounds, and during the first quarter of its operation twelve pounds fifteen shillings and sixpence was expended.

Relief work funded by this means rapidly grew in importance. During its first year of operation a total of two hundred and thirty two pounds, eight shillings and sixpence was spent on benevolent work, and by 1937 this had grown to two thousand, two hundred and twenty pounds. In 1934 there was some easing of this burden once the Mayor's Metropolitan Relief Committee, of which Mr Orr was a member, was established.

As an addition to the other relief work undertaken by the mission a clinic was inaugurated in 1933, from which Dr Howie, a medical practitioner, Mr C. Martyn, an optician, and Mr H.D. Crump a dentist, began operation in 1934 presumably on a part-time basis. This was but one part of the social service work which was maintained during the period under review, as were the court, hospital, and prison chaplaincies which had begun in Scrimgeour's time.

The remainder of this essay is devoted to two aspects of the Mission: the formation of the Social Service Association, and the establishment of the 'institutional' phase of Central Mission life as seen in the building of the Children's Health Camp at Campbell's Bay, and the acceptance by Conference, of the plan to erect new buildings on the Mission site. In essence it is this which distinguishes the 'Scrimgeour period' from the 'Orr period'.

The formation of a Methodist Social Service Association was not a new idea. It had been discussed for a number of years as a means of ensuring centralization of social service effort. The 1931 Conference made the first positive step in forming such an association, by referring the matter to the Temperance and Public Morals Committee to formulate a policy and organization.

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32 Minutes Bd. M. , 16 January 1933. The establishment of this Fund was proposed by Rev. A.J.Seamer, who no doubt perceived some of the difficulties the new Missioner would face.
33 Later renamed the Public Questions Committee.
This was duly drafted, and at the 1933 Conference the Association was formed, its officers being drawn from the Dunedin area. Its aims and objects were stated as 'the exposition of Christian principles, the development of social service work in City Mission, Orphanages and general benevolent work.' It is likely that the Church was influenced in its thinking by literature from the overseas church which dealt with similar matters. For example, the pronouncement by the Social Service Commission of the New York Conference which included the view that 'society . . . planned primarily for the welfare of human-beings is economically and morally sound'.

This national Association did not have the desired impact on the Auckland area, and Mr Orr was keen to see the co-operation of the Methodist social service agencies in the city. Accordingly in 1934 permission was sought from both the Auckland Synod and Conference for an Auckland Methodist Social Service Association to be formed.

Permission was granted in February 1935, and the first fully constituted meeting was held on 29 July.

The inauguration was heralded to Methodism, and the citizens of Auckland on 19 November, 1935, when a demonstration rally was held in the Town Hall concert chamber. Mr Orr 'in a stirring speech gave an interesting resume of the great scope of social work in which the church was actively engaged in New Zealand, embracing children's homes and orphanages, health camps, rest homes, old people’s homes, hospital and prison chaplaincy, benevolent work, social work among the Maoris, and activities of the deaconesses in the cities and country'.

All these activities, he said, were now co-ordinated in the newly-formed Social Service Association. In Auckland, however, the Association only represented three orphanages, the prison and hospital chaplaincies, Maori work in the city, suburbs, and country areas, and the benevolent work of Pitt Street and other Churches. Other activities were added later. For example, a gift of a Mt Eden home valued at two thousand, five hundred pounds by the Martin Brothers in 1935 was the first step in the development of the Geriatric Hospital on Mt Eden Road. By the end of 1937 the Association was co-ordinating the work of the Central Mission, the work of the deaconesses working north of Kawhia, the orphanages, the hospital and prison chaplaincies, the Martin Memorial Home, and the Radio Church of the Helping Hand.

