

City Congregation 1895–1925

With the need to find a new incumbent, once more the key role of the trustees in the life of the congregation became apparent. By their actions on this occasion they consciously set a pattern for the incumbency of Trinity which has never been contradicted since. As we shall see, they took a line that emphasised the tradition of the church and not any conformity to diocesan wishes.

Frederick Webb appointed

The problem of appointing a successor to Richardson Reid had concerned the trustees for some time, possibly even while Mayo was still alive. They went outside the diocese and consulted a well-known evangelical clergyman in Melbourne, Archdeacon Henry Langley, who not long after these exchanges became Bishop of Bendigo. (His brother was Archdeacon J.D. Langley, who had remained in Sydney when Henry went to Melbourne. Both were powerful evangelical leaders in the Church of England in Australia in the late nineteenth century, once again with Church of Ireland origins.) Langley recommended Frederick Webb, Vicar of St Alban's Armadale, a well-to-do suburb of Melbourne. Webb, born in Hampshire, England in 1859, had trained at New College, associated with the University of London. It was a college, it should be noted, which was linked with the Congregationalists. He had been made deacon by the bishop of Melbourne in 1885, and ordained priest the next year. He served as a curate at St Matthew's, Prahran, under Henry Langley, before his appointment to the newly begun St Alban's in 1888.¹ One correspondent to the *Register* objected to Webb's proposed move to Trinity. On 19 April 1895 'M.D.' protested against this 'slight' on local clergy, this loss of opportunity. Indeed, the writer had a point, although with the growth of the Church of England in Australia it might be expected that some interstate traffic in appointments would occur. Nor could his argument be any more than a moral protest, for the trustees knew that they had clear legal power to make the recommendation. The letter-writer also expressed the wish that 'the simple style of services to which the people who worship in old Trinity Church are accustomed' should not be changed.

This same correspondent returned to the charge on 24 April in terms which effectively removed his cloak of anonymity.

I have not even in my own mind considered the suitability of any particular minister for the position, but my common sense tells me

that out of seventy clergy working in South Australia there ought to be several willing to accept the post.

Surely only the administrator of the diocese in the absence of a bishop after Bishop Kennion's departure in 1894 could speak so confidently of his own mind, and one known, what is more, to do so frequently and publicly. This was Charles Marryat, the Dean of Adelaide and of course once Trinity's own first curate: hence 'M.D.' He argued that Trinity church belonged to the diocese of Adelaide, which was true enough, and that it was not a 'Congregational Chapel', which was only half true. The parish did indeed possess a degree of independence which had the potential of setting it somewhat apart from the rest of the diocese. While it was not 'an appendage of the Diocese of Melbourne', what Marryat grumbled about was that the appointment to Trinity's incumbency was not as effectively under the control of the bishop as by now most of the other parishes were, through their adoption of the model trust deed. He asserted quite incorrectly that 'Synod have a perfect right to say that the handful of people who worship within the walls of this venerable edifice, many of whom, perhaps the majority, are not residents of the parish, shall not inflict a glaring injustice upon the clergy of South Australia'. He ignored the fact that it was the trustees not the worshippers who had the power to make the appointment, and that they were entitled to take advice from any quarter. He also ignored the fact that several other parishes also possessed trust deeds which gave similar freedom to their trustees. He returned to the matter in his 'Report on the State of the Diocese' for 1895.² There can be little doubt that he made a nuisance of himself as the matter of filling the Trinity vacancy proceeded.

A special vestry meeting was held on 6 May 1895, with Samuel Tomkinson in the chair. With Toms in England and Mayo dead he was the only available and gazetted trustee. W.H. Holmes had been asked to succeed Mayo, but his appointment had not yet been confirmed by the governor. There were fifteen men and thirteen women present. It was explained that Dean Marryat had written to the trustees, presumably in terms similar to M.D.'s letter to the press, but several spoke in favour of Webb, so the chairman undertook to consult with the Administrator of the Government (for once more Chief Justice Way was serving as Acting Governor while a new governor was travelling to the colony to take up his appointment) to inform him of the unanimous feeling of the parish. Nevertheless, in his report to synod that same month Marryat explained how Reid had not known of the negotiations with Webb when he announced his intended resignation. Marryat claimed such negotiations were *ultra vires*, since Reid had only signalled an intention. He had a point there, as the seatholders learnt on 18 June: Marryat would issue no license to Webb until a vacancy actually existed. He was also expressing doubt about the powers of the trustees to appoint, so the trustees asked the eminent lawyer Josiah Symon to advise them. Despite these potential doubts, the meeting resolved to ask Webb to come over and reside in the parsonage to discuss the whole matter. On 3 October Samuel Tomkinson chaired a large meeting of seatholders at which Frederick Webb was present. Already the parish had held a meeting on 28 September to farewell

the Reids, at which the high esteem in which they were held, and their long connection with the parish, was generously proclaimed. Webb then indicated that he could stay for a fortnight to see the matter sorted out. It was agreed to wait on the bishop to request the issue of Webb's license.

Matters now began to move. The appointment of W.H. Holmes as trustee was gazetted on 31 October, signed by Acting Governor Way. The same *Gazette* contained Way's official approval of Webb's appointment as incumbent in the place of Reid, who had officially resigned. Thus Webb could explain to another meeting of seatholders on 16 October, a day after the trustees had met to act, that a complete change had come over the aspect of affairs. Way's willingness to confirm Holmes' appointment, thus providing a local majority of trustees, had been crucial. Whether he took Symon's advice or whether he perused the deeds himself we do not know. He was after all the Chief Justice of the Colony. Bishop Harmer, who had arrived in Adelaide in July, grasped the realities of the situation more clearly than the obstructionist Marryat, who perhaps had been too sensitive about the parish in which he began his South Australian ministry. The bishop promptly issued a license to Webb. The seatholders resolved to write to the 'Lieutenant Governor' 'thanking him for his expressions of sympathy in the interests of Trinity Church and his desire to meet the wishes of its seatholders'. They also thanked the trustees for their firm adherence to the trust: the precedents were now clear. There has never been another such occasion of embarrassment in appointing a clergyman to the parish. The right of the trustees to select a candidate uninfluenced by the bishop had been firmly asserted (though, to be sure, it had been Dean Marryat, not Bishop Harmer, who had been difficult on this occasion). The power of the congregation to maintain its preferred character was secure.

Webb's early initiatives

On Wednesday 4 November Frederick Webb returned by train and was met by several 'leading Trinitarians'. It was the beginning of a thirty-year ministry. Henry Evans, the editor/reporter of the *Quiz and Lantern*, attended his first sermon to assess the new man. In a previous article reporting the sermon of Dean Hopcraft who preached in May while the parish lacked a minister, Evans had described Trinity as 'distinctly "low"'. Gorgeous ritual is religiously tabooed. The congregation have determined that they will have a minister who is "Low" ... The seatholders will doubtless have their own way, and the Rev. Mr Webb, of Victoria, will presently be found presiding at North Terrace.'³ And so it had proved. In this further article he described Webb as possessing 'not at all an unpleasant voice' with a 'certain singsongness in the reading of the lessons'. He was a 'well conditioned man of between 35 and 40 years of age [not a bad guess: Webb was born in 1851]. His face has no care lines upon it. Life has seemingly been easy to him'. The reporter obviously liked the look of Webb: a 'quiet, unassuming kind of fellow' he was, who looked as though he 'could tell a good story'.

