

— CENTENNIAL BROCHURE —

HISTORY OF METHODISM IN STOKE, (NELSON, N.Z.)

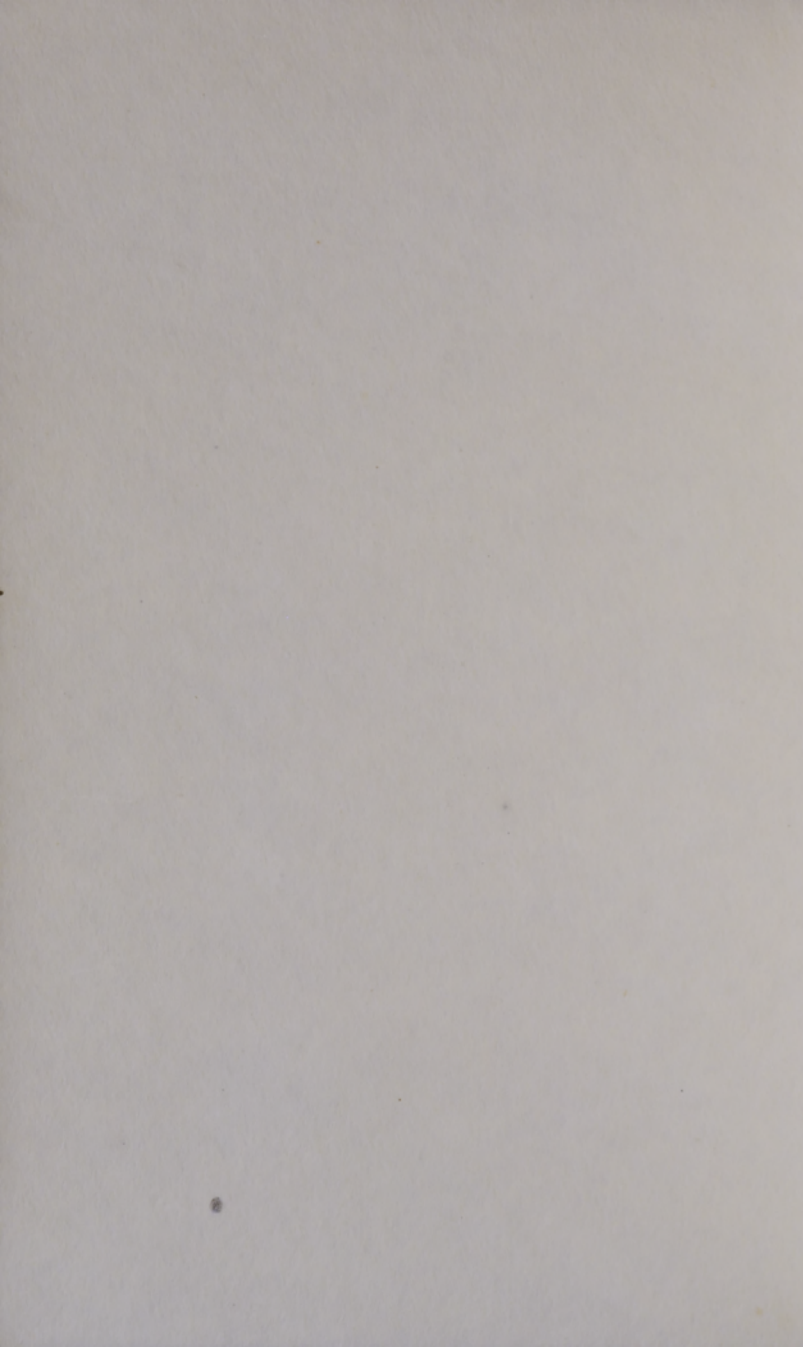
BY THE REV. C. B. JORDAN, M.A., B.D.



PRESENT CHURCH.—BUILT 1915.



SUNDAY SCHOOL HALL.—BUILT 1932.



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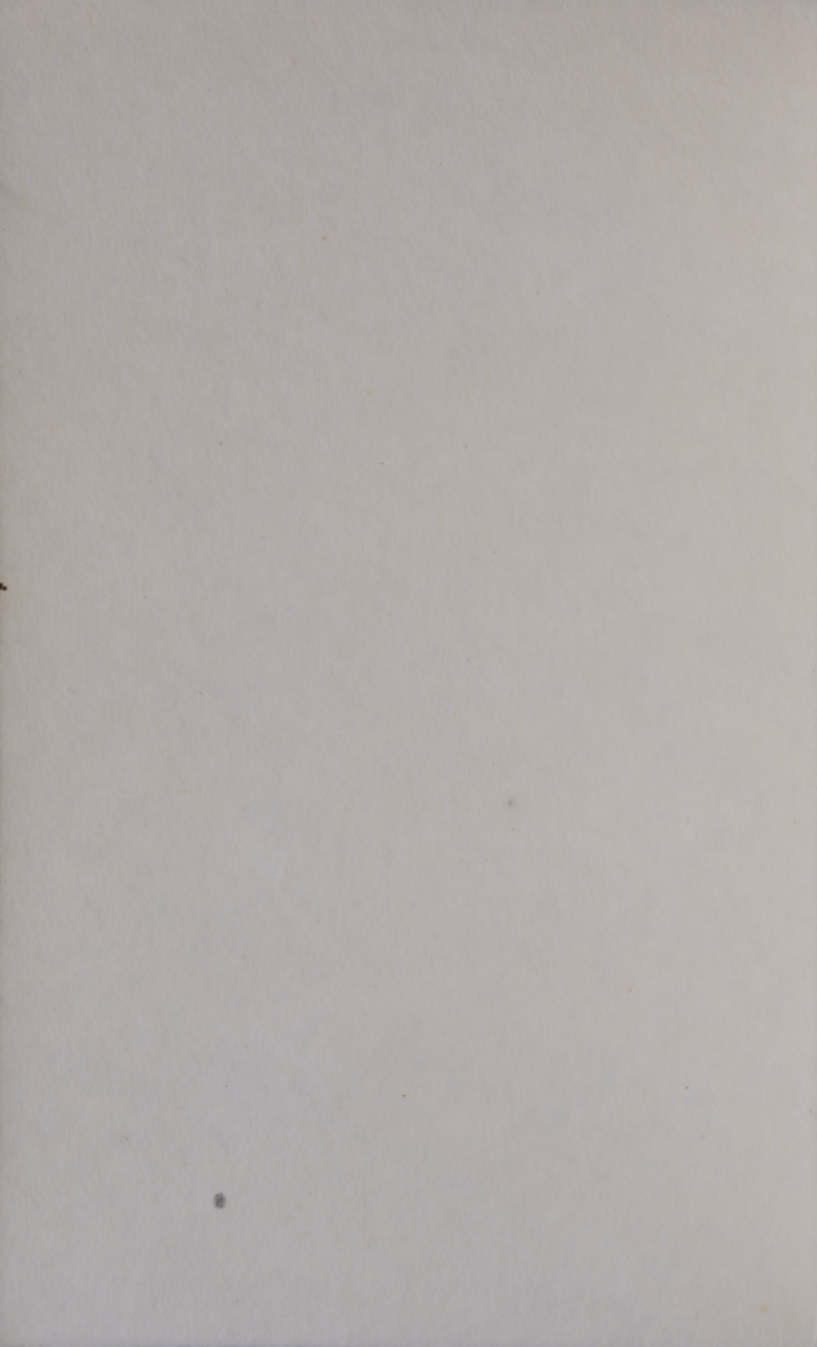
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BY
THE REV. C. B. JORDAN, M.A., B.D.

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HISTORY OF METHODISM IN STOKES

(NELSON, N.Y.)

THE REV. C. B. JORDAN, M.A., LL.D.

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PREFACE.

It is with pleasure that the Trustees of the Stoke Methodist Church send forth this brochure, believing that it will be of real interest and historical value to everyone concerned in any way with early Church life in the Nelson District, and especially to "the people called Methodists."

We are greatly indebted to the Rev. C. B. Jordan, M.A., B.D., who has written the brochure. It may have been expected that I, as the present minister of the Stoke Church, would have done it. As a matter of fact, I did commence to gather materials for a brochure soon after my arrival in the Richmond Circuit about 4½ years ago. But as the origins of Stoke Methodism were then, it seemed, wrapped in almost complete obscurity, I made little progress in my research, partly it must be admitted, through lack of time and opportunity. Fortunately Mr. Jordan came to live at Stoke later, and at my suggestion the Trustees asked him if he would consent to continue the work of research into Stoke's Methodist origins and history.

This he agreed to do, and ever since for about 18 months he has been on the job, interviewing descendants of the old pioneers, reading old papers, magazines, letters, etc., and now has gathered all this information into this very readable, and we believe, valuable historical record.

I personally am deeply grateful to Mr. Jordan for relieving me of the burden of the research work entailed in this booklet. It could not have been the thorough and complete production which we believe it to be, if it had all been left to me.

It is therefore with confidence that I commend this little story of Stoke Methodism to you.

RALPH E. PATCHETT,

Present Minister.



REV. JOHN ALDRED
Pioneer Minister, Nelson Circuit.



REV. R. E. PATCHETT
Present Minister Richmond Circuit.



MR. RICHARD CHING
Pioneer Methodist.



MR. DAVID NORGATE
Pioneer Methodist



MRS. DAVID NORGATE
Pioneer Methodist

THE AUTHOR'S FOREWORD.

The early contents of this brochure have been most difficult to write, owing to the dearth of early records. Even now the facts are far from certain; however, assistance has not been wholly wanting. First must be mentioned my friend and brother minister, the Rev. R. E. Patchett, superintendent of the Richmond circuit, who began historical research work some time before me. Next must be mentioned Principal Hames, of Trinity College, Auckland, who supplied to Mr. Patchett a valuable link in the early history through his research work in the College library.

My old friend of boyhood days, Mr. Hollis Hill, of Brightwater, a C. of E. lay reader, deserves a whole paragraph to himself. He has written out carefully by hand certain items of information taken from early numbers of the *Nelson Examiner*, whose value is priceless. Dr. F. A. Bett, of Nelson, has rendered exceptional service in supplying me with quotations from the Nelson Census of 1849.

Then a goodly group of ladies have not allowed my request for assistance to fall on deaf ears. Miss J. Bond, of Nelson, has furnished both Mr. Patchett and myself with valuable information relating to district affairs, particularly in the sphere of matters social and educational, during the heroic pioneer period. In addition, she has referred me to others who have, in some cases, conferred like favours. Among these latter are Mrs. M. Palmer, of Nelson, and Mrs. Sheat, with her daughter, Miss L. Sheat, M.A., of Mount Albert, Auckland. The writer has also been in communication with Mesdames T. R. Hodder, of Palmerston North, and G. W. Webber, of the French Pass, both daughters of the late Rev. John Crump, whose knowledge of Methodism in Stoke went back as far as 1867; also with Mr. F. Cresswell, of Palmerston North, and Mr. W. D. Lusty, of Ponsonby (a former Nelson journalist). Mrs. Holdaway senr., of Nelson, has been interviewed.

