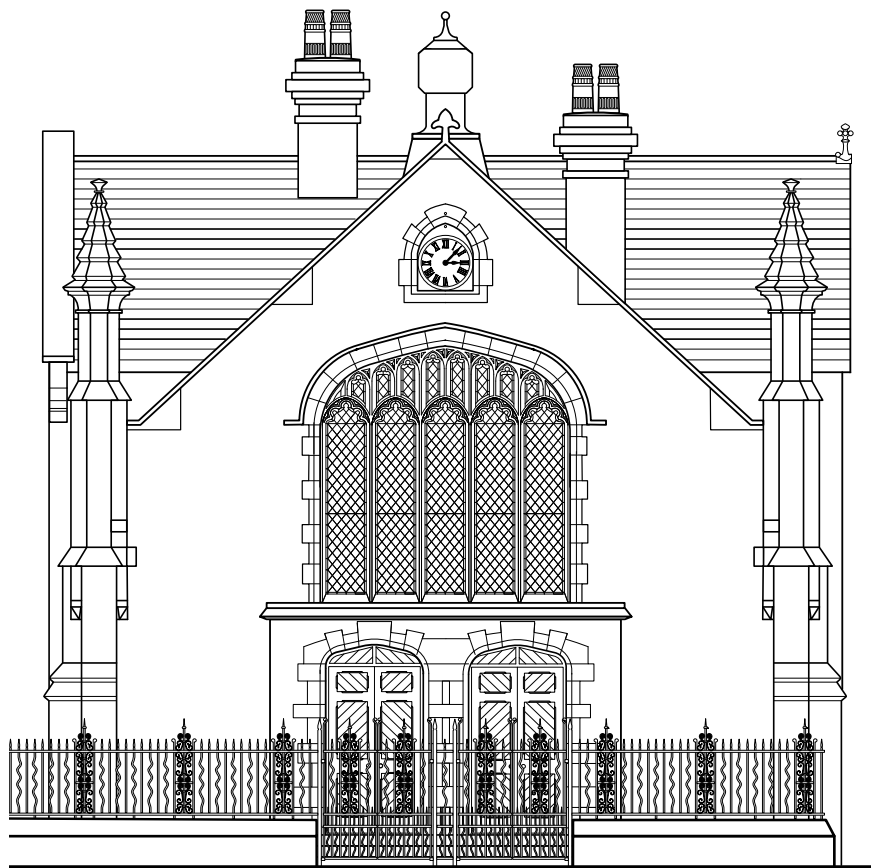


The Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School

THIRSK - 1900 to 1919

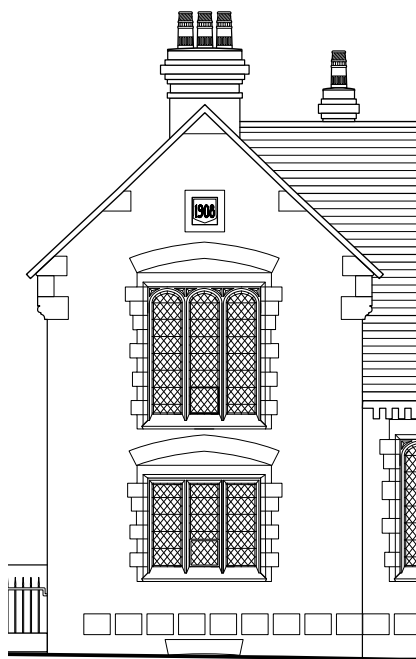


St. James' Green, Thirsk, North Yorkshire.

Simon Williamson

The Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School

THIRSK - 1900 to 1919



St. James' Green, Thirsk, North Yorkshire.

Simon Williamson

Print Edition, First Published June 2024

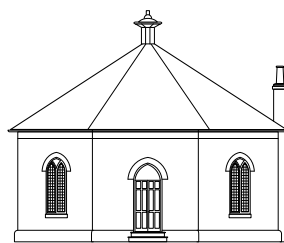
Digital Edition, Published July 2024

Contents

Introduction	2
Building Permission and Finance	4
Donations	8
Key Players	12
The Building Scheme	20
Architectural Drawings	22
Building Contractors	26
Construction Materials.	27
Sunday School Stone Laying Ceremony	35
Foundation Stone Inscriptions	37
The Sunday School Opening Ceremony.	40
Users of the New Building	41
Thirsk Sunday School Staff	42
The Building Today	51
Sources and Credits	52

Introduction

The Wesleyan Methodists in Thirsk first met in a private house in Barbeck in 1763, and a year later in the first fitted meeting room at Brady's Yard. The land adjacent to where the new Sunday School was later built was acquired by George Dobson and John Oastler for the purposes of building a new Octagonal Meeting House. The Octagonal Meeting House was built in 1766 by William Wells (Brick Layer) and in which John Wesley



Recreation of the Thirsk Meeting House based on the chapel at Yarm.



Signature and wax seals for George Dobson and John Oastler, indenture, August 8, 1766



John Wesley

preached on at least nine occasions. The Octagonal meeting house was replaced by a new chapel and school room, built by John Fawcett in 1817. The addition of a burial ground left little space for any additional expansion.

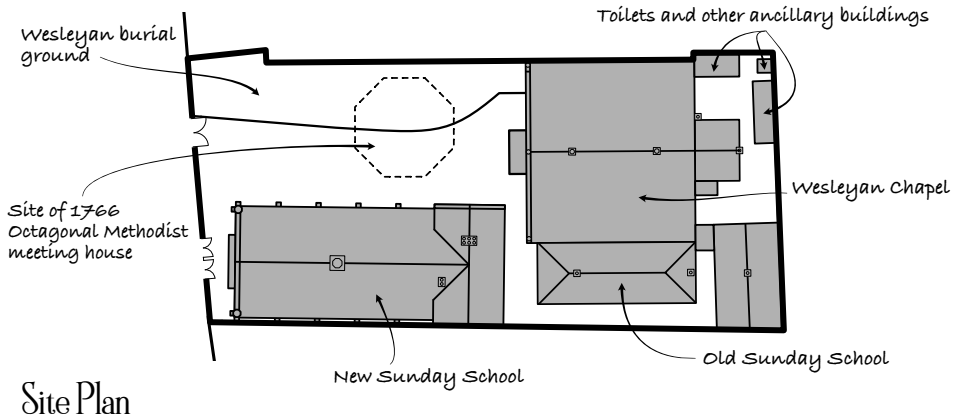
The members of the Wesleyan Methodist church in Thirsk saw the need for improved facilities to teach the word of God to the young as well as a space for adult fellowship through various groups. The old facilities had become too small for the church's aspirations, and it was recognised that a larger building was required. An expansion of the existing site was facilitated by the purchase of adjacent land, which consisted of The Rising Sun inn and a small cottage.

The scheme for the new building was prepared in 1903 at an estimated cost of £2,000 on the site of The Rising Sun and cottage but due to a shortfall in funding it was delayed.

It was not until the arrival of the new Circuit Superintendent and the possible loss of grants that the scheme was realised. The following pages give more detail on fund-raising and grants, key players, the building scheme, key events, and people and groups who used the building in the first ten years of use.



Photograph of Chapel, Sunday School and local children c. 1909



This site plan was created using the 1910 OS map and a 1929 aerial photograph.

Building Permission and Finance

Acquiring the additional land

The need for extra land to build the new Sunday School was accomplished by the purchase of “The Rising Sun” inn and cottage on May 16, 1900, from Messer Plews & Sons (the Vale of Mowbray Brewery), as described in the following news article:



WESLEYANS BUY A PUBLIC HOUSE

The Wesleyan body at Thirsk has just purchased off Messrs. Plews and Sons, the Vale of Mowbray Brewery, Leeming Lane, Bedale “The Rising Sun” Inn situated on St. James’ Green in Thirsk. The Inn adjoins the Lord Nelson and also the outer gates of the Wesleyan Chapel graveyard. The property which was purchased for about £350 is intended for the enlargement of the school accommodation in connection with the Wesleyan Chapel at Thirsk.

York Herald, 27th January 1900

Note: The purchase was completed three and a half months after the date of this newspaper article.

Application to build

A formal application for permission to build the new Sunday School at St. James' Green, Thirsk, was placed on January 16, 1900, with the Wesleyan Central Chapel committee in Manchester. The following is a combination of this and further applications made to the Wesleyan Central Chapel committee and the Wesleyan Twentieth Century Fund.

What is the reason for this application? To replace the previous building, "The Old School," which was adjacent to the existing chapel and accommodated 120 scholars. The building is valued at £100 and is to be retained for other chapel-related uses. The present Sunday School building is now inadequate for the 166 children now receiving instruction.

The land has already been acquired (purchased old public house and cottage on May 16, 1900, at a cost of £350).

Proposed new building: 80' x 35' (outside dimensions) with a wall thickness of 14". Single-story main hall with an attached two-story classroom block. The building will be constructed of brick with stone dressings.

The building comprises a central hall, four classrooms, a ladies parlour, and three basement rooms (offices).

The new school will accommodate 300 children.

Room heights: Hall 15', Ground Floor Classrooms 10', and First Floor Classroom and Ladies Parlour 11'.

A School Master's (room) is not required.

The estimated building cost (supplied by the contractor) was later defined in the application of June 20, 1903.

Land: £350

Building works: £1,465 12s 4d

Ground works: £71

Gas fittings: £12 10s 0d

Heating and Ventilation: £69

Architect's fees: £75

The final cost of building and furnishing the new Sunday School is £2,305 0s 3d (shown in a letter March 11, 1910, to the Wesleyan Central Chapel committee).

Overspend of £360 due to improved design of stone and woodwork. Also the purchase of up-to-date furniture.

A further grant of £75 was received from the Wesleyan Central Chapel committee on June 1, 1910.

Building insured for £1,450

Number of church members in 1910: 168 people

Fund-raising, donations, and grants

Promised: February 3, 1904.

Subscriptions £1,030

Addition subscriptions expected: £300

Estimated public collections: £200

Total: £1,530

Further grants

Wesleyan Twentieth Century Fund: £250

Wesleyan Central Chapel Committee: £75

Estimated £1,945

Actual final cost: £2,305

Building Progress

The following article published in the Thirsk Circuit Magazine, which is a letter sent out to try and raise the additional funds required to finish the project.

THIRSK NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL .

The workmen are making good progress with the building, and the scheme will be advanced another stage on July 29th, when the stone-laying ceremony will take place. The friends should muster in full force from all parts of the circuit, and do their best to ensure the complete success of the occasion. The following circular (here slightly abbreviated), has been issued, and is signed by the Circuit Minister and Mr. RT Tennant:

“The needs long been felt for a better accommodation for our Sunday School work, etc. The present building is seriously inadequate, out of date, ill adapted, badly ventilated and there are only two classrooms for the use of School, Society, Congregation and Wesley Guild. Aggressive work is consequently impracticable, and it is even difficult to hold our own.

A scheme for the new Building was prepared five years ago at an estimated cost of £2,000; and to secure sufficient land on which to build we bought, for £350, an old Public House and cottage adjoining our chapel ground. These old premises have been recently taken down and the new buildings are being erected on the site. We are confident that the idea of a new Sunday School, with 4 additional classrooms, ladies’ room, etc, in place of an old public house will commend itself to the kind consideration of the Christian public.

