



The History of the Baptist Church, Dartmouth

Souvenir Copy

Commemorating the 350th Anniversary

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PREFACE

In this short history, I have attempted to tell the story of the Baptist Church in Dartmouth.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness, first to the brother who wrote in the Minute Book of 1883, all that was known up to that date, and to the brother who, in 1898, caused it to be printed in The Dartmouth Free Churches' Magazine.

All the Original Deeds of the Church, which had been deposited with the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association were lost in the Great Blitz on Plymouth, March, 1941, but a few Minute Books were saved and most of the Facts enclosed are from these Books, we are indebted indeed to these brethren of former years for the faithful records. As we peruse these pages, and in imagination, travel the years with our fellow Baptist Folk, may we gain inspiration from their trials and be as faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ as they were.

J. W. BINMORE.

T is well for us sometimes to look backward and inform ourselves concerning our ancestors.

Our fathers were highminded men Who firmly
kept the Faith To freedom and to conscience true
In danger and in death.

Our faith will be strengthened, and our zeal inflamed by calling to mind the difficulties under which they lived and worshipped.

In the year 1600, England was a very different place to what it is to-day. 'Tis true, Elizabeth, a staunch Protestant, was on the throne, and Roman Catholicism was under a cloud, but, 'tis equally true, that vital godliness was but little known in the churches of the land ; yet there were Puritans in those days who mourned the spiritual condition of clergy and laity, and spoke and wrote vigorously advocating, what they called, a re-reformation.

All this led the more serious, to a careful and impartial study of the word of God, and as a consequence, there sprang up a large number of religious communities, separated from the patronage and control of the State, claiming Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, and taking the Scriptures as the sole guide and rule of their worship and ordinances.

It was about this time the DARTMOUTH BAPTIST CHURCH was formed ; being cradled amid such difficulties, it is not to be wondered that we continue until this day.

There is no reliable record of the foundation of the Church, nor of its history until about 1640, but tradition dates its commencement at the beginning of 1600, and associates the name of one " Paul Hobson" with its early trials and triumphs, whether he held the office of Pastor, or was a presiding Elder, such as are mentioned in Acts 14-23, we do not know, but we can, and do think of him as being " separated by the Church for the work whereunto the Lord had called him, in obedience to the voice of the Spirit of God, he and those with him laid a foundation on which other God-sent men and women have been privileged to build.

The Pilgrim fathers left Dartmouth in 1620, and while here were comforted and nourished by sympathetic friends. Pioneers of Freedom, as were Baptists, it was certain these were among the friends mentioned.

The first Pastor of whom we have authentic information is Robert Steed. He was a man well known to the readers of religious thought in that day, as his name appears in the introduction of a book written in 1656 by Hansard Knollys, an eminent London minister, entitled " Sigh for Zion." We can think of the Church at that time enjoying happy fellowship with their Lord, and with each other, having the peace, which the world cannot give or take away. But there were circumstances which may have disturbed this inward peace, and would certainly occasion a good deal of trouble, if they occurred to-day. Take the following record as an instance—

1663, November and, Charles Newcomen and his wife, and Bathsheba

Newcomen, Robert Steed and his wife, each fined 12 pence, a goodly sum then, for being absenters from the Parish Church.

The greatest dishonour, rested not on those who were persecuted and fined for their loyalty their conscience, but on those who made such laws. We have no doubt these brethren and sisters came out of court, feeling themselves to be true successors to the apostles, and like them, rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus' Name.

Such petty persecutions seemed to have been avoided later, by the Baptist Pastor, for we read that in 1672 Robert Steed held a licence as an Ana Baptist preacher of Dartmouth.

We do not know how many years this worthy man ministered the Word of Life to the faithful, and did the work of an evangelist in the town ; but we know that London claimed his services soon, and in 1685 he signs his name as minister of a Church there, and in 1689 his name appears with other eminent men endorsing a Confession of Faith, which stoutly repudiates Armenian Doctrine This Confession of Faith was republished in 1885 by C. H. Spurgeon.