Already the old schoolroom in Morphett Street had been fitted up to carry out mission work late in 1894, a recognition that the congregation was now becoming distanced from its physical surroundings but yet

“THE REVD F. WEBB AT TRINITY CHURCH”

Last Sunday morning Mr Webb was on his trial at Trinity Church. He was preaching his first sermon as pastor of the oldest Anglican church in South Australia. He was practically occupying the position of the first Colonial Chaplain of this great, this free, and this debt-ridden country. Moreover, he was following a clergyman, the Rev. Richardson Reid, who had ministered to the spiritual wants of successive congregations at Trinity Church for the space of half a century. Considerations like these might well make a man nervous. A new parson is a being to be scrutinised. The women take stock of his features; the men lean back and criticise (mentally of course) his voice. *Quiz* would not have been in Mr Webb's place last Sunday, not though the reward had been a Spanish galleon full of doubloons.

And yet Mr Webb had nothing to fear — that is to say, if he is not a very diffident man, which he does not appear to be in any way. The ignorant man who persists in boring his friends on every possible occasion is worse than the seven plagues of Egypt, but any man of intelligence should not be alarmed at the thought of mere criticism. Byron, in his famous “English Bards and Scottish Reviewers”, has told us that critics, unlike the generality of mankind, are ready made. There is not the least doubt about it that the average critic — and *Quiz* accounts himself a very average critic — would no more dare to mount the pulpit and deliver an exhortation to a strange audience than he would dream of diving off the City bridge into one of the mudbanks which have been so mercifully created by Providence and the City Council. If, then, there was a slight tremor in Mr Webb's voice as he rose for the first time to speak to the congregation of Trinity Church — a rather meagre one, by the bye — he must be set down as a man possessing nerves, which no man nowadays ought to possess. There was a sound of the air, “At Trinity Church I met my doom,” about the sanctuary, and it was entirely unjustifiable.

Mr Webb comes from Armadale, Victoria, and he brings with him a considerable reputation. The first note *Quiz* made concerning him, “not at all an unpleasant voice.” There was a certain sing-songiness (if the expression may be permitted) in the reading of the lessons, but this may be all the result of habit. When one has to say much the same thing Sunday after Sunday, for fifty-two Sundays in the year, one is apt to grow careless. Anyway, *Quiz* determined not to judge Mr Webb by his reading, and therein he was quite right. Some of the most original men couldn't read a prayer through properly to save themselves from the pit of Tophet. They ought to be able to do so; but they can't.

In appearance Mr Webb is a well-conditioned man of between 35 and 40 years of age. His face has no care lines upon it. Life has seemingly been easy with him. He has not worried himself about small things or great things. He has reconciled himself to matters just as they are, and by-and-bye will look as comfortable and as imposing as Dean Marryat, who surely has never experienced trouble of any sort. Mr Webb seems to be a quiet, unassuming kind of fellow, who won't want to “boss” everybody, and who won't dream of putting on airs just because he is at the head of Trinity Church. So far as one can judge he is as likely to be popular with the men as with the women, for he looks as though he could tell a good story or listen to one with equal pleasure. Of course this is all mere conjecture, and the result of a quite insufficient acquaintance with the gentleman under review.

When sermon time arrives there is just the suggestion of excitement among the congregation. There is a rustle of dresses and a movement of manly boots. Mr Webb walks slowly to the desk or lectern, and then finds that he has forgotten his manuscript, so he has to tramp back again for it. This is an evident admission of nervousness. Yet when the text has been given out there is little trace of this dire complaint. The voice rings out clearly

and strongly, and it is the voice of a man who could, if he would, be an orator, because it is musical. There are some little affectations, it is true, but these are only to be expected on such an occasion. The main thing is that the voice is there; its subsequent development will be watched with much interest. A man with a harsh intonation, like the Revd Dr Talmage, for instance, may sometimes secure a host of followers, but he who seeks to captivate the multitude must make music in their ears, and this Mr Webb is capable of doing.

The sermon is of the cautious sort. It begins with a sort of introduction of the pastor to the congregation, and a number of questions are asked by the preacher and answered to his own satisfaction, and probably that of those present. Once or twice Mr Webb was inclined to be tautological, but the instances were so slight as to be scarcely worth-while referring to. The subject matter of the address is of an orthodox character. Now and again the regions of eloquence are approached, but the minister falls back into the realms of commonplace. His diction is generally good, but he is evidently not a poet, as one at least of his illustrations concerning a mill wheel is of a very practical order. He is fond of repeating certain words or phrases with slight alterations, such for example, as "It is a beautiful theme, a lovely theme, a most attractive theme," and so on. This, however, is only a trick of style, and may be rendered very effective. It is perhaps unfair to single it out for special notice, but there was little in the discourse that could well be reproduced in these columns, and this must be the excuse of the writer for referring to apparently minor matters.

However, Mr Webb was on his trial, and he may be said to have come through the ordeal with success. He will probably prove to be one of the most popular Anglican clergymen in the city, and Trinity Church will once more become a fashionable Sunday resort. The impression created on Sunday was distinctly favorable, though as applause is not yet permitted in churches (this innovation is only a question of time) it is difficult to gauge the feelings of a congregation. One has to judge by attention or inattention and by the expression on the faces of the worshippers, which may or may not be misleading. All one can say regarding last Sunday's service is that the idea conveyed was as has been stated above. Time will show the correctness or otherwise of the estimate made.

Quiz & the Lantern 14 Nov 1895.

committed to reaching the habitués of this now seedy end of town where prostitutes paraded, where the Salvation Army held evangelistic meetings, and where rescue societies sought to convince women there was a better way. A service was held in the schoolroom on Sunday evenings at eight, and also on Tuesday evenings, while on Friday it was used as a reading room with refreshments on sale. Now Webb took up the challenge, holding 'bright services' as he called them in his *Story of Holy Trinity Church*, which he published in 1920, the first in a long line of such pamphlets on the parish's history.⁴ He explained that 'open air work formed a large part of the parochial program. Threatened loss of voice by the rector [as the incumbent of all parishes in the diocese was called from 1896], caused this part of [the] parish enterprise to be regretfully given up'. Soreness of voice aside, it was clear evidence of Webb's concern to develop the impact of the parish upon the city.

Congregation surveyed

Webb also surveyed his congregation, beginning in 1896 the first regular record of communicants, with their addresses and attendances at Communion, still held monthly. He recorded forty-three men and 107



The old Trinity Schoolroom toward the end of its life. It faced Morphett Street, and replaced the schoolroom used by the first pupils of St Peter's College, which is marked on the Kingston map of 1842.

women that year: thirty-three people took communion in February, while thirty-seven did so on Easter Day. Samuel Dixon came every month, but most received the sacrament less than six times a year. Of the 127 names with addresses, there was a rough balance between city and near suburbs. There were communicants living in North Terrace, Hindley Street, Halifax Street, Weymouth Street, Gilles Street, next to St Barnabas' College (opposite the cathedral), at the Destitute Asylum (i.e. a staff member), King William Street, Franklin Street, Fenn Place (just a block west of the church), Currie Street, the Coffee Palace (in Hindley Street), and Whitmore Square. These city addresses can be compared with those in such suburbs as Parkside, Prospect, Walkerville, North Glenelg, Hackney, Norwood, Mile End, and Maylands.

