Bright Hall Assembly Eccles Archive, 1898 — 1976

Reference code: BHE
Title: Bright Hall Assembly Eccles Archive
Dates of creation: 1898–1976
Held at: The University of Manchester, The John Rylands University Library
Extent: 0.5 linear metres
Extent: (36 items)
Name of creator: Bright Hall Assembly Eccles
Level of Description: fonds
Language: English
Published by: The John Rylands University Library
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Administrative history

The first assembly of Open Brethren in Eccles took place sometime in the 1880s when W. H. Hunter conducted a month-long campaign of gospel meetings in Eccles Town Hall. Subsequently gospel meetings were held in a hall in Barton Lane, until in 1887 the Brethren began meeting in their own Gospel Hall on Peel Street. By 1895 the Brethren had left these premises and were meeting in a room over a shop in Church Street. Under the guidance of W. H. Hunter a new building was obtained in Bright Road. Bright Hall was built at this location by F. E. Gill and Son and was officially opened in 1902.

In 1905 Bright Hall was registered as a place of religious worship and building for the solemnization of marriages. By 1919 a board of trustees had been appointed, who dealt with any important issues concerning the assembly. Regular business meetings were held in which leading members of the assembly discussed the day-to-day matters concerning the Brethren.

The hall was used by the assembly for prayer meetings, a Sunday School and other activities such as tea parties and children's meetings. The assembly at Bright Hall also helped to organise Brethren conferences and gospel campaigns in the local area. In 1967 an attempt was made to establish a young people's meeting, but this was abandoned after only two meetings due to the disapproval of the elders. The assembly donated money to a number of causes, including missionary work in the UK and overseas, the Manchester Missionaries Home, other Brethren assemblies and a local hospital, which the assembly regularly visited.
In 1972 the Brethren assembly briefly moved out of Bright Hall while it was redecorated following an accident involving the boiler chimney. During its closure the assembly used the United Reform Church opposite the hall. By 15 February 1973 the assembly had moved back into Bright Hall. In 1976 a job creation scheme run by Glyn Jones, the secretary of Bright Hall, provided jobs for twelve men to reconstruct the interior of the hall. The Brethren continued to meet at Bright Hall until 1984 when the hall closed due to falling membership numbers.

Scope and content

Most of the material in this archive relates to the administration of the assembly and hall. It includes correspondence, business minute books, roll books, cash books, balance sheets, statements of receipts and payments, and letters and papers concerning the trustees, insurance and the registration of the hall. The archive also contains catalogues and lists of the books that belonged to the assembly and were donated to the John Rylands Library on 14 March 1985. Some items in the archive relate to activities at the hall; including service programs, tickets and adverts for events, and newspaper cuttings about the hall. There are also letters and draft letters concerning missionary work the assembly supported and the commendation of members of the Brethren.

System of arrangement

The physical arrangement of this archive was confused in places. Therefore, this archive has been arranged into series according to function while also taking account of the order in which items were arranged when received by the library.

Archival history

Not known.

Immediate source of acquisition

Not known. The hall closed in 1984. Books from Library were donated to JRUL 14 March 1985. This archival material may have been acquired at the same time.

Restrictions on access

Access restrictions may apply, please consult the archivist.

Restrictions on use

Photocopies and photographic copies can be supplied for private study purposes only, depending on the condition of the documents.

A number of items within the archive remain within copyright under the terms of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988; it is the responsibility of users to obtain the
Other finding aids

None.

Related materials

The Bright Hall Assembly Eccles Archive is part of the Christian Brethren Collection held at the John Rylands Library.

Bibliography


Preferred Citation

Bright Hall Assembly Eccles Archive, BHE/1/1 (etc.), John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester.

Index terms

**Corporate Name**
Bright Hall Assembly
Eccles

**Subject**
Plymouth Brethren
Christianity
Religion
Eccles
Manchester

Reference code: BHE/1

Business minute books

Dates of creation: 1955–1979
Extent: 2 items
Scope and Content

The minutes record the names of those present, a statement of accounts and the discussions and resolutions made at the meetings. The matters discussed include practical issues affecting the assembly, such as the maintenance of the building and payments made out of the accounts. Also discussed are the dates and organisation of prayer meetings, conferences, gospel campaigns and hospital visits, donations and the membership of the assembly.

