

**THE PORTREYS
OF
MAIDENHEAD**

JOSEPH and MARTHA PORTREY

RICHARD WATSON PORTREY

JABEZ BUNTING and MARTHA PHILIPPA PORTREY

ROBERT NEWTON and ALICE PORTREY

SUSANNAH WESLEY PORTREY

This "PORTREY" story came about simply through a deciphering of the lettering on one of the few remaining and exceedingly worn gravestones around the High Street Methodist Church in Maidenhead. The stone itself is one of several that were relocated closer to the church surrounds to make way for town road redevelopment in the 1970s. Consequently therefore, in common with the other remaining stones, it does not indicate the actual burial spot of any of the people to which it relates.

The following people and facilities have contributed to the family story related in the succeeding pages. To them and for them I am very grateful.

Revd Dr Leslie Griffiths, Wesley's Chapel, London
Dr Peter Forsaith, Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University
Zoë Parsons, Archivist, Kingswood School
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Dr John H Lenton, Wesley Historical Society Librarian.
Richard Palin, Genealogist, Norfolk (www.find-your-roots.co.uk)
"Philippe Baker Sark's Methodist Missionary to Haiti" by Cedrick May
Dr John and Sharon Harbottle, Methodist Mission Partners. Haiti
The Research Team, Tasmanian Family History Society, Launceston Branch, Tasmania
Vikki Ellis, Island Archives, St Peter Port, Guernsey
"The Successful Student Early Crowned" by Joseph Portrey
National Library of Australia - TROVE
The British Newspaper Archive

My apologies should I have misrepresented any of the above or omitted any I should have included.

Sid Barker
October 2013

FAMILY LIFE

Joseph Portrey was born in Farmborough a small village 6 miles south of Bath on May Day 1815. His Methodist upbringing was very largely influenced by his pious mother. He began to preach at the age of 22 and in 1840 candidated for the Wesleyan Methodist ministry and after training at Hoxton and was ordained in 1845.

Joseph's first appointment was to Tewksbury where, in September 1846, he married Martha Flook with their first child, Susannah, being born there the following year. In 1848 Joseph and Martha moved to Methwold in the Thetford Circuit and it was in the following year that the expulsion from Wesleyan Methodism of three ministers over the publication and authorship of "Fly Sheets" caused a nationwide public outcry. Joseph was strongly on the side of the Wesleyan Methodist "establishment" as his correspondence published in the Norfolk News at that time testifies. While in Norfolk two more children were born, Richard in 1849 and Jabez in 1851. Joseph and Martha subsequently moved to Witney, Darlington and Belper where, in 1856, their third son Robert was born. Joseph's strong, perhaps overbearing, loyalty to Wesleyan Methodism is emphasised by the fact that all four of his children were given the names of four Wesleyan Methodist "worthies" namely: Susannah Wesley, Richard Watson, Jabez Bunting and Robert Newton and it might be assumed that Martha had little say in the choice! The family moved to Guisborough, Barnard Castle and Louth before Joseph became Superintendent of the Windsor Circuit in 1868.

Joseph's time at Windsor was to be devastating. His eldest and gifted son Richard died suddenly aged only 20. Richard, like his two brothers, had spent his senior school years at Woodhouse Grove, the school for boys of the Wesleyan Manse. He was a highly gifted young man, being awarded many prestigious school prizes as he rose through the school and after spending some time as a master at the school he gained his B.A., with honours, in Logic and Moral Philosophy from the Wesley College, Sheffield in 1868. However in 1869 he became seriously ill and was brought home to Windsor only to die of consumption in April of the same year and being subsequently buried at the Wesleyan Methodist church in Maidenhead. Although devastated by the loss of his son, Joseph submitted to pressure to write a book about him with information gleaned from Richard's own diaries and from the many letters of condolence Joseph himself received following Richard's death. This remarkable book "The Successful Student Early Crowned" was published in September 1869 five months after Richard's burial.

Joseph's next Superintendancy was to Alton, a period which was to bring, in part, more cheer into the family. First of all, in 1871, it saw the acceptance of Jabez into the Wesleyan ministry. Jabez's first circuit post was to Gunnislake, in Cornwall, where he probably met Martha ("Mattie") Searle his wife to be, and then in 1872 to Liskeard. However for health reasons he was strongly advised to seek a more conducive climate so in June 1873, he embarked for Australia where he was accepted as a second year probationary minister. 1875 was a particularly good year for the family as in the first instance on 1st May (Joseph's sixtieth birthday), in Sydney, Jabez married Martha, who had traveled out from England a few months earlier; secondly in the following month, back in England, Susannah married George Higgins a Draper's Assistant. 1877 brought even more joy when Susannah presented Joseph and Mary with their first grandchild, Helena Victoria. More good news was to follow during Joseph's subsequently appointment to Shaftesbury with the birth of Susannah's second child, Susannah Portrey and with the acceptance of Robert into the Wesleyan Methodist ministry. Sadly however it was at Shaftesbury that Joseph died on 10th October 1880; his body being brought back by train to be interred in Maidenhead with his son Richard. Joseph is recorded as a man having "*a Christian cheerfulness and kindness of heart endeared him to the people of his charge*" whose preaching was "*clear and evangelical, and characterised by 'uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, and sound speech*" and delivered "*with affectionate earnestness*".

Difficult times lay ahead for the remainder of the Portrey family. Following Joseph's death, Martha, stayed on in the Shaftesbury Wesleyan manse, but now only as a lodger of the new but unmarried incumbent minister. In September 1881, on being admitted into full connexion with the Wesleyan Methodist church, Robert married Alice Pearse at Southernay Methodist Chapel, but sadly Martha died very soon afterwards, in November, she was interred with Joseph and Richard in the Maidenhead family grave. Meanwhile despite a successful and fulfilled ministry in the beneficial climate of Launceston in Tasmania, Jabez's health deteriorated so that he was unable to continue in the active ministry and soon died and was buried in Adelaide in June 1882. Jabez and his wife had no children and in September Mattie returned to England. Coincident with Mattie's departure from Australia, Robert, with his wife Alice, was arriving as a missionary to the yellow fever stricken island of Haiti. Robert's ministerial traveling companion, Phillipe Baker from Sark succumbed to the fever within three weeks. Robert himself endured just three months but in that short time had a singularly effectual ministry. Every week he preached to enormous congregations, and he was so popular that many of the more dissolute came to hear him. One of them said "*I just can't stay at home when it's time for the Service, I just have to go hear this preacher*". Robert died on 14th December and Alice returned home to give birth to their child, Hope Newton, on 7th July 1883. So within the short space of two years, Susannah had lost all her remaining family members, each of which had however made their mark, no matter how briefly, on the Methodist church worldwide.

