

## THE CHAPELS SOCIETY

### Notes for visit to Cleethorpes & Grimsby

12 September 2015

**Introduction.** From the middle of the nineteenth century Grimsby developed as a port and its neighbour, Cleethorpes, as a residential and seaside resort. The population of Grimsby was 8,860 in 1851, when work on the new Royal Dock was underway, that of the parish of Clee 1,034 of whom 839 lived on the coast in the Clee 'thorpes'. In 1901 the population of Grimsby was 63,138, that of Cleethorpes 12,578, but by then Grimsby's boundaries had been extended into the ancient parish of Clee to include what became known as New Clee, originally New Cleethorpes.

New Clee, had developed on the western edge of Clee parish, in proximity to the docks. There had also been rapid growth on the Grimsby side of the boundary, where the freemen of the borough (first charter 1201) had begun to lease out their East Marsh grazing lands for building. Later suburban development to the south on land owned by the Heneage and Grant Thorold families' estates added a more distinctly middle class area to the fabric of the town.

**Beaconthorpe Methodist Church, Cleethorpes** (Grade II listed <http://list.historicengland.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1161563> Architect: Henry Harper, Nottingham. Builder: A. J. Elms, Gainsborough. Cost: £3,007). The first Primitive Methodist preachers arrived in Cleethorpes in 1819. At the 1851 Census of Religious Worship, the Primitives had a 'General Congregation' of 100, with 37 Sunday Scholars, at their best attended service. That at the Wesleyan chapel was a General Congregation of 235. By the time that Beaconthorpe was built the Primitives were worshipping in the 1,000 seat Mill Road chapel, which became the central Methodist church in Cleethorpes after Trinity Wesleyan chapel closed in 1968. In 1978, the present building, St Andrew's was opened on the Mill Road site.

The township of Beaconthorpe – a new 'thorpe' for Cleethorpes – comprised four houses in 1844. In 1858 it became the site of a coastguard station, with houses for six men, a chief boatman, and their families. By the 1880s, when the Cleethorpes Primitive Methodists had begun to hold house meetings in Beaconthorpe, the residents of the developing suburb included a shipping agent, brick and tile makers, fishermen and fish merchants. A mission room, which still stands behind the church, was opened in 1889 (Cost: £247). The adjacent plot of land for the present chapel, on the corner of Grimsby Road and Tennyson Road, was purchased from the Tennyson family in 1912 for £504.

There is no external foundation stone, but a tablet at the base of the tower records the laying of memorial stones on 21 May 1913. The chapel was opened on 2 June 1914. An organ was installed in 1924 to replace an harmonium. The adjoining Sunday School (Architect: Archibald Osbourne, Cleethorpes. Builder Wilkinson & Houghton, Cleethorpes) was opened in 1932. There were 23 trustees when the church and mission room trusts were consolidated in 1926. Eight of them were fish merchants, 2 were steam trawler owners, and 1 a fish buyer. Councillor T., later Sir Thomas, Robinson, J.P. and his wife were among the people laying stones in 1913. Sir Thomas, whose association with the Mill Road chapel is a measure of the

importance of Methodism in the life of Cleethorpes – there was no Anglican church building there until 1866 – was Vice President of the Primitive Methodist conference in 1923.

Stell describes Beacontorpe church building as ‘Free Gothic’ (Stell, *Eastern England*, p.202), but the official listing adds the description ‘Arts and Crafts’, describing the windows as having ‘Arts and Crafts style Perpendicular tracery’. The stained glass, with a particularly ornate south window, is also Arts and Crafts. The pews are arranged in curved rows. With the original panelled pine pulpit and five bay single hammer beam roof, they contribute to an impressive interior. The architect, Henry Harper, working from his Nottingham office, had some twenty nonconformist commissions in the period 1895-1909, of which fifteen were for the Primitive Methodists, and twelve in the East Midlands.

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The **Freeman Street** area of **Grimsby**, where the group will visit **St Mary on the Sea Roman Catholic** church, the **Ice House**, the **Central Hall**, and see the **Sir Moses Montefiore Synagogue**, the **Hall of Science**, the former **United Methodist Free Churches Chapel**, and the **Salvation Army Barracks**, was developed by the Freemen of Grimsby on their former East Marsh grazing lands. Its proximity to the fish docks, the first of which was completed in 1857, meant that it was the area of the town that was particularly associated with the fishing industry. There were 64 fishing vessels registered in Grimsby in 1851. Their number peaked at 636 in 1891, and although there were fluctuations in the total weight of fish that was landed, the industry continued to expand because of its value. A high point was reached in the 1950s with 198,000 tons of fish landed from British vessels in 1951.

