

A
HISTORY
OF THE
CARDIFF
BRANCH

In 1849 John Davis, a young printer, took Dan Jones's place as editor of the Welsh Mormon periodical and publisher of other materials for the LDS church in Wales. He gave a major thrust to record keeping among the Latter-day Saints in Wales by publishing an official membership register in the latter part of 1849. Davis instructed the scribe of each branch of the Church to keep a brief history of his branch in the first few pages of the record book. Although most chose to ignore Davis's counsel, one of the Cardiff scribes, Lewis Watkins, constitutes a notable exception. At the request of the Cardiff branch president, James Ellis, Watkins made a compilation of the writings of his predecessors and recorded the information, according to the instructions of John Davis, in the record book. The result is a fascinating, nine-page account of a number of events that transpired in the Cardiff area in the Church's infancy. This foldout page contains an illustration of the first page of the history in Watkins's elegant handwriting. The following pages, the first publication of the Cardiff Branch history, contain the entire Watkins compilation with the original spelling; some punctuation has been changed to facilitate the reading.

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An History of Cardiff Branch of the Laterday Saints from the Commencement as taken from a Book kep'd by Priest John Thomas Rewritten by Lewis Watkins by order of the Presidant James Ellis. The first known to Preach the gospel in Cardiff was one Thomas Jones in Millicent Street in the year 1846, William Jenkins being the First that was Baptised. The Apostle Tailor Called hear on his way to Merthyr Conferance in the year 1846. Captain Jones and Brother Phillips Established this Branch the first of Janury 1847 in Henry Jones his House in Maryann Street, and in the begining of the year 1847 I James Ellis yealded obedience. We held our Meeding in Maryann Street and the Spirit of God desended on us like a mighty Rushing wind untill the whole House was filled and we received the Spiritual gifts abundantly. Henry Jones being unable to walk howing to a weakness in his Limbs he was caried to the waters of Baptisem but Soon gained his Health and Strenth under the Hands of Elder Phillips. As Eddifying Brothers whare coming every Sunday from Merthyr with the prayers of the Saints the work prospered very well. In the year 1846 I John Thomas remember hearing that there was Laterday Saints in Cardiff under the Presidency of William Jinkins ; in March 1847 I first hearded the Gospel Preached at a funaral in Charlotta Street. from that time I continued a constant hearer of the Doctrin untill I yealded Obediance to the Gospel.

During the time the Brothers whare Preaching through the Cuntry and organised a Branch at Tw'n y Rotin. William Thomas was Ordained Presidant over that Branch. In June 1847 as William Jinkins was Baptizing in a Field ajoining the Cardiff Armes Crouds of Peoaple with the Magistrate of the Town came and demanded Brother Jinkins of the premissis but he whold not untill he had Baptized the person. With that James James the Maultser made a blow at Jinkins with a Stick but without Sucses. In December 1847 Captain Jones and Orson Spencer Came down to our Saints meeting and gave teachings concerning many Spirits that had gon out to the world which proved very Edifying to the Church and Enabeled the Servants to go and

preach the Gospel through the Cuntry with more energy &c. In the following Conference at Merthyr there was more Servants called to work of the ministry and in going forth a flood of persecutions followed after them. At this time we rented a room in the Tredegar Arms which was the Roman Catholics Club Room. on the Sunday Captain Jones and Brother Howells Preached at 11 O'clock; kept Saint Meeting at 2. Captain Jones said at the time that a Sedan change should take place which came to pass before night; as we returned to the 6 O'clock Meeting we found the room locked up, so Captain and the whole Congregation was on the Open Street. then we thought it advisable to take the Beanchis Back to the old room in Millecent Street and Captain Jones preached to large Congregation which proved a blessing, for many were baptized in a short time after. The Above was caused [caused] by one of the Roman Catholic leaders.

