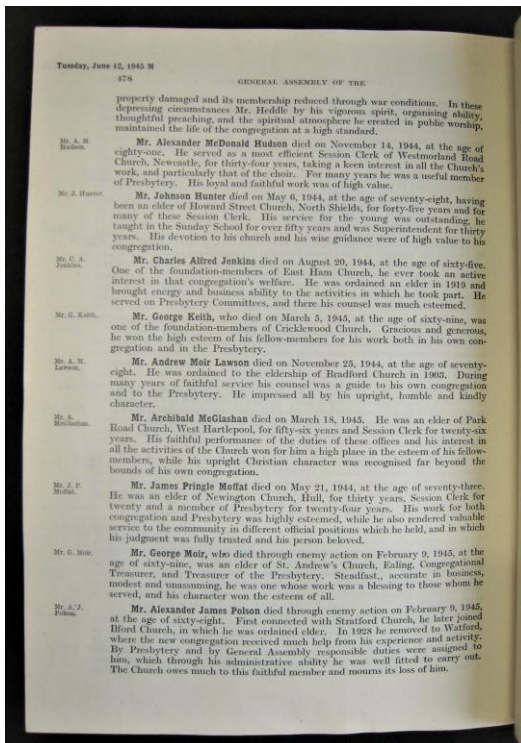


# In Memoriam: 75 years ago, Church House in London was destroyed by a V2 rocket



Extract from the Memorial Minutes (this page shows Mr Moir and Mr Polson) read at the 1945 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England.



Stained glass at Lumen, the church next door, which was also damaged by the blast.

Rev. A.D. Marcus was then the Moderator of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England. Late for his meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1945, he was walking towards Church House when he saw a V2 rocket hit the building. He ran to help his colleagues, but ten people in Church House died, many more were injured, and the building was destroyed.

Seventy-five years on, we remember **Revd. William Thorburn Elmslie**, General Secretary to the Presbyterian Church of England; **Revd. Thomas William Douglas James**, Secretary of the Foreign Missions Committee; **Mr. Wilfred H Wright**, Financial Secretary; **Mr. William Thomas Stubbs**, Secretary of the Welfare of Youth Committee and assistant to the General Secretary; **Mr. Ernest H Morris**, working with book-keeping at Church House; **Mr. George Moir**, Treasurer of St. Andrew's, Ealing, and of the Presbytery of London North; **Mrs. Ida M Warner**, Senior Clerk; **Miss Muriel Kenyon**, Assistant in the Book Room; **Mr. Alexander James Polson**, Treasurer of the Publications Committee; and **Father Reginald H Tribe**, a Church of England minister who had been at a meeting at Church House.

The men and women who died are commemorated on a memorial plaque at Church House, which was rebuilt on the same site and opened in 1957. The church next door - then known as Regent Square church, now Lumen URC - was also damaged by the blast and had to be rebuilt.

Today, a memorial service is being held at Church House to commemorate those who died 75 years ago.

There will also be a selection of original historical records on display after the service: biographies and obituaries for those who died, and documents and [photographs relating to the V2 attack on Church House](#) and the re-opening of the new building - including many from the Presbyterian Church of England archives collections.

Today's tribute echoes the one given in the report by Revd. Marcus at the 1945 General Assembly (p.364), in which he said: "The warm sympathy of the Church is extended to all relatives and friends who have been bereaved, and to the injured. They are assured of our thoughts and prayers to-day and for many days to come. We give thanks for the memory of our friends and comrades, and remembering the quality and fidelity of their service, seek to dedicate ourselves anew to the work of the Church which they loved and served."

Helen Weller, Archivist  
February 2020

**Sources and Further Reading:**

Archives of the Presbyterian Church of England, held by the [United Reformed Church History Society](#) at Westminster College, Cambridge

“Memorial Minute”, in *Reports of Committees and Other Papers Presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England, 1945*

“Report of the Foreign Missions Committee”, in *Reports of Committees and Other Papers Presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England 1945*

“Editorial Opinion”, in *The Presbyterian Messenger*: May-June 1945, no. 1159

*Lumen Church*, by Barbara Waddington: <http://www.lumenurc.org.uk/Lumenhistory.htm>

*Church House Memorial*, by London Remembers:

<https://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/church-house-wc1-names>

“Church House to mark 75th anniversary of Second World War bombing”, by the URC, online at <https://urc.org.uk/latest-news/3342-church-house-marks-75th-anniversary-of-second-world-war-bombing.html>