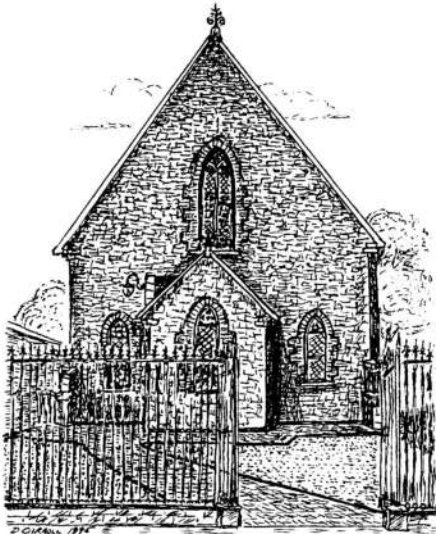


ROUND THE CHURCHES

86: Mountmellick Methodist Church

Drawing: Denis Carroll

Text: Dudley Levistone Cooney



John Wesley came to Mountmellick for the first time in May 1748, during his first visit to Ireland. A Methodist society had already been formed there, one of the first in the country and by the following year the largest outside Dublin. Wesley was to be a frequent visitor. It was not until 1765 that the first Methodist chapel was built here.

It welcomed such distinguished preachers as Adam Averell, Gideon Ouseley, James McQuigg and the eccentric American, Lorenzo Dow. Having served the local Methodists for over a century it was replaced in 1882 by the present church, to which was added a schoolroom. Remembering with gratitude the successful missions which he had led here, the local

people named the building 'Gideon Ouseley Memorial Chapel'.

Declining numbers saw a reduction in the work here, and the buildings began to show signs of neglect. Then the tide turned, and a number of new families began to attend. With the assistance of the Rank Trust the buildings were extended, and refurbished at a cost of £62,000 in 1995. This transformation inspired businesses in the town to renovate their premises, giving a bright and prosperous appearance to the whole town.

In that revived air of well-being the Methodist Church has found new ways of offering service to the community reflecting its own lively faith.