In 1851 Grimsby had 8 places of worship: an ancient parish church, 2 Wesleyan Methodist and 2 Primitive Methodist chapels. There were as well two sets of Baptist services, of which one was held in a rented hall, and also Roman Catholic services held in what was described as ‘Ropery’. By 1891, there were 43 buildings used for religious purposes (9 belonged to the Church of England, 10 were Wesleyan and 7 Primitive Methodists, 1 United Methodist Free Churches, 3 Independent, 5 Baptist, 1 Roman Catholic, 1 Presbyterian, 1 Salvation Army, 1 Scandinavian Lutheran, a Fishermen and Sailors’ Bethel, and a Fishermen and Sailors’ Gospel Temperance Mission). A report in the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* in 1893 noted the popularity of 9 or 10 interdenominational mission halls in the town. It was suggested, that members who had moved from the country areas took more kindly to their ‘homelier’ services.

### **St Mary on the Sea Roman Catholic Church and Presbytery (Both Grade II**

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-479283-church-of-st-mary-by-the-sea-#.VbqJuvlViko>; illustrated history of the church at

<http://www.stmarysrcchurchgrimsby.org.uk/history-of-the-church/> Architects: M.E. & C. Hadfield, Sheffield. Builders: church: Riggall & Hewins, Grimsby; sacristy: J.G. Smith, Grimsby). In 1851 a congregation of about eighty Roman Catholics met in a building described as a ‘Ropery’. The priest, Father Phelan, had been sent to Grimsby from Louth in 1850 to serve what was a new Catholic community: largely Irish men working on the new dock works, with a core of married couples. When the dock works were finished Father Phelan left the town, and, for a time, a priest from Brigg took services. A resident priest was appointed in 1856. Various buildings were hired for worship, and in 1869 the site of the present church on Holme Hill was purchased by Sir John Sutton, a friend of A. N. W. Pugin,

from the estate of the Heneage family, also Roman Catholics. It was a site where there had been chapel in the middle ages dedicated to St Nicholas, and the building is shown on an early seventeenth century map, while the Grey Friars obtained a licence in 1313 to build a subterranean conduit from Holme Hill to their Grimsby house.

The patronage of the local Catholic gentry remained important in Lincolnshire church building even after the main centres of worship had moved to towns. Thomas Arthur Young (d.1891), from the village of Kingerby, who contributed £6,000 to the building of St Mary's, is described on his memorial in the chapel of the Sacred Heart at Grimsby not only as the benefactor of St Mary's, but also of 'many churches throughout the Shire'.

The church's architect, Matthew Ellison Hadfield, who has been described as a 'pious Catholic,' was first in partnership with J.G. Weightman. Their work included St John's church, Salford, which became the cathedral in 1850, and St Marie's, Sheffield, elevated to cathedral status in 1980. From the 1860s Hadfield was joined by his son Charles. St Mary's was one of the last of their numerous Roman Catholic churches.

The Hadfields were probably also responsible for the **Presbytery**, built 1874. An apse in the school to the north of the church, also 1874 and replaced by modern buildings in the 1970s, was used for Mass until the church, begun in 1879, was dedicated 1883. The foundation stone on the south side of the church chancel exterior has the dates 1880 and 1883.

According to the *Grimsby News* of 24 August 1883, the architects of St Mary's had attempted to express 'the idea of size and solidity, as in the great North German Medieval Churches, and the material of which the fabric is constructed is a local brick of warm red tone, with a sparing use of Yorkshire stone', a reference that is picked up by Pevsner: 'the aisles so high that the effect is almost that of a hall-church.'

Gentry influence and patronage is evident in the furnishings of the church. Young provided the elaborately fitted Sacred Heart Chapel, while its altar, by Pugin and Pugin, was the gift of the Hon. Mrs Georgina Fraser (née Heneage). Young's other gifts included, in 1888, the oak chancel stalls, as well as the high altar and reredos. He is depicted in the left panel of the bottom row of the reredos, kneeling at the feet of St Norbert, the founder of the Premonstratensian order, which Young reintroduced into Lincolnshire. A new altar and lectern were installed in 1973 when the church was reordered.

The east window, with five openings depicting Our Lady Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in 'Italian Gothic of the 15<sup>th</sup> century', was another of Young's gifts, and cost £400. This and the side windows of the chancel are said to have been designed by Herbert Gandy (d.1934), a painter whose work included religious subjects, and they were probably made by John Jennings (1848-1919), of Lambeth Art Glass Works. In 1881, Jennings described himself as 'a draughtsman for painted glass who had trained at Lambeth Art School'. Each of the side windows of the sanctuary has a medallion with a symbol of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Other stained glass has been attributed to John Hardman & Co., Birmingham, and the 'Miraculous Draught of Fishes', a window commemorating the Peace of 1945, in memory of Emily Hyldon (d.1945), is signed as such. It has views of Grimsby docks. The chancel floor has tiles, now covered, by the firm of William Godwin of Lugwardine and Withington, near Hereford.

