

The Women Ministers of the Bible Christian Church.
Second Appendix : Additional information as continuously compiled (2)

This Second Appendix is additional to the one appended to the original file on the Women Itinerant Preachers of the Bible Christian Connexion. It continues the numbering of that Appendix, adding further information about those in the first Appendix under repeated numbers. Item there numbered 1.3 should read 1.2. Numbers 13 onwards here is new information about women not mentioned in the first Appendix.

Note that modern preferences include using « woman/women » for « female » although the latter is most commonly used in the Bible Christian documents, and is preserved here when using quotations from them, or titles to papers &c.

Note that the Ringsash Circuit is based on Ashreigney in Devon.

2. Ann Cory

Gracca as previously noted was never a Circuit, but Ann and her sister Sarah (see below; their brother was the male itinerant preacher Andrew) were stationed in the new Luxillian [sic] Circuit in 1819, along with Henry Freeman. Together they began the Bible Christian work in St.Austell.

The *Conference Manuscript Journal* shows that Ann was present at the annual Conference of 1828 (later women did not attend Conference) and she and William O'Bryan 'consulted together' over a grievance.

4. Ann Mason

Ann wrote to Samuel Thorne on October 15 1819 from Northcott in the Kilkhampton Circuit, describing recent ministry activities. See S.L. Thorne.

5. Mary (Ann) Mason

The previous Appendix showed that the woman Itinerant Preacher was not Mary Ann, but Mary.

I now believe she was the sister of Ann Mason. Some of Ann's letters in Freeman are addressed to Mary. Mary also wrote to Samuel Thorne from Sowden, a place I've not identified, in 1820.

11. Mary Toms

Mary wrote to Samuel Thorne on 25 September 1820 from Luxillian (sic) in that Circuit, thanking him for spiritual advice and asking for his prayers. See S.L. Thorne.

12. Mary Ann Werrey

An exploration of her possible origins can be found in another paper on the site, and a paper in *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* (Bowen, James M., "A Dream Fulfilled: The Life of Mary Ann Werrey, ..." *Proc WHS* Vol.61 Part 6 pp274-9) adds much to her story.

Lewis Court's 'A Song of the Century' is a celebration in verse of the whole Bible Christian story, not Mary Ann Werrey alone.

13. Lillie Edwards

Joan Mills' reference to several women itinerant preachers losing their jobs is wrong; only Lilly Edwards was still serving.

Another article in *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* (Burnham, C.Paul and Short, Colin, "Lillie Edwards (1863-1937): A Female Methodist Superintendent

Minister” *Proc WHS* Vol.60 Part 2 (May2015) pp64-73) details her ministry. Before she entered the ministry Lillie Edwards served as a hired Local Preacher in Ashford and Tenterden (1890–2), and an evangelist during each of the following years at Kilkhampton and London (Waterloo Road). On acceptance for the ministry her Sevenoaks appointment was on her own, and it was on her own that she served in St. Mawes and Hastings Circuits. Although the polity of the United Methodist Church after 1907 didn’t recognise her, she seems to have carried on doing the work until she herself decided to retire !

14. Other Women Itinerant Preachers not listed in Beckerlegge

The *Manuscript Journal* of the Bible Christian Conference held at The John Rylands University of Manchester Library, Deansgate, Manchester reveals that occasionally women were accepted on trial for the stations, subject to suitable Certificates at the year end, but without their name being included in the printed *Minutes*; they were not always continued beyond the year.

15. Ann White

Ann White (1834-1850) was sent to ten Circuits, but twice does not appear on the stations. Her ministry reflects the evangelical work of the early women Itinerant Preachers, because extended stays at Week St Mary (1837-9) and Tenterden (1844-7) saw evangelical success; indeed in the latter place F.W.Bourne was converted. Later in 1850 she married Rev James Roberts – who had become a minister in 1832 of the break-away Arminian Bible Christians of 1829, and was one of those accepted back in 1835 – and according to rule, Ann left the itinerant ministry. In 1854 the couple transferred to the South Australian Bible Christian Church. There Ann continued to preach, often attracting larger crowds because of her gender. In 1867/8 she was listed as a Circuit Minister; this may not have been the only occasion. The historian of the South Australian Bible Christians (Curnow, Edwin A, *Bible Christian Methodists in South Australia 1850-1900* Black Forest, South Australia: Uniting Church SA Historical Society 2015 p293) regards her as a significant women who made a major contribution to South Australian society.

