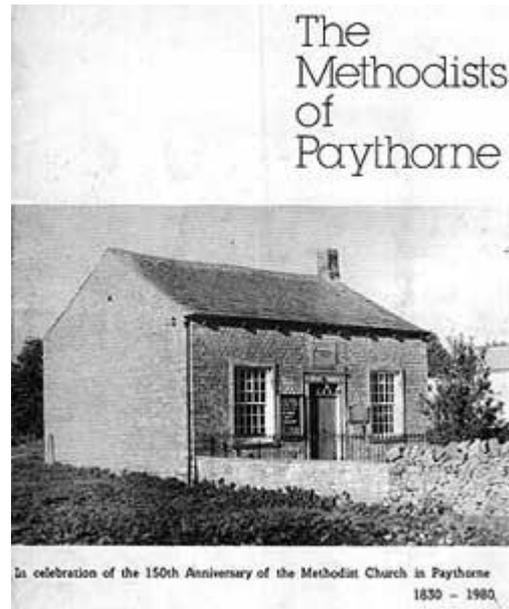


The
Methodists
of
Paythorne

In celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the
Methodist Church in Paythorne 1830 - 1980



A Message from our Minister

Hollymount, Chatburn.

Dear Friend,

One hundred and fifty years cannot pass in the life of a chapel without the influence of that place of worship rubbing off on the people of the local community. Generations of local families have had associations with Paythorne Chapel. Families have moved away how far, one wonders, has the chapel's influence reached? New families have arrived, bringing new insights and understanding to the local Christian witness. This booklet recounts something of the life of these folk. They would never have claimed to be anything more than ordinary people, but there is no doubt that they are to be considered the very salt of God's earth and they certainly have been the life blood of Paythorne Chapel.

The Chapel membership is as sound, today, as it has ever been in recent years. There are times when numbers at services disappoint, but it is equally true that on occasions not as infrequent as some might think the chapel can fill up almost to overflowing with locals. Our Sunday School is small, but well staffed and well attended.

In 1980 we rejoice in what has gone before and the germ of hope evident in the present. I hope this booklet serves not only to prompt enjoyable reminiscence, but also acts as a spur and challenge to all of us who read it to go forward determined to uphold and proclaim the Christian rule of life, so that in another one hundred and fifty years someone will want to write a further volume to this history and will moreover find something worthwhile to merit putting pen to paper.

The invitation to produce this forward cannot be allowed to pass without my paying a personal word of tribute to Mr. and Mrs. William R. Hanson. They have never sought any praise, nor do they seek public acclaim now, but they have given so much to Paythorne Chapel and, without their untiring efforts, I feel sure I would not have been able to write in such confident words as I commend this booklet to you. And, finally, a special word of thanks to Eric Kenyon for his unstinted efforts in researching and compiling our history.

With every good wish,

Ward Jones

Minister

Church Council Membership 1979-80

Church Stewards Mrs.N.Kayley, Mrs.A.Preston.

Church Treasurer Mr.W.Hanson

Communion Stewards Mrs.M.Newbouldv Mrs.E.Mqrton

Class Leader Mrs.J.Gorst

Baptismal Roll Sec. Mrs.D.Kelsall

Sunday School Supt. Mrs.E.Asquith

Property Stewards Mr.E.Gorst, Mr.D.Kelsall

Home Missions Sec. Mrs.M.Preston

Overseas Missions Sec. Mrs.J.Gorst

Social Responsibility Sec. Mrs.E.Asquith

Church Council Sec. Mrs.N.Kayley

Church Meeting Reps. Mrs.E.Hanson, Mrs.A.Peel, Mrs.L.Kayley, Miss A.Lambert, Mr.C.Preston.

Other Officials

Property Committee Sec. Mr.W.Hanson

Sunday School Teachers Mrs.J.Gorst, Mrs.M.Preston.

Organist Mrs.E.Hanson

Representatives to Circuit Meeting and various Circuit Committees:

Mrs.E.Asquith, Mrs.M.Preston, Mrs.J.Gorst, Mr.W.Hanson, Mrs.N.Kayley, Mrs.A.Preston.

Acknowledgment

The information in this booklet is derived from many sources, particularly a history prepared in 1930 to mark the centenary of the Paythorne Chapel. The small numbers in the margins of the booklet refer to the sources of information, which are listed in detail on page 28.

I am very grateful to the many people who have helped in researching information for this booklet and to Mr.J.R.Todd for four new photographs, Rev.G.A.Vickers and Mr.E.A.Rose for comments on the manuscript, and to Mrs. D. Tomlinson for typing and re-typing these sheets.

Eric B. Kenyon

Christleton, Chester.

THE METHODISTS OF PAYTHORNE

We celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Chapel in Paythorne, a noteworthy event, but the present building, erected largely by the members' own hands, was an outward symbol of a society

which must have been developing in the village for many years the membership then, as now, being also drawn from the widespread farming area surrounding Paythorne.

The date of the first Methodist meeting in Paythorne is not known, nor do we know who was the first Methodist in the village, but it is certain that meetings were held there as early as 1799 and possibly even 50 years earlier. We can never know the details of those early meetings, although we can be sure that they were different in many ways from present day Methodist services just as the village of Paythorne was very different from its modern counterpart.



The Sunday School November 1979.

Paythorne What's in a Name?

The earliest record of the name Paythorne, but with several different spellings, is in William the Conquerors great Domesday Book which recorded details of 11th century land ownership throughout the country. In more recent years several interpretations of the meaning of 'Paythorne' have also been suggested, possibly 'a thorn bush beside a pathway', or even 'a peacock shaped thorn bush', but much the most popular definition results from the placing of the village in Gisburn Forest. The inn in Paythorne was traditionally in Medieval times the meeting place for huntsmen, a nearby large thorn marking the place where the steward of the hunt paid his retainers the 'pay-thorn'. At that time:

.... there were only three farms in Paythorn: the Old Manor, Higher House, and Old Bank Top. During the 17th and 18th centuries however,....all available common and waste land was enclosed; Gisburn Forest was cleared, and ploughing and reaping took the place of deer and hunting. A mill to grind the corn stood at the old ford, near to the present bridge. Farms or small holdings increased to about 20, and these with some 40 cottages, eventually housed a population of 300

Many families worked both in farming and in other trades.... Colne, eight miles distant, was the market town. Farmers, shopkeepers and weavers would attend this market every week to exchange their goods.

The link with Colne would be emphasised by the greater importance of the rough road through Paythorne. It was not until the early 19th century that the turnpike road linking Gisburn, Nappa and Long Preston was built and before that time many travellers would be familiar with the more direct route from Gisburn to Settle through Paythorne. No doubt this road would be travelled by many Protestant preachers before the Methodists first came the vicars of Gisburn, the Quakers,

Presbyterians, Baptists and Independents from nearby villages. In the 18th century Methodism was just one of many influences at work in Britain, each attempting to fill the vacuum left by the disastrous breakdown of communications between the Church of England and a large part of the country's population.

