

## **GEORGE STUART CANN**

**George was a Devonian born in Totnes, in December 1887 the son of William Cann and Olive Cann.**

**He trained at Headingley College, Leeds**

**Very little has been found about his service prior to coming to Maidenhead as Circuit Superintendant minister in 1935.**

**Leaving Maidenhead in 1939, he first took up the superintendency of the Brixton circuit and later in 1945 that of superintendent at the Dale Street church, Leamington Spa and then in 1948 as superintendant minister in Kidwelly close to Carmarthen Bay**

**For a short period during the Second World War, he enlisted in the Army Chaplains department but had to resign through ill-health in October 1940.**

**He died in his birthplace, Totnes, in December 1964.**

**His stay in Maidenhead covered the bicentenary of the conversion of John Wesley - an event that was celebrated world-wide on the 24th May 1938. This was not only celebrated in Methodist places of worship but occasioned a surprising event in St George's Chapel Windsor Castle !**

Memorable Methodist Celebration.  
BICENTENARY OF JOHN WESLEY'S CONVERSION.

The bicentenary of John Wesley's conversion was celebrated on Sunday last by special services in every Methodist Church and Sunday School in the world, and the churches attached to the Windsor Circuit of which the Rev. G. Stuart Cann (Maidenhead) is the superintendent minister, contributed their full share to the memorable occasion.

It has been estimated that there are 12,000,000 communicant members and a total of about 50,000,000 in the Methodist community. At the High Street Methodist Church, Maidenhead, there were large congregations both morning and evening, and to add to the interest of the auspicious occasion a scheme of floral decoration had been carried out with much taste by ladies of the church and congregation. In the morning the preacher was the Rev. V. Donald Siddons, D.C.F. (Windsor), and in the evening the Rev. G. Stuart Cann. The special form of service was used throughout the day. At the morning service the hymns, all by Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley, were "Father in Whom we live", "Come Holy Ghost our hearts inspire", "The people that in darkness lay", "Where shall my wandering soul begin?" and "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost"; and the choir, with Mr. T. A. Huddle at the organ, rendered the anthem, "Blessed be the God and Father" (S. S. Wesley). The Boy Scouts took part in the service, and at the close the Rev. V. D. Siddons, who earlier in the service gave a special young people's address concerning John Wesley, handed back to the standard bearers their standards which they had surrendered at the communion platform before the service commenced. The service concluded with the singing of "God save the King". In the afternoon the scholars took part in a special order of service drawn up for use in all Methodist Sunday Schools. This was conducted by Mr Norman Bromley (superintendent), assisted by Mr H.G. Symmons, Mr J W Slatter presided at the piano. At the evening service, special hymns were again sung the greater number by Charles Wesley, and the choir rendered the anthem "Out of the deep have I called unto Thee". The Rev Stuart Cann gave a short address, and at the close loyal Methodists hurried to their homes to listen to the special service broadcast from Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London and the address given by the Rev Scott Lidgett. At Queen Street Methodist Church the services both morning and evening were taken part in by good congregations, and the special orders of service used. In the morning the preacher was the Rev George West and in the evening the address was given by Mr F J Galsworthy (Burnham).

United services by the three centres at Windsor, Maidenhead (High Street), and Slough Central hall were held yesterday (Tuesday). At Maidenhead there was holy communion at 7a.m.; a service for women in the afternoon at 3 o'clock; a children's service at 6 p.m.; a prayer meeting at 7.15 p.m. and a great commemoration gathering at 8 p.m. with a relay from Wesley's Chapel when the President of the Conference (the Rev H Bond) gave the address. In the broadcast address, Dr Bond read an extract from John Wesley's journal describing his conversion, exactly to the minute 200 years ago, and during the service was sung the anthem "Out of the deep" (Croft) which John Wesley heard in St Paul's Cathedral on the day of his conversion and which influenced him so greatly. At the evening service meeting at Maidenhead centres represented were Queen Street, Burberry Hall, Cookham Rise, Cookham Dean, Lent Rise (Burnham), Holyport, Woodlands Park and Littlewick.

To-day (Wednesday) a service of thanksgiving and remembrance takes place at St. George's Chapel at 8 p.m. by invitation of the Dean of Windsor (Dr. A. V. Baillie), when the preacher will be the Rev. Canon Anthony Deane. The six Methodist Circuit ministers will be present: the Revs. G. Stuart Cann and E.W. Harvey (Maidenhead), V. D. Siddons (Windsor), George West (Slough Central Hall), Robert I'arkinson (Slough) and John Charlton. The Lesson is being read by the Rev. G. Stuart Cann. Methodist organisations will be represented.

**At the request of the Dean of Winsor, Stuart Cann was invited to frame an appropriate Order of Service to be celebrated in St George's Chapel. At a Chapter Meeting held on May 7th 1938, the following was recorded:**

*'The proof of the form of the Service to be held in the Nave at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 25th, in commemoration of the Bi-centenary of the Conversion of John Wesley was agreed'*

**The Order of Service was as follows:**

**THE PREPARATION**

(All Standing)

**HYMN:** *O for a thousand tongues to sing*

**PRAYERS AND THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN:** *Love Divine , all loves excelling.*

**THE LESSON**

(Acts xxvi, 1 - 29)

(The Revd G Stuart Cann)

**HYMN:** *Let saints on earth in concert sing*

(All standing)

**THE APOSTLES' CREED**

**INTERCESSIONS**

**A GENERAL THANKSGIVING**

**HYMN:** *O for a heart to praise my God*

**THE SERMON**

(The Rev Canon Anthony C Deane)

**HYMN:** *Rejoice the Lord is King*

**THE BLESSING**

**With regard to the event the Proceedings of the Weslley Historical Society noted that:**

*"Of unusual interest was a commemoration at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the Chapel of the Knights of the Garter. An order of service was drawn up, at the request of the Dean of Windsor, by the Rev. G. Stuart Cann, Methodist Superintendent Minister. Canon Anthony Deane preached, and reminded his hearers that many varied and majestic services had been held in the historic place, but never one like this. The service, said he, commemorated an event of world-wide importance ; it also signified the increasing unity that was felt between the Church of England and the Free Churches, and perhaps in a particular degree between the Church of .England and the Methodist Church."*