

Provident Strict Baptist

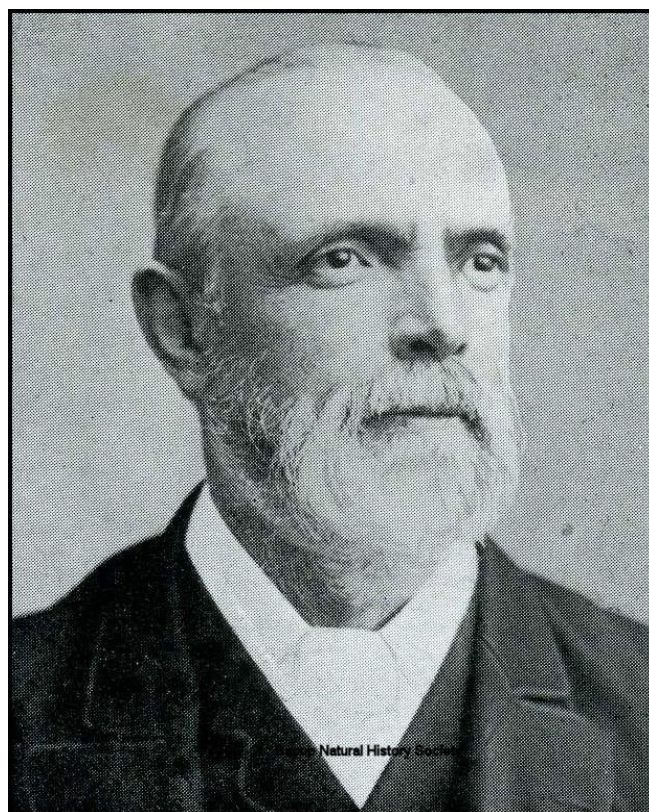


After the death of Mr Hirst one time pastor of Ebenezer Baptists the pulpit was occupied by a number of students. Some of the members were not happy with this arrangement and decided to attend the chapel at Rochdale. Finding they could not attend the chapel at Rochdale as often as they like they purchased a few forms and began to meet in each others houses carrying the forms from house to house as needed. Eventually the numbers grew and they decided to hire a room in King Street pictured right for the sum of 1/6 per week. By 1840 the industrial revolution had taken off and Bacup was at the heart of it. The increase of people in the town resulted in an increase in meeting houses for the various religious causes. With the meeting house in King Street becoming too small they began to look around for a new site to build a new bigger chapel. The site now occupied on bankside by St Marys church was thought suitable however the landowner Mr Whittaker of Broadclough refused to let the ground to build a dissenting chapel.

In 1848 the site at Tong was taken and the building was finished and opened for worship on Christmas Day 1851. The site at this time was surrounded by open fields on the old pack horse trail to Rochdale known as Tong Lane. The church members at this time was about 10 with about 100 attending many of them strangers who had come to the town to work rather than born and bred Bacupians. Having got a new chapel the people of Tong now wanted a new pastor and on the recommendation of a few people who had come from Suffolk they invited a Mr Tant of Suffolk and he commenced his ministry on Sunday 19th September 1852.



A very gifted man he commenced a day school and evening classes, but something occurred which led to him being dismissed in disgrace in 1854. For the next 34 years until 1888 they had supplies from various parts of the country. The next full time resident pastor was a Mr Thomas Stansfield, pictured below he began his ministry on the first Sunday of 1888 resigning in 1894.



In 1871 it was reported that the trustees and managers were about to erect a new school and chapel the present one being rather too small. This was perhaps a based hope as the new school was not built and opened until 1912. The first marriage to take place after licensing was between Mr John Hargreaves of Trice- Barn and Miss Sarah Hunt of Doals. The ceremony was performed by Mr Walsh of Bath and assisted by Mr Brown of Doals.

Providence Choir 1932

Back row L to R: Annie Hartley, William Hartley, Harry Hargreaves, Ada Turner, Arnold Hargreaves, Arnold Hartley, Jimmy Hensby, Florrie Hartley.

Middle row L to R : Unknown, Dorothy Parker, James Henry Lord(organist), Chapman Turner, Walter Maden, Annie Betts, Doris Cooper,

Front L to R: Millie Lord, Francis Banham, Clara Lord.

