

Ebenezer Baptist Church



The church known as Piccop's "New Meeting," house built at Lane Head was in a weak condition at the time of Mr Piccop's death, but fortunately was not long without a pastor, John Hirst, a member of the Baptist Church at Accnngton, was appointed pastor and commenced his duties in 1773. By 1777 the congregation had largely increased and a larger meeting house was erected at a cost of £400.00, all of which was promised before the building started. By 1810 still more room was needed and this was met by the building of a new chapel which was opened in 1812 and under this chapel a room was provided for a Sunday School. By this time Mr. Hirst had become very feeble and it was only with great difficulty he continued his pastoral work. Towards the end of his life, determined to preach, he had to be carried into the pulpit and though not able to stand he addressed the congregation from his "preaching chair". He died in 1815 after a devoted and successful ministry of 42 years. The Rev. W. J. Dyer succeeded Mr. Hirst in 1816, but in 1821 Mr. Dyer and about half the members seceded and formed a second church later known as Irwell Terrace.



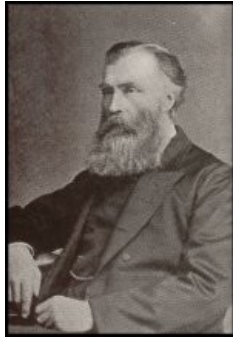
After the breakaway to form Irwell Terrace the following thirty years were fairly quiet. The pastors of the church were the Revs. G. A. Grant, John Edwards and Simpson Todd. During Mr Grant's pastorate a new School was built. Mr Edwards did good solid work during his ministry of 12 years. Mr Todd was a fervid evangelist who made a great impression and a considerable number joined the church during his somewhat brief pastorate. In 1848, following Mr. Todd, came the Rev. Jonas Smith and his pastorate was marked by much good and solid work.



In 1849 an additional schoolroom was provided. In 1851 the church opened a meeting room and Sunday School at Millgate. Here at Millgate the work so progressed that in 1858 a chapel was built at a cost of £1,100, and in later years this was superseded by a larger and finer chapel with a beautiful school, and the Millgate church has been a separate church for many years. In 1861 a Sunday School was started at Deerplay and the work prospered. In 1862 a chapel was built and in 1867 Doals became a separate church

In 1864 the roof of the Ebenezer chapel was found to be insecure, and for 20 months the church worshipped at the Co-operative Hall. The old chapel was converted into a school and was used as a school and chapel until the building of a new chapel in 1868-1870. This new chapel cost £6,000, all of which was raised within two months of the opening services. The close of Mr. Smith's ministry was clouded by church troubles respecting doctrinal views. In 1874 Mr. Smith ceased to be the pastor. He and a number of members withdrew from the church and ultimately formed the Mount Olivet Baptist Church. In 1878 the Rev. W. Gay

became pastor of the Ebenezer Church, and after labouring with great earnestness for four years he resigned in 1882.



Pastor Jonas Smith
1848 - 1874