

## AN ADVENTURE IN FAITH

Kingfield Baptist Church and Sunday School 1929 - 1960

**W.J. Smith**

TWO SHILLINGS. Proceeds for Church Funds.

### FOREWORD

I appreciate this opportunity to express appreciation and thanks for the time and effort expended in preparing this booklet so aptly described as "An Adventure in Faith", recording for us a glimpse into the past from the early days of the work until the present time. "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow", will, I am sure, echo from all our hearts as we read this Adventure of Faith of the Baptist Cause at Kingfield. As we look back we can see how the hand of God has directed the work, and as we look forward we are assured that He will lead us on to even greater things in the years which lie ahead - for "Our God is Able".

**A.K. BUTCHER.**

## AN ADVENTURE IN FAITH

### Preface

I have been asked by the Deacons of our Church to write a short history of the Kingfield Baptist Church and Sunday School., with special reference to the founding and early days of the cause here. It was thought that friends who join our fellowship might be interested to learn how, when, and by whom our Sunday School and Church were started at Kingfield.

The task has fallen to me, presumably, because I had the privilege under God's grace to be the first teacher in the new Sunday School and, later on, the first member of the ensuing church, and my recollections of those early days are still with me. Fortunately I had kept the monthly issues of "Forward", magazine of the Woking Baptist Church from 1927 to 1957, when it was discontinued, and reference to these has enabled me to check the sequence of events.

### ***From Wiltshire to Surrey***

Might I add a word here to explain my presence in the district. Living in the West Country and working as a printer, I eventually obtained employment with Messrs. Unwin Brothers Ltd., and moved to Old Woking with my wife and three young children, Edna, Denis and Leslie, in March, 1925. I was a member of the Bethesda Baptist Church in Trowbridge, Wiltshire, having been baptised there at the age of 17, in 1905, and my wife was in membership with the WesleyRoad Methodist Church in the same town. On settling down in our new home we soon found our way to the Woking Baptist Church which was then situated in Goldsworth Road, and I had my membership transferred from Trowbridge. Be cause of the distance to Woking - one had to walk in those days - my two eldest children attended Cartbridge Congregational Sunday School where, incidentally, my son's teacher was Mr. W.G. Simmons, who was afterwards to become the Secretary of the Woking Baptist Church. We later moved to Send, so that now we had e. walk of three miles to Woking. My wife and I worshipped at the Woking Church for two years, but then, I regret to say, my attendances grew less and less.

Now comes my testimony to the for-seeing eye of God and the means, strange sometimes to us, that He employs to bring straying sheep back to the fold. One fine Saturday afternoon I went for a stroll in Woking Park, and seeing a cricket match in progress, sat on a seat and watched.

I soon recognised one of the teams to be that of the Woking Baptist Church - a good one too, in those days. At the tea break the captain saw me sitting alone on the seat and came and sat with me. Imagine my embarrassment when the captain turned out to be the pastor of the church, the Rev. F. Middleton-Price. But he was, as usual, the essence of tactfulness and simply said that they had missed me at Percy Street (Woking Baptists had shortly before moved into a fine new building in that road) and realised what a long walk it was from Send. But, he said, he had a proposition to put to me which would halve the distance - 11.3 miles each way instead of 5. He and the deacons at Percy Street had decided that as their share of the Forward Movement of the Baptist Union of England and Wales they would open a Sunday School at Kingfield to serve the rapidly-growing districts of Old Woking, Kingfield and Westfield. The nearest Non conformist Sunday School was at the Congregational Church at Cartbridge, which was about a mile-end~e-quarter away.

They did not wish to entice children from Sunday Schools they were already attending, but to attract those who did not go anywhere. Mr. Price asked me if I would co-operate from the Kingfield end, and I gladly consented; for I was caught by the Divine inspiration and the adventure in faith which had entered the hearts of the Pastor and Deacons of Woking Baptist Church.

## **W. J. SMITH**

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## **I, IN THE BEGINNING (1929)**

The first meeting of the pioneers of the new Baptist Sunday School took place on the piece of ground on which now stands the School Hall. Mr. H. O. Serpell, J.P., of Westcroft Park, Chobham, a member of the Woking Baptist Church, presided. He had purchased the site and now generously handed the deeds to his Church. Supporting him were the Rev. F. Middleton Price and the deacons of the Woking Baptist Church: Messrs. Stanley Webb (Church Secretary), A.V. Rowe (Church Treasurer), Caleb and Edwin Bond, E.A. Back, H.C. Payne, C.W. Newbold, and G. Wyatt. The meeting was attended by a small but enthusiastic audience from the Church at Woking and interested friends of the district. The writer well remembers the very hot day in July 1929 with the mosquitoes and flies coming out of the long grass, keeping the listeners busy with their handkerchiefs. Mr. Serpell was warmly thanked for his generosity in providing such a valuable site, situated as it was at the junction of three districts - Old Woking, Kingfield and Westfield, in order to advance Christ's work among the children of the neighbourhood. After further short speeches, plans were made for the first Sunday School to be held at Kingfield.

Mr. Serpell promised to provide a large marquee for the remainder of the summer. Mr. Caleb Bond was appointed to be in charge, acting for the diaconate at Woking, while Mr. W.J. Smith would supervise the work at Kingfield. Later Mr. Smith was co-opted on to the diaconate at Woking.

In addition to the last-named, the Misses Jessie Hole and Ruby Simmons (who also acted as pianist), Mrs. W.J. Smith and Mr. Gordon Suckling volunteered as the first teachers in the new Sunday School. (It was a singular fact that nearly all the workers in those early days came from the West Country - Wiltshire, Somerset, Bristol and Swan sea.)

