

YESTERDAY'S NEWS.2

CORNAIGMORE CHURCH

It seems extraordinary today, as Tiree clings on—and no more—to its status as a two-church island. But in the 1890s, six wasn't enough. The session of the Kirkapoll Church of Scotland agreed to build a seventh, a 200-seat-church in Cornaigmore. They set up a Building Committee consisting of Rev T S MacPherson with elders Thomas Barr; Hugh MacLean, Caolas; John MacPhail; Alexander MacLean; Donald MacKinnon, teacher at Cornaig School; and Hugh MacPhail, merchant at Cornaigmore. The Duke of Argyll donated an eighth of an acre from Cornaigmore Farm.

The church was opened in July 1899. Tom Barr, who farmed Balephetrish, parts of Kenovay and Crossapoll, loaned £500 towards the cost of £530 (the equivalent of £80,000 today). Fundraising to pay back this loan continued:

TIREE CHURCH BAZAAR IN GLASGOW.

Highland News 13 October 1900

'In the absence of Mr D N Nicol of Ardmarnock [the Unionist MP for Argyllshire at the time], Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, [Conservative MP for the Glasgow constituency of Colledge], last Friday performed the opening ceremony in connection with a bazaar at the Sauciehall Rooms [at 234 Sauciehall Street] in aid of the funds for the erection of the new church at Cornaig, parish of Tiree. Rev John Maclean, St Columba's, Glasgow, occupied the chair, and briefly introduced Sir John, who expressed the pleasure it gave him to present, especially that he should have the honour of filling the place of his 'friend, Mr Nicol, whom he knew so well in the House of Commons. and for whom he always felt so much respect. He knew no man engaged in political life who had so little of the humbug of politics about him, and who always seemed to do his very best for the interests of the county. The county which we live in—that small group of islands—would be a very dull place in which to live were it not for the amazing variety and differences which separated one part from another. Among those, nothing could be more remarkable than the difference there existed between such a place as Tiree and such a place as Glasgow. He did not suppose they could find wider differences within so small an area all over the globe as those marking the situation, lives, hopes, aspirations, and means of the inhabitants of these two places. Were there a debating society, he thought they might do worse than consider the question of whether it was better to live in Glasgow than in Tyree—(laughter). At that moment, at the end of an election campaign, he would certainly vote for Tiree—(laughter). There could be no doubt that Glasgow could do good work for Tiree, just as the West Highlands of Scotland did good work for the people of Glasgow by giving them a resort for rest and health in the intervals of business. With

respect to the bazaar which he had been asked to open, he hoped it would be very successful. The object was not only a good one, but the church which they were asked to assist towards construction was free from all those suspicions of undue competition that was sometimes shown even in the building of churches—(applause). A vote of thanks to Sir John was given on the motion of the Rev. D C MacMichael, Greenock, and a similar compliment proposed by the Rev T S Macpherson, pastor of the Cornaig congregation [Thomas Smith MacPherson was the Church of Scotland minister at Kirkapoll from 1895 to 1906] was accorded to the chairman. The business of the day was then proceeded with. On Saturday the bazaar was opened by Sir John N Cuthbertson [from the Glasgow Highland Society], who was introduced by the chairman, Dr Robert Blair, Edinburgh. Despite the inclemency of the weather a good quantity of goods were sold, and in all a sum of over £300 has been raised by the bazaar. On Friday 12th inst. the St Columba Choir and other friends will give a concert in the Sauciehall Rooms in aid of the Tiree Church funds.'

The Tiree Association, which would have usually organised an event such as this, was not set up until the following year.

It seems amazing that one 'bazaar' could raise more than half the money to build a church.

Dr John Holliday