

[STATUTES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, 1855] [1]

[18° & 19° VICTORIÆ.]

CAP. LXXXI.

An Act to amend the Law concerning the certifying and registering of Places of Religious Worship in England.

[30th July 1855.]

[1]
1 W. & M.
Sess. 1.
c. 18.

WHEREAS by an Act of the First Session of the First Year of King *William* and Queen *Mary*, Chapter Eighteen, [2] and

52 G. 3.
c. 155. an Act of the Fifty-second Year of King *George* the Third, Chapter One hundred and fifty-five, [3]

Places of Meeting of Congregations or Assemblies for Religious Worship of Protestants (save as therein excepted with respect to Places of Worship of the Established Church and otherwise) were required to be certified to the Bishop's or Archdeacon's Court, or to the General or Quarter Sessions of the Peace, and to be registered in such Court, and recorded at such Sessions:

31 G. 3.
c. 32. And whereas by an Act of the Thirty-first Year of King *George* the Third, Chapter Thirty-two, [4] every Place of Congregation or Assembly for Religious Worship of Persons professing the Roman Catholic Religion is required to be certified to and recorded at the General or Quarter Sessions of the Peace:

And whereas by the Two following Acts respectively, that is to say,

2 & 3 W. 4.
c. 115. an Act of the Session holden in the Second and Third Years of King *William* the Fourth, Chapter One hundred and fifteen, [5] and

an Act of the Session holden in the Ninth and Tenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Fifty-nine, [6]

Her Majesty's Subjects professing the Roman Catholic Religion, and Her Majesty's Subjects professing the Jewish Religion, in respect of their Places for Religious Worship, are made subject to the same Laws as Protestant Dissenters:

And whereas by an Act passed in the Session holden in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] Places of Meeting of Congregations or Assemblies for Religious Worship of Protestant Dissenters are required to be certified to the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in *England*, and to be recorded in the General Register Office, in lieu of being certified to and registered and recorded in the Bishop's or Archdeacon's Court, and at the General or Quarter Sessions, as herein-before mentioned:

And whereas it is expedient that all Places of Religious Worship, not being Churches or Chapels of the Established Church, should, if the Congregation should desire, but not otherwise, be certified to the said Registrar General:

Be it therefore enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

[1] [Public General Statutes, 1855. Given the short title *The Places of Worship Registration Act, 1855* by the *Short Titles Act, 1896*.]

[2] [*The Toleration Act, 1688*]

[3] [*The Places of Religious Worship Act, 1812*]

[4] [*The Roman Catholic Relief Act, 1791*]

[5] [*The Roman Catholic Charities Act, 1832*]

[6] [*The Religious Disabilities Act, 1846*]

[7] [*Protestant Dissenters Act of 1852*]

15 & 16
Vict. c. 36
repealed,

but Places
of Worship
certified
thereunder
to have
Force, &c.

Places of
Worship to
be certified
to Registrar
General.

I. The said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] shall be repealed:

Provided always, that the certifying thereunder before the passing of this Act of any Place of Meeting for Religious Worship shall, subject to the Provisions hereinafter contained, have the same Force and Effect from the Time of such certifying as if the same had been duly certified, registered, and recorded as before the passing of the said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] was required by Law, and such Act and this Act had not been passed.

II. Every Place of Meeting for Religious Worship

of Protestant Dissenters or other Protestants, and

of Persons professing the Roman Catholic Religion,

by the said Acts of

King *William* and Queen *Mary*, [2]

the Thirty-first [4] and Fifty-second Years of King *George* the Third, [3] and

the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7]

or any of them, required to be certified and registered or recorded, as therein mentioned, and not heretofore certified and registered or recorded in manner required by Law, and

every Place of Meeting for Religious Worship of Persons professing the Jewish Religion, not heretofore certified and registered or recorded as aforesaid, and

every Place of Meeting for Religious Worship of any other Body or Denomination of Persons, may be certified in Writing to the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in *England*, through the Superintendent Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages of the District in which such Place may be situate; and

such Certificate shall be in Duplicate, and upon Forms in accordance with Schedule A. to this Act, or to the like Effect, such Forms to be provided by the said Registrar General, and to be obtained

(without Payment) upon Application to such Superintendent Registrar as aforesaid; and

the said Superintendent Registrar shall, upon the Receipt of such Certificate in Duplicate, forthwith transmit the same to the said Registrar General,

who, after having caused the Place of Meeting therein mentioned to be recorded as herein-after directed,

shall return One of the said Certificates to the said Superintendent Registrar, to be re-delivered by him to the certifying Party, and

shall keep the other Certificate with the Records of the General Register Office.

