

ARTICLE

# Bishop Broughton and his Colonial Visitation in 1845

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## Abstract

This article examines an account by William Grant Broughton, describing a journey made in 1845 to the south of his Diocese of Australia. It was published by English supporters, describing the impossibly large area of his responsibility and pleading for a subdivision of his diocese. Broughton wanted to overcome ignorance of Australia, to thank his supporters for money and manpower, and to demonstrate that his work as a bishop was not just a state appointed official, but as a spiritual Father-in-God in apostolic succession from Christ. Broughton was inspired by the Oxford Movement. Broughton met influential colonists and inspired support in his vision of church buildings where the Gospel might be preached and the sacraments of the Church of England celebrated with a dignity to inspire and attract the flock. Broughton knew the 1836 decision of the Government to give state aid to all major Christian denominations undermined the claim of the Church of England to have inherited established legal status the church enjoyed in England. Broughton's heroic efforts form an inspiring Anglican heritage. The article concludes that by the time of his death in 1853 his church was but one denomination in a spiritually plural, and secular, society.

**Keywords:** Bishop Broughton, Campbell of Duntroon, Canberra, Church Act of 1836, Church of England, Oxford Movement, tyranny of distance

## Introduction

In the year 1845 William Broughton had been Bishop of Australia for nearly ten years. Born in 1788, the first year of British settlement in Australia, he was then about 58 years of age, lame, and walking with a stick. Yet in that year he went by horseback on a long visitation from Sydney to southern New South Wales, a journey of more than 1600 kilometres.

Broughton recorded this expedition in the form of a record of a journey. It was not a tourist trip, but rather he describes it as a 'journal of visitation' during a defined period (January to April, 1845), over a defined area, Southern New

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William Grant Broughton (Bishop of Australia 1836–47 and Bishop of Sydney 1847–52).  
Source: State Library of New South Wales.

South Wales, and with the aim of meeting leading Anglicans and founding churches along the way. He chose this same format to describe his visit to the Hunter Valley two years earlier.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to remember that the first colonies on the Australian continent were penal colonies, established to relieve the overcrowded prison system in Britain. Only at the last minute was even the Established Church of England given a place in that enterprise with chaplains like Richard Johnson and Samuel Marsden being appointed.

As the population of free settlers expanded, more clergy arrived and later Archdeacons Thomas Hobbes Scott and then Broughton. The institutional structure was completed when Broughton arrived back from a visit to England with the title of ‘Bishop of Australia’, and was enthroned in Sydney in 1836. In the years that

<sup>2</sup>For the life of Broughton see entry in Kenneth Cable, *Cable Clerical Index*, available online at: <http://anglicanhistory.org/aus/cci/index.pdf> (accessed 25 January 2022) and George Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot: William Grant Broughton 1788–1853* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978). This is the standard biography. For an account of the Hunter River tour in 1843 see Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, pp. 166–67, but there is no detailed account by Shaw of the 1845 Visitation to Southern NSW, the subject of this study. For details of the early clergy in the Colony such as Richard Johnson, Samuel Marsden and Thomas Hobbes Scott, see *Cable Clerical Index*.

followed he bravely attempted to visit all parts of his vast diocese, including this Visitation in 1845.

Why did Broughton make this arduous journey? Why did he make a detailed report about his southern Visitation to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London, known as the SPG? This report was published and circulated by the Society. In this article the 1845 journey of Broughton is cited as *Visitation*. Why did he use the Journal of Visitation format to describe it to English readers for whom the distances of Australia were difficult to comprehend?<sup>3</sup>

The most obvious reason was the impossibility of him ministering over such a vast area on his own. In a letter he wrote while on his Visitation, to his friend and English Agent Edward Coleridge, on 21 January 1845, Broughton reported: 'Now I am halting in the mountains on my road to Bathurst where I am to lay the foundation of a Church on Friday next. After that I have a journey of 1,000 miles and upwards before me and I shall not be home again until after Easter; probably about the first week in April.'<sup>4</sup>

Broughton was writing to someone for whom such a long journey by horseback was almost unimaginable. In Britain bishops of the Established Church travelled in carriages, usually over well-made roads. But he went on to write to Coleridge about an issue which he said was very close to his heart, particularly in the light of his arduous wanderings. The issue was the subdivision of his vast diocese into more manageable areas for more effective ministry. Broughton appealed to Coleridge to do whatever he could in Britain to advance this cause. In fact, his appeal was effective and within a few years bishops were appointed to the new dioceses of Newcastle, Hobart, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Another purpose of his Visitation was to express gratitude to Coleridge and the SPG for their support which, he said, had raised several thousands of pounds for Church of England outreach in Australia. Naturally he hoped that this would continue with money and manpower.

Broughton was seeking to overcome the sheer ignorance of people in Britain about the Australian continent, which was in fact approximately the same size as the continental United States of America, though with vast areas of arid and desert country. There is an undocumented legend that the SPG authorities sent a clergyman to early Melbourne with a suggestion that, at the beginning, he might conduct a morning service in Melbourne and an evening service in Adelaide each Sunday! Adelaide was over 700 kilometres from Melbourne and would require several days of travel at that time.

