

Englesea Extra

No. 86: June 2026

Price: justice

Strange Times

As it is National Volunteer week, let me begin by thanking, unreservedly, all those of you who are volunteering or who have volunteered either at the Chapel and Museum or at the Book Emporium. Your time and dedication have helped to shape and grow the work to remember and celebrate the lives and impact of the Primitive Methodists. On Sunday 23rd August at 3pm, we will be holding a service of celebration to mark the 40th anniversary of Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum, led by Rev Helen Kirk. More details to follow, but please do keep the date free. We will also be marking a remarkable 40 years of volunteering with the project – David Scott was here at its inception and has volunteered continuously ever since. He is just one of a wonderful host of volunteers over the past 40 years, and I thank and applaud each and every one of you.



MyPrimitiveMethodists website is such a useful and informative resource – again thanks to the continuous work of committed volunteers – and has thrown up another gem. As part of our ‘Peace and War’ display, we discovered a couple of pictures of nurses from WW1. Thanks to the webmasters of the site, I was put in touch with Jane, the person who had shared these photos. And what a lovely story has unfolded.

Jane shared photos of her great aunt Maggi, who together with her fellow PM Sunday School teacher, travelled to France in WW1 to serve as nurses. Here is a photo of the nurses leaving from St Pancras station (left). The photo album shows photos of their patients, many of them amputees:

Undoubtedly the most poignant item was a letter sent to her great aunt Maggi, or Madge as she was known, dated 7th October 1919, by Tom, one of the men she had nursed. Here are some excerpts:

Do you remember 3 years ago this month – my last operations. And here I am, well established in the old home, glad to feel so well and healthy again that really the past is but one long dream and I am able to face the world and take stand once more.

All this is due to the tender care bestowed on me at NE and as I have said so often, to you especially do I owe my present existence.



.... Well ...it will come as a pleasant surprise to you to know that I have dedicated myself afresh to God and am again interested in those Higher Ideals we used to talk of in days gone by. This too will be an answer to your own prayers on my behalf. Yes for 2 months now I have taken my Sunday School work and feel enthusiastic and greatly interested.... Now you are glad, are you not!

What a glimpse into faith in action in the most challenging of situations. Where might we be called to share our faith this week?

Every blessing

Ruth

PS

Does anyone fancy owning a bit of Prim history? In the village of Englesea Brook, Sarah Smith's cottage is for sale: <https://www.zoopla.co.uk/for-sale/property/englesea-brook/englesea-brook-lane/cw2-5qw/>
She was a remarkable woman, and one of our favourites here at the museum, as it was she who brought Primitive Methodism to the village! Learn more of her story here:

<https://www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/content/people-2/lay-people/surnames-beginning-with-s/sarah-smith-1766-1822>

Pause for thought:

The difficulty lies, not in the new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones. -

John Maynard Keynes, economist (5 Jun 1883-1946).

Chris' conundrums

Egg and flower Sunday

A few weeks ago my home chapel in Wiltshire celebrated 200 years since Thomas Russell and John Ride brought Primitive Methodism to Stratton St Margaret, with meetings in Mr Habgood's carpenter's shop – a building in the yard where I was brought up. The first chapel opened in 1830 - [see more here](#). It was replaced in 1884 by a building still in active use. [See it here](#).

I'll write about the week-end later, but for now I want to ask about one thing that when I was growing up in the 1950's, I thought was a normal part of Methodism – egg and flower Sunday.

Early summer each year, we would take bunches of flowers and baskets of eggs to a Sunday morning and evening service. Afterwards the gifts would be taken to "the Workhouse" – in fact an NHS hospital for older patients.

Stratton was a rapidly growing village at the time and more than one new church member brought a gift of flour to donate – the joy of a homonym.

Was Egg and flower Sunday unique to Stratton or have you been to one?

EE86 Geoff's Grand Tour

He's done it! After 19 gruelling days, Geoff (and his wife Jane) has completed his epic journey from Land's End to John o'Groats! He's had sunshine and rain, hail and cross-wind. He's come through the plains of Cheshire, the winding lanes of Cornwall, the moors of the Eden Valley and the summits of the Cairngorms. What a journey – and all to raise funds for Englesea Brook. Thank you Geoff.