III. The said Registrar General shall cause all Places of Meeting for Religious Worship certified to him under this Act to be recorded in a Book to be kept by him for that Purpose at the General Register Office, and

no such Place of Meeting as aforesaid shall

be certified to or registered in any Court of any Bishop or Archdeacon, or

be certified to or recorded at any General or Quarter Sessions; and

the certifying to the said Registrar General

of any such Place of Meeting for Religious Worship of Protestant Dissenters or other Protestants or Roman Catholics, or Persons professing the Jewish Religion, and

of any Place of Meeting for Religious Worship of any other Body or Denomination of Persons,

shall, subject to the Provisions herein contained, have the same Force and Effect as if such Place had been duly certified and recorded or registered and recorded as before the passing of the said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] was required by Law, and such Act and this Act had not been passed.

IV. Any Place of Meeting for Religious Worship heretofore certified and registered or recorded in manner required by Law, and which continues to be used for Religious Worship, save any such Place of Meeting certified to the said Registrar General under the said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7]

Places of
Meeting to
be record-
ed.

Places of
Meeting al-
ready cer-
tified, save
those certi-
fied under
15 & 16
Vict. c. 36,

may be certified to Registrar General, and

be recorded by him.

Fee of 2 s. 6 d. to be paid with Certificate to Superintendent Registrar.

Notice to be given to Registrar General of every Place of Meeting becoming disused for the Purposes for which it was certified.

may, at any Time after the passing of this Act, be certified in Writing to such Registrar General through the Superintendent Registrar of the District in which such Place may be situate, and

shall be recorded by such Registrar General in manner herein-before mentioned concerning Places of Meeting not heretofore certified and registered or recorded.

V. Upon the Delivery of every Certificate to the Superintendent Registrar for Transmission to the Registrar General for the Purpose of being recorded under this Act, the Person delivering the same shall pay to such Superintendent Registrar for his own Use the Sum of Two Shillings and Sixpence, and

it shall not be lawful to demand or take any greater Fee or Reward for the same respectively.

VI. Whenever any Place of Meeting for Religious Worship which may have been certified under the said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] or this Act, shall have wholly ceased to be used as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship,

the Person or One of the Persons who so certified or last certified the same (as the Case may be), or the Trustee or One of the Trustees for the Time being of such Place of Meeting, or

the Owner or Occupier or One of the Owners or Occupiers thereof,

shall, if then resident within the Superintendent Registrar's District within which such Place shall be situate, forthwith give Notice to the Registrar General through such Superintendent Registrar that such Place has so ceased to be used as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship,

such Notice to be in a Form in accordance with the Schedule B. to this Act, or to the like Effect, and

which Form

shall be provided by the said Registrar General, and

may be obtained (without Payment) upon Application to the said Superintendent Registrar; and

the Person giving such Notice shall sign the same in the Presence of such Superintendent Registrar or of his Deputy,

who shall forthwith transmit the same through the General Post to the Registrar General at the General Register Office.

VII. The said Registrar General shall,

in the Year One thousand eight hundred and fifty-six, and

also at such subsequent Periods as One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State shall from Time to Time in that Behalf order or direct,

make out and cause to be printed a List of all Places of Meeting which have been certified to and recorded by him under the said Act of the Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] or this Act, and the Record of which has not been cancelled as herein-after provided, and

shall state in such List the County and Superintendent Registrar's District within which each of such Places of Meeting is situated, and the Religious Denomination to which the Persons for the Time being certifying it belong, and

shall cause a Copy of such List to be sent to every Superintendent Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in *England*, and

such List shall be open at all reasonable Times to all Persons desirous of inspecting the same, on Payment to such Superintendent Registrar of a Fee of One Shilling.

VIII. Whenever it shall appear to the Satisfaction of the said Registrar General, from any Notice which shall have been given to him as aforesaid or otherwise that any certified Place of Meeting for Religious Worship has wholly ceased to be used as such, the said Registrar General shall

cause the Record of such Certification to be cancelled, and

shall give public Notice of the Cancellation thereof by Advertisement

List of certified Places to be printed.

Direction to the Registrar General to cancel Records of Certificates of Places of Worship ceasing to be used as such.

in some Newspaper circulating within the District in which such Place of Meeting is situated, and

in the *London Gazette*, and

shall also expunge the Name of such Place from the List of certified Places so to be printed by him as aforesaid; and

after such Cancellation and Publication thereof as aforesaid such Place shall

cease to be deemed duly certified as by Law required, and

shall so remain until it shall have been duly certified afresh under this Act.

Certified Places exempted from the Operation of "The Charitable Trusts Act, 1853."

IX. Every Place of Meeting for Religious Worship certified to the said Registrar General under the said Act of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter Thirty-six, [7] or this Act, and recorded by him as aforesaid, so long as

the same continues to be *bonâ fide* used as a Place of Religious Worship, and

the Record of the Certification thereof has not been cancelled as herein-before is provided,

shall be wholly freed and exempted from the Operation of an Act passed in the Session holden in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Years of Her Majesty, Chapter One hundred and thirty-seven, intituled "*The Charitable Trusts Act, 1853*," and

shall not be subject or liable to any of the Provisions of the same Act, save that the exempted Charities may avail themselves of the Sixty-third and Sixty-fourth Sections of the said Act, if they shall think fit.

