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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

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THE CHANGING FACE OF METHODISM

II. The Methodist Church Act, 1976

THE twentieth century has seen three significant advances in the development of the Methodist Church: the 1907 Act which brought the United Methodist Church into being, the 1929 Act which facilitated Methodist Union in 1932, and the Methodist Church Act, 1976, which fulfilled the implied promise of the first two.

Historical Background

John Wesley's *Journal* gives ample evidence of the problems he encountered in settling his buildings upon suitable trust deeds, and of the aversion he felt for members of the legal profession. However, he could not escape the necessity for buildings, nor avoid the requirements of the law. When the Deed of Declaration in 1784 gave independent legal status to the Methodist Conference, there were nearly four hundred Methodist preaching-houses. William Myles, in his *Chronological History of the People called Methodists*, shows the increasing number of chapels up to 1812.

The new religious impetus of the eighteenth century continued with unabated vigour until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and members and buildings increased. The story of the extension and divisions in this turbulent period has been told in many reliable works. The legal problems affecting property persisted, and were exacerbated by deep suspicion of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference and its "autocratic" preachers. Some trust deeds eschewed Wesleyan Conference preachers but insisted on the doctrines "as taught by Mr. Wesley". Some of the breakaway groups came together in 1857 to form the United Methodist Free Churches (well documented by Dr. Oliver Beckerlegge), indicating centripetal as well as centrifugal tendencies of the times.

The 1907 Act, amalgamating the United Methodist Free Churches, the Bible Christians and the Methodist New Connexion into the United Methodist Church, was envisaged decades earlier, and itself

encouraged the movement towards the Union of 1932. About 1919, Sir Robert Perks wrote an illuminating booklet, urging integration of all who were called Methodists.

The Union proposals in 1929 were strongly opposed, and there are verbatim records of the proceedings before the select committees of both Houses of Parliament. The 1929 Act authorized the Deed of Union and the Model Deed.

It is worth recollecting that, at Union in 1932, no chapel was on the Methodist Model Deed, and that, although there was no power of compulsion, nearly fourteen thousand chapels from 1932 to 1976 voluntarily adopted the Model Deed trusts. Thus the proposals of the 1976 Act already had long roots before Parliament transformed them into legal provisions.

Constitutional Approach

The attitude of the "angry young men" at the 1965 Plymouth Conference coincided with a memorial from the London (Highgate) circuit which urged

that the whole structure and organization be re-examined, re-planned and streamlined, so that the Church may fulfil the spiritual and evangelistic purpose for which it was raised up.

Several connexional working parties reported in the next four years, and of their various recommendations two are relevant: that connexional departments and committees should be re-formed into seven divisions, with a President's Council to deal with the policy aspect of the General Purposes Committee, and that in each local church the duality of leaders' meetings and trustees should be replaced by a Church Council, to control every aspect of church life, including property.

The period from 1969 to 1976 is the story of the implementation of this policy of integrated local control. The old Department for Chapel Affairs became the Property Division, and was directed to amend the Model Deed. Consultations with counsel and solicitors and the Charity Commissioners resulted in the Commissioners strongly recommending a new statute rather than to embark upon alterations to the Model Deed—the doctrinal clauses of which were unalterable except by statute. The details of the appointment of counsel to write the Bill; of leading counsel to represent the Church before Parliament; of Parliamentary agents; of consultation between General Purposes and Faith and Order Committees and the Property Division to brief solicitors and counsel, are recorded. The main areas of change were approved by Conference in 1973, the Parliamentary Draft Bill in 1974, the revised Draft Bill (after consideration as provisional legislation by the District Synods) in 1975—culminating in the depositing of the Bill in Parliament. The President and the Secretary of Conference and the General Secretary of the Property Division were instructed by Conference to pilot the Bill through Parliament.

The Property Division, which through the years had administered property affairs on behalf of Conference and elucidated and applied the trusts of the Model Deed, was charged with the initiative throughout the process, and the General Secretary, the Rev. Herbert Simpson, until his retirement in 1975, bore a considerable additional burden. For two years before the Bill reached Parliament, he guided a representative committee in consideration of the numerous revisions of Standing Orders, procedures and practices.

The Parliamentary Process

The Draft Bill was formally deposited on 27th November 1975, and objections were permitted up to 6th February 1976. Notification was published in *The Times* on 1st December. To meet the reservations of the Charity Commissioners, acting through the Treasury Solicitor and the Attorney-General, and to avoid prejudicing the passage of the Bill, the three officers appointed by Conference accepted on behalf of the Church the following amendments: (1) deletion of the second clause of Section 4, which could have had the effect of including in the purposes of the Church the support of bodies which were neither Christian nor charitable; (2) deletion of the power of the Managing Trustees in the model trusts to "develop or turn to account the property or any part thereof in any manner whatsoever", which meant that trustees could not put their Charity resources at speculative risk by themselves carrying out a large commercial redevelopment.

Other amendments of a minor nature—mainly drafting revisions to avoid uncertainty of interpretation—were also agreed. The one outstanding point on which it was agreed to withstand the Charity Commissioners in Parliament was the right of the Church to impose restrictive covenants, even in those rare cases where the consequence of so doing would be to depress the "best price possible".

After first and second readings had been approved, two petitions were entered against the Bill, and the House of Lords Select Committee met on 30th March. For five days the Committee, presided over by Lord Alport, listened to the sponsors represented by Mr. Peter Boydell, Q.C., assisted by Mr. Philip Clough, and the petitioners against the Bill represented by Mr. Norman Moody, Q.C. The following were called to witness under oath on behalf of the Bill: the President of Conference (the Rev. A. Raymond George), the Secretary of Conference (the Rev. Dr. Kenneth G. Greet), the General Secretary of the Property Division (the Rev. George W. Dolbey), and the Rev. William H. Barrett (superintendent of the Clay Cross circuit). The objectors to the Bill included Mrs. Alice Bailey, Mr. Norman Siddon, the Rev. Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge, the Rev. John M. Peters, the Rev. Dr. Leslie A. Newman, the Rev. Norman W. Valley, Mr. John C. Eastwood, and the Rev. Kenneth MacKenzie. The Treasury Solicitor's objection to the imposition of restrictive covenants was withdrawn on the discovery that the Church of England already possessed a similar power in relation to redundant

church buildings in their Pastoral Measure of 1968. The Committee finally decided to recommend the proposals.

Following the successful third reading in the House of Lords, the Bill passed to the House of Commons, where, after the formal first reading, a three-hour debate was held on 15th June.¹ The vote in favour of 117 to 35 preceded the second reading, and the Bill went to committee on 6th July. This Select Committee, with Mr. Frederic Evans, M.P. in the chair, lasted six days. There were three petitions against the Bill, one of which was withdrawn, and once again the issue was exhaustively examined.

This time the previous ministerial witnesses on behalf of the Bill were joined by two lay representatives—Mrs. Mary I. Lenton and Mr. John B. Holliday, and the witnesses against the Bill were increased to a dozen, mainly with additional laymen. Eventually the Committee recommended the property proposals, but in the matter of doctrine insisted that any change of doctrinal standards should be operative only if consultation had taken place down to local church level. The House of Commons debated for three hours on the report stage on 18th October the motion that those who resisted doctrinal change should be permitted to continue their ministry and preaching on the basis of the old doctrine. This was more decisively defeated than on the previous occasion, and the Bill proceeded to the third reading. Finally it received the Royal Assent on 26th October, and became operative on 16th April 1977—the date fixed by the President of Conference.

Benefits and Significance

There are five areas of major benefit from the Act, as well as a number of minor advantages. Much remains unchanged, and it may be held that there are some minor disadvantages, but this would depend upon where the emphasis is placed in the perpetual tension between the demands of freedom and those of order.

The outstanding advance is that in each of the eight thousand or so local churches there is now unified control. The duality of trustees and leaders (now the Church Council) which has operated from the eighteenth century—and the defects of which also date from the days of John Wesley—is replaced by one body having authority over people, policy and property. Although for practical purposes a working harmony existed between the two former bodies, there were sufficient examples of unresolved tension damaging the essential mission of the Church to make the change desirable.² The results of this unified control, whereby the members of the Church Council have become the managing trustees, will gradually become evident in greater unity and decisiveness at the local level of the Church. Because of the changing personnel of the managing trustees, the

¹ See *Hansard*, volume 913, Nos. 123 and 124.

² See the proceedings before the Select Committees of the House of Lords, especially pp. 9-11 for Wednesday, 31st March 1976, and the House of Commons, especially pp. 15-16 for Thursday, 8th July.

permanency of ownership legally necessary is ensured by central vesting of the property in the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes—a statutory body having its own seal which since the Methodist Church Act of 1939 has been empowered to hold Church property as custodian trustee. This is after the pattern of the custodian trusteeship of the Official Custodian for Charities set up by the Public Trustee Act of 1906. The powers of the custodian trustee are limited, and management functions are exercised by the managing trustees.

The second area of benefit concerns the doctrines of the Church. Clause 8 of the Methodist Church Union Act 1929 enabled the Methodist Church to adopt the Deed of Union with the Conference having power to change any part of that Deed except the clauses which define the doctrinal standards. These standards are set out in clause 30 of the Deed of Union, and—for the first time in Methodist history—they were made subject to the authority of Her Majesty's Parliament as far as any proposed change was concerned. After considerable discussion in the Select Committees, both Houses of Parliament agreed to the reversion to the Church of the power to amend its own doctrine; but the House of Commons insisted that any doctrinal change must be preceded by full consultation down to local church level. Although Conference under the 1929 Act had power to interpret its doctrines, the new Act enables it to deal with any doctrinal amendments which could be held legally to be more than an interpretation. This benefit may appear to have comparatively little to do with the practical work of the local church, but as a matter of fundamental principle in the relation of Church and State, it is felt to be right for the Church to be master in its own house as far as the doctrines of the Church are concerned. In expressing human convictions about the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is more logical and natural to trust the duly-constituted supreme body of the Methodist Church than either House of Parliament, whose members include some atheists, more agnostics, and—to echo Lord Alport, the chairman of the House of Lords Select Committee—at least one Buddhist!