## ***The First Sunday School***

At the beginning of August, 1929, the five teachers gathered in the tent which had been erected for the

first Sunday School at Kingfield. With them came Mr. F.G. Missen, a young member of the Woking Church, who was a student at Spurgeon's College, London. He spent his vacations with friends at Send. He volunteered to speak to the expected children and had chosen as the subject of his address the parable of the Feeding of the Five Thousand (John V).

His text was "There is a lad here" (verse 9). Strange to relate, there was a lad there in the tent - but he was the only child present!

What a disappointment for the speaker and teachers. But they remembered that theirs was an adventure in faith and they must carry on. So the following week many of the houses in the locality were visited and the parents persuaded - if their children did not already attend a Sunday School - to send them along to the tent the following Sunday. Of course, the prayers and the efforts of the teachers were rewarded, for on the following Sunday afternoon twenty scholars turned up and thereafter the School grew from week to week. By the way, the name of the lad who was there on that first Sunday in the tent was Harold Stovold.

During August, the Pastor, Rev. F. Middleton Price, preached at the first Sunday service to be held at Kingfield. Quite a few local residents visited the tent and Mr. Price took for his text: "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes".

In September, Harvest Thanksgiving services were held in the tent. Friends and residents of the district were very generous with their gifts of fruit, vegetables and flowers. These were placed tastefully on boxes round the tent poles. Mr. F.G. Missen preached an appropriate sermon to a fair-sized congregation.

## ***Indoor Accommodation***

When the weather became too cold, the larger of the two wooden huts that were on the site, and which had formerly been a horse-box, was re-lined, windows and doors added and the whole transformed into a most comfortable meeting house. Mr. Missen continued to take the Sunday services and when he was free of his college duties a prayer meeting on Saturday. Miss Ruby Simmons continued as organist, and Mr. L. Sparkes and other lay preachers occupied the pulpit on other occasions.

The writer well remembers an outstanding instance of keenness and loyalty during those early days in the hut. A young girl, Miss Ella Clarke, although she lived at the Bleak, Horsell, rarely missed a morning service, walking the three miles to Kingfield and back home again in all sorts of weather and sometimes pushing her young brother in a push-chair, as there were no buses to the Bleak in those days. She often came to Send with my daughter for dinner so that she could teach in the Sunday School at Kingfield in the afternoon.

Before the second Wey Navigation Canal was cut, the floods in the winter time stretched away from the back of the hut as far as the eye could see and one Sunday evening, whilst the service was being held, water was heard lapping against the outside walls! The service ended and the elderly ladies of the congregation (and some of the not so elderly, too) were carried through the flood to dry land.

The smaller of the two huts in the Church grounds was then renovated and used to provide a room for the younger children attending the Sunday School. It was named the Primary Hut and the Misses Kathleen Fluxman, Evelyn Hancock, and later, Miss Gladys Payne laboured for many years within its wooden walls.

## ***The New Church***

The Sunday School and the Church congregation had gradually grown, so that a larger building was now needed. The Rev. F. Middleton Price and the deacons at Woking promptly instructed the architect who had planned the new Church in Percy Street, Mr. Herbert Jones, of Swansea, to submit plans for a School-Chapel at Kingfield. These were approved and the new building was commenced by Messrs.

Norris & Co., of Sunningdale, the builders of the Woking Baptist Church.

## **Foundation Stone Laying**

The Rev. Middleton Price and the Woking Chapel Steward, Mr. Caleb Bond, laid the first and second bricks. In January, 1950, the foundation stone was laid by Mr. H.O. Serpell, J.P. Among the gathering on the platform were the Rev. Middleton Price, Mr. F.G. Missen, the deacons of the Woking Baptist Church, Mr. Somerville Knott, Mr. A.O. Wright, Canon Askwith (Vicar of Woking), Rev. T. Woodhouse (Area Superintendent of the Home Counties Baptist Association), Rev. J. Johnston, Woking Trinity Methodist Church, the minister of the Woking Congregational Church, Mr. G.D. Jennings, J.P., and Mr. W.G. Whitbourn, J.P., representing Cartbridge Congregational Church. Apologies for absence were received from Mr. Vivian Young and Mr. Gordon Unwin. Miss R. Simmons accompanied the singing of the hymns on a small organ.

## **Opening Ceremony ,**

The opening ceremony of the new School-Chapel took place on Wednesday, March 5, 1950. A large gathering of friends had assembled outside the building at 5-50 pm. The Rev. Middleton Price presided, supported by Mr. P.G. Missen and Mrs. J. Somerville Knott. Following the hymn "All people that on Earth do Dwell", the architect handed the key of the School-Chapel to Mr. Caleb Bond, the Chapel Steward. Mr. Bond then presented the key to Mrs. Knott, who said it was a great pleasure to declare the Chapel open for the worship of God and the preaching of His Gospel. She hoped that it would prove a great blessing to the neighbourhood. Mrs. Knott then cut the ribbon which bound the door, and unlocked it.

Public Worship followed, the sermon being delivered by the Rev. J.E. Joyness, of Guildford. Tea was afterwards partaken of. At the evening meeting a large congregation assembled. Mr. G.H. Cook, J.P., of Bookham Baptist Church, presided and was supported by representatives of the various Churches in Woking and District. The Rev. T. Woodhouse (Area Superintendent) said that the reply to criticism of the Church of Christ was to put up another Church as they had done at Kingfield. Mr. F.G. Missen, of Spurgeon's College, who had given much of his time to the Kingfield School and Church, said that Mr. Middleton Price had seen the growing need of a Sunday School in the district and with Mr. Serpell's help had provided the means of meeting that need. Mr. Middleton Price thanked everyone who had worked for the new School and Church, especially Mr. Caleb Bond, who had accepted the whole of the responsibility for the new building, and Mr. W.J. Smith, who had undertaken the oversight at Kingfield and was always there to welcome friends and visitors. Mr. Price also thanked Mr. Missen and referred to the affection in which he was held by Kingfield people. Mr. Serpell had returned home that morning from a tour abroad and a telegram of welcome was sent to him.