Last, but not least, come our numerous Stoke friends, of whose names space will permit the mention of five only. The fact that one surname is so frequent among them is not surprising when one considers how prominent that name is in Stoke's early history—it will be noticed that the names of the gentlemen are given alphabetically—(1) Mrs. E. C. Russell, who has sup-

plied many items of general information; (2) Mr. Albert Ching, who secured a copy of the Crown Grant and plan of the present church site (1870, confirmed in 1875, but dating from August 31, 1852). The bracketed date last mentioned is all-important in sustaining the argument of this brochure; (3) Mr. H. L. Ching, the local headmaster, who kindly loaned me a copy (now very scarce) of Broad's *Jubilee History of Nelson*; (4) Mr. Philip Ching, who happened to possess a valuable Minute Book, chiefly concerning Trust affairs, for the period 1864 to 1914; and (5), most important of all, Miss E. Ching, who furnished a list (from memories of what her grandparents and others had told her) of persons who would be in the habit of attending meetings of the earliest society class in 1843.

C. B. JORDAN.

Stoke, Nelson, Wesley Day (May 24), 1949.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY BEGINNINGS.

We learn from the centennial brochure of the Stoke day school that there was no school at Brook Green, as Stoke was first named, before 1845. We have good reason, however, for believing that Wesleyan Sunday services were held before that year in the private homes of pioneer settlers. If so, it is almost certain that one of the lay preachers who in turn conducted them would be Mr. Edward Green, who is believed to have conducted the first Methodist service in Nelson as far back as March, 1842. It is a generally admitted fact that the Rev. John Aldred, who began work in Nelson in March 1843, preached the Christian evangel, or had it preached, wherever the same was possible; and we may be sure that the pioneer people of Stoke would not be neglected.

An old Methodist preaching plan for Nelson circuit from June to September, 1848 (still preserved) shows services conducted at Nelson, Stoke, Spring Grove, Waimea Village, and Wakapuaka. Notice that Stoke is in the list. This certainly was after the erection of the school in 1845, but it does not prove that such services were not held at even earlier dates.

OLD-FASHIONED CLASS MEETINGS.

It is true, then, that doubt exists as to the holding of Methodist Sunday services at Brook Green prior to 1845; but on the other hand, no doubt whatever exists regarding the holding of old-fashioned Methodist class meetings before then, and a list has been supplied to us by grandchildren of the early pioneers, of persons who would be sure to be among those attending such classes for fellowship. These persons were all well known characters in later years. For example, Mr. Richard Ching senr. would be among them; and it has been ascertained that as early as 1843, before good habits formed in the old land had had time to be broken, certain persons met habitually and formed an old-fashioned society class. They met in the huts of the different settlers in turn. The writer has had produced to him the old Bible that was used in those meetings. The Psalms in that sacred volume show unmistakable signs of wear, suggesting that they were read more frequently than any other biblical portions.

Included in that group of class members were the following: Mrs. Elizabeth Tidd, Mr. and Mrs. David Norgate (Mrs. Norgate often reading the Scripture passages), Mrs. Norgate's two brothers, Daniel and Ben Eyles ("Uncle Ben" used to raise the tune with a tuning-fork), and Messrs. Enoch Jellyman and Edward Bovey (with their wives), and John Holdaway. Mr. Holdaway's son Henry the writer afterwards knew as a Motueka circuit official in 1910, residing at the Moutere. After his first wife's death, Mr. Holdaway senr. married Mrs. Cresswell, and they lived, first in the Maitai Valley, and afterwards about half-way between Stoke and Richmond, there rearing a splendid family, the above-named Henry being one of them. A daughter of the same family afterwards married the late Rev. J. H. Simmonds. It may be mentioned that of the persons named above, the forbears of Mrs. Norgate had personally known John Wesley.

May we be pardoned if we exercise our imagination for a moment and listen to their singing in one of those pioneer huts the strains of some familiar hymn-verse?

Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
More than all in Thee I find!
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind;

* * *

Love
O Lord divine, how sweet Thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
All taken up by Thee?
I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me!

* * *

Look unto Him, ye nations, own
Your God, ye fallen race;
Look, and be saved through faith alone,
Be justified by grace.

See all your sins on Jesus laid:
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

Among the best guarantees in Methodism of the maintenance of sound evangelical doctrine is our Methodist hymn book.

THE ROADS.

The main road going through the Waimea in the forties was of clay. Broad's *Jubilee History of Nelson*, p. 152 says: "In 1853, even the roads and streets of Nelson were mainly pathways and poorly-furnished tracks; the country districts were reached through miry and ill-formed roads." We may judge from statements like these what the settlement of Brook Green (afterwards Stoke) must have been like four years earlier, when our first Methodist chapel was opened. The road connecting Appleby with Nelson has been described as incredibly "swampy and muddy." A toll-gate stood opposite the place where the Bishopdale Station now stands, the proceeds of the tolls being used towards the maintenance of the roads. The tolls, it is said, were one shilling for a vehicle and sixpence for a horseman.

In the Matthew Campbell school erected on its first site in 1845 Sunday services were held by Church of England folk and Methodists alike, the names of the preachers appearing on our Nelson Methodist plan being these: Rev. John Aldred and Messrs. Hough, Humphries, Jackson, Robinson, Riley, and Wallis.

INFANT BAPTISM AT STOKE.

A record of an infant baptism at Stoke is still preserved in the study of St. John's Parsonage, Nelson. It is that of Eliza Jane, daughter of Job and Eliza Best, baptized February 18, 1848, approximately a year and ten months before the opening of our earliest Stoke chapel.

MARRIAGES AT STOKE.

The following records also are still to be found in the Nelson parsonage—Marriages: August 14, 1849, John Win and Katherine Martha Humphries (no mention of place, presumably in a private house); November 18, 1851, William Win and Harriet Humphries (in the chapel); May 23, 1853, John Sutton and Esther Tidd (not in the chapel). These three entries are all consistent with the writer's contention that the first Stoke chapel was used for worship from December 9, 1849, to August 31, 1852, or a little later.

CONDITION OF EARLY SETTLERS.

From the time of the Wairau Massacre (June, 1843), and continuing through the whole of the forties, all the early settlers suffered terrible hardships through the failure of the New Zea-

land Company. When the crash came, Mr. Hugh Martin, the largest employer of labour at Stoke (who lived on the Main Road where Major Lorimer's house now stands) paid men 2s 6d. per day, just to keep the wolf from the door. The same economic order as exists to-day existed then; then, however, the capital was always privately owned. It was not possible then, nor is it reasonably possible now, to create a new economic order in one day; so what cannot be immediately cured must for the present be endured. All honour, then, to the man who thus put his little bit of stored-up capital to good use! His tombstone is to be seen to-day in St. Barnabas's C. of E. cemetery, Stoke.

Happily the spirit of co-operation was then in the air. If the people of those days had not assisted one another, the district would have had a much greater setback than was actually experienced.

An old Stoke resident, when a boy returning hungry from school in the late afternoons of those days, frequently watched his mother grinding wheat in a coffee mill. The mother quickly made the meal into scones, and their taste gave the boy abundant compensation for his previous hunger. At that time the people were in grave danger of starving; but happily there was abundance of game procurable,—wild animals and wild birds.

THE FIRST WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

What has hitherto been said concerning the hardships of the pioneers leads up very naturally to the theme of the first chapel, and for this reason: It has been held that the building of a chapel at so early a date would have been impossible owing to the poverty of the early settlers; but the evidence in support of a different conclusion is overwhelming. It was doubtless rather a rough structure, and was probably built largely by voluntary labour during the previous 15 months; but it is evident that in spite of the undoubted hardships of the earliest inhabitants of Stoke, there was a will, and therefore a way.

Just here comes in official documentary evidence, and for this we are indebted to the Rev. Principal E. W. Hames, M.A., of Trinity College, Auckland, who kindly did half a day's research on our behalf. First, however, we must say that our C. of E. friend, Mr. Hollis Hill, "dug up" for us the following advertisement in the *Examiner* of December 8, 1849, which the writer himself has seen: "The Ebenezer Chapel, Stoke, will be opened on Sunday, December 9, 1849. Preachers, 11 a.m. Rev.

Samuel Ironside; 6 p.m., Mr. W. Jenkins, of Motueka. On Monday, 10th, at 11 a.m., sermon by Rev. T. D. Nicholson. Tea Meeting 4 p.m."

Both the Sunday preachers were Methodists, the Rev. S. Ironside being our superintendent minister in Nelson at the time, and Mr. Jenkins catechist among the Methodist Maoris at Motueka. The Monday preacher, the Rev. T. D. Nicholson, was the first Presbyterian minister stationed at Nelson; but the writer has learned from perusals of other advertisements in the *Examiner* that partnership between Methodist and Presbyterian ministers at special church functions was then quite the usual practice.

Let us now turn our attention to the Trinity College document. It contains the Southern District Minutes, and is dated September 11, 1848 (meeting held at Wellington): "At Stoke, in the Nelson Circuit, an acre of ground has been given by Mr. Marsden for a Wesleyan chapel and burial ground, for which this Meeting tenders to him its acknowledgments. A chapel is about to be erected on the acre." "It is apparent", concludes the Principal, in a letter to the Rev. R. E. Patchett, "that these chapels were built, because the statistics of chapels in the Nelson Circuit went up from 3 in 1848 to 5 in 1851."

THE THREE EBENEZERS.

An interdenominational chapel was erected at the corner of Tasman and Hardy Streets, Nelson, being opened on December 4, 1842. (See advertisement in *Examiner*, November 29), and it was called the Ebenezer. Reference is made to it also by the late Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt on page 9 of the *Nelson Methodist Centenary Souvenir*. The word is Hebrew, and means "stone of help" (see 1 Samuel VII 12). The *Examiner* afterwards gave a report of the opening as follows:—"Among the earliest settlers who landed in Nelson were a few dissenters of various denominations. These men saw the evil of continuing the dissensions of the land they had left in the new land of their adoption, and agreed to merge all differences and join together to build themselves a place for worship where they could meet as one brotherhood. A trifling subscription was raised to assist them in their praiseworthy intention, and in the meantime, under the name of the United Christians, they established a Sunday school and had regular services in a temporary building. The chapel, though not complete, is sufficiently so to allow of its being used for the purpose for which it was built, and accordingly on Sunday last was opened. Three sermons were

preached, that in the morning by Mr. Hough, that in the afternoon by Mr. Andrews, and the one in the evening by Mr. Mears."