The third advantage of the Act is that Model Trust property may properly be held at each level of the Church. The 1932 Model Deed was drawn up in relation to local church property, and the superintendent minister of the circuit was declared to be chairman of the trustees. Difficulties were experienced when the deeds for houses of "separated" Chairmen of Districts and Methodist International Houses came to be drawn up. As it was obviously inappropriate for a superintendent minister to be chairman of the trustees' meeting, the Chairman of the District was substituted, and the deed was described as the "Model Deed with variations". This was a legal anomaly which is now rectified by the Act, and it is now legally in order for property to be held on the model trusts with managing trustees at local church, circuit, district and connexional levels.

Given the necessary Methodist approvals, any Model Trust property may now be sold or transferred from one Methodist level to another with simply a different body of managing trustees.

The fourth benefit is that for the first time in the history of the Methodist Church its purposes have been defined in a legal document, thus remedying a legal weakness in clause 26 of the Model Deed. Although clause 4 was narrowed a little following representations of the Charity Commissioners through the Treasury Solicitor, its effect is to strengthen the position of the Methodist Church as a charity under the 1960 Charities Act. As more and more reports and statutes deal with the statutory and fiscal position of charities, it is essential that there should be no shadow of legal doubt about the charitable nature and purpose of the Church.

The last major advantage is that of flexibility, or adaptability to changing conditions. Whereas the trusts of the Model Deed were difficult to amend in relation to properties already owned by the Church, the Act transforms these into "Model Trusts", and makes specific provision for Conference to alter all except six of these provisions. As so much in the world has changed radically since the comparatively settled days of the 1929 Act, this new flexibility cannot but be an advantage. Nevertheless, in so far as every new freedom imposes the necessity for a more rational discipline, the control by Conference will need to be carefully exercised. The use of the special resolution, and even more the deferred special resolution, as defined in the Act, will constitute a safeguard against any insufficiently-considered decision of Conference.

There are several minor benefits of the Act which no doubt in the individual cases where they apply will be of major importance. In certain circumstances, where a property is sold by one part of the Church to another it may be for less than the "best price possible". The power to insert restrictive covenants is vindicated, though limited to buildings which have been used for regular public worship. There has also been vindicated the "connexional principle" in relation to local church property, largely through section 12 of the 1929 Act, and before that section 11 of the 1907 United Methodist Church Act. There is and has been a connexional element in the ownership of the local chapel, even if much of the money to erect it came from local sources.

Further administration of Church property will be more equitable and efficient by reason of a number of changes. Although since 1932 almost fourteen thousand chapel trusts voluntarily adopted the trusts of the Model Deed, some forty or so declined to do so and remained on the former model deeds (listed in Schedule 1 of the Act), and these are now brought on to the same model trusts as the majority. A number of odd situations have come to light, for instance where old buildings had closed for worship many years ago and fallen outside the purview of any continuing church, or old invested church funds had been irregularly registered in the names of private persons, and these are now brought "within the system", to the benefit of

the whole Church. Advantage has also been taken to accord with section 34 of the 1960 Charities Act and allow two instead of three trustees of the Board of Trustees to sign documents; this may seem insignificant, but it becomes of practical importance in the holiday season when immediate signatures are required for some urgent legal or financial matter.

As in this life nothing is free of cost, there are several consequences of the Act which, not to mention the expense of £60,000 or so involved in the process, could be held by some to be disadvantageous. Some local trustees under the other model deeds would probably maintain that their freedom has been taken away: this is more true in theory than in practice, and investigation has revealed that some of them were already acting contrary to their existing trusts. The Property Division and the Trustees for Methodist Church Purposes are faced with a nightmarish situation for a year or two, caused by the increasing volume and complexity of work, but it is hoped that this will be a temporary situation. The cessation of the Statutory Excepting Order (from some provisions of the 1960 Charities Act) on 16th April 1977, the application by Order-in-Council to the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, the complete re-casting of legal precedent forms, divisional schedules and literature, and the re-orientation in administrative methods and training, are among the stresses and strains being experienced by "Manchester". Some additional staff and accommodation have been secured to cope with the situation, and this may well become a permanent charge upon the Division. Nevertheless, benefits of the Act so greatly outweigh temporary difficulties as to leave no reasonable doubt that the legal basis of property ownership and management, the freedom of doctrine, and the charitable status of the Church, are now much more firmly established than before. We are a little nearer to "the best" that is "yet to be"! GEORGE W. DOLBEY.

[The Rev. George W. Dolbey, M.A., B.D., A.R.I.B.A., M.R.T.P.I. is the General Secretary of the Property Division of the Methodist Church in Great Britain.]

Mr. William Leary, our indefatigable Exhibitions Secretary and the Lincoln District Archivist, has produced an attractive booklet entitled *Methodist Preaching Plans: A Guide to their Usefulness to the Historian*. It is a cyclostyled foolscap-size booklet, running to 25 pages plus illustrations of old plans. Mr. Leary begins with a brief history of the development of the Circuit Plan, and then deals with such points as Preachers' Names, Advice to Preachers and others, and "Verse and Worse", concluding with "Bric-à-Brac". Copies may be obtained from the author, price 6op. (75p. post free) at Brantwood, 58, St. Edward's Drive, Sudbrooke, Lincoln, LN2 2QR.

Our Society has received a legacy of £50 from the estate of Mrs. Enid Mary Brooks, of Parkstone, Dorset, whose death was recorded in our last issue. Mrs. Brooks, who formerly resided in Lincoln, had been a member for some fourteen years, and had served as Lincolnshire branch treasurer.

THE EXTINCT METHODIST SOCIETIES OF SOUTH-EAST SCOTLAND

4. Dalkeith

IN comparison with the other causes reviewed in this series of articles, Dalkeith enjoyed a far longer life. Indeed, although worship there had ceased many years previously, the Dalkeith Old Church remained in existence until 1960, when the property was sold to the Local Authority under a road-widening scheme. The close connexion of this society with the mother-church of the Edinburgh circuit has resulted in the preservation of much archival material, and consequently much more is known of this cause.

Methodism in this small Midlothian town was established in 1786 through the efforts of Zechariah Yewdall. Its early history was the subject of an article in these *Proceedings* many years ago by the late Rev. Wesley F. Swift,¹ and it is sufficient to note here the salient points. It appears that Yewdall was the first travelling preacher to attempt to form a society there, although the town may have been visited earlier by some of his predecessors. On his first visit (13th November 1786), he preached in a former Episcopalian chapel. The following week the congregation was three times the size, and Yewdall continued to be optimistic. The initial difficulties in securing the first chapel are well known, in particular the opinion expressed by John Wesley in his letter to Yewdall dated 27th December 1787:

My Dear Brother,

You are in the right. You can have nothing at all to do with the chapel upon those terms. Nay, a dovecote above it would be an insufferable nuisance, as it would fill the whole place with fleas. . . . I cannot advise you to set about building an house unless you could find one or two responsible men who would engage themselves to finish the building in such a manner for an hundred and fifty pounds. Otherwise I think you would be more bold than wise.²

This place of worship was thus given up, and on 18th January 1788 Yewdall recorded in his diary: "It seems as if we shall build a chapel there yet."³ Further difficulties arose before this hope was finally realized. The congregations dwindled; local trustees could not be procured; Yewdall had thus to become personally responsible for the property, and a storm of persecution broke upon the infant society. However, on 19th March of that year Thomas Coke was constrained to address an appeal "To the Ministers, Preachers and Members of the Methodist Church in Scotland":

. . . The repairing of our present Preaching-house would be nearly as expensive as the erecting of a new one: besides, we should be obliged to suffer in the present place the offensiveness of a Stable below & the Fleas of a Dove-house above. For these reasons I beg you will do

¹ Wesley F. Swift: "Early Methodism in Dalkeith, Scotland" (*Proceedings*, xvii, pp. 125-32).

² *Letters*, viii, p. 30.

³ This diary is in the Methodist Archives.

every thing in your Power privately & publicly to help on this new Erection.⁴

Eventually, thanks to the intervention of Alexander Mather and Wesley himself, Yewdall was fully delivered from his troubles. Indeed, in April 1789 Wesley wrote in the following vein :

I am glad to hear that there is so fine a prospect at Dalkeith. So is generally the way of our Lord, to try us first, and then to comfort.⁵

The ground on which the chapel was built in Dalkeith is described in the sasine of 1789 :

On 12 January 1789 compeared personally Andrew Crombie, tenant at Newmills, as Procurator and Attorney for the Reverend Zachariah Yewdall, presently residing in Edinburgh, and past with us . . . to the said subjects HAVING and HOLDING in his hands a DISPOSITION made and granted by James Simpson, eldest son of the deceased James Simpson Jr., shoemaker and portioner of Dalkeith, in favour of Zachariah Yewdall, whereby in consideration of the price of £26 10/- sterling, James Simpson SOLD, ALIENATED and DISPONED to . . . Zachariah Yewdall, heritably and irredeemably, ALL and WHOLE that piece or portion of the garden belonging to . . . James Simpson on the south side thereof next the back vennel thereof from the corner of the stable formerly belonging to John Watson now converted into a shop posses part . . . by James Hardie meal maker and part . . . by Ebenezer Clarkson Surgeon in Dalkeith ; northwards along the east side of the new South Street and bounded thereby on the west, on the south by the back vennel of Dalkeith and the east by that garden of old belonging to John Reid, portioner of Dalkeith and now to John King, which piece of ground is part of that yard and barn disponed by Peter Simpson carrier in Dalkeith to Isobel Amslie his mother in liferent and to . . . James Simpson his eldest brother in fee . . . near to the upper end and upon the west side of the coat tenement of land disponed by Magdalen Calderwood, alias Brown, relict of the deceased Andrew Brown, surgeon in Dalkeith, to and in favour of . . . John Simpson's father and mother in conjunct fee, being parts and portions of that coat tenement of land and pertinents of the same situated within the town of Dalkeith upon the south side of the high street . . . in that part called the Wicket, betwixt the tenement of land of old belonging to the heirs of William Mow and thereafter to the heirs of John Watson, portioner there on the south, and the tenement of land and yeard of old belonging to Robertson Veitch, thereafter to John Veitch, now to John Reid in the north parts, which yard and barn thereby disponed is bounded as follows : by the coat tenement upon the north, by the back vennel of Dalkeith on the south, by the yard of . . . John Reid on the east and by the yards and tenement of John Watson on the north.⁶

Although Yewdall had been appointed to the Berwick circuit at the 1788 Conference, not until 1789 did he draw up a deed of disposition to a regularly-constituted band of trustees—"seeing that it was likely that he would soon leave Scotland and therefore it was necessary to have the chapel regularly settled". This disposition was in favour of

⁴ *Proceedings*, xxviii, pp. 15-16.

