

Thorn Wesleyan Chapel



Though the chapel at Thorn was formally opened on May 5th 1872 that date was not its real commencement. Strictly speaking it was a transfer from premises in Union Street, where both chapel and school services had been held for over twenty years. Those premises were officially known as Union Street School Chapel for the destitute or the Bacup ragged school. Following a committee meeting of members of Mount Pleasant in 1851 it was agreed to look for premises in the area of Irwell Street for the purpose of setting up a school for the destitute children of Bacup.

Three persons on the committee present were James Heyworth, John Dawson and Joshua Hoyle all of which were cotton manufacturers and the respective heads of the three firms known as Dawson and Haworth, Waterside Mill. Joshua Hoyle and Sons, Plantation Mill and James Haworth and Bros, Forest Mill. On November 14th 1851, Lawrence Lupton was appointed Superintendent of the Union street school and that Benjamin Thomas becomes a teacher in the same school. Benjamin Thomas was better known as " Benny Mark" and was Bacup's oldest postman.

On the day of opening in 1872 sixty-three scholars from the Union Street school made their way to the chapel in a procession. Three of those were Mary Ann Coppin nee Abbott, Martha Hartley nee Harper and Betsy Ann Hacking nee Nuttall.

The Rev. William Perkins was the first minister, and in later years he became President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. Greatness personified! The following list gives the ministers' names in their order. Rev. William Perkins 1874- 1876 Rev. Sampson Weaver 1877 - 1879 Rev. John Denholm Brash 1880 -1882 Rev. David Solomon 1883 - 1885 Rev. Thomas Hargreaves 1886 - 1888 Rev. John Naylor 1889 - 1891 Rev. Joseph Whitehead 1892 - 1894 Rev. Walter F. Mayer 1895 - 1897

Rev. G. W. Kettleborough 1898 - 1900 Rev. E. H. Maggs 1901 - 1903 Rev. Sidney R. Rees 1904 - 1905
Rev. E. A. Prince 1906 - 1908 Rev. J. G. Penman 1909 - 1911 Rev. Benjamin Barker 1912 - 1914 Rev.
W. T. Kilbride 1915 - 1918 Rev. Robert Mettam 1919. During the Great War 12 boys of Thorn Chapel
lost their lives and were remembered on a marble tablet that was in the entrance to the church. The
names of the fallen were. Harry Ashworth, Harold Bacon, Enoch Butterworth, William Crane, Fred
Harrison Thomas Howorth, Bertie Hutchinson, Harry Snowden, Adolphus Stranger, Fred Thomas
Herbert Thomas, Fred Walmersley.

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