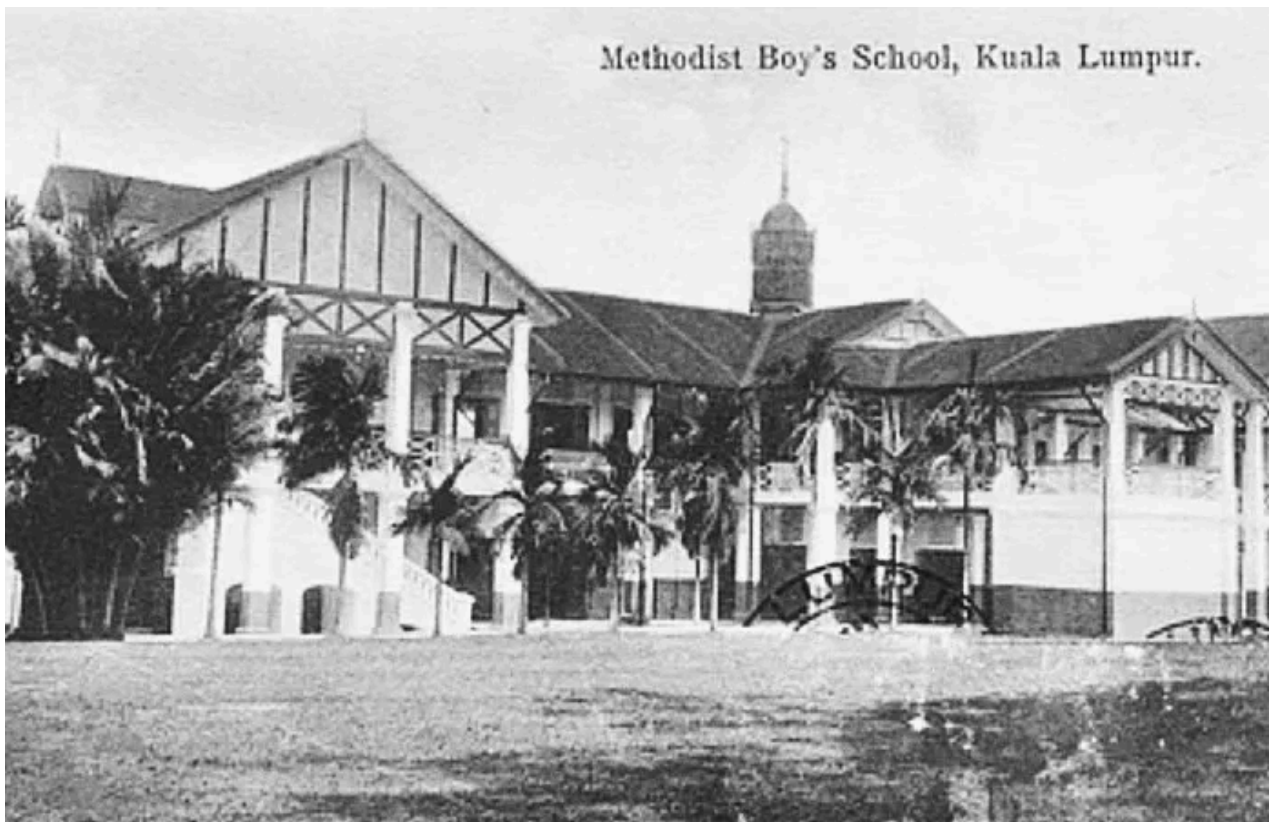


Malaysia 1786 - 1957

EDUCATION

Methodist Boys' School, Kuala Lumpur (1897)



Date: August 29, 2022 © 2 Comments

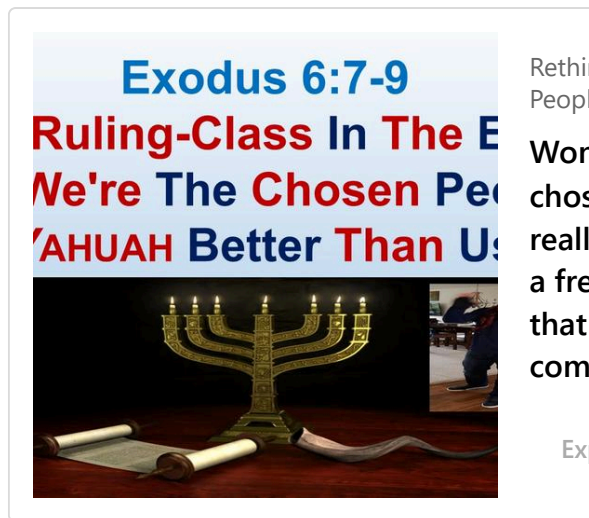
The year 2022 marks the 125th anniversary of the founding of the Methodist Boys' School in Kuala Lumpur. One of the oldest schools in Malaysia it was established in 1897 by retired British naval officer and missionary Rev. Dr. William T. Kensett.