For various reasons the Building has been postponed for the last five years. Collecting cards have been used and donations promised, but only half the amount required has so far been secured, including a promised Grant of £200 from the 20th Century Fund. We have had notice that unless we begin building operations the promise of the Grant must be withdrawn.

With our trust in God and in the generosity of the Christian public we have undertaken the responsibility of building at once and have decided to lay the Memorial Stones on Wednesday, July 29th, 1908, at 1–30 p.m. Tea at 5 o’clock. Meeting at 7 p.m. We depend upon the proceeds of the Stone Laying Day for Funds to help the Project to a successful issue. Our friends are helping with their best, but we cannot defray the cost of £2,000 without the most liberal outside help.

Will you kindly help us with Donation towards the urgent and needy case.

The new Buildings will be utilised for Sunday School, Temperance, Band of Hope, Men's Brotherhood, Guild meetings, sacred Concerts, Lectures, and popular meetings for people, and thus will give new life to every branch of our Methodist work.

We urgently plead for your kind help for the sake of the children and young people. Do please assist us!"

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), July 1908

Donations

The following list shows the generosity of those who gave money to allow the scheme to come to fruition.

Foundation Stones

Stone reference numbers are shown in brackets.

- £100 Mrs. Ellen Bellman* (ref 32).
£52 10s 0d Miss Jessie Bellman* (ref 31) and Miss Gladys Bellman* (ref 33)
£30 Mr Thomas Jackson Foggitt (ref 43).
£20 Chapel Choir (ref 16) and Wesley Guild* (ref 15).
£15 Mr Samuel Wilcock (ref 37).
£10 10s 0d Mr Robert Tennant (ref 42).
£10 5s 0d Miss Alberta Joll (ref 30).
£10 Alderman Joseph Agar (ref 38), Mr Thomas Clark (ref 46),
Mrs Frances Thorpe (ref 9) and Sunday School (ref 45)
£5 5s 0d Mr William Foggitt (ref 39), Mr G. Wright (ref 41), Miss Ann Clark
(ref 10), Miss Elizabeth Straffen (ref 21), Miss I (Maria) Straffen
(ref 20), Mrs Esther Dewsbury (ref 13), Mr Robert Dewsbury (ref
12), Mr William Wootton (ref 25), Miss Amy Ingham (ref 19),
Mr J. Kendall (ref 7), Mr Joseph Bowen (ref 2), Mrs Margaret
Willey (ref 5), Mrs Sarah Bentley (ref 6), Mrs Mary Johnson (ref
3), Miss Fanny Boddy (ref 1) and Mr and Mrs Francis (ref 9).
£5 Mrs Sarah Wilcock (ref 34).

** The cost of these stones was either fully or partially funded by money raised by the Rev. Bellman.*

In Memoriam Stones

£100	Mr Jonah Waites (ref 36).
£50	Mrs Lucy Clark (ref 47).
£25	Mrs Elizabeth Foggitt (ref 40).
£6	Rev John and Mrs Mary Joll (ref 29.)
£5 5s 0d	Mr Frederick Wootton (ref 28), Mr Joseph Wootton (ref 26), Mrs Isabella Wootton (ref 27), Miss Frances Tennant (ref 14), Mr Samuel Ingham by Mrs Mary Ingham (ref 17), Miss I Barnes by Mr J Hall (ref 35), Mrs Grace Manfield (ref 24), Mr George Manfield (ref 22), Mr John Blackett (ref 8), Mrs Elizabeth Blackett (ref 44), Mr John and Mrs Jane Acres (ref 23) and Mr Thomas Ingham (ref 18).

Total £694.

Guinea Bricks

These were laid by;

£1 1s 0d	Rev WE Holburn, Mrs Holburn, Miss M Holburn, Miss E. Holburn, Mr A Holborn, Mr J Holborn, Mr SF Holburn, Mr J F Holburn, Miss E Bell, Mr E Dixon, Mr H Dixon, Miss E Dixon, Mr J Wright, Mrs J Wright, Mr W Griffiths, Mr D Griffiths, Mr T Ferguson, Miss Bosomworth, Miss Porter, Miss F Midgley, Miss E Midgley, Miss Hall, Mrs Giles, Mr J Long, Miss EA Bell, Mr J Ward, Miss L Ward, Miss W Bickers, Mr J Cowton, Mrs J Cotton, Mrs H Horner, Mr Mills, Mrs Mills, Mrs J Bell, Mr A Dewsbury, Miss SJ Prest, Mr G Prest, Mrs Prest, Miss BA Prest, Miss M Fletcher, Miss Hamilton, Miss O. Bosomworth, Miss L Kettewell, Miss Brisby, Miss Davison, Miss Snowden, Miss M Walker, Mr H Jackson, Mr TG Pollard, and Mr G. Manfield.
----------	---

Total

£52 17s 9d.

Scholars' Bricks

There were twenty six bricks laid by;

Miss Lilian Bell, Miss Hilda Bell, Miss Doris Bell, Miss G Bell,
Mr William Bell, Mr John Ernest Bell, Miss Kathleen Brennan,
Miss Annie Brennan, Miss Norah Brennan, Miss Georgina
Brennan, Mr W Briggs, Mr H Danny, Mr C. Danny,
Miss E Midgley, Mr C Mills, Miss H Mills, Miss F Pallier,
Mr N Willey, Miss M Lambert, Miss J Lambert, Miss E Wright,
Mr A Willey, Miss E Willey, Miss I Parker, Miss M Parker,
Miss E Broadwith.

Total

£7 3s 3d.

Subscriptions

The following subscription either in promises or cash;

£20	Mr W Holyday in memory of Mrs Holyday.
£10 10s 0d	Mr Thomas Stokes.
£10	Mrs Kearns.
£5	Mr Jacob Bell, Mr B Foggitt, and Mr Parker (Scarborough).
£5 5s 0d	Mrs W A Johnson and Rev J W Blackett in memory of his sister the late Mrs Foggitt.
£2 2s 0d	Mr AJ Moore, A Friend, Mr WA Wright, Rev R and Mrs Rossall, Mrs Cross and Mr H Ridsdale.
£2	Miss Fawcett (Appleby).
£1 4s 0d	Mr C. Manfield.
£1 1s 0d	Mr T Robinson, Mr C Harlow, Mrs C Harlow, Mr and Mrs T Jordison, Mr J Ryder, Mr T Leedal, Mr W Leedal, Mr R Bosomworth jr, Mr WM Kettewell, Mr J Robson, Mr John Clayton, Mrs Clayton, Miss Clayton and Mr W Clayton.

Total

£69 10s 0d.

Promises

At the public meeting promises were made as follows;

£2 2s 0d	Mr and Mrs Ward and Miss Weighell (Sowerby).
£2	Mr F Lambert.
£1 1s 0d	Mr ML Hoy (Acomb), Mrs Wood (Sowerby), Mrs E Horner, and Mr T Wood.
£1	Mr and Mrs W Harrison.
£0 10s 6d	Mr RJ Bellman.
£0 10s 0d	Rev EO Pearson.
£0 5s 0d	A H, Mrs Weighell (Green), Miss E Horner, Mr C Mills, Mr WBL Wootton, Mr T Ponder, A Friend and Mr A H Dewsbury.
Total	
£14 8s 6d.	

Total money raised as of August 1908

Balance in hand	£256 11s 5d;
Foundation Stones	£688 15s 0d;
Guinea Bricks	£52 17s 9d;
Scholars' Bricks	£7 3s 3d;
Subscriptions	£69 10s 0d;
Sweet stall by Misses Holborn and Tennant	£1 10s 4d;
Proceeds of tea	£8 8s 0d;
Evening collection	£10 11s 8d;
Promises at meeting	£14 8s 6d;
Coffee supper	£1 17s 6d;
Provisions sold	£2 0s 3d;

Also money collected by the Rev JS Bellman £220

£5	Mrs Thompson (Upsall) and Mr and Mrs Petch.
£2 2s 0d	Mr and Mrs Brisby.
£1 1s 0d	Mr T Porter.
£0 10s 0d	Mr J Barber.

The remainder of money collected from outside of the Thirsk circuit was as follows;

£100	Mr Walker (Whitehaven).
£10	Mr JR Hill and Mr J Cory.
£5	Mr Thomas Robinson Ferens, MP (Hull), Mrs Southern, Miss Brown and Mr J Rank.

The £220 collected by Rev Bellman was distributed as follows; £100 for Mrs Bellman's stone; £52 10s 0d each for the Misses Bellman stones, and £15 towards the Wesley Guild stone of £20.

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), August 1908

Key Players

The four Wesleyans who were responsible for the scheme are Rev. James Semmens Bellman (Superintendent Minister), Robert Thomas Tenant (Trustee, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Building Fund), Thomas Clark (Trustee), and Thomas Jackson Foggitt (Trustee). The Architect appointed by the trustees for the scheme was Thomas Stokes.

Revd. James Semmens Bellman (*Superintendent Minister, Thirsk Wesleyan Circuit*)



He was the chief fundraiser for the scheme and key to the restarting of the stalled Sunday School project.

Born in 1843 in St. Ives, Cornwall, to parents Benjamin Bellman and Mary Ann Semmens. He followed his father's trade as a plasterer and house painter, as recorded in the 1861 census. James trained as a Wesleyan Methodist minister at Norwich from 1868 to 1871 and was ordained in 1872. He spent some time at Old Kent Road and the Southwark District of London, before serving at the following

places;

1886 to 1888 – Gateshead (High West Street Chapel)

1889 – Witney (Oxford District)

1892 – Hull (Great Thornton Street Chapel)

1895 to 1896 – Swansea

1899 to 1901 – Ipswich (Woodbridge)

1901 to 1903 – Bridlington

1907 to 1910 – Thirsk

1911 – Brentwood, Cleckheaton

1914 to 1915 – Kirbymoorside

1918 – Rhos-on-Sea (North Wales District)

1923 – Colwyn Bay (Liverpool District)

He married his second wife Ellen Maude Woodcock by Licence on 12 August 1879 in Norwich. Ellen and two of her children, Jessie Maria and Gladys Mabel Bellman are named on Thirsk Sunday School foundation stone inscriptions.

James died on 2 August 1925 at Porthmeor Cadwgan Road, Old Colwyn, Denbighshire.

*Note places and dates are from either from Census, newspapers or historical documents.
(Minutes of the Methodist Conferences, Volume XVIII).*

The photo is believed to be the Revd. James S. Bellman, taken in 1908 at Thirsk.

Robert Thomas Tennant *(Treasurer and secretary of the building fund)*



Born in 1859 in Middleham, Yorkshire, to parents Thomas Tennant (Master Stone Mason) and Elizabeth (née Handley). On the 1881 census, Robert is shown living with his widowed mother, and he is shown working as a bank accountant. After his mother's death, Robert moved to Thirsk, becoming the manager of the London Joint Stock Limited Bank on Market Place (now the HSBC Bank) in 1896, a position he held until his retirement in 1926. Prior to this position, he was a bank clerk and an insurance agent for the Scottish Union Company.

He married Annie Ada Foggitt, the sister of Thomas Jackson Foggitt and daughter of William, who were key members of the Wesleyan connection in Thirsk. The marriage took place on April 19 1892 at the Wesleyan Chapel on St. James' Green, Thirsk.