<sup>3</sup>William Grant Broughton, *Church in Australia. Two Journals of Visitation to the northern and southern portions of his diocese by the Lord Bishop of Australia*. (London, 1846). This pamphlet is rare but two copies exist in the National Library of Australia in Canberra. They are the basis of this study. Shaw in his biography of Broughton makes little mention of this 1845 visitation but Broughton's account of it is very important as a record of his views on the place of the Church of England in Colonial society. To Coleridge he described himself as 'almost constantly a wanderer upon the face of earth or sea' (Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, p. 182).

<sup>4</sup>*Broughton to Coleridge*. Transcription of a letter edited by Dr Bruce Kaye from microfilm in the National Library. Reverend Edward Coleridge, born in 1800, was a House Master at Eton College and was the son-in-law of the Head Master, Dr Keate. He was a cousin of the famous poet. Coleridge first met Broughton in 1835 and they became lifelong friends and corresponded regularly. See Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, p. 166.

Yet another purpose of his Visitation was to express the convictions of the Oxford Movement about the very nature of the Church of England and the role of the bishop. No longer was the bishop seen as simply a state-appointed official. More and more he was seen as a spiritual Father-in-God to members of the Church, in the Apostolic succession from the disciples of Jesus Christ.

Broughton was a follower of this newly emerging Oxford Movement, though sometimes critical of the views of men like Newman and Pusey. He made this journey in 1845 while very much afraid that Newman was moving towards submission to Rome, as happened later that year. Broughton took with him on his journey a book of Lenten readings translated from the French by Dr Edward Pusey. Edward Bouverie Pusey, whom Broughton much admired, then took over the leadership of the Oxford Movement.<sup>5</sup>

Yet another reason why Broughton undertook that arduous Visitation journey was an awareness of the fact that the 1836 Church Act had given financial support to the four main Christian denominations in the Colony, Church of England, Roman Catholic, Church of Scotland and Wesleyan Methodist, and that their leaders were competing in evangelistic outreach. He clearly saw the Church of England as losing, or had lost, status as the only legally established Church in the Colony.<sup>6</sup> The 1836 Church Act posed a dilemma for Broughton. He accepted the aid offered to the Church of England but knew that the fact that other denominations also accepted it undermined his claim to Anglican Establishment, such as the Church enjoyed in England.

In the early years of the Colony almost all Catholics were Irish convicts or ex-convicts but gradually Catholic free settlers and the first legally recognized priests, like Father J.J. Therry, followed by Bishop John Bede Polding, arrived in the Colony. But there was a major problem for Catholics in the fact that Polding wanted to establish the Australian Church as an English Benedictine foundation, which was his own background. This created tension with the Irish Catholic tradition.<sup>7</sup>

The other main competitors for Broughton were the Scottish Presbyterians and the Wesleyan Methodists. Each of these groups would have numbered less than 10 per cent of the populations but both were significant. Few convicts were numbered among them but their social influence was considerable, especially that of the Presbyterians.

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<sup>5</sup>See Stewart Brown and Peter Nockles (eds.), *The Oxford Movement: Europe and the Wider World 1830–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Also Brian Douglas: *The Eucharistic Theology of Edward Bouverie Pusey* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), p. 47. The Lenten book mentioned by Broughton in his letter to Coleridge, p. 312 of the Kaye transcription, was by Jean Baptiste Elie Avrillon, *A Guide to Lent*. Avrillon (1652–1729) was a French Franciscan priest and spiritual writer. Several of his books were translated by Pusey and published in London.

<sup>6</sup>David Stoneman, 'The Church Act: The Expansion of Christianity or the Imposition of Moral Enlightenment?' PhD thesis, University of New England, Armidale, 2011. Online at <https://rune.une.edu.au/web/handle/1959.11/10794> (accessed 25 January 2022). Especially Chapter 3, 'William Broughton and Anglican Ascendancy', pp. 98ff. Other chapters dealing with the rise of Catholicism and the rights of Scottish Presbyterians, are also very relevant. This is an important study.

<sup>7</sup>*Australian Dictionary of Biography (ADB)* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1967), II, pp. 509–12 and pp. 340–47 for entries on J.J. Therry and John Bede Polding.

From the beginning of settlement in Australia, Scottish Presbyterians – including several early Governors, notably Hunter, Macquarie and Brisbane – were Scottish born.<sup>8</sup> As governors they supported the Established Church of England but their position was soon questioned with the arrival of the first Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) clergyman, John Dunmore Lang, in 1823.

Lang was very conscious that in Scotland the Established Church was the Church of Scotland, and the Episcopal Church of Scotland, while in communion with the Church of England, was a small dissenting group of less than 10 per cent of the population. Lang asserted his position very vigorously, but his repeated clashes with all who opposed him, eventually drove several Presbyterian Ministers to seek Anglican Orders at the hands of Bishop Broughton.<sup>9</sup>

J.D. Lang, in 1826, three years before Broughton reached the Colony as Archdeacon, travelled over the mountains to Bathurst and later travelled extensively throughout the Colony, as did Polding.

