

YES, GOD IS GOOD

HISTORY OF THE
TAWA FLAT METHODIST CHURCH

1850-1951

*Yes, God is good — in earth and sky,
From ocean depths and spreading wood,
Ten thousand voices seem to cry:
God made us all, and God is good.*

—Favourite hymn of Mr. James Taylor.

FIRST EDITION — SEPTEMBER, 1951

REVISED EDITION — DECEMBER, 1951

Written at the request of the Centennial Committee by
Arthur H. Carman

Circulated by arrangement with the Tawa Flat Methodist
Church Trustees by the Wesley Historical Society (N.Z.
Branch), as Vol. 10, No. 1 of its Proceedings.



Present Church - 1951

PROLOGUE

"A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, and as a watch in the night." So wrote the Psalmist: but we cannot see with God's perspective, and a hundred years more than spans most of our little lives. It is surely a good thing at the end of one such period, to pause awhile and remember and rejoice, before moving forward to take up the new tasks that await us.

If this Centennial is an important occasion in the life of the Church, it is not less so in the life of the district.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" applies to communities as it does to men. These pioneers who built their Church, even while they built their dwellings and their barns provide an example for us, for we tend to say, "After we have built and furnished our homes, and laid out our gardens, then we can give the Church a place in our attention." James Taylor and those who laboured with him knew that home and Church buttress each other, and that healthy Churches mean happy homes. They knew that character was all important.

"Why build these cities glorious,
If man unbuilt goes?
In vain we build the work,
Unless the builder also grows."

And they also knew that "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

This foreword cannot conclude without grateful reference to Mr. Carman who has proved to be the historian of the Church and of the district. Without his keen and accurate research, extending over a number of years, this story could not have been told. He himself has, in many ways, helped to build the Church whose history he so well records.

WELLINGTON MISSION PRIMITIVE METHODIST PREACHER'S PLAN

1855.

"Preach all things; hold fast that which is good."

Places and Time.	JULY.				AUGUST.				SEPTEMBER.					Preacher's Names.	
	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30		
Wellington,	11	1	1s	2	1	1	4	1	1c	1	7	1	5	1	1. Green
"	03	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1c	1	1	1	1	1	
" Tuesday,	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1T	1	1	1	1	1	1	2. Kibblewhite
River Hutt	11	7	4	1s	7	2	7	4	7	5c	4	2	4	6	3. Green
" "	23	2	1	1	7	4	1	1T	4	5c	1	2	1	6	4. Clement
" Thursday	7		1		1		1		1		1		1		5. Taylor
Towai Flat,	23	1	6	5		1c	6	5	1	4c		1		7	6. Pilcher
" Thursday	7	1		1s		1		1T		1		1		1	7. Masters
Stokes Valley,	11		7		4		1		2c		1		1		Exhorter on Trial.
" "	3		7		4		2		2c		4		7		8. Mitchell
" Wednesday,	7		1		1		1		1T		1		1		Preyer Leader.
Town Belt,	7	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	9. Towner

MISSIOY NOTICES.—1st. Missionary Prayer Meetings will be held at the following places:—Wellington, the first Wednesday after the first Sabbath in the month, River Hutt the 2nd Thursday, and at Towai Flat the first.

REFERENCES.—c. Quarterly Collections.—s. Sacrament.—l. Lovefeast.—r. Tickets.

N.B.—The Quarterly Meeting will be held at Wellington, September, 18th. To commence at 11 o'clock, p.m.

Printed at the office of the "Wellington Independent."

Facsimile of an Early Plan



English Sunday School Union Long Service Diploma

awarded after 58 years' service on
May 1st, 1908.

"AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING ——"

THE first contact that Methodism had with Tawa Flat preceded the settlement of Wellington, for we read in the reminiscences of the pioneer Wesleyan Missionary, Rev. James Buller, *Forty Years in New Zealand*, of his journey through the district. Leaving North Auckland on November 27, 1839, he travelled on foot—or by canoe—via Taupo and Wanganui, and, after visiting Mana Island, where he held a service with Te Rauparaha on Sunday, January 20, 1840, he records "From Porirua we had five hours' walk through thick woods to Port Nicholson. When the land-locked harbour broke upon us, it seemed—a lake. We descended the hill to Petone." This was on Monday, January 21, and the following day the first shipload of settlers arrived in the Aurora, on board which Rev. Mr. Buller preached the following Sunday.

Elsdon Best, eminent Maori scholar and historian, who was born at Tawa Flat, states,

"When Europeans first traversed the rugged bush-clad hills between Porirua and Wellington Harbour, they used the old Maori trails. The first used by the pioneers was that running over the hills from the Koro Koro stream (Petone) to Tawa Flat and on to Porirua Harbour. When the settlers occupied the site of Wellington City, the native track from Kaiwharawhara came into use, which track junctioned with the former track at Takapu."

It was the former track that Rev. Mr. Buller used, but in the local newspaper, *N.Z. Gazette and Wellington Spectator*, of March 13, 1841, we read

"Last week we joined the Surveyor-General and, starting from Wellington at about 9 o'clock, we took the road by Kai Warra Warra to Porirua. It is quite passable for foot passengers and is being rendered passable for horses as speedily as possible. The whole distance is a little over 12 miles, and, with the exception of about one and a half miles, may be made an excellent horse road, or even carriage road at a very trifling expense. By the present route the river must be crossed many times, but on horse-back this is of little consequence, the water being shallow. The upper part of the valley is narrow, the hills in parts are steep, but the soil, if we may judge from the growth of timber, is excellent. Below the point where the path from Petone crosses the river, for the first time the valley becomes wider. The widest part is nearest the mouth of the river. The timber here, however, is not so fine as it is nearer Wellington, consisting mainly of tawa."

A vivid description of the forest which clothed the country between Wellington and Porirua is given by George F. Angus, who travelled through the district in July, 1844. He writes:

"From Wellington I started on foot through the mountainous forests for Porirua Harbour to visit the settlement of the chief, Rauparaha, and his fighting general,

Rangihæta. My only companion was Tuarau, or Kopai, a nephew of Te Rauparaha, being the son of Na Horua, the elder brother of that crafty and powerful chief. For three or four miles from Wellington a road has been formed through the forest, but the path afterwards becomes a narrow track, little better than a Maori footway, in some places knee-deep with mud, and in others so overgrown with tangled Hands and supplejacks as to be scarcely passable; fallen trees constantly obstructed the way; and owing to the late heavy rains, we were frequently compelled to wade for a considerable distance. The scenery along this forest track is for the whole 12 miles exceedingly picturesque. The lofty forest—filled with noble trees of gigantic growth, clothed not only with their own evergreen foliage, but with innumerable parasitical plants, ferns, mosses and orchidæ, climbing up to their very summits—presents a scene of luxuriant vegetation not to be surpassed in the tropics. Beneath the upper canopy of forest trees—such as the rimu, pine, the kaikatea, the totara, kahikatoa, rata and many others of enormous growth, all affording excellent timber and ornamental wood—there is an undergrowth in these damp and windless twilight solitudes composed of the nikau palm and the beautiful tree-fern which is the glory of the New Zealand forest, and has been aptly styled the king of ferns and may be seen in their native luxuriance towering to a height of 20 or 30 feet and occasionally attaining even a still higher altitude. Every valley in the forest is intersected by a gurgling stream, and the banks of the glen on each side are generally clothed with one leafy mass of magnificent ferns and dracaenæ. Some of the mosses are extremely beautiful; a scarlet fungus enlivens the decaying trees and there is scarcely a spot of an inch square that is not the receptacle of vegetable life in these dense and teeming woods. On emerging from the forest we came upon the shores of the harbour; low sandy flats stretch out for some distance, and the hills around arc covered with fern and belts of forest descending to the shore."

