

Mount Pleasant Wesleyan Chapel



In 1751 the Methodist in Bacup were holding meetings in a cottage on the right hand side of Lane Head Lane and had 14 members. Mary Hargreaves a widow first resided in a cottage that once stood in the same place that Ebenezer Baptist once stood and it is thought that the first class meeting was held at her house pictured right. Later on she moved to a little cottage below Mr Dawson's house at Mount Pleasant and provide accommodation for many of the preachers amongst whom was Mr Wesley himself.

In 1788 a new chapel was built in Lane Head lane fronting Earnshaw road and with a yearly rent of 8/- but there are no more details of this chapel or of its opening. But we do know a burial ground was opened here and the first internment was a George Hargreaves of Mow Grain. In 1804 the burial ground was extended for a yearly rent of 17/- and 3,074 people were buried there by the time the graveyard was closed in 1860 save for those people being interred in the vaults there. Families who had vaults there were : Ashworth - Bannister- Cardus- Clegg – Dawson Earnsahw - Howorth - Howorth - Hauhurst – Hodson Haworth - Hoyle - Hudson - Lord - Parkinson Maden - Seiber - Sutcliffe - Taylor- Whitfield Worrall.



In 1836 a number of people left the chapel and began services in a chamber of the shop and part of the house occupied by Mr Daniel Baron in Union Street.

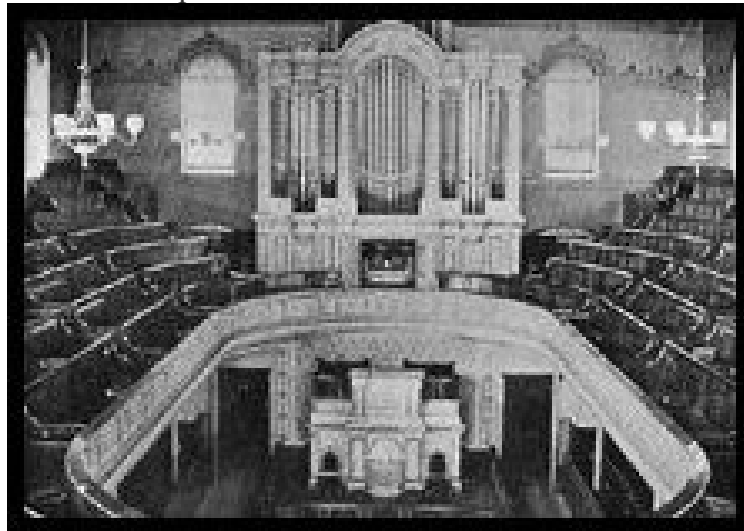
In the year 1838, there was a monster procession of all the Schools of the town, in commemoration of the Coronation of the late Most Gracious Queen Victoria. St. James's Street was closed to vehicular traffic and made into an open dining room for the processionists, after the scholars had retired to the various Schools for coffee and buns.

Extract from " The Watchman," April 22nd, 1839.

Bacup.—On Good Friday, April 17th, the Foundation Stone of a new Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was laid on Mount Pleasant, in the presence of a large concourse of spectators. The Rev. Benjamin Pearce opened the proceedings by singing and prayer, after which Mr. John Dawson read a document, a transcript of which had been deposited in a bottle and placed in the corner stone. The Rev. Benjamin Pearce then, in the name of the Trustees, presented John Earnshaw, Esq., Justice of the Peace, with a new silver trowel, who delivered a very excellent and appropriate address, at the close of which he laid the Foundation Stone, in the name of the Glorious Trinity. Another appropriate hymn was sung. Edmund Dawson, Esq., then gave an address, which, together with that of Mr. Earnshaw, was rendered particularly interesting, from the allusions made to old times, and also from the fact that the fathers of these gentlemen were among the first Methodists in Bacup. Messrs. James and Robert Heyworth, twin brothers and both local preachers, each delivered an impressive address. Mr. James Maden, of Newhallhey, who had that morning presented £50 towards that edifice, was then called upon, and he urged the assembly not to despise the day of small things, inasmuch as the building of the first Methodist Chapel in Bacup was commenced by a poor man offering a crooked sixpence, at the same time promising more as soon as he had it. The congregation immediately sang the verses : " Saw ye not the cloud arise, Little as a human hand, Now it spreads along the skies, Hangs o'er all the thirsty land, etc, "In 1841 the new chapel was opened.



The stones of the old chapel were utilised for a new Sunday school consisting of two stories, the upper rooms being used for the girls the lower rooms for the boys. By 1846 they had 574 scholars and 83 teachers. 53 Girls were taught needlework on Tues evenings 101 boys were taught writing and arithmetic on Saturday evenings. Sunday school opened at 1pm and the exits were guarded to ensure capture of would be truants.



Mount Pleasant Day School Standard 5 1891
Teacher R.H.Hall Headmaster Henry Mottram

Little Boy 3rd from left on Back Row would become a Doctor and was fondly known as Doctor Percival Brown of Burwood House. George Ashworth First on right second row.



Graveyard of Mount Pleasant after demolition.

Extract From Chapel Minutes

28 Oct 1874 The chapel keeper Mr Whittaker resigns. Resolved to pay Mr Whittaker 5/- per week if he will agree to keep the chapel gardens in good order, in addition to the work done.

2 Oct 1876 A stone with the following inscription be unofficially laid in the place nearest Lane Head Lane : In Memoriam

John Maden

John Earnshaw

John Dawson

James Haworth.

30 January 1896 Two houses in Earnshaw road sold for £160.00