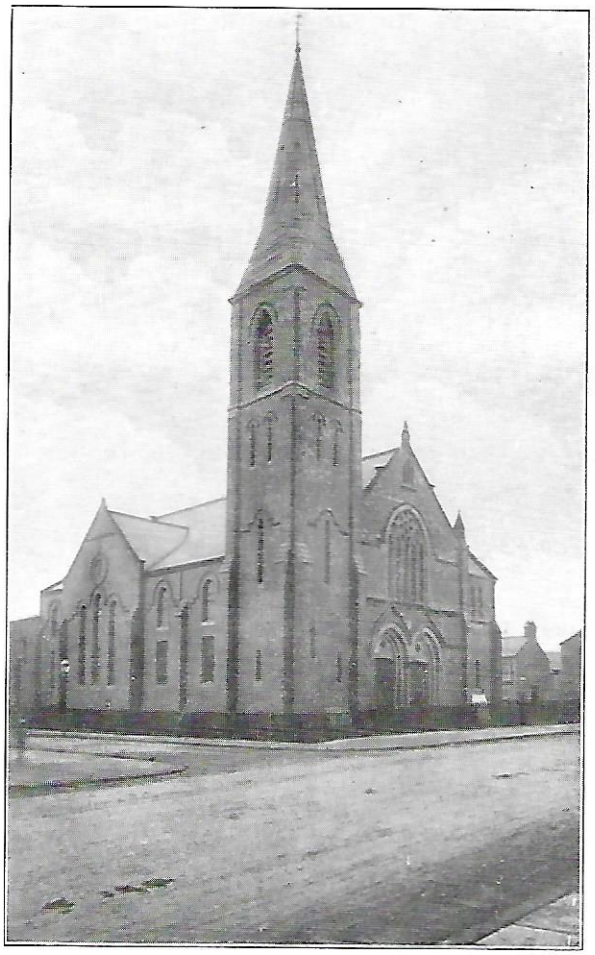


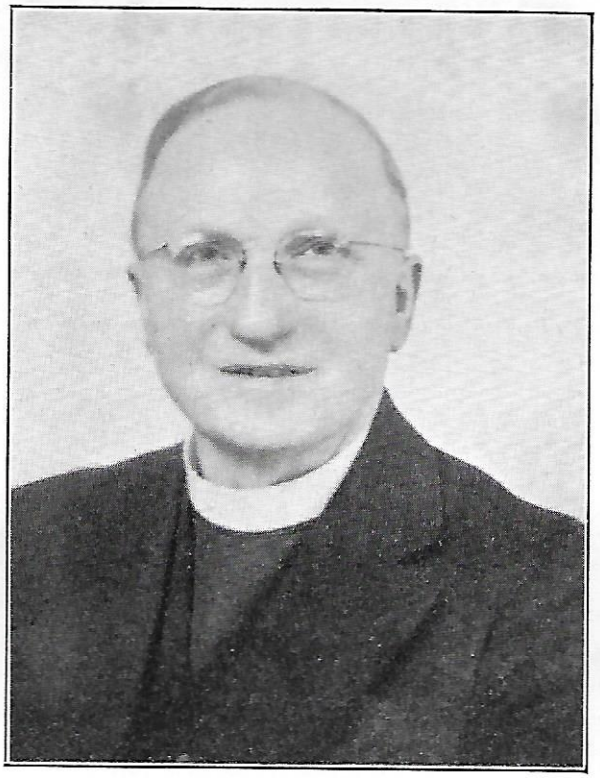
McQuiston Memorial Presbyterian Church

BELFAST

YEAR BOOK 1953-54

PRICE—ONE SHILLING

OFFICE BEARERS AND OFFICIALS



Minister:
REV. J. B. McILROY, M.A., D.D.,
9 Ballyholme Road, Bangor.
Phone: Bangor 443. Church Phone: 58155.

Assistant Minister:
REV. A. J. C. LEITCH, M.A., LL.B.

Missionary:
Mr. J. C. CUNNINGHAM, 9 Stranmillis Street, Belfast.

Clerk of Session:
Mr. FRANK SNOWDEN, 11 Sandhill Gardens, Knock. Telephone: 55721.

Honorary Secretary:
Mr. R. A. CRAWFORD, 64 Newton Park. Telephone : 48016.

Honorary Treasurer:
Mr. JOHN McCARTNEY, C.A., 34 Knockeden Park. Telephone: 42887.

