**MOUNT TABOR METHODIST CHURCH**

**1820 1970**

**THE THIRD FIFTY YEARS**

**1920 1970**

 **20p 4s.0d.**

 **SURVEY OF CHURCH AFFAIRS AT MOUNT TABOR**

In 1920 services were held celebrating the first centenary of the church. A booklet was published then which traced the history of Methodism in the village up to that time. It has been thought fitting that some record of the life and work of the church here during the last fifty years should be made.

**Centenary Celebrations 1920**

These were very successful, on the Saturday 262 people sat down to tea and the chapel was crowded for the evening meeting, when messages from old scholars and friends were read prior to addresses being given by officials of the church. The three Sunday services were also well attended and over £760 was raised which more than met the cost of the thorough renovation of the premises. The success of this weekend was largely due to the enthusiastic efforts of the minister the Rev Samuel Marriott. He is still affectionately remembered by those who knew him as being all that a pastor should be, alive to the needs of every member of his flock and doing all he could to see that those needs were met. The speakers of the Saturday evening meeting included Mr John Sutcliffe and Mr Mark Stansfield who continued to be mainstays of the church and school for another ten years. As stewards of the society, trustees of the property, superintendents of the school and above all as class leaders. They gave whole hearted service in the work which had a supreme place in their affection and loyalty. Not only did they set a worthy example of Christian living in their own disciplined lives but they also held up those in their spiritual charge to high endeavour, inspiring them to have a sense of stewards-ship in the use of their possessions and talents.

Also taking part in the Centenary celebrations were Mr W.H. Longbottom a former active worker who after leaving the village continued to act as secretary, and Ald. R.D. Ward who in 1929 completed 43 years as treasurer to the trust during which time his advice and help were of great value. On view at the Centenary awards and afterwards presented to the trust by Cllr. and Mrs J.R. Swaine was the communion cup used from 1820 to 1833. It had been bought for the use of the society by one of the first trustees Mrs James Rothery, the grandfather of Mrs Swaine; it is on view in the communion rail. A later gift of an individual communion set perpetuates the memory of Mr John Sutcliffe and Mr Mark Stansfield.

The years following the First World War saw the beginning of many changes in the pattern of the life of the church. One of the most fundamental of these was the passing of the class meeting where members meet week by week under their leader for the purpose of sharing their religious experiences. Each person was encouraged to speak freely of his or her difficulties, failings or triumphs. The leader was thus able to discipline or encourage his charges as the need arose.

Prayer meetings held after every Sunday evening service also ceased around this time, the petitions to the almighty at times tended to reflect the opinions of the petitioner on his fellow worshipers but nevertheless, these meetings usually created an atmosphere in which the divine presence was very real.

The passing of the class and prayer meetings was accompanied by that of the habit of “Clerking” at ordinary services by members of the congregation. One wonders what the loud ejaculations of “Hallelujah” or “Praise the Lord” shouted from the pews in previous centenary days would have on a service today. They certainly used to keep the hearers awake and often inspired the preacher to make emotional appeals for converts to come and kneel at the communion rail. Was the more sedate atmosphere of later years perhaps responsible for diminishing numbers of attenders? Perhaps the chief reason was that the introduction of better transport to town meant that the church ceased to be the focal point of village life. A changed approach to religion induced by the war years also meant a decreased interest in church affairs. The records show that in the 1920’s it was necessary to provide 400 hymn sheets for the Sunday School Anniversary Service in the afternoon and 600 at night, forms had to be brought into the aisles to accommodate all the congregation whilst a large number of visitors had tea in the school between services.