The names of Mr. Missen, the Rev. Middleton Price and Mr. Serpell are commemorated on the tablets placed in the side wall of the Church.

On the following Sunday, March 9th, the Rev. Middleton Price preached morning and evening - the first Sunday services in the new Church. What a great thrill it was to those who had hoped that some day they would be able to meet in a brick and stone building to worship God.

At the close of the evening service, Mrs. W.J. Smith was received into membership, and Mrs. W. Hancock presented the Church with a wall clock.

Mr. G. Timms, of the Woking Church, accepted the post of Superintendent of the Sunday School in February, 1950, and Miss M. Sinclair was appointed Secretary of the School and Church. Many Woking gentlemen occupied the pulpit at that time, among whom were Messrs. L. Sparks, A.O. Wright, M.A. Parris, S. Webb, D.W. Buttson, H. Hilliger, and G. Wyatt. Mr. F.C. Hays was appointed Correspondent and worked faithfully for Kingfield until his death.

## **II. MR. F.G. MISSEN BECOMES STUDENT-PASTOR**

**(1930-1931)**

Mr. F.G. Missen commenced his Student~Pastorship of Kingfield in September, 1950, and shortly afterwards held his first Baptismal service in the Baptistry of Woking Baptist Church. The candidates were Mrs. R. Sparrow, Miss P. Sparrow, and Miss Edna Smith. During his ministry the Church and Sunday School prospered exceedingly. About this time, Mr. A.K. Butcher came to Old Woking from the writer's home town, Trowbridge, in Wiltshire. His Church membership was transferred from Emanuel Baptist Church to Kingfield and he soon became an active worker in the Church.

When Mr. Timms retired from the Sunday School super-intendentship, Mr. Butcher succeeded him and shortly afterwards joined Mr. Smith on the Diaconate at Percy Street, representing Kingfield.

Mr. Missen's pastorate at Kingfield ended on September 7th, 1931, he having accepted the pastorate of the Burnham-on-Crouch Church, Essex. On July 50th, 1932, the Rev. F.G. Missen and Miss Ruby Simmons, who had been a teacher and organist at Kingfield from the commencement of the Sunday School and Church, were married at Percy Street by the Rev. Middleton Price.

Later, the Rev. F.G. Missen moved to Walthamstow London, and then to Teddington, Middlesex.

## **III. Mr D. W. Battson**

**(1931-1933)**

Mr. D.W. Battson succeeded the Rev. F.G. Missen in September, 1951. His ministry was always keenly evangelical and an enthusiastic band of young people was attracted to the Church. Mr. Battson being an accomplished musician, a choir was soon in being, accompanied by Miss V.I. King as organist, Mr. L. Blake, violin, and Mr. J. Pow, piano. They very ably led the singing for Sunday worship and gave several sacred concerts.

A mission conducted by Mr. Frank Food, staff evangelist of the National Young Life Campaign was well attended and brought much blessing throughout, especially to the young people of the Church. It also led to the formation of a branch of this popular youth movement at Kingfield, with Mr. Denis Smith as Secretary and Mr. S. Hawkins as Treasurer.

The Ladies Sewing Committee formed in Mr. Missen's time and which consisted of Mrs. F. Woods, Mrs. L.J. Smith, Mrs. Hay, Mrs. W. Hancock, Mrs. Chitty, Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Tout, organised sales of work.

Miss Sinclair, the Secretary of the Sunday School and of the Church, died in April, 1935, after a long and faithful service. She was succeeded as Secretary of the Sunday School by Mr. C. Freeman and as Secretary of the Church by Mr. V.L.J. Smith.

Mr. Battson's ministry ended towards the close of 1955.

## ***Interregnum***

While the Church was without a Pastor, the Rev. Middleton Price undertook the oversight of Kingfield, and the Secretary welcomed many old friends to the pulpit on Sundays. Among them were Methodist Lay Preachers of the district; Messrs. W. New, N.H. Fosbury, and Miss Jessie Arnold B.A., who often spoke at the Women's Own meetings. Mr. Donald Woolnough kindly volunteered to be organist with Miss Margaret Woods as deputy. When Miss Woods left the district, Miss Lily Freeman obliged for

some time.

In March, 1954, Kingfield heard with great regret that the Rev. F. Middleton Price was leaving Woking after 114 years as Pastor, and was going to Twynhelm, Fulham. He will always be remembered at Kingfield with affection as the Pastor of Percy Street who saw the need for the widening of Christ's Kingdom in their district and, with his Deacons, had made the dream into a reality. Some years later, the news of the death of the Rev. Middleton Price, at the close of a sermon preached in his London Church, was received with profound regret and sorrow at Kingfield.

In June, 1934, we were again saddened by the news of the death of Miss Ella Clarke, the young girl whose loyalty and courage and service to Kingfield was recorded earlier in this story.

The Church's Fifth Anniversary services were held in November, 1934. On Sunday the preacher was the Rev. G.W. Harris, of Ashtead. Miss L. Freeman was the soloist. on the following day a birthday tea was held when 65 friends partook. The speaker at the evening service was the Rev. J.A. Cook, of Faringdon. Mr. W.G. Flaxman (Deacon-in-charge), followed with a short address. Mr. L. Sparks, J.P. was in the chair, and Mrs. Donald Woolnough sang a solo, with Mr. D. Woolnough at the organ.

The Rev. Stanley C. Harrison, B.D., of Whitstable, Kent, who had been a missionary in China, succeeded the Rev. F. Middleton Price at Percy Street and commenced his ministry on the first Sunday in December, 1934. He very soon assumed the mantle laid down by his predecessor of co-Pastor and champion of the cause at Kingfield

## ***Appeal Answered***

When Mr. W.J. Smith, as Church Secretary of Kingfield, alarmed at the increasing number of vacant seats at recent Sunday services, appealed to the parent Church at Woking to appoint a full-time Pastor who could visit the people in their homes, Mr. Harrison and the Deacons contacted the Rev. F.T. Dimmick, of Milford-on-Sea. God once again answered the prayers of his followers at Kingfield and Mr. Dimmick accepted the call.