Of these three, Mr. Hough was a well-known Methodist in Nelson and afterwards a trustee of the first church built on the present Stoke site in 1861 (the Trust, however, was not legally constituted until 1870); Mr. Andrews was the grandfather of the present Mayor of Christchurch; and it is believed that Mr. Mears was a Methodist at Upper Wakefield. If all three were Methodists, however, that fact does not alter a parallel fact which the *Examiner* report states quite correctly, namely, that the chapel was interdenominational.

Although the Stoke chapel of the same name was undoubtedly Methodist, the question arises, Did the Stoke Methodists buy that chapel on cheap terms (we have already seen that they were all alike "up against it", as we say), and did they get it removed to Stoke? All the evidence available tells us that the Nelson Ebenezer was built of hand-sawn timber, timber being then quite abundant, a fact strongly suggested by the very name "The Wood" for what is now a part of Nelson town. Removal of that building was perhaps possible, but the writer is convinced, after a careful examination of all the evidence, that it is most *improbable*. To mention only one fact, its size would appear much too large to permit its easy removal, and it would be much larger than the Stoke Methodists would require. Then again, the word "erected" in the official report above mentioned scarcely suggests the removal of a building.

A former resident of Richmond remembers hearing in her youth of an old chapel which had, many years before, been removed to Hope, under the hills. This would be at a date much prior to the erection of our present Hope church on the main road. She does not remember from what place it was removed, but she thinks it was known as "Ebenezer." This suggested identity of the Stoke and Hope Ebenezers has, however, been emphatically contradicted, and by the same person a suggestion has been made to the effect that our Stoke chapel was moved to the vicinity of the Appleby station and of the famous three gum-trees; but this supposition remains for the present nothing more than a possibility.*

*In mentioning this possibility we are not confusing Ebenezer with Rehoboth Chapel, which faced Wensley Hill, Richmond, and was opened on January 13, 1850.

"NOISY" WORSHIP.

One report concerning early services held in that Stoke chapel complains of their "noisy" character; but the amount of importance to be attached to such a complaint would depend largely upon the degree of musical appreciation previously attained by the complainant! That those early Methodists of Stoke sang more heartily than other worshippers we readily believe; but does not that suggest that they had something specially good to sing about? We may judge that they used their freedom, a freedom which we all devoutly hope will not soon be lost, a freedom not merely "to worship God," but also to proclaim freely the redemptive truth of the evangel of saving grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, and to follow it up by an appropriate appeal for a life surrender to Him who is the Divine Source of that immeasurable love manifested in the cross and the world's redemption.

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

CHAPTER II.

MORE ABOUT THE FIRST CHAPEL.

THE "COB" HYPOTHESIS.

As to the location of the first Wesleyan chapel at Brook Green, afterwards Stoke, we were for a long time in perplexity. It has been stated (and it is settled fact) that a whole acre of ground was officially reported in September, 1848, to have been donated by Mr. Thomas Marsden to the Wesleyan Methodists for a church and burial ground. For various reasons it had appeared to the writer that such a site must have been not on the present main road, but on one of the side roads. We had considered, too, that it was probably built of cob. What has been called "the old mud school," the first school built on the present school site about 1859, was built of cob, and it was argued that the old Ebenezer chapel could very well have been built of the same material ten years earlier. Old residents of Stoke say there is a local tradition to the effect that the first bell used in "the old mud school" was the bell formally used in the old Wesleyan chapel. The local tradition, so far as one can ascertain it, is that the bell was originally a ship's bell, and that it was first used on the "Fifeshire," of the Fifeshire Rock fame, or on some other old ship.

Moreover, to this "cob" hypothesis an advertisement in the *Nelson Examiner* of March 9, 1850 (only 3 months after the opening of the Stoke Ebenezer) seemed to lend countenance. It read thus: "Wanted two men, or more, to proceed immediately to the Wairau to build cob cottages. One at least of them must have had experience in that kind of building." On reading this, the writer at once asked, Were any of those hardy Methodist pioneer men experienced in cob building? If only one was so qualified, that one could have instructed or supervised the others, and they could have built the chapel by voluntary labour, after ordinary working hours, in the long summer evenings.

A WOODEN BUILDING.

However, the "cob" hypothesis has been hopelessly "smashed" by a few simple words in the Nelson Census (not printed) for 1849, wherein the Stoke Ebenezer has been described as "a small wooden building with a thatched roof"; but

there is no need to discard the remaining part of the hypothesis, namely that it was built by voluntary and amateur labour. All the facts available suggest that it was so built. Any other kind of building would at that time have been utterly beyond the financial resources of those pioneer Methodists, even supposing they were liberally aided by their non-Methodist neighbours. Anyhow, there are no existing records to show that any professional architect or builder had any part whatever in its actual building or construction.

The Nelson Census referred to above suggests that Messrs. Marsden, Job Best, and William Songer must have occupied lands adjoining, or close to, the earliest chapel site. The description suggests the conclusion that it was on the main road, close by the brook, but whether on the Nelson or the Richmond side of the brook is not quite clear. The late Mr. T. Neale's house stood in the same locality, on the opposite side of the road.

Since Mr. Marsden himself was a member of the mother Church, it may perhaps seem strange that he gave to the Methodists of this place a whole acre of land on the main road, whereas he gave to his own Church (apparently) considerably less than an acre. But there are sufficient explanations. One of these is that the present site of St. Barnabas's Church was given by Mr. T. Marsden, in the first instance, not for a church, but for a school (at that time already erected, but on a different site), the church being not decided on until 1859, when the Church of England residents of Stoke resolved on removing the school to a third site, half a mile or so in the direction of Richmond. The then school site, being the best in the district, they said, was to be for the church. When it became a settled fact that the church was to be built on the former school site, the donor of the property made considerable additions to it, as we can well understand; nevertheless, Mr. Marsden's religious views were broad, not narrowly denominational.

A POSSIBLE MISUNDERSTANDING.

A voluminous diary relating to that period suggests that there must have been some misunderstanding between Mr. Marsden and the Rev. J. Aldred regarding the gift of the acre. It appears that Mr. Marsden's donation had been conditional on the possibility of a substantial stone or brick building being erected on the property. Be this as it may, the donation of the acre was officially reported, and if no subsequent agreement had been come to, the mistake would surely have been reported the following year. The point is, the chapel was erected, and

erected on property formerly owned by Mr. Marsden. If the latter gentleman preferred a more worthy structure than the one actually erected, doubtless the Methodists of both those days and the present would have heartily agreed with him, had the same been possible; but as before explained, owing to the failure of the N.Z. Company, all those pioneer settlers had been reduced to a "hand to mouth" existence, and it is decidedly to their credit that we are able to record that they built at so early a date any place of worship at all.

For good or otherwise, the chapel was erected, and opened in December, 1849; so we can understand that afterwards, even when there had been built a second chapel in 1861, Anniversaries were for many years celebrated at the Christmas or New Year season. Support for our theory that the first chapel was built by voluntary labour is accidentally contained in the fact that there was an interval of 15 months between the official report of the gift of a site and the actual opening of the building. "A small wooden building" such as the Census describes would scarcely have taken professional builders 15 months to erect.

WHY IT WAS ABANDONED.

Here perhaps we are face to face with a real problem. Was that first chapel intended only as a temporary structure? There were, we understand, earthquakes during that period. Had earthquakes anything to do with its premature abandonment? We have no evidence of it. When the foundation of the present church was laid in 1915, the then Chairman of the Nelson District (the late Rev. Wm. Baumber) said he understood that the first Stoke chapel was "blown down". (See both *Evening Mail* and *Colonist* of May 13, 1915). I have been able to find no corroboration of this statement, likely though some may suppose its truth to have been. According to Mr. Baumber also, an old resident then began building another, which was never finished.

The late Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt, Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, believed that the first Methodist church in Stoke was sold at an early date, the proceeds being used to purchase the present site. We see no reason whatever to question that proposition. Possibly the sale of the site without the building would have been insufficient to effect a suitable purchase; but even the supposition that after sale the chapel became a stable need not horrify us, for after all, even a stable can be a sacred place; and besides, was not Somebody born in a stable?

SALE OF THE SITE.

Hence until further evidence is forthcoming, the present writer for one accepts the view that the proceeds of the sale of both site and building were used to purchase the present site. True, we cannot prove it at this distant date. We do know, however, that in November 1870 a Crown Grant of the present site was made to the Trustees, but it was made "as from the thirty-first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two." The document is headed "Grant under the New Zealand Company's Ordinance", and it reads thus:—Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain Queen. To Whom these presents shall come; Greeting: Know ye that for good considerations us thereunto moving WE for US our Heirs and Successors do hereby Grant unto James Watkin of Sydney Samuel Ironside of Tasmania John Aldred of Canterbury New Zealand, Wesleyan Ministers, William Hough of Nelson storekeeper Adam Jackson of Wairau Richard Wallis of Moutere and John Riley of Collingwood their heirs and assigns ALL that parcel of land in our Province of Nelson in Our Colony of New Zealand containing by admeasurement one rood and twenty two perches situated in the District of Suburban South being a portion of Section numbered 57 on the plan of the said District bounded on the Northward (132 links) and Eastward (539 links) by public roads on the Westward by the High Road to Nelson and on the Southward by the Public Road forming the junction between the Public Roads on the Eastern and Western boundaries aforesaid (5 links) as the same is delineated on the Plan drawn in the margin hereof With all the Rights and Appurtenances thereto belonging TO HOLD unto the said James Watkin Samuel Ironside John Aldred William Hough Adam Jackson Richard Wallis and John Riley their Heirs and Assigns for ever as from the thirty-first day of August one thousand eight hundred and fifty-two. IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused this Our Grant to be sealed with the SEAL of Our Colony of New Zealand."

It will be noticed that none of the Trustees named were Stoke men. The three ministers who head the list, though not then resident in the district, were still legal Trustees. They are named as Trustees for the people known as Wesleyan Methodists, "being followers of John Wesley," and the document is under the hand of Sir George Ferguson Bowen, Governor at Auckland.

The same property (that is, the present Methodist church site) was transferred in 1875 by deed to a local Trust Board,

consisting of the following:—Edward Green, Edward Cresswell, David Norgate, John Bovey, William Doidge, William Burlace Pote, Hicks Parker (all of Stoke), Thomas Usher, John Tippet Smith, and Robert Lucas (of Nelson). The property was placed under the provisions of the Land Transfer Act on February 29, 1928.

AN AWKWARD HIATUS.

The aforesaid Crown Grant, then, was dated as from August 31, 1852. The question immediately arises, Why that particular date? What happened on that date? The writer takes it as the date on which the disposal of the old site and building had been completed and the new site occupied. What other date could it be? Perhaps, however, we should rather say it was the approximate date. But it is one thing to procure a site, and altogether another to have a building erected thereon; and it happens in this case that not until nine years later was a building on this site ready to be opened. But in the meanwhile death was taking its toll among our people at Stoke (for example, little William Sigley, 17 months old, date on tombstone 1855), and it was necessary to have them interred somewhere; so the place was used as a burial-ground, not yet as a church site. It is believed that the child's tombstone, and probably others, had afterwards to be removed to other portions of the ground because in their first position they hampered building operations; but the stones were still good as memorials.