⁵ *Letters*, viii, p. 131.

⁶ New Particular Register of Sasines, Edinburgh, &c., RS27, Vol. 330, pp. 1-8. Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh (SRO in subsequent footnotes).

the minister officiating or presiding in the Methodist chapel at Dalkeith for the time being [initially the Rev. John Barber and the Rev. James Bogie]; William Murray, Tailor in the Pleasance near Edinburgh [also a trustee of the Calton chapel, Edinburgh];⁷ William Bain, Tailor in the Canongate, Edinburgh [also a trustee of the Calton chapel]; John St. George, Weaver in Leith Walk; Harry Innes, Clerk in the Excise Office; David Hodge, Brewer in the Canongate, Edinburgh; Robert Kerr, Overseer of the works at Newbattle, and William Shellinglaw, Labourer in Dalkeith.

Thus, from its inception, the trust was dominated by Edinburgh-based trustees, who may well have had a decisive influence on future events.

Yewdall's disposition is rather different from the other trust deeds of chapels in the Edinburgh area. As might be expected, clauses regulating the size of the trust (nine members), the persons qualified to officiate, and the fate of preachers who were deficient in doctrine or immoral in their conduct, all appear. In addition, however, there are a number of other provisions, concerning which Wesley Swift remarked:

The zeal of Yewdall for purity of doctrine is evidenced by the fact that he adds to the deed certain qualifying clauses which are certainly quaint, if not unique.⁸

These spell out in detail the essential Methodist doctrines as set out in Wesley's *Notes* and in the first four volumes of *Sermons*.

The trust appears to have undergone a number of vicissitudes during its long life. By 1792 William Bain, William Murray and John St. George were the only surviving members of the original trust. The Rev. Joseph Cole (as officiating minister, but actually superintendent of the Edinburgh circuit), together with "John Cuthbertson, Wright in Edinburgh; William Eilbeck, Engraver, and Peter Moffatt, Innkeeper, Dalkeith" were therefore assumed as additional trustees. This renewed trust then sold off all the land surrounding the chapel. A second renewal occurred in 1803, by which time David Hodge and Robert Kerr had died, Harry Innes had "left the kingdom", and John St. George and William Shillinglaw had been "excluded from the Society of Methodists". A deed of nomination was then executed by William West (superintendent of the Edinburgh circuit), John Barker, James Bogie, William Murray and William Bain, whereby they nominated "Donald Sinclair, High Street, Edinburgh; John Brown, Coachmaker, Abbeyhill; George Elphingston, Merchant, College Street; David Dawson, Shoemaker, Nicolson Street, and Henry Bowerhill, Corn Merchant in Leith" to be trustees.⁹ (George Elphingston was also a trustee of the Calton chapel.)¹⁰

By 1816 a third renewal proved necessary. On this occasion the

⁷ A. J. Hayes: *Edinburgh Methodism, 1761-1975: The Mother Churches* (Edinburgh, 1976).

⁸ Swift, *op. cit.*

⁹ New Particular Register of Sasines, Edinburgh, &c., RS 27, Vol. 739, pp. 230 ff. (SRO.)

¹⁰ Hayes, *op. cit.*

property was regularly disposed to the new trust by sasine, and the continuing trustees—Thomas Bridgman (actually second minister in the Dunbar and Haddington circuit), John Barber, James Bogie, William Murray and Donald Sinclair—“seeing that David Dawson and Henry Bowerhill had left the Society of Methodists and that William Bain, John Brown and George Elphingston had died”, nominated “Robert Drummond, Tailor; Robert McFunn, gentleman, Dalkeith; James Spence, tobacconist, Dalkeith; Alexander Hume, Wright, Dalkeith, and George Hall, Writer in Edinburgh” to be trustees.¹¹ The reason for the appearance of Thomas Bridgman in the deed is that Dalkeith had been transferred to the Dunbar and Haddington circuit for the year 1816. This arrangement cannot have been a success, for the following year it reverted to the Edinburgh circuit. Robert Drummond and George Hall were trustees of the Calton chapel, Edinburgh, and later of Nicolson Square.

Ten years later, the trust was again renewed. The officiating minister (the Rev. John Ward) decided that additional trustees should be assumed, since Alexander Hume was not likely to return to Dalkeith for some time, being now a Wesleyan missionary in the East Indies. Accordingly, Thomas Hughes of Inveresk (trustee of Nicolson Square and principal creditor at Haddington and Musselburgh)¹² was assumed as a trustee, as were also “Andrew Lockie, Candlemaker in Dalkeith; Robert Thomson, also Candlemaker in Dalkeith, and Alex. Borrowman, Teller in Dalkeith”.

Matters then remain quiet until 1851, when, at a trustees' meeting held at Leith, the Rev. Robert McBair (superintendent) and Andrew Lockie, the sole-surviving trustees capable of acting, assumed as additional trustees “James Stirling, Cabinetmaker, Dalkeith; William Excelby, Colour and Varnish Maker, Dalkeith; James Light, Gentleman's Servant, Lasswade Road, and John Clapperton, Hatter's Clerk, S. Back of Canongate, Edinburgh; James Jack, Agent in Edinburgh; John Livingston, Bank Messenger in Edinburgh; John Danks, Clerk in Edinburgh, and William Lyall, Compositor in Edinburgh”.

By 6th March 1874 Thomas Hughes, Alex. Borrowman, William Excelby, James Light, William Murray and Donald Sinclair had all died, and Andrew Lockie (then in Alaska), Robert Thomson, James Stirling and William Lyall (then in Liverpool) had ceased to meet. The survivors—James Jack, John Livingston and John Clapperton—first assumed as additional trustees “William Ormiston, Surveyor in Edinburgh, and John Black, Ironfounder in Edinburgh”, and four months later “Robert Robertson, Watch and Material Dealer, Nicolson Square, Edinburgh; Robert Croll, Clerk to Messrs McVey and Son, Old Physic Gardens, Edinburgh; David Millar, Draper, South

¹¹ New Particular Register of Sasines, Edinburgh, &c., Vol. 781, pp. 96-107. (SRO.)

¹² See the second and third articles in this series (*Proceedings*, xli, pp. 43-52, 77-85).

Bridge; William Bell Mack, Hatter, Hunter Square, and William Petty, China Merchant, Broughton Street" were also assumed, but the two latter eventually withdrew. Three others—"George Henry Horsman, Potato Merchant, London Road; John Birrell, Wine and Spirit Merchant, Dundas Street, and John Parr, Thrashing Machine Proprietor, Summerhill"—all declined to act as trustees.

In July 1874, the Rev. William Barber informed the Dalkeith trustees that, doubts having arisen as to the validity of the trustees' title to the Dalkeith chapel, he had consulted Mr. William White Millar, S.S.C., who reported that although there was little doubt that the actual right to the property was with the trustees, it would be advisable in order to fortify the title to take a conveyance in favour of the present trustees from Alexander Hume, the only one of the trustees infeft in the sasine of 1816 still alive. A letter from the Rev. John Bedford at Camborne, then secretary of the Board of Trustees for Chapel Purposes, regretted the defects of the title but indicated that the alternative course of action (i.e. a private Act of Parliament) was out of the question. Bedford suggested that the best way to proceed was for Mr. Hume and the administrative trustees to choose others to fill up the trust. By this time Hume had returned from the mission field, and in order to regularize the ownership of the chapel, he vested the property in the 1874 trust.

Ten years later, the building of the new chapel in Eskbank meant that public worship at South Street ceased, but the property remained in Methodist hands, with a body of trustees, for almost another seventy-five years. It would be tedious to list all the changes in the Dalkeith Old Church trust (as it later became) in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The main changes are summarized in the following table:

PRINCIPAL CHANGES IN THE DALKEITH TRUST, 1878-1931

- 1878 Alexander Hume deceased; Robert Robertson ceased to meet. John Parr and F. A. Gough assumed as trustees.
- 1883 William Petty succeeded John Livingston.
- 1884 C. M. Deans succeeded James Jack.
- 1885 J. W. Hodgson succeeded David Millar.
- 1890 Robert Robertson succeeded Robert Croll.
- 1898 John Black deceased; Oscar Webster and J. E. Cargill assumed.
- 1902 William Taylor and J. Graham Downes assumed.
- 1904 Oscar Webster removed from circuit. New trust deed drawn up by Charles T. Nightingale.
- 1907 Alex. Farquhar assumed.
- 1911 J. W. Hodgson resigns. Present composition of trust: J. Clapperton, W. Ormiston, J. Parr, O. F. Webster, J. E. Cargill, J. G. Downes, J. W. Hodgson (Treasurer), A. Farquhar (Treasurer), F. A. Gough (Secretary).
- 1912 John Clapperton deceased; J. Parr, J. W. Hodgson and A. Farquhar ceased to meet; Charles T. Nightingale assumed as new trustee.



SOUTH STREET METHODIST CHAPEL, DALKEITH

Photograph kindly loaned by the Rev. Dr. O. A. Beckerlegge.

- 1919 Present composition of trust: W. Ormiston, J. E. Cargill, O. F. Webster, J. G. Downes, T. Clapperton, C. T. Nightingale, Prof. C. G. Barkla, T. D. Leith (Secretary and Treasurer).
- 1933 T. D. Leith deceased. Present composition of trust: Rev. Stanley Dixon, J. E. Cargill, Prof. C. G. Barkla, J. G. Downes, T. Clapperton, C. T. Nightingale, W. M. Swan, R. W. Wrigley, E. J. Sutton, R. H. Cane, J. Forsyth, F. H. Korner, C. F. Brown, F. W. King, F. A. G. Alexander.

This 1933 trust, or rather its survivors, continued to administer the premises until their sale in 1960.

