

## **J. N. Darby and Tongues at Row: A Recent Manuscript Discovery**

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### **Introduction**

The document, reproduced in the following pages, consists of eight *bifolia* (fos 1–8) which compose the first part of a cache of papers purchased in 2007 by the Friends of Lambeth Palace Library from the descendants of William Dodsworth (1798–1861).<sup>1</sup> It is untitled but signed by J. N. Darby.<sup>2</sup> Although there are some significant differences in its handwriting from that of the earliest known original letter of John Nelson Darby (written more than ten years later) there are sufficient distinct similarities for a reasonable conclusion that this is Darby's original account,<sup>3</sup> and certainly the signature looks

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<sup>1</sup> These papers, including Dodsworth's 'Autobiographical Memoir,' have been bound together as LPL, MS 4727. The part, which concerns us, is located at the start of the bound volume because it was evidently written some time before the other items. It is something of a mystery how it found its way into Dodsworth's papers, for details of which see S. Taylor, and G. Sewell (eds.), *From the Reformation to the Permissive Society: A Miscellany in Celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lambeth Palace Library* (Church of England Record Society 18: Woodbridge, 2010), 415, 420n.16, 421, 440 n.46.

<sup>2</sup> John Nelson Darby (1800–1882) trained as a lawyer, was ordained in the established church and served in the parish of Delgany before his secession in c.1831. He was a key figure in the origins and development of the early Plymouth Brethren; see H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [hereafter *ODNB*], *s.n.*, art. by T. C. F. Stunt; 'Influences in the Early development of John Nelson Darby', in T. C. F. Stunt, *The Elusive Quest of the Spiritual Malcontent: Some Early Nineteenth Century Ecclesiastical Mavericks* (Eugene OR, 2015), 119–142; D. H. Akenson, *Discovering the End of Time: Irish Evangelicals in the Age of Daniel O'Connell* (Montreal, 2016), 86–156 *et passim*.

<sup>3</sup> His formation of the letter 'k' is very distinctive, but another specific detail may sufficiently confirm my conclusion. In Darby's later writing his lower case 'd's' nearly always have a vertical line on the right-hand side (d), but occasionally he reverts to another form of the letter where the top of the vertical line is swept back over the preceding letter (ð). In the document under consideration this swept back ð

authentic. For what it may be worth as proof of authenticity, one could also add that the punctuation of this document is as execrable as Darby's punctuation remained for the rest of his life!

The situation, which gave rise to the writing of this document, will be familiar to anyone who has studied the development of evangelicalism in Britain in the 1820s and 30s. William Dodsworth would later be a Tractarian and eventually become a Roman Catholic, but as a young man, his evangelical convictions were not in doubt and indeed had evoked some hostility in his early parochial ministry.<sup>4</sup> In the later 1820s he became part of the more radical wing of evangelicalism associated with Edward Irving and Henry Drummond in whose home the Albury conferences on the subject of prophecy (which Dodsworth attended) were held.<sup>5</sup> It was during these Adventist years that his friendship with Hugh McNeile<sup>6</sup> developed, and in 1829 Drummond appointed him to be the minister of the Margaret Street Chapel, in London. Not surprisingly the news of 'tongue speaking' and 'healings' said to be occurring in Western Scotland, near Port Glasgow in 1830, aroused the interest of these students of prophecy and Dodsworth was no exception.

These manifestations began in Fernicarry, Clydeside, on 30 March 1830 when the consumptive Mary Campbell spoke in an

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is almost universal but just occasionally (at the beginning of a word, for example), he uses the 'd' which later appears to have become his normal style.

<sup>4</sup> Palmer, 'Dodsworth', 433–35.

<sup>5</sup> For the growing tension between radical and traditional evangelicals see T. C. F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession: Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain 1815–35* (Edinburgh, 2000), 133–38; G. Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals: Protestant Secessions from the Via Media, c.1800–1850* (Oxford, 2001), 172–79. For Edward Irving (1792–1834) and the conferences at Albury, hosted by Henry Drummond (1786–1860), see T. Grass, *Edward Irving: The Lord's Watchman* (Milton Keynes, 2011), 102–5, 148–73.

<sup>6</sup> Hugh McNeile (1795–1879) was ordained in the Church of Ireland but was the Rector of Albury (1822–34) before his appointment to St Jude's, Liverpool (1834) and to be Dean of Ripon (1868). For his early development see T. C. F. Stunt, 'Trinity College, John Darby and the Powerscourt *Milieu*', in J. Searle and K. G. C. Newport (eds.), *Beyond the End: The Future of Millennial Studies* (Sheffield, 2012), 53–56.

Also they apply all the scripture as from  
the Spirit to the existing fallen Church  
to in the Spirit in the scripture seems to  
me to have given no such application  
This is a very important point, if they  
utter as from the Spirit what is contrary  
to the mind of the Spirit in scripture,  
supposing our views to be right, their  
Desires I believe from the Spirit but not  
their spiritual application. It appears to  
me the result of persons, not mature personal  
Christian knowledge, having been acted  
on, take away these persons the whole  
we fall to the ground, these persons never  
we have committed themselves in action  
as those led by them have. I pray God they  
may be wise before they are brought to shame  
It is on the whole a wonderful circumstance  
or state of things, Oh may we be led to look  
for his coming upon whom our Desires  
is, our eyes wait as watching for hastening  
to Him here my eyes rest, here I turn as my  
hope the Lord is long suffering in delaying it yet we  
can earnestly desire it in Spirit & say hasten & hasten it, in its  
Day when we shall have done with men & the Lord alone shall  
be called.  
J. H. Darby.