A report given in the *Examiner* of February 3, 1858, of a meeting of Stoke residents to discuss school and church affairs may be thus briefly summarised: It had been suggested that the day school, now re-erected on the present site of St. Barnabas's church, should be enlarged so as to provide for the large congregations that assembled there on Sundays. Some urged the building of an Anglican church: they maintained that a school-room was not a suitable place for church services. But what interests Methodists most about that meeting was the argument of another section of the Stoke people, who said that the Wesleyans would soon meet in their own building, which was now nearly finished; and should that be the case, the present school building would be large enough. From this it would appear that in 1858 Church of England people and Wesleyans worshipped together in the school, that the former had as yet no church and were contemplating the building of one, and that the latter already had one in the course of erection.

The writer suggests either that the report is not quite accurate or that those who spoke about the Wesleyans, their doings,

and intentions were either misinformed or slightly given to exaggeration; for notwithstanding anything said at this meeting, it remains a fact that no new chapel for the Wesleyans went up until $3\frac{1}{2}$ years later, the real opening date being July 21, 1861. Doubtless money was being collected for the purpose, but that did not mean that the Methodists were yet ready to build. Some of us know by actual experience that, when one wants to have a church erected, it is usually necessary to begin at least ten years before the time when the building would need to be used.

It would appear, then, that the Wesleyan Methodists of early Stoke, finding themselves homeless about August or September, 1852, went back to worship on Sundays in the school. What supposition is more likely than that? They had worshipped in the school when it stood on its first site, from 1845 to 1849. Why not now, when its site was changed? We see nothing incredible about that; nay more, it is just about what would have been most likely to happen; and thus they continued for nine long years, that is, until July 21, 1861.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

Before we take leave of these splendid pioneer folk of early Stoke, we feel that tribute should be paid to their zeal for "first things", the things that matter most. They were eager to secure educational facilities for their children, yet we learn also from their action in relation to the school and church sites that there was something which they deemed of still greater importance. The best site in the district was to be for the church, not for the school; and yet the education of those days had a religious foundation. To prove this, it is necessary only to point to the character of the tests they applied to the teaching given in the schools of those days. On page 3 of the *Early History of the Stoke School* appears the following description of the first general assembly of the children belonging to the Nelson School Society, held at Brook Green on December 2, 1846: "About 3 o'clock the examination was commenced by Mr. Fox, afterwards Attorney-General, principally in Scripture, history, and arithmetic, and the manner in which the children acquitted themselves must have been as gratifying to their parents, many of whom were present, as it was satisfying to their teachers. The children also recited some short poems and sang a few hymns."

Reports of such annual gatherings appearing in subsequent years in the *Examiner* newspaper are all similar, the examinations sometimes being conducted by the minister of one or another

of the Christian Churches of Nelson. It is surely not difficult to see what sort of education those early settlers prized most for their children. Among the subjects of the curriculum, the first mentioned is "Scripture," and the children sang hymns; so evidently those early pioneers were firmly convinced of one great truth (and moreover they practised it), the truth, namely, that "the fear of God is the beginning of knowledge." It is a great pity that folk in these more modern days are not always of the same mind with them in this regard. Those old-fashioned folk were wise enough to know that the only learning worth while in the long run is one that is firmly based on "Christ, the solid Rock." If any newcomers to Stoke should happen to read this brochure, the writer would take this opportunity of commending to them so worthy an example, and would appeal to them not to forsake those old and well-worn paths. If those pioneer folk were wrong, will someone kindly tell us where they were wrong? In these days when nothing seems certain and enduring, and everything around us seems to be tottering, is there any ideal more wholesome and enduring than that which was inculcated by the precept and practice of those old pioneers? If so, we have not yet heard of it.

CHAPTER III.

FROM 1861 TO 1915 (SECOND CHURCH TO THIRD.)

The following report appeared in the *Nelson Examiner* of July 31, 1861:—

STOKE WESLEYAN CHAPEL.

“The above chapel, which has lately been erected, was opened for public worship on Sunday, July 21. Two sermons were preached upon the occasion, the one in the morning by the Rev. J. Innes, from Psalm 15, and the one in the evening by the Rev. P. Calder from part of the 16th verse of the 6th chapter of 2 Corinthians. A collection was made at the close of each sermon: that in the morning amounting to £4/0/2, and that in the evening to £3/12/11d.”

“On the Tuesday evening following, a tea-meeting was held, when the weather, which was very favourable on the Sunday, now proved just the opposite for it commenced raining about 4 o'clock, and continued to do so without intermission during the whole of the evening. However, the fire proved stronger than the water; the meeting had been determined upon, and so at the time appointed, about 140 friends were comfortably seated at the various tea-tables, which had been liberally and gratuitously supplied by some of the ladies residing in the district.”

“After tea, a public meeting was held, which was presided over by — Saxton, Esq. The proceedings commenced with singing, and the following gentlemen delivered addresses, namely the Revs. J. Innes and J. Moorhouse, and Messrs. Gardiner, Wagg, Drew, Rose, and Burn.”

According to the report, the money expenditure connected with the erection of the chapel amounted to £168, while the money raised by the kindness and liberality of many friends amounted to £168/12/7d. The proceeds of the tea and public meeting amounted to about £12, sufficient to pay for the forms required for public worship.

“The contract entered into with the builder, Mr. Henry, of Nelson, did not include the papering and painting of the chapel; that has still to be done; so that, should there be any of our town or country friends who could not be with us on Tuesday

on account of the weather, they have still an opportunity of assisting by presenting their donations to the Rev. J. Innes, the Rev. J. Moorhouse, or to any of the chapel committee at Stoke.”*

Over the front gable of the chapel of 1861 appeared the words “Stoke Wesleyan Church, B.B.A., 1861.” The letters were interpreted by the younger wags as “Born before Adam”, but their true signification is “Blase Beach, Architect.”

Local friends tell us also that the chapel of 1861 was built with the back higher than the front, as are so many more recent churches, thus allowing the people in the back pews to see the front despite the “ostrich tips” on the heads of fair wearers! There was evidently no porch at first, for it was decided at a Chapel Committee meeting held in December, 1864, that £13 be handed to Mr. E. Jellyman to pay for part of the porch. That year the Chapel Anniversary was held on Christmas Day, and to the Anniversary tea, held on Boxing Day, about 100 people sat down. The ordinary needs of the Trust in those early times seem to have been met by quarterly Sunday offerings. The Anniversary tea meeting in 1864 was held in “the old mud school” to which reference has already been made. The public meeting was held in the chapel, the Rev. William Kirk presiding, excellent addresses being given by Messrs. J. T. Smith, J. M. Hill, J. Atkin, and the Rev. J. Wallis. The offering at the close, together with the subscriptions, completely wiped off the debt on the new porch (total cost, £26/10/0).

In 1865 it was resolved that two dozen gum-trees be purchased, and planted in the chapel grounds at a cost of sixpence each, also 3000 quicks for £1/2/6d. to form a fence round the chapel. In 1884 it was decided to cut down all the gum-trees, barring only the one at the lower end of the ground.

Evidently the chapel of 1861 had a shingle roof, for in 1884 it was re-covered with iron at a total cost of £17. In August, 1869, kerosene lamps were installed in place of candles. On March 27, 1865, Mr. R. Ching was re-elected society steward. At the same meeting it was decided that the offer of Mr. Edward Cresswell to put up gate posts and repair the fencing be accepted. It must be remembered that the ground had been already occupied about 13 years.

**The names of the members of the Chapel Committee here referred to in the year 1864 (three years later) were the following: Messrs. Borlase, R. Ching, E. Cresswell, D. Norgate, and J. T. Smith.*

On July 3, 1865, Messrs. Borlase, Cresswell and Smith were appointed a sub-committee to see to the erection of six pews in the chapel, so there was evidently room for more seats than those originally provided. It seems to suggest also that congregations were then on the increase. On New Year's day, 1866, the following took part in the weeknight public meeting associated with the Chapel Anniversary:—Mrs. Bunn, the Rev. R. S. Bunn, and Messrs. Atkin, J. Rose, and J. M. Hill.

On Christmas Day, 1865, the Trustees decided that the new "pews" be let at 5/- per quarter, and the old "seats" at 4/-. The "pews" were fixed, whereas the "seats" were movable forms with back-rests. Seat rents were not abolished until much later. The Anniversary proceeds on New Year's Day, 1866, enabled the Committee to pay for the new pews. That year (1866) Mr. Richard Ching was society steward, Mr. E. Cresswell chapel steward and treasurer, and Mr. J. T. Smith secretary. The chapel was painted (one coat) between March and June, 1868, and another coat was given in October, 1870.

THE SEVENTIES.

Coming to the seventies of the last century, we note that on March 28, 1873, it was resolved "that Mr. Watkin's account for Crown grant of property and registering the same be paid." The Rev. W. J. Watkin was then just finishing up his term as superintendent minister of the Nelson circuit.

Under date September 28, 1875, we find the following minute: "The Trust Deed of the Stoke Wesleyan Church was signed this day by the persons following, namely:— Edward Green, Edward Cresswell, David Norgate, John Bovey, William Burlace Pote, William Doidge, and Hicks Parker as part of the Trustees for the property." The Trustees absent on that occasion were Messrs. Thomas Usher, John Tippet Smith, and Robert Lucas. On November 4 the same year it was resolved that the church roof be repaired, the windows frosted, and new gates put up at the entrance.

A minute dated November 3, 1879, reads thus: "That the ground be closed for interments, no further burials to be permitted," but with two exceptions in the case of widows whose husbands had previously passed away and been interred there. We note that 1879 was the year in which Mr. Enoch Jellyman was accidentally killed at the age of 68, but (the above resolution notwithstanding) Mr. Richard Ching senr., who passed away on May 6, 1883, at the age of 72, has had a tomb stone erected to his memory in the graveyard of the church. Mr.

Ching's prominence from the very first as a pioneer Methodist and office-bearer doubtless justified a departure from the decision previously recorded.

REPAIRS TO THE CHAPEL.

Towards the end of 1883, a public meeting was held to consider the best means of repairing the chapel. On July 3, 1884, the Trustees decided that the contract for placing iron on the roof and porch should be given to Mr. H. Norgate (at his own estimate, £17/15/0), and on October 23 the same year it was resolved that Mr. W. H. Constable should be paid the sum of £11 for painting and papering. It was also resolved that inquiries be made regarding "the cost of frosting the windows and varnishing the wainscoting."

CHANGES IN THE TRUST.

