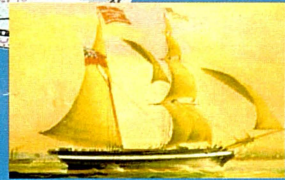
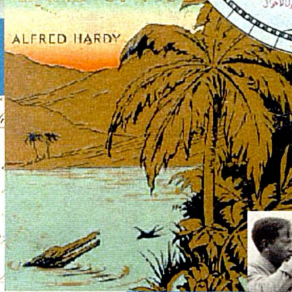




LIFE AND ADVENTURE
IN THE
LAND OF MUD

ALFRED HARDY



to be out for a short time
the spending is little. In
the first few months
for some time, and it is
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as I found it was expensive.
The American State of
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then as life is simple.
It is going early to rest, and by early to
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SOAS
Library

Guide to Methodist Missionary Collections

Introduction

The Methodist Church of Great Britain was founded on the 20th September 1932 by the amalgamation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the United Methodist Church. As a consequence the missionary societies of each of these churches were merged to create the Methodist Missionary Society (MMS). In the early 1970s, during a phase of reorganisation throughout the Methodist Church, the MMS became the Overseas Division of the Methodist Church and this remained in place until responsibilities were transferred to the World Church Office in 1996. If you are interested in the Methodist Church and its current work in the UK and overseas then please visit <http://www.methodist.org.uk/>.

The first part of the WMMS archive was deposited at the School of Oriental and African Studies in 1978 with subsequent deposits occurring at intervals since then. This guide attempts to give an overview of the archive up to 1945. Most of the material up to 1945 has been catalogued and most of this has been microfiched. Some material (mainly Synod minutes and correspondence) between 1945 and 1950 has been catalogued but not microfiched. The most recent deposit of material, mainly dating from 1951 to the early 1970s is currently uncatalogued. Boxes are gradually being checked and prepared for cataloguing. Until the cataloguing process is complete post-1950 records and some earlier uncatalogued materials are unavailable.

The main types of records in the archive are minutes, correspondence, personal papers and photographs. They detail the history of the organisation, its work and employees, as well as the regions and peoples with whom missionaries inter-acted. Furthermore, much of the MMS library is deposited at SOAS and an overview of its contents is briefly given in this guide as well.

During the period up to 1945 missionary work was undertaken in North America, Central America and the Caribbean, Africa, Europe, Asia and Australasia. Place names for countries or regions used in the remainder of this guide reflect contemporary and not modern usage.

The archive and library are kept within the environmentally controlled and monitored archive store within SOAS library and are consulted in the Special Collections Reading Room. For preservation reasons original records are not produced where microfiche exists. Photographs and books are available for consultation in their original format.

If you are interested in purchasing microfiche copies of the archive for personal use then please visit <http://www.idc.nl>.

(Wesleyan) Methodist Missionary Society

Although the WMMS was only constituted at the Methodist conference of 1818 Wesleyans had already been undertaking missionary work overseas: amongst the earliest being the North American colonies from the 1760s, the West Indies from 1786, and Europe from 1791. Missionary work continued to expand in the areas already established and into new regions so that by the mid nineteenth century the Wesleyans had missions in Australasia, Ceylon, China, Europe, India, the West Indies, South and West Africa. In 1932 the WMMS merged with the PMMS and UMMS to form the Methodist Missionary Society, which continued the overseas missionary work of all three organisations through the administrative structure created by the Wesleyans.

The records are arranged within sections: Home, Overseas and Special Series. Home material is sub-divided by record type whilst material within the overseas section is sub-divided by district then by record type and then by mission field. The Special Series section includes the following sub-sections: notes & transcripts, biographical, ships' logs and a few candidates' papers.



Dr Nancy Francis administering medical aid to a patient. Possibly Hyderabad District, India, 1936-1941. (WMMS/INS/1199/014/011).

Records of the WMMS & MMS

Home

Minutes

The central minutes of the society are the minutes of the General Committee of Management and these survive from 1804. These are complemented by the minutes of Secretaries' – later Officers' – Committee (1837-), Eastern Committee (1912-), Western Committee (1912-), General Purposes Committee (1912-) and various financial committees. Candidates' Committee minutes are extant from 1912.