During Webb's ministry the number of communicants rose by roughly fifty per cent on the figures of the 1890s: from below 100 to about 200 in the 1920s. Acts of communion roughly doubled, reflecting mainly the greater importance given to the service of Holy Communion in this period. It was also influenced by Webb's decision to follow the new practice and introduce an 'early' celebration of Holy Communion at 8 a.m., from August 1902. Marriages at Trinity also doubled, to reach a peak in Webb's period of 129 in 1913. Significantly, these marriages represented between ten per cent and fifteen per cent of all marriages celebrated by Anglican clergymen in South Australia at this time. By contrast, both baptisms and Sunday school attendances fell markedly, the Sunday school from around 300 pupils to fewer than 100. On the other hand, the parish's annual income did not grow in sympathy with the increased activity among the

worshippers. Webb's salary remained about £225 (hardly the 'richest living in the diocese' as *Quiz & Lantern* had asserted in 1895), and total ordinary annual income hovered just under £400 for the whole thirty years of his incumbency. Although new forms of income were developed and new commitments undertaken, the finances of the congregation were not impressive.

Literary Society

If attendance at Holy Communion and the scale of financial support were the two most obvious measures of the life of the congregation, there were other, lesser, expressions of its identity, notably in the form of specific groupings for Christian fellowship. One was the Literary Society, led by the indefatigable William Shakespeare. It continued in the 1890s, as the surviving minute book attests, possibly since being reformed in the late 1870s. Its weekly meetings had attendances of about fifteen men and fifteen women ('associates'). As before, the fare was literary, but now Biblical papers rarely appeared in the program. There were scenes from *Henry IV*, from *School for Scandal*, Shakespeare on 'The Life of Absalom', which was recorded as 'well written and excellently read and was listened to with attention'. By contrast at the same meeting on 31 October 1893, W. Baker's paper on 'Australian Democracy' 'did not appear to be up to the writer's usual standard, but still it contained some very interesting matter and was listened to with attention. Both papers were criticised by various members present'.

The society continued through the mid-1890s, farewelling Reid as President and welcoming Webb. There were visits to other literary societies, and special lectures: one by Dr W.G. Torr, the principal of Way College, founded by the Bible Christians in 1892, on 'Travels in Palestine' attracted a 'splendid attendance' in 1896. But its appeal seemed to pall, and after W. Lindow stood down as secretary the society faded away, to be wound up in May 1899. Held together for forty years by Shakespeare's enthusiasm, the society was an interesting expression of the search for culture and fellowship among the members of the Trinity congregation. Its demise may well have been influenced by the changing demography of the parish.

Mothers' Union

Another new group was a branch of the Mothers' Union, established in 1898. This Anglican women's organisation, which had been introduced to the diocese by Mrs Dorothy Harmer, the bishop's wife, in 1895, was committed to the maintenance of marriage and the family.⁵ Mrs Webb reported as Branch presiding Associate to the diocesan committee in 1899 that the Trinity branch was inaugurated by Lady Victoria Buxton, the governor's wife and active promoter of the Mothers' Union, 'more especially for those mothers who belonged to the mothers meeting held weekly'. From this grew a meeting on 14 December 1898 for a wider constituency, including mothers of Sunday school children, at which Mrs Harmer spoke of 'the high standard upheld, and source of strength in united prayer': seven ladies enrolled. From April 1899 regular monthly meetings were being held, including the ubiquitous William Shakespeare and his lantern

slides. 'Lady Victoria Buxton's picture on the screen was the occasion of enthusiastic applause, which was renewed when it was mentioned that it was to her thoughtful kindness and generosity we owed the pleasure of the evening.' There were twenty-five members at the end of the first year.⁶ There were fleeting mentions of the branch from that time onwards until it was closed in 1926. It is not clear how regularly the branch met. The gulf between the working class women who lived within the parish and who were regarded as objects of ministry, of visitation and encouragement and possibly charity, and those middle class ladies who were spouses of seat-holders, probably living in the suburbs, was evident in Mrs Webb's report. That gulf, it must be presumed, constricted the impact of the Mothers' Union at Trinity.

Parish affairs

Notwithstanding these new groups, for much of these thirty years the record of the congregation's activities centred on the annual vestry meeting and the financial accounts presented there. In 1897 the wardens were authorized to 'reopen' the organist's position, which had been dispensed with as an economy measure earlier in the decade. That same meeting learnt of the departure to India of Miss Jenkyn, the parish deaconess. No record of her Christian name or her place of training has yet been found. She had been appointed in the previous year, the first in the diocese, a sign of efforts in the Church of England, whether High Church or Evangelical, to invest more formal significance in the ministry of women. Bishop Kennion had introduced a women's religious community, the Sisters of the Church, into the diocese in 1892.⁷ Miss Jenkyn's duties can only be presumed: parish visiting most likely, possibly she also convened women's meetings. Was her departure relevant to the establishment of the Mothers' Union branch? We do not know. It was unfortunate that her departure was also linked, as Webb reported, with 'an alteration in her doctrinal views'. She disappeared from sight and, with her, so did full-time women's ministry in the parish or any supported by the parish for the next twenty-five years.

At the 1898 vestry meeting that well known explanation of poor attendance, the weather, in the form of 'an extreme and protracted summer' (in fact the impact of a series of years of *el niño* weather imposing severe drought on large areas of Australia), was invoked, especially as it applied to those living 'at a distance'. A special vestry meeting arranged a memorial tablet to Richardson Reid, who had died on 30 December 1898, aged only sixty-three. The 1899 annual vestry was informed of new forms of fund raising, a search which has persisted ever since: a Spring Fair raised £42 17s 8d, and a Winter Sale £34 16s 5d; in 1900 it was a Federation Fair, a concert and a choir fund; in 1901 an Empire Fair and a Strawberry Fete, all typical techniques among late Victorian Edwardian churches.

