

**Broad Lane Chapel rebuild 1907 - transcription of Crewe Chronicle article
Saturday 29th of June 1907**

Primitive Methodism at Nantwich building a new chapel

On Wednesday, foundation stones of a new Primitive Methodist Church were laid in Broad Lane. The place of worship is being erected on the site of the old Chapel, which has been in existence for something like 40 years, but which owing to its dangerous state, had to be demolished. The new building has been designed by Mr R Mathews, architect, Nantwich, and the building work is being carried out by Mr Reed, Hospital Street, Mr H Harding, of the same town, providing the stonework, the chapel will be a red brick structure with terracotta dressings and red rubber arches. The upper part of the edifice will be rough cast, and the roof will be made of red tiles. The main chapel will be 22 feet 6" x 18', and right angles to it there will be a school room measuring 24 feet 6" x 18'. The chapel will seat about 60 worshippers, but there is a folding screen dividing the two places, and when the screen is thrown open, an additional seating capacity for 70 is secured. The entrance is 11' x 6', and the front is in half-timber at work. The lighting of the building will be by means of circular beaded windows, fitted with iron encasements and ventilation will be secured with inlet brackets and extractor. The full cost of the structure will be about £400.

Beautiful weather favoured the ceremony, and there was a good muster of friends. The service was conducted by the circuit Minister, the Reverend GTD Pidsley, and the Rev'd W.T. Cole, and there were ministers of other denominations present. The Reverend J Thackeray, superintendent Minister of the Nantwich Wesleyan circuit, delivered a short address, and we marked that as nonconformists there was precious little difference between them in principles. The first thing that struck him about the connection with that new place of worship was, why was it going to be erected on the side of the main road and well to the front, for all folks to see? There was a time when if they wanted to find a nonconformist place of worship they would have to look for it in a bye street, up a passage, out of sight. And this was not always of necessity, but by choice. Nearly all the old deeds there was rather a curious phrase, which stated that the place was to be used for the purpose for which it was built, "so long as the law allows". 100 years or more ago they were tolerated, but they thought they might not always be. Another point was, what were they going to call their place of worship? He did not like the spirit that underlay the practice of calling these places churches. But they could call it what they liked. What, however, were they going to do with it? It should be a place of aggression, of red-hot evangelism, and going ahead for the Lord Jesus Christ. He impressed upon them the necessity of getting new members, and said that if they did not get them they would die, and thoroughly deserve it. He trusted that the place might be what he heard a similar place in Sheffield described us, namely, another "converting furnace".

The Revd G.T.D. Pidsley remarked that the stones to be laid around the building were 18 in number: some belonged to one denomination and some to another. It was

not only a Methodist union, but it was a Christian union that was represented by that place that day. Mr Mathews, the architect, had served their connection splendidly before, and to carry out his plans. They had a builder in Mr. Read whose character character what was the birth preach. They had every confidence in him, and they hoped to have a splendid building.

After a collection, the following stones were laid, The mentioned in) being the amount of the donations: Mr. W Hockenhull (£10), Mr Boss and family, Wrexham Bridge, Burland (£10); Mr and Mrs H Mullineux and family (£10), Mr E Moulton and family (£5), Mr and Mrs H Knowles, the Barony (£5), Mrs Hewson, Broad Lane (£5), Mr H Chetwood , Bunbury (£5), Mr and Mrs Williamson (£5), Mr H Hinde (£5), Mrs Sutton, Pewitt Hall (£5 7 shillings), Mr Wilfred Harlock (£5), Mr and Mrs J Edwards, Burland (£5), J Corbett, circuit steward, (£5), messier CW W Lea, (£5), Mr George Harding and family, The Barony, (£5); Mr and Mrs T Charlesworth and family, Baddington, sis £5), and Mrs Williams, Grange on Sands (£5). Mr Robert Lloyd Stone for an anonymous friend, who also gave 55 pounds. At the conclusion of the ceremony the company adjourned to Mr Williamson's farm, which had been kindly lent by Mr and Mrs Williamson for the purpose of the tea and the subsequent meeting. About 160 sat down to an excellent repast. The meeting which followed, was presided over by Mr TC Goodwin, who expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present, because there were old associations in connection with the chapel they had pulled down, and the ground on which it was built. His grandfather gave the ground for the chapel, and laid the stone there. Then he was pleased to be with them to show his sympathy with the work, and to do what he could to help in any good cause, no matter what denomination it might be, for he was broad minded enough to believe that a church which existed with the desire to benefit mankind, and to uplift all classes of people was a church that was fulfilling her mission – no matter whether it was Church of England, Primitive, Baptist, or whatever it might be. he was rather wondering whether there was a sufficiently large congregation in Broad Lane to justify the eruption of a chapel there, but when he remembered that there were two public houses in their neighbourhood, he thought there was at least room for a house of God. The sooner they made it impossible for two public houses to exist in that locality the better it would be for the people. He should be very glad to give a subscription to close those public houses, because he believed that temperance should play a great part in their religion, and he believed in the gospel playing a part in their daily lives. (Applause)

Mr. W. Hockenhull said, as a trustee of the old Chapel, he had long been in fear, because they were told by the architect that the place was not safe; and again and again had his attention being called to the responsibility of being a trustee of an unsafe place. If it had come down on the congregation when they were assembled for worship, he expected that they would be called upon to pay compensation. (Laughter) He was delighted to see that the old place was down at last. The motive and building the chapel was for the benefit and welfare of those who lived in the

immediate neighbourhood. One of the ways of closing one or both of the Public Houses referred to was by pushing the project they had in view, and he desired that night to express his gratitude to those friends who had come forward so nobly to help them.

The Reverend JR Brett, Chairman of the Free Church Council, expressed, on behalf of that body, the deep sympathy with them in the work they had undertaken, and their admiration for the courageous manner in which they had set about the Work.

Reverend W Wright thought the trustees of Broad Lane Chapel were very much to be commended and congratulated for not leaving the neighbourhood in Broad Lane. would have been a lamentable mistake to have sold that old chapel for secular purposes and quitted the neighbourhood. It would have been a signal defeat and acknowledgement of failure; and the thought of the failure would have been discreditable to Methodists and Primitive Methodists in particular. But taking that forward step to him was an exhibition of wisdom and courage. He had not the slightest doubt that the step would be crowned with success, and that the building in the future would be a blessing to the children who grew up in the neighbourhood. The mission of Primitive Methodism to a very large extent had been to the villages, and they will be ashamed if they left them. Well, Methodism had done a great deal for the villages, the villages had done a great deal for Methodism.

The Revd GTD Pidsley read the financial report, from way to appear that the amount already collected or promised towards the new chapel was £186. He moved a hearty vote of thanks to all who had taken part in that day proceedings – Mr Moulton seconded, and trusted that when the chapel was erected, the debt would have been paid off– the vote having been heartily carried, the Chairman responded, and the meeting closed with a blessing. Mr H Mills accompanied the singing on the harmonium, and during the evening a sacred solo was given by Miss Hobson.