Reference code: BHE/1/1

Business meeting minute book

Dates of creation: 14 Jan 1955–2 Oct 1959
Extent: 1 volume

Scope and Content

This minute book is in reverse chronological order. The balance in the general and missionary account is stated in the notes for each meeting.

Reference code: BHE/1/2

Business meeting minute book

Dates of creation: 2 Nov 1962–11 May 1979
Extent: 1 volume and 3 sheets

Scope and Content

In this minute book the balances in the building, general and missionary funds are stated in the notes for each meeting.

After 11 February 1972 there are only brief notes on a change to the bank account and a withdrawal made on 24 March 1976, a note about a fellowship tea on 14 April 1976 and a note about the trustees dated 11 May 1979. At the back of the book are a few notes concerning how a gospel campaign could be better organised in the future. Enclosed in the book are two papers concerning the annual rent and an annual meeting dated 14 May 1976 and a statement of the Gospel Hall's account for 1975.

Reference code: BHE/2

Papers relating to administration of trustees
Dates of creation: 1919, 1953-1974
Extent: 5 items

Scope and Content

This series comprises of a list of trustees in 1919 and correspondence and documents relating to resignations and appointments of trustees during the period 1954 to 1974. It also contains items related to trustees' activities, including an endorsement to an insurance policy, a financial statement and a notice concerning a grant of money. During this later period, a number of the trustees had died and not been replaced. These papers mainly concern the need to appoint new trustees.

Related Units of Description

See also BHE/3/1 that contains a letter discussing vacancies amongst the trustees, dated 14 May 1924.

Reference code: BHE/2/1

Bundle: letters and lists related to trustees

Extent: 13 pieces

Scope and Content

The correspondence of John Francis Hill concerning the appointment of new trustees and revisions to the trust deed. This bundle contains drafts and notes relating to his correspondence with G.F. Oulton Lee circa May 1953 – 3 November 1955 with a letter received from John Jack, 27 June 1954. The bundle also contains various lists of trustees with addresses and dates passed away, including a letter to John Jack and Sons from G. F. Oulton Lee, 29 August 1919, which lists the then current trustees.

Reference code: BHE/2/2

Endorsement relating to an insurance policy

Dates of creation: 18 Jun 1957
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content

Commercial Union Assurance Company Limited endorsement to the policy of James Francis Hall and Ors as trustees of Bright Hall. The endorsement states that the Stockport Atlas Permanent Benefit Building Society are no longer interested in the insurance as Mortgagees and that the policy is now vested in
the Trustees of Bright Hall. It also states that the insurance will be extended to cover destruction and damage caused by fire, explosion or otherwise.

Reference code: BHE/2/3

Bundle: correspondence of Harold Humphreys

Dates of creation: 14 Apr 1965–21 Aug 1965
Extent: 4 pieces

Scope and Content

- /3 Copy letter from H. G. Humphreys to D. G. Barnsley dated 21 August 1965 concerning the passing on of Humphrey's account to the Eccles Assembly and confirming the safe receipt of documents related to the Assembly.

Reference code: BHE/2/4

Bundle: death certificates of trustees

Dates of creation: 15 Apr 1965–21 Mar 1974
Extent: 4 pieces

Scope and Content

The bundle includes a certified copy of an entry of death for George Thomas Lea, a letter from H. White, and photocopies of a certified copy of an entry of death for Richard Ashley and for Harold White.

Reference code: BHE/2/5

Bundle: letters concerning the appointment of new trustees

Extent: 21 pieces

Scope and Content

Bundle of documents regarding the drawing up of new Trust Deeds and the appointment of new trustees. The bundle includes
/1–7 Correspondence between D. G. Barnsley, a solicitor, and J. I. Jenkins and a letter from Harold [Humphreys] to Jack [Jenkins] regarding the documents and information needed to draw up a new Trust Deed to appoint Glyn Jones as trustee, dated 16 February 1965 — 7 May 1965.