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The inscriptions on the gravestone at the High St Methodist Church, Maidenhead read:

In Loving remembrance of the Rev JOSEPH PORTREY of Shaftesbury
who entered into rest on the 10th October 1880 aged 66 years

Also of MARTHA PORTREY his wife. She died at Alton on the 12th Nov 1881 aged 86
"I was dumb and opened not my mouth because thou didst it" Psalm 39 v 9

In loving remembrance of RICHARD WATSON PORTREY B.A.
Eldest son of the Rev JOSEPH PORTREY born Sept 7th 1849 died 1st April 1869
His last words were "Glory! Conquest! Meet me there – meet me there"

Also of his second son Rev JABEZ BUNTING PORTREY who died at Adelaide, Australia
June 20th 1882 aged 31

Also of his youngest son Rev ROBERT NEWTON PORTREY who died at Cape Haitien,
West Indies Dec 14th 1882 aged 26



JOSEPH PORTREY

- 1815 Born Farmborough, Somerset 1 May
 - 1841 Entered the Wesleyan Methodist Ministry
 - 1845 Ordination
 - 1846 Tewksbury
 - 1846 Married Martha Flook Keynsham September
 - 1848 Thetford (Methwold) 1850
 - 1852 Witney 1853
 - 1854 Darlington 1855 1856
 - 1857 Belper 1858
 - 1859 Guisborough 1860 1861 1862
 - 1863 Barnard Castle 1864
 - 1865 Louth 1867
 - 1868 Lead Conference in Prayer
 - 1869 Windsor
 - 1875 Alton
 - 1880 Shaftesbury
 - 1880 Died 19 October
-
- 1812 Martha Portrey born
 - 1881 Martha Portrey died Alton, Hants 12 November

(Joseph gets into trouble!)

THE LATE EXPULSIONS AT THE METHODIST CONFERENCE

To the Editor of the Norfolk News

Sir – In the Norfolk News of last Saturday, Mr. Joseph Massingham, and Mr. Alfred Stocks, are reported to have said, in reference to the expulsion of the Revs J Everett, S Dunn and W Griffiths jun, by the Methodist Conference, lately holden in Manchester, that they were expelled *on suspicion*. As one who witnessed the whole of the proceedings on that subject, I beg to say that that statement is entirely incorrect. They were expelled, *not on suspicion, but on evidence the most clear, the most direct and the most conclusive*.

Trusting to your candour for the insertion of this is your next, I am, yours respectfully,
JOSEPH PORTREY, Wesleyan Minister Methwold. August 28th 1849
(*Norfolk News 1st September 1849*)

THE EXPELLED WESLEYAN MINISTERS

To the Editor of the Norfolk News

My Dear Sir. – The letter of the Rev Joseph Portrey, in your last week's paper, has just met my eye, and I scarcely know whether it most excited my pity or surprise.

It states that Messrs Everett, Dunn and Griffith jun. were expelled "*not on suspicion, but on evidence the most clear, the most direct and the most conclusive*"

If so, then I ask, why was not such evidence produced? It is utter nonsense, to say, as some have affirmed, that they expelled for "Contempt of Court!". Yes just as much as was the Rev James Shore !! Surely Sir the defence of such an unscriptural course should be committed to better hands than those of this young minister. Perhaps next week he will favour the entire Methodist public, who are yet in ignorance of the subject, of the authorship of the "Fly Sheets" with the production of this "*most clear, most direct and most conclusive evidence*" I am, My dear Sir, yours truly
JOSEPH MASSINGHAM, Norwich 31st August 1849.

(*Norfolk News 8th September 1849*)

To the Editor of the Norfolk News

Dear Sir – having read in yours of last week a letter from the Rev Joseph Portrey, in reference to the expulsion of Messrs Everett, Dunn and Griffiths jnr by the Wesleyan Conference, I am anxious in conjunction with my Wesleyan friends, to be favoured with the very clear evidence which the reverend gentleman professes to have heard against the ejected ministers. I have read the proceedings of the conference as reported in the *Watchman* and the *Wesleyan Times* newspapers, as also the official document issued under the sanction of the conference to "remove doubt and uncertainty from randid minds" and I must beg still to maintain that these three ministers were expelled "on suspicion". Should Mr. Portrey however be able to furnish the Methodist public with the evidence to which he alludes, it will be gladly received, as it is much to be lamented that the conference has not been able, out of all its resources, to bring *forth anything in the shape of proof* .to justify its proceedings or calm down the agitated state of the society. I beg leave, therefore, to request Mr. Portrey to prove the correctness of his assertion, and shall feel obliged for myself and the members generally, who are seeking to know the truth, by his giving a clear and simple answer to the following questions, inasmuch as in the absence of all proof and guilt, we are bound to consider these ministers innocent, and consequently expelled on mere suspicion.

1st. *What, where and when* was the charge preferred against them ?

2nd. By whom was the charge preferred ?

3rd. What was the "*clear, direct and conclusive evidence*" by which it was supported ?

4th. By whom was such *most clear, most direct and most conclusive evidence* given ?

Hoping Mr. Portrey's reply will have the tendency of allaying the present unhappy feeling which exists in our societies, and lead to restoration of peace and unity.

I am, Sir, respectfully yours ALFRED J STOCKS Norwich, Sept 4th 1849.

(Joseph gets out of trouble – perhaps !)

To the Editor of the Norfolk News.

Sir – the first part of Mr. Massingham's letter with which I was prodigiously struck, was its supreme sophistry. Pray on what authority does he insinuate that "the defence of such an unscriptural course is committed into my hands?" Does not that imply that I was employed by some person or persons who were foolish enough to commit it to me? Surely, indeed I cannot wonder at all that Mr. Massingham's pity and surprise should both be excited at such a circumstance.

As to the "nonsense of affirming that they (Messrs Everett, Dunn and Griffith jnr) were expelled for "Contempt of Court" I want an explanation. Perhaps Mr. Massingham did not remember at the moment that I am "a plain man" not "from" but in "the country", otherwise he would have written more plainly. "Contempt of Court" is a word I do not remember to have heard in this case. Did he anticipate that that would be the "evidence" I should adduce, and receive on refuting it before hand? If so that is surprising indeed.

In the next place, Mr. Massingham hopes that I will "*favour the entire Methodist public*" as to the "authorship of the Fly Sheets". But how am I to do this? That the *Norfolk News* has a wide circulation I can readily believe, but that it is circulated throughout the "*entire Methodist people*", I can hardly think. If however Mr. M will allow me, I will inform him for his own comfort, that it is a strongly prevailing opinion that the great bulk of the people in the *Wesleyan Methodist public* are already satisfied. What arrogance is it in any man to take upon himself to speak of the ignorance of an entire public, when he does not know the opinions of one tenth of them! But the "authorship of the Fly Sheets" is not the point in question. I say nothing about either the "Fly Sheets" or their authors, as such, in my letter. I said the men were expelled on evidence, and I say so still. Mr. Stocks requests me to prove the correctness of my assertion. This I will endeavour to do.

To the "*Methodist public*" who read the *Norfolk News*, and to all others who are interested in this matter: - The Revds J Everett, S Dunn and Wm Griffith jnr., were expelled from the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, not for writing the "Fly sheets" but for obstinately refusing to submit to a part of Methodist discipline, which is considered essential to the unity of the body, and discipline to which they had *pledged themselves*. This is the real ground of their expulsion. That they did so refuse was as *clear* to me as that the sun shines at noonday, for I saw and heard the whole of their conduct. That it was *direct* was manifest to all who were present at the Conference from the fact that their refusal was uttered by *themselves in person*, and this being the case, what could be more *conclusive*? The questions of Mr. Stocks are as foreign to the case as the "authorship of the Fly Sheets"; as I leave them where I find them. If he still persists in saying that "the Conference has not been able, out of all its resources, to bring forth anything in the shape of proof to justify the proceedings", of course I cannot be responsible for that. Meanwhile let me say, quoting from archbishop Tilletson that "argument, like gunpowder, carries and does execution according to its *strength*; all the rest is but noise"

Mr. Massingham is please to call the course thus taken an unscriptural one. The correctness or incorrectness of this will appear from a consideration of the following remark, which I give from the Rev John Lomas, who is not a very young Minister, and whose Biblical knowledge and sound judgement, I suppose, are seldom questioned. He says – "We request those who call such methods of repressing secret sin against the prosperity of a Church unscriptural, to study the history of Asham!". With great respect, I am yours truly JOSEPH PORTREY. Methwold September 11th 1849
(*Norfolk News 15th September 1849*)

Joseph Portrey's Obituary

JOSEPH PORTREY; who was born at Farmborough, Somerset, on the 1st of May, 1815. Careful home training, especially the influences and prayers of a pious mother, resulted in his conversion at an early age. On new-year's day, 1833, he began to meet in Class, and to the end of his life greatly prized our social means of grace. He commenced to preach at the age of twenty-two, and at the Conference of 1840 was a candidate for the Ministry. After a period of training at the Hoxton Institution, he entered upon Circuit-work, and for thirty-seven, years laboured therein with fervour and fidelity. Throughout his course he aimed at complete consecration to God, and was 'an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.' His Christian cheerfulness and kindness of heart endeared him to the people of his charge.