The work of the Central Mission was changed in character. It no longer consisted of the congregation and its relief department. With the establishment of the Association and the development of the Campbell's Bay Health Camp, the maintenance of the work went beyond the resources of the local and provincial church. The Government was involved through the granting of subsidies, and in recognition of this extra load, the Board of Management was reconstituted to include those with experience and business acumen which would contribute to the overall administration of the mission and its social services.
The 'institutional' component of the Mission had been recognized. It incorporated and developed many of the understandings which had been part of city missions. In 1940 a committee was established to formulate a comprehensive policy of city mission work. Its findings comprise Appendix VIII to this study.

The first building project to be undertaken in the 'Orr period', was the erection of the Children's Health Camp at Campbell's Bay. The 'seeds' of the idea were first sown at the Quarterly Meeting of the Mission held on 24 April 1934, and the buildings were opened on 11 December 1938, by the Governor General, Viscount Galway. An examination of the Fund raising activities and organization to facilitate this even show clearly Mr Orr's ability as an organizer.

The inspiration for the Camp came from recognition of the needs of ailing children and tired mothers from poorer homes who were unable to provide holidays for their families. Approval was given to proceed with planning, at the 24 April meeting, the plans were drawn up for a scheme to cost 'no more than three thousand pounds; and a 7½ acre section was purchased at Campbell's Bay for one hundred and twenty pounds.

Once this was completed fund raising began, the intention being to complete the facility free of debt. To secure contributions, a plan was prepared, and tickets representing areas were 'sold' at the rate of one penny per square inch, or ten shillings per square foot.

While the necessary finance was being raised, a start was made to giving women and children holidays. Some 40 children and 20 mothers were sent to a beach cottage at Ostend, Waiheke Island, over the Christmas period. In the meantime, the ground preparations went ahead, and working bees, of some 80 men and women cleared the manuka and fenced the site.

Many of these workers were men who- e wives and children had had holidays at Ostend Camp. On 3 June, the first building, a small cookhouse costing one hundred and fifty pounds was erected by voluntary labour, 500 trees were planted, and a bore sunk to ensure water supplies.

The project caught the imagination of many. The Government made the first of what were to become regular contributions to the Mission's social service work with a grant of twentythree pounds. An anonymous donor gave 3½ acres and a cottage at Henderson, which was sold for five hundred and twentyfive pounds and other donations were forthcoming. With this money behind them, it was decided that the building would commence once one thousand pounds had been subscribed.

In July 1936, the scheme took on yet another dimension. The Wellington Health Camp Conference recognised the camp as part of the National Health Camp scheme, and it was therefore eligible to receive assistance from the Health Stamp Fund. Plans were then made to operate a programme involving 150 to 200 children over the coming
Christmas, and to continue the camp throughout the year, to assist children requiring longer treatment. Seven hundred pounds was now available in the building fund, and a start was made on the administration block, and hall. These were completed before Christmas 1936, and during the next year, some 235 children spent periods there.

The scheme had outgrown its original concept. Three thousand pounds had already been spent. On opening day, 11 December, 1937, the camp could accommodate 60 children at a time, and four additional dormitories were planned each to hold 15 children. This health camp, the first of the institutions to be created as part of the Central Mission, was one of the links in the Health Camp movement which played such an important part in New Zealand's child health programme. At this time school examinations by the Department of Health revealed that 51 per cent of children suffered from dietary defects, and 4.3 per cent from subnormal nutrition. These camps, of which Campbell's Bay was one, had great value in the preventive medicine programme of the day.

The extensive planning, the years of fund raising and the delays that went with the provision of a new building for the Central Mission is covered in some detail in Wesley Parker's In the midst of the city. Due credit is given not only to Mr Orr's part in this, but also to that of a great number of other people.

During the years 1933 to 1937, Mr Orr worked at gathering support for the proposal and securing the permission of Conference for the venture. Years later when the scheme had been approved and the architects had drawn up plans for a building worth 739,000 pounds, the Trust was informed that in a short period of time inflation had added yet another 70,000 pounds to that figure. Everil Orr in evaluating this set-back wrote that: 'future generations, when reading of the long history of negotiations, planning and set-back, will realize that at this stage, it is a matter of life and death to get the building up and to pass on to them something which will be of greater value to them than to those of us who are endeavouring to discharge our trust, when money is extremely short, and the financial squeeze is here'.

