

J. Waggett's Copy of Church Minute Book

Keld
Congregational Church

on Sunday August 1st 1915
Sermons will be preached

by
Rev. Joseph Atkinson

Services to commence

at 2 pm. & 7 pm.

Special Special Singing by the Choir

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Copy Congl. Church Minute Book

The origin & past history of the Cause of Christ at Keld, according to the order of Congregational or Independent descent is not without interest, a brief record which may be useful.

Prior to the year 1789 Keld & the neighbourhood was without any place of worship, or Evangelical instruction, beyond occasional visits from a few zealous men of the English persuasion whose ~~but~~ labours were not unappreciated, as some from near Keld were in the habit of attending their Ministry at Birch Chapel where they staidly preached, a distance of more than 20 miles from Keld.

In the year 1789 Mr Edward Stillman (who afterwards became the Bishop of Leeds) ^{was engaged as an} itinerant preacher (on his own account) found his way into Swaledale, where he engaged to preach for the first time at Threkeby in the open air, on a Sunday afternoon, but in consequence of the weather

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being unfavourable, the service was conducted in a Barn, which was kindly lent for the purpose; from thence Mr Stillman proceeded to Keld where he preached in the open air, where many came to hear, Mr Stillman possessing an attractive appearance, was a good speaker, & a delightful singer, so that while the people looked, & listened, their minds became captivated, so that nothing would satisfy them but he must remain, & become their minister he was conducted to an old Chapel which had been in ruins for more than 100 years, which the people promised to rebuild, if he would remain amongst them. Mr Stillman walked into the Centre of the ruins, & amongst the weeds by which it was overgrown, stuck in his stick, & said, here will I have my Chapel & there will I preach the Gospel, The Chapel was rebuilt, with two adjoining rooms, the one Mr S. used as a school, the other was his dwelling. Having now a settled habitation, he cast in his lot amongst the Noravians for a wife, & a good wife

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he got, who was a comfort to him, & a blessing to the neighbourhood, by her unwearied diligence in the boy School which she taught as the gratifying of one desire, oft gave rise to others, so it was with Mr Stillman, he became tired of his temporary Building, & resolved on having a new Chapel, & an enlarged dwelling house, which he accomplished in the year 1818 Mr Stillman having undertaken these alterations on his own responsibility, he had to contend with many difficulties, & was involved in a heavy debt, which caused him to have many begging excursions, but being successful he had the pleasure of securing his building free from debt. He next bought a piece of Land behind the Chapel for a Burial Ground. In 1830 he received a severe stroke in the death of Mrs Stillman, an event which to him was a great loss, but to her infinite gain, his earthly comforts were greatly marred, other difficulties came upon him. Lady Hewley's Charity was withheld, by reason of advancing

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years, & many trials his faculties failed, his Congregational diminished, & his resources from them declined, so that his whole stipend would not be more than £15 a year, for a few of his last years of his life.

In this time of difficulty Mr Edmund Knowles of Low Row, bought a field called Broken Intake, & gave it to the Chapel for the benefit of the Minister.

on the 12th of March 1837 Mrs Stillman preached in the Chapel for the last time, on the 14th he became seriously ill, & only lived 8 days, on the 22nd his spirit took its departure to another & better world, on the Sabbath following his remains were deposited in the same grave as with ~~his~~ Mrs Stillman in front of the pulpit, This after 48 years of care & toil, privation, & suffering, of which could all the circumstances here recorded, they would tell many ~~to~~ a touching tale but they are all past, & he rejoices in his reward. He left a Church consisting of seven members, but no Church Book, or any

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record of their formation or order.
In the month of June 1837 Mr William Sedgwick
who had finished his studies at Andover
College. Visited Keld, meeting with acceptance,
on the invitation of the Church, he became their
settled pastor, & commenced his labours
with the hope of much good, but the
heavy morning of his ~~hope~~ labours, & his
hopes, were soon overcast, by dark &
threatening clouds of opposition, which were
principally in consequence of a change
in Mr Sedgwick's views by which he became
to much an American for those who
had been accustomed to the doctrines
of his predecessor: The Congregation
became divided, much excitement
prevailed, those who were at first were
Mr Sedgwick's friends became his
enemies, & would gladly ~~see~~ have removed
him, in this the Church ~~deceived~~ were
unanimous, & decidedly refused
to receive any of his new converts into
their fellowship, as they regarded them