As well as his many roles in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, he was the secretary of the Thirsk Lawn Tennis Club, a member of the Thirsk and District Naturalist Society, an Apiarist (beekeeper), secretary to the Orpheus Choral Society, secretary of Thirsk Art Classes at the Thirsk Institute, and editor of the Wesleyan Methodist Church Record for the Thirsk Circuit.

Robert died on 29th May 1928 at his home in Thirsk.

The adjacent photo is believed to be Robert T. Tenant, taken in 1908 Thirsk.

Note places and dates are from either form Census, newspapers or historical documents.

Thomas Jackson Foggitt (Trustee)



Thomas was the eldest son of William Foggitt and Elizabeth Thompson Blackett. He was born on March 2nd, 1858, in Thirsk. Both the Foggitt and Blackett families had active roles within the Thirsk Wesleyan Society, as would Thomas.

His education consisted of that of Mr. George Nicholson (Thirsk), Mr. Charles Fisher (Sand Hutton), and at Wharfedale College (Boston Spa). After leaving school, Thomas was apprenticed to his father, William Foggitt. William was a druggist and chemist who ran a business in Thirsk. In 1880,

Thomas qualified as a chemist and joined the family business in Market Place, Thirsk.

As well as being an active member of the Wesleyan Church and a partner in the family chemist business, he was a JP, member of the Thirsk Liberal Association, Thirsk Parish Councillor, North Riding County Councillor, and member of the boards of management of the National, British, and Foreign schools. He also

had a keen interest in botany, undertaking many plant hunting expeditions in the mountain regions of Britain, the Alps, and the Pyrenees.

Thomas Jackson Foggitt, from the Wesleyan Methodist Church Record, Thirsk Circuit .

Sometime just before 1911, Thomas and his housekeeper, Fanny Sophie Boddy, moved from above the premises in Market Place, Thirsk, to Stoneybrough house on Stockton Road, Thirsk. Fanny has her name on one of the Sunday School foundation stones.

Thomas was to later marry Fanny on August 27, 1919, at the Thirsk Wesleyan Chapel by licence. There must have been much disapproval of the marriage of Thomas to his housekeeper, as a newspaper article describes the wedding as exceptionally quiet as follows:

WEDDING AT THIRSK. The marriage took place yesterday at the Wesleyan Church, Thirsk, between Miss Fanny Sophia Boddy, daughter of Mr. Thomas Boddy of Scorton, and Mr. Thomas Jackson Foggitt of Stoneybrough, Thirsk. The wedding was exceptionally quiet, with only those principally concerned being present. Miss Stephenson, of Haxby, and Mr. RT Tennant, of Thirsk, gave the bride away.

The Leeds Mercury, 28 August 1919

Miss Stephenson and Robert T Tennant (brother-in-law) also appear on the marriage certificate as witnesses.

1919. Marriage solemnized at <u>The Wesleyan Methodist Chapel St James Green Thirsk</u> in the								
District of <u>Thirsk</u> in the County of <u>York N.R.</u>								
No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
26	August 27th 1919.	Thomas Jackson Foggitt	61 years	Bachelor	Justice of the Peace	Stoneybrough Thirsk	William Foggitt (deceased)	—
		Fanny Sophia Boddy	50 years	Spinster	--	Stoneybrough Thirsk	Thomas Boddy	Retired Farmer.
Married in the <u>Wesleyan Methodist Chapel</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Wesleyan Methodists</u> by <u>Licence</u>								
This Marriage was solemnized between us,		<u>Thomas J. Foggitt</u>	in the Presence of us,	<u>R. Stephenson</u>	And in the Presence of	<u>George England Thirsk</u> <u>Ray & Leman</u>	Authorized Person for <u>the Society Chapel</u>	

Thomas Jackson Foggitt and Fanny Sophia Boddy's marriage certificate, August 27, 1919.

After the death of his wife Fanny on April 2, 1925, Thomas later married Gertrude Bacon in 1929 in London. Gertrude was an interesting woman who took part in and wrote many books on early aviation and also shared Thomas' interest in botany.

Thomas died on October 30, 1934, and shared a grave with his first wife, Fanny, in the Thirsk Cemetery. The inscription reads:

*Remembrance of
Fanny Sophia
The beloved Wife of
Thomas Jackson Foggitt
of Stoneybrough
Who passed Home April 2nd 1925
Aged 56 Years
"At Rest"
Thomas Jackson Foggitt
Died Oct 30 1934
Aged 75
Consider the Lilies of the field,
how they grow.
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills.*

Thomas Clark (*Trustee*)

Thomas was born in Quebec, Canada, in 1848, but had come to live in the UK sometime before 1861. He is shown on the 1861 census living with his grandparents, Charles and Elizabeth Loftas, in Millgate, Thirsk.

He married Lucy Foster in 1874 in Hull, England, and set up a business as a Grocer at 51 Market Place, Hull. Ten years later, in 1891, he was working and living in Thirsk for Messers Clark & Co. Grocers. Thomas and Lucy do not have a family of their own, but in 1901 they are providing lodging for a student Wesleyan Ministry (Minister?) Reginald F. Evens.

Both Thomas and Lucy are named on the Sunday School foundation stones, as follows: T. CLARK (ref 46) and IN MEMORIAM L. CLARK (ref 47) on the front of the building. When Thomas died on April 10, 1928, he left a large bequest to the Wesleyan Methodist Church for ministry and the upkeep of the St. James' Green chapel.

Thomas and Lucy are buried in the graveyard at St. Oswald Church, Sowerby. And the inscription reads,

*In Loving Memory of
Lucy Clark
Wife of Thomas Clark
of Thirsk
Died January 30th 1908
Aged 64 years
"Till the daybreak, and the
shadows flee away."*

*Also of the above
Thomas Clark
who was called home April 10th 1923
Aged 80 years.
"Faithful unto Death"*

Thomas Stokes (*Architect*)

The architect appointed by the trustees of the chapel was no stranger to this type of work, as he had already designed a number of chapels for the Wesleyan Methodist Circuit as well as other public buildings. His legacy to Thirsk is the Thirsk Memorial Clock of 1896, to celebrate the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of York and Princess May (later to become King George V). Sadly, today, people no longer know who the designer of their beloved clock is. ^{1, 1a}

Thomas Stokes was born in 1857 in Selby, Yorkshire, to parents John Stokes and Elizabeth (née Haddlesey). He trained as an architect and surveyor before setting up his own business with an office in the Market Place, Thirsk.

Stokes Thomas, Market place (Bulmer's Directory of 1890)

At this period, Thomas was living with his widowed mother Elizabeth at Victoria Avenue, Sowerby, Thirsk. After his mother's death, he married Mary Jane Walker, who was 43 at the time of their marriage on September 4, 1918, at St. Oswald's Parish Church, Sowerby, Thirsk. Thomas died on November 10, 1929, in Sowerby, Thirsk, and is buried in St. Oswald's graveyard, Sowerby.

Thomas Stokes seemed to have had some affinity with some of his buildings, as after his death in 1930, he left money to the three institutions listed in the following newspaper article.

YORKSHIRE CHARITIES BENEFIT

Gifts of £200 each to the Thirsk Wesleyan Sunday School, the Thirsk Lambert Memorial Hospital and the Victoria Nursing Home, Ripon, are included in the will of Mr. Thomas Stokes, of Topcliffe road, Sowerby, near Thirsk, Architect and Surveyor and for many years Secretary of the Thirsk Gas Company, whose estate has been proved at £7,142 gross with £3,635 net.

Sheffield Independent, 5th March 1930

Thomas Stokes as well as his own business as an Architect and Surveyor, he also was Secretary and Manager of the Thirsk District Water Co Ltd, Secretary of the Gas Company working with Henry Foss (manager and father of Constance Ellen Foss one of the Sunday School Teachers), and Assistant Secretary of the Coffee House Co Ltd.

Richmond & Ripon Chronicle 16th December 1882

The following lists some of the buildings and Memorial's designed by Thomas Stokes.

Memorials

The Thirsk Memorial Clock, 1896 ^{1,1a}

Wesleyan Chapels and Sunday Schools

Wesleyan Chapel – Dishforth, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1892 ²
 Wesleyan Chapel – Bagby, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1893 ³
 Wesleyan Chapel – Upsall, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1887 ⁶
 Wesleyan Chapel – Boltby, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1895 ⁸
 Wesleyan Chapel – Laverton, nr Ripon, Yorkshire 1895 ⁹
 Wesleyan Chapel – Aldfield, nr Ripon, Yorkshire 1902 ¹¹
 Wesleyan Sunday School – Carlton Husthwaite, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1887 ⁴
 Wesleyan Sunday School – St. James' Green, Thirsk, Yorkshire 1908

Schools

Primary School – Carlton Miniott, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1889 ⁵
 Primary School – Sandhutton, nr Thirsk, Yorkshire 1883 ¹⁴
 New Infant Classroom – National School, Thirsk 1882 ¹⁶

Public Buildings

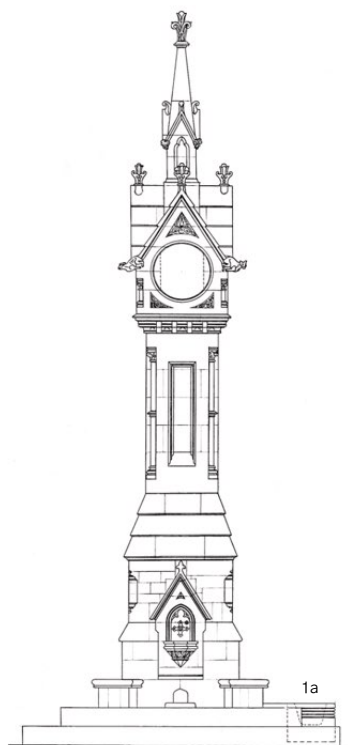
Picture Theatre – Thirsk, Yorkshire 1924 ¹²

Hospitals including Workhouses

Infirmiry – Guisborough Workhouse – 1893 ⁷
 Victoria Nurses Home, Ripon – 1902 ¹⁰
 Thirsk Union Fever Hospital and Children
 accommodation ¹³

1. *Yorkshire Gazette* 16th November 1895
- 1a *Architectural drawing* (Thirsk Museum)
2. *York Herald* 2nd July 1892
3. *Yorkshire Gazette* 12th August 1893
4. *Leeds Mercury* 29th September 1887
5. *York Herald* 2nd November 1889
6. *Richmond & Ripon Chronicle* 24th September 1887
7. *York Herald* 23rd September 1893
8. *York Herald* 6th December 1895
9. *Ripon Observer* 24th January 1895
10. *Ripon Observer* 21st August 1902
11. *Ripon Observer* 10th April 1902
12. *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer* 21st June 1924
13. *York Gazette* 10th April 1886
14. *Richmond & Ripon Chronicle* 16th December 1882
15. *York Herald* 17th March 1893
16. *Richmond & Ripon Chronicle* 15th July 1882

Thirsk Clock Tower.



The Building Scheme

The Building

Designed in the Gothic style, similar to other public buildings of the period, many of its details also appear in other buildings by the architect Thomas Stokes. The new building has a total outside dimension of 80 feet by 35 feet with a wall thickness of 14 inches and consists of a single-storey main hall and a two-storey classroom block.

The main hall, 60 x 30 feet (which was the largest public room in Thirsk at the time), had four classrooms (three on the ground floor and one on the first floor) and a Ladies Room also on the first floor, which was given in recognition of the valuable work done by the ladies of the church.

