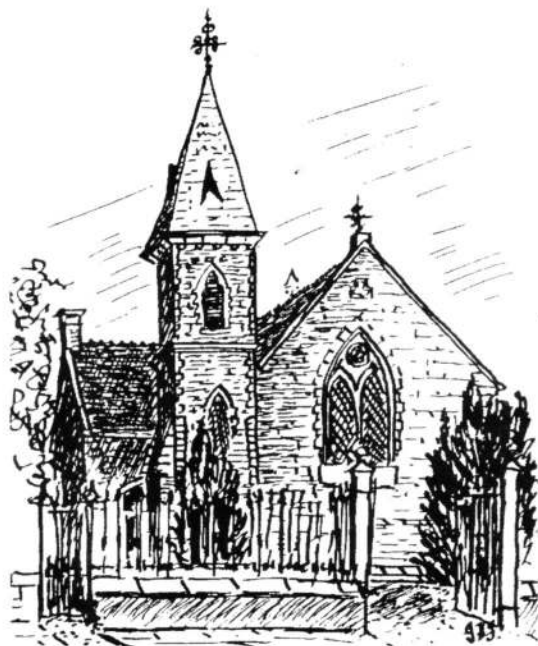


ROUND THE CHURCHES

Drawing: Jim Flack

85: Athy Methodist Church

Text: Dudley Levistone Cooney



Methodism was introduced into Athy when the Rev Thomas Kelly, who had left the Church of Ireland to form a small group known as the Kellyites, invited Adam Averell to take charge of his congregation in the town when Kelly himself went to England. The society acquired its first chapel in 1813. They bought the Quaker Meeting House in Meeting House Lane, but it is not certain whether they adapted this to Methodist use, or demolished it and built on the site.

By the 1840s and 1850s this building was proving to be too small for the growing society, but it was not until 1871 that the

present site on Woodstock Street was bought, and in the following year the church and schoolhouse were erected. The cost was £2,200, and the building was dedicated by the Rev William Arthur.

Reviving work in the area resulted in a major renovation scheme, carried out by FAS, the employment and training authority. The buildings were re-roofed, and redecorated, the whole scheme costing £40,000.

From this renewed building the Methodists of Athy offer warm-hearted service to the community, strengthened by a tradition of over 130 years of worship here.