Little information has survived on the conditions at Dalkeith for the first sixty years or so after 1786, but a passing reference by Valentine Ward gives an indication of the state of affairs in 1815:

The first time I visited Dalkeith, I saw a sufficient cause for the smallness of our congregation and society in the miserable state of the chapel. An alteration was made, which independent of making the chapel quite comfortable and of contributing to the revival of the work of God, brings in a considerable profit.¹³

Wesley Swift adds:

This refers, I think, to the construction of the ground floor of the chapel into shops, which entailed the confinement of the actual place of worship to an "upper room".¹⁴

From 1851 onwards, however, a complete set of trust accounts and minute-books is extant,¹⁵ so that the later phases may be traced in detail. It is clear that by this time Dalkeith was a declining cause, and in 1852 the single minister was withdrawn and replaced by a supernumerary (see the list printed on pages 115-16). Towards the middle of that year William Excelby resigned as Trustees' Steward, and an audit of accounts revealed that there were numerous errors, especially in relation to sums which did not agree with amounts received by the Society Steward. James Jack was accordingly elected to succeed Excelby. Three years later, it was decided that the Rev. Humphrey Stevenson, the supernumerary minister, was to be replaced, "taking into account the present prospects at Dalkeith, and the feeling existing there that a change was necessary". The state of the cause is indicated independently by a series of replies furnished to the 1855 District Meeting (presumably in attempting to decide whether to close the chapel):

INQUIRIES MADE CONCERNING THE DALKEITH CHAPEL, WITH
REPLIES THERETO, FURNISHED TO THE EDINBURGH
DISTRICT MEETING HELD MAY 1855

When erected?—A.D. 1803	Original Cost—
Present Debt—£200	Original number of trustees—9
Present number of Trustees—?	Where are the deeds?—In the iron safe in Nicolson Square Chapel, Edinburgh

¹³ V. Ward: *Free and Candid Strictures on Methodism* (Aberdeen, 1818).

¹⁴ Swift, *op. cit.*

¹⁵ SRO. CH.11/17/6.

INCOME

Balance in hand from last year	?	Seat Rents	?
Rent of Houses, etc.	£31 5/-	Anniversary Collections	?
Door Collections	?	Other Income	?
<u>Total Income</u>		£31 5/-	

EXPENDITURE

Deficiency from last year	?	Interest	£9 0 0
Ground Rent	?	Repairs	£5 14 4½
Lighting and Cleaning		Lighting only	12 / 5
Insurance	£1 1 9	To Chapel Fund	?
Paid to Circuit	?	Children's Fund	11 / 2

Other Expenditure

Taxes	£3 14 7	To Rev. Mr. Stevenson	£8 2 11
<u>Total Expenditure</u>		£28 17 2½d.	
Surplus		£ 2 7 9½d.	

Trustee Treasurer—JOHN DANKS.

The debt of £200 appears to have been a continuing liability. In March 1859 the chief creditor, Mr. Stirling, wished to withdraw his money, and had arranged a three-months bill from Mr. Nairn, painter in Dalkeith, for the same amount (£120) at 4½ per cent interest. In that same year, the society requested a Home Missions minister, and offered £30 per annum, plus a small house—this application being continued to the following year. Later in 1859, the trustees considered the present state and future prospects of Dalkeith, noted that the income did not defray the necessary expenditure, and instructed Mr. Hardy and Mr. Stirling to submit the matter to the President of Conference. Indeed, the parlous condition of the cause in 1860 may be judged from the fact that the Rev. John McLean was owed £30 by the society, and the trustees authorized Mr. Stirling to borrow this sum so as to discharge the debt.¹⁶

The failing fortunes made the new principal creditor, Mr. Nairn, apprehensive about the safety of his money, for he expressed a wish to John Clapperton either to have a regular bond on the property or else to have his money paid up. As a result, the trustees agreed to try to secure a loan from some other party. John Nairn continued to press, however, and in April 1860 an approach was made to the local banks. Despite the financial stringency, sufficient funds were available to re-paint the chapel. There is also a strong suspicion that John McLean may well have been the last supernumerary, for in 1861 the trustees requested the Local Preachers' Meeting to send a "supply" to Dalkeith as soon as possible. Efforts were made that same year to restore some degree of organization, for it was reported:

As there had been no income from pew rents for some time, it was thought desirable, there now being a stated ministry at Dalkeith, to have the pews let regularly as formerly—and that if more convenient to pay for them quarterly.¹⁷

¹⁶, ¹⁷ SRO. CH.11/17/1.

The immediate financial difficulties were solved early in 1862, when Mr. Jordan offered to lend money to the trust—this offer being gratefully accepted. At the same meeting, Dalkeith being presumably still without a minister, the trustees “were of the opinion that the appointment of a supernumerary was desirable—and it was agreed to recommend same to the March Quarterly Meeting”. One year later the basis of offer was “£10 per year and all the seat rents”.

Apart from recurring disputes over house-rents and insurances, little then seems to have happened until 1869, when the Edinburgh circuit Quarterly Meeting proposed to extinguish the Dalkeith chapel debt, “provided that the Circuit do hereafter receive the net proceeds of the rental”.¹⁸ This was agreed, provided that the needs of Dalkeith were suitably catered for, and was subsequently ratified, “provided that the Circuit Stewards shall supply Dalkeith with ministerial services every alternate Sunday at least”. Bearing in mind that the Edinburgh circuit was already engaged in sending preachers as far afield as Bathgate and Armadale, this seems a somewhat unreasonable request. That some measures were put in train to supply Dalkeith is evident from the 1869 plan,¹⁹ where Thomas Dinsdale is named as resident preacher (possibly a hired local preacher). By 1871, however, the cause had so far declined that the sale of the property was contemplated. Indeed, during 1872 and 1873 the chapel was in fact closed for public worship.

Just before the closure in 1871, it was recorded that

The Quarterly Meeting having given the services of one minister entirely to Dalkeith on condition that his stipend be paid to the Circuit Stewards by the Dalkeith Society and that on this condition the Circuit relinquished its claim to the surplus income of the trust estate . . .²⁰

The sale of the premises had been recommended in 1872, but two years later a discussion took place regarding the interests of the trust in Dalkeith:

. . . and with the conviction that the cause of Methodism would be greatly promoted by the appointment of a second minister, they unanimously agreed that the surplus funds be appropriated to the extension of the work in the Edinburgh Circuit.

Despite the fact that the chapel had then been closed for over a year, Methodism was not entirely extinct in Dalkeith, for on 6th March 1874

Representations having been made by two of the trustees that there was a probability of good yet being done, it was unanimously agreed that the chapel again be opened for Sabbath services.

Since there was then no resident minister, it was formally resolved that the whole rights and powers as vested in the resident minister in the trust deed of 1789 be vested in and belong to the superintendent of the Edinburgh circuit only as long as there was no minister resident at Dalkeith. Later in 1874 (whether at circuit expense or

¹⁸ SRO. CH.11/17/1.

²⁰ SRO. CH.11/17/1.

²¹ Hayes, op. cit., p. 210.

not is uncertain), a hired local preacher, Mr. George Woolsey, was at work in Dalkeith, followed early in 1875 by a Home Missionary, Alex. Mayes, who received £90 per annum. As no Leaders' Meeting was in existence, Alex. Mayes was given a seat on the Nicolson Square Leaders' Meeting, so that he might represent the views of the Dalkeith society. Later in 1875, it became clear that Mayes might become a candidate for the ministry, and steps were taken to ensure a successor; but Conference in its wisdom continued him at Dalkeith for a further three years. As the membership had then nearly trebled (from 11 to 28), the trustees recommended to the Quarterly Meeting that

taking into account the present financial condition of Dalkeith, arising from the rental of the property, and also the hopeful prospects of the Society, agree to recommend that Dalkeith be made a Circuit without a member [?] and that an unmarried minister be asked for at next Conference without a pledge.

The South Street premises were by now nearly ninety years old, and either they were becoming unsatisfactory or else an expansionist phase was replacing the earlier contraction, for the first mention of a site for a new chapel—destined to be the short-lived Eskbank cause—occurs in 1877. Far from being financially sound, it may be noted that application was made in 1879 to secure an overdraft with the Commercial Bank, and the income from rents meant that a maximum of £50 was available as a contribution to the Edinburgh circuit board. This was in direct contravention of the agreement made some years earlier, and it is not surprising that the June 1879 Quarterly Meeting declared that in the circumstances it could not entertain the subject of responsibility for any part of the Dalkeith preacher's stipend. Moves towards the new chapel at Westfield Park, Eskbank, continued throughout 1882 and 1883. It was first proposed to open mission services there and close South Street for morning services and for afternoon Sunday-school, but eventually it was decided instead to try afternoon services at Westfield Park. Later in 1883, the District Meeting was to recommend that "the second minister in Edinburgh, appointed as Chairman's assistant, be withdrawn, but that the minister at Dalkeith be continued at present". This was very much the swan-song of the South Street premises, and in 1885 permission was finally given for the new chapel to be erected. Immediately before its opening in 1888, Mr. John Dennis, a local builder, offered the use of a mission-room at Westfield. With the opening of Eskbank, services at South Street ceased, but the Salvation Army later rented the premises for Sunday evening and week-night services. On occasion they were disorderly tenants, for complaints were received from the occupiers of the shops and houses nearby about the conduct of the crowd outside the chapel each evening and the marching and singing of the Army in the streets of the town. Despite this, the Salvationists continued to meet in South Street for a number of years.

The move to Eskbank was marred by an acrimonious dispute

regarding finance. Mr. White Millar, the solicitor, indicated that revenue from the old chapel could not legally be used for the support of the minister at Eskbank. However, Mr. Ormiston roundly declared that he could not concur with this view, and there was a majority of trustees who believed that they could continue as they had been doing, i.e. supporting Eskbank with moneys from South Street. The matter was raised again in 1889, when Mr. Black inquired if it was a fact that the minister had ceased to officiate in the South Street chapel, and stated that if such was the case it would be both unwise and illegal to use the funds arising out of this trust for the support of a minister officiating at Westfield Park. He wished that his protest against this being done be minuted, and the affair was then allowed to drop. During that year proposals were put forward to convert South Street into a house, but the scheme never materialized.

From 1888 until its final sale in 1960, the surplus revenue from the trust property was donated to the Nicolson Square circuit (the Edinburgh Mission circuit having separated in 1888). Initially these funds were given to support Eskbank, and later to the causes at Abbeyhill and Newcraighall. Early this century (1907) "Wesley Hall", as it came to be known, was leased to the "Brethren", and is still remembered with affection by the older Dalkeith residents. Their lease was not finally relinquished until 1956. By the early 1950s it was clear that the premises required considerable modernization, but the trust was informed that the whole property would be condemned by the (then) Burgh Council. Finally, in 1960, it was acquired by the Local Authority for £1,500, and subsequently demolished as part of a road-widening scheme.

