



Sounds from Heaven

*The Revival on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland,
1949–1952*

Colin and Mary Peckham



CHRISTIAN FOCUS





Cover picture - Donald MacAulay in his boat, the *Mairi Dhonn*. Donald was later to become the Rev. Donald MacAulay, first convenor of the Western Isles Council whose testimony is in the book.

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,
they were all with one accord in one place.
And suddenly there came a sound from heaven (Acts 2:1, 2).*



Scripture quotations are from the King James Version.



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Foreword



The last recorded revival in the British Isles ended just half a century ago, but its results are still with us – and that is a mark of authentic revival. The Western Isles of Scotland had experienced a number of short periods of revival at the end of the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth centuries, but especially between 1949 and 1952. The story of Duncan Campbell has already been written and therefore is only lightly touched here; but this book is distinctive because whilst most books on revival are written by historians (distant observers), theologians (critical observers), or perhaps by the leaders themselves (immediate observers), here are stories from the heart by ordinary people who were caught up in a magnificent work of God: they have recounted what they saw, heard and personally experienced, and what is notable is the fact that although none knew what the others had recorded, each was telling the same coherent story of the miracle of revival in the Western Isles.

Much of the material in this book should have been available long ago, but we can be grateful to Colin and Mary Peckham for publishing for the first time extracts from the reports sent to the Faith Mission Headquarters by Duncan Campbell during those momentous years, and even for leading us through the labyrinth of the history of the Presbyterian churches in Scotland! This is by no means irrelevant because the historic differences help to explain the tragic suspicion and opposition with which the work of God was viewed by some denominations. There are important lessons to be learnt from all this.

But there are many more positive aspects of the revival, like the first lesson of persistent, insistent, believing prayer ('Many of us pray just enough to ease the conscience, but not enough to win any decisive victory'), the sense of the presence of God ('An overwhelming sense of God invading the atmosphere.... You could feel Him in the homes of the people, on the common and on the moor and even as you walked along the road through the townships'), the chief description of the power of the Holy Spirit being that of conviction of sin ('Strong men broken down and crying for mercy'), and the dynamic of song in times of revival ('Revival singing is anointed



Sounds from Heaven

singing. It is like a fire that goes through one's whole being').

I cannot recall any book on revival that I have read that has given me greater pleasure, held my attention more, and incited my longing for a new visitation from God more than this one. This is a significant book in the growing library of revival literature.

Rev. Brian Edwards
Surbiton Surrey, England
Author of Revival.
Former moderator of the
Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.





Thanks

To all those who were willing to share their testimonies of revival with us from which we were able to glean so much vital information of challenge and blessing.

To the Faith Mission Headquarters for allowing us access to Duncan Campbell's valuable reports from the revival scenes.

To the Faith Mission students who patiently stood at the photostat machine and reproduced Mr Campbell's reports from the Mission's archives.

To Mrs. Sonya Russell, Dromore, N. Ireland, who typed part of the document for us.

To the Lord who has made this a tremendous blessing to our own hearts as we have worked.

Sometimes when reading, translating and typing these thrilling testimonies, our hearts were broken. It has inspired us to cry to Him who is the source of revival to pour out once again His Spirit upon us. May God teach us to pray, to enter into His presence, to learn true soul travail as we bear the burden of the lost.

Colin & Mary Peckham
1 Kilpunt Gardens,
Broxburn, Scotland
EH52 5AT
E-mail: drc@peckham.net
Web-site: www.revival.org

Faith Mission Headquarters
Govan House, 2 Drum Street,
Edinburgh, Scotland EH17 8QG
E-mail: hq@faithmission.org

Faith Mission Bible College
2 Drum Street, Gilmerton,
Edinburgh, EH17 8QG
E-mail: college@faithmission.org

Web-site: www.faimission.org





About the Authors

Rev. Dr. Colin Neil Peckham, L.Th Hons, BA (Theol), B.Th. Hons, M.Th, D.Th, was born in South Africa where he had ten years of evangelistic ministry and youth work before entering Bible College work in Cape Town. For seventeen years he was principal of the Faith Mission Bible College, Gilmerton, Edinburgh, Scotland. As principal emeritus he now has an extensive preaching ministry in Great Britain and abroad.



Mary J. Peckham (nee Morrison), was born on the Isle-of-Lewis, Scotland. She was converted in the 1949 revival there and soon after her conversion entered The Faith Mission Bible College in Edinburgh. She spent fourteen years in evangelistic and convention ministry in the UK and abroad, seeing true revival on two occasions in her ministry, before marrying Colin in 1969. Together they served the Lord in South Africa for fourteen years before going to the UK to minister in the FMBC, Edinburgh



They have three adult children, two of whom are married, and one grandchild.



