

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

READING CASTLE STREET CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH RECORDS

D/N 9

Records of Castle Street Congregational Church, Reading, 1835-1979.
(20 vols, 11 bdl, 10 docs)

Deposited in March 1979 (acc. 2375); June 2007 (acc. 8047)

Cat : LS 7/2007

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Schedule of accessions

Acc. 2375 : 1/2/1-3; 2/1/1-3; 2/2/1; 4/1/1-4; 5/1/1-3; 5/3/1-2; 6/2/2;
6/4/1; 6/5/1-4; 7/1/1-3; 8/1/1; 8/2/1; 8/3/1; 9/3/1; 10/1;
13/1/1; 13/2/1-2; 14/1-4

Acc. 8047 : 6/2/1,3-4; 6/5/5

Introduction

Castle Street Congregational Church was formed in 1836 when St Mary's Church, Castle Street, Reading (D/P 175) reverted to the Church of England. Those members who wished to remain Independent rented rooms in Bridge Street, and in 1837 built a Congregational Chapel in Castle Street, almost opposite their former church.

In 1886 the church amalgamated with the Augustine Church in Friar Street.

The church declined in the 1950s, and closed in 1956. The proceeds of sale of the building, and some of the church contents, were given to a new church to be built on the Southcote estate (later Grange Free Church).

Summary

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION: church meeting minutes, 1836-1956.

DEACONS: minutes, 1844-1951.

COMMITTEES: Committee of Management minutes, 1882-1884; General (later General Finance) Committee minutes, 1876-1886; Village Committee minutes, 1844-1852, 1877-[1890]; Village Agents' meeting minutes, 1844-1850; Renovation Fund Committee minutes, 1901.

TREASURER: accounts, 1836-1876; pew rent accounts, 1857-1876; annual statements of accounts, 1871-1876.

PROPERTY RECORDS: transcript of deed of chapel, n.d.; schedule of deeds of chapel site, 1849; appointments of trustees, 1910-1957; counterpart leases of 9 Castle Street, 1934-1954; papers relating to sale of 9 Castle Street, 1977-1979; chapel building and subscription accounts, 1836-1843; register of pews, c.1876-1879; trustees' correspondence, 1877-1879, 1940-1957.

CHURCH ORGANISATIONS: Sunday School admission registers, 1854-1879.

REGISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP: register of baptisms, 1857-1862, marriages, 1857-1861, and burials, 1857-1862; registers of members, 1836-1874; details of admission of members, c.1836-1951; correspondence on transfer of members, 1883-1885.

SERVICE OF THE CHURCH: certificate of registration for marriage, 1838.

MINISTER: correspondence with the Revd John Wood, 1876.

OTHER BODIES: accounts of Berkshire, South Oxon and South Bucks Association of Independent Ministers and Churches (later the Berkshire, South Oxon and South Bucks Congregational Union), 1841-1893; balance sheet: account with daughter-churches, 1920; letter relating to tenancy of land adjoining Wargrave Congregational Church, 1924.

MISCELLANEOUS: copy report of Coley Schools Committee, 1870; printed miscellanea, 1863-c.1880s.

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Records in other collections

1950-1951

Correspondence with B.S.O.S.B. Congregational Union

D/N 25/1/2/1

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1	CHURCH ADMINISTRATION		
1/2	<u>Church meeting minutes</u>		
1/2/1	Minutes, November 1836-December 1842, January 1856-April 1885. (Includes account of circumstances leading to the formation of the church, 1836; and (reversed) register of members, October 1836- April 1856. Minutes include admission of members.)	1 vol	1836-1885
1/2/2	Minutes, June 1885-January 1951. (Includes admission of members <i>passim</i> ; and minutes of deacons' meetings, March-April 1931.)	1 vol	1885-1951
1/2/3	Minutes, March 1951-March 1956.	1 vol	1951-1956

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2	DEACONS		
2/1	<u>Minutes</u>		
2/1/1	Minutes (described as committee minutes to October 1855), December 1844-November 1876. (Includes, at front, list of ministers who supplied the pulpit, 1836-1839.) [For sub-committee [deacons'] minutes, 1876-1881, <i>see</i> D/N9/4/1/1.]	1 vol	1844-1876
2/1/2	Minutes, September 1881-March 1924. (Minutes described variously as deacons' meetings, September 1881-April 1882, committee of management, June 1882-May 1884, deacons' meetings, July 1884-July 1915, Council, July 1915-January 1921, alternately deacons' meetings and Council, February 1921-January 1923, and deacons' meetings, February 1923-March 1924. Also includes Renovation Fund Committee minutes, February-December 1901.)	1 vol	1881-1924
2/1/3	Minutes, April 1924-August 1951. [For March-April 1931, <i>see</i> D/N9/1/2/2.]	1 vol	1924-1951
2/2	<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
2/2/1	Acceptance of the resignation of Messrs Hampton, Player and Wells as deacons.	1 doc	n.d. [1876]

4 COMMITTEES

4/1 Minutes

[For minutes of "committee of management" (probably the deacons), 1882-1884, *see* D/N9/2/1/2.]

