The Bencoolen Bell

Bound for India with machinery for the cotton mills there, the merchant ship *Bencoolen* was wrecked off Bude Haven in October 1862. Just six of the thirty-one man crew survived. The bodies that were recovered were laid to rest in a mass grave in Bude that is marked by the salvaged boat's figurehead.

At the same time as the tragedy, Thomas Hills, a member of the *Roscarrock Hill Methodist Society*, was in Bude in his coasting smack Telegraph. He paid thirty shillings for the bell from the wrecked Bencoolen and he brought it down the coast to Port Isaac and its new home in the Chapel. Apart from during the war years, the bell was rung every Sunday up until the Chapel closed in 1993, summoning the congregation to worship.

The Bencoolen

One of the treasures of the Chapel is the illustrated vellum manuscript by Mr D Abbot FRSA. It tells the story of the wreck of the Bencoolen and the history of the bell. It was unveiled in 1963 in the presence of Thomas Hills' grand-children, Mr TH (Tom) and Miss BJ (Jennie) Hills. It is still displayed in the old Chapel today.
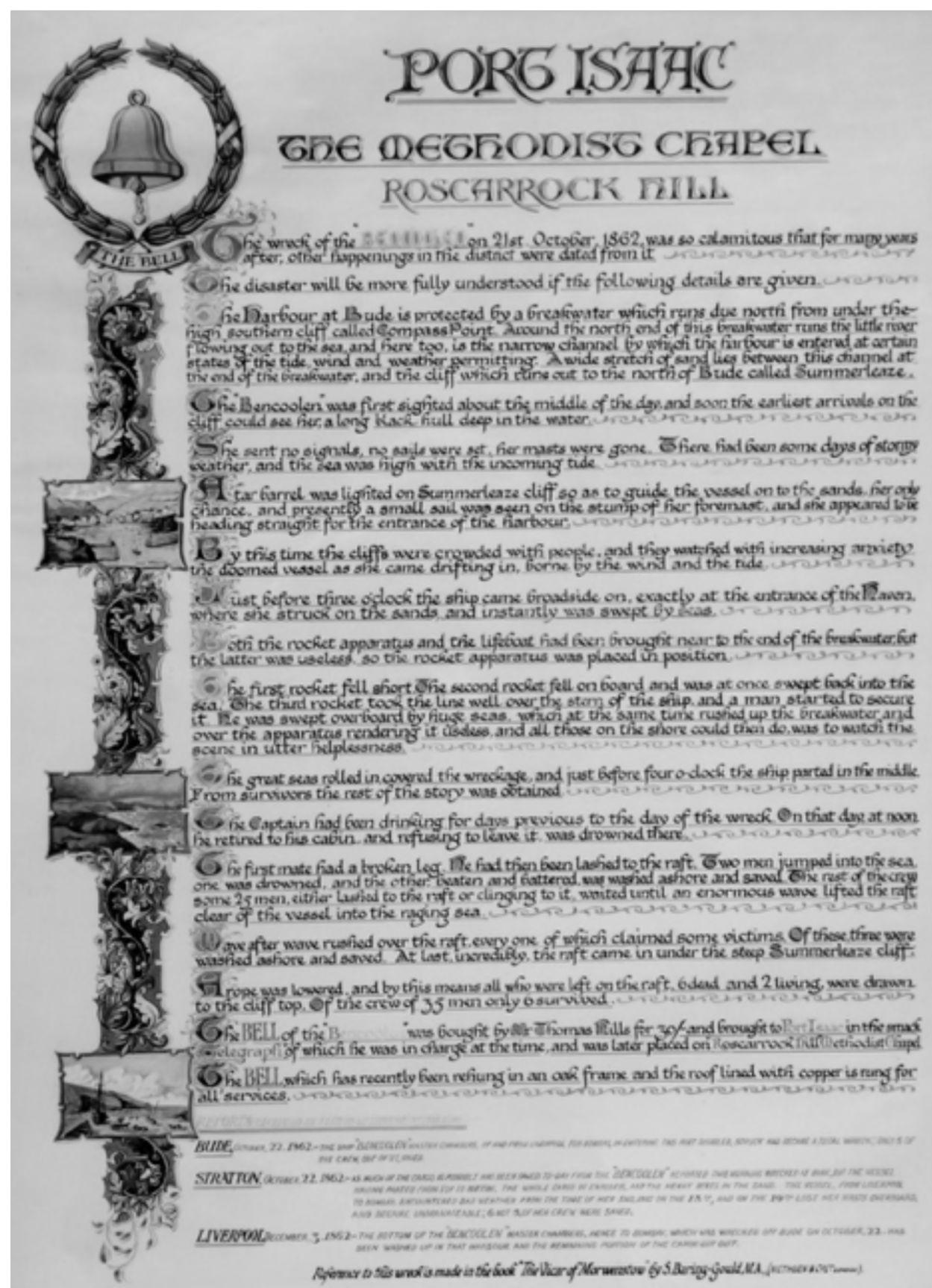
Trelights Chapel

The first Bible Christian Society in Trelights was established in the home of Nicholas Carveth in 1820. The cottage meetings continued until 1837 when a Bible Christian Chapel was built. It closed in 1907, to become a home that is now called Chapel Villa.

Associated with the *Trelights Chapel* was a small building for worship at Port Quin, which was quite a fishing community then - after its closure there was a house fellowship in Port Quin until well into the 1900s when the Steward of *Trelights Chapel*, would walk down on a weekday evening of the week to conduct a fellowship service.

The *Methodist Schoolroom* was built, as a chapel, in 1831 by subscriptions and the deeds drawn up in 1833 in a somewhat unorthodox manner. Trelights was one of six chapels whose deeds were defective from the Wesleyan point of view so they could make no claim on them. This meant that after the 'disruption' of 1834-35 when the Wesleyans held on to their chapels or reclaimed them, the 'reformers' (Methodists) built new ones, as in Port Isaac.

In 1887, the Brown family, who were carpenters in Trelights for generations, built a new Methodist Chapel, the *Chapel on the Hill*, in the space adjoining the old building …

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