The final page of the manuscript, Lambeth Palace, LPL, MS 4727. Reproduced by kind permission.

unknown tongue. During the previous year, south of the river, in Port Glasgow, another invalid, Margaret Macdonald had experienced spiritual ecstasies though apparently without glossolalia. Two weeks after Mary Campbell's experience, Margaret was bidden by her brother James to 'arise and stand upright,' and on doing so was restored to bodily health. That day, James Macdonald wrote a similar command in a letter to Mary Campbell, who, on receiving the letter, rose from her bed and declared herself healed. In the following months Mary Campbell, Margaret Macdonald and her brothers frequently spoke in tongues and prophesied, attracting great interest and many visitors.<sup>7</sup>

It was no co-incidence that these unusual events occurred in a region where certain ministers of the Church of Scotland had questioned the teaching of the Westminster Confession on Christ's work of redemption. Both Robert Story,<sup>8</sup> whose parish of Rosneath included the Campbell household at Fernicarry, and his friend, John McLeod Campbell,<sup>9</sup> who was the minister of the neighbouring parish of Row, had risked the wrath of the Scottish establishment by

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<sup>7</sup> For non-partisan accounts of these events see A. L. Drummond, *Edward Irving and his Circle, Including some Consideration of the "Tongues" Movement in the Light of Modern Psychology* (London, [1934]), 136–51; Stunt, *From Awakening*, 228–36; Grass, *Edward Irving*, 204–215; D. M. Bennett, *Edward Irving Reconsidered: The Man, His Controversies and the Pentecostal Movement* (Eugene, OR, 2014), 189–98.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Story (1790–1859), minister of Rosneath from 1818, was initially convinced as to the authenticity of Mary Campbell's glossolalia but became disillusioned and never gave his approval to Irving's Catholic Apostolic Church. At the time of the Scottish Disruption (1843) he did not secede; see R. H. Story, *Memoir of the Life of the Rev Robert Story* (Cambridge, 1862); N. M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh, 1993) [hereafter *DSCHT*], *s.n.*, art. by N. R. Needham.

<sup>9</sup> John McLeod Campbell (1800–72) was the minister of Row (now known as Rhu: pronounced as a homophone of 'rue') from 1825 to 1831, when the Scottish Assembly deposed him for his teaching of 'universal pardon'. In 1834 he became an independent pastor ministering to what became a Congregational church in Glasgow; see D. Campbell (ed.), *Memorials of John McLeod Campbell* 2 vols. (London, 1877); G. M. Tuttle, *So Rich a Soil: John McLeod Campbell on Christian Atonement* (Edinburgh, 1986); *ODNB*, *s.n.*, art. by M. Jenkins; P. Stevenson, *God in our Nature: The Incarnational Theology of John McLeod Campbell* (Carlisle, 2004).

proclaiming that God's love (and therefore Christ's redeeming work) was not confined to the elect but extended to the whole of humanity. As a corollary to this teaching, some ministers like Edward Irving and the young Alexander Scott<sup>10</sup> (whose father was the minister of the nearby parish of Greenock) felt that Christ's humanity had been neglected and argued that it was necessary to give more emphasis, in their teaching, to Christ's humanity though not denying his divinity. In due course, with the exception of Story, all of these ministers were deposed by the Assembly, but their teaching had left its mark on some of their parishioners, who felt that their faith could give them access to the powers of a Saviour who fully shared their humanity.

Inevitably there was much debate over the previous medical condition of those who had been healed and whether the 'miracles' were of divine origin.<sup>11</sup> Thomas Chalmers,<sup>12</sup> a noted leader among

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<sup>10</sup> Alexander ['Sandy'] John Scott (1805–66) was licensed to preach in the Church of Scotland in 1827, but even before his appointment as minister to the Scots Church, Woolwich, in 1830, was associated with Campbell and Story in his questioning of the doctrine of particular redemption which led to his deposition in 1831. In later years he was associated with F. D. Maurice as a founder of Christian Socialism, and was Principal of Owens College, Manchester (1851–57); see J. P. Newell, 'Scottish Intimations of Modern Pentecostalism: A. J. Scott and the Clydeside Charismatics', *Pneuma* 4/2 (1982), 1–18; *idem*, "'Unworthy of the Dignity of the Assembly": The Deposition of Alexander John Scott', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 21 (1983), 249–62; *ODNB*, *s.n.*, art. by J. P. Newell.

<sup>11</sup> The fullest contemporary accounts of these events are mostly by observers who were favourably disposed towards the phenomena, e.g. T. E[rskine], *The Gifts of the Spirit* (Greenock, 1830); J. B. Cardale, 'On the Extraordinary Manifestations in Port-Glasgow', *Morning Watch* 2 (1830), 869–72; E. Irving, 'Facts Connected with Recent Manifestations of Spiritual Gifts', *Fraser's Magazine* (1832) 4: 754–61, 5: 198–205, 316–20; R. Norton, *Neglected and Controverted Scripture Truths; with an Historical Review of Miraculous Manifestations in the Church of Christ, and an Account of their late Revival in the West of Scotland* (London, 1839); *Memoirs of James and George Macdonald of Port Glasgow* (London, 1840). A hostile account, but one which makes use of valuable documentation is A. Robertson, *A Vindication of 'The Religion of the Land' from Misrepresentation and an Exposure of the Absurd Pretensions of the Gareloch Enthusiasts, in a letter to Thomas Erskine, Esq.* (Edinburgh, 1830); in the same category is E. Craig, *A Letter to Thomas Erskine, Esq., in reply to his recent pamphlet in vindication of the West Country miracles* (Edinburgh, 1830); R. H. Story following his father (who had been a close associate

Evangelicals, was cautiously non-committal in his inquiries, while the judgment of the Scottish Episcopalian, Thomas Erskine of Linlathen,<sup>13</sup> was enthusiastically favourable. In the South of England in the circle around Irving and Drummond, men like Dodsworth and McNeile were only too ready, for a time at least, to give credence to such reports, as likewise were radical evangelicals like Frank Newman<sup>14</sup> who was on the point of leaving for Baghdad where he expected to join the independent missionary, Anthony Norris Groves.<sup>15</sup>

Students of the early Brethren movement have long been aware that in the summer of 1830 John Nelson Darby visited Clydeside as an observer, with the interested encouragement of Brethren like

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of the participants), gave a moderately critical account in his *Memoir of Robert Story*.

