

Church Planting 1836–1843

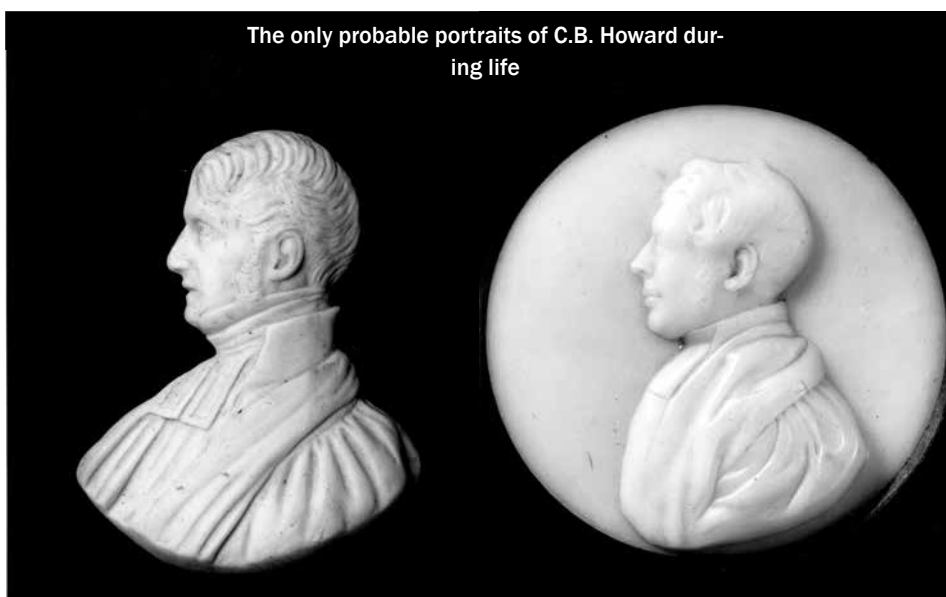
The voyage to South Australia was no great joy for Colonial Chaplain Howard. His salary and duties began when he went aboard *Buffalo* in late July 1836. Captain John Hindmarsh, commanding *Buffalo* and to commence duties as governor on arrival, had already made his distaste of the established church plain in correspondence to his patrons in England. He and Howard found little in common during the voyage. It was soon apparent to at least one observer that Hindmarsh was deliberately making Howard's exercise of his Christian ministry difficult. George Stevenson was both private secretary to the governor and editor of the *Register*. He was no friend of the Church of England either, and his shipboard diary was at first hostile to Howard, noting sourly the Sundays that ensued without divine service. On 7 August 'Mr Howard preached a somewhat appropriate discourse with great attention to decorum'. The following Sunday it was a 'very good sermon' but on the 21st the sermon, 'professing to prove the efficacy of faith and the inutility of good works to salvation, did neither. Our worthy Chaplain carefully eluded both points, and vapid commonplaces were all we got'. But then Stevenson began to note that Hindmarsh and his family absented themselves from the Sunday services: worse came on 23 October with the service 'indecorously interrupted by the Captain, who made a vast commotion in adjusting the sails when there was certainly no pressing necessity for anything of the sort'. Howard sensibly omitted his sermon. On many successive Sundays Stevenson noted the absence of a sermon, or what he thought was Howard's ignorance of Puritan divines, or Hindmarsh's disinterest. The climax came on Christmas Day.

Thoroughly disgusted with the conduct of the Governor to-day. Such violence and ruffianism are without parallel, and his profane and abominable oaths have driven all but his own and Mr. Howard's family from the deck to seek refuge in their own cabins.

It was hardly the best sort of ministry in the Body of Christ on that day.¹

Ministry begun

Howard equipped himself with the normal books of registration² (of births, deaths and marriages) before leaving England, as well as a serviceable Bible and prayer book, and so we find that he conducted a number of marriages as the *Buffalo* wended its weary way to Australia. The registers



Left: 'Parker'. The Revd Charles Beaumont Howard, wax medallion portrait Art Gallery of South Australia. Right: Theresa Walker, Australia, 1807-1876, (The Revd Charles Beaumont Howard) wax medallion portrait. Art Gallery of South Australia. The identification is only inferential, but the probable date of production (ca 1840) and the others in the group which Walker modeled (obvious early leaders including Gawler and probably Light) suggest it predates Farrell's arrival.

were inscribed at some time, presumably before departure, with the name 'Trinity'. The decision to dedicate the church to the Holy Trinity may well have been Howard's acknowledgement of his college in Dublin. It was, in any event, a non-controversial and securely protestant dedication. The first marriage entered in the register was between Jonathan Bean and Martha Archbold on 28 July, while the *Buffalo* was still in the Channel. At least four more followed in quick succession, presumably of couples who had been awaiting his arrival aboard to regularize their status.

The day the ship reached Holdfast Bay, Howard accompanied his superior officer Governor Hindmarsh and assisted in the swearing-in of the other officials at the official proclamation of the Province on 28 January 1837 (when their salaries began). The following Sunday, 1 January 1837, he conducted his first service of worship ashore at Holdfast Bay (later Glenelg) with his parishioners, including the baptism of a baby boy.³ The text he chose, 'Lord, let it alone this year also' from Luke 13:8 might appear at first sight unpromising, yet a quick check reveals Howard had chosen a text that possessed powerful impact in the context of the beginning of a new community in a new environment. Here was the opportunity to create a fruitful and successful settlement responsive to the demands of God. It was, as it were, a second chance, a new opportunity. It remained to be seen how well the colonists took up the challenge Howard issued on that hot, dusty day in the tent amid the sandhills at Glenelg.

Governor Hindmarsh's venom pursued Howard ashore and perhaps

continued to limit his ministry. On 15 February 1837 the governor wrote to George Fife Angas, the Baptist businessman who had been so significant in ensuring the colony got started, and who had arranged that Hindmarsh got his job as governor. It was a long and spiteful letter which did him no credit. To Hindmarsh Howard was 'Mr Currie's protegee'. He condemned Howard roundly as a conservative, and his wife for worse:

The one is an epitome of Sir Harcourt Lee, the other an insinuating talebearing handsome woman. He has no talent but fancies himself very zealous for religion's sake, mistaking the meaning of the word and fancying that high Tory politics means religion.⁴

Hindmarsh revealed himself quite ill-informed in objecting, for example, to Howard's announcement that pew-rents would be charged in the new church, and asserted that the man was 'a well-meaning good sort of man, but of a weak understanding'. Attitudes such as that no doubt made the development of a congregation difficult. Howard's problem was to remain aloof from the party divisions which wracked the colony in its first two years. All accounts aver he did so with great success.

Howard had also to establish the proper authorisations for the exercise of his ministry once he was resident in the diocese of Australia, administered from Sydney by Bishop William Grant Broughton. We have already seen Howard marrying and burying colonists, acting under the authority of Bishop Broughton, who had appointed him as his surrogate in South Australia for the issue of marriage licenses.⁵ This was the normal procedure of the day, which both men adopted in good faith in London in 1836 on the assumption that the colony lay within Broughton's vast diocese of Australia. There was some delay in the activation of the commission because Judge Jeffcott wanted to take legal advice before receiving Howard's oaths and subscriptions as prescribed by procedure.⁶ Then it was claimed in the press that this formal procedure was all an attempt



The front flyleaf of Howard's shipboard Prayerbook, currently displayed in the church vestry. It and his accompanying Bible were retained by the family of John William Adams, Howard's clerk during the voyage, and presented to the church on 25 January 1969.

by the bishop to somehow claim jurisdiction in South Australia improperly. Unfortunately the bishop's secretary in Sydney made things worse by writing later in 1837 to confirm these arrangements and added on his own initiative the instruction that Howard should forward two-thirds of the marriage fee to Sydney. Once Howard took advice the matter became public knowledge and the *Register* weighed in with an angry leading article. Not only was the idea of taxation going to Sydney anathema; worse, the idea that episcopal authority should apply in South Australia on the basis of laws framed outside of and subsequent to the terms of the Foundation Act was outrageous. The notion of separation of church and state, so central to the thinking of many colonists, seemed to be undermined. Howard hastened to explain how he had acknowledged Broughton's authority and that thus episcopal forms operated in the colony. In this vigorous reply, Howard also made plain that it was he, not the bishop, who had named the parish and church for the Holy Trinity. At first Howard set his fee for marriages at £1, but Advocate General Mann intervened to fix a higher rate of £3 3s 0d, to be shared equally between the colonial chaplain, the advocate general and the relevant government clerk. About this Howard could do nothing. The matter simmered on for several years as both the bishop and the Colonial Office thought about the problem of clarifying the coverage of the diocese of Australia to include South Australia. By the end of 1839 the bishop's Letters Patent were ruled in London to do this validly. The only exercise Broughton made of this authority, however, was to direct that the marriage fee be set at £2 5s 0d, to be wholly devoted to the debt on Trinity church.

