

Doals Baptist

Two groups united to form the cause at Doals members of Ebenezer, Bacup, and some who met at a small meeting place at Deerplay - the site of which is now marked by a solitary memorial stone.

The initiative in the work of building a chapel at Doals was taken by the members of Ebenezer, Bacup. Since 1836 the church had held meetings in the Doals district for the convenience of its members living in that area. In 1860 the desire of the leaders of Ebenezer that something should be done to meet the needs of the Doals Baptists, who were members at Ebenezer, ripened into a definite plan. Despite the great economic distress of the period due to the cotton famine which plunged Lancashire into industrial disaster, at a church meeting on September 1st, 1860, it was resolved to ask the little church at Deerplay to unite in the project of building a Baptist meeting house in the neighbourhood of Deerplay and Doals. A fortnight later when apparently no reply had been received from the Deerplay church, it was resolved that the responsibility for building should be entirely borne by the Ebenezer church. A site was procured for the new building and on April 11th, 1861 the first sod was cut. On April 18th and 20th, 1862, the new chapel was opened. The total cost was about £1,100 and the whole of the amount was paid off by March, 1873.

The first church meeting to be held at Doals was on January 18th 1862. This was held in the schoolroom since the chapel itself was not ready for use. At this meeting seven women came from Deerplay church which had just been dissolved, and threw in their lot with the Doals people, one member bringing along with her a yellow bass fiddle. They were received into fellowship along with three men, who were the first converts of the work, on Sunday January 19th, 1862. The official formation of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Doals, as a company of believers with its own membership, took place on 30th November, 1867, when forty-eight persons were dismissed from the mother church in Bacup. This step, as will be seen from the letter of request for dismissal, was precipitated by a desire on the part of the Doals people to have their own pastor.