12 Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847) had aroused considerable interest in his parish work in Glasgow (1815–1823) and as Professor of Moral Philosophy at St Andrews (1823–28) and of Divinity at Edinburgh. He was later a key seceding figure in the Disruption of 1843; see S. J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (Oxford, 1982); *DSCHT*, s.n., art. by A. C. Cheyne. For Chalmers' perspective on the manifestations on Clydeside, see W. Hanna (ed.), *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers* 4 vols (Edinburgh, 1851), 3: 246–49.

13 Thomas Erskine (1788–1870) was an influential lay Episcopal theologian whose critique of traditional Calvinism in his *Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel* (1828) made him a natural friend and ally of J. McLeod Campbell. Sometime in 1833–34 he abandoned his earlier enthusiasm for the authenticity of the Row 'manifestations'; see N. R. Needham, *Thomas Erskine of Linlathen: His Life and Theology 1788–1837* (Edinburgh, 1990); Stunt, *From Awakening*, 107–8, 226–8, 232–7; *ODNB*, s.n., art. by T. A. Hart; D. Horrocks, *Laws of the Spiritual Order: Innovation and Reconstruction in the Soteriology of Thomas Erskine of Linlathen* (Milton Keynes, 2006).

14 Francis William Newman (1805–97), the younger brother of Cardinal John Henry Newman, was Fellow of Balliol College (1826–30). He was later Professor of classics at New College, Manchester (1840–46) and of Latin at University College, London (1846–62); see *ODNB*, s.n., art. by T. C. F. Stunt.

15 Anthony Norris Groves (1795–1853) an independent missionary in Persia and later in India, was associated with the origins and early development of the Plymouth Brethren; see R. B. Dann, *Father of Faith Missions: The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves* (Milton Keynes, 2004); 'Anthony Norris Groves: A Radical Pioneer of Missions', in T.C.F. Stunt, *The Elusive Quest*, 102–118.

Frank Newman and Benjamin Newton. In his autobiographical memoir, *Phases of Faith*, Newman recalled:

So long ago as in 1830 when the Irving “miracles” commenced in Scotland, my particular attention had been turned to this subject, and the Irvingite exposition of the Pauline phenomena appeared to me so correct, that I was vehemently predisposed to believe the miraculous tongues. But my friend “the Irish clergyman” [J. N. Darby] wrote me a full account of what he heard with his own ears.<sup>16</sup>

Many years later, another former member of the Plymouth Brethren, Benjamin Newton, recalled how Frank Newman had shown him a letter about the manifestations:

After reading it I could only think the best thing would be for someone to go and see the place and the people. The only person I could think of was Darby who was then in London . . . So I wrote to Darby. He stayed a fortnight or three weeks . . .<sup>17</sup>

We must now therefore consider the man whom these people trusted sufficiently to ask him to observe the phenomena, and examine the account that he wrote at the time, (rather than the one that he gave at a later stage), and which at long last is now available for study.<sup>18</sup> But in doing so we must beware of the temptation to think of him as the man with whose later career we may be familiar. In 1830, John Darby had not yet finally broken with the Establishment; there was not yet a group of people who could be described as the Plymouth Brethren among whom he could be

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16 F. W. Newman, *Phases of Faith or Passages from the History of my Creed* (London, 1850), 177–78.

17 University of Manchester Library, Christian Brethren Archive [hereafter CBA] 7057, Wyatt MS Book i.331. In another recollection Newton stated that Darby ‘spent three days there’, CBA 7049, Fry MS Book 208. Cf. CBA 7060, Wyatt MS Book vi.38 (transcribed in Fry MS Book 237).

18 Some twenty-three years later, in his published reply to Frank Newman’s *Phases of Faith*, Darby gave a very brief account of his visit (acknowledging that ‘he went rather as deputed for others than for himself’) [J. N. Darby], *The Irrationalism of Infidelity, being a reply to “Phases of Faith”* (London, 1853), 301 (later issued as part of *The Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* (Apologetic 1), 6: 284. We shall make reference to this later account where appropriate.

considered a leading figure; he was not yet renowned as an expositor of the Scripture—indeed he had only published a couple of pamphlets and his opinions on prophetic subjects were far from made up.

John Nelson Darby came from an Anglo-Irish family, and graduated from Trinity College Dublin, in 1819. He briefly pursued a legal career, but after an experience of conversion (in 1820 or 1821) he was ordained in the Irish Church and, as an exact churchman, attaching great importance to sacramental grace, served for a time as a curate in the parish of Delgany, Co. Wicklow. Late in 1827, when convalescing after a riding accident, he discovered what he later described as ‘deliverance from bondage’ and the reality of ‘union with Christ,’ and he now became more closely associated with the evangelical element in the establishment, adopting a missionary role as a free-lance evangelist with no parochial responsibility.

This was his status in 1830 at the time of his visit to Scotland. A month or two before, in early May he had participated at a clerical breakfast<sup>19</sup> in Islington hosted by Daniel Wilson (soon to be the Bishop of Calcutta) and later in the month we find him in Oxford expounding the third chapter of I John at a *soirée* of John Hill, the Vice-Principal of St Edmund Hall, on which occasion he was introduced to Benjamin Newton.<sup>20</sup> At the risk of repetition, it must be emphasized again, that at this stage Darby had not seceded from the

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<sup>19</sup> On this occasion which was attended by the Dean of Salisbury and the Chaplains of the Bishops of Winchester and Chester (as well as by the Bishop of Ohio,) Darby was invited to give his views on ‘that depravity of heart in the unregenerate, and that remainder of evil in the regenerate, which obstruct *right apprehensions of the person and grace of Christ.*’ Darby’s response led one of his listeners (a cautiously conservative Episcopalian minister from New York), to describe him as a ‘scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven’; see J. S. Stone, *A Memoir of the Life of James Milnor, D.D., late Rector of St George’s Church, New York* (New York, 1849), 308; cf. W. Carus (ed.), *Memorials of the Right Reverend Charles Pettit McIlvaine, D.D., D.C.L., late Bishop of Ohio* (New York, 1882), 46.