Nothing to affect Churches, &c of Established Church.

X. Nothing in this Act shall affect or be construed to affect

the Churches or Chapels of the United Church of *England* and *Ireland*, or

the Celebration of Divine Service according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the said United Church by Ministers of such Church,

in any Place hitherto used for such Purpose, or being now or hereafter duly consecrated or licensed by any Archbishop or Bishop or other Person lawfully authorized to consecrate or license the same.

XI. The Registrar General, on Payment to him of a Fee of Two Shillings and Sixpence, shall, with respect to any Place certified to him as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship, the Record whereof remains uncanceled, give to any Person demanding the same a Certificate, sealed or stamped with the Seal of the General Register Office,

that at the Time or respective Times in such Certificate in that Behalf stated the Place therein described was duly certified and duly recorded as required by this Act, and

that at the Date of such sealed or stamped Certificate the Record of such Certification remained uncanceled; and

every such sealed or stamped Certificate, if tendered in Evidence upon any Trial or other judicial Proceeding in any Civil or Criminal Court, shall be received as Evidence of the said several Facts therein mentioned, without any further or other Proof of the same.

XII. All Sums to be received by or on account of the Registrar General in pursuance of this Act shall be accounted for and paid in manner directed by the said [8] Act of the Seventh Year of King William the Fourth, "*for registering Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England*," [9] with respect to Sums received by him or on his Account under the Provisions of that Act; and

all Expenses incurred by the said Registrar General, or by any Superintendent Registrar, or Registrar, with his Sanction and acting under his Direction or Authority, in carrying this Act into execution and making known its Provisions, shall be deemed to have been incurred in carrying on the Business of the General Register Office, and be defrayed accordingly.

XIII. Notwithstanding the Provisions of this or any other Act, all Marriages which heretofore have been had or solemnized in any Building which has been registered for the Solemnization of Marriages pursuant to the Provisions of an Act passed in the Sixth and Seventh Years of His late

Certificate of Place having been certified to be given.

Sums received by or on account of Registrar General to be accounted for, and

Expenses defrayed as other Expenses of the General Register Office.

To remove Doubts as to Validity of Marriage.

[8] [Sic. An apparent drafting error, the act is not previously mentioned.]

[9] [An Act for registering Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England, 6 & 7 W 4 c 86; given the short title *The Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1836* by the *Short Titles Act, 1896*.]

Majesty King William the Fourth, Chapter Eighty-five, [10] but which may not have been certified as required by the Provisions of this or any other Act, shall be as valid in all respects as if such Place of Worship had been so certified.

Extent of Act. XIV. This Act shall not extend to *Scotland* or *Ireland*.

SCHEDULES referred to in the foregoing Act.

SCHEDULE A.

To the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England. Directions for filling up this Schedule.

I the undersigned (a) of in the County of do hereby, under and by virtue of an Act passed in the Year of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, intituled “An Act to amend the Law concerning the certifying and registering of Places of Religious Worship in England,” certify that a certain Building known by the Name of situated at in the County of within the Superintendent Registrar’s District of

[was used (b) as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship before the 30th Day of June 1852 and]

is intended to be used as heretofore, (c)

and will accordingly be forthwith used as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship by a Congregation or Assembly of Persons calling themselves (d)

and I request that this Certificate may be recorded in the General Register Office, pursuant to the said Act.

Dated this Day of 185 .
(Signature of the Party certifying.)

(e) of the Place of Meeting above described.
(e) Insert on this Line immediately under the Signature the Word “Minister,” “Proprietor,” “a Trustee,” “Occupier,” “an Attendant,” or such other Words as will clearly show the Connexion subsisting between the Person certifying and the Place of Meeting.

SCHEDULE B.

To the Registrar General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in England.

I, the undersigned of in the County of being the Person or One of the Persons who certified or last certified [or being “the Trustee,” or “One of the Trustees,” or the “Owner,” or “Occupier,” or “One of the Owners or Occupiers” (as the Case may be), of] a certain Building known by the Name of [or a certain Dwelling House, &c. (as the Case may be)] situate at in the County of

within the Superintendent Registrar’s District of [and being now resident within the same District], do hereby declare and give you Notice, in pursuance of an Act passed in the Year of Her present Majesty, Chapter that the aforesaid Building [or Dwelling House, &c.] which was on the Day of 185 recorded by you as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship by a Congregation or Assembly of Persons calling themselves

[or by a Congregation or Assembly of Roman Catholics, or of Persons belonging to the Society of Friends, or of Persons professing the Jewish Religion (as the Case may be)],

has wholly ceased to be used as a Place for public Religious Worship.

Witness my Hand, this Day of 185 .

LONDON:
Printed by GEORGE EDWARD EYRE and WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE, Printers to the Queen’s most Excellent Majesty. 1855.

[Original colour-phon]

[10] [Marriage Act of 1836]