There is still time to sponsor him.

The money raised, at Geoff's request, will be ringfenced for the purchase of artefacts for the museum. The project has never had a fund specifically for this purpose before, but it means that, if a rare item comes up for sale, there is money set aside to purchase it..... [I'm still hoping for Hugh Bourne's other book to turn up – ed].

Please visit Geoff's JustGiving page

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/geoffrey-dickinson>

or

by bank transfer, remembering to put 'Geoff' as the reference:

Account details: Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum

Sort code: 30-12-59

Account no.: 00781832.



Photo: At the finish – it was very wet!



Photo: At the start!



Photo: Geoff greeted by friends from Englesea Brook and around the circuit at Audlem Methodist Church – almost half way through!

Randle's Rummagings

In 1999 we were given a medallion marking the Jubilee of the Primitive Methodist movement in 1860. It is 4.5cms in diameter and has a small display box. On one side is a bust of 'The Revd Hugh Bourne' and an inscription reading 'In Commemoration of the First Jubilee of the Primitive Methodist Connexion', and on the other side a bust of 'The Revd William Clowes', with statistics giving the state of the Connexion at that time:

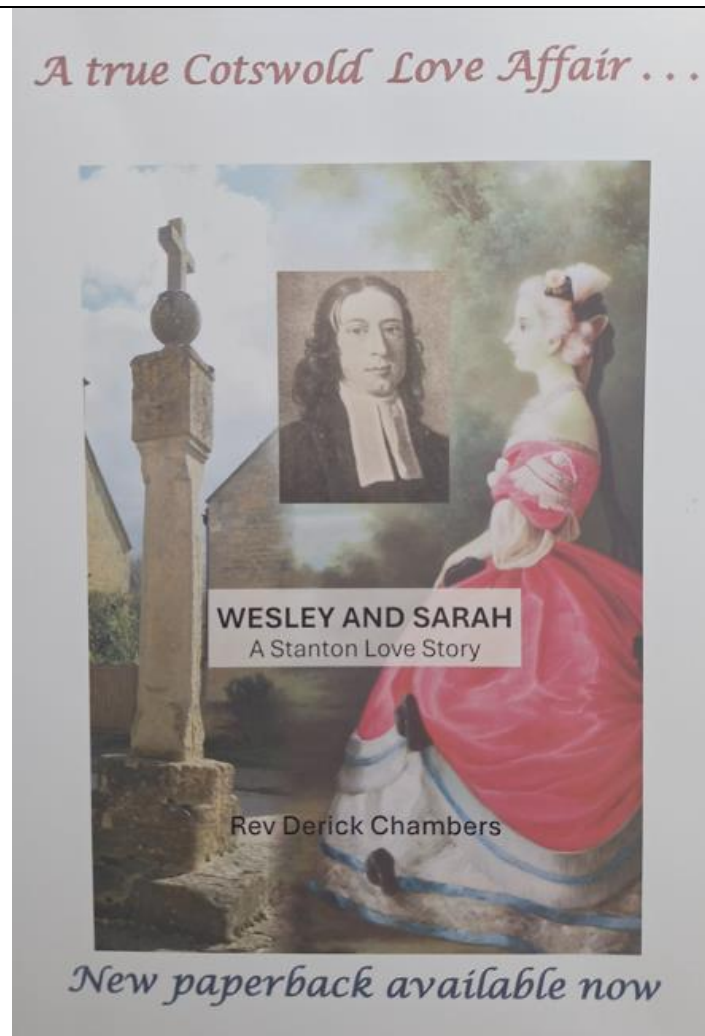
<i>Members 132,114</i>	<i>Itinerant Preachers 675</i>	<i>Local Preachers 11,384</i>
<i>Class Leaders 7,803</i>	<i>Connexional Chapels 2,267</i>	<i>Rented Chapels 3,268</i>
<i>Sabbath Schools 2,036</i>	<i>Sabbath Teachers 30,988</i>	<i>Sabbath Scholars 167,533.</i>

In 2021 we were given another medallion, of exactly the same description, but smaller, 3.5cms in diameter, and mounted in a small leather case. These were the only two Jubilee Medallions we had ever seen, so we presumed they were not common, but this year we received a third medallion which we are assured is extremely rare. It is exactly the same as the smaller medallion described above, but whereas the two we already held are only white metal, this one is solid silver. It was given to us by Mr Martin Bower in memory of the Revd David Leese.



