

‘A LITTLE CHAPEL 9 MILES OUT OF NELSON’: REVISITING BAPTIST BEGINNINGS IN AOTEAROA

DALE CAMPBELL

Independent Scholar

Baptist beginnings in Aotearoa-New Zealand are not as clear as they may seem. The current national Baptist website names Nelson Baptist Church as “the first Baptist Church in New Zealand.”

¹ Alan Roberts, writing in his wonderful local church history agreed: “The Nelson Baptist Church has the honour of being the first Baptist church to be formed in New Zealand.”² The Baptist website mentions two key early Baptists: 1) “the first notable Baptist, Henry Cooper Daniell”, who emigrated in 1841, settled later in Nelson, and eventually became a founding member of Nelson Baptist, and 2) “the first Baptist minister, Decimus Dolamore”, arriving in 1851 to help “establish Nelson Baptist Church” along with Daniell and the other founding members.³ A similar picture is seen in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1966), which reads as follows:

The first Baptist Church in New Zealand was formed at Nelson in May 1851. The ship Comet brought the Rev. Decimus Dolamore, a Baptist minister from Bedale, Yorkshire, who was seeking service in the colonies. The Church began under his leadership with 15 foundation members. A grant of land was obtained from the Provincial Government and a building was erected.⁴

From such summary statements alone, one would easily assume Baptist history in Aotearoa-New Zealand to have relatively simple beginnings, characterised primarily by the work of two men, Daniell and Dolamore, leading to the establishment of the first Baptist Church. Daniell, however, was not the person Dolamore was expecting to meet when he arrived on these shores. Dolamore was expecting to meet and serve an existing community which Baptist historian Martin Sutherland rightly describes as a “nascent church”.⁵ Both Sutherland’s account and Paul Tonson’s treatment in the *Handful of Grain* series, draw from a letter from Daniell to his mother, originally published in the English Baptist *Repository* and later reprinted in Roberts’ history of Nelson Baptist. It reveals a

¹ Baptist Churches of New Zealand, “Our Story | Baptist Churches of New Zealand,” *Baptist Churches of New Zealand*, n.d., <http://www.baptist.org.nz/general/Our-Story/>.

² Alan Roberts, *Nelson Baptist Church: The Journey Continues - A Narrative of the Years 1951 to 2001* (Nelson, New Zealand: Nelson Bays Print, 2002), 7.

³ Baptist Churches of New Zealand, “Our Story | Baptist Churches of New Zealand.”

⁴ G. T. Beilby, “Foundations (Baptist Churches),” in *An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand*, by A. H. McLintock, online. (The Government of New Zealand, 1966), <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/baptist-churches>.

⁵ Martin Sutherland, *Conflict & Connection: Baptist Identity in New Zealand* (Auckland: Archer Press, 2011), 10.

third character, a migrant carpenter named James Poppleton Horne, whose role, even if not long-lasting, was significant in the earliest chapters of the Baptist story in Aotearoa. To explore the extent of this activity, we will first re-visit the impression offered through Daniell, and then gather observations from Horne himself, in a correspondence that appears to not have won a wide modern audience.

HORNE ACCORDING TO DANIELL

Opening his narration of the Nelson Baptist story, Alan Roberts reproduces a letter from Daniell “to his mother in Bristol”.⁶ It provides us with a very early, and notably critical, picture of Horne. Daniell’s account of Horne’s ministry experience is scant. Horne is introduced as a carpenter “living in the country” who had “become apparently very seriously impressed” and “took it into his head” to be baptized. Sutherland, likely taking into account later events, describes Horne as becoming “convicted of Baptist principles”.⁷ Horne was then both baptized by and then baptized a (formerly Wesleyan) acquaintance of his, and subsequently “took to preaching”. He then “got together some followers and built a little chapel about 9 miles out of Nelson.” Paul Tonson, through uncited sources, documents that Horne called this chapel ‘Rehoboth’, after the “well dug by Isaac (Genesis 26:22)” and meaning “we shall be fruitful in the land.”⁸

It is clear that Horne and his “followers” intended to be recognised as a Baptist church. Daniell reports that Horne, through a former “member of the Baptist Chapel in England”, wrote to a Baptist contact, “a Mr Derry of Barton, England, stating that a Baptist cause had been raised in Nelson settlement”. According to Daniell, Horne’s letter, forwarded by Derry to be inserted in the “Baptist Reporter”, requested “some young man to come out and take oversight of this Church”, and promised that their current relatively poor state would not prevent them from maintaining “a young man without encumbrance.” This request, of course, was answered affirmatively by Decimus Dolamore, who was willing to leave his position as “Pastor of the Baptist Church of Bedale, Yorkshire” and “undertake the charge” at the church described by Horne.