THE VANGUARD APPEARS

The New Zealand Company distributed the land in the Tawa Flat district in 100-acre lots to original shareholders, each being entitled to one town acre and 100 country acres. The selection of country sections took place early in 1842, and the company pushed on the construction of the road or bridle-path to enable settlers to occupy their selections. Charles Heaphy, draftsman to the company, in his Narrative of a Residence in Various Parts of New Zealand, published in 1842, writes of the road as follows:

"The road is not more than five feet in width and therefore serves only for the passage of cattle and packhorses. The difficulties which the road party had to contend with on this line were certainly great, as throughout its whole length it is surrounded with forest."

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The cost of this road was £231 per mile, the settlers in the district assisting with a considerable amount, both of labour and materials.

In 1846 the military forces took over the construction of a wider road, which was opened in December, 1847, its general width being fifteen feet, at a cost of £700 per mile.

Very soon the settlers took up their residence along the road, each making a small clearing and cultivating the land. Mr. John Rochfort, in his *The Adventures of a Surveyor in New Zealand*, writes of the route from Wellington to Porirua,

"The little farms and clearings which are scattered here and there on each side add much to the beauty of the country."

And so Tawa Flat was born. Among those first settlers were George Pilcher, George Mexted and William and George Taylor, all of whom are included in the 1845 Jury List as resident in the district.

In 1849, Mr. James Taylor and his wife and two oldest children moved from Pahautanui and settled at Tawa Flat, it being recorded that

"as a member of the Primitive Methodist Church, Mr. Taylor established a Sunday School on the first Sabbath spent in the district." (*The Cyclopaedia of N.Z.*, 1897)

It is probable that this Sunday School was conducted at the home of Mr. John Mitchell, who had settled in the district at about this time, his house being about where the Mexted Service Station is now, for our next reference is provided in *Fifty Years of Primitive Methodism in New Zealand*, which records

"Tawa Flat, a settlement ten miles in the bush, was missioned by Mr. Green in 1850, and Sabbath afternoon services were established which were held in the house of Mr. John Mitchell, one of the first settlers in that district who joined our Church."

(The words, "Primitive Methodism," may perhaps perplex the reader. In 1810, a section of the Methodist movement broke off from the main body, although remaining within the authentic tradition of Methodism. This vigorous independent section, calling itself the Primitive Methodist Connexion maintained its active life for over a century.—S.D.)

Primitive Methodism had been established in Wellington in 1847. "The Rev. R. Ward had been labouring single handed at New Plymouth for about two years, when the Rev. H. Green arrived from England to assist in the work of the mission." It is further recorded of Tawa Flat that "the following March (1851) the friends had permission to fit up a room in which to hold Sabbath School and services provided they incurred no debt."

THE FIRST CHURCH BUILDING

IN 1851, Stephen Pilcher, with his wife and family, settled on a farm of 28 acres on Section 41, and built a house behind the farmhouse now standing at the rear of the Church. On January 1, 1856, Mr. Pilcher dedicated a piece of land, 61 links square, comprising 5½ perches, to the Rev. Henry Green, James Taylor and Richard Taylor of the Primitive Methodist Connexion for a Church site, and the title was stated to be from 1854. Mrs. Elizabeth Greer, who passed away at the age of 92 in 1941, and who was a daughter of Stephen Pilcher, told me

"I was three years old when we went to Tawa Flat and we lived first of all at a house called Mitchells. It was all very heavy bush, but very pretty, being full of tree-fern, and it was with this class of material (punga) that my father built his first home, and it proved to be very warm and cosy in those days. My father gave the piece of land where the present Methodist Church stands. The settlers subscribed the money, and it was built by John and David Hall. I was seven years old when it was built, and Mr. Taylor used to conduct Sunday School in the front room of our house until the Church was built."

This would place the date of the original Church building at about 1854-55, services and Sunday School meanwhile continuing to be conducted at Mr. Pilcher's home.

The Rev. H. Green remained in charge of the mission at Wellington until 1857, being succeeded by Rev. Joshua Smith, who moved to Tasmania in 1863. On August 12, 1861, a Crown Grant to the Church site was issued in the names of "Rev. Joshua Smith, of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, Henry Taylor, James Taylor, Richard Taylor, John Clement, Stephen Pilcher, James Gordon and George Taylor, members of said Connexion, and all resident in the province of Wellington." and was signed by Sir T. Gore Browne, Governor of the Colony of New Zealand.

THE CHURCH IN ACTION

That the normal life of a community of that day was centred round the Church, is evident from several excerpts from the Wellington daily papers.

The following is a copy of such an extract—

"On Thursday, July 4, 1861, a lecture was given by Charles D. de Castro in the chapel at Tawa Flat, Porirua Road, which has been kindly lent by the Trustees for the purpose of popular instruction. The subject was 'Capital Punishment.' On July 18, in the same place, a second lecture will be given by Mr. de Castro on 'Life of Wolsey.' On August 1, Rev. H. W. Scott, Congregational Minister, is announced to be the speaker. On August 15 and 29, Charles D. de Castro will speak on 'Martin Luther'."

Minutes of a Committee
Meeting held at Tawa Flat
Nov 24, 1867.

- 1 - That we respectfully inform Bro. Ward and the Committee his attention - that we approve of the arrangement proposed in Bro. Cotton's letter Oct 25th - and we shall accordingly support Brother Ward and Family about June.
- 2 - That Bro. Waters, with (200) have Wellington for the Primitive on Jan 5th of this year a return being at that time.
- 3 - That Brother Ward be respectfully informed that should Bro. Ward and Family will have a cordial welcome to the Mission - and we trust Bro. Ward will feel at home at home with us, as our present Committee has done.
We fervently pray that the blessing of God may rest richly on both Committee and Station.

James Gordon President
Charles Waters Secretary

A page of the Minute Book of the Wellington Primitive Methodist Mission.

The following appeared in a Wellington paper—

"Marriage, January 4, 1864, at the Tawa Flat Chapel, by Rev. J. Aldred, Mr. R. W. Sinclair, late of Newcastle-on-Tyne, to Ann, fourth daughter of James Walker, ship-builder, Porirua."

Another notice reads,

"The Annual Tea Meeting was held in the Tawa Flat Chapel on January 22, 1869, in aid of Primitive Methodist Sunday School. A considerable number were present."

A perusal of the Minute Book of the Wellington Mission recording the proceedings of the quarterly meetings from 1864 to 1892 produced much interesting information which is quoted in chronological order.

