

Some footprints of the remarkable Murray and Hofmeyr family on the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Free State and the Reformed Church in Zambia

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At the opening of the Andrew Murray Centre for Spirituality, it is indeed appropriate to celebrate the extraordinary contribution of the Murray family. The Louw, Hofmeyr and Neethling families were, however, very much part of this clan. And their influence also stretched to the Free State (or Trans Gariëp) and (northern-Rhodesia) Zambia. At crucial moments in the history of the Dutch Reformed Church Free State (DRC Free State) and the Reformed Church in Zambia (RCZ), the names of a Murray, a Hofmeyr or a Louw featured prominently.

## **1. The founding years of the DRC Free State – the young rev Andrew Murray of Bloemfontein**

### **1.1 Murray inducted as minister**

It was three days before he turned 21, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 1849, that Andrew Murray has been ordained and inducted as minister of the recently founded Bloemfontein congregation of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). At the Sunday morning service his father, rev Andrew Murray snr from Graaff Reinet preaches from 2 Corinthians 6:1 and then, by solemnly laying his hands on his kneeling son – as has always been the custom in the DRC – he ordained and inducted him as minister. Andrew's brother John, who would soon be inducted in the Burgersdorp congregation, was also present. That Sunday afternoon Andrew Murray jnr preached from 1 Corinthians 1:23: *"but we preach Christ crucified..."* Christ Jesus, and an intimate, life-changing relationship with Jesus, would be the centre of his ministry, Murray explained in a very serious and lively sermon to the gathered congregation. The Legislative Council of the Orange River Sovereignty would pay his salary – as was also the arrangement in the Cape Colony. The colonial government and the church was clearly not separated.

Murray's immediate congregation in Bloemfontein consisted of the migrant farmers who recently established themselves in the Transgariëp in the Modder River area and members of the British garrison under Major Warden who was established in the "village". But the young minister's responsibilities would actually cover a much wider area. He would be the only minister to the settlers (*Trekkers*) in the Orange River Sovereignty, stretching from the Orange (or Gariëp) River in the south to the Vaal River in the north. And, for some years he would also be responsible for the whole area beyond the Vaal River, the Transvaal... and also Natal! The Orange River Sovereignty was proclaimed as such by the Cape Governor Harry Smith in 1848. Andries Pretorius, with a strong commando of Transvaal burghers wanted to violently undo this proclamation, but they were defeated at Boomplaats. It has been the beginning of some tense relations between the settlers on both sides of the Vaal.

### **1.2 Deputations from the Cape**

In the years immediately after the Great Trek (1836-1838), the Trekkers were relying on the ministry of missionaries like Erasmus Smit, Daniel Lindley, DJ Döhne and elder Sarel Cilliers, etc. In the years immediately after the Great trek, the Cape DRC sporadically and hesitantly sent ministers, but eventually the Presbytery of Graaf Reinet sent official deputations to the Orange River Sovereignty to minister the Word and sacraments to the new immigrants and to establish congregations. The first official deputation consisted of rev Andrew Murray snr, rev

PK Albertyn and elder Pienaar. In March 1848 they officially established the first congregation in the Orange River Sovereignty at Rietrivier (today Fauresmith); in the vicinity of the Modder Rivier (some distance from today's Bloemfontein) they preached and baptised children and near the Vet River (today's Winburg) they rearranged and officially established the congregation which had been unofficially formed during the Trek. On their return journey they also paid a visit to Bloemfontein, but it was only during a second deputation towards the end of 1848 that the congregation of Bloemfontein was officially established (30 November 1848). The second deputation also constituted the congregation at Smithfield. Andrew Murray jnr would be the first minister to permanently minister to the Bloemfontein congregation. All the other congregations, including Harrismith which also came into being in 1848, were vacant and he had to serve them all – an impossible task! In December 1850 rev Dirk van Velden was ordained in Winburg and served there for a brief period. Only in April 1855 came some relieve for the young Andrew Murray when his brother in law, rev AA Louw (married to Jemima Murray – they were the parents of the founder of the Masjona (Zimbabwe) Mission AA Louw jnr), became the minister of Fauresmith. In the following years Murray and Louw would be instrumental in establishing several new congregations in the Free State.