Introduction

In order to preserve the testimonies of those who were in Lewis revivals before they passed away, and to give an authentic account of the 1949-1952 revival, we travelled to various parts of Lewis and Harris (and other places as well) to capture their stories. Often the tape recorder was placed on the table and conversations proceeded along the normal lines of the weather, health and other items of the day together with the accounts of the revivals. All this material had to be sorted out, sometimes translated from Gaelic by Mary, and edited from the colloquial manner in which it was gathered. We have the tapes of the conversations, testimonies and any such gathered information.



Duncan Campbell spent five years at the beginning of his ministry in the Faith Mission, and later twenty-five years as a minister in the United Free Church of Scotland. In January 1949, he rejoined the Faith Mission. In December 1949, Mr. Campbell went to Lewis and was involved in a movement of the Spirit from 1949 to 1953. From 1958 to 1967 he was the principal of the Faith Mission Bible College in Edinburgh.

The Faith Mission is an interdenominational evangelistic society founded in 1886, operating in Great Britain and Ireland with its Headquarters and Bible College in Edinburgh, Scotland. It has about 100 workers holding evangelistic missions (or campaigns) mainly in rural districts, and conventions for Christians for the deepening of spiritual life, throughout the country and throughout the year. It holds about 8,000 meetings in any one year. People are trained for Christian service at home and abroad in the Bible College, and any Christian requiring Bible College training may apply.

The workers of the Faith Mission send weekly reports of their work to the Mission Headquarters. The staff then take extracts from those reports and compile a letter called *Pilgrim News* which gives up to date news of all that is happening throughout the work of the Faith Mission each week. This private letter is sent to all the workers so that all are constantly in touch with each other and can therefore pray more effectively for one another.

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Sounds from Heaven

Realizing that Duncan Campbell's reports were in the Faith Mission archives, we were given access to these and extracted his valuable observations written at the time of the revival straight from the field of action. This material has never seen the light of day and is now released with a prayer that it might be used to inspire prayer and faith for a movement of the Spirit today.

To grasp and understand what occurred at that time it is necessary not only to read Duncan Campbell's reports but also the wonderful testimonies of those who were there. Shafts of light from these testimonies clarify much concerning actions and events of this period and of the revival itself. Mary's testimony has been published in book form three times (*I was Saved in Revival*) and it appears here in an abridged form.

The testimonies glow with an indescribable warmth and the reality of their experience is there for all to see. The gospel is so clear. God manifest among His people is a thrilling reality and the power of the Holy Spirit in the midst, convicting, constraining, converting, confirming, comforting, causes the reader to bend before God in awe and adoration, in love and consecration, in wonder and amazement. One senses the powerful operation of the Holy Ghost.

When we review our own lack of burden, our dim understanding of God's mighty working, we can but cry to God to engulf us with flood-tides of divine refreshing and bring reviving streams to us all, sweeping sinners into the kingdom.

Let us read, ponder, reflect, humble ourselves, pray, seek His face, turn from our wicked ways, and surely He will hear from heaven, forgive our sin and heal our poor land, blighted with the scourge of vulgarity, brutality, nudity, profanity, obscenity, blasphemy, immorality, depravity and spiritual poverty.

May the Lord use this little volume to His great glory.



A day of the ministration of the Spirit would bring many rare and rich blessings along with it; such as discoveries of the Redeemer's glory, convictions of the evil and vileness of sin, many crowns of victory and triumph to Christ, great additions to his friends and followers. Then gospel light would shine clear, saving knowledge increase, ignorance and error vanish, riches of free grace would be displayed, and Satan be bound up. Then ministers and ordinances would be lively, secure sinners would be awakened, dead souls would live, hard hearts would be melted, strong lusts subdued, and many sons and daughters born to God. Such a day would heal divisions, cement breaches, make us all of one heart and mind, and bring down heaven to earth. This would redress our grievances, remove our complaints, and unite Christ's scattered flock. It would make true religion and holy persons to be in esteem, vice to be in disgrace, and iniquity as ashamed to hide its face. Then sabbaths and communions would be days of heaven. Prayer and praise, spiritual converse, talking of Christ and redeeming love, would be our chiefest delight. O then, pray for such a time.



John Willison, *The Balm of Gilead*, 1742







SEND THE FLOOD-TIDES

Send the flood-tides of Thy blessing!
Pour exhaustless draughts of grace;
In the spate of heavenly glory
O, my God, spare me a place.

Come around us, o'er us, on us,
Fill our souls with holy fire,
Come in glory, stand among us!
O my soul, to God aspire!

Cleanse! Thou mighty flood-tide, cleanse me
Purer than the driven snow!
Oh, the precious blood doth reach me,
His blest cleansing I can know.

God is here in matchless splendour,
Gone the glory of earth's sun,
Blinded by the vision glorious,
Lord, in me Thy will be done.

Hallelujah! Glory! Glory!
God in majesty doth sweep;
Gushing forth a mighty torrent
O'er the land His power doth leap.

O Thou Victor – ride in triumph!
Blood-bought riches Thou must claim,
On till we with hosts of glory
Swell fore'er Thy matchless Name!

Colin N. Peckham