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all Methodists, Mr Sedgwick having many ~~for~~ professed converts, & not being able to work with the existing Church, resolved on the expedient of forming a new Church, which was done on the 12th of June 1838; when 18 persons were formed into a Christian Church by the Rev John Harrison of Barnard Castle, but this proved an unhappy affair, things were done hastily, without due preparation, & it was soon discovered that excitement would not answer the end of piety, on the 10th of July following Mr Sedgwick was ordained Pastor over his newly formed Church, these things dreadfully exasperated Mr Sedgwick's opponents who did all they could to oppose the Ordination. The Chapel was held in possession with a continued ^{continued} ~~services~~ of services from Sunday morning, night a day, till Tuesday night the day of the Ordination. but though Mr Sedgwick so far gained a ~~trifling~~ triumph over his foes,

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These things tended more to the weakening than the strengthening of the hand of Mr Sedgwick, not being able to place confidence in his Church for the want of principle, & being more & more opposed by his enemies he found himself very uncomfortably situated, so much so that at the end of three months he resigned his charge.

The Rev. William Sedgwick having resigned his charge, the Church & congregation at once presented an unanimous invitation to Mr James Wilkinson then a seaman & Lay Preacher in connection with the Independent Church at Sedburgh. (who had occasionally supplied at Keld to supply the pulpit for 12 months, the invitation was accepted, & Mr Wilkinson entered on his labours on the first Sabbath in 1838. at the end of 12 months 8 members had been added to the Church, former breaches had in a great measure been healed, & all things apparently had gone on very prosp. prosperously. a new stone had been placed in the Chapel which has added much to the comfort of the congregation.

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The front of the Chapel had been enclosed with Iron palisading which added much to the respectability of the appearance. The Church & Congregation now presented Mr Wilkenson with an unanimous ~~and~~ invitation to become their settled pastor, which was accepted, at a public meeting held for the purpose on the 31st Oct 1839. Conducted by the Rev. John Boyd of Low Row.

Mr Wilkenson was ordained to the office of Pastor on the 21st of Sept 1841. Soon after the Solemn Service there were evident tokens of the ~~afforded~~ operation of the workings of the divine Spirit on the hearts of ~~many~~^{many}, so that at the close of the year a revival of religion broke out, but the Lord has his own way of doing his own work, the Pastor through over exertion & exposure to night air had brought on an effect on the lungs, in consequence he had to be confined to his room for 6 weeks & 2 days, & not able to preach for 8 Sabbaths, the weather was such that ~~no~~ supplies could only be got for the three Sabbaths, yet the

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people regularly met together & prayed & the Lord was with them, & many were converted.

In answer to prayer the Pastor was restored & strengthened for her work. Again began to labour as amidst the delight of Spencey.

In the year 1842 the new school was built, and opened with the annual Tea Party on the 6th of January 1843 Mrs Mary Thompson gave \$16-4 towards the erection.

In 1844 the Chapel was duly licensed for the Solemnization of Marriages.

After the excitement of the revival had passed away, evil spirits began to manifest themselves disturbances began to rise discipline had to be exercised, things continued to get worse, & worse, some had to be cut of, others left, but still the cause of trouble remained, which might be attributed to the first formation of the Church, which was bad in principle, & bad in material; the evil was one which required means extraordinary to

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At a Church meeting held Feb 3^d 1854,
James Alderson Clarkson, John Scott, and
James Cherry were unanimously
Chosen by the Church to take the office
of beacons. They having complied to the wish
of the Church were on the following Sabbath
set apart to the office of beacons, by prayer
offered by the Minister

Signed Jas Wilkinson Pastor

Jan'y 1855 It is with sincere gratitude
to God, & for the Honour of his name that
I would here put upon record that peace
& prosperity has attended all efforts
of the past year: During the year 1853-4
the Chapel House wood underwent consider-
able alterations & enlargements, at the cost
of more than £55. towards which £45. 17. 6
has been subscribed by friends at a distance
By means of this alteration a Room was
provided for Vestry & Reading Room, in
which a Mutual Improvement Society

was formed for the benefit of young men,
in May 1854, at the end of the year the Society
numbers 21 members, & is the hope of much
good to the neighbourhood

1861 Time has moved on but no very
noticable change has taken place, mercy
has been continued & grace conferred, the
cause of much thankfulness to the giver
of all good: during the past year the chapel
has been ^{in a great measure} pulled down & rebuilt; which
had become necessary through the dec-
ayed state of the wood, both in the roof & in the
Pews. Encouraged by J. E. Flint
Esq. of Leeds & John Crosley Esq. of
Halifax, & other kind friends in the
West Riding the work was commenced
in July 1860. The season was a most difficult
one on account of the ^{constant} rain. The work
was completed in Nov. & the Chapel
was used during the spring of 1861.
but not formally opened till July 20th /61.
when the following services were held.

