

NONCONFORMITY IN EARDISLAND.

OUR WESLEYAN CHAPEL was built in 1864, the same year that the Barewood Chapel was built. It has seating accommodation for 150, and is a good building of the period. At the back there is a stable, which doubtless was very necessary in the old days.

It is thought that the building was paid for partly by public subscription, and partly by Grants from the Methodist Convention; and it is said that the land was given by the then farmer at the Lynch at a Peppercorn Rent of 6d. a year.

Many - among them Mr. Harvey and Mrs. Jenkins (Dilwyn), two former organists - can remember how the Chapel flourished in the early years of this Century. In those days there was a Service at 11 a.m. and another at 6.30 every Sunday, and attendances were in the neighbourhood of 30 to 40 at each Service. There was also a Sunday School, which met at 3 p.m. every Sunday and was attended by about 30 children. The social side, too, was not forgotten, for every Summer Mr. Lewis Owens, Hinton Manor, entertained the Sunday School children to tea and sports; and every Christmas Mrs. Riley, Court House, gave a party for the children, with tea and presents.

In those days it belonged to the Leominster Circuit and there was a resident minister at Leominster who came to preach occasionally, but most of the Services were taken by local preachers, who had to travel by bicycle and earlier still doubtless on horseback. In addition Prayer Meetings were taken by Mr. Edwin Riley at the Court House every week, and those were well attended.

It has always been the custom to hold a Produce Sale on the Tuesday after Harvest Thanksgiving, the proceeds being devoted to Chapel funds. This practice is still carried on.

Nowadays Services are held only on Sunday evening, at 6.30, and there is no Sunday School. The decline in support for the Chapel (we have only three Members) is doubtless largely due to the fact that many supporters have left the district and not been replaced. In spite of this, however, the Chapel valiantly carries on, and it now comes under the Presteigne and Kington Circuit, with resident Ministers in Presteigne and Pembridge.

CHARITIES.

WE HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED the Marlowe and Froysell Charities under the Church Section. There was another Charity, not strictly an Ecclesiastical one, usually known as the Court House Charity; but this died out about 20 years ago and has not been revived. Here are the particulars:

"An ancient document states that there was given by a Lord of the Manor of Eardisland the tenth in the several parcels of land (which were formerly tillage) thereafter mentioned, viz.-

The New Tindings, 4 acres, in which were 6 ridges;
 In Sheepcoat Furlong and Lime Gobbett, 20 acres in which were 20 ridges;
 In Shurlefield, 4 gobbets or parcels of land, between Greenclose and the Nunhouse Acre at Fowleslough, called But Furlong, in which the 10th ridge was due;
 In Streame Field, half a tenth ridge;
 In Quarry Furlong, 10 acres, in which were 10 ridges;
 In West Field Gobbett 20 acres, in which were 20 ridges;
 In Denshall Field, 15 acres, in which were 15 ridges;
 In Church Field, 14 acres, in which were 14 ridges;
 In Smaly, 30 acres, in which were 30 ridges; *All the field names!*

which tenth ridges were given by a Lord of the Manor of Eardisland to the person of the said Parish who should be his farmer or deputy there being for the maintenance of a perpetual alms; and that he should, in lieu thereof, distribute to the poor of the said Parish of Eardisland most wanting, 13 bushels of wheat, and 13 pence in silver to 13 boys of the said Parish, for a remembrance of that gift."

The document further states that most of the said parcels had been converted into pasture land, and that the said alms would have been lost if John Booth, Esq., the then farmer of the said parsonage of Eardisland, had not commenced a suit against Mr. Richard Dolphin, who would have defrauded the poor of their alms.

The above suit was commenced about 1670, as the evidence of a witness was taken on the 19th October in that year, and confirms some of the above facts.

We could procure no documents; but the above charges are paid out of the Court House estate (now belonging to Charles Haywood, Esq., a minor), to the Parish officers, and distributed by them on the Thursday before Easter; the wheat to the poor in general, in quantities of from half-a-quarter to a peck, according to the number of the family, having regard to merit, and the 13 pence to the children."

(Extract from Printed Parliamentary Reports of the Former Commissioners Enquiring Concerning Charities. No. 32, Part 11, Dated 30th June, 1837. Page 191.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

WE HAVE HAD A PARISH COUNCIL SINCE 1894. Before that date our local administration was in the hands of two Guardians and Waywardens, and two Overseers, elected at the Easter Vestry Meeting along with the Churchwardens. We also had an Assistant Overseer - this appointment was advertised in the Parish Magazine at a salary of £25 a year - and a Parish Constable, the latter also elected annually, and paid no salary but "fees for work done".