The west window is also possibly Hardman. This, and one above the penultimate Station of the Cross, were installed from funds raised to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the

ordination of Canon J.P. Hawkins, parish priest between 1884 and 1913. His involvement in the public life of the town, including long service on the Board of Guardians and School Board, is indicative of the evolving place of the Catholic community in it. This development is also reflected in the growth of benefactions by members of the middle classes to the church. The pulpit, was given in 1892 in memory of Thomas Dunn, a 'boot dealer' with two shops in the town, by his wife, Bedelia. Made in Germany at a cost of £100 it was praised in the church magazine as 'a model of cheapness, and yet truly solid ... worthy of any church'. The wooden statues of St Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary (1892) were also made in Germany.

The public services of Thomas Charlton, shipbuilder, Grimsby borough councillor for 35 years, justice of the peace and, in 1875-76, the second Roman Catholic mayor since the Reformation, were commemorated by his surviving children, who paid for the 'magnificent decorations on the walls and archway of the sanctuary'. Charlton appears in his mayoral robes in the Nativity scene, while it is said that his family were also used as models in this and the painting of the Epiphany. Another benefactor was Thomas Rice, a scrap iron merchant, described by the *Grimsby Telegraph* as 'a leading member of the congregation'. The decoration of the church was carried out in 1908, and has been attributed to the studio of Nathaniel Westlake (1833–1921) of Lavers, Westlake and Co., London.

Other wall paintings include part of a dado frieze of fishes, said to have been painted by three members of the congregation in the 1930s, and purported to include every known species of fish in the sea. It originally extended around the nave, but is now only visible at the west end under the gallery. With the sanctuary paintings they were painted over in 1963, until ca. 2002-4, when they were partially restored by conservator Nigel Leaney. Panels in the centre of the reredos were also exposed. In 1983 a narthex was formed under the western gallery, which contains the organ installed in the 1920s.

**Sir Moses Montefiore Synagogue and ritual bath house** *EXTERIOR ONLY*. (Both

Grade II <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-479287-sir-moses-montefiore-synagogue-#.VbqNovlViko>;

<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-479288-bath-house-at-sir-moses-montefiore-synag#.VbqOXflViko> Architect: B.S. Jacobs, Hull. Builder: Jolland

Chapman, Grimsby. Cost: 'a little over £1,000') There was only one Jew apparent in the population of Grimsby in 1861, Joseph Hertzberg, a second hand clothes dealer. By 1871 there were 22 Jewish adults and 16 children, all living near the docks area of the town. They included 4 glaziers, 3 joiners, 2 jewellers and watchmakers, a rabbi, a moneylender, a labourer, a hawker, a shoemaker, and a tailor. There was a fish merchant by 1881 but, although there was some Jewish investment in the fishing industry, there was no marked association with it.

In 1874, when a synagogue was established, its 18 members included Jews who were of German, Russian and Polish origin, but whose younger children had been born in Hull in the 1860s. Grimsby was identified in the 1903 Royal Commission into Alien Immigration as 'a high thoroughfare for passengers' with 'a direct bearing on the question of alien immigration'. Each year between 1881 and 1914 about 5,000 of the 2.75 million Jews who were moving from Europe to the United States passed through Grimsby. A small number stayed in the town, and in 1881 most of its 50 Jewish adults, had been born in 'Russian Poland'.

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A synagogue had been opened in a 'cottage' by 1878. It had 20 seat holders on its register. The marriage register, predates this building, and begins in 1875, when a private house was used for wedding ceremonies. The register, which is still in use, reflects the demographic history of town's Jewish community. One hundred and ninety nine of its 200 spaces have been used, with the last entry in 1972. The total Jewish population of the town reached its height of 450 in the period 1899-1918. The highest ratio of synagogue members to the Jewish population of the town was 66% in 1982, the lowest, at 13% in 1900.

In 1882 land was bought for £20 from Edward, later Baron, Heneage of Hainton, to build a new synagogue. The architect, Benjamin Septimus Jacobs (*fl.* 1875-1915) had an extensive practice in Hull, and his work included the city's Western Synagogue (1902). The foundation stone was laid in 1885, and the synagogue consecrated in December 1888. An entrance arch, to the right of the front of the building as seen from the road, is later nineteenth century. The ark recess, which appears as an extension on the front of the building was added in 1935, while there is a single storey school/meeting room at the rear, built in the 1930s.

The premises of the Fisherlads' Institute were used for a *mikvah* or ritual bath from 1891, but in 1916 one was built at the rear of the synagogue. It is now disused, but according to the English Heritage listing, which describes it as an 'unusual survival', it retains original fittings, glazed tile walls, and changing cubicles.

**The Ice House Christian Centre** (Architect: V. Goodhand, Grimsby; Consulting Engineers: Williams Concrete Services, London. For extension, Architect: Goodhand & White, Grimsby. Cost: said to be over £1,000,000). The Ice House, which is built of reinforced concrete, was completed in 1922 for the Standard Ice & Cold Storage Co. Ltd. It was intended to be used to manufacture ice for the fishing industry, and as cold stores. The two bay extension on the south of the building that is the entrance area was added soon after to provide a cart way, offices and additional cold storage. Other structures, associated with the industrial use of the building have been demolished.