His preaching was clear and evangelical, and characterised by 'unconspicuousness, gravity, sincerity,' and 'sound speech, that cannot be condemned' His sermons were delivered with affectionate earnestness, and, being accompanied by 'an unction from the Holy One', were blessed to the awakening and salvation of many. He was a genuine friend, a generous colleague, and a painstaking Superintendent, scrupulously conscientious in the fulfilment of duty, and faithful to our economy in times of Connexional trial.

At the last Conference Mr. Portrey was appointed to the Shaftesbury Circuit. He entered upon his duties in the spirit of devotion which had marked his whole ministry, and soon won the esteem and affection of the Societies and Congregations. But his health, which had for some time been failing, rapidly declined. At the September Quarterly Meeting, which he made an effort to attend, he said,

'My work is done, - I am not tired of it; preaching with me has been a passion. I would rather be a Methodist preacher than sit on any throne in the world. But I am not afraid to die. I know whom I have believed; yet if God should spare me a little longer I should delight to preach Christ.'

He then asked the Meeting to join him in singing, 'Happy if with my latest breath, etc.' During the last fortnight of his life he often said, *'If I die tonight it is all right'*. On October 19th, 1880, he exchanged the 'enforced silence,' which had been such a privation to him, for the joys of those who serve God day and night in His temple. He finished his earthly course in the sixty-sixth year of his age and the fortieth of his ministry.

(Minutes of Conference 1881)

Joseph Portrey's Will

In the name of the Holy Trinity. This is the last Will and Testament of me Joseph Portrey, 12 Park Road, Southampton in the County of Hampshire. After payment of all my just debts, funeral and testamentary expenses, I give devise and bequeath unto my dear wife Martha Portrey all my property consisting of Five Cottages - situate at Kingswood and Hanham in the County of Gloster together with all the money of which I may be possessed at the time of my death including my Policy in the "Star Life Insurance Society" monies in the "Monarch Building Society" and all other monies - whatever to be at her sole disposal. And I do appoint my dear wife Martha Portrey the sole Executrix of this my last Will and Testament. As witness my hand this 11th day of September 1879.

Martha Portrey's Will

(Personal Estate £545.4.6 Gross, £444.2.6 Net. No Leaseholds)

Proved by Joseph Dyke, Draper, and Robert Newton Portrey of Louth in the County of Lincoln Wesleyan Minister son of the said deceased. Jabez Bunting Portrey son of the said deceased being resident in Tasmania at the death of the said deceased.

(Resworn September 1882 of the gross value of £717.13.7)

This is the last Will and testament of me Martha Portrey of Shaftesbury in the county of Dorset Widow. I bequeath unto my daughter Susannah Wesley Higgins my gold watch and jet chain and the whole of my wearing apparel. I also bequeath unto my said daughter the sum of fifty pounds now owing from her husband George Higgins to me with any interest that may due thereon at the time of my decease and also the sum of ten pounds being one fifth part of a share of fifty pounds to which I am entitled in the Monarch Building Society. And I also give to my said daughter during her life the five leasehold cottages with the appurtenances now belonging numbers 15 and 16 Redown Gardens, Aldershot in the County of Hants and after her decease I give the same cottages with the appurtenances unto my Son in Law the said George Higgins during his life and after his decease I give the same unto and between all the children equally if more than one or to the only child if but one of my said daughter who being sons or son shall attain the age of twenty one years or being daughters or daughter shall attain that age or marry for all my estate and interest therein. I devise unto and to the use of my elder Son Jabez Bunting Portrey his heirs and assigns the two freehold cottages and gardens with their appurtenances belonging to me situate at Kingswood Hill near Bristol opposite Trinity Church and I bequeath unto my same son the sum of forty pounds being the remaining four fifth parts of the before mentioned share in the Monarch Building Society to which I am so entitled as aforesaid. I devise unto and to the use of my younger son Robert Newton Portrey his heirs and assigns the three freehold cottages and gardens with the appurtenances belonging to me situate on the road leading from Kingswood Hill aforesaid to Hanham Tabernacle. I devise and bequeath all other the real and personal estate and effects of every description of or to which I shall at the time of my decease be seised or entitled and of which I can hereby dispose unto and between my said three children in equal shares. And in case at the time of my decease my Elder Son the said Jabez Bunting Portrey shall be in England, I appoint him and my friend Joseph Dyke of Alton in the said County of Hants, Draper, joint Executors of this my will but if at the time of my decease my said Elder Son shall not have returned to England then I appoint my Younger Son the said Robert Newton Portrey to be my Excecutor in his stead and jointly with Joseph Dyke. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of February one thousand eight hundred and eighty one.

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*Your aff^{te} Brother,
R.W. Portrey*

RICHARD WATSON PORTREY

1849 Born Thetford, September
1859 Woodhouse Grove School

While at Woodhouse Grove School Richard Watson Portrey displayed exceptional ability and was awarded several school Awards:

- 1865 The Conference Scholarship award (C.Sc.). A free year granted to the most distinguished Levite of the year
- 1866 The Meek Medal (M.M.), A gold medal awarded for Divinity; founded at the Grove by Mr Thomas Meek, of Preston
- 1866 Bedford Medal (B.M.) A medal given to the "most proficient out-going boy" at the Grove. It was founded by F. W. Bedford, Esq., a former master

1869 Died Windsor 1st April

(From Sunday September 17th 1865 Watson began to keep a daily journal)

Wednesday 9th (1866). Went up to see Male. How glad I was to get leave to go! He is very thin and looking weak; yet he is happy. In the darkest times he had a blessed hope of eternal life. He looks happy too. It did me much good to be with him. (**Arthur Male his best friend who as Rev Arthur Male was to become resident Minister at the High Street church in 1897*)

(He left Woodhouse Grove School and entered Wesley College Sheffield in September 1866)

Friday 7th September. My birthday! O may it prove the happiest of my life. I do thank God for preserving me till now.

Sunday 9th September I had a happy day after writing the above. I don't think I ever saw the Lord's goodness so much as then. O what a mercy he has given me such loving parents, sister, brothers, friends. What love they and I have for each other ! But above all what inconceivable joy it is to be under His own smile.