General (later General Finance) Committee

[The General Committee was renamed the General Finance Committee in 1885.]

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|-----------|
| 4/1/1 | Minutes, March 1877-July 1886.
(Includes minutes of "sub-committee", December 1876-August 1881. [This is probably the "committee of management" appointed in 1876 which seems to have replaced the deacons; <i>see also</i> D/N9/2/1/2.] Also includes, at front, inventory of contents of Bridge Street schoolrooms, 1877.)
Not to be produced | 1 vol | 1876-1886 |
|-------|--|-------|-----------|

Village Committee

[The Village Committee was responsible for the rural chapels overseen by Castle Street, a responsibility inherited from Reading Evangelical Society (*see* D/N11/13/1/1) and its successor the Reading Auxiliary Society for the Spread of the Gospel. It was responsible for chapels or smaller places of worship at Binfield Heath, Caversham Hill, Hare Hatch, Kidmore End, Pound Green, Sonning, Theale, Wargrave and Woodley.]

- | | | | |
|-------|--|-------|-----------------|
| 4/1/2 | Minutes, September 1844-August 1852. | 1 vol | 1844-1852 |
| 4/1/3 | Minutes, September 1877-October 1889 and undated meeting, [1890].
(Pages missing at the front.) | 1 vol | 1877-n.d.[1890] |
| 4/1/4 | Minutes of Village Agents' meetings, September 1844-November 1850.
(Includes preaching plans for Caversham Hill, Binfield Heath, Wargrave and Hare Hatch, Sonning, Woodley, Pound Green, and Kidmore End. The agents were responsible for obtaining preachers.) | 1 vol | 1844-1850 |

Renovation Fund Committee

[For minutes, 1901, *see* D/N9/2/1/2.]

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5	TREASURER			
5/1	<u>Accounts</u>			
5/1/1	Treasurer's accounts, September 1836-December 1876. (Described as Chapel Incidental Fund from 1867. Includes annual statements of accounts, 1871-1876.)	1 vol		1836-1876
5/1/2	Pew rent (described as "chapel sittings") cash accounts, March 1857-December 1876. (Includes, at end, bank deposit accounts, 1857-1860. No names or pew numbers are recorded.)	1 vol		1857-1876
5/1/3	Pew rent accounts, October 1862-May 1876. (Lists payments for each pew number.)	1 vol		1862-1876
5/2	<u>Statements of accounts</u> [For annual statements, 1871-1876, <i>see</i> D/N9/5/1/1.]			
5/3	<u>Miscellaneous</u>			
5/3/1/1-2	Notices requesting payment of pew rent.	1 bdl		n.d. [1860s]
5/3/2	Pledges to make regular gifts to the Weekly Offering Fund. (Includes names and addresses of those making pledges.)	1 bdl		1876

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6	PROPERTY RECORDS		
6/2	<u>Title deeds</u>		
6/2/1	Transcript of trust deed of the chapel, 1837. [Not to be produced.]	1 doc	n.d. [mid 19C]
6/2/2	Schedule of deeds of the chapel site.	1 doc	1849
6/2/3/1-6	Memoranda of appointment of new trustees of the chapel, 1910 and 1937, and the Bridge Street Schools, 1910; and Charity Commission Schemes relating to the same, 1951 and 1957.	1 bdl	1910-1957
6/2/4/1-15	Counterpart leases of 9 Castle Street, Reading, 1934, 1954; and papers relating to its sale, 1977-1979, including photocopy of trust deed, 1944.	1 bdl	1934-1979
6/4	<u>Accounts</u>		
6/4/1	Building and subscription accounts for the new chapel.	1 vol	1836-1843
6/5	<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
6/5/1	Register of pews. (Includes plan of pews pasted inside back cover.)	1 vol	n.d. [c.1876]-1879
6/5/2/1-2	Letters from Kate Hodgson and Annie Brooker, resigning their pews on joining the choir.	1 bdl	1878-1879
6/5/3/1-14	Trustees' correspondence relating to Castle Street, the Bridge Street property, and the chapels at Binfield Heath, Caversham Hill, Sonning, Wargrave and Woodley.	1 bdl	1940-1943
6/5/4/1-3	Correspondence relating to the tenancy of the premises in Bridge Street, Reading, including their use by Reading Union Board of Guardians as a vaccination station in 1878.	1 bdl	1877-1878
6/5/5/1-4	Correspondence relating to the sale of the church and 6, 8 and 10 Bridge Street, Reading with statement of accounts.	1 bdl	1957

7	CHURCH ORGANISATIONS		
7/1	<u>Sunday School</u>		
7/1/1	Admission register: boys. (Includes each boy's name, some ages, address, date of admission, name of teacher, and in some cases notes on leaving. Ages range from 6 to 19.)	1 vol	1854-1877
7/1/2	Admission register: girls. (Includes each girl's name, some ages, some names of parents or guardians, address, name of teacher, and in some cases notes on leaving. Ages range from 5 to 18. Relates to girls admitted up to January 1878, with some notes on leaving, 1879.)	1 vol	1854-1879
7/1/3/1-2	Bill and receipt for printing cards for the Sunday School library.	1 bdl	1881