This was an occasion for great joy at Kingfield, and Mr. W.J. Smith wrote the following in the June, 1935, issue of the Woking "Forward" Magazine: "We give thanks to God for His answer to our prayers for a leader for Kingfield. The news of the acceptance of the Pastorate by the Rev. F.T. Dimmick was received with gratification by the members and friends here. There is a feeling abroad that there is a great future for Kingfield. Five years ago a fire was lit here; it blazed for a time, then flickered - and all honour is due to the little band of "stokers" who, by their unremitting energies and love for the cause, kept the smouldering embers alight. Now with the advent of a spiritual leader who will dwell among us, there is every prospect of the fire developing into a great beacon that shall light up the whole neighbourhood, and whose rays shall direct and lead many precious souls to the feet of the Saviour. May God grant His richest blessing on this venture of faith."

## **IV. Rev. F.T. Dimmick**

### ***(1935-1945)***

The Rev. F.T. Dimmick opened his ministry at Kingfield on August 11th, 1935. His family consisted of his wife and three sons, Fred, David, and Paul. He was a thorough Bible scholar and his portrayal of scenes taken from the Old Testament were very vivid. A keen Christian Endeavourer, he revived interest in the movement at Kingfield and was President of the Woking, Guildford and District Union of the Thames Valley C.E. Federation. He will be remembered also for his keen love of nature in all its infinite variety, and was rarely seen without a flower, usually a corn flower, in his buttonhole.

Various improvements to the fabric of the Church were carried out during Mr. Dimmick's pastorate. An architect friend helped to provide a handsome porch with stained glass windows which added

considerably to the appearance of the Church. It was opened on October 13th, 1935, by Mrs. Somerville Knott, the key having been presented to her by Mr. Caleb Bond. Inside the Church the Rev. Dimmick conducted a short service assisted by Mr. A.V. Rowe, treasurer of the Church at Percy Street, Mr. W.J. Smith and Mr. A.K. Butcher. The thanks of the Church were conveyed to the donor of the porch by the Rev. Dimmick.

The text on the wall behind the pulpit: "Sir, we would see Jesus", was chosen and provided by Mr. Keevil, who was a good and generous friend to the Church before he and his wife left to reside in Bournemouth.

Next came the building of a new School Hall at the side of the Church, made necessary by the great increase in the Sunday School. Mr. Serpell, D.L., again helped Kingfield with a contribution of £100 towards the cost of the building. Mrs. Dimmick performed the opening ceremony and the Rev. C.E. Camble of Addlestone was the speaker at the short service that followed in the new hall. The original building which had been known as the School Hall was now referred to as the Church.

During 1935 the members hoard with deep sorrow of the death of Mr. L. Sparks, J.P. of the Woking Church. He had been a great friend to Kingfield from the beginning, occupying the pulpit on many occasions and often conducting the week-night service.

A Boys' Club was organised by Mr. W.J. Smith, with Councillor J. Steer taking a keen interest and helping to provide necessary equipment. Refreshments were provided by Mrs. Chitty and Mrs. Davis. The girls were not going to be left out, so a club was started for them. This was named the Girls' Guild and had Miss Margaret Batty as Leader assisted by Mrs. Craddock and Miss K. Flaxnan. For the younger children there were the Crusaders for the boys and Sunbeams for the girls. Youth was served by a Young People's Guild with Mr. Denis Smith as Leader and Miss Rose Maas as Secretary. Mr. Leslie Stokes was the speaker on several occasions.

Mrs. Dimmick had to give up the Girls' Bible Class owing to recurring ill-health and Mrs. E.A. Back, of Percy Street, and Mrs. W.J. Smith took over.

## ***Own Baptistry***

A splendid gift of a marble Baptistry was made to the Church by Mr. Ashley Cook, M.B.E., who with his family was then worshipping with us. Hitherto, the friends at Kingfield who wished to be baptised had to travel to Percy Street. It was very gratifying to Pastor and members to now have a Baptistry of their own.

During 1935 the Christian Endeavour Society was re-organised, with Mr. A.K. Butcher as Leader, Miss E. Winter as Program Convener, Miss L. Freeman as accompanist, and Miss E. Smith as Secretary.

Mrs. W. Smith, senior, having come to reside in Old Woking, her membership was transferred from Trowbridge, Wiltshire, to Kingfield.

On October 17th, 1936, the wedding took place of two active workers in the Sunday School and Church from the early days - Miss L. Freeman and Mr. A.K. Butcher. Mr. Butcher had been Superintendent of the Sunday School for several years, and Miss Freeman had been a teacher, organist, and a member of several organisations of the Church. The Rev. F.T. Dimmick officiated and many of the scholars of the Sunday School attended and afterwards formed a Guard of Honour outside the Church. Mr. Dimmick's youngest son, Paul, was an excellent organist and with Miss Eileen Simpson accompanied the singing of the hymns at the services. There was a Bible Class of young men taken by Mr. Dimmick and they were always very happy together, as he was a very friendly and understanding man.

Mrs. J. Somerville Knott, who with Mr. Knott, had always been most helpful to Kingfield, invited the Missionary Auxiliary to her lovely house and grounds at "Newlands", Hook Heath, for their garden parties on several occasions.

The second world war occurred during Mr. Dimmick's ministry and brought a great tragedy to him and his family. His second son, David, who had not long married a local young lady, was called to the army and was thought to be on board a transport vessel which was sunk by enemy sub marines off the coast of Crete. Nothing further was heard of him, and there followed along time of anxiety and hope against hope for our beloved Pastor and his family.

