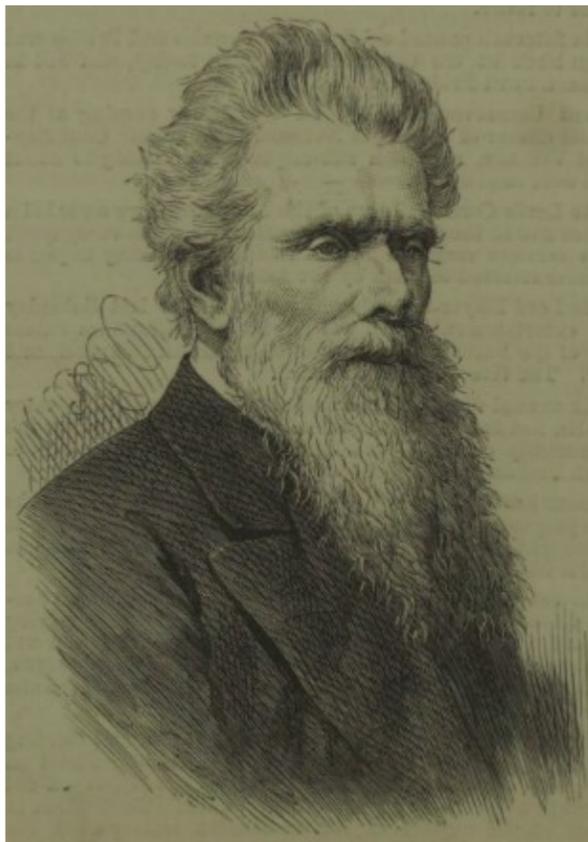


Alexander Duff 1806-1878

Missionary to India

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Alexander Duff was born in Moulin, near Pitlochry, Perthshire, on 25 April 1806. While studying at the University of St Andrews he was influenced by the teaching and missionary fervour of Dr Thomas Chalmers and in 1829 he was appointed the first official Church of Scotland missionary to India. He married Anne Scott Drysdale (1796-1865) on 30 July and they set sail for India on 14 October arriving in Calcutta on 27 May 1830 having been twice shipwrecked and losing nearly all their possessions. Their daughter, Rebecca, was born in Calcutta on 24 June 1830.



Duff established a school in Calcutta aimed at offering a liberal education and religious instruction in English to the sons of the Bengali élite in the hope that their conversion to Christianity would filter down the social scale.

Duff returned to Scotland in 1834 on account of his health. He and his wife went back to India in 1840 leaving their four children behind. Duff spent this time raising funds and writing a major volume on missionary work, *India and Indian Missions* (1840).

In 1843 Duff and other Church of Scotland missionaries in India joined the Free Church and had to surrender their buildings, books and equipment and start afresh.

Duff returned to Scotland in 1850 and was elected Free Church Moderator in 1851. He appeared before a House of Lords select committee on education in India in 1853. He toured Scotland and in 1854 visited North America raising funds for missionary work before going back to India in 1856. However, in 1863, again in poor health, he was recalled to become convener of the Foreign Missions Committee. On his way home he visited mission stations in South Africa.

He never returned to India but continued to write and work in support of the Church's missionary work in India and Africa. In 1867 he accepted the new Chair of Evangelistic Theology in New College and in 1873 he was again elected Free Church Moderator. He died on 12 February 1878 in Sidmouth, Devon, where he had gone for his health.

Of his five children, two died young. His daughter Rebecca (1830-96) married John Watson, an East India merchant; his son Alexander (1834-1909) became an army doctor in India (1857-62) before settling in New Zealand; and his youngest child William (1838-99) became a merchant in Calcutta.

Illustration from *Illustrated London News*, 23 February 1878, Portrait from a photograph by Mr E R Yerbury, Edinburgh