**“There will be a tea and meeting”** was a frequent announcement; bodily fortification was needed to face the issues to be considered afterwards. The Annual Sunday School tea and meeting was an outstanding affair necessitating two “sittings down” for tea, long speeches from the elders, a lengthy secretary’s report and items by the children at the evening meeting. Before the First World War the charge for the tea was adults 6d. children 3d. The fare included home- made bread, cakes, buns, fatty cakes and pastries, with cream for the tea in lavish quantities and its quality earned the Mount Tabor Ladies a well- deserved reputation. Even the liquid brew was said to be better than town tea, was this because the water used was pumped from a well near the cemetery? Tea also preceded the annual meetings of the Teachers and Senior Scholars, the Society of the Band of Hope and Foreign Missions. The last of these was held in September and often included a circuit welcome to the new minister. The adequate provision made for these teas was due to the efficiency of the various ladies deputed to “see to the tea”. Misses M.H. & E. Sutcliffe had this task over a long number of years. Others mentioned in the records included Miss M.L. Berry, the Misses Walmsley, Mrs Greenwood, Mrs L. Stansfield, Miss N. Moore, Mrs G. Sutcliffe, Miss J.M. Sutcliffe and Miss I. Bamforth who all served in other capacities.

At the Whit Monday “treat” coffee brewed in large earthenware containers and 8oz currant buns were served either in the school if wet or the field if fine. 160 such buns, sometimes more were ordered along with 8 dozen or more oranges. The singing of hymns in the village, generally from special Whitsuntide hymn sheets provided by the Sunday School Union preceded the tea interval which was followed by games in the field or school. The day usually ended with the formation of “kissing rings” and the singing of old catches such as “the green leaves are falling” and “Green grow the leaves on the old oak tree”. Many a romance had its origins at such a time, in later years organised games replaced these more sentimental pastimes.

**Musical Matters**

All with any pretentions to musical ability and some others were wont to look forward with pleasure to the few Sundays before Whitsuntide when hymns were rehearsed at the afternoon session. Many new tunes and verses were brought to the attention of those interested. One remembers with some nostalgia the school harmonium which in the earlier part of the period under consideration was used to accompany the singing. Its music seemed particularly fitting for the Sankey’s hymns in use then and helped bring vocal effort from even the most reluctant of the male scholars. The annual rendering of the “Messiah” around Christmas time was a major item in the programme of choir performances.

The considerable talent of our own singers on these occasions was augmented by voices from other places in the district. Eisteddfods held at Trinity Chapel for the circuit in the late 1920’s and at Booth Congregational Chapel some years later for the district, were incentives to musical efforts on the part of members of the choir and school, several of whom were successful entrants in the various competitions. An attempt was made in 1931 to inaugurate an Annual Musical Festival for the district with singing and band music in the recreation ground. Its lack of success was largely due to inclement weather. When Methodist Union in 1935 saw the introduction of a new Methodist Hymnal, the gift of a pulpit hymn book by Mr and Mrs E. Horsfall was much appreciated. Fund’s for tune books for the choir were raised by a bonfire night, in addition to the plot fire there was a parkin supper and an impromptu sketch. A copy of the 1751 edition of Wesley’s Hymns was given to the Trustees in 1925 by Mr T. Skelton Ellis whose great grandfather Joseph Skelton one of the original trustees had used it 100 year previously. Perusal of its pages shows a greater emphasis on death and future life, than that given by more modern hymnals.

Annual choir trips were enjoyed by members of the congregation as well as those of the choir. No reference to musical matters would be complete without some tribute being paid to the work of Mr Edgar Farnell. He was appointed choirmaster in 1921 and continued to inspire the choral side of the activities of the church until near the end of his life in 1957. He not only did this as a member and leader of the choir but also in rehearsing scholars for the Whitsuntide singing and for their parts on Anniversary demonstrations or Carol Services, as well as Eisteddfod events. In the married folks concerts held annually from 1926 to 1936 he was a star artist and bass singer and also as an actor in the part of Nathaniel in a series of Anastasia sketches. In training both the choir and scholars he showed remarkable talent for obtaining the best possible interpretation of a piece of music.

