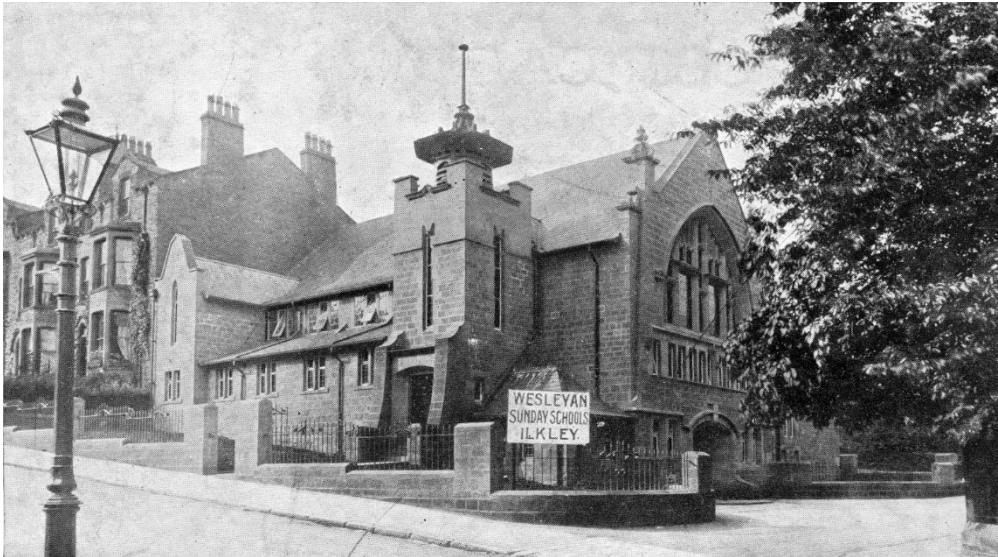


ILKLEY WESLEYAN CHURCH
(Ilkley Gazette Saturday 24th September 1904)



THE NEW CHURCH BUILDINGS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

DEDICATION CEREMONY AND PUBLIC MEETING

The new Sunday school and Church Buildings erected by the Ilkley Wesleyans on the plot of land adjoining the Church in Wells Road was opened on Tuesday afternoon. For many years the need of such buildings has been severely felt, the only accommodation for the Sunday School and other Church purposes not altogether devotional in character, being the rooms under the church, and which were so small as often to necessitate the use of the church for meetings and lectures of all kinds, but designed with the one objective of supplying this want the new buildings are sufficiently commodious and well-appointed as to render the necessity for further accommodation this character very remote indeed. The designs of Mr Alec Adkin, architect, Ilkley and Bradford, was selected out of a good number of competitors, and the buildings erected possess many pleasing features and are well and substantially built throughout. Architecturally they are a free treatment of late gothic and arranged on what is known as the central hall principle. There is a good deal of ornamentation inside and out and with a view to the more harmonious treatment, the interior decoration has been carried out on somewhat unique lines, the new art style being employed, with embellishments Mr Adkin himself designed. The treatment is unconventional, simple, and effective and a very pleasing departure from the usual stereotyped form. The large hall has a maximum accommodation for 650 people, but classrooms on either side and at the North End are fitted with folding doors and partitions so that hall can be reduced two sizes if needed. There are 12 classrooms provided in this way with two adult classrooms near the main entrance that can be used as cloakrooms when concerts or social gatherings are being held in the hall, and which have lavatory and other needful conveniences attached. In addition to the large hall there is a lecture room upstairs to seat 120, a church parlour to accommodate 80 (each provided with a hoist served from the kitchen) and a large infants class-room. There is further a pay box and library, storerooms and retiring and dressing rooms for artists, with commodious kitchens and caretaker's apartments. At the South end of the hall there is a telescopic platform to seat 100 and a gallery at the North End with seating accommodation for 120. A large tracery window filled with coloured lights is a striking feature at the front of the building, which looks north, and the hall is further lighted by eight clerestory windows, four on either side and others that serve the classrooms as well. All the interior woodwork is pitch pine. The total cost of the buildings is about £5,000 and the firms who have carried out the work are; - Mr. L. T. Learoyd, mason, Ilkley; Messrs Eagle and Mawson, joiners, Ilkley; Messrs W. and H. Pickles, plumbers, Shipley; Mr Thomas Nelson, slater, Bradford; Mr J. W. Walton, plasterer, Bradford; Mr. O. Lister, plasterer, Ilkley; Mr. John Stones, patent folding door maker, Ulverston; Mr. J. Anderson, heating engineer, Bradford.

The opening of the buildings was to have been performed by Mr Sidney Kellett, CC, but owing to indisposition he had to delegate this duty to his daughter (Mrs Leonard Cooper). There was a large gathering to witness to witness the outside ceremony, which was very brief.

The Rev. Dr. Maggs express regret that Mr. Kellett was unable to be present and then cordially invited Mrs. Cooper to open the buildings. Having opened the door Mrs. Cooper declared the buildings open to the glory of God and the use of the church. She was sorry that her father was prevented from seeing that the day the completion of the scheme, in which she knew he took a very deep interest, and expressed the hope that the buildings would prove a great help to the life of the church and also the school.