The basement consists of four rooms with light wells for natural light and ventilation. Access is via an outside staircase and indoors from the main hall. The largest basement room is used as a kitchen, equipped with a cooking range, sinks, and a copper for boiling water. Off this is a storeroom and entrance lobby. The remaining room houses the heating apparatus and storage of coal or coke.

The design of the fabric of the building consisted of red-pressed brick with stone detailing and a slate roof. We look at each of the materials used in the construction of the new Sunday school, as well as the fittings and fixtures, in a later section.

Work was also carried out on the old schoolrooms to rebuild the west elevation facing the new building with the same red-pressed brick and matching doors.

The west boundary, which is just off St. James' Green, has new replacement wrought iron railings and gates. The lower part of the boundary wall used the same red-pressed brick with a depth of one and a half bricks and was capped with Horsforth stone.



Image digitally enhanced from an original drawing by Robert Rodwell – 1908

The Rodwell Drawing – 1908

The Rodwell Drawing comprises a black-and-white line drawing depicting how the new Sunday School will look and was drawn by Robert Rodwell, b. 1851, Skelton, York (architectural and surveyor's draughtsman). There are no records to show if Robert was Thomas Stokes' assistant, but his 1908 sketch would support that he was.

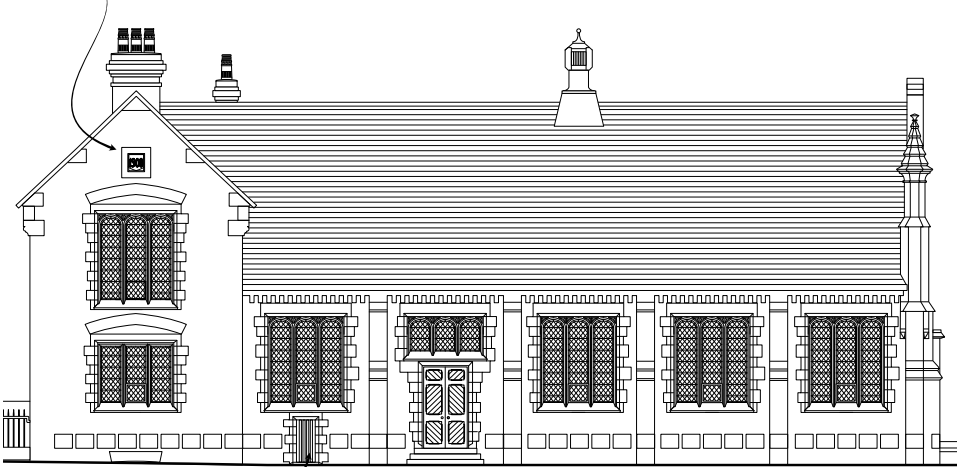
The drawing was published in the Thirsk Circuit magazine in April 1909 and there are a number of differences from the final build, as follows:

The front entrance porch has a triangular gable end, which is flat on the final build. Landscaping differs and also doesn't show the boundary wall and railings. The ventilation cowl also differs. The type shown is an Archimedean screw revolving ventilator, which may have proven too expensive and noisy. Instead, a simpler extractor cowl was fitted, fed by two internal ducts built into the roof void, which draw air from the large hall below and are operated by a rope system. The guide wheels and hole in the ceiling are still visible today.

Architectural Drawings

The following architectural drawings have been recreated to show details and features that have now been lost due to the many building refurbishments. The section and floor plans of the building help give a better understanding of the building's layout and use.

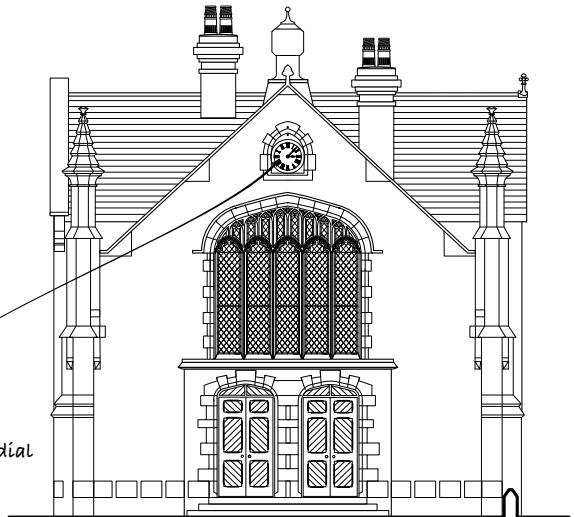
Date stone showing 1908



North Elevation

It is not known if this hatch was a door to give access to the basement steps or just a window. The Rodwell drawing indicates a window. There are some leaded panels remaining in the cellar that could have been part of the window or glazing panel within a door.

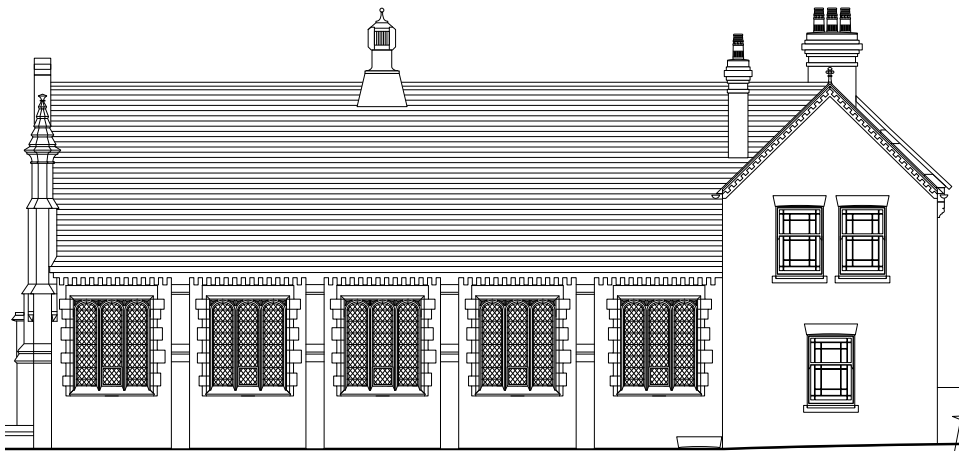
Clock with a twenty-four inch dial



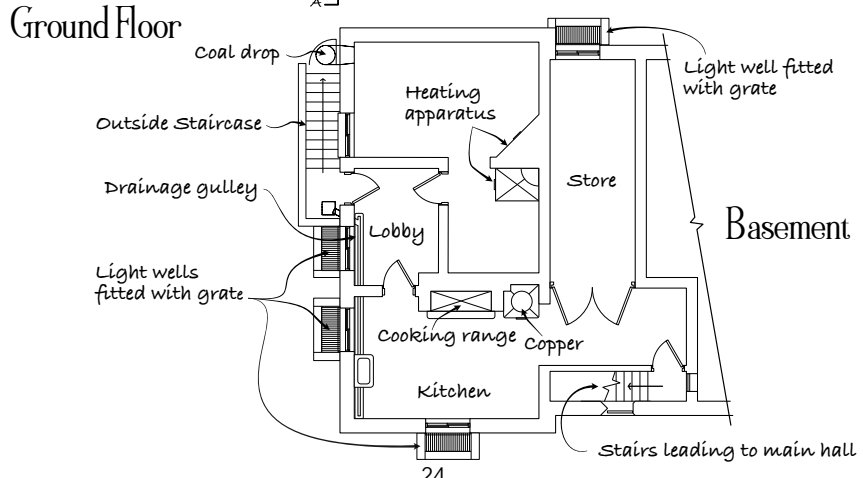
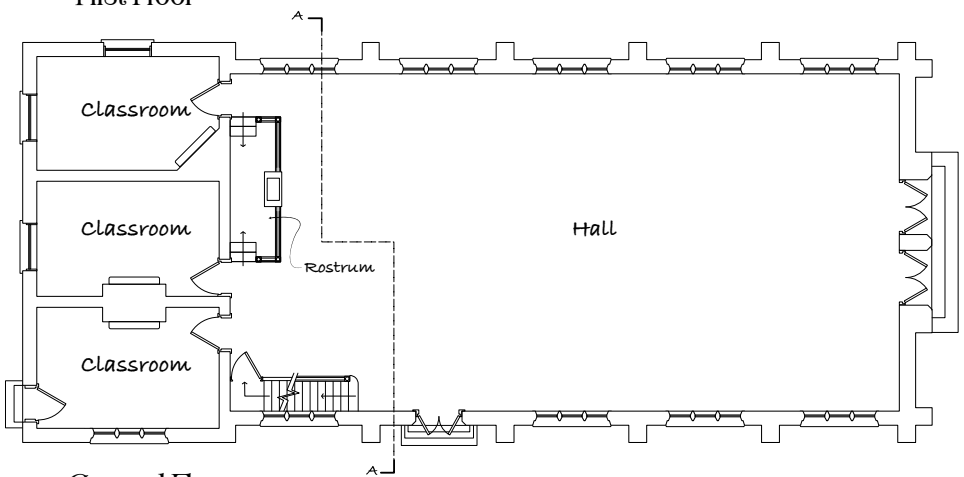
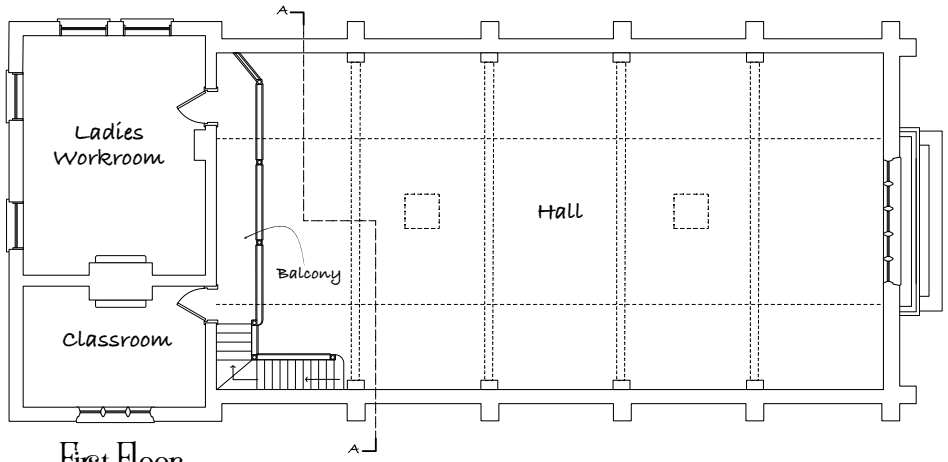
West Elevation

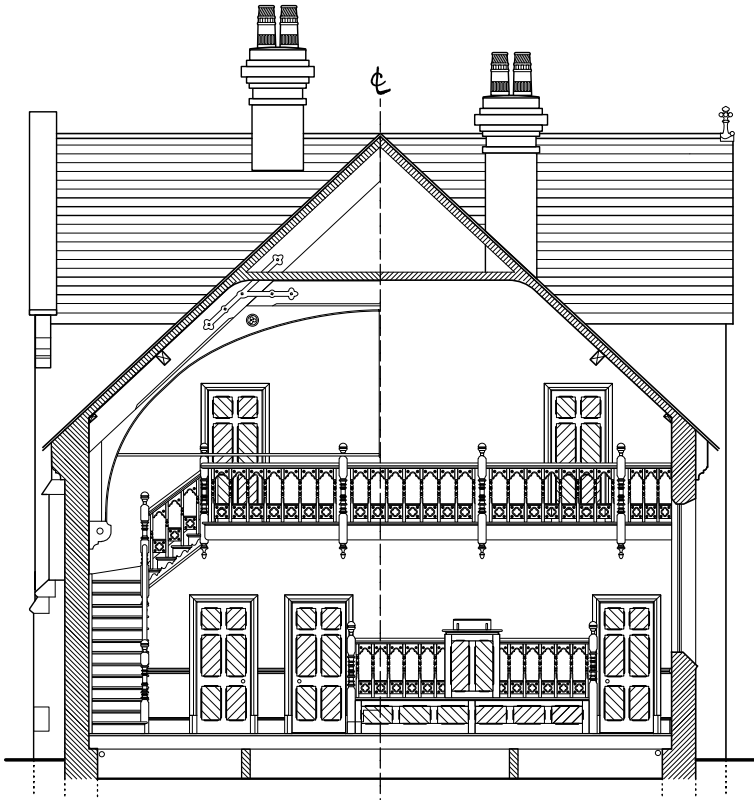


East Elevation



South Elevation





Section A-A



Interior view of the main hall showing the rostrum, balcony, and seating. The two seated figures are possibly Robert Tennant and Thomas Stokes (Architect).