The Ice House is of interest because the structural engineering practice, Williams Concrete Structures Ltd was involved in its construction. The industrial buildings with which the firm, established in 1919/20, was associated this time were utilitarian and lacked architectural pretensions. An example from Lincolnshire is Blackstone's tractor factory, Stamford. But the firm's founder, Owen, later Sir Owen, Williams, broke away from the traditional pattern of working in concrete reinforcement in which the engineer's contribution to building design was only negligible, and buildings to his credit include Wembley Stadium (1921-24), as well as the Daily Express buildings, in Fleet Street, London (1929-31), Manchester (1935-39), and Glasgow (1936-39).

Ice manufacture was underway by July 1922, and in an article in February 1924 the *Daily Mail* published pictures of the machinery and ice-making process in what was claimed to be the largest ice factory in the world. In 1934 the daily output was said to be 350 tons, while the factory also had a cold storage capacity of 250,000 square feet. In February 1939, the *Grimsby Evening Telegraph* carried a report that the manufacture of ice had ceased, and although it was started again in 1940, production eventually ended. A large part of the plant was given over to fish processing until 1970, when an application was made to demolish the whole building and to build a completely new cold store – plans that would have been hampered by what was said to be twenty feet of permafrost beneath the old building. The factory finally closed in 1971.

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The building, which had been described in the local evening paper as ‘a terrible eyesore’ in 1974, was bought in 1977 by a local businessman. It was reported in February 1978, that it was to be used ‘for the promotion of the Christian faith’. The conversion of the building into a Christian centre took place over a period of three years, during which the third floor was added and became a 700 seat auditorium. The first public event took place in October 1980. In 2006 the trustees decided to redevelop and modernize the Centre. This work was completed, and the Ice House Christian Centre was relaunched, in May 2009.

**Central Hall and Fisherman’s Chapel** (<http://www.grimsbycentralhall.org/> Architect: A. Brocklehurst, Waterfoot, Lancs., then Manchester. Stated cost: £26,000) There was Methodist preaching in Grimsby from 1743, with visits by both John and Charles Wesley – in the case of John, twenty times over a period of 45 years from 1743. By 1766 the town was at the head of what became the Lincolnshire East Circuit. The first Grimsby Methodist chapel, opened by John Wesley in 1757, may have been the earliest in Lincolnshire.

By 1851 there were two Wesleyan chapels in the town: the central George Street Chapel, with attendances on Sunday 30 March that were said to fill its 1,050 seats to capacity and more, and a smaller building in a former Masonic hall, with attendances, according to the same minister who made the return for George Street, exactly matching the 170 seats that were available. The Primitive Methodists, whose preachers had arrived in the town in 1819, also had two chapels by 1851: the larger with a congregation of 500 at its best attended service on Sunday 30 March; the smaller, in the area where the new docks were under construction, had a congregation of 70, with 97 Sunday scholars.

Duncombe Street Wesleyan (Architect: Charles Bell) opened in 1872, with seating for 880 people, was the third new Wesleyan chapel to be opened in the period from 1860. The nearby Garibaldi Street Primitive Methodist, with seats for 690, and opened in 1863, also served the Freeman Street area. The Reform movement was never strong in Grimsby, and it was not until 1869 that the **United Methodist Free Churches Chapel** was opened, with seats for ‘between seven and eight hundred people’.

Garibaldi Street and the UMFC chapels were closed and sold following Methodist Union in 1932. Duncombe Street was demolished and replaced by the **[Methodist] Central Hall**, which was opened in 1934, when the hope was expressed that it would become the home for ‘all that is best in religion, education and recreation’.

Grimsby was in the last period of Central Hall building: 13 between 1930 and 1945. They tended to be much smaller than their predecessors, the first of which had been built in 1875 – about half or slightly less than half the size. Its architect, Arthur Brocklehurst (1879-1960), was a lifelong Methodist. Either individually, or in partnership with his son, or with Alan W. Hornabrook, he designed a total of 22, or nearly 30% of all the Halls that were built. He also worked on halls, schools and, mainly Wesleyan, churches, many located in Lancashire, most of the others in adjoining counties.

The Grimsby Hall was described in the annual report of the national Chapel Committee of 1934 as being in an architectural style that ‘is a modern rendering of Renaissance’. The building was ‘steel-framed and supported on re-inforced concrete piles, with brick walls, the principal elevation being faced with multi-coloured rustic facings with reconstructed stone dressings’. It included the central hall, with ‘accommodation for a Congregation and Choir of 1,115 adults [seating capacity said to be 956 in 1941] on the Ground Floor and End Gallery’,

as well as school and recreation rooms. Rooms were also provided for 'the Cinematograph Apparatus'.