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December 2, 1867

"That Tawa Flat Sabbath School Anniversary be celebrated on January 19, and a Tea Meeting on January 22 by Bro. Ward."

March 2nd, 1868

Membership was stated to be 105—for the whole Mission, including Tawa Flat—an increase of 5 on the previous quarter.

"That Anniversary Services be preached in aid of Tawa Flat Chapel."

"That we still urge most respectfully that the General Missionary Committee will allow 50/- a week salary to this Station." At an earlier quarterly meeting the following had appeared: "We beg respectfully to inform the Committee that although the war is for the present partly over, its effects are still sorely felt. We have to pay dearly for it in heavy taxation, under which New Zealand groans and everyone complains. We must still express the wish and the hope that the Committee will allow our Ministers in New Zealand at least 50/- per week, this will be 10/- per week under the mechanic."

September 7th, 1868

"That the week evening preaching at Webb Street be on Tuesday, Sydney Street on Wednesday, Tawa Flat on Thursday, leaving Thursday and Friday every alternate week to the Lower Hutt and Stokes Valley."

"That Bro. Ward lead the class at Tawa Flat once a fortnight and Bro. James Taylor on the opposite week."

December 6th, 1868

"That Mr. James Taylor be re-appointed Station Steward." (He held this post for many years.)

"That the Sunday School Tea Meeting at Tawa Flat be held on January 22nd next, and the Sunday School sermons be preached on the preceding Sunday." (This minute was repeated often in succeeding years. Anniversary Day being regularly chosen.)

"That the Tawa Flat Chapel Anniversary Services be preached sometime in March next." September 13th, 1869

"That the Sunday evening preaching at Tawa Flat be planned at 7 o'clock." (An early example of daylight saving!)

"That the number of members reported be 169, being an increase of 41 for the quarter."

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"That the General Missionary Committee be respectfully requested to station a young man here as second preacher, as it is our deliberate opinion that were this done, the balance deficit each quarter will not be greater than it is at present."

June 29th, 1870

"That we record our thanks to Almighty God that an attempt to make our station self-supporting has been successful this quarter, and we trust it will continue so; and that all the Missionary money raised on our Station will be sent to supply places less favoured than this is with the Gospel of Christ."

March 12th, 1871

Quarterly Meeting held at Sydney Street, and only Messrs. Dean, Taylor and Gordon were present. The credentials of the new Minister, Mr. Dean, and Mrs. Dean were received. The Minutes, which were signed at the close of the meeting to which they referred bear the signatures of James Taylor, as President, and William John Dean, as Secretary.

"That Sabbath evening services at Tawa Flat commence at 6½ o'clock." (This change of service for summer and winter took place each year for some time.)

March 2nd, 1872

"That Pahautanui (22 miles from Wellington) come upon the plan and service be appointed once a month at, 2½ o'clock."

December 2nd, 1872

"That the 'Ferry' be placed upon the plan and service (upon the Sabbath) be appointed at 6½ o'clock." This was the commencement of services at what is now Porirua.

March 3rd, 1873

"That Ferry come off the plan as the place is fully taken up by the Wesleyans."

"That Pahautanui come off the plan as the place is fully supplied by the Episcopalian Minister and the Wesleyans, and the distance (22 miles) is so great that it can only be supplied by us at great inconvenience."

"That the Mission Horses be sold and one be hired when required for the use of the Station."

"That a collection be made during the quarter in aid of the 'Beneficent Fund' at Tawa Flat, Webb Street and Stokes Valley."

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June 1st, 1874

"That Bro. _____, credentialled from _____, come on the plan with a few appointments, and that Bro. Ward speak with him on the necessity of improving in reading so as to read the Scriptures with propriety in public."

August 31st, 1874

"That Bro. _____ have an appointment at Tawa Flat and Webb Street." Apparently Bro. _____'s reading had now passed muster!

"That Bro. Gordon be planned at both the Town chapels on one Sunday and that a conveyance be provided for him at the expense of the Horse Fund."

"That Bro. Edward Taylor be placed on the plan as an exhorter."

December 7th, 1874

"That Bro. E. Taylor be placed on trial—and have an appointment on a Sunday Evening at Tawa Flat, providing his examination be satisfactory to Bro. J. Taylor and R. Ward."

March 8th, 1875

"That Bro. E. Taylor's name be removed from the plan on account of his removal to Taranaki."

"That the friends belonging to the Tawa Flat Sunday School be allowed to place an Harmonium in the Chapel and that in addition to the contributions given specially for a Harmonium, the collection made on January 6th be devoted to the Harmonium Fund."

"That Messrs. Eli Allen, George Hall, George Morris and Philip Roberts, in connection with the Tawa Flat trustees, be a Committee of Management for the Tawa Flat Trust Property."

June 7th, 1875

"That a travelling preacher be placed at Tawa Flat three Sundays next quarter."

September 6th, 1875

"That Bro. Gordon's name be retained on the plan the next quarter as a mark of respect and acknowledgment of past labours and that a letter expressive of our best wishes be sent to him."

December 6th, 1875

"That Bro. Gordon's name be left off the plan as he has removed to Wairarapa and united with the Wesleyans."

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PLACES	TIME	JULY					AUGUST				SEPTEMBER				PREACHERS' NAMES
		2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	
SYDNEY STREET															1. R. Ward
Sabbath Morning ...	11	1m	2	1ms	2	scf	2m	1	2	1m	2r	1ms	2	1	2. J. Nixon
" Evening ...	6½	2m	1	2ms	1s	2	1m	2	1	2m	1fs	2ms	1	2	3. J. Clement
Sunday School Address ...	3				2				1						4. J. Taylor
Monday—Prayer Meeting	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5. J. Edge
Wednesday ...	7	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	6. C. E. Fisher
TAWA FLAT															7. G. Hancock
Sabbath Morning	11	3	6c	5	3	1ms	10	7	8m	8	2r	3	9m	12	8. D. J. Robertson
" Evening	6½	8	6c	5	3	1ms	10	7	8m	6	2r	3	9m	12	9. J. Hadden
Thursday ...	7		2		1				1						10. W. Luke
WEBB STREET															11. R. Thacker
Sabbath Morning ...	11	2m	1	2r	1	2	1ms	2	1m	2	3c	2	1m	2	EXAMINER
" Evening ...	6½	1m	2	1r	2s	5	2ms	1	2m	1	3c	1	2m	1	12. W. Pallant
Sunday School Address ...	3				1				2			1			REFERENCES
Tuesday ...	7	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	c Chapel Collection
Thursday ...	7	2	10	2	12	8	10	2	12	5	2	8	10	12	f Horse Fund
STORES VALLEY															m Collection for Ministry
Sabbath Morning ...	11	3m	12	3	7	8m	3	12	3	5ms	9	10	3	8	ms Missionary Sermons
Thursday ...	7	1				2				2					s Sacrament
HUTT															sur Supply
KARORI															N.B.—The Quarterly Tickets will be renewed in the two last weeks in August.

Wellington Station Plan 1876

June 2nd, 1879

"That the initials of Daniel Hall be placed upon the new plan and that he have some appointments at Tawa Flat in conjunction with Mr. Taylor." (This was Daniel King, stepson of George Hall, of Tawa Flat.)