Meanwhile, whatever the tensions, Howard served as a useful public servant, being appointed during 1838 (presumably after Colonel George Gawler arrived to replace Captain Hindmarsh as governor) to the board of the Adelaide Hospital, and to the Aborigines Committee. He served on a committee of enquiry into the salaries of government officials, and was made a trustee of the cemetery on West Terrace in 1839.⁷

If Hindmarsh felt constrained in the presence of the youthful, well-connected Grace Montgomery Howard, it says more of his social inadequacy than it does of the characteristics to be avoided by the wife of a clergyman. I wrote in 1986 'What a pity that we know so little of this lady, loyal wife successively to the colony's first two Anglican clergymen for thirty-six years'. My historian-colleague and fellow member of Trinity's congregation, Dr Leith MacGillivray, rose to that challenge, and published this essay in *Trinity Times* in December 1999. She has kindly agreed to its inclusion here. There are some repetitions with the main text, but they can be tolerated for it is good to pay tribute to such founding mothers in Israel who have laboured among us faithfully, if at such great cost.

Church building

But church planting meant not only establishing good relationships with the settlers, it also meant church building. The Church Society had spent £400 on a prefabricated wooden church building which was sent out on the *William Hutt*. It was described as a handsome structure capable of seating 750 persons.⁹ It was landed at Holdfast Bay where it lay for some time for want of funds to move it to town acre 9, on the corner of North

Grace Montgomery Howard/Farrell: founding wife, mother and grandmother of Trinity

By Dr Leith MacGillivray

Grace Montgomery Neville, born 8th May 1812, probably in Ireland, was a founding wife and mother of South Australia. Because of her marriages to the first two colonial chaplains, Charles Beaumont Howard and James Farrell, she was also a founding member of Trinity Church, with which she was continuously associated for thirty-four years.

Sadly, because none of Grace's personal records are extant, at least in Australia, we have no documented evidence, from her perspective, about her origins, her personal faith, or her participation in Trinity Church, and must draw on second-hand opinions. This makes interpretations of Grace's life and character, at best, conjectural.

Grace Neville began her life's work as a clergyman's wife when, at 20, she married Charles Beaumont Howard, M.A., a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, and self-declared evangelical whose avowed purpose was 'to preach Christ and Him crucified'. The marriage was solemnized in St Peter's parish, Dublin, where they were both living, on 12 April 1832, probably about when her new husband was priested.

During the Howards' early ministry in England two daughters were born – Grace Montgomery (2 December 1833) and Barbara Isabella Mary, or 'Bel' (27 January 1835). Following Howard's appointment as Colonial Chaplain, the little family, together with Grace's sister, Rachel, and servants Margaret Shines and Catherine Kenny, sailed in the Buffalo to the unknown colony of South Australia.

Howard shared a love of dancing with fellow Irishmen. His violin playing to accompany the dancing on board ship drew both favourable and unfavourable comments, as did his sermons. However, Rosina Ferguson, Scottish immigrant, admired neither Howard nor his wife. She declared that, although Howard was 'too given to the pleasures and politics of the world, his gun, or a dance', he might improve, but his 'very vain, gay wife was a drawback to him'. However, Rosina Ferguson was comparing Howard with the beloved pastor she so sadly missed, and her Scottish piety might also have coloured her view of the Howards. Governor Hindmarsh also observed that Grace was a 'handsome' but 'insinuating, tale-bearing woman', but the inarticulate, bluff sea-captain may well have been no match for Grace's ready wit. Nevertheless, this was not the last time that Grace's words were to provoke criticism or offence.

While in the early stages of another pregnancy, Grace was to endure her first Australian summer in a tent on the sandhills of Holdfast Bay. By June the family had moved to their first home, a six-roomed Manning house, erected by Howard on the church town acre on North Terrace. While her dedicated husband pastored his scattered flock on foot, Grace cared for her family, paid the social dues and attended the church functions required of a Chaplain's wife, as well as nurturing a small Sunday School.

On 15 October 1837 their weakly little son was born. Baptised 'Charles Neville' by his father when three days old, the baby died and was buried by his father the following day. Yet public duty came before private sorrow. Grace and her husband grieved apart as Howard, Colonial Chaplain, took his place with other public officials to celebrate the news that Princess Victoria had become Queen.

In July 1838, at the christening ceremony of Emily Anne Fisher, daughter of Elizabeth and James Hurtle Fisher, the Resident Commissioner and members of Trinity, Grace wore 'stiff corded black silk'. Known as one 'very fond of dress and showing it off', did Grace wish

to stand out in black among other parishioners, all of whom wore pastel colours? Or was she still in mourning for her son? If the latter, perhaps her sorrow may have helped her to comfort her servant, Catherine Kenny, now Catherine Monck, wife of John Monck, Trinity Clerk and West Terrace Cemetery sexton, who was to lose her five children in infancy.

When the evangelical Governor, George Gawler, and his wife Maria, arrived in September 1838, they found the Howards 'in weak bodily health' because of their 'largely unassisted labours', but with the former's patronage and encouragement, a District Visiting Society was formed and the Sunday school began to flourish. William Ross, an experienced London teacher, was Superintendent of the Sunday school and Head of the Native School Establishment. The boys from the School, in their bright red shirts, and the girls in their long, grey dresses and white headbands regularly attended Trinity Sunday School. Among these was Kudnarto, tutored in European ways and, perhaps even by Grace, in the Christian faith, who, when she married Thomas Adams, was the first aboriginal woman to marry a white man.

In 1848 the current Governor, Sir Richard MacDonnell, another Irishman with Trinity College connections, visited the impressive Sunday school. It was, conceivably, partly because of Grace's work and influence in this area, that he named the mid-north township of Grace and Grace Plains after her, a rare honour for a woman.

By 1840 the Howards had two more daughters – Henrietta Hindmarsh (9 February 1839) and Elizabeth Susannah (27 January 1840), known affectionately as 'Henni' and 'Muttie' respectively. Grace was possibly more an 'evangelical widow' than previously, as Howard, now on his horse, Luther, visited burgeoning congregations further afield at Port Adelaide (St Paul's), Angaston (St Peter's) and Gawler. We know, however, that Grace accompanied him on at least one occasion in 1842 when he preached to over thirty people in the barn of friends Bessie and Frank Davison, at Blakiston, near Mt Barker.

With a Church of England membership in the colony of 12,000 by 1840, Howard had the assistance of 36 year old bachelor, James Farrell, M.A., fellow graduate of Trinity College, former curate in England and Ireland, and incumbent, since September, at St John's in the Wilderness (now Halifax Street). Farrell shared the burden of parish work and the increasing financial stress of establishing a church in the colony's first economic depression. Already in weakened health from these strains and a severe cold, Howard caught a chill in the bleak, wet July of 1843 when he went beyond the bounds of duty, doubtless mindful of his own little son's death, to bury the infant son of John Bull. He died on 19 July 1843, entrusting Grace and his children to his friend and colleague, James Farrell.

At 32, Grace was now a widow with four young children, and as Howard had died intestate, was left with a dower and a few lots of heavily-mortgaged land. She moved to Octagon Cottage in East Terrace, the home of Osmond Gilles, Colonial Secretary and Trinity trustee, which home Gilles gave as the parsonage for St John's. Here another catastrophe befell Grace. In November 1844 a fire broke out and she lost furniture and family possessions. Despite contemporary propriety, Grace may have returned temporarily to Trinity parsonage, where Farrell had been living as second Colonial Chaplain since Howard's death, especially if accommodation for a woman and four children were not forthcoming, but within two months she was residing, possibly holidaying, at Glenelg.

In February 1845, a scandal broke in Adelaide. James Farrell faced prosecution for indecent assault, brought against him by Richard Charlesworth, shoemaker, on behalf of his 14-year-old daughter, Sarah, Grace's servant of only a few days. The Adelaide press covered the trial fully. Despite stifling heat, Adelaideans packed the courthouse, while

bystanders peered through windows, to witness the prosecution of the chaplain of their foremost church.

The trial revealed that Grace, her sister Rachel, four children, Sarah and Farrell had crammed into the four-roomed Glenelg cottage, with Farrell sleeping on the sofa in the parlour, opening onto Grace's bedroom. From here one morning, by her own admission during the trial, Grace impatiently called twice to Farrell to wake Sarah. Entering Sarah's room in his nightshirt, on his second attempt Farrell shook her, pulled back the bedclothes and, according to Sarah, 'touched her on her left breast'.

During the trial, James Hurtle Fisher sat beside Farrell. Fisher, known as a 'wily academic lawyer', was not only counsel for Farrell, but had also been an original trustee and influential member of Farrell's church. Further supported by several prominent citizens who rallied around a member of their class, Farrell was finally acquitted because of insufficient evidence, but the case had laid bare the distinct social and economic advantages Farrell had over a 14-year-old servant girl. He left the courtroom 'much affected'. His indiscretion was to set serious consequences in train.