The Hall remained in debt until the 1960s, when it became the responsibility of the Methodist Church's Central Missions Committee. A number of Central Halls were modernized between 1960 and 1970 and, in 1965, work to renovate the Grimsby building was carried out under the Hull Methodist architect Bernard (later the Revd Bernard) W. Blanchard (*d.* 1983) at a cost of £20,000, with the same builders who had built the Hall. This included the replacement of the by now unusable pipe organ in the central hall, and the reconfiguration of the platform on which it had stood, together with the seating arrangements in the hall. A community hall, now known as the Roy Kemp Room, with a stage, dressing rooms, lounge, coffee bar and kitchens was created from the School Assembly Hall on the first floor.

Offices were created for the team of religious and social workers that was set up to work from the Hall. A community officer had been appointed in 1963 to develop secular activities, and in 1966 the Port Missioner's work was incorporated into the team. There was a Sunday school of some 900 children for the first few years of the new dispensation, but congregations declined: the average Sunday congregation was 276 in 1960, 120 by 1969.

Without the financial support of Grimsby Borough Council, which continued through the 1970s and 1980s – 21 groups were reported to be using it in 1972, with another 23 affiliated to it – the Hall would have had to have closed in the early 1970s. The community centre was closed in 1985, its development restricted, it was reported, by covenants that covered the use of the Hall. By 1991 a major programme of refurbishment and repair was needed in order to obtain a public entertainment licence. By this time services, which were held in the Fisherman's Chapel, were attended by about 35 people, and there were 68 members in the society. It was decided to close the Hall, and the last Methodist service was held in December of that year. A charitable trust was formed with the aim of maintaining it as a centre for the performing arts, and the Hall was leased to them by the Methodist Church at a peppercorn rent.

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In May 1966 the Epworth Chapel, originally the Quiet Room of the Central Hall, became **The Fisherman's Chapel**

(<http://www.grimsbycentralhall.org/UserControls/FCKEditor/UserFiles/file/The%20Fisherman's%20and%20Seaman's%20Memorial%20Chapel.pdf>). Its fittings and furnishings, were brought from the former Fishermen's Bethel Mission, New Clee (Architect R.A. Robertson, Grimsby. Builder: J.S. Spalding), which was opened in 1904, closed in March 1966, and is now demolished. Approaches to mission were affected by changes in fishing techniques, particularly the development of steam trawling, but loss of life, and the resulting social needs, were a constant in the life of the fishing community, and the chapel, with its memorials, is a powerful reminder of the human cost of fishing.

The Bethel Mission was built as part of the work of the Hull Society East Coast Mission & Sailors' Orphans Homes (later the Port of Hull Society and Sailors' Orphan Homes), which was one of a number of societies, some denominationally based, working in Grimsby and on the North Sea fisheries. The Society had appointed a Port Missionary in the town in 1870, and he was supported by members of the local community and its churches. In 1877 a bazaar

was held in the Temperance Hall to liquidate the debt on the Sailors and Fishermen's Iron Bethel, a predecessor to the building of 1904. The history of the actual fabric of the Iron Bethel is somewhat opaque, but in 900 people were reported to have attended a service in 1882 to mark one of the various changes to its configuration that were effected in the 1880s and 1890s.

Other premises were also used by the Society for its evangelistic and charitable work. These were given up when the Bethel Mission was opened in New Clee in 1904. This was a relatively simple building, with a main hall measuring 56 by 34 feet, and an ancillary class room and kitchen. The premises were later expanded and also extended, when a neighbouring house was bought and adapted as a Sunday school. This added six more class rooms. An organ was purchased from Lincoln Drill Hall. The Bethel Mission building memorial stone, now above the entrance door of the Fisherman's Chapel, has the names of its twelve original trustees. Two of them, W. Grant and Thomas Robinson appear on the memorial stone of **Beaconthorpe Church** [p.2 above]. There are also members of the Osborn family on both stones.

After the First World War there began, in the words of Captain Smedley, the Port Missionary (*fl.* 1896-1933) 'a race to beautifie[sic] the Churches at the expense of the war with War Memorials. I myself did not believe [sic] in this'. But he was persuaded that there should be one in the Bethel – 'it was only fitting ... all the sorrow came there' – and the marble war memorial for all the men lost at sea from the port that is now on the left wall of the Fisherman's Chapel was erected.

The war memorial covers 1,230 losses in the period 1914 to 1919, and the record is continued in a series of boards, now fixed on either side of it. The first of them was unveiled in December 1930, with the names of each man lost at sea since 1920 who has no known grave: a total of about 3,000. The lighted windows at the east end of the chapel are another First World War memorial. These were originally installed in a church for merchant seamen in Immingham, but this building was demolished, and what was then a single, three light window was taken for a church, also for merchant seamen, to be erected in Dunkirk. The window was eventually returned, still in its packing case, and installed in the Bethel Mission in 1922. From there it came in to the Chapel in 1966 with other memorial windows to the crews of the trawlers *Epine* lost off the coast of Iceland in 1948, the *Sheldon*, lost with all hands on its way to the Faroe fishing grounds in 1953, and men lost from the trawler the *Oswald*.