The long history of negotiations began on 24 August 1933, only seven months after Mr Orr took up his appointment. He introduced the matter of providing for new buildings to the Quarterly Meeting, and it was agreed that a trust be formed to manage any monies donated for this purpose.

The 1933 Annual Report acquainted Conference with the establishment of this Fund, and appealed for contributions and legacies.

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34 NZMT., 21 November, 1936, p. 229. Grants from the Health Stamp Fund were made for the maintenance of the children attending. MC., 1938, p, 137.
35 Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting, 24 August, 1933.
This pursuance of the legacy appeal often led to bad relationships between Mr Orr and country ministers, who felt that the contributions Mr Orr encouraged people to make to the Mission were justly due to their local churches.

The original vision was for a building worth 20,000 pounds, comprising an auditorium, chapel, hall, classrooms, suites of offices, Sunday School departments, clinic, evangelist's quarters, residence for single young men in the city and a men's shelter. It was to be a building 'worthy of our task'. This dream grew. By 1937, it had been expanded to include a Connexional centre for the Auckland province, a book room, and a Maori hall, and the former plan to incorporate a residence and hostel facilities had been deleted. This new concept became the brief to the architect, and a progress report was made to the 1938 Conference. In response, Conference resolved that it considered 'the time had arrived when the Central Mission work in Auckland should be put on a more satisfactory and worthy basis'. The Plan to erect suitable buildings was approved.

A decade had passed since the 1927 appointment of C.G. Scrimgeour to mission and social work in the city. A new era was about to begin. The days of the city mission with its relief department, supported by a dwindling population, working out of dilapidated buildings had passed. Here in the heart of the city was the Methodist Central Mission, headquarters of the Auckland Social Services Association, involved not only in relief and benevolent work, but in orphanages, prison and hospital chaplaincies, the work of the deaconesses north of Kawhia, the Martin Memorial home, the Radio Church of the Helping Hand, and Health Camp work. With the approval of Conference for new buildings to be erected on the Airedale Street site, Mr Orr's vision that things should become visible on an institutional basis had come a step closer. After many more years of negotiation, planning and set-backs the new building was opened by Prime Minister Holyoake on 7 February, 1964.
CHAPTER III

SISTER IVY JONES AND THE MAORI MISSION

During July 1928 Miss Ivy Jones offered her services to the Home Mission Board for Maori work in and around Auckland. It was agreed that she should be engaged at 100 pounds p.a., and that she should have a 40 pound p.a. travelling allowance. Her appointment took effect from 1 October, and two days later she was introduced to some of the people she would be working with by Sister Nicholls, a respected Deaconess, who was in charge of the work amongst Maori woman and children in the city.

Sister Ivy very quickly became immersed in her work, and after two years she reported on her work to the Women's Missionary Union, describing herself as 'the only woman in Auckland who is working entirely among our Maori people'. The report outlined the difficulties that the social workers had in understanding the Maori: their need, and speech, and commented that 'as a rule, they look upon them with suspicion'. As a result of these difficulties and prejudices, any Maori who went to a social worker in Auckland was referred to Sister Ivy, who decided on the nature of relief to be given. Once this decision had been made, the petitioner was often referred back to his own church mission for action to be taken. This move established some links between the Maori Mission and the Central Mission, and to ensure that this work was conducted effectively Sister Ivy affiliated with the Auckland Social Workers' Association, where all assistance given could be tabulated to prevent overlapping.

Her work amongst the Maori families was that of a Minister (conducting meetings, family services, and giving religious instruction), nurse ("doing what I can until I am able to procure the services of the district nurse"), and teacher. Many mothers were taught to remodel clothing that came from her "old clothes room".

