

## Hele Lane Chapel



The following information is derived from information supplied by Wallace Boundy, which was included in the material collated by John Usmar in 2007 as part of his study of the Witheridge Outliers. Additional information from online sources has been added.

9 <sup>th</sup> October 1815	The Bible Christian denomination was founded at Lake Farm, Shebbear
9 <sup>th</sup> April 1818	The first society (as congregations are called) was formed at Ashreigney with 9 members.
Autumn 1819	The Ringsash Bible Christian Circuit was formed. The Bible Christians divided their scattered places into circuits (groups of chapels that were cared for by one or more ministers). Ringsash was one of these earliest circuits; one of the places in their circuit was "Ashreigney" but they turned its name round to become "Ringsash" <a href="#">[1]</a> .
Spring 1824	What is believed to be the oldest surviving Ringsash Circuit Plan shows services being held at Hele Lane.
9 <sup>th</sup> May 1833	John, the son of John Luckas a labourer of Witheridge Parish and his wife Elizabeth, was baptised at Hele Lane or possibly Hele Barton; probably the first Bible Christian baptism there.
1834	Providence Chapel was built at Hele Lane; the chapels had a Biblical name – a long-standing Bible Christian tradition.
6 <sup>th</sup> October 1835	The Circuit quarterly meeting was held at Hele Barton where it was noted that there were 24 members plus three on trial.

2 <sup>nd</sup> October 1837	A Preaching House Licence application stated "I William Conibear of the parish of Burrington, Minister, do hereby certify that a certain building called Providence Chapel situated at Hele Lane is intended forthwith to be used as a place of worship."
9 <sup>th</sup> January 1839	Joh Foxford Hammet of Witheridge Parish was baptised at Providence Chapel Hele Lane by John Brown. This appears to have been the first baptism at Hele Lane Chapel.
28 <sup>th</sup> September 1841	The Circuit quarterly meeting was held at Canns Mill where it was reported that there were 18 members at Hele Lane.
1858	The first deeds for the chapel were drawn up. A body of Bible Christians bought a privately owned chapel, schoolroom and burying ground at Hele Lane for £2, which then was vested in trustees. Although cheap, this building caused expense later as one of the walls collapsed and had to be rebuilt in the 1920's <sup>1</sup> . See the extract from the chapel deeds below.
June 1861	It was reported in the Bible Christian Magazine that the old school room at Hele Lane was converted into a cottage and a new one much prettier and more commodious built all the length of the chapel.
5 <sup>th</sup> October 1875	From the Tiverton Gazette "A harvest thanksgiving service at Hele Lane Chapel on Monday afternoon was well attended. Addresses were given by the Revs J Smith and J Smallridge and after tea in the schoolroom (served by Mrs Bragg, Mrs Southcott and Mrs Bradford) the company returned to the Chapel where more addresses were delivered. Good collections were take."
1907	The Bible Christians amalgamated with two other Methodist denominations, the United Methodist Free Churches and the Methodist New Connection to form the United Methodist Church.
1932	The United Methodist Church amalgamated with the Primitive Methodist and the Wesleyans to form the Methodist Church as it is today. These unions of 1907 and 1932 did not affect the Ringsash Circuit because there were no chapels belonging to these other denominations within its area.
January 1956	The former school at Black Dog was sold to the Hele Lane Trustees and converted into a chapel, which was opened on 12 <sup>th</sup> April 1956. Like the old one, it is called Hele Lane Chapel.
8 <sup>th</sup> April 1956	The last service at the chapel was on 8 <sup>th</sup> April 1956.
c1958	Demolition of the Chapel was completed after around two years; most of the work was done by Jim Crang, he was the Daniel James Crang that lived at Sentrays, Black Dog.

HELE LANE  
METHODIST  
CEMETERY

THIS WAS THE ORIGINAL  
SITE OF THE HELE LANE  
METHODIST SOCIETY  
FOUNDED IN 1858 AND  
REMOVED TO BLACK  
DOG 1956. THIS BEING  
THEREFORE CONSEC-  
-RATED GROUND AND  
HALLOWED BY MANY  
YEARS OF WORSHIP, IT  
WAS THOUGHT FITTING  
TO PRESERVE THE SITE  
AS A BURIAL GROUND



## Extracts from the Hele Lane Chapel Deeds

This indenture is made the **twentieth day of May one thousand eight hundred and fifty eight** between Thomas Bragg of Washford Pyne in the county of Devon yeoman of the first part and William Buckingham and James Buckingham both of Kingsnympton in the said county yeoman John Cann of Morchard Bishop in the said county yeoman George Adams of Witheridge in the said county school master George Thorne, Isaac Headon, and George Southcott yeoman and Aaron Chapple tailor all of Washford Pyne aforesaid and Joh Bragg of Cheriton Fitzpaine in the said county yeoman of the second part whereas the said Thomas Bragg is the legal owner and proprietor of the piece or parcel of ground hereinafter more particularly described and also conveyed on which a Bible Christian Chapel and Schoolroom have been erected and hath agreed for the absolute sole thereof together with all buildings thereon erected to the said parties hereto of the second part for the price or sum of **two pounds**.... being part and parcel of an estate called Tidlake in the parish of Witheridge aforesaid containing about ninety three feet in length fifty four feet in breadth at the north end and forty six feet and six inches in breadth at the south end and bounded on the west by the turnpike road leading from Thelbridge Cross to Black Dog on the north by a garden part of the said estate and on the east and south by part of the said field together with the said chapel and schoolroom and all erections and buildings now being on the said piece or parcel of ground.