Towards the end of Mr. Dimmick's ministry, Mr. W.J. Smith resigned from the Church Secretaryship and was succeeded by Mr. B.J. Billing, who had joined Kingfield from the Guildford Baptist Church. Mr. Porteous was appointed Church Treasurer.

The Rev. F.T. Dimmick's pastorate ended when he left to return to Lyndhurst in the New Forest, where several years later he suddenly died. He will always be remembered by those who knew him intimately as a genial and much-loved Pastor.

No two ministers could have worked more understandingly and happily together than the Rev. Stanley Herrisson the Pastor of Percy Street, and the Rev. Fred Dimmick, the Pastor of Kingfield. Throughout the years Kingfield has had many friends, but none greater than the Rev. Stanley C. Harrisson, who in 1960, and helped by Mrs. Harrisson, is still active in service to his Lord.

### ***In memoriam***

The joy of Christ's service is often mysteriously mixed with sorrow-many of us have experienced this. Mr. Dimmick in the loss of his son David; the writer in the loss of his youngest son, Leslie, whose chief joy was to stand in the 'porch at Kingfield and hand out hymn-books with a smile' Then there was Mrs. L. Freeman and her daughter Violet, who were always active workers for our Church-all summoned to meet the God they loved and served in His Heavenly Kingdom. It is hard to say: "Thy will be done" - but to a Christian it becomes much less hard.

## **V. REV. W. PERRY HORTON**

**(1945-1949 )**

Before the Rev. Dimmick left Kingfield he introduced to the members the Rev. W. Perry Horton, of Fleet, Hampshire. Mr. Horton had been a missionary in India, where he had met and married his wife, and with them to Kingfield came his daughter Helen, who was a hospital nurse, and Mr. W. Dawson.

Mr. Perry Horton was an energetic and popular leader, especially with the young people whom he often joined in their rambles and excursions into the surrounding countryside.

A Company of the Boys' Brigade was formed at this time with Captain L. Stokes and Lieutenant W. Dawson as officers. For the younger boys there were the Life Boys with Mr. A.K. Butcher as the Leader-in-Charge. The young ladies had their Girls' Life Brigade, with Miss Eileen Simpson as Captain and Miss Gladys Hoare as Lieutenant.

Work among the young continued to show increasing fruitfulness, and the Sunday School grew rapidly under a loyal band of teachers. Secretary of the school at this time was Mrs. C. Freeman and the pianist was Miss Margaret Smith, both of whom served in these capacities for many years. In charge of the Primary Department was Miss R. Maas and Miss E. Smith. The Sunday School was supporting a cot in the Mission Infirmary at Chandragundu in the Lushia Hills, India. Miss Oliver from the Infirmary and the Rev. and Mrs. E.J. Raper from the same station visited Kingfield to give Missionary addresses to the Church and Sunday School on several occasions. Missionary work generally, as might be expected under Mr. Horton's leadership, was well to the fore, and many Missionary Auxiliary conferences in neighbouring Baptist Churches were attended by Mrs. W. Simpson, Miss E. Simpson and the Missionary Secretary, Mr. W.J. Smith. Mr. W. Simpson became Church Secretary in 1945.



## **Youth Centre**

An outstanding feature of the Rev. Perry Horton's pastorate was the erection of the Youth Centre. This was accomplished by voluntary labour under the supervision of Er. R. Warren, a builder and teacher in the Sunday School, It was a substantial structure and the young men and women (and some of the 'not so young' men) of the Church joined with the Pastor in the rather arduous work. It cut the cost of the building to £500.

The Rev. W. Perry Horton closed his ministry at Kingfield in 1949.

Kingfield was without a Pastor for a year, and during that time friends from Woking and District occupied the pulpit. Among them were Messrs. W.G. Simmons, G. Mansey, Norman Clarke, A.K. Butcher, and the Woking Gospel Quintet. Mr. L.W. Stokes, who had on the death of Mr. W. Simpson, succeeded him as Church Secretary, looked after the affairs of the Church. The Sunday School continued to increase under the superintendent of Mr. Butcher.

The Rev. L.H. Fraser from Hayes, Middlesex, succeeded the Rev. S.C. Harrison as Pastor of Percy Street, Mr. Harrison eventually returning to his former Church at Whitstable.

## **VI. REV. G.W. YAXLEY**

### **(1950-1952)**

Songs and speeches bade welcome to the Rev. G.W. Yaxley and Mrs. Yaxley at a social gathering to welcome them to Kingfield in April, 1950. The Rev. L.H. Fraser, Woking Baptist minister, was in the chair and welcomed Mr. Yaxley as a colleague. Mr. L.W. Stokes, Church Secretary, pledged the support and prayers of the Kingfield members. Mr. W.G. Simmons, Secretary of the Woking Church, followed and spoke of the warm and friendly bonds that had always existed between the two Churches. Greetings from the Women's Own and the Youth Club and other organisations of the Church were given by their secretaries. Mr. Butcher spoke on behalf of the Sunday School. Musical items followed when three sisters, Misses Edna and Gwen Smith and Mrs. G. Butler sang a musical welcome to the new Pastor. Miss Lesley Bromley recited, Miss Eileen Simpson sang a solo, and the Woking Baptist Choir rendered two pieces under the conductor-ship of Mr. Gilbert Wyatt.

The Rev. G. Yuxley had a thought for the older people and instituted the Good Fellowship Club, which became a very happy gathering organised and run by Mrs. A.K. Butcher and a sympathetic committee with Mrs. L. Motley, Secretary, and Mrs. A. Grimshaw, Treasurer. The Revised Baptist Church Hymnal was introduced and a handbell-ringing team was formed and taught by Mr. Yaxley. They added much to the enjoyment at various concerts. Many members and friends availed themselves of the afternoon and evening coach tours run by the Church.