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I came with my family to Keld on
the 30th Nov. 1866. On the 31st Dec 1866 Mr Wilkerson
died at Southport rather suddenly &
unexpectedly, altho he had ^{been} in a
weak & declining state. Thus after three
days residence, the charge of the place
devolved upon me, & a strong desire
was expressed by the people, & also
by the executive & deputation of the West
Riding Home Missionary Society that
I should accept the Pastorate of this "Church
in the wilderness" but I could not see my
way to entertain the thought of a permanent
settlement, altho I resolved to remain
for 12 months & do the best I could to
promote the prosperity of the place.
Three objects I have been anxious to
accomplish - viz. The removal of the debt
connected with Keld Chapel, this is now
promised by friends in Leeds & Bradford &
Mr Scotson & Alderman Law, Henry

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in the treasurer's hands, and I trust
the whole amount required for the new
building will be attained before the
building is quite completed.

The Day School at Keld has been very
creditably and efficiently conducted by
Mrs Faircliff & we have raised £20 for the
year for the Schoolmaster, in addition
to School pence, instead of £10 which
was originally promised. The services
at Keld & Thwaite have been well sustained
during the 12 months, but in consequence
of serious sickness in my family, &
my own serious illness, & also in
consequence of frequent journeys to ~~Lancashire~~
Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire
& Scotland &c besides a considerable
amount of private & family business
to which I was obliged to attend, it has
been quite impossible for me to give
that amount of attention to pastoral

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visitation & distinct preaching, which is desirable, & which I should have had pleasure, in attending to if other & equally important duties had not prevented.

The great want of this place is earnest, spiritual work, & especially in reference to direct effort for the conversion of sinners, & the safe but speedy increase of the Church which appears to me exceedingly small.

I preached yesterday, being my last Sabbath at Keld, from the Comm. given to the children of Israel: So Forward.

Exodus 16: 15^v & took occasion to speak of the importance of trust in God on the one hand & earnest & persevering efforts for personal advancement & improvement in everything truly ^{great &} good on the other. In the evening I preached at Thwate from 2 Cor 13: 11^v the ^{ordinance} ~~ordinance~~ of the Lords Supper was observed at Keld in the afternoon, & at Thwate in the evening (for the first time at Thwate).

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On Tuesday evening Dec 10. 1867 Mr Thomas
of Leeds will preach (S.V.) at Thwaites -
on Wednesday Dec 11. 1867 a service will be held
at Keld at which addresses will be given by
myself Mr Thomas of Leeds & Mr Wollard
of Leeds, who is coming to supply at Keld &
Thwaites for two months & on Thursday morning
I hope to take my departure for Broad Oaks
Manfield Yorkshire, where I intend to
reside (with my family) for a few months
Dec 9th 1867.

Geo G. Waddington

Mr Waddington died at the above address
on 1898.

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First services at Keld in 1789. Mr Stillman
New Chapel & enlarged dwelling house 1818
Broken Intake bought by Mr Howle
1837 Mr Sedgwick became minister.

In consequence of Mr Sedgwick views the
Congregation became divided. The Church
refused to receive any of his new converts into
their fellowship, as they regarded them all
~~Methodists~~ Methodists.

New Church formed 1838 Mr Sedgwick
opponents did all they could to oppose
his ordination. after which at the
end of three months he resigned his charge
Mr Walkman came to Keld in 1838
New School built in 1842

Chapel Licensed for solemnity of Marriage 1844
In 1850 disturbances began, discipline had
to be exercised some had to be cut of others
left, still the trouble remained. It
was decided to dissolve the Church for a time
The Church formed again & appointed
Mr Walkman the pastor

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In 1853-4 Chapel House ~~was~~ underwent
considerable cost over £55.

Mutual Improvement Society formed 1854.

Chapel Rebuilt 1861 - Cost £306.10.

Improvement & enlargement of Institute
1866. estimate cost £110.

~~1863~~ ~~the new School Committee~~ ~~known~~
The new School Committee ¹⁸⁶³ known
as foundation managers.

The Pastor to be Chairman by
virtue of his office.

Foundation manager to be elected
at the Yearly Church meeting each
January. of which due notice must
be given to the Education Dept through
the School Secy

1911. School Manager J Waggett was
elected to act during the vacancy in
the pastorate.

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School managers

Meeting held Jan'y 1915

A letter was read from the Trustees sent by the Rector of Leeds. wishing the meeting to appoint three foundation managers for Boy School from our membership

School managers

It was decided that Mr S F Scott, by the approval of the Rev Betram Smith Leeds Sec'y of the district - preside at the Boy School Managers Meeting until a new committee come

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