

## CHARLES DUNHAM

Charles was born in Barton, Bedfordshire in 1849, the son of George & Mary Dunham

He entered the ministry in 1876

He married Lucy Jane Pedder in Reigate June 1881 They had six children

He died in the village of Slad, Nr Stroud December 1943

**After serving as a probationary minister he became a candidate on the Approved list in 1880:**

C Dunham (Weymouth)

..... C. DUNHAM acknowledged the good and holy influence of his mother, a member of the Wesleyan body. She implanted in him a love for the true and the beautiful. At the age of 15 he went to London, and, being invited by a fellow workman to go to a Primitive Methodist Chapel, he was converted after a sermon preached by Mr. Major on the text: " The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and ye are not saved." He then began to work as a Sunday school teacher, ultimately becoming superintendent.

(Northampton Mercury 8 May 1880)

**He was instrumental in laying the foundation of the Primitive Methodist chapel in Brampton.....**

THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS AT BRAMPTON  
LAYING THE MEMORIAL STONES TO THE NEW CHAPEL.

Easter Monday will be a red-letter day to the Primitive Methodists of Brampton, for on that day the memorial stones to the new chapel were formally laid. The weather was all that could have been desired, and there were about 400 present. The chapel, which will be of red and white bricks, has a frontage of 24 feet, and is 80 feet in length, whilst adjoining will be a small vestry. It will, therefore, be a great boon to the Primitive Methodists as regards accommodation

At three o'clock, the time announced for the opening of the ceremony, the hymn "The Church's one foundation" was sung by all present, after which an appropriate passage was read from the Bible by the Rev. C. Dunham (minister of St. Neots). The Rev. B. Bransom then engaged in short prayer, and after the singing of another hymn a few well-spoken words were delivered by the Rev. C. Dunham. He said :

*"My dear friends, as the minister of the St. Neots circuit, I feel it expedient on my part to make a few statements. I might say that we come here this afternoon not an enemy to any other body, but as the friends of all. I am proud this afternoon to belong to the Primitive Methodists. There was a time when we were small in numbers and unknown, but I am sure that that time has passed away. We have been in existence for nearly 70 years in this country, and I think that we have proved our existence by our works. I was once, continued the speaker, talking with a gentleman, and he spoke of the Primitive Methodists as a class looked upon in a disrespectful manner. Well, I had to speak to that gentleman, and I thought it incumbent upon me to say that the Primitive Methodist body had always been respectable, but not always been respected. I am proud to say this afternoon that ever since our denomination first started our method has been respected. We are not only known by the noise we make but by the words we preach.*

*The Primitive Methodists have grown very strong, and numbered last year 192,874 members. There are 1,014 travelling preachers, and 16,188 local preachers. The children belonging to the Sunday schools number 428,718, and there are 61,792 teachers. The number of chapels amount to 4,427. The chapels belonging to the connection value £8,184,268. Last year there was an increase in the members of 1,212, but there was lost by death about 8,000. This shows that the Primitive Methodists are in a flourishing condition, and we hope to continue so. Many of our fathers who have departed from this earth have assisted in many such ceremonies as this, and we, their sons and daughters, are endeavouring to follow them"*

The memorial stones, four in number, were then laid. The first one was laid by Mrs. Bird, on behalf of the Sunday school scholars, who, in so doing, said it gave her great pleasure to do it for the Primitive Methodist cause. Mrs. Wright laid the next one, and said that it was to her the greatest event of her life to lay a stone for the Primitive Methodist. The third stone was laid by Mrs. Dunham (St. Neot's), who also briefly expressed the pleasure that it afforded her. Mrs. J. Howard (Eaton Ford) laid the last stone, and this lady said that she had been a Primitive Methodist all her life.

After these stones had been laid, about 18 bricks were laid by members at the cost of 5s. each, this sum allowing them to have their initials inscribed thereon. Several bricks (without initials) were also laid for the sum of one shilling. The "Doxology" brought the proceedings to a close. A public tea took place at half past four in the Cross-room, when about 110 persons sat down.