December 1st, 1879

"That Bro. D. King be requested to preach a trial sermon during the quarter with a view to being received as a local preacher on full plan."

"Through the depressed state of commercial life it was found that in addition to the deficiency of last quarter, there was a further deficiency of £6 14s. 6d. The Board deemed it unwise to allow the latter deficiency to be added to the former, and Tawa Flat offered to raise by some special effort £2, and Webb Street £2 14s. 6d." It was then decided that Sydney Street be requested to raise the remaining £2.

June 1st, 1880 (held at Sydney Street)

"That this meeting express its regret at Bro. J. Taylor's absence from the quarterly meeting through his remote residence from the place of meeting and the hour at which it is held, but cannot see its way clear to commence the meetings earlier and that a letter to this effect be forwarded to him."

The closing minute stated "that the meeting opened and closed with devotional exercises and was harmonious and cheerful throughout." These minutes were

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confirmed at the next meeting by James Taylor, President, and William S. Potter, Secretary!

September 6th, 1880 (held at Sydney Street)

"That the next quarterly meeting be held on Monday, December 6th, at Sydney Street, business to commence at 1.30 p.m." So apparently James Taylor won his point as the usual time of meeting had been 5 p.m. December 6th, 1880

"That the next quarterly meeting be held this day 13 weeks at Tawa Flat, business to commence at 2 o'clock."

March 7th, 1881 (held at Tawa Flat)

"That in future the societies furnish to the quarterly meetings the following respective sums:—Sydney Street, £25 per quarter and £10 for Minister's house, total £35; Webb Street, £45; Tawa Flat, £10; and the Hutt, 10/-."

"That Messrs Allen senior and junior, J. Taylor, G. Hall, D. King and I. Taylor form the Tawa Flat Finance Committee."

March 6th, 1882

It was usual for a preachers' meeting to precede the quarterly meeting and the following minutes appear of the preachers' meeting:

"1. That Mr. J. Taylor be President and A. J. Smith Secretary."

"2. That an explanation be given to this meeting by Bro. Charles Luke on his neglecting his appointment at Tawa Flat."

Then the final minute of the quarterly meeting reads, "31. That Bro. C. M. Luke's reason of Minute II be received."

June 6th, 1882

"That the Ministers be planned at Tawa Flat once a month and that they be planned at the Ferry in the afternoon."

September 5th, 1882

"19. That Tawa Flat Finance Committee be re-elected with the addition of Bro. G. Stephens' name." (This should be G. Stevens.)

"23. That Mr. Stephens have permission to leave the meeting owing to distance from home."

"25. That a note go on the plan kindly requesting the brethren planned at Tawa Flat, to go by coach and so keep down expenses, place and time of starting to be placed on the plan." The Railway was not opened until 1885.

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June 5th, 1883

"That collections be taken up at each Service on the Sunday at Tawa Flat." Apparently, prior to this, collections had been taken only when especially indicated on the plan, such as for Missionary, Minister, Horse Fund, etc.

September 4th, 1883

"That Tawa Flat have permission to beg for Bazaar a Gift Auction towards building Church." Also the Finance Committee was re-elected with the exception of Eli Allen senior.

December 4th, 1883

"That Tawa Flat Annual Demonstration in conjunction with Bazaar be held January 22nd." March 4th, 1884

"That Tawa Flat Service be only on Sunday evenings until opening of New Chapel."

"That the members of Tawa Flat have permission to build a New Chapel."

"That Tawa Flat have permission to open their New Chapel on the 11th of May, or before, if necessary."

"That they have permission to have a Tea Meeting on the 24th of May." This was a Public Holiday, Empire Day, being Queen Victoria's Birthday.

June 3rd, 1884

"That Revival Services be held at Tawa Flat six weeks hence." September 2nd, 1884

"That Mr. J. L. Wright be appointed Leader of Tawa Flat Thursday afternoon class."

March 2nd, 1885

"That Bros. (James) Mitchell and Jones be requested to take the children and choir free of charge to Tawa Flat entertainment."

At Johnsonville Quarterly Meeting, held at Ngaio on April 21st, 1913, Rev. S. H. D. Peryman in the chair, the following resolution was carried: "Moved by the chairman, seconded by Mr. (W. J.) Carman that a letter be written to Mr. Taylor, of Tawa Flat, expressing the pleasure of the quarterly meeting of counting such a venerable worker in the Master's Service as a fellow member."

At the same meeting it was suggested to have "a combined tea-meeting at Tawa Flat, the arrangement of same to be left in the hands of Mr. Harris."

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The Quarterly Meeting on October 6th, 1913, was held at Porirua, the Tawa Flat delegates being Miss Taylor and Mr. A. Halliday, whilst Porirua sent Rev. Harris, Mrs. Mitchell and Mr. Stevens.

At the meeting held at Ngaio on January 8th, 1915, it was moved by Mr. Burnct, seconded by Mr. Wackrow, "That the Taylor family at Tawa Flat be given permission to build a vestry at Tawa Flat Church."

Following Church Union, on January 26th, 1914, it was recorded that the Trustees of the Tawa Flat Church were:—

Isaac Edward Taylor, Lower Hutt
James Taylor, Tawa Flat
James Gordon, Masterton
John Clement, Hutt
Benjamin Cummings, Island Bay
Richard Taylor, Feilding
Walter Andrew Taylor, Tawa Flat
James Taverncr Russell, Tawa Flat
Alfred John Taylor, Tawa Flat

When this list was revised on December 23rd, 1926, all were deceased or had left the district except Walter A. Taylor, and two new Trustees were added—John R. Roxburgh (Storekeeper) and Stephen Bertram Mexted (farmer). These in turn were deceased or non-active when on October 3rd, 1932, the Trust was reformed with the following seven new Trustees: Cecil C. Mexted, Francis Herbert Greer, George Turkington, Arthur H. Carman, Frederick W. Larsen, Lionel D. Nairn and John Woodman.

TAWA FLAT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendents:

1849-1910 Mr. James Taylor
1910-1923 Miss Kate Taylor
1923-1933 Mrs. Larsen
1933-1941 Mr. Arthur Carman
1941-1942 Mr. George Bennett
1942-date Mr. Percy Clark

"OURSELVES YOUR SERVANTS FOR JESUS' SAKE"

In August, 1864, Rev. Charles Waters arrived to take charge and "the Church at Tawa Flat was enlarged." After three years, Mr. Waters moved to New Plymouth, and Rev. Robert Ward, the pioneer Minister, returned to Wellington, this time as the local

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Minister. Mr. Ward preached his last sermon on October 1st, 1876, passing away on October 13th, aged 60.