### **1.3 Characteristics of his ministry**

When Murray became minister in Bloemfontein, he had only recently returned from his studies in the Netherlands. There he and his brother John came under the influence of the Dutch *réveil*, a movement that promoted spiritual enthusiasm; they have been members of the student organisation *Sechor Dabar*, which promoted a puritan and holy lifestyle, fervent prayer, the longing for the salvation of souls, consciousness of sin and the need of a powerful conversion experience (this organisation was nicknamed the *Tea Drinking Club*). In Utrecht they also formed their own student mission organisation named *Eltheto*. His early ministry would therefore be characterised by a strong evangelical emphasis and mission enthusiasm. For instance: only days after his induction, precisely on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, Andrew Murray, his father and brother, paid a visit to the missionaries in the eastern regions near Lesotho, at Merimetsu and Mekuatleng. In him the French, German and English missionaries working in the Trans Gariep and Lesotho, would find a kindred spirit, one who would, from his official position as minister of the state church, even try to protect them from the unfortunate attacks by the Boer commando's. Murray also started to minister to the English and Sesotho speaking population in and around Bloemfontein.

In 1856 Andrew Murray was married to Emma Rutherfoord by a Lutheran Minister in the DRC building in Wynberg. Emma's father was a well-known businessman and philanthropist in Cape Town, a dedicated member of the Anglican Church – typically of Murray's ecumenical background. They were a very popular couple in the parsonage, opening up their hearts to all classes of people. And often the kind of people they had to minister to, where still very uneducated and in a state of spiritual neglect. Each Sunday Emma would accompany the congregation on the '*seraphine*' (*The seraphine is an early keyed wind instrument, something of a cross between a reed organ and an accordion, being more similar to the former*).

Andrew Murray's ministry in Bloemfontein occurred during a tumultuous, but in many ways also a foundational time. He had to lay several foundations, even literally for the first church building. When the church building of Bloemfontein was officially opened on 5 June 1852, it was his brother in law, rev Jan Neethling of Price Albert, who just returned with Murray from a visit to the Transvaal and his brother John Murray from Burgersdorp, who took part in the historic celebrations. In 1852 he, together with elder J van Zijl, attended the Cape Synod as the first representatives of the new Presbytery of the Transgariep. On his recommendation the

missionaries of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society working in Lesotho and the eastern parts of the Orange River Sovereignty were officially acknowledged by the Synod as sister organisation to the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1855 Andrew Murray was instrumental in establishing the boys school Grey College with the funds, which Sir George Grey, the then Governor of the Cape Colony made available for the erection of a “seminary” in the Trans Gariep. Murray served as the first “rector” of this institution, originally of the DRC, but which eventually became the well-known Grey College of today and which later on gave birth to the Grey University College, the predecessor of today’s University of the Free State. (In the footsteps of Grey College, the DRC Synod of the Free State also established, in 1874, the Eunice-ladies Institute, a girls school next to Grey College). At the Synod of 1857, Murray, as representative of the Presbytery of the Trans Gariep, passionately pleaded for a mission awakening in the DRC.

Apart from building the Bloemfontein congregation through the ministry of Word and sacraments, catechism, house visits, church discipline and especially maintaining very good relationships – Murray has indeed been a much loved minister – there was also resistance to his evangelical approach. Some very influential members, under the leadership of JJ Venter, complained about not feeling at home in the congregation any more. They provided reasons for therefore leaving: the evangelical hymns sung at services, the regular prayer meetings, the tables that are arranged in the form of a cross at the Lords Supper, the lack of proper discipline in allowing participants to the Lords Table, and the evangelical preaching focussing on the need of conversion and holiness instead of predestination and election. When rev Dirk Postma visited Bloemfontein and vicinity in 1859, he assisted these disgruntled members to establish the first church belonging to the newly formed denomination, the Gereformeerde Kerke in the then Free State Republic, on the village they named Reddersburg (the name was derived from their joy of being saved from the evangelical influence). Murray, typically of his generous spirit, showed no animosity to this group despite his sadness. Perhaps this breakaway church would be able to reach those whose hearts he himself would not be able to reach, he argued. He even allowed Postma to preach from the pulpit in his congregation, very much to the annoyance of the Presbytery of the Trans Gariep.

