

ROUND THE CHURCHES

Drawing: JH Flack



The old village of Borrisokane was the centre of that part of North Tipperary which was granted in the Cromwellian Settlement to one Capt James Stopford, ancestor of the Earls of Courtown. The hymn-writer, Stopford Augustus Brooke, was another of his descendants. Stopford enlarged the town introducing soldiers from the disbanded

Cromwellian army to populate the new part.

It was Gideon Ouseley who introduced active Methodism here during the course of his evangelistic tours. He came in 1809 and found one Methodist resident, but succeeded in interesting others so that a society could be formed. In the following year a Mr Maberly of London offered to raise money

25: Borrisokane Methodist Church

for the building of a better Methodist premises in Galway city, and was so successful that Ouseley was able to build seven new preaching houses, one of them being the first in Borrisokane. This little building, behind those facing the street, served the Methodists here for over fifty years.

In 1867 the foundation stone was laid of the present handsome cut stone building facing the street. It was opened in the September of the following year, when the preacher was the Rev William Arthur. The new building cost £560. Part of the old building remained, later joined to the rear of the new by a vestry, and this served as a hall for many years. A minister was resident in the town from 1838 to 1921, and a circuit evangelist from 1924 to 1946. Of the latter (seventeen in all) thirteen entered the ministry. A small house was built at the back of the site to accommodate the evangelist.

In 1993 the old hall was removed to make way for a fine modern hall, in itself evidence of the vigour of this small society.

DLC