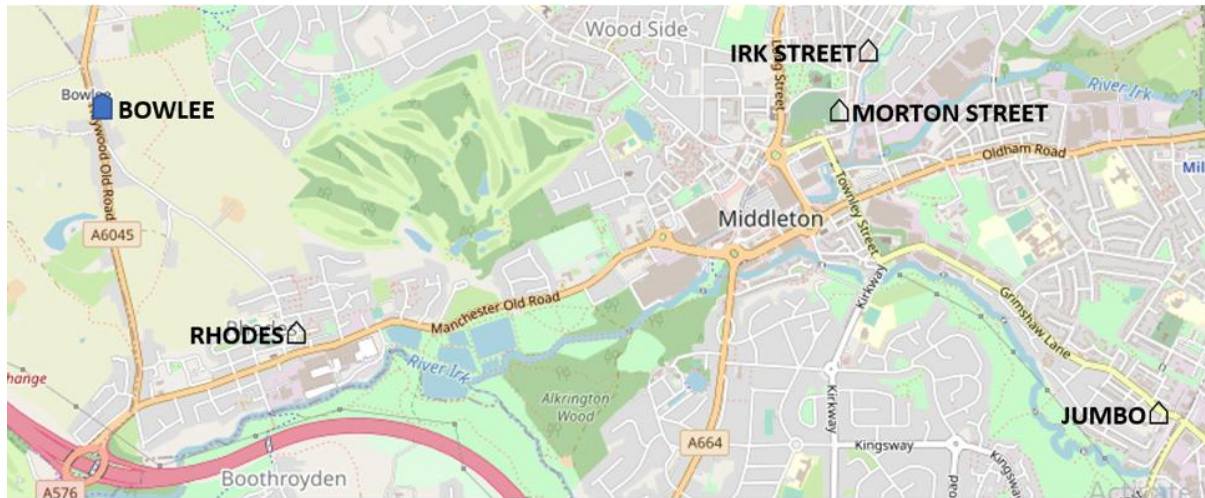




# Middleton and Area Primitive Methodist Chapels



Scale  ½ mile

Acknowledgement: OpenStreetMap

-  Chapel now in residential use
-  Chapel no longer existing

John Bartholomew's 1887 *Gazetteer of the British Isles* (in 'A Vision of Britain') described Middleton like this:

**Middleton**. – market town, par., and township, SE. Lancashire, 3½ miles W. of Oldham and 6 miles N. of Manchester by rail ... Only 20 houses were here in 1770, and the progress of the town may be dated from 1791 when it received a charter for a weekly market. The town is situated in a fine valley of the Irk. It is now a place with considerable mfrs., the chief trades being silk weaving, cotton spinning, and calico printing. Minor employments are soap-making, machine-making, ironfounding, and the mfr. of chemicals.'

I used the following sources to identify chapels in this area:

- Preaching Plans from this website:
  - Manchester Circuit [1828 Q4](#) and [1838 Q2](#) included Middleton (Irk Street).
  - Manchester 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit [1853 Q3](#) to [1862 Q2](#) included Middleton (Irk Street) and Rhodes (Mount Pleasant).
  - Manchester 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit [1863 Q4](#) to [1866 Q3](#) included Middleton (Irk Street), Rhodes (Mount Pleasant) and Bowlee.
  - Manchester 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit [1867 Q4](#) to [1870 Q3](#) included Middleton (Irk Street), Rhodes (Mount Pleasant), Bowlee and Jumbo.
  - Manchester 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit [1871 Q2](#), Middleton Branch consisting of Middleton (Irk Street), Rhodes (Mount Pleasant), Bowlee and Jumbo.

Middleton Circuit [1872 Q3](#) to [1889-90 Q4](#) consisting of Middleton (Irk Street), Rhodes (Mount Pleasant), Bowlee and Jumbo.

In [1874 Q2](#) there was a fifth Place - 'Manchester Old Road Room' - where a weekly 6pm Sunday service was held, and the Circuit Bible Class was held every Saturday at 7.30pm. It had disappeared by the time of the next Plan in 1877/78 Q4.

Similarly, in [1887 Q1](#) there was a fifth Place - 'Birch' - an 1886 newspaper article reports on a mission being established in Birch by the Bowlee Prims. According to the Plan, a weekly 6pm Sunday service and occasional 2.30pm Sunday and 7.30pm Wednesday services were held in Birch. It had disappeared by the time of the next Plan in 1889 Q2.

