

Ebenezer Methodist Church
Magazine

JULY, 1957



CIRCUIT HONOURS LOCAL PREACHERS—*see pages 3 & 5*
(Photo by courtesy of the Walsall Observer)

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Edited by Keith H. Evans.

Editorial

It is not always appreciated what a devoted service is that of the Methodist local preacher. Every week he can be seen making his way in all kinds of weather to churches all over the circuit to preach Christianity and the evangelism of John Wesley, often to faithful but small congregations. No one knows the countless hours of preparation he spends with his Bible and books searching for fresh and inspiring thoughts for his next sermon, and his own spare time is often drastically curtailed or lost altogether, especially when he has other commitments (- and local preachers usually have). Yet they continue their preaching, often out of pocket but never grumbling, and never thinking (as so many people seem to these days) of themselves first, but, instead, of their duty to God. Theirs is the conviction that one day they will have played a part in the re-conversion of England.

Methodism, probably more than any other great Christian movement, owes a great and immeasurable debt to her local preachers, and we are happy and proud that for once we can break the silence and pay tribute to them. We are thinking in particular of two local preachers in our own circuit who have between them over 90 years preaching to their credit - Coun. S.J. Breeze (50 years) and Mr. W. Bampton (40 years).

This is indeed a remarkable achievement, and we take this opportunity of thanking them in public for the great personal sacrifices they must have made in the course of these life-long ministries, whilst praying that they may continue to preach the Gospel for many years to come.

This great example set us by these two worthy men should help to remind us that the only way to serve God - the ONLY way - is to sacrifice your personal amusements and put God FIRST. Let us all take note, and dedicate our whole lives to God. The Christian story through the ages is one of sacrifice, and we shall continue it only by sacrificing too.

This quarter's CHAPEL NEWS is on page 12.

A PERSONAL CALL TO WALSALL WOOD METHODISTS
from the Minister, the Rev. C.R. Ransome.

Before the searching problems of the Church, which is the "body of Christ", the cry is heard: Who is sufficient for these things? And the answer comes: Our sufficiency is of God.

Methodism has won its greatest victories in days of darkness - and will again. The twilight creates the challenge, and the challenge calls forth the response. That response is Faith; that is the "V" sign.

Twilight! Challenge! Response! Victory! A blue-print of the spirit!

On the immediate horizon looms a fascinating new opportunity, and with the opportunity there breaks in upon us a rousing challenge - the challenge seriously to consecrate ourselves anew, to the end that this "blue-print of the spirit" is for us and for our church transferred and translated into rich and thrilling victories of Faith.

The circuit, and (in a special manner) unresting and aspiring 'Ebenezer' souls, have long recognised the clamant need of this church for a consecrated pastoral ministry which hitherto has been physically impossible by the available ministerial staff. One learns that down the years various ideas have been advanced. It is stimulating that now propitious circumstances combine to make it practicable for the Circuit Quarterly Meeting to take a momentous initial step towards responding to this need. It can, if we will, be revolutionary.

The Rev. Lawrence Robinson, whose geniality and forceful preaching are well-known to us, has graciously agreed, beginning in October, to give pastoral oversight to the 'Ebenezer' Church, occupy that pulpit one Sunday a month, attend the Thursday evening fellowship meeting fortnightly and the Monday evening Women's Own Meeting monthly.

Already this proposal is creating new heart and confidence. However, it cannot be too strongly stated (and it is of the greatest importance to hold it in mind) that the desired fulfilment of this high hope is entirely dependent on the willing, wholesome, energetic, personal dedicated co-operation of the whole household of God, and not upon one person. YOU count: count enormously. Count crucially and decisively. There is a real sense in which it "all depends on you." It is a piercing thought that

we have it in our power to thwart and baulk God's purposes. Dr. Campbell Morgan put it like this: "Man is helpless apart from immediate co-operation with God. God chooses to be helpless apart from co-operation with man." The new day will dawn only as we accept our personal obligations and responsibilities to God, to the brethren, and to the Church.

Herein lies the great and grave and - could be- destiny - determining new challenge to our habits and our way of life, to our faith and friendship, to our love and loyalties.