It was, however, in her work among Maori girls that Sister Ivy's heart lay. She would find places to train Maori girls who came to the city looking for work but without the necessary skills. Many girls found work in the Chinese gardens around Onehunga and Mangere. These girls were visited, and Sister Ivy discussed with them how best to adapt to their new life style. For others the pressure of city life was too great and "rescue work in the dark corners of the city, and in the prisons and mental homes required attention". Sister Ivy was well known for her work at the courts, and over the years many girls were placed in her care by the Courts, as an alternative to other measures.

Suitable training was arranged to enable the girls to secure employment as domestics in the hotels and restaurants of the city. No hotel dining room or restaurant would employ a Maori girl as a waitress at this time. This training was necessary because many of the girls were lacking even the rudiments of the personal and public hygiene
requirements expected in such employment. Sister Ivy would place girls with her European friends for training and then she would help them to find employment.

Many continued their association with her. They became part of her girls' club, which met fortnightly, on Friday evenings. There, the girls not only had a place to meet socially, but their training in the habits of thrift, physical education, first aid, and hygiene continued. At times this club had a membership of over 70.

From 1934 onwards, Sister Ivy, with the assistance of Mr A. Manoah, a Tongan commenced weekly services in Maori. These were held in the Mission Hall and by 1935 drew an average attendance of between 25-30.

Mr Manoah was a convert of the old East Street Mission, and had a seat on the Mission Board of Management. Leadership assistance was also given in these services by Mr Rangi Rogers (later Rev. R. Rogers) and Mr Maharaia Winiata (later Dr M. Winiata), students at Trinity College and Auckland University. Mr Manoah was also well-known for his work among the Maori prisoners in Mt Eden goal. From 1936 onwards a building behind the old Airedale Street Church became headquarters for the Auckland Maori Mission. This was named the Ataahua Maori Centre, and a spirit of co-operation grew up between the Mission and the Auckland Methodist Maori Mission. This further developed the contact which began with the Auckland Social Workers' Association. In 1934, the benevolent fund of the Central Mission began making contributions to Sister Ivy's work,\(^\text{36}\) and when the Auckland Methodist Social Services Association was formed in 1935, she was part of the committee.

In 1938 when plans were being made to redevelop the Mission property, it was regarded as imperative that provision be made to include a 'home' for Maori work in the proposed building.\(^\text{37}\) This recognized that in the 'institutional' philosophy of the Central Mission, co-operation and co-ordination in all avenues of social work had become necessary and desirable. Both were part of the Auckland Social Services Association.

It would appear, however, that this spirit of co-operation and understanding did not last. A question that might be asked, is why, after this initial stress was placed on providing for a Maori identity in the new building, it never eventuated?

\(^\text{36}\) Minutes Bd. M., 24 April, 1934.
\(^\text{37}\) M.C., 1938, p. 138
CONCLUSION

The decade 1927-1937, was a significant period in the development of the Central Mission. It embraces the years between which the decision was made to retain the Alexandra Street site as a city Mission, through to the agreement by Conference for a new set of buildings from which an institution could operate. This development can basically be attributed to two young and energetic agents. The first, a Home Missionary, with little background in church administration, began a work which became well-known and highly respected in the Auckland area. He was a man who at times found it difficult to work with conventional authority, and who won a reputation for the unorthodox. His successor, a probationary Minister, with undoubted gifts in administration, was able to take, and develop, the relief ethos which had been established. Scrimgeour had organised this work extremely effectively, but it relied almost entirely on his charisma to secure the funds necessary for its maintenance. Orr had painstakingly to resurrect this community involvement, which collapsed with Scrimgeour's departure. As he did so he changed the Mission's philosophy from that of a palliative organisation, into an institution which co-ordinated the social services maintained by the Methodist church in the northern North Island. The tribute to Rev. A. Everil Orr is embodied in the Everil Orr Homes complex in Mt Albert. It will always remain an unanswered question whether such an organization could have been created had the work of C.G. Scrimgeour not preceded it.

In 1926 the site was almost sold. But for the foresight and determination of Rev. A.J. Seamer, and the appointment of Scrimgeour, the vision which Rev. A.E. Orr was able to promote may not have had fertile ground in which to germinate.