Correspondence

Home incoming correspondence is extant from 1803 to 1896. Most of this correspondence originated from societies in the Home districts. The outgoing correspondence (both Home and Overseas) is extant from 1816 to 1914 and is arranged partly by area then by date.

Further Home correspondence – arranged by place, individual or subject file – exists from 1928 and includes both incoming and outgoing correspondence. A small amount of correspondence (1806-1905) with government departments (particularly the Colonial Office) is also available. Finally, a number of printed circulars originating from Mission House have survived, albeit sporadically, for between 1821 and 1904.

Overseas

This section is arranged geographically by missionary region. Please be aware that boundaries and jurisdiction did change over the period covered here and that in some cases – particularly with the earlier records – relevant material may be found in adjacent regions, districts or mission fields. Each of the following regions contains minutes (usually Synod) and correspondence. Synod minutes record the decisions and actions of the district under the guidance of the district chairman or superintendent. Correspondence consists primarily of communications from missionaries (including extracts from their journals) regarding their work and from each district chairman on issues concerning missionary work within their district. Please note that the following dates listed for records are covering dates and do not imply a complete series of records.

North America

Wesleyans began work in North America in the 1760s but were hampered in what became the United States by the Revolutionary War. The Canadian Methodist Missionary Society was formed in 1824 and became independent in 1854. Minutes (including Synod) for Canada date from 1823 to 1868 with correspondence from 1791 to 1883. A small amount of United States correspondence is extant from 1801 to 1881.

West Indies

Wesleyan Methodism began in the West Indies with the arrival of Thomas Coke in 1786. In 1885 the West Indies (with the exception of the Bahamas and Honduras) formed an independent conference but this only lasted until 1903 when they rejoined the WMMS. Synod minutes for the West Indies date from 1822 with general correspondence from 1803 to 1857 and from 1903. Conference correspondence exists from 1880 to 1902.

Correspondence for specific areas is available as follows: Antigua (1833-1890), Bahamas (1835-), Barbados (1905-), British Guiana (1867-), British Honduras (1833-), Demerara (1858-1867), Haiti/Santo Domingo (1834-1930), Jamaica (1833-), Leeward Islands (1905-), St Vincent (1858-1890) and Trinidad (1905-).

Europe

France was the first European Wesleyan missionary district in 1791 and subsequent missionary work in Europe was concentrated mostly in the Romance language countries. A small amount of material exists for North Africa. European Synod minutes date from 1823 with general correspondence from 1917 to 1941. Correspondence for specific areas is available as follows: Channel Islands (1806-1884), Egypt including the Levant (1823-1902), France including Belgium (1814-1936), Germany including Austria (1821-1899), Gibraltar (1804-1902), Greece (1826-1834), Ireland (1802-1862), Italy (1861-1936) & Naples (1886-1904), Malta (1815-1902), Portugal (1870-1936), Spain (1870-1936), Sweden (1825-1864), Switzerland (1823-1905) and various (1818-1879).

West Africa

Wesleyan missionary work began in Sierra Leone in 1811 and spread within the next twenty years to neighbouring lands. After 1932 the material here includes records for the former UMMS missions in Sierra Leone and the PMMS missions in Nigeria and Fernando Po.

Synod minutes are extant for Fernando Po (1933-1939), French West Africa (1925-), Gambia (1841-), Gold Coast (1842-), Nigeria (1878-) and Sierra Leone (1822-).

Correspondence is available for Fernando Po (1932-1940), French West Africa (1925-), Gambia (1821-), Gold Coast (1835-), Sierra Leone (1811-), and Nigeria (1877-1902) with Eastern Nigeria (1932-) and also Western Nigeria (1902-).

South Africa

Wesleyan missionary work began at Namaqualand in 1814. All but one of the districts agreed to form the South African Conference in 1882. The dissenter – the Transvaal and Swaziland district – delayed its entry until 1931. Minutes (primarily Synod) for South Africa are extant from 1823 to 1887 with the addition of minutes (1889-1944) for Transvaal and Swaziland (including Rhodesia to 1911). General correspondence dates from 1807 to 1824 with the addition of correspondence relating to the South African Conference from

1883-1942. Correspondence for specific areas is available as follows: Albany (1825-1857), Bechuana (1838-1876), Bloemfontein (1876-1885), the Cape including Mauritius (1825-1885), Clerkebury (1881-1885), Grahamstown (1864-1885), Kaffraria (1858-1864), Mashonaland (1891-1898), Natal (1858-1885), Queenstown (1868-1885), and Transvaal and Swaziland (1881-).

