

will in its proper place give a fuller account.

Burns Hill

On the 31st of Dec^r. 1884. I left Lovedale in Dr. Stewart's spider kind sent and driven by Mr. Peter Stewart. The road rough & hilly lies to the south west of the Amatola Mountains. The driver was not intimate with the way & had me out very frequently asking if we were on the right road. Nothing but Kafirs could be had to direct us. I could not speak a word of Kafir, nor they English. Some laughed at me, others asked tobacco. When within a mile of Burns Hill a bad drift came in the way which my nervous driver would not cross. Thinking to outspan there he went for forage & brought Mr. Stuart who took the spider across by another road. Though unlooked for I was very warmly welcomed by Mr. Stuart. The evening was one of the loveliest to be witnessed. As the sun set - gilding the clouds with red; the

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moon rose & seemed to bid good night
to her more glorious companion. The
very air seemed red as sol sunk
slowly in the west. After darkness
had come a magnificent display
of lightning occurred among the
mountains in the north. Among
a mass of snowy clouds the light-
ning played with wonderful vividness
making quite a transformation scene.

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The warmth of the evening made
it difficult to realise it was the
closing day of 1884. Habit is truly
a second nature & neither the one
nor the other is easily got rid of.

The scenery round the station is
~~it~~ scarcely surpassed anywhere in
South Africa. Wooded Mount Macdonald
stands with bold front the haunt
of Kafirs in past wars. with the
winding Kiskama flowing at its
base. To the back of this the
mountains rise in natural terraces
with intersecting kloofs & valleys
the whole terminating in the Amatol

range with the Hogs Back & Sankai
Kop as the highest peaks, 7000
ft above sea level.

The present church stands on the
top of a ridge surrounded by Kafir
huts. It is of the plainest architecture
imaginable both in & out. The walls
are destitute of ornament. A railing
about five feet in height surrounds
the church & by it the framework
for the bell is erected. The bell in
tone exceedingly like one at Shotts
found to be the gift of a member
of Dean Free Ch. Edinburgh.

A plain pulpit of pine unvarnished,
& a number of strong seats; a table
& chair are the articles of furniture
inside. About a 100 yds further
down the slope towards the river
the old church, thatched roof & rudely
built still stands now used as a
school. It speaks of the discomfort
the early missionaries must have
laboured under. A few feet from
it the tree still grows under which

the first congregation met at the start of the mission. Around it there are the graves of some soldiers who fell in the mountains near the river. Beside the old church a new school has been built by money contributed by the Ladies Society for Education in India & South Africa. A European is expected to be appointed soon who will teach the children useful things & generally care for their social welfare.

The Mission House is large & commodious. A verandah raised two ft above the ground forms a pleasant retreat from the sun & a place for chatting when the day work is over.

There is a good garden beside the house & a larger one near the river capable of raising abundant for family use. Two traders shops & houses are situated to the east of the Mission House. The report was the influence of both was for

evil on the people. The natives here are partly ^{of the} Kafir & partly Fingo tribe. To unite them & produce harmony in a congregation is exceedingly difficult. Only a European can do it. The native minister generally finds the tribe he does not belong to opposing him.

1st Jan 1885. There was nothing to make it appear more than an ordinary day at the station. In the afternoon I went out a ride with Mr. Stuart & visited the Witch's Rock. There in former days when the power of Chiefs was supreme many poor souls were dashed to pieces. When any one had died, & especially those connected with the Chief, the witch doctor was sent to smell out who had bewitched the person. Generally a person was found & that a rich one in cattle, sheep & goats. His goods were confiscated & he was taken & thrown over the precipice into the Keis-

Kama below. Nothing of this kind can happen now under British rule.

In the evening I went to a Prayer Meeting in the Church. About 100 were present. Only four candles were lit at the pulpit the rest of the church being in almost total darkness. In the dim light the black faces, rolling white eyes & shining ivory teeth were a weird sight. There was something infernal like about the sight. After a hymn sung in good Kafir fashion with abundance of sound & shurr Mr. St. gave an address on Kafir Beer & urged the people strongly to give it up. The address was interpreted by a tall fellow with a voice that seemed to rise from his thighs. He led the singing also & the notes rolled out in tremendous volume.

Afterwards I spoke a little on the state of heart they should be in for coming to the Lords Table on Sabbath. It was my first exper

since of speaking by an interpreter
 & I confess it was rather cooling
 to the spirit than rousing.

Friday 2nd Jan. I attended the meetings
 of Deacons & Elders. From a distance
 of 18 miles some came. I found there
 were 9 Deacons & 12 Elders on the
 roll. The Deacons met first & received
 subscriptions for gospel support. The
 contributions ranged from 6^d to 1^d. A
 goat was given by a widow. This
 money is spent for the support of
 evangelists & scripture readers gen-
 erally at new missions or in Cen-
 tral Africa. At the Session Meeting
 reports of work & meetings were given
 in. A young woman was dealt with
 who was in the candidates class.

She went to a heathen kraal & consulted
 a witch doctor & while there put on
 a red blanket. This is considered equal
 to going back to heathenism. Most
 dexterously she fenced her position by
 considering evidently how the question
 that was asked at her would affect

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her last statement & the next probable question. Cautionness in committing themselves is a trait of the Kaffirs.

At last an elder brought her to the point & then she was rebuked by Mr. Stuart.