Governor Grey informed Downing Street and the Right Rev. Dr. W. G. Broughton, Bishop of Australia. Both agreed that Farrell was 'guilty of breaches of propriety and decorum' expected of 'a minister of the gospel'. Broughton declared he 'lacked the qualifications for any superior ecclesiastical office', let alone 'the Head of the Establishment of the Church of England in the province of South Australia.'⁸ His only subsequent additional office was as Dean of the diocese, appointed by Bishop Short in 1849.

A little over two years after her husband's death, but having known Farrell for five years, Grace and he were married quietly on 12 November 1845. For want of a Church of England clergyman to officiate, the marriage was performed by the Rev. Robert Haining in the little stringy-bark Church of Scotland, St Mary's-on-the-Sturt. The news took ten days to reach Adelaide's press.

The Farrells had embarked on a marriage in which Grace proved neither a stoic nor a pliant wife. Her daughter, Grace, noted several domestic conflicts in her diary, and almost a decade after her mother's marriage, was still commenting, 'What a sad thing these family disputes are.'

Almost a decade after her own marriage, Grace Farrell saw her eldest daughter married. In 1854, 21-year-old Grace Howard was confiding to her diary, not only her annoyance at persistent overtures from one suitor, but her increasing pleasure in the company of Charles Marryat, 27-year-old Oxford graduate, incumbent at St John's since April 1853, and socially well-connected as Bishop Short's nephew and brother of Lady Augusta Young, wife of the current Governor. Grace's growing admiration for Charles had to survive one serious setback, however. Her spirited defence of her Irish fondness for dancing drew strong criticism from Charles. Later, when he preached 'against the vanities of this world' from 1John 5:14, Grace was quite sure 'he was directing his words partly at her'.

However, with a reconciliation achieved, on 8 August 1854 Grace Howard and Charles Marryat were married at Trinity, with her step-father, James Farrell, officiating. If Grace Farrell had any qualms about losing her first child in marriage, her unease would surely have been allayed had she known of Charles' prayer to his diary: 'O God, bless this marriage of mine to my temporal and spiritual and ministerial good ... In seeking my own happiness, I have not forgotten Thy glory.'

Ten months later Grace Farrell became a grandmother for the first time, when Charles Howard Marryat, or 'Charlie', was born. In years to come Grace was to be grandmother to

eight more Marryat children, six of whom survived her, but none seemed to give so much delight as this first grandson, perhaps because he reminded her of her only little son, Charles, who had lived for just five days.

A shadow had fallen over the Marryats' wedding however. Muttie had been too ill to be bridesmaid and was to die two years later, at only 16, from one of her 'usual attacks', and was buried beside her father, Charles Howard. Heartbroken at the loss of a second child, Grace seemed to take comfort 'only from her grandson, Charlie, and the sight of his merry little face.'

In November 1857, Grace became the mother of two brides dressed exactly alike, when Bel married John Williams, pastoralist of Black Rock station, and Henni became the wife of Captain Morley Saunders of the 12th Regiment. The assertion of Douglas Pike, historian, that Grace wished to see her daughters 'married well' may have seemed a reality with Bel now married into landed wealth and society, and Henni the wife of an army Captain with a promising career, but both marriages were threaded with sorrow.

John Williams was consumptive, frail even at marriage. Yet it was 'the much-loved Bell ... of the sweet disposition' who was to die first, nine years after marriage, and leaving no children. Grace Farrell had now to mourn the loss of a third child. Likewise Henni, with an itinerant husband posted at various places within Australia and as far afield as India, had to bear much responsibility for her children's upbringing. Her sister, Grace Marryat, found the children unruly and 'sadly spoilt', while grandmother Grace found them very difficult to handle on their infrequent visits. More serious was Morley's 'queer behaviour', about which Grace Marryat was so concerned that she spoke with her step-father, and both consulted the family doctor. Furthermore, in Sydney in 1863, Saunders faced a prolonged court-martial 'induced by his Colonel's conduct towards his wife'. Saunders had first taken leave from his base without permission, after which consequent charges were preferred. With the reporting of the case in Adelaide, Grace Farrell and family endured the unwanted publicity of a second scandal until Saunders' acquittal a year later.

By the 1860s the Farrells were 'empty-nesters' at a time when both the colony and Trinity church had consolidated following a post-mineral buoyant economy. Indeed, Trinity was now considered the society church of Adelaide and 'no society people ... would have any other clergyman to marry them while [Dean Farrell] lived'.

The Farrells, with their own and their son-in-law Charles Marryat's connections, now moved in circles which included a judge, politicians, governors, and men of high commerce. One admirer, a friend of the Howard children since governess days, and a member of society herself, described hostess Grace as 'tall, handsome, and exceedingly clever', as never wanting in social poise, knowing always 'how to do a gracious act'. This knowledge, her friend added, came 'from breeding', which lends some credence to Grace's reputed descent from the Neville Earls of Warwick. Yet Grace's often mordant wit and mimicry had not mellowed with time. Many found that her 'irresistible temptation' to 'take the fun out of anyone's peculiarities kept them in fits of laughter', at the same time as it understandably made many enemies.

Perhaps mindful of his earlier indiscreet behaviour, as well as the expectations of, and obligations to, his parishioners, Farrell tempered his interests accordingly. Although passionately fond of horses, he did not attend race meetings, but always rode in that direction. He loved whist, but never played for money. Yet two features of Farrell's life remained above reproach. Firstly, as Grace Marryat's diary attests, the Howard children had 'truly found a second father'. Further proof of his caring responsibility lies in the ornate memorial

plaque in Trinity, erected by Farrell, in memory of the 'esteem and affection' he had for his other two step-daughters, Bel and Muttie. Secondly, in his preaching of the gospel, he remained as staunch an evangelical as his predecessor – 'no eloquence, no oratory, but a solemn, simple manner in the pulpit, that carried conviction to all'.

Within a few years the Farrells faced declining health. The Dean had become progressively more ill, very possibly from swallowing an embrocation containing lead and potassium in mistake for his usual medicine. Early in 1868 he paid young Charles Marryat's fees for St Peter's College and gave him a Bible. Grace's gift to Charlie was his cap and gown. By August Farrell was so ill he had not been able to preach for three months. In November he journeyed to England, seeking the currently popular water cure, but died on 26 April 1869. As the Observer reported, 'The veteran evangelist sleeps far from the scene of his labours'. Now twice widowed, Grace, 'completely prostrated with grief ... would not put on her weeds for some time.'

From a variety of judicious investments, Farrell died a very rich man. He left his wealth not to Trinity, not even to his wife, but to St Peter's College, the school for 'young Christian gentlemen' with which he had had a long association and involvement. Embarrassed at such munificence, the College Council resolved to appoint Grace as Lady Visitor, with a salary of £200 per year.

As well as coping with bereavement, Grace was ailing from the effects of often vomiting blood, persistent bronchitis and a serious fall. Grace Marryat was with her when she died from 'a disease of the heart' on 18 July 1870 at Christ Church parsonage, spared the knowledge that Henni was to die in Ireland six years later, leaving eight children, the oldest of whom was twelve, and a husband committed to a lunatic asylum in 1883.

Grace had survived her two husbands, three of her five children and two grandchildren, both of whom were also named Grace. She is buried in West Terrace Cemetery with her first husband, her children Bel and Muttie, and two grandchildren. On the simple headstone are roughly etched the letters 'GMM' and 'HHS', those of her two daughters, Grace Montgomery Marryat and Henrietta Hindmarsh Saunders, buried elsewhere.

Because Grace cannot speak for herself, we can draw only inconclusive assumptions about her. Some disliked her for what they saw as vanity, social climbing, imperious manner and hurtful tongue. Others saw a different side. They enjoyed her wit and sociability, saw her vulnerable in loneliness and grief, and resilient to private criticism and public scandal. Within her marriages and church fellowship she knew first-hand that forgiveness and salvation come through grace alone. If she spoke to herself as forthrightly as she did to others, Grace would surely have known she stood in need of grace as much as any.

She has two memorials. At St Peter's Cathedral a stained glass triptych, which forms the Resurrection window depicting the women at Jesus' tomb, was dedicated to the first Dean of Adelaide, James Farrell and his wife. It was moved to Trinity in 1912 when the cathedral was extended. Also now in Trinity a memorial tablet to Grace is flanked by similar tablets commemorating her husbands. Both of these memorials are in the chancel. The words on Grace's tablet encourage Trinity members to remember the good that Charles Howard, James Farrell and she did, and to hold all in affection.

One might add that the words speak also of many other early 19th century founding Trinity women, about whom we know even less than we do about Grace Montgomery Howard/Farrell.