On May 29, 1884, Mr. James Cresswell was made church steward in place of his father. On February 23, 1888, the following were elected Trustees on the nomination of the chairman: Messrs. Albert, Daniel, and Frank Cresswell, and Thomas Ching, the first named being made secretary. On March 1, 1888, it was directed that two names from among the Trustees be dropped on account of their non-attendance at public worship. Two other names were dropped owing to their residing at a distance. The resignation of Mr. Edward Green, a veteran and pioneer local preacher and office-bearer, who had rendered conspicuous service to the Church, was accepted with very great reluctance, as was also that of Mr. Thomas Usher of Nelson, because of their inability any longer to attend Trustee meetings. On November 5, 1895, it was resolved that Mr. James Ching be asked to become a Trustee. In October, 1906, the following gentlemen were asked to become Trustees, namely, Messrs. N. J. Pill, James Mundy, Frank Norgate, Philip Ching, Michael Ching, and William Kenning. Mr. Pill accepted office and proved a worthy Trustee, as the following resolution on his retirement will show:—"That the best thanks of the Trust be accorded to Mr. N. J. Pill for work done to improve the church building, and that a small donation" (amount given) "be handed to him as part reimbursement and as a mark of gratitude."

On August 19, 1908, the resignation of Mr. Frank Cresswell, then of Ballance (Pahiatua circuit), was received. Mr. N. J. Pill was appointed in place of Mr. Edward Cresswell, and Mr. Philip Ching in place of Mr. Thomas Ching. Messrs. James Mundy and Frederick John Hall were appointed additional

Trustees, the last-named becoming secretary and treasurer on January 8, 1909. He continued to give faithful and devoted service in that capacity for about five years.

VOLUNTARY WORK.

On January 18, 1911, it was reported that a working bee, consisting of Messrs. Henry, James, and Philip Ching, Fred Hall, John Jellyman, and Henry Norgate "had spent two afternoons recently putting the grounds in order, trimming the hedges, etc." Mr. Cecil Norgate had rendered service putting in windows free of charge. Votes of thanks to these brethren were passed, also to Mr. Pill for preparing posts for the gate. Our young people were commended for raising funds for a new organ, and it was decided to open subscription lists for that purpose. At the same meeting the new church project was discussed, but deferred.

NEW CHURCH MOVEMENT.

In December, 1913, the new church scheme was again deferred until the ladies could hold their function in the following month. After that, a full meeting of Trustees could be summoned to discuss the matter. It was reported that Mr. Pill had offered a section for a new church next to his shop, and that in the event of the Trustees not accepting his offer, he was willing to donate the sum of £25, or its equivalent, towards the new church scheme.

THE RAISING OF MONEY.

On April 22, 1914, it was resolved that a systematic canvass be made in aid of the Building Fund, that the offer of Messrs. P. Ching and J. Jellyman to canvass the eastern end and that of Messrs. Cecil Norgate and Claude Powell the western end of the Stoke district be accepted. The Trustees requested the ladies to hold a tea meeting on Tuesday, May 12, to be followed by an Anniversary concert in the evening. Application was made to Mr. C. Goodwin of Richmond for a loan of £150 on Promissory Note at 5 per cent. interest. In 1914 the registered Trustees were the following: Messrs. N. J. Pill, J. Rutherford, D. Frost, C. Norgate, T. Chambers, E. C. Russell, C. Powell, J. Jellyman, and A. G. Nuttall, Mr. Jellyman having been elected secretary and treasurer in place of Mr. Fred Hall (resigned).

The Church Anniversary tea and concert in 1914 was held on May 12. On July 14 a meeting of Trustees was held at the home of Mr. Pill, whereat it was resolved that the new church be built on the present site, that the plan be altered so as to

dispense with the buttresses, that an addition be made at the pulpit end sufficient to carry the rostrum, and that the stud be at least 12 feet. It was suggested that linings be not more than 4½ inches wide, and jointed with no centre joint. It was considered that the building should accommodate at least 100 persons.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS.

On July 27 Mr. Griffin, architect for the new building, attended a meeting of Trustees, and during the evening explained details of the plan. After considerable discussion, Mr. Griffin was asked to prepare plans and specifications slightly amended. At a meeting of Trustees held on October 8, 1914, the specifications were read by the chairman and carefully considered by the Trustees present, considerable discussion ensuing. Mr. Pill moved that a possible weakness of the roof be referred to the architect for his opinion, also the purloins and the question of changing the specified width of lining from six to four inches. The matter of the new church being postponed until after Christmas, it was decided that in the meantime effort be made to collect donations.

MEETING OF CONGREGATION.

At a meeting of members and adherents of the Stoke church on March 12, 1915, a report of the financial position of the new Church Building Fund was read by the Trust secretary, showing that the amount at present available (including £150 borrowed from Mr. Goodwin) was £427. The report was fully discussed by those present, and finally Mr. J. Biggar moved the following: "That in the opinion of this meeting the time has arrived for the Trustees to proceed with the erection of the new church building". Mr. James Ching, in seconding the motion, said he had witnessed the erection of the building in which they were then gathered. The motion was put and carried unanimously.

At a meeting of Trustees held the same evening the chairman, the Rev. C. Eaton, reported a recent conversation with Mr. Griffin, the architect, in which the latter had stated that the alterations of the clause specifying 75 per cent. heart of timber, together with the substitution of four inches lining for six inches, would probably mean an additional cost of £20. After full discussion, it was decided to allow the two items to stand as at present until the opening of the tenders, when an alteration could be made if found necessary. It was resolved that the architect be requested to call for tenders forthwith. During the

meeting a letter from the architect regarding the strength of the roof was read, stating that, in his opinion, ample strength was provided for.

THE TENDERS.

On March 24, 1915, Mr. Griffin, architect for the new building, attended a Trustee meeting by request, and opened the tenders, three of these being duly considered. It was decided that the tender of Messrs. Robertson Bros. be accepted for £469/18/10d. Mr. P. Ching reported that Messrs. Millar had offered to donate a foundation stone with suitable inscription for the new church. This was accepted with thanks, and it was agreed that the Rev. John Dawson, President of the Conference, be asked to lay the foundation stone. The Stoke Methodists, however, were not destined to see the late Rev. John Dawson in his official capacity. Before the due date he came temporarily on to the sick list and sent as his substitute the late Rev. S. J. Serpell, of Masterton, the Ex-President. (See *Evening Mail and Colonist* of 13/5/15).

A further meeting of Trustees on April 14 was attended by Messrs. Pill (chair), Norgate, Nuttall, Frost, Powell, and Jellyman (secretary). A date was suggested for the stone-laying which was afterwards changed to Wednesday, May 12, to suit the arrangements of the President. The inscription on the stone suggested by the Rev. C. Eaton was approved. It was decided to ask the President to give a lecture in the public hall in the evening of the day of the stone-laying. Mrs. Giblin was thanked for organising a concert in aid of the Building Fund. On the motion of Messrs. Norgate and Nuttall it was resolved that the expenses of the labour of putting in the foundations be shared equally by the Trustees. At a subsequent meeting the following committee was set up to arrange all details in connection with the stone laying, including the commissariat arrangements, namely:—Mrs. Giblin, Mrs. Chambers, Mr. J. Jellyman and Mr. C. Norgate (with power to add). The Trustees' Committee to carry out instructions in connection with the stone-laying consisted of Messrs. Powell, Russell, P. Ching and J. Jellyman. The Anniversary of the old church was put forward to May 16th (*) to agree with the date of the stone-laying. On July 5, 1915, it was decided that the new church should be taken

*This C.A. Function had by this time become shifted to somewhere near July, to suit (apparently) the date of the opening of the 1861 church.

over by the Trustees on July 16th and opened on the 18th; that the Rev. W. Baumber be the preacher in the afternoon, and the Rev. A. Ashcroft in the evening; that on the following Sunday (25th) the Rev. A. Ashcroft be the afternoon preacher and that Mr. Geo. Snadden officiate in the evening. On the Thursday between the two Sundays a circuit tea was held, and there were five tables—Stoke one, Hope one, Richmond one, Brightwater and Spring Grove one, also Wakefield and Wai-iti one. Mesdames H. Ching and T. Chambers, and Messrs. C. Norgate, E. C. Russell and J. Jellyman formed the committee appointed to arrange the evening programme on July 22nd.

On July 12, 1915, the Trustees agreed to purchase on terms the organ for the new church recommended by the Rev. A. Ashcroft, for 43 guineas. The amended account of Messrs. Robertson Bros. for extras was passed for payment, and it was resolved on the motion of Messrs. Jellyman and Frost that application be made to Mr. Goodwin for a further loan of £50. The ladies were asked to assist in raising funds to extinguish the debt on the new church, and the offer of Mr. Webster to show lantern slides for that purpose was accepted with thanks.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THIRD CHURCH TO SUNDAY SCHOOL HALL (1915-1931).

On August 16, 1915, the Trustees appointed Messrs. Pill, P. Ching, and C. Norgate to inspect the old church building and report on its condition. On December 13 that committee reported that the old church was beyond repair, but recommended that it be retained for use as a Sunday school until the Trustees were able to erect a new building. On October 9, 1916, Mr. Hart was granted the use of the old church for one night in the week to conduct a gymnasium. Similar permission had before this been given to the Boy Scouts. The officers and teachers of the Sunday school were granted permission to make such alterations in the platform and seating arrangements of the old building as might be found necessary for the better working of the school.

On Saturday, July 28, 1917, several members of the congregation, including the Trustees, met in the grounds to inspect the old church building, and on August 23 it was resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Jellyman and Frost, to obtain permission from our Loan Fund Committee to demolish the same. This permission having been given, Mr. Pill moved on October 29, and Mr. Frost seconded, that the Trustees avail themselves of that permission. The voting was six for, and one against, the motion. It was then resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Nuttall and Chambers, that the Sunday school be permitted to use the new church building on certain agreed conditions.

Tenders were then invited for purchase and removal of the old church building. This was to be done within thirty days from acceptance of the tender. Messrs. Frost and Nuttall moved that the proceeds of the sale of the old building be used towards paying off the debt on the new building. Messrs. Stead and Chambers moved as an amendment that the proceeds be made the nucleus of a fund for a new Sunday school. The amendment was carried. Three tenders for the purchase and removal were received by the Trustees on November 13, and it was resolved that the offer of Mr. David Wood (£35) be accepted.

On January 14, 1918, the amendment of October 29 in the previous year was rescinded, and it was now resolved that the proceeds of the sale of the old church building be placed to the

credit of the general Trust Account. On May 27, on the motion of Messrs. Nuttall and Stead, permission was given to have the foundations of the old building removed. A working bee was appointed to put the grounds in order and to gravel the paths, the matter of procuring gravel being left to Mr. Stead. An offer by Mr. E. C. Russell to build a cupboard for the use of the Sunday school from material provided by the Trustees was accepted with thanks.

EXTINGUISHING CHURCH DEBT.