It is not possible to assess the strength of the influences at work in Paythorne a hundred years ago, but it is certain that both Quakers and Presbyterians had established meeting places in Newsholme before the first recorded visits of Methodist preachers to the area.

Travelling Preachers

The first visit of John Wesley to the north of England was in 1742. Over the next three years Methodism slowly developed, particularly in the Leeds and Keighley areas, until in 1745 Rev. William Grimshaw, the Curate of Haworth, was led into a belief in justification by personal faith one of many beliefs that linked his views very closely to those of John Wesley.

Grimshaw remained the Curate of Haworth, his church there becoming a great centre of preaching, but he also became the first super-intendent of the Methodist Circuit which covered much of the north-west of England 'Grimshaw's Round'. He usually travelled on foot throughout his round and, despite opposition from some of his fellow clergymen, preached as and where he felt inclined, his view being that Methodism must be a revitalising element within the Church of England and must in no way be a separate church.

There are no complete records of William Grimshaw's journeys, his only known visit to the area of the present Clitheroe circuit '29 being in June 1756 when he preached in Rimington and Gisburn. In 1754 however, he wrote:

For some years past, the Lord, I trust, has been pleased to open the hearts of a great many people by the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Ingham Mr. Wm. Batty, and some others in Pendle Forest, Paythorn, Sladeburn There are, I believe, many lively members of the Lord Jesus in these places.

The "Rev. Mr. Ingham" (Benjamin Ingham) had been a Church of England minister, also a friend of John Wesley and had set up many societies in West Yorkshire at first all, in his view, within the framework of the Church of England. These societies undoubtedly had a significant influence, but they were frequently short lived and, due to strong differences of opinion between Ingham and Wesley, were never joined to the Methodist conference.

The first of Ingham's meeting places in the Paythorne area was 'R Croysdale's house' at Newsholme, first used for preaching on 28th December, 1745. Subsequent meetings were held in 'John Hornby's house' in Newsholme, however in June 1747

there was a mob at Newsholm near Gisburn in Craven and 15 of our hearers were summoned afterwards to appear at Skipton sessions.

The next year, on July 3rd, Benjamin Ingham

lodged for the first time at Rob. Nightingales at Paythorn to whose house the preaching is to be removed from Newsholme.

Unfortunately we have no other record of these meetings nor their location could the name Chapel Head Barn (between Higher House and Carholme) be a clue?

There are also no records of how long meetings continued at Rob. Nightingales' nor whether this society ever became associated with John Wesley, however the history of Grimshaw's Round records that Methodism had been introduced into Paythorne by 1750 if this date is accurate, the first recorded Methodist meetings in the whole area of the present Clitheroe circuit were held in Paythorne!

In those early years there is no record of John Wesley visiting the Clitheroe area, although he had both difficulties and successes to the east of Pendle as had one of his assistants who in 1748 visited Colne and after being roughly handled by a crowd made the best use of his opportunities and began to preach whilst fastened in the stocks! Nearer to Paythorne, in Gisburn, a Methodist society was established a few years later and from 1758 to 1763, along with societies at Twiston and Newhurst (near Bolton by Bowland), made regular contributions to the funds of the Haworth circuit.

About this time the Vicar of Gisburn reported that in his parish there were 370 families, none of whom were dissenters (?) but 5 families were Papists and 7 were Presbyterian. The Vicar gave 19 no details at all of the Methodists in his parish, either in Gisburn itself or in Paythorne, as "the Methodists do not call themselves dissenters" a statement John Wesley would have approved of entirely, but of no help now in assessing numbers!

John Wesley in Paythorne?

We have to wait 20 years for the next reference to Methodists in the area, until in fact, Sunday April 18th 1784 when John Wesley, after having preached at 5 o'clock in the morning to a 'numerous congregation in Blackburn, 'hastened to Gisburn' to take the morning service in the Parish Church.

The church was so full that a few were obliged to stand without the doors. The word was quick and powerful, so it was afterwards in Settle.

by this time John Wesley (who was 81 years old) had become an acceptable preacher in some sections of the Church of England. Tradition now records that as John Wesley set out towards Settle he was accompanied by a large number of admirers who stayed with him until he was about half way on his journey when they were met by another crowd 'to whom they safely delivered their precious charge'! Throughout the walk the men remained on one side of the road and the women on the other! Could it have been that this journey followed the most direct route from Gisburn to Settle by way of Paythorne? (see map on page 14).

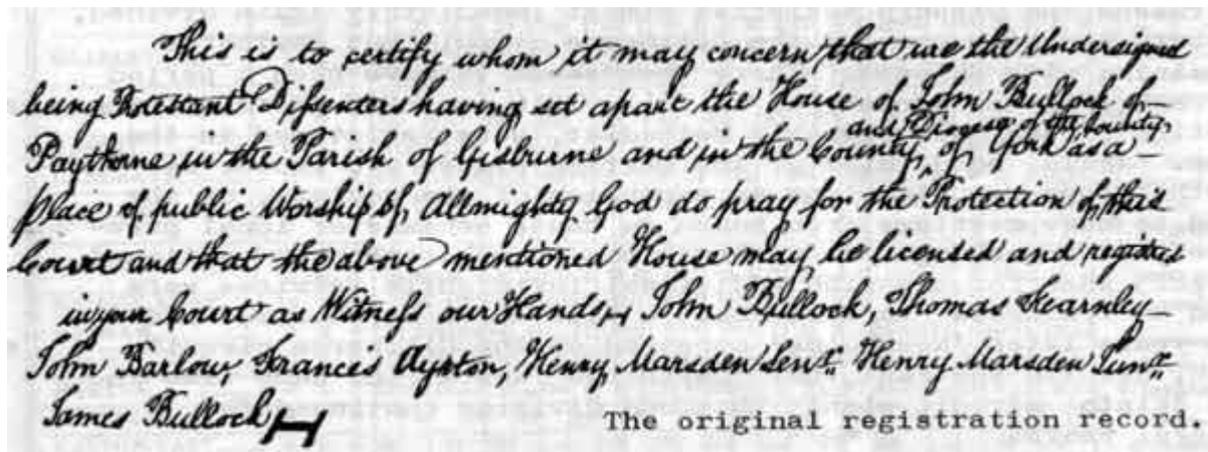
But what do these few facts hide in the story of the early Methodists of the area? Methodism was still a missionary society and there were few preachers available. The preachers would be travelling almost continually from society to society, preaching at least twice a day often extremely early in the morning before people went to work and when there was less chance of their being disturbed by those who disagreed with the Methodists' 'enthusiasm' for their religion. Visits to societies would usually be on an irregular basis, there being too few preachers to allow any establishing of regular Sunday services in most places indeed John Wesley did not permit the times of Methodist services to clash with those in a local parish church. The travelling preachers at this time received minimum expenses from their circuits and were otherwise supported by the societies they visited items such as candles and boots regularly appearing in the accounts!

