

Primitive Methodist Societies and Chapels of the Wirral



Sketch Map of the ancient Hundred of Wirral

△ PM Chapel ⊞ PM society without chapel

Birkenhead PM chapels: Beckwith St, Camperdown St, Grange Road.

Tranmere PM chapels: Grosvenor St (1); Queen St (2); Mount Tabor (3).

The ancient Hundred of Wirral is defined on three sides by the Irish Sea and the Mersey and Dee estuaries. The southern boundary is the England-Wales border which follows the course of the River Dee as it was before the 'New Cut' in 1737 canalised the river on the Welsh side of the estuary. Finally, the eastern boundary is formed by the Shropshire Union Canal; the section between Chester and Ellesmere Port was built in 1793. After the 1974 Local Government re-organisation, the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral was established; its southern boundary crosses just north of Parkgate, Willaston and Hooton, these places now being in Cheshire West and Cheshire.



Willaston Primitive Methodist Chapel, built 1889

I have identified 24 Primitive Methodist societies in the Hundred of Wirral, and 32 PM chapels; only four of the buildings still exist: two are still Methodist places of worship (Little Neston and Willaston), one has been converted into flats (New Ferry Beaconsfield Road) and one has reverted to being a general farm building (Poulton-cum-Spital).

Between 1840 and 1890 there was a steady rise in the number of PM chapels from 1(?) to 14. The number then remained steady until 1940 when it declined over the next three decades because of:

- falling membership
- rationalisation of Methodist chapels after Reunification
- replacement of deteriorating buildings with new ones.

There were various arrangements of these chapels into circuits. Those in the north were initially in the Birkenhead Branch of the Liverpool Circuit (eg. see the [1859 Q2 Preaching Plan for the Liverpool Circuit](#)); then in 1859 a separate Birkenhead Circuit was formed (eg. see the [1889 Q2 Preaching Plan for the Birkenhead Circuit](#)).

Those in the south were part of the Chester Circuit which was first formed as an independent PM circuit in 1825/6. In the second half of the 1800s this circuit was split into Chester 1st Circuit headed by the George Street chapel (eg. see the [1882 Q4 Preaching Plan for the Chester 1st Circuit](#)), and Chester 2nd Circuit headed by Commonhall St chapel. Then in 1890, Chester 3rd Circuit was formed, headed by Tarvin Road chapel, Boughton (eg. see the Plans for all three Chester Circuits in [1894 Q3 Preaching Plan for the Chester Circuit](#)). Two years later, a new Ellesmere Port Circuit was formed, splitting off from Chester 1st; it was headed by the Upper Mersey Street chapel and joined by Whitby chapel and Pooltown society.

The following table shows all of the chapels and societies in Wirral found to date. Societies without chapels are shown in italics.

Chapel/society	Postcode	Dates active
Bebington, Chapel Street	Near CH63 7PL	1834-c.1880
<i>Birkenhead, Beckwith Street, the smithy</i>	<i>Near CH41 3JE</i>	<i>1840s?-1930s</i>
Birkenhead, Beckwith Street, 1 st chapel	Near CH41 3JE	late 1840s-1870s
Birkenhead, Beckwith Street, 2 nd chapel	CH41 3JE	1880-1930s
Birkenhead, Camperdown Street	CH41 5ER	1855-1869
Birkenhead, Grange Lane	CH41 2PH	1869-1959
<i>Ellesmere Port 1st society</i>	<i>?</i>	<i>1840s?-?</i>
<i>Ellesmere Port 2nd society</i>	<i>CH65 2AB</i>	<i>1847-date</i>
Ellesmere Port, Upper Mersey Street	CH65 2BQ	1872-1900
Ellesmere Port, Queen Street	CH65 2BL	1900-1968
Ellesmere Port Heathfield Road	CH65 8DH	1908-1963
<i>Greasby</i>	<i>Near CH49 3AT</i>	<i>1850s-1860s</i>
<i>Hoylake, 1st society</i>	<i>Near CH47 2BF</i>	<i>1797-1868?</i>
Hoylake, 1 st chapel	Near CH47 2BF	1800-?
Hoylake, Alderley Road	CH47 2BF	1860-c. 1868
<i>Irby, 1st society</i>	<i>CH61 4XQ</i>	<i>1850s-date</i>
Irby, 'Tin Chapel'	CH61 4XQ	1881-1936
Liscard, Wallasey Road	CH44 5XU	1840s-c.1880
<i>Little Neston, farmhouse</i>	<i>Near CH64 4BN</i>	<i>1819-?</i>
Little Neston, Mellock Lane	CH64 4BN	1872-date
Moreton	Near CH46 6AD	Around 1867
New Ferry Mission Hall, New Chester Road	CH62 1AB	c.1890-?
New Ferry, Beaconsfield Road	CH62 1AD	1913-1990
<i>Pooltown 1st society</i>	<i>CH66 1RL</i>	<i>1840s?-1901</i>
Pooltown (Overpool) Rivacre Road	CH66 1LL	1901-1950
Poulton-cum-Seacombe	Near CH44 6AA	1837-mid-1850s?
Poulton-cum-Seacombe, Brighton Street	CH44 6QN	1865-1907
Poulton-cum-Seacombe, Poulton Road #1	CH44 9AR	1907-1928
Poulton-cum-Seacombe, Poulton Road #2	CH44 9AR	1926-1941
Poulton-cum-Spital	CH63 9LL	late 1840s-1935
Saughall 1 st chapel	CH1 6EN	1832-1864
Saughall 2 nd chapel	CH1 6EN	1864-2012
Tranmere, Grosvenor Street	CH62 2BL	1846-c.1880
Tranmere, Queen Street	CH41 9AS	1862-c.1880
Tranmere, Mount Tabor, Holt Road	CH41 9DZ	1879-1965
<i>Wallasey</i>	<i>Near CH45 3LN</i>	<i>1838-mid 1850s</i>
West Kirby, Eaton Road	CH48 3HE	1880-1963
<i>Whitby 1st society</i>	<i>CH65 6RS</i>	<i>1851-1873</i>
Whitby, Whitby Road	CH65 6RS	1873-1968
<i>Willaston 1st society</i>	<i>Near CH64 2TA</i>	<i>1832-1838</i>
Willaston, Buckley Lane	CH64 2TT	1838-1889
Willaston, Neston Road	CH64 2TL	1889- date

More details about each of these chapels and societies can be found in the Chapels>Cheshire section of this website.