

Churches, chapels and changing times in Quorn

Religious loyalties and preferences in Britain have inevitably changed and evolved over the years, and these have been reflected in their own unique way in Quorn. In 1851 a religious census was carried out nationwide, and a return for attendances at each place of worship was completed by the vicar or minister. Philip Thornborow, who is the Liaison Officer for Methodist Archives in Britain, and lives in Quorn, has analysed the 1851 religious census for our village. This has provided a fascinating insight into the churchgoing habits of the residents of Quorn in Victorian times and has revealed Chapels that you probably never knew existed. In addition, Philip has also generously shared his research into the history of the Methodists in Quorn, some of which is included in this article.



What was the religious census for?

The reason for the worship attendance census taken on 30th March 1851 was to determine not only how many people went to Church, but also if there was enough religious provision and education for an increasing population. The specific questions asked of each Church or Chapel were:

- When was the place of worship built?
- How many people does it hold?
- How many were present at the services on Census Day?
- How many people normally attend services?

How many Churches/Chapels were there in Quorn?

It is perhaps surprising to discover that five places of worship were identified in Quorn in 1851. These were:

Quorn St Bartholomew's Parish Church (Anglican)

- The oldest parts of the Church date from about 1150. Up until 1868, Quorn was a chapelry of the mother Church at Barrow upon Soar.
- Today St Bartholomew's is a united Church (Anglican and Methodist).
- The incumbent minister in 1851 was Reverend Robert Stammers.

General Baptist Chapel

- The Baptist Chapel on Meeting Street first opened its doors in 1770. The first Baptists worshipped in Quorn in 1760, when the home of Robert Parkinson became a Baptist meeting house. His house stands opposite the current Chapel and is now purely a family home.
- The recorded Minister in 1851 was Samuel Sladden

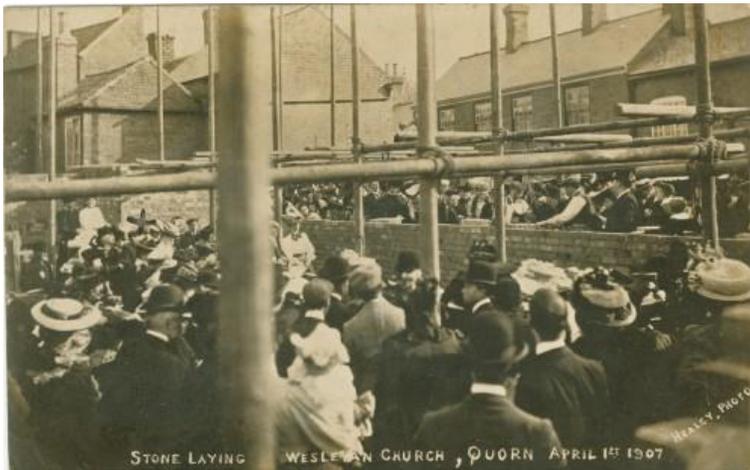


Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, High Street

- The first Methodist Chapel in Quorn was erected in about 1819 on High Street. It was located behind what we think of today as 'the old Methodist Chapel', which was built in 1907. The original Chapel has since been demolished and the 1907 building has been converted into flats.
- The Steward in 1851 is recorded as Thomas Raven, who lived at what is now 31 Meeting Street, next to the Blacksmith's pub and is still called Raven Cottage. Thomas died in 1858, but he was obviously very highly thought of as he is remembered by a memorial stone laid in the front wall of the 1907 Chapel.



The original Wesleyan Chapel erected in about 1819



The stone laying ceremony in April 1907



The 'new' Wesleyan Chapel built in 1907

Another building associated with the Wesleyan Methodists was a Gospel Temperance Mission Hall at 70 Barrow Road. The hall was not a formal Chapel as such, but services were held there, and it was run from 1898 by devout Wesleyan, William Teagle, later to be taken over by his son-in-law Sam Bailey. A few years ago the original plaque on the wall was hardly visible, but it has now been replaced and can clearly be seen as you walk down Barrow Road. The postcard of the stone laying ceremony at the Wesleyan Chapel was sent by William's daughter Elizabeth Bailey (nee Teagle) on 23rd April 1907 to her friend Minnie in London. At the end of her message she says:

"Can you find Nellie on this PC. This was taken on Easter Monday. It is the stone laying of our new chapel."