In addition to visits by the preachers, societies would also have their class meetings when the leader would guide each person individually, prayer meetings would be held, and members would undertake personal devotions and perhaps also attend the local parish church, particularly for communion services few early Methodists had any spare time, nor did they seek it.

Legal Documents

For the next clue in this story we must move to 1793 about the time of the first Methodist meetings in Clitheroe, that year a house in 'Newsom' was registered for the use of 'protestant dissenters?', the witnesses including Geo. Gibbon -probably the Methodist minister Rev. George Gibbon, who was however stationed not in the Colne circuit, but in Huddersfield that year. At this time all meeting places had to be registered with the local court or the diocese to avoid the penalties of laws against dissenters.

Six years later the house of John Bullock in Paythorne, was also registered as a dissenters meeting place, the witnesses this time including Thomas Fearnley (probably Rev. Thomas Fearnley who was stationed in the Lancaster circuit at the time) and Francis Ayrton (listed three years later as a local preacher in the newly formed Skipton circuit).



This is to certify whom it may concern that we the undersigned being Protestant Dissenters having set apart the House of John Bullock of Paythorne in the Parish of Gisburne and in the County of York as a place of public worship of, Almighty God do pray for the Protection of their Court and that the above mentioned House may be licenced and registered in your Court as WITNESSE our Hands, John Bullock, Thomas Fearnley, John Barlow, Francis Ayrton, Henry Marsden Senr. Henry Marsden Junr. James Bullock

The original registration record.

Seven years later Francis Ayrton was the only recorded witness for the registration of yet another meeting place, this time in Newsholme and the same year John Bullock witnessed the registration for another meeting place in Paythorne. Again, we know no details of these places although

it is said that the first preaching place was the Old Manor House which was on the site of the bungalow that now fronts the chapel. In the house or hall, was a large room 25 feet square, which was utilised as the preaching place and Sunday School.

Whatever the real details, somewhere hidden within the four registrations is the story of the start of the present Methodist society in Paythorne the story of a small group of people who came together, in what may well have been a hostile world, for worship and support.

The slow development of Methodism in Paythorne is typical of many societies, although it should not be forgotten that in some areas, by this time, Methodism was beginning to achieve the status of an accepted Church, its separation from the Church of England having become inevitable before John Wesley's death in 1791. Circuits were being reduced in size and services were more often held on Sundays, more ministers and local preachers being available. The traditional organisation of Methodism was also developing one sign of this organisation (or perhaps 'method') is that baptism registers were often kept by the circuits, one early entry in the Skipton register being the baptism in 1809 of John, son of John and Ann Brown of Paythorne.

The Skipton and Clitheroe Circuits

It is not until 1807 that we find the earliest surviving evidence of their being regular Methodist services in Paythorne. In that year Paythorne appeared on the Skipton circuit plan, services being

held on alternate Sundays at 2 p.m. Four years later however, the society was combined with Gisburn and services were then held at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., but still only on alternate Sundays.

Following the formation of the Clitheroe circuit about 1812, the Paythorne and Gisburn societies almost immediately again divided, Gisburn becoming part of the Clitheroe circuit but Paythorne remaining with Skipton. There then seems to have been a period of change in the society as in 1812, 1816 and 1817 another three meeting places, all probably Methodist, were registered in the area. Again, no details of the meeting places are known, nor whether they resulted from an expansion of the society, or the need to move meetings from house to house because of local pressures or from changes in membership. Further changes continued in 1823 when for a period additional. fortnightly services were held at Pye Cross (a farm about a mile above Paythorne), and two years later 'Newsholme' appeared on the Clitheroe circuit plan, despite the fact that 'Paythorne' was at the same time on the Skipton circuit plan! This odd division continued for several years.

The Skipton circuit preaching plan illustrated is typical of that period with preachers being referred to by number rather than name. Numbers 1 and 2 refer to ministers, all others refer to local preachers. The small number of collections listed is fairly typical for the period the "Quarterly collections" were given to circuit funds along with the regular amounts received from each member at class meetings. All contributions were usually handed to the circuit stewards at the quarterly meetings the meeting for December 1827 being held on Christmas Day, as was the Local Preachers' meeting how many would attend such meetings nowadays!

This plan is, of course, a 'Wesleyan' preaching plan, the solidarity of Methodism during John Wesley's lifetime having been shattered by many divisions. These divisions do not seem to have produced problems in Paythorne at least as far as written records show, although at this time there was at least one person living in Paythorne (Joseph Dodgson) who was a member of the Primitive Methodist Society at Salterforth. The house of Robert Dodgson in Paythorne was also registered as a dissenters meeting place could this have been an attempt to start Primitive Methodist meetings in the village?

The New Chapel

In June 1828 the Paythorne society had eleven members:

It was these eleven heroic souls whose faith and courage undertook the great work of building, namely: William and Jane Bullock, John and Anne Brown, Richard and Elizabeth Coates, Mort Menekin, Ann Riley, William and Isobel Slater, and Thomas Dodgson.... An entry in an old Skipton

circuit book states that "the Chapel Building Committee have sanctioned an application for the circuit to erect a new chapel at Paythorne".

Also

"(1) the chapel shall be 30 ft. long and 27 ft. broad, on the outside;" (about half the size actually built)

"(2) there shall be no gallery therein;

(3) the land is freehold;

(4) the Sunday School be connected with the Chapel which shall be a Methodist school conducted according to the general rules and recommendations of our connexion;

(5) the proposal to build the Chapel has been duly sanctioned according to rule;

(6) the estimated cost of the building is £100;

(7) the subscriptions towards defraying the expense will amount to £50 or £60;

(8) the probable annual amount of the seat rents will be £4.11

The land for the Chapel was situated close to several cottages and was purchased from Lord Ribblesdale for £5.5s.0d. the Lister family were always both friendly and generous to the Methodists of Paythorne.

The stone for the Chapel was given by Christopher Lancaster, of Moorhouse, and was quarried on the opposite side of Castle o'Hill. When the Ribble was low, the banks were bridged by planks and the stone carried across in wheelbarrows. It was then loaded into farm carts, taken across the Holme, up to Leather Bill Head gate and into the Gisburn Newsholme road. Mr. Tatham gave the coal used in burning the lime and it was carted from the canal at East Marton. Mr. Brown of Newsholme, who gave the stone, used the fuel for limeburning at his kilns there. All the carting was undertaken by local farmers.