Rev. Dr. Kensett arrived in Kuala Lumpur in 1897, after retiring from service in the Royal Navy on the ship *HMS Orion*, an ironclad coastal defence ship. As a missionary he was tasked with setting up a school specifically for Indian Tamils. A Methodist Boys' School in Penang had already been established six years earlier in 1891 called the Anglo-Chinese School whose principal was Rev. George F. Pykett.

The school was named the Anglo-Tamil School and its first premises were said to have been a wooden shophouse on the corner of Batu Road (now Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman) and Java Street (now Jalan Tun Perak). There were four teachers lead by its first headmaster Rev. Samuel Thambo Abraham who was a Tamil missionary from Ceylon and worked in the nearby Tamil church in Malacca Street (Jalan Melaka)

After moving from Batu Road to temporary premises in a disused fruit market in Malacca Street in 1902, the school then moved three years later, after briefly occupying the Mission Hall in Sultan Street (Jalan Sultan), to its new site on Petaling Hill when the new premises were completed and which were opened in 1905 with an initial enrolment of 125 boys. The foundation stone having been laid in December, 1904 by Mr.B.G.Campbell, Acting British Resident of Selangor, in a grand ceremony said to include nearly all the leading Europeans, and leading Chinese and Tamils of Kuala Lumpur.

Advertisement



The advertisement features a central image of a golden menorah with seven branches, set against a dark background. To the left of the menorah are two rolled-up scrolls. The text is arranged in a column to the right of the image. The top line reads 'Exodus 6:7-9' in blue. The second line reads 'Ruling-Class In The E' in red. The third line reads 'We're The Chosen Pe' in red. The fourth line reads 'AHUAH Better Than Us' in red. To the right of the image, there is a vertical column of text: 'Rethin', 'People', 'Won', 'chos', 'really', 'a fres', 'that', 'com', and 'Exp'.

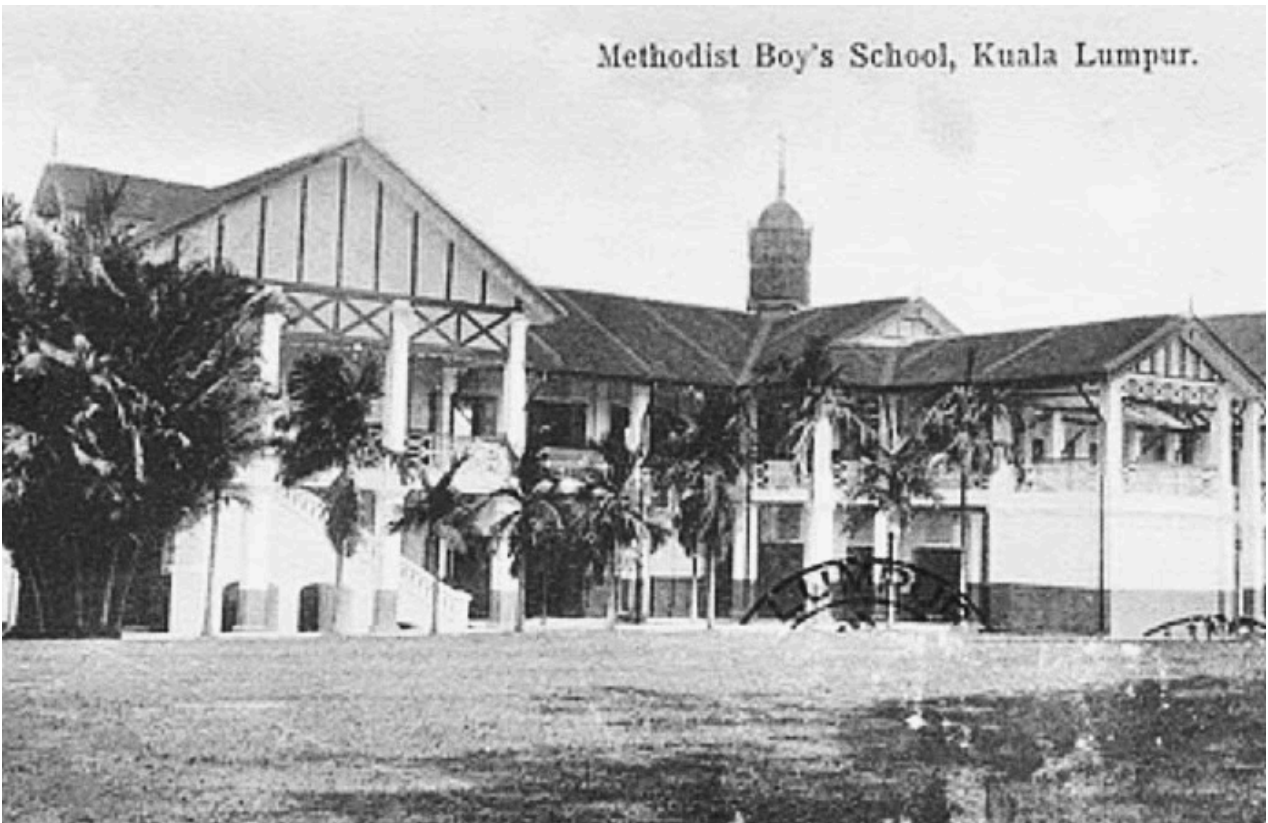
Rev. William E. Horley was the new principal and he renamed the school from the “Anglo-Indian School” to the “Methodist Boys’ School” (MBS). As first principal, the school was sometimes referred to as “Horley School”. Previously, he had founded the Anglo-Chinese School in Ipoh in 1896 and spent thirty-seven years in the country as one of its leading educationists.