The first ordained Wesleyan Minister in the Colony, the Reverend Samuel Leigh, arrived in 1815. The Senior Chaplain, Samuel Marsden, himself had a Methodist heritage. He appears to have welcomed Methodists but was uneasy about possible clashes with his status as a Church of England priest and Chaplain.<sup>10</sup>

In addition to the four main Christian denominations, there were numerous citizens, such as William Charles Wentworth, a founder of the Sydney University, who professed little allegiance to any denomination and could be described as free thinkers, with a secular outlook. Such views marked the beginning of the modern secular society.<sup>11</sup>

An Australian Church historian, Ross Border, has written of Broughton that his greatness was in the quality of his ideas, the vigour of his leadership, the wide embrace of his vision and the depth of his devotion to God and his Church.<sup>12</sup> When we consider the reasons that drove him to this arduous Visitation in 1845, we see these qualities richly demonstrated. The fact that history shows that he failed in some of his aims in no way detracts from his qualities.

Broughton was unable to keep public education in the hands of the Church of England. Emerging educational institutions were essentially secular but with limited time given for religious instruction. The influence of Wentworth in the founding of the University of Sydney saw it also as a secular institution and Broughton refused to

<sup>8</sup>Malcolm Prentis, *The Scots in Australia* (Sydney: University New South Wales Press, 2008).

<sup>9</sup>D.W.A. Baker, *Days of Wrath: A Life of John Dunmore Lang* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1985). Baker treats Lang's clashes with Broughton in much detail. This is the definitive biography of Lang. See also Robert J. Willson, 'A Colonial Clergyman: James Allan and the Church of England in the Braidwood District', Litt. B. degree thesis, Australian National University, 1982. James Allan and John Gregor were two Presbyterian Ministers who were ordained in the Church of England by Broughton after having clashed with Lang. Allan served for many years at Braidwood and was later to be at St John's, Canberra for the consecration of that church by Broughton on his Visitation.

<sup>10</sup>A.T. Yarwood, *Samuel Marsden, The Great Survivor* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1977), pp. 207ff. For Samuel Leigh see *ADB*, II, p. 105.

<sup>11</sup>Andrew Tink, *William Charles Wentworth: Australia's Greatest Native Son* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2009), p. 77.

<sup>12</sup>Ross Border, *Church and State in Australia, 1788–1872* (London: SPCK, 1962), p. 80.

accept a seat on the Senate. By the time Broughton left Australia in 1852 the Church of England had lost any claim to be Established.

Years later the poet Robert Browning wrote: 'Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?'<sup>13</sup>

### Part 1: The Visitation from Sydney to Bathurst

Bishop Broughton's 1845 Visitation began in mid-January 1845, when he said farewell to his wife Sarah and left his home, Tusculum, at Darling Point. He was travelling first to the west, over the Blue Mountains, and then to the south to the area later known as the Monaro.

Communications on the trip would be slow. After Blackheath, Broughton wrote no surviving letters to Coleridge, and only brief notes to his wife Sarah. He may have complained about the impossibility of being bishop of the whole of Australia but he still signed all his personal notes to Sarah with his full episcopal title and signature: +W G Australia. Many of these letters still survive in the Moore College Library in Sydney. Clearly Broughton was both repelled and yet attracted by his status as 'Bishop of Australia'.

Broughton rode a horse and led another pack animal, carrying his luggage, clerical requirements and episcopal robes, though he wrote few details about his travelling arrangements. He needed to be prepared to celebrate the Sacraments in places where there were no necessary vessels. He would have carried scriptures and prayer books and tracts for distribution.

As the Bishop rode along George Street in Sydney he passed Christ Church St Laurence, founded in 1840, then in the course of erection, and he would be able to consecrate it later in the year 1845, after returning from his Visitation. This congregation and parish, together with St James' King Street, many years later, still represent the traditions that Broughton espoused, while the majority of Sydney parishes moved in a much more evangelical tradition.<sup>14</sup>

The first part of his Visitation showed that the Bishop was then travelling through the oldest British settlement in the Colony, founded by free settlers in the late eighteenth century, following the beginnings of settlement as a convict colony in 1788. The first inhabitants were officials, soldiers and convicts but soon free settlers, including John Macarthur and his family, were arriving. The Macarthurs arrived on the Second Fleet. The long administration of Governor Lachlan Macquarie from 1810 to 1821, often referred to as the Age of Macquarie, accelerated this process, and laid the foundation of a nation when transportation of convicts ended in 1840.<sup>15</sup>

By the time the Bishop travelled through the area to the south and west of Sydney many wealthy estates existed there. Naturally he felt at home with people of wealth

<sup>13</sup>Robert Browning, *Andrea del Sarto*. From Browning, *Men and Women* (London, 1855).

<sup>14</sup>See *Sydney Herald*, 3 January 1840 for the foundation of that church and John Spooner, *The Archbishops of Railway Square* (Sydney: Halstead Press, 2002), for a general history of the Parish.

<sup>15</sup>James Broadbent and Joy Hughes (eds.), *The Age of Macquarie* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1992). Though Broughton arrived in the Colony after that period it provides a valuable background for his ministry.



and education and social status. They were usually strong supporters of the Church of England as part of the established order, and he was to rely on them for his evangelistic outreach. They had the money and the influence that he needed.

An example of this appeared when the Bishop reached Denham Court, the residence of Thomas Valentine Bloomfield.<sup>16</sup> Born in Suffolk, Blomfield came from an old military family and was a Captain in the 28th Regiment. Blomfield married a daughter of Captain Richard Brooks, whose son, Richard Henry Brooks, became a leading citizen on the Monaro. When the Bishop reached the Monaro later in his Visitation, he was made very welcome by Richard Henry, an example of social networking by the Bishop. This led to the foundation of the Church of St Mary at Gegendzerick, now the oldest church on the Monaro.