Two of the windows include pictures of the lost trawlers. That for the *Sheldon*, in the centre, was designed by G.R. Smith (*fl.* 1937-1960s), and came from the studios of A.K. Nicholson, St John's Wood, London, at a cost of £150. The *Epine* is depicted in the window to the left. That to the right has men hauling in the trawl. Other furniture in the Chapel includes an antique trawler binnacle which, with a ship's wheel that is on the lectern, were positioned beneath the pulpit at the Bethel Mission. The binnacle has been fitted with a brass bowl to make it useable as a font.

**United Methodist Free Churches Chapel EXTERIOR ONLY** (1869. Cost, including land: 'about £1,300'). Only the upper part of the façade and gable end of this reportedly 'neat and chaste' building is now visible but, as one of the surviving buildings of the period, the chapel is a reminder of the scale and pace of building operations in this part of Grimsby at the time. The inclusion of the price of the land in the reported cost of building the chapel –



said to be a large sum 'for a few hard-working families to raise' – is indicative of the additional expense that was incurred by churches that aspired to build on the main streets of developing areas. Nonetheless, by May 1870, it was felt that the chapel was too small, and it was resolved to add a 'substantial' vestry and schoolroom.

**Hall of Science** *EXTERIOR ONLY* (Architect: David Pick, ?Grimsby. Bricklayer: John Surfleet, Grimsby. Joiners: Coulson & Heywood, Grimsby. Cost: £1,200). There is evidence for the existence of an organized group of freethinkers in Grimsby from 1868, and the prospectus for a company to build Grimsby Hall of Science appeared in the *Grimsby Observer & Humber News* of 1 May 1872. The advertisement referred to the 'repeated denial of our halls and other public buildings for the delivery of Freethought and Scientific Lectures'. The company sought, by building the Hall, to 'effect the elevation and development of the moral and intellectual character of the people'. It was to be financed by the issue of £1 shares.

The company had a nominal capital of £1,500, and the main shareholders, with ten shares each, were a fish salesman and a marine store dealer. The company secretary was an ice merchant's clerk. The number of shareholders grew, and by 1874, as well as the atheist Charles Bradlaugh, described at this date as a journalist, there were also fishermen, a number of painters, and innkeepers. Mrs Annie Besant, the prominent British socialist, theosophist, women's rights activist, writer and orator, had become a shareholder by 1879.

Members of the families of shareholders also subscribed to the Company and, as they increased their holdings, it began to appear, as early as 1879, to be an organisation that was in the hands of a relatively limited circle of activists, often linked by family ties. The company was wound up in 1920. The Hall was sold, and by 1923 was a café and billiard hall. The sum of £3,138 was distributed to shareholders. True to the Company's original mission, a donation of £10 was made to the 'Free Thought Society'.

The lower part of the façade of the Hall of Science is now concealed by 'Daves Place'. The original structure, opened in 1873 by the secularist and co-operator George Holyoake, was described as 'an acquisition to the architectural efforts of the New Town'. As well as the ground floor lecture hall, which measured 54 by 37 feet, and an 18 by 12 foot platform, it had two committee rooms, a lounge, and two ante rooms. When the building was finished, the management committee were reported as being 'perplexed' by the inclusion of the letters A.D. in the date on the inscription on the front of the building. They were struck out.

**Salvation Army Barracks** *EXTERIOR ONLY* (Architect: E.J. Sherwood, Surveyors Department, Salvation Army Headquarters, London) In 1880 William Booth sent Captain and Mrs Wilson to 'open fire' in Grimsby, and by 1881 the Army were said to have purchased a building in Duncombe Street that had previously been used as a saw mill. There were reported to be 600 members by 1882, and at a 'Council of War' in 1886 General Booth is reported to have presented colours. The present building was built in 1888, to replace what was said to be a wooden structure. Junior Soldiers Barracks were added to its west in 1894.

The 1888 building was said to have 480 seats on the main floor, with 137 seats, and room for 126 to stand in the gallery at the rear, which is now boxed in. There were also 100 seats in the 'orchestra' giving a total capacity of 843. While the date stone and title are clearly visible

above what is now a central doorway, the foundation stones to the right and left of the door are eroded to the point of illegibility.

### **Welholme Galleries** *EXTERIOR ONLY* (Grade II

[http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-479344-welholme-galleries-#.Vcj9L\\_IViko](http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-479344-welholme-galleries-#.Vcj9L_IViko)

Architects: former Mission Church and Sunday School: H. C. Scaping, Grimsby; former Welholme Congregational Church: Bell, Withers and Meredith, London. Builders: Mission church and Sunday School: H. Thompson, Grimsby; former Welholme Congregational church: Hewins & Goodhand, Grimsby. Cost: Welholme: £7,082)

In 1778 Cradock Glascot, a minister in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, visited Grimsby at the invitation of several people, and preached in the town's streets. A local committee was formed in support of the work. A room, and then a barn, were used for worship until a chapel was built in 1779. The second minister, William Smelle [see **United Reformed Church** p.12 below for his memorial], who came to the town in 1782, remained a committed itinerant preacher after he seceded from the connexion and settled into an Independent ministry.