/8 Letter from Harry E. [?] Cooks, of the Western Counties and South Wales Evangelisation Trust, to G. Jones dated 30 November 1973. The letter advises Mr Jones that, provided there is a well managed assembly in a hall, trustees meetings only need be held when trustee business arises, for example concerning the land and buildings of an assembly, or when the assembly faces an internal difficulty.

/9–19 Correspondence between G. O. Jones and John C. Maddox dated 30 July 1973 — 27 June 1974 concerning the information and documents needed to draw up a new Deed of Appointment of New Trustees and the process of signing and dating it. This bundle also includes a number of other letters and draft letters concerning the same matter from G. O. Jones, J. Jenkins and Harold Humphreys dated 16 May 1973 — 6 August 1973, a letter of 6 May 1973 accepting Harold [Humphrey's] resignation and asking for the Trust Deed to be returned and a list of the names, addresses and professions of the trustees.

/20 A notice that the Congregational Insurance Charitable Trust will send a grant of £16.


Reference code: BHE/3

Other correspondence

Dates of creation: 26 Apr 1922–Aug 1980
Extent: 3 items

Scope and Content

This series comprises correspondence of leading members of the Bright Hall Brethren concerning the assembly. It includes letters from Arthur Brewis to [J. F.] Hill and bundles of correspondence relating to Glyn Jones and J. I. Jenkins.

Reference code: BHE/3/1

Bundle: letters from Arthur Brewis to [J. F.] Hill

Dates of creation: 26 Apr 1922–14 May 1924
Extent: 3 pieces

Scope and Content
Letters from Arthur Brewis, a chartered accountant, to [J. F.] Hill, a trustee, concerning the Bright Hall assembly's accounts. One of the letters, dated 14 May 1924, also discusses vacancies amongst the trustees.

Reference code: BHE/3/2

Bundle of correspondence relating to Glyn Jones

Dates of creation: 11 Apr 1969–Aug 1980
Extent: 3 pieces

Scope and Content

Glyn Jones acted as the secretary of the Bright Hall assembly c. 1960s — 1970s. This bundle includes:

- /1 Photocopy of a letter dated August 1980 from Glyn O. Jones to all the assemblies in Manchester and district concerning the Lancashire gospel tent in Eccles.
- /2 Letter from A. Pickering, secretary of the J. W. Laing Trust, to G. Jones dated 19 January 1977 thanking Jones for informing them about the work at Bright Hall.

Reference code: BHE/3/3

Bundle of correspondence relating to J. I. Jenkins

Dates of creation: 8 Feb 1971–25 Jul 1975
Extent: 17 pieces

Scope and Content

This bundle mainly comprises letters addressed to J. I. Jenkins, the treasurer of the Bright Hall assembly, thanking the assembly for donations made to missionary organisations and giving information about their activities. It also includes letters recommending people to the Bright Hall assembly and requests for and draft letters of commendation from the assembly. Also in the bundle are a letter to J. I. Jenkins from J. A. Doyley of the accounts department of Southern-Evans Limited returning a cheque that had been incorrectly filled in and a copy letter from G. O. Jones inviting brethren to a Sunday School Teachers Conference on 14 September 1974 at Bright Hall.

Reference code: BHE/4

Cash books
**Dates of creation**: 1 Apr 1928–31 Dec 1975  
**Extent**: 3 items

**Scope and Content**

These cash books were summarised and audited annually. They include income and expenditure and all aspects of Hall finances.

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**Reference code**: BHE/4/1

**Cash book**

**Dates of creation**: 1 Apr 1928–18 Jan 1937  
**Extent**: 1 volume

**Scope and Content**

This cash book shows the three accounts, usually a general account, a missionary account and a Sunday School account.

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**Reference code**: BHE/4/2

**Cash book**

**Dates of creation**: 3 Jan 1937–7 Jan 1954  
**Extent**: 1 volume

**Scope and Content**

This cash book shows a general and a missionary accounts and from 1 October 1944 a special account.

