

# GRANDMA KATE'S PREACHING CLOCK

*Hazel Thurlow*

The family of O'Coy were wheelwrights in and around Banbury. Isaac Alfred (always known as Alfred) married Louisa Cox the daughter of Police Sergeant John Cox. They had their wheelwright's shop in Grimsbury, where they brought up their family of very tall and strong *girls!* This was a great disappointment to Alfred – he had no sons to carry on the wheelwright and carpentry business, and his daughters' main interest was in Mission and Bible Studies.

His daughter Kate accompanied the Gillett family and members of the British and Foreign Society on their trip to what was then Constantinople, which gave her parents considerable anxiety. On arriving back in Banbury she was told very firmly: "No more travelling abroad!" – it was time she thought of marrying and making a home of her own.

George Hutt of Buckingham, the son of a regular customer at the wheelwright shop, was Kate's choice. They were married in 1897 at the Methodist Chapel. For their wedding present Alfred, Kate's father, made the necessary cart and wagon, so that George and Kate could start up a business of their own. This was farming at Buckingham and also a very successful fish trading enterprise, which included mobile fish shops.

Kate was still very involved in church work and in time became a Methodist Local Preacher. However, she never learnt to drive, either the horse and cart or, later on, the car. George therefore was the driver to her appointments. He would not sit in the chapels for Kate's services – he said he had to listen to her all week long and on a Sunday it was somebody else's turn to listen.

Like a good husband he waited... and waited. Kate got longer and longer in her sermons until, one day, George lost his temper and asked "Haven't they got a clock in there?" The answer was "No". So George made sure that if there was no clock in any of the chapels where Kate was a regular preacher there very soon would be. Off he went to Banbury to buy what he called "good reliable clocks". This would have been in the 1920/30s.