In the same year the doughty Samuel Tomkinson died having promoted the evangelical cause in Adelaide for more than fifty years. He was replaced by Samuel Dixon as trustee and a wall tablet in the nave was unveiled to Tomkinson's memory during the Sunday school's annual festivities. It is still there, speaking tersely to Tomkinson's life.⁸ During 1902 two other familiar issues were dealt with. It was agreed that as

Church Hymns was used by Trinity and only two other parishes, it should be replaced by *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. W.H. Holmes opposed the idea, presumably on the same grounds that evangelicals had expressed for thirty years in England and Australia about the collection, that it was overly ‘catholic’ and failed to reflect adequately the Protestant heritage of the Church of England. The same meeting agreed to go ahead with the erection of the rooms on the eastern side of the schoolroom (now known as the parish hall) which had been provided for in the original 1880 plan, if the trustees were agreeable. The target was £285, of which only £26 remained to be raised by the time of the meeting. Mrs Harmer laid the foundation stone in March amidst the usual flutter of robed ecclesiastical presences. Bishop Harmer thanked the trustees and rector for the use of the church and schoolroom for synod meetings: a reminder that the schoolroom was now the regular venue for these annual meetings, which were held there until synod moved to St Peter’s College in 1954. They were memorialised in a series of solemn group photographs usually taken by the side of the church, enlivened on one occasion by the inclusion of Dorothy Webb, the rector’s youngest daughter.⁹

Webb remarked at the 1902 vestry meeting on the success of the annual thankoffering, another of the fundraising innovations, which now became an important annual event. It was, as the name implied, an annual and specific Sunday when the congregation was invited to make an extra contribution to parish funds as an expression of their gratitude to God and their commitment to the work of the parish. It was a form of fundraising which could relieve the pressure on the wives in their frantic endeavours at fairs and the like. It made up an eighth of the gross income that year, a proportion roughly maintained in future years. It probably encouraged the congregation to authorise the installation of ‘incandescent burners’, an improved form of gas lighting, in 1904, which greatly reduced the cost of illuminating the church.

Webb on ‘Responsibility and privilege’

While these physical developments continued, what understanding can be developed of the theory and practice of Webb’s ministry? At the Fourth Australian Church Congress, held at Ballarat in November 1898, Webb presented an address on ‘Responsibility and privilege’, which was a well-rounded evangelical statement of the role of the clergyman. He began:

The dominant note in the life of every earnest man is the note of responsibility. Life to him is labour, a method to be closely followed, an opportunity whence ever widening issues may be viewed ... How much more true is all this of the minister of Christ.

He developed his argument by balancing the themes of responsibility and privilege: the burden lightened by joy. The disciples were nurtured by Christ, who gave tears of blood and his very life for them, then commissioned them to the responsibility of ‘preaching, organising, imprisonment, martyrdom, and the extension of the Kingdom of God to distant regions’. He observed that

We give quite the wrong impression of our office to outsiders when

we constantly remind them of our manifold labours; when we take every opportunity of emphasising our rights in Assembly, or Synod, or Congress; when we continually parade our parochial difficulties, or too carefully enumerate our many engagements. By doing this we lead men to suppose that our view of the life of the minister of Christ is that it is a kind of mild slavery, instead of a 'work of faith and a labour of love', uniting us to the great and good of all ages and all ranks.

Life at the rectory

That vision shaped Webb's own ministry at Trinity: of that there can be no doubt, as he laboured without complaint among the congregation. But we might set it off with recollections written in her old age by his youngest daughter Dorothy, who was born in 1901, following Walter (1889), Victoria (1892), John (1894), and Arthur (1898). She related that:

Father was chaplain at the Adelaide Gaol for a few years. Every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock he took the service. Mother and I took it in turns to play the harmonium. Father and I walked down to the gaol (about a mile away) and we would be let in the main door. Great keys unlocked it and then Father and I would go to a Room where he picked out the Hymns for me to play. The favourites were Abide with Me, Sun of My Soul, Rock of Ages. The prisoners really enjoyed singing all these hymns. I would go upstairs to the little room and then the women prisoners would file in behind me. There was a partition separating the women. Then the men came in and Father started the service.¹⁰

Webb's ministry outside the congregation was also expressed in his contribution to the establishment of the Clerks Union in Adelaide. He is still remembered in that union with pleasure.

Dorothy Webb (to retain Mrs Gill's original name) recalled that 'we had no electric light upstairs in the rectory. Every day when I came home from school I filled the lamps and cleaned the wicks.' Her mother went visiting in the afternoons 'round Currie Street and down to Mile End'.

We went into awfull dirty homes and I said to Mother, 'I can't eat their food, it makes me feel sick', but Mother said, 'You must because they will be hurt if you don't'.

It was for these same women that Mrs Webb would hasten to offer a black dress to wear at the funeral if there was a death. They told Mrs Webb all their troubles, including the effects of drink. Like his predecessor, Webb regularly visited in the parish too and 'did a lot of weddings'. Mrs Webb and Dorothy would often serve as witnesses; indeed, for the country brides, perhaps drawn by the knowledge that their parents had been married at Trinity, Mrs Webb often provided her own bedroom for them to prepare in. The Webbs were well aware that the money from weddings helped, especially as all three boys went to 'Saints' (St Peter's College) and then on to the university to study medicine. More to the point, Mrs Webb came from a family made wealthy through links with the sugar industry.

As factories were established or expanded in the city area, neighbours suffered: the Webbs were no exception. Through 1907–10 they endured



In the rectory garden (the fence dividing it from the church can be seen). Frederick Webb, rector 1895-1925, with his wife Emma, with (l. to r.) Victoria, Arthur, John and Walter. Dorothy was born later.

the steam hammers and the general noisiness of the Union Engineering Company in the galvanised iron shed next door. Complaints and requests for help to the trustees yielded little. By 1909, on his return from long leave in England,¹¹ Webb threatened legal action. Mrs Webb wrote angrily to W.H. Holmes, but to no avail. The trustees seemed uninterested in either the noise or the frustration it created. A year later Webb had clearly gained his point, for the owners were offering substantial compensation for an out-of-court settlement. Eventually the factory was removed to another site. It was a victory for the tough-minded Webbs.¹²

Sundays, with or without the steam hammers, were busy, naturally enough, with the first service at 8 a.m. 'Breakfast on Sunday was tripe and onions.' Lunch was a cold meal and tea was at five. 'We used to go for a walk before Church in the Parklands ... Generally there would be friends for tea on a Sunday and they would walk with us.' After the service there would be supper, again most likely with visitors. Sometimes these lunchtime visitors were people for whom the long journey home between services was too much. But certainly it took stout walking to get to Trinity services from St Peters, Thebarton or Wayville, for example. Others came in their own traps, such as the Le Pages, or the Keeles from Lockleys. (Dorothy later married a Keele boy). She recalled that her father preached for about twenty minutes, without notes, each a separate sermon from Bible texts. He was 'definitely low church ... didn't like vestments, candles,

confessions’, never turned East during the creed and didn’t allow chanting’. Perhaps he felt that sort of thing was best left to Father Wise at St George’s, Goodwood, which by 1910 caused scandal to Protestant-minded Anglicans because of the elaborate ritual that marked its services.¹³

Every Christmas ‘mother would take a house at the beach’ for a month. The location varied along the coast. The children went of course, but not the rector. They also had a hideaway at Upper Sturt, to which he escaped on Mondays by train. It was a masculine place, rough and ready: Dorothy didn’t like it, or the ‘awful apples on the trees, which took hours to prepare’. But it was a place to relax and be with his boys.

Worship

A reporter from the *Register* clearly grasped the low church and easy-going flavour of Webb’s ministry in his account of Evensong at Trinity on 6 July 1903.

There were not more than a hundred people in the church and two thirds of these were women. The choir, numbering eight men and eight women, in ordinary attire, entered by the vestry door, [i.e. they did not proceed down one of the aisles] and took up their positions in the seats in front of the pulpit.