Ceylon

Work began in Ceylon in 1814 and within a year five Wesleyan mission stations had been founded. Minutes (primarily Synod) are extant from 1821. General correspondence exists from 1814 to 1867 and from 1935. Correspondence is also available for Colombo (1885-1906), Galle & Kandy (1885-1905), North Ceylon (1867-1935) and South Ceylon (1868-1935).

India

Madras in Southern India was the first Wesleyan mission being founded in 1817. Synod minutes date from 1824 to 1911 with subsequent minutes for North India (1912-) and South India (1912-). General and provincial minutes date from 1906. Correspondence is available for Benares (1868-1904), Bengal (1904-), Bombay (1902-), Calcutta (1868-1904), Hyderabad (1885-), Lucknow (1868-), Madras (1817-), Mysore (1835-), Negapatam (1886-1904), North India (1857-1874) and Trichinopoly (1886-1945).

Australasia

Wesleyan missionary work started in Australia in 1818, had reached New Zealand by 1822 and the South Sea Islands in the 1820s (Tonga first in 1826). The Australasian Methodist Missionary Society was formed as an auxiliary in 1822 with independence taking place in 1855. Minutes (primarily Synod) for Australia (including Tasmania) and New Zealand are extant from 1822 to 1862 whilst for Fiji and Tonga they are extant from 1828 to 1855. Correspondence is available for Australia (1812-1889), Fiji (1835-1884), New Zealand (1819-1882), Samoa & New Britain (1834-1881), Tasmania (1823-1876) and Tonga (1822-1859).

China

Canton was the first region of China where a Wesleyan mission was founded in 1851. After 1932 the material here includes records for the former UMMS missions in Ningpo, North China, Wenchow and Yunnan in South-west China. Synod minutes for China are extant from 1853 with general correspondence dating from 1936. Correspondence for specific areas is available as follows: Canton (1851-1905), Hunan (1907-), Hupeh (1905-), Ningpo (1933-), North China (1933-), South China (1905-), South-west China (1932-), Wenchow (1933-) and Wuchang (1877-1905).

Kenya

Originally, Kenya was a UMMS mission district (1852-1932). No papers are extant for that period. However, Synod minutes and correspondence are extant from 1933 (coinciding with the formation of the MMS).

Burma

In 1887 the first Wesleyan mission in Burma was founded at Mandalay. Minutes (primarily Synod) are extant from 1889 whilst correspondence dates from 1886.

Rhodesia

Initially, Wesleyan missionary work began in Mashonaland in 1891 and expanded into Matabeleland in 1895 and Northern Rhodesia in 1913. From 1932 this section includes records relating to missionary work in the former PMMS region of Northern Rhodesia. Synod minutes for Mashonaland and Matabeleland to 1911 are amongst those for the Transvaal and Swaziland. Synod minutes for Rhodesia itself date from 1912 to 1933 with additional Synod minutes for Northern Rhodesia (1932-) and Southern Rhodesia (1940-). Correspondence for Rhodesia is extant from 1891 – although correspondence for Mashonaland between 1891 and 1898 is amongst the South African correspondence – with correspondence for Southern Rhodesia dating from 1932.

Special Series

This section contains material primarily from the WMMS but does include some items relating to the other Methodist societies as well as the work of the MMS.

Notes & Transcripts

Includes notes, manuscript works, copies of articles, small publications, etc, on: missionaries; missionary organisations and their work; the cultures and languages of peoples in areas of missionary work. Also includes a number of transcripts of missionary diaries, journals and autobiographical material. Although the material is predominantly twentieth century a few items do date from the previous century.

Biographical

These papers are arranged by overseas region and then by individual missionary. Material – dating from the late eighteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century – includes diaries, journals, notebooks, letters, ms histories on missions and regions, ms biographical and autobiographical papers, published works and a few photographs. Missionaries of particular note include Thomas Birch Freeman, David Hill, Samuel Pollard (BC), Edwin W Smith (PMMS) and Sister Gladys Stephenson.