<sup>20</sup> Stunt, *From Awakening*, 218.

Established Church,<sup>21</sup> but like Dodsworth and other clergy was interested in the interpretation of prophecy.

It is possible that Benjamin Newton expected Darby to be accompanied to Scotland by another of his Oxford friends, George Wigram who had studied at the Queen's College and who was certainly known to Darby at this stage.<sup>22</sup> A few years before, in Switzerland, Wigram had met Thomas Erskine,<sup>23</sup> who in turn may have invited his friend to observe and share his enthusiasm for the 'Row phenomena'. A letter (dated 31 July 1830), discussing how the authenticity of the manifestations could or could not be established, was addressed by Newton to Wigram, at the Post Office in Glasgow but was returned to the sender because it was 'not called for'.<sup>24</sup> Even if Darby and Wigram were not travelling together the letter suggests that Darby was in Scotland sometime in July or August 1830. It was certainly before October, when at Newton's invitation, he visited Plymouth.<sup>25</sup>

Although Mary Campbell's home, Fernicarry, was at the North end of Gareloch and therefore in Robert Story's parish of Rosneath, she gathered a group of like-minded followers a few miles south of Garelochhead in Helensburgh, which was in John McLeod Campbell's parish of Row. It was apparently to these meetings that curious visitors came to observe 'the Maid of Fernicarry' and 'the Row miracles', as the phenomena were sometimes scornfully designated. The other location on Clydeside to which enquirers came,

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21 As late as December 1830 he was preaching in the pulpit of St Ebbes, Oxford and in Plymouth in Charles Chapel, Tavistock Place (later the parish of St Luke), where Septimus Courtney was the perpetual curate; see Stunt, *From Awakening*, 258, 289.

22 George Vicesimus Wigram (1805–79) was later, as one of the Plymouth Brethren, a loyal supporter of Darby. For his early career, see H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren, 1825–1850* (London, 1967), 63–74; Stunt, *From Awakening*, 198–200, 290–91. For later details see, Tim Grass, *Gathering to his Name: The Story of Open Brethren in Britain and Ireland* (Milton Keynes, 2006), 53–54.

23 For Wigram and Erskine in Switzerland, see Stunt, *From Awakening*, 199.

24 For most of the text of Newton's letter to Wigram, a copy of which is in the Wyatt MS Book 2: 47 (and recopied in the Fry MS Book 264–66), see Stunt, *From Awakening*, 252–53. In the letter Newton asks Wigram for Darby's address.

25 See Stunt, 'Influences', in *The Elusive Quest*, 135 n.79.

was on the south bank in Port Glasgow, where the Macdonald Brothers took the lead, and were the object of public criticism by the minister of the parish, Dr. James Barr.<sup>26</sup> Although Darby must have crossed the Clyde when he called on Campbell at the beginning of his visit, he certainly gives the impression that most of his observations were made among the Port Glasgow group.

In general it is noteworthy that in his account, Darby pays a relatively small amount of attention to the way the folk, whom he was observing, interpreted prophecy, as opposed to their understanding of such issues as Christ's person and work, ecclesiastical order and the charismatic phenomena.<sup>27</sup> In this respect one could say that he is quite as interested in the doctrinal distinctives of McLeod Campbell and Sandy Scott, as in the phenomena themselves. When it came to commenting on the latter he is cautious in his judgments. Although he clearly has real reservations about the glossolalia, his overall tone is generous and he is ready to find positive elements in what he is observing. It is worth noting that barely a year later, at the Powerscourt conference on 6 October 1831, when speaking about the Clydeside manifestations of the previous year, his tone would be more critical, when, according to the notes made by one listener, he opined that 'some of them are imposters, some of them imposed upon. I consider some of them to be children

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26 James Barr, D.D. (?–1861) was ordained in 1815 and had served the Scots Church in Liverpool before his appointment to the parish of Port Glasgow (1825–1843). He later served in the parish of St Enoch, Glasgow; see W. Innes Addison (ed.), *A Roll of the Graduates of the University of Glasgow, 1727–1897* (Glasgow: MacLehose & Sons, 1898), 35; cf. J. Smith (ed.), *Our Scottish Clergy: Fifty-two sketches, biographical, theological and critical* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1848), 24–29. Barr's disdain for the enthusiasm of the Macdonalds is reflected in the sermon he preached before the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, 'On Zeal' in *The Scottish Pulpit*, iv.143 (20 Dec 1833), 265–9.

27 For modern students of prophecy, this should put paid to the far-fetched claims of Mr D. MacPherson who has constructed an elaborate conspiracy theory in which Darby derived his later futurist prophetic system from the utterances of Margaret Macdonald. See D. MacPherson, *The Rapture Plot* (Simpsonville, SC, 1995), 133–35, *et passim*. Unfortunately, conspiracy theorists are often immune to evidence that conflicts with their hypotheses.

of God but under a delusion of Satan. Some of their doctrines are very erroneous.<sup>28</sup>

The reader of the document under consideration will notice that Darby prefaced his earlier observations with his intention to give ‘facts rather than my own judgment upon them,’ and consequently in this earlier account he avoids words like *imposter*, or *Satanic* or even *evil*. Further (and more specific) explanations will be provided in the footnotes to the document, but by way of conclusion it should be observed that Darby’s association with Dodsworth was probably only very slight in the first place and it is quite possible that Darby’s report was subsequently passed to Dodsworth by a third party. Perhaps the most interesting aspect from the historian’s point of view is that he retained the document to his dying day.