On October 9, 1916, a small debt remaining on the new church, it was resolved that the assistance of the ladies be asked in extinguishing the same. On January 29, 1917, the account of Messrs. Robertson Bros. for panels and necessary alterations in front of the choir seats was passed for payment. It was resolved that the fences be repaired (a panel fence to be erected at the top of the church grounds), and that some climbing plants be placed around the tree stump.

On April 12 it was decided that the loan of £150 from the Loan Fund, together with £50 from the local Trust Fund, be placed together and used to repay the debt of £200 due to Mr. Goodwin.

ELECTRIC LIGHT.

In On August, 1915, application was made to Mr. Ellis for the lighting of the church by electricity. On January 29, 1917, it was resolved that, with the consent of Mr. Ellis, the work be entrusted to Mr. George Pill, the Trust secretary and Mr. Pill to make the arrangements necessary.

On January 22, 1924, it was resolved to have an electric light meter installed in the church, it being understood that a flat rate of 18/7d per quarter was to be charged. On December 8, 1931, it was resolved that the Sunday school hall (when finished) and the church were to be connected with the one switch board.

PAINTING THE CHURCH.

It being now eight years since the erection of the church, it was resolved in January, 1923, on the motion of Messrs. Frost and Norgate that an estimate be obtained of the cost of painting the church. It was reported at the next meeting (February 13) that the cost by day labour ^{was} be £41, and by contract £45. On March 6, after some discussion concerning ways and means, one of the Trustees offered to loan, on promissory note, at a reasonable

rate, the balance of the funds required. His offer was accepted with thanks. The balance of the cost was met by the proceeds of the Anniversary effort that year.

THE LADIES' GUILD.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the service rendered to Christ and His Church in various ways during the years by the Methodist women of Stoke. To say nothing of work previously done by them, they received in February, 1921, the thanks of the Trustees for the gift of £44, proceeds of a recent sale of work. On January 16, 1923, the church was reported to be now free of debt, and there was also a credit balance of £18. A year later the sum of £39 was raised for the proposed new S.S. Hall. On November 27, 1929, the Rev. J. H. Haslam reported to the Trustees that the Ladies' Guild had, through an effort made on November 2, been able to hand over to the same building fund the sum of £50. These efforts seem to have been made during this period every year.

PERSONNEL OF TRUST.

Mr. N. J. Pill, a very able and enthusiastic trustee, was removed by death in 1921. In January, 1923, Messrs. Taylor, Trevella, and Baldwin were appointed new Trustees. On May 15, 1923, Mr. J. Jellyman tendered his resignation as Trust secretary, and it was unanimously resolved "that Mr. Jellyman's resignation be accepted with very great regret, and that this meeting of Trustees places on record its appreciation of the long and faithful services carried out in a most conscientious manner by their late secretary."

Mr. Trevella was appointed to the vacant position. Mr. A. J. Nuttall passed away during the first half of 1923, and Mr. J. Rutherford some time afterwards. Mr. Jellyman remained a Trustee after ceasing to be secretary. Mr. Trevella retained the secretaryship until May, 1928, when the Trustees placed on record their thanks for and appreciation of his services during the previous five years, he having always carried out his duties "with credit to himself and to the Board." Messrs. J. W. Longworth and G. W. Nuttall were appointed Trustees, and at the next meeting (June 6) Mr. Nuttall was elected secretary. Mr. Nuttall occupied the position, however, for a short time only, his resignation being received with regret by the Trustees on October 24. Mr. Dickinson was elected a Trustee on November 21, 1930, and on September 7, 1931, he was elected secretary.

GROUND AND PATHS.

On May 8, 1919, the Trustees decided to plough the church ground, with a view to levelling and beautifying the same. A working bee was organised, and some ornamental shrubs were procured. Another working bee met in the church grounds on a Saturday afternoon in July, 1922, to trim the hedges. On June 9, 1925, a vote of thanks and appreciation was passed by the Trustees to Messrs. W. Norgate and Richard Ching for care bestowed on the grounds and paths. On September 7, 1931, the same two gentlemen are again thanked "for tidying the grounds of our church." On October 16, 1931, the question regarding the front fence of the church facing Station Road (now Songer Street) was discussed, and the feeling was that, if possible, this ought to be altered to correspond with the fence on the main road. Messrs. Russell, P. Ching and Jellyman were appointed to interview the County Council with plenipotentiary powers. On November 23, 1931, the Trustees appointed Mr. P. Ching overseer of the first working bee for Saturday, November 28, approved of the purchase of Cyclone wire for fencing the front of the section, and sanctioned the replacement of the hedge by a fence similar to the one being erected along the main road. Mr. Russell's offer to erect the fence after the clearing of the ground was gratefully accepted.

ROAD AND BOUNDARY ALTERATIONS.

A Trust minute dated September 11, 1929, notes the proposal of the Waimea County Council to acquire some eight or ten feet of our main road frontage for road-widening, and it was decided that, before the commencement of building operations, the County engineer be interviewed. On January 15, 1930, the chairman, the Rev. J. H. Haslam, reported to a meeting of the Stoke congregation that he, with Messrs. P. Ching and J. Jellyman had met a deputation from the Waimea County Council consisting of the engineer and two councillors, and that it had been agreed to recommend to the Council that it be satisfied with the acceptance of six feet of church property along the main road frontage, and that the two end corners be rounded off; that compensation be at the rate of £100 per acre, thirty shillings per chain being allowed for fencing. Dissatisfaction was expressed respecting the rate of compensation, and it was resolved, in the event of the Council not accepting six feet as sufficient, to press for a different basis of computation.

A meeting of the Trust on March 6, 1930, considered a letter to the chairman from the clerk of the Waimea County.

setting forth certain resolutions passed at a meeting held on February 6 concerning the acquiring of a strip of the church section at Stoke, also a letter from the Secretary of our Loan Fund Committee authorising the dedication of a strip of the section for road-widening purposes on condition that the Trustees secure the best terms possible from the County Council.

After some discussion, it was moved by Mr. P. Ching, and seconded by Mr. J. Jellyman, that the chairman be asked to write to the County Clerk stating: (1) That in the opinion of the Trustees the letter sent by him is unsatisfactory in that it does not give particulars respecting the width of the strip it was agreed to acquire for road-widening; (2) that, acting on instructions from the Church Building and Loan Fund Committee, the Trustees have reviewed the position and agreed that the basis of £100 per acre by way of compensation is altogether inadequate, considering the situation of the church section (in the heart of Stoke) and the area of the section which will be injuriously affected for church purposes by the surrender of even six feet along the Richmond main highway; (3) that if the Council is prepared to reconsider terms of compensation, the Trustees will be happy to meet it, or a Committee appointed by it, to discuss the whole question.

The Council having agreed to a meeting with the Trustees, it was decided at a Trustee meeting held on Wednesday, May 28, that the full Trust Board should meet the representatives of the Waimea County Council on a date to be arranged by the Council. It was resolved that the Trustees fix £150 (plus cost of fencing) as the valuation of a six-foot width of frontage along the main highway, that it be further stated that, the property being contiguous to the main road, it will be materially deteriorated in value by every foot of land surrendered, and that, further, it will become necessary for the Trust to purchase another section to carry out the proposed Sunday school building scheme.

It was further resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Powell and Taylor, that in the event of the council requiring more than a six-foot width, £200 be the valuation of nine feet, and £250 for twelve feet. The chairman was further authorised to state to the Council's representatives that the Trustees do not wish to sell any of the land, the property as it is suiting our purposes much better.

On November 21, 1930, correspondence was read from the clerk of the Waimea County declining the Trustees' offer of a six-foot strip of land for £150. A letter from our Connexional Secretary was also read, giving the opinion of our Conference

legal adviser in relation to the property. The Rev. P. N. Knight, B.A., who presided over the meeting in his official capacity as Chairman of the District, suggested that it would be sound policy to secure the opinion of a competent local legal adviser; then armed with this opinion, the Trustees would be in a position to approach the County Council. He offered to obtain information as to the most suitable solicitor, and also to act as a member of the deputation. This kind offer the Trustees accepted.

On December 22, Mr. Knight again presided over a meeting of Trustees, and reported that Mr. J. Glasgow had been consulted as solicitor, and that there had been an informal conversation with certain members of the Waimea County Council wherein it had been suggested that a strip of land on the back road might be exchanged for one on the main road. It was resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Taylor and Powell, "that we offer to the Waimea County Council either a six or eight feet strip of land on the main highway in exchange for a strip of equal width on the back road, provided (1) that the building regulations will allow the erection of a building on the boundaries of both minor roads; (2) that the Waimea County Council remove both hedges and replace with cyclone wire fencing."

In reply to a communication from the County Council, a meeting of Trustees on February 9, 1931, resolved as follows: "The Trustees insist upon the necessity of a cyclone wire fence being erected on the main road, approved by the Trustees. Regarding the fence on the back road, the Trustees agree to the erection of a sawn post and wire fence, the posts to be not more than nine feet apart, and bored for eight wires; this fence also to be approved by the Trustees; posts for both fences to be of black birch."

On July 27, 1931, the chairman submitted to the Trustees a tracing map showing alterations to the section involved in the transfer of land to and from the Waimea County Council. It was signed by the Trustees in attendance. Letters from Mr. J. Glasgow, solicitor, and the Waimea County Council stated that requirements regarding fences, etc., had been agreed to by the Public Works Department.

CHAPTER V.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL HALL.

As early as December, 1923, the proceeds of a Christmas tree bazaar £39 had been set aside by the ladies for a new Sunday school. The Trustees, on January 22, 1924, decided that this should be a separate fund and deposited for one year with the Permanent Building Society, Nelson. On April 16 they carried the motion of Messrs. Frost and Powell "that the Trustees appreciate, and are in sympathy with the efforts of the ladies and of the S.S. officers in the new S.S. project, and assure them of their hearty co-operation."

In October, 1927, a letter came from the Public Trustee intimating that the late Mrs. Feddon, in her will, had bequeathed a sum of money to the funds of the Stoke Methodist Sunday school. The Trustees then discussed the contemplated building, and it was resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Taylor and Russell, that Mr. F. P. Brooks (the builder) be requested to meet the Trustees on October 17. The meeting was duly held, and Mr. Brooks was asked to prepare rough plans.

APPLICATION FOR LOAN.

In August, 1928, the rough plan and specifications of the proposed erection were fully considered, and several items referred back to the builder for fuller information. On the motion of Messrs. Russell and Ching an application was made to the Church Building and Loan Fund Committee for £350. The Connexional Secretary in reply intimated that the plan and specifications had been passed provisionally, and that about two years thence a loan of £230 would be available.

The chairman of the Trust, the Rev. J. H. Haslam, reported on November 27, 1929, that the sum in hand, including a recent donation of £50 from the Ladies' Guild, amounted now to about £415. He suggested the present possibility of instructing the architect to call for tenders. He had requested that the amount available from the Loan Fund be immediately earmarked, as it would be required at an early date.

UNAVOIDABLE DELAY.