Honorary Auditors:
Mr. P. FIRTH and Mr. S. C. THOMPSON.

Organist and Choirmaster :
Mr. R. McCULLY, 75 Onslow Parade. Telephone: 42338.

Church Officer - Mr. J. COOPER, 48 Clara Street.

McQuiston Memorial Congregation

The organisation of the W. J. McQUISTON Memorial Congregation, being the forty-first in the City, was sanctioned by the Assembly of 1889, at the request of the Belfast Presbytery. The Church Extension Committee of that Presbytery secured a site on Castlereagh Road, erected thereon an iron church, and in 1892 appointed Mr. Thomas R. Ballantine, B.A., a native of Ballynahinch and licentiate of the Belfast Presbytery, to labour in connection therewith. A congregation was soon gathered and organized by the Presbytery on December 20th, 1892, to which the name "Willowfield" was given.

The first minister was Rev. Mr. Ballantine, who was ordained on March 7th, 1893. Some time afterwards Mr. W. J. McQuiston died, bequeathing almost his entire estate, amounting to over £2000, to his trustees (Messrs. Joseph Blair and Alexander Crawford) for the erection of a Presbyterian Church to be called the "W. J. McQuiston Memorial Church." This bequest the trustees applied to the erection of a church in 1897 for Mr. Ballantine and his congregation. As the church cost about double the amount of Mr. McQuiston's bequest, the balance was raised by the congregation. A lecture hall was afterwards erected, and under Mr. Ballantine's evangelical ministry the congregation prospered exceedingly. Having accepted a call to Boksburg, South Africa, Mr. Ballantine resigned the pastorate of the congregation on July 31st, 1910.

The Rev. D. D. Boyle, a native of Dungiven, formerly minister of St. James's Church, Ballymoney, for about twelve years, and of Downshire Road Church, Newry, for over two years, was installed in McQuiston on November 1st, 1910. Under his ministry the congregation continued to prosper. The fine suite of buildings known as McQuiston Institute was opened on March 31st, 1912, and on April 7th of the same year the new hall for Canton Street Mission was opened.

In the first World War, 353 men from the congregation served in the Forces and 61 made the supreme sacrifice.

Railings were erected round the Church and Institute in 1924 as a memorial to those who had served in the war.

An organ was installed and its opening was marked by special services on October 9th, 1932.

The Rev. D. D. Boyle, M.A., was honoured by the Faculty of the Presbyterian College, Belfast, in 1937, by having conferred on him the honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity.

McQuiston Memorial Congregation—*continued*

On April 29th, 1938, the Rev. Dr. Boyle, after forty years in the ministry of the Church, 27½ years of which had been served in McQuiston, passed to his rest, having been called home after a brief illness, in the midst of his labours, a fitting end to a busy life of service to the church and the community.

Our present minister, the Rev. J. B. McIlroy, M.A., D.D., a licentiate of the Belfast Presbytery, served as Assistant in Ballysillan Presbyterian Church and Shankill Road Mission. He attended Princeton University, U.S.A., obtaining the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, and was ordained in Cowan Avenue Presbyterian Church, Toronto, in September, 1918, ministering there for a period of six years. He was called to the oversight of North Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1924, relinquishing that charge in May, 1935, in order to return home. After periods of temporary service in various congregations, Dr. McIlroy was installed as minister of McQuiston on November 3rd, 1938, and has thus completed fifteen years' service in our congregation.

In the second World War, 238 men and women from the congregation served in the Forces, and twenty of these men made the supreme sacrifice.

McQuiston Memorial Church

Our Congregation is by far the largest in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Our number of families is greater than the total number in any of fifteen of the Presbyteries of our Church. It is equal in numbers to one Presbytery which has fourteen ministers looking after its sixteen Congregations. Our Sabbath Schools, too, are the largest in our Irish Presbyterian Church.

This means that there is much work to be done by our Minister and his Assistants ; by the Sabbath School Superintendents, Leaders and Teachers, and by the many who render service in the various offices and organisations of our Congregation.

We need your prayers for our Church ; your right hand of fellowship to the stranger who worships in the pew beside you ; your kindled faith in Christ's great promise that wherever His people gather there He Himself will come.

We invite you to the meeting for prayer at 11.5 a.m. each Sunday in the Large Hall of the Institute, and to our Mid-Week Service on Wednesdays at 7.45 o'clock.

Office Bearers for 1953

Minister :

REV. J. B. McILROY, M.A., D.D.