Building Contractors

An article was published in “The Builder” on August 15, 1908, listing all the contractors (see list below) who had won tenders placed by the architect Thomas Stokes for the building of the new Wesleyan Sunday School. This article also gives an estimated cost for the work as £1,700, with a further £300 for furnishings.

Builder: J. R. Manfield

Mr. James Robert Manfield (born 1858, Thirsk) – Builder / Bricklaying (also his son Robert Christopher, born 1888, Thirsk – Bricklayer) Living at Bridge Street, Thirsk

Joiner: J. D. Ruecroft

Mr John Deighton Ruecroft (born 11 February 1869 Ainderby Steeple, Yorkshire), was a Master Joiner. Living at Princess Terrace, Sowerby, Thirsk.

Roof Slater: Baynes & Beck

John Baynes and Charles Beck, were Slating and Tiling Contractors, and Builders’ Merchants, based in North Road, Ripon.

Plumber: J. Best

Mr John Best (born 1883 Thirsk) Plumber, Ingramgate Thirsk. He was a Master Plumber, Glazier and also Gas Fitter.

Painter and Decorator: J. Bickers & Sons.

Mr John Bickers (born 1853 Thirsk) Millgate, Thirsk, and ran his business with his two sons, Francis Henry b. 1885, Thirsk (House Painter) and John Vincent b. 1893 Thirsk (Apprentice House Painter)

Heating: Blakeborough & Rhodes Ltd.

Hot water engineers, wholesale and retail furnishing builders, and agricultural and general ironmongers. Their showroom and registered office were at 57 High Street, Stockton-on-Tees. They would have supplied and fitted the heating system to the main hall (this could have been either a high or low pressure system), the four fireplaces and surrounds, the cooking range, and possibly the copper. They may have also supplied other steel or iron fittings.

Construction Materials.

Red Pressed Brick

The architect specified a red pressed brick for the main wall construction. This type of brick has a smooth surface with even sharp edges and when laid uses very thin mortar joints. The bricks are made of very fine dry clay which is pressed into moulds at high pressure, and then immediately fired without the need of a drying process. The use of dry fine clay ensures no contaminants (small pebbles), minimal shrinkage and makes a harder dense brick compared to the common house brick.

Horsforth Stone

The window surrounds and other architectural features were made of Horsforth stone. The Horsforth quarries during Mediaeval times supplied stone to Kirkstall Abbey and were also used for millstones. The stone was used in later buildings in Yorkshire, as well as Scarborough's seafront.

Roof

Stokes, in many of his Methodist chapels, used a decorative feature of bands of lighter and darker grey slates to produce a striped effect. The Sunday School roof consisted of three stripes on the main hall and two on the two-storey classroom block. The roofing work was carried out by the firm of Baynes & Beck, based in Ripon

Interior Colour Scheme

The colour scheme as built is difficult to determine due to the many later refurbishments to the building. The only available B&W photograph of the interior space only gives tonal hints of what the actual colours were.

Ceilings would have been white, with the upper parts of the walls in a light cream. The lower portion of the walls is shown as a darker tone, possibly reds, greens, or browns.

All the woodwork, including doors, frames, panels, and bannisters, was lacquered in a dark brown varnish. The door to the cellar, which is now painted, is still finished in its original brown varnish on the other side. The remaining fireplaces in three of the classrooms have either inset dark red or green tiles,

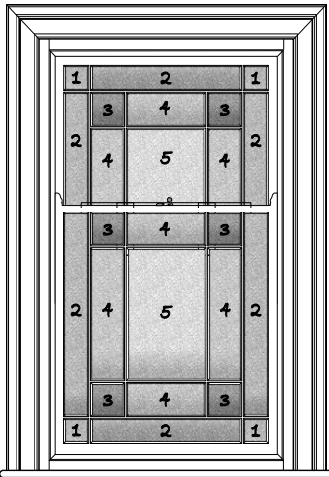
which could indicate these rooms have been painted with matching lower wall panels. The window reveals were possibly an unpainted stone finish.

The basement woodwork is painted green, which, as little redevelopment work has taken place, could be the original colour. The walls and ceilings are white with a concrete floor. The painting and decorating were contracted to J. Bickers & Sons, of Milgate, Thirsk.

Windows

The feature windows in the main hall and classroom block on the northern elevation were carved stone frames with leaded coloured glass. The remaining windows of the classroom block are traditional sash windows with frosted coloured glass. The basement windows are a Yorkshire horizontal sliding sash design. Usually, one panel was fixed and the other slid horizontally.

Basement windows gained light from brick built light wells capped with wrought iron grills. Of the five basement windows, four have light wells and one from the outside stairs.



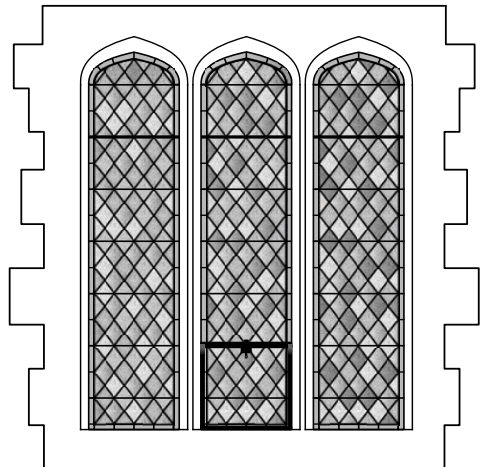
Sash-windows (as viewed from inside.)

Frosted glass panels

- 1 = pale orange
- 2 = pale green
- 3 = dark pink
- 4 = pale pink
- 5 = clear

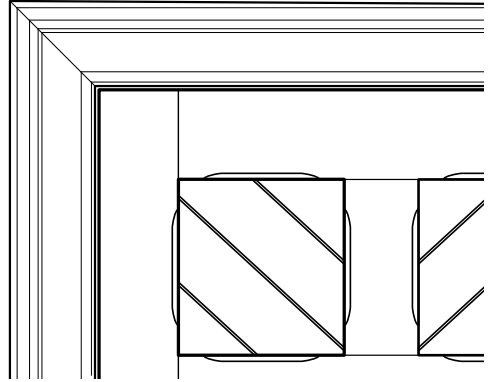
Leaded glass windows

This type of window has pale pink glass surrounds with diamond-shaped glass pieces in either two shades of apricot, pale green, pale blue, or clear.



Doors

All the external and internal doors have the same design. These consisted of a softwood frame with six panels with diagonal slats. The same panel design was also used for the staircase and rostrum front. All the doors were finished in a dark brown lacquered varnish.



Ventilation

The main hall was ventilated by a large roof-mounted cowl, which drew air from the hall below via two large vents and ducts in the ceiling. The original scheme drawing by Robert Rodwell in 1908 shows a mechanical roof-mounted revolving ventilator, which, if installed, may have been too expensive and noisy. Instead,



Guide wheels for operating the ventilation cowl.

a simpler extractor cowl was fitted, fed by two internal ducts built into the roof void, which draw air from the large hall below and are operated by a rope system. The guide wheels and hole in the ceiling are still visible today. There are also wall-mounted vents produced by Kershaw Brassington & Co. of Lancaster, so this firm may also have supplied the roof ventilation system.

Heating

The classrooms and Ladies Parlour were heated by traditional fireplaces. The main hall was heated by a forced hot water system (rather than steam) via pipes and decorative cast iron radiators. The only parts of this system remaining are in the basement, which consists of some of the large bore iron pipes and boiler inside its brick exterior casing. The basement heating was via the heating

furnace, copper, and cooking range. The appointed contractors for the scheme were Blakeborough & Rhodes Ltd. of Stockton-on-Tess.

Fireplaces

Classrooms and Ladies Parlour were heated by traditional fireplaces. Each fireplace had a slightly different design, incorporating the latest Art Nouveau decoration. They consisted of black ironwork, possible slate or black marble with panels of white veined black marble, and red or green glazed ceramic tiles.

After researching newspaper advertisements of the period, similar designs were manufactured by Carron of Falkirk, Scotland, under their “Esto Fires” range. As the cooking range was by Carron, it is very likely these were as well. Three of the original fireplaces still exist, with two different designs and green or red ceramic tiles set on either side of the grate.

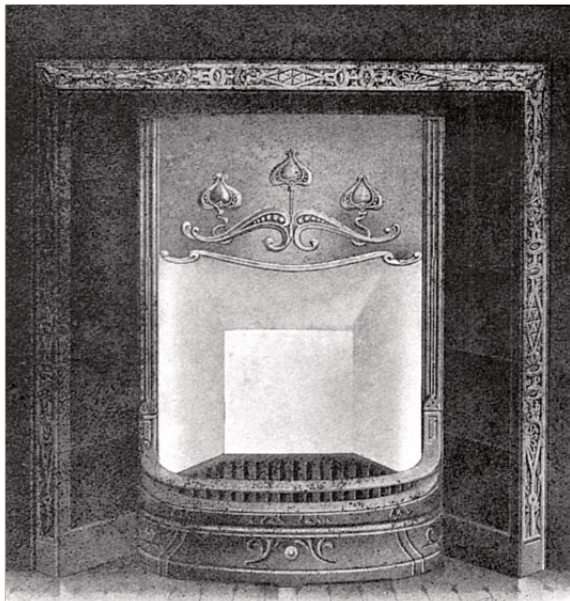


CARRON

“ESTO FIRES.”

FUEL AND LABOUR SAVING.

NEAT AND ATTRACTIVE.



THE result of practical and scientific investigation on part of Carron Company to place on the market a fire guaranteed to throw out a warm genial, and healthy heat, with the minimum consumption of fuel. The fuel-saving feature alone justifies the removal of the old grate and the installation of an "Esto." The bottom grate, set low, forms with bar a "well"-shaped cavity—the most perfect contrivance for combustion. The "Esto" Fire is made in various designs, and when set with suitable tile forms an exceedingly rich and artistic decoration. Can be fitted to almost any fireplace.

Obtainable through all Ironmongers and Hardware Merchants, and on view at the Company's various Showrooms.