When Mr Bower gave us this medallion, he also included a set of six post-union Sunday School medals issued by the Methodist Youth Department. They were presented for regular attendance: one is marked Award of Merit for Attendance, and all have enamel decoration. With them are nine Bars for continued good attendance in subsequent years. Of course they are not Primitive Methodist items, but they form a very attractive set and we are very pleased to add them to the collection.





EE86 Book Emporium news

Local History books.

Good news for Cheshire residents from Rev Malcolm Lorimer

Recently we received a very large donation of Books relating to local history in Cheshire. The donation was in fact so large that we had to get a van to collect. We have histories of Chester, especially the Cathedral and many more of the over 781 towns and villages in Cheshire. We have books relating to Nantwich, Northwich, Middlewich, Warrington, Runcorn, Alderley Edge, Stockport, Macclesfield, Congleton, Alsager, Holmes Chapel, Wilmslow, Crewe and the Wirral. So if you want to find out more about where you live, pop in to see us. We will probably have something that will catch your eye! Some books are rare antiquities, and we will be taking these to auction.

We also have local histories, pamphlets and books on all the major industries and companies of the area. We also have some lovely books on the Heraldry and Genealogy of the county. Come and browse!

One of our more popular sections is *Fantasy and Science Fiction*, again we have just received a large donation of some 600 books. We have come to appreciate that there are so many books in the genre and so many fans of these wonderful fantasies! So, if you are looking to visit a galaxy far, far away, or just travel with a few Hobbits accompanied by a strange ring, we'll have something to capture your imagination.

Finally, the Emporium is run by and relies on a dedicated group of volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare and are fascinated by books why not join the team, we could always do with an extra pair of hands.

ALSAGER BOOK EMPORIUM HASSALL ROAD IS ORGANISING A COLLECTORS FAIR



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Contact Malcolm Lorimer

maxcricket@btinternet.com

*A Century of the
Cheshire County Ladies
Golf Association*



Friday
Forum
Theatre



TALES FROM THE POT BANK: THE ARDOUR OF WILLIAM CLOWES

Friday 10th July, 7-8.30pm

William Clowes (1780-1851) was one of the founders of Primitive Methodism. In our dramatisation of the remarkable life of the once-dissolute potter we explore his zeal as a new convert and his emerging gifts as a great evangelist.

Tickets £8. Pay on the door.
Book your seats at
learning@engleseabrook.org.uk
Not suitable for under 12s



Google Maps

Englesea Brook Chapel
and Museum, Englesea
Brook Lane, CW2 5QW
Parking available.

Englesea Diary

See the whole page notices for details.

Friday Forum Theatre

Friday 10th July 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm – Talles from the pot bank: the ardour of William Clowes

Collectors' Fair

Saturday 11th July 10am-4pm at Wesley Place Methodist Church Alsager. Organised by Rev Malcolm Lorimer, together with volunteers at Alsager Book Emporium.

Cottage Crafts Day

Saturday 8th August – Cottage Crafts Day for all the family!

The Annual Barbeque and Quiz

Friday 14th August – 6-8pm The Annual Barbeque and Quiz

Sunday service

Sunday 23rd August – Celebrating 40 years of Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum. Led by Rev Helen Kirk

Copy and publication dates for Englesea Extra 87

The plan is to publish Extra 85 on Wednesday July 1st 2026. Contributions to Ruth by Friday, June 26th please.

And a final prayer from Handley Moule (1841-1920)

God of grace, we bless you for the gift of each day; for the glory of creation, the joy of salvation and the fire of your love in our hearts.

Amen.