#### **1.4 The Transvaal**

In the early years of his ministry Murray paid extensive visits to the Transvaal, each taking several months. The first was from December 1849 to February 1850, the second in October to December in 1850 and again in Mei 1851 and February 1852. He crisscrossed the whole area, travelled hundreds of miles on horseback or on horsecars, married and baptised hundreds, preached and served the Lords Supper. His preaching drew big crowds of people. He has been moved by the lack of a proper ministry to those thousands of people; in his many letters and reports he expressed his concerns. Despite his English background and connections to the colonial government in the Cape, the people there held this serious young minister in high esteem. Towards the end of 1850 he received a call to the congregation at Mooirivier (today’s Potchefstroom), with more than 1100 people signing a petition to the Cape Synod Commission to encourage his coming to Transvaal. After much internal struggle and prayer, he decided not to accept the call. Even the anti-British activist, Commandant-General Andries Pretorius, originally grew fond of this young minister and often sought his advice – see Pretorius’ letters in Du Plessis’s biography. Murray was therefore drawn into the politics of the day, for example when he was requested to play a mediatory role (and that of interpreter) at the Sand River convention on 17 January 1852 where the independence of the Transvaal from British rule was negotiated. He was in favour of the Transvaal’s independence. Murray however had to accept, that despite his efforts, together with that of his brother John

and brother in law JH Neethling who accompanied him on his journeys to the Transvaal, to convince the Transvaal congregations to become part of the Cape Synod, they would eventually opt to form an independent Hervormde Church as official state church under the leadership of rev Dirk van der Hoff. The anti-British, anti-colonial sentiment – and Van der Hoff's attitude against Murray – eventually got the upper hand in that region.

## **1.5 Political influence**

Back in the Orange River Sovereignty he had been much concerned over the repeated wars between the people of Mosjesj and the Boer commandos. The Boers commandos revenged the attacks by Basotho on farmers and even repeatedly attacked mission stations. The Colonial garrison under Warden were not capable to maintain the peace, and they even lost the battles at Viervoetberg (near Ladybrand) and could not defeat Mosjesj at the battle of Berea. Consequently the Cape Government considered giving up the rule and abandoning the idea sovereignty. Although Murray had been sympathetic to the Transvaal's claim to retain independence, he thought that it would be better for the Free State, especially for the sake of the church and the mission endeavours, to remain a colonial sovereignty. Andrew Murray, together with Dr Collin Frazer, an elder in his congregation, was sent to London to plea the case for retaining the sovereignty. This venture, however, did not bear the intended fruits. In February 1854 the Sovereignty had to make way for a Republic, with JP Hoffman as first president.

Murray served in Bloemfontein for 11 years, until April 1860, when he left to become minister in Worcester.

## **2. A mission policy and approach – taking responsibility for the mission to Zambia**

Since its formation in 1850, the Presbytery of the Trans Gariep consisted of congregations of the Free State Republic as well as Natal. Of this body rev AA Louw has often been the chairperson. He was also the chairperson when in 1864 the 11 Free State congregations gathered to prepare a church order for the official establishment of a Synod on 10 Mei 1865.

### **2.1 Mission approach**

On this historic synod was also present rev Charles Murray, the Mission Inspector (or Mission Secretary) of the Cape Dutch Reformed Church and brother of Andrew jnr. He “happened to be” on his way to the Soutpansberg mission of the Cape Synod. Charles Murray motivated the synod for mission work, locally and abroad. This talk – it was rather what we today call a workshop – would have a profound influence on how the DRC Free State from the beginning saw its own mission calling and again, in today's terms, missional identity. In the first church order they included an article stipulating that each minister and each local congregation is obliged to do mission work in their own context. Indeed, next to each congregation a mission ministry developed, eventually leading to a Free State Mission Church that was, comparatively to other DRC Synods, very strong indeed. And, on this very first synod the Free State DRC decided to embark on mission projects in other areas, also abroad. Thanks to rev Charles Murray's influence, the synod also decided to annually send a substantial amount of money to the Cape Synod for its mission endeavours abroad – a practice which continued until the Free State could start with its own work in Zambia. Money was also sent for the French Missionaries in Lesotho. And, this very Synod pertinently made sure that the Reformed in its name would be translated as Gereformeerde and not Hervormde in Dutch – the ties with and

character of the mother church in the Cape Colony, rather than the Transvaal one, had to be kept as close as possible.

The Free State Synod appointed a synod mission commission in 1866, whose task it was to mobilise local congregations for their mission task, locally, but also further apart. In 1871 it started with mission work in Witsieshoek. Much of the work has been done in a joint effort with the Frensch Missionaries of Lesotho – a relationship which Andrew Murray officially established in the very early years.