For several years he received valuable help from Mr Leslie Lee who was organist from 1926 to 1939, Leslie served the church in many ways especially as chapel steward. Mr Tom Lee, father of Leslie and superintendent of the Sunday school from 1929 to 1948, also society steward from 1934 to 1947. In addition to faithful service in these offices made notable contribution to the musical training of scholars by forming a harmonica band with a number of boys from the ages of nine to fifteen. For some of them a lasting love of music was thus created and it provided them all with a worthwhile recreation.

A minor part in the musical matters was played by the organ blower; there was considerable competition for this job among older boys of the school possibly because of the slight remuneration which it carried with it. Some of them made their mark at their work as initials carved in the woodwork bear witness. The post became a memory in 1932 when electric lighting was introduced and an electric blower installed. This event was commemorated by a musical evening with vocal pianoforte with organ contributions from Mr Ernest Firth, his wife Madame Rachael Crowther and their daughter Miss Edna Firth. The dedication of the lighting was made by the oldest member of the church Mrs James Bamforth. Mr Firth a former organist of the church died a few weeks after these events.

**Other Activities**

The Wesley Guild, run by Mrs L Stansfield with its diversity of interests, devotional, literary, social and musical up to 1934 helped members to develop ways of self - expression and united them in a happy fellowship. The Band of Hope which had been a flourishing concern before the Centenary went out of existence about this time to be revived for a while in later years. The Sisterhood still very much alive came into being in the mid- twenties. All through the years it has been of help in providing a means of fellowship for the ladies of the church as well as assisting the mother body in a whole hearted and generous manner. The leader Mrs Ben Greenwood shouldered many other responsibilities including those of class leader and society steward. Along with Mr Farnell she helped by her ability as an actress to make the Married Folks Concerts a big success.

With her three inseparable friends Mrs Spencer, Mrs Smith and Mrs Ambler she was a loyal supporter of every branch of the work of the church and infected others with her cheerful spirit and good temper.

**Sunday School Affairs**

Modernisation of the Primary Department including the training of helpers was carried out under the guidance of Mrs L. Stansfield soon after 1920. Later leaders of the department included Miss A. Walmsley, Miss H. Lassey and Mrs A. Mann. A few years later the character of the morning services at Sunday School Anniversaries was changed by the introduction of Demonstrations with the children taking the main share in the presentation. These services have provided inspiration and uplift to many who have witnessed their performances, the willing and able contribution of the children themselves being largely responsible. Whilst no doubt their own characters were influenced by the parts they took in the services. The same may be said of the Carol Services which commenced about the same time. The separation of the scholars into two “houses”; each competing for a trophy proved of interest and help for a few years. The custom of taking part in District and National examinations was begun in the early thirties and has continued to the present day, the results have invariably been satisfactory. Those connected with the school when Rev E. Boulton and Rev W.H. Hanby were ministers in the circuit will recall with pleasure the very great interest these two clergymen took in the work of the school. They rarely failed to come half an hour earlier than they need have done when planned to preach so they could come into the school and co-operate in the teaching being done there. Sunday school outings of individual classes or of the whole upper school often included walks over the moor to Hardcastle Craggs or Haworth and trips to Sunny Vale Gardens, Manningham Park or Hollingworth Lake. These outings provided a welcome change and pleasant entertainment.

**The Tennis Club**

From time to time attempts were made to have week night activities for young people such as Boy Scouts Boys Brigade, a Boys Club and a Young Men’s Institute. They were mostly of short duration on account of lack of leaders or lack of numbers. The formation of a Tennis Club in 1920 was more successful. By considerable manual labour and much effort in raising money, two secluded grass courts were made in the field adjoining the cemetery. Two trophies for competition were given by the opener MR R.D. Parker whose forebears were closely associated with the church. It became a village institution rather than an adjunct of the school and gave a means of healthy exercise and enjoyment for over thirty years. Repeated wet seasons and proximity of hard courts in the town led to its having to cease its activities.