Session :

T. A. ALLISTER.
R. L. ARDILL.
WILLIAM BELL.
W. O. BELL.
R. BELL.
T. N. BOYD.
A. G. BEATTY.
H. BOYCE.
T. A. CLARKE.
W. CLARKE.
R. A. CRAWFORD.
J. C. CUNNINGHAM.
G. E. DUNLOP.
A. M. EWING.
P. FIRTH.
L. GAULT.
W. J. HARCOURT.
H. D. HEAZLEY, M.D.
A. JACKSON.
J. M. JORDAN.
A. H. LEITCH.
B. McCARTNEY.
J. McCARTNEY.
D. McCAUGHAN.
W. McNEELY.
D. McROBERTS.
J. A. MEEKE.
REV. J. M. PATTERSON, B.A.
A. PATTERSON.
W. A. PATRICK.
J. RAINEY.
C. McN. ROBINSON.
D. SHAW.
S. SMITH.
T. STEWART.
S. C. THOMPSON.
W. THOMPSON.
J. H. TOWELL.
D. H. WILSON.
G. WILSON.

F. SNOWDEN, 11 Sandhill Gardens, *Session Clerk*. Telephone : 55721.

Congregational Committee :

Retire December, 1953

T. BEGGS.
F. FREEMAN.
W. B. JAMESON.
A. A. LEITCH.
JAMES McKIRGAN.
J. MILLAR.
Mrs. W. BELL.
Mrs. J. RAINEY.

Retire December, 1954

L. H. ANDERSON.
S. ARMSTRONG.
S. CARDWELL.
A. H. DEMPSTER.
M. JONES.
S. J. KERR.
J. KYLE.
F. McCALLUM.
J. McKINNEY.
JOHN McKIRGAN.
JOHN McKIRGAN, JUN.
R. PATTERSON.
D. SHAW, JUN.
S. J. STEWART.
J. WASSON.
R. WATTERS.
J. F. WEST.

Retire December, 1955

W. H. BELL.
W. J. CLARKE.
G. CRAWFORD.
R. J. KIRKPATRICK.
W. A. McCLELLAND.
S. NESBITT.
T. ORR.
J. PURDY.
W. G. SLOSS.
T. STEWART, JUN.
J. THOMPSON.

Ex-Officio—The Members of Session.

Hon. Treasurer :

JOHN McCARTNEY, C.A., 34 Knockeden Park. Telephone: 42887.

Hon. Secretary :

R. A. CRAWFORD, 64 Newton Park. Telephone : 48016.

Organist-Choirmaster :

RONALD McCULLY, 75 Onslow Parade. Telephone : 42338.

Church Officer :

J. COOPER, 48 Clara Street.

Bankers : THE BELFAST BANKING CO. LTD.

ORGANISATIONS

WITH NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF REPRESENTATIVES

Girls' Bible Class
Sunday, 10.15 a.m.
Miss N. MURRAY, 153 Castlereagh Road.

Boys' Brigade Bible Class
Sunday, 10.15 a.m.
Captain : Mr. H. R. S. HILL.

Church Junior Sabbath School
Junior :
Mr. B. McCARTNEY, 90 Greenore Street.
Beginners and Primary :
Mr. J. McKIRGAN, Jun., 10 Ravenhill Parade.

Church Senior Sabbath School
3.30 p.m.
Mr. W. O. BELL, 15 Gibson Park Gardens.
Mr. B. McCARTNEY, 90 Greenore Street.

Young Men's Bible Class
Sundays, 3.30 p.m.
Mr. R. L. ARDILL, Cabra, Knock.

Junior Ladies' Bible Class
Sundays, 3.30 p.m.
Rev. A. J. C. LEITCH, M.A., LL.B.

Cradle Roll
Miss N. BOYCE, 70 Hillsborough Drive.

Canton Street Mission Sabbath School
2.30 and 3.30 p m.
Mr. A. PATTERSON, 214 Ravenhill Road.

Christian Endeavour
Senior : Monday, 8 p.m.
Miss N. FOSTER, 2 Loopland Drive.
Junior : Monday. 7 p.m.
Miss M. McMURTRY, 2 Thornhill Drive.

Boys' Brigade (19th Company)
Monday, 7.45 p.m.
Mr. H. R. S. HILL, 72 Orangefield Crescent.
(*Captain.*)

Girls' Auxiliary
Monday, 8 p.m.
President :
Miss M. MILLER.
Hon. Secretary :
Miss MARGARET GLOVER, 19 Moneyrea St.

