

A History of Weedon Chapel

by Ralph Followell

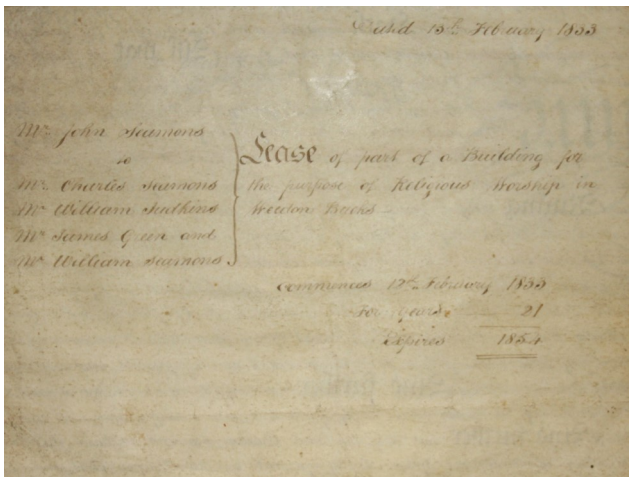


1854

The Seamons family played an important role in the growth of Methodism in Weedon. William Seamons was born in 1767 and died in 1831. He married Ann Brooks, born in 1769, in 1789, and she died in 1842. They lived in a farm cottage where Jonathan Freeman- Attwood now lives. They had ten children, three girls and seven boys. one boy died in infancy. The eldest boy was Charles followed by William, John, Joseph, Edmund, and James. They like their father, were farmers with Charles building and living in Chapel House and William in Penwick Furlong adjacent to it. Joseph lived in the Manor Farmhouse and James in Waddesdon. John and Edmund immigrated to Australia in 1849. William married twice and had two girls who died before they were teenagers. Charles married three times and had no offspring. Joseph though had ten girls and one boy. His fifth daughter named Hannah Maria married Edmund Rolls in 1863 which was milestone when they united the two families which had lived side by side for so long. With the collapse of the farming industry at these times, many from the different families immigrated to Australia and America.

Many years ago, I took photographs of legal documents of the Chapel in Weedon Village which were kept in the safe in Aylesbury Methodist Church. Alas, no one knows where they are now. They reveal interesting features which have not been available for a number of years.

The oldest document is dated **15th February 1833** and concerns the lease of a part of a building for the purpose of Religious Worship in Weedon, Bucks from 12th February 1833 for 21 years, expiring in 1854. The parties to the lease were Mr John Seamons, a Grazier from Quarrendon in the first part and to Mr Charles Seamons, a Farmer of Weedon, Mr William Judkins, a Baker of Aylesbury, Mr James Green, a Butcher of Aylesbury, and Mr William Seamons, a Farmer from Weedon in the second part. The Building was part of a barn to the North of Weedon near to the present Newville and the rent was 30 shillings per year. As the lease covered a long period, it also included individual heirs and assigns should they not be capable of discharging their function e.g., if they died.

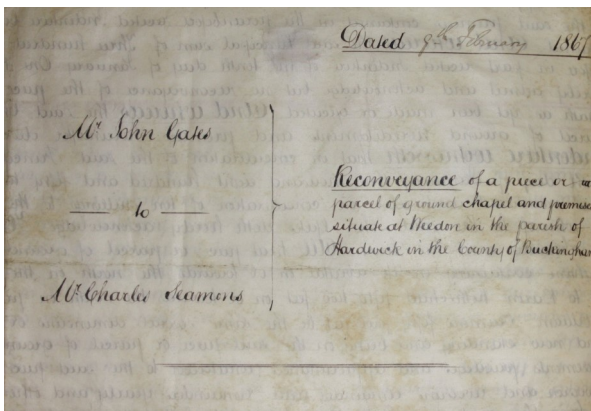


In **1852**, the barn which was being used for services burnt down and they then held services in the old family Homestead. Chares Seamons had finished building his own house having demolished the two cottages on the site of the present Chapel House. There are no documents relevant to the building of the Chapel and from drawings it may be assumed that the land was part of the garden of William's house donated by him. There are no records of properties standing on that area before the Chapel was built. The original building was the same size as the present building without the rear schoolroom part. The entrance was from the front with the altar at the back. In 1913, the stained glass window was installed, and the chapel

turned round with the altar at the front. The entrance was from the side and later the small room at the rear was extended to its present size.