16. Elizabeth Gay

Elizabeth Gay was shown as stationed at Plymouth Dock (Devonport) on her own in the first Bible Christian *Minutes* in 1819. Jennifer Lloyd called that appointment “exceptional” (Lloyd, Jennifer, “Women Preachers in the Bible Christian Connexion,” *Albion* 36,3 (Fall 2004), 451-481), but there were other of the women Itinerant Preachers placed in not dissimilar appointments. David Shorney (Shorney, David, “Women may preach but men must govern” *Gender and Christian Religion* Boydell Press, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1998.), exploring whether she administered Baptism in the period, tells us that during her time the two male ministers who registered Baptisms were William Mason, stationed in St. Neot, and William Lyle who had lately come in from the ‘Boylite’ work (See Shaw, Tom and Short, Colin *Feet of Clay* Porthleven: Colin C Short 2007, pp90-94).

Six years after she ‘desisted’ in 1820 the *Conference Manuscript Journal* shows male Itinerant Preacher William Metherell being given permission to marry her. Two years later (1828) they brought a charge to Conference against William O'Bryan. The matter is reported thus in the *Manuscript Journal* ...

Q4 Do we consider that Elizabeth Metherall [sic] has been injured ?

A: Yes.

Q5 Does she wish to have the matter explained who has injured her ?

A: (She answered) Yes.

Q6 How has she been injured ?

A1: In having been taken out to travel from her situation, which induced her to give up her school and sell her goods and in the end obliged to return to her own resources.

A2: [Refers to something not explained to her before her marriage, the consequence of which could result in William M being “stopped from travelling” – and thus “greatly alter her circumstances”.]

The second part, about the marriage is unclear to me. But in the first part, it seems that like many of the early women Gay was called into the ministry by William O'Bryan (although this is one a very few explicit examples of that) and then sent to run the Dock Mission. She was obliged to leave her school – she must have been a teacher – and sell her goods, “and in the end obliged to return to her own resources” – probably discontinued without compensation. When this charge was brought, in 1828, the rift between the Conference and O'Bryan was rapidly deepening.

Conference ruled for Elizabeth, but William’s name does not re-appear from 1828. Whether compensation came is not known. Their baby son was Baptised at Breage Bible Christian Chapel in June 1829. Breage was soon to become a centre of the 1829 Arminian Bible Christian schism. See Shaw and Short.

Lloyd’s calling of Gay’s appointment “exceptional” might be right in one respect, for 1819 was still early in the Connexion’s life, and the evangelical Charismatic Community was still on the pilgrimage to Institutional Church – so perhaps Dock in 1819 was ... ‘experimental.’

17. Both Sarah and Martha “Hutchings”

What ought to be “Hutchings” appears in the main headings as Hutchings. This is a result of a missed OCR error. Sorry !

18. Annie Carkeek

There is a brief biography by Appleby, referred to in the first Appendix. Annie submitted an entry to the *Who’s Who in Methodism 1933* from which Appleby took information. She died in December 1932 before her entry was published.

Annie Carkeek came from west Cornwall, was converted within the Wesleyans and apparently became a Bible Christian to fulfil a call to full-time ministry. She was working as a hired Local Preacher in Blaenavon in south Wales from 1892. When she offered for the ministry in 1894 she continued to serve in the same Circuit but as an itinerant preacher On Trial. However, the Conference Committee were unable to find her a station in 1895, and she accepted the identification as a Connexional evangelist.

19. Mary Ann Soper

Mary wrote to Samuel Thorne on May 1820 from Oakwell in the Ringsash Circuit, and in September 1820 from Tregonatha in the St. Ervan Circuit, describing recent ministry activities. See S.L. Thorne.

20. Betsy Reed

Betsy wrote to Samuel Thorne on 25 July 1819 from Polmonick (today Polminnick) in the Morvah Circuit, describing recent ministry activities, especially relationships

with the parish priest (unusually open here). See S.L. Thorne.

21. Mary O'Bryan

Samuel Thorne's wooing of Mary O'Bryan is described in *Samuel Thorne, printer*.