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**Reference code**: BHE/4/3

**Cash book**

**Dates of creation**: 3 Jan 1954–31 Dec 1975  
**Extent**: 1 volume

**Scope and Content**

This cash book shows a general account, a missionary account and a special account.

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**Reference code**: BHE/5
Balance Sheets

Dates of creation: 1907–1976  
Extent: 3 items

Scope and Content

Includes a summary of receipts and payments for the period 23 January 1907 until 5 August 1920, an annual statement of receipts and payments from 1 May 1924 to 6 October 1925, and a series of annual typescript balance sheets from 1949 to 1976.

Reference code: BHE/5/1

Summary of receipts and payments

Dates of creation: 23 Jan 1907–5 Aug 1920  
Extent: 1 piece

Reference code: BHE/5/2

Statement of receipts and payments (audited)

Dates of creation: 1 May 1924–6 Oct 1925  
Extent: 1 piece

Reference code: BHE/5/3

Bundle of balance sheets (audited)

Dates of creation: 1949–1976  
Extent: 29 pieces

Scope and Content

The first two balance sheets are loose, with the remainder from 1975 to 1949 fastened together in reverse chronological order.

Reference code: BHE/6

Insurance

Extent: 4 items

Scope and Content
Items related to the insurance of Bright Hall; including letters, a policy book, endorsements to policies and documents concerning inspections of the hall.

Some of the documents relate to an accident involving the boiler chimney in 1972, which caused the Brethren assembly to briefly move out of Bright Hall. The letters show that the claim on their insurance was rejected because the damage was caused by soot rather than by a fire.

Reference code: BHE/6/1

Bundle of documents concerning insurance

Dates of creation: 1968
Extent: 5 pieces

Scope and Content

This bundle includes correspondence between G. O. Jones and G. Gorman, branch manager of the Road Transport and General Insurance Company Ltd, concerning the insurance policy of Bright Hall and arranging an inspection of the boiler dated between 15 November 1968 and 10 December 1968 and an engineer surveyor's report on the pressure plant boiler in Bright Hall.

Reference code: BHE/6/2

Road Transport and General Insurance Company Combined Policy

Dates of creation: 5 Feb 1969–16 Jul 1975
Extent: 1 volume and 8 sheets

Scope and Content

Attached to the policy book is a receipt for £24.11 received from the secretary of Bright Hall for payment of the balance owed. Inside the book are a number of loose sheets comprising:

- two with compliments slips one concerning a cheque for a claim and one concerning an endorsement to the insurance policy
- an endorsement to the policy dated 16 July 1975
- a letter from S. Saluja, branch manager of the General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation Limited, to J. Jenkins dated 10th June 1975 concerning an endorsement to the policy
- a certificate of insurance for one year dated 23 December 1974
- a letter from N. Ward, branch manager of the Road Transport and General Insurance Company Limited, to G. O. Jones dated 19 June 1969 concerning an endorsement to the policy
Bundle of documents concerning insurance.

Extent: 8 pieces

Scope and Content

This bundle includes a number of letters dated 11 December 1972 to 23 February 1973 related to an insurance claim made on 26 November 1972 for damages to the hall. It comprises: a draft letter to P. Cartwright of the General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation Limited asking how the insurance company are dealing with the claim, a letter from J. McLennan, the branch manager, refusing the claim and a letter from J. Barry of Manchester Mobile Steam Cleaning to Mr Jones giving a quotation to clean and redecorate some rooms in the hall. Also in the bundle is a report of the plant at Bright Hall, following an examination of it, dated 4 December 1972. The report was carried out by the Scottish Boiler and General Insurance Company Ltd and may have been undertaken as part of the insurance claim.

There are two items in the bundle relating to a claim made for broken glass: a draft letter from J. I. Jenkins to the insurance company dated 15 August 1973 and a compliments slip enclosing a cheque for £4.67 to pay for the glass from the insurance company dated 22 March 1974. This bundle also contains a notice that an inspection of Bright Hall will take place on the 25 January 1971 and a letter to J. I. Jenkins from J. A. Norwell, branch manager of the insurance company, dated 17 September 1975 concerning an endorsement to the insurance policy and payment of the remittance owed.