Life Boys
Tuesdays, 7 p.m.
Mr. D. SHAW, 71 Portallo Street.

Brownies
Miss JESSIE McLEOD, 14 Belmont Avenue.

Women's Missionary Association
Tuesday, 8 p.m.
Mrs. W. O. BELL, 15 Gibson Park Gardens.

Church Choir
Mr. R. WATTERS, 7 Wynford Street.

Badminton Club
Mr. G. McCORMICK, 23 Orby Drive.

Girl Guides
Mrs. N. STRAIN, 20 Rutland Street.

Boys' Auxiliary
Friday, 8 p.m.
President :
Mr. L. H. ANDERSON.
Secretary :
J. G. McLELLAND, 17 Leitrim Street.

International Bible Reading Association
Mr. A. A. LEITCH, "Orlei," Sicily Park.

Orphan Society (Collections)
Miss M. MILLAR, 122 Castlereagh Road.
Miss D. ESPEY, 57 Oberon Street.

Old Age Pension Fund and Orphan Society Annuitants
Rev. J. B. McILROY, M.A., D.D.
Mr. JOHN CUNNINGHAM, 9 Stranmillis St.

An Outline of the History of Presbyterianism in Ireland

The first definite shaping of Presbyterianism in Ireland was seen early in the seventeenth century, when among the settlers in Ulster under the terms of the Plantation, came large numbers of Scottish Presbyterians. Ministers of the Anglican Church had hitherto been unrestricted in their activities and following the "invasion" there were a few isolated attempts at opposition. But eventually, following the lead of Archbishop Usher, who welcomed the Scottish Ministers, a reconciliation was effected and for a time Presbyterians and Anglicans worked amicably together.

The plantation of the Ulster counties had by no means met with the approval of the native population, among whom the most discontented were undoubtedly the Roman Catholics. This was due to some extent to the conduct of a section of the early " Planters," who might perhaps be described as having been more " soldiers of fortune " than earnest settlers. With the influx of the Scottish Presbyterian element, much of the evil repute of the early Planters was lived down and the basis of a better understanding speedily laid.

But the spirit of progress was not to flourish unchecked, for the growing success of Presbyterianism had alarmed the Bishops and eventually " forsaking the spirit of Usher " they tried to suppress Irish Presbyterianism. By 1636 the silencing process was deemed complete. But in spite of the machinations of Wentworth, the heroic ministers were not dismayed and removing the scene of their labours from Ireland to Scotland, they continued their good work and took a leading part there in the great movement of 1638.

In Ireland the prevailing antagonism of the native Irish population to English rule found violent expression in the rebellion of 1641, and among the troops sent to quell the rising were several Scottish regiments. The Chaplains of these regiments were mainly Presbyterian and during their prolonged stay in Ireland they were able to re-establish Presbyterianism. As the majority of the Ulster Protestants were Presbyterian, their ministry was gladly received and a great religious revival took place. In four of the Scottish regiments Kirk Sessions were formed and the first regular Presbytery was held at Carrickfergus on 10th June, 1642, attended by five ministers and by the ruling elders from the regimental Sessions. From the first Presbytery as many ministers as possible were sent out to various congregations and to supplement them other ministers were sent from Scotland.

By the end of 1643, the Ulster Church was fairly established and by 1647, despite numerous set-backs, there were upwards of thirty ordained ministers in fixed charges in Ulster besides the Chaplains of the Scottish regiments. During the next twenty years progress was fairly well maintained for we find that around 1660 the Church numbered five Presbyteries, eighty congregations and seventy ministers.

As steel comes forth hardened from the ordeal of fire, so the faith of Ulster Presbyterians was to be tempered by persecution. After the restoration, the Government determined to wipe out Presbyterianism and the full effects of this drastic decision were felt in Ireland. In 1661, the Lords Justices forbade all " unlawful assemblies " and in this they were pleased to include Presbyterian congregations. Bishop Jeremy Taylor distinguished himself by an excess of sadly misguided zeal. The Oath of Supremacy in its iniquitous form could not be accepted by the Presbyterian ministers and so their parishes were declared vacant and Episcopal clergy installed therein. Of the harsh and unjust enactments associated with this period we are all familiar ; Presbyterian ministers were forbidden to preach or administer the Sacraments and the hills and the valleys became their hiding-place.