1685 Philip Gary succeeded Robert Steed. He continued as pastor until 1710, 25 years, then he was translated to higher service. During¹ his pastorate, and evidently being a man who read his New Testament with an Opened Eye, he was able to give a reason for the Hope that was in him. He wrote a pamphlet entitled "A Solemn Call as to Infant Baptism " which called forth a reply from his neighbour John Flavel. Whoever else was convinced by these learned disquisitions, neither John Flavel nor Philip Gary changed their opinions.

1710. The name of Newcomen was probably connected with the Church from its commencement. Their faithfulness as a family was manifested in their willingness to pay fines rather than act contrary to their consciences. The name Newcomen has become illustrious beyond religious circles, for it was Thomas Newcomen, of Dartmouth, who was the inventor of the Steam Engine which has revolutionised so many departments of labour and made travelling so expeditious. But he had greater honour than this, he was a messenger of the King of Kings, and for 20 years was the Pastor of the Baptist Church. That {fact was recorded. The very ingenious Mr. Thomas Newcomen (the projector of the engine for raising water by fire) was called out to ye ministry which he sustained about twenty years. His record is on high, but he is not likely to be forgotten here, as the road in which the Chapel is situate where he used to minister, is called after him.

From the close of Mr. Newcomen's ministry in 1730 until 1786 a period of 56 years, there was no settled Pastor, and the number of members was small, but they were a steadfast community, meeting together for worship as occasion offered, and often journeying to Kingsbridge to hold fellowship with their brethren and sisters in the

faith, and at other times, during the winter months, meeting with their PAEDO-Baptist friends.

During this period of quietness the Church possessed able men qualified to expound the word of God to their fellow believers, and from 1786 to 1797 the Church seemed to have had its regular worship in their appointed place and instructed each other as they had been taught of the Lord, so that when in 1797 one William Giles visited Dartmouth, they were ready to think of him as their future Pastor.

Things did not move as fast in those days as they do now, and the Church cautiously decided to hear Mr. Giles for 12 months before inviting him to the pastorate, which he held for twelve years, enjoying tokens of the Divine favour during the whole of his residence in the town. From 1797 to 1809 the Church enjoyed a season of great prosperity, 122 persons being admitted to fellowship during that period. Other things transpiring, affected the well-being of other places besides Dartmouth. We find the following resolution: Unanimously agreed at the Church Meeting, April 6th, 1800, with a view to the glory of God, that our members, living at Brixham, whose names are undermentioned, should form themselves into a Church. Then follows 12 names, and this was the nucleus of the Church at Brixham.

It also appears that several members had left Dartmouth for Plymouth Dock, that is Devonport, and that news had reached the Church that they were neglecting- to attend the Lord's Supper, a letter was forwarded to them to admonish and point out the impropriety of such neglect. This Church was Pembroke St. or Morice Square, if the latter, it was the birthplace into Christ of the present writer of this history, and also the Church, School and Caretaker's house adjoining was completely destroyed March, 1941.

It will be seen therefore that the influence of the Church at Dartmouth in those days, was felt in the towns far from it. Although there were these migrations of members, the Church grew in numbers so much so, that a gallery was erected in the Meeting House to accommodate them, thus did God bless the ministry of Mr. Giles. It is also on record that a Plated Set of Communion Furniture was purchased, and what would be more likely to further the Spiritual welfare of the community, a member's experience meeting was established, by which godly men and women were led into a clearer apprehension of the privileges and duties which pertain to life and godliness.

1809. In 1809 a sorrowing Church had to bid farewell to their esteemed Pastor, who removed to Kent. For three years the Church remained without a minister. One brother, a Mr. Watkins preached and lived among the people for twelve months—" In order that they might discover his abilities for the Pastoral care of the Church " but the end of the twelve months, bade him farewell.

