

THE ENGLESEA EXTRA

20TH MAY 2020: 9TH EDITION

PRICE: SUN HAT OR KNOTTED HANDKERCHIEF

STRANGE TIMES

As Project Director I guess I shouldn't have favourite artefacts – it feels a bit like suggesting one has a favourite child! Nonetheless, as a passionate crafter and seamstress (I prefer the term 'sewer' but that has led to some misunderstandings in the past!) I am drawn to the textiles in the collection; the vibrant silks of the banners, the embroidered cotton of the christening gown, the woven fabric of the tiny dolls from a missionary returning from China, the intricately sewn samplers and tapestries – but ultimately it's the stories that they tell which draw me in. It's the story of the wedding dress, part of the Hodgson-Field collection at EB, worn by Miss Helen Clements when she married Rev George Hodgson to just days before leaving on a boat to Nigeria to begin life as a missionary's wife, that resonates with my own story; we married 5 days before Rob started training for the ministry at Queens'! I was delighted then, when we secured funding to have the wedding dress conserved, and the work is now complete. Here are the before and after



photos, something to look forward to seeing when we finally return to the museum.

On that note, we still have no idea of when we might return, but rest assured, we are already thinking how we might be able to do so, ensuring that social



distancing advice is followed and that all areas are safe for staff, volunteers and visitors, As soon as things become clearer, we will of course be notifying all volunteers for your thoughts.

Don't forget our Heritage service via Zoom this Sunday 24th at 3pm. Tim and I are also contributing to the YouTube service produced by the Dane and Trent circuit this Sunday, because we were due to be sharing in worship at Mow Cop before the quarantine. If you follow this link, you should find the service uploaded there by Sunday morning:

https://m.youtube.com/channel/UC_Dwva7qONxyALmknFrowQ

If you can watch this service before we meet together at 3pm, Tim will be making reference to it, but don't worry if you're not able to!

Finally, there will be no Englesea Extra next week – the staff are taking a week's annual leave to rest and reinvigorate ourselves! We will pray on Friday at noon, not formally but quietly in our own time and space. We will return on Wed 3rd June with a vengeance...

Every blessing Ruth

Reminiscences of the Research

Director

Here is the second half of Tim's research into the arrival of Primitive Methodism to Chester and Saughall:

Many of the itinerant preachers who came to lead services and mid-week class and prayer meetings were very temporary, some staying as little as 6 months, others up to two years at the most for much of the first half of the nineteenth century. Only one stayed three years in exceptional circumstances. Many of those who served in Chester in the 1820s came from the Burland circuit, covering much of West and South

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Cheshire. Many of them were native to the area or across the border in Flintshire or neighbouring Shropshire. Most were young converts, often in their late teens and unmarried. Most were farm workers or related to agriculture, or craftsmen, shoemakers and the like. They served a short apprenticeship as local preachers and then were sent to their stations to commence their ministry. Many had to cover great distances for three or more preaching appointments on a Sunday.

William Holt was the minister in the circuit when Saughall had its first chapel established in 1831, a cottage subsequently known as Dorina on Church Road, occupied in the 1960s by Mr and Mrs Joe Reynolds. Before that the Primitive Methodists had met in a cottage near The Towers. William Holt wrote in the PMM that "On Sunday 15th January 1832, our new chapel at Saughall was opened for divine worship, by Brothers Wedgwood and Bateman from the Burland Circuit. This chapel is eight yards long, six and a half yards wide, and twelve feet high to the square. The whole expense including a coal house amounts to about £112. This chapel is an ornament to the village; the congregations are good and the Lord is reviving his work." He wrote again in the summer of the increase of work in the circuit: "backsliders are healed, wanderers are reclaimed, and the preachers, leaders and members in general are seeking after holiness of heart and expecting a more general revival ... the preaching places have been crowded to excess, sinners have cried for mercy, and the meetings could not be concluded till eleven or twelve o'clock at night." In another article described the "holy fire burning in the circuit and several

PRICE: SUN HAT OR KNOTTED HANDKERCHIEF of the adjacent villages have caught the flame." "The barren places are becoming fruitful and the rough places made plain". On the 2nd September he recorded that at Saughall: "The Lord was with us and we rejoiced together. Our new chapel here has been a blessing. It is well attended and souls have been converted in it." A month later on a Sunday afternoon they held a love feast which was the occasion of a lively meeting.

