

## CHAPTER 4 – PLANTING AND CHURCH GROWTH

### Church planting

The first Christian activities in the area of Lincoln-Springston were house churches. Again Mary Pannett recalls:

“My parents, in spite of their unsettled lives, after leaving their English home, had not lost their faith in God, nor desire to serve Him in any way possible. Children always held a warm place in their hearts. A desire to lead little ones to Jesus the Saviour led father (there being no church or Sunday School for miles distant) to open a Sunday school in his own kitchen. Often there was also a preaching service held there. This school of which my father was the superintendent and mother teacher of the beginners class, I at three or four attended.”<sup>1</sup>

Adams suggests that the Methodists were first to establish a home church in the area at the house of a Mr Wright on Springs Track and that there the Pannett household met other local Christians for worship at first and then joined with the Presbyterians as well<sup>2</sup>. However, Mary Pannett has a different but graphic description of how the first house church meetings used to get convened:

“The first services for worship in that district were also held in that farmhouse kitchen. Two men, (colporters) rode over the country districts with a bundle of good books, to sell, and wherever convenient would hold a preaching service on the Sunday. Naturally these men soon found Mr and Mrs Pannett welcomed them. Members of the family were glad to see them, books to read were not plentiful in those days, with no libraries to supply them. On a Saturday afternoon then, if we children saw a man riding horseback down the private lane to the house we would run in and tell mother we thought Mr. Parlane or Mr. Binstead was coming. Soon after the bundle was opened and the books looked over, Sister Annie, with her two little sisters Agnes and Mary, started out to tell the neighbours there would be a service in the kitchen tomorrow afternoon. Those services usually saw the room well filled.”<sup>3</sup>

When the Presbyterians opened a Sabbath school in Lincoln in 1868 with Provincial support, the Pannett Sunday School was moved into their building and became a non-sectarian Sunday School. Thomas Pannett (sen) was asked to be the first Superintendent and continued to run it for several years<sup>4</sup>. He recalled in old age that he had been a Sunday School Superintendent for 51 years, from the age of 19 to 70 years<sup>5</sup>. He was also elected to the Church, Congregational and Finance Committee of Lincoln Presbyterian Church. During the nineteenth century the Sunday School Superintendent had a very high status in a church, perhaps second only to the minister<sup>6</sup>.

In 1874, at the time of the Annual Tea meeting, Thursday 19 November, there were ten teachers on the books, five male and five female; also there were 34 boys and 32 girls on the books. Of those 26 boys and 23 girls attended Sunday School the following Sunday. At a Teacher’s meeting the previous 20th October, the teachers included H. Pannett, W. J. Pannett, and Misses E. and A. J. Pannett. The guest list included Reverend C. Fraser, the then Superintendent, and the Reverends D. J. Ferguson and J. W. Cree, and Mr Binstead, one of the colporters. The Teachers and children attending the Day School were also invited. Addresses at the Tea Meeting were given by Professor Bickerton and Reverend J. W. Cree from Leeston<sup>7</sup>.