The number of lay preachers rose from 6 in 1872 to 11 in 1877, dropped to 7 in 1881 Q2 and then returned to 11 between 1887 and 1889/90 Q4. Over this period, the total number of classes in Middleton Circuit was 13-18: in Middleton 5-7, in Rhodes 3-5, in Bowlee 2-5 and in Jumbo 2-3.

- The [1867 Register of Non-Conformist Chapels \(Primitive Methodist\)](#), Oldham Registration District which listed the following places:

Bowlee, Middleton (#15)  
Rhodes, Middleton (#100)  
Rhodes, Middleton, Ebenezer (-)

Note 1: I think that the two Rhodes entries refer to the same chapel ('Mount Pleasant').

Note 2: Middleton Irk Street did not make a return.

- The [1940 Methodist Church Buildings Report Districts 'M'](#) which listed Circuit 825 Middleton:

Morton Street [Middleton]  
Rhodes (Chapel Street)  
Bowlee  
Jumbo

- '*There is Holy Ground*' – A History of Methodism in Middleton 1760-1950 (Middleton Library) contains brief histories of these chapels:

- Primitive Methodist:

Morton Street, Middleton; Mount Pleasant and Chapel Street, Rhodes;  
Bowlee; Jumbo.

- Wesleyan Methodist:

Long Street and Sadler Street, Middleton; Hebers; Manchester Old Road, Rhodes; Middleton Junction

- [Genuki](#) for the area around Middleton (2 miles):

	Opened	Closed
Morton Street, Middleton, Primitive Methodist	1881	1961
Boarshaw Road, Middleton, Primitive Methodist (see Irk Street chapel)	Bef. 1895	?
Grimshaw Lane, Bowlee, Primitive Methodist <i>Error: see Heywood Old Road below</i>	1868	1969
Grimshaw Lane, Jumbo, Primitive Methodist, Middleton (with photo)	1868	1967
Tonge, Primitive Methodist <i>(Not found; thought to be Grimshaw Lane, Jumbo)</i>	Bef. 1895	?
Chapel Street Primitive Methodist, Rhodes (with incorrect photo, actually of the first Wesleyan chapel in Rhodes, Manchester Old Road)	Bef. 1895	1963
Heywood Old Road, Bowlee, Primitive Methodist	Bef. 1891	Yes
Hopwood, Primitive Methodist <i>(not found)</i>	Bef. 1895	?
Primitive Methodist, Healds Green, Chadderton (with photo) (prob. in Oldham circuit)	1865	?

The following Prim chapels are listed in the 2- to 3-mile zone and probably belonged to other circuits

- Middleton Road chapel and Butler Green, Washbrook, chapel, both in Chadderton and probably members of the Oldham Circuit.
- Corday Lane chapel, Unsworth, a member of Manchester 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit.
- Barnes Green chapel, Rochdale Road/ Russet Road, Blackley, probably a member of a Manchester Circuit.
- Miller Street chapel and Bridge Street chapel, Heywood, members of the Bury Circuit.
- [Lancashire Online Parish Clerk, Middleton parish:](#)
  - 35. Boarshaw Road PM, Middleton (the first chapel to be opened in Middleton was opened in 1790 on Boarshaw Lane).
  - 36. Grimshaw Lane PM, Jumbo, Middleton Junction 1868-1967.
  - 37. Heywood Old Road PM, Bowlee, Langley
  - 38. Morton Street PM, Middleton, 1881-1961

- 39. Tonge PM, Alkrington (thought to be the Jumbo chapel, an error carried over from Genuki, or vv)
- 40. Hopwood PM, Manchester Road, Heywood.

I therefore settle on the following as PM chapels in Middleton and the immediate area around:

<b>Chapel</b>	<b>Opened</b>	<b>Closed</b>	<b>Seating</b>
<a href="#"><u>Middleton: Irk Street, Boarshaw Road</u></a>	1823	1881	347
<a href="#"><u>Middleton: Morton Street</u></a>	1881	1961	370
<a href="#"><u>Jumbo, Middleton Junction: Grimshaw Lane</u></a>	1868	1966	110
<a href="#"><u>Bowlee, Langley: Heywood Old Road</u></a>	1864	c.1968	168
<a href="#"><u>Rhodes: Mount Pleasant</u></a>	1846	1906	204
<a href="#"><u>Rhodes: Chapel Street</u></a>	1907	1963	263