The 1832 chapel was freehold, held on the connexional deed deposited with William Vickers one of nine trustees who included E Williams JP of The Croft, Thomas Langford, James Shone, Thomas Whitley, Thomas Hughes, William Jones, Richard Hallows, and Richard Frodsham. At that time the population of the village was 480 of which 48 (10%) were PM members. The chapel could seat 108, of which 27 were rented pews and 81 free seating. Of the £120 spent on the building of the chapel, they had a debt of £87 to pay off. The rented pews, six of them, cost £15/15/6d at some later stage. By 1863, when they came to build a new chapel they had reduced the debt on the original chapel to £5.

So what do we know of the chapel and its members in the early 19th century? Bagshaw's Directory of 1850 records that there were two nonconformist chapels (a Primitive Methodist and a (Welsh) Calvinistic Methodist, later called an independent or congregational chapel, and that the Baptists were creating a small chapel on Hermitage Road, also called the Church of Christ. Sadly the Ecclesiastical Census of 1851, the only ever national listing of (supposedly) all churches and

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chapels, their date of establishment, numbers of sittings and attendances on the Census date in March of that year, fails to record entries for Saughall. The only Anglican presence in the village was that of the National School created at the expense of Thomas Wedge until the building of All Saints later in the century. Of the 500 inhabitants, the more substantial landowners, farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen were listed. Of these The following have been identified from the Circuit membership records as beings PMs. Prominent amongst these was the patriarch, Ephraim Sadler described as a farmer (though as an annuitant in the 1851 Census) along with James Sadler his grandson. Also listed were the farmers Thomas Shepherd, Joseph Corbin and George Shone who had smallholdings in the village. Thomas Johnson lived at Parkgate House. Robert Carter was listed as grocer and baker, Robert Jones as wheelwright and William Vickers, original trustee and occupier of land on which the new chapel was to be erected, a bricklayer.

The first membership list we have is that of 1838, soon after the first chapel was built. Thomas Langford, William Jones and James Shone were listed as class leaders. All told, there 27 members and 8 on trial, a total of 35. By 1840 this had risen to 43. By the 1850s and 60s, this number rose to the upper 50s and 60s, making Saughall the second largest society in the circuit. The Chapel schedules in the circuit records record 68 members in 1859 with over 100 attending chapel and 30 in the mid-week service. That necessitated the building of a new chapel opened in 1865. But the growth was halted in the late nineteenth century.

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The membership rolls record when members were sick and unable to attend or when they died or were removed i.e. migrated elsewhere. But it also recorded when members had to be struck off, for a variety of reasons. Some lost faith (doubtful), some fell away from the high moral standards required for members (as with Samuel Willey removed in 1838 for drunkenness} when they were recorded as “fallen” or “neglect”.

Saughall as well as being part of the Chester Circuit was part of the Manchester District of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Occasionally there was a District meeting held in Chester, as in 1843 when the Chair wrote of the gathering at the Cross where all formed as hollow circle and sang and prayed. “Brother W. Garner from a flight of stairs (by St. Peter’s?), delivered a short address. Then there was a grand procession towards the camp ground. The inhabitants conducted themselves in a very orderly manner and seemed rather disposed to oblige us than to offer any annoyance ... highly creditable to the ancient and dignified city of Chester.” The camp meeting was held in a field (probably in Boughton) where 5 or 6,000 souls were present. Then in the evening a love feast was held in the chapel nearby in Steam Mill Street. The Chair concluded his report: “Notwithstanding the protracted and severe commercial distress by which the district has been afflicted, we have the pleasure of reporting an increase of 940 members for the year.” In July 1854 similar events were held on a Sunday reported by Ambrose Kirkland. This time there were 4 or 5,000 persons present.

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Saughall Methodist chapel today, rebuilt in 2013

We know that there were Methodists in Saughall listed in 1790 who were Wesleyans, attending the chapel in the city or the preaching places around. These included Charles and Mary Done, David Price, Sarah Yoxhall, Margaret Rigby, Ed and Martha Thornton, Silvester Warrington, Benjamin Hancock, Jane Jones, Ann Williams and Catherine Price. Much more work needs to be done to establish whether any or many of these, defected to the Primitive Methodists. The family names suggest many did.