## “Pioneer Memories In Canterbury

By *GEORGE W. HOLLAND.*

It may be interesting to some to recall a few of the difficulties the early settlers had to overcome before any social or religious progress could be made. In the late 'sixties and early 'seventies the country was so sparsely populated that often the nearest neighbour was miles away, making these opportunities literally few and far between. These chances for development were often—perhaps too often—thrust aside by the hundred and one duties inseparable from settlements of families in a new country. Dwellings of some kind had to be built, fences must be put up, and large tracts of fertile soil brought under cultivation. There was very real danger of "things not seen" being thrust aside by the things that were ever present. There was difficulty in finding suitable places in which to conduct public worship. No schools, no barns, or woolsheds which could be utilized in such a way. Settlers readily threw open their living rooms for the purpose, but in many cases those living rooms were not more than 12 feet by 10 feet, their walls being built with sods, the roof being covered with thatch made of straw, and the floor with rough boards. When more suitable places were available the difficulty arose of finding preachers. With very few exceptions the preacher had to travel long distances, from 12 to 30 miles, and with very crude methods of transport. The writer has a vivid recollection of a young man appointed to conduct morning and evening services in a settlement 16 miles from home. On Sunday morning he rode to his appointment on one of his plough horses. As they left the building it was discovered that an afternoon service, 10 miles away, would almost certainly fall through for a lack of a speaker. The young man was asked if it would be possible for him to fill the gap if someone took him. He agreed and was driven those 10 miles in one of the most effectual bone-shakers that ever ran on wheels over trackless tussock, then back to his evening appointment, after which he mounted his noble steed and returned to his home, having travelled 52 miles and taken three services. The noble steed had his Sunday the next day; not so the young man. This may be an exceptional case, but it had a goodly number of runners-up, and shows some of the obstacles that our pioneers had to overcome. In settling a new land it was inevitable that people hailing from different parts of the Old Land should hold widely diverging views on some almost vital truths. It was not to be expected that the Calvinist would give up his Final perseverance or the Arminian his Free Will, but in building up the religious life of a new country it was necessary, so far as was possible, to have the

cooperation of all. It speaks volumes for the tact, patience, and perseverance of our pioneers that during these first years of our denominational life in New Zealand there have been no signs of going back, nor the semblance of a split in our ranks. But to-day, as in the days that are gone, the various branches of our work, comprising Church, Bible Class, School, Missionary Society, Auxiliary, Orphanage and College are all pulling together in sweet accord. Surely this outstanding fact should encourage us to go forward in the full assurance of faith. Owing to the scattered nature of the population it was often necessary for enthusiasts to work single handed. This was done mainly through Sunday School work. Some of the Sunday Schools had very humble beginnings, comprising five or six scholars, with one or two teachers. Mrs Holland and Miss Shepherd, of Yorktown and West Melton, ran schools of this type for a considerable time. Mr. T. A. Pannett, of Lincoln, and Mr. and Mrs. T. W. Adams, Greendale, had, much earlier than this, commenced Sunday Schools in their own homes, gathering in all their neighbours' children of whatsoever denomination purely to teach the gospel and help the neighbours to observe the Holy day. These two latter schools merged into larger ones. Mr. T. A. Pannett's being held in Lincoln Presbyterian Church, and that of Mr. Adams moving into the Greendale Public School.

To Mr. J. W. Sawle, perhaps more than to any other one man is due the honour of establishing an Association of Baptist Churches in Canterbury. He never appeared to lose an opportunity of pressing the importance of such an association. On December 31, 1873, a preliminary meeting was held in Christchurch with the view of forming an Association of Canterbury Baptist Churches. On March 18, 1874, a meeting of delegates from these churches was held in Christchurch. Present were Messrs. Morton, Simmonds, Pole, Dixon, Sawle, Shepherd, Simpson, T. W. Adams and N. Grindrod, and the Canterbury Baptist Association was launched forth on its great mission in life. In 1876 two important projects were started. One, the appointment of an evangelist. Mr George Johnstone was called to fill that office. His duty was mainly to visit outlying districts and carry the Gospel message to places that were not otherwise likely to hear it. The other forward move was the publication of a magazine, hence the birth of the Canterbury Evangelist. This was a bold step for so young an organisation, but has been abundantly

justified. The magazine contained a Preachers' Plan. One for August-October, 1876, had 12 places and 15 preachers. By 1880 these had grown to 16 stations and 22 preachers. Out of these 15 names on the first plan only one remains. Between 1876 and 1880 six ministers had arrived—Rev. C. Dallaston, William C. Spencer, T. A. Cato, T. W. Smyth, T. Harrington and Rev. William C. Spencer, whose address is 2420 Ninth avenue, Oakland, California, United States of America, where he will take a lively interest in our jubilee meetings. He was the first secretary of our Baptist Union, holding this position for two years, until 1884, when failing health made it necessary for him to set out for the drier climate of California.