The first Parish Meeting in Eardisland was held on December 4th, 1894, at 7 p.m., and its first business after the election of a Chairman was to elect seven Parish Councillors from the 13 parishioners (1 Clergyman, 1 Schoolmaster, 6 farmers, 2 labourers, 1 gardener, 1 mason, 1 blacksmith) nominated. The nominations were written on forms provided, each having to be signed by a parochial elector who was not allowed to nominate more than seven.

The names of the persons nominated were then called out, and each voted upon by a show of hands. At this first election the Council elected consisted of:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>No. of votes</u>
Davies, Thomas	Farmer	40
Hope, Frederick	Farmer	35
Roberts, George	Labourer	35
Thomas, David	Farmer	35
Goodwin, Price	Farmer	32
Turner, William Philip	Farmer	29
Barker, Revd. Joseph	Vicar	26

The Council agreed to pay 1/6d. for cleaning, light and fuel at Council Meetings.

1895. January 27th. The Council agreed to prepare and present a memorandum to the County Council, asking them to consider putting a bridge over the ford in Broom Lane.

The second election was held on March 9th, 1896, with 31 present. Members were elected by a show of hands as before, and this method of appointing councillors was practised until 1949, when the new Act was introduced that all Parish councillors be elected by a poll when the nominations exceed the number of councillors, which still remains at 7. The election is arranged by the District Council and is held every three years. All expenses are paid by a rate levied on the Parish, and the cost is approximately £16. In 1935 a penny rate on the whole of the Parish produced £8.3.0.

1897. Mr. Barker proposed that Catherine Morris, Ann Morgan and Charlotte Parker be excused from paying rates. Similar entries appear until 1929.

Also in that year Mr. Thomas Davies, Lower Burton, reported

the existence of a nuisance by gypsies and van dwellers resorting to Pigmore Common and turning their horses and donkeys for pasturage onto fields adjoining, and breaking down fences thereon. The Council agreed to write to the County Council, calling attention to the said nuisance and enquiring whether they had issued any notices warning gypsies and van dwellers of penalties incurred by their trespassing, etc., and asking that copies might be sent for posting in Eardisland.

1898. It was resolved to write to Col. Clowes as Lord of the Manor, calling his attention to the nuisance caused by gypsies and van dwellers camping on Pigmore Common.

1899. Col. Clowes' reply was read with regard to the gypsies on Pigmore Common, and the Council are glad to learn that steps will be taken at once to erect notice boards prohibiting gypsies from resorting to the Common.

1902. March. A letter of condolence was sent to Miss Barker: "The Eardisland Parish Council desires to express its sincere sympathy with Miss Barker and other members of the family in the great loss they have sustained in the death of the Revd. Joseph Barker, and they wish to take this opportunity of expressing their appreciation of his valued services as Chairman of this Council since its formation.

1903. The first School Manager under the Education Act, 1902, was appointed from the Parish Council. Mr. Lewis Owens, of Hinton Manor, was appointed School Manager, and Mr. Thomas Davies Lower Burton, nominated as a Manager of the Eardisland National School.

There are still two representatives of the Parish Council as School Managers.

1906. The Clerk was instructed to ascertain where the Parish map is. It is reported missing from the Vestry where it has formerly been kept. The map was recovered from Messrs. Lloyd & Son who had it for deciding disputed cases of Tithe. It was agreed that it be kept in the Vestry in future, and that a lock be attached to the box, with two keys - one for the Vicar and one for the Clerk to the Parish Council.

1908. Thanks were expressed to the Revd. R.S. Aldridge for obtaining the new Staff and handcuffs for the use of the Parish constable.

1909. It was decided to insure the Assistant Overseer against accidents.

The draft scheme for School Endowment was presented by Mr. Aldridge. It was resolved that the Parish Council do offer objection to the above scheme on the ground that the rights of the Vicar are ignored. As the School since its foundation has been a Church of England School, it is contrary to the character

of the endowment that the Vicar of the Parish should not have an ex-officio place on the Body of Governors. A copy of the resolution was sent to the Secretary of the Board of Education in Whitehall.