The next day at Denham Court the Bishop consecrated the church built by the Brooks family and he called it 'St Mary the Virgin'. Both Richard Brooks senior and his wife were buried in a vault under the eastern end of the church. Richard Brooks senior had died after being gored to death by an enraged bull when he had incautiously entered a stock yard.

By 16 January the Bishop reached the village of Camden, where he inspected the church and school, accompanied by the local clergyman. He had laid the foundation stone of that church in 1840 and was to consecrate it on 7 June 1849.

Broughton enjoyed his visits to Camden, one of the earliest settlements in the Colony and a place rich in historical associations. To this day there remain many heritage buildings of great historical significance and the bibliography of writings about Camden is vast.

But writing this Visitation record, Broughton concentrates on his encounter with Mrs Elizabeth Macarthur, the widow of the late John Macarthur, the man who is often described as the father of the Australian wool industry, the first export industry of the Colony. Many historians now dispute this and see Mrs Elizabeth Macarthur, his wife, as equally responsible. She built up the local wool industry during his long absences in Britain, especially after the 1808 so called 'Rum Rebellion'. This was an armed insurrection against the Governor, William Bligh, in which John Macarthur was involved. The literature on John and Elizabeth Macarthur is extensive.<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Broughton was deeply moved to meet this lady who had been in the Colony almost from the beginning of settlement. He recorded his encounter in these words:

She had been upon the spot on which we were standing, while it was in a state of nature, not a tree felled, nor a vestige of culture or civilization anywhere to be seen. That she should have lived to behold it as it is now, occupied by a large, substantial and really handsome church, built in a correct style of decorated architecture, with a lofty tower and spire, and even in its unfinished state

<sup>16</sup>Felix Mitchell, *Back to Cooma* (Shire of Cooma, 1926), p. 72. See this book for details of the families of Blomfield and Brooks.

<sup>17</sup>The standard biography is by M.H. Ellis, *John Macarthur* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1955). See also a recent study by Michelle Scott Tucker, *Elizabeth Macarthur: A Life at the end of the World* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2018).

forming a most striking feature in the landscape, seemed to amount almost to a miracle.<sup>18</sup>

This passage gives us a striking insight into the mind of the Bishop, and his priorities on his Visitation. These priorities will be demonstrated again and again. Clearly Broughton saw the erection of appropriate buildings for the worship of God as central to evangelism. No doubt he would have agreed that the Christian faith began without any buildings at all, but under the influence of the Oxford and Romantic movements, Broughton believed that the worship of God should be not only with heart and soul and mind and strength, but beautified by physical arrangements. He believed that to reach that ideal in Colonial NSW required worship according to the Prayer Book, a hierarchical structure of clergy and bishop in a legally established church with appropriate buildings.

But people like the Blomfields and the Macarthurs were the only members of colonial society with the resources to erect appropriate buildings. The Bishop travelled long distances to energize such people and to seek to make that dream a reality. The 1836 Church Act was undermining that dream by supporting Christians with very different priorities but he did his best. He battled opposition and indifference and even hostility to his role as the ‘Lord Bishop’, a title increasingly irrelevant in colonial society, and sneered at in the popular press of the day, such as the *Sydney Gazette*.

By 18 January Bishop Broughton reached ‘Wyvenhoe’, the impressive residence of Charles Cowper (1834–1911), politician and police magistrate, and later to be Premier. Cowper was at that time a Member of the Legislative Council for Cumberland. Cowper lived very close to the village of Cobbitty.<sup>19</sup>

The Bishop would have conducted family worship with the Cowper family. He would have felt very much at home. He commented that the spires of Cobbitty and Camden churches were visible at the same time. Broughton wrote that the effect to him was truly gratifying. Once again for him it appeared that the Church building was as important as the congregation that might use it.

On 20 January the Bishop’s journey took him away from the Sydney area and he began to climb into the mountains on a back road leading him eventually to the main road to Bathurst. On 20 January he reached a place called ‘Twenty-Mile Hollow’. This place, now called Woodford, was a relic of the road over the Blue Mountains built by William Cox in 1815, thirty years earlier. In that year Cox is said to have placed a twenty-mile peg near the present Woodford Railway Station. An inn was built nearby and the area was used as a reserve to water travelling stock. The Bishop may have spent the night at that inn before travelling, on 21 January, to Blackheath.<sup>20</sup>

Broughton wrote in his *Visitation* that the elevation was 4000 feet above sea level and the temperature was unpleasantly cold compared with that of the plains though which he had passed.

<sup>18</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, entry for 15 January 1845.

<sup>19</sup>For life of Cowper see *ADB*, III, p. 479. For local hostility to Broughton as ‘Lord Bishop’, see *The Sydney Gazette* and other newspapers, quoted in Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, p. 104.

<sup>20</sup>*The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, Saturday 10 June 1815, published Governor Macquarie’s full account of his journey over the newly made road to Bathurst.



