

Helmshore Primitive Methodist chapels, Lancashire



Acknowledgement: OpenStreetMap

Helmshore is a village in the Rossendale Valley. The chapel lies close to the River Ogden, about 2 miles south west of Rawtenstall, about 7½ miles south east of Blackburn and about 9 miles north west of Rochdale.

1839: According to [Genuki](#), the first chapel was founded in 1839. It can be seen on the [1844/5 6" OS map](#) and on the [1891 25" OS map](#), on which the chapel is labelled 'Sion Chapel (Prim. Meth.)' and scales at about 30 feet x 36 feet, with a room behind scaling at about 20 feet x 23 feet.

No 1851 Census Return for this chapel is held on this website, nor is the chapel listed in the 1867 Registration.

1863: From the *Bury Times* of 18 April:

'A religious revival is now going on amongst the Primitive Methodists at Helmshore, where from 65 to 70 persons were added to the church last week, and the work we understand is still progressing. The members of the church are united and earnest, and the religious services, which have lately been more frequent than usual, have been well attended.'

1865: From the *Bury Times* of 10 June:

'Opening of New Organ and Re-opening of Chapel and Schools. – On Sunday last, the new organ was opened in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Helmshore. Two sermons were preached in the new chapel, which has been re-opened by the [Rev. John Oscroft](#), of Blackburn. There were large congregations, and the collections amounted to upwards of £36.'

From the *Bury Times* of 30 December:

'PRIMITIVE METHODIST SCHOOL, HELMSHORE. On Christmas Day, nearly 400 persons sat down to a very abundant tea, provided in the Helmshore School. After tea the [Rev. A. McKechnie](#), of Yorkshire, delivered a lecture entitled "The Wife at home".'

1895: According to [Genuki](#), the 1839 chapel was pulled down and replaced on the same site, the new foundation stone being laid on 25 May 1895. The chapel can be seen on the [1909 25" OS map](#) and scales at about 62 feet x 37 feet. Two photographs can be seen on [Genuki](#).

1896: The Preaching Plans for the Helmshore Circuit for 4th Quarter 1896 and 2nd Quarter 1897 survive (see [here](#) and [here](#)). There were four 'Places': Helmshore, Crawshawbooth (about 3 miles north east), Hareholme (about 3 miles ENE) and the Union Workhouse in Spring Lane, Haslingden (about 2½ miles north).

1928: By the time of the [1928 25" OS map](#), two more buildings had been added, scaling at about 40 feet x 33 feet and 22 feet x 18 feet.

1940: The chapel was listed in the [1940 Methodist Church Buildings Report Districts 'N-P'](#), Circuit 897 Helmshore. The following information was provided:

Helmshore (Sion): made of stone; seating 300; pews; two halls and seven other rooms.

Crawshawbooth (Lord Street): made of stone; seating 282; pews; one hall and four other rooms.

Hareholme (Bacup Road): made of stone; seating 150; pews; one hall and two other rooms.

1981: According to [Genuki](#), the Lancashire Record Office holds marriage records from 1908 to 1981 (was the chapel closed then?).

The site is now vacant, lying immediately north west of the Village Store, 414 Holcombe Road BB4 4LX. The original low walls and railings of the chapel are still in place.