Terrace and Morphett Street, the site selected by the colony's Surveyor General, Colonel Light in March 1837 as the place for the town's church. He did this at the beginning of the process by which the original land-order holders gained their town acres by means of drawing lots, prior to the process of open sale of the remainder. To avoid scandal, all agreed that Light should first nominate the acre on which the church should be built.¹⁰ He expected this location to face the major crossing point over the river and the link with the residential sites on the north side. Like so much of Light's application of the model plan (sketched in London by George Kingston) to the realities of antipodean Adelaide, his prediction was soon proved wrong. Acre 9 was never surrounded by prosperous residences. It was sited beside a busy roadway in a quarter of the town rapidly occupied by speculators and their small-scale tenants.¹¹

In the meantime, Howard was anxious to provide some form of meeting place for worship. He gained the gift of a sail from one of the ships unloading off the coast, but could not readily arrange its movement to the town. So he appealed to his fellow passenger and supporter, the good-natured but stout Osmond Gilles. Together they trolled and manhandled the sail the weary, hot miles from the port to Adelaide, not without mishap as the trolley got away from them and sent them both sprawling. They struggled somehow across the Torrens and eventually reached their destination somewhere on North Terrace. There Howard erected it as a sort of shelter under which he conducted services.¹²

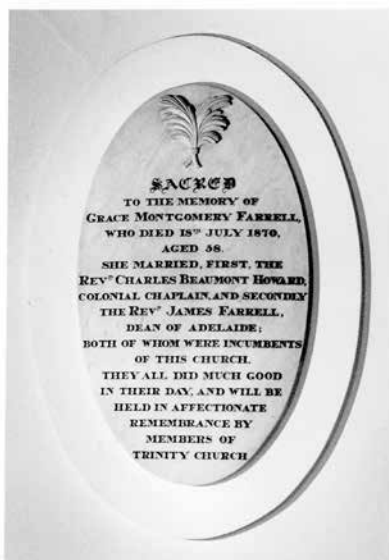
Next in use was the wooden temporary court house, in Gilles Arcade, off Currie Street, where the congregation sat on simple benches. One day, according to Mary Thomas, the front bench, bearing the weight of the Governor and his suite from Government House, gave way under the strain. There was a loud crash as they all fell to the floor, flat on their backs, 'to the evident amusement of many of the congregation'. Some laughed outright, including the governor himself, 'and even Mr Howard could not repress a smile'.¹³

In June 1837 an appeal for funds was launched with advertisements in the local press:

The Christian Public are hereby informed that the only obstacle in the way of the speedy erection of Trinity Church, is the want of funds. It is hoped that, under the circumstances, all who dread the evil of our becoming a Sabbath-desecrating, and consequently a Godless people, will readily contribute towards so desirable an object as the erection of a house of worship.¹⁴

A month later the published subscription list acknowledged gifts from the governor (£5), the judge and some twenty five others. The first call was to pay Messrs Cock and Ferguson to move the remains of the wooden church from where it had lain for some months to North Terrace. It soon became apparent that its flimsy quality had not withstood the journey out from England. The trustees sensibly decided not to erect it, although they were eventually able to salvage some of it to build a schoolroom beside the church. That meant a more substantial building must be erected. So work began on a stone church for which the contractor was John White. The foundation lead plate with its bold text: 'The Lord of Heaven he will prosper

us; therefore we his servants will arise and build. Neh. II.20' was laid on 26 January 1838. Perhaps the trustees and the incumbent remembered that this was the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the colony of New South Wales. They ensured that the governor conducted the ceremony.¹⁵



Memorial tablet to Grace Farrell.
Photo by Don Gee.



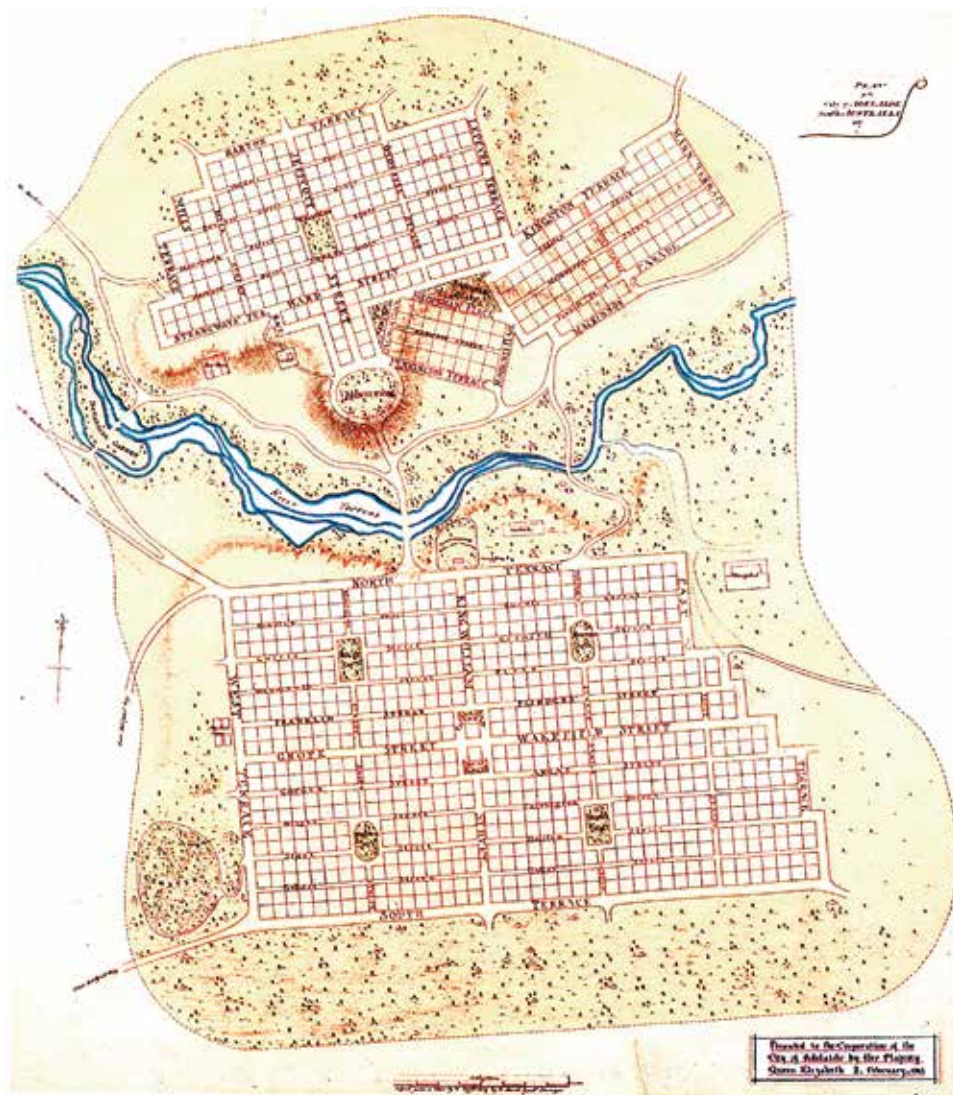
The maker's plate on the church clock.
Photo Brian Dickey.

Howard and the trustees still had to raise the money to implement this simple English village church design which the contractor hoped to finish within two months: by March 1838 £106 had been acknowledged in the press and so White could be paid £20 towards his account. Soon the trustees were able to invite applications in the press for pews to be subscribed for at £5 p.a. for a whole family. Demand exceeded supply so the original plan was modified to yield another 100 sittings (600 in all). The original estimate of £1100 had now risen to £2400, which included the price of a clock tower to house the clock made by Vulliamy (clockmaker to William IV) in 1836 on the instructions of the Commissioners to serve as the town clock. Actually installing the clock ran into 1838 and meant yet another subscription list, and some newspaper letter writing complaining of its inaccurate timekeeping.¹⁶

The rising costs also encompassed a fence, shingles for the roof, paving, flooring and joining. Once more a subscription list was opened, and once more the supporters of the Church of England dug into their pockets to pledge money. It was a price which also reflected the soaring costs of labour and materials in the poorly supplied colony. It was a cost which was to bring disaster.

Howard and his congregation

Amidst the building work Howard had still to minister to his congregation. He made a regular practice of visiting isolated settlers even though it entailed much weary walking or riding. He baptised and married as part of his duties as Colonial Chaplain. Miss Eliza Malpas left a vivid record of the first baptisms in the unfinished building. She wrote much later in her diary of the events of 21 July 1838:¹⁷



Plan of the City of Adelaide,
1837 by Col. William Light.

