

Englesea Extra

No. 73 : February 2025

Price: justice

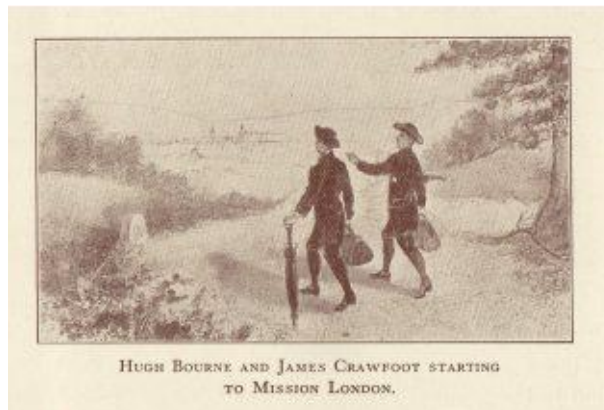
Strange Times

To what lengths would Bourne go?

That sounds like a sinister question posed as part of an imagination-grabbing trailer for one of the Jason Bourne action-thriller movies! And I'd dread to think to what lengths Jason Bourne might go. But what of the other, more famous Bourne, Hugh?

There is much written evidence of the sort of man Hugh Bourne was. His appearance was said to be 'unprepossessing'. He had an awkward gait, was just 5'9" tall with rounded shoulders and small eyes beneath heavy brows. He was often unshaven. His hat had seen better days. Ministerial students in 1894 exam papers on Connexional History describe him variously as 'a man like the brown heather, rough in the exterior'; 'Nature had been a bit stingy so far as the outward appearance of the man went, but in other ways it was made up to him'; 'Bourne's brain was the finest part of his body'; and most stingingly, 'Bourne looked nothing, Clowes looked everything'!

He described himself as timid and fearful of public speaking: his first preaching was in 1801 at Joseph Pointon's home at Mow. He tells of going to 'Old Joseph's' with 'his bosom still full of trouble.' 'One thing however, consoles him – that in the event of a failure there will be very few present to witness his disgrace...but on his arrival...he [was] surprised to find a great multitude.' (Primitive Methodist Magazine, October 1853). There were too many to fit into Pointon's house, so they poured out into a field on the side of Mow. The words Bourne had prepared left him and he was momentarily speechless: 'I then spoke as if addressing a single person'.



Bourne was a tenacious evangelist whose timidity in large gatherings was balanced by a warmth and easy communication one to one. This gift, described as 'kitchen evangelism', he employed most effectively in prayer with individuals and when conversing with children.

But how far was he prepared to go to preach urgent revivalism and salvation? He may not have been an action hero like his fictional namesake, but he preferred action nevertheless. In 1808 he first tried a walking prayer meeting, followed by a walking preaching service. H B Kendall writes in his 'Handbook of Primitive Methodist Church Principles, History and Polity' (1898), 'He was no believer in long preaching measured by time, but measured by distance he had no objection to it; **for on this occasion he preached a sermon a mile and a half long!**'

Every blessing

Elizabeth Morris

Pause for thought

I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ
Mahatma Ghandi (1869 - 1948)

Methodist teas

I went to a funeral in Sheffield recently - and was handed a collection of photographs mainly from the 1950s of life in the now closed Methodist former Wesleyan chapel in Ridgeway, on the border between Sheffield and Derbyshire. The photographs mainly showed the village Whitsuntide walks - complete with portable harmonium carried around the village, violin, cello and lots of children. I'm encouraging the villagers I met at the funeral to capture their memories for the Heritage sites.



Amongst the photographs were three of the Home Missions "Good News" caravan and the one shown here of a chapel Christmas tea party from the early 1950s. It made me think about the importance of teas in Methodism.

Each account of a chapel opening in the early Primitive Methodist magazines would tell us about the opening service, who preached, how much the new building cost (and how much would still be owing) - and there was always a tea, usually on the day after the opening service. A tea was a significant fundraiser for a new chapel and the magazine would tell us it would be provided, free, by "the ladies"

Tea is still important as Methodist societies increasingly recognise the value of community in worship.

Seeing the picture triggered my memories of teas and suppers in the schoolroom behind the former Primitive Methodist chapel in Lower Stratton, in Wiltshire. The seating was on "tram seat" forms - after watching something on the stage, those on the forms on the stage side of the trestle tables moved out, changed the seat rail to the opposite side, then re-took their seats.