The initial premises were designed for four hundred boys but enlargement of the school soon followed as the number of pupils exceeded its capacity due to the growth of Kuala Lumpur. The school was open to boys of all nationalities and faiths including many from the Tamil community who had come from India to work in the rubber plantations which soon became a booming industry.

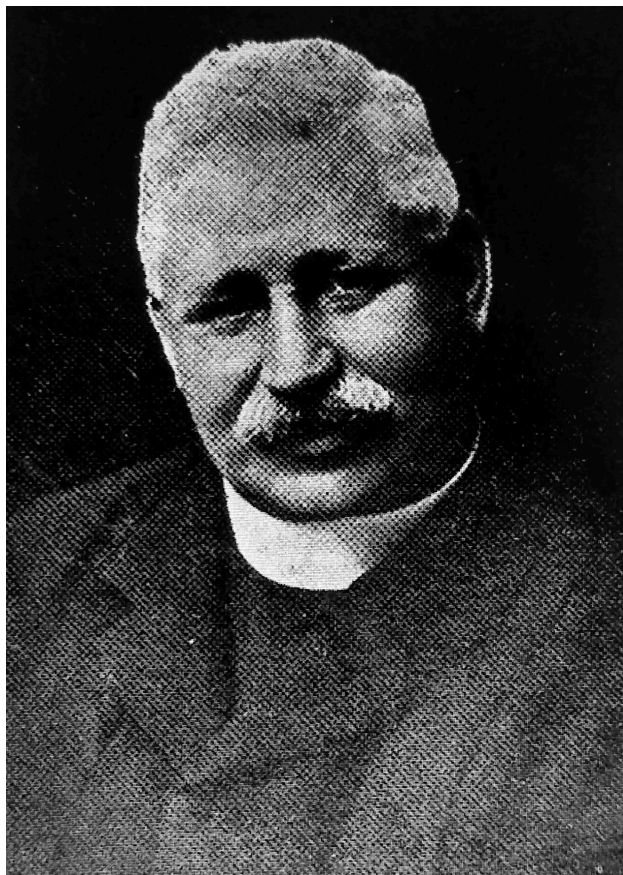
A library was added in 1906 financed by a Chinese philanthropist, later known as the “Lum Mun Yoke Memorial Library”, and in 1907, when the number of teachers had risen to fourteen, eight new classrooms were added. The sports field was built from a large donation by Loke Yew, Chinese business magnate, and a gymnasium was erected with the assistance of Mr.We Hap Lang. A new annexe named the “Hinch Annexe”, after its principal Mr. Thomas William Hinch, was opened in 1926 by Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor of the Straits Settlements.

Today it is one of the most successful schools in Malaysia having been designated as an “Cluster School of Excellence and High Performance School” by the Government.