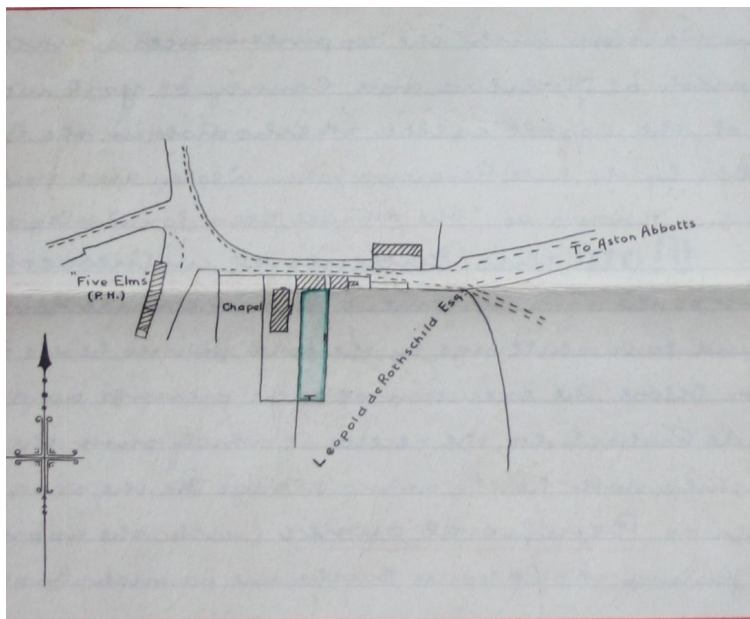


The next document is dated **9th February 1867** and is a Reconveyance of a 'piece or parcel of ground chapel and premises' situate at Weedon in the parish of Hardwick in the County of Buckingham between Mr John Gates to Mr. Charles Seamons. It refers to an Indenture of 1850 between John Gates of Wing, a Farmer on the one part and Charles Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer of the second part and Henry Watson of Aylesbury of the third part, whereby the Indenture of 1850 between Charles Seamons and Samuel Miller Gibbs, where John Gates paid Samuel Miller Gibbs £300. This was repaid in 1867 by Charles Seamons at £350. The extra £50 representing the interest on the rent over 15 years. Charles cleared his debts during this year before he died in 1868.

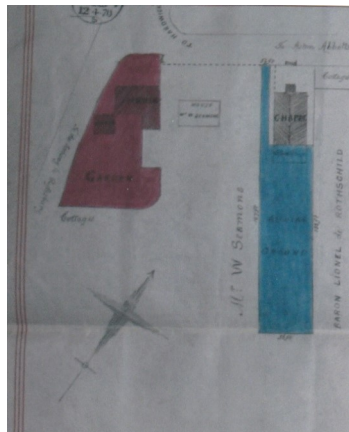


A few days after the repayment of the £300 on the **13th February 1867** another document records the release of a 'piece or parcel of ground chapel or place of Religious Worship' situate in Weedon. It was between Mr Charles Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer of the one part and to William Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer, Joseph Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer and James Seamons of Waddesdon, a Farmer, William Barnard of Waddesdon, a Carpenter, Edmund Rolls of Weedon, a Plait Dealer, Joseph Watkins of Weedon, a Farmer, Edwin Rose, of Aylesbury, a Baker, Charles Samuel Madder of Aylesbury a Draper, John Rose, of Aylesbury a Surveyor, Thomas Durley of Aylesbury, a Stationer, Mark Monk, of Aylesbury, a Brewer, Obadiah Duntling of Waddesdon, a Farmer. of the second part and Reverend William Piggott a local preacher of the circuit of the third part. They in turn gave it to the Wesleyan Methodists.

Charles Seamons died in January 1868 and another Indenture of **16th May 1868** between William Seamons on the one part and Joseph Seamons, James Seamons, William Barnard, Edmund Rolls, Joseph Watkins, Edwin Rose, Thomas Durley, Obadiah Duntling, Charles Samuel Madder and John Rose of the second part and the Reverend William Piggott of the third part, gave the land and buildings to the second party. The chapel and graveyard were given to the various people who signed the document of 1867.



The Conveyance of a 'messuage or tenement and ground at Weedon' on **3rd April 1870** whereby Mr William Seamons gave it to The Trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel at Weedon. This indenture between William Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer of the one part and Joseph Seamons of Weedon, a Farmer and James Seamons of Waddesdon, a Farmer, William Barnard of Waddesdon, a Carpenter, Edmund Rolls of Weedon, a Plait Dealer, Joseph Watkins of Weedon, a Farmer, Edwin Rose, of Aylesbury, a Baker, Charles Samuel Madder of Aylesbury a Draper, John Rose, of Aylesbury a Surveyor, Thomas Durley of Aylesbury, a Stationer, Mark Monk, of Aylesbury, a Brewer, Obadiah Duntling of Waddesdon, a Farmer of the second part and The Reverend Thomas Unson of the third part, whereby the land and buildings of the Chapel and those of the former home of Charles Seamons, namely Chapel House and the Hovel were given to the Methodists.



Two documents dated **24th January 1914** show a Conveyance of the piece of land at Weedon Bucks by Leopold de Rothschild Esq. of the first part and the Reverend Joshua Monkhouse Fairbourn the present Superintendent Minister of the circuit of the second part and Thomas Durley, Harry Bates, Edmund Percy Rolls, Thomas John Nash Cannon, Thomas Edward Biggs, John Stephens, Frederick Taylor, John Henry Kingham, Charles Seamons Watkins and Herbert David Honour of the third part to The Trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel at Weedon Bucks. This indenture in consideration of £6.4s, Leopold recognised as beneficial owner of land but not the cottage.



The other conveyance was by Mrs H N Rolls to the Trustees of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel Weedon Bucks. The indenture was between Hannah Maria Rolls, a widow of the first part and the Reverend Joshua Monkhouse Fairbourne, the present Superintendent Minister of the circuit of the second part and Thomas Durley, Harry Bates, Edmund Percy Rolls, Thomas John Nash Cannon, Thomas Edward Biggs, John Stephens, Frederick Taylor, John Henry Kingham, Charles Seamons Watkins and Herbert David Honour of the third part whereas they wish to acquire a piece of land for building works and extending the graveyard. Whereas the parties gifted the extra land as a burial place. Conveyed as a gift and also included the cottage.

Hannah Rolls was the daughter of Joseph Seamons who lived at the Manor Farmhouse; she married Edmund Rolls a local minister and owner of the Village Shop in the High Street. Chapel House was used as the residence of the local minister until it was sold in 1916 for £300.



Photograph of the rear of the Chapel after reconstruction of new rear elevation to the same height as the frontal part in 1920s. The new housing for the organ can also be seen.



Photograph of the celebration at the reopening .

Photograph of the Weedon Wesleyan Chapel in 2000.