At this point Daniell begins to narrate the conflict which emerged between he and Horne, particularly over Horne’s intent to be recognised as a Baptist. In the absence of any local established Baptist movement, Daniell, along with his wife and “four Baptist families” in Nelson, “who were accredited members of [Baptist] Churches in England [...] had worshipped and communed with

⁶ Roberts, *Nelson Baptist Church: The Journey Continues*, 7, and subsequent quotes from Daniell.

⁷ Sutherland, *Conflict & Connection*, 10.

⁸ Paul Tonson, *A Handful of Grain: The Centenary History of the Baptist Union of New Zealand—Volume 1: 1851–1882* (Wellington, NZ: N.Z. Baptist Historical Society for the Baptist Union of New Zealand, 1982), 49.

the Wesleyans.” Meanwhile, Horne’s group had tried “often” to win the “sanction and support to his proceedings in the country”. Daniell cites two reasons why he and the other urban Baptists “could never unite with him”; 1) “his doctrine was erroneous” and 2) “his practice, as relates to discipline, [was] at variance with Scripture and propriety”. It is not clear what the particular issues were.

The relationship between the rural and urban groups sunk even further when Horne was able “to obtain from His Excellency [the Governor] the promise of a grant of a piece of land in the town for the purpose of erecting a Chapel.” Horne apparently had secured the land not “for himself and followers only”, but rather “by representing himself as the representative of the Baptist Body”. It just so happened that the grant was to be prepared at the office where Daniell worked, enabling him to confirm that Horne had “especially asked for [the land grant] on behalf of the Baptist Body generally.” He goes on to describe his dissatisfaction:

When I understood the grounds upon which the land was to be granted to him, I saw directly that if we – that is, those of us who consider ourselves, in the true sense of the word, Baptists – that if we should, at any future time, wish to obtain from the Government a piece of land it would not be granted as the Government would at once reply “Why, we have granted a piece of land already to your body!”

Daniell and a friend were able to persuade “the Government officer” to “delay the issue of such a grant until measures could be taken to secure the fair representation of the Baptist Body in the grant.”

A meeting date was appointed, which turned out to be more momentous than expected. Daniell records that Horne came prepared. He “came into town, attended by a large number of his followers. He had invited several of the respectable inhabitants to come and hear the matter, including the Crown Lands Commissioner.” Daniell and the urban Baptists argued that Horne “had no right to ask for the grant on behalf of the Baptist Body generally, but only as for himself and followers”. If correct, this would leave the land up for grabs, as “the Governor would not grant to him and his Church simply, but to the Baptist Denomination generally.” Progress seemed unlikely. An hour after the meeting was adjourned to reconvene that evening, a vessel called “The Comet” arriving via Sydney, arrived ashore with the Rev. Mr Dolamore and his wife. Subsequently, Dolamore, “who had been sent for by Horn’s party, and who knew nothing of any Baptists being in Nelson, but fully expected to be located in the country,” was introduced instead to Daniell having presented letters of introduction to a colleague. Dolamore’s arrival meant that not only was land at stake in the conflict, but also, it seemed, the newly arrived minister.

Horne's party, which Daniell calls "the people in the country", were deemed "utterly unable to support a Minister, and it soon appeared from their admission that they expected a young man, who, while capable of earning his livelihood by his own labour, might also assist Horn in preaching." Daniell and the urban Baptists suspected Horne's true motive was "the hope of getting such sanction from the Churches in England as should establish him in the eyes of the public and his own people." Daniell and the other town Baptists, though they "could not venture unassisted to think of supporting a minister", nonetheless promised to "strain every nerve to endeavour to support him" if he stayed. Dolamore's decision came down on the side of Daniell and the town Baptists, however he also planned to "visit the country once a month."