(In January 1867 he was resident with his family at Louth for a few days)

Monday 14th January While writing, Newton has come to me saying "I want to be converted". Of course I was greatly pleased and tried to help him all I could. He and I were alone in the house and, as best as I could, I made the way easy for him to understand and then prayed with him. Before I prayed he said he thought he was forgiven, and I told him to be quite sure of it. He said he was sure. Then I prayed again, and asked him not to be deceived but to be quite sure. He said he was sure. Then I asked him to praise god and sing 'O happy Day' &. He did so and just then Mamma came in and talked to him and now he is full of joy. Lord help him to be faithful unto death. May he never look back.

Thursday 17th Oh what a happy thought ! We are a family all going hand in hand to heaven. Surely the conversion itself was a very remarkable one. He had rather peculiar views as I thought. I kept wishing Mamma would come in and show him the way more perfectly than I could hardly expecting that the great change would take place so soon. When it did take place these words were applied to check my unbelief, and to encourage my faith "Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think". It was more than the greatest stretch of my faith had looked for.

Monday 21st I have just been thinking how merciful the Lord has been to us as a family. None have died. We have had but little affliction. May each one of us duly appreciate the goodness of our heavenly Father, and live for His glory alone!.

(In August he took his brother Newton back to Woodhouse Grove while on his way to Sheffield)

Saturday August 3rd. Thank God for preserving mercies to Newton and myself in our journeys. After two days spent I am here again. Have had to leave my precious one at the Grove; but left him under the loving care of our Father. O how often I have prayed for him while on our way! Poor boy! He cried at the last and that made it worse for me.

Thursday 29th August. Yesterday I was at the first Local Preacher's Monthly Meeting I have ever attended, and had great spiritual enjoyment. I felt then as I do now the true spirit of a preacher – Love to Christ and to perishing souls for Christ's sake

Wednesday 11th September. Just written a birthday letter to Newton. May he have a good and happy day.

Thursday 12th September. Newton's birthday. O Father look upon him. Take his young heart and make it 'All like Thine'

(He applied and was appointed to the post of Classical and Mathematical Master back at the Grove School but at the close of the year he felt unwell. After taking advise, and despite his father's plea that he should resign the post, he returned to his post. However his health steadily deteriorated that on the 6th March 1869 he was brought home to Windsor. Some detail of his last days follow)

Saturday 13th March

His brother (*Jabez*), who had been telegraphed for on Monday, had to return to his situation on the morning of this day; and the scene witnessed at their leave-taking was truly affecting. All through their childhood and youth not a word of disagreement had ever been heard between them.
.....Six happy years they had spent together at Woodhouse Grove, at the communion rail they knelt together in penitence before God; had both become Local Preachers; and, till this sudden affliction, had a bright and promising career opening before them. The invalid was sitting up in bed, about to get his breakfast, when his brother came and kissed him, uttering the words, as best he could, "Good bye, Watson." "Good bye, Jabez," he replied; and then, with an earnestness which cannot be described, added, "Be faithful: I shall look out for your converts."

Friday 26th March (Good Friday)

So calmly and quietly did he pass away, that the exact moment of his departure was not known. But just about thirty-five minutes past four a beautiful smile lighted up his countenance with such force that his upper lip was quite lifted up, and his eyes were steadfastly set, as though he were looking at some one that had brought him a very important message. It was as though another of the thoughts expressed in the book he loved so dearly had been experienced by him :-

"Let me catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity."

The effect produced by that smile upon a countenance always winning, as Mr. William Henry Taylor has observed, was altogether beyond the power of mortal to describe, and left its beauty even in death. Not knowing that he had departed, all the watchers stood in breathless attitude, expecting to see him die. The doctor came just at the moment, went to the beautiful form, felt for the pulse, turned away, and beckoned one of the attendants to follow him. The next minute she returned saying, "He is gone! The doctor says he is gone!" It was touching to see his "little pet," as he used to call his younger brother (*Robert*) pressing towards him, and to hear his shrill voice break the silence by uttering, "Good bye, Watson !" Thus meekly and submissively did he resign his breath at the age of nineteen years and six months.

At the time of Richard's last illness and death many letters of sympathy were sent to Joseph his father.

One such letter was from Arthur Hodson Male a bosom friend of his who was later to be appointed as resident Minister at the High Street Methodist church where the Portrey family was later buried or remembered.

My Dear Sir

I have just received your letter containing the sad intelligence of my much-loved friend. I have been for some time wondering that I had not heard from him, as he owed me a letter; but I little thought that such a trial was in the future. I cannot express how much I feel this blow, - my best most valued friend being taken from me.

My memory recurs to the time when we were at the Grove together; and how, when God saw fit to lay His hand upon me, and also to take to Himself a beloved mother, his letters of consolation were really such to me. I shall not soon forget the beautiful lines which he quoted in one of them:

One family we dwell in Him,
One church above beneath
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

And again, when apparently near to death myself, his loving and Christian messages cheered and comforted me.

The last time I saw him was at Wesley College when I went over from Chesterfield to spend an afternoon with him - a year ago almost to the day. I little thought then that I should see his face no more on earth. But if this be the Lord's will, I pray for grace to say "Thy will be done". As he once said in a letter to me so I say now - that I never knew how much I loved him until now there seems more than a possibility of his being taken from me.

If he be still with you, please give him by very best love and say that I trust to meet him in heaven to renew our friendship so soon to be broken on earth.

Believe me, my dear Sir, yours very sincerely.

A.H.Male.

In August 1897, Arthur Hodson Male was appointed as the resident minister at the High Street Methodist Church, Maidenhead where he came to stand at the grave of his friend.

JABEZ BUNTING PORTREY

1851 Born Thetford September
1870 Entered the Methodist Ministry
1870 Sidmouth
1871 Liskeard
1875 Married Martha (Mattie) Phillipa Searle 1st May
1875 Ordained
1882 Died Adelaide, Australia 20 June

1846 Martha Phillipa Searle born Bath March
1920 Martha P Portrey died Christchurch, Hants September

NEW WESLEYAN CHAPEL.—Special services and a bazaar, to aid in paying off the debt recently incurred in erecting a Wesleyan chapel and school at Calstock, were held last week. A sermon was preached by the Rev. S. Langdon, and a meeting was held presided over by Capt. J. BRAY, and addresses were given by Revs. D. Cork, S. Langdon, and W. D. Williams, and Mr Jas. Lawry, Junr. At the close the chairman presented to the Rev. W. D. Williams his own portrait and purse of money, in acknowledgement of his successful efforts towards relieving the chapel property in the circuit from pecuniary burdens. Mr Williams is about to remove to Devonport. A purse of money was also presented to be forwarded to the Rev. J. B. Portrey, the junior minister, who has already left the neighbourhood. The bazaar was held in the large schoolroom, where there were five very good stalls, presided over by the Mesdames Grenfell, Hillman, Row, and Matthews, and the Misses Grenfell, Lateman, Hicks, Pearse, Bray, and Husband. The Misses Mitchell and Miss Grenfell performed on the piano and harmonium. The total receipts amounted to £54, and after deducting expenses, there will remain about £40 to be added to the building fund.