He went on to record that all sat for the general confession, that there were girls ‘nodding and smiling to one another’, that the lay reader who read the lessons ‘apparently had not been taught elocution’ and that ‘the voice of the choir might have been fuller and stronger’.

The sermon Webb preached was on Judges 11:35, an unpromising text indeed about the sacrifice of a daughter. Webb managed to apply it to unnecessary sacrifice of women to unwanted marriages or to monastic



Frederick Webb, with Trinity’s choir and (presumably) church officers and their wives. The men suggest a pre-1914 date. Smiling seems not to have been suggested!

life. He did it 'in a natural, understandable manner and the congregation listened attentively to the sermon'.

Webb did, however, recognise the value of the church calendar. For example, in 1904 he preached on the Seven Words from the Cross at Matins on Good Friday, while on Easter Day there was Holy Communion at 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., Matins and Holy Communion at 11 a.m., and Evensong at 6.45 p.m. A robed choir appeared at Trinity for the first time on Ascension Day, 1904. It was one of the last parish choirs in the diocese to adopt this practice, which thirty years earlier had been regarded as evidence of high churchmanship. By this time some Methodist, Baptist and Cong churches in Adelaide were robing their choirs too, so it now lacked that earlier air of controversy. Lest he be misunderstood, Webb was pleased to announce at that same 1905 vestry meeting that the Young Men's Gymnastic Society 'had made rapid strides in numbers and athletic power'. Certainly the parish was not forsaking its low church style.

Parish activities

So then, the life of the congregation under Webb's leadership continued. Monday night was Band of Hope, the children's temperance meeting. 'We had games in the schoolroom. Push the Business and Farmer in the Dell.' Thursday night was, and was for the next eighty years until the choir was disbanded, choir practice night. Friday the cleaners did the church. For city residents such as the Webbs, Saturday was the time to visit the market. When synod was on Mrs Webb entertained the wives to afternoon tea while their husbands labored on in the schoolroom. In June the annual tea meeting with its massive agenda of clerical speeches was a great event to celebrate the Sunday school: it served as the major festival of identity for the congregation. For the women it meant a day spent making beef sandwiches. On other occasions the members of the Mothers' Union and the Girls' Friendly Society would join Mrs Webb in playing croquet on the front lawn. Webb of course received callers in his study, but sometimes Dorothy would hide behind the front door and jump out with a 'bool': the day she did it to the Governor, Sir George Le Hunte, was a bit embarrassing.

Frederick Webb continued his leadership of the congregation, supported by W.H. Holmes before the war and Harry Hatwell, mayor of Thebarton, in the 1920s, with Harry Rowe Jnr as superintendent of the Sunday school from 1913, and no doubt others such as the Dunks with their four children and Mr Flehr, a tailor, who wore beautiful suits (naturally), and all the other men in their blue three-piece suits.

Church Missionary Association

During 1910–13 Webb led the congregation into a new and important long-term initiative. He was one of the founders of the Church Missionary Association branch in South Australia. This was set up, first as a committee, on 7 November 1910, with Webb as Chairman, supported by clergy and laypeople from St Luke's, Whitmore Square and St Bartholomew's, Norwood. This became the Church Missionary Association of South Australia on 31 March 1913. It was to become an important expression for evangelical missionary interest, especially in comparison to the



Children's Own Service. This is one of several images of children in fancy dress, convened by the Sunday school superintendent, Harry Rowe Jnr probably just before or during World War One. They mark efforts to make attendance more attractive for children.



Sunday school picnic, 1912, probably at National Park, Belair. It is another sign of the returning vigour of the congregation.

ineffectiveness at that time of the Australian Board of Missions, nominally the official missionary arm of the Church of England in Australia. Bishop Cecil Wilson of Melanesia asked rhetorically at the 1902 Church Congress ‘Where is the Board of Missions? Does it ever meet? Is it anything more than an idea, not a reality at all?’ True, a renewed effort was in hand in Adelaide with the creation of the Diocesan Missionary Association by Bishop Nutter Thomas in 1907, and nationally with the creation by General Synod of a new constitution for ABM in 1916. These events were part of the context for the Church Missionary Association initiative: evangelicals did not have a monopoly of the resurgent missionary spirit in those Edwardian years. The Trinity balance sheets, however, did not suggest that there was an immediate increase in funds for missionary work after the establishment of the local CMA: roughly ten per cent of gross income was given to it in these years. This may in part have been affected by the hostility of Bishop Nutter Thomas to the Church Missionary Society, as it became in 1917 with the establishment of the South Australian branch. While he must be credited with a strong missionary commitment and a desire to place the efforts of the diocese in missionary work on a firm footing, he wished to do this solely through ABM and his Diocesan Missionary Association. Twice he sought to overrule the decision of General Synod that the CMS branches were to be given equal standing with ABM. His behaviour, though perhaps understandable from his non-evangelical perspective, only reinforced the determination of the South Australian branch of CMS to maintain its access to the parishes of the diocese where they were welcome.¹⁴

The departure of Sister Rhoda Watkins as a missionary for service in China on 12 February 1922, a year after Sister Ethel Nunn went to the Sudan from St Luke’s, was an important personal example of support for the missionary cause. Rhoda Watkins, who grew up in the south-east in Lucindale, was a trained nurse. While never a member of the parish of Holy Trinity, she was ‘adopted’ there and became a focus for prayer and for fundraising. She served as a sister and matron establishing and organising hospital services at Gweilin (modern spelling) in China for twenty-five years, including some exciting experiences during the 1920s when she and a colleague were kidnapped by bandits, and then during war between China and Japan which began in 1936, and then the struggle between the Nationalists and the Communists, which led in 1949 to the departure of all the western missionaries. Even then, she continued



Rhoda Watkins, formally attired as a nursing sister, probably just before her departure for China in 1922.
Courtesy Watkins family.



To celebrate the centenary of the hospital where Rhoda Watkins played such a large role, Helen Caterer's biography of Rhoda Watkins has been translated into Chinese. Marilyn Jolly, another long-term member of Trinity, is a great niece of Rhoda Watkins. They were joined by Matai (left) and Xiaoling (3rd left), delegates from Gweilin's Women's and Children's Hospital founded by CMS missionaries in 1910 as the 'Way of Life Hospital', who brought copies of this new edition to Adelaide. The hospital is still a valued part of that city's life and retaining its Christian affiliation. They were photographed at Trinity on 3 Apr 2011, with (l. to r.) Ros and Bill Hague, David and Marilyn Jolly, Helen Caterer and Betty Brockelebank (Marilyn's mother and niece of Rhoda Watkins). Matai's father and Bill Hague's father were both clergymen in Gweilin in the 1940s. Bill was born in Hong Kong in 1949, and Rhoda Watkins was his Godmother. Remarkably, she was also Godmother to D.J. Knox's daughter, Doris Elizabeth Rhoda. David Knox was another founder of the SA CMS branch and rector of St Luke's Whitmore Square from 1910 to 1922.