Good memories - and it's important that we capture those personal memories for My Prims and the other Community websites so they are not simply historical records but reflect the joy of fellowship and the life of the community. So we need pages sharing personal contributions about all aspects of chapel life - Sunday school anniversaries, camp meetings, Egg and flower Sunday, harvest suppers, singing in choirs, Sunday school Treats, youth club

What could you share?

Chris Hill

Randle's rummaging

Methodism is famous for teas - and they were served in style!

In its collections the museum holds two fairly complete tea sets, made to mark the 1907-10 centenary, and parts of others. We have just been given another tea set, of a completely different design, with pink decoration, and the question arises, does it also date from that period, or from the Jubilee in 1860? The same transfers were used for some items on both occasions, but on stylistic grounds it is believed that 1860, or shortly after, is the more likely date, but further research is necessary to make a definitive decision, as the reversal of some images may suggest the later date.

It only arrived at the museum on February 1st and hasn't even been accessioned yet; it will be the first addition in 2025. It consists of an elaborate teapot, a sugar basin, which is unfortunately missing most of its lid, a jug, a slop bowl, four cups and eight saucers, but no plates. It was presumably a set of a dozen cups and saucers originally. One of the cups is unusual: three have pictures of Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, but one has two pictures of William Clowes. The pictures show part of the set and a close-up of the much-used teapot, together with pieces from the other 1907 tea sets in the collection and a couple of other teapots.





Chris' conundrums

A simple question: how many Primitive Methodist chapels were there?

In the last Extra I raised the question of how many Primitive Methodist chapels there were, with an eye on ensuring as many as possible are represented on My Primitive Methodists and the other Methodist Heritage Community websites. After Union in 1932, the new Connexion compiled an inventory of 13,632 Methodist buildings, published in 1940. It would be excellent to ensure that all the chapels in the 1940 Inventory are on the sites (My Prim's to begin with!) and I pleased to say that volunteers have come forward to tackle the Bournemouth and East Anglia districts. If you fancy it for your area, get in touch - myprim.s.celh@btinternet.com. You just need access to the internet, some time and quite a lot of patience.

John Anderson got in touch to suggest a possible route towards an answer. John says:

"Methodist Church Buildings Statistical Returns as at July 1st, 1940 [[Facsimile pub. 1992 - copy at EB](#)] lists by circuit every chapel and rented room etc giving the pre-union denomination. By looking at subsequent published returns, 1963/4, 1972/3, 1990, and 2000 (after which the publication of the Decennial returns ceased) some indication may be found as to when chapels closed or were rebuilt. Stephen Hatcher produced a list of "Former Primitive Methodist Chapels and United Methodist Chapels that are the property of the Methodist Church 1997". Again there should be a copy at EB. Pre Methodist Union the Wesleyan Methodists had published Decennial Statistical returns - I have copies of the 1912 and 1930 editions. Regrettably there was no Prim equivalent as far as I am aware.

The Prim's did collect statistics in the form of chapel schedules annually submitted by the circuits to the districts which the Tunstall District, and probably other Districts, bound together in annual volumes. They were not however, as far as I am aware, published. Some of the bound volumes of the Tunstall District chapel schedules survive including 1876, 1874, and 1893. A search in national and local archives may uncover more from other Districts. Another useful source is, of course, the 1851 Ecclesiastical Census. The original census returns may be found by a search in the National Archives searching by registration districts [as in 1851]. There are published county volumes of transcripts, including Staffordshire - some at EB.

There are over 90 illustrated articles about individual Prim chapels in first ten volumes of the Christian Messenger, 1865 - 1874. Later volumes, in the early 1900s, have illustrated articles about PM circuits with photos and descriptions/history of the chapels. "

More next month about how to track down the history of an individual chapel.

Picking up a lost thread

As mentioned in the last edition, Englesea Brook is working with Adelaide School and a videographer, Rev Phil Summers, to produce three educational films exploring Primitive Methodism, the Temperance Movement and the effect of alcohol on relationships, money and health. We took the pupils 'on location' to the National Boat Museum as Ellesmere Port to use the 1830s house, furnished to reflect the social history of that period. There the pupils came face-to-face with Flo (aka Elizabeth, seen here crouched on the floor) who told them the sad and sorry tale of her life and the effect of alcohol upon it. The effect on the young people was incredible, and to hear them interact with Flo, asking her questions and encouraging her to find help [they remembered the White Ribbon society that we had told them about the day before] – well, it bought a tear to my eye! They went on to film themselves reflecting on their own attitudes to alcohol – we look forward to sharing these films with you when they are complete.