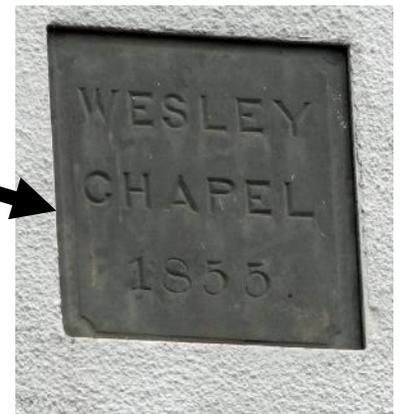


William Teagle with two of his daughters, Elizabeth (left) and Emma (right). It was taken in about 1905 outside the Gospel Temperance Mission Hall at 70 Barrow Road, and their home at 72 Barrow Road.



Wesleyan Reform Chapel

- The Wesleyan reformers, were a group that broke away from the main Wesleyan Methodists in 1850, after disagreements about the way that Methodism was developing.
- Their Chapel was a normal house, converted into a place of worship on 29th October 1850. It was somewhere on Meeting Street, but the exact location is unknown.
- In 1851 the Local Preacher was recorded as Jabez Jarratt, from Loughborough.
- In 1855 the Wesleyan Reform Chapel moved to School Lane, where the plaque on the wall can still be seen today.
- The Methodists continued to change and evolve, and in 1857 the Wesleyan Reformers on School Lane became part of the United Methodist Free Churches (UMFC). For many years in the late 1800s, their steward was John Judd from High Street, Quorn - and when looking back over a long life in 1939, 90 year old Quorn resident, Maria Ankers (nee Wyld), refers to the old School Lane Chapel as "The Free Church", generally known as 'old John Judd's Chapel'. John Judd committed suicide in 1899.



- The exact date of the closure of the School Lane Chapel is not known, but it was between 1916 and 1920.

Primitive Methodist Chapel

- Nationally, the Primitive Methodists broke away from the Wesleyan Methodists in about 1810. Their aim was to preserve a simpler form of Methodism, focusing more on lay people and the rural poor.
- The Local Preacher in 1851 was George Broughton.
- The Primitive Methodist Chapel was located on Meeting Street, at what is now number 83. It opened in 1820 and ceased to be a Chapel in 1923. After this it was used as head-quarters for the local Adult school and the British Legion, before reverting to being used as a normal dwelling house.



83 Meeting Street today

Religious Census Results for Quorn

It is interesting to look at the results of the religious census for Quorn for 1851. Before comparisons are made, it is worth remembering a few points that affect the accuracy of the figures:

- By chance, Census Day was also Mothering Sunday. This was a time when families often came together, and those who worked away from their mothers traditionally visited. This may have resulted in increased Church attendance.
- Churches/Chapels held more than one service on Sundays and people may have attended either one or both. In order to try to provide a fair estimation of individual churchgoers, the Registrar General at the time applied the following somewhat arbitrary formula:
Total number of worshippers for each place of worship =
 - Number at the main service
 - PLUS
 - Half of those at the second service
- In 1851 the total population of Quorn was 1,876. Of these 70% were deemed capable of attending Church, ie to allow for the young, elderly and infirm. This gives an estimated possible churchgoing population of 1,313.

Results Table

	Capacity/ Available spaces	General Congregation Attendances					Percentage of population
		Early service attendance	Later service attendance	Total attendance	Total attendance with formula applied		
Parish Church	467	179	188	367	277	21%	
Baptist Chapel	450	240	450	690	570	43%	
Wesleyan Methodist Chapel	200	25	54	79	67	5%	
Wesleyan Reform Chapel	60	40	43	83	63	5%	
Primitive Methodist Chapel	250	40	60	100	80	6%	
TOTAL	1,427	524	795	1,319	1,057	80%	

Overall result: Across the country 50% of the population attended church, so the fact that 80% of the inhabitants of Quorndon seem to have attended, is well above the average, ie 1,057 as a percentage of 1,313

Denominational results: The proportions of the inhabitants attending the various churches and chapels are also interesting. The Anglicans could count on 21%, the Wesleyans 5%, the Primitive Methodists 6%, the Wesleyan Reformers 5% and the Baptists a massive 43%. The Baptists had been worshipping in Quorn for nearly 200 years in 1851 and it is very clear that Quorn was a Baptist village.

This article was brought together by Sue Templeman on behalf of www.quornmuseum.com, using information and research supplied by Philip Thornborow, Liaison Officer for Methodist Archives in Britain. Thank you Philip! It

is also acknowledged that parts of this article originally appeared in a previous article written by Philip, entitled 'Reformed or Free Methodists in Quorn', which was published in 'Heritage' - the Journal of the East Midlands Wesley History Society, vol. 17, no.1, April 2016, pp. 9-15 ISSN 0260-4957.

If you have any information about the Primitive or Free Methodist chapels, or even if you just know that your relatives worshipped there, Philip and Sue would love to hear from you in order to build up more of a picture of these now historical places. Please contact sue@quorndon.com or 01509 412112 or pass a message through the Parish Office.