Write for No. 43 "Esto" Fire List.

Other "Carron" Specialities—Cooking Ranges, Baths, Lavatories, Gas Fires and Gas Cookers, Garden Seats, Rollers, and Chair, Stable, Cowhouse and Piggery Fittings, &c.

CARRON COMPANY

(Incorporated by Royal Charter, 1773.)



**CARRON,
STIRLINGSHIRE.**

Digitally recreated advert of 1906

Cooking Range

The Cooking Range was manufactured by the Carron Company in Falkirk, Scotland. A plaque fitted on the range suggests that the fitter or service contractor is H. Meek of Thirsk. There are Meek's listed in both the 1901 and 1911 censuses, but none can be linked to the H. Meek shown on the plaque.

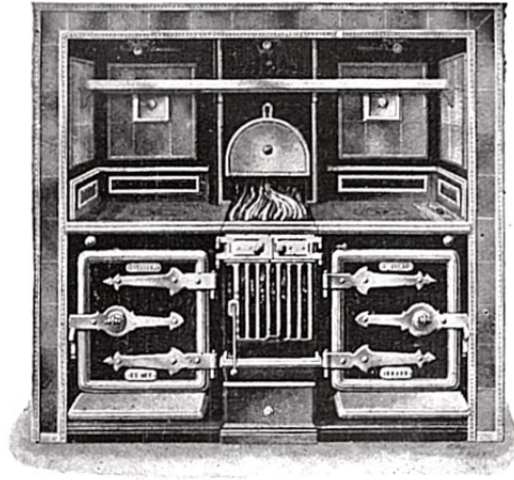


The attached photos show the Cooking Range to be a single oven Carron variant framed with a white painted stone surround. Both the range and the adjacent hot water copper are vented by the same chimney flue. Pieces of the range are now missing, and these include a projecting oven shelf, parts of the fire grate, and a brass or iron fender that would have been set on the floor at the front.



CARRON COOKING RANGES.

GRILL, BOIL,
BAKE,
AND COOK TO
PERFECTION.



BEAUTIFULLY
FINISHED.
PERFECTLY
FITTED.

If you contemplate installing a new Cooking Range this Autumn, insist on having a "CARRON." It will assuredly give you the greatest possible satisfaction at a minimum expense. Manufactured from specially-selected metal taken from Carron Company's own iron-fields, which is subjected to laboratory analysis, thus ensuring perfect freedom from flaw or imperfection. Made in various styles and sizes. Ranges from Cottage, Mansion, Hotel, or Institution. Supplied with single or double ovens, patent lifting bottom grates, and all the latest improvements for effecting a saving in labour, time and fuel.

Obtainable through all Ironmongers and Hardware Merchants, and on view at the Company's various Showrooms.

Write for No 42 Range Catalogue.



CARRON COMPANY CARRON,
INCORPORATED BY
ROYAL CHARTER 1773 **Stirlingshire.**

**Other "CARRON" Specialities—Firegrates, Baths, Lavatories,
Gas Fires, Cookers, Heating Stoves, Garden Rollers, Seats,
and Tables, Stable, Cowhouse, and Piggery Fittings,
and every description of Cast Iron Goods.**

Digitally recreated advert of 1906

Lighting

These were all mostly still Gas fittings, as an electric supply had only just been made available in 1904, for street lighting in Thirsk. The only original light fittings shown are ceiling suspended with multiple glass shades.

Furniture

For the new Sunday School, the most up-to-date furniture was purchased from the North of England School Furnishing Company of Darlington, as stamped on one of the only existing cupboards still in use in the present building. It's not known if the classrooms were furnished with school desks or just benches.

A contemporary photograph shows that the main hall was furnished with what we would now call cafe chairs (Beech bentwood frame and seat) on the front rows and the rest with long wooden bench seats that could accommodate 5 to 6 children. On the rostrum, there are four Captains or Windsor-type chairs. These chairs are marked with the maker W.B.G.

The only existing pieces of furniture from the original building are the four Captain/ Windsor-type chairs, one of the long bench seats, and a freestanding classroom cupboard.

The North of England School Furnishing Company was formed in Darlington in the 1860s. It had factories in Darlington, Newcastle, and Newton Wycliffe. The company manufactured all the school's furniture and equipment needs, from desks to backboards.



Sunday School Stone Laying Ceremony

The Stone-Laying Ceremony took place on a sunny Wednesday, July 29, 1908, at 1:30 p.m. and was well attended, as the following photographs show. Some of the stones are now hidden or have become difficult to read. A list published in the Wesleyan Methodist Church Record Magazine was used to corroborate the inscriptions and positions. In addition to the stones, 76 unmarked Guniea and Scholar's bricks were also laid.



The assembled crowd was made up of members of the Thirsk circuit, friends, and invited guests, which included Rev. JCW Gostick (Chairman of the Wesleyan Methodist District), Alderman Agar (Mill owner and former Mayor of York), and Rev. WB Lowther (former circuit minister). The ceremony began with the singing of a hymn and the reading of a psalm. And then a prayer by Rev. E Omar Pearson and an address by Rev. JCW Gostick. After this, the stone laying commenced with the placement of the 47 stones and unmarked Guniea and Scholar's bricks.

The Rev. Lowther then made a short address before the assembled crowd had Tea in the Old School Room.

Later in the afternoon, a well attended meeting took place, presided over by Mr. S Ibbetson of York. The meeting consisted of a financial statement by Robert T Tennant and the Rev.



Bellman. Then addresses were given by Mr. S Ibbetson, Alderman Agar, and the Revs. A Becket, JB Gratton, FW Weldon, and WE Holborn. The meeting finished with the choir singing an anthem.

The money raised before and during the meeting was as follows: the collection was over £10, which included money given some years ago, £100 paid by the trustees of the late Mr. Jonah Waites, and other promised money. The total raised was £1,130, leaving £520 still to be found.

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), August 1908

It is possible to identify some of the people shown in the four 1908 photographs. The top photograph possibly shows Miss Fanny Boddy (5) tamping down the stone that bears her name. Behind her is Thomas J Foggitt (3), her employer and later husband. Also identified are Robert T Tennant (2) and the Rev. James Bellman (1).



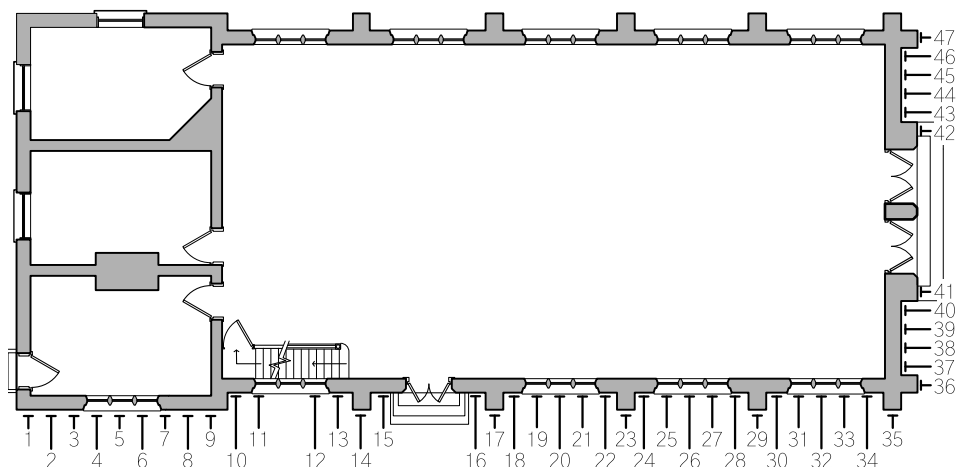
In the photograph immediately above, Joseph Agar (4) is pointing to the stone that bears his name, and next to him are TJ Foggitt (3), RT Tennant (2), and the Rev. J Bellman (1).

Foundation Stone Inscriptions

Ref	Inscription	Name	Occupation	Dates	Where born	Other info
1	F. S. BODDY	Miss Fanny Sophia Boddy	Housemaid	1869–1925	Scawton, Yorkshire	Married Thomas J Foggitt in 1919 Thirsk
2	J. W. BOWEN	Mr Joseph William Bowen	Apprentice Jeweller	1893–1971	Sowerby, Thirsk, Yorkshire	Son of William Bowen, Tailor's cutter
3	M. A. JOHNSON	Mrs Mary Ann Johnson (née Pattison)		1838–1899	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of Edwin Johnson
4	E. JOHNSON	Mr Edwin Johnson	Cattle dealer and butcher	1835–1899	Thirsk, Yorkshire	
5	M. H. WILLEY	Mrs Margaret Hedley Willey (née Walker)		1871–1939	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of George Wiley, Draper / shopkeeper, Milgate, Thirsk
6	S. A. BENTLEY	Mrs Sarah Ann Bentley (née Knaggs)		1850–1922	Great Driffield, Yorkshire	Wife of George Bentley, farmer, Sowerby Parks.
7	J. KENDALL	Mr J Kendall				
8	IN MEMORIAM J. BLACKETT	Mr John Blackett		1803–1874	Northallerton, Yorkshire	
9	T. R. FRANCIS	Mr and Mrs Francis				
10	A. E. CLARK	Miss Ann Eliza Clark		1866	Thirsk, Yorkshire	
11	F.E.THORPE	Mrs Frances Emily Thorpe (née Atkinson)		1865	Heckmondwike, Yorkshire	Wife of Alban Thomas Thorpe, clerk
12	R. DEWSBURY	Mr Robert Dewsbury	Grocer	1870–1949	Etton, Yorkshire	
13	E. J. DEWSBURY	Mrs Esther Jane Dewsbury (née Gladwin)		1875–1930	Rese Carr, Durham	Wife of Robert Dewsbury
14	IN MEMORIAM F. L. TENNANT	Miss Frances Louise Tennant		1896–1896	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Daughter of RT Tennant and granddaughter of William Foggitt
15	WESLEY GUILD					
16	CHAPEL CHOIR					
17	IN MEMORIAM S. H. INGHAM	Mr Samuel Henry Ingham		1857–1904	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Son of Thomas Ingham and husband of Mary Frances Foggitt.
18	IN MEMORIAM T. INGHAM	Mr Thomas Ingham	Currier	1818–1898	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Currier in Finkle Street, Thirsk
19	A. INGHAM	Miss Amy Ingham		1887	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Daughter of Thomas Ingham
20	I. STRAFFEN	Miss I (Maria?) Straffen	Boot dealer	1888	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Millgate, Thirsk
21	E. STRAFFEN	Miss Elizabeth Straffen	Boot dealer	1882	Wensley, Yorkshire	Millgate, Thirsk