Tim

FROM MARGARET:

Magic Lanterns: Part One

Many, many years ago, when there were no moving pictures as we know them today, people watched magic lantern shows. The magic lantern and slides were used for amusement, when funny slides were shown and children watched stories told with the use of the magic lantern in Sunday schools. Sometimes these stories were light hearted

PRICE: SUN HAT OR KNOTTED HANDKERCHIEF such as the stories of `Cock Robin` and often they showed pictures of the times linked to stories that were often sad. We used to show the story of `Jack's Little Treasure`, at the museum a few years ago. The picture of a rich person's house in Victorian times was actually the last slide of that story.

We have already looked at some of the differences between poor and rich people during those earlier days and here is a magic lantern slide showing a lodging house; that is a house where people actually paid to spend a night in one of the rooms. Here Jack and his friend are saying their prayers before going to sleep for the night.



Can you remember how we can tell that this is a picture taken from a magic lantern slide? You can see the shape of the slide and then there is a lot of dark and blue colouring round the edges.



We have a variety of magic lantern slides at the museum.

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Some really do look like action shots for instance, one has a man falling off a chair and another has the candle being blown out at the end of the day. The ones in the picture here have handles on them so that special effects could be used to make the whole thing even more amazing to the Victorians. Hopefully you will be able to visit and see them when the museum is open again and you can visit safely.

The magic lantern was also known by its Latin name, 'lanterna magica' - it must have seemed like magic to the people all those many years ago. They would not have seen anything quite like it before.

Here we have a very elaborate magic lantern.



Some were much simpler than this but they were all truly amazing in their time. They were invented in the 1660's and at first they were lit by candle light! Later better quality and intensity of light was achieved but sometimes the methods used were dangerous and could cause fires. The one we used at Englesea Brook was converted so that it could be powered by electricity. Some had

PRICE: SUN HAT OR KNOTTED HANDKERCHIEF a single lens and other more expensive ones had two or even three lenses and three light sources. These were called biunial and triunial magic lanterns.

Tune in next time to see how to make your own Magic Lantern!

***** STOP PRESS *****

If you would like to nominate Englesea Brook as a charity to win one of Ecclesiastical Insurance Movement for Good £1,000 awards it's quick and easy to do. The more nominations we get, the greater the chance of EB winning! Follow this link:

https://www.ecclesiastical.com/movement-for-good/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw2PP1BRCiARIsAEqv-pTEEumJ3_maahSD1JXcELNWLXLcre4AaaychB00QF-xE9wKwjzu59MaAheCEALw_wcB

The only key bit of information you need to know is our Charity Number i.e. 1132237 (The search button then automatically brings up our charity name: 'The Methodist Church – Chester and Stoke on Trent District', because we are a District Project). I put 'Heritage Arts' as the type of charity out of the limited choice of alternatives. It only takes a minute or two to complete & submit. It needs to be done **before May 24th.**

The money would almost pay for new security system in the chapel and museum, which we think is still the one put in when the chapel was converted, in 1987!

Many thanks!

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Geoff's Jottings

My prims passed a milestone on Sunday - we now have exceeded 11,000 pages on the site!

That is a phenomenal achievement, so many of us value it immensely as a resource. I note that between yourself and Chris, you have contributed 7,700 of those pages! On behalf of us all, a huge Thank You. Ed.

Chris's Conundrums

Here are the answers to last week's questions; did you manage to find them on MyPrimitiveMethodist website?

Which Cambridgeshire chapel opening resulted in magistrates being less busy and less liquor being sold?

Answer: Brampton

Which County Durham Prim society met in a tripe shop in Ann Street (amongst other places) before they opened their own chapel in 1861?

Answer: Whitby Street, West Hartlepool.

And so to this week's mini research project:

Which County Durham society stretched themselves so much to build their new chapel that when it was first completed, they couldn't afford pews or other basics?

And whilst we are in County Durham, can you name one of the four chapels/preaching places that reported themselves in the 1851 census as shared between the Primitive and Wesleyan (one Wesleyan Reform) branches of Methodism?

Becoming More Primitive

Rev Helen Kirk, our District Chair, is known to many of us from her time in this District as a probationer and at Holmes Chapel. We are delighted she's back and are grateful to her for her support as Chair of the Englesea Brook Executive. Here she shares her thoughts about 'Becoming more Primitive'

There is an old joke: 'How many Methodists does it take to change a

lightbulb?' Answer: 'Change??!!'