Arrangements appear from that date to have been considerably delayed, owing to the somewhat protracted negoti-

ations with the Waimea County Council regarding boundary alterations for the purpose of road-widening. As a result nothing more was done until July 27, 1931, when Mr. Powell moved, and Mr. Russell seconded, that the new Sunday school be proceeded with, and that new tenders be called for by the architect, Mr. A. R. Griffin of Nelson. After a lengthy exchange of opinions, it was resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Powell and Taylor, that the building be erected on the N.E. corner, fronting Station Road.

THE TENDERS.

At the next Trustee meeting (September 7, 1931) Mr. Griffin attended, and opened the tenders. No less than fifteen of these were to hand, and after prolonged discussion it was unanimously decided to accept the tender of Messrs. Brooks and McDonald for £508/11-.

On September 19, 1931, it was reported that the architect had found it impossible to have the building erected on the N.E. corner, and it was therefore resolved, on the motion of Messrs. Jellyman and P. Ching, that in view of information received, it be erected at the rear of the present church, and facing the south. It was next found that an ante-room and certain other additions were needed, and at a meeting held on October 16 a letter was received from the architect stating that, having gone carefully through the estimates given for extra work, he now submitted suggestions regarding alterations and deductions. The total cost of additions, etc., as estimated by the architect amounted to £105, which amount was, by arrangement with the contractors, afterwards reduced to £100.

At a combined meeting of Trustees, Guild members, and S.S. officers held on November 10, 1931, the following committee was appointed to make arrangements regarding the opening: Mesdames Blommaart, Pickup, Powell and Wilkinson, Misses Ching and Winn, and Messrs. Ching, Dickinson, and Jellyman.

OPENING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL HALL.

The hall was opened on January 23, 1932, in the presence of about 200 workers, S.S. scholars, and friends gathered from near and far. The section had recently undergone transformation, being now surrounded by neat fences and footpaths, thanks to hard work by willing hands, and the co-operation of the Waimea County Council. The hall has a seating capacity for more than 200.

Outside the hall at 3 p.m., in beautiful sunshine, scholars, teachers, and friends assembled for the preliminary service. The Rev. R. Richards, circuit minister, presided and spoke of the day as one of thanksgiving for completed labour. The Doxology was sung, followed by a prayer of thanksgiving led by Mr. George Nuttall, a former S.S. superintendent.

The Rev. George Stockwell, of Blenheim, Chairman of the District, spoke in a few choice sentences of the joy he felt in being present with so many old friends on so happy an occasion. Miss H. Sparrow (now Mrs. J. Gribben), who for many years past had been a zealous worker in the church and S.S., was asked to open the door of the new building. In a neat little speech Miss Sparrow spoke of the importance and joy of work among the young. Much as she appreciated the invitation to take part in the function, she knew she was but the one through whom honour was being done to the ladies and their splendid efforts in raising money for the desired objective. Miss Sparrow was then handed the key by Mr. Brooks, on behalf of his building firm, and the door was opened, Miss Sparrow being then presented by Miss Rowena Wilkinson with a beautiful bouquet.

DEDICATION SERVICE.

The dedication service at 3.30 p.m. was conducted by the District Chairman, and about 220 people assembled in the new hall. The opening hymn was "O thou whose hand hath brought us," and after a further hymn had been sung ("Praise ye the Lord, 'tis good. . ."), Missioner Duder of Wakefield led the assembly in prayer. The Dedication Service was read by the Chairman, the people joining in the responses. The dedicatory prayer was taken by the Rev. W. A. Burley, M.A. of Nelson, the lessons (Psalm 84 and Mark 10, 10-16) being read by the Rev. R. Richards. The dedication hymn was "Be with us, gracious Lord, to-day."

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

The address of the District Chairman paid glowing tribute to past workers, and rejoiced in great hopes fulfilled. The key position regarding the future, he said, was held by Sunday schools and the young people. These days of haste and rush were very different from the quiet, solid, and perhaps rather slow days of the Victorian era, but the young folk of today had a difficult yet glorious task before them in building the Temple of Peace and the Kingdom of God. The Methodist Church had done a splendid work among youth, possessing as we did 420

Sunday schools, 3,200 teachers, 30,000 Sunday school scholars, besides Cubs, Scouts, Guides, and C.E. societies. He reminded the young folk that there were before them today big opportunities to make New Zealand prosperous, strong, and free. Laying stress upon the importance of teaching work among the young, he brought home to his hearers the truth that early piety has for its goal the pre-eminence of Christ in all things. In deprecating unnecessary pessimism in our view of life today, he suggested that instead of so much outlook, we might with advantage try the "uplook." Three great goals lay before present-day youth: (1) the realisation of Church unity; (2) the building of the Temple of Peace, and (3) the christianisation of moral standards and moral character.

To serve the present age,
 Our calling to fulfil:
 O may it all our powers engage
 To do our Master's will.

The function concluded with the singing of "O God our Help."

TEA AND PUBLIC MEETING.

The tea was in the Stoke Public Hall, the tables being laden with dainty edibles, and the room tastefully decorated, everything reflecting credit on the willing band of women workers and others. More than 200 people sat down at the tables. At 7 p.m. the evening meeting and concert began, the hall being well filled. The Chairman, the Rev. G. Stockwell, was supported on the platform by Trustees, Guild members, and former S.S. teachers and scholars. The time-honoured "O for a thousand tongues" opened proceedings, and then followed prayer, led by the Rev. R. Richards. The Trust secretary, Mr. W. Dickinson, read messages from old scholars and friends as follows:—Mrs. Meads (Nelson), Mrs. J. Sutton and family (Brightwater), Mr. and Mrs. Ching (Lower Moutere), Mr. and Mrs. Win (Wakefield), the Revs. M. A. Rugby Pratt (Christchurch) and H. L. Richards (Takapuna), Messrs. J. E. Cresswell (Blenheim), Frank Hart (Wellington), A. A. Lucas (Nelson), and many others. Several old scholars spoke, giving happy reminiscences, among whom was the veteran Mr. J. Jellyman of Blenheim, who referred to early Methodist days in Stoke. Mr. Trevella, also of Blenheim, expressed gratitude for pleasant memories and renewed friendships, giving words of encouragement to workers. Mr. Chambers, of Lower Moutere, referred to the old church of 1861, and claimed to have conducted the last service held in it.

Mr. W. H. Kelly, mayor of Richmond, in a happy little speech, reminded his hearers that "righteousness exalteth a nation." Mr. Black of Nelson invoked happy memories, and congratulated the Methodists of Stoke. Mr. J. W. Longworth (S.S. superintendent) told in his interesting report "how we got our Sunday school," making special reference to the late Mrs. Feddon and her generous bequest, to the Ladies' Guild (who since 1926 had contributed approximately £250 to the fund), to the scholars and their weekly offerings, also to the loyal band of present-day teachers, secretary, officials, and parents. The speeches were pleasantly interspersed with songs, duets, elocutionary items, and a dialogue contributed by Mrs. Lewis, Misses Steventon, Brooks, Gubb and Kershaw, with their youthful assistants.

SUNDAY SERVICES.

Mr. George Nuttall and the Rev. Ray Richards conducted good and helpful youth services on the Sunday following, Mr. Nuttall taking as his theme "Charity", and Mr. Richards speaking earnestly on Psalm 127: 1—"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." The children sang very beautifully a number of special hymns. The special offerings taken at the Saturday and Sunday meetings added about £35 to the fund.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STOKE CHURCH—ITS MORE RECENT HISTORY.

PERSONNEL OF THE TRUST.

The following was a complete list of active Trustees on October 3, 1933—Messrs. Philip Ching, James Mundy, E. C. Russell, Daniel Frost, Thomas Chambers, J. C. Powell, Charles Baldwin, H. M. Taylor, G. W. Nuttall, J. W. Longworth, W. Dickinson, and C. Norgate. On November 14, 1933, the Chairman (the Rev. B. Dudley) welcomed Messrs. M. R. Ching and R. J. Hyland as new members of the Trust Board, thanking them for their acceptance of office and wishing them joy and success in their work as Trustees. At a later date the names of Messrs. J. Gribben, S. Winn, and A. Winn were added.

In November, 1935, the Trustees received with regret the resignation of Mr. W. Dickinson as their secretary and treasurer, owing to his leaving the district. The meeting resolved to place on record its sincere appreciation of his services during the past four years. Mr. W. J. Ferguson was appointed his successor as secretary and treasurer of the Trust, and he continued in this office, serving faithfully, for eleven years.

A successor to Mr. Ferguson was found in Mr. J. Gribben, who was appointed on October 14, 1946, and still carries on faithfully the duties of the office. The resignation of Mr. S. Winn from the Trust was received on October 4, 1948, a letter of thanks and appreciation being sent to him. At the same meeting the following were nominated and subsequently registered as new Trustees:— Messrs. S. C. Hutton, A. Eden, G. Allcott, and F. J. Gribble.

LOAN PAID OFF.

On November 9, 1937, it was resolved "that the Trustees accept the offer of the Ladies' Guild to pay off the balance owing on the Sunday school hall, and that we convey our heartiest appreciation of the generous work done in connection with the whole enterprise." It was also resolved at the same meeting that the Secretary write to the Secretary of the Church Building and Loan Fund Committee, making arrangements to pay off the

balance owing on the Sunday school hall. The rest of the church subsequently combined and entertained the Ladies' Guild at a social evening in connection with the event.

VOLUNTARY LABOUR.

Reference has already been made to the work of working bees in connection with the up-keep of the church grounds; but no less praise is due to individual persons who have given manual toil in the King's service. Many names worthy of mention in this connection appear elsewhere in this brochure, but also specially deserving of a place is Mr. J. Gribben, the present Trust secretary and treasurer, for his fine joinery work, etc. Many others, past and present, have served the Church gladly and well, but it is possible to mention only the names of Messrs. W. Blommaart and H. N. Toomer.

CONCRETING CHURCH PATHS.

The Trust secretary on March 6, 1945, reported that, in addition to one or two unpaid promises, there had been actually handed to him sums amounting to £14/13/6d towards concreting the church paths. After a lengthy discussion, it was resolved that an early start be made with the work. The cement having been procured from Mr. James Baird and the gravel from Mr. B. A. Brough, a working bee on Saturday, April 7th, constructed a front path 4 feet in width, a side path 3 feet, and one between the church and Sunday school 2½ feet. Concrete paths had been laid around the Sunday school the previous year.

Working bees were likewise in operation doing sundry work about the church and the grounds on June 28, 1947, and May 1, 1948. In the history of Methodism at Stoke right from the earliest recorded days, a notable feature has been the work at various times of men's working bees. The value of the contribution thus made to the work of our church in this place is beyond computation; and this remark gains additional emphasis if, as the author believes, our very first chapel was erected mainly, if not wholly, by voluntary labour.

PAINTING THE CHURCH.

