

Englesea Extra

No. 63: Wednesday October 4th 2023

Price: charity

Strange Times

A belated 'Happy New Year' to you all. I'm sure many readers of Strange Times will have experienced, either as circuit stewards, lay workers, treasurers, church stewards, musicians, deacons, presbyters, and all Methodist posts in between, 'September madness' as the new Methodist year begins. It's been no exception at Englesea Brook, hence this double edition of the Extra for Sept and October.

The Root and Branch exhibition 'How 5 shillings, faith and belief inspired the beginning of the Probation Service' was launched in August, and the response has been wonderful. By the time you read this, it will have moved to its next location – the details of where you can visit the exhibition near you can be found on the website linked to the exhibition:



<https://rootbranchexhibition.wordpress.com/venues-and-dates/>.

It has been particularly heartening to see how Probation Officers have responded: a Service often overlooked and as a report published only last week confirmed, underfunded and under-staffed. Sonia, the former Chief Probation Officer for England and Wales, whose visit to Englesea Brook back in 2021 was the reason for this partnership, saw the potential of reminding Probation officers of their heritage story to rejuvenate a tired, disillusioned and disenchanted service. And therein is the potential of our Methodist story when we are feeling jaded and disheartened – particularly at the end of September! So come and be inspired and revived – there's always cake here too....

At Synod we also launched our appeal for new volunteers – with our unique video: [click here to be amazed!](#) Again, we have been delighted with the response, and 4 new volunteers will be joining us

in various roles. However, the role of treasurer remains unfilled. John Percival who has diligently served as treasurer for many years is keen to hang up his calculator (!) so if you know anyone who might be interested in working with us – on the understanding that the wearing of an alpaca mask is entirely optional – please direct them to our website for more information. <https://engleseabrook.org.uk/treasurer-wanted/>

Finally I hope you enjoy the articles in this edition of Englesea Extra, including one from a visitor from Canada, who returned home to follow up his family connections to Primitive Methodism.

Every blessing

Ruth

Pause for thought

Truth is not only violated by falsehood; it may be equally outraged by silence.

-Henri Frederic Amiel, philosopher and writer (1821-1881)

A Canadian family story

In May this year, Dr Charles Nienkirchen organised a trip to Englesea Brook. Charles is Professor Emeritus of Christian History and Spirituality at Ambrose University, Calgary, Alberta in Canada. Here he writes about his visit to Englesea and the UK

Now here's some Primitive Methodist residue from my Wesley's itinerary that brought my group to Englesea Brook that may be of some interest to you. When I crafted the itinerary, I wanted also to give attention to two,



1: Cotton Amy, his wife and daughter c. 1860 (1904). If you're interested, share our joy and check out the following link:

<https://archive.org/details/oldtimemethod00hoppuoft/page/208/mode/2up>

Go to pp. 209, 210 and you will note the following:

1. p 209- mentions the Peel and Wellesley mission, 'especially the Bethel appointment in Pilkington, now a part of the Alma circuit'. Further down, the statement is made that those from Cornwall and Devonshire 'make splendid Methodists'
2. p.210- gives a glowing tribute to the piety of both Cotton Amy and his wife as well as mentioning their daughter and two sons, Thomas and Richard.

what I called, 'Back to Wesley' movements - the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists - as a way of addressing the question, 'What happens when renewal needs renewal?' There was also some family history connection with one of these movements, the Bible Christians, the ground zero for which was the village of Shebbear in Devon which we also visited. My wife and I know a lot about them because her ancestors were Amys from Cornwall who became Bible Christians, whether in Cornwall or after they arrived in Canada (specifically Southern Ontario) to which they emigrated, we're not sure. I arranged a stop in our itinerary at St. Teath in Cornwall which allowed my wife to stand beside the still to be read gravestone of her great X 4 Amy grandparents of which she is a 7th generation descendant. That was genealogical ecstasy for her. :-)

In 1844, two Amy brothers, Moses and Cotton, left economically depressed Cornwall to go to Canada seeking a better future. Before coming to the UK on the Wesleys tour we knew much about the connection between the Bible Christians and the line of descendants that has flowed from Moses Amy, my wife's direct ancestor who settled in the area of Exeter, Ontario near her home village of Crediton (both places named after their counterparts in the UK).