For all of the years I have been involved in the Methodist church we have talked of the need to change and yet have struggled to do so. As a probationer minister in Cheshire 23 years ago I led worship for the first time at a small chapel and was told proudly by one of the six members of the congregation that everything was exactly as it had been when he had been baptised some 85 years ago!

And yet in the last 8 weeks everything has change for us as a society and a church. We have very quickly adapted to the need for social distancing (if you have been lucky enough to go out for walks you will be familiar with the 'Covid dance' which enables people to remain 2m apart whilst walking along the same pavement!) constant hand washing, face coverings, Zoom meetings and online worship. We

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have also as a society rediscovered gardening, cooking from scratch, giving time to our children, walking, keeping in touch and caring for our neighbours.

The question we all face now: is this a blip to be looked back on or an opportunity to be the church and society we have always hoped we might be?

Many have said to me that they are rediscovering God now their lives are not filled with activity and events and all the things that we do to keep the church going. This time has enabled many of us to reflect on what matters most and on who we are. Maybe this is where Englesea Brook offers some insights?

The underlying question for many today has become 'Who are we?' As keepers of the Primitive Methodist story we know our answer: Primitive Methodists were proud of the simplicity and authenticity of their worship; they believed that everyone – whatever their social status, qualification or gender – had the capacity to bring God's word to others; that buildings were not essential for faith to flourish; that prayer must lead to a committed action to transform the life of the poorest; that Christianity had to partner politics if the least were to be lifted and injustices challenged. Primitive because they knew what mattered the most.

Perhaps as we may begin to emerge from the Covid 19 crisis and seek to discern a way forward for ourselves as a Church and a society our primitive forbears may have

PRICE: SUN HAT OR KNOTTED HANDKERCHIEF much to teach us. Simplicity, authenticity, equality, people not property or entitlement; scripture and social justice entwined so that God's word is freed from the confines of our pulpits to challenge and transform communities.

Maybe, just maybe we all need to become a little more primitive.

Dates for your diary

Next heritage talk via Zoom:

Saturday 6th June - 11am

Dispelling the myths: Church and Faith in the Great War

Led by Rev Dr Stuart Bell.

A zoom invitation will be sent out a few days prior to the event.

Sat 20th June

An EXTRA Heritage talk by Andrew Pickering. Watch this space for more details!

Jane's Quiz Time:

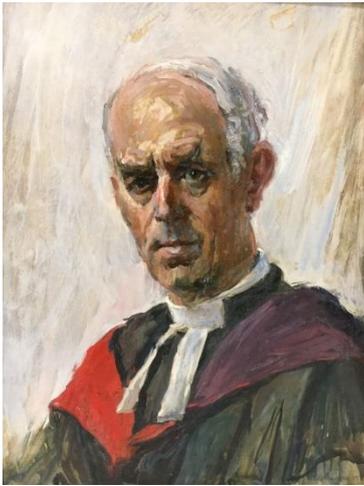
Last edition, our picture clue was the Harmonium from Filey Chapel in Yorkshire which is now taking pride of place in the New Store.

Also posted previously on Facebook was a picture of mincemeat jars from a certain preserve company in Liverpool.

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Can anyone tell me what links this fine-looking gentleman to the owner of the company?

Friday Prayers at Noon

We continue to come together wherever we are, at noon on Fridays to pray.

Tomorrow the National Prayer Initiative 'Thy Kingdom Come' begins. For more information, follow this link:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/thy-kingdom-come/>

We will close our prayer time together on Friday using this prayer for Aldersgate Sunday:

God of overwhelming grace, you ignited the spark of your grace in John and Charles Wesley and a passion for holiness, justice and sharing your great love with others.

Warm our hearts that we may trust in you.

Renew our conviction and inspire us to embrace new opportunities even in difficulty.

Pour out your spirit on your people that we may be united in your love and ready to share hope with the world through Jesus who is one with you. Amen

Last week instead of a Wordsearch I threw down the gauntlet to see how many words people could produce from the letters in ENGLESEA BROOK. By the looks of things Angela and Tim have not slept for several days! They came up with a massive 270 words! Well done chaps, get some sleep now! Or Not!

This week I have been pondering that we have so many wonderful Margaret's within our Englesea Brook family. So this week how many words can you come up with from the letters in 'FIVE MARGARETS'? Normal Scrabble rules apply regarding no proper nouns. Might I suggest that the words are at least 4 or more letters long?