Colonel Light's original plan of the city, 1837: it clearly shows Light's concept of the city articulated north-south via Morphett Street across the river to Montefiore Hill and North Adelaide. It was unfortunate for Trinity on a number of counts. Plainly, settlers voted with their feet and moved along Hindley Street towards the higher ground and the power bases located around and opposite Government House. Better crossings of the river were demanded to replace the ford shown on Light's plan, and these were located in line with King William Street, and Kingston soon amended the design to reshape North Adelaide accordingly. This left Trinity in what quickly became a zone of secondary industry and modest housing. Furthermore, it lay beside a creek line. Hardly prestigious, and certainly the face of the 'town clock' served few passers-by. *Courtesy City of Adelaide Archives, Civic Collection, Item 1383.*



Part of North Terrace, a lithograph published in 1839 by A. Gole from a painting by Anne Gladdon

Mrs Stephen and myself were dressed for the christening by 2 o'clock. Mrs Cotter called for us and we walked from the S.A. Bank [corner of North Terrace and Stephen Place] to the church [ie Trinity]. It was, for Adelaide, a very big building, but would have been thought small in England. The workmen were on the roof and looked with astonishment at the party below. The ceremony commenced. Mrs Fisher's daughter of 18 months was the first. She was named Emily Anne (or Ann). Mrs Fisher was one godmother, and Mrs Cotter proxy for an aunt, and Mr Cotter for Charles Fisher. The next was Master Cotter aged two years and four months: Thomas Charles Edward, Miss Cotter 4 months, Ellen Fisher. After the ceremony we walked to Mr Fisher's and in a few minutes the company assembled. Mr Fisher was dressed in uniform; Mrs Fisher wore a maroon cored silk with a very handsome worked collar. Mrs Cotter has a fawn silk with lace pelerine. Mrs Smart a lemon coloured silk and pearl necklace. Mrs Stephens (or Stephen) pale green silk, white crepe scarf and sable boa. Mrs [sc Miss?] Fisher French poplin, of fawn and brown, and a ribbon round her head of white and green. Fanny had a frock like Mrs F's dress and a ribbon like her sister's round her head. I wore a white frock and blue scarf. There were several gentlemen present: Mr Morphett, Alan Hicks, John Hancock, James Fisher, Capt Pollard and Mr Brown.

At 3 o'clock¹⁸ we partook of an elegant cold collation and as I wish to be able at some future time to know the manners of the colony I hall insert the bill of fare as nearly as I can remember:-

Giblet and gravy soup

Cold roast suckling pig, Fowls roast and boiled, tongue, chicken pies

Plum pudding, gooseberry pie, scalded codlings [unripe apples, preserved by scalding, and eaten as sweetmeats]
Preserved ginger, tipsy cake, custard, open tart, preserved orange
Plum cake
Port, sherry, ale, cheese

I find I have omitted the Rev Howard, with wife and sister. Mrs Howard in stiff corded black silk, her hair tied with cherry ribbon. Sister [Miss Neville] in violet silk .

After dinner the ladies walked in the garden or stayed in the office, where supper was set out for the servants, consisting of round of beef and plum pudding. The gentlemen soon joined us and we returned to the sitting room. Miss Fisher was soon seated at the piano. Several stood round her, and others stood talking to the ladies. The instrument was a very fine toned one and we were favoured with some beautiful music, Weber and other composers. Coffee and tea was brought in and after that the company arranged the room for a dance. After several had been gone through, the 'Coquette' was proposed, and all joined with the exception of 2 or 3. Mr Morphett leading out Miss Fisher was the signal for a burst of applause. After an evening spent in a most delightful manner we separated and went home. Capt Pollard and Mr Brown accompanied us to the Bank, where they stayed some time.

It is pleasant to note the presence of a fine piano and the music of the fashionable Carl Maria von Weber. These are people who saw themselves as representatives of the comfortable British middle classes, successfully translated to the new colony.

But church planting could just as well involve personal costs as well as such socialising. The announcement in the Register of 19 October 1837 of the birth of a son, Charles Neville, to 'the lady of the Rev. C.B. Howard' was accompanied by a note of the infant's death. No time to mourn either, for Howard had to attend Government House that same day to celebrate news of the accession of Queen Victoria.

Early church officials

Apart from the trustees, whose concerns were more general, Howard also gathered a staff to assist him in conducting services and caring for the church building once it could be occupied. He had employed John Adams as his clerk during the voyage to Australia. It was a memory his descendants treasured, especially since Howard presented a bible and prayer book to Adams as a memento of his services. These two volumes are now part of the church's display of objects commemorating its history.

In the newly-erected church it was customary and necessary to have a clerk to aid in the reading of the services. John Monck filled the post for some years. Charles Emery, at first bell-ringer, then pew-opener, verger and groom to both Howard and his successor, James Farrell, claimed late in his life that Monck sat at a desk in part of a triple deck, with lectern and pulpit above him, a common arrangement in eighteenth century England. From his desk the clerk would read the responses. Unfortunately Monck was prone to call 'amen' in the midst of sermons, to the distraction of

congregation and preacher. The tale has all the marks of an urban myth or the effects of reading Thomas Hardy, for there is no evidence of such a pulpit at Trinity. Emery claimed Monck was ‘fond of his beer’, and that he was sacked over some controversy about the West Terrace Cemetery, where he was sexton.¹⁹

Then there was a pew and lamp cleaner — no easy task in the days of oil lamps. This was a woman’s task, and it was held at first by Mrs White, perhaps a relative of John White the builder of the church. Later in the 1840s she was succeeded by Mrs Emery, as the latter’s husband recalled around 1900.

These officials were all paid for their services as the trustees’ records show: the clerk’s fee was reduced to £5 pa in 1843, the pew opener’s to £10, and the bell-ringer’s to £6, when there was only one Sunday service. Charles Platts, the organist, was paid rather more, £29 for 1841, while candles and other consumables cost £13 in 1843. Charges of this size were a steady call on the congregation’s income from monthly Sunday collections, pew rents and other gifts from the very beginning.

Until funds were available to buy a horse, Howard’s pastoral visits were carried out on foot. When a horse could be spared he was allowed the use of a police nag, but such chancy arrangements sometimes failed and on occasions the people of Port Adelaide just had to wait for him to arrive. By sometime in 1839 he had a horse of his own, which he called ‘Luther’.²⁰ It strengthened his ministry at Port Adelaide and permitted him to conduct services at Sturt River and later at Gawler, Mount Barker, Echunga, and Lyndoch Valley. The congregation using the incomplete building on North Terrace would be but the beginning of Anglicanism in the colony.

Support from the Gawlers

While Governor Hindmarsh was not much encouragement to Howard, his successor Governor George Gawler was the very reverse. He and his wife were committed evangelical Christians who encouraged Howard in the work of expanding a Christian influence in the colony. Mrs Gawler wrote home to her sister Jane Cox in Derby late in 1838:

I was interrupted yesterday by a long visit from our clergyman, Mr Howard begging some old linen for the Hospital here, [of which he had just been appointed chairman] and making arrangements for a lending library and the erection of a Sunday School Room for which a sermon is to be preached and a collection made next Sunday. We are also about to establish a District Visiting Society.²¹

Indeed, Howard also gave time to the Temperance Society, the Botanic Gardens, the British and Foreign Sailors Society, the Board of Aboriginal Protection, the South Australian Schools Society and the Adelaide Savings Bank. His sympathies were diverse, as he sought to exercise his dual ministries as Chaplain and parish minister.²²

It is not surprising, therefore, that Mrs Gawler went on to remark that ‘Poor Mr & Mrs Howard, with but weakly bodily health, have stood alone as regards any patronage or assistance in their labours of love’. What concerned her most of all was that as a result, the Sunday school was at a low

ebb – though getting it going at all was no mean feat. So to her interested and experienced sister she went on to relate how she was drafting various members of the governor’s staff (including young Arthur Gell) to assist as teachers. Certainly the Gawlers left no stone unturned, or unlaid, in their endeavours to make South Australia a ‘Bible Colony’. Mrs Gawler urged her sister and her friends in Derby to send what funds they could raise to aid the Sunday school and the erection of the church. She reported that the pewing was completed a couple of weeks previously, so obviously progress was being made with the building, despite difficulties over funds. ‘It is filled to overflowing, especially in the morning, and is now being enlarged to hold 300 persons more’. She looked for the erection of another church, which did not please Howard. It meant the diversion to the erection of St John’s church in the south-east corner of the city of resources Gawler controlled which might better have been directed to wiping out Trinity’s debt. But Gawler was both well-meaning and Howard’s superior, so St John’s ‘in the wilderness’ went ahead.²³

Mrs Gawler explained that Howard was the only ‘Church’ clergyman in the colony, and that ‘we are better pleased with Mr Howard every time we hear him’. As with the earlier commentators, there was that hint that Howard’s preaching was sincere but undistinguished. Of course ‘he is an Irishman’: did that help or hinder?



The first Sunday school room, built in 1839 of pise and the residue of the unusable pre-fabricated church. SLSA B8042. author unknown.