I would that we see this important time as an occasion for a fearless and honest scrutiny of our own heart. In anything have we drifted, fallen short, weakened, slackened? Do we jealously guard and observe fixed and regular times for prayer, meditation, the reading of the Bible? How faithfully do we honour attendance at the means of grace, on Sundays and on weekdays? Has the morning of the Lord's Day ceased to draw us to the House of God? Can it be that the desperate need to meet God Sunday by Sunday in His sanctuary has become so cluttered up with the things of self, and ease and pleasure that when the hour comes for Public Worship it often finds us lulled and lured into the defeating, dangerous and deadly quagmire of lukewarmness? Do we meet all life's ebb and flow with the personal Christ? A spiritually disciplined life is fundamental and essential for a constantly burning, shining, radiating Christian life, Christian fellowship, Christian witness.

Mr. Robinson will welcome a conversation on the work of the church with all the friends of 'Ebenezer'. The proposed date is Thursday August 15th. Please do try to attend.

OUR COVER PICTURE

Our cover picture, for which we are indebted to the "Walsall Observer", was taken at the circuit gathering at Mt. Zion Methodist Church, Brownhills, in April, when Long Service Certificates were presented on behalf of the Methodist Church by the Superintendent Minister (Rev. C.R. Ransome) to Coun. S.J. Breeze, J.P., and Mr. W. Bampton.

In the foreground are (right to left): Mr. W. Bampton, Coun. Breeze, Rev. C.R. Ransome, Mr. W. Upton, Mr. H. Craddock. In the background are some of the Methodists from all over the circuit who attended the ceremony - you can probably recognise some of the many familiar faces!

(See also page three)

COOKING: :LEMON SPONGE SANDWICH

2 eggs; pinch of salt; 4 oz. margarine;
4 ozs. castor sugar; 4 oz. S.R. flour;
rind of a lemon; juice of half a lemon.

Cream together the sugar and margarine. Add the lemon rind and juice, followed by the sifted flour and beaten eggs. (Add these gradually). Bake in a moderate oven for 20 - 30 minutes.

Filling:

Cream together 2 oz. margarine, 3 oz. icing sugar and the juice of half a lemon. Spread over the sandwich when cold.

SOME MORE PROVED HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

CYCLE CLIPS on trousers make it easier to put on overalls.

If two GLASSES stick together, separate them by filling the top one with cold water and holding the bottom one in hot water.

When you WASH YOUR HAIR put steel wool in the plug-hole.
This stops hairs from clogging the waste pipe.

After using STEEL WOOL keep it in soapy water: this prevents rustings and waste.

It is important to KEEP DRAINS CLEAN during hot weather.
Put salt inside the drain and let stand a few minutes to remove slime, then scrub. Place the foot of an old nylon stocking over the end of the waste pipe and secure with string. Remove when full.

Original articles and readers' letters are always welcome in this magazine and should be sent to E.M.C. Magazine, 38 Coronation Road, Walsall Wood, Staffs. Articles for inclusion in the next magazine should be sent not later than September 1st, 1957 if at all possible.

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"AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN'S SPORT"

by Tony Stackhouse.

The discordant sound of the hunting-horn heralded the approach of the panting hounds and lathered horses. A glimpse of red in the weak sunlight showed the progress of the hunt through the copse: the fox is spent and the end is near. Like ravening wolves the hounds tear into quivering flesh and the quarry is destroyed. The huntsmen ride up and, thinking themselves "great fellows" for pursuing this unfortunate creature to its death, engage in the pagan rites of cutting off the brush and initiating new members by bedaubing their faces with blood.

Up from the undergrowth rushes the stag, wide-eyed and fearful. Behind come the would-be murderers, eyes alight with the lust for blood. Suddenly the pitiful creature reaches a raging torrent, and the drama moves to its climax. Hemmed in by the hunters the stag is left with a terrible choice - to turn and fight a hopeless battle or to enter the boiling waters. With reckless courage the animal jumps into the torrent, thus avoiding a gory scene but meeting a horrible watery death. The hunt look on, not feeling pity for the noble animal, but burning with intense disappointment at being cheated of their "sport".

These two scenes portray the typical happenings of a hunt. Apart from the obvious fact that hunting is cruel, it is true that hunting brings out the worst part of the human character - the urge to destroy life. God created man above all animals, but by taking part in hunting we are descending to animal level.

I URGE EVERYONE TO OPPOSE HUNTING AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

During a conference in a near-by town a country farmer and his wife were entertaining two ministers over the weekend. The appetite of the visitors rather surprised their hosts, and although they had dressed two small cockerels they were compelled to kill another.