What this photo doesn't show is just how perishingly cold it was that day – the canals were frozen and Elizabeth was in bare feet. Talk about suffering for one's art

Please can you help us complete our new Peace Garden before the official opening on Friday 25th April?



PEACE IS A JOURNEY

... it must be taken one step at a time.

We have travelled most of the journey towards our sensory and accessible Community Peace Garden and we need your help to take the final steps!

CAN YOU HELP US RAISE £500 TO FINISH OUR COMMUNITY PEACE GARDEN?

WHAT DO WE NEED?

- A SMALL RAMP FROM THE CAR PARK
- A SOLAR WATER FEATURE
- PLANTERS
- WHITE AND PURPLE FLOWERING OR SCENTED PLANTS

Post to: Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum
Englesea Brook, Crewe, CW2 5QW

TO DONATE:

Send a cheque payable to Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum marked: Peace Garden

OR via online banking - Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum

Sortcode: 30-12-59

Account no: 00781832

Ref: Peace Garden



Pieces of Peace



Can you help? As you know our new community Peace Garden is almost complete. Amy is also working on a couple of new exhibition boards for when we reopen in April, together with artefacts from the collection. We would also like to curate a display of items that reflect what Peace means to YOU. What brings YOU a sense of PEACE? We would like to include items – and a brief explanation – that represents a sense of peace for you, so look around and see if there's something you would be willing to loan us for the year and which speaks to you of peace. The display will also include items from our collection that we think reflect 'everyday peace'

Please email Amy on heritage@engleseabrook.org.uk or me at director@engleseabrook.org.uk with your thoughts on 'What brings me peace' and we can make arrangements for the item to be displayed in the museum.

Thank you!

Calling all Book Worms!

This season we are trying something new – a book club at Englesea Brook. Over the course of this year, we are going to suggest novels that make some reference to Methodists, Primitive Methodists if possible. We have a few ideas up our sleeves, but if you would like to send in ideas, we would love to hear from you.

The opportunity to gather and talk about what we've read will be hybrid sessions – in the parlour at Englesea Brook and on zoom – but there will be cake for those who can make it in person!

More details will be in the next Englesea Extra and on our social media channels.



Dates for the Diary

Community Worship at Englesea Brook

Over the past 12 months, we have slowly begun to make more links with people from the village, so have decided to build on that with a slight change to our pattern of worship. Instead of monthly services, we are planning to have themed services throughout the year aimed particularly, but not exclusively, at the local community. Please do come along and support to help us extend a warm, friendly welcome to all. All the services will be at the same time of 3pm.

Friday 18 th April	Reflective service for Good Friday
Sunday 1 st June	Heritage celebration on Mow Cop in partnership with Mow Cop Methodist Church
Sunday 15 th June	Pet Service
Sunday 10 th August	Messy Church for families
Sunday 28 th September	Harvest
Sunday 14 th December	Carol Service

Heritage talks:

Saturday 15th February – David Heatherington from the Weardale Museum, talking about the Methodist Tapestry.

<https://zoom.us/j/98534758846?pwd=fYyiwJDvIMWzNvlnUqs5LQNnibGhQF.1>

Meeting ID: 985 3475 8846 Passcode: 081715

Saturday 15th March – our own Amy Wilkinson – Just Women. Doing all her research justice!

Lent Bible Studies

Led by Rev Rob Hilton, the superintendent of the Cheshire South circuit.

The title for the 4 sessions is: Turning Points – Exploring the moments in Mark's Gospel which took Jesus to the cross and beyond.

On Zoom from 10:30 - 12 noon - Wed 19th and 26th March, (we are on holiday for the middle one!) and Wed 9th and 16th April. More details in the next Extra.

Copy and publication dates for Englesea Extra 74

The plan is to publish Extra 74 on Wednesday, March 5th. Your article, ideas, photographs by Friday February 28th please.

And a final prayer from a Tenth Century African hymn

Blessed is your cross, O Jesus, way for the lost, guide for the seeker and strength for the weak.

Blessed is your cross, O Jesus, healing for the sick, freedom for the slave and clothing for the naked.

Amen.