It is not clear if the rural congregation remained long enough to receive a visit from Dolamore, as it was "completely broken up" after "a few weeks". Daniell's final assessment is that they were justified "in keeping aloof" from Horne, in the light of "some inconsistencies and charges proving his unfitness for the position he had assumed".

Daniell's portrait of Horne admits of at least some activity, most notably preaching and erecting a Chapel. Reading in between the lines, we see Horne's efforts to network with other Christians in the Nelson area, in particular Daniell and the urban Baptists. In sum, however, Daniell's account is distinctly negative. It contains a) their reasons for refusing to join with him, b) their action taken to prevent the land grant from being awarded to him and his church, and c) the resulting consequence of Dolamore settling in with Daniell and the members of what would become Nelson Baptist Church.

HORNE ACCORDING TO HORNE

However accurate or exaggerated Daniell's account was, one point that is surely correct was that Horne wrote a letter to contacts in England. It was addressed to a "John Derry" of Barton, England, who forwarded the letter to a "Brother Goadby... for insertion in the Repository", and made appearance in November 1849.⁹ Its contents give a fuller picture of events leading up to the fateful meeting, and (of course) a more positive portrait of Horne.

It opens with a stated aim of "forming a Baptist church in the settlement of Nelson, New Zealand". With this goal in mind, the bulk of the letter consists of Horne supplying Derry (and any other readers) with his own story. Thirty years old at the time of writing, Horne was the son of a Presbyterian elder, reverend and "eminently good man." Part of a "strictly pious" family he "was

⁹ James Poppleton Horne, "New Zealand: Correspondence", *The General Baptist Repository and Missionary Observer*, Vol. XI—New Series (London: Benjamin L. Green, Paternoster/Row, 1849), 514–16.

brought up in the Presbyterian form of worship.” Early adult life, however, saw him leaving London with the New Zealand Company, “by trade a carpenter, a complete worldling in the pursuit of wealth, and fond of change.” Either due to a troubled conscience, troubled seas, or both, Horne made a vow to serve the Lord “if spared to land”. However, after a short time attending “upon the means of grace”, he subsequently moved up country with sixteen other road and bridge builders. “I scarcely need to say that my resolutions, made in my own strength,” he writes, “began to give way.” In the context of “bad company, and bad examples, and in connection with a strong desire of making money to get home, I seemed to forget for a time the promises I had previously made.”

Horne then goes on to tell of his conversion. In the language he employs, we may possibly discern a hint of Horne’s tone and tenor as one who gained a reputation as “a very acceptable preacher”.¹⁰

But it pleased the Lord to take the work into his own hands, and so to convince me of sin, as to lead me to sue for mercy, where mercy only could be found – in his dear Son. I was brought low, and he helped me; and when in the deepest distress I gained hope from the promises made in his holy word. My attention was particularly directed to the words of Peter, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you,’... I was enabled to believe that Christ would forgive me, and seal me with the spirit of promise; I had not a shadow of doubt; I had every reason to believe I had received the blessedness I sought, by the joy and peace I felt in believing.

Horne was an acquaintance of “an old man who had been a local preacher amongst the Methodists, and who, like myself, concluded that it was the duty of christians [sic] to obey the ordinances of Christ”, and the two baptized one another.

Upon returning to Nelson, a “Sabbath-school” was being established by “a gentleman of the name of Campbell”, and Horne was selected as superintendent, in addition to agreeing “to build a place as speedily as we could for a school-room and preaching place.”¹¹

Horne then recounts his sense of calling to the ministry of preaching. Having been “earnestly requested to commence preaching by several of my neighbours”, and “getting my old Wesleyan friend to pray with me and for me”, he began in 1842, initially being put on a rotating preaching plan amongst a society of “United Christians”. He recounts his reasons for soon

¹⁰ Tonson, *A Handful of Grain*, 49.

