

Presbytery of Bangor

Dromore Visitation

29th May 2024

Records Commission

The Records Commission was welcomed to Dromore on Wednesday, 29th May by Donna McDonald, Sam Flanagan and Amy Flanagan and we thank them for the warmth of their welcome and their help in sorting through the various records and documents held by the congregation.

We had sight of the following documents:

A. Marriage Notice Books

1. 18/5/1845 – 16/3/1872
2. 27/5/1872 – 30/9/1944
3. 16/6/1948 – 26/5/2001

B. Marriage Registers

1. 20/10/1835 – 8/8/1839
2. 21/5/1845 – 19/4/1864
3. 30/1/1865 – 19/4/1895
4. 7/5/1895 – 30/12/1936
5. 2/2/1938 – 6/1/1953
6. 26/3/1953 – 4/2/1967
7. 11/3/1967 – 9/9/2002
8. 15/9/2005 – 19/2/2022 (current)

C. Baptismal Registers

1. 18/3/1825 – 10/11/1839
2. 11/1/1879 – 21/8/1957 (the entries for 27/2/1949 – 21/8/1957 are copied into the start of Register C3)
3. 27/2/1949 – 30/3/2024 (current)

D. Funeral Registers

1. 6/5/1896 – 6/3/2024 (current)
2. Graveyard Register (in the possession of the graveyard manager – we did not have sight of this)
3. Map of Graveyard 1958

NB See also Record J1.

E. Committee and Session Minute Books (including AGM minutes)

1. 21/3/1860 – 30/7/1911
2. 9/1/1939 – 2/12/1957
3. 6/1/1958 – 4/11/1968
4. 3/3/1969 – 3/2/1986
5. 5/5/1986 – 5/3/1990
6. 8/4/91 – 5/12/1994
7. 10/1/1995 – 10/1/2000
8. 7/1/2002 – 4/4/2016
9. 2/5/2016 – 10/4/2024 (current) Committee and Session Minutes
10. 25/2/2002 – 13/3/2024 (current) AGM Minutes

NB items E4 – E10 inclusive, comprise individual sheets in a lever arch file

There appear to be no minutes for the period between 10/1/2000 to 7/1/2002

F. Memorandum of Choice and Appointment of Trustees

1. This is currently in the hands of the Church solicitors – Baxter’s Solicitors, Church Street, Dromore.

There are currently five congregational trustees – Mr Jeffrey Martin, Mr David Black, Mr Alistair McDonald, Mr David Wilson, Mr Roy Crookshanks.

G. Women’s League Record Books

1. February 1985 – June 1997
2. September 1997 – February 2009
3. March 2009 – November 2010
4. March 2015 – March 2020

H. Young People’s League Dromore Branch Committee Minute Book

1. 11/12/44 – 8/3/49

J. NSP Magazine Subscription Book Ledger

1. 1927 – 1933

NB This book also includes 1957 Reclamation of Graves details

K. Investment and Insurance Book

1. 1916 – 1945

L. Church Finance Ledger

1. 1928 – 1963

M. Collections Book

1. 6/1/1946 – 26/6/1960

N. Collections and Accounts Book

1. 1/5/1900 – 30/6/1937

O. Copies of deeds (originals held with solicitors)

1. Manse deeds and Church deeds.

P. Miscellaneous

1. A variety of historical items kept together in need of cataloguing

Q. Bible

1. Geneva Bible, once in the possession of the Benson family

R. [Denominational] Ministers' Meetings Minute Books

1. 29/9/1902 – 2/12/1912
2. 2/12/1912 – 7/4/1925
3. 27/4/1925 – 3/1/1938
4. 3/1/1938 – 17/2/1947
5. 17/2/1947 – 8/10/1970 (last signature dated 12/11/1970)

The records of the congregation are well cared for by the members of the committee who have responsibility for them and they are stored in a fireproof cabinet in the Church Vestry. Dromore has a remarkable collection of records. Like so many of our churches, there is little to indicate a congregation that can date its origins back to the seventeenth century but it possesses some rare and unusual items.

We would make the following recommendations:

1. An inventory of items P.1., Miscellaneous, currently held together in a folder, should be drawn up.
2. The Church is in the fortunate position of having an original Geneva Bible (item Q.1.). Steps should be taken to have this Bible valued, and the possibility of having it restored, explored. Advice can be given on this matter.
3. [Denominational] Ministers' Meetings Minute Books (items R.1.-5.) The Church has performed a very useful service to the denomination in preserving the minute books of the regular meetings of NSPCI ministers which took place from 1902 to 1970. Presumably they were entrusted to the Rev A.E. Peaston to look after in 1970. These are an invaluable source of information for historians and contain photographs, letters, dinner menus and other items. Particular attention should be paid to their preservation and safe keeping.

The Records Commission would like to thank the Dromore Congregation for their hospitality and their help on the evening.

Rev Stephen Reain-Adair

Rev Dr David Steers