As the domestic work grew rapidly, the urge to get directly involved in a foreign field, and not only indirectly via the financial contribution to the Cape Synod, became stronger. This became all the more urgent when rev AC Murray, the leading figure in the Nyasaland Mission (Malawian mission), who was on his way back to Malawi after recovering from a leopard attack in the mission field, paid a visit to the Free State in 1897. He visited several congregations in the Eastern Free State, from Bethulie to Bethlehem, creating an awareness of the huge possibilities of entering new mission fields in Northern Rhodesia (today's Zambia). Rev AC Murray also passionately addressed the Free State Synod of 1897 on the open doors to mission fields in the vicinity of Malawi. The Synod reacted enthusiastically: "mission concerns the life of the church" and "God will provide the necessary funds" they resolved. What made this resolve so remarkable was that the dark clouds of conflict (that would soon lead to the Anglo-Boer War) with British Imperial forces already assembled and the Free State was then struggling with the devastating consequences of the rinderpest of 1896, which plunged many Free State farmers into desperate poverty. At the Synod, Murray also established a branch of the Ministers Missionary Union in the Free State with the same goals as the Cape counterpart. The Synod therefore mandated its Synod Mission Commission to commence with the work abroad.

### **3. Commencing with the work in Zambia – the Hofmeyr family**

Early in 1898 messengers from Mpezeni, chief of the Angoni people, decedents of a Zulu impi, who fled from King Chaka's reign of terror back in Zululand and who eventually settled in the Eastern Province of Zambia, came to Mvera in Malawi to request rev AC Murray to send missionaries to their people. When sending these messengers, Mpezeni had been in jail, because of his resistance to the imperial, expansionist endeavours of Cecil John Rhodes. The request was sent through to the Free State Synod Mission Commission. In the mean while rev AC Murray would send some Malawian evangelists to Mpezeni's people. Towards the end of that same year, in 1898, revs. AC Murray and TCB Vlok paid a visit to the area.

When the Free State Synod's Mission Commission received the request, it was like an answer to prayer. It was the young minister of Zastron, rev J du Plessis, who would later on be the biographer of Andrew Murray jnr, who proposed that the free State should commence with work in Eastern Zambia, a proposal that was accepted.

On 5 July 1899 – whilst the devastating impact of the Boer war was already evident – the first two missionaries sent by the Free State Synod arrived at the place in Eastern Zambia, just across the border with Malawi and which they called Magwero ("origens"). There they established the first mission station in Zambia. The first two missionaries were rev JM Hofmeyr, son of the well-known rev JH Hofmeyr of Somerset-East, who was married to Isabel Murray, another sister of Andrew Murray jnr) and rev JP Smit, who was trained at Wellington. On Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup> of July they started with proclaiming the Word of God under a tree that is still alive today – now with wide branches and a welcoming shade as quiet testimony of the

growth of the church from small beginnings to what is today a vibrant church of more than a million members, the Reformed Church in Zambia.

Regarding the approach to the work, the first two missionaries followed the example of the older mission field in Malawi. Apart from proclaiming the Word, they immediately started with educational projects by establishing a school at Magwero. Rev Hofmeyr, who received some medical training at the Livingstone College in London, also began with the treatment of the sick. They built houses, a school and eventually a church – the typical mission station model. In August 1902 the very capable and dedicated rev JM Hofmeyr unfortunately had to return to South Africa due to a second attack of the life threatening black water fever.

In 1903, after the Anglo-Boer war, three new missionaries joined the work in Zambia. One of them was the younger brother of rev JM Hofmeyr who had to return from the mission field, namely rev CM Hofmeyr. Together with rev JH van Schalkwyk, they established the second station which they called, Madzimoyo, meaning “water of life”. Like all missionaries, they however first had to learn to speak Chichewa. In 1905 the third mission station was established at fort Jameson (today Chipata) by rev CP Pauw, the first of three generations of missionaries to do exceptional work in the Zambian mission. Rev CM Hofmeyr would labour at Mazimoyo until 1910. At some stage he was assisted by rev William Murray from Malawi. The work grew rapidly and several other mission stations were established, one of which was called Hofmeyr (the village called Hofmeyr is still existing today), to acknowledge the work done by members of the Hofmeyr family. Because, the two brothers who initially came were to be succeeded by two other members of the Hofmeyr family (cousins). The one was Miss Issie Hofmeyr, who commenced with wonderful and much appreciated work amongst the blind at Magwero. She later on married to Mr Frikkie van Eden. He was the first missionary farmer at Magwero, who was trained at the Worcester institute where young farmers returning from the 1899-1902 War received missionary training. But in 1910 she tragically died of black water fever – the first of many missionaries who would bring the highest sacrifice for the mission. Her class of blind learners were devastated, and for days they mourned at her graveside. Her brother, Dr. Jan K.A. Hofmeyr, brother of Issie Hofmeyr, was the first medical doctor of the Zambian mission. This brilliant young doctor arrived in 1908, just after completing his medical studies in Britain. He erected a hospital at Mazimoyo, did wonderful pioneering medical work, operating on patients and simultaneously playing the role of a nurse. He even took it upon himself to preach and conduct catechism classes, and started a project for patients having sleeping sickness. He was much loved and respected by all. In 1913 he went for a further course in tropical illnesses, but tragically died in Scotland of brain cancer in 1914. It has again been a devastating blow to the mission. But, despite the tragic setbacks – or was it maybe because of this vulnerability and willingness to bring sacrifices – the Zambian mission grew steadily and eventually spread across the whole country.