¹¹ Horne refers here to Matthew Campbell, who founded several schools in the area, see “Matthew Campbell – Laying the Foundation of National Education NZ,” *TheProw.Org.NZ—Ngā Kōrero o Te Tau Ihu*, 2008, <http://www.theprow.org.nz/people/matthew-campbell/#.WuLV9Mhx0Wo>; Nelson Baptist Church would later use this site for its initial meetings, whilst the construction of their building was delayed due to “the more necessary business of building a Brewery”, see “Nelson Baptist Church,” *TheProw.Org.NZ—Ngā Kōrero o Te Tau Ihu*, 2012, <http://www.theprow.org.nz/places/nelson-baptist-church/#.WuLUH8hx0Wp>.

withdrawing his name: "...I soon saw that each preacher was particularly anxious to further his own views, and that high Calvinists, Primitive Methodists... with one poor Baptist, would not do well together." He resigned to preach "to such as came to me, the same faith I had in Jesus, and pointed out to them his example, and besought them to follow him." He then reports the fruit of his preaching ministry. He was eventually joined by "a Mr. Jessop, who had sat under Mr. Brock of Norwich, whose principles were decidedly those of a Baptist... and his wife", who were baptized 1 ½ years prior to the letter. He saw "evidence that the preaching of the gospel there proved itself to be the power of God unto the salvation of some precious souls." He was received by "Richard Hart and his wife" and "for the first time, I saw a little church of seven members united in fellowship with me." At the time of writing, Horne reported that "fifteen have been baptized."

At some stage, the threat of "rapidly declining" health led Horne to drastically reduce the amount of preaching he did. In addition to an unexpectedly speedy recovery, he felt warned "not to be idle" by a dream in which a prisoner looked him in the eye and "cried three times, *Lost! lost! lost!*" After finding his "lungs and voice much improved" while speaking at a Wesleyan missionary meeting, he resumed preaching, whilst maintaining his schoolmaster position.

The remainder of the letter addresses Horne's struggle to establish his congregation as a Baptist church. He praises the "steady adherence" of his congregants, which he affectionately calls "friends", who have stayed with him despite being invited elsewhere. Most of all they are "brow-beaten with the reflection, that I am not recognized by the churches at home". This reflection seems to have come from neighbouring churches. There appears to have been a group and their minister (not the urban Baptists, for they had no minister) who were critical of Horne. They nonetheless gave him "a nearly unanimous call to join them", but he felt convicted to preach only "what has brought peace to my own soul" rather than change his views.

Horne then offers a brief treatment of his relations to the other Baptists in the area. He regrets that they "have not become as yet united to us". As for Daniell in particular, Horne calls him admirably "a man of true piety". Horne does not mention Daniell's concern with his 'doctrine' but instead portrays him as being chiefly concerned with order.

His objections are, that my way of beginning was out of order, and would not be recognized by you, on account of my not being ordained; and he further objects that they having no papers from home to prove their membership with the churches at home, they cannot, for want of the proper power, constitute me as their minister, or form themselves into a church. But why talk of order, when souls all around us are going down to hell!

Here we get a sense that, as Sutherland perceives, as far as Horne and Daniell's conflict was concerned, "the key issues had to do with power and leadership style."¹² Whereas Daniell and the other urban Baptists were content to worship with the Wesleyans until "the proper power" could come and assist with the proper constitution of Horne as a minister, and advised Horne and his congregation to do the same. Horne writes, "to this advice our little church would not accede". He felt compelled by the "peculiar circumstances in which I was placed – the co-operation of divine grace, and the desire of the people," to carry on with the ministry, and discerned his decision to be confirmed by subsequent experience.

At our meetings the people forbore not to cry for mercy, and would not leave the place till we had prayed with them for mercy; and though some, whose parents are Wesleyans, have not yet been baptized, yet they confess they have gotten much good through my instrumentality.

Furthermore, Horne signals the advanced state which his initiative had progressed to; namely having "ordered stuff for the building of a Baptist Chapel", and records that he "received a note, saying it is ready" at the very time of his writing. Here he also mentions "the grant of an acre of land in a very eligible spot, commanding a double frontage of two principal roads", which he had received. Horne's congregation wanted the endorsement from the English contacts before investing the land.

Before closing his letter, Horne outlining four "reasons for addressing you":

1st. It is the design both of myself and the church that we should be identified with the General Baptists. We have no wish to form a new sect. The trust deeds, if you approve of us, will be made in that name. We should be thankful for instruction as to how the deeds should be worded, and to have information respecting your form of church government, that we may be placed upon a more permanent basis.