Documents from the Congregational & General Insurance Co Ltd

Dates of creation: 12–16 Oct 1976  
Extent: 2 pieces

Scope and Content

The documents comprise a letter addressed to G. O. Jones dated 12 October 1976 concerning an insurance policy for the hall with a copy of a term agreement form signed by Glyn Jones and dated 16 October 1976 attached to it. [The items were found inside the assembly roll book 1922 – 1941 item BHE/9/2 but have been removed as they relate to insurance, rather than assembly attendance.]
Reference code: BHE/7

Documents concerning the registration of Bright Hall

Dates of creation: 1905
Extent: 1 item

Scope and Content

Bundle of documents concerning the registration of Bright Hall.

Reference code: BHE/7/1

Bundle

Dates of creation: 6 Apr–9 May 1905
Extent: 8 pieces

Scope and Content

This bundle includes certificates registering Bright Hall as a place of religious worship and building for the solemnization of marriages, and six letters from J. W. Whitworth, clerk to the guardians and superintendent registrar of Barton-upon-Irwell Union, to J. F. Hill concerning the registration of the Hall.

Reference code: BHE/8

Items related to the library at Bright Hall

Dates of creation: n.d. [20th Century]
Extent: 1 item

Reference code: BHE/8/1

Lists of books

Dates of creation: n.d. [20th Century]
Extent: 3 pieces

Scope and Content

One volume listing the library books at Bright Hall with a printed catalogue and a loose list of books inside. On each item it is noted that the books were donated to the John Rylands library on 14 March 1985.

Reference code: BHE/8/1/1
List of books

**Dates of creation:** n.d. [Early 20th Century]
**Extent:** 1 volume

**Scope and Content**

The volume begins with an alphabetical list of the books in Bright Hall's library. At the back the books are listed by number.

Reference code: BHE/8/1/2

Catalogue of books

**Dates of creation:** n.d. [Early 20th Century]
**Extent:** 1 pamphlet

**Scope and Content**

This printed catalogue divides the books into the following categories: concordances, commentaries, bible helps, exposition, miscellaneous studies, doctrinal, prophetical, devotional, Sunday School teachers' and children's books, missionary work, biographies, poems, and sermons and outline addresses.

Reference code: BHE/8/1/3

List of books

**Dates of creation:** n.d. [Late 20th Century]
**Extent:** 1 piece

**Scope and Content**

Handwritten list of books, which gives the number of some of the books.

Reference code: BHE/9

Roll books

**Dates of creation:** 1922–1980
**Extent:** 3 items

**Scope and Content**
These roll books list members of the Bright Hall assembly and their Sunday School.

Reference code: BHE/9/1

Assembly and Sunday School roll book.

Dates of creation: 1922–1924, 1977
Extent: 1 volume

Scope and Content

Membership register stating name, address and date 'received'. It was apparently compiled 1922–1924, but members are recorded as being 'received', or joining the assembly, since 1898. This volume was first used as an assembly roll book circa the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The register is arranged alphabetically.

The volume was re-used as a Sunday School roll book in 1977. It records names, addresses and dates of birth. There are also spaces for marks awarded in 1977, 1978, and 1979, but these have not been completed.

Reference code: BHE/9/2

Assembly roll book

Dates of creation: 1922–1941
Extent: 1 volume

Scope and Content

This roll book lists members of the Bright Hall brethren and records their attendance at meetings.

It also contained documents from the Congregational & General Insurance Co Ltd. that have been extracted and now form BHE/6/4.

Reference code: BHE/9/3

Sunday School and Assembly roll book

Dates of creation: 1939–1980
Extent: 1 volume

Scope and Content
This roll book records attendance, names and addresses of members of the Bright Hall Sunday School from 1 January 1939 to 31 March 1940, three undated months probably in 1958, and July and August 1959.

From 1977 to 20 January 1980 it was used as an assembly roll book, recording attendance at meetings.