Near Blackheath he passed a stockade with accommodation for a gang of prisoners, about 70 in number, who were working on the road over the mountains. Broughton recorded that it was under the command of Captain John Edward Bull of the 99th Regiment. The Bishop admired Bull who was an 'active and judicious officer'.

The Bishop noted that the transportation of felons to the Colony had ceased five years previously, in 1840, though it continued in other parts of Australia. He remarked with surprise and gratification that all traces of the convict system had disappeared except for this stockade.

Behind this progressive expression there is a revealing glimpse of deeper religious issues. It was well known that the great majority of convicts were Irish Catholics. Even though transportation had now ceased these men were determined to cling to their faith. Broughton was concerned that they would swamp the population and that the Established Church would continue to lose the status of the dominant faith in Australia.

Broughton would never forget that day in March 1843 when John Bede Polding returned to Sydney with a large party of priests, students and brothers, including the first three Christian Brothers. When Polding made a public landing in Sydney Cove, 2000 Catholics formed a noisy procession to escort him past St James' Church to the old Catholic Cathedral, while singing 'See the Conquering Hero Comes'. The Pope had conferred on him the title 'Archbishop of Sydney, Vicar Apostolic of New Holland'.

Broughton naturally saw this as an infringement of his own position and his authority. He delivered a solemn protest in St James' Church, surrounded by six of his clergy, and wrote a formal protest to the British Government. The Government refused to get involved and did nothing. Governor Gipps flatly declined to print the protest of Broughton in the Government Gazette.<sup>21</sup>

So even when Broughton was on his Visitation and commented that signs of the convict era were fading away, he knew that the growing Roman Catholic numbers in the population would continue to threaten the Church of England heritage. By that time perhaps 30 per cent of the people were of Irish Catholic background. All he could do was to try to inspire and mobilize his own Church by this Visitation. It was no easy task for one man.

The Bishop preached and read prayers before the soldiers and the prisoners, many of whom were probably Catholics, and then rode on to Blackheath. He made no comment on the spectacular beauty of the rugged scenery of the area. He was not a tourist. He spent his evening there writing by the light of a tallow candle what was apparently his last letter to Coleridge on his journey. In that letter he pleaded for action to subdivide his vast diocese. Doubtless he had been thinking a lot about that issue on his ride.<sup>22</sup>

Broughton reached Bathurst on 23 January 1845.<sup>23</sup> He had been there several times previously, including his visit in 1836 to consecrate Holy Trinity Church, Kelso. This was the first Church west of the Great Divide.

<sup>21</sup>Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, pp. 164-65. See also *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, 16 March 1843 for a dramatic account of the arrival of Polding.

<sup>22</sup>Broughton to Coleridge, 21 January 1845.

<sup>23</sup>Theo Barker, *A History of Bathurst* (Bathurst: Crawford House Press, 1992), I, pp. 24ff.

It is surprising that in his Visitation the Bishop did not mention the Kelso Church, which he had earlier consecrated. He spent only a night in Bathurst and laid the foundation stone of a church to be named All Saints, now the Anglican Cathedral for the Diocese of Bathurst. He wrote that there was a large crowd in spite of the oppressive heat, but he gave no details and did not linger there.

In fact many of the leading citizens of Bathurst were Scottish Presbyterians at that time. These included Major-General William Stewart, former Lieut-Governor, by then living in retirement at Mount Pleasant, a magnificent Scottish Baronial mansion. Other leading Presbyterians were Captain John Piper and George Ranken.<sup>24</sup>

By 25 January the Bishop reached the village of Carcoar, near the estate known as 'Coombing', the residence of Thomas Icely, a member of the Legislative Council nominated by the Crown. The Bishop recorded that Icely had accompanied him on the way. This indicates that Broughton had already written to Icely and told him that the Foundation of All Saints would be taking place on 24 January. Icely had come to Bathurst to meet the Bishop and to be his guide for his journey through the area known as 'King's Plains', now Blayney, and on to the valley where the village of Carcoar was being formed. Coombing was a very wealthy and extensive property and Icely was a strong supporter of Broughton.<sup>25</sup>

On Sunday, 26 January, the Bishop read prayers and preached at the Carcoar Court House, one of the earliest buildings in the village. He stayed the night at Coombing and doubtless he and Icely would have talked about the political and social issues of the day. The next day Broughton was back in the village to lay the foundation stone of a church to be named 'St Thomas's', probably after the Christian name of his host who had supported it.

The Carcoar Church still stands as the central feature of the village, more than a century and a half later. At some date unknown the name was changed to 'St Paul's', as it remains.

Apparently Broughton rested for a few days at Coombing because the next entry in his Visitation is dated 28 January. He writes that he made a day's journey in the wilderness beyond the boundaries: towards evening arrived and was entertained for the night at a station occupied by Mr Arthur Rankin (brother of George Ranken) on the banks of the river Lachlan.<sup>26</sup>

Broughton was well aware that in moving beyond the Nineteen Counties he might well be in danger from Aboriginal tribes who had reason to fear and hate Europeans whom they saw as invaders. He was now in the Wiradjuri country, a

<sup>24</sup>C.A. White, *The Challenge of the Years: A History of the Presbyterian Church in the State of New South Wales* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1951), pp. 248-50. See also *ADB*, II, pp. 482-83, pp. 334-35 and pp. 361-62 for entries on William Stewart, John Piper and George Ranken.