Estero, Florida  
June 2016

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**J. N. Darby’s report on the manifestations on Clydeside  
1830 [Lambeth Palace Library, MS 4727 fos.1–8]<sup>29</sup>**

*Editorial note: All words and punctuation marks in [square brackets] are editorial additions for the sake of comprehension and ease of reading. The MS page (folio) numbers and the side of the page (recto/front, verso/back) are given in italics.*

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<sup>28</sup> For details of the recently discovered notes made by a listener at the Powerscourt conference in October 1831, see Mr Tom Chantry’s website <<http://www.brethrenarchive.org/mini-blog/posts/fascinating-acquisition/>>, accessed 24 May 2016. The words quoted are taken, with permission, from notebook 2, p. 24. The change in Darby’s tone is partly explained by the incipient emergence of an Irvingite ecclesiastical identity in London that would become the ‘Catholic Apostolic Church’—a development which put the Row utterances in a rather different perspective.

<sup>29</sup> Reproduced by kind permission of Lambeth Palace Library.

[*Folio 1 recto*] I shall under God's guidance communicate to you rather facts than my own judgment upon them. I went to Scotland & to M<sup>r</sup> Campbell<sup>30</sup> in the first instance, who received me very kindly, stating what I had come for[.] There was a meeting that evening (Saturday), for their peculiar object of prayer, he thought my feeling on the subject sufficiently satisfactory to let me go & I went. I called on Macdonald<sup>31</sup> & walked with him to M<sup>rs</sup> Kings, about a mile from Port Glasgow [*sic*], where they meet.<sup>32</sup> He said that what had passed as to written tongues<sup>33</sup> did not affect his mind at all. Miracles they have essayed & prayed for & failed. M<sup>r</sup> Campbell said this did not weigh with him now, since the Apostles during the transfiguration had tried [*folio 1 verso*] without succeeding,<sup>34</sup> they pray for the outpouring of gifts under the impression that it is only want of faith w[hic]<sup>h</sup> hinders them. They feel & strongly the low state & degradation of the Church in this respect & look for this as a restoration of its glory (though they look for the coming of the Lord) & especially in what they utter as from the Spirit, they apply to the Gentile Church the passages in w[hic]<sup>h</sup> the future glory of Jerusalem

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30 For John McLeod Campbell, *vide supra* n.9. The parish of Row included what is now the town of Helensburgh, and in giving priority to his call on Campbell, Darby's first destination was on the north bank of the Clyde.

31 This may have been George Macdonald (1808–35), but more probably his twin brother, James, who, as Darby later observed, 'practically takes a lead in the meetings.' The brothers, who were the subject of Norton's *Memoirs* (*vide supra* n.11), were shipbuilders in Port Glasgow. After visiting Campbell, therefore, Darby must have taken the ferry to the South bank of the Clyde.

32 'From May to August [1830], prayer meetings . . . were held in Port-Glasgow every evening, at first in the house of the M'Donalds or that of Miss [Agnes] Cumming, but being annoyed at the crowds outside, they were afterwards held in the house of Mrs. King, Springbank, a mile to the eastward of the village', C. W. Boase, *Supplementary Narrative to the Elijah Ministry* (Edinburgh, [?1870]), 766.

33 This appears to be an allusion to Mary Campbell's claim to have written in unknown tongues by means of 'automatic writing'. For a sceptical account of this with a facsimile of a page of her writing see Robertson, *Vindication*, 277n and 305; but *vide infra* n.55.

34 This refers to the inability of the disciples (other than Peter, James, and John) to heal the boy with 'a dumb spirit,' Mark 9: 17–18.

is spoken of as “Arise shine: Thy judgments are in the earth”<sup>35</sup> &c & in this there seem[s] decided confusion of thought amongst them & imperfection of knowledge. M<sup>r</sup> C[ampbell] & they avowedly defend a double application of Scripture & deliberately argue for it.

I should add that they stated their expectation of these things to arise from a sermon by M<sup>r</sup> A Scott who is now their principal sanctioner.<sup>36</sup> There is at all times I think a strong pressure on [*folio 2 recto*] their spirit, a good deal of communion of feeling, excited, yet on the whole pleasant [,] a strong idea of going through in themselves the travail of Christ[']s soul being, as they say put in his soul.

They hold universal redemption & speak much of not limiting God’s love & their past sin in doing so. This holds a prominent place in their views. M<sup>r</sup> Erskine<sup>37</sup> of whom I saw much, thus explains it as adopted by them all in its terms. He thinks Christ became the first

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<sup>35</sup> Darby is here conflating Isaiah 60: 1 (‘Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,’) and Isaiah 26: 9 (‘when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.’) Darby’s reference to ‘confusion of thought amongst them’ reflects his own insistence that a clear distinction should be made between the prophecies addressed to Israel and those addressed to the church. This should not be confused with his later dispensationalism by which the Gospels were given a different hermeneutical status from the Epistles.

<sup>36</sup> For Alexander [‘Sandy’] John Scott *vide supra* n.10. For Scott’s sermon on Ephesians 1: 13–14, which gave rise to ‘their expectation of these things’, see ‘Mr. Irving’s Church and the Record Newspaper,’ *The Morning Watch* 5 (Mar. 1832), 182. From 1827–29 Scott publicly encouraged the expectation of Pentecostal gifts, which was the position he adopted in his *Neglected Truths: Hints on I Corinthians* (London, 1830.) On the other hand Darby’s description of him as ‘their principal sanctioner’ is hardly supported by the fact that, when visiting his family in Greenock in the summer of 1830, he expressed no approval of the ‘manifestations’, and, possibly influenced by Anne Ker whom he married a few months later, he soon openly denied their authenticity, J. P. Newell ‘A. J. Scott and his Circle’ (PhD thesis, New College, Edinburgh, 1981), 91–95. On the other hand as the anonymous but probable editor of the first volume of Groves’s missionary journal, Scott was hoping, as late as 1831, that Groves would ‘cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink deadly things without hurt, lay hands on the sick and they recover ...’, A. N. Groves, *Journal of Mr. Anthony N. Groves, Missionary During a Journey from London to Bagdad* (London, 1831), x. The second volume (*Journal of a Residence at Bagdad...* London, 1832), acknowledged A. J. Scott as the editor on p.xv.