1812. Early in this year, an invitation was sent to Benjamin Godwin, who was then labouring at Bath. He was a man of deep piety and scholarly

attainments and in later years was connected with our Theological College at Rawden. In his day and for many years, his name was revered and loved by a large number of people. His influence upon the men he was privileged to train for the ministry was felt for many years. His stay at Dartmouth was brief, just under three years, but while here the Lord gave "Seals to his ministry and souls for his hire," it was during his pastorate that the Sabbath School was established. It being resolved in October, 1812, that our brother and deacon, Robert Edwards, be entrusted with the important matter of gathering together the children of the members of our Church and congregation for instruction by catechising them.

The successor to Mr. Godwin, was one John Cooper who undertook the responsible duty, with a salary of Forty Pounds per Annum with all the funds and the house next the meeting house to reside in. We do not know the value of the amount he received from the funds, we only know that he could start housekeeping with the assurance, My God shall supply all your need, so while the salary was small, there was no lack^{*} There is no record of anything particular during his five years residence in the town, but it is to be feared it was not a prosperous period, for in 1820 a pitiful appeal was made to the Particular Baptist Fund for help. They speak of the burden of debt on the Chapel and House accounts, and mourn the low state of Spiritual life amongst them, arid Wednesday October 2nd, 1820 was set apart as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer, because "they are conscious of great spiritual declension and are justly subject to the Divine displeasure."

The Lord heard the prayers of His people and in 1821 sent Philip House as their Pastor. He was well advanced in years when he came to Dartmouth, but seems to have been a man of considerable energy. One of the first things which claimed his attention was the dilapidated state of the meeting house, and a thorough renovation of the premises was commenced, the congregation assembling in a schoolroom in Lower Street.

Many manifestations of the Divine favour were enjoyed when the congregation reassembled in their usual place of worship, and for some years the relationship between pastor and people seem to have been very happy, but towards the close of his twelve years ministry, there were disturbing elements at work in the Church. His own entries in the Church books speaks of uneasy and restless spirits who are causing troubles in the Church, whereby the Church and congregation are greatly reduced, and the school brought down from seventy to twenty-five children. Probably these things, combined with the fact that he was seventy-three years of age, led him to resign the pastorate on April 7th, 1833. In the letter tendering his resignation he expressed his willingness to render any and every service he can for the welfare of the Church. He remained with the Church 9 years after retiring from the pastorate and passed away at the age of eighty-two years. During that 9 years he saw two pastors settle and others preach a probationary term.

William Welsh was called to the pastorate in 1834. He came from

Masborough, Yorkshire, and remained three years, removing to Brixham to undertake the work of the Baptist Church there in 1837. His short stay amongst the people seems to have been a time, of patient perseverance in well doing, and the Lord let his smile rest upon the efforts made by His people to glorify His name.

1838. With the commencement of this year came Edwin Harold Brewer, whose memory is esteemed, a tablet being-placed in the Church. He commenced on the First Sunday in 1838, the longest pastorate on record in connection with our Church. Coming from the Church at Shaldon near Teignmouth. He was full of manly vigour and gave himself with much heartiness to the work of God he had come to do. From the beginning and for tw"enty years onward, much blessing rested upon his labours. The Gospel of the Grace of God as preached by him entered into many hearts, and many others were attracted by the glad news of Jesus' Power to save, and twice during his ministry it was found necessary to enlarge the accommodation for worshippers, first by erecting side galleries in the old meeting house and afterwards adding to its length, making it a well proportioned building. The total cost of these alterations was between ,£400—£500 all of which was raised within *a*. short time of its being expended There seems to have been vigorous spiritual life manifested by the Church, the records supply many evidences of this. Here are a few: Sister Thorne followed her Lord through the waters of Baptism at the great age of 74 years; the discipline of the Church was maintained with vigour, members walking disorderly being promptly excluded or suspended. One member sends in his resignation stating as a reason, he desires to be at liberty to bake on the Sabbath day, and evidently feeling the Church atmosphere was so pure, that he could not thus break the fourth commandment and retain his connection with the Church." The past days may not have been better than the present, yet we sigh for more of this Puritan spirit.