(Cambridge Daily News 23 April 1889)

..... and seeing it built and opened in record time !

#### OPENING OF THE NEW PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL AT BRAMPTON.

At last the long-anticipated chapel of the Primitive Methodists of Brampton is finished, and was successfully opened on Thursday afternoon. The weather was all that could be desired, and at the opening sermon at three o'clock in the after-noon the chapel was well filled, there being, besides the village members of the chapel, a large number of friends present from Huntingdon and St. Neots.

Amongst those present we noticed the Rev. C. and Mrs. Dunham (minister of St. Neots circuit), Mr. J. Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. I. Howard, Mr. and Mrs. Dollar, Mrs. Brillion, Mr. and Mrs. L. Brittan, Mrs. Pitts (Chawston), Mr. and Mrs. F. Cole, Mr. and Mrs. W. Wright, Mr. and Mrs. Bird, and others.

The chapel, which is constructed of white bricks with red dressings, presents quite a neat and pleasing appearance. On the outside, on a white square stone just above the doors, are inscribed the words, " Primitive Methodist Chapel. 1889." Adjoining the chapel is a small vestry and other conveniences, and the work reflects great credit on Messrs. Page Bros., builders.

In the interior there is accommodation for about 150 persons. Just above the rostrum are displayed on the wall the words "Come and take of the water of Life freely," and on the west wall, just as the chapel is entered, is placed another text, "Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine." These are the work of a recent member of the chapel, the text being done in white letters, and fixed on a red ground.

Outside the chapel, and forming the boundary, are fixed iron palisades, and, as we before mentioned, the whole building, though quite modern in design, presents quite a pleasing aspect.

The members have been working very ardently towards furthering their financial affairs, and a good sum is already in hand. The chapel is estimated to cost £236.

(Cambridge Daily News 28 June 1889)

library. Lecture.

On Monday, the Primitive Methodist Chapel, a lecture of a very interesting kind was given by the Rev. C. Dunham, superintendent minister, on Cartwright, the Backwoods Preacher.' Mr. Read took the chair.

(Bucks Herald 5 Dec 1891)

**While in the Cheltenham circuit, this ministry was open to the world !**

**SUNDAY'S SERMONS  
GODLINESS**

The Rev S Dunham, preaching at the Stroud Primitive Methodist Chapel on Sunday morning, took as his text 1 Timothy iv., 7. "But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness."

Human nature, he said was a fallen nature. Since the day when man transgressed the laws of his Creator, his tendency had been downward. He had become morally degraded and spiritually darkened, despising virtue and practicing vice. Man had changed the truth of God into a lie, and had worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.

The world had had many teachers and reformers among men, who had propounded theories, laid down rules, and tried many expedients to restore man to virtue and to God, but all had failed. The cause of man's degeneracy had been thought by some to be physical, and many bodily deprivations and cruel austerities had been practised. Men abstained from marriage, the eating of flesh, and lived alone in monasteries.

What were the popular theories and expedients to moralise men to day ? Well education, total abstinence, vegetarianism, social reform. Better homes and higher wages were advocated by some people as the best means by which the standards of man's life could be raised. These things were to be recommended and were good in their place, but something more was required to make men godly or god-like in character.

Men might be naturally moral, but no man was naturally godly, and this condition of the soul was imparted by the Spirit of God. Men should exercise themselves to obtain godliness. This was the highest attainment and best possession of man. The fall of man was not the ruin of any power in him, but only the deprecation of all. Then men should retain godliness. It was good to obtain, but far better to retain, and lastly men should progress and advance in holiness of character. In the world of nature there was a universal law of progression and development. Life must progress to live, and if it becomes stationary it would die.

But what was godliness ? Some said it was the knowledge of God in the mind, the grace of God in the soul, the love of God in the life. Before the coming of Christ, sacrifices to be acceptable, were seasoned with salt. This was God's command. Therefore, unless they were seasoned with the salt of true godliness, they and all their actions would be unsavoury to the Lord. Godliness was the purity, beauty, and strength of their souls.