<sup>37</sup> For Thomas Erskine *vide supra* n.13.

Adam as well as the second,<sup>38</sup> i.e. physically united to every body & that he dwells (i.e. his flesh) in every body & accordingly the hidden mystery revealed by the Gospel was that the Gentile as well as the Jew was (not should be) one body not each with the other, but each with Christ in a word that as he was essentially the word the first declaration of Adam was inspoken [*sc.* unspoken,] Christ having then (as it were) slipped into his place to all his natural seed.

[*Folio 2 verso*] This oneness of flesh with Christ they call the first bond, & that this is the Gospel[,] saying “He is bone of our bone & flesh of our flesh,”<sup>39</sup> & the knowledge of this induces the second bond, of which the flesh is the channel; to wit the bond of the Spirit.

Those texts which speak of “without Christ[’]” they explain to mean [*sc.* without] knowledge of it or him, as it is plainly said, the Head of every man is Christ.<sup>40</sup> This point, also the restoration of the Church’s glory by the Spirit, so that the remnant shall be gathered together with the fellowship of Christ[’]s sufferings, these form their characteristic views. They would not assist the societies as acting in man’s ways & man’s strength.<sup>41</sup> They hold, (I speak from the Macdonalds) high Church views. They w[oul]d not preach without ordination as being the only warrant & consider succession as the essential point & divine conduit. But it appears [*folio 3 recto*] to me their leaders take this & all their special views at second hand (tho’ they now quote Scripture themselves) from M<sup>r</sup> Scott & M<sup>r</sup> Erskine, tho’ they do not think so & as to looking for gifts, are sustained by M<sup>r</sup> Campbell.

I had better now mention the fact of their meetings. They continued them for another week, (a few going away) during which I

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38 A year later, at Powerscourt, Darby was noted as describing ‘some of their doctrines’ as ‘very erroneous; for instance they consider our Lord to be [the] first Adam as well as well as the second Adam.’ (Powerscourt Notebook (1831), 2: 24).

39 This is a curious inversion of the order in Genesis 2: 23 where Eve is described by Adam as ‘bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh’ and Ephesians 5: 30 where the same imagery is applied to the church and Christ.

40 1 Corinthians 11: 3.

41 For the growing questioning of the spiritual efficacy of the evangelical societies in the later 1820s, see D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London, 2003), 76–77.

remained in the neighbourhood & attended several & was much in & out amongst the principal members who are much together. There are five who have spoken with strange sounds, the last beginning to do so about a fortnight after the others since which time none have [*sic*] followed them. The order of the meeting was singing, praying & reading alternately[,] concluding with Gloria Patri, then they sat to see whether any would speak with tongues or prophecy [*sic*]. The first [*folio 3 verso*] evening I was there, James Macdonald, who practically takes a lead in the meetings, (a young man an elder from Edinburgh presides by name White<sup>42</sup>) in his prayer spoke strange sounds, generally like Latin with words of Greek description intermixed, and then returned to English.<sup>43</sup> Soon after the Gloria Patri sounds came out of the adjoining room where 2 women had gone & one in particular seemed oppressed in prayer for some soul. I thought she was praying for Christ in his agony but was informed afterwards it was for some one for whom she was engaged all the day, afterwards she entered fully into the sufferings of Christ in act as it were, thro' them dwelling on certain words & repeating them with violent exertion so as to be heard far out of the house which is usual with them.<sup>44</sup> The nervous effect in all is manifest nor do I wonder at it

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42 This was most likely Henry Stephen Whyte (1814–95) though it is strange for a 16-year old to be described as an elder. Whyte was later an 'angel-evangelist' in the Catholic Apostolic Church. I am indebted to Abba Seraphim of the British Orthodox Church and to Dr Tim Grass for help in this identification and for other suggestions.

43 There are similarities here with the intermixing of languages described by John Perceval, who was visiting in July 1830, 'one afternoon at Row, in the house of a gentleman, where I was at luncheon.' An 'inspired' young woman addressed Perceval 'with sounds like these: "*Hola mi hastos, Hola mi hastos, disca capita crustos bustos,*" &c. &c. &c. She then cried out "and he led them out to Bethany and said, Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye are indued [*sic*] with power from on high." ' See G. Bateson (ed.), *Perceval's Narrative: a Patient's account of his Psychosis 1830–1832* (Stanford CA: Stanford UP, 1962), 16. For the context of Perceval's experience, see Stunt, *From Awakening*, 251–253.

44 More than twenty years later, Darby recalled that someone 'went into the next room, and the gifted English-speaking person, with utterances from the highest pitch of voice to the lowest murmur, with all strange prolongation of tones, spoke through, if one may so express oneself, as if passing through, the agony of Christ.' [Darby,] *Irrationalism of Infidelity* (1853), 301.

[*folio 4 recto*] in susceptible persons, considering what I felt myself. The other person a sister of the Macdonalds occasionally joined in Chorus when she was most excited the rest remaining silent. She finished in triumphing in his deliverance, the other joining. Just as they concluded James Macdonald started up, (it was sudden & startling so generally) & began loudly in the same character of sounds as before. He spoke with great animation for some time & often very loud ending with a chant or hymn in the same sounds, & then I think one or two verses of a psalm in English, then he knelt down & prayed. The part which I recollect was acknowledging the gift of tongues with entreaty for that of interpretation. During this, one of the two women as interpreting went on with Scripture texts. ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation’<sup>45</sup> then texts about overcoming,<sup>46</sup> ending with “Fight the good fight”<sup>47</sup> often repeated.

