

## **Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre**

**This catalogue was digitised by The National Archives as part of the National Register of Archives digitisation project**

NRA 30914



The National Archives

### Introduction

The Church of England Men's Society was formed in 1899 by the amalgamation of three district Church Societies for Men. In 1900 its constitution was formulated. Its Rule of Life stated that members should pray to God every day and do something to help forward the work of the Church. Its objects were to deepen the spiritual life of its members, band churchmen together to promote the glory of God and promote opportunities for friendly intercourse among members.

In 1905 the Rochester and District Federation of the C.E.M.S. was founded consisting of branches in this area, each sending between two and four delegates to meetings and paying an annual affiliation fee. The Federation's task was to promote new branches, inform incumbents of the C.E.M.S., arrange united meetings of branches and encourage visits between branches in order to spread knowledge of the Church of England and foster unity. It also was to help foster co-operation between the Clergy and Laity.

The Rochester Diocesan Union Council was founded in 1908 to unite the Federations and branches within the diocese and connect with the rest of the country and the world. The Council also organised an Annual Conference. The C.E.M.S. was finally dissolved in 1985.

Rochester and District Federation

- Ch83/1 Minute Book indexed. Also includes a copy of the 'Rules and Objects of the Rochester and District Federation 1908, a programme of a Local Conference 1907, agendas of the Federations Annual Meetings 1908-1910 and newspaper cuttings  
(1 sm. vol.) 1905-1912
- Ch83/2 Minute Book includes at the front a brief index to 'Important Notes from previous Minute Book'. Also newspaper cuttings relating to the C.E.M.S. Conference at Chatham on 'Church Finance' and 'Labour Unrest' 1912, the first council meeting of the Rochester Diocesan Union 1913, the Annual Meeting of the Rochester and District Federation 1916, a meeting at Chatham when Dr. Edward Lyttleton spoke on 'The Secret of Reconstruction' 1921, the Annual Meeting 1922, the Annual Meeting at Cliffe 1929 and the C.E.M.S. protests against Football and Fairs on Good Friday.  
  
Also included are the Branch Secretaries Meeting 1916, Annual Reports 1917-1928 and on the front and back cover the Union's Constitution 1908 and Amendments 1914  
(1 sm. vol.) 1912-1930
- Ch83/3 Minute Book including Annual Reports and Financial Statements for 1930-1949. Also newspaper cuttings relating to the address by Professor Sovabji of the Church's Mission at a General Meeting of the Federation 1932, the obituary of Mr. B.J. Wakeling, Honorary Secretary of the Frindsbury Branch 1935, the Dean of Rochester's speech on the Divorce Question at the Annual Meeting 1937, a Tribute to Mr. Walter Smith, Secretary, 1947, an extract on Charles Harvey 1947 and a photograph of members at Gillingham 1947. On the back cover a copy of the constitution and rules 1913.  
(1 sm. vol.) 1930-1950

Rochester and District Federation

- Ch83/4 Minute Book including Annual Reports for 1950 and 1964 and Statement of Account 1965. Also a newspaper cutting re the C.E.M.S. Annual Conference 1961 (1 sm. vol.) 1950-1966
- Ch83/5 Minute Book including Statement of Account 1966-1970 (1 sm. vol.) 1966-1970

Rochester Diocesan Union Council

- Ch83/6 Minute Book including a pamphlet titled 'Suggestions for a Few Minutes of Prayer Before Meetings of the C.E.M.S.' Programmes of the Diocesan Men's Festivals and Annual Conferences 1937-1939, 1941 and of The Open Men's Conferences 1942-1946 and Annual Conference 1946. Also a report on the meeting of Branch Secretaries presented to the Council 1939 and a note of proposals for altering the Constitution 1939 (1 vol.) 1937-1946
- Ch83/7 Minute Book of Annual Conferences including programmes of events 1947-1948, 1950-1953, 1959 and Annual Conference and Service programmes 1961-1967. Also a letter from Rev. Robert Orpington to Mr. Bartlett re establishing a branch 1961, At the back a note re changes in the constitution of C.E.M.S. 1919 (1 sm. vol.) 1947-1967
- Ch83/8 Minute Folder indexed including programmes and agendas. Nothing for 1978, 1984 (1 folder) 1962-1985
- Ch83/9 Account Book 1922-1947, 1957-1977 at the front 1922-1958 at the back. Also at the end a collection of loose financial statements 1967, 1971-1973, 1975, 1977, 1979-1981 (1 vol.) 1922-1981
- Ch83/10 'A time to be born and a time to die.....' A report to the C.E.M.S. by an independent commission on the society 1985. Also including a newspaper clipping 1985 and four leaflets 1986 re the closure including the Reverend David Murfet's farewell letter. 1985-1986