Joseph Snell, Bible Christian Minister was a witness to the above agreement.

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This conveyance is made on the **14<sup>th</sup> January 1934** between Oliver Tucker of Icknield, Ipsden, Wallingford in the county of Oxford yeoman (thereinafter called the vendor) of the one part and William John Burrows of Morchard Bishop in the county of Devon tailor William Pugsley of Woolfardisworthy in the said county of Devon miller and the vendor and Joh William Crang of Washford Pyne in the said county of Devon farmer Frederick Ash of Thelbridge in the said county of Devon labourer George Partridge of Molland Farm Chulmleigh in the said county of Devon farmer Francis Hugh Sims Clapp of St. Just in the county of Cornwall Methodist Minister and William Edwin Short of Hawkridge Coldridge in the said county of Devon farmer (hereinafter called the purchasers) of the other part.....at the price of **five pounds**....all that piece or parcel of land situate lying and being in the parish of Thelbridge in the said county of Devon and being part of the messuage tenement farms, lands and premises with the appurtenances called or commonly known by the name of Tidlakes otherwise Lower Marchweek and part of the close of land number 78 on the Ordnance Survey map for the said parish of Thelbridge and which said piece or parcel of land hereby conveyed adjoins the Methodist Chapel at Hele Lane.....and is now used as a parking ground.

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On **25<sup>th</sup> February 1952** an agreement was drawn up between the Chapel and the Council under which the Chapel would give the Council a strip of land containing about thirty square yards for road widening (the present road bridge was built at about this time). Among other things, the Council would recreate the entrance gate which was against the road with a new gateway in the wall opposite the Chapel door.

### **Will of William Bragg, dated 17<sup>th</sup> June 1859**

I give unto the three trustees herein after named the sum of two hundred pounds to be held in trust to invest the same either on Government or real security with power to alter and vary the same from time to time and apply one half part thereof or of the interest thereof from time to time for the relief of such necefsitous poor in the Parish of Washford Pyne as they my said trustees may in their discretion think proper and at such time of the year as they may think fit and apply the other half part thereof or of the interest thereof to the better payment of the salary of the school master or school mistress for the time being (so long as there shall be a school master or school stress) of the school called the Hele Lane School in the Parish of Witheridge and in case there should not be a school master or school mistress of the said school then in trust to pay the same unto the trustees of the time being of the Hele Lane School or Chapel so that there may be a better provision and maintenance of and for the said School and Chapel.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> day of September 1859 the will of William Bragg late of Gatehouse in the Parish of Washford Pyne in the county of Devon gentleman deceased who died on 20<sup>th</sup> day of June 1859 at Gatehouse in Washford Pyne aforesaid was proved in the District Registry attached to Her Majesty's Court of Probate at Exeter by the oath of Thomas Bragg of Gatehouse aforesaid yeoman the role Executor therein named he having been first sworn duly to administer.

## Hele Lane Trust

The Trust was renewed on **26<sup>th</sup> January 1914** when Josiah Datson was minister. The previous trustees had all died; William Buckingham was not listed among the previous trustees. The new trustees were:-

William Harris, Washford Pyne	Labourer
Frederick John Palfrey, Woolfardisworthy	Farmer
William John Burrow, Morchard Bishop	Tailor
William Pugsley, Woolfardisworthy, miller (he worked at Penford Mill and was a brother of Samuel Pugsley of Curriton)	
Oliver Tucker, Thelbridge	Farmer
John William Crang, Washford Pyne	Farmer
Frederick Ash, Thelbridge	Labourer
George Partridge, Thelbridge	Labourer
Frank Venner, Morchard Bishop	Farmer
Francis Hugh Sims Clapp, Morchard Bishop	U.M. Minister
William Edwin Short, Middlecroft, Morchard Bishop	Farmer
Eveline Tucker of Hele lane Thelbridge was a witness.	