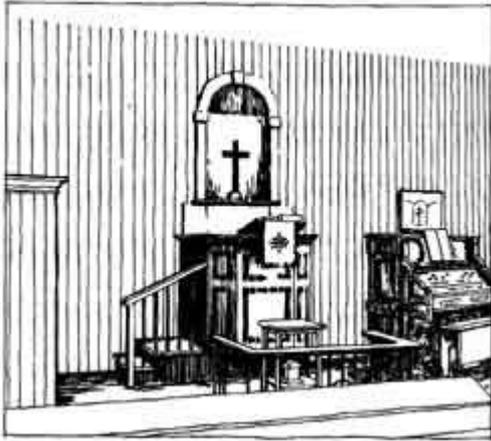
(Presumably one of the references above to 'stone' is to the main building material for the walls, and the other 'stone' is that used in the making of mortar).

The shell of the Chapel was opened by Mr. Gill of Keighley on Christmas Day 1829 and two days later special services were conducted by Rev. W. Brailsford of Blackburn.

The trust deed was dated 20th March 1830 The first trustees were Elijah Tatham, coal merchant of Gargrave; John Brown, lime burner and farmer of Newsholme; and the rest were Skipton tradesmen ... The total cost to the trustees was £175.3s11¹/₂d Subscriptions amount to £55 10s 11¹/₂d collections at the opening services were £11.13s.0d. The balance was met by a loan of £108 at 4¹/₂ per cent interest from Thomas Wilkinson of Skipton How the loan was liquidated is a mystery It was said that a lady at Long Preston gave a lot of money to the chapel

And so, one would expect, the Paythorne society would, after its years of difficulty and of moving from meeting place to meeting place, be set for a period of consolidation and development. True, it was only small in numbers and the population of the village had declined to 187 from 242 ten years earlier, but the congregations were drawn from quite a few families and, judging by numbers, included many children. They also, of course, had a very pleasant, well built new Chapel in

appearance, the Chapel has changed little over the years the single rectangular room with central pulpit and raked seating, but no schoolroom, porch or other spaces.



At first the pew rents paid for the interest repayments on the loan for the building costs, but the number of rented seats very quickly declined, and panic seems to have ensued, at least in Skipton. At the Trustees meeting held on 21st February 1833:

It was proposed by Thos. Wilson and seconded by Josuah Lockwood that an application to Conference be made for power 'to sell the Chapel at Paythorn in consequence of its embarrassed state as to finances. The motion was carried accordingly.

Neither Elijah Tatham nor John Brown had travelled to Skipton for this meeting a meeting held at the time of year when travel conditions must often have been difficult. Subsequently, from the little we can deduce from the account book, no notice at all was taken of' the proposal.

The trust income at this time came almost entirely from pew rents the stewards account book for 1830 and 1845 lists all the seat holders for this period. All seats were rented for 8d. per quarter, the number of seats actually rented usually being around 28. At first many people rented several seats in 1830, 5 families each had 7 seats, whereas later most people only rented 1 or 2 seats. It would be tempting to relate membership to this variation in numbers but it more probably relates to financial. Problems in the village, as indeed a reflection of national problems due to growing industrialisation, changes in agriculture and large increases and movements of population.

There is no specific reference in the accounts to financial problems in the village but in 1840 there does seem to. have been a touch of scandal as two pew rents were never collected or never collected by the trustees! The entries read:

Richard Watson paid 8d. to Ireland, the Blacksmith's apprentice.

William Slater paid 8d. to his apprentice Ireland and know not where he is, to get it of him!

One other point perhaps of interest from the expenditure columns of the account book is the number of items for glazing. Was this just due to bad luck, or were the Methodists unpopular with some section of the village population or was it just an excess of interest in the Chapel by cattle in the adjoining field, as still happens occasionally now?

Sunday School Reminiscences

In the early 19th century many people were becoming aware of the need for improving standards of education, they were also very concerned at how little, if any, education most people received. A

few children received some education at the old established grammar schools or at private schools such as once existed in Paythorne in the Old Manor House or in the granary off the Buck Inn yard, but for most adults and children (who would be working long hours) the only hope of education was at Sunday or evening schools run by the churches. The education at these schools varied considerably, but in addition to religious subjects most schools probably taught reading, writing and perhaps arithmetic with other more practical subjects such as sewing.

There is no record of when a Sunday School was first established in Paythorne but it seems to have developed fairly successfully after 1830 as a library was soon formed and this eventually contained about 200 books. About 1850 Richard Lund was a scholar at the school (he had been born in Newsholme and later became a jeweller in Clitheroe). Many years later he wrote:

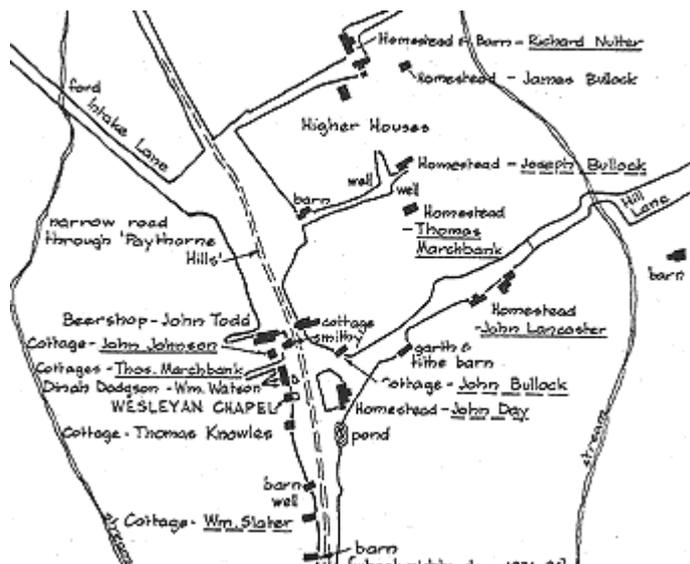
As I remember the Sunday School sermons, the players and singers were in the corner on the left of the pulpit, and an oak table nearby was brought on the back of Billy Robinson. 'Th'owd maister'. Henry Sharp, played the little fiddle; William Bullock the clarinet; and Anthony Dickinson from Wigglesworth, the bassoon. At the tea party I remember Rachel Coates singing "Millions have reached that heavenly shore, Where pain and sorrow is no more: And still there's room for millions more Will you go?"

I often admired the old pulpit and the candlesticks, to me they seemed like gold I liked to attend the tea party too. The women of Paythorne always knew how to make a good tea; they could shame the towns in that respect.

The first superintendent I remember was Jacky Bullock: he wore a white linen jacket over his coat. The women had bonnets of plain straw, with ribbons for strings Jacky usually stood on the pulpit steps and started the tunes. His left leg was shorter than the right, and as he 'led off' the short leg used to go up It was funny, yet we dare not laugh, as Jacky could use the stick....