(Royal Cornwall Gazette 7th September 1872)

SYDNEY SHIPPING ARRIVALS

La Hogue, ship, 1331 tons, Captain Goddard 23rd April . Passengers Rev Mr Portrey
(The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser Thursday 17 July 1873)

A tea meeting was held at Wesley Church, Chippendale (*Sidney*), last Tuesday evening, to introduce the Rev J B Portrey, a minister just come from England
(The Sydney Morning Herald Saturday 26 July 1873)

On the 21st July the York street branch of the Australasian Wesleyan Missionary Society held their annual meeting. On the 22nd the Rev. J.B. Portrey was introduced to the congregation at Wesley Church, Redfern (*Sidney*)
(Empire Saturday 9 August 1873)

J. B. Portrey recently from England, was recorded as a probationer in his third year.
(The Sydney Morning Herald (Thursday 20 November 1873)

Wesleyan Conference.Tho following candidates for the ministry were accepted: Messrs. Ebenezer Fox, William Woolls Rutledge, and: Charles Wiley. It was resolved that Messrs. Fox and Graham should bo sent to the Theological Institution, vice Messrs. T. Gibson and G.. A, Reeve, The following candldates for ordination were received into full connexion: — Revs, Beale, McKeown, Portrey, J. Woolnough, and Youngman. besides the Rev. A, Midgely, in Queensland,
(The Mercury 6th February 1875)

The Wesleyan Methodist Conference – Saturday February 1, 1879

The General Conference, held in this city in May last, made arrangements for the following Conference transfers, which will take effect in April next. The Revs. J. B. Portrey and W. B. Mather, from this Conference to the Victoria and the South Australia Conferences, respectively.
(The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser Tuesday February 4th 1879)

Recd 6/3/9
sent same day

Wesley Dale
Chudleigh
Tasmania.
Feb 28th 1879.

My dear Sir,

Will you kindly forward
to my address by return mail,
if practicable, the latest Syllabus
of subjects published by the Ad-
elaide University for the various
University Examinations. If any
charge is made for the Syllabus
or Calendar, I will forward P. 60
immediately on receipt of return.

I am,
My dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
J. B. Portrey

To the Registrar.

WESLEYAN HOME MISSIONS

The anniversary of the Wesleyan Home Mission was celebrated yesterday in the church, Patterson street, by special sermons, in the morning by the Rev U. Daniel, and in the evening by the Rev. J. B. Portrey. In the morning the Rev. U. Daniel addressed his hearers from the words contained in the 8th chapter of St. John, 4th verse - "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work". In the evening the Rev. J. B. Portrey preached a solemn and touching sermon from the parable of the rich man, 12th chapter of St Luke's Gospel 10th and following verses. The attendance was large, both morning and evening. A public meeting will be held in the schoolroom, Patterson street, this evening, when the Revs. J. B. Portrey, H. J. Lavera, B. Blackett, Mr Basil Archer, the ministers of the circuit, and other gentlemen will address the meeting (*The Cornwall Chronicle Monday 25 August 1879*)

WESLEYAN DISTRICT MEETING

The annual meeting in connection with the Paamaman Wesleyan District began at Launceston on Wednesday. Proceedings commenced yesterday morning with singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. The roll was called, and the following ministers responded to their names:-J. Cope, Chairman ; George Daniel, G. B. Richards, C. Dubourg, John S. Greet, Henry J. Lavers, Henry Greenwood, Jabez B. Portrey Charles Sanders, Jas. Thomas, J. Cowporthwait, W. Thompson, Joseph May, and W.I. Dawson. The Rev. F. E. Stevenson was elected Secretary. Arrangements were made for hearing the trial sermons of Rev. W. Thompson, J. May, and W. Dawson, also to receive

their book lists and written sermons. A dispensation from attendance was granted to the Rev. S. Waterhouse. It was found that none have died during the year, and none of the ministers have preferred a request to be made supernumeraries. Some conversation ensued in reference to one of the ministers, who is at present on the supernumerary list, but the matter was deferred until further medical opinion shall be obtained. An application was read, signed by 154 residents of Mount Bischoff, asking that the minister of the Stanley Circuit be removed to Mount Bischoff, and that the Rev. W. Dawson be stationed there for the ensuing year. After a discussion, in which most of the ministers of the meeting took part, the settlement of the question was deferred until today. The Rev. J.B. Portrey having requested to be made a supernumerary for another year, the meeting decided, with many expressions of sympathy, that his request be complied with. The usual enquiry as to personal character, pastoral fidelity, and efficiency in ministerial work was held, and the questions in each case were satisfactorily replied to. A letter was read from the Rev. J. Shaw, of the New South Wales Conference but now residing in Victoria, to the effect that his wife's health debar him from removing to New South Wales, and asking if one of the Tasmanian ministers would go in his place. The question was put, but no one offered to exchange with Rev. Shaw. A requisition was sent in from the quarterly meeting of the Launceston Circuit, asking for the appointment of a young man as third preacher, to reside at Beaconsfield. The meeting decided to recommend the Conference to accede to this. The stations were read for the first time and passed. The meeting was concluded with the benediction

(The Mercury Friday 14 November 1879)

CARRICK (From our own Correspondent)

The fourteenth anniversary of the Wesleyan Sunday School was celebrated on Sunday last the 7th inst, in the Public Room when two appropriate sermons were preached by the Rev G Daniel of Launceston in the afternoon and evening. The weather was very stormy and unpropitious which interfered with the attendance - still the room was comfortably filled - the hymns were sung in good time and tune - and the collections, although less than last year, were as much as could be expected. The afternoon being £3 2s and the evening £2 11s 6d. At the close of the service in the afternoon the award books were given out. It had been arranged for the Rev Portrey to be present but the delicate state of his health prevented him coming.

(Launceston Examiner Wednesday 10 December 1879)

VICTORIAN AND TASMANIAN WESLEYAN CONFERENCE

..... The conference agreed also to the requests of the Rev R. Hart of Stawell, and the Revs. G.T. Hetward and J.B. Portrey of Launceston, to be permitted to rest from the work of ministry for another year

(The Argus Thursday 20 January 1881)

WELCOME TEA MEETING.

A tea and public meeting was held at the Wesleyan School-room, Patterson-street, last night, for the purpose of welcoming to the circuit the newly appointed ministers, the Revs. J. G. Millard and D. Annear. The room was very tastefully decorated, and appropriate mottoes were suspended upon the walls. A very sumptuous repast had been laid by Mr W.V.B. Dean, and to this ample justice was done by a large audience. At the conclusion of the tea, the Rev. G. Heyward opened the public proceedings by announcing a hymn, and prayer having then been engaged in, Mr Heyward called upon Mr D. Cocker, Senior Circuit Steward, to take the chair. The Chairman in his opening remarks, stated that the meeting would have been held earlier but for the Easter holidays. He trusted they would all unite in giving a real hearty Methodist welcome to their new ministers. The Rev. Mr Portrey considered such gatherings promoted Christian unity, and he urged his hearers to work together in unity, and not to be ashamed of their church, but to be determined to make it advance for the future. They must not expect their ministers to be angels, must not expect impossibilities from them, but must be assured that their ministers would do their duty if the congregation did theirs. It

very much depended upon the hearers whether the ministers were successful or not, and he pointed out in forcible language the necessity of prayer on the part of the congregation for their preachers. He personally welcomed the ministers to the circuit.

(Launceston Examiner Thursday 28 April 1881)

WESLEYAN DISTRICT MEETING November 9th.

.....The Rev. J. B. Portrey applied to be received again into the regular work of the ministry. After some discussion it was resolved to pass a resolution embodying a recommendation to the Conference to this effect.

(Launceston Examiner 10 November 1881)

SHIPPING OUTWARDS

The following saloon passengers had booked last evening in the s.s. Flinders, which sails for Melbourne at 10 o'clock this morning :..... Rev. J. B. and Mrs Portrey

(Launceston Examiner Friday 31 March 1882)

South Australian, S.S., 760 tons, T. W. Lockyer, for Adelaide.