But Ruth, here's WHAT WE DIDN'T KNOW! Cotton Amy (the other brother), to whom we hadn't given much attention as he wasn't my wife's direct ancestor and had settled in a different location in southern Ontario, **became immersed in Primitive Methodism**. We have just recently read a glowing tribute to the PM piety of him and his wife in the book by Mrs. R. P. Hopper, *Old-Time Primitive Methodism in Canada*.



2: Moses and Mary Amy c. 1861

And so as it turns out, my wife's Amy ancestors were spiritually renewed by two 'Back to Wesley' movements, the Bible Christians AND the Primitive Methodists. Fortunately, without knowing anything about the Amy-Primitive Methodist connection prior to going to the UK on the Wesleys tour, I had woven the Primitive Methodists into the script of the itinerary including a visit to the best PM Museum in the country at Englesea Brook where we heard Tim's excellent lecture on Primitive Methodism. How fortuitous was that !

As I write, my wife has gone to Ontario to visit her family and today she will go to Elora, Ontario to visit the pioneer cemetery where the tombstones of Cotton Amy and his wife and some members of his family can still be seen.

We thought you might like to know about this which has even further deepened our joy at having been able to come to Englesea Brook and gain such an excellent exposure to 'the Prims' as you call them. Moreover, I included the postcards of the original pics of the Mow Cop camp meeting which I purchased in your gift shop, in an Amy history binder that I prepared for my wife to take and show to her family, most of whom have little if any awareness of the depth and intensity of the spiritual renewal entwined with their Amy family roots. Sections of the binder are given to the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists so my wife's

siblings can have a sense of what they were all about.

What do you think of this? :-)

The annals of both biblical and immigration history show that God, through the circumstances of life, moves and relocates people so that he can reveal himself to them in a new way for the sake of their salvation. And in the difficulties that often accompany their new settings, they must call to him for assistance and the strength to persevere in a manner they have never done before.

Relics beneath foundation stones.

John Anderson taps into our collective knowledge:

I have a document recording the laying of the foundation stone of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Burslem in 1870. It says inter alia that

"There is also in the bottle – A lock of hair of the Rev. John Wesley M.A. – A small piece of wood being part of the coffin of the Rev. J. Wesley – A small piece of the shroud of the Rev. J. Wesley."

Why? Extraordinary as this might seem, the reason for doing this, albeit subconsciously in the minds of those who did it, may have been similar as to why saints relics were put in the altars of medieval churches!

The practice of putting articles in bottles in cavities beneath the foundation stones of buildings was not in itself unusual and it would be interesting to know if there is any record of Primitive Methodist examples and if so what was put in the bottles.

Once upon a time

Rev. David Leese tells the recent story of the Ilkeston Circuit Primitive Methodist Preachers Minute Book: 1852-1864

Once upon a time—well the beginning is fine, but the story does not have a happy ending.

From time to time as a result of internet surfing items have been seen which are of public interest, and should properly be in public archives for others to access. Such items have included deed documents for chapels and trustee forms. Other than drawing the attention of the sellers to this (which I suspect has not always been appreciated) I have not taken any direct action. However during the first week of August 2023 The Saleroom website included an item, lot 290, due for a Nottingham auction on 15 August. The item was the Local Preachers minute book for the Ilkeston Primitive Methodist Circuit 1852-1864. It carried a guide price of £80-£120.

My first step was to register for the auction and place a nominal bid, initially of £20. The question was what to do next.

We fortunately have District Archivists, and I contacted Mr John Crofts who holds this position for the Nottingham and Derby district. He personally approached the auctioneer explaining that the document was one of public interest, but the auctioneer's response was that he had been asked to auction an item, and he had no valid reason not to.

Philip Thornborow, former archivist, suggested we contact Derbyshire Records Office as the auctioneer's item description as 'Minutes of the Quarterly Meeting' was incorrect, the item being the Quarterly meeting of preachers, and the Records Office catalogue stated that the Quarterly Meeting minutes were in their care. Further discussion with colleagues raised the question that the item might be one that had been stolen or lost from their collection, and so Derbyshire Archives were approached. They quickly and helpfully replied that they did consider it a document of public interest, that it had not been previously deposited as part of their archives, and that they wished to have the item for their collection. They asked what we were going to do with the minutes if we bought them-- our response was to give it them, the County archives. By this time John Crofts and myself had increased our bid to £40-- £20 each.

Derbyshire Archives have no budget, but they placed a bid at the guide price level, and asked the two of us if we were prepared to donate our proposed bid to the Derbyshire Archives and this we agreed to do.