The 'Orr Period', and the years that followed it were regarded as a success story, by an age which based its evaluation on visible works: buildings and well presented accounts. These standards cannot, however, be used to denigrate the era which preceded it. By contemporary accounts, this period was also a success, and generally speaking the work of the mission received the blessing and admiration of the Church and Society.

Finally, the chapter of Sister Ivy and the Maori Mission demonstrates how the work of the Maori Mission became associated with that of the Central Mission, through the development of the Auckland Social Services Association. It is an indicator of the importance of Sister Ivy's pastorate.

During this time both the work of the 'Central Mission' and the 'Maori Mission' were somewhat experimental, where bold initiatives were called for. This bold initiative was forthcoming from each of the three major agents appointed to facilitate the work. They were not constrained by precedent, and each of them created their own distinctive operation.
APPENDIX I

Resolutions of the Annual Conferences of the New Zealand Methodist Church regarding the status of 'the Methodist Central Mission', 1927-1937.

1927 That Auckland Methodist Mission be reconstituted . . . with the status of a Home Mission Station, under the supervision of the Auckland Central Circuit Superintendent.

1929 Central Mission - That a Probationer be appointed as an additional agent under the direction of the Chairman of the District.

1930 Auckland Central Mission - That this Mission become a circuit with an ordained minister, and Home Missionary, with a suitable grant.

1931 (i) Central Mission - That the appointment for the ensuing year be a married Home Missionary and a Deaconess, with a suitable grant.

(ii) That the name of the Mission be changed to 'The Auckland Methodist Social Service Mission'.

1933 Auckland Social Service Mission - That the status of the Mission be raised to that of a Circuit, and that an unmarried probationer be appointed.

1935 That the Auckland West Circuit boundaries be altered to include Franklin Road Church in the Auckland Social Service Mission.

1936 Central Mission - That the name of the Auckland Social Service Mission be changed to Auckland Methodist Central Mission.
APPENDIX II

MISSIONERS AND MINISTERS 1927-1937

Missioner C.G. Scrimgeour 1927-1932
Rev. L.C. Horwood 1929
Rev. E.T. Olds 1930
Rev. A. Everil Orr 1933 onwards

DEACONESES

Sister Blakeley c.1886
Sister Francis c.1892
Sister Kenneth McKenzie 1912-1913
Sister Olive Coleman 1927-1928
Sister Bessie McFarlane 1928-1929
Mrs C.G. Scrimgeour (Acting) 1930
Sister Rita Snowden 1931: 1934-1938
Sister Jessie McKenzie 1933

REFERENCE

Parker, U. In the midst of the city, Methodist Central Mission,
1972. p.61-62
APPENDIX III

SOCIAL SERVICE MISSIONER'S REPORT 17-7-31

In spite of the fact that we are up against unprecedented problems we are pleased to report that our Social Service work is operating more successfully than ever before. The greatly increased demands upon our resources have been met very largely by the generosity of our people throughout the province. Never before has there been such widespread interest in our work, and, in spite of the prevalent depression, our income, both in cash and goods, shows a marked increase.

The Committee of Business Men, who act for us in operating the Relief Service, greatly appreciate the work that has been carried out.

The Central Office for registration of all applicants for charity through any Society is a great success and we have achieved recognition from all quarters as to the value of this piece of service.

The daily number of applications made at the Mission has steadily increased and, while we have not always been able to meet the many needs of these people, no deserving case has been turned away.

We are deeply grateful for the valuable support rendered to our work by the farmers of the Auckland province, who, through the Farmers Union, are sending in large supplies of meat and produce for our distribution.

The latest development in work may be seen in the family soup depot from which 50 gallons of first-class soup are being distributed daily. This has been made possible by the generosity of Messrs. R. & W. Hellaby, Ltd, who make and supply the soup.

While much has been heard lately of the ingratitude of people who receive assistance, we wish to state emphatically that not one per cent of those who receive our aid are ungrateful or lack, in any way, appreciation of what has been done for them.

