17th Century Church Stands

TOTTLEBANK, England — A book of minutes from the meeting of the church of Christ in this little town near Ulverston in the Lake District of England, testifies that the church met regularly in an upper room of a building still standing, according to Ken Chumbley.

One page of the book says "The 18th day of ye sixth month, called, August 1669. A Church of Christ was formed in order and sate down together in the ffellowship and order of ye Gospel of Jesus Christ. Att the house of William Rawlinson off Tottlebank, in Coulton in furness. There were present and Assisted Mr. George Larkham, Pastor off a Church of Christ in Cumberland, and Mr. Roger Sawrey of Broughton tower. A member of Christ and of that particular Church in London of wich Mr. George Coackine is teaching Elder. The persons Joyninge themselves at this time, Gabriel Camelford, Hugh Towers, William Towers, James Towers, Joseph Towers, James Fisher, Henry Jackson."

Chumbley notes an interesting fact that at this time all religious meetings, except those of the Church of England (Episcopal), were illegal. He believes the reason they met in the particular room in which they did, was because it gave a vantage point from which could be seen the approach of the King's soldiers on the highway from a great distance.

The property is now owned by a Baptist church, but the minutes and a set of communion ware which includes a table, still belong to the church of Christ.

Chumbley, who is minister at Riverside in Corpus Christi, Tex., has been in the British Isles doing some work.

THIS BUILDING served as a place of worship for the church of Christ in Tottlebank, England in 1669. Texas minister Ken Chumbley points to window from which sentrys watched for approach of soldiers because their worship was against the law of England then.

COMMUNION WARE used by the 17th Century church in England is held by Ken Chumbley. Also found in the ancient building was the table from which the communion was served.