2nd. We think that when you know our state we shall share in your sympathies, and have an interest in your prayers.

3rd. It would furnish an impetus to our efforts, and tend to remove that impression so industriously circulated, as to our being an unlawful assembly, on account of my not being ordained, nor the church recognized by any of the churches at home.

4th. We want to make all secure to those who may succeed us; and if a young man approved of the church [...] would come out voluntarily, we would thankfully receive

¹² Sutherland, *Conflict & Connection*, 10–11.

him as a labourer amongst us; and if outfitted by you, we would support him for three years, and by that time we have no doubt but the ingathering would be abundant.

We see Horne's desire to establish himself and his congregation in positive light in a closing wish: "may the Lord assist you in forming such views of the case as shall tend to the furtherance of his glory."

In his letter, we gain a valuable perspective for better understanding Baptist beginnings in the Nelson region. We see Horne, son of a Presbyterian preacher, having wandered from God's path, having a strong experience of conversion and sense of call to ministry. We see him negotiate relationships with other Christians and other Baptists, and engaging in ministry that saw a "little church" gathered, a chapel erected, and some "precious souls" saved and baptized. Naturally, Horne's autobiographical account is more positive than Daniell's accusatory picture. Nonetheless, his letter provides valuable contrast and detail, which, when read alongside Daniell, helps us get a clearer sense of how things unfolded.

We know almost nothing of what became of Horne. Tonson quotes an unknown source describing him as being "a very acceptable preacher in his early years" but being "somewhat under a cloud" in his later life.¹³ Whilst Horne may not have engaged in formal ministry again, it seems that he pursued other forms of public service. According to one record, he died in Christchurch, on or near March 21, 1893, having once been "a member of the Provincial Council" of Nelson, and (unsuccessfully) "contested the Superintendency" in 1869, some 18 years after our events.¹⁴

As far as Baptist 'firsts' go in Aotearoa-New Zealand, at least a few occurred in relation to Horne. The first baptism by immersion in this land may well have been the joint baptism of Horne and his Wesleyan friend "twenty miles from Nelson" in a "tracky wood".¹⁵ The first baptistic worship services appear to be those associated with the "little church" Horne managed to gather, meeting in the home of Richard Hart and his wife in Wimea. We now turn to consider the extent to which this "little church" can be seen as a 'Baptist Church'.

THE FIRST 'BAPTIST CHURCH' IN AOTEAROA?

Prior to the question of what makes a Baptist Church is the question of what makes any church a church. Horne, whilst not devoid of biblical, theological or ecclesial concern, seems to have had a *pragmatic* impulse which prioritised saving souls over denominational order and process. A church

¹³ Tonson, *A Handful of Grain*, 49.

¹⁴ H. L. N. Clark, "Re James Poppleton Horne, Deceased," *The Marlborough Express*, 25 March 1893, XXIX:3, <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers/MEX18930325.2.32>.

¹⁵ Tonson, *A Handful of Grain*, 49.

preaches the Gospel and sees souls saved and baptised. In Daniell, we saw a *doctrinal* approach seeking sufficient evidence of orthodox belief, thus he cited Horne's "erroneous" doctrine as a key reason for not joining him. A church believes in the God and Gospel of Scripture. A more *ecclesial* perspective is concerned with the global and local meanings of 'church', such as the more universal 'Church' Jesus promised to build (Matthew 16:18), and the local plurality seen in Paul's letter to "the churches in Galatia" (Galatians 1:2). Whereas Catholic theology has seen individual churches as subsisting within the one global Church, Baptist understanding, whilst acknowledging the single "holy catholic Church" incorporating all believers, has seen local churches as the primary locus of Christ's promised presence where "two or more are gathered" in his name. A collection of Baptist churches, thus, cannot be referred as a singular entity, such as '*The Baptist Church in New Zealand*', but are understood denominationally in the plural, for example, '*Baptist Churches of New Zealand*'. Daniel and Horne both showed a desire to link the new baptistic activity in the new colony with the established churches back home.