**James and Lewis**

After the deaths of Mr John Sutcliffe and Mr Mark Stansfield responsibility for school affairs passed into the hands of Mr T. Lee and Mr G. Sutcliffe, whilst Mr James Sutcliffe and Mr Lewis Stansfield became the mainstays of the church. Mr James, till his death in 1953, and Mr Lewis till 1962 a year or so before his death. James became Sunday School Secretary in 1896 and later held almost every other office for long periods, fulfilling his duties with conscientious and scrupulous care. His work in seeing that the graveyard was kept in perfect condition is beyond all praise, along with Lewis he was responsible for the church property being kept in excellent repair at a minimum cost. Lewis was secretary to the trust treasurer for the school and chapel and chapel steward for long periods. His shrewd business ability enabled him to keep a careful watch over the finances of the church and to give sound advice on all matters relating to the upkeep of the premises. Acting as organist without remuneration from 1941 to 1962 he greatly helped to make Sunday worship a vital experience. Both these men were fine examples of what a Christian should be, faithful to their duties, lovable in their homes, scornful of all that was petty or mean, true servants of the Lord. They wove into the fabric of our community life something of infinite worth.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CENTENARY 1935**

The celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the opening of the Sunday school in October 1935 was a memorable event. On the Saturday afternoon a pageant portraying the history of the school throughout the past century was given by the scholars. Crinoline dresses as worn in bygone days by the mother of a former teacher Miss A. Wormald, helped to make the presentation realistic and successful. The teas which followed was served under the light of candles mounted on brass candlesticks some of which were as old as the school. The food was mostly homemade, an attempt being made to produce the type of fare provided in the previous century. At the evening meeting the emphasis was on witness to the value of the Sunday school work. Through the efforts of Mr James and Miss Jessie Sutcliffe acting as secretaries, a large number of testimonials from former scholars in various parts of the world had been collected and were read to a large gathering in the chapel. Vocal tributes were also given, Mr L. Tattersall a former teacher and official was in the chair, whilst the company was addressed by Rev A.G. Tuck the resident minister and Rev E. Boulton who came from Manchester for the occasion. On the Sunday a demonstration “The building of the Lighthouse” was given by the children. Mr Boulton was the preacher in the evening. The financial proceeds were moderate in amount and were shared between Sunday school funds and Children’s Homes.

**1935-1951 New Blood and New Ideas**

After 1935 the names of the rising generation were mentioned more and more and more often in the minute books, especially those of Mr John Stansfield in secretarial and financial matters and those of Miss E. Ambrose and her future husband Mr Selwyn Washington in the administration of the school. The two latter after a course of training; passed the examination for the Diploma in Sunday school teaching Miss Ambrose also taking the Advanced Certificate. Their training involved attendance at specially held schools over the Easter periods of 1937 and 1938 in Blackpool and Westminster College as well as courses held in Halifax under the instructor delegated by Conference, Rev W.W.N. White. Both became local preachers and sought to train young people to become teachers and church members. The Band of hope was revived and for a time was popular with the scholars, a school choir was organised and trained at this time by the organist of the church Mr H. Hanson. Leadership of the Primary Department during this period was chiefly in the hands of Miss J.M. Sutcliffe with Miss G. Wormald, Miss P. Lassey and later Miss E. Fairburn sharing the task.

**War Years**

The outbreak of the Second World War caused some upheavals; the absence of the three young men mentioned above, as well as that of many senior scholars meant the loss of their services for several years. Rationing put an end to the last of the Annual teas, the complete black-out of the school with its large window space proved a problem. One hectic period during the war fortunately of short duration, was the provision of shelter for evacuees from London who had not been allotted to private houses. With beds filling the main schoolroom it had the appearance of a hospital ward. Mrs G. Sutcliffe and other ladies helping with the arrangements will never forget the task of cleaning the school afterwards. Soon after the war, the return of Mr S. Washington as Sunday school Superintendent and Mr J. Stansfield as treasurer with both of them acting as society Stewards was very welcome, especially in view of Mr T. Lee’s failing health and resignation from office.