Once the superintendent from Skipton came to preach. He announced a six-eights meter (six lines) and, as the custom was, read only two lines, in order that those who had no books could sing the words. Jacky started a tune which was pitched too low, so that before proceeding to read the next two lines the minister asked Jacky to sing a little higher. "Thee mind thi preachin an we'll dolt singing" Jacky replied "tha'll see it'll be high enough before we get through"! Other helpers were... John Parker and his wife; she wore a white shawl. John was a local preacher and trustee. One Sunday he was taking the service and there was none to start the tunes. The only tune that John knew was the "Old Hundred" and as he chose three long metre hymns they sang that tune to each! The Chapel was well attended. It was the custom of children from a distance to bring their dinners. Scholars rose in the classes by merit. The people cleaned the Chapel voluntarily....

About 1864 the violin and clarinet gave way to a harmonium. William Hargreaves, who afterwards was innkeeper of the Buck and his brother, Henry, were concerned in the introduction of the 'box o'whistles' It was decided to form a choir and to have a 'singing pew' and as the brothers were joiners, they did the work. On the first Sunday the instrument was played by Henry, who could play by ear. Then a Holdsworth tune book was procured and the harmonium was carried from the cottage to the chapel every Sunday, and back again after the service, until William could play from music!



Village Decline

On Sunday 30th March 1851 a census was taken of attendances at the churches and chapels of England and Wales. The return for Paythorne states that there were 70 'free sittings' available and 70 'other seats'. The attendance at the afternoon service was 65 and at the school 45.

At that time some of the local preachers came from as far away as Draughton and Addingham in Wharfedale. They had to leave home, possibly on a cold winter's morning at seven o'clock, walk six miles to Skipton, ride nine miles in the daily post conveyance which travelled from Skipton to Gisburn and was due at Horton Four Lane Ends at 10 a.m. From there the preacher had an hour to walk the three miles for the service at 11 o'clock. The service was followed by dinner, and a further service at 2 p.m. a further walk of five miles to Long Preston was then entailed and after tea there was a service at 6.30. After the railway from Skipton to Lancaster was opened the return journey to Skipton could be by train and was accomplished by about 9 p.m., then the last weary six miles on foot were finished anywhere from 10.30 to 11pm A journey of 39 miles in 14 hours and the conducting of three services! Surely a strenuous day's work for the master!

In the middle of the 19th Century, it has been stated, the agriculture of Paythorne still included corn growing. Tradespeople in the village included many hand-loom weavers, two blacksmiths, two tailors, two or three grocers, a butcher, a saddler, a draper and a cornmiller how accurate in detail this information is must be uncertain, but it definitely suggests a very active village community rather than merely a scattering of farms.

The decline of Paythorne as a village must have begun between 1851 and 1861 when 16 of the 42 dwellings in the 'township' were demolished leaving mainly the farmhouses standing the stone from the cottages was used for roadmaking. During the period the population also decreased from 206 to 126 and over the next 20 years, whilst no more houses were demolished, the population continued to decline until only 100 people remained. The reasons for the decline were no doubt linked to national problems as agriculture and industry were still changing and many people moved to live in the towns. Of particular importance in Paythorne at this time was the almost complete elimination of the hand-loom weaving industry.

The effects of the village decline were disastrous for the Chapel. At one stage there was no Sunday School or choir and the congregation was reduced to about 6 people. In 1874 there also seems to have been other troubles as in Skipton on 29th September there was:

a long conversation or, the state of the society at Paythorne, which ended in a sort of understanding that as soon as possible the ministers and Mr. W. Mattock shall visit Paythorne with a view to correct, advise and set them straight.

Clitheroe Circuit

The small society at Paythorne, with all its problems, and placed in a distant corner of the circuit was becoming a burden to those in Skipton, but the Clitheroe circuit had no desire to take on that burden. In April 1877 (probably) the Skipton circuit received:

a reply from the superintendent of the Clitheroe circuit declining respectfully to receive Paythorne.

However, in October the same year:

Letters were read from the Rev. John Hartley, Chairman of the District and the Rev. John Hornby respecting the transfer of Paythorne Chapel to the Clitheroe circuit, the Conference agreeing to the transfer.

The transfer probably occurred in 1878. Two years later the railway line from Chatburn to Hellifield was completed, and the station at Newsholme was opened. This, of course, would greatly facilitate links to Clitheroe.

After the transfer new trustees were appointed. John Bateson of Englands Head (who was also a local preacher and the Sunday School superintendent) was the only trustee from Paythorne, although most of the others were from societies nearby.

Ben Robinson from Gisburn was a frequent helper. The Trustees invited the people to a congregational tea but there were fewer than a score present Mr. Robert Duckworth of Stopper Lane in his prayer said: "We feel that we are not only trustees of this chapel, but that the souls of those who live around this place are a solemn sacred trust. Lord help us to be faithful trustees."

A homely talk was given by Mr. George Illingworth of Downham. "We've some fine ministers they're good men, and some gradely good local preachers, and we want you to come to the Chapel. Na you'll come, won't you? We've a first class choir at Downham and, if you like, I'll ask some of 'em to come and sing at the sermons. We want to help you, but we can't do it unless you come to the Chapel".

Rise and Fall

Soon after Paythorne became part of the Clitheroe circuit:

Mr. George Haworth of Rochdale came to Tewitt Hall. Having had experience of school work he was appointed superintendent and in a short time the school was flourishing.... about this time there was a preponderance of boys in four families the Jacksons of Loftrans, the Mellins of Agden, the Heatons of Isles and the Sugdens of Pye Cross there were no fewer than twenty sons. Other families to mention are the Lofthouses of Paa, the Kayleys of Adams, the Peels and Marsdens of Newsholme and the Pettys of Higher Thornber....

One of the best helpers in the School was William Knight, a farm servant he was the only person who read a religious weekly, the 'Christian Herald'About this time Mr. Duxbury came to Higher House from Earby and such an acceptable preacher he was that for the first few years he was away taking appointments almost every Sunday. When Mr. Haworth departed however he took charge of the school. He was there Sunday by Sunday, cheerful and bright encouraging those who were disposed to give up hope and apologising to the preacher because the congregation was so poor....

In 1888 Conference recommended that on the last Sunday of November each year 'reference be made in all Chapels and Sunday School on the appalling extent and dire results of Intemperance'.

Mrs. Thompson was an enthusiastic Blue Ribboner. She organised a meeting which was largely attended and those who were willing to take the pledge had a piece of blue ribbon attached to coat or dress the caretaker at the time was Mrs. Hargreaves of the Buck Inn, and she was at no pains to conceal her displeasure "I don't know what the Methodists are coming to with their new ideas about being teetotal" she declared "Why, one of the first trustees was a Skipton spirit merchant and one of the best local preachers that came from Skipton to hold a week's mission here, every night before he went to the chapel had a pint of the best, and he alus said as he supped it, that it made him preach better!"