Soon after Thomas Richards Preached on the old Bridge taken up by a Policeman before a Bench of Magistrates to answer the charge but he was discharged. He also Preached on the warf Bridge and was persecuted by rebellions and worst of them was James Williams, one of the Baptist class Leader who was always in the habit of doing so when he had the chance. Another time when William Jenkins and James Ellis was Preaching by the River Side a Poliesman came and dispersed the whole Congregation and pulled James Ellis of the Platform. Also as John George was Preaching before his own house some of the Baptist members came and Shoved him of the wall but Still continued his Sermond through all persecutions into the end. At this time the Servants were Preaching in different Street through the Town Stopped by police and the People of the world frequently throughed dirt in their Faces &c. At the same time James Ellis had to preach in Tredegar Street without disturbance and the work of God prospered very well. These persecutions happened in the Summer of 1848. At this time we were frequently visited by Brothers Jones and Phillips and Other Officers from Merthyr. About this time William Jenkins and Other Officers went to Bro Evans Hills Terres whose wife was an unbeliever. Shee was at this time quite blind and through weakness unable to move in Bed and given up as incurable by all the professions; they anointed her and laid Hands and Shee received the blessing fourthwith and afterwards Baptized and continued to gain Strength. Shortly after this Present James Ellis was Struck with a Stone as he was Preaching at Twynyrotin. During this time we held our meetings at the Barraks Rooms and our presiding Elder Still went through the Cuntry Preaching the Gospel; it happened Elder James Ellis profisaid That William Jenkins

was Preaching in a certain place to a large Congregation of Peoaple whitch was afterwards proved to be Exactly Right ; this was in the year 1848. At this time the gift of Healing was reasived powerfully whitch the Church at the time Stood in need of. Sister Margret Jenkins was teaken very ill in as mutch that Some thaught that Life was Extinct, but the Elders William Jenkins and James Ellis whare Sent for and laid Hands on her and at the time she Screamed very mutch whitch brought crowds of Peoaple around the House thinking She was in the agonies of Death ; but when they knew the Elders whare there they Sent for the Poliese, but before they came the Sister had received the blessing out of bed heating a harty Supper and walked down to the Barrak Room that Same Night. Very Shortly after Captain Jones came and Teatched the Saints to be faithfull as there whare plauges at Hand etc, and in a very Short time his words came true, for in the year 1849 the Collara Morbus broch out amongst the Peoaple. Still the Servants whent through the Cuntrey Preaching and Batpizing the Peoaple in midst of all presecutions.

In December 1848 James Ellis was made president of the Cardiff Branch at Merthyr Conferance ; at this time John George was invited to Cogg and offered a House to Preach in but it was Jacob Jones and David Jenkins was the first that Preached the gospel in Cogg ; but it was John George was the first that Baptized there, and in the beginning of 1849 a branch was Established in Cogg under the presidency of James Ellis, and Abraham Rees was made Presidant of the Branch. In Frebr 1849, 7 out of our Branch Emmigrated for the Land of Zion. Now under the Presidency of James Ellis the Spirit of God Made manifest that the Saints was in a decaying State howing to fauls or contrary teatching by a Nicholite while Bro Jinkins presided in 1848, but Bro Phillips being lead by the Spirit of God with the Exertions of Bro Ellis and Other officers lead by the Same Spirit, they removed the Eval from the Branch, and the work of God prospered and the Servants whent to preach the Gospel through Town and Country with Great Energy in Spite of all theyer foes.

Now comes the true Sayings of Captain Jones ; the Collara Marbus Broke out and Sweeped Hundreds to Eturnety in Spite of all the Medical Energi. We had Great many Caseis amongst the Saint but through God & Mercy by his healing Spirit we only lost 2 out of the whole Branch whitch was Sister Bleaton and Brother Richards was Sevearly atacted, but the ordinance being administered with the prayers of the Saints he was relived entierly from the Collera, but however on the 12th Day he Died from Some unknow Caus in the fullness of the faith while Others at the Same time Died in a few

Hours from the Collera ; he was born in the year 1813, Died in 1849, aged 36 years. At this time it Seamed as if God gave the gift of Healing More powerfully. Sister How. was Sevearly atacted but refused Docters ; but Shee received the Blesing and gained her health and Strength by the laying on of Hands and at the Same time received the Spiritual gifts. Now Richard Hows Daughter, aged 6 years, was taken very Hill. Docter Payn thaught that the Medison had not been given acording to his Direction ; he Summonsed Richard How and George Tailor to the Town Hall and they appeered before the Corroner and Jury. God moved a worldly man to defend theyer Cause and they whare Set at liberty.