Ref	Inscription	Name	Occupation	Dates	Where born	Other info
22	IN MEMORIAM G. MANFIELD	Mr George Manfield	Builder	1833–1891	Thirsk, Yorkshire	
23	IN MEMORIAM J. ACRES	Mr John and Mrs Jane Acres (née Dodgson)	Carpenter Dressmaker	1817–1893 1817–1905	Ripon, Yorkshire Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of John Acres
24	IN MEMORIAM G. MANFIELD	Mrs Grace Manfield (née Gill)	Builder (owner)	1833–1906	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of George Manfield
25	W. B. L. WOOTTON	Mr William Bragg Leighton Wootton	Marine Stone Dealer	1871–1943	Newcastle on Tyne	Son of Joseph and Isabella Wootton
26	IN MEMORIAM J. WOOTTON	Mr Joseph Wootton	Marine Stone Dealer	1837–1901	Bedford, Bedfordshire	
27	IN MEMORIAM I. WOOTTON	Mrs Isabella Wootton (née Leighton)		1843–1906	Newcastle on Tyne	Wife of Joseph Wootton
28	IN MEMORIAM F. WOOTTON	Mr Joseph Frederick Wootton	Chemist / druggist	1873–1908	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Son of Joseph and Isabella Wootton
29	IN MEMORIAM Rev J. M. & Mrs JOLL	Rev John Maw and Mrs Mary Jane Joll (née Richardson)	Wesleyan Methodist Minister	1806–1866 1820–1895	Thetford, Norfolk Spilsby, Lincolnshire	Former Minister to the Thirsk Wesleyan Methodist Circuit Second wife of Rev John Joll and mother of Alberta Joll

Key Plan



Ref	Inscription	Name	Occupation	Dates	Where born	Other info
30	A. G. JOLL	Miss Alberta Georgina Joll	Teacher in private school	1862–1948	Wainfleet, Lincs	Daughter of Rev J M Joll
31	J. M. BELLMAN	Miss Jessie Maria Bellman		1881–1969	Hastings, Sussex	Daughter of Rev James Bellman, Wesleyan Methodist Minister
32	E. M. BELLMAN	Mrs Ellen Maude Bellman (née Woodcock)		1851–1928	Lincoln, Lincs	Wife of Rev James Bellman, Wesleyan Methodist Minister
33	G. M. BELLMAN	Miss Gladys Mabel Bellman		1887–1965	Kingston on Thames, Surrey	Daughter of Rev James Bellman, Wesleyan Methodist Minister
34	S. E. WILCOCK	Mrs Sarah Elizabeth Wilcock (née POOL)		1852	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of Samuel B Wilcock
35	I. BARNES	Miss I Barnes				In memory by J. Hall
36	IN MEMORIAM J. WAITES	Mr Jonah Waites	Farmer	1811–1903	Sowerby, Thirsk, Yorkshire	
37	S. B. WILCOCK J.P.	Mr Samuel Beadley Wilcock J.P.	Railway district auditor	1834–1912	Bradford, Yorkshire	
38	ALDERMAN AGAR J.P.	Mr Joseph Agar	Tannery owner and 3x Lord Mayor of York	1832–1920	York, Yorkshire	
39	W. FOGGITT J.P. F.L.S.	Mr William Foggitt J.P.	Chemist / druggist	1835–1917	Yarm, Yorkshire	
40	IN MEMORIAM E. T. FOGGITT	Mrs Elizabeth Thompson Foggitt (née Blackett)		1839–1903	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of William Foggitt
41	G. WRIGHT	Mr G Wright				
42	R. T. TENNANT	Mr Robert Thomas Tennant	Bank Manager	1860–1928	Middleham, Yorkshire	London Joint Stock Bank Limited, Market Place, Thirsk
43	T. J. FOGGITT	Mr Thomas Jackson Foggitt	Chemist	1858	Thirsk, Yorkshire	
44	IN MEMORIAM E. BLACKETT	Mrs Elizabeth Blackett (née Thompson)		1808–1878	Thirsk, Yorkshire	Wife of John Blackett
45	SUNDAY SCHOOL					
46	T. CLARK	Mr Thomas Clark	Grocer	1848–1928	Quebec, Canada	
47	IN MEMORIAM L. CLARK	Mrs Lucy Clark (née Foster)		1848–1908	Market Weighton, Yorkshire	Wife of Thomas Clark

The Sunday School Opening Ceremony.

The assembled crowds, who just eleven months ago witnessed the Stone-Laying Ceremony, now reassemble for the Opening Ceremony. This took place once again in brilliant sunshine on Wednesday, June 2, 1909. This time, the Revd. James S Bellman (Superintendent Minister) presided over the events.

The ceremony was comprised of the opening of the three main doors with silver keys. The two doors at the front of the building opened by Mrs. RT Tennant (Thirsk), Mr. W Cambridge FRHS (York), and the side door opened by Mrs. Bellman (wife of the Revd. James Bellman). Each made a short speech before opening the required door.

After this part of the ceremony, a service was held in the new school room (main hall of the new building), with a large and enthusiastic congregation attending. The service included a stirring and suitable address from the Chairman of the



1. Revd. James S Bellman; 2. Mr. Robert T Tennant; 3. Mr. Thomas J Foggitt; 4. Revd. John CW Gostick; 5. Mrs. Annie Tennant (née Foggitt and sister of Thomas J Foggitt); and 6. Mr. W Cambridge FRHS.

District, Revd. JCW Gostick, and solos by MD Jones of Middlesborough. After the service, Tea was served in the old school room.

The climax of the evening proceedings was reached by an announcement that the total amount required to fully cover the cost of the scheme had now been raised. Immediately as the secret was known, the Rev. Bellman sprang to his feet and gave the doxology, which he sang with gusto.

Other people who were present were Rev. John Chittenden Wilkins Gostick (Chairman of York Wesleyan Methodist District), Rev. WE Holborn (Wesleyan Methodist, Thirsk), Rev. Thomas Collins (Primitive Methodist, Thirsk), Mr. Thomas Stokes (the Architect), and Mr. Robert T Tennant (the Treasurer).

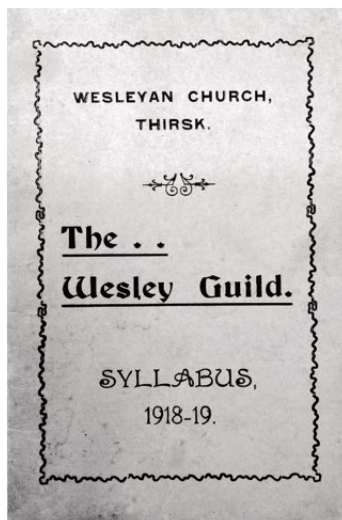
Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), July 1909

Users of the New Building

The primary directive for the creation of the building was as a Sunday School, but the space was also intended for other church and community activities. This idea continues to the present day, with the building now used as the Methodist Church, with its flexible open-plan space allowing for both church and community uses.

The first groups to utilise the building were the Temperance and Band of Hope for the younger children. The Temperance movement had been influentially in Thirsk in the setting up of a Temperance cafe and the education of the harm caused by alcohol.

Other groups included the Men's Brotherhood and the Wesley Guild. The Guild was founded in 1896 in Liverpool by the Revd. Charles Henry Kelly and Revd. W. Blackburn FitzGerald, but was quickly incorporated as a youth organisation within the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The Guild's aim was to retain young people post-Sunday school by helping young people band together using the model known as the "four Cs of Christ":



1. *Comradeship (of young Methodists)*
2. *Consecration (of body, soul, and spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ);*
3. *Culture (of mind to ensure a thoughtful and intelligent life);*
4. *Christian service (for the building up of the church and the kingdom of God)*

A Wesley Guild syllabus for Thirsk 1918–19 lists the Guild's activities and also includes the names of members and those who served during the Great War. The Guild was divided into a list of offices and committees, which included the executive, devotional, social and musical, literary, Christian service, and Look-Out group. The programme for that year included devotional (the address and sacrament of the Lord's Supper), social, Christian service (address), and literary (a debate on the theme of Prohibition).

And finally, sacred concerts, lectures, and popular meetings open to the community would also take place in the Sunday School building.

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), July 1908.
Wesley Guild syllabus for Thirsk 1918–19

Thirsk Sunday School Staff

The completion of the New Sunday School in 1909 created an opportunity to re-think the current teaching methods and allow the introduction of modern ways of teaching. One of these was the creation of a Primary or Infant department, catering to the 3–8-year-old group. This department was run by John Bell, Bertha Joll, and John's daughter Edith.

Class preparations for the primary department staff were run by Miss Joll one night a week.

It's not recorded how many children attended the new Sunday school, which could accommodate 300 children. But it is recorded that there were 166 children receiving instruction in 1900. The Primary Sunday School teachers were made of young adults who would have also once been pupils themselves. A short biography and photograph for each have been included in the following pages.

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), March 1912

John Bell (*Trustee, Assistant Sunday School Secretary and Joint Superintendent of Primary Department*)



John was born on September 23, 1858, in Sowerby, Thirsk. His parents were Benjamin Bell and Jane (née Spence). He married Agnes Curry (or Currie) on March 29, 1879, at St. Mary's Church, Thirsk. Agnes was born in 1859 in Scotland.

John became a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in St. James' Green in 1884 and, a year later, became a Sunday School teacher. He would later take on more senior roles in the Sunday School as Joint Superintendent of the Primary Department and Assistant Sunday School Secretary. Two of his daughters, Edith and Hilda, were also Sunday school teachers.

John ran a letterpress printing business in Ingramgate, Thirsk, and printed many of the Wesleyan church publications. Outside of business and church, his interests included poultry keeping and gardening. He was secretary of the Thirsk & District Fanciers Society and the Thirsk & Sowerby Floral & Horticultural Society.

John died in Thirsk on October 14, 1931.

Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), December 1910 and Leeds Mercury 15th October 1931.

Edith Bell (*Senior Sunday School Teacher*)



Edith was born on May 17, 1888 and is the elder sister of Hilda and the daughter of John Bell (Printer and Sunday School Superintendent) and Agnes (née Currie). Her occupation in 1911 is shown as Elementary School Teacher, so she was one of only two qualified teachers in the Sunday school.

She married George Hartley on April 5, 1915, at Thirsk Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. By 1921, Edith is living in Kirkgate, Thirsk, with her husband and daughter, Winfred. George's occupation is shown as a petroleum

tanker driver for Anglo American Oil Company. In 1939, the family was living in Richmond, North Yorkshire. After this date, it is difficult to follow the family via the available records.

Bertha (*Alberta Georgina*) Joll (*Senior Sunday School Teacher*)



Born on November 22, 1861, in Wainfleet, Lincolnshire, to parents the Revd JM Joll (who had been a minister at the Wesleyan chapel at Thirsk) and Martha (née Richardson),

In 1911, she was a teacher at a private school run by her mother in Sowerby, Thirsk. She also played the church organ at Sowerby Methodist Chapel, was a senior Sunday School teacher, and was an active member of the Thirsk Wesley Guild.

Bertha never married and died in 1948 at the Lambert Memorial Hospital, Sowerby, Thirsk. Prior to her death, she was living at the Inglenook, 64 Sowerby Road, Sowerby, Thirsk.

Bertha and her parents have Sunday school foundation stone inscriptions, and her brother John Cliffe Joll is interred in the burial ground adjacent to the present church (former Sunday school).

Lilian Acres (*Sunday School Teacher*)



Born on May 5, 1896, in Bradford, her parents were Robert Dunnington Acres (Joiner) and Mary Elizabeth (née Walton). In 1911, Lilian was living with her parents in Kirkgate, Thirsk, and was employed as a stationery assistant.

She married Frederick George Wray on August 19, 1919, at Thirsk Wesleyan Chapel. George's occupation is shown as an engineer's draftsman. Her husband's profession meant that they moved to different parts of the UK. In 1921, they are living on Hospital Road, East Retford, Nottinghamshire, where George is employed by W T Jenkins & Co. Ltd. In 1939, they lived at 3 Nelson Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk,

where George is now the Assistant Chief Draughtsman / Medical Engineer.