There for years Mr Spencer has done yeoman service as pastor of influential churches, and for nine succeeding years was secretary of the Northern California Baptist Convention. One lifts one's hat at the mere mention and memory of such names as T. A. Pannett, R. A. Colee, T. W. Adams, Thomas Dixon and others. May our Divine Master grant that there may be just as good grounds for rejoicing when the centenary is reached as there is during this season of jubilee. May the recollection of what has been accomplished in the name of the Lord encourage us to go forward with renewed energy and greater faith, for "there is yet very much land to be possessed.""  
—Reprinted from N.Z. Baptist, Oct., 1932.



### **18. Lincoln Presbyterian Church 2015**

#### **A Separate Baptist Church**

From 1873 a few baptized believers and their families had met at the house of Mr Charles Storey to hear the Word of God and for public worship. To begin with these services were held on alternate Sundays, then from early in 1876 they were held every Sunday at 3.00 p.m. under the auspices of the Canterbury Baptist Association<sup>8</sup>. The Canterbury Baptist Association had been founded on 18 March 1874 with representatives from Hereford Street (Christchurch) , West Melton, Lincoln Road, Oxford, Greendale and Malvern. Thomas Adams, Thomas Pannett's son-in-law, represented Greendale. When the Association met for its first Annual Meeting on 14 April 1875 delegates came from Hereford Street (Christchurch), Lincoln Road, West Melton, East Malvern, South Malvern, Oxford, Greendale and Lincoln Station. This appears to be a reference to Lincoln township because the delegate is Brother Storey, presumably the

same one whose house was used for meetings at Lincoln. Among the business conducted was the preparation of a Preacher's plan. A collection of £31-16-4d. was made, of which £1-15-10d. was subscribed by friends at Lincoln<sup>9</sup>.

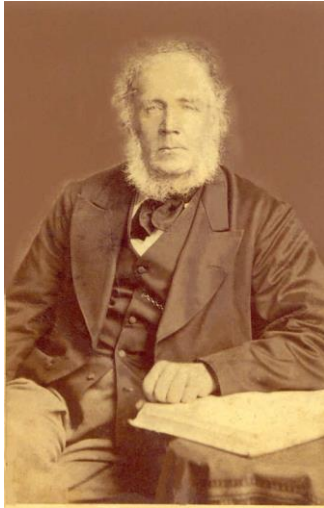
The following year, at the Annual Meeting (5 April 1876), it is recorded: "Mr Storey reported for the Lincoln Station that the attendance had kept up considerably well notwithstanding the drawbacks". Other business conducted at the meeting included the establishment of a Quarterly magazine which became *The Canterbury Evangelist*. Also George Johnson was appointed as an Evangelist at £120 *per annum*.

Johnston reported to the Association in mid 1876:

"...My next field of labour was Lincoln, where I commenced on Sunday, June 11. I visited in the township and vicinity 55 or 56 families, and gave away about 130 tracts. I was kindly received by all. I held whilst there four Sunday afternoon and seven week night services, but this, in a great measure, may be accounted for by the inclemency of the weather, dark nights, and the inconvenience of the meeting place. At first I thought this to be a very promising field, but I have changed my mind since (but only in regard to immediate results). I endeavoured for a time to urge the propriety of having a chapel built, and even got various promises towards it, which, though it may not be carried out at present, will not be lost sight of. We have lost our vantage ground here. It ought to have been taken up by the Association at the first, but now our Presbyterian and Church of England friends are in full operation, and if they seek only the salvation of souls and the glory of God, I think we must not envy their position, whilst other fields are more open to us and solicitous of that Gospel which makes wise unto salvation, and where we do not interfere with the labour of others. The locality is a good one and rising fast in importance, and no doubt will ultimately become the centre of a large and populous district. Our nominal strength here is much impaired through such Baptists and supporters as are settled in the district being disheartened in former efforts and being unsettled in life. I do not think it would be wise in the mean time to press this place too much, whilst I would by all means say, let us keep our hold, and if anything is to be gained let it not slip. I feel confident that a more convenient season is not far distant. Let us therefore not relax what we have, but patiently wait for better things..."<sup>10</sup>

By the following 6-monthly meeting at Lincoln Road Baptist Chapel (2 October 1876) his activities were clearly yielding some fruit. An application was received from the Church at Lincoln ("...lately formed...", delegates Thomas Pannett and Charles Storey) desiring to be united with the Association. This was readily agreed. Brother Johnson's efforts at Lincoln and Lincoln Road were noted in the Minutes. Brother Dixon from Lincoln Road also proposed the formation of a Church building fund.