Little can be learned of the affairs of the society from the surviving records. The parlous condition of the Edinburgh circuit in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as a result of the activities of Valentine Ward is clearly reflected in the state of affairs at Dalkeith, though Ward himself appears to have had little direct influence. During the ministry of Robert Melson (1812-14), the first of a series of deficiencies appears in the District Meeting minutes,²¹ together with the expenditure of £30 for furniture for Dalkeith. These indicate that on occasion this small cause boasted a married preacher. The following table shows the figures for three successive years.

DEFICIENCIES FOR DALKEITH, 1813-15

	1813			1814			1815		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Quartermage ...	16	16	0	16	16	0	16	16	0
Wife ...	16	16	0	16	16	0	16	16	0
Children ...	6	6	0	6	6	0	6	6	0
Servant ...	8	0	0	8	0	0	8	0	0
House Rent ...	10	2	0	10	11	6	18	6	6
Coal and candles ...	8	0	0	9	10	0	8	0	0

²¹ Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes. (Methodist Archives.)

This period of financial stringency was only temporary, for from 1816 to 1822 Dalkeith became financially independent. In 1823, George Marsland (then resident minister) was censured by the District Meeting for having married without permission, having then travelled only three years. In 1825 this same brother was noted as having temporarily left the ministry, but he re-entered later in the same year. His successor, Edward Ford, left the Connexion to go into business.

These temporary difficulties pale into insignificance compared with the debts of the Edinburgh circuit in the decade 1822-31. These have already been listed,²² but may with advantage be repeated here (see the table below). Since the Dunfermline preacher was withdrawn at the 1823 Conference, and Dunbar and Haddington comprised a separate circuit from 1812 to 1827 and then again from 1830, the circuit was reduced to the three chapels at Edinburgh, Leith and Dalkeith. The fragile condition of the circuit is thus evidenced, and it is not surprising to find the District Meeting recording in 1830: "The Edinburgh Circuit was still greatly embarrassed and was recommended to the Connexion."²³

ORDINARY DEFICIENCIES IN THE EDINBURGH CIRCUIT, 1822-31

Year	Quarterage			Wife			Children			Servant			Rent			Coal, &c.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1822	33	12	0	33	12	0	...	8	0	0	44	13	6	15	6	5		
1823	50	0	0	33	12	0	...	8	0	0	41	3	6	15	6	5		
1824	33	12	0	33	12	0	...	8	0	0	41	3	6	16	5	5		
1825	33	12	0	33	12	0	...	16	0	0	43	3	6	20	12	5		
1826	33	12	0	16	16	0	...	8	0	0	41	0	0	20	12	0		
1827	33	12	0	16	16	0	...	8	0	0	41	0	0	15	12	0		
1828	Total—£130																	
1829	33	10	0	33	10	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	0	0			
1830	33	10	0	33	10	0	...	...	...	15	0	0	9	10	8			
1831	33	12	0	33	12	0	...	...	...	15	0	0	7	16	10			

Things were not much better in 1839, as indicated in a letter from Jonathan Bates to Jabez Bunting:

Edinburgh May 23rd 1839

... Prior to my coming to this city, the financial affairs of this Circuit had regularly gone back so that a circuit debt of about £170 had been accumulated. At our second Quarterly Meeting, we had just enough money to pay the young man [presumably Joseph Watson at Dalkeith] his quarterage, the second preacher [at Leith] a portion of his, while for myself there was not a farthing.²⁴

However, four years later the situation had much improved, judging by two letters to Jabez Bunting written by Peter Duncan:

27 March 1843

... Things are still looking up in this Circuit. We have had indeed a falling off of members, arising from the failure of small country Societies, which in great measure consisted of English people, who have been

²² Hayes, *op. cit.*

²⁴ Methodist Archives.

²³ Edinburgh District Meeting Minutes.

forced to return home on account of the failure of employment. In Dalkeith, our prospects were never more pleasing. The chapel there will hold about 240 people. A year ago, the evening congregation amounted only to about 40, but the chapel is now well-filled and indeed I have seen it literally wedged and of the most respectable persons in this town. In the forenoon and afternoon, the congregations have increased, more than one-third. The number of members was 31; this quarter 42.

30 September 1843

... I was much afraid that Mr. Perks would be much discouraged in Dalkeith, exhibiting as it does such a contrast to the previous scene of his labours, but I am happily mistaken. He is delighted with his appointment and our truly excellent people there have given him a cordial Christian welcome. The Society in Dalkeith is a relic of the old Scottish Methodism and according to its numbers, I have never seen its equal. There has been considerable improvement there as to congregations. We have nearly thrice as many who attend chapel on the forenoon of the Lord's Day as we had two years ago and we are still looking upward.²⁵

This success proved to be only transient, for, as we have already seen, the resident minister was withdrawn at the 1852 Conference. Nevertheless, thirty-six years later the Scottish Relief and Extension Fund Report made the following comment :

In various parts of Scotland there are people now living who can tell of "glorious times" in that "upper room", when, as young men, John Maclean and G. T. Perks occupied the pulpit.²⁶

This account is best concluded with a list of the preachers who ministered to the Dalkeith society and a table of the membership. Whilst it is true that the numbers were always small, there were undoubtedly times when there was great optimism for the progress of the work. The later phases of the story are inextricably bound up with the Eskbank development, and it is hoped to deal with this at some future date.

ALAN J. HAYES.

²⁵, ²⁶ *ibid.* (The Rev. George T. Perks became President of the Wesleyan Conference in 1875.)

PREACHERS SERVING THE DALKEITH SOCIETY, 1786-1887

1786-8	Zachariah Yewdall	1809	William Tranter
1789	Robert Dall	1810	Joseph Brittain
1790	Thomas Vasey	1811	Robert Nicolson
1791	Samuel Botts	1812-13	Robert Melson
1792	Robert Johnson	1814	Valentine Ward
1793	John Doncaster	1815	John Bedford
1794	Alexander Cummins	1816	Thomas Bridgman
1795	Richard Waddy	1817	James Beckwith
1796	Joseph Cross	1818	Thomas Moss
1797	John Braithwaite	1819	
1798	William Fenwick	1820-1	Daniel M'Allum
1799	George White	1822	Richard R. Mole
1800	John Phillips	1823	George Marsland
1801-2	Arthur Hutchinson	1824	Edward Ford
1803	David McNicholl	1825	John Ward, jun.
1804	Joseph Kitchen	1826	John McLean
1805-6	James Lowry	1827	Edward Walker
1807-8	Edward Green	1828	William Wears

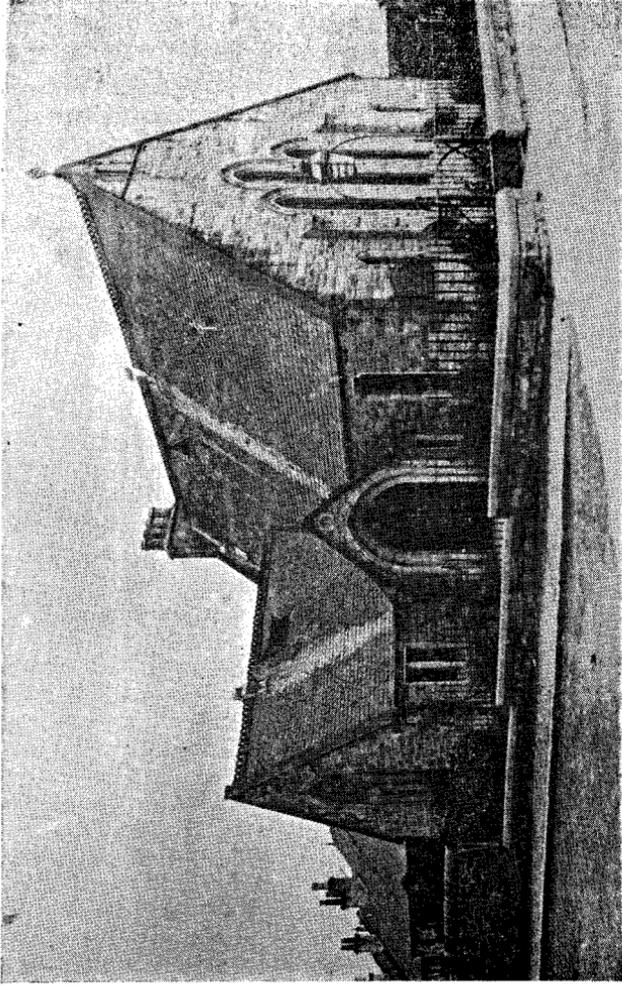
116 PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PREACHERS SERVING THE DALKEITH SOCIETY, 1786-1887—*continued*

1829	John McLean	1862	
1830		1863	
1831		1864	
1832		1865	
1833		1866	
1834	Thomas Thompson, jun.	1867	
1835-6	John Ryan	1868	
1837	John Egglestone	1869	Thomas Dinsdale (L.P.?)
1838-40	Joseph Watson	1870	
1841	Henry Hastling	1871	
1842	Edward Jones	1872	
1843-4	George T. Perks	1873	
1845	Thomas H. Hill	1874	George Woolsey (Hired L.P.)
1846	John Parsons		
1847-8	John Hay	1875	Alex. Mayes (Home Missionary)
1849-50	William L. Horton		
1851	Robert Brown	1876-9	Alex. Mayes
1852	<i>Minister withdrawn</i>	1880	William Done
1853-5	Humphrey Stevenson (Supernumerary)	1881-3	W. Arthur Labrum
		1884-5	Alfred S. Geden
1856-60	John McLean ..	1886	William Wood
1861		1887	Woodthorpe Baker

MEMBERSHIP OF THE DALKEITH SOCIETY, 1789-1887

<i>Year</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Members</i>
1789-1805	No records		1853	1	20
1806		24	1854	No record	
1807		29	1855	1	18
1808		25	1856	1	18
1809		15	1857	1	20
1810-11	No records		1858	1	23
1812		20	1859	1	24
1813		24	1860	No record	
1814-24	No records		1861	1	28
1825		30	1862	1	27
1826	3	33	1863	1	26
1827	3	43	1864	2	18
1828-9	No records		1865	3	21
1830	4	43	1866	3	28
1831-2	No records		1867	2	26
1833	5	38	1868	2	25
1834-5	No records		1869	2	21
1836	3	51	1870	1	17
1837	3	38	1871	1	18
1838	3	41	1872-3	Chapel closed	
1839		105	1874		11
1840	No record		1875	1	28
1841		35	1876	1	28
1842	3	30	1877	1	20
1843		43	1878	1	23
1844	3	38	1879	2	23
1845	3	28	1880	2	18
1846	3	29	1881	1	23
1847	3	31	1882	1	13
1848	3	51	1883	1	13
1849	5	53	1884	3	25
1850	5	55	1885	3	26
1851	4	30	1886	3	26
1852	No record		1887	4	21



ESKBANK METHODIST CHAPEL, WESTFIELD PARK
(Erected 1888; demolished c. 1965)

“HYMNS FOR CHILDREN”

FROM 1740 onwards John and Charles Wesley produced a variety of written materials for children. Their publications included hymns for specific occasions and collections of a more general nature. The earliest of the latter type of work appears to be an undated book entitled *Hymns for Children*—the only two known copies of which are to be found in the Methodist Archives.