No opportunity is lost, while administering to the bodily needs of these people, to make them feel that God cares for them and we act only as his servants.

C.G. Scrimgeour

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Minutes Bd Man., 17 July, 1931
APPENDIX IV

METHODISM'S SOCIAL CREED

Recognising that great changes are necessary to bring society within even measurable distance of the Christian ideal and desiring to make our position clear to all classes of the community, we declare that the Methodist Church stands for:

1. The sacredness of human personality and the equal value of men in the sight of God.

2. The affirmation that the true principle of individualism is not merely competition for personal gain but co-operation for the service of the needs of the community.

3. The best service the worker can render and for the condemnation as utterly unchristian of scamped work, and restricted output; as well as the condemnation for the same reason of the practice of sweating the worker and of exploiting the consumer.

4. The principle of a wage that shall suffice to ensure the health and vigour of family life, housing conditions that will make for happiness and virtue and the enjoyment of a fair measure of the comforts of life.

5. For such conditions in the toil of women and young people as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

6. For a weekly day of rest, for reasonable hours of labour, adequate holiday periods and leisure such as will ensure opportunity for the enjoyment of life and a reasonable use of the good gifts of God.

7. For constitutional methods of securing redress of grievances and of promoting industrial and social reforms.

8. For the removal of the root causes of poverty and unemployment including vice, waste and extravagance as well as those causes relating to the purely economic aspects of trade and education.

9. For the fact that in the message and mission of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ — a message of goodwill and brotherhood — will be found the only power for promoting effectively the reconstruction and regeneration of society. Hence we seek to secure the recognition of the Golden Rule and of the mind of the sure remedy for all social ill.

39 N.Z.M.T. 17 October 1931.
10. Recognising the need for Christian influence in the realm of ethics that deals with good Government (i.e. in political life) and also convinced that parliamentary and public bodies need moral reinforcement, we call upon our people to realise more fully the obligation of Christian citizenship to share more fully in the civic and political life of the land.
APPENDIX V

PRONOUNCEMENT ON THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM

This Conference expresses its deep concern at the prolonged and desperately urgent problem of unemployment, believing that such conditions as at present obtain are a hindrance to the progress of God's Kingdom on earth.

We believe that an eagerness for the material things of life rather than a desire for the spiritual has helped to precipitate a situation in which a superabundance of good things has been put to wrong uses. This can only be rectified by the personal and national application of the Principles of Jesus Christ.

We accept no suggested solution which will involve the weakening of self-respect and self-reliance; the removal of the independence of the individual or that tends to make a normal family life impossible.

1. We regard as one of the Chief difficulties of the problem of unemployment the lack of purchasing power in the community which has been aggravated by the policy of deflation. We consider that the time has come for a complete overhaul of our present economic system with a view to a just distribution of the necessities of life.

2. That in view of the wasteful and demoralising nature of much of the work at present provided, this Conference recommends the fullest possible extension of the principle of productive employment.

3. That while appreciating the earnest efforts of the Government to grapple with this complex problem, the Conference suggests that the rates of payment under present schemes are inadequate and recommends an increase in the allowances paid to relief workers particularly in view of the recent adoption of increased exchange and Sales Tax,

4. That as the present mode of taxation falls heavily upon the poorer sections of the community the Conference suggests to the government that if any additional taxation is necessary it should be provided by:
   (a) Taxation of luxuries, together with such wasteful expenditure as Drink, Gambling, etc.
   (b) A steeply graduated Income Tax.

5. We further suggest the consideration of the raising of an internal loan, the interest to be a charge on the fund created by the unemployment tax.

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40 M.C. 1933, p.81.
As the representatives of the Methodist Church of New Zealand we pledge ourselves to do all that lies within our power to help the needy, to continue to assist the workless, and to feed the starving, while praying that Divine Providence may guide those who may be in authority to wise decisions in the deliberations upon this great problem that so closely touches the life and well-being of the community.