What had happened? On 24th September 1876, after the usual worship service, the Lord's Supper was observed for the first time by the Baptist believers at Lincoln. The congregation had nine members and three of them were from Lincoln Road. Brother J. S. Clarke conducted the service. It is recorded in *The Canterbury Evangelist* that it was a "time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord". The following day, Monday, 25 September 1876, the five founders met again at Storey's house to construct a Formula of Faith and Rules for Membership (See inserted box). The five were Thomas Pannett (senior), James Osborne, Charles Storey, James Wolfe and J. S. Clarke. It was twenty five years since Thomas Pannett (senior) had arrived in Canterbury. Besides being one of the first farmers in the Lincoln area, Thomas was also a founder member of the West Lincoln Road Board, which later became the Springs Road Board.



**19. Thomas Pannett 1811-1889, founding Deacon.**

His fellow church founders were also men of some substance. All except Clarke have an entry devoted to them in the *Macdonald Dictionary of Biographies*. James Osborne (1829-1908) was one of three brothers from Road, Somerset, who arrived in Canterbury in 1859. After an initial period bush felling he had been a cheesemaker at Tai Tapu for 4 years before working for R. H. Rhodes at *Ahuriri*. He leased land from Rhodes and established a dairy farm, then broke in a further substantial area. He was a member of the Tai Tapu School Committee in 1867-1868<sup>11</sup>.

*MR. J. OSBORNE AND FAMILY.*



*Standish and Prece, photo.*

**20. James Osborne and family**



*Standish and Prece, photo.*  
**MR. J. WOLFE.**

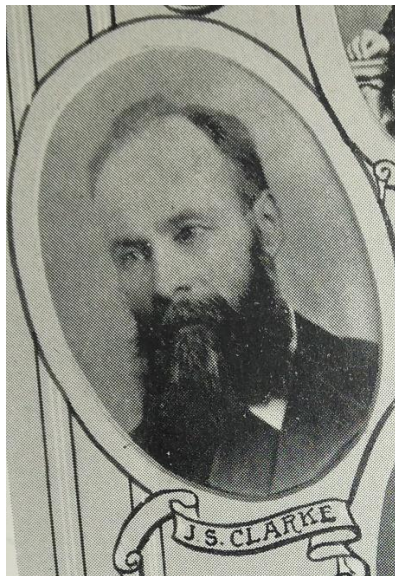
**21. John Wolfe**

James Wolfe (1842-1916) came from near Rugby and was a relative of General Wolfe, the hero of the Battle of Quebec (1759) when Canada was secured by Britain. He had been apprenticed as a Plumber, Painter and Glazier and had arrived in Lyttelton in only 1875. He settled and bought land at Lincoln, which he developed as a dairy farm, but continued his trades as well. His farm consisted of some 500

acres. Later he was to hold office in several public bodies, including eight years on Springs Road Board of which he had been the chairman, also on Christchurch Hospital Board. He was also Chairman of Lincoln Domains Board.

Charles Storey (1829-1911), who was born at Stuckley in Hampshire, was another farmer who had had land at Lincoln<sup>12</sup>. Initially he had a small farm at Lincoln, and by 1876 he had been living in Lincoln for a time. Then he bought land at Greendale. He is recorded in the Church Minutes, in August 1881, as being dismissed from church membership, on the request of the Pastor<sup>13</sup>. That is in effect a formal resignation upon moving to Greendale, where he had two farms, one of 330 acres being the homestead block and the other of 150 acres adjoining the homestead<sup>14</sup>. He farmed assiduously there, establishing a good reputation as a horse and cattle breeder and for being a tidy farmer. After 23 years at Greendale he was forced by advancing age to give up the occupation he loved. So he and his wife, Anne, moved back to Lincoln and retired there in 1902<sup>15</sup>. The house they bought had been the property of Thomas and Eliza Pannett, which his wife bought from their trustees, Henry and William Fuller Pannett<sup>16</sup>.