22. Ipsa Parnell

William O'Bryan's *Journal* reveals that on his first return visit from the United States of America after emigrating in 1831, he visited London and accompanied Ipsa for about a month in May-June 1836, on several occasions preaching in her place on the Bible Christian London Preaching Plan. Some idea of where Ipsa was working may be gleaned from this.

23. Sarah Cory

See the notes in this Appendix on Ann Cory.

Sarah is mentioned in the letter Ann Mason wrote to Samuel Thorne on 15 October 1819 (See S.L. Thorne.): "Sarah Cory – dear Sarah; you would delight to see her, she is even as a flame of fire."

24. Elizabeth Trick

Mentioned in the same letter as Sarah Cory, preaching at either Menadue or Bodwen (both in Luxulyan; the letter could mean either). This illustrates that her 1819 appointment to St. Neot was as 'flexible' as all those early stations.

25. Hannah Pearce

The Methodist Protestant church to which Joan Mills refers is the American Protestant Methodist Church, one of the branches along which American Methodism grew. Hannah wrote to Samuel Thorne on 17 November 1820 – that is, *before* she was accepted into the ministry in 1821 – from Sheepwash in the Shebbear Circuit, asking his guidance as "... the Lord has called me to a great work." Thorne was Pastor of the Circuit. Hannah wanted Samuel's permission to "... go round this circuit once with sister Witham [who was presumably a Local Preacher]." See S.L. Thorne.

There is an American biography, "The Lady Preacher" by her husband, William Reeves. This may be the source of the late Bible Christian obituary.

26. Ann Vicary

She married Paul Robins (with one 'b').

Joan Mills' comment about being posted to Jersey was, according to the official stations, without her husband, and was never itself entered in the annual *Minutes*.

Ann wrote to Samuel Thorne on 12 September 1820 from Lapford in the Ringsash Circuit, full of spiritual joy, and awaiting Samuel Thorne to come to Ringsash. See S.L. Thorne. She was stationed for her first appointment in August 1820 at Kilkhampton, so her taking up of that appointment was delayed by needs in the Ringsash Circuit.

27. Eliza Giles

Eliza was the first of the final cohort of four women itinerant preachers, the other three – Lily Oram, Annie G Carkeek and Lillie Edwards – all starting On Trial the year Eliza was Received into Full Connexion (1894). All three were already working for the church in some capacity.

Eliza's offer proceeded according to 1827 Rules, but in 1893 after such a long time the

Conference was minded to review their processes. As a consequence in 1894 a new body of 'Regulations with regard to the admission and employment of Female preachers' was established.

By 1897 she was in her fourth appointment, a single minister station at Dalwood in east Devon. There she was 'under the general oversight of Br. Daniel', thirteen miles away at Crewkerne. But she resigned before a year's experience of that arrangement was over. Did she find the arrangement – or perhaps Bro. Daniel – unworkable? Or, as the new Regulations gave no guidance for a woman itinerant preacher seeking to marry, was her resignation for love?

28. Lily Oram

The Bible Christian Magazine for 1893 first reveals Miss Oram working as an evangelist in south Wales. On acceptance for the ministry she was sent On Trial to London (Jubilee) Circuit, a single chapel Circuit with normally only one itinerant preacher. It might be considered a strange and difficult situation to which to send an evangelist from south Wales. She resigned during the year.

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The late Joan Mills prepared this study, and under my advice deposited it at the John Rylands University of Manchester Library, Deansgate, Manchester. For a long while I had thought that her final illness had prevented her from doing this, as others reported a failure to find it, so I published a copy with several emendations on the *My Bible Christians* website. Others have since added more information. Now the location of Joan's document at Rylands has been clarified: it has been included in the Louis Court Collection. My website comments are still valid.

A pirated print of my file (now in the *My United Methodists* website) was made available without permission.

Minutes of Conference, issued annually

O'Bryan, Mary, *Journal*, Cornwall CRO X241/8

O'Bryan, William, *Journal*; I use transcripts of the microfilm copy at The John Rylands University of Manchester Library, Deansgate, Manchester obtained by the late Tom Shaw.

President's Circular

Listing of the decisions made by the president during the year. Often bound with the annual *Minutes of Conference*.

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