<sup>25</sup>*ADB*, II, pp. 1-2 for entry on Thomas Icely.

<sup>26</sup>The reference to travelling 'beyond the boundaries' refers to the Nineteen Counties, which were defined as the limits of location in the first half of the nineteenth century. The wilderness was regarded as dangerous because of hostile Aboriginal attacks and the Government could not provide effective protection beyond what it defined as the Nineteen Counties, mapped by Surveyor General Major Thomas Mitchell in 1834. This Government regulation was a dead letter from the start and settlers, known as 'squatters', ran large numbers of sheep and cattle in the wilderness areas beyond the boundaries. The literature on this period is extensive.

tribal district covering most of central New South Wales, between the three rivers, the Macquarie, the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee.

The Bishop must have noted that very few Aboriginal tribespeople were to be seen around Bathurst in 1845. Historian Donald Baker suggests that almost all the Wiradjuri people had been exterminated around Bathurst, or driven out of the district after the conflicts of the 1820s.<sup>27</sup>

Broughton supported anyone who would study and record Aboriginal languages and culture, such as the efforts of Lancelot Threlkeld, but the deeper issues of the future of the First Australians seemed beyond him.<sup>28</sup> On his Visitation his main focus was the future place of his Church in Australia.

## Part 2: From Bathurst to the Monaro

On 29 January 1845 Bishop Broughton writes that he travelled 45 miles in a southerly direction on a generally excellent road. In the evening he arrived at a solitary station called 'Meringa' with the house being much dilapidated and nearly deserted.<sup>29</sup> He received a friendly welcome from the person in charge but there was no bed in the house and he lay down on a couch without undressing, after a meal of milk and damper. The summer heat would have made it most uncomfortable. He was told that there was no population except shepherds and stockmen, so the next day he took the road to Burrowa where there was an inn.<sup>30</sup>

At this little village he wrote that he rested his horses and received a visit from the Reverend Robert Cartwright (1771–1856).<sup>31</sup> The Bishop would have been deeply impressed with Cartwright's energy and determination to continue ministry when over eighty years of age. But the encounter would have underlined his desperate need for more younger clergy to carry on the work in his impossibly vast diocese. Broughton records that he concluded after enquiries that the population was too scattered in that area for more than occasional visits by clergy such as Cartwright and the priest in Yass, Charles Ferdinand Brigstocke.<sup>32</sup>

According to the Bishop's Visitation, 1 February 1845, may be recorded as the date of the foundation of the Church of England in Boorowa. Broughton was accompanied by two magistrates of the territory, Captain W.P. Trevelyan and Mr W.R. Broughton (no relation), to inspect what had been used as a burial ground.

<sup>27</sup>D.W.A. Baker, *The Civilised Surveyor: Thomas Mitchell and the Australian Aborigines* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1997), p. 68.

<sup>28</sup>Roger Milliss, *Waterloo Creek, The Australia Day Massacre of 1838, George Gipps and the British Conquest of New South Wales* (Sydney: McPhee Gribble Penguin Books, 1992), p. 126. This is a very important study of a complex subject. See also Stephen Gapps, *Gudyarra: The First Wiradjuri War of Resistance, Bathurst, 1822–1824* (Sydney: New South Books, 2021). This book, the result of recent study, helps to explain why Broughton saw so few members of the Wiradjuri tribe on his travels south from Bathurst. For life of Lancelot Threlkeld, see *ADB*, II, pp. 528–30.

<sup>29</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, p. 9. Broughton recorded details of his arduous travels to remind readers that the Australian experience of a bishop was vastly different to the English scene.

<sup>30</sup>Burrowa, a rural township whose name is now spelt 'Boorowa'. Broughton would have seen it near the beginning of its history. Later a number of Irish ex-convict families settled in the area and gave it a strong Roman Catholic tradition, a trend which the bishop doubtless regretted.

<sup>31</sup>For the life of Cartwright see *Cable Clerical Index*.

<sup>32</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, p. 11. For the life of Brigstocke see *Cable Clerical Index*.

They decided to apply to the Government for an enlarged grant for Church and burial ground to be fenced at the expense of Mr Broughton.<sup>33</sup> This decision also included the erection of a weatherboard church at his expense.

After travelling many miles through largely unpopulated areas the Bishop was now in a more settled area and he recorded visits to Yass, Gunning and Rossiville, near Goulburn. On 9 February the Bishop consecrated St Saviour's Church, Goulburn.<sup>34</sup> Within twenty years of his visit, Goulburn would have grown into a major centre and St Saviour's was on the way to becoming a Cathedral. Bishop Mesac Thomas arrived as the first bishop of the new diocese in 1865.<sup>35</sup>

Broughton then rode from Goulburn to Duntroon, the country residence of Robert Campbell, merchant of Campbell's Wharf, Sydney. The Bishop records with gratification that Campbell had erected at his own expense a 'handsome and massive stone church'. This of course is St John's Church at Reid, in modern Canberra. Broughton recorded that Campbell was at that time absent but he looked forward to consecrating this church on his return from the Maneroo district.

When the Bishop reached Cooma at Kirwan's Inn, he spent some time in reflection and wrote a most important expression of his whole understanding of evangelism by the Church of England in the Australian environment.