Least of all is known about the joint pastor with Lincoln Road, J. S. Clarke. His picture appears in the Jubilee Celebration document produced by Spreydon Baptist Church. After other churches offered to support his stipend for the first six months insufficient church income may have seen to his leaving. At the beginning of 1879 he attempts to resign but is stalled to begin with by a proposal by Thomas Pannett, seconded by Charles Storey, that the deficiency in Pastor Clarke's stipend be defrayed out of monies held by the Treasurer (T. Pannett), which was carried unanimously. After the Pastor had left the meeting for a short time his resignation was eventually accepted<sup>17</sup>. He is without date of birth or death and disappears from the records after he leaves the Lincoln pastorate<sup>18</sup>, perhaps somewhat like Melchizadeck (Genesis, ch. 14 vv. 18-21; Hebrews, ch. 7).



**22. J.S. Clarke, First Pastor, Lincoln Baptist Church (Source: Spreydon Baptist Church Jubilee brochure, October 1916, Canterbury Public Library)**

Formation of the church had come about after Brother Sawle of Greendale and Brother Dixon of Lincoln Road had suggested that J. S. Clarke might be employed in ministering to the newly formed church at

Lincoln and the church at Lincoln Road. It was also agreed that for the first six months his stipend would be raised by these two churches together, with any help gratefully received from those keen to “...extend the Redeemer’s Kingdom in these districts through the preaching of the Gospel”.<sup>19</sup> As a result of the initial meeting on Monday, 25 September 1876, the following Confession of Faith was agreed and church officers were appointed (*pro tem*):

*“Confession of Faith and Rules of Membership believed, acknowledged, and practised by the Baptised Church of Jesus Christ at Lincoln, Canterbury, N.Z.*

#### I. - CONFESSION OF FAITH.

- 1<sup>st</sup>. We believe in the Trinity in unity, being Three Persons in one Godhead, called in the Holy Scriptures “Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”
- 2<sup>nd</sup>. We believe in the fall of man and the universal depravity and condemnation of the human race.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. We believe in the redemption of mankind through the atonement and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. We believe that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to all who believe in Him for salvation.
- 5<sup>th</sup>. We believe in the election of believers in Jesus Christ unto holiness here and to eternal life and glory hereafter.
- 6<sup>th</sup>. We believe in effectual calling, and in the final perseverance of the saints by the Divine operation of the Holy Spirit.
- 7<sup>th</sup>. We believe that the Holy Scriptures are a full and sufficient guide in the way of salvation.

#### II. - RULES OF MEMBERSHIP.

- 1<sup>st</sup>. That all believers in Christ Jesus desiring to unite in fellowship with this Church shall, on confession of their faith, be *baptized by immersion* into water, which we believe to be the only Scriptural mode of baptism. The church also receives as members such brothers and sisters as may be transferred from other Churches of the same faith and order.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>. That the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed on the *last Sabbath in each month*, when each member is expected to be present, unless prevented by unavoidable causes.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. That a Church meeting shall be held in the months of March, June, September and December in each year (for the transaction of Church business only), on a Tuesday nearest preceding the full of the moon; the pastor to call a special Church meeting whenever requisite. Each meeting to commence and close with prayer.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. That all candidates for membership shall be nominated at a Church meeting either by the pastor or one of the officers of the Church, and that such candidates shall be visited by two male members of the Church appointed by the Church meeting, who shall visit the Church during the following month, and report their opinions of such candidates at the next church meeting..<sup>20</sup>

Pastor: J S. Clarke

Deacons (*pro tem*): T. Pannett (sen), J. Osborne, C. Storey, J. Wolfe.

Treasurer: T. Pannett (sen), Farmer, Springs Road, Lincoln

Secretary: Mr J. Wolfe, Painter, Lincoln Township.