**Primary Room Casualties**

In 1946 a serious bulge in the Primary school wall necessitated expert investigation which showed structural repairs to be necessary. A minor mishap occurred in the severe winter of 1946-47 when a burst pipe resulted in the primary room floor, piano, forms and light fittings being thickly coated in ice.

**Parents Association**

This was formed late in 1947 and was open to all wishing to attend the meetings which were held once a month, with a special speaker usually addressing the meeting. Concerts in aid of church funds were arranged, new talent on the platform and in church and school affairs became evident. In particular the names of Mrs E. Ackroyd, Mr W. Crockett, Miss D. Longbottom, Mr K. Ackroyd and Miss G. Thomas became associated with the various activities. The success of this association was largely due to the hard work and enthusiasm of the Rev Howard ford who arranged the programmes for several years.

**Missionary Matters**

Throughout this century Mount Tabor has been missionary minded, keeping in touch with overseas work and raising funds for it in a variety of ways. The annual garden party at Broad Lea has been a noteworthy event in this connection. Mrs L Stansfield who was missionary secretary from 1920 to 1959 by her unselfish devotion to the cause, has been chiefly responsible for the keeping of this aspect of church work very much alive. Miss L. Wadsworth, Mrs Starkie and Mrs Pearson have since carried on with this work. With this background it was perhaps inevitable that someone should feel a call to serve overseas, Miss Margaret Sutcliffe did so and went to China in 1949. When communist pressure forced her to leave Canton she went to Hong Kong and there became Mrs Jones, she and her husband are now on the Mission Field in Rhodesia but expect to take up English Circuit work in bury later this year. A valedictory service was held here in 1948 when Dr A.C. Lamb the minister under whom she became a member gave the charge.

**Special Service and Reunion of Former Scholars 1951**

In 1951 a special effort was made to revive interest in the work being done here and took the form of a scholar’s reunion on the 14th April with special services on the following day. A Play Reading was given on the Saturday afternoon, objects of historic interest connected with the church were exhibited, after tea the minister who had organised the affair the Rev A.H. Ford received special gifts. The reunion gathering was presided over by Me A. Tattersall a former scholar and one of a large family whose members have all attended here. Mr Ford welcomed those present several former scholars spoke of bygone days and the meeting was addressed by the Rev A.G. Tuck. Old hymns were sung and the singing of “all in the April Evening” by the choir under the conductorship of Mr Farnell will long be remembered by those who heard it. Time seemed to be eliminated as we witnessed the crucifixion on Calvary and felt the presence of the Lamb of God in our midst. Rev A.G. Tuck who had been largely responsible for the 1935 functions preached in the chapel the following day.

**Memories A letter from Mrs Aubrey Lassey in New Zealand**

My happiest days were at Mount Tabor where I lived for thirty years on Long Row. All my children were brought up in the Sunday school and the three girls were married in the chapel. In my younger days I loved to go to chapel, we had several concerts in which I took part and had very enjoyable times. I loved the Sisterhood when the cold weather was on and we were made so nice and comfortable in the Chapel House. We used to have outings to different places in the summer time and garden parties at Mrs Stansfield’s. My daughter Phillis was a Sunday school teacher in the Primary and was happily married to a Methodist boy. Albert married a girl from Bethel Ovenden. At one time Hilda’s husband got a Boy Scout company together. I was over from New Zealand in 1961 for ten months and came up to the sisterhood and especially remembered the farewell tea they gave me. My husband’s family were all brought up in the Sunday school; my father in law was in the Mixenden choir for 15 years. He lost an eye in an accident at the quarry, grandma Lassey was a lovely god fearing lady and had to work hard to bring up her eight boys.

At the time I was married there was not a licence at Mount Tabor so we were married in Halifax. New Zealand is a lovely country; much warmer than Tabor with more sunshine. We are not far from the sea and often have barbeque meals on the sea shore.