Hymns for Children was produced in the popular size for chap-books in the eighteenth century, viz. 6½ by 4 in. The only distinctive feature is an ornamental rule on the heading of the first page which varies slightly between the two copies. There are 12 pages, but no title-page, and the details of author, publisher, place of publication, and date, are all missing. The contents fall into two parts: hymns and prayers. There are nine hymns—some numbered, others with specific headings. Seven of them are by Charles Wesley—five being taken from a group headed “Hymns for Children” in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1742), and two from *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740). One hymn is by Isaac Watts, first published in *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707), and one is by Samuel Wesley, jun., from his *Poems on Several Occasions* (1736). After the hymns there is a general “Exhortation” to prayer, and “Directions” to help the child with his prayers. Provision is made for morning and evening prayer-times; there is a separate prayer for bed-time, and there are graces for use before and after meals.

Very little has been written about *Hymns for Children*. Green, in the first edition of his *Bibliography*, placed it as No. 99 under 1746;¹ but in the second edition he raised doubts as to its authenticity.² Dr. Frank Baker, in an earlier volume of these *Proceedings*, describes the contents, and suggests that the book could have been produced by Charles Wesley in the mid-1740s.³ His case is based on the similarity of the ornamental rule to others printed in Wesley publications at that period, together with the sources of the hymns and the style of the prayers. More recently, Mr. A. G. Ives has suggested that the book might have been produced for use by the scholars of Kingswood School.⁴ This would imply a later publication date, possibly into the 1750s. To support his theory, Mr. Ives quotes a letter from Charles Wesley to Mrs. Jones of Fonmon Castle, who was the mother of one of the first pupils. In addition, he suggests that the use of the word “Governors” in the “Morning Prayer” was a possible reference to the masters in the school.

A critical assessment of the evidence presented by these writers must precede further consideration of the hymn-book.

¹ Richard Green: *The Works of John and Charles Wesley: A Bibliography* (1st edn., 1896), p. 49.

² *ibid.* (2nd edn.), pp. 249-50.

³ See *Proceedings*, xxxi, pp. 81-5.

⁴ A. G. Ives: *Kingswood School in Wesley's day and since* (1970), pp. 31, 35.

Green's revised opinion as to the authorship of *Hymns for Children* is of little help, for it does not appear to have arisen as a result of the examination of new evidence. Rather he felt that the lines

But if I die before I wake,
I pray to God my Soul to take⁵

from the prayer to be used "At lying down in Bed" were not likely to have been written by Wesley. As Dr. Baker in his article comments, this conclusion may well have been the result of a distaste for the eighteenth-century attitude to children and death.

Dr. Baker's article is helpful and important on the subject of printers' ornamental rules and the style of the prayers. However, a careful examination of the sources of the hymns shows that they had all been published in books by John and Charles by 1742. Thus they were available to any hymn-book compiler after that date. Therefore the supposition, based on the fact that two of the hymns are to be found in the earliest of Charles Wesley's manuscript volumes (dated 1740), that Charles Wesley was the compiler of *Hymns for Children*, must be questioned. Without further evidence to show that all the hymns had been written by 1740, and that before they were generally accessible to the public they were published in *Hymns for Children*, the manuscript only confirms Charles Wesley's authorship of two of the hymns in the collection. What is clear from the dates and sources of the hymns is that 1742 is the earliest possible dating for the hymn-book.

In the context of the letter in the Fonmon Papers, dated 29th January 1749/50,⁶ quoted by Mr. Ives, the reference by Charles Wesley to the publication of a hymn-book for the scholars would seem to be fairly conclusive. But this passing reference mentions no title, and as yet no other evidence appears to be available to show that such a book was ever published. A careful survey of the usage of the word "governor" by Puritans in general, within the Wesley family in particular, and by John and Charles in their writings, has produced no support for the idea that the term, in the context of the "Morning Prayer", may be taken to mean "teacher" or "master". This meaning is to be found, however, in the definitions given by Samuel Johnson in the second edition of his *Dictionary*.⁷ From Mr. Ives's evidence, the book may have been published in the early 1750s, but again, neither dating nor authorship can be confirmed.

In order to place the book within the context of Methodist history and education, further research into the external evidence and a closer examination of the contents was necessary.

A preliminary study of the places where children sang hymns in the eighteenth century was very revealing. Firstly, hymns were seen to have a clear educational value. For example, when John

⁵ *Hymns for Children*, p. 12.

⁶ Fonmon Papers (MSS) in the Glamorgan Archives.

⁷ Samuel Johnson: *A Dictionary of the English Language* (2nd edn., 1755-6).

Wesley visited the Moravians in Germany in 1738 he recorded in his *Journal* details of life at their centre at Herrnhut, including

AN EXTRACT OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF
THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN AT HERRNHUT, LAID BEFORE THE
THEOLOGICAL ORDER AT WIRTEMBERG IN THE YEAR 1733.

Point 12 contains the following :

Our little children we instruct chiefly by hymns; whereby we find the most important truths most successfully insinuated into their minds.⁸

Although John Wesley makes no comment on this statement, it is hardly likely to have escaped his notice.

The other important result of the preliminary work on hymn-singing was that it identified the settings in which such a book as *Hymns for Children* would be useful, narrowing them down to two: Methodist homes and Kingswood School. Each was considered as a possible setting for the book.

John Wesley's advice to Methodists on bringing up their children appears to be based in large measure on his reading of seventeenth-century Puritan writers and on his childhood experiences at Epworth rectory. There is a wealth of evidence as to the basis of spirituality in Methodist homes, for example in the writings of Richard Baxter, Philip Henry, and Joseph Allein. The times of prayer, the content of the prayer-time, and the use of catechetical methods with children were specified by Susanna Wesley in a letter to John.⁹ The devotional life was clearly seen to be important as the basis of the education of children in good Methodist homes.

At Kingswood School the time-table made provision for the boys' devotional life in a way which was almost identical with that recommended for use in homes.¹⁰ Sudden conversion experiences amongst the scholars were accepted as normal; misbehaviour was considered to be the work of the devil, which could only be countered by increased religious teaching. Again, the devotional life of the individual was of paramount importance.

In the study of *Hymns for Children*, each hymn was considered separately with reference to its metre, length, source, progression of ideas, and biblical allusions. Next, the progression of ideas from hymn to hymn was analysed. Finally, the response apparently required from the child using the book was noted. The prayers were assessed in the light of the contents of the "Exhortation" and the "Directions", and they were considered in relation to those elements of prayer which appear to have been characteristic of Methodist spirituality. Some necessary work on eighteenth-century linguistics was done, but there is scope for more extensive research in this area. In order to set the book into the context of Methodist education, a comparison was made with the theological content of John Wesley's

⁸ *Journal*, ii, p. 52.

⁹ Adam Clarke: *Memoirs of the Wesley Family* (1823), p. 264.

¹⁰ John Wesley: *A Short Account of the School in Kingswood Near Bristol* (1749), pp. 4-5.

Instructions for Children.¹¹ An attempt was also made to see whether the content of *Hymns for Children* bore any relationship to John Wesley's scheme of salvation as it applied to adults.

As a result of this study, what may be affirmed in regard to the date, the authorship, and the purpose for which *Hymns for Children* was produced? The book was intended for use with children; this is clear from the title and from the content of the "Exhortation" and the "Directions". The authorship of the hymns, and the fact that they, and the prayers, are in harmony with John Wesley's teaching in his *Instructions for Children*, makes a Methodist setting appropriate. Less certain are the publication date and the compiler of the book. The context for which it was designed would seem to be the controlling factor in any decision. However, evidence for the reasons for publication is conflicting.

There appears to be no external evidence to support the theory that *Hymns for Children* was published for use in Methodist families. The ornamental rule, by placing it in the 1740s, makes it too early for Charles to have compiled it for his own children. It is not mentioned in any lists of Wesley publications, and its use, unlike that of the *Instructions for Children*, does not appear to have been recommended by John.

Yet the arrangement of the contents, and the ideas contained in the hymns and prayers, would appear to meet the needs of parents requiring help with the devotional life of their children. For instance, the Wesleys advocated private devotions both morning and evening. *Hymns for Children* provides both a hymn and a prayer specifically designated for these times. When the remaining seven hymns are considered, it can be seen that they fall into a distinct pattern. If a hymn is allocated to each day of the week, beginning with Hymn I on Monday, then Hymn V, which has as its theme the Atonement, falls on Friday; the seventh hymn is entitled "Hymn for Sunday". Thus elements of an office-book are present. There is, however, no fixed order in which the material was to be used, so that additional hymns, prayers and readings could have been introduced, thereby increasing its flexibility.

The content of the hymns and prayers clearly reflects the same thought-forms and attitudes as are presented in the *Instructions*. There is support for John Wesley's scheme of salvation: the evil nature of man is presupposed; the redemptive power of Christ's atonement is central; "backsliding" is acknowledged; and the need for regular reflection, patience, and forgiveness, along with adoration and thanksgiving, are explicitly stated. For example, where the *Instructions* refer to the sin of Adam and Eve and the consequences for mankind—

They are all born in Sin and Guilt, and subject to Pain and Death . . .
We are all born proud, self-will'd, Lovers of the World, and not Lovers
of God¹²

¹¹ John Wesley: *Instructions for Children* (4th edn., 1749).

¹² *ibid.*, Questions 4-9.