Candidates' Papers

Very little material on candidates is extant. Surviving papers, dating from the 1820s to 1860s, consist of Missionary district minutes on candidates, a register of candidates, brief notes on candidates and correspondence regarding the character and suitability of candidates.

Ships' logs and papers

The WMMS owned three missionary ships with papers surviving for two: the "Triton" (1839-1847) and the "John Wesley" (1846-1865). A complete set of ship's logs is available for the "Triton" but not for the "John Wesley" (only 1845-1853, 1859). Supplementary papers for both ships – detailing finance, provisions and stores, insurance, outfitting, etc – survive for 1838 to 1847 and 1845 to 1864 respectively. Minutes of the Ship Committee are extant from 1841 to 1845.

Various papers

These include: Anti-slavery papers – letters (mostly printed), articles, propaganda, etc, late C18th-late C19th; Niger Expedition papers – correspondence, reports, journals, etc, 1835, 1841 & 1857-1858; Government publications – acts, minutes, reports, etc from South & West Africa, Australia & New Zealand, Canada, India and West Indies, c1797-1877; Rev Thomas Jackson Collection – correspondence and printed material on Methodist History, 1736-1839; Steele Collection – Methodist preachers' correspondence, 1788-1866.

Women's Work of the (Wesleyan) Methodist Missionary Society

Collectively organised work by women within the WMMS began in 1858. Initially, education was their chief concern with attempts made to improve the quality of education in mission fields for women and girls. Funds were raised and administered independently of the WMMS to improve existing schools, create new ones and to train teachers to staff them. As the organisation expanded it embraced other work with, most significantly, medical work flourishing in the 1880s and 1890s. From the start of the twentieth century additional female workers were recruited from the Wesley Deaconesses Order as well as from local and indigenous women. In 1928 the then 'Women's Auxiliary' became a department of the WMMS and subsequently merged in 1932 with the Women's Missionary Federation of the PMMS and the UM Women's Missionary Auxiliary. None of the latter's records are extant whilst the very small number of the PMMS Women's Missionary Federation records are kept within the PMMS archive.

Women's Work Records

Many gaps exist within the record series of the Women's Work Department with, unfortunately, few pre-twentieth century records being extant.

Home

An almost complete set of minutes from 1858 has survived for the Women's Work Department (and all its Wesleyan predecessors). These form the central record of their activities and policy decisions. An incomplete series of finance committee minutes dates from 1912 and is supplemented by a few surviving financial ledgers, cash books and overseas schedules. Additionally, Candidates' Committee minutes survive from 1918 whilst candidate papers date from 1893.

Overseas

Missionaries worked in Asia (particularly China and India), Africa, Europe and the West Indies. The records consist of reports and correspondence.

- Reports: For Africa reports exist from 1934, for China from 1939 and for India (including some reports for Burma and Ceylon) from 1923. All are incomplete series.
- Correspondence: This is arranged by region and contains files of Chairman's and Missionaries' correspondence. Correspondence is extant for Europe from 1918, West Indies from 1928, Africa (including Rhodesia, Transvaal and West Africa) from 1914, Ceylon from 1907 and Burma from 1920. Correspondence for India (from 1906) is further divided by mission field: Bengal, Hyderabad, Lucknow & Benares, Madras, Medak, Trichinopoly. Correspondence for China (from 1920) is also divided by mission field: South, South-west, North, Hunan, Hupeh, Ningpo and Wenchow. Some of the above are incomplete series.

Personal Papers

A few papers of employees of the Women's Work Department exist and are located in WMMS Special Series/Biographical and MRP.

Primitive Methodist Missionary Society (PMMS)

Primitive Methodism grew out of the work of Hugh Bourne and William Clowes and their emphasis on the role lay people could undertake within Methodism. The Society of Primitive Methodists was formed in 1812 with colonial missionary work beginning in 1829. From 1843 the society issued reports of its overseas work under the name of the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society but it was not until 1870 that its first non-colonial missionary began work.