[*Folio 4 verso*] [( ] I think he had repeated the same sound several times). [S]he forgot the end of one text in repeating them & she ended with no hymn.<sup>48</sup> Nothing more passed that night that I remember. I would remark that the sounds in the prayer seemed identical with the prophesying [*sic*] tho’ not to the same length. Whether the interpretation could apply to both you will judge. I should not say there was a natural variety or suffusion of the sounds tho’ he uttered them with fluency and emphasis. On the whole I should say negatively (tho’ not trusting to this,[ ] ) that it was no language, but the sounds of a person who had heard Latin & Greek, but I am open to them[,] this aside. The next evening there was nothing unusual, except that the person who had spoken in the other

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45 John 16: 33.

46 1 John 2: 13–14, 4: 4, and 5: 4-5.

47 1 Timothy 6: 12, cf. 2 Tim. 4: 7.

48 This part of Darby’s account would appear to be the basis of his later recollection: ‘J. M’D— spoke on the occasion alluded to, for about a quarter of an hour, with great energy and fluency, in a semi-latin sounding speech—then sung a hymn in the same. Having finished, he knelt down and prayed there might be interpretation; as God had given one gift, that he would add the other. His sister got up at the opposite side of the room, and professed to give the interpretation, — but it was a string of texts on overcoming, and no hymn. . .’ [Darby,] *Irrationalism of Infidelity* (1853), 301.

room prayed with great vociferation & familiarity, but into much of the subject matter of her supplication I fully entered. This person was in the habit of venting her feelings as if of [*folio 5 recto*] uncontrollable [*sic*] grief whenever love to all or Christ's sufferings were brought forward[.]

We were there from 7 to 11. [A]a third evening after Gloria Patri when we thought all was over, James Macdonald rose & spoke in his usual sounds ending with a chant in them, then spoke in English for some time. On his speaking of the Lord's coming a lady who was lately come jumped up & with every feature & limb stiffened, except that she swung round her left arm, standing on tiptoe,<sup>49</sup> cried out ["Behold he cometh,"<sup>50</sup> but she sat down again when he proceeded to something else. When all were on the point of retiring, (Mr White observing to a gentleman lately come that there was less of the Spirit than there had been) the Macdonald[']s maid whose name I do not know began speaking in quite different sounds the same often repeated with little variety.<sup>51</sup>

In defect [*sc.* for want of, *OED*] of other evidence I should not hesitate to call this gibberish. The sounds were such as I know "mingus cratifigus" [*folio 5 verso*] ending with "lasas nasas" & the like sounded with Irish a's. She spoke awhile alternately in this tongue & in English but there was no interpretation unless the English interposed was such. Its subject was the manifestation of glory, (of the Church not of Christ) & of judgment with much

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49 The phrase 'standing on tiptoe' brings to mind the recollection of an unnamed observer who, according to Robert Norton, claimed that she had 'seen both her [*sc.* Mrs Elizabeth Johnston] and Miss Margaret Macdonald stand like statues scarcely touching the ground, evidently supernaturally.' Quoted in Norton's later book, R. Norton], *The Restoration of Apostles and Prophets; in the Catholic Apostolic Church* (London, 1861), 25. Norton married Margaret Macdonald and it was only after the death of his wife and his brothers-in-law (James and George) that he was identified with the Catholic Apostolic Church (often referred to as Irvingite).

50 Revelation 1: 7.

51 The maid's name was Margaret Dewar; see Boase, *Supplementary Narrative*, [?1870]), 766.

Scripture, as “Arise Shine” &c.<sup>52</sup> She spoke pretty well but sometimes used the incorrect language of her rank.

They do not shew any acting of love towards the souls of those around them & I was informed that no strangers hitherto had come among them. Mr White opens his house for a prayer meeting & expounds but does not go out to do it. Mr Erskine (tho’ seemingly a most amiable man) is particularly full of his own views on universal love & this fellowship of Christ’s sufferings. I did not see much knowledge of scripture among them. There is a tendency to be full of themselves. Mr Campbell I should say (believing him to be a good man [*folio 6 recto*] with much of a good pastor about him & certainly considerable powers of a certain kind) was immature in his views. He is a young man,<sup>53</sup> i.e. had not tried them nor altogether measured himself but apparently he will soon have done so. I think I see much of that spirit w[hic]h seeing & feeling the evils in the Church looks (as a man) to the opposite as a remedy. Do you understand me? I am aware in part of this I may seem to have anticipated judgment, but they are the impressions w[hic]h could not otherwise be conveyed to form the material of judgment, & to be judged themselves. I will hereafter communicate more fully feeling I can do so. To some who w[oul]d take it up with scorn, w[hic]h strikes the subject rather than the errors[,] I say little[,] I am sure you will feel with me. It is a happiness when[,] however weak we are[,] yet from simplicity of intention we can thus communicate in the love of our common Lord.

[*Folio 6 verso*] I sho[ul]d mention that in succeeding sentences Macdonald used the inflexions, laetabo, laetebo, lataibo, a trifle yet tending to shew it to be a language.<sup>54</sup> But the moral evidences are at

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. *supra* note 35.

<sup>53</sup> Campbell was aged 30 and was some six months older than Darby, who was still only 29.