Despite all the enthusiasm and potential of these years the Methodist cause in Paythorne was again very soon in difficulties and in 1890 the circuit plan noted:

The preachers are requested to take charge of the class meetings at Paythorne and also to help in the re-establishment of the Sunday School.

About this time there was no school organist, no choir and in contrast to earlier years, no hospitality for preachers. Frequent changes in farm tenancies had disrupted the society and only four members remained.

Unfortunately membership numbers do little to tell the full story as they give no idea of how many adherents or children also attended services these still being held at 2 p.m. every Sunday, followed by a class meeting at 3.30 P.m. For a short period the plan also listed monthly evening services and for about 2 years Mr. E. Lund of Paythorne was also on the plan as a local preacher.

At this time there were 14 other societies in the circuit Wesley (125 members), Low Moor (29), Waterloo (31), Slaidburn (17), Bashall Eaves (27), Stopper Lane (17), Downham (14), Whalley (58), Waddington (24), Sawley (24), Harrop (5), Bolton (5), Gisburn (17) and Chatburn (39).

In Paythorne, as in most other churches at this time, there was only one communion service per quarter, also a 'fast day with social prayer'. Before 1905 only three or four collections were taken per 23 quarter, typically for the Education Fund (mainly for the education of ministers' children), the Local Preachers' Conveyancing Fund, the Quarterly Collection (for circuit funds) and General Chapel Fund (the connexional building fund).

George Hargreaves

In 1888:

Just when it seemed that the Chapel would have to be closed, a change for the better came about in an extra ordinary way. Mr. & Mrs. Hargreaves of Bank Top had a grandson (just out of his teens) and he was breaking their hearts because of bad habits. Lodging with them had been a young fellow, a porter employed at Newsholme station and known as Jim Stott ... It was in order to keep George away from the place where he usually passed his Sundays that Jim now living at Monebent Head invited George to tea Bolton-by-Bowland Chapel was celebrating its anniversary and George was expected to accompany the family to the evening service The sermon dealt with Pilate's condemnation of Jesus to crucifixion, knowing Him to be innocent the preacher exclaimed "How many men today are like Pilate! They find no fault with Jesus, yet they crucify Him in their lives."

.... the sermon had made a deep impression on George the result was to use an old Methodist phrase he came 'under conviction', and one morning in the following spring when, as he was reading the last few verses of Galatians before starting out to work, he was converted....

The next week George went to tell the good news to Mr. & Mrs. Barrett and to express his conviction that the school should be reopened.... "Gladly" was the reply "if there is anybody to play the organ" thereupon a bargain was struck, that as soon as George could play three tunes, Mr. Barrett would open the school In about six weeks, the school reopened to an attendance of perhaps a dozen. Mr. Barrett arranged to attend on alternate Sundays with Mr. Smith of Wilcross ... It was the joy of Mr. Barrett's life to sing some soul stirring melody, preferably with a good chorus his favourites being "Blessed Assurance", "I feel like singing all the time", and "There's a work for me and a work for you".

George Hargreaves also wrote of Mrs. Barrett:

Difficulties, trials, disappointments all troubles could be taken to Mrs. Barrett.

and of John Smith of Pye Cross:

A walking encyclopaedia intensely religious, whose aim was to pass his knowledge on to others.

For the next few years the membership remained very low, despite the increase in activity and assistance from members at Chatburn, also a visit by 'Mission Band 2' a group of 'exhorters' who took services around the circuit.

In 1892:

For the first time in its history Paythorne sent a representative to the Quarterly Meeting Afterwards the Paythorne delegate was introduced to his colleagues "This young man comes from the Nazareth of the Clitheroe Circuit" Mr. Parker of Whalley, an ex-circuit steward, probably had in mind the burden laid on the circuit by Paythorne, for he answered, perhaps inevitably, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? None has yet come for this circuit!"

The following year George Hargreaves became an exhorter and a class leader, and went on to be a full local preacher in 1895.

Success at Last

George Hargreaves was the first of three 'Georges' from Paythorne, each 'products' of the Chapel. The 'second' was George Lambert who was an extremely mischievous lad, who was also an expert at disrupting the lessons of his Sunday School teacher George Hargreaves! In 1897, however, George Hargreaves left Paythorne to live in Waddington and the necessity of finding a new Sunday School superintendent arose:

Another miracle of grace happened. George Lambert the erstwhile mischievous youth - attended a service at Horton and determined to consecrate himself to the Master. He told the school on the following Sunday of his change of heart and those who had been accustomed to laugh at everything he did or said, thought he must be joking as usual He began to interest himself in evangelistic work, assisted in the Hellifield Railway Mission, became a local preacher and organised a week's mission in the Chapel where one of many converts was George Parsons.

Many years later, George Parsons recalled:

It is now nearly thirty years since I became a member and teacher. There were few members and scarcely sufficient teachers to supply the classes. This may explain why one so young and inexperienced had the opportunity of taking a prominent part in the work.

The men who influenced me the most were William Barrett, John Peel and George Lambert. They were devoted to the little Chapel and gave of their best to the work. I owe a great debt also to George Hargreaves who had moved to Clitheroe, but who took a deep interest in the Methodist cause in his native village....

Looking back over the years, I feel devoutly thankful to God for the gracious and inspiring influences which came into my life in the tiny wayside Chapel, for those influences made possible the experiences that have come to me since and opened out the way to a wider ministry.

In 1905, George Parsons left his home in Horton and entered the Methodist ministry, in which he served until his death in 1973. During his ministry he returned many times to take services at Paythorne.



The Sunday School in 1906. Seated centrally is William Barrett. The back row includes George Lambert on the left, George Hargreaves in the centre, and George Parsons, second from the right.

Misleading Statistics!

We have no record of attendances at either services or school at the end of the 19th century, although in 1897 the membership increased to 11 out of a circuit total of 430. However the difficulty of measuring the size and influence of a society by its membership is well illustrated by the records available for the years 1905. In 1905 the society membership was only 8 yet in 1908 there were 34 scholars on the Sunday School register and 'in 1906 a photograph was taken of the scholars and teachers of that school the total number present being 64! In contrast, in 1909 there were only 31 scholars of all denominations at the village school, but the same year at the Sunday School Anniversary and re opening after renovation' the congregation was so great that 'a number were unable to gain admittance'. To complete the confusion we have the Clitheroe circuit financial assessments for 1901 the circuit quarterly income being anticipated as £153 of which the Paythorne assessment was £1.15s.0d. However, the actual amount paid by Paythorne to the circuit funds did not rise to this quarterly amount until 41 years later!

High Water

The Sunday School registers for the years 1908 to 1934 show that three classes were usually held, the 'first class' (taken by the superintendent), the 'testament class', and the 'infants class'. During several periods the attendance was between 30 and 40 scholars, although it was often lower.