It was not until 1665 that Ormonde was able to secure facilities for open worship, and once again the faithful were able to attend Divine Service without restriction. For several years, following this the Church grew and prospered, not alone in Ulster but in the South and West of Ireland. In 1672 she received from Charles II a yearly grant of £600, which was known as "regium donum," being the gift of the King. Subsequently, under William III the grant was restored and substantially increased.

The administration of James II was in no way favourable to Irish Presbyterians for his religious sympathies were directly opposed. Accordingly, they were among the first to petition the coming of the Prince of Orange and to welcome him on his arrival in England. The historic Siege of

Derry and its heroic defence is too well known to need description here, but the Presbyterians of Derry and of all Ulster will not soon forget the glorious victory won by their forefathers on that memorable occasion.

Less troublous for the Church was the period that followed. The Presbyterian ranks had been swelled by the addition of numerous Huguenots, who had been forced by the Edict of Nantes to flee their country in 1685. The Church had now about 100 congregations, 75 having settled ministers under five Presbyteries.

During the reign of William III the Church had begun to enjoy her first spell of comparative freedom from irksome restriction, but this welcome toleration ceased abruptly with the coming of Queen Anne to the throne. The Test Act of 1704 resulted in a steady stream of emigrant Presbyterians to America and the Colonies, with the consequent loss to Ireland of numbers of her best citizens. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that relief was forthcoming with the repeal of the repressive Act of 1704. Persecution since has happily been absent from the records of the Church, but that is not to say that any marked signs of favour were extended to her. Indeed, throughout the entire history of the Church it may truthfully be said that at no time has she enjoyed privileges but at best, her greatest gift has been relief, however transient, from persecution.

The Church in Ireland has always been distinguished by a sturdy adherence to the old truths of evangelical doctrine and Presbyterian polity. But in common with other institutions, she has not been free from internal controversy. The first disturbance arose from the New Light Movement which, beginning in 1705 as a revolt against creed subscription, resulted in a certain laxity of doctrine. The movement was not checked until 1750, when the arrival from Scotland of a number of orthodox seceders turned the tide.

In the early half of the nineteenth century there arose the Arian controversy, which waged intermittently over a space of ten years. It is interesting to recall that the momentous meeting of the General Synod summoned in 1829, was held in the present First Lurgan Church, the Rev. Mr. Hamilton Dobbin (said to have been a relative of the famous General Jackson of America) being minister at the time. Here, too, Dr. Cooke and Dr. Montgomery eventually met in forensic combat, which resulted in a glorious and decisive victory for the champion of orthodoxy. In 1840 there followed union between the Secession Synod and the Synod of Ulster, and gradually the scattered congregations of the south and west were brought within the common fold, until in 1854 there was one united Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

The foundation of the Church's greatness had been well and truly laid, and from this time her progress in every branch of Christian activity has prospered, being blessed of God. The Church Court of 1869, which disestablished and disendowed the Irish Episcopal Church, also deprived the Presbyterian Church of the " regium donum." To counteract this the ministers of the Church, with commendable unanimity, decided to commute their life interests and form therewith a central fund for the support of the Church. The commemoration fund thus formed is a permanent memorial of a generous and disinterested act on the part of her ministry. The interest accruing from it is added to the yearly sustentation contributions, and forms a central fund for ministerial support now called the Sustentation Fund.

Of the influence of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to-day we have ample evidence. National education has always been regarded as of major importance, and the efficient and imposing schools erected under the Church's aegis are a striking testimony to her ever-present concern for the welfare of the youth of our country. Most of these schools are now transferred to State management but were built and originally maintained by the Church.

In social service, and particularly in the pressing cause of Temperance, the Church is ever active and seeks to add fresh laurels to her already creditable records. While the spiritual significance of the Presbyterian Church is such that wherever men be gathered together, be it on their native soil or in the far distant climes of other lands, her teaching still serves to comfort and assist the troubled soul in finding the path that leads to Eternal Life.

EDMUND GLYNN.

A list of organisations connected with our Congregation is shown in this book, and it would not be possible to give each of them at length. We include hereafter short historical sketches of three of these organisations.

THE GIRLS' AUXILIARY

In the year 1911, the Girls' Auxiliary was formed to enlist the interest of the girls of the Church so that they might help the Women's Association for Foreign Missions to maintain its missionary work. Any girl over fourteen years of age who is connected with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland may become a member.

Since its inauguration many Doctors, Nurses and Evangelists have gone out from its ranks to India and China, and two-thirds of the funds raised annually are given to the Zenana Mission.