The Pastor was keen on Christian Endeavour and Missionary work and allowed the Missionary Secretary, Mr. Smith, to conduct a Missionary prayer meeting on the last Thursday in each month.

### **21st Anniversaries**

The Sunday School celebrated their 21st anniversary in August, 1950, when the Pastor preached impressive sermons. The Juniors, Intermediates and Beginners, under the direction of Mr. A.K. Butcher, Miss E. Smith and Miss G. Hoare respectively, sang and recited special items. The Church Choir, conducted by Mrs. A.K. Butcher, sang two pieces accompanied by Miss E. Simpson at the organ.

The 21st anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone was celebrated in January, 1951. About 80 people sat down to a birthday tea at which Mr. W.J. Smith, the first Church member, out a two-tier

cake (made by Mrs. R. Maas) and spoke of the growth and activities of the Church over the last twenty-one years. At the meeting which followed, the Chair was taken by Mr. W.G. Simmons, M.B.E., and an address was given by the Rev. R.S.S. Heath, Vicar of Woking. During the evening, a musical programme was presented, at the close of which Mrs. G. Gale was presented with a handbag and a purse of money by Miss Jennifer Hobbs in recognition of twenty-one years' loyal service as Church caretaker.

During the year we were pleased to welcome the Secretary of the Guildford Baptist Church, Mr. C.E. Bingham, who spoke of his work in India. Another welcome speaker on several occasions was Gipsy Williams, missionary and evangelist to gipsies, who was a native of Old Woking.

An unusual spectacle for Kingfield was when the South Surrey Battalion of the Boys' Brigade with their band visited Kingfield for their Founder's Day parade. With the Kingfield Company under Captain W. Dowson leading, they paraded round Rydens Way and High Street, Old Woking. The Church was filled to capacity for a combined Sunday School and Youth Guild service, with the Boys' Brigade. Mr. Denis Smith, of Byfleet, gave the address, his subject being "Keys". The chairman was Mr. A.K. Butcher and the organist Miss E. Simpson. James Searle, a member of the Kingfield Company, was presented with the B.B. Diploma for Bravery, for his courage in rescuing a boy from the river Wey in July of that year. Summer camps were held in the Isle of Wight by the Boys' Brigade and at Whitstable by the Girls' Life Brigade. The girls were fortunate in having the help of the Rev. S.C. Harrison and Mrs. Harrison who were then living at Whitstable.

Mr. Grimsey, "Uncle Grimsey" to the young folk, held a mission for children which was very popular with the young people. Miss V. Butcher, who was then Church Treasurer, started a branch of the Young Worshipers' League, and was assisted by Miss Pauline Wallace. Miss M. Keeble succeeded Miss Butcher as Church Treasurer in 1955. The Rev. G.W. Yaxley returned to Norfolk, having accepted the pastorate of the Great Yarmouth Church.

## **VII. REV. DAVID BOONE M.A.**

### **(1955-1960)**

The sixth Pastor of Kingfield began his ministry on Sunday, August 1st, 1955. He had spent three years in a Canterbury coal mine as a "Bevin boy" during the war. Kingfield was his first pastorate. He went to Bristol Baptist College and graduated at Bristol University. He then went to Regent's Park College, Oxford, in 1951, and graduated in theology in 1952. W. Boone had two student pastorates - at Upper Studley, Wiltshire, and Wolvercote, Oxford. Mr. and Mrs. Boone were married at Tonbridge, Kent

There was a large congregation for the service of induction and ordination at Kingfield. The Principal of Regent's Park College, the Rev. R.L. Child, spoke in glowing terms of Mr. Boone's qualities of mind and character, so essential to his calling. The Act of Ordination, in which the Rev. R.L. Child was joined by the Rev. W.D. Jackson (Southern Area Superintendent of the Baptist Union), was followed by speeches from the Rev. L.H. Fraser (minister of Woking Baptist Church and Moderator of the Home Counties Baptist Association), and the Rev. S.F. Field, formerly Mr. Boone's pastor at Tonbridge. The charge to the new minister was given by Rev. R.L. Child, and the Rev. David Boone was inducted into the pastorate of Kingfield by the Rev. W.D. Jackson. Other Baptist ministers were present and took part.

At the evening service, which was attended by a large congregation, the Rev. D. Boone thanked those who had prepared for his coming by getting the Manse and its garden ready. About 80 people travelled from Tonbridge to the service.

## **Silver Jubilee 1951**

Kingfield members were delighted at their Silver Jubilee by a visit from their former Student-Pastor, the Rev. F.G. Missen. At the evening meeting Mr. A.K. Butcher was in the chair, and the speaker was the Rev. S.C. Harrison, now returned to the locality as the minister at Addlestone. Mr. L. Stokes spoke of the Church's history and the Chairman said their aim was now to become self-supporting and a great consolidation of the work was now in progress.

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## **A Fully-Constituted Church \_**

A large congregation filled the Church for a service of thanksgiving and consecration on April 10th, 1956, held to mark the independence of the Church from the mother Church in Percy Street, Woking. The Rev. H.V. Larcombe, Area Superintendent, led the worship and the Rev. Principal R.L. Childs, a Past President of the Baptist Union, gave the address. The Rev. I.H. Fraser, minister of the Woking Baptist Church stated that the Kingfield Church was now free of debt and handed over the trust deeds and covenant of the Church and land, value £10,000, to the minister. In reply the Rev. D. Boone expressed the thanks of those at Kingfield for the work of past ministers, mentioning in particular those who had helped in the early days. They had nurtured, prayed for and helped the work at Kingfield. In the near future, as a small token of the help of their brethren at Percy Street, they would be presenting that Church with an electric clock. The Rev. Principal R.L. Childs in his address spoke on "Freedom and Responsibility". Following the service, 91 Foundation Members signed the Church Covenant. The Rev. H.V. Larcombe welcomed them as a fully-constituted Church in the Home Counties Association and the Baptist Union of Great Britain; and Ireland".