Brother Ellis was also Sevearly atacted with the Collera three times in so mutch that he was at one time given up as Dead, but through the faith and persevearance of Elders Pugh and Phillips they brought him to his former Health and Strength, and many more of the Saints received the blessing ; as I can mention few more names as fallows : Thomas Matthews, Hannah Morgan, Sister Ellis, John Thomas, &c., all Received their Health by administering the Ordinances. David Jones and Thomas Evans are worthy of haveing theyer names recorded in this Book for theyer labours amongst the Saints Day and Night during the Malody as God Preserved them in Health to fulfill theyer office, and Great many Received the Blessing under theyer Hands. The blessings of Health whare so many during the Collera that I do not think it wisdom to enter the whole of the particlers in this Book. At this time the Servants whare Preatching the gospel through town and Country and Carrying on the work of God in Spite of all our Ennemyes, as God dealt very mercyfull with us ; but our Foes whare cut Down boath on our left and on our right with the dredfull malledy. As I and other Brothers whare Preatching in John Payns House in Mellicant Street Crouds of people gathered about the Dore and the wife of David Wilkins was amongst the rebellious with a Bowl in her Hand. Shee throughed it in the House and Said at the Same time if the Saints whare to Preatch before her Dore that Shee whold through Fier in theyer Faces ; but in less than 24 Hours the Same person was laying in her Grave from a visitation of Death.

In 1849 I was Preatching with William Bevan by the Five Bells ; a Man by the name of Roberts did try to Set a Great Mastiff Dog on us but the Dog refused and that also was Cut off in a very Short time. Brother Bevan has Since Died in the fullness of the faith and on his Death bead he requested his wife to call in Brother Ellis, but

Shee refused. As I was Preatching in Canton on a Sunday Night and Saying that Children whare not to be Baptized, but people capable of repentance, I was Collered and drged about the Street, and a Man by the name of William Morgan Said I aught to be Shot. On the 10th of June falowing the Said William Morgan was killed by a Stone falling on his Head at Merthyr Works ; but this was not all the judgements that befell them that persecuted the work of God at that time, but we the Servants thanked for the prosperity we had in the year 1849, for in December at Merthyr Conferance there whare three Branches Established in his Naighborud under the presidency of James Ellis.

In January 1850, 19 Members out of our Branch Emmigrated for the Land of Zion. On the 10th of January Sister How propheseyd that a Great many accidence Shuld take place Shortly, and on the 11th, which was the fallowing Day, Thomas Evans, a Carpinters Son was Drowned in a pann [pond] of water behind the House ; on the 12th John Thomass Son was killed by a Horse and Cart ; also a man named Bennet was kiced by Horse and broke his Leg ; also a man throughed of a Horse in Crockherblown and Convaied to the Infirmary ; on the 13th a Pilot Boy Drowned in the Cull. There whare Seven accidence happened on the 11th besides the one above Stated. there whare 13 accidence from Saints on Wednesday Night untill Saturday Morning, and out of them three fatal Deadths. James Ellis and three more Elders whare asked to come and See a Childe of John Morris ; the Docters had given him up as totaly blind, but by anointing, praying and the laying of Hands the Childe received his Eyesight. Brothers Phillips and Pugh came down often about this time and by giving good teachings it always proved Edifying and Removed many EVELS from the Church.

In March Dr. Leavey Richard came and Preached in the room. Shawed the nesesity of Knowing God the Father as a Father and how he is to be known through Obediance. June the 10th Apostle Tailor colled in the Branch. We hiered the Brutish Schoolroom on the Ocation for whitch they charged a Sovereign. he preatched to a large congriation the First princebels of the Gospel and the blessings that atended the Same. July 1st we had the pleasure of Seeing the very first that Brother Howells Baptized in France and the first that Obayed the Gospel in that Country. Shee gived us an interesting account of the French Mission and the Great blessing of Health Shee received under Brother Howells Hands and her determination to go on with the work, &c. July the 3d we whare visited by Captain Witlock and Brother Henshaw. Brother Witlock Expresed the inconvenience he labored under in not understanding the Welch

Language, but he was happy to Say that by the Gospel which is Preatched in this Dispensation we shall all come to Speke and understand the Same Language ; he also delivered Ellegant Discourse concerning the Sheep and the Goates, the hireling Servants of the Day, &c., and proved that there was a knowledge Existing between different Spirits and we the Living.

July the 5th we whare favoured with Brother Witlock and Henshaw againe ; Henshaw adressed the officers and urged them to do thyer duty, &c., and Brother Witlock Opened many interesting princeples with the History and Travels of the Brothers in America ; at the Same time Brother Ellis Exorted the Servants to huis [use] Brotherly love ; with that our Meeting Seperated. By this time the Officers of Cardiff knew what [it] was to travel through the Countys of Monnmouth and Glannmorgan without a House to Shelter in from the Storme, but now they have Six Branches to visit, five of whitch is under the presidency of James Ellis ; by this [time] there is Some of the Children that was born in Cardiff Branch Presiding over other Branches in different parts of the Cuntery. This concluds the History from the year 1846 untill June 1850.