Broughton wrote of the importance of a Church building as:

one place set apart for the decent and orderly administration of its ordinances – that is, a church. Herein the rich and poor, gathered from a very extensive circuit, might occasionally at least meet together, to make profession of their common faith, and to unite in the prescribed forms of adoration and thanksgiving to Him who is the God and Father of them all. Here might behold some manifestation, however humble, of the beauty of holiness, which, by the impression produced upon their minds and feelings from without, might by God's attendant blessing convey to their hearts some sense of the greatness of that salvation which it commemorated in the ordinances of Christian worship.<sup>36</sup>

The Bishop then went on to refer particularly to the rite of Baptism, the solemnization of matrimony, and of confirmation, and, as he described it, 'the most Holy Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ'. He believed very strongly that it was important, not only that a clergyman should be available in every settled district, but also that a church building should be a centre of visible union, and a depository of these holy observances.

Broughton's convictions, expressed on the Monaro, exactly mirror his earlier words to Mrs Macarthur at St John's Camden, as quoted earlier.<sup>37</sup>

In Cooma the Bishop prepared what he called a 'rough sketch' of a small church, in the Early English Style of architecture. He spent the night in Cooma and the next

<sup>33</sup>For details of the properties of Trevelyan and Broughton see *New South Government Gazette, September 1848*. This publication records the boundaries of claims to leases of Crown Lands beyond the settled districts.

<sup>34</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>35</sup>Ransome T. Wyatt, *The History of the Diocese of Goulburn* (Sydney: Bragg and Sons, 1937).

<sup>36</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, 14 February, pp. 17-18.

<sup>37</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, p. 6.

day, being Sunday 16 February, he shared in worship, including morning prayer read by the Reverend E.G. Pryce, followed by the Sermon and celebration of Holy Communion by the Bishop.

After the end of worship Broughton and Pryce rode 20 miles from Cooma to Gegedzerick, the station of Richard Brooks. Arrangements were made to erect a small Chapel to be built of wood. The Bishop was amazed at how many people gathered for the occasion from a seemingly sparsely populated district. He recorded that a Presbyterian gentleman was so impressed with it that he told the Bishop that accusations of 'Popery', levelled by many at the Church of England, were utterly unfounded. He asked for details of the occasion to be printed and mailed to friends in Scotland.<sup>38</sup>

### Part 3: Broughton's Homeward Journey

The Bishop's visitation to Gegedzerick marked the farthest extremity of his 1845 Visitation. On his return journey he marked the climax of his travelling by consecrating St John the Baptist Church on the Limestone Plains. This Church, now more than 175 years old, exemplified Broughton's ideals for the mission of the Church of England. It was planned and built by the Campbell family who lived on the nearby estate of Duntroon. That family were actually converts from the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, attracted to Anglicanism by the leadership of Bishop Broughton and those who came after him and repelled by the firebrand Dr Lang.

After his long ride from the Monaro the Bishop reached Duntroon on 19 February 1845, but discovered that Robert Campbell and his family were not there.<sup>39</sup> Apparently they were away in Sydney but were expected home soon. Two completed church buildings, Christ Church at Queanbeyan, and St John the Baptist Church at 'Canberry, Limestone Plains', were both ready for episcopal consecration but Bishop Broughton very much wanted Mr Campbell to be present.

The historian of St John's, A.H. Body, suggests that the Bishop may have taken a couple of days to rest at Duntroon. If so, he certainly deserved it. We know from other records that Broughton would always seize the opportunity to write to his wife Sarah, and update her on his travels and when he might expect to be home. He would also write to Coleridge in Eton but we have no surviving letter from this period.<sup>40</sup>

While waiting for Campbell to return to Duntroon the Bishop made a long journey around various settlements nearby, including Goulburn and Braidwood. It would have been obvious to Broughton that this area was to be one of closer settlement and rapidly increasing European population. In his Visitation report he makes no mention of the population of ex-convicts or of the Aborigines who had lived in

<sup>38</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, p. 20. The little wooden church Broughton planned was eventually built of stone, opened in 1860 and named 'St Mary the Virgin'. More than a century later it is still visited by the present Rector of the Parish of Berridale.

<sup>39</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, pp. 21-25.

<sup>40</sup>A.H. Body, *Firm Still You Stand* (Canberra: St John's Parish Council, 1986), p. 12. For the life of Robert Campbell see *ADB*, I, pp. 202-206.

the area for thousands of years but were now being driven almost to extinction. As always, his focus was on building up the Church of England.

Earlier explorers of the area around Canberra, especially John Lhotsky, had commented that the Limestone Plains area might one day be the site for a town. Yet neither they nor Broughton would dream that between Queanbeyan and the Limestone Plains or the Canberry Plains districts, there would one day be a planned city with a population approaching half a million people.<sup>41</sup> It is unlikely that Broughton would have read Lhotsky's prophecy on his journey nine years earlier but it would certainly have impressed him.

His Visitation record shows that on 8 March 1845, the Bishop consecrated Christ Church at Queanbeyan and about 20 candidates were confirmed that day. It appears that Mr Robert Campbell was one of those confirmed. A.H. Body in his history of St John's suggests that after his Confirmation Campbell was at St John's for that consecration on 12 March and that there he received his first Holy Communion in the building which owed so much to his efforts. Perhaps that is why the Bishop was so keen to have Campbell present.