All of this lends clarity to the question of whether or not Horne's group, instead of Nelson Baptist Church, was the first 'Baptist Church' in New Zealand. Pragmatically, Horne's identity and reputation as a Baptist may well have extended to the community and its little chapel, thus making it in one sense a Baptist Church. Doctrinally, we remain in the dark as to what specific points of Horne's doctrine Daniell found to be erroneous. Theologically, even Horne's "little church" in Wimea was indeed a locus for the presence of Christ as they gathered in his name. As to the specific question of whether it was a *Baptist* church, it depends on what is meant by 'Baptist Church'. Horne's group never achieved the associational status that they sought with the General Baptists back home, so it cannot be described as a *General* Baptist church, despite their intent to be recognised as such. Furthermore, there would not be a local national Baptist denomination to join until 1882 (31 years later), so it cannot have been a member church of what would become the 'Baptist Churches (or Union) of New Zealand'. But none of this prevents the name Baptist from being used in reference to Horne's group. There is, of course, no single central global (or national) Baptist authority which can dictate who can and cannot use the word. To illustrate, there are various 'Baptist' churches in Aotearoa-New Zealand today which are not member churches of the specific denomination known as 'Baptist Churches of New Zealand'.¹⁶

These churches identify as 'Baptist' apart from membership in the wider Baptist denomination, so too did Horne's group (though it must be said that whilst the modern independent Baptists appear to remain independent by choice, Horne and his congregation were

¹⁶ "New Zealand Independent Baptist Churches," *Independent Baptist Church Locator*, n.d., <http://militarygetsaved.tripod.com/newzealand.html>.

in the process of making plans to establish denominational membership). In light of this, this “little chapel 9 miles out of Nelson” can indeed be seen as the first ‘Baptist’ church in Aotearoa-New Zealand, even if full denominational association was never achieved with any existing bodies.

REFLECTIONS FOR CONTEMPORARY MISSION AND MINISTRY

This clearer picture of Baptist beginnings has significance for mission and ministry. It could be that there is a tendency to remember (and honour) only ‘successful’ efforts, and to forget, and thus fail to appreciate or learn from, other less fruitful endeavours. We now briefly consider three areas of contrast which arose from the above analysis, and which continue to affect contemporary church life.

First, in the personalities of Horne and Daniell, we see a contrast between progress and purity. Horne appears to be a ‘doer’, keen to get stuck in and win souls. His comment “why talk of order when souls all around us are going down to hell!” is illustrative. Daniell, by contrast, is quite happy to fellowship with the Wesleyans, encouraging Horne to do the same, waiting for a Baptist church and minister to be constituted properly. He also is concerned with Scriptural doctrine and practice. If Sutherland is right that their conflict had more to do with power and leadership style than with doctrine, then the inability for a union of the two groups seems unfortunate. We cannot, however, know if Horne’s doctrine did compromise core Christian dogma, so we are limited in our ability to discuss the dynamics of missional progress and doctrinal purity in their case. Suffice to say that just as progress, at times prone to arrogance or error, needs to be chastened and held accountable to purity, so also purity, prone to judgmentalism or inactivity, may need to be unsettled or enlivened by progress.

Second, there is a tension between *rural* and *urban* communities. Admittedly, it is difficult to see any disparaging remarks made by country dwellers about any urban groups, and it may not be accurate to discern a negative tone in Daniell’s references concerning “the people in the country”. It is not difficult, however, to imagine other (perhaps subconscious) layers to the conflict between Horne, a country-dweller accustomed to working with his hands, and Daniell, a city-dweller who worked in an office. Such contrasts can be subtle yet powerful sources of difficulty. As the modern world continues to change with technology and migration, differences of resources, finances, language, culture and longevity can aggravate existing struggles or create new ones. There is, then and now, the need for the patience that bears with the ‘other’, and humility to see the ‘other’ and their needs above your own.