<sup>54</sup> The conclusion that Darby draws here from the evidence of inflexions is rather different from his verdict as recalled by Frank Newman. According to Newman in 1850, Darby wrote ‘that none of the sounds, vowels or consonants, were foreign; — that the strange words were moulded after the Latin grammar, ending in –abus, –obus, –ebat, –avi, &c, so as to denote poverty of invention rather than spiritual agency; and *that there was no interpretation.*’ Newman, *Phases of Faith* (1850), 178.

least of equal importance[.] I observed a thought of status among their leaders (not at all in the Macdonalds who are simple hearted & friendly tho' of feelings much worked on) w[hic]h they were not aware of. I sh[oul]d say they were more in their first strong anxious feelings personally towards God, than the simple calmness of holy knowledge of him in past obtained peace[,] tho' on confidence of faith they much insist. They say they value their utterings as exalting God & annihilating man, yet they look specially to special individuals & think their thoughts the hope of the Church. They dwell particularly on their own peculiar views. It characterizes the whole & forms their life [and they] are earnest against the state of the Church & interceding [*folio 7 recto*] much for it. I feel particularly anxious that charity should be preserved both for the sake of the thing itself [,] for the sake of the Church & for the sakes of these people in Scotland on whom supposing them wrong, the reaction m[igh]t be dreadful if not held up in charity by their brethren, even where it appears to them an error [.] indeed I have no hesitation in saying that altho' it seemed to me that they had been led beyond the truth in what they did, there was an honoring [*sic*] of the Spirit, w[hic]h to me was highly good, & in w[hic]h the Church much fails, so that I could not speak but in charity of them. Still it appears to me that they have gone wrong upon the face [?fact] of the matter itself. I mean there did not appear to me the characters of a real work of the Spirit in the thing itself as represented to me. Let us weigh collateral evidences.

Language sent to Meyers,<sup>55</sup> essayed as [*folio 7 verso*] from the Spirit. Miracles confessedly failed, i.e. [they] have erred conclusively

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55 A sample of Mary Campbell's 'automatic writing' in an 'unknown tongue' was sent to the orientalist, Samuel Lee, at Cambridge. He in turn passed the writing to Thomas Myers [*sic*] (c.1804–1870) of Trinity College, who was said by Lee to be 'a promising beginner in Chinese, but . . . he could make nothing whatever out of it.' (Robertson, *Vindication*, 289. Cf. M. G. Blackie (ed.), *Letters and Journals of Anne Chalmers* (London: Chelsea Publishing Co. 1923), 111; Hanna (ed.), *Memoirs of Chalmers* 3: 261). Myers, who later became Vicar of Sheriff Hutton, Yorks (1848–57), had published in 1825 *An Essay on the Nature and Structure of the Chinese Language* (Cambridge 1825), which was later described as 'A trifling, ephemeral publication . . . by one who knew little enough of the subject he undertook to write upon.' (*Chinese Repository* 28 [Dec. 1849] 661.)

in judgment as to the power of the Spirit in its new operation, besides the boy they failed in raising,<sup>56</sup> the body of the mother [*sc.* brother] was kept two days to make the power more evident, but no power was exercised [.]<sup>57</sup> this shews a mistake as to their apprehension not merely as to the manner in w[hic]<sup>h</sup> the Spirit w[oul]<sup>d</sup> be pleased to exercise his power in the Lord's name, but also as to his directing & presence with them in such cases. I admit it concludes nothing as to the fact directly, but it does as to the competency of their judgment as to whether the spirit be with them. A fact connected with this part of the subject I omitted to mention, [;] at one[,] I think [,] the second of our meetings[,] a letter was read from a Sister Davison from Edinburgh unqualifiedly stating that the Spirit had desired her to write these things to them w[hic]<sup>h</sup> appeared to me the merest rhapsody I ever heard [*folio 8 recto*] & ended by saying that the Spirit desired her[,] prompted her to say a great many more things, but that she had not room or time, or the like. The state of the case seems to me to be that they have felt[,] partly under the influence of other persons[,] the low estate of the Church & been led by their theory to look for its remedy in a special way till (as to the Macdonalds at any rate) they have believed that way to be realised. I do not think the persons who first felt on the subject w[oul]<sup>d</sup> probably have done this, — instead of presenting a remedy they w[oul]<sup>d</sup> more have waited upon God, until he had mercy on it. The remedy here identifies itself too, with themselves.

It is not a display upon the Church, as God[']s general remedy & method, manifested to be so by himself. It appears to me indeed that they misinterpret scripture. There are but a few too in w[hic]<sup>h</sup> they ground their confidence in the promise as Ask the Lord. [*Folio 8 verso*] Also they apply all the Scripture as from the Spirit to the

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56 'The boy they failed in raising' was Pringle, Robert Story's firstborn. The child was commanded to arise by an earnest believer in the Row miracles, Pierre Méjanel, 'in a stentorian voice, until Mr. Story, distracted by the unseemly and unfeeling noise, forced him to desist;' Story, *Memoir*, 238. For Méjanel's erratic career see Stunt, *From Awakening*, 37–41, 110, 162, 235, 265, 305–306.

57 'The body...[being] kept two days' refers to Mary Campbell's delay in coming home from Glasgow when she learnt of the death of her brother Samuel; see Story, *Memoir*, 223n, Robertson, *Vindication*, 268.

existing fallen Church to w[hic]<sup>h</sup> the Spirit in the Scripture seems to me to have given no such application[.]

This is a very important point, if they utter as from the Spirit what is contrary to the mind of the Spirit in Scripture, (supposing our views to be right.[ ]) Their desires I believe [come] from the Spirit but not their spiritual application. It appears to me the result of persons, not mature personal Christian knowledge, having been acted on; take away these persons [and] the whole w[oul]<sup>d</sup> fall to the ground, these persons never w[oul]<sup>d</sup> have committed themselves in action as those led by them have. I pray God they may be wise before they are brought to shame[.]

It is on the whole a wonderful circumstance & state of things. Oh may we be led to look for his coming upon whom our desire is, our eyes wait as watching for, hastening to Him[.] Here my eyes rest. [H]ere I turn as my hope, the Lord is long suffering in delaying it, yet we can earnestly desire it in Spirit & say hasten oh hasten it, in its day when we shall have done with man & the Lord alone shall be exalted.

J N Darby