In 1854 Mr. Brewer was called upon to bid a farewell to his beloved wife, who passed to be with her Lord on December 27th. This was a severe blow to the faithful Pastor, from which he never recovered. Mrs. Brewer had been a true helpmeet, a faithful wife, a loving counsellor and a zealous worker in the Church, and after her removal Mr. Brewer's energies seemed to flag, and the earnestness with which he had hitherto laboured seems to have been buried with his wife. As a consequence of this, the Church lost much of its healthy vigour and many of the supporters leaving the town, a cloud seemed to settle down upon the people that did not lift for many years. Mr. Brewer passed away in 1867, aged 70 years, and his body was laid beside that of his wife in the burial ground belonging to the Independant Church at Dittisham. Mr. Brewer was succeeded in the pastorate by Mr. J. M. Clase who had assisted the aged pastor for some months before his death. It was not by the unanimous vote of the Church he entered upon the duties of the

office, and during the eight years he remained, things went from bad to worse, until in 1875 only a few remained of the once flourishing Church and congregation. Those who remained deemed it best to resign, so for a short period this ancient Church ceased to exist.

The Devon Baptist Association came to the assistance of the few who desired to see the work of God revived in connection of the Church. For a time they sent supplies for the pulpit, hoping that from amongst them, one might be found to undertake the difficult and delicate task of resuscitating the Church ; eventually Rev, E. T. Davis, of Newton Abbot settled there commencing his ministry on May 17th, 1876, The Sunday School was re-opened July 30th the same year, and on May 17th, 1877, the Church was reconstituted, and for a period of three years seems to have enjoyed happy fellowship with their Lord and each other, amidst many tokens of the Divine favour. One very important matter undertaken by Mr. Davis, was the renovation of the chapel, which was done in a very thorough manner, and it is much to be regretted that soon differences arose between the pastor and one of the deacons resulting in the resignation of both and to general unhappiness in the Church. As a consequence of this, the Church was in a disturbed state for some three years. The pulpit was supplied by various brethren from near and far. The Church was not disbanded, but it had no officers and lived at a poor dying rate, until the coming of Rev. F. J. Greening, who had for ten years been the pastor of the Baptist Church at Crewe. He came to Dartmouth, in the first instance to conduct a mission. Much blessing was received during the visit and he eventually acceded to the unanimously expressed wish of the Church to become her pastor, and begin his ministry January, 1883.

There were only fifteen names upon the Church Roll when Mr. Greening commenced his pastorate, and the Church had no officers, the management being under the control of a . committee. The faithful few worked harmoniously and earnestly with their new pastor and from the beginning of his ministry, the attendance at the services increased, the Sunday school showed signs of revived life, and tokens of the Divine favour were seen in connection of every branch of work undertaken by the Church. At the end of the first year of Mr. Greening's pastorate the membership had doubled, and during the eleven years he remained there was a steady increase in the Church Roll, although there were constant removals.

Mr. Greening was a man of fertile resources, and indomitable perseverance. At one time he was left without a super-intendant or secretary of the Sunday school. He cheerfully shouldered the additional work and resolved upon an increase of the school which was accomplished, in fact the school progressed so much, that necessity forced the Church the desirability of building suitable premises ; and although they thought about it for some years before the Church

ventured to arise and build, the purpose was ever in their mind.

Early in the year 1887 it was felt the time had come to put the Church in a more orderly way of working, and by a unanimous vote by ballot, two brethren were elected to fill the office of Deacon.

At the same time the opinion was expressed that it would be for the spiritual edification of believers to observe the Lord's Supper every Sabbath Day, and it was unanimously agreed to make arrangements accordingly.