Over the years the expense of painting the church has doubtless been faced many times, and the Trust minutes of 1935 inform us that Mr. C. Norgate's tender of £25 was accepted for two coats to the body of the building and one coat to the roof. The Ladies' Guild, with its usual generosity, made a grant of £20 towards the cost.

On June 16, 1947, Mr. C. Norgate offered to do certain expert work inside the church, provided the Trustees supplied the material and some voluntary assistance. This was accepted. On November 25, 1948, the Trustees decided that the inside walls of the church down to the window-sills should be painted as soon as possible a pale cream (two coats). This was done in due course by enthusiastic working bees under Mr. Norgate's supervision. Mr. Norgate was asked to stain and varnish the seats of the church, also the walls up to and including the window-sills. This work was completed on Monday, December 6.

ORGANISTS AND CONDUCTORS.

On December 1, 1936, the Trustees decided on sending a letter to Miss H. Sparrow conveying their thanks for and appreciation of her long and faithful services as organist, and also on making at an early date a suitable presentation to her. On November 19, 1940, it was decided that letters of thanks for and appreciation of their faithful work be sent both to Miss Sparrow as organist and Mr. E. Temple-White as choir conductor. In reappointing Miss Sparrow on November 15, 1945, it was directed that a suitable gift be made to her. On October 6, 1947, Mrs. Gribben (formerly Miss H. Sparrow), Miss Lola Russell (morning organist), and Miss Eva Winn all received the thanks of the Trustees, and they were reappointed.

On October 14, 1946, the Trustees appointed Mr. H. N. Toomer conductor of the senior choir. At the Stoke morning services the junior choir fills a very important place, and the annual meetings of Trustees in 1947 and 1948 officially thanked the juniors.

CHURCH FINANCE.

On August 6, 1945, the Trustees discussed financial affairs, and the following was moved and carried: "That the Stoke Trustees, realizing the unsatisfactory nature of the present method of financing the Church Trust (income being practically limited to one Sunday's collections a year), feel that some effort should be made to put the finances on a more stable basis, and therefore they suggest that the envelope system be reorganised in the church so as to make available from each Sunday's contribution per envelopes (1) a fixed percentage for the Circuit Fund, and (2) the remaining percentage to the Trust Fund. They therefore recommend that a Circuit Finance Committee be set up to investigate what percentages should be given to the Circuit Fund and the Trust Fund respectively." This resolution

formed the basis of a reorganisation of the finances of the whole circuit, including the Richmond Parsonage Trust, and the new scheme has operated since April 1, 1946, with outstanding success.

ROAD-WIDENING.

At a meeting of Trustees held on March 20, 1946, a letter was received from the District Highways Council, intimating the Council's intention to take a portion of the church section for the purpose of widening the road. It will be remembered that plans for church extension and development had been adversely affected in the past on account of road-widening, so it will surprise no one to learn that the Trustees decided at once to send a letter of protest to the Highways Council. After much careful thought and earnest discussion on the matter, the conclusion was reached that, in view of the desire of the Public Works Department to cut down our section, any large addition to the present Sunday school hall was impracticable.

Notwithstanding this decision, the Trustees resolved to meet the Ladies' Guild to discuss the possibility of enlarging the kitchen. The Trustees, on December 11, 1946, decided on the motion of Messrs. Ferguson and A. Winn that the Public Works Department be informed of the terms under which the Trustees consent to the cutting down of the church section. The section would in other respects require to be restored to its present state and a concrete path laid along the left-hand side of the church. The value of the land taken would require to be based on the difference between the value of the section before, and its value after, its reduction in size. This difference was estimated by the Trustees as about £75, their estimate being based on the fact that the section was already too small, and the further reductions in size would seriously limit its usefulness and create great inconvenience in carrying on our activities as a church.

PROPERTY EXTENSION.

On August 6, 1945, Mr. R. C. A. Marshall, Sunday school superintendent, waited on the Trust and placed before it the position of the Sunday school. As the number of scholars in attendance was more than could be accommodated, he recommended that, if the present school building was not suitable for extension, the Trust take steps to secure another section near the present one. Mr. Marshall's suggestion crystallized thoughts already present in the minds of the Trustees, who also had become seized with the necessity of our Church's catering in some

way for the development taking place in Stoke. Messrs. Powell and Taylor were requested to investigate suitable adjacent sections, and report.

On November 15, 1945, the Trustees met and inspected sections over the right-of-way from the church. Subsequently it was resolved that the section owned by Miss Craig (on the corner of Songer Street and the right-of-way) was the most suitable for our Trust purposes. Miss Craig having signified her willingness to sell her section, subject to the approval of the Land Sales Committee, it was agreed at a Trustee meeting held on March 20, 1946, to purchase her section.

The payment (£310) was met temporarily by a loan obtained from the Home Mission Investment Funds Board. On December 11, 1946, the direction was given that all moneys received by the Trust towards payment for this new section be kept in a separate account, and Mr. Taylor was requested to convey the thanks of the Trustees to an anonymous donor of £10. The proceeds of the forthcoming Centennial effort will, it is hoped, succeed in effecting the repayment of the loan from the Home Mission Investment Funds Board.

CONCLUSION.

One hundred years is a long term in the history of a young and vigorous settlement, and the progress of a Christian church in a developing township should under normal circumstances be correspondingly rapid. Stoke at present is in a favourable position for advancement ecclesiastically. New houses are going up in all directions, particularly in the parts of the township nearest to Nelson, and its prospects as a suburb seem bright. It is expected that in the very near future the building of a new church will be necessary. A hard-working and progressive minister, plus a team of far-seeing office-bearers, are fully alive to this necessity and to any other step forward which the present developing situation may prompt.

Make the future in the present,
Strong of heart, toil on and sing:
God is with us, God is with us,
Christ our Lord shall reign as King!



REV. CLARENCE EATON
Minister when present Church was being built.

APPENDIX

Ministers During the Years.

1843-8—John Aldred
 1849-54—S. Ironside
 1855-6—J. Warren
 1857-9—W. J. Watkin
 1860-1—J. Moorhouse
 1862-3—W. Cannell
 1864—J. W. Wallis
 1865-6—R. S. Bunn
 1867-8—R. L. Vickers
 1869-70—J. A. Taylor
 1871-3—W. Cannell
 1874-5—W. Keall
 1876—W. B. Marten
 1877-9—T. F. Reeve
 1880—W. Rowse
 1881—J. Berry
 1882-4—W. Kirk
 1885-7—James Thomas
 1888-90—J. Crump (Sup.)
 1891-2—J. Crump
 1892-4—J. S. Rishworth
 1895-8—G. T. Marshall
 1899-1902—T. G. Carr
 1903-5—J. D. Jory
 1906-9—S. H. D. Peryman
 1910-15—C. Eaton
 1916-7—A. Ashcroft
 1918-20—W. Wills
 1921-4—J. R. Nelson
 1925-8—H. L. Richards
 1929-31—J. H. Haslam
 1932—Ray Richards
 1933-7—Ben Dudley, F.R.A.S.
 1938-40—M. Ayrton
 1941-44—J. D. Grocott
 1945—R. E. Patchett

List of Stoke Church Workers During the Years.

Ladies' Guild Presidents.

Mrs. Henry Ching
 Mrs. S. Winn senr.
 Mrs. H. Pickup
 Mrs. W. Blommaart
 Mrs. E. Wilkinson

Present Stoke Trustees.

Mr. M. R. Ching
 Mr. H. Taylor
 Mr. J. C. Powell

Stoke Trustees (contd.)

Mr. W. J. Ferguson
 Mr. J. Gribben
 Mr. A. Winn
 Mr. C. R. Norgate
 Mr. G. J. D. Allcott
 Mr. S. C. Hutton
 Mr. A. Eden
 Mr. F. J. W. Gribble

Local Preachers (Stoke only)

J. T. Smith
 Mr. Thomas Chambers
 Mr. Robert Black (Bapt.)
 Mr. Douglas
 Mr. George Nuttall
 Mr. N. J. Pill
 Mr. W. Dickinson
 Mr. J. W. Longworth
 Mr. C. R. Norgate
 Mrs. H. N. Toomer

S.S. Superintendents.

Mr. J. T. Smith
 Mrs. Beattie
 Mr. T. Holdaway
 Mr. Frank Cresswell
 Mr. Ralph Paynter
 Miss Carr
 Miss Wilkes
 Sister Moody Bell
 Mr. N. J. Pill
 Mr. Fred. Hall
 Mr. T. Chambers
 Mr. C. R. Norgate
 Mr. G. W. Nuttall
 Mr. F. O. Hart
 Mr. A. Trevella
 Mr. J. W. Longworth
 Mr. W. Dickinson
 Mr. R. C. A. Marshall

S.S. Secretaries (recent).

Mr. H. M. Taylor
 Miss Mabel Winn
 Miss Joyce Gribble

B.C. Leaders.

Mrs. T. Chambers
 Mr. J. W. Longworth
 Miss H. Sparrow
 Mr. Ian Boyes

B.C. Leaders (contd.)

Miss M. Corby
 Mrs. H. N. Toomer
 Mr. R. C. A. Marshall

S.S. Teachers who Have Given Outstanding Service.

Misses Carr
 Miss C. Jory (Mrs. W. Walker)
 Mrs. Jensen
 Miss Eva Winn
 Miss Mabel Winn
 Mr. F. J. Gribble
 Miss S. Sparrow (Mrs. Flatt)
 Misses Crump (4)
 Mrs. Fred Hall
 Mrs. E. C. Russell
 Mrs. T. Chambers
 Miss Wills
 Miss M. Edwards
 Mrs. Blommaart
 Miss May Russell (Mrs. Humphrey)
 Miss Iris Powell (Mrs. W. Cordell)
 Miss Doris Watson
 Miss Jean Powell (Mrs. G. Ingham)
 Miss R. Ching (Mrs. Williams)
 Miss V. Ching (Mrs. L. Mossong)
 (Supt. Primary Dept.)
 Miss A. Ching (Mrs. H. Glover)
 Miss J. Gribble
 Miss J. Ching

Church Organists.

Miss Jellyman
 Miss May Cresswell
 Miss Jellyman (2nd term)
 Miss Grace Ching (Mrs. Meads)
 Misses Crump
 Miss Minnie Ching
 Miss C. Beattie
 Mr. Enoch Clough
 Mrs. D. Kenyon
 Miss Emma Ching (Mrs. Edwards)
 Miss Mabel Beach
 Miss E. Sparrow (Mrs. Billcliff)
 Miss H. Sparrow (Mrs. J. Gribben)
 Miss E. Winn
 Miss Lola Russell
 Miss Barbara Taylor

Choir Conductors.

Mr. R. Black
 Mr. W. Dickinson
 Mr. E. Temple-White
 Mr. J. Longworth
 Mr. H. N. Toomer.

N.B.—No guarantee of completeness is here given, nor yet of exact order in time sequence of the above names.

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