Auction Day did not have a happy outcome, The Derbyshire Records office had bid £150, but the hammer price was £180. They have asked the auctioneer to pass on their details to the buyer, so they know where they are. Their experience though is that auctioneers are reluctant to do this.

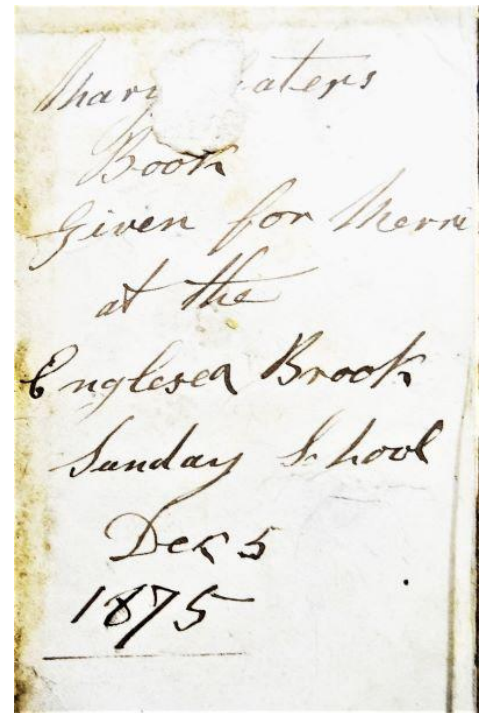
Randle's rummagings

To state the obvious, the Museum of Primitive Methodism is based at Englesea Brook Chapel, but what do we have in the collection relating to this small Cheshire hamlet and its chapel, which was built in 1828 and extended four years later? There are two pine chairs which sat by the communion table and a bible which was presented to the chapel in 1927 in memory of Thomas Whittaker, also a marble font which was given in memory of Mary Procter, who died in 1910, aged 39, and is buried in the churchyard here.



We also have three PM hymn books and four bibles which were presented as Sunday School prizes, the oldest being the hymn book presented to Mary Gater in 1875, together with a bible she received. Thomas Whittaker signed one of the other bibles as Sunday School superintendent.

There is a paper cutting about the PM centenary, which was celebrated here with 'much enthusiasm'. The birthday cake was cut by Thomas Burgess, who had been associated with the chapel for over 70 years. The service sheet for the stone-laying of the Bourne Sunday School in 1914 is also preserved, together with the chapel's listing by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments and numerous more recent photographs and paper cuttings. There is even a copy of a hymn tune called Englesea Brook, set to the hymn *With Gladness We Worship*.



Perhaps the most unusual item associated with the chapel is the conductor's baton, which started life as a swagger stick of the Royal Engineers, it was mentioned in passing in EE14. It has been shortened and a metal tip fitted. Although it has no connection with Englesea Brook, we do have a second conductor's baton. It is silver mounted and folds in half to go in a fitted case. It was presented to Rev H. Stratton by Hartley College Choir in 1910.



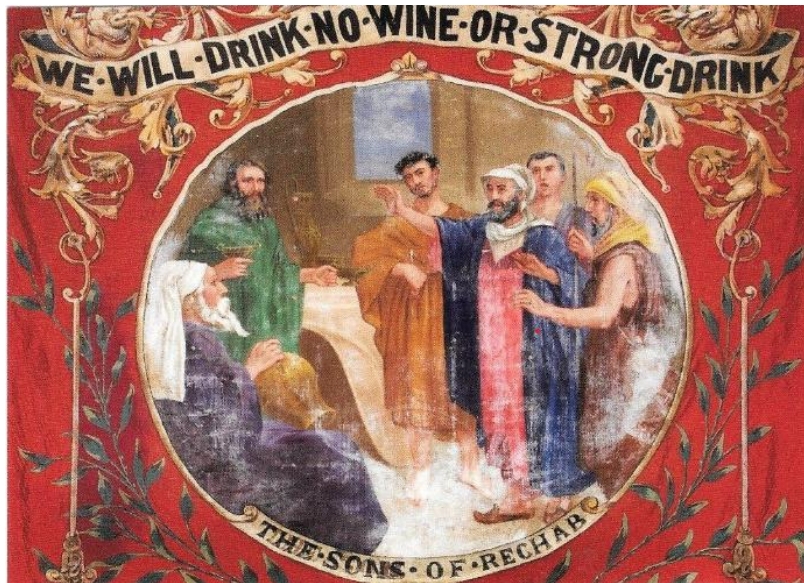
A local metal detectorist has given a couple of his finds to the museum. One is a Band of Hope belt buckle, and another is a model of a hand, 11 cms long, and made of lead. Its original purpose is a mystery.