In the year 1889 this Church received into association with it a number of members who were residing at Paignton and arrangements were made whereby the pastor ministered to both congregations, visiting Paignton for this purpose at stated intervals. This connection was continued until August, 1891, when the members residing at Paignton were transferred to the Baptist Church in that town, and Mr. Greening's pastoral labours among them ceased.

During Mr. Greening's residence in Dartmouth, on April 26th, 1892, he attained his jubilee, and the Church felt it to be a fitting occasion to express their continued affection and esteem for their pastor. This they did, by presenting him with an illuminated address, handsomely framed, and a purse of gold. This mark of sincere love was greatly appreciated by Mr. and Mrs. Greening, but with becoming generosity the money was all given to the Lord's work mostly in connection with the Church, the larger portion to the new School Building Fund.

The excellent School premises now possessed by the Church will ever be a monument of Mr. Greening's painstaking energy. Many who read these words, writes the historian of 1898 will remember the dilapidated house adjoining the Chapel where former pastors had resided ; and some possibly felt it would be presumption to attempt to put up convenient rooms for school work ; but not so their energetic pastor, and by January 1st, 1891, the Church had caught some of their pastor's faith, and passed the following resolution : " That trusting in the Word, that God shall supply all our need, we at once undertake the erection of a new schoolroom—on the site of the old Chapel House, and that our Pastor and Deacons at once take the matter in hand." They did this, not with precipitate haste—for it was two years and a half before the schoolroom was ready for use—but by self sacrifice and earnest pleading with friends far and near, they accumulated funds and considered plans, and at last began to build in the Name of the Lord, and were able to present the property to the Church, Free of Debt, on June 28th, 1893.

It was a day of rejoicing with the Baptist Church, and the buildings have been, and still are, a source of comfort and help to those who carry on the work of God in this corner of the Lord's vineyard.

The joy of midsummer was changed to gloom and sadness with the close of the year, for on December 28th, 1893, Mr. Greening tendered

his resignation. He had held the pastorate for eleven years, and the esteem in which he was held by the Church had deepened as the years had passed, and though they felt that God who had sent him, was now calling him to another sphere of labour, they accepted his resignation with deep regret, and continues to follow him with prayers and heartiest good wishes. The fact that Mr. Greening had made almost an annual visit to his old flock, since his removal to Lancashire is quite sufficient evidence to show the love which was borne to him by those who sat under his ministry and profited by his counsels

Before Mr. Greening left the town, the Church invited Pastor J. G. Scott of Stogumber, Somerset, to be his successor. Mr. Scott had visited Dartmouth, and hearing God's voice in the call of the people, gladly accepted the pastorate, and entered upon his labours here May 6th, 1894. Happy fellowship one with another, earnest desire for the deepening of the spiritual life of the Lord's people, consecrated activity for the evangelisation of the town, generous liberality, for the support of the work of the Lord both at home and abroad, have been manifested by the Church during the present pastorate. So finishes the writer of the history, May, 1898.

We continue, during Mr. Scott's oversight, the Chapel was renovated, we note, because of present-day (ig5o) associations that Miss May Humphry was, in company with Miss May Crocker, appointed to play the harmonium. Mr. Scott did not stay long, for in September, 1898, he resigned, and it was received with great regret, and it was placed on record, the Church wish to record his faithfulness in the ministry of The Word, his unceasing zeal in every good work—his wise counsels and loving rebukes. Mr. Scott and Mrs. Scott were dismissed to the Church at Gillingham, December 10th, 1899, having served the Church from 1894 — 1899.

Rev. W. T. Soper became the minister in July, 1900, during his ministry the Chapel was renovated, it being noted that the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Association loaned Twenty Pounds free of interest ; also at the Annual Meeting, July 25th, 1907, it was decided to rescind the resolution in the minute book, prohibiting Associate or unbaptised members from voting at Church Meetings. Mr. Soper served the Church 7 years.