Passengers-cabin: Rev. Mr. and Mrs J.B.Portrey

(The Argus Wednesday 12 April 1882)

In our obituary notices today will be found the name of the Rev. J. B. Portrey, Wesleyan minister, who died at North Adelaide on Monday June 19. The deceased gentleman came to Adelaide about nine weeks ago, being recommended by his medical advisers to leave Tasmania for a warmer climate during the winter. He was the son of a Wesleyan minister in England, and himself entered upon ministerial duties in England, where, after he had travelled in two circuits, his health failed, and he was advised to come to Australia in the hope that his health would be re-established. He was in circuit work in New South Wales for five years, but his health again failing he became a supernumerary and removed to Tasmania, where he resided about four years. He was a man of superior attainments, and was greatly respected for his genuine and gentle Christian character.. The disease which has terminated fatally was consumption. He leaves & widow but no children. His remains are to be interred in the West Terrace cemetery this afternoon

(The South Australian Advertiser Wednesday 21 June 1882)

Many of our readers will remember the Rev. J. B. Portrey whose death is announced in the South Australia Advertiser of the 21st inst. The deceased gentleman only arrived at Adelaide about nine days ago, having been recommended by his medical advisers to try a warmer climate than Tasmania during the winter. The Advertiser says: - "He was the son of a Wesleyan minister in England, and himself entered upon ministerial duties in England, where, after he had travelled in two circuits, his health failed, and he was advised to come to Australia in the hope that his health would be re-established. He was in circuit work in New South Wales for five years, but his health again failing he became a supernumerary and removed to Tasmania, where he resided about four years. He was a man of superior attainments, and was greatly respected for his genuine and gentle Christian character. The disease which has terminated fatally was consumption. He leaves a widow, but no children.

(Launceston Examiner Thursday 29 June 1882)

The Rev. J. B. PORTREY. — About three months ago this Wesleyan minister, who had been laid aside from active service, came to Adelaide with his wife, in the hope that the change of climate might be beneficial to his health. At first his hopes that his disease would be arrested were sanguine, but it soon became apparent that its progress had been too great, and he expired on Tuesday, June 20. He is spoken of as having been, prior to the failure of his health, a singularly able, successful, and promising minister. He entered the ministry in England at the early age of twenty. About nine

years ago he came to New South Wales, and thence removed to Tasmania, but for three or four years had been unequal to the charge of a circuit. The interment of the remains of the deceased minister took place on Wednesday in the West-terrace Cemetery. The Rev. R. S. Casely conducted the ceremony, and among others present were the Revs. T. Lloyd, Osric Copland, H. T. Burgess, J. B. Stephenson, and Messrs. R. Searle, J.P., J.A. Hartley, B.A., J. Scott, and T. Padman. The deceased gentleman was a son of the late Rev. Joseph Portrey an English Wesleyan minister, and was only in the thirty-first year of his age.

(South Australian Register Wednesday 5 July 1882)

THE WESLEYAN CHURCH. On Sunday morning last a very large congregation assembled in the Wesleyan Church, Patterson street, when the death of the late Rev. J. B. Portrey was improved. The president of the Wesleyan Conference (the Rev. J. G. Millard) preached an impressive sermon founded on St. Paul's declaration in one of his epistles to Timothy, I have fought a good fight, etc." At the close of the sermon the Rev. G. T. Heyward paid a just tribute to the many excellencies of the departed minister.: The pulpit was draped in black, and the singing was suitable to the occasion.

(Launceston Examiner Tuesday 11 July 1882)

Jabez Bunting Portrey, who was born in England, and died in South Australia. He was the son of the late Rev. J. Portrey, and brother of the Revs. H. and R. W. Portrey, all familiar and honoured names in English Wesleyan Methodism. He entered the Woodhouse Grove school at the usual age, and in a gracious revival of religion there he was soundly converted to God. While yet a mere boy, he became an earnest and successful evangelist and local preacher. His call to the Christian ministry was loud, clear, and satisfactory, and in due course he was received into it. After a short time spent in English circuits, he was advised on account of threatening symptoms in his health to seek the more genial climate of Australia. Arriving in Sydney, he was appointed to the Chippendale circuit, and at his next removal, to Orange. In both these circuits God richly blessed his labours. While at Orange his health completely failed, and he was compelled to become a supernumerary. At this time the position of private tutor in the family of the late Henry Reed, Esq., of Mount Pleasant, Launceston, was offered to him. This offer he accepted, and he held the position till within a few weeks of his death. In this new sphere he was greatly valued and beloved. To the extent of his strength and beyond in various ways he zealously laboured for God and souls during this period. After many fluctuations in health it was evident to all that he was sinking. Under medical advice he visited South Australia, but he only survived a few weeks, and died in great peace and the full assurance of faith. As a man he was cast in a gentle and amiable mould, and of a most affectionate disposition. Few men have succeeded in attaching to themselves more to the troops of friends as he had. As a preacher he was scholarly and refined, and at the same time full of evangelical fervour. As a private Christian, in his retirement from active life, he was characterised by great humility, simplicity, consistency, and thoroughness. To him might honestly be applied this worthy text "First pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works, without partiality and without hypocrisy". He died at the early age of 31 years.

After hearing the above road, the hymn commencing " Rejoice for a brother deceased," was sung

(The Mercury 9 November 1882)

Sailed. Thursday, August 31— B.M.S. ROME, G. F. Cotes, commander, for Gallc, via King George's Sound. Passengers from Adelaide:- Mrs Portrey for London

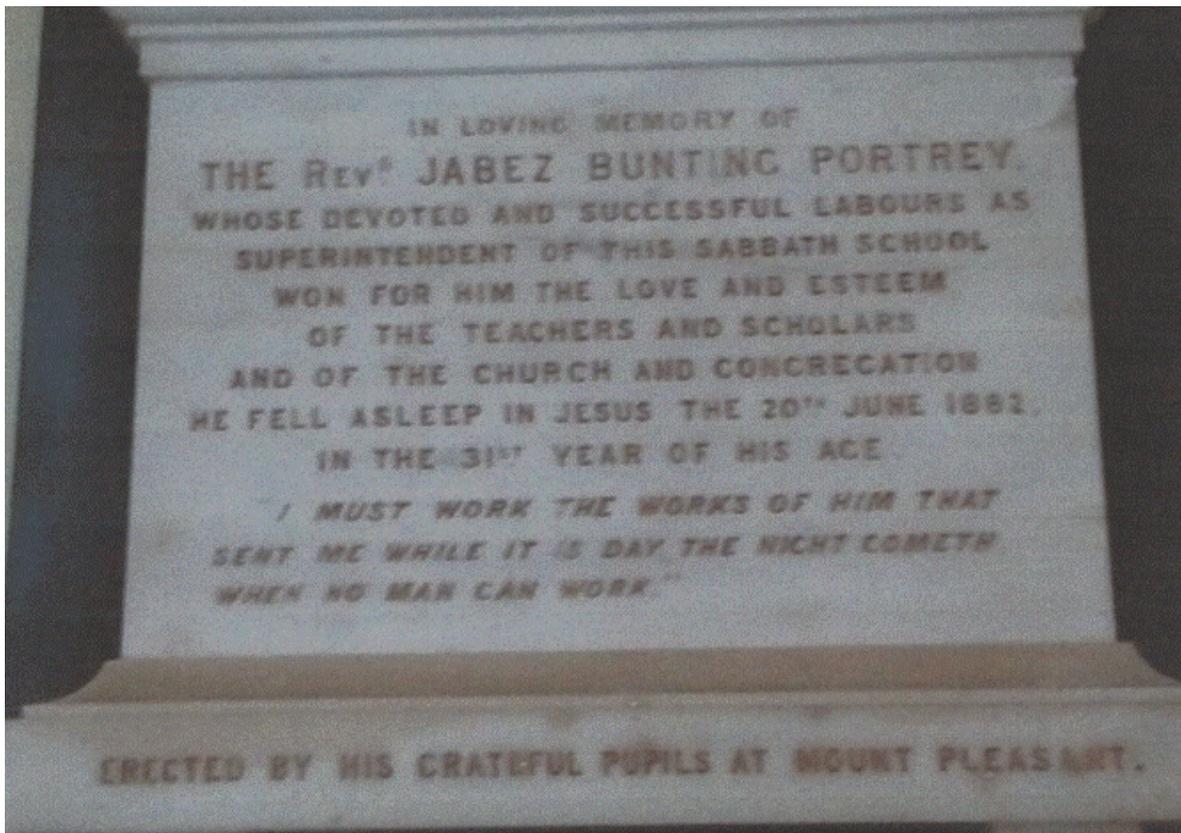
(South Australian Register Friday 1 September 1882)