Their family consisted of three children: Arthur G Wray, born on July 22, 1924; Mary M, born in 1927; and finally Harold J, who was born in Thirsk. Lilian's final move was to Luton in Bedfordshire, where she died in 1981.

Agnes Barron (*Sunday School Teacher*)



She was born in 1894 in Brooklyn, New York, in the United States. Her parents were James Hedley Barron (a house painter) from Cornwall and Mary Augusta (née Farrie) from the USA. Both Agnes and her mother were American citizens. The family is shown living in Millgate, Thirsk, in 1911.

She married Leonard Dodgson in 1916 in Thirsk, and in 1921 they are shown running the White Mare Hotel in Barbeck, Thirsk. Agnes died in Thirsk in 1933.

Hilda Bell (*Sunday School Teacher*)



She was born on September 29 1892 in Thirsk. Daughter of John Bell (Printer and Sunday School Superintendent) and Agnes (née Currie)

Hilda was educated in 1896 at the council-run Thirsk County Infant School. After leaving school, she worked as a machine stocking knitter for Joseph Kendall draper of Market Place Thirsk. She would have also attended the Wesleyan Sunday School and would later teach as well as being a member of the Thirsk Wesley Guild.

By 1939, Hilda is employed as a housekeeper for Jame Lofthouse, a retired railway goods agent living at 24 South Terrace, Sowerby. She married Sidney T. Hopps in 1948 in Bradford, and finally her death was recorded in 1970 at Wharfedale.

May Burton *(Sunday School Teacher)*



She was born on May 3rd, 1896, in Sowerby, Thirsk. Her parents were William Burton (Corn Miller) and Emma (née Walker). When this photo was taken, she would have been 16 years old and living in Long Street, Thirsk.

In 1915, at the age of 19, she married Stanley Cooper-Tempest in Ripon. They had four children: May, born in 1916, Olga, born in 1919, Iris, born in 1924, and Roma, born in 1930. May died in Ripon on May 15, 1975.

Bessie Crisp *(Sunday School Teacher)*



She was born on April 8, 1897 in Middlesborough. Her parents were James Crisp (School Attendance Office) and Mary (née Hawley). The family lived at 6 Westbourne Terrace, Sowerby, and she was employed as a dressmaker's apprentice.

Bessie married Harold Benson Bosomworth (Railway Clerk) on April 10, 1920, at Sowerby. Ruth, born in York in 1926, was their only child. Bessie died in 1982 in York.

Griffin Crisp *(Sunday School Teacher)*



He was born 9th June 1894 in South Side, Middlesbrough, to parents James Crisp (School Attendance Officer) and Mary (née Hawley). In 1912 he lived at Westbourne Terrace, Sowerby and was employed as a Grocers apprentice. He was also a Sunday School teacher and member of the Thirsk Wesley Guild.

Griffin married Elizabeth Wright on 23rd September 1919 at Brompton. They had a son named Errol who was born 3rd

April 1920 in Northallerton, where they lodging with Elizabeth's parents. Their son was named after Griffin's brother who had been killed in action during WW1. The 1921 census show he was employed as an Assistant Grocer for Messrs Clark

& Co grocers, Market Place, Thirsk (this is the family business being run by Thomas Clark, one of the Church and Sunday School Trustee). Griffin died in 1977 East Cleveland.

Constance Ellen Foss (*Sunday School Teacher*)



Born on August 5, 1890, in Thirsk, to parents Henry Foss (gas manager) and Martha (née Key).

Constance lived with her parents on Long Street until her marriage to Charles Davison Snowden (railway clerk) on February 22, 1922, at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Thirsk. Her new husband had been previously married to Charlotte Winifred Smithson, but she had died two years earlier in Northallerton.

By 1939, Constance and her husband, now Station Master at Whitby, were living at the station house in Ruswarp, Whitby. Constance never had children of her own but brought up her stepson Geoffrey Wynne (born October 7, 1920) from her husband's first marriage. Four years later, in 1943, her husband died, leaving her a widow. There are no more records for Constance until her death in 1972 in the Westmorland South District.

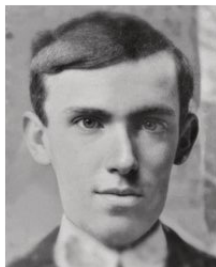
Daisy Harrison (*Sunday School Teacher*)



Daisy was born September 11, 1891, in Bradford. Her parents were John Harrison (Confectioners' Salesman) and Jemima (née Dalziel) As well as a Sunday School teacher, Daisy also worked as a shop assistant.

On the 29th November 1919 at the Wesleyan Chapel in Thirsk, Daisy married Frederick Williams Snelling. By 1921 they are living at 40 Long Street, Thirsk and Frederick is employed by the Cooperative Society in Market Place as a grocers traveller. They have one child, a daughter Miriam, born in 1924. Daisy died at the age of 71 in 1963.

William Robert Horner *(Sunday School Teacher)*



He was born on August 10, 1893, in Thirsk, and like Griffin, he was also a grocer's apprentice. His parents were Alfred Horner (a general labourer) and Elizabeth Ann (née Walker), and they lived in Little Green, Thirsk.

William served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the newly named RAF from September 27th, 1918, to April 25th, 1919. Little is known about William's life after WW1.

Gladys May Jordison *(Sunday School Teacher)*



She was born in Thirsk on May 20, 1896. Her parents were Thomas Jordison (Railway Waggon Examiner) and Rosamond (née Harker). At the time of this photo, the family was living at 33 Long Street, Thirsk. Gladys married John Reginald Holmes (Draper and Furnisher) on June 3, 1922, at the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Thirsk. Both John and Gladys worked for B. Smith & Sons, Drapers & Outfitters in the market place, Thirsk.

They had one child, Derek, born in 1925 in Thirsk. Gladys died on March 12, 1975, in Harrogate.

Maggie Kilvington *(Sunday School Teacher)*



Maggie was born on March 18th, 1895, in Stockton Forest, York. Her parents were Henry Grayson Kilvington (a publican and forage dealer) and Ann (née Rodgers). In 1911, she was living at the Crown Hotel, Market Place, Thirsk.

Maggie married Harold Murgatroyd at Thirsk in 1918. Three years later, the couple is living at 14 Station Road, Billingham, Durham, where Harold is employed as a railway porter for the North Eastern Railway at Billingham Junction Station. By 1939, they were living at 47

Godard Avenue, Hull. Maggie's husband is now employed as a travelling railway ticket inspector for the L.N.E.R.

Maggie and Harold had one son, Geoffrey, who was born on July 11, 1930, in Stockton. She continued living in Hull until her death in 1960.

Edith Eleanor Midgley (*Sunday School Teacher*)



Edith was born August 19, 1888, in Norton. Her parents were Ralph Midgley (Railway Signalman) and Lucy Mary (née Prest). At the time of this photograph, she was employed as a draper's assistant and lived at Melbourne Place, Sowerby.

Edith married Thomas Couper (a railway clerk) in Thirsk in 1930. Prior to this, in 1921, she was boarding with her future husband's family in Darlington and working as a blouse buyer for the firm of J. Bainbridge Baker, Drapers, and Costumier. Interestingly, in the 1921 census, she is shown using the Couper surname and not Midgley. She spent the rest of her life in Darlington; the records show her death in 1974.

Charlie Mills (*Sunday School Teacher*)



Charlie was born on October 24, 1892, in Thirsk. His parents were Charles Mills (Foreman Blacksmith) and Annie (née Spence). The family was living at Victory Row, Sowerby, and Charlie was employed as an apprentice fitter. In 1921, Charlie is shown living at 6 Mansfield Street, York, and his occupation is fitter engineer for Rowntree's Cocoa & Chocolate Manufacturers.

Charlie married Mary Maw Nurrish in 1918 in Tynemouth, Northumberland, and they had two children, Lena, born on January 25, 1920, and Charles, born on December 30, 1921, both in York. Charlie died at the age of 77 in 1969 in York.

Maria Straffen *(Sunday School Teacher)*



Maria was born on May 1st, 1887, in Thirsk. Her parents were John Robert Straffen and Sarah (née Atkinson), who ran a shoe and boot business in Millgate, Thirsk.

After the death of her father, she ran the family business with her mother and sister. Maria's sister Elizabeth was also an active member of the Wesleyan church, and they are both named on the Sunday School foundation stones (*refs. 20 and 21*).

An article in the Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record describes how she became a devout Christian at the age of 13. Being part of church life was very important to her and included the choir, Wesley Guild, Society Class leader, and Sunday School teacher.

At the age of 28 years, she married Edwin Clare Atkinson, a clergyman in the Anglican Church. The service took place on August 11, 1915, at the Wesleyan Chapel in Thirsk. Some time before 1918, she and her husband, The Reverend Edwin C. Atkinson, moved to the United States, where Edwin undertook the duties of Church of England curate. Maria died on December 30, 1918, at the Christchurch Rectory, Albert Lea, Minnesota, USA, where her husband was the curate.

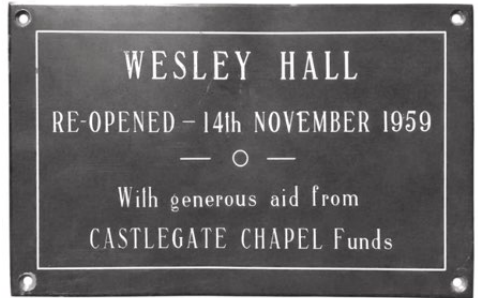
Thirsk Circuit Wesleyan Methodist Church Record (Magazine), birth, census and military records (FMP)



Thirsk Sunday School – Primary Department Staff, March 1912

The Building Today

During World War II, the building, then known as Wesley Hall, was leased to the Army and later to the Ministry of Pensions. After a merger with the Primitive Methodist Church on Castlegate and the demolition of the Wesleyan Chapel on St. James' Green, the Sunday School now became the Thirsk Methodist Church. The building had undergone two major refurbishments, with the last in 2005. The original vision for this space in the 1900s continues with us today, with the building being used not only for worship but also for education, the arts, and community use.



Thirsk Methodist Church



The Sunday School Stone-Laying Ceremony, Wednesday 29 July 1908

Sources and Credits

Thirsk Methodist Records – North Yorkshire Archives.

Methodism in the Thirsk Circuit by J Ward, Wesleyan Minister 1860

Baptism, Marriage, Burial, Census and Newspapers – FindMyPast / Ancestry.

Thirsk Museum.

St. James' Green Methodist Church, Thirsk.

Revd. Denise Williamson for help and support.

Photographs (*including digitally enhanced*), graphics, maps, text, and layout design – SPW.

The Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School, THIRSK – 1900 to 1919

The Thirsk Wesleyan Methodists had a brave vision to build a new Sunday School. It would accommodate 300 children. It was a struggle to raise the required funds, which were only realised at the Opening Ceremony on June 2, 1909.

Included are the names and, in some cases, short biographies and photographs of those involved with the scheme, which will be of great interest to local and family historians. The book also contains photographs of the stone-laying and opening ceremonies, showing the key people present.

The building's architectural details, fittings, and fixtures are also shown as drawings, photographs, and written descriptions.

1919 was the end of a period which saw a change in Britain due to the horrors and suffering of the Great War. A number of the young people from the Thirsk Circuit served their King and Country.