The new church was also given a section by Thomas Chivers, a Sunday School Teacher of Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, Christchurch, for the erection of a church building. As long as the Church at Lincoln paid all legal expenses connected with the transfer of title deeds and conveyance the land was a free gift. Other donations of money and labour for erecting such a building were also promised.

The church building progressed swiftly and was officially opened at a service on Sunday 25 February 1877, presided over by the Reverend Charles Dallaston, the new minister for Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, Christchurch. Mr Dallaston had been appointed as a result of a recommendation by C. H. Spurgeon from the students at his training school, Pastor's College, and had only arrived at Lyttelton six weeks previously. Thomas Pannett's contribution to the establishment of the Lincoln Church was recognised in the *Diamond Jubilee Souvenir* of Oxford Terrace Baptist Church, in which he is described as a 'grand old man', who had laboured at Lincoln with others<sup>21</sup>. In the *New Zealand Baptist* issue celebrating the Canterbury Centenary in 1950 he is described further:

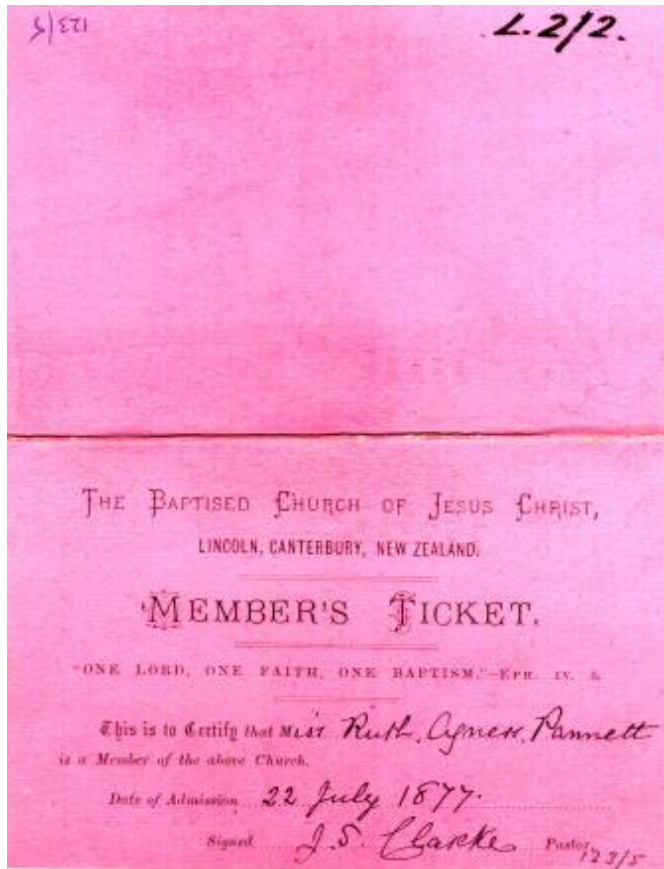
"In 1851, when the population of Canterbury was about 3,000 there arrived a Mr T. A. Pannett, a member of the Baptist church at Lewes. He paid his £1 to the church authorities and was permitted to "settle" in Canterbury. He with his infant son was destined to play a prominent part in the establishment of the Baptist Church of Canterbury. He first worshipped in a private house, then later in the Oddfellows' Hall in Lichfield Street..."<sup>22</sup>