Chris' Conundrums: a double dose

International fame!! **A.Word.A.Day** is a daily blog issued from America by Wordsmith.org - and today (September 28th) it has featured My Prims. The week's focus is words derived from the Bible that have entered everyday usage - in this case the word *Rechabite*.. We were contacted by Anu Garg, founder of the website about the use of material and picture on the [My Prims page on the Independent Order of Rechabites](#). The picture is of a banner in the Englesea collection.

See what they did with it here - <https://wordsmith.org/words/rechabite.html> and you might enjoy a subscription to A.Word.A.Day

The page was originally created by Jane Richardson who was pleased the page was of interest.



A conundrum in the process of solution

Sue Goodwill, Circuit Archivist for Ryedale in North Yorkshire, contacted us for help in solving a puzzle. Sue has been transcribing various old deeds and has come across the phrases below more than once.

Release bearing date the twenty fourth day of March one thousand eight hundred and sixty four and made or expressed to be made between Reverend Richard Davis of the one part and Jezeb Barlow George Roby John Wonfer Robert William Simon William Baker George Wood Robert Baker George Hayter Jesse Povey William Lewis and Richard Povey of the second part and enrolled on her Majesty's High Court of Chancery on the second day of April one thousand eight hundred and sixty four being a deed made for the settlement...

Sue wanted to know where the words were from and who the people named were. No sooner was the question asked than the answer came! John Anderson, who has forgotten more about Primitive Methodism than I ever knew, recognised the words as from the Primitive Methodist Model Trust Deed – I.e. The standard wording suggested when property was settled on the Primitive Methodist Connexion. John also identified Richard Davis as the Primitive Methodist Book Steward in 1864.

Sue has also been trawling through old circuit plans and compiled lists of all the chapels mentioned. You can see the Malton circuit and its successors here:

https://www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/content/objects/circuit_plans/m/malton-circuit-places-named-on-primitive-methodist-preaching-plans

and the Pickering and Helmsley circuit here

https://www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/content/objects/circuit_plans/h/pickering-and-helmsley-circuits-places-named-on-primitive-methodist-preaching-plans

SPEAKERS FOR THE DAY

Edward Hilditch is Chairman of the Burton and Neston Local History Society. He speaks on a wide range of aspects of Burton's and Neston's heritage and local history and leads guided local history walks. The Society's prime purpose is to study and research local history; its work has resulted in a number of books, shorter publications and exhibitions.

Margaret Roberts is Trustee/Liaison Officer of the Federation of Family History Societies and the Publicity Officer of Cheshire Family History Society. She also works with academics, researchers, PhD students and families, at home and abroad, to help to uncover many forms of sporting past. Margaret is the Editor-in-Chief of *Playing Pasts*, the original online magazine for *Global Sport/Leisure History*.

Dr Alan Crosby is a nationally known local and family historian, who has been editor of *The Local Historian* since 2001. He is the main local history contributor to the BBC 'Who Do You Think You Are?' magazine. He has published very extensively on diverse aspects of the history of Cheshire and Lancashire and has a particular interest in landscape history. Alan's 'History of Cheshire' was published in 1996: he is a regular speaker at local history societies in the county.

LOCAL STUDIES

Valda McDonald, Daresbury Heritage Group

Patricia Onslow-Macaulay, Huxley & Hargrave W.I.

Mike and Maggie Taylor, Thelwall Society

Linda Webb, Hoole History and Heritage Society

THE GRANGE THEATRE - HARTFORD

The Grange Theatre is situated in the quiet village of Hartford, near Northwich and is easily accessible by all major routes and public transport.

The venue has ample free car parking across the road from the entrance to the conference. There is a pedestrian crossing outside the main car park entrance and a guided walkway to the entrance to the building. Limited parking available for blue badge holders and people with mobility issues can park at the front of the building.

The professional theatre setting for the event has a seating capacity of 233 and has a fresh air handling system. There is space for bookstalls and society displays etc in addition.

For further information please contact:

Linda Webb Tel: 01244 320542 or email lindamwebb@btinternet.com

CHESHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION


An umbrella organisation, which seeks to promote the interest in and study of the local history of Historic and Civic Cheshire, and to look after the interests of local history societies and individual local historians.

Personal membership for an individual or a couple living at the same address is £10.00 p.a. which includes a complimentary copy of the annual journal. Society membership is £20.00 p.a. and includes two complimentary copies of the annual journal.