Photo Brian Dickey.

service in Malaya, and among Australian troops in Korea. Regularly her doings were reported through the CMS, and from time to time she was welcomed back in Adelaide on furlough.¹⁵ She was one of a growing number of 'God's Willing Workers', to use Anne O'Brien's apt term.¹⁶

These women were a significant new venture for evangelicals in developing roles for women to serve full-time in Christian work. Such a professional career was an alternative to marriage. It became an important option for women to consider in assessing their opportunities for Christian service. Some of course combined the two by marrying a clergyman and departing with him for missionary service, although that was not the experience of any of the South Australian CMS candidates between the wars.

Search for secure income

Alongside this important expansion of an outgoing ministry through CMS, more mundane matters also attracted the attention of the vestry and the



CMS tea, probably in the 1920s. The trestles and long benches survived until the 1990s. There have been innumerable such gatherings convened in the hall since its erection in 1880. The extremely large teapots to service the thirsty participants are still held in the (refurbished) kitchen.

trustees for a decade from about 1911: the clarification of the financial arrangements upon which the parish operated. The wardens mentioned in 1911 that £254 had been collected for the renovations which had been continued on the church. As someone asked at that 1911 vestry meeting, could not the trustees get a better return for the glebe land so they could help pay for such work on the church or on the rectory? It appeared to be a valueless £6000 asset. Unperturbed, the trustees Shakespeare and Holmes, both now in their seventies, carried out their annual inspection of the property on 26 May 1911. Holmes resigned a month later, and Dixon and Shakespeare moved to invite Herbert Mayo, presumably because he was a rising lawyer and grandson of Dr George Mayo, to join them as a trustee, even though, as it transpired, Mayo did not worship at Trinity.

A special vestry was held in July 1911 to put pressure on the trustees in this question of their management of the parish's resources. They responded by proposing that the glebe be let on building leases for fifty years and that the income be shared equally between the rector and property development. Another vestry in August urged the sale of the glebe. Then discussion developed about leasing some of the church acre: perhaps the old schoolroom site on Morphett Street, perhaps the eastern half acre on which the rectory and the schoolroom stood. It was possibly Mayo who suggested the creation of a residential college, affiliated with the university, for theological students, combined with building a rectory on the glebe land and shifting the schoolroom to the Morphett Street site.

ending 31 March 1911

No of Pair	Initials	Name of Seat Holder	Amount Paid for Sitting
		1 Atkinson	20/-
69	2	Bennett R.V.	20/-
74	1	Bushman Min	20/-
39	1	Brodrick Mr	20/-
38	1	Maxton	20/-
27	1	Cliff Min	20/-
75	1	Cordal Mr	20/-
65	2	Dunn S.J.	15/-
35	1	Dwyer Mr	20/-
79	1	Doune Min	20/-
62	1	Fleer M.H.C.	20/-
23	2	Guth Mr	15/-
29	2	Govermanns Home	20/-
31	2	Guyas R	20/-
71	3	Guy Mr	20/-
35	1	Holmes M.H.	20/-
28	1	Honey Mr	20/-
79	1	Harvey	20/-
77	1	Hawken	20/-
37	2	Lapidge M.S.	20/-
15	3	Lodge S.L.	20/-
70	2	Meyers Mr	20/-
34	1	McLusky C	20/-
	2	Norman G.	20/-
30	1	Noreock H.M.C.	20/-
	1	Pullford Mr	20/-
19	1	Rowell Mr	20/-
77	2	Rushford Mr	20/-
21	1	Rose Mr.	20/-
41	2	Sygas Mr	20/-
73	4	Swiff Mr	20/-
		48 Forward	

Amount Forward

40	1	Shard Mr	20/-
22	1	Waylor Mr	20/-
84	1	Thomas	20/-
63	2	Wood Mr	20/-
24	2	Young Mr. W.L.C.	20/-
		65 Long etc	

Year ending 31 March	Seat Holders	Sitting fee
1906	50	83
1907	42	73
1909	33	54
1911	36	55

Out of the 50 seat holders in 1906, there are only 16 in 1911

Quarter ending	Seats Paid	Seats in arrears
30 June 1910	8.5.0	5.0.8
31 Sept "	10.5.0	7.15.9
31 Dec "	12.5.9	12.16.0
31 March 1911	19.15.5	12.17.6
	50.14.0	38.9.9

Seat holders, 1911. Note the loss of subscribers since 1906, and the high proportion of arrears (43%).

Nothing came of this complex suggestion. Negotiations were being held over in 1913, while Webb wanted to sell the glebe land and the trustees did not. Renting the eastern half of the city acre was also still thought to be possible.

Nonetheless, the congregation continued its efforts at finding secure income. The duplex system of envelopes for weekly contributions to the parish and to other Christian agencies was introduced in 1912. It had significant potential for stabilising the weekly income of the parish, and perhaps too of increasing giving to CMS. On the other hand, when it came to physical improvements, the procedure of a special fund was once more used in 1913 to provide electric light for the church. The replacement of gas lighting by electricity brought much satisfaction when the new facilities were installed late in 1915.

A kindergarten was started as part of the Sunday school in July 1913, led by the Webb's elder daughter, Victoria. It had become fashionable to run kindergartens since Lucy Morice had begun the Kindergarten Union in the city in 1909, and the arrival of Lillian de Lissa in 1911 to lead the

Kindergarten Training College. In that same year, Harry Rowe Jnr took over the Sunday school, which he was to supervise assiduously for many years, despite the steady decline in enrolments and attendances which by then had set in. For example, average enrolments in 1928 were only thirty-two per cent of those in 1908. Many factors were working to produce this decline. One surely was the industrialisation of the city: Holdens were only one of many expanding business west of King William Street. People, rich and poor, were moving to the suburbs. The population of Gawler Ward, which had stood at more than 7500 at the 1881 census, fell from 6313 in 1901 to 1775 in 1921. The handsome villa which stood next door to Trinity, on Acre 10, facing North Terrace, had come down in the world to become a well-worn boarding house for railway travellers. As a result, from time to time families were farewelled from the congregation – to suburban Malvern, or even further afield, to Kapunda for example. At the 1916 vestry meeting the death of W.H. Holmes was recorded. At 78 he was indeed the last link between the very early days of Trinity Church and the present. From boyhood he was connected with the church and Sunday School. As synodman, warden and lay reader he served the former. As scholar, teacher, superintendent and treasurer he served the latter. No man has ever worked for his church more loyally and faithfully than he.

It was a fitting farewell to the nineteenth century, but a warning of the difficulties which loomed ahead if the parish was to survive this continual shrinkage of its local base and hence its resources in people and income.¹⁷

The Great War only made this double problem of people and funds worse. It was already into its horrific and destructive course by the time Holmes died. Development plans were shelved, records of enlistments and deaths of parish men took their place. A roll of honour was unveiled on Christmas Day 1915. That record of death, rather than one of expansion of income and attendance, became the focus of attention in this Anglican parish, as it did across the nation.