## **The Manse**

A fund was started in 1957 to build a new manse on the ground at the side of the Church, but a suitable house close by coming on the market it was decided to take up a mortgage with the Temperance Permanent Building Society. This left the ground at the side of the Church free to serve as a car park, which was becoming more and more necessary. The Pastor and his wife and two little children moved to the new manse in 1958.

The Women's Own, which was continually increasing its membership, had as its President Mrs. D. Boone with Hrs. M. Cornwell as Vice-President. Mrs. R. Maas was Secretary with Mrs. Cavell as Treasurer. For women who could not attend the Tuesday afternoon meeting, an evening Group was formed for Friday evening, with Mrs. M. Wakeman as Secretary and Mrs. B. Rutland as Treasurer. The needs of the men of the Church are catered for by the Men's Fireside Fellowship which meets once a month on Friday evenings. Mr. A. Grimshaw is Secretary.

## **Operation Friendship**

An outstanding feature of Mr. Boone's ministry was the distribution of 2,000 letters each month offering help and advice, which were delivered by willing hands to every household in the locality. These letters were much appreciated and were often taken advantage of.

The monthly Saturday evening rallies and the Sunday evening Guest Services became very popular. Mr. R. Burnett led community singing before the Sunday evening service. The successor of the Rev. I.H. Fraser as Pastor of the Woking Baptist Church, the Rev. Philip Jones, was the speaker at one of the Saturday evening rallies and Mr. Burnett was the soloist.

## ***Evangelistic Mission***

Much prayer and organisation were put into the preparation of an evangelistic mission held in April, 1959. Special preachers, singers and a film attracted large gatherings for five days. Before the service on each evening Mr. R. Burnett conducted community singing, and the Woking Gospel Singers sang on most of the evenings. The Mission was a great success, many young people testifying to changed lives during and since the meetings.

## ***30th Church Anniversary***

Another landmark was the 30th Church Anniversary held on Wednesday, September 30th, 1959. The large congregation included visitors from neighbouring Churches. The Moderator of the Home Counties Baptist Association, the Rev. H.E. Ward, of Kingston, presided, and the guest speaker was the Rev. G. Cumming, of Eastbourne. He delivered an impressive address on the text: "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness".

The Church Secretary, Mr. A.K. Butcher, gave a comprehensive Church report, showing the remarkable growth during the past years, the membership now standing at 103. The annual gift day effort resulted in the record sum of £108 being raised.

A most successful sale of work was held in 1959, which realised £102, a special feature being a balloon rocket operated by Mr. F. Cornwall.

Visual aid equipment in the Church was augmented by the purchase of a film projector with sound track and many excellent films have been shown. There is also the Aldis projector for strip films and slides and Mr. F. Cornwall, besides being the producer of many attractive posters for the Church has proved himself a most efficient projectionist.

The Women's Own held their 26th anniversary on October 27th, 1959. The speaker was the Rev. Violet Hedger of London. Mrs. R. Maas, Hon. Secretary, gave a most satisfactory report on the year's activities and Mrs. Leslie Davis of Guildford, accompanied by Mrs. V. Pearse, sang a solo. Representatives from eight neighbouring women's meetings answered the roll-call. At the tea table afterwards Mrs. M. Cornwall, senior, presented a book-token to the Rev. David Boone.

On their retirement from the committee of Kingfield Baptist Women's Own, after 25 and 20 years service respectively, Mrs. W.J. Smith and Mrs. I. Tickner were presented with embossed initial writing-cases by Mrs. D. Boone, President. At a later meeting Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Tickner were made honorary life members of the Committee.

The news of the death of the Rev. F.G. Missen at Teddington came as a great shock to the Kingfield members who had worked with him during his Student Pastorship. He was a most sincere preacher of the Gospel and a personnel friend. Heartfelt sympathy was felt for his devoted wife - the former Miss Ruby Simmons, the faithful Sunday-school teacher and the player of the little organ in the early days. During his pastorate at Burnham-on-Crouch the Rev. F. Missen was one of the "Essex Five", a band of ministers who toured the neighbouring countryside conducting evangelical missions.

## ***Choir***

A most pleasing, and in the writer's opinion, a necessary addition to the Church services, was the formation again of a choir. Mr. R. Featherstone, the choirmaster, gathered together a fine band of singers to brighten the services.

Miss Eileen Simpson, who had been our organist for 16 years, left for Cornwall and was succeeded by Mrs. V. Pearse.

Ter-Jubilee Celebration Fund This celebration is to thank God for His great goodness to our

denomination over the past 150 years- that is, from 1812. The years covered by the fund are from May, 1959 to May, 1963. It is hoped to raise in this period the sum of £300,000 from 248,263 Church members. The money raised will go towards the building of new Churches, assist ministerial training, augment the capital of the Home Work Fund and advance the work of the Baptist Union. A minimum of 7/6d. per annum from each member would achieve the amount aimed at. Mr. W.J. Smith offered to become representative for Kingfield.

## **Baptisms**

The fruits of Mr. Boone's ministry and the Mission of 1959 began to appear towards the end of his ministry. In January 1960 four young men and two young women went through the waters of baptism, and in February two more young ladies were baptised. Thus the second part of the challenge to the Pastor and Church thrown out by the Rev. D.W. Jackson at Mr. Boone's induction and ordination service - that the membership should increase from 60 to 100 - had already been passed; and the first part of the challenge that the Church should become completely independent of the Baptist Union's financial aid, was well on the way to being fulfilled, the assistance asked for having dropped to 5275. `

## **Farewell Service**

The farewell service of the Rev. David Boone, M.A., was held in the Church on Friday evening, March 4th, 1960. The Church was packed to capacity and included fifteen friends from Crofton, the place of his new ministry. The Rev. S.C. Harrison, B.D., presided, and the speakers were the Rev. Philip Jones, of the Baptist Church at Woking., the vicar of Woking (the Rev. K.C. Phillips), Mr. C.O. Hunt (Guildford), Treasurer of the H.C.B.A., Rev. C. Smallman (Guildford), Rev. Aubrey Moore (Hindhead), Mr. A.K. Butcher (Kingfield Church Secretary), Mr. L.W. Stokes, and Mr. White (Church Secretary, Crofton Baptist Church). Mr. Leslie Stokes, on behalf of the Kingfield Church, presented Mr. Boone with a cheque. Previously the Good Fellowship Club had presented Mr. Boone with a car rug, and the Bible Class and Youth Guild with a five-year diary. Mrs. Boone was given a suitcase as a parting gift by the Women's Own.