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8		REGISTRATION AND MEMBERSHIP		
	8/1	<u>Registers of birth, baptism, marriage, death and burial</u>		
MF21106	8/1/1	Register of baptisms, April 1857-April 1862, marriages (informal), May 1857-November 1861, and burials, April 1857-March 1862. (Includes, reversed, register of members, 1855-1862, arranged by district from 1860, with notes on District Visiting, 1857, and rough plan of districts around the church.) [District Visiting was a form of pastoral visiting organised by the ladies of the church.]	1 vol	1855-1862
	8/2	<u>Membership registers and lists</u>		
		[For register, 1836-1856, <i>see</i> D/N9/1/2/1. For 1855-1862, <i>see</i> D/N9/8/1/1. For admission of members <i>passim</i> , 1836-c.1951, <i>see</i> D/N9/1/2/1-2.]		
	8/2/1	Register of members, compiled 1863, with new admissions and details of departure updated to 1874.	1 vol	1863-1874
	8/3	<u>Miscellaneous</u>		
	8/3/1/1-9	Correspondence relating to the transfer of members.	1 bdl	1883-1885

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9 SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

9/3 Miscellaneous

9/3/1 Certificate of registration of the chapel as a 1 doc 1838
place for the solemnisation of marriages.

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10 MINISTER

10/1/1-6 Correspondence with the Revd John Wood, 1 bdl 1876
minister of the church, concerning his threat to
resign, with [subscription list].

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- 13 OTHER BODIES
- 13/1 Berkshire, South Oxon and South Bucks Association of Independent Ministers and Churches (later the Berkshire, South Oxon and South Bucks Congregational Union)
- [For official records of the Association, and a brief history, *see* D/N25.]
- 13/1/1 Accounts, April 1841-December 1893. 1 vol 1841-1893
- 13/2 Daughter-churches
- 13/2/1 Balance sheet: Castle Street account with the chapels at Binfield Heath, Caversham Hill, Sonning, Wargrave and Woodley. 1 doc 1920
- 13/2/2 Letter concerning the tenancy of land adjoining Wargrave Congregational Church. 1 doc 1924

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14	MISCELLANEOUS		
14/1	<i>A Guide to Church Membership.</i> (Tract published by the Congregational Union.)	1 doc	1863
14/2	Copy report of Coley Schools Committee, read at the opening of the schools, with an account of the opening meeting, February 1870. [The schools developed from Sunday Schools and secular evening schools run by the church in Coley Street. The day school opened in part of the former St Mary's Workhouse premises.]	1 doc	1870
14/3	Printed <i>Notes</i> on provision of places of worship and church attendance.	1 doc	n.d. [c.1882-1890]
14/4	Bill from George Lovejoy of Reading, bookseller and stationer, to Mr Timothy, for supply of <i>Lyra Germanica</i> and Macaulay's <i>Lays</i> with receipt. (Endorsed with draft minutes of a deacons' meeting.) [Thomas Norris Timothy of 147 Castle Street, Reading, pharmaceutical chemist, had been a member of the church since 1852, and appears to have been a deacon.]	1 doc	1863

APPENDIX I

Concordance

The following documents have been recatalogued.

<u>Old reference</u>	<u>New reference</u>
D/N9/1	D/N9/1/2/1
D/N9/1A/1	D/N9/14/3
D/N9/1A/2-10	D/N9/8/3/1
D/N9/2	D/N9/1/2/2
D/N9/2A/1	D/N9/6/5/3
D/N9/3	D/N9/1/2/3
D/N9/4	D/N9/4/1/4
D/N9/5	D/N9/4/1/2
D/N9/6	D/N9/4/1/3
D/N9/7	D/N9/2/1/1
D/N9/7A/1	D/N9/6/2/2
D/N9/7A/2	D/N9/9/3/1
D/N9/7A/3	D/N9/14/1
D/N9/7A/4	D/N9/5/3/1
D/N9/7A/5	D/N9/14/4
D/N9/7A/6-11	D/N9/10/1
D/N9/7A/12	Destroyed (duplicate)
D/N9/7A/13	D/N9/2/2/1
D/N9/8	D/N9/4/1/1
D/N9/9	D/N9/2/1/2; 13/2/1-2
D/N9/10	D/N9/2/1/3
D/N9/11	D/N9/8/1/1
D/N9/12	D/N9/8/2/1
D/N9/13	D/N9/7/1/1
D/N9/14	D/N9/7/1/2
D/N9/15	D/N9/6/5/1-2

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Concordance (cont.)

<u>Old reference</u>	<u>New reference</u>
D/N9/15A/1	D/N9/5/3/2
D/N9/15A/2-3	D/N9/6/5/4
D/N9/15A/4-5	D/N9/7/1/3
D/N9/16	D/N9/6/4/1
D/N9/17	D/N9/5/1/1
D/N9/18	D/N9/13/1/1
D/N9/19	D/N9/5/1/2
D/N9/20	D/N9/5/1/3
D/N9/21	D/N9/14/2