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The Trust was remade on the **24<sup>th</sup> February 1936**. Continuing Trustees were:-

William Pugsley, Woolfardisworthy	Miller
John William Crang, WWashford Pyne	Farmer
George Partridge, Molland, Chulmleigh	Farmer
Francis Hugh Sim Clapp, Dracaena Avenue, Falmouth Minister	Methodist
New Trustees were:-	
Percy John Cobley, Tidlakes, Hele Lane	Farmer
William Bowden, Black Dog	Retired

Robert William May, Black Dog	Labourer
John Hayes, Hele Lane	Retired
Alfred Gillbard, Hele Barton	Farmer
James Daniel Crang, Wonham, Washford Pyne	Farmer
Leonard Gillbard, Hele Barton	Farmer
George Nott, Horage	Farmer
Donald Southcott, Black Dog	Labourer

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The Trust was remade on **12<sup>th</sup> May 1954**. Continuing trustees were:-

John William Crang, Wonham, Black Dog	Farmer
Percy John Cobley, Tidlakes, Hele Lane	Farmer
Daniel James Crang, Sentrys, Black Dog	Farmer
Leonard Gillbard, Broadridge, Witheridge	Farmer
Donald William Southcott, Council Houses Black Dog	Farm worker
George Partridge, Broadgates, Morchard Bishop	Farmer

New trustees were:-

William John Daniel Crang, Moor Farm, Black Dog	Farmer
Eric Crang, Wonham, Black Dog	Farmer
Kenneth William Grant, Northwood, Morchard Bishop	Farmer
Gilbert Thomas Ascott, Henceford, Black Dog	Farmer
William Edmund Waller, Lower Minchindown, Black Dog	Farmer
Dennis C. Palfrey, East Brownstone, Black Dog	Farmer
Thomas J. Ash, 2 Council Houses Black Dog	Farm worker
Edward Dennis, Woolfardisworthy Barton, Black Dog	Farmer

Samuel Elland Radford, Higher Gate House, Black Dog Farmer

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On **21<sup>st</sup> December 1954** Devon County Council sold the Washford Pyne School, Black Dog to Mr Frederick Albert Baker who intended converting it into a bungalow. He later became bankrupt and sold the school to Hele Lane Trustees for **£525** on **4<sup>th</sup> January 1956**.

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Trustees appointed **4<sup>th</sup> January 1956**:-

William John Daniel Crang, Wonham	Farmer
Percy John Cobley, The School House, Black Dog	Retired farmer
George Partridge, Broadgate, Morchard Bishop	Farmer
Daniel James Crang, Sentrys, Black Dog	Farmer
Donald William Southcott, Council houses, Black Dog	Lorry Driver
Gilbert Thomas Ascott, Henceford, Black Dog	Farmer
William Edmund Waller, Lower Minchindown, Black Dog	Farmer
Kenneth William Grant, Northwood, Black Dog	Farmer
Samuel Elland Radford, Higher Gate House, Back Dog	Farm worker
William John Daniel Crang, Moor Farm, Black Dog	Farmer
Edward Dennis, Penford Mill, Black Dog	Farmer
Dennis Clifford Palfrey, Brownstone, Black Dog	Farmer
Eric Crang, Wonham, Black Dog	Farmer
Kenneth Morgan Boundy, Curriton, Black Dog	Farmer
Harold Anstey Geatches, Henceford, Black Dog	Farmer
Basil Leo Smith, Pyne, Black Dog	Farmer
Gilbert Ronald Ascott, Henceford, Black Dog	Farmer
Clarence Gordon Rooke, Great Gutton, Shobrooke	Farmer

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Trustees appointed **9<sup>th</sup> December 1971**, continuing trustees were:-

William John Daniel Crang, Wonham	Retired farmer
George Partridge, Broadgate, Morchard Bishop	Retired farmer
Daniel James Crang, Meadowside, Black Dog	Farmer
Donald William Southcott, Dartmoor View, Back Dog	Lorry driver
Gilbert Thomas Ascott, Glengariff, Crediton	Retired farmer
William Edmund Waller, Providence House, Back Dog	Retired farmer
Kenneth William Grant, Northwood, Black Dog	Farmer
Samuel Elland Radford, Dartmoor View, Black Dog worker	Retired farm
William John Crang, Moor Farm, Black Dog	Farmer
Edward Dennis, Penford, Black Dog	Retired farmer
Dennis Clifford Palfrey, East Brownstone, Back Dog	Retired farmer
Eric Crang, Wonham, Black Dog	Farmer
Basil Leo Smith, Mortimer's Cottage, Black Dog	Postman

New trustees were:-

Arthur John Crang, Sentrys, Black Dog	Farmer
Wallace Kenneth Boundy, Curriton, Black Dog	Farmer
Raymond Alan Boundy, Witheridge Moor Farm, Nomansland	Farmer
Brian Reginald Chapple, Lommas Close <a href="#">[2]</a> , Thelbridge	Farmer

The Trust ceased to exist some years ago; all chapels are considered to belong to the Methodist Church.

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[1] [www.ringsashcircuit.org.uk/history/](http://www.ringsashcircuit.org.uk/history/)

[2] The property name has been changed to Little Orchard Farm