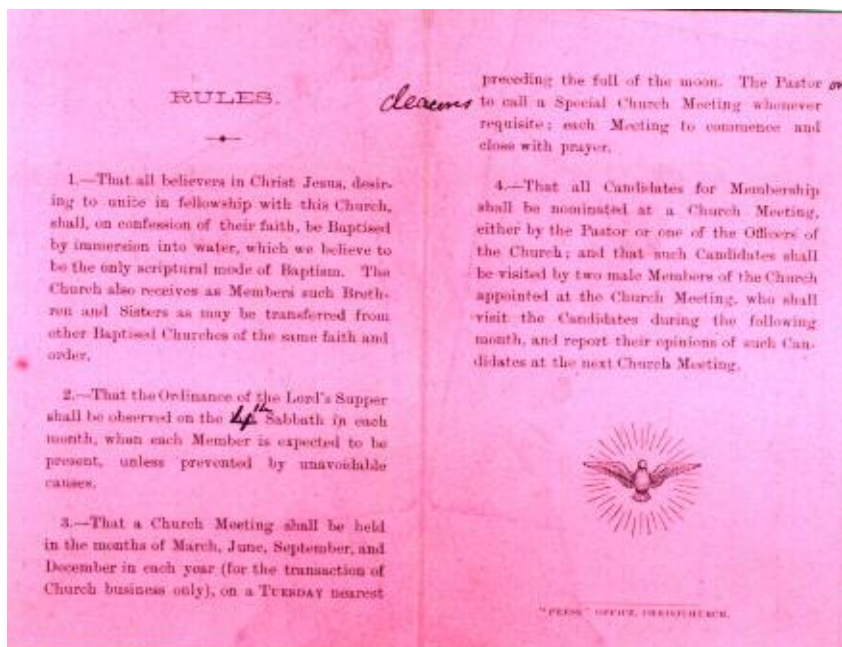
At the Third Meeting of the Canterbury Baptist Association, attended by Messrs. Pannett, Osborne and Clarke, their church report concluded that it was believed that there were sufficient funds in hand or promised to meet all the liabilities on the new Chapel. Brother Clarke also moved that thanks be conveyed to Brother Storey for the initial use of his house for meetings, by letter, which was agreed<sup>23</sup>.

### 23. Rev. Charles Dallaston





24a & 24b. Ruth Agnes Pannett's Membership Card. She was one of the first baptisms of the new Lincoln Baptist Church which took place at Lincoln Road Church.



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1. Richards, *ibid.*, p. 8.
  2. Adams, T. W. (1918) "Early Lincoln" (Second chapter), *The Canterbury Agricultural Magazine*, June, pp. 524-529.
  3. Richards, *ibid.*, p. 11.
  4. *The Centennial Book of Lincoln School*, published by Lincoln School Centennial Committee, pp.14-15.
  5. *Memoirs of Mary Pannett Richards*. Oxford, Ohio. February 1931. Typescript in the possession of the Richards family. Also in Appendix 1, and in the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch City Library and Baptist Archives.
  6. Clifford (97) referred to in Cary College Notes on The Baptist Churches- Section Eight.
  7. *Sunday School Minute Book*, December 1873-May 1884. Box 45, Oxford Terrace Baptist Church Archives: Individual Church Files, Lincoln Baptist Church held in the New Zealand Room, Canterbury Public Library.
  8. *The Canterbury Evangelist*, November 1876, pp. 32-4.
  9. *Canterbury Baptist Association Minute Book (Home Missions)*, March 18, 1874 - September 14, 1885.
  10. Johnston, George Report to the Canterbury Association 1876, *The Canterbury Evangelist*, August, 14-16.
  11. Macdonald, G. R. *Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*. Entry O. 122. Canterbury Museum Library.
  12. Macdonald, G. R. *Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*. Entry S. 809. Canterbury Museum Library.
  13. Lincoln Baptist Minute Book 1876-1915, entry for 18 August 1881.
  14. Sale notice from H. Matson and Co. for 24 March 1900 published in *The Press*, p. 12.
  15. Obituary published in *The Press*, 10 January 1912, p.110
  16. Certificate of title, Register Book 64, Folio 63.
  17. Lincoln Baptist Church Minute Book 1876-1915, entries for 7 January, 10 February and 24 March 1879.
  18. Sutherland, Martin ed. (2002) Biographical Appendix, p.212 in *Baptists in Colonial New Zealand – documents illustrating baptist life and development*. New Zealand Baptist Research and Historical Society: Auckland.
  19. *The Canterbury Evangelist*, *ibid.*
  20. *The Canterbury Evangelist*, *ibid.*
  21. Hercus (1931), p.7.
  22. Falla, Hugh 'Progress of the Baptist Church in Christchurch', *New Zealand Baptist*, August, p.227ff.
  23.