Smelle received support for his work 'to spread the Gospel in some of the darkest parts of Lincolnshire' from the national Societas Evangelica, and a meeting of an association for Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire ministers 'of Calvinistic persuasion' met at Smelle's Grimsby meeting house in June 1799. Smelle built a dwelling house at the end of the chapel and, since he had lent money to build it, the trustees assigned the building to him and his heirs until the church was able to redeem them. At his death in 1823 the property was claimed by a relative and the church eventually dispersed.

Some sort of continuity is perhaps implied by the stone plaque and date stone inscribed 'Ebenezer' and with the date 1786, set in the liturgically north transept of the Galleries, but the date does not fit with any known event in the history of Dissent in Grimsby and, although there are references to ministers in Grimsby in the 1830s, it was not until 1849 that an effort to re-establish the cause was made by the Lincolnshire Association of Independent Churches and Ministers. Eventually the Hull Association was able to begin services in the Mechanics' Hall in 1859, and when Spring Church was built in 1861, nearly half its trustees were from Hull.

Spring Church, by the Louth architect James Fowler (1828-92) cost £1,539, plus £450 for the land on Victoria Street, and the eleven local trustees, under the leadership of Thomas Wintringham, a timber merchant, with two of his foremen, show a church that was rooted in mercantile activity and shop trade. The new trust for the Welholme church and Sunday school in 1909, was more varied, with the inclusion of schoolmasters, clerks and a railway official. All, except one, were from Grimsby, and mainly resident in the newly built terraced housing of the Heneage estate, on which the church was built.

**Welholme Congregational Church and Sunday School**, although now joined by the vestry and church rooms of the later Church (1907), were separated in time by thirteen years. The Sunday School was originally built in 1894 with others in the town that were planted by Spring Church, as a mission church for the area. The architect, H.C. Scaping (1865-1934), was a local man and, in his work for the Grimsby Board of Guardians and Education Committee, was responsible for a number of public buildings in the town, as well as some

interesting domestic architecture. The builder, H. Thompson, may have been a member of the 1909 church trust.

The 'Gothic Revival' Mission Church, an aisled nave with doors at the ritual east end and a triple east lancet window, can be contrasted with Bell, Withers and Meredith Co.'s 'free Gothic revival' Congregational Church of 1907. '[F]ree Arts and Crafts Gothic. Very capricious', according to Pevsner.

Charles Bell (1846-99), who was born in Grantham, was responsible for over sixty Wesleyan Methodist, a small number of Congregational, and one Calvinistic Methodist chapel, as well as a number of public and commercial buildings, predominantly in the East of England, including London, and also Grimsby and Cleethorpes. After Bell's death, Withers and Meredith, with George Edward Withers (1874-1945) as the principal, took on his practice under the name of Bell, Withers and Meredith, which they continued until around 1907, although they had begun to drop his name by 1906. Welholme was, therefore, one of the last buildings to be undertaken by the firm under the Bell, Withers and Meredith title, and one of the few of their chapel commissions that was not for Wesleyans.

Part of the cost of the 1907 Welholme church, which was said to have had 800 seats, was raised by a mortgage of £3,000 from the United Kingdom Temperance and General Provident Association. When it opened Spring Church was sold, but still stands, and has been used for a number of purposes. On the formation of Grimsby United Reformed church in 1978, Welholme was leased to North East Lincolnshire Council, and was a museum and art gallery until 1991. It is now owned by the Council, and used as a store.

**United Reformed [formerly St Columba's] Church** (Architects: Morter & Dobie, Liverpool. Builder: Hewins & Goodhand, Grimsby. Cost: c. £10,000). There was a Presbyterian 'preaching station', initially planted by a Hull minister, and recognized in 1873, at first in a Temperance Hall then, from 1874, in a hall that was built on Victor Street, in Grimsby's East Marsh area. Grimsby became a 'sanctioned charge' in 1875, and a minister was called and ordained to the church. A church, demolished in 1981, with, according to various accounts, between 450 and 600 sittings, was built on the Victor Street site in the 1880s at a cost of £2,153. It was used until 1931, but, as the *Grimsby News* of 12 June 1931 reported:

Members of the ... congregation were removing to newly developed districts, their attendance at the church services was consequently becoming more and more irregular and the prospect of rendering any effective service to or receiving any support from the immediate neighbourhood was diminishing year by year. With the conditions changing so rapidly it became increasingly difficult to maintain the virility and strength of the Presbyterian cause in Grimsby a step forward was necessary, not only to meet the needs of their scattering flock but to enlarge the church's opportunities for service.