HARTNOLL & FERGUSON have received instructions to sell by auction, at the mart, Brisbane-street, on the above day, a portion of the Library of the late Rev. J. B. Portrey consisting of theological educational, historical, and works of general literature. Also 1 good side saddle.

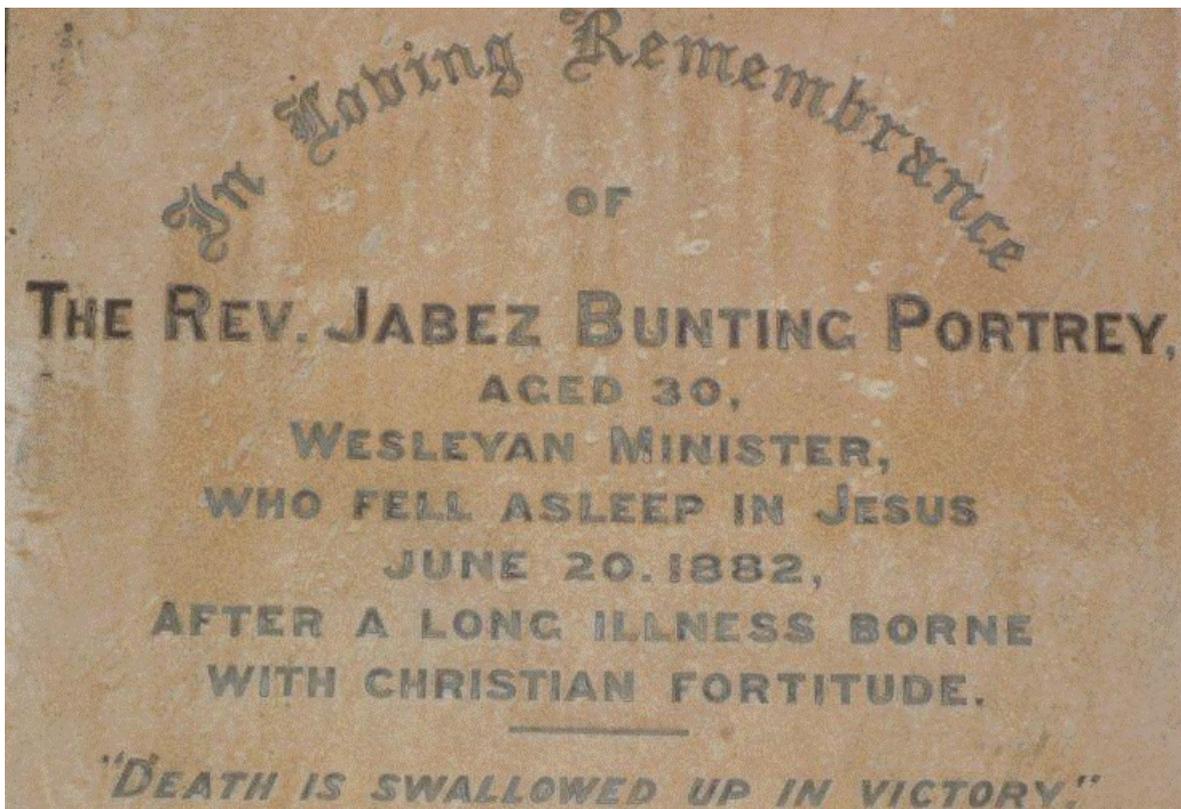
No reserve. Terms cash.

(Launceston Examiner Tuesday 19 September 1882)

On her return to England "Mattie" took up residence at Hatchwood Farm, Tavistock first, 1891, with her sister Mary Phillips and her farmer husband and the in 1901 with her other sister Amelia Trevethan. By 1911 she was living on her own means at 12 Walpole Road, Boscombe where she died in September 1920.



Jabez Bunting Memorial, Launceston, Tasmania



Jabez Bunting grave Adelaide, Australia

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ROBERT NEWTON PORTREY

- 1856 Born 12th September Belper
 - 1877 Entered the Methodist Ministry
 - 1878 - 1880 Calais
 - 1879 Ilminster
 - 1881 Ordained (Liverpool) 28 July
 - 1881 Horncastle
 - 1881 Married Alice Pearce, Exeter September
 - 1882 Market Rasen - July
 - 1882 to Haiti September
 - 1882 Died Cape Haitien,
-
- 1883 Hope Newton Portrey born 7 July
 - 1940 Alice Portrey died September
 - 1965 Hope Newton Portrey died Okehampton Dec

WESLEYAN FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The anniversary of the above society was celebrated on Sunday and Tuesday. On Sunday, two able and appropriate sermons were preached by the Rev R Newton Portrey, late missionary at Calais. He selected for his morning text Genesis xv., 1 and for the evening one Matthew xvi., 26. On Tuesday, a public meeting was held in the chapel. Mr Killip, of Langport presided. After singing and prayer, the Chairman said he felt deeply interested in the work the missionary society was doing throughout the world, and believed that the command of Christ would be ultimately fulfilled in the world's conversion to him. After some other remarks, the Rev P Duke addressed the meeting. He was pleased to plead on behalf of the mission cause. He believed that the society with which he was particularly identified and the one advocated that night – and all others similar – had but one grand object, that of bringing the world to Christ. That object was not to be obtained by the sword or any carnal weapon, but by the prayer, faith, and labours of the Christian Church. Rev W H Dale, the circuit missionary secretary, then read the report, from which we gather that the society's income is over £140.000 and that Ilminster contributed £17 last year. The Rev R N Portrey followed, and gave a very graphic account of missionary difficulties, trials, and successes. Special reference was made to France, where he had laboured for the society. In comparing the obstacles to the spread of Christianity in different parts of the mission field, he contended that the greatest were in France. Various priests held the people in their grasp, and persecuted all opposed to Roman Catholicism. Special reference was made to the Jesuits, their subtlety and intrigue, and the endeavours of the Government to suppress Jesuitical teaching in every form. He expressed his sorrow to find that the same party were gaining ground in England, and said he hoped those who were bound by a solemn oath to restore the country to Rome would never succeed. At the close the speaker made an earnest appeal on behalf of the society. The address was listened to with marked attention, and the continued applause at the conclusion manifested the hearty appreciation of the address. Revs T W Smith, T W Cook and W H Dale also addressed the meeting which was closed with singing and prayer by Rev W P Duke.

