

Moments in Our History

(Excerpts from the Dissenting Church of Christ at St. John's 1775 – 1975)

A Sufficiency of Land (Part 7)

The document consists of thirteen articles “to stand in full force and unalterable from thenceforth during the growth of Oak and Ash ... for and in defence of what we esteem the pure Doctrine, Order and Discipline of the Gospel. . . in the Dissenting pro-fession now existing in St. John's ... ” It declares their intention to buy the property of Andrew Barnes for the erection of a new Meeting House, the buildings to be dedicated “to the worship of God, the business of the church and the education of children and to no other business.” A Committee of six was to be elected by the majority of the Brethren “to regulate all matters belonging to the church.” Should the Committee not agree, “the controverted point” to be settled by a Church Meeting, the Minister having the right “to offer or withhold his vote as appears most judicious to himself.” The Minister, Elders and Deacons must be “persuaded of, believe in, and earnestly contend the Doctrines of Grace as contained in the Confession of Faith and the Assembly's two catechisms, belonging to the present Church of Scotland.” Only those approved by the church will be allowed to preach, and Schoolmasters, Ushers, etc. will be examined by the Committee as to “their principles and moral practice.” Should a “general Apostacy” befall the church, the property would devolve to “The Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor” which meets at Founders Hall, London. Lastly, the apartments are to be “the sole right and property of the minister during his term of office.”