**Another Member Remembers**

The conclusion of a Sunday School Anniversary demonstration “ The Open window” which was admirably given by scholars as representatives of various countries, coming in turn to gather inside the Communion Rail as they sang the words of the hymn “ Coming, coming yes they are”. The dream of a complete family of god’s children seemed for a few moments translated into reality. The inspiration to strive to make it so permanently remained.

**More Recent Days**

The outstanding developments since 1952 have been in connection with Youth work and youth organisations. During Mr Middleton’s ministry fellowship meetings were held in the homes of different members. From the discussions it became obvious that there was an increasing need to provide for the week night activities of young people. One factor was the increase in the number of houses in the district. It was decided to start branches of the Boys Brigade, Life boys, Guides and Brownies. Good leadership was responsible for these organisations soon becoming flourishing concerns. The monthly parade services show that this work has continued to be under capable leadership and the organisations still provide healthy physical, mental and moral development for a large number of boys and girls.

The help of young men and women living in some of the new housing areas in the neighbourhood has been most welcome in the running of these youth activities and the Sunday school. In addition to the work done by the present leaders one remembers with gratitude that done by others, some of whom have left the district.

The boys Brigade and Life boys were at first led by Mr N. Greenwood and Mr B. Gregan with the help of Mr A. Parker, Mr R. Greenwood and Mr H. Horsfall and with initial help from the Company at Mixenden Congregational Church. About five years ago Mr and Mrs D. Greenwood took over and were later joined by Mr S. Washington, Mr C. Farrar and Mr Paul Greenwood. Activities include Sunday Bible Class; and club night when boys do drill, PT. Games and work for badges. Cricket and football against other Battalion teams are enjoyed by most of the boys as well as sports meetings and five a side football. Our boys have also joined Battalion camps and had their own camps at seaside places and in the Lake District.

After joining with Trinity Methodist girls for a few months the Guide Company and Brownie pack were launched at Mount Tabor in 1959 with Mrs D. Stansfield, Mrs L Gregan, Miss A. Crockett and Mrs N. Greenwood as leaders. Over the years helpers have included Mrs B. Headon, Mrs Edwards, Mrs B. Greenwood and Miss P. Gregan. Many of the girls started as Brownies, continued through Guides and some joined Rangers and have now become qualified Brownie and Guide Guiders. The girls believe in Service to God through Service to others and try to work on this theme in their weekly meetings. Eight girls have in this period gained their Queens Guide Certificates and many badges have been obtained by both Brownies and guides. Camps have mostly been held locally at such places as Luddenden Dean, Cragg Vale and Cottonstones, whilst others have been held at Bishop Monkton and Kettlewell. The Brownies have been on Pack Holidays to Steeton and Ilkley. The leaders of all the uniformed organisations have usually worked together and arranged joint activities. These have taken the form of hikes and rambles, either during the day or night. To add interest some have been quizzes, some sponsored, some mystery; most of the local countryside has been covered and many children have gained a little more knowledge of their neighbourhood. Over the last few years carol singers have gone round locally to older members of the community and leave them small gifts. Usually some forty to fifty homes are visited.

Both the boys and girls have decorated their own rooms in the Sunday school and older members have painted and papered the Primary room. The over 14’s of both boys and girls organisations have taken part in the Long March, and event organised by the Y.M.C.A. at Easter with proceeds for Christian Aid. All taking part have been sponsored and many have completed the thirty miles. In some years they have raised over £50 for this Charity, leaders have helped with car patrols and at rest centres. The young people have been responsible for the purchase of stacking chairs for the school and the introduction of strip lighting, as well as contributing to church funds in increasing amounts.

The swimming club, which is open to all Sunday school scholars and members of Youth organisations was formed in 1959 and has been running ever since. It is usually held at Park road baths. Parents are welcome and occasionally bring tiny members with them.