We do not know why St John the Baptist was the saint chosen for the Church. As the biblical John the Baptist came 'like the voice of one crying in the wilderness', it would perhaps have seemed to the Bishop to be an appropriate name. During his long visitation he had seen many wilderness areas.<sup>42</sup>

We are fortunate that a reporter from *The Sydney Morning Herald* was on hand to gather a detailed account of the occasion, soon to be published.<sup>43</sup> This report must have warmed the heart of Bishop Broughton.

The report stated that the edifice was built of stone and imparted the appearance of an old English village church. It was claimed that it would hold a congregation of nearly 200 people, though this might have been an overstatement. As was often the case in such reports, the reporter was impressed by the fact that the congregation was very respectably dressed. There were none of what people called 'the lower classes', convicts or ex-convicts, or any of the local aboriginal tribes, to be seen.

The Consecration service and ritual were very formal. The Bishop was received at the west door by Mr Campbell and his family and escorted to the Communion Table. It is not recorded if he knocked on the door with his episcopal staff, as was the tradition.

The Bishop was attended by four priests – Woodd, Allan, Pryce and Smith. Details of these pioneering priests are recorded in the *Cable Clerical Index*. Several of these men would have had to ride long distances in the heat of summer, to be present that day.

A.H. Body, in his history of St John's, records that in the Sydney Diocesan Archives he was able to secure a copy of the formal 'Service of Consecration' of St John's. Broughton had read this document on that day and then placed it in the archives. The whole occasion must have been very satisfying for him.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup>John Lhotsky, *A Journey from Sydney to the Australian Alps, 1834* (Hobart: Blubber Head Press, 1979), pp. 67-68.

<sup>42</sup>The Gospel of Mark 1.3 (AV).

<sup>43</sup>SMH, 21 March 1845.

<sup>44</sup>Body, *Firm Still You Stand*, pp. 14-15.



Robert Campbell is honoured as the builder of St John's Church, but he had less than a year left to him because he died at Duntroon from what was called an apoplectic fit (a stroke). Bishop Broughton conducted his funeral.

As the Bishop mounted his horse and hurried on to Bungendore he must have felt a deep sense of satisfaction. The vision of Church buildings in many settlements, which he had described several times in his Visitation, was most appropriately realized in St John's. There a wealthy patron had built a splendid Church, later to be enlarged further, where Church people could come for the Sacraments and hear the preaching of the Word of God, had been made a reality on the Canberry Plains. But even in his most optimistic moments the Bishop might never dream that one day a Queen and a Governor General and visiting Heads of State from all over the world, would worship there amid the suburbs of a great capital city.

Bishop Broughton continued his journey, visiting Church of England people and establishments on the way home to Sydney. He reached home just after Easter that year, having been on the road for about three months. The following year he wrote this 'journal of Visitation' and sent it to the SPG for publication. There are a few very minor errors in dates, indicating that he was writing from memory, but it is a valuable and revealing record of his Australian evangelism.

## Conclusion

In his biography of Bishop Broughton, George Shaw studies many aspects of Broughton's life and episcopate in Australia, from his time as archdeacon through to his years as bishop of the whole continent, and finally as bishop of Sydney.

However he gives almost no space to the records of Broughton's visitations, such as the 1845 journey to the southern counties of New South Wales. He dismisses this record in a single sentence. The Visitation account, which has been the subject of this study, underlines Broughton's own claim that he had been almost constantly a wanderer upon the face of earth and sea.<sup>45</sup>

What may the modern reader learn from this Visitation record? Bishop Broughton was clearly a man of great personal stamina. When 58 years old he undertook a journey by horseback, in his own words, of 'more than a thousand miles' from Sydney to Bathurst and south to the foothills of the Snowy mountains.

Broughton travelled, not to see the sights, but to meet people and to build church buildings where the liturgy of his church might be observed in a seemly fashion according to the Scriptures and the *Book of Common Prayer*. Only thus, he believed, might members of the Church of England in Australia be firmly attached to their spiritual heritage and share it with their children.

During his record of his visit to Mrs John Macarthur at Camden he made this ideal clear. Later in the record of his visit to Cooma, both quoted in this article, he again made it quite explicit.<sup>46</sup>

Because Broughton saw appropriate buildings for the celebration of the Sacraments, especially Baptism and the Holy Communion, as so important, he

<sup>45</sup>Shaw, *Patriarch and Patriot*, p. 182.

<sup>46</sup>Broughton, *Visitation*, p. 9 and p. 17.

naturally visited committed Anglicans of wealth and position who would be able to bring this vision to reality.

The most important example of this is the Campbell family at Duntroon, on the Limestone Plains. This is now part of the Australian Capital Territory and now known as Canberra. In the consecration of St John's Church, built entirely by Robert Campbell, with some government assistance, Broughton saw the clearest example of his ambitions.

Throughout the area of his southern visitation, there are churches and congregations today that stand there because of his vision and his personal efforts. The same applies to other parts of the Colony. They are his lasting monument nearly two centuries after Broughton's time. His exhausting Visitation in 1845 was very fruitful and deserves to be remembered with gratitude. It is a small part of Bishop Broughton's wider vision for the Church of England throughout Australia and endures long after his episcopate.