—this is paralleled in the hymns :

Hide me, from all Evil hide,
Self, and Stubbornness, and Pride¹³

and

Let me cast the World behind,
All its Poms and Pleasures vain.¹⁴

From the commentary on the Fifth Commandment in the *Instructions* we have :

Shew all Lowliness and Reverence to your Father and Mother, and do whatever either of them bids you¹⁵

—and in the *Hymns* :

Meek and lowly may I be,
Thou art all Humility ;
Let me to my Betters bow,
Subject to thy Parents Thou.¹⁶

The prayer section, too, shows an equally clear parallel. For example, the statement from the "Directions" "Never omit Prayer Morning or Evening"¹⁷ was expressed in the earlier *Instructions* in the form "Never fail to pray to GOD, Morning and Evening".¹⁸ In the "Directions", evening prayer is to include reviewing the day: "Consider what Idleness or Unchastity, what Lying and Stubbornness you have been guilty of".¹⁹ Unquestionably this relates to a warning set out in the *Instructions* :

So you must always be punished for Lying, for calling Names, for Disobedience, or for striking any one. For you know, this is a Sin against GOD ; . . .²⁰

Many such parallels could be quoted, so that although not all sections of the *Instructions* are equally represented in *Hymns for Children*, there is nevertheless an obvious close relationship between the two books. Such a devotional manual would surely be acceptable in view of Joseph Allein's comment to the heads of households: "Get them the Help of a Form, if they need it, 'till they are able to go without it."²¹

The evidence for a setting in Kingswood School is rather different. In this case the primary evidence is the sentence "I am writing an Hymn book for the Scholars" in the letter from Charles Wesley to Mrs. Jones to which reference has already been made. This was dated January 1749/50 ; during the previous autumn there had been serious discipline problems with the older boys in the school. The provision of a book such as *Hymns for Children* could have been justified as part of the increased religious teaching which John Wesley might have been expected to prescribe in the circumstances. Yet the book is never mentioned in the lists of books used in the school—which is a curious omission if indeed it was introduced.

¹³ *Hymns for Children*, I, verse 7.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, Hymn II, verse 4.

¹⁵ *Instructions* . . . , p. 31.

¹⁶ *Hymns* . . . , I, verse 10.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁸ *Instructions* . . . , Section IV, Lesson IX.

¹⁹ *Hymns* . . . , p. 11.

²⁰ *Instructions* . . . , Section IV, Lesson XI.

²¹ See "A Counsel for Personal and Family Godliness", in John Wesley's *Christian Library* (1753), xxiv, p. 317.

Just as in private homes, so in the school context, *Hymns for Children* could have been used during the morning and evening periods set aside for private devotions. The flexible "daily office" approach would have been appropriate. The contents would have reinforced the teaching received by the boys, as *Instructions for Children* was used in the school. There is, however, a lack of anything which distinguishes it as having been produced specifically for school use. There is no mention of "masters" or "teachers"; and if the book was produced in response to a particular discipline problem, as the Fonmon letter might suggest, then a more overt reaction in the choice of hymns and the wording of the prayers might have been expected.

Private homes or Kingswood School? From the available evidence it is impossible to make any final decision. It seems likely that *Hymns for Children* was compiled by Charles Wesley, but the possible influence of John should not be discounted. A publication date between the mid-1740s and the early 1750s seems probable.

Whilst the work on this book was by no means exhaustive, what did emerge quite clearly was the importance of its educational role. It was assumed by the compiler of *Hymns for Children* that children could grasp adult religious concepts from an early age. This is in keeping with educational theory and adult views and attitudes to children in the middle of the eighteenth century. As a consequence, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the book would have met the children's real needs in terms of their religious development. Clearly its great strength, for Methodists, was the extent to which it may have assisted in transferring established patterns of thought and behaviour from adults to children. For there is no doubt that built into the book are just those elements of theology and piety which are generally considered characteristic of the Methodist movement in its early days. It is precisely these features of their life which the early Methodists would have been most likely to wish to preserve; and what better way of achieving their aim was there, than by instilling them in the next generation by means of easily-remembered hymns?

It seems that there is sufficient evidence to suggest that *Hymns for Children* could have been popular with adults. For whilst the contents would reinforce the direct religious teaching which they could give, it also solved the problem of how the children's private prayer-time was to be spent by providing a flexible framework adaptable for all ages. It is quite possible that this small devotional work had an influence out of all proportion to its size.

E. ANN BUCKROYD.

[The Rev. E. Ann Buckroyd is a Methodist minister in the Manchester and Stockport District. Before entering the ministry she was a teacher, initially of music and history, although she later specialized in remedial work. As part of her research into the educational role of children's hymn-books she is at present working on the 1827 Wesleyan *Sunday-School Hymn-Book*.]

NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

[All dates refer to 1977 unless otherwise stated.]

THREE meetings of the **Bristol** branch were held during the year, and at each a lecture was given: "Portrait of a Methodist convert: a personal glimpse of Methodist influence at the turn of the century", by the Rev. T. Mervyn Willshaw; "Three strands of Methodism in the Forest of Dean", by the Rev. George E. Lawrence, and "John Wesley in Modern Scholarship", by the Rev. Rupert E. Davies. Tribute was paid at the Annual Meeting to the late Mr. A. B. Sackett.

Bulletin: Two (unnumbered) received.

Secretary: Rev. Wilfrid J. Little, 5, Leyton Villas, Redland, Bristol,

Membership: 82. [BS6 6JF.

No report has been received from the **Cornish** branch.

Journal: Vol. 5 No. 1 received.

Secretary: Mr. C. J. Tromans, M.A., 17, Knight's Meadow, Carnon Downs, Truro, Cornwall.

Membership: 336.

THE **Cumbrian** branch has prospered over the year, and held its first Annual Meeting at Carlisle on 1st October, preceded by a lecture on the rise of Primitive Methodism given by the Rev. Stephen G. Hatcher. In addition to its *Journals*, the branch has brought out a detailed list of Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodist ministers who served in the county.

Journal: Nos. 1 and 2 received.

Secretary: Mr. W. Angus Ridley, 40, Woodlands Close, Stanwix, Carlisle,

Membership: 94. [CA3 9BS.

No report has been received from the **East Anglia** branch.

THE spring meeting of the **Lancashire and Cheshire** branch was held in May at Swinton, when Mr. Peter Facer lectured on the life of Sir William P. Hartley, under the title "Money from Jam". In June, a successful outing to Macclesfield was held, including visits to the Unitarian chapel and Christ Church. Following the business of the Annual Meeting in October, the Rev. C. Norman R. Wallwork spoke on the Lord's Supper in Methodism after 1791.

Journal: Vol. III. Nos. 5 and 6 received.

Secretary: Mr. E. A. Rose, B.A., 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde,

Membership: 143. [Cheshire, SK14 6LP.

THE **Lincolnshire** branch held its first meeting at Bourne in May, when the Rev. Dr. William Strawson spoke to a well-attended gathering on "The significance of Dr. Leslie Weatherhead as preacher and writer". Mr. Rex Russell, a branch-member, addressed the Annual Meeting at Nettleton in October, on aspects of Primitive Methodism in Lincolnshire.

Journal: Vol. III. Part 1 received.

Secretary: Mr. H. Jubbs, 3A, Church Road, Upton, Gainsborough, Lincs,

Membership: 113. [DN21 5NR.

THE **London and Home Counties** branch met twice. On Tuesday, 24th May, a pilgrimage round Wesley sites in the City was led by the Rev. Douglas A. Wollen. This preceded the annual Wesley Day service in St. Botolph's church, Aldersgate Street, at which the sermon was preached by

the Rev. N. Allen Birtwhistle. On Saturday, 1st October, the Annual Meeting was held at Southlands College, Wimbledon, when the Rev. Douglas S. Hubery gave a lecture entitled "Methodism, Education and Youth—an historical survey".

Bulletin: No. 16 received.

Secretary: Rev. William D. Horton, M.A., 6, The Drive, Sevenoaks,

Membership: 65. [Kent, TN13 3AE.

THE **Isle of Man** branch has been active in the celebration of the bicentenary of John Wesley's first visit to the island in 1777. A large crowd attended the bicentennial service in Castletown Square on Tuesday, 31st May, when the Rev. Reginald Kissack was the speaker. The branch has also been deeply concerned in the issue of four Manx stamps to mark the occasion. In August an outing to chapels in the south of the island was arranged, concluding at Union Mills.

Secretary: Miss A. M. McHardy, Zeerust, Clayhead Road, Baldrine,
Isle of Man.

THE spring meeting of the **North-East** branch was held jointly with the Independent Methodists of the Sunderland area as part of the centenary celebrations of the Christian Lay Churches (formed by a secession from the Primitive Methodists). The branch editor, Mr. G. E. Milburn, spoke and showed slides on the Lay Church origins.

A new venture for the branch was a residential week-end on Holy Island in June. The President of the Wesley Historical Society, Dr. John C. Bowmer, was "tutor in residence", and led sessions on some fundamental themes of Methodist history. The autumn outing found the branch exploring some of the remoter parts of Northumberland. Two places with particular Methodist associations visited were the Wesley stone at Saugh House and Bavington Hall, home of that (unique?) phenomenon, a Primitive Methodist squire, Robert Shafto.

The former Bishop of Ripon, Dr. John Moorman, spoke to the autumn meeting at Durham on the contrasts and comparisons between three men of God from diverse periods—St. Francis of Assisi, John Wesley, and Pope John XXIII. Representatives attended from the Northern Catholic History Society.

Bulletin: Nos. 27 and 28 received.

Secretaries: Mr. A. P. Champley, B.A., 121, Haydon Close, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2BZ.

Mr. G. E. Milburn, M.A., 8, Ashbrooke Mount, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR2 7SD.

Membership: 168.

THE **Plymouth and Exeter** branch held two meetings during the year. In April at Sidmouth, the branch chairman, the Rev. R. Keith Parsons, described the authors, composers, hymns and tunes in the *Methodist Hymn-Book* having associations with Devon. In November an open meeting was held at Paignton, when the Rev. Amos S. Cresswell talked about the sidelights of Methodist history that he has discovered, mainly in the Midlands.

Bulletin: Vol. IV. Nos. 2 and 3 received.

Secretary: Mr. Roger F. S. Thorne, C.Eng., 11, Station Road, Topsham, Exeter, Devon.

Membership: 80.

ONE meeting of the **Scottish** branch was held—at Woodlands, Glasgow, in September, when the Rev. Stephen G. Hatcher gave an illustrated talk on the origins of Primitive Methodism.

Journal: Nos. 9 and 10 received.

Secretary: Dr. D. A. Gowland, Department of Modern History,

Membership: 115. [The University, Dundee, DD1 4HN.