The youth club of the late forties which had a membership of over forty at one time eventually ceased and in the 1960’s another was formed and this was successfully run for some years by Mr and Mrs J. Dinsdale and Mrs J. Walker. Table tennis was one of tits highlights together with efforts for church funds. During this period a newsletter was inaugurated to give information about activities to the parents of the many children coming to the Sunday school and week night activities. At first this was a weekly letter but later became a monthly edition, eighty to ninety copies are distributed each month and are eagerly looked for by church members who cannot get to services because of illness.

**Caretakers**

Over the years we have had caretakers who with their families have taken an active part in church. Mr Brier was caretaker in 1920 and his son was a member of the choir for many years; Mr Wilde who followed him was a regular attender of the church services and for some time was superintendent in the school. He was succeeded by Mrs Ambler who had the position for about 12 years and supported almost all the activities of the church. During the war we had Mr Tempest and Mr Hoyle who worked well under difficult conditions, soon after the war Mr and Mrs Crockett came to us from Greetland. They as others who followed were ever ready to do odd jobs, join in church worship, take part in concerts and Mrs Crockett was a Sunday school teacher and a member of the sisterhood and choir. Later Mr and Mrs Farnell took their place, Mr Farnell being an old scholar had a great regard for Tabor and took a watchful interest in all activities. Mrs Farnell was the president of the Sisterhood, our present caretaker Mrs Walker is a Guider and with her husband spends a great deal of time beyond caretaking duties in activities on the premises. We have been fortunate to have families like these to take care of the properties.

**The Sisterhood**

As mentioned previously the sisterhood plays an active part in church life. The meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of each month, the minister usually taking the first meeting and various speakers on alternate meetings. Funds are raised for such charities as the National Children’s home as well as missionary funds. Many visits have been paid to factories and children’s homes, they help to foster good relations with other denominations by attending functions at the Baptist and Anglican churches and at the Salvation Army and by inviting speakers at meetings at Mount Tabor. The Sisterhood with other ladies of the church produce much of our finance at the Annual Fair. Over the years changes have taken place amongst our officers. The sisterhood work has been carried on by Mrs Robey, Mrs N. Sutcliffe, Mrs m. Stansfie4ld, Mrs D. Highley, Mrs L. Farnell, Mrs E. Pearson the present president, and Mrs M. Saunderson. Mrs Robey also became a class leader in 1953 along with Mrs E. Ackroyd who has played a big part in our school and church life. She has been a teacher, treasurer, choir member and is always helpful in the production of special services and concerts. After Mr L. Stansfield’s resignation as organist because of ill health the task has been shared by three ladies. Miss M.J. Sutcliffe, who also serves in many other ways. Mrs Avril Turner and Mrs Patricia Gordon who have both spent several years as Guiders.

**School**

In the 1950’s Mr Keith Ackroyd became our school secretary and a teacher. He took an active part in the school youth club and Parents Association, as did his future wife Miss Gwenda Thomas who was a much loved Primary superintendent. They enjoyed the parts they played in concerts, and conducted many successful hikes. Owing to business reasons they had to leave the district in 1959 but as one door closed another opened when Mr and Mrs Roy Starkie came to live here in 1958. They were soon taking a busy part in our affairs especially the Sunday school where Mr Starkie became morning superintendent and secretary, numbers in the school continued to increase. Mr Starkie was responsible for producing many excellent Anniversary morning services including “Mountains of Meaning”, “Living Letters” and “The Bible through the Ages”. As Sunday school secretary he arranged annual outings including one to try and find the witches of Pendle Hill, which was climbed by youngsters of up to sixty years of age and from the top of Blackpool Tower was visible. Mrs Starkie became Primary superintendent and did valuable work as Missionary secretary and Cradle Roll secretary. The Starkie family moved to Winchester in 1968 when Mr Stuart Greenwood became our secretary and morning superintendent and he is filling the posts with distinction. During all these years Mr S. Washington has been a Sunday school leader, and his devotion to the work amongst the young as superintendent, Boys Brigade Leader and Local Preacher especially on Parade Sundays has been greatly appreciated. For many years o ur scholars have taken part in circuit Bible Quiz’s and Annual Scripture examination with commendable results.