(Cheltenham Chronicle 15 November 1913)

**As with many of his colleagues, he was a passive resister to the Education Bill**

There was a solitary "passive resister" at Hitchin Sessions last week in the person of the Rev C. Dunham, Primitive Methodist minister.

Mr. Dunham said he had deducted 3s. 2d. from the rate for education.

The Chairman : We have only to carry out the law. We must make an order for payment.

Mr. Dunham : I have reasons for refusing to pay.

The Chairman We have nothing to do with them. If you live in a country you must obey its laws.

Mr. Dunham : Even if the Laws are unjust ?

The Chairman : That is a question we cannot go into.

The usual order was made.

(Luton Times and Advertiser 1 July 1904)

## **Charles and his wife spent a happy retirement in Gloucestershire among family and friends:**

### **FOUR GENERATIONS AT CHRISTENING**

#### **Great-Grandfather Performs Ceremony at Slad**

At a font decorated with moss and primroses the Rev Charles Dunham (90) christened his great-grandson at Slad (Glos) Congregational Chapel. Yesterday.

Around the font were gathered four generations of the Dunham family - great grandfather and great - grandmother, grandfather and grandmother, mother and father, and the child.

In spite of his 90 years, Mr Dunham rises early in the morning, goes for long walks, chops wood, gardens and preaches at Methodist and Congregational churches in all parts of Gloucestershire. The child, the son of Dr and Mrs K C Dunham was christened Ansel Charles.

(Western Daily Press 15 April 1939)

### **SLAD DIAMOND WEDDING**

#### **REV. AND MRS. CHARLES DUNHAM**

The Rev Charles Dunham, who is now in his 93rd year, and Mrs. Dunham, who is 80, of The Manse, Slad, near Stroud, have celebrated their diamond wedding, the ceremony having taken place at Reigate Congregational Church on May 3, 1881.

Until his retirement in 1914 Mr. Dunham had been a Primitive Methodist minister for 33 years, the final three years being spent as superintendent circuit minister at Stroud.

With his retirement in 1914, however, Mr. Dunham by no means finished his work as a preacher and for a number of years he conducted services in various chapels in the neighbourhood.

Going to Slad in 1918 he undertook the supervision of the local Congregational Church and continued the work until about 13 years ago when the late Rev. W H Jefferies, of Painswick, undertook the supervision of the chapels at Edge, Slad and Cranham.

The Rev and Mrs Dunham have family of three sons and four daughters. There are also nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. (Gloucester Journal 10 May 1941)

### **DEATH OF REV. C. DUNHAM**

#### **Doyen of Glo'shire Methodists**

The death has taken place of the Rev. Charles Dunham of The Manse, Slad, at the great age of 93 years.

Mr. Dunham was the doyen of Methodist ministers in Gloucestershire, having been inducted to the ministry 66 years ago.

He went to Stroud in 1911 as the Superintendent Minister of the old Primitive Methodist Circuit and although he retired in 1914 he did not relax his work as a preacher. Gifted with good health and extraordinary faculties he continued this work until he became ill a few weeks ago. His wide circle of friends hoped that he would make a recovery, but he gradually became worse and died.

Mr. Dunham began his ministry at Bedford and afterwards served at Maidenhead, Weymouth, Cowes, Plumstead (London), St. Neots, Berkhamstead, Reading, Bradford, Wymondham (Norfolk), Hitchin, Chalfont St. Giles, and Weobley.

After going to Slad in 1918, Mr. Dunham undertook the supervision of the Congregational Church there, and was able to render signal service to a sister church without interfering with or minimising his devotion to Primitive Methodism. He continued this work for about 13 years.

Married at Reigate Congregational Church on May 3 1881, Mr. Dunham and his wife (who is 81 years of age) celebrated their diamond wedding last year. In addition to his wife, Mr. Dunham is survived by three sons, four daughters, nine grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. (Gloucester Journal, 2 Jan 1943)