In August 1850 thare was a Child with Charles Sheppard that had withered away to a mear Skelliton and quite Blinde, but by Brothers Witlock and Ellis administering the Ordinance of the Church the Child receved his Health and Eyesight. Sister Rebecca Flours was Struck with a Parralectic Strock untill one of her Sides whare quite Dead and uisless ; but in Brothers Ellis and Pugh administering the Ordinance of the Church Shee receaved her Health. I have heard her testify the Same Several times. It happened that Sister Scheen of Canton fell into a deep well of water and was thare neerly an Houre ; then Shee [was] brought Home could [cold] and Helpless as a Corpes and the Moast of them thought that life was Extinct ; her Husband came the distance of a mile to fetch the Elders. Brothers Ellis and Pugh whent and laid Hands on her and through the power of God Shee gained her health and Strength at the time. I remember going with John George to See William Nicholass wife which was very bad Grasping for breath when we Got thare, and Shee had been so for three Days. John George anointed her and through the laying on of Hands and the blessing of God Shee was restored to her perfect health.

Sept 21 we whare vissited by Elder Dalling from Newport ; he adressed the Saints concerning the Happy time they Shuld gather Home to Zion and also Desiered them to live faithfull. President Ellis Spoke concerning the Spirit of God and proved it to be a Supstance.

The Meeting was oppened for testifying, &c. Elder Dalling Said a worldly man had received a wanderfull Gift of Health under his Hands at Newport, and Elder Evanss Son received his Health the Same time. At 6 Oclock Dr Leavey Richards Spoke concerning the king of Heaven, how he is to be known and how the Nations of the Earth is to be Governed and the word of God which his [is] the Book of Morman Shows that narrow his [is] the Gate and Straight his [is] the path that leadeth to life and that revelation is nessary for the Gathering of the Saints, &c. Sepr 27th Elder Peack related the travels of the Saints through America and how they Suffered in that country through presecution and that thare was a 1000 Dollers offered for the Prophets Head, &c., and Said that he Elder Peack was the first white man that Entered the Sault Lake Valley and that when they Started back from thare they had only 10 lbs of Flour for Eatch person to travel the distance of 1033 Miles. Elder Peack was ill for Several Days at Presidant Elliss House but received his Health and whent on to the Manchester conferance.

Sunday Sepr 29 Saints Meeting and Elder Pugh adressed the Saints concerning the Ordinance, &c. This was the first time we used Wine in our Branch for the Sacrement. October 2nd Our Presidant spoke of the comming of Christ and the Baptisem for the Dead and many Other interesting Discourse that Proved Edifying to the Church. Octr 6 Elder John George Preatch his farewell Sermon urging his friends to obay the commandments of God and telling his Determination to go on with the worke of God. On the 7th Seven Saints Emmigrated from this Branch for the Land of Zion. Presidant Ellis whent with them so fur as Liverpool as a Brotherly kindness.

Octr 11th Received from Cogg Branch Seven Shillings for the French Mishon. Thursday Night the 17th Elder Thomas Evans Presided when the Elders Js Ellis, Phillips, Pugh, Evans and Williams returned from Liverpool. Elder Evans adressed the Saints to be faithfull, &c. Elder Williams wished the Saints to Strive more for the Spirit of God and to come to more knowledge and to be faithfull and to avoid Evel doings, &c. Elder Pugh Hoped God whold bless the Saints in all circomstances and that they whold prove faithfull as God whold call the just and the unjust to the Same platforme and wished his friends to obay the commandments of God, &c. President Pillips adressed the meeting and Said that the Welch Saints had payed nearly 20 of Tithing at Liverpool and that there was a power on Earth that no man could resist and unless the Man that wants this Room will repent Spidily let the curse of God be on his Head. Janury 1851 conferance heald at Merthyr and a Branch Established at White Church ;

in Feby Two of our Saints Emmigrated for the Land of Zion. In April an English Branch was Established at Cogg. And of late many have ben Restored to Health by the power of Priesthood and the Gospel Preatched throuogh town and Counetry, Some Yelding obediance and Others rebelling, and the Judgements of God falling on them in various ways. While the Priests and Elders whare Preatching in different Parts of the town amangst Rebellious Peoaple Elder John Evans was taken to the Lockup House for Preatching in the open Street, but was let at Liberty in a few Hours without being put to any Trouble.