In the meanwhile, it was some mission minded ministers, and especially the Orange Women’s Mission Union (*Oranje Vroue Sendingbond*), under the leadership of formidable women like Charlotte Theron, the wife of rev CP Theron of Bethlehem (the so called “Father of the Free State Mission”), who kept the home front and raised financial support. Despite the Boer War, the draughts, , the Rebellion and World War 1, the great depression of the 1920’s and 1930’s and (white) poverty, the mission could be sustained. This is a story of miracles and perseverance – a story that deserves to be researched and told again. And, Mrs Charlotte Theron – the “mother of the Free State mission” – had been operating in close relationship and regular correspondence with the Murrays in Wellington.

Many, if not most of the missionaries to Zambia – at once stage in the 1960s there were 67 mission personnel sent by the Free State in Zambia – had been trained in Wellington, thus they were influenced and inspired by the typical evangelical and puritan spirituality of Murrays. They were driven by a passion to spread the Gospel into Africa, but from their puritan roots they also imposed a certain conduct of life and piety on the new converts, which has often been very foreign to the African culture. There was not much accommodation of African traditional customs. But therein also laid for many the attraction to the church – it meant a complete break with or liberation from the powers in which they were fearfully caught. And the specific approach to mission meant that people became literate, reading the Bible in their own language – that was maybe the biggest contribution.

#### **4. Resistance to an evangelical approach – an unfortunate venture to transform and protect identities**

At first, close ties were kept between the work in Zambia and that of Malawi. Until 1908 the work was done under the supervision of the Mission Council of Malawi, when, for practical reasons, an independent Mission Council was established for Zambia, but in close cooperation with the work in Malawi. Rev CP Pauw became the first chairperson of this body.

But in 1926 a sudden resistance, one could even call it hostility against the longstanding loyal cooperation between the Free State Synod and the Cape Synod appeared on the scene. It was when the controversial rev JG Strydom became mission secretary of the Free State Synod. He would occupy this post for 25 years. The Free State political context was that of General JBM Hertzog's separatism, the dawn of a particular Afrikaner nationalism. But it was also the era of a bitter church dispute around prof. Johannes du Plessis, a missiologist in the Murray evangelical tradition. An opposite theological stream was consciously developed in those days, namely a new-Calvinist movement being fond of a certain interpretation of Abraham Kuyper's theology. Strydom found himself squarely in this new-Calvinist stream, and very sceptical of the more evangelical approach of the majority of mission minded persons in the Cape Synod and in Malawi. To Strydom, the whole mission enterprise became a mere social project of bringing certain form of development, for instance Bantu education, in order to safeguard the supremacy and eventual survival of the white Afrikaner race. In the 1930's he coined the term Apartheid, even speaking of "our mission policy of apartheid" and he would play a vital role in formulating the 1935 Mission Policy of the Federal Mission Council of the Dutch Reformed Church. He made it his mission to counter the Murray (or evangelical) influence in the Free State and in Zambia.

After the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) became independent in 1924, with the Nkhoma mission joining it as one of the three presbyteries in 1926, there were strong voices calling on the church in Zambia to also join the CCAP. The missionaries in Zambia unanimously supported this idea. In 1928 the Free State Synod, on proposal by the then moderator rev JL van Heerden, who visited Zambia just prior to the synod meeting, indeed decided that the church in Zambia should join the CCAP. But rev JG Strydom would eventually overrule the Synod's decision and influenced the synod mission commission to suspend it. In 1931 the Synod then endorsed Rev Strydom's actions. The young Christians in Zambia strongly advocated joining the CCAP (they felt themselves close to their Chichewa speaking brothers and sisters just across the border in Malawi) and in 1939 again requested the Free State mission authorities' permission to join the CCAP. But rev Strydom would have none of it and in 1943 the *Dutch Reformed Mission Church of the Orange Free State in Rhodesia* was constituted (Cronje 1981:186).