The aims of the Girls' Auxiliary is to unite the girls of the Church in personal allegiance to Jesus Christ and in the service of His Kingdom, the compass points being—Thought, Prayer, Comradeship and Service.

McQuiston G.A. Branch meets on Monday nights at 8 o'clock and our evenings include Bible study, missionary talks, and visits from Missionaries on furlough. Social service is carried out in aid of the Victoria Homes and the Cripples' Institute.

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR

Every generation has its own peculiar problems and in every period of history God has raised up men to fulfil specific tasks and to become leaders of World movements. Francis E. Clarke, Pastor of Williston Congregational Church, Portland, Maine, U.S.A., was called to become the founder of Christian Endeavour, a movement which stands for something distinctive in the religious world.

The first Christian Endeavour meeting was held on February 2nd, 1881, and was attended by nearly one hundred young people. This new Society proved to be so happy and useful that it was soon copied in other churches, and then in other countries, until there were over 80,000 societies in all parts of the world.

The Senior Society connected with our Church was formed in February, 1936, our first President being Rev. D. D. Boyle, M.A., D.D. In its fifteen years of existence the members have endeavoured to be true to the C.E. motto *For Christ and the Church*. By its Covenant they have been taught the obligations that the Christian life entails ; it has emphasised the necessity of daily prayer and Bible reading, and has created a new missionary enthusiasm among young people. One of our members left the Society at the end of the year 1947 to train for full-time service in the Mission Field, and, when leaving, she said that it was in the C.E. meeting that she first spoke and prayed publicly.

Our aim in the weekly meetings is to hold bright, and at the same time, helpful meetings. These include Camp Fire, Question Night, Twenty Questions, Sealed Orders, Praise Services, and Missionary Journeys. Social activities include hikes, cycle runs, bus tours and social evenings.

In the first C.E. Societies boys and girls joined in with the grown-ups, but soon a bright idea, that the boys and girls should have a Society of their own, was adopted. The first Junior C.E. Society was organised in 1884. Our own Junior Society was formed in May, 1944, and is conducted on the same lines as the Senior Society.

We feel sure that there are many young people in our Church who would enjoy the fellowship of Christian Endeavour and we extend to them a hearty invitation to our meetings in the Boys' Room on Monday evenings, the Junior Society at 7 p.m. and the Senior Society at 8 p.m.

THE BROWNIES

After the Girl Guide movement was started, the need for an organisation for younger girls was realised, and so Lady Baden-Powell founded the Rosebuds, now known as Brownies, as a sister organisation to the Scouts and Guides.

The ideal Pack consists of 18 Brownies, but the regulation number is 24.

In the 81st Pack (McQuiston) we far exceed these numbers, and our large pack is under the leadership of the Senior Brownie Guider " Brown Owl," two assistants called Tawny Owls, and a Pack Leader who is also a Guide. The Brownies are divided into parties of six, each under a leader who is called a Sixer, and each six has a name, such as Fairies, Gnomes, Pixies or Leprechauns, and has its own badge, which is worn above the pocket.

The object of the Brownies is to provide recreational training such as can be employed outside school walls for inculcating the four necessary but much neglected ingredients in education :

1. Character and Intelligence.

2. Skill and Handicraft.

3. Physical Health and Hygiene.

4. Service for others and Fellowship.

Before being accepted as a real Brownie each child makes a twofold promise, which is : *I promise to do my best to do my duty to God and the Queen; to help other people every day, especially those at home*, and of which she is reminded by her two-finger salute.

Badges are awarded for efficiency in different branches of Brownie work.

Brownies are admitted between the ages of seven and eleven years.

A JUBILEE

In the year 1901 the congregation obtained the services, as Precentor, of Mr. James Woods, and the choir soon came to occupy a place of merit in public estimation. When the organ was installed, in 1932, Mr. Woods became Musical Director. At a Special Service, on Sunday, May 6th, 1951, after the closing Praise, and before the Benediction, recognition was paid, in the presence of the entire congregation, to the fifty years of Mr. Woods' service. Those who took part were the Rev. J. B. McIlroy, M.A., D.D., Mr. F. Snowden, Clerk of the Kirk Session, and Mr. George Wilson. In addition to the thanks expressed by these, on behalf of the congregation, Mr. Woods was given a valuable memento of his Golden Jubilee in the service of McQuiston Memorial, and of the Praise Service of the Church in general.