THE **Shropshire** branch has held three meetings. At Shifnal, the Shropshire county archivist, Mrs. M. T. Halford, spoke on the care of historical records. Mr. J. H. Lenton gave a detailed account of the Snedshill affair of 1851-2, when the society left the Wesleyan circuit and ultimately became part of the United Methodist Free Churches, at a meeting held in the Snedshill chapel. Finally, at St. John's, Shrewsbury, Mr. David Trumper looked in depth at Shrewsbury Primitive Methodism from 1820 to 1850.

Mr. Lenton continues his systematic recording of Methodist buildings in the county, and has added a second project, namely the compilation of a register of preaching plans extant in the county.

Bulletin: Nos. 8, 9 and 10 received.

Secretary: Rev. R. Ward Davies, B.D., 1, Clive Road, Market Drayton,

Membership: 50. [Salop, TF9 3DJ.

THE spring meeting of the **West Midlands** branch was held in conjunction with the Shropshire branch at Shifnal in March. In October, a meeting was held at Beckminster chapel, Wolverhampton, when the branch treasurer, Mr. S. C. Redhead, gave an interesting talk on the Wesley family.

Secretary: Mrs. E. D. Graham, B.A., B.D., 34, Spiceland Road,

Membership: 90. [Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1NJ.

IN May, the **Yorkshire** branch meeting was held in the Holmfirth circuit. Members assembling at the recently-built Holmfirth chapel were able to see an exhibition of circuit records before moving to Gatehead, where the Rev. Stephen G. Hatcher gave an illustrated talk on the introduction of Primitive Methodism into the West Riding. In September, Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge addressed the branch on the Protestant Methodists, commemorating the 150th anniversary of their foundation. This meeting was held at Mount View chapel, Sheffield.

Hull members were involved in the arrangements for the Conference Exhibition, as Bradford members will be in 1978.

Bulletin: Nos. 30 and 31 received.

Secretary: Mr. D. Colin Dews, B.Ed., 4, Lynwood Grove, Leeds,

Membership: 182. [LS12 4AU.

E. A. ROSE.

We gratefully acknowledge having received the following periodicals, some of which come to us on a reciprocal basis with these *Proceedings*.

The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, October 1977.

The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales (New Series), No. 1, 1977.

The Baptist Quarterly, January 1978.

The Local Historian, Vol. 12, No. 8.

Methodist History, October 1977.

WORLD METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

Residential Conference at Selly Oak

As mentioned on page 32 of the current volume of these *Proceedings*, the next British Section Conference will take place at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, from Tuesday to Friday, 25th to 28th July, on the general theme "Methodist Minorities and Methodists in the majority". The object of the conference is to examine the history of Methodism in a variety of social contexts, and to see how the theology and forms of church government bequeathed by John Wesley to his connexion have developed in different parts of Britain and in other parts of the world. Speakers will include Professor Walter Hollenweger of Birmingham University, the Rev. J. Munsey Turner, and Mr. A. F. Walls of the University of Aberdeen.

There will be a visit to Shropshire to see Madeley parish church and other places associated with John Fletcher, as well as parts of the Iron-bridge Museum.

The inclusive cost for residents will be £25, or for non-residents £2 (meals not included). Full programme details and other information will be available early in June, and those interested are invited to apply to me at 87, Marshall Avenue, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 2TW, for a registration form. JOHN A. VICKERS (British Secretary, WMHS).

THE ANNUAL LECTURE

in connexion with the Bradford Conference, 1978,

WILL BE DELIVERED IN

Ilkley Methodist Church, Wells Road,

On Monday, 26th June, at 7-30 p.m.,

BY

Miss JOANNA M. G. DAWSON.

Subject: "THE PEOPLE AT THE GRASS-ROOTS WITHIN THE
GREAT HAWORTH ROUND, 1738-91".

The chair will be taken by the REV. W. RUSSELL SHEARER, M.A.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held at the same church at **5-30 p.m.**

Mr. and Mrs. Rowland C. Swift kindly invite members of the Society to **Tea** in the schoolroom at **4-30 p.m.** It is desirable that all those who intend to be present at the Tea should send their names to the Rev. Ronald J. Bradwell, 48, Bolling Road, Ilkley, LS29 8QD (Tel. 607870), not later than Saturday, 24th June. The church can be reached from the Conference Hall by the A658 up Church Road by the Cathedral. Take left turn at large roundabout (where you will notice the "JCT 600" garage). The journey will take about 40 minutes by car. There is a 30-minute train service from Bradford (a 20-minute journey), the last return train being at 10 p.m. Buses 650 and 651, from Canal Road, near the Conference Hall, also go to Ilkley, but there is no return service during the evening.

This year's **Exhibition** will be found in the foyer of Bradford Central Library. Arranged by our Yorkshire branch, its theme will be "The other Haworth", and so will be related to the theme of the lecture.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1301. THE METHODIST ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH CENTRE.

Mrs. S. J. Himsworth, B.A. (Connexional Archivist) writes:

The Methodist Archives and Research Centre collection was transferred from Epworth House, City Road, London, to the John Rylands University Library of Manchester on permanent loan in the summer of 1977. Additions to the collection will be made from time to time out of the Book Fund at the discretion of the Connexional Archivist in consultation with members of the Archives and History Committee. Books and papers to be presented to the collection should be sent either direct, stating that they are for the MARC collection, or via the Connexional Archivist. The collection, and any such additions, will remain the property of the Methodist Church. The collection is now available for use by bona fide students over 18 years of age, who should write in advance to Mr. D. W. Riley, Methodist Archives and Research Centre Collection, John Rylands University Library of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PP, giving some indication of the material required. Inquiries on all relevant subjects may also be addressed to the Connexional Archivist, c/o Southlands College, Wimbledon Park Side, London, S.W.19 5NN.

The Wesley Historical Society Library, which since its emergency removal from the Wesley's Chapel crypt in 1972 had been stored alongside the Archives at Epworth House, is now deposited at Southlands College, and will constitute an alternative research centre for students unable to reach Manchester. [See note on page 128.—EDITOR.]

1302. METHODIST MEDALLIONS.

Mr. Simon H. Monks, of White Lodge, 20, Compton Avenue, Luton, Beds, writes:

I am making a study of Methodist medallions, and should be glad to have any information on the subject which any of your readers might be able to supply. I should also be pleased to hear of the present location of such items, and interested to purchase any which are not already in my own collection.

1303. WESLEY LANTERN SLIDES.

Mr. Fred Adcock, of 6, Cerne Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 6QQ, writes:

I have a number of duplicate slides of scenes and items associated with John and Charles Wesley. If any of your readers would care to exchange with me, I should be glad to hear from them. The slides are 35 mm. and black-and-white.

1304. ST. NEOTS CIRCUIT RECORD BOOK.

Mr. D. W. Bushby, of 2, Little Barford Road, Eynesbury, St. Neots, Cambs, PE19 2SA, writes:

Notes and Queries 1293 in the June 1977 *Proceedings* regarding the Bedford circuit record book prompts me to say that I have just completed a copy of the earliest surviving book of the St. Neots circuit. St. Neots was originally part of the Bedford circuit, the St. Neots circuit being formed in 1800. The earliest circuit book covers the years 1813 to 1837. As well as St. Neots itself, there are several other societies whose first connexions were with the Bedford circuit. Apart from this, the book is of interest as showing the successes and failures of a small rural circuit in the early years of the nineteenth century. I can supply copies (pp. 42) for 60p. plus 25p. for postage and packing in the UK.

1305. A WATER-COLOUR OF EPWORTH OLD RECTORY.

Mr. R. G. Kendall (Warden of Epworth Old Rectory) writes :

An entirely new aspect of Epworth Old Rectory is shown in a water-colour by John Hurst which now hangs in that house. The scene includes the rear of the building and the eastern end, and shows the dormer windows of the upper floor where "Old Jeffrey's chamber" is located. In the foreground is a field believed to be all that is left of Samuel Wesley's glebe farm. A limited edition of 300 prints is on sale at the Old Rectory at the reasonable price of £2 75p. (unmounted). Anyone interested should write to The Warden, The Old Rectory, Epworth, Doncaster, DN9 1HB. John Hurst is a local artist who, as a boy in his parents' home within sight of the Old Rectory, used to play in the rectory garden. The painting has been admired by many visitors, and prints have already found their way into homes in many countries.

Methodist History for October 1977 contains an article by Dr. Fredrick E. Maser entitled "John Wesley's Only Marriage: an examination of Dr. Frank Baker's article 'John Wesley's First Marriage'", followed by a reply by Dr. Baker, "Some Observations on John Wesley's Relationship with Grace Murray". (See *Proceedings*, xxxvi, pp. 110 f. for a review of Dr. Baker's original article.) Dr. Maser's point is that Wesley accompanied the *de præsenti* marriage with certain conditions which remained unfulfilled, and so destroyed the contract.

In the same issue there is a study of "The Reaction of British Methodism to the Civil War and Reconstruction in America", by W. Harrison Daniel, also an article by W. B. T. Douglas on "George Whitefield: the man and his mission".

Copies of *Methodist History* may be obtained from the editor at Box 488, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, 28745, USA. The annual subscription is \$7 (or \$12 for two years), and is payable only in US dollars direct to Lake Junaluska.

The *Research Bulletin*, 1977 of the Institute for the Study of Worship and Religious Architecture of the University of Birmingham carries a 26-page article by one of our members, the Rev. Dr. John F. Butler, entitled "Methodist Architecture in relation to Methodist Liturgy". This is an article which is full of sound common sense about our Methodist "way of doing things" (the true meaning of "liturgy" as "the work of the people"), and is worthy of a wide circulation. Copies of the *Bulletin* may be obtained, price £1 30p. plus 30p. postage, from the above-named Institute, University of Birmingham, Box 363, Birmingham, B15 2TT.

The Wesley Historical Society Library

WE are glad to announce that after being out of use for nearly six years, our Library has now been housed in congenial surroundings at Southlands College, Wimbledon Park Side, London, S.W.19. Students wishing to use the Library for research should apply to the Librarian, Rev. Kenneth B. Garlick, Wesley House, 1, Chester Road, Wanstead, London, E.11 2JR, for a reader's ticket (free to members of the Wesley Historical Society; £1 to non-members)—applications to be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. It is hoped later to re-establish arrangements for the borrowing of books by post.