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One of the days I spent at Burnshill I visited the little cemetery of the Station. This is always a sacred spot to a stranger. Near in the rudest & scattered style the graves of the Kaffirs are found.

They follow no order in arranging the graves & erect no stones to speak of the dead. A mound, sometimes covered with rough stones is all that marks the place. Just beside the

Keiskama River under the shade of some trees the remains of a few are laid. The sound of the waters ^{seem to} hush their slumbers. A simple railing about 4 ft in height surrounds the tomb stones & mounds. The grass has been allowed to grow long & rank almost choking a few drooping flowers. The inscriptions are these -

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Sacred to the Memory of the Rev James
Laird. Missionary of the Free Ch of
Scotland at Burnhill, who after 42
years of faithful, zealous, patient &
successful labour in the service of his
Lord among the benighted tribes of
this land was called to receive his
reward on the 28th of Jan 1872 aged
62 years. "They that turn many to
righteousness shall shine as the
stars for ever & ever". The stone is
a slate slab in good condition about
5 ft in ht.

Sacred to the memory of the Rev Donald
Mackeod M.A. Missionary of the Free
Ch of Scotland Burnhill, where he
laboured faithfully & zealously for the
advancement of Christ's King dom
from 16th Aug 1873 till he entered into
rest on 21st Aug 1878 aged 38 years.

1 Cor XV. 54 in Rafir So shall we
be ever with the Lord also in Rafir.
It is a slab of Aberdeen granite
~~Refined~~ ^{Refined} ~~these~~ ^{these} ~~graves~~ ^{graves} there is a low stone
set in brick marking the resting place

of Mr. Laing's first wife. Several children are also buried in the enclosure.

On Sabbath 4th Jan the Communion was dispensed. For two nights before meetings were held well attended to make preparation of heart. After one of these meetings Mr. McEilivray Mr. Stuart & I sat long talking of the power of grace & telling anecdotes of conversion that had happened. It made our hearts long the more for a blessing. On the Saturday evening before a good many came from distant places to rest the night & be ready for the services next day. Two of them were introduced to me. They had been at the Girls School Lovedale for several years. Their names are Nokwemba Ngani & Anna Manone. The first I found was educated by Miss Ramsay, The Retreat Kilneggan. & the latter by Mr. McAnish, Lochgelly, Fifeshire. By 8 a.m. on Sabbath morning little companies of men & women could be seen

wending their way to the Church.

Round it they squatted the women generally by themselves. Print dresses of gaudy patterns seem to be greatly liked. The head dress invariably being two or three Handkerchiefs of different colours pink, red, blue & black tied in sugar loaf fashion. When I entered the Church it was full, some even sitting in the passages. Four white people were present all the others being Kafirs & Fingoes.

The services of the day began by singing of a hymn & prayer. Mr. Stuart gave a suitable address explaining the ordinances & the benefits flowing from it. Then the elders distributed the elements. They were not dressed in West of England's and white ties as at home. Some had old shabby dresses out at the elbows, some had corduroy jackets & trousers, one a old coat of a soldier or policeman. Almost every one had bare feet. It had this advantage

their movements were noiseless. We can look underneath such things & see a heart following after Christ. The dress in God's sight is but little. After the elements were distributed I gave a short address on what was expected from them until Christ came again. It was a day to be remembered. I thought it a great privilege to sit down beside those who had been but lately heathen ignorant of Christ & His salvation. What hath God wrought!

On Monday 5th Jan 1885. I went to visit the grave of Baike the chief of played such an important part in the early Kafir wars. in the company of Mr. Mc. Silivary Carpenter, Lonedale. It is on the slope of the hill on which the church is built overlooking Mount Macdonald where a battle was fought. Beside the grave a few trees grow, among them being a jessamine, which at

Two of Gark's sons are members of Burns Hill Church. Their conversion is attributed to the influence of their mother (not Suter) who was one of the first converts of the mission.

the time was covered with white blossoms. In a horseshoe shape stones are laid round to mark the spot. Instead of it being raised it is slightly hollow. From the shape of the grave it is very probable he was buried according to the fashion of former days. Here it will be suitable to insert a few notes on the death & burial of a chief.

When a chief is dying all valuable articles are generally removed & only necessary things left. As soon as death takes place he is wrapped in his blanket & a grave is prepared.

The hole is dug 6 or 8 ft deep & then a recess is made in one of the sides to receive the body. When he is about to be removed from the hut a hole is cut in the side of it & the body is taken out by it. The dead must not go out by the door of the living else they may be bewitched. Those standing round salute him three times & then he

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 Carried to the grave. His mat is laid in the recess for him to rest on & then in a sitting posture he is placed with his assegay, staff, cooking utensils & medicine bottles beside him. A peice of wicker work is laid on the opening ^{or put in front} & then the grave is filled in. Each person in silence takes a stone & places it on the grave. The hut is ^{then} burned; the heads are shaved & the women sent off to the bush to mourn. An ox or oxen are killed to cleanse the Kraal & also in honour of his spirit who is supposed still to know what is going on.

Here I began to ride a novel experience I had many good outings during the last days. As soon as nervousness was gone I enjoyed it much. On Monday afternoon I accompanied Mr. Mc. Linary a part of the way home to Lovedale & met two young men from Grahamstown, who had heard me preach. They came on & had tea at the Mission House.