Third, we observe with Sutherland the dual realities of *conflict* and *connection*. Both Horne and Daniell are willing to take actions which will sooner or later be accompanied by conflict. Horne proceeds to build a Chapel, claim the land grant, and make efforts to establish the church as Baptist and secure a minister; all the while going against the advice and blessing of Daniell and the other Baptists. As far as Daniell is concerned, some may see unnecessary conflict created by his refusing to join with Horne's group, and later his later actions to prevent the land deed being drawn up and awarded to Horne. By contrast, we also see efforts at connection in both. Horne partners, or attempts to partner, with various others, and was at the very least able to facilitate the budding growth of a worshipping community. Horne's depiction of Daniell as "a man of true piety" shows a charitable disposition, even if he appears to have been less patient with others he disagreed with. We also see a notable expression of 'connection' in Dolamore's judicious decision to keep the two groups related by offering to visit Horne's group on a monthly basis. This has considerable relevance for relationships within and between local communities and denominations. The best and most lasting connection will not be achieved without facing, and working through, real conflict. However, care must be taken as to just how much conflict a person (or group) can handle, or indeed what matters are worthy of going through conflict for. Conflict is a fire, and one that either will burn bridges *en route* to schism, or under God's good hand can serve to test and purify hearts for long-lasting communion.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, we have seen that Baptist beginnings in Aotearoa, far from being a simple matter of Dolamore arriving to help Daniell establish Nelson Baptist Church, was much more varied and interesting. We have highlighted the significance and amount of ministry which Horne accomplished. This carpenter and minister's son, coming to hold Baptist convictions, felt a call to preach and serve, and managed to bring together a "little church" that seems to have sooner or later identified itself as Baptist. Attributing it all to divine assistance, this little Baptist church saw conversions, baptisms, a Chapel erected, a land grant promised, and seemed poised to connect its fledgling life with the General Baptists at home. Whatever Horne's defects may have been, this history deserves a place in the telling of the story of Baptist life and witness in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

- 1841 Henry C. Daniell arrives in New Zealand
- 1842 Establishment of Nelson settlement
James Poppleton Horne boards vessel going to Australia
Vows to serve the Lord on board vessel
Horne arrives in Nelson
Horne moves “farther up the country”
Resolutions give way, forgets promises
Experience of renewed repentance
Joint baptism with retired Methodist preacher
“twenty miles from Nelson” in “a tracky wood”
Horne returns to Nelson
Chosen superintendent of Sabbath School est. by “Campbell”
Commences preaching within Society of “United Christians”
Withdrew from Society amidst differing views
“preached to such as came to me”
Meets Mr. Jessop; he and wife later join with Horne’s group
“some precious souls” saved under Horne’s preaching
Horne moves to Wimea village, meets Richard Hart and his wife
“a little church of seven members”
“several others” embrace truth afterward
15 baptized at time of 1849 correspondence
- August 1843 Henry Daniell settles in Nelson
- “some time since” 1842
Horne acquires disease, rests from regular preaching
Horne has dream of prisoner crying “*Lost! lost! lost!*”
Next day lungs/voice able to preach at Wesleyan missionary mtg.
Horne appointed schoolmaster at Wimea village
(still held at time of 1849 correspondence)
begins “labours” again
“steady adherence” of friends, despite trials
Criticism that Horne not recognized by “churches at home”
(by non-Baptist church – possibly Wesleyan)
“Mr. Daniels” (Henry C. Daniell) refrains to unite with Horne
disapproves of Horne “not being ordained”
Daniell and others without membership papers
Unable to form church & constitute Horne as minister
Daniell advises to join Wesleyans for the time being
(along with Daniell and “four Baptists families”)
Horne’s “little church” opts not to join Wesleyans
Horne continues ministry with adherents
- 1847 Mr. & Mrs. Jessop baptized
“about a year-and a half” prior to Horne’s letter

February 1849	Horne obtains grant of land from Governor (while in Nelson)
Feb-Mar 1849	Horne orders “stuff for the building of a Baptist Chapel”
8 March 1849	Horne writes to “Mr Derry” of Barton, England Horne informed Chapel materials are “ready”
18 September 1849	Midland Conference forwards Horne’s letter to “Brother Goadby”
November 1849	Horne’s letter published in <i>General Baptist Repository</i>
Circa 1850	Decimus Dolamore responds to Mr. Derry (unknown to Horne and Daniell)
April 1851	Daniell learns of land grant promised to Horne Daniell arranges delay of grant until “fair representation” of “Baptist Body” established
May 3, 1851	Meeting to determine recipient of land grant (Decimus Dolamore arrives on “The Comet” from England) Meeting adjourns with no result Meeting reconvenes to decide on land grant Dolamore sides with Daniell and urban Baptists Dolamore agrees to meet country group monthly
(a ‘few weeks’ later)	Horne’s group broken up