Rev. Robert Ward

Primitive Methodist Ministers in charge of Tawa Flat up to the date of Church Union in 1913 were:

- 1871-1875 W. J. Dean
- 1875-1878 John Nixon
- 1877-1879 John Dumbell
- 1878-1881 W. S. Potter
- 1879-1882 D. Dutton
- 1881-1885 A. J. Smith
- 1883-1888 P. N. Hunter

The Wellington Station was then divided into two, No. 1 Sydney St., minister. Rev. Hunter, and No. 2, Webb Street, Tawa Flat and Newtown, minister Rev. Smith. Later ministers in charge of No. 2 Station were:

- 1885-1886 Peter W. Jones
- 1886-1888 W. S. Potter
- 1889-1893 C. E. Ward

Then the Stations were re-united, later ministers being:

- 1892 William C. Wood
- 1893-1894 S. Barnett
- 1894-1896 J. Guy
- 1895-1896 E. Drake

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1897-1908 John Dawson
1897-1901 G. H. Mann
1897 T. A Pybus
1898-1901 Richard Hall

Again the Station was divided and G. P. Hunt was the minister in 1902, and in 1905-06 Basil Metson was the first minister to be stationed at Porirua under the superintendency of John Dawson. In 1908, J. T. Pratley was stationed at Porirua. From 1909 to 1912, W. S. Potter was in charge with A.O. Harris at Porirua from 1910 to 1914.

(In 1913, the Primitive Methodist Connexion rejoined the main body, and today there is only one Methodist Church Connexion in New Zealand. Re-union has also been accomplished in England and elsewhere. The old divisions are now largely forgotten.—S.D.)

Under the United Methodist Churches, Tawa Flat and Porirua were included in the Johnsonville Circuit, with a probationary minister or Home Missionary residing at the Porirua parsonage. The establishment of a resident minister at Porirua was made possible by the provision of a parsonage and certain trust funds by Mr. James Gear, who died in April, 1911.

Such ministers have been:

1914-1916 Oswald Burnet
1916-1917 O. S. Pearn
1917-1920 C. H. Earwaker
1920-1923 Vacant
1923-1924 T. F. Watson
1924-1926 C. G. H. Bycroft
1926-1928 W. Sussex
1928- N. Whitfield
1928-1930 W. Tralford
1930-1932 W. T. Hooper
1932-1934 H. Ashworth
1934-1937 S. Keen
1937-1942 W. L. Long
1942-1944 H. C. Dixon
1944-1948 W. J. Morrison
1948- W. S. Dawson

The earliest local preachers used often to ride on horseback, or even sometimes walk, out from Wellington. Among those whose names are remembered by Mrs. Greer was John Clement, a soldier of the 65th Regiment, who arrived in Wellington in 1849 and

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was a regular occupant of the Tawa Flat pulpit for many years. In 1888 he celebrated his fiftieth year as a local preacher in Primitive Methodist Connexion.

(Only one shadow appears to darken the reputation of tills good man. In Fifty Years of Primitive Methodism we read, "The only charge we ever knew brought against Mr. Clement appears in the terms of the following unique minute, of September 5, 1855, That Bro. J. Clement be forgiven this time for long preaching, having promised to do better for the future; but that he suffer for the next offence according to rule'."

Have our congregations lost their courage in such matters, or are modern preachers mindful of the implied threat in this old minute?—S.D.)

Another regular local preacher was James Gordon who, with his wife, Ellen, arrived at Wellington in 1855 and settled at Tawa Flat, living on Section 34, opposite the Takapu Road junction, until 1874, when he moved to Wairarapa. They had a family of seven children, five of whom were born at Tawa Flat. Two of the daughters, Charlotte and Helen, married James and David Donald, respectively, well-known residents of Masterton. Other members of the family were Sarah (Mrs. George Curtis), Fanny, James (who married Maria Allen), George and John.



Mr. and Mrs James Gordon

In 1874, the Luke family arrived from Cornwall, and one of the sons, Charles Manly Luke, was local preacher for many years. In 1890, he was elected President of the New Zealand Primitive Methodist Connexion. Later, for many years chairman of the

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Wellington Hospital Board and a Legislative Councillor, he was knighted, and died in 1941, aged 84.

James Taylor often conducted services at Tawa Flat, and four local young men, Isaac Marshall, James Nott, Edward Taylor and Daniel King, also became preachers.

SOME EARLY FAMILIES

Isaac Marshall was the eldest son of Thomas and Ann Marshall, who arrived in New Zealand from Melbourne in 1855 and settled on Part Section 32, just south of Takapu Road on the west side of the main road. Isaac was born there in 1857, and died in 1941 at Stanway, near Halcombe, the family having moved on to Foxton in the early 1870's.

James Thornton Nott was born at Johnsonville in 1864, the son of a very early settler, William Nott and his wife, Emma, who lived on Sections 29 and 30 on the east side of the Main Road (the big house standing on the east of the railway line, south of Takapu Road, and occupied until recently by the Rowell family). He was educated at Three Kings College, Auckland, graduated M.A. at Auckland University, and was accepted as a probationer in the Wesleyan Ministry, spending two years at Riverton and two at Christchurch, before he resigned and returned to his farm at Tawa Flat. His father had died in 1895, aged 81. He gave many lectures on the result of his biological studies, which was his absorbing hobby. He died in 1938.

John Mitchell, in whose home the first service at Tawa Flat was held, was a Yorkshireman, who arrived in the Colony in November, 1841, by the ship *Gertrude*, with his wife, Mary, and their six children. They removed to Wellington in the early 1850s, and John Mitchell died in 1862. Their eldest daughter, Elizabeth, married Eli Allen at the Manners Street Wesleyan Chapel on October 19th, 1845. Eli Allen had arrived on the *Birman* in 1842, a young man of 20, seeking adventure in a new land. In 1864 the Allen family settled at the northern end of Tawa Flat, farming the 100 acres of Section 50, and in 1875 also purchasing the adjoining 100 acres of Section 48—the old Best property "Grasslees Farm"—the area between Tawa Flat and Linden. Both Eli Allen and his son of the same name held office on the Church Trust in later years. Eli Allen senior died in 1889, his wife having predeceased him by two years, whilst Eli junior died in 1934. There were two sons, Eli and John, and six daughters, Mary, who married James Pask, of Tawa Flat; Elizabeth, who married Thomas Tremewan; Hannah, who married H. J. Freeman, of Wellington; Nancy, who married John Mitchell, a grandson of Andrew and Mary Brown; Sarah, who married James Taverner Russell, farmer in Tawa Flat and Trust Member in later years; and Maria, who married James Gordon.

The Jubilee volume, *Fifty Years of Primitive Methodism in New Zealand*, contains the following typical and very interesting note:

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"While new arrivals were being welcomed, old friends were passing away. At Tawa Flat, there was an aged couple named Brown, who had resided in the district for about 33 years. They had come from Scotland, and on their settlement at Tawa Flat had become members of our Church. A little over a year before Mrs. Brown's decease they both lay helpless in one bed, and it was thought that death would not divide them, but it pleased God to take the husband first. Just before he died, noticing that he was restless, his wife said, 'Are ye weary to be gone dear?' to which he replied, 'Yes, and ye'll no be long in comin' too.' Shortly after this he passed peacefully away. Twelve months afterwards, on September 4, 1883, aged 76 years, Mrs. Brown also passed away to the heavenly home."



