



Non-Conformist Meeting House Certificates

The Toleration Act of 1812 made several alterations to the procedures for registering meeting houses. Registration became compulsory for any religious assembly, 'at which there shall be present more than twenty persons besides the immediate family and servants of the person in whose house or upon whose premises,' the assembly was held. Arrangements were also made for the registering authorities to notify each other annually of all registrations relevant to each other's jurisdiction made during the previous year. The fee for procuring a license was to become two shillings and sixpence; and the penalties imposed on an occupier for failing to register were set at between £1 and £20, at the magistrates' discretion.

The following are extracts from records held in The Wiltshire Record Office.

18 March 1816 (30 March 1816). Great Bedwyn. A house in the occupation of Mr. James Gregory. Independent. William Bartlett, surgeon, Stephen Pullin of Great Bedwyn, John Smallbones, James Dowling. **(WRO D1/9/2/1)**

27 May 1816 (11 June 1816). Great Bedwyn. A house in the occupation of Mary Beck. William Bartlett, surgeon, James Gregory. (Pencil Note at Foot) 7th June 1816 Mr. Barrett. **(WRO D1/9/2/1)**

9 September 1820 (7 November 1820). Great Bedwyn [but dated from Shalbourne]. A dwelling house in the occupation of Thomas Knock. Independent. Charles Cannon, Thomas Butcher. [Note on attached sheet] 'For Mr. Tasker, Abbotts Ann.' **(WRO D1/9/2/1)**

27 January 1834 (28 January 1834). Great Bedwyn. A building now in the possession of William May, farmer, of Great Bedwyn. Wesleyan Methodist. William Pollard of Hungerford, Berkshire, Wesleyan Methodist minister. **(WRO D1/9/2/1)**