All the speakers spoke of the remarkable way in which the Rev. David Boone had built up the Church, and his faithful ministry during the past six-and-a-half years. They wished him God's richest blessing in his new sphere of labour at Crofton. Mr. White (Church Secretary) spoke on behalf of the Crofton Church.

Mr. Boone feelingly replied, thanking officers and members of Kingfield for their unfailing love and service during the time he had been among them. A most impressive service ended with the Benediction by the Rev. S.C. Harrison.

On the following Sunday the Rev. Boone concluded his pastorate of Kingfield. At the morning service he took as his text: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide you with Mine eye" (Psalm 52: 8). In the evening Mr. Boone spoke on the text which is engraved on the wall of the Church: "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12: 21). At the Communion service which followed, five new members were received into the fellowship of the Church. Mr. Boone expressed his thankfulness for the strong ties of Christian love that had bound Pastor and people together. In the Sunday School in the afternoon Mr. Boone was presented with a set of photographic accessories by the Superintendent, teachers and scholars.

The Rev. S.C. Harrison accepted the position of Moderator for Kingfield during the interregnum.

So we come to the close of the sixth pastorate of the Kingfield Church, The Rev. David Boone built up our Church both spiritually and financially. What a grand finale to his ministry to be able to welcome five more members into the fellowship of the Church at his last Communion service, We thanked God for this sign of His continued blessing towards us.

## ***Long Service***

The worship and work of our Church at Kingfield has been favoured over the years by the long and devoted service of many of its office-bearers, among whom must be mentioned Mr. A.K. Butcher who, until his appointment as Church Secretary held the post of superintendent of the Sunday School for 27 years - a wonderful record. Mr. Stokes, whom he succeeded, was the Church secretary for many years and also did great work for the Baptist Lay Preachers' Association as well as being Captain of our Boys' Brigade.

Preparing the Communion Table was, for a great many years, the loving service of Mrs. R. Maas and on her retirement it was undertaken by Mrs. L. Blake for the morning service and for the evening by Mrs. M. Cornwell.

Miss E. Smith has been responsible for the floral decoration of the Church for 28 years, and has led the Primary department of the Sunday School for at least 12 of these, combining with those duties also that of B.M.S. secretary. Miss Gladys Hoare has been with us as leader of the Beginners' department for a very long time.

As mentioned earlier, Mrs. G. Gale was caretaker of the Church for 21 years. Mrs. L. Blake now has the arduous task of caring for the Church premises.

Mr. F. Cornwell succeeded Mr. Butcher as Sunday School superintendent. The Play-Hour he inaugurated for the scholars on Thursday evening proved very popular.

Mr. L. Motley, who succeeded Miss M. Keeble as Church treasurer in 1955 ably deals with the Church's increasing finances (early Church notice books in my possession give an average offertory for the Sunday services as 13/- to 14/-!). The treasurer of the B.M.S. for Kingfield is Mr. J. Dunford and Mrs. F. Cornwell looks after the finances of the Sunday School. Mr. Rutland is in charge of the Home Work Fund.

Literature and good Press relations must take their part in the modern church and Kingfield's monthly News letter is now edited by Mr. L. Stokes and its distribution organised by Mr. T. Pearse. Secretary of our branch of the I.B.R.A., is Mr. J. Turner and Press Correspondent for the Church is Mr. W.J. Smith.

Mr. W. Gales is leader of the Bible Class and Youth Club and Mr. D. Byde is in charge of the Junior Christian Endeavour with Mrs. J. Dunford as assistant. Mrs. Butcher who for many years has given loyal service to Kingfield in many capacities now leads the Good Fellowship Club, a fortnightly afternoon meeting; which brings much joy into the lives of many folk who are not so young as they once were.

Kingfield delegates to B.W.L. assemblies have been Mrs. Maas, Mrs. Pearse and Mrs. Smith.

## ***A Salute to our Young Workers***

It is a great joy in these days to see so many young people at Kingfield willing to become Sunday School teachers and to serve their Church in other ways. It means that our Church is assured of workers to carry on the Christian tradition at Kingfield in the days to come.

Now to the future. Kingfield has always been a friendly Church, the members being bound together by the ties of love and fellowship with the one great aim of extending Christ's Kingdom in this corner of His vineyard.

## ***Sincere Appreciation***

I cannot close this short history without acknowledging the great financial sacrifices the deacons and members of Woking Baptist Church made for Kingfield from the beginning until our Church was able to be independent in 1956. Once they put their hands to the plough they never looked back and were consistently backed by their successive Pastors at Percy Street. The adventure in faith launched in 1929

has, with God's help, been fully justified.

It has given me great pleasure to write this story of our beloved Church and Sunday School. I have tried to be accurate in the sequence of events and the friends who have helped us, but if anyone should have been inadvertently omitted I offer my sincere apologies. My thanks to Mr. A.K. Butcher for so kindly writing n Foreword.

I close this history of Kingfield with thanks to God for the past, and with the text which has been so often quoted at Kingfield: "It is the Lord is doing and it is marvellous in our eyes". For the present - "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; and for the future - I ask God's Benediction on our Church and Sunday School in the days to come.

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