Reference code: BHE/10

Assembly service programs

Extent: 6 items

Scope and Content

This series comprises programs for services held at Bright Hall that record details such as prayers said, passages of the bible quoted, sermons given and hymns sung. It also includes a hymn and an article that may have been read out during assembly services.

Reference code: BHE/10/1

Notes for the funeral program of Mrs Rutter

Dates of creation: 28 Mar 1974
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content

One sheet of handwritten notes.

Reference code: BHE/10/2

Bundle of funeral service programs

Extent: 5 pieces

Scope and Content

Printed funeral service programs for Miss Eva Howard (n.d), John I. Jenkins dated 17th March 1976 and Mr Charles Horridge dated 15th October 1974. They are annotated with handwritten notes. The bundle also includes a printed speech given at the service for John I. Jenkins and a page with the words of two hymns typed on it and the name 'Mrs Gallins' handwritten at the top.
“The Missing Day”: An extract from the Hollywood Free Paper

Dates of creation: N.D.
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content

This article concerns how two passages in the bible explain a missing day detected by astronauts and space scientists at Green Belt Md. The story was related to the author by Harold Hill, President of Curtis Engine Company in Baltimore, Maryland, and a consultant in the Space Programme. The article is not dated and the author is not stated. Its context among service programs suggests it may have been read out during an assembly service.

Notes for assembly services

Dates of creation: [1976]
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content

One sheet of what appears to be handwritten notes for the delivery of assembly services. One set of notes is dated 19 June 1976.

Funeral service program for Clara Hearn

Dates of creation: 21 Jul 1976
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content

Handwritten funeral service program for Clara Hearn. On the reverse is a list of funeral services and the part played in them by the person who wrote the list.

“I am with you” by F. A. Regler
Dates of creation: n.d.
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content
Printed words to a hymn or a prayer.

Reference code: BHE/11

Other items relating to the assembly’s activities

Dates of creation: 1921, 1973–1976
Extent: 5 items

Scope and Content
This series includes an advert for Sunday School, a bundle of newspaper cuttings concerning the hall and invitations to events at the hall.

Reference code: BHE/11/1

Advert for Sunday School

Dates of creation: n.d.
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content
This leaflet advertises the Bright Hall Sunday School held every week at 2.30 and suggests that Sunday School training is a way in which boys can avoid getting into trouble.

Reference code: BHE/11/2

Newsletter from Walter and Marguerite Reed

Dates of creation: 16 Oct 1951
Extent: 1 piece

Scope and Content
Newsletter addressed to the Eccles assembly concerning the missionary work of Walter and Marguerite Reed who were based at the Mutshatsha Mission in the Belgian Congo. On the reverse of the newsletter is a map of the region they operate in with significant places marked.
Reference code: BHE/11/3

Bundle of newspaper cuttings

Dates of creation: 1973–1976
Extent: 4 pieces

Scope and Content

Bundle of newspaper cuttings comprising of:

- An article concerning the assembly's move back into Bright Hall after its redecoration following an accident with the boiler chimney. This article is dated 15 February 1973.
- An article concerning a job creation scheme run by Glyn Jones at Bright Hall dated 6 October 1976.
- An article concerning youth employment that mentions the job creation scheme renovating Bright Hall dated 8 December 1976.
- A photograph and caption showing children at the Bright Hall youth club, which has no date.

Reference code: BHE/11/4

A ticket for the Elder Scholars’ Tea Party

Dates of creation: 1921
Extent: 1 item

Scope and Content

This small card appears to be a ticket for the Elder Scholar's Tea Party planned for 12 March 1921 at Bright Hall Sunday School.

Reference code: BHE/11/5

Invitation to a thanksgiving service.

Dates of creation: 1976
Extent: 1 item

Scope and Content

The invitation is for a thanksgiving service following the renovation of the hall combined with a Christmas carol service on 19 December 1976.
**Creation:** Finding aid encoded in EAD 2002 by Angela Haighton using Epic Editor v.4.1, October 2006.

**Descriptive Rules:** Finding aid compiled according to JRUL's Guide to the listing of archives (3rd edition, 2004), which is based on the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)), second edition.