On 28 March 1830, Mary Campbell, a young devout Scotts woman from Clydeside, during an act of communal prayer in her own home, spoke in 'an unknown tongue.'\(^1\) Mary and those with her believed this to be a resurgence of the apostolic gift of tongues. What were the circumstances that led up to this remarkably early anticipation of modern pentecostalism in presbyterian Scotland? What further charismatic phenomena occurred on Clydeside at this time, and how far did they spread? Who was it that, having developed a theology of the Spirit, had encouraged Mary Campbell and others to seek the restoration of the early Church's spiritual gifts? And how did the British Churches react to these extraordinary occurrences?

Alexander John Scott (1805-66), as a young minister in the National Kirk of Scotland, began to develop in his theology, as early as 1827,

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an unusual emphasis on the Spirit. This was due in part to the influence of his father, who, in marked contrast to the orthodoxy of the day, placed great importance upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. ‘It is melancholy,’ said old Dr. Scott, ‘to think how little the offices of the Holy Spirit are known, or considered, or improved. How can reading, or hearing, or catechising, or praying even, be profitable, while this is the case?’ ‘What is this wilful ignorance of the office of the Spirit—what is this contempt of his assistance, but a contempt of the unchangeable plan of heaven.’ Scott’s father encouraged his family and his congregation in Greenock to ‘go to school to the Holy Spirit.’ Scott picked up his father’s emphasis and further developed it.

During an assistantship, between 1828 and 1830, to Edward Irving at the Scots Kirk in Regent Square, London, Scott attempted to understand the true nature of the Church by going back to its origins in the first century. He was impressed by the early Church’s living quality, one element of that life being its charismatic gifts. Up to this stage young Scott’s theology had been characterised by a search for that which was vital and living and by a stress on the importance of experienced faith. In his first theological publication he had mourned the lifeless, ‘palsied’ state of the Church of his age and had longed for a Church of living men and women with the Spirit of God dwelling in and speaking by them. Scott now found in the early Church’s charismatic gifts a sign of the spiritual dynamism for which he longed.

Scott was not alone in emphasising the Spirit, for certain pockets within the British Churches at this time were praying for ‘an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.’ But they were not looking for anything charismatic

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2J. Scott, Sermons (Edinburgh, 1839), p. 31.

3Ibid, p. 447.

4See J. Thompson, The Owens College (Manchester, 1886), p. 176.