Following him, came Rev. T. Gardiner who served for 3 years and at whose recognition services Mr. Tibbett of Totnes and Mr. Harry, of Brixham, were invited to speak. The membership at this time was 50, reports of the work of Sunday School, Band of Hope under Mr. Plater, and the Christian Endeavour Society under Mr. Brown shows that there was a spiritual activity at this time. Mr. Gardiner resigned March, 1910.

It was about now that, because of unrest, and the leaving of some who had been of great help in the Church, yet who were not baptised, that information was sought from the Baptist Association and the Baptist Union on specific questions—

Would a resolution unanimously passed at an ordinary Church meeting (but which was not called or convened for the purpose) be in order—

Answer—It does not seem to me that a resolution passed at a meeting not duly convened—would be LEGAL.

Can unbaptised brethren be elected Deacons ?

Answer—The Trusts are for a Society of Protestant Dissenters called Baptists, and I do not consider that other than Baptists could be legally appointed Deacons.

Can a properly convened Church Meeting ALTER the ' Constitution of the Church ?

Answer—The Trust Deeds clearly indicate the Church is a Baptist one and if other than Baptists are admitted into membership, the matter might lead to litigation, so that unless there be a unanimous feeling on the subject it would be unwise to attempt to alter the Constitution of the Church.

Yours faithfully, J. H. Shakespeare,

Secretary Baptist Union.

At the Church Meeting held April 7th, 1910, with 19 members present, a ballot was taken as to the advisability of changing the constitution from a Baptist to a Union Church. The result, 19 present ; 13 voted for remaining Baptist, 3 for a Union Church, 2 did not vote, and there was 1 spoilt paper These discussions and resolution meant the withdrawal of several associate members.

Rev. H. V. Hobbs became the new minister, and he and Mrs. Hobbs were received in as members at the Lord's Table May 7th, 1911. During his ministry of 8 years many joined the Church, although drastic revision had taken place.

At a Church Meeting, it was agreed that the Chapel be called the "Newcomin Baptist Church, after the famous Thomas Newcomin, pastor from 1710—1730. (This title seems to have been forgotten, for all official purposes the Church is called Dartmouth Baptist Church). Alterations to the Front of School were affected, the present glass roof being erected At a Special Church Meeting, January 25th 1916, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Hobbs be asked to continue his ministry, many expressions of personal blessings received through his ministry. It was on April 11th, 1919, that the Church received and accepted very regretfully the resignation of Mr. Hobbs, who, for family reasons, felt it necessary to remove to Bristol. A letter was sent to Mr. and Mrs. Hobbs expressing the appreciation of all the Church to them.

Rev. R. Hurditch was called to the pastorate March, 1920, he being the First minister to receive " Sustenation Grant," bringing the salary to ^156 per annum. April 4th being the day for his Recognition Services, at which Rev. A. E. Johns, Brixham, was the preacher. He fulfilled his mission, although greatly handicapped by approaching blindness. During the six years he was pastor, many had been received into the Church fellowship by baptism. Rev. J. W. Bailey followed on March, 1928, but on the doctor's advice had to relinquish the pastorate in 1929.

The Church continued for some time, having visiting preachers, but on June 16th, 1930, Rev. H. Drake, of Brixham, offered to take the oversight with Mr. Piggott assisting. This was accepted, and eventually it seems Mr. Piggott was looked upon as Lay Pastor. It was in 1930 that Mr. Ryder who had been Secretary for a number of years, and was greatly esteemed, had to resign on account of ill health. Also at this time permission was given to Mr. Humphry to insert in the minute book some valuable history of the Church which had come into his possession, concerning the ministry of Rev. Philip Giles, 1795—1809, written by his daughter, Mrs. M. E. Godfrey, of Liverpool, in her 89th year. This was duly done and can be seen and read in the minute book now being used. A brief resume is contained at the beginning of this history.