Records of the PMMS

Home

The central minutes of the society are the minutes of the General Missionary Committee. The series is incomplete but covers the period 1863-1933. There are also a small number of minutes of Missions District Meetings & District Synods between 1928 and 1932. Most correspondence is contained within an alphabetical series which includes correspondence with individuals (benefactors, advisors, employees, etc), other missionary and Christian organisations, and on subjects (such as land or missionary training), dating from 1894 to 1933. A register of sailings and furloughs (1871-1933) is also extant.

Colonial

Colonial work started in USA in 1829 and spread to Canada in 1830 with missions beginning in Australia and New Zealand from 1844. The only surviving documents recording colonial work constitute one box of correspondence for Australia and New Zealand from 1895 to 1913.

Foreign

This missionary work was confined to Africa. Beginning in Fernando Po and South Africa (Aliwal North) in 1870 work expanded into Central Africa from 1889 (including a mission in Northern Rhodesia from 1893) until the last mission field was established in Eastern Nigeria in 1894. Information on work undertaken in mission fields and stations is contained within the surviving quarterly reports (1894-1916) as well as within an incomplete series of foreign reports (1914-1933). Material relating to specific mission fields is as follows:

- Fernando Po: correspondence with missionaries, administrative files and general correspondence, accounts, papers of the Fernandian Council, and one file of photographs

- South & Central Africa (including Rhodesia): correspondence with missionaries, administrative files and general correspondence (including Methodist Union in South Africa), reports and a few Synod minutes
- Nigeria: correspondence with missionaries, administrative files, general correspondence, council and Synod minutes

Personal Papers

Some papers of PMMS employees exist and are located in WMMS Special Series/Biographical and MRP.

United Methodist Missionary Society (UMMS)

Formed in 1907 by the amalgamation of the Methodist New Connexion, the Bible Christians and the United Methodist Free Churches.

Records of Predecessors

Methodist New Connexion (MNC)

Formed in 1797, the MNC began missionary work in 1824. Missionary work was undertaken in Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and China. Only the minutes of the missionary society from 1844 to 1908 are extant.

Bible Christians (BC)

Founded in 1815, the missionary society was created in 1821. Missionary work began in North America and then expanded to include Australia, New Zealand and China. Only the minutes of the missionary society are extant and these form an incomplete series (1861-1873, 1882-1891 & 1903-1909).

United Methodist Free Churches (UMFC)

Formed by the union of the Wesleyan Association with elements of the Wesleyan Reformers churches in 1857 it began its existence with missions already operating in Jamaica and Australia. Later work saw missionaries travel to New Zealand, China, Sierra Leone, East Africa and Panama. Only the minutes of the missionary society are extant and these form an incomplete series (1869-1883 & 1900-1908).

Records of the UMMS

The UMMS continued the work of its predecessors until its merger with the WMMS and PMMS in 1932 when its mission fields consisted of Kenya, Sierra Leone and China. With the exception of one minute book (1905-1932) for the district of South-west China only the minutes of the Foreign Missions Committee are extant (1908-1933).

Personal Papers

A few papers of UMMS (and its predecessors) employees exist and are located in WMMS Special Series/Biographical and MRP.

Photographs

The deposited photographs in the (Wesleyan) Methodist Missionary Society consist of over 2,000 photographs, depicting all of the main overseas mission fields: Africa, the West Indies, China, India and Ceylon. The majority of the photographs were created rather than collected by the missionaries in the field themselves. They provide a valuable first-hand visual record of the people and events considered of value and importance by those directly involved in the life and work of the mission stations. Many of the photographs are captioned on the reverse with information, not only regarding the details of the subject, when and where the photograph was taken, but also the photographer's own attitude to the person, place or event represented. Photographs prior to 1932 are overwhelmingly Wesleyan in origin and a significant number of these (and some later) photographs were reproduced in Methodist publications such as *The Foreign Field*.

The photographs have been catalogued, usually to file level, and are arranged by mission region. During the cataloguing process measures were taken to replace existing packaging with archival packaging, such as putting loose photographs into inert polyester sleeves.

MMS Library

The MMS library contains about 6,500 books and pamphlets of which around 5,000 have been added to the SOAS library catalogue INNOPAC (<http://lib.soas.ac.uk/>) where they can be recognised by the prefix MMSL. Its contents are a key source for the history of the MMS as well as being a rich source of information on the regions and peoples encountered by missionaries.