**Mr. and Mrs Eli Allen, senr.
(nee Elizabeth Mitchell)**

The couple here referred to were Andrew and Mary Brown, who arrived in 1850 and took up Section 49 on the Porirua Road (at Linden) and opposite Mr. Duncan's property. Andrew died on September 8, 1882, aged 75, and his wife a year later. The old house is still occupied by descendants of the original owners.

Mr. Stephen Pilcher, ever a staunch adherent and worker, died in 1872, aged 76, his wife having passed away seven years earlier. Mr. Pilcher, a widower, had arrived at Wellington in August, 1840, with three children, his eldest son, George, having

arrived a few months earlier. On the same boat, the Coromandel, a widow, Mrs. Bennett Hook, had also come to New Zealand with her three children. Her son, Friend Hook, then aged 5, brought up a family of 16 children, many of whom lived in the Tawa Flat district. Her eldest daughter, Rachel, then aged 12, later married James Taylor. In 1844, Stephen Pilcher and Mrs. Bennett Hook were married, and it was a child of this marriage—there were seven in all—Elizabeth, who married Francis Greer, and who provided much of this information when she was interviewed in 1938-39. Her husband died in 1917, aged 82, and of the family of 13 children, the eldest son, Herbert, was a regular worshipper and Trust member at the Tawa Flat Church until his death in 1945, aged 77. Another son, Samuel, still lives at Tawa Flat, and Charles Greer, of Porirua, is another son.

Another early family was the Morgans. Mrs. Greer told me that she well remembered in Church one Sunday, when three girls came in with white muslin bonnets, and she was told they were the Morgan girls coming here to live. They built their home where the original store (Grether's) now stands. The girls were, Martha, Mary Ann, and Fanny Morgan, the first named later marrying Friend Hook. Their parents, Thomas and Mary Ann Morgan were early arrivals at Wellington (1842) from Wales, and they later moved to Takapu Road.

THE PRESENT CHURCH BUILDING

Meanwhile the life of the community had been moving along, and we again turn to the *Fifty Years of Primitive Methodism in New Zealand* and read: "The original Church at Tawa Flat had fallen into decay through lapse of time and was replaced in 1884 by the present neat and comfortable building at a cost of £280, £230 of which was raised at the time. A gracious revival broke out at Tawa Flat and Webb Street, during which a number of people were converted."

The fate of the old Chapel is uncertain, although it would appear that it was sold to Mr. George Hall, and moved to the site of the present Tawa Hall, being occupied by Mr. Daniel T. King, now of Carterton, and later by Mr. James T. Russell, who died in 1940, aged 90. Mr. Herbert Greer told me in 1937 that this building was later moved to Station Road (now Tawa Street) and was added to as part of a residence near the corner of that street and the main road, but this building has now been demolished. Other reports, however, state that the old Church was burnt down at the previous site.

There is also recorded, 'For about 18 months, services had been held in the country district of Porirua, 15 miles from Wellington, and at this time (1888) a section of land was given by Mr. Tremewan for a Church site. The matter was taken up heartily by a few friends and a Church was erected at a cost of about £230. The building, which is free of debt, is a neat comfortable structure, capable of seating about 130 persons and is an ornament to the district, and being the only Church, supplies a felt want."

This Church building was burnt down in April, 1938, the present building taking its place.

THE TAYLOR FAMILY

During this period, several of the Taylor brothers had left the district, and this is an appropriate place to record the names of this family who played so prominent a part in the life of the Methodist Church at Tawa Flat.

The parents, William and Ann Taylor had arrived in Wellington by the *Martha Ridgway* on July 8, 1840, with their daughter Mary, and sons George (aged 15), Henry (8), Richard (6) and Frederick (4). Also, by the same ship, came the eldest brother, James, who worked his passage as "Captain's boy." James Taylor was born at Tunbridge Wells on August 17, 1823, and on August 7, 1844, at the Wesleyan Chapel, Manners Street, was married to Rachel Hook. They settled at Pahautanui, where the three eldest children were born but the family moved to Tawa Flat in 1849, settling on Section 36, near the Takapu Road junction, and later building the two-storey house which still stands and was named Maidstone House, and is now occupied by Dr. and Mrs. W. Brooker. Here the remaining eleven children were born. James Taylor conducted the Sunday School for over 60 years, and, in addition to being a local preacher, took a prominent part in the national affairs of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, being treasurer of the Mission Funds and treasurer of the Loan Fund, in which capacity he attended most of the annual district meetings. Mr. and Mrs. Taylor's home was "ever open to preachers, and all who visited the district have the kindest remembrance of their hospitality." Mr. Taylor died, aged 90, on November 6, 1913, and his wife, Rachel was 96 when she passed away on December 10, 1921.

The Minutes of the 18th Annual Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, held at Webb Street, Wellington on January 12th, 1911, include the following minute:—

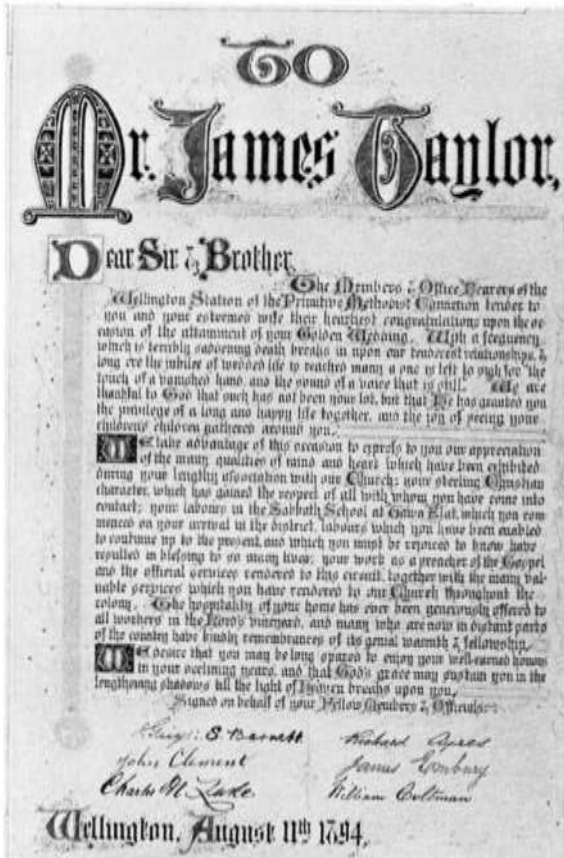
"The Conference desires to record its sincere appreciation and thanks to Capt. James Taylor for his long and faithful services rendered to the Connexion with special reference to his position as Custodian of Deeds."

"The Conference has directed that the safe which was purchased by the Connexion some years ago, be presented with its best wishes to Mr. Taylor as a small memento of his services."