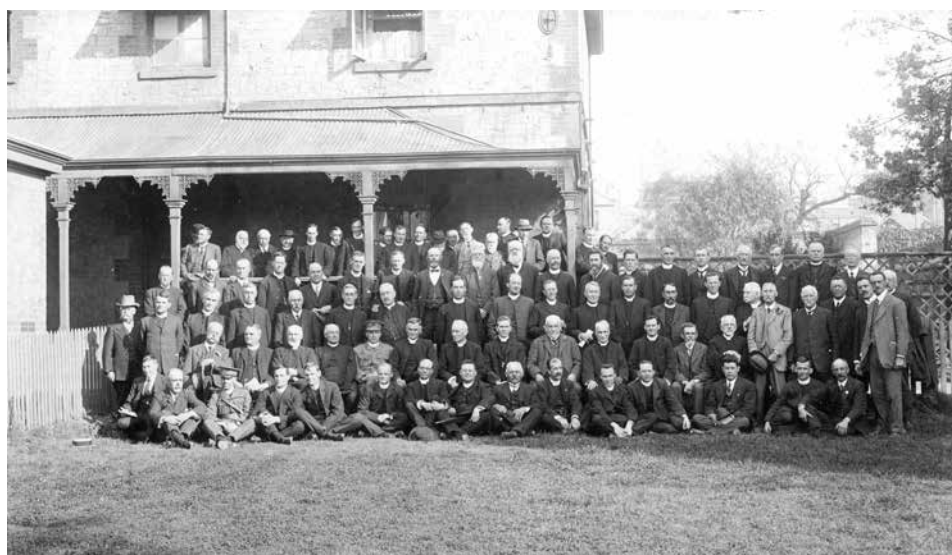
Early in 1917 the trustees stumbled in their relations with the parish. When Samuel Dixon resigned as a trustee in March, Mayo and Shakespeare proposed J.H. Grundy as his successor. But as both the rector and the wardens explained to a special vestry in June, that had the effect of appointing a third man who did not worship at Trinity (Shakespeare, recently remarried, now lived in Rose Park and worshipped at St Augustine's, Unley and St Theodore's, Toorak Gardens). The wardens remarked 'it is only right and proper' that all the trustees should be seatholders. So Webb took the matter up with Sir Henry Galway, the governor, who had to approve the trustees' decision. He rejected Grundy's name. The meeting resolved to 'heartily endorse the action of the Rector and Churchwardens in objecting to the appointment of a gentleman not connected with the parish.' They also thanked the governor for his intervention. The correspondence was read and the meeting gave their leaders a standing ovation.

Then the meeting heard some trustee-bashing. W.J. Lapidge, a long-serving member, spoke of the wasted resource of the glebe land: it was 'reprehensible', the trustees had 'grossly neglected their duties'. Mr Becker called upon the two trustees to resign. Why should not the glebe land be sold, people asked, 'to utilize the valuable endowment'? To be fair

to the trustees, the rector reported that they were working on a scheme to subdivide ‘their’ thirty-two acres of the glebe and create a cemetery in the other eight as the indenture required.

A month later the rector was authorised to consult the trustees about a new appointment. So, when the trustees next met, they hastened to nominate H.R. Smyth as their colleague, who was promptly accepted by the governor. Mayo and Shakespeare decided not to resign, even though they were both ‘rather tired of it all’.¹⁸

In the meantime, like everyone else, the congregation welcomed peace at the end of 1918. The wardens gave thanks to God for victory, this ‘stupendous triumph’. The rector preached special peace and thanksgiving sermons. Others who came that same year to preach included R.B. Robinson, locum tenens at St Luke’s, to support CMS; Bishop G.H. Cranswick of Gippsland preached on 6 December during the CMS Summer School. The bishop and the dean preached on 6 September in support of the Bishop’s Home Mission Society, the organisation which since 1883 had financed the creation of new congregations in the diocese. There were



Diocesan synod, outside the rectory at Trinity. The presence of uniformed clergy shows this to have been a synod held during World War One. The Trinity parish hall served for many years as the meeting place for synod. Oral tradition has it that neither Webb nor his successor, Fulford, attended very often.

others too, although it is hard to establish why Webb should be inviting a larger number of visitors. We do not know if it was simply a fashion, or if he felt his own powers were waning, or simply that certain causes needed promotion from the pulpit.

For the next two years the issue of developing the parish’s capital resources became a matter of detailed negotiation by the trustees and lawyers. It seems that Webb’s victory over Mayo and Shakespeare, and Smythe’s appointment, led the trustees to be more receptive to his advice. They invited Webb in July 1917 ‘to place before us any scheme you favour as to what should be done with the Glebe lands’. Webb suggested sale of

the land in subdivided lots for house building. The problem lay with the trust deed: how binding was the direction that the thirty-two acres be held to generate income for the rector's salary? Could the land be sold? What legal procedures were required to achieve this goal? Webb proposed a private act of parliament to solve the legal riddle by breaking the trust in that respect. The trustees refused even to fund this proposal, even though it would obviously solve many of their difficulties. But the long drawn-out negotiations reached some clarity late in 1919, when, after much legal advice, the private act of parliament was eventually passed. This permitted the sale of the whole forty acres, since the creation of a cemetery in that locality was declared to be 'inexpedient'. This was achieved with the help inside and outside parliament of H. Angus Parsons MHA, R.W. Bennett, E.P. Rowley and J.H. Cooke MLC. The act not only recited the terms of the original indenture of 1836, but required the proceeds of the sale of the glebe land to be applied to the salary of the rector, up to £600 annually.

Webb's reiterated advice to sell the subdivision at auction was received coolly by Mayo, who ungraciously held Webb responsible should this procedure earn less than the amount expected from a broadacre sale. He implied that Webb could blame himself for a smaller income. The auction was held at 'Trinity Gardens', Magill Road, on 17 April 1920, at the height of the post-war building boom. The name of the subdivision was proposed by Webb. Wilkinson, Sands and Wyles conducted the auction in a large marquee on the estate. There were 126 blocks with reserves from 17s 6d to 27s 6d a foot. The terms were ten per cent down, fifteen per cent in thirty days, the balance in two years at five per cent interest. The blocks were to be used only for residences. The sale yielded substantially more than anticipated, with the prime frontages along Magill Road going up to 53s a foot. Total proceeds on that day were £1499, which implied a total value of nearly £15,000. As the wardens put it, 'thus ended most successfully under the good hand of God, years of negotiations with the Trustees on the part of the Rector'. They also acknowledged the 'great cordiality shown by the Trustees' who ensured that 'every consideration' was shown to the interests of Trinity church.

The principal outcome was that, as the payment for the land trickled in, the trustees invested the money in government bonds. They then applied the whole annual income, of about £550 at its peak, to the rector's salary, as they understood the Act of 1919 required them to do. It was a great relief to the congregation not to have to support their clergyman from weekly contributions. It was no doubt a great satisfaction to the trustees to have so much money under their control and to be spending it on such a worthy cause, and one so consistent with the original indenture. But it was foolish financial management to spend all their income, as this led to the dissipation of the value of the capital base and the effective destruction of the trustees' capacity to aid the congregation. They failed to protect themselves from the effects of inflation, readily detectable in the cost-of-living series being published by the Commonwealth Statistician during the 1920s, by not withholding some of the income. Worse, by locking themselves into long-term government bonds, they lost flexibility in the deployment of the resource by which they might have recovered the

situation. The parish benefited from the income for only a few years in the 1920s, before its value began to shrink in the 1930s.