1912. Gravel was to be carted from the river for repairs to the road leading from the Bridge to Mr. Yeld's cottage.

1915. Floodgates adjoining the river Arrow in Long Meadow were put out of order by recent floods, causing inconvenience to villagers and doing great damage to roads.

1916. A letter was sent to the Automobile Association, asking them to erect a Danger notice at each end of the village.

1919. Application was made to the County Council for a polling station at Eardisland.

A second application was made to the A.A. for Danger notice boards.

Four inches of gravel was put on the road from the Bridge to Mr. Yeld's cottage by Mr. S. Morris for the sum of £1.4.0. The gravel was got from the river.

1922. Danger signs were erected by permission of the County Council, and provided by the A.A., through the influence of Col. Clowes.

1923. A Parish Meeting was called to discuss the proposed bridge over the river at Heybridge. After much discussion and a further meeting, it was proposed and seconded "that the District Council erect a bridge over the ford", but on being put to the meeting nobody voted for the resolution.

(It is interesting to note that as far back as 1895 the Parish Council resolved to present a memorandum to the County Council for the erection of a bridge over the ford; then in 1923 the Parish Meeting failed to agree. A further Parish Meeting was called in 1927 in reply to a communication from Wigmore Rural District Council, asking for the views of the Parish as to a proposed bridge over the ford. The Meeting agreed to ask the W.R.D.C. to go into the cost and give details of any grant obtainable. This also fell through, and the District Council agreed to make the bed of the ford more accessible to vehicular traffic. From time to time since 1927 to 1953 applications have been made for a bridge over the ford, and we are still without one.)

1925. The scheme for lighting the village, or alternatively the bridge, was rejected.

1927. Two representatives were appointed for the Rating and Valuation Act, to serve for a period of three years.

Here it appears that the Overseers ceased to function, and

that the rates came under the Weobley Rating Authority. All through the ages the excused list of ratepayers had been dealt with by the Parish Council and the Overseers, but now they had to go through the Weobley Rating Authority and particulars as to their claim to exemption submitted to that Authority. An interesting entry is that the case of one member who had previously been excused did not now occur as he is now an inmate of the House

1927. A truck-load of chippings was purchased for the Churchyard paths - 5 tons of $\frac{3}{4}$ " for £1.0.6d. per ton, and £2 paid for the laying of it.

1930. A Public Meeting was called to discuss the lighting of the village by electricity. (1955: it has not been done.)

The Council agreed that Political Meetings be prohibited from being held at the Memorial Cross.

1933. Application was made to Leominster Postmaster for a Sunday collection in Eardisland, there being no collection from 2.30 p.m. on Saturdays till 10 a.m. on Mondays.

1935. Application was made to the County Council for a speed limit in the village of 20 m.p.h.

1936. An application was read, asking the Council to devise some method for the collection and disposal of household refuse in the village; a disused lane at the East end of the village was used for depositing household refuse, it having to be taken here by the householders. A caretaker was appointed at a salary of £1.10.0. per annum. The dump caused a great deal of controversy, and a new caretaker was appointed at £4 per annum, to be in attendance on one afternoon a week from 3 o'clock to 5 o'clock when the arrival of refuse would be dealt with and kept tidy. This dump was closed in 1947, when a house-to-house collection by the Wigmore Rural District Council was started. All expenses of the dump were paid for by the W.R.D.C.

1937. The footpath through the Court House orchard was tar-macked by the County Council.

1938. First application for a pillar box at West End. (3 applications have since been made without success.)

The crazy paving round the wall and base of the Memorial was laid by Mr. J. Taylor for the sum of 15/-.

1940. Mr. Wood, the Chairman, died, and Mr. A. Taylor was appointed in his place.

1943. Mr. A. Taylor was presented by the Police Authorities with a long service medal for his services as Parish constable for the village.

1944. The Parish Councils Association was formed and Eardisland Parish Council joined, the membership fee being 5/-. One of the first things to come under discussion by this Association was the abolition of the show of hands method of electing councillors and the adoption of a secret ballot method.

Application made for a speed limit of 10 miles through the village was not allowed by the Ministry of War Transport.

1946. Cinder path laid on part of the footpath at Heybridge, at a cost of £4.7.1d., paid by the Parish Council.

A further application for a 30 miles speed limit as the bridge had been widened was made, again without success.

1948. The Bridge was widened.

1951. The maps and particulars of the survey of Rights of Way in the Parish were presented to the Council and checked.

1953. Improvements to the footpath at Heybridge were made by voluntary labour by hauling gravel from the river bed.