From the tributes paid to Mr. James Taylor on his decease in 1913, the following extracts are selected from the Methodist Times. Hon. (later Sir) C. M. Luke wrote,

"He was elected as a member of Wellington Provincial Council for Porirua district in 1865, and sat till 1873, highly esteemed for his sound judgment and common sense. He was a member and Chairman for some years (1876-1890

altogether) of Hutt County Council, and Chairman of the School Committee, and, with the writer, he sat as a member of the Wellington Hospital Board of Trustees, so that I can speak intimately of his splendid devotion and self-denying interest. His public service was part of his religion. However, it was in Church and home that his best qualities appeared. Seventy years ago he began his work of promoting the spiritual interests of the settlers at Tawa Flat. For over sixty years, he met the Sunday School regularly, as Superintendent and teacher. He served his Church in every office, from local preacher to vice-President of Conference. Though pressed often-times, he would not accept the position of President. As treasurer of the Missionary Funds, Children's and Widows' Fund, and Church Loan Fund, he rendered yeoman service. For a quarter of a century he presided at our quarterly meetings."



Copy of Illuminated Address to Mr James Taylor.

Yes, God is Good by Arthur H. Carman

Rev. C. E. Ward penned the following:

"Conspicuous among the pioneers of New Zealand was the late Mr. James Taylor, of Tawa Flat—a man with a healthy, sturdy body, a strong, clear intellect, and a big, tender heart; thrifty, enterprising, self-respecting, resourceful, persevering, a man to whom the Church and State owes much. Knowing the importance of religious instruction to the young, Mr. Taylor gathered the boys and girls in the neighbourhood, and formed a Sunday School, and, for over sixty years, was a successful instructor of childhood and youth. He was a man of quiet, unassuming, habits and simple tastes, fond of singing and intelligent reading of the daily paper and of many books, a successful farmer, a lover of animals, trees, flowers and all nature. His kindly, manly disposition endeared him to all who knew him."

(Thus, the lifetime of James Taylor spans not only the major period of the existence of Tawa Flat Methodist Church, but also that of New Zealand itself as a British Colony and Dominion.—S.D.)

Of the other brothers, George married Jane Thomas and had a family of 15 children, but they moved to Inglewood in 1875, where George Taylor died in 1890. Their eldest son, Edward, who was born in 1854, was accepted as a local preacher in 1874. He died in 1930. Henry Taylor married Fanny Bartlett, whose people lived in the two-story house now occupied by Mr. Whitcombe —the old Golf House. Of their family of eight children, all except the youngest were born at Tawa Flat. Henry Taylor lived at Linden in the old house across the railway line near Gee Street, and he too left the district, in 1874, for Waitara, where he died in 1900. Richard Taylor also lived at Linden near his brother, having married Charlotte Sellars, and their family of seven children were all born at Tawa Flat. They moved to Foxton in 1867, and Richard Taylor died in 1923, aged 89.

Of James Taylor's children, a number have been closely associated with the Church, both at Tawa Flat and in other parts of the country, so it seems only just to fully record this remarkably loyal family.

Mary Ann married Andrew Whyte and lived at Tokomaru.

James lived at Makino.

Emily married James Jones and lived at Morrinsville.

Annie married William Masters (Hastings) and died in 1945, aged 93.

George lived at Otaki, and Thomas at Te Horo.

Isaac lived at Tawa Flat, farming what is now Mr. Larsen's property. He died in 1924.

Jane is still with us, living at Otaki, now aged 91. She married James Best of Ohariu in 1885, being the first married in the present Church building. A

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daughter is Mrs. Evans, of Porirua, and Mrs. Stan Smith, of Linden, is a grand-daughter.

Frank lived at Te Horo, and Millie married Harry Windley, of Otaki, Mrs. Goer being their daughter.

Walter remained single, living at the old home, and died in 1929. Kate also never married, living at the old homestead until the late 1930's. She was the regular Church organist and Sunday School superintendent for many years. She died in 1942, aged 73.

Alfred John married Margaret Nairn, sister to Lionel Nairn, of Takapu Koad, for some years a Church Trustee, and to Mrs. de la Cour, of Tawa Flat. Mrs. G. Howan (Lexie), of Johnsonville, is a daughter.



**Mr. and Mrs. James Taylor
on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary , 1904**

STILL MORE EARLY FAMILIES

Other families associated with the Tawa Flat Church have been the Mexteds and Woodmans. Stephen Mexted was a son of Stephen senior, who was a child of three years when his parents arrived in 1841. Stephen junior was born in 1859, and died in August, 1940. He married Eliza Champion and they lived at Tawa Flat all their later lives, Cecil, Bert, Wilf, Roy and Milton being sons, and Mrs. Hoare a daughter. Mrs. Stephen Mexted was always a generous friend to the Methodist Church, and Cecil has been a Trustee for many years. "Bert" (Stephen Bertram) was also a Trustee for some years prior to 1932.

George Hall, mentioned as a member of the Committee of Management in 1875, had arrived from Melbourne about 1868 with his wife Ellen, and three children, the eldest of whom was a stepson, Daniel King. Six other children were born at Tawa Flat where George Hall died in 1896, aged 73, and his widow sold their farm (28 acres of Section 41—about where Mexted's Service Station is) to James T. Russell in 1900. Daniel Thomas King was born near Melbourne in March 1859, and after being a local preacher and Trust member at Tawa Flat, moved to the Wairarapa about 1886. He was for many years in business in Carterton and still resides there, aged 92.

George Morris, mentioned as a member of the Management Committee in 1875, had arrived at Wellington in 1857 by the ship *Ann Wilson*, with his wife, Mary Ann, and 11 children, the youngest of whom was born on the voyage out. Morris purchased 25 acres of Section 34, next to James Gordon, on the west side of the Main Road, opposite the Takapu Road junction, in 1862. Several of the family married locally, but George Morris and most of his children moved on to Palmerston North late in 1875 and he died there. The eldest daughter, Mary Ann, was born on November 10th, 1831, married William Call, of Tawa Flat, and died at Eltham on October 17th, 1931, aged 99 years 11 months and 7 days,

William Catt, who had also come to New Zealand by the *Ann Wilson*, first settled at Johnsonville, where he was Wesleyan Sunday School Superintendent for some years, but from 1865 to 1873 he farmed the portion of Section 41, just north of the present Church. He died at Masterton in 1900.

Philip Roberts, also named as a member of the 1875 Management Committee, had arrived by the *Duke of Roxburgh* in 1840, with his parents, he being then ten years old. After going to Australia, he returned in 1858 with his wife, Amelia, and mother-in-law, Mrs. Eliza Thomas, and purchased Section 53, at the north end of Linden, from Henry and Richard Taylor. Mrs. Thomas died in 1874 and is buried at the Linden Cemetery, where Mrs. Roberts was buried in 1883, when she died, aged 46. Mr. Philip Roberts sold his farm to Thomas Tremewan and left the district in 1876, and when he died, in 1901, he too was buried at the Linden Cemetery.

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George Stevens, Trust Member in 1882, had purchased the farm at the rear of the Church from William Peckham just previously, but sold it late in 1883 and moved away. He was a son of Charles and Lydia Stevens, who had arrived in 1842 by the ship *Clifton*, and who held the lease from Edward Gibbon Wakefield to the farm, on Section 52, in the early 1860s, and which was a few years later sold to Charles Duncan, by whose son it is still owned. George Stevens married Elizabeth Peckham, who died in 1891, and he lived until 1918. A daughter is Mrs. Herbert Taylor, organist at the Porirua Methodist Church.