But never again was such a gap between trustees and congregation as had developed over this issue allowed to open up. While protecting their right to choose their colleagues, a majority of the trustees since 1917 have always been respected members of the congregation who, it was expected, would be alert to the attitudes and requirements of the congregation, and above all, to the maintenance of the established tradition of the church.

F.B. Meyer's visit

The congregation rejoiced in Webb's silver jubilee as rector at a celebration on 10 November 1920, with the usual presentations of an illuminated address and a silver tea service. By contrast, Bishop Thomas found little to congratulate Webb for in 1923. A fracas arose when F.B. Meyer, a prominent English Baptist minister who was widely known for his devotional books, came to Adelaide in the middle of that year. Webb invited this famous visitor to preach at Trinity. Bishop Thomas very properly forbade this breach of Anglican regulations, for Meyer possessed no clerical standing in the Church of England. Possibly Webb was misled by the bishop's practice of arranging for prominent laymen of Protestant churches to speak in the cathedral in annual series of addresses on social issues. Of course, they were not ordained and their addresses were probably not seen as sermons from the pulpit. But this invitation of Webb's was certainly illegal under existing church rules. When Webb realised his mistake, he convened the service in the schoolroom, where Meyer spoke to a large gathering. It was a legalistic evasion which was likely only to set the parish off from the rest of the diocese once again. Both Webb and Meyer felt the division between Anglicans and Protestants explored in the Binney crisis of 1858 was being repeated. There was no doubt of Webb's position. For him, shared Protestant evangelical values were really more important than the rules of the Church of England, which he only just managed to obey. On the other hand, despite his error in procedure, the *Register* supported him against the bishop's 'jarring note'.¹⁹ It was evidence of the continuing strength of the common, essentially Protestant, Christianity of the South Australian community. Nor did the newspaper fail to remind the bishop that he had readily permitted non-Anglican laymen to speak in the cathedral on 'semi-secular subjects' (with just a hint of ideas critical of received conservative, free-enterprise, wisdom), while Meyer was preaching the gospel. The contrast was pointed, at least to the *Register* and probably to the Trinity congregation. Webb was set in his evangelical ways and no unsympathetic bishop was going to thwart his view of his ministry, with its responsibility and privilege.²⁰

Webb's death

Webb and his wife had therefore earned their long holiday to England in 1924. While a tennis club had been founded in 1923 with Ken Holt the driving force, the roll of communicants stood at only 111 that year, roughly the same figure as at the beginning of Webb's ministry. Total income including all special collections, was only £450 for 1923–24, and only fourteen people came to the annual meeting chaired by Reginald

Fulford, the Bush Church Aid (BCA) missionary from Broken Hill who was serving as locum tenens while the Webbs were away. These were signs that the congregation was only barely surviving, perhaps in part as a result of the exhaustion of the rector after such a long ministry in the one parish.

Awareness of the contracting size and resources of the congregation was compounded by sadness for the members when they learnt in October 1924 that Mrs Webb had died while aboard ship on the way home from that recuperative holiday. When he arrived back in Adelaide in November the grief-stricken rector vetoed the ‘welcome home’ which had been planned, and travelled to Melbourne to be with his sons. Within a month the trustees were considering the possibility of his resignation. At a special vestry on 5 January 1925 a letter was read from one of Webb’s sons indicating that the rector would resign at Easter and that he needed a long recuperation. His son Jack telegraphed the trustees on 25 January ‘Regret causing you worry Father officially resigning heartbroken’. Frederick Webb died on 11 March 1925.

Once more the congregation had reached the end of an era, defined inevitably in terms of the incumbency of the clergyman. Webb’s tough-minded leadership had been uncompromising. He had made the parish’s evangelical stance explicit through the links with CMS, his invitation to Meyer, and contacts with other like-minded clergy in the diocese such as D.J. Knox, rector of St Luke’s (1910–22). The rearrangement of the parish’s capital resources was the result largely of Webb’s urging. On the other hand, membership had not grown, nor had ordinary income: the process of suburbanisation had worked steadily against the size of this historic city congregation. It remained to be seen if under Reginald Fulford’s leadership anything could be done to overcome that basic weakness.

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- 1 *Advertiser*, 21 Mar 1914, a piece obviously informed by an interview with Webb.
 - 2 *Year Book of the Church of England in the Diocese of Adelaide*, 1895, pp.158–9.
 - 3 *Quiz & Lantern*, 16 May 1895.
 - 4 The most recent example is Brian Dickey, *A Short History of Holy Trinity, Adelaide*, 2011, to be found on the church website.
 - 5 Brian Dickey, *Not Just Tea & Biscuits: the Mothers’ Union in the diocese of Adelaide, 1895–1995*, The Mothers’ Union, Adelaide, 1995.
 - 6 Mothers’ Union Adelaide, *Annual Report for 1898*, 1899.
 - 7 Hilliard, *Godliness*, p.72.
 - 8 *Register* 15 Apr 1901.
 - 9 Interview, Brian Dickey with Mrs Dorothy Gill, nee Webb, 30 Jul 1986.
 - 10 Gill, interview.
 - 11 While In England he delivered an address to the Pan-Anglican Congress, and was presented to the King and Queen: *Advertiser*, 21 Mar 1914.
 - 12 The correspondence and other details are recorded in the trustees minutes.
 - 13 See David Hilliard, ‘The transformation of South Australian Anglicanism c.1880–1930’, *Journal of Religious History*, vol. 14, no. 1, Jun 1986, pp. 38–56.
 - 14 The story is told in detail in my article, ‘The Origins of the Church Missionary Society in South Australia, 1910–1917’, *JHSSA*, no.17, pp. 62–77.
 - 15 Her biography was written by Helen Caterer, a journalist and long-time member of Holy Trinity, *Foreigner in Kweilin*, London, 1966. She used long interviews with Rhoda

- Watkins and accessed the substantial file of letters she wrote to CMS.
- 16 Anne O'Brien, *God's Willing Workers: women and religion in Australia*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2005.
 - 17 It is worth noticing that the nearest church to Trinity was St Patrick's Roman Catholic parish church in Grote Street. After major fundraising efforts the rebuilt church which still stands today was opened on 15 March 1914, at a cost of about £16,000. The parish, defined by the archdiocese as west of King William Street, contained probably 1,000 members. But by 2012, the building is used by two small congregations, Croatian and Portugese. My thanks to David Hilliard for showing me his articles in the *Southern Cross* (the local Catholic newspaper), for Sep and Oct 2012. The contrast between a local and a metropolitan parish could not be clearer.
 - 18 Pkt 21, Trustees papers.
 - 19 *Register*, 22, 23 Jun 1923.
 - 20 In 1926 Archbishop Lees of Melbourne invited a Congregational minister (J. James of Collins Street Independent Church) into the cathedral pulpit (in a series of Wednesday addresses) and also Gypsy Smith the evangelist. Archbishop Riley of Perth also allowed Gypsy Smith to preach in his cathedral during the same tour. *Church Record*, 18 Mar 1926. These invitations seem to have been the watershed in the shift from the previous ban on non-Anglican clergy occupying the pulpit. I am grateful to Dr David Hilliard for this information.