On the Monday as the farmer passed through his yard he noticed the persons leaning on a gate. "Look farmer," said one, "See how that old hen struts about. She seems to be pretty proud this morning". "Aye", replied the farmer, "she ought to be. She's put three sons into the ministry this weekend".

CONVERTED MINERS BEAR WITNESS TO POWER OF EVANGELISM

On Whit-Monday a dark-coloured van from Great Lumley, Co. Durham, pulled up at Cliff College for the great anniversary gatherings. Out came five miners, three of whom were coal-cutters and had to be back in time for the 2 a.m. shift next morning. William Smith, acting as spokesman, told this most remarkable story to "Methodist Recorder" reporter E.W. Tattersall.

"Last New Year's Eve, after being a fortnight on the booze and having myself spent £23 on drink in a week and had only 10s. left - we went home from the pub as drunk as lords."

It appeared that Evangelist Tom Butler had been conducting a campaign at the chapel, and was about to hold a watchnight service. Going along he heard a terrific noise and drunken singing, so Mr. Butler called in to invite them all to come to the watchnight service.

In doing so, to quote Mr. Smith: "In the darkness he fell over cases of beer bottles, whisky and wine, near the front door. All the sixteen of us went to the service, some of us blind drunk, and all of us got converted! While we were out, more friends came into the house and drank up all the booze, and when we returned there was only one bottle of beer left - and we poured that down the sink!

"Next morning Mr. Butler didn't give us a chance to go back to the pub - he came before opening time!"

And here they were, the five coal-face miners at Cliff six months after, saying "God Bless" and "Praise the Lord!" They had not been singing in the pub since then - and four of them had been singing in the chapel choir!

FOOTNOTE: Over 14,000 people were reported to have gone to Cliff College this year. It was the Rev. J.E. Eagles' last year as Principal - he is being succeeded by the Rev. T.D. Meadley, at present Superintendent of Leeds Mission. Members who went again this year say it was as good as ever, among the speakers being the famous German Christian who went through the war in a concentration camp - Pastor Martin Niemoller - and Dr. W.E. Sangster. Many people were converted or re-converted - including a coach driver who said he had not been to church for twenty years.

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S H E L F I E L D

A few weeks ago the following letter was written by the Rev. Bryan H. Reed (of the Methodist Youth Department) to the Editor of the "Methodist Recorder":-

"Six months after the sale of the first Premium Bonds the Government has paid out £970,000 in prizes and over £2,600,000 in advertising and administrative costs. It has thus cost the taxpayer £3,645,000 to borrow £48½ million for six months, or 15 per cent per annum -- surely one of the most extravagant and wasteful enterprises ever conceived."

And with that summing up by the Rev. Bryan Reed we promise to banish the subject of premium bonds from our pages for ever!

Attention all Walsall Wood!

The church has decided to hold this summer a

C---A---R---N---I---V---A---L

on Oak Park, Walsall Wood, preceeded by a Parade and the choosing of a Carnival Queen. There will be stalls, sideshows, etc.

For Full Details See The Posters!

WORTH INCLUDING

A boy was a witness in court and the lawyer asked "Did anyone tell you what to say?" "Yes, sir" replied the boy. "I thought so," exclaimed the lawyer. "Now you'll have to tell me who it was who told you." "My father, sir!" "And what did he tell you?" "He said," the boy replied calmly, "the lwyers would try to get me all tangled up, but if I stuck to the truth I would be all right."

There are three kinds of people in the world - the Wills, the Wont's, and the Can'ts. The first accomplish everything, the second oppose everything and the third fail in everything.

The 1st Walsall Wood Company of the Boys' Brigade held its annual inspection and display Saturday May 23rd. in the Methodist schoolroom. The chairman was Mr. W.E. Bullock, Hon. Captain and the inspecting officer was Mr. G. Mullingani, Birmingham Battalion bandmaster: the company's chaplain, the Rev. C.R. Ransome, was also present.

The programme consisted of a parade of the company, the inspection itself and a number of interesting items, including a drill display, a band item and an amusing drill display by the Arward Squad, with Lieut. T. Webster in charge. After this, the Rev. C.R. Ransome spoke on the good work being done by a loyal and inspired number of Christian men who gave up their valued time to lead boys to their Captain, Jesus Christ.