Sunday school established

By the time Mrs Gawler wrote to her mother Mrs George Cox, the Sunday school sermon had been preached, the collection yielding £14 16s 3d. Howard thought that might just be enough to raise mud walls, because they could not afford anything more. It was soon put to use, for invitations were issued in the *Register* in February for parents to bring infants

from the age of two to six to the schoolroom for a weekday infants' school. It did not stop either of them in establishing a committee for the school to strengthen the lonely Howards. Gawler became Patron, George Hall (his secretary) treasurer, and Arthur Gell joined the committee. Poor Arthur, another of Gawlers' staff, had not been well. Not long after, he lost his life at sea, as the memorial tablet in the church testifies.²⁴

Music

Whether or not Howard's Irishness contributed, Mrs Gawler also noted that 'He is very musical'. He put together a selection of hymns and arranged for their printing by Thomas in 1838. The *South Australian Hymn Book* was a words-only edition which contained 105 hymns set to standard tunes proposed by title and metre. A seraphine, a small portable instrument probably similar to a harmonium, was imported from England, costing £64-5-0 (including the cost of transport from the Port), on which Charles Platts could play to lead the congregation.²⁵ So 'Awake my soul, and with the sun' was to be sung to New Portugal, while the evening hymn, 'Glory to thee, my God, this night' to Brentwood. Provision was made for Advent (four hymns), Christmas (five), New Year, Epiphany, and of course Good Friday, under which heading nine hymns were listed ('When I survey the wondrous cross'), several of which were expressive of late eighteenth century romanticism.

Few other church festivals were recognised, but provision was made for charity sermons, missionary Sundays, schools, confirmation and harvest time. There were ten on death and judgement, and fifteen on redemption ('Come weary souls, with sin opprest'), with another fifteen on Christian experience. The protestant evangelical character of Howard's ministry was unmistakable in this clear expression of his preferences.

Howard placed this hymn in the section on Christian experience in his *South Australian Hymn Book*. It was in 'Common Measure', and the suggested tune was Gainsboro'. It illustrates his emphasis on hymns of personal experience, a product of the more subjective side of the Evangelical revival when influenced by Romanticism. Despite this, it is Hymn no. 2:28 by Isaac Watts, writing a hundred years earlier.

81 C.M. Gainsboro

Happy the heart where graces reign,
Where love inspires the breast;
Love is the fairest of the train,
And quickens all the rest.

Knowledge alone is all in vain,
In vain is servile fear;
Our Stubborn sins will fight and reign
If love is absent there.

'Tis love that makes our cheerful feet
In swift obedience move;
The devils know, and tremble too,
But Satan cannot love.

This is the grace that lives and sings
When faith and hope shall cease;
Tis this shall strike our joyful strings
In the sweet realms of peace.

In this hymn for Good Friday, Howard has chosen one which has most of the marks of the evangelical Christian view of Christ's death, seen once more in highly personal, even subjective terms. Author unknown.

18 L.M. *Simeon*

Sinners! 'behold the man' who died!
hold your saviour crucifi'd!
Behold him bleeding on the cross!
Behold him sacrificed for us!

Trace him, ye careless sinners, through
The grief and shame he bore for you;
Until you see him pierced and slain;
And then, by faith, 'behold the man!'

He bow'd beneath affliction's rod,
Fulfilling all the Law of God;
He guiltless soul was full of woe;
'Behold the man' who died for you!

O, sinners! such his torments were;
His agonies beyond compare
Exceeding for all mortal woe
How great his love who died for you!

Criticism

There were critics too, especially in the press, that hotbed of nonconformist opinion. Already David McLaren, manager of the South Australian Company and a prominent Baptist, had asserted that there was no established church in the Province, which had been met by the equally forceful reply of 'A Churchman' that the creation of the office of Colonial Chaplain had done just that. This controversy alone was reason enough for Howard to walk modestly. Then there were specific attacks. Why didn't Mr Howard accompany a funeral from the church to the cemetery, sniffed the *Southern Australian* of 29 December 1838. Howard's spirited reply in the *Register* asserted that when, after prayers in the church, he failed to accompany a funeral party to the actual burial it was due to 'ill-health, the intervention of other more important clerical duty or the want of punctuality in parties attending the funeral'.²⁶ The editor continued to imply criticism so a group of fifty-two of Howard's supporters — we can by this date reasonably call them his parishioners — wrote in his defence to the *Register* expressing their 'deep feelings of regard, esteem, and respect with which your zealous piety and conscientious discharge of all the duties of your sacred office have impressed our hearts'. They rejected the criticism of the *Southern Australian* by asserting that Howard readily afforded 'to all without distinction the

consolations of religion and the offices of friendship'. Therefore they had no hesitation in 'recording our admiration of your universal exertions in the erection of more than one place of public worship, at which we have seen you toil with your own hands'. Their conclusion may have been conventional, but it was still heartfelt: 'it is our earnest prayer that we may be long blessed by the Ministry of one who in so high degree possesses the virtues of a Christian Pastor, and the qualities of a good colonist'.²⁷

Should Howard have replied to this fulsome praise? Convention required it. His remarks again show the evangelical model of ministry which he followed with feeling:

That the connection which exists between us as a minister and his flock may be not only lasting but of daily increasing spiritual benefit to both, is my heartfelt prayer. May your minister so deeply feel his responsibility that he may with earnestness set forth 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified' as the only foundation for a sinner's hopes, and the sanctification of His Spirit as the only satisfactory evidence of having secured an interest in his salvation. May you, his flock, receive the word at his mouth 'not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God', which is able to make you 'wise unto salvation'. Thus may we hope that the union which has commenced here below will be continued above, and prove lasting as eternity.²⁸

The evangelical piety of this exchange may be cloying to the modern sensibility, but it is overwhelming in its force. These people and their pastor were in a strong and trusting relationship.

There were other controversies to confront. The marriage issue rumbled on, with Howard conducting all weddings with licenses signed by the governor. But when the Revd Ralph Drummond, the minister of the (Scottish) United Secession Church, married a couple in 1841, his actions were challenged on the grounds that the privileges of Scots clergy did not apply in the colony. Were any marriages validly performed if the colony had no official, that is government controlled, registration? Changes in English law while the *Buffalo* had been on the water meant that even Howard's treasured register might merely be wasted paper. It was not until late in 1842 that the English law officers of the crown set consciences at rest as to Howard's proper exercise of this duty. For the Dissenters it required two local Ordinances of Council, in 1842 and 1844, to validate all marriages conducted in the colony up to that date, and to lay down procedures which removed any claim to privileged priority by the Anglican clergy.²⁹ Given the well-established pattern of service to the colony Howard had followed, there is no cause to doubt that he accepted this important equalising of the status of the several churches in the colony, far in advance of the situation which applied in England. Certainly, on the broader issue, he stated in the *Register* in reply to one opponent of state aid that once he was convinced that the state should no longer provide support for religion, he would be happy to become a 'voluntary pastor' because he believed that the Lord of the Vineyard 'will not fail to supply those who labor therein with all things needful'.³⁰

While all this was evolving, the Sunday school celebrated its first

anniversary on 14 May 1839 in front of Government House where the children amused themselves as they pleased, especially at the several swings fixed to some trees. The preliminary land order was turned into two land grants, one for acre 9, one for forty country acres to the north-east of the city, in December 1839, to be held by the three trustees Fisher, Mann and Gilles. More significant for Howard personally was the arrival of another Anglican clergyman, the Revd James Farrell, sent out with the support of the SPG, in September 1840. Farrell, another graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, became incumbent of the newly established second church, St John's, Halifax Street ('in the wilderness' as it was nicknamed in those early years).³¹

Financial crisis

For the rest of Howard's life it was not fellowship but money which dominated his affairs. The tale which unfolded from the trustees' records illustrates the character of the Anglican beachhead in Adelaide. This inner history gives the lie to those, then or later, who claimed that the Anglicans had a privileged start in the colony. The reverse was true. Being both Colonial Chaplain and parish clergyman restricted Howard's capacity to develop a clear parochial ministry, when his work is compared with the vigorous efforts of the early Methodist clergy. What is more, there might well have been among some Anglicans a lingering belief that the Chaplain's salary absolved them from the financial obligations of supporting their parish clergyman. The concept of a 'voluntary pastor' stuck in more throats than Howard's. It was not necessary in England: why in the new province? So the sometimes tedious tale of the financial struggles of the early 1840s unfolds. The outcome was a parish knowingly committed to the voluntary principle, at least pro tem, for everything other than its clergyman's salary.

Not only had extending the church in 1838 been expensive. It had not been sustained by enough money from Trinity's supporters. True, the Wesleyans and the Independents were borrowing from the Bank of Adelaide to pay their contractors, but at least the Wesleyans were covering the interest payments from pew rents.³² Howard borrowed £300 on 13 June 1838 from the Bank of South Australia. On 3 November £250 more was borrowed, and by 27 July 1839, another £1040. The money went to the contractors and sub-contractors, as the receipts drafted in Howard's hand on slips of paper attested by the recipients show. Platts was paid £64 for the seraphine, Charles Fowler was paid £1 9s 0d for installing brackets and holdfasts, C. Brook £1 16s 0d for twenty-four candlesticks.