It was in 1909, when George Lambert removed to Bradford, that John Taylor came to Bank Top For nearly 20 years he was principal leader and worker in the chapel and school and during this time Methodism in Paythorne reached high-water mark in its history. Under his wise and tactful guidance the congregation doubled and the school had a record attendance Humble, sensitive, retiring, Mr. Taylor had a most lovable disposition.... he gathered about him a splendid body of workers His sudden death in 1927, in the prime of life, was a shattering blow to Paythorne

Following Mr. Taylor's death, Mr. Walker of Moorhouse, who was also a local preacher, took over the Sunday School for several years.

Despite the successes of this period the 'high water' unfortunately was not translated into an increase in adult membership of the society. Turning to the trust records for the same period we find that at first the local trustees were Thomas Peel, George Lambert, and William Barrett and that these were succeeded in 1925 by John Taylor and John Lambert. The interest in the musical contribution to services is shown by the purchase in 1914 of 'an instrument for the Chapel' variously described as an organ, and a harmonium the cost being £23.15s.6d, over threequarters of this cost being met by the Sunday School. This 'instrument' was replaced in 1925 we don't know what the effect on the singing was, but four years later the trust contributed £4.10s.0d to the cost of a choir trip! The accounts for 1925 also refer to a Good Friday tea and meeting an annual tea party and meeting had been held regularly for many years, the teas being noted for the quality of the hot muffins!

One other aspect of the life of rural communities at this time is illustrated on the circuit plans. Nowadays committee meetings are usually held in the building concerned, but not so 50 years ago! Tuesday was market day in Clitheroe and once a year on a Tuesday the superintendent minister diverted the members of the rural churches away from the market for their annual trust meetings in Wesley - 8 meetings for the 'super' in one day!

Centenary Celebrations

After all the struggles and frustrations, the state of the society in 1930 was such that the members felt there was plenty to celebrate and hope for. Just before the celebrations, however,

"Paythorne awoke from its rural somnolence and expressed its awakening in the form of one of the most hilariously jolly dances that the village schoolroom has ever known"

- an event in no way connected with the Chapel but in aid of Leeds Infirmary - however there is no doubt that the village did stay awake for the centenary!

On Good Friday 1930 a 'Great Rally of Friends from the Clitheroe Circuit' was held, the Chapel being 'crowded to the doors' and the main speakers being Rev. George Tyson (the superintendent minister) and George Hargreaves. Perhaps George Hargreaves was conscious of some overemphasis on the 'three Georges' as in opening his speech he showed the skill which, in a very different context, took him on to be Mayor of Clitheroe. He began by quoting a 19th century derogatory verse now generally forgotten (perhaps thankfully) but which described the first four King Georges he however equated this to himself (1st), George Lambert (2nd), Rev. George Parsons (3rd), Rev. George Tyson (4th) then added two more Georges to the verse, Rev. George Pollard (5th from Chatburn) and George Cowgill (6th editor of the Clitheroe Advertiser & Times), and, as he said,

almost certainly with all 6 Georges present he "could quote the last line of the verse faithfully Heaven be praised the Georges are ended!"

The celebrations continued on the Sunday with services conducted by Rev. George Parsons and a 'Rally of Past and Present Paythorners and Friends' on the Monday. For all the events the Chapel seems to have been full to capacity at one stage

the pianist had scarcely room to play, so tightly was the crowd jammed and one envied Rev. George Pollard who had the pulpit to himself!

Many people spoke at the meetings and services about the history, about those whose name was not George, about the future and about personal needs and service:

the world would not be saved by preaching but by Christian people giving their testimony to the cause they had proved in their hearts and minds.

50 More Years

It is (almost) fifty years since those centenary celebrations and what has happened to the Society in those years years in which so much has changed in the world generally?

Soon after the centenary the trustees were considering the possibility of adding a vestry, porch and 'pail closet' and a drawing was prepared to show this. A fund was set up for the work and by 1937, when this amounted to £54, the trustees thought that some land behind the Chapel should be purchased. However, "the friends at Paythorne said the time was not opportune" and the idea was postponed in fact from that time it was necessary to gradually use the savings to pay the running costs of the Chapel.

The decline of the society resulted particularly from changes in farm tenancies and ownership most evident when the Lund family left the village and the Chapel therefore had no Sunday School superintendent, secretary and treasurer, no caretaker, no organist, no Chapel steward and no poor steward! About the same time George Hargreaves died and George Lambert had to resign as society steward and trust secretary due to his own poor health.

By 1940 services were reduced to fortnightly and the following year the Sunday School was abandoned. Only 2 members remained and no services were held in the winter of 1941/2 an equally dark period in the life of this country. With a view to the Chapel being sold, an inventory was then prepared. This was presented to the trustees at a meeting which was also, by chance, the first one attended by William Hanson George Hargreaves son-in-law. William Hanson lived in Clitheroe and was not a trustee, but had been invited to the meeting to bring George Hargreaves' minute and account books. After the meeting the superintendent, Rev. G. Boyd Macgarr, asked Mr. Hanson to look after those books again "until the future of the Chapel is decided" he is still looking after those books, and their successors, now!

Rather than close the Chapel, the trust decided early in 1942 to ask the circuit local preachers to hold monthly evening services during the summer. Only two services per year were actually held the Harvest and the Anniversary of a non-existent Sunday School until 1948 when, very quietly, two people began working for the reopening of the Sunday School.

No society could survive on the basis of only two services per year but Margaret Hargreaves (a daughter of George Hargreaves) believed that a Methodist Society should exist at Paythorne and she also believed that the need and the opportunity were there. She then began what was, in a very real sense, home missions work in the village. Margaret Hargreaves lived in Clitheroe but began making

visits to the farms in Paythorne to talk to both parents and children about their needs and her beliefs, to ask for support in the reopening of the school and chapel, and subsequently inviting all the children to come along to Sunday School. She was supported in this work by a friend who visited the village every day, George Harrop from Clitheroe, who was the Paythorne village postman. On his rounds of the village he was able to back up the the work already begun, and as a result of the efforts the Sunday School reopened in June 1949 with seven scholars present. From this small start, so uncertain in many ways, the present society has developed and matured. The Sunday School was at first held weekly and soon monthly services were also started, an arrangement which continued until 1953 when the services became fortnightly. Ten years later the Sunday School also became fortnightly, to alternate with the services. In the early days the teachers in the Sunday School Were Vivienne Whiting (of Gisburn), Margaret Hargreaves and her sister Ethel Hanson.