During 1960 special services were held throughout June and amongst the ministers who visited Mount Tabor were the Rev Harold Key (Chairman of the District) Rev A. Howard Ford a former minister, and Rev Derek Greaves of Central Hall Westminster who conducted mid- week services. There was a Women’s rally at which Mrs Maurice Barnett was the speaker and the chair was occupied by Mrs J.W. Gray of Pellon Church.

For over twenty years we have joined the United Ascension Day Services at Christ Church Pellon when ministers of the local churches have taken part. This United Service has done much to foster good relations amongst the local churches. In more recent years conversations about union with Anglicans have taken place but this matter is a present in abeyance.

Other events in the last few years have been the visit in the mid- sixties of the Male Voice Choir from John Smith Memorial Church Cudworth. The presence of Shirley Somerskill, M.P. at the At Homes in 1965 and visits by the Sowerby Bridge Gilbert and Sullivan Society.

No account of Tabor would be complete without mention of a man who has taken a lifelong active interest in church, school and Missionary work. In 1960 Mr George Sutcliffe was awarded a certificate for forty years as a Local Preacher. Along with his wife Doris he wrote the 1920 history of the church and he has written much of this one (but not this paragraph you may be sure). About 1926 he instituted the Sunday school Anniversary morning services in their present form and for over twenty years produced them and often wrote the script. In lighter vein some of the sketches he wrote for concerts were the funniest parts of the shows.

**Looking Back**

We thank God for all who, inspired by their worship here have kept the lamp of faith burning. For all the souls who with a vision of a larger truth have sought to pass that wisdom to others. For the multitude of quiet and courageous people who by faithful service have sought to purify and sanctify the life of this community. We thank God too that he has put into our hearts to serve the same cause.

**Looking Ahead**

The rising costs associated with the upkeep of the premises and maintenance of the minister since the last war have meant that financial matters have loomed very large in the thoughts and work of the church officials. An inherent danger of this emphasis is that the essential work of ensuring that the Spirit of Jesus Christ controls the lives of men and women, boys and girls, by their submission to him tends to be overlooked. Financial pressures may possibly one day, be it far distant, cause the closure or partial closure of the premises; there may be some form of union with the Anglican community; but whatever else changes there will remain the need on this hill top for a company of people banded together to fight the growing evils of the age. To keep the ideal of Love, Truth and Mercy, and to be the vehicle through which the caring Love of God for His children can be shown. May we be faithful members of such a company, worthy of the heritage which is ours?

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**PRESENT ACTIVE STAFF**

 **Church** **Trustees – Officers**

Minister: Rev W.G. Barker Secretary: Miss J.M. Sutcliffe

Stewards/ Leaders Mrs S. Washington Treasurer: Mr J. Stansfield

Mrs E. Ackroyd, Mrs M. Stansfield Chapel Steward: Mr B. Gregan

**Sisterhood** **Guides and Brownies**

President: Mrs E Pearson Mrs D. Stansfield, Mrs J.P. Walker

Secretary: Mrs D Highley Miss N. Wilson, Miss J.E. Stansfield

Treasurer: Mrs M. Saunderson Miss D.G. Stokes, Miss J.A. Smith

Organists: Miss J.M. Sutcliffe, Mrs A. Turner Miss L.M. Lockwood

 Mrs P. L. Gordon **Company and Junior Brigade**

Missionary Secretary: Mrs E. Pearson Mr D. Greenwood, Mrs W. Greenwood

**Sunday school Superintendents** Mr S. Washington, Mr C. Farrar

Mrs S Greenwood (Sec) Mrs S. Washington

Teachers: Mr B. Gregan, Mrs M Saunderson

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 Miss C. B. Highley

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