Mr. Piggott served the Church for nearly 7 years, coming to and from Brixham every Sunday and during the week although working as manager in a bank, this was a remarkable achievement and the Church benefitted by such an exhibition of Christian Love and service. His was a very gracious ministry.

With the help of Upton Vale Baptist Church, a young man Mr. A. Mitchell was invited to become minister, while preparing for the BU Examination. He eventually passed and became an accredited minister, this was a stiff work for a young man, he commenced on March 21st, 1937. For four years he maintained the work, eventually receiving a call to Hatherley. The War had commenced in 1939, this as all we living know had a serious effect on worship, and our school was taken over by the Education authorities, and much to the regret of the Church was used by the Roman Catholics.

Rev. H. Drake, a former pastor of Brixham Baptist Church, but residing at Gosport, accepted a call to Dartmouth and commenced on the First Sunday in May, 1941. These were difficult war years, but the ministry was sustained and members received into Church membership.

At a Church Meeting held April 9th, 1942, the following resolutions were passed : " This Church hearing that the Deeds of the Church having been destroyed by enemy action, respectfully ask the Devon and Cornwall Baptist Corporation, who have been made Trustees of the Church to execute a New Deed.

That One of the Dartmouth Free Church Ministers shall have a seat on the Hospital Committee,

That we share in the B M S effort to raise the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Guineas in commemoration of the Society's 150th Anniversary,"

For health reasons the Rev. H. Drake felt compelled to resign the pastorate as from June 30th, 1943, This was received with regret and gratitude for what had been done.

It was resolved to ask Rev. R. Millington and the Brixham Church to take the oversight of Dartmouth. It was accordingly agreed subject to certain

conditions, these having been brought forward, and the Pastor and Deacons of Brixham having accepted, the Church enjoyed the help and fellowship of Rev. R. Millington. This was September,

1943. The pulpit was supplied by the Lay Preachers of the Torquay District ; these arrangements continued for nearly two years, then Mr. J. W. Binmore, of Plymouth, was asked to preach with a view of becoming the Lay Pastor ; he did so on Sunday, June 10th, 1945.

On July 5th, at a Church Meeting, it was decided to invite Mr. Binmore to the pastorate, and his ministry commenced September 30th, 1945.

As Mr. Binmore is the writer of this history, he cannot speak of his work, save to say he is deeply grateful to all the members of the Church and Congregation for their loyal and prayerful co-operation in this work of God, and to all his brethren in the ministry in Torquay District especially to the pastor, deacons and members of the Brixham Baptist Church, also the Area Superintendent, Dr. Nixon, and the Rev. C. Dyer, the Association Secretary, and the Committee for their kind help to the Church and her pastor, during the five years of the pastorate.

It can be said that during that time, the roofs of both Church and School have been re-slatted, the whole of the interior and exterior of the premises have been decorated, and because of the gift of £30 from the Association the total cost amounting to about £250 was met.

Also the Congregational Church having been damaged badly during the war, the Members worshipped with us for two-and-a-half years, with fellowship enjoyed by both congregations. The membership at the commencement of Mr. Binmore's ministry, 1945, was 20, at the present time, October, 1950, it is 32.

One important decision must be recorded, the Torquay District of Baptist Churches, after discussing for several years, have recently decided to acquire a site for a Baptist Church on the Townstal Estate. Agreement with the Dartmouth Town Council as to the situation of the site has been reached, and by a resolution at a Church Meeting on July 13th, 1950, it was agreed that the Dartmouth Baptist Church would (with the help of the district raise the sum of £150 to qualify for the Home Work Fund grant, and thus try to secure a resident minister to care for the local Church and help in starting the new work at Townstal.

Thus we conclude this short history of the Dartmouth Baptist Church, thanking God for the Divine favour down through the ages. We know not what the future may contain for the Church, but we look forward with confidence and upward with hope, for the Master's voice is heard— " Behold, I come quickly " and we respond " Even so, come Lord Jesus." Amen.

J. W. BINMORE, 1950.