A similar and related situation arose in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). In 1912 rev TCB Vlok was sent from Malawi to start work amongst Chichewa speaking migrants in Zimbabwe. He did marvellous work for 16 years. In 1928 the DRC Free State took over the responsibility for the white congregations in Zimbabwe. And because of the DRC Free State's old ruling that was written into the church order at the very first synod meeting in 1865, namely that each local congregation and minister should take responsibility for mission work in their own area, rev Strydom in 1928 used this ruling as excuse to insist that all the mission work amongst the Chichewa speaking people in Zimbabwe be transferred to the Free State. Obviously rev Vlok and the members of the young church in Zimbabwe objected strongly to severing ties with the Cape Synod and Malawi. Martin Pauw wrote: "This was the prelude to a long and painful and in many ways disastrous, if not scandalous dispute between the two Synods, which was to last for nearly twenty years and was only finally settled in 1954".

Behind all of this is to be seen the hands of rev Strydom, who deliberately wanted to cut off all links with the evangelical, Murray tradition, and who was equating "Calvinism" with "separation" and "mission" with "apartheid". But the Free State Synod allowed him to do this, they even during the 1940s sent him on a study tour to the Southern States of America to learn first handily how racial segregation could be successfully applied. However, the missionaries in Zambia consistently resisted his deliberate attempts to infuse them with his new, anti-evangelical spirituality. And so did the young church established by the Free State in Zambia.

#### **5. The blessed fruit – attempting to evaluate the immeasurable.**

It is really not possible to measure the impact of the Murray, Louw and Hofmeyr families on the Free State Church and the planting of a church in Zambia. The blessed fruits are there to be seen, even to this day. It would however also be important to critically look at their role and theological impact, and their collaboration with the colonial project of their era. They were children of their time. They were, however, not merely instruments of colonialism. They may not be easily judged from the context and criteria of our day. Their relationship with colonialism could therefore rather be described as ambivalent. But maybe, at these celebrations of unveiling the Andrew Murray Centre for Spirituality, it is only necessary to revisit the stories and thus celebrate their contribution, while keeping in mind that stories have the ability to form, reform and transform identities. Stories (history) can never be told from a neutral point of departure; revisiting and retrieving the past remains a humbling and tentative endeavour.

To me, the most profound Murray story in connection to the Free State, a story that I am convinced we need to retell today, even more so than in the past, is the story of Dr Andrew Murray in his old age once more returning to the Free State. During the Anglo-Boer War he was very concerned about the plight of Afrikaners in the two Boer Republics – the whole parochial area of his early ministry. Amongst other actions, he wrote a lengthy, open letter to the British people (of which they indeed took notice in their media). As oldest minister in the DRC, he pleaded to them for peace. He appealed to the British's generosity as "the most Christian nation in the world", to awaken and realise the futility and disastrous consequences of the war; he called on them and everybody else to pray instead. After the war, in December 1913, the Women's Memorial commemorating the suffering and death of so many women and children (more than 40000, black and white), was unveiled in Bloemfontein. Murray attended this ceremony – he was then 85 years of age; it was less than four years before his death in 1917. Before the procession moved to the monument, Murray once again preached in the Bloemfontein Tweetoring Church building, with clarity and force. He pleaded for

reconciliation, not separation and division: "We are gathered here to celebrate a feast of love – the suffering, praying, blessing, conquering love. It is a monument of love that we are now going to unveil... Let us go to the monument with the prayer: I sacrifice myself to God, I seek not my own interest; let us go with a banner of God's love!" And, at the monument itself a small scene was engraved on the thousands in the crowd, a moment full of symbolism. It was the sight of the frail Dr Murray, leaning on the arm of Dr Collin Frazer, the old friend from Murray's time in Bloemfontein and who accompanied him to London to plea against the independence of the Free State. And, when the sun suddenly broke through the clouds on that hot summer day, it was the Boer leader who fought to the bitter end for the independence of the Free State Republic, General Christiaan de Wet, who humbly and respectfully held an umbrella over the two aged men.