But repayment was not proceeding. The £42 received by Osmond Gilles at the church on 21 July 1838 was disappointing. The colony was not generating a prosperous income for its settlers, and by 1840 the first mad rush of speculative investment and growth had slowed to nothing. It was not much use to have £1000 secured against the building, or even that £700 was on a bill signed by the three trustees. On 1 November 1839, after a disagreement about the extent of work still needed, perhaps to put right poor work already done, Howard borrowed another £215 from the Australasian Bank to pay the workmen, against the wishes of the trustees. They resigned, thus endangering the bills they had signed for the church. It was to Governor Gawler that Howard turned, who readily

put his name to a note for £1000, as a matter of form as he later claimed. It appears that the pressure from the banks in 1840 was assuaged after Howard appealed to Raikes Currie, his banker-patron in London.³³

But tougher views about the colony prevailing in London at the Colonial Office culminated in the decision of the Colonization Commissioners to refuse further credit to Governor Gawler and the colony of South Australia later that year. The British government decided to replace him with Captain Grey, who announced his arrival and appointment to the startled colonists on 15 April 1841 and soon after severe cuts in government expenditure. What can only be called the first depression of the South Australian economy ensued. There were many bankruptcies of business and individuals, high and low. James Fisher was among them. There was little hope for the Trinity congregation and its financial worries. The Bank of South Australia demanded repayment within five days on 10 May 1841. A meeting of trustees was held the next day to consider the situation: they now comprised George Hall, Charles Sturt (Colonial Secretary) and Boyle Travers Finniss, with John Baker as treasurer. They found an accumulated debt, including interest, of £1894 6s 6d owing to the Bank of South Australia and another £215 to the Bank of Australasia. They found that pew rent promises were worth £272, and they estimated annual income from collections at £100. They had to find payments for the clerk, bell ringer, pew opener, collector of rents, organist and lighting totalling £70. Income was therefore insufficient to meet all the claims. Howard optimistically canvassed the renting of more pews, while Finniss took over as treasurer.

Obviously Howard was still not getting any income from his parishioners. They were to be dunned for the payment of outstanding pew rents by Charles Platts, the collector, as Finniss urged the churchwarden C.B. Newenham in May, while Edward Stephens at the Bank of South Australia kept up his pressure for prompt repayment. The trustees' next step was to draft and issue a circular appealing for donations – this amidst the colony's bleakest financial winter when there were hundreds of men out of work and hundreds of families receiving strictly limited aid from the Emigration Agent. The new trustees could correctly claim that they had no part in the making of the present difficulties. They urged the 'strong claims which that church has to the good feelings of the members generally of the Protestant community as being the first existing in the province'. They were confident that the present embarrassed condition would be speedily rectified by the generosity of the public. They called a meeting to canvass their proposals on 2 August 1841. In the meantime they learnt that the new Governor Grey would not lend any money to Trinity, but that he wished as an individual to donate £20 towards the fund.

The meeting of 2 August was chaired by Howard. Charles Sturt, Dr Newland, Richard Baker, G.T. Finniss, H. Neale, Osmond Gilles, James Farrell, C. Platts, C.B. Newenham, D. Wright and William Bartley were present. The new scheme put forward was to raise £2000 by £5 shares which would be regarded as advances on future pew rents over ten years. The loan would be at 10 per cent. The meeting was not keen on yet more debt, and resolved, in preference, to urge state aid for religion along the lines adopted in New South Wales in 1836, that is annual subsidies in proportion to the amount raised by the congregations, or perhaps

according to their size. The pew redemption scheme was rejected. Finniss told the churchwardens that they must accept responsibility for any further expenses. Nor should we be surprised to find their clergyman writing in pathetic urgency to Governor Grey on 5 November, in a letter in the files of the Colonial Secretary which still evokes sympathy, pleading for the government to buy the church:

I humbly conceive that it is the duty of a Government where it appoints a chaplain to provide him with a suitable church in which to officiate, else how are his public ministrations to be exercised? In South Australia this duty has hitherto been overlooked. To this day I am indebted to the voluntary contributions of individuals for the church in which I officiate and the incumbency of which I hold not in right of my office as Colonial Chaplain, but nomination of the Trustees, the two appointments being perfectly distinct. Government *as such* has never contributed anything towards the erection of Trinity Church, although the heads and other members of it have, as *individuals* contributed liberally. The church is however heavily in debt.³⁴

Pew rents paid in the year ending 25 March 1843

	£		£
John Baker	5 0 0	G Malin	4 0 0
F Bayne	1 5 0	H Maslin	1 2 6
C Beck	4 0 0	Masters	17 0
A Best	1 0 0	G Mayo	4 0 0
Capt. Butler	2 10	J Morphett	4 0 0
C Calton	15 0	T Nash	2 0 0
Miss Calton	10 0	Nation	1 10
Capt. Duff	4 0 0	B Neales	1 10
H	2 0 0	L Payne	3 15
Fenton	7 6	Penny	1 0 0
Capt. Frome	8 0 0	Pepperate	7 6
Gaywood	1 5 0	H Pringle	15 0
G Gilbert	3 0 0	Sharp &	1 0 0
W Golding	2 0 0	W Smillie	1 5 0
W Gell	1 10	R Smith	4 0 0
J Hance	1 0 0	Tovey	1 10
James	4 0 0	Trimmer	2 10
H Jickling	1 0 0	Turton	10 0
G Knott	1 0 0	Capt. Watts	4 0 0
W Lambert	1 10	Mrs Wilson	15 0
P Lowe	10 0	Dr Wyatt	1 0 0

Source: Papers relating to property & finance, 1837–51, Holy Trinity papers, SRG 94/2A/10.

He pointed out that if the church had to be sold to meet the debts being pressed by the banks the government would have to erect a building in which he might officiate. So he offered Trinity to the government for a round £2000, which would eventually be able to collect the pew rents for its own use! The very next day the *Register* carried Platt's threat to repossess the seraphine if the £40 plus interest still owing on it was not

speedily found. Grey was not unsympathetic to Howard's request, but of course had to see it in the widest context of demands from all denominations and the current straitened circumstances of government and colony alike. No special aid was therefore available for Trinity church, though as we shall see, Grey's successor was quick to move when prosperity had returned.

The struggle continued through 1842, with C.B. Newenham, churchwarden and the colony's Sheriff, reported just over £200 income for the year (to 27 March) but payments of almost £270, the largest amount being £209 to the Bank of South Australia. In May B.T. Finniss resigned as trustee, another victim of the colony's financial crisis, while revenue from pew rents continued to fall. By the end of March 1843 Charles Platts had collected £94 14s 6d in pew rents. These were the parishioners who were actually supporting the church with funds. It can be seen from the following table that many could not pay the full £1 per sitting, and that not many of the great of the world continued to subscribe.

By July Platts had been dispensed with, not only as collector but also as organist, a duty he had occupied for some time, for he was the colony's leading music entrepreneur, running a shop selling musical instruments and books, and giving recitals in church and hall. Howard wrote to Governor Grey on 28 April 1843 again canvassing the dire situation he faced at Trinity. The debts were growing as interest piled up, Howard wrote. Things were not helped by squabbles among the trustees: he made it clear he was desperate for money. The pew rents for the year to March 1843 made the point.³⁵



Boyle Travers Finniss, trustee 1840–46, public servant and first premier of South Australia (1856–57). From Dean Jaensch, *The Flinders History of South Australia: Political*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, p.80.

Howard's style

Meanwhile, in January 1842 and amidst these growing financial pressures, a small and short-lived publication, the *South Australian Magazine* published an appreciation of Howard's preaching and ministry. The author noted the predominance of evangelical sentiment among most of the colonists, whatever their denomination, with its emphasis on 'sinner's justification by faith and ... the finished work of Christ as the only ground of a sinner's hope'. To Howard was attributed much of:

that cordiality and good feeling, which has existed among all denominations of Christians from the establishment of the Province ... Uniformly urbane and gentlemanly in his deportment, he has succeeded not only in attaching to himself the members of his own

congregation, but in raising himself in the esteem of all others to whom he is personally known.

The writer reminded his readers of Howard's personal efforts in building his house, and then went on:

Mr Howard's style of preaching is simple and pleasing, but it possesses neither sufficient unction nor fervour to make him ... a popular preacher. Without diving deep into the intricacies of theological disquisition or venturing rashly into an elaborate defence of particular doctrinal sentiments, there is sufficient in his ordinary preaching to secure a variety, and to convince you that you are not listening to a mere moralist in religion, but to one who has an implicit regard to the doctrines of the New Testament. If he startles you with no new discoveries in truth, he leads you into none of the subtleties or mazes of error. If his preaching possesses but few of the variegated beauties which embellish the pulpit exercises of some of our modern popular preachers, it is at least free from that insidious poison, which in the shape of a gilded pill, is swallowed down as a universal panacea ... His preaching [is] ... that of a man who is slowly treading in the footsteps of others of greater eminence, in regarding the sacrifice of Christ as the only sure guide to practise.