At first Margaret Hargreaves and Ethel Hanson travelled to the Sunday School by bus from Clitheroe to Gisburn, they then walked to Paythorne where in cold weather the small paraffin heater in the Chapel provided both warmth for the school and was the only means of making a warm drink (electricity was installed in the Chapel by Rev. James Wright in 1952). The journeys by bus and on foot continued until 1953 when William Hanson became able to provide transport for the teachers but perhaps inevitably, as an experienced teacher he soon helped out 'just for once', then twice 9 then regularly in fact until 1974 when he and Mrs. Hanson retired (Mrs. Hanson having served as a teacher and Sunday School secretary for 25 years). During the 31 years since the Sunday School first reopened, representatives of several families, some long established in the village, others among the newcomers to the area, and including at least four former scholars, have taken part in the teaching. The mixture of 'newt and gold' families is also shown in the list of present officers (see page 2) equally the addresses of those officers show the wide area from which the congregations are drawn and also show the continuing character of Paythorne itself the same farm names again reappearing, Higher House, Loftrans, Englands Head a list that could almost certainly be extended if, in the past, precise addresses of members within Newsholme had been noted. It would be tempting to pick out for comment individual names and families among both the officers and others whose names appear on the community roll, but thankfully the work at Paythorne is widely spread, so many people contributing to the work of the Church in all its aspects, whether by holding a particular office or in a less formal way perhaps caring for the building, perhaps helping at the harvest social, or of course by attending the Sunday School.

The highlight of the Sunday School year at Paythorne indeed one of the highlights of the year in the Chapel generally, has for many years been the Anniversary when the scholars and local congregation have been joined by friends from other areas at first travelling on a hired bus from Clitheroe. As with most Sunday Schools, the scholars have often taken an active part in the services in many ways indeed over the years one of the achievements of the society has been the extent of the unconcerned informal participation of the children in the services.

From time to time links with the rest of the circuit have also been strengthened by events in Paythorne, such as the two occasions when the circuit quarterly meeting was held in the Chapel, or much more informally, as at Good Friday youth rallies remembered perhaps for a wide range of reasons, even for the occasion when the field adjoining the Chapel was used for a sort-of-football match. Perhaps the superintendent minister at that time would not wish to be reminded of his enthusiastic and effective if highly unconventional goalkeeping a prelude to going into the Chapel and speaking equally effectively and forcefully at the rally service!

The numbers in the Sunday School have never been large typically about 10 scholars, although this rose to about 20 in the late 1950S quite enough to make a notable impact in the circuit Festivals of

Youth (sharing first place with Chatburn in the first year the festival competitions were held), to make plenty of noise on the annual outing to the Trinity Christmas pantomime in Clitheroe and (more seriously) to form a useful, lively Sunday School which, hopefully, will lead the children into full active membership of their Church.

As in most societies there have, over the years, been many changes but also a regular pattern of events

- an annual open air service is held on the first Sunday in August at the caravan site near the Chapel, about 100 people usually being present at this service.
- the Chapel has been licensed for Marriages, at the request of the first lucky couple, Rosemary Peel (a former scholar) and Walter Robinson.
- to raise funds, a sale of home-made produce is held on the Spring Bank Holiday Saturday and, of course, following long established tradition, the ladies of Paythorne again serve afternoon teas!
- as in all societies, trustees have been replaced by Property Committees. When the Trust was last renewed in 1954 four of the trustees were from Paythorne area Thomas and Lilian Kayley, Ada Peel and Clara Lambert, more local trustees at one time than there had ever been in Paythorne.
- in the 39 years since the crisis of 1941 the membership has slowly but steadily increased from 2 to 21 and there are now 44 names on the community roll. Attendances have rarely reached those of some high points in the society's history but this must be set against the smaller village population nowadays.

The 'first' Sunday School register - June 1949			JUNE					Total	
			22	29	5	12	19	26	
David Palmer	Buck Inn					1			17
Ganetta "	"			1	1	1	1		23
Hazel Newson	Manor Farm			1		1	1		24
John "	"			1		1	1		24
Alma "	"			1		1	1		24
Rosemary Peel	Stonker Hill			1	1	1	1		26
Jean "	"			1	1	1	1		26
Harry Kayley	Laiper House			1	1	1	1		24
Clive Preston	Higha House			1		1			26

To close this history, let us remind ourselves of how the Methodist Chapel and its members fit into the life of the surrounding community. The village of Paythorne now only has a population of about 85 (one third of what it was in 1821) as in the early days of the society, the congregation is of course, also drawn from the surrounding areas. In recent years the village school has closed and Newsholme station is closed to regular passenger services but of course, private transport is much more readily available than it was in the past. The life of the village probably bears little resemblance to its earlier counterparts although community life in a modified form undoubtedly continues.

We have seen how very varied is the story of the Methodists of Paythorne. Despite all the difficulties, the successes over the years have been such that there is a continuing presence in the village, and this at a time when many other chapels, in both rural and urban areas of the country have been forced to close. Two of the present features in the chapel do in fact have their origins in other chapels closed in this way the organ was formerly in Sawley Chapel and the communion rail is,

surprisingly, from a chapel in Edgware, London. May they long continue in regular use in their "new" 150 year old home!

E.B.K.

And the Future...

As has already been mentioned, I came into the work at Paythorne largely by accident almost 40 years ago. I have been very happy and grateful for being able to serve the people of Paythorne over the years but in reality I wish it had not been necessary! I say this not from any sense of conflict with Paythorne far from it but it has always been my one wish that the society should be self-sufficient and even become a support to other parts of the circuit as it has sometimes been at times in the past at least spiritually and in service if not financially. The work at Paythorne has been very much a team effort and if we have managed to develop a lively society, so infinitely more active than 40 years ago, as I believe we have done, then all the effort by so many people has been worthwhile.

There are, I believe, great possibilities for the development of the support recently begun by the larger churches of the circuit in visiting the smaller places on a regular basis I do believe that it is very important that the smaller societies, however lively they may be, are kept constantly in close touch with the rest of the circuit. Changes can happen very quickly in a small church where the loss of just a few families can remove a large proportion of the society. It is important at such a time, that help is immediately available before the society loses heart. It is so easy to close a chapel for short term gains and yet lose a power-base for the future a base that can be almost impossible to re-establish once lost.

In his foreword Rev. Ward Jones asks how far the influence of Paythorne has spread. We can never know, although the movements of population in the 19th century certainly took Paythorne people to many remote parts of the world. Wherever people live, I wonder if the answer to Mr. Jones' question will always return to the level of personal experience expressed for me so clearly in George Parsons' introduction to the centenary booklet in 1930:

The work at Paythorne has often been discouraging, but it has been tremendously worthwhile. The labour of God's people has not been in vain, because it has been done in the Lord and in the power of His Spirit. The services of the little chapel have exercised a refining and saving power on many lives during the century that has gone. Now, with the undying flame of the love of Christ in our hearts, we may greet the new century with hope and confidence and say "The best is yet to bell.

It is 50 years since those words were written, the 'Century' is now a 'Century and a half' and I pray "The best is yet to bell.

William R. Hanson West Bradford

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