(Western Gazette 31 October 1879)

MARRIAGE OF MISS ALICE PEARCE

The marriage of Miss Alice Pearce second daughter of the late Mr. James Pearce, of Belbourne House, the Friars, with the Rev. Robert Newton Portrey (Wesleyan), of Louth, Lincolnshire, was solemnised at the Southernhay Wesleyan Chapel yesterday. The bride - who was attired in white serge, trimmed with plush, and a lace veil - was escorted by her grandfather, Mr. Thomas Sercomhe, of London, and as the bridal party made their way up the aisle the Choir very nicely rendered the nuptial hymn, "The voice that breathed o'er Eden". The bridesmaids - Miss Pearce, Miss M Pearce, Miss A. Pearce, Miss Mabel Pearce (the bride's sisters), and Miss N. Andrew were dressed in sateen, trimmed with crimson. The ceremony was performed by Rev. J. T. F. Halligey assisted by Rev. T. B. Goodwin and Rev. T. Wheatley (brother-in-law of the bride). The Bridegroom's "best man" being Mr. Stormer, of London. As the happy couple left the sacred edifice Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" was played by the organist (Mr. W. Brock). The party after-wards sat down to a wedding breakfast supplied by Murch and Co., Cathedral-yard, who also supplied the bride - cake.

(Western Times 30 September 1881)

Robert Portrey, in company with another missionary, Philippe Baker (from the island of Sark), sailed for Haiti along with Rev Thomas Butcher. They arrived in September 1882, a year in which there had first been a virulent outbreak of smallpox which had claimed thousands of lives followed by a plague of yellow fever. They arrived in September and within three weeks Philippe Baker died of the plague and within three months Robert also succumbed.

By an English Christian resident in Cap-Haitien translated from the “*Methodist Recorder*”

A FEW WORDS CONCERNING THE REV R N PORTREY

Our readers will be pleased to read, following the preceding biography, the following testimony to Baker’s young colleague – R N Portrey – by an English Christian resident in Cap-Haitien translated from the “*Methodist Recorder*”

“From a far western country, a loving tribute must be dedicated to the memory of Rev Robert Newton Portrey, for he gathered together in his person all those loving qualities which tend to cement a perfect union between a pastor and his people. The Church possessed in him a faithful and devoted servant, a man of God in the real sense of the word, a capable worker, a powerful preacher; and to sum up all in one word, he gathered together in himself all desirable qualities: “He was a host in himself”. Good, gentle, kindly and sociable; a talented young man and full of energy; he made us hope for an era of prosperity, and all the true Protestant friends in our town, had responded to his requests and had given him their ready cooperation. The English part of his congregations loved him exceedingly. Every week he preached to enormous congregations, and he was so popular that some of the more dissolute felt almost compelled to go and hear him. One of them said “*I just can’t stay at home when it’s time for the Service, I just have to go hear this preacher*”. He had many friends among the Haitiens and he would most certainly have been an instrument of the hand of God to bring about good at the heart of this community. He preached in French on several occasions and he had made surprising progress in the language. He was always busy, not wasting a moment; he spent all his time improving his French, writing sermons, teaching in the school, visiting the sick, gathering subscriptions for the school and several other tasks associated with his mission. It would have been impossible to find anyone more energetic and tireless. He had conceived a project to establish a girls’ school and he had already set in place its administration. One had first to build the schoolroom in which Mrs Portrey had undertaken to teach English, music and art. Many influential families were sympathetic to the project; a Management Committee was being formed; in just a few days, materials for building the school were about to be delivered when news of his death came suddenly to take from us he who was the instrument and the centre of this project. His death came as a huge blow to us. Our deceased friend was ideally suited to the work of a missionary and he possessed the inherent ability to manage the project which would soon have reached a point where it would have covered all its expenses. He loved his church; and on his deathbed he asked his wife, on her return to England, to straightway beg the Missionary Committee not to leave the Cap station without a pastor. Mr Portrey died with the name of Jesus on his lips the 14 December last.

(MAGASIN METHODISTE June 1883)

Rev. R. N. Portrey, (W. H. Grove 1867-72). After a short but very able ministry in England and France he bravely went to supply a vacancy in the plague-stricken Mission in Hayti and died within two months of his arrival.

(The Kingswood Magazine, Vol. III - No. 1, September 1883, Page 6)

Obituary

ROBERT NEWTON PORTREY, who was born at Belper, September 12th, 1856, was the youngest son of the Rev. Joseph Portrey. He found peace with God when eleven years of age. He entered the Ministry in 1877; and, in accordance with his strong desire to consecrate himself to God on the altar of Missionary service, he was appointed to Calais at the Conference of 1878. After two years of faithful and energetic toil in France, he re-entered the English work, and won the esteem of his flock by his eminent pulpit ability, his genial temperament, and his readiness for every description of service. His residence in France had given him an opportunity of observing the Roman Catholic system, for which he contracted a profound dislike, and during the Missionary campaign in that Circuit he often stirred the audiences by his burning words in denunciation of Roman idolatry.

The spirit of heroic ardour which first prompted his offer for the work abroad never slumbered, and when the call came from Hayti, then decimated by disease, with a holy eagerness, he responded to that call. He sailed for Hayti in October, 1882, and immediately on reaching Cape Haytien, set to work full of zeal and projects of usefulness. But the Master, accepting the intentions of His servant, suffered him only for a season to contend for the cause he loved, and conferred upon him an early entrance upon his great reward. Scarcely two months after landing he was stricken down by yellow fever. During his short illness he exhorted those around him to trust in Christ, and joined in hymns of praise, which weeping friends were singing round his bed. He spoke of his soul as being illuminated by the Sun of Righteousness, and exclaimed, a few hours before he died, ' This Sun will never set for me.' He passed peacefully away on December 14th, 1882.

During his stay at Cape Haytien, he won golden opinions from all who knew him. High expectations were being raised as to the great advantages the Mission would derive from his presence at its head. His ability as a preacher drew crowds to hear him. His gentle and sympathising disposition endeared him to many. His untiring industry as a pastor, and his attention to the educational requirements of the locality, were beginning to tell with blessed effect upon the interests of the Saviour's kingdom. His death was a blow to the cause of Protestant Christianity in the town; and amongst the solemn thoughts of the dying hour he did not forget to appeal, through his wife, to the Missionary Society at home - not to leave Cape Hayti without a minister.'

(Minutes of Conference 1883)

SUSANNAH WESLEY PORTREY

1848 Born March
1875 Married George Higgins September
1912 Died Prestwich, December

Children

(Note - the 1911 census records that Susannah had eleven children four of whom had died prior to that date. Of the eleven only the following ten have been identified)

Helena Victoria b June 1877 - d Strood March 1922

Susannah Portrey b December 1879 - d Strood December 1903

Josephine Alice b March 1881 - d June 1881

Joseph Portrey b September 1882 - d Dartford Dec 1961

Grace Newton b September 1883 (no further trace)

George Gordon b March 1885 - d Maidstone March 1961

Florence Louise b September 1886 (no further trace)

Margaret Louise b 23 October 1887 - d (Heddle) Dartford Dec 1971

Mary Ann b March 1888 (no further trace)

Hannah Gwendoline b June 1889 - d (Harrison) Dartford March 1972