Cheshire History


Information available from CLHA, c/o Cheshire Record Office, Duke Street, Chester CH1 1RL

www.cheshirehistory.org.uk

 **Cheshire Local History Association**

HISTORY DAY

Cheshire in the 1920s



The Grange Theatre
Bradburns Lane
Hartford CW8 1LU

Saturday October 7th, 2023
9:30am - 4:30pm
(Doors open 9am)

**HISTORY DAY 2023
POSTAL BOOKING FORM**

To: Cheshire Local History Association,
c/o The Treasurer
31 Pearl Lane, Vicars Cross,
Chester CH3 5NU

Email: cheshirelha.committee@gmail.com

Website: www.cheshirehistory.org.uk

Surname _____

Title _____ Initial _____

Address _____

Tel: _____

Email: (please write clearly)

Are you a member of CLHA or an affiliated organisation? **YES / NO**

Ticket price **£15** per person.

Number of tickets required _____

Cheque (payable to CLHA)

£ _____ is enclosed

Tickets will be sent out by email or can be collected on the door.

BOOK TICKETS ONLINE

Visit: thegrangetheatre.com/boxoffice
(no booking fee)

BOOK TICKETS BY TELEPHONE

Call 01606 539040 (£2 booking fee)

DIRECTIONS TO VENUE

<https://www.thegrangetheatre.com/parking>

While CLHA will do all it can to present the advertised programme, circumstances sometimes arise (e.g., indisposition of a speaker) when it becomes necessary to change the speaker and his or her subject at short notice.

Tickets are non-refundable. However, should the event have to be cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control, bookings would automatically be carried forward to the 2024 History Day which would be on the same subject.

REFRESHMENTS AND LUNCH

Coffee/tea will be provided free on arrival.

There are no café facilities at this venue, but you will be able to eat your own lunch in the building. You can pre-order lunchtime drinks with the caterer on arrival or just purchase in the interval.

PROGRAMME

- 9:00 Registration and coffee
- From 9:30 Take places in the Theatre
- *9.45 Welcome and launch of *Cheshire History*
- 10:00-11:00 Edward Hilditch
'Daily life and work in 1920s Cheshire'
- 11:00-11:20 Break
- *11:20-12:20 Margaret Roberts
'Women in Sport in the 1920s'
- 12:20-13:30 Lunch and opportunity to visit stalls
- *13:30-14:30 Alan Crosby
'Breaking up estates and selling farms in 1920s Cheshire'
- 14:30-14:55 Break – last chance at the stalls.
- *15:00-15:30 Linda Webb
'Life in the 1920s Hoole Urban District'
- 15:30-16.15 Valda McDonald
'Schools in the ecclesiastical parish of Daresbury'
Patricia Onslow-Macaulay
'Huxley & Hargrave W.I. in the 1920s'
Mike & Maggie Taylor
'Thelwall's Millenary Celebrations and its Legacy'
- 16:15 Questions and Plenary Discussion
- 16:30 Close
- *Please be seated in the theatre before the start

Dates for the Diary

Heritage Talks:

Saturday 14th October at 11am - *Celebrating Black Methodists in British Methodist History* - Inderjit Bhoga

On Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96629750476?pwd=R0tGOTNIS3pGOTBzelNneFhzbTFmZz09>

Meeting ID: 966 2975 0476

Passcode: 958957

Saturday 11th November –Threading faith, memory and self-care: Sewing and Primitive Methodism - Clare Holdsworth from Keele University

Heritage Services:

Sunday October 1st – Rev Rob Hilton – ‘Heritage: Why bother?’

Sunday Nov 5th – Love Feast

Cheshire History Day - Saturday October 7th Cheshire in the 1920s. See the whole page advert

Looking Ahead - Christmas at Englesea Brook

Sunday 10th December – 3pm Carol Service with Rev Helen Kirk

Friday 15th December – 7pm A Christmas Carol – a retelling of the Dickens classic. Back by popular request

Copy and publication dates for Englesea Extra 64

Extra 64 will be published on Wednesday November 1st.. Your article, ideas, photographs by Friday October 27th please.

And a final prayer from Rachel Parkinson, District Chair, Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District

Hidden God, you are known to me as absence more than presence yet just occasionally the point of a needle breaks through the fabric of my life, makes one perfect golden stitch and disappears again into the depths.

It's not much, but enough to know that the thread is unbroken and for that I thank you.

Amen