Inside the buildings a short dedicatory service followed. The Rev. Dr. Maggs presided and he was supported by the Rev. Sylvester Whitehead (president of the Conference), Rev. Dr. Stephenson, Rev. Dr. Muntz (vicar of Ilkley), Rev. T. Hammer (Congregationalist), Rev. A. Nightingale and the Rev. W. H. Ibberson (Baptists), Rev. J. W. Silcox and the Rev. A. Freeman (Harrogate).

Dr. Muntz, who had to leave to attend a funeral, read a portion of scripture and the Rev. W. H. Ibberson offered a prayer.

In a few remarks Dr. Maggs gave the Rev. Sylvester Whitehead, and through him the church at large, an account of the work that Ilkley church has just completed.

The president said it was a great satisfaction to him to be present to witness such an interesting ceremony, and also to take some part in the opening of such beautiful premises. They were greatly indebted to Mr Kellett and many other friends who had initiated and carried through this work and also to Rev. Dr. Stephenson, whose wonderful organising faculties had also been laid under tribute. The buildings were exceedingly well adapted for the work they had to do, and he hoped they might bear witness to much spiritual work done for the Master and which would produce happy and abiding results. The president afterwards offered prayer.

Dr. Stephenson presented to Mrs. Cooper, for her father, a beautiful copy of the new Wesleyan hymn book, and promised her that as soon as possible she should also receive a copy as a memento of the occasion.

The dedication ceremony was followed by a service in the church led by the president, and afterwards a large number sat down to tea in the new school room. The ladies presiding at the tables were: - Mrs J. T. Jackson, Mrs E. Dove, Mrs Lund, Mrs Jenkinson, Mrs Naylor, Mrs Stephenson, Miss Patterson, Mrs Worfolk, Mrs Silcox and Miss Coultas.

In the evening a well-attended meeting took place, presided over by Mr Newton Smith. Others on the platform included the Rev. Dr. Stephenson, Rev. Dr. Maggs, Dr. Banks (Principal, Headingley Theological College), Rev. A. Dickinson, Mr. S. P. Myers, JP, Mr W. H. Barber, BA., Mr. W. H. Conyers, Mr. J. E. Gaunt, Rev. A. Nightingale, Mr. J. H. Holtby, Mr V. Dobson, Mr. J. C. Naylor and Mr. J. Knight.

Dr. Mags presented a brief financial statement. He said that already some £3,213 had been paid on account of contracts and that there were accounts amounting to £704 yet to come in, which with the debt of the land amounting to £950 made the total cost of the scheme £4,867 or £5000 in round figures. They had already received from the bazaar and donations £2,172, and since the statement was made-up, he had received £77 more on account of promises. When they fulfilled certain connexional conditions they were to receive £400 from the 20th century fund and this would bring the total income up to 2649, which would leave them with £2,300 yet to provide. They were permitted to allow a certain portion to remain as a debt, however, but they would have £1,100 yet to raise before they could claim the £400 grant, and this they hope to do as soon as possible.

The chairman, in some remarks said the new buildings would not only prove a great advantage to the work of the Sunday School, but for all Church purposes.

Dr. Stevenson in congratulating Dr Maggs and the members of the church on the possession of such fine buildings, said they were as bright and distractive as a public house, which showed they were at last beginning

to learn something from their enemies. The amount of worldly mindedness about the decoration of the church parlour was really alarming. He trusted, however that Ilkley would be all the better for these splendid buildings. When one remembered how strangely things were moving in the political as well as the religious world, and especially with regard to religious education, it was absolutely necessary that the appliances and arrangements for Sunday School work should not be one behind those of the day schools. (Hear, hear) - he should find it much like to see the debt completely removed and if Dr. Maggs was to keep up the highly intellectual preaching he had been giving them, he would not have to be worried with a burden of this character.

Dr. Maggs intimated that Mr W. H. Conyers and Mr J. E. Gaunt were present as delegates from the Congregational Church and read a resolution passed by the deacons offering cordial congratulations to their Wesleyan friends on the completion of their school premises and expressing the hope that the erection of such would lead to the greater enrichment of the religious life and work of the town and also the great benefit of the young people who should gather within their walls.

Mr Conyers remarked that the Wesleyan Church and the Congregational Church had always had a kind and brotherly feeling towards each other, and he wished them great joy in the possession of these beautiful buildings and that they would be the means of many being led to Christ.

Mr. Gaunt remarked that the Wesleyans had a glorious heritage and he trusted that in these buildings many might be led to witness valiantly for Christ in the years to come.

Mr Nightingale referred to the great kindness the Baptists had always received at the hands of their Wesleyan friends, and speaking more generally said that if he read the signs of the times aright he believed that the solution of the education difficulty would rest largely with the Churches and Sunday Schools, and not until the Churches were prepared to do their duty to the children would they find a solution satisfactory to all classes of the community.

Dr. Banks remarked that the most beautiful feature in the services that day had been the expression of brotherly love on the part of the churches. Ilkley, he believed, had long been noted for the spirit of unity and love that had bound the churches of Christ together; and he hoped that this spirit would ever continue.

Mr Holtby read a list of various contributions received during the day these included £16 from Mr. Kellett, in addition to the receipt for 500 chairs which had cost £84 making a total of £100 received from Mr Kellett. Other sums, with the proceeds of the tea and collection in church brought the amount up to £226 8s. 5d. and the collection at the close realised another £31 making the total for the day £257 8s. 5d.

The meeting closed with the singing of the Doxology.