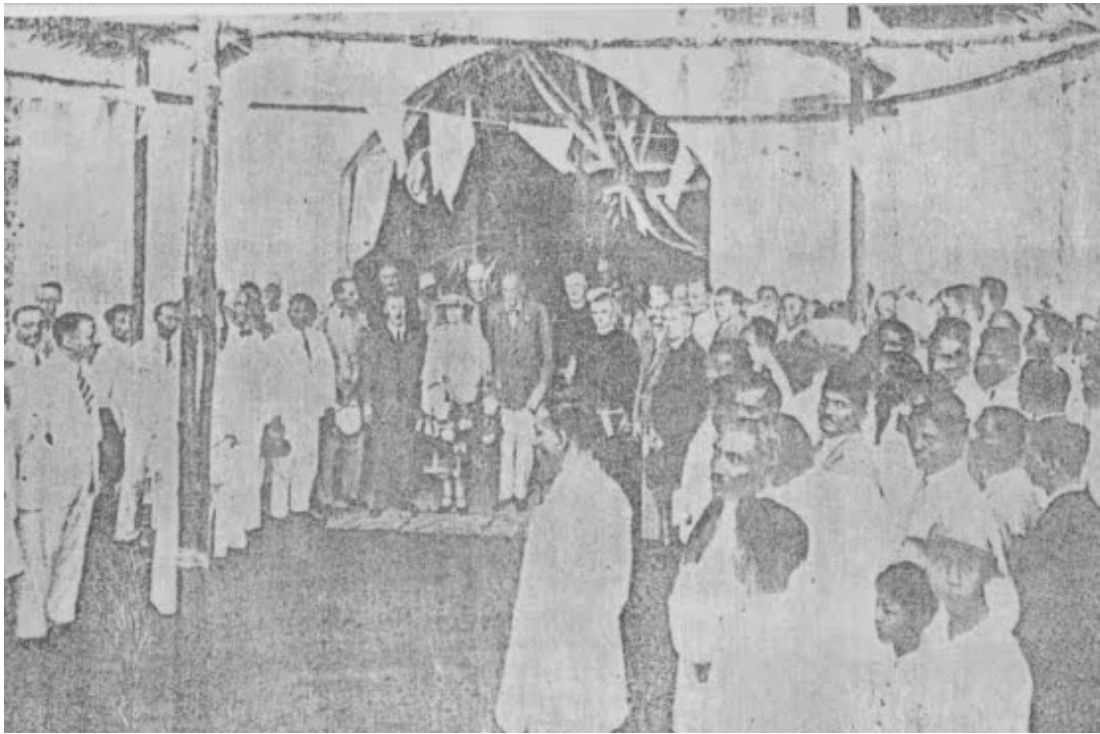
Methodist Boy's School, Kuala Lumpur.



The Methodist Boys' School soon after it opened on Petaling Hill in 1905 (Source: Public domain)



Rev. W.E. Horley the school's first principal who renamed the Anglo-Indian School to the "Methodist Boys' School" (MBS) (Source: Public domain)



Opening of the new Hinch Annexe at the Methodist Boys' School by Sir Hugh Clifford in 1926 (Source: Public domain)



HMS *Orion* of the Royal Navy on which Rev. Dr. Kensett, the founder of the Methodist Boys' School, served as a naval officer until he retired to become a missionary (Source: Public domain).



The school crest and motto "Ora et Labora", Latin for "Pray and Work" (Fair Use)

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2 thoughts on "Methodist Boys' School, Kuala Lumpur (1897)"

Add Comment

1. **sabrizain** says:

August 29, 2022 at 11:27 am

I was an MBS boy back in the 70s and old enough to remember that the original crest on our school badges had a white cross on that blue shield. Later, in deference to Muslim students in the school, a cross-less version of the badge was made that they could wear. I think that cross-less version later became the new official school crest in 1989.

Reply

2. **TheConstantTraveller** says:

August 30, 2022 at 1:56 pm

I assume that it was around that time that the crests of the Convent schools in Malaysia were also changed such as Convent Bukit Nanas and Convent Light Street. The cross at the top of the shield becoming a star, and the symbol representing the Book of Gospels with the hanging rosary, top right on the shield, becoming the Book of Faiths. However I noticed when I was last in George Town that at Convent Light Street the original form of the crest, with the cross at the top, was still on the wall.

Convent Light Street, Georgetown – “Simple in virtue, steadfast in duty”



The Convent Light Street established in 1852 is the oldest girls school in South East Asia. It was founded by French sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus mission. From 1786 to 1852 the site was used as offices and as a residence of the British Governor originally established by Francis Light. He built a grand ... [Continue reading](#).



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