Benjamin Cummings, Trust Member in 1914, had purchased, in 1890, the 100 acres of Section 44, Bartlett's old farm, with the house where Mr. Whitcombe lives in Old School Lane (Oxford Street) as the homestead.

Thomas and Mary Woodman arrived at Wellington in the *Bolton* in April, 1840, and one of their sons— William, who died in 1900, aged .67, and who for some lime lived where the "Bull and Bush" now is—was the father of John Woodman, for many years of Takapu Road, a member of the Church Trust, and father of Mrs. Arnold Woodman of Linden.

In more recent times, Mrs. Fred Larsen conducted the Sunday School for many years until 1933, and Mr. Larsen has been a Trustee for 20 years. It was in the 1920's that the character of Tawa Flat began to change from a purely farming district to a suburban community, and closer settlement and denser population resulted.

And now, with St. Paul, I would close with, "And what shall I more say" of all those who have worshipped and worked during the years at the Tawa Flat Chapel, those whose Christian witness has been faithfully maintained, but whose names do not appear in this record, but are written in the Book of Life. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run wth patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."



**Church Membership Card,
Mrs. Eli Allen (nee Mitchell)**

EPILOGUE

It requires a strong leap of the imagination to connect the supplejack-hung trails and moss hung forests of a century ago with our modern town plans and motorways: the meetings of the newly appointed Town Board arc concerned with housing regulations and zoning of industry, rather than with stockades and packhorse tracks. We seem a very long way in time from the captain's boy of the Martha Ridgway, and the stoutly shod early preachers of Methodism.

It is safe to predict that the Tawa Flat of today will seem equally remote and rudimentary to those who will celebrate the end of this second century which now we enter. Although it is not possible for us to visualise that Tawa Flat, we can, on the basis of our past, confidently prophesy that God is in the future. Our task is so to build, not merely the outward fabric of a Church, but still more its inner reality, that God will be able to use us in this new century as He has used our fathers in that which is past.

"So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on."—Newman.

NEWS OF THE NEW CHURCH BUILDING

It has been increasingly evident over a period of years that our present Church property is totally inadequate both for our growing congregations and our expanding youth work. Our trustees have, as an act of faith, had plans prepared for a Community Church, to be erected on our section at Elena Place, nearer to the centre of Tawa Flat than our present Church. These plans contain several interesting features, and the end result should be a very fine building structurally, well adapted for the many activities of a modern Church. The men of the Church have undertaken 'to do much of the work themselves under competent supervision, thus making it possible for us to have a finer building than we could have otherwise afforded.

Finance

At present we envisage a cost of about £4,500. We have £1,500 already in hand, from the grant which followed the disposal of the Webb Street Church.

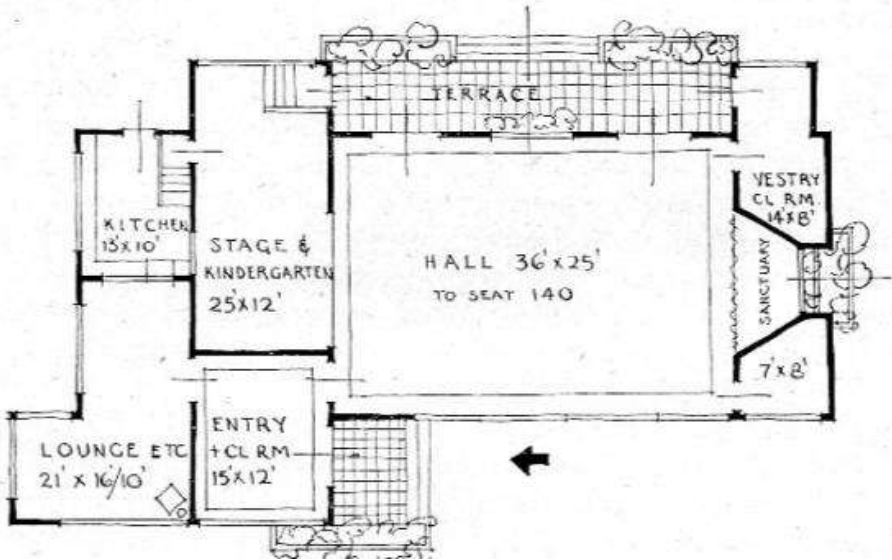
We have been assured of an interest free loan of £1,000 from the Methodist Church Building and Loan Fund.

The balance of £2,000 could, perhaps, be raised partly by loan, but the Trustees have decided that, rather than mortgage the future to this additional extent, we should instead seek to raise this sum in a more direct fashion.

Accordingly, they have decided to raise a
CENTENNIAL THANKSGIVING FUND

Yes, God is Good by Arthur H. Carman

with a target of £2,000: this sum to be devoted directly to the cost of building the new Church. Mr. F. H. Turley, of Huia Street, Tawa Flat, is the secretary-treasurer of the fund.



Ground plan of proposed Church.

A direct approach by the committee will be made to our local Church folk: but in addition, we solicit gifts from interested people outside the immediate congregation: especially those who have been connected with Tawa Flat in the past, and those who were formerly members of the Primitive Methodist Church, of which the new Church will be in part a memorial.

Our target is a large one, but

- (1) *This is a most worthy cause.*—The provision of an adequate Church building for an expanding Church and district will pay large dividends for the Kingdom of God. It is absolutely essential that we should have a new home for Church and youth work before twelve months are up.
- (2) *This is a most appropriate occasion.*—We feel that the centennial marks a real stage in the life of our Church.
- (3) *Every penny of the fund will be needed.*—If the target is not reached, the construction will have to be halted until more funds and materials come to hand.

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(4) *The congregation is doing its share in this venture.*—The women-folk have been working for some years to raise funds for furnishings: the men are eager to carry out the major part of the labour themselves: and all will be contributing directly to the funds.

Nevertheless, we need the help of generous folk outside the immediate congregation, as the target is a large one, and most of our people already have large commitments in purchasing their own houses, and bringing up their families. If you can see your way clear to help us, we will be most grateful.



James Taylor Golden Wedding Celebration 1904

Back row (from left): James Best, John Taylor, Walter Taylor, Andrew Whyte, Frank Taylor, Isaac Taylor, William Masters/Harry Windley.

Second row: Mrs. J. Best, Miss M. Jones, Miss J. Whyte, Miss Kate Taylor, Thomas Taylor, ———, ———. Mrs. Barber, Mrs H Windley, Mrs. E. Smith. Mrs. G. Taylor.

Seated: Mrs. J. Jones, Mrs. James Taylor, Mr. James Taylor, Mrs. A. Whyte, Mrs. W. Masters, and children William and Walter Taylor.

In front: Tom Taylor, Harold Best, Millie Best, Kitty Best (Mrs. Evans), ———, Dolly Masters.

Yes, God is Good by Arthur H. Carman

The prologue and epilogue and certain other comments are from the pen of Rev. Selwyn Dawson.

Appreciation is expressed of the valuable assistance rendered by Mr. Charles J. Freeman, of Wellington, himself a grandson of Eli Allen, and great-grandson of the John Mitchell at whose house the first service was held in 1850.