The site for a new church was acquired from the Heneage estate in 1922, one of only three that was available by then in a rapidly suburbanising area. The estate's solicitor had said that 'a building which might be described as a barn' would not be approved; it should be such 'as would not disturb the amenities of the residential district'. If a spire were to be built something 'more substantial than the toothpick on Welholme church [**Welholme Galleries** p.10 above] was necessary'. No bells would be allowed. William Glen Dobie (*fl.*

1882-1956) of the Morter and Dobie partnership, was appointed in 1926, and appears to have been the principal architect of the Grimsby church. As well as St Columba's the partnership worked on one Anglican and two Presbyterian churches between 1930 and 1932 – all in Liverpool

In terms of its officials, the new church of St Columba was firmly rooted in the area. Nearly all its trustees lived in the near neighbourhood. There was one fish merchant, the rest were, like their suburban neighbours, in largely professional and managerial occupations. There is no indication of the extent to which the architect felt that he needed to be mindful of the views of the officials of the Heneage estate. The church, which was opened in June 1931, is, after **Beaconthorpe** and the **Welholme Galleries**, the third of the buildings to be visited to which the epithet 'Arts and Crafts' has been applied. At its opening the *Grimsby News* remarked that 'In its general character it resembles a phase of early English gothic.' It had seats for about 300 with extensive ancillary rooms, including a large session room as well as halls.

The memorial stone to the Smelle family, on south wall of the liturgically north transept is noteworthy for its association with the development of Calvinistic dissent in Grimsby in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, and the chapels that were built to accommodate its adherents [see also **Welholme Galleries** p.10 above]. It includes the name of the Revd William Smelle (1758-1823), who had come to the town as a preacher for the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion and became an Independent minister. This memorial may have come from Smelle's chapel in the old town centre.

**St Christopher's [Primitive] Methodist Church, Welholme Road** (Architect: Bernard W. Blanchard, Hull. Builders: Wilkinson & Houghton, Cleethorpes. Cost: 'just over £21,000'). The present chapel was opened in 1959 after Welholme Road society united with that from nearby Heneage Road, formerly Wesleyan. Its architect, Bernard (later the Revd Bernard) Blanchard, worked on a number of Methodist buildings in Yorkshire and north Lincolnshire before he became a Methodist minister [See also **Central Hall** p.7 above].

There is some ambiguity about the exact dates for the development of the Welholme Road site in the 1880s and 1890s, but it was a period of optimism among the local Primitive Methodists. A report on Great Grimsby in the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* in 1888 observed that 'The prospects of our church in Grimsby were never brighter than now'. The 'church-machinery' was 'as well adapted for aggressive and successful work as that of any existing church or evangelistic organization.' Souls desiring to hear the Gospel were said to 'crowd around'.

Land was leased from the Heneage estate in 1882 to build a Sunday School on what was then referred to as Welholme Road East. There was a further lease in 1889. A new school (Architect: H.C. Scaping, Grimsby [for Scaping see also **Welholme Congregational Church and Sunday School** pp. 10-11 above]), described as a large room 57 by 30 feet, was opened in 1897, and was illustrated in the programme for the Connexion's 1899 conference, when a public meeting on 'Social Questions' was held there. A loose date stone in the present car park, dated 1908, refers to Primitive Methodist Schools. The social composition of the all male trustees on the 1889 lease mirrored that of the area. While still reflecting something of Grimsby's links to the sea, with fish merchants and customs officers, it also included craftsmen, tradesmen and clerical workers.

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Heneage Road Wesleyan School (Architect: George W. Frost, Grimsby) had been opened in 1898. The main school room was larger than that at Welholme Road (66 feet 6 inches by 36 feet), had smaller rooms leading off it, and was said to seat 300 in 1931. In the 1930s, a wooden scout hut was built nearby. For many years Heneage had a larger membership than Welholme, which fluctuated. However, the destruction of the Heneage chapel by a bomb in 1940 was a turning point. Although worship continued in the hut until 1955, the site was deemed to be unsuitable for a new church. By this time Welholme was in a flourishing state, and needed more accommodation. There was space at the Welholme site for expansion, and it was decided to unite the Heneage Road and Welholme Road trusts and societies. This took place on 1 September 1955.

War damage compensation from Heneage Road was transferred to the building fund for a new church, with seating for 200, on land in Welholme Road at the side of the School, which was retained. The church was opened on 25 July 1959. Its trust of 28 people was only slightly larger than that of 1889, but it was markedly different in its composition. Nearly half the new trustees, were female, none with any occupation given. The male trustees included one person, a fishmonger, whose work related to Grimsby's fishing industry and port. The rest were from clerical occupations and what would be now termed service industries, with an engine driver and window cleaner as representatives of, at least among the Primitive Methodists, a more working class past.

In the Spring of 1997 the chapel and associated buildings sustained £ 76,000 worth of damage from three arson attacks within a three week period. As part of the necessary repair and refurbishment the School was demolished to create the car park at the side of the chapel.

**Bibliographical note:** These notes are based on a range of primary sources and secondary literature. It would add materially to their length if a detailed bibliography were to be provided, but I will be pleased to supply references for the whole, or parts of the notes. I am also indebted to Dr Angela Connelly and Dr Chris. Wakelin for their help through personal correspondence, which is gratefully acknowledged.

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