Lieut. J. Smith presented the company's annual report, and spoke of the numerous achievements the Company had gained during the year - including winning the Cup Final yet again. The Chairman, in his remarks, paid tribute to the boys and officers of the company, and spoke of happy memories of Camp and other associations of his with the boys since 1946.

The inspecting officer then gave his remarks: he spoke of the performance of the boys and of the smartness of their appearance. He was very pleased with all that had transpired and concluded by expressing his thanks to all who had helped to make the evening most enjoyable. Following this the awards were presented to the boys by the chaplain.

The ceremony ended with prayers and vespers and the singing of the National Anthem.

-W. E. B.

C H A P E L N E W S

Anniversaries More Popular This Year.

Reports from other local chapels confirm that by and large this year's Sunday-School Anniversaries were better-attended than for some time, and most of them report that their collections have been correspondingly larger. Our own Anniversary collections (for the two Sundays) amounted to £135 / 10 / Od.

Off to Camp.

Members of the Boys' Brigade and the Girls' Life Brigade

will soon be off on their annual camps. The boys are spending a fortnight at Ramsgate (July 27 - August 10) and the girls are going to Shanklin, I.O.W. (July 27 - August 3).

B. B. Pull Off Hat-Trick Cup and League Double.

The Boys' Brigade football team have again brought honour to Walsall Wood and our church by yet another season of remarkable wins. For example they won,....

-every match they played last season,
-the B. B. Cup Final (for the third time in succession and for the fourth time in only five years),
-the Division I shield (making it a Cup and League Double this year).

All this was won in the face of not inconsiderable odds - all these matches were against teams from the whole of the Birmingham Battalion. Congratulations, boys and team-manager Mr. Jim Smith: and the best of luck for the coming season!

Mrs. E. Bullock

We are very sorry to report that Mrs. E. Bullock has of late been ill again. On behalf of the whole church we hope and pray that she will soon be restored to health and strength again.

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S T O ----

DAVID MARLOW and DOREEN PRICE on the occasion of their wedding (June 8th) at Mount Zion, Brownhills.

MR. and MRS. HOWARD THACKER, of High Street, who have recently celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary.

HADEN and BETTY WALKER on the birth of a son (Martin) on May 10th

T H I S
QUARTER'S
SPECIALS

July 7th : Ladies' Day
September 8th: Choir Sunday
(October 6th : Harvest Festival)

CHURCH RELATIONS

Dear Sir,

In a recent editorial you welcomed the talks between the Methodist Church and the Church of England, and suggested that it would be a good thing if the two Churches were to join together.

How is this possible when there is a definite anti-Methodist feeling in the Church of England? I am thinking of in particular of a recent case where a vicar dismissed a head-mistress just because she taught in a Methodist Sunday School.

Yours, &c.,

EX-PRIM (Name and address supplied)

P.T.A. ALLEGATIONS

Dear Sir,

I would be pleased if you would deny the allegations that have been made recently by the Parent-Teacher Association of a local school. By means of a petition circulating throughout the village and by a leading article in the local Press, many people I feel are under a delusion that conditions at the chapel (where the school rents two rooms for teaching during the week) are very bad.

This is not the case. Of all the allegations made I would challenge the P.T.A. to prove one of them. They have grossly exaggerated the position and are guilty of serious distortion of fact.

I say this to clear the chapel of a bad name which other bodies seem intent on getting it, and I throw out this challenge so that the members and officials responsible for the article and petition can either justify their claims or be shown up in their true light.

I hope you will print their reply in the next magazine.

Yours &c.,

MEMBER OF EBENEZER

EDITOR: I should be only too pleased to print the P.T.A.'s reply to your letter. Perhaps they can explain about the "bad ventilation," the "serious threat to the children's health," and "dirty conditions," and the other things of which they speak.

Readers' letters, which should always include their names and addresses, are always welcome. They may be handed to any member of the Magazine Committee or posted (address on page 6).

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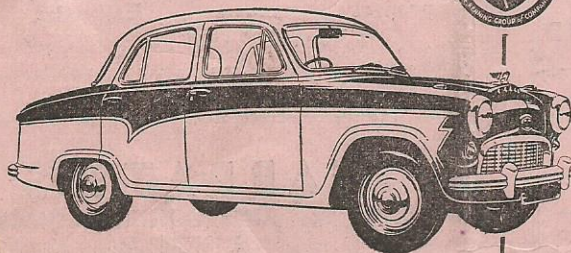
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