Crisis climaxes

These were generous, friendly words, but they did not ease the pressure from the banks. In early June 1843 Howard reported to his congregation on Sunday morning:

I hold in my hand a formal notice that legal proceedings are about to be instituted against myself and the other trustees for the debt which has been contracted for Trinity Church. I shall make but this last appeal upon this subject as it may be thought I am influenced by personal feelings rather than a sense of public duty. It would be a disgrace to the congregation if the oldest place of worship in the colony were to be seized upon for debt. Were the pew rents paid up a sum would be raised sufficient for a time at least to stop legal proceedings.³⁶

But it would be Howard's own failing health that brought these problems to their climax. Already he was writing on 5 June to his friend Captain Francis Davison to seek the use of Davison's house at Mount Barker to recuperate.³⁷ The announcement that Howard had died on 19 July was swift and dramatic. The *South Australian* reminded its readers of his hard work, his early difficulties with authority, and 'his ever ready attendance to the sick and the dying'. The *Register* spoke of his 'uniformly urbane and gentlemanly deportment', and his 'truly Catholic spirit' which all agreed had contributed to the 'feeling of unanimity and cordial brotherhood, which has so happily subsisted among all denominations of Christians in the Province from its first establishment.'³⁸ The town turned out for his funeral, with government offices shut as a mark of respect for their energetic colleague. The funeral service, attended by the governor and many officials, included Handel's 'I know that my redeemer liveth' and his 'Dead

March’, together with Luther’s mighty ‘Ein Feste Burg’. James Farrell, the only other Anglican clergyman in the colony, read the funeral service ‘with impressive solemnity’. Observers remarked that ‘such a number of persons so completely overcome in their feelings have seldom been witnessed at a public funeral’.³⁹ The fashions of the day united with genuine sadness to evoke those tears from a community which recognised the passing of a devoted servant, especially when they reflected upon the story of his last ministry. He had ridden up to Mount Barker to visit the Bull family whose child was ill, only to be soaked by heavy rain on the return journey. It was from that chill that Howard never recovered.

That theme of devoted pastoral care was dominant in Howard’s ministry. It was combined with a patently evangelical view of Christianity. But the process of creating a self-sustaining Christian congregation in the new province within the framework of traditional Anglicanism was by no means complete. Leadership, other than from Howard, had more than once faltered. Income was not secure. The trustees were an uncertain group. Even the achievement of a permanent, weatherproof church building was to prove to be some years away, as Howard’s successor soon discovered.

- 1 [George Stevenson], ‘Extracts from the Journal of a Voyage in His Majesty’s Ship “Buffalo” from England to South Australia’, RGSSA, *Proceedings*, 30, 1928–9, pp.21–65.
- 2 Marriage Registers, SRG 94/2A/1/1-4, SLSA. These and linked baptism and burial registers are available on microfilm in the Genealogical History section at SLSA.
- 3 David Hilliard, *Godliness and Good Order: a history of the Anglican Church in South Australia*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 1986, p.3.
- 4 Angas Papers, foolscap series, PRG 175, SLSA.
- 5 Commission, dated 29 Mar 1837. SLSA D8315.
- 6 Judge J. Jeffcott to C.B. Howard, 2 July 1837, GRG 24/1/1837/171a, SRSA, *Register*, 8, 29 July 1837.
- 7 These appointments are recorded in the Colonial secretary’s inward and outward correspondence, GRG 24/4, SRSA.
- 8 Minutes of the Executive Council, 1 Mar 1845, GRG 40/1/3; Bishop Broughton to Governor Grey, 11 Apr 1845, GRG 24/1/1845/77, SRSA.
- 9 Pike, p.265.
- 10 John Stephens, *The History of the Rise and progress of the New British Province of South Australia...*, Smith, Elder, London, 1839, 2 ed., p.101, fn†.
- 11 Interestingly, in 1838 Howard himself is shown on Kingston’s Town Map as owning Acre 53, which lay diagonally behind Acre 9 fronting Hindley Street. One can only presume this land was swallowed up in the church’s financial crisis.
- 12 As related in Bull, *Early Experiences in South Australia*, Adelaide, 1884, p.39.
- 13 *The diary and letters of Mary Thomas (1836–1866): being a record of the early days of South Australia*. (3rd ed.), edited by Evan Kyffin Thomas, Adelaide, 1995.
- 14 *Register* 8 Jul 1837.
- 15 Recorded on the half title page of the marriage register and reported in the *Register* 17 Feb 1838.
- 16 *Register* 13, 20 Apr 1838. More than 170 years later, devoted work by Bob Smith and others saw the clock’s worn brass cog teeth replaced and the whole mechanism refurbished so that it runs accurately.
- 17 Miss Eliza Malpas was a sister in law of Charles Mann. She died in March 1902 aged 81 (*Register* 18 Mar 1902), and so she was seventeen in 1838, though when she actually wrote this memoir is not clear: it seems much later. This is a transcribed extract from her diary. No other material from this diary exists. It is here drawn from a print displayed in the vestry at Holy Trinity Church, North Terrace, Adelaide. No other source details are available. This piece may have appeared in an Adelaide newspaper in 1932, prompting the query from the Secretary of the Library. (Miss M. E. Malpas to the Secretary of the Library, Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia 7 Apr 1932,

- GRG19/17, 1932/M, State Records South Australia.) The State Library of SA holds no records of Eliza Malpas, or for that matter Charles Mann, Eliza's relative in its collections. Mr James Hurtle Fisher was the Resident Land Commissioner for the Colony.
- 18 The subsequent reference to 'the office' suggests that the Fishers were the hosts most probably at the Fisher residence and attached Land Office, on the parklands near the corner of North Terrace and West Terrace (i.e. the Newmarket Hotel site now) and with Colonel Light's hut adjacent. Both were subsequently destroyed by fire with resulting disastrous impacts on records of the early colony.
 - 19 Reminiscences of Charles Emery, born 12 December 1823, written ca 1900. Original held (1985) by Mrs Joyce Hann. Most published in newspaper articles, eg *Advertiser* 12 Mar 1903.
 - 20 Bull, p.40.
 - 21 Gawler family records, PRG 50/19, SLSA.
 - 22 Register 3 Feb, 14 Jul, 1838, 3 Mar 1839.
 - 23 Gawler continued to have some links with St John's, remaining a trustee after he left the colony. Caroline Adams, in her study of the early years at St John's mentions this link with Gawler. He laid the foundation stone and had a role in Farrell's appointment. <http://www.sahistorians.org.au/175/documents/st-johns-church-an-early-history-of-a-colonial-chu.shtml>
 - 24 A file of newspaper and other cuttings provided by Ian Tulloch to Rector, Holy Trinity, 2 Nov 1987, records Arthur Gell's life.
 - 25 SRG 94/A2/9-10, papers relating to property & finance of Holy Trinity Church ca 1837–1846.
 - 26 *Register* 5 Jan 1839.
 - 27 *Register* 12 Jan 1839.
 - 28 *Register* 12 Jan 1839.
 - 29 Pike, p.276–9.
 - 30 *Register* 21 Aug 1841.
 - 31 Farrell was born on 26 Nov 1803 at Longford, Ireland, son of the Revd James Farrell, of the United Church of England and Ireland. He graduated BA in 1823 from Trinity College, Dublin and MA in 1832. He was curate of Kilfree, County Sligo, before leaving his homeland in 1832 in search of a secure living. After two years in Paris, where he was private chaplain to a wealthy American, he served in rural parishes in Guernsey and at Studley, Worcestershire, England. In March 1840 he was accepted by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel as a missionary to South Australia, arriving in 1840. Hilliard, David, 'Farrell, James (1803–1869)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/farrell-james-12914/text23331>, accessed 15 October 2012.
 - 32 Pike, p.266–7.
 - 33 Pike, p.269.
 - 34 Quoted by Janet Scarfe, 'Bridge of polished steel as fine as a hair': the Oxford Movement in South Australia, 1836–1881, MA thesis, University of Adelaide, 1974, p. 72, from GRG 24/1, SRSA.
 - 35 C.B. Howard to Gov G. Grey, 28 Apr 1843, GRG 24/1/1843/115, No.119½.
 - 36 Pike, p.269, quoting *Examiner* 3 Jun 1843.
 - 37 Howard to Davison, 5 Jun 1843, D 4842(L), SLSA.
 - 38 *Register* 22 Jul 1843.
 - 39 *South Australian* 25 Jul 1843; *Register* 26 Jul 1843. Bull's memories are found in his *Early Experiences in South Australia*, Adelaide, 1884.