A significant amount of the material was originally published by the MMS (and its predecessors) as well as by its partner churches overseas. Methodist Missionary Society periodicals consist principally of printed annual reports and missionary magazines. (The most important of these are available on open access in the SCRR). Similar material also exists from mission districts and mission stations. From the late 1940s there are a number of printed reports and magazines originating from the autonomous churches formed in individual countries. A few publications of non-Methodist missionary societies and other Christian organisations are also present.

Not surprisingly there are a number of books (many written by Methodist missionaries) on the history of mission regions, districts and even individual mission stations. These are complemented by more general histories on geographic areas, countries, peoples and cultures. There are also a small but important number of books written on the indigenous languages encountered by missionaries as well as the subsequent translations by missionaries of Christian texts into many of those languages.

Related Material

Missionary Records Project (MRP)

A programme was begun in 1969 to encourage former employees of the MMS (and its predecessors) to deposit their personal papers (or copies of them) with the MMS. Records to be found amongst these deposits include diaries, correspondence, notes, articles and photographs. Most mission districts are represented, with the earliest records dating from the 1830s (although most material is twentieth century). Much of this material has been recently transferred to SOAS, is still being processed and consequently is only available by special arrangement. Please note that due to the personal content of some of the MRP records there is a closure period of 75 years.

Oral History

A complementary oral history project, 'Sounds Interesting', was begun at the same time as MRP. Interviews with former employees about their work for the MMS were recorded and summaries were made. The summaries can be consulted in the normal way but copies of the tapes are only made available by special arrangement.

Non MMS Deposits

A small number of records have been deposited from sources other than the Methodist Church. Significant among these are: letters of Benjamin Pratt, 1884-1922 (MS 380651); the Parsons family papers, comprising typescript copies of letters and diaries as well as language material, from 1902 to 1990's (MS 380686); the Samuel Pollard (Kendall) papers, 1888-1921, 1970 (MS 380690).

Records of the Methodist Church

These are deposited with the Methodist Archives and Research Centre at John Rylands University Library of Manchester (<http://rylibweb.man.ac.uk/data1/dg/text/method.html>).

Finding Aids

SOAS

The principal finding aid for access to the WMMS collection is Elizabeth Bennett's Guide produced at the time the collection was microfiched. This is a simple box list arranged by region and noting the type of records and covering dates. This guide is supplemented by a number of more detailed lists for correspondence (mainly nineteenth century) and much of the material within the WMMS Special Series. Furthermore, a brief guide to the 1983 deposit is also available although most of the records in this deposit date from 1945 to 1950.

Web

Collection level descriptions are available on line as part of the Mundus project (<http://www.mundus.ac.uk/>) and the Aim25 project (<http://www.aim25.ac.uk>). Both also include information on the personal papers of a few MMS missionaries. Additionally, SOAS Library Special Collections has its own website giving brief information on holdings and how to gain access to them (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/Archives/home.html>).

Accessing the Methodist Missionary Collections

All members of SOAS Library can access the MMS Library, and the finding aids and reference works relating to the WMMS archive kept in the Special Collections Reading Room (SCRR) on Level F in SOAS Library. Day membership holders are also entitled to reference access to the SCRR. Archive materials themselves are restricted to SOAS Library ticket holders, and to Archive ticket holders. Members of academic staff of UK and overseas universities should bring relevant identification and should ask for a reference ticket. Research students should bring a letter of recommendation from their Departments in order to obtain an archives ticket. Researchers not attached to academic bodies should apply to the Methodist Church directly for a letter of recommendation, which will then enable them to apply for an archives ticket. Archives tickets are free and are valid for a period of one year.

Since both the MMS Library and the WMMS archive are kept in closed access, materials are requisitioned from the store using a requisition slip. Collections are made at 10am, 11.30am, 2.00pm and 4.30pm, Mon-Fri. All materials are consulted under supervised conditions in the SCRR. The SCRR is open from 9am to 7pm Mon-Thurs, 9am to 5pm Fri, and on one Saturday morning a month. During the summer vacation, the SCRR is open from 9am to 5pm Mon-Fri, and on alternate Saturday mornings. Collections are at 10am, 11.30 and 2.30 pm, Mon-Fri. The SCRR is usually closed for one week in June for stocktaking.

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