

Barton Wesleyan Chapel
Barton upon Irwell
-
Graveyard Survey



**Surveyed Prior to Redevelopment
September 2001 to May 2002**

By Eric J. E. Heaton & Roger G. Hart

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**Compiled
By**

Roger Geoffrey Hart

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Acknowledgements

Eric Heaton's contribution to this document lies not only in his thorough transcription of half of the gravestones within the graveyard but also in the production of an accurate plan of the graveyard prior to development, and a rough plan of the memorial yard after development. Many of his photographs have been used within this document and there are examples of some of his detailed drawings of the various designs used on the headstones. I also have to thank Eric for all the help and advice given over the last six years; he has been a true friend.

It would have been impossible to complete the survey if we had not had the help and support of several people.

I received an e-mail from Paul Cesnavicius on the 14 June 2001, with information about the development proposed for the site. Paul, and his wife Susan continued their support with information and help in carrying out the survey until its completion in 2002. Throughout the survey Brenda and Margaret Carr, two ladies who were members of the church prior to its sale in 1970, supported our work and helped in clearing the debris so that the gravestones could be recorded, they also provided several photographs used in this work to illustrate the Front Graveyard. Elizabeth and Roderick Cannon on a visit to Eccles from Norfolk spent a day in the rain clearing gravestones. Roderick returned on several occasions, once with two relatives and did a splendid job of clearing gravestones. It was Roderick's sheer determination that enabled us to record an area against the north boundary wall that was covered in shrubs, ivy, and a mass of rubbish. On most afternoons, we had help from Albert Cordwell, who cycled in from Salford. Andrew Yarwood from Tyldesley transcribed in part the second volume of burials, information which was invaluable, and the details of which have been included within this document. There were many other people who helped in various ways and have not been mentioned but who rightly deserve a big thank you from Eric and me.

Thanks must be given to Doreen Robinson for the use of the illustration on the title page. This picture is taken from a hand painted plate that hung in the vestry before 1970.

Permission was given by N. Hayes to use his fine ink drawing of the Chapel and Front Graveyard. His series of ink drawings are held at Salford Museum as part of their art collection.

We are also indebted to Tim Ashworth and Sandra Hayton, librarians at Salford Local History Library who in their usual friendly and professional way, dealt with our many queries and requests.

Roger Hart
June 2007.
(www.mancuniensis.info)

Introduction

A pre-arranged meeting at Barton brought together two like-minded people who were concerned that the re-development of the Barton Wesleyan Chapel and Graveyard could mean the loss of the graveyard plan and important memorial information. Eric's interest in creating a plan of the graveyard together with my concern for the loss of any information contained on the gravestones, led to us to team up, to create a full and accurate survey of the burial grounds.

Historical Outline and Description of the Cemetery

The Methodist community have used the site of the Barton Wesleyan Chapel and burial grounds for more than 175 years before its sale in 1970.

Richard Gill in his "Historical Notes" describes how the land was acquired. "There is a misty legend that the Methodists at Barton, for some few years occupied a disused joiner's workshop, which is said to have then stood on the site of the present school building. This circumstance led to the securing of a site for the chapel. The agreement of the lease of the plot of land on which the chapel now stands, and including the land on the easterly side where the first burials have taken place, is dated 9th June 1796. The owner of the land is described as Mr. Thomas Mee, yeoman; Mr. Mee was also the owner of the houses known as Mee Square. It is said that the land for the chapel and burial ground was secured by the good offices of Mr. Samuel Burgess the elder, corn miller, of Worsley. The first plot of land in 1796 was taken on lease for 999 years, at an annual rent of 45s. The lease was granted to John Wood, of Barton-upon-Irwell, tailor".

The historical records of the Society show that the chapel was opened on Sunday November 17th 1796, by the Rev. Thomas Rutherford then stationed in the Manchester Circuit as local preacher. (Eccles Journal 15/6/1923) On checking the date to see if the 17th was a Sunday, it turned out to be a Thursday. Sunday the 17th November does not occur until 1799!

The Wesleyan Methodists occupied the site until 1970 when the chapel and graveyard was sold to the Church of the Nazarene for £2,250. Followed in 1982 by the Weaste Full Gospel Church paying £17,500 for the site. In 2002, Leslie Hampson a developer paid £75,000 for the chapel, which by this time had become dilapidated and the graveyard, overgrown and inaccessible. In the same year (2002) the Chapel was demolished followed shortly thereafter by the clearance of nearly half the gravestones to facilitate the layout of a car park at the rear of a block of flats which had been built on the site of the chapel. (H. M. Land Registry)

SURVEY

Eric Heaton and I teamed up in September 2001, realising that the graveyard needed surveying before any development work, and that it should be carried out as accurately as possible. At the start, it looked a near impossible task, the front graveyard had been grassed over, and the rear graveyard was impenetrable with gravestones surrounded by debris and vegetation. Help was at hand, although at the time we feared that there would be much damage caused, when Mr. Hampson the developer moved a small mechanical excavator on site and fenced off the rear of the chapel. Our concern was eased when only one small headstone was found to be damaged and scrape marks caused by the digger were found on a number of the gravestones.

We were given access to the site and started cleaning and recording the gravestones, everything was recorded in detail and later each gravestone was photographed and drawings taken of some of the intricate carvings.

While making the survey, we were under the constraint of expecting February 2002 as the starting date for the development and our departure from the site. The developer became tangled up in red tape with Salford Planning Department and this gave us more time on site to complete the survey in full, together with a complete series of plans drawn up by Eric.

In previous years the minister of the Church of the Nazarene recorded a number of gravestones in the front yard prior to landscaping by Eccles Park Dept. Through contacts at Salford Town hall Eric managed to trace the transcript in the Autumn of 2001, 57 transcriptions on A5 cards that had been photocopied onto A4 sheets were handed over. These transcripts have been included in this document.

The rear graveyards have been recorded in part by The Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society. In 1978 "nine volunteers on nine Saturdays spent 100 hours" recording the monumental inscriptions (MLHFS Journal Oct. 1978 Vol14 No.4 pages 103 - 106). Copies of the journal and the survey can be found in Salford Local History Library and the MLFHS library in Manchester.

GRAVEYARD

The graveyard is extensive and for a small chapel it was a surprise to walk to the rear of the building and see how far back the cemetery stretched.

In 1796 when the land for the chapel was acquired, enough ground was included for a graveyard at the front of the building. There was room for 147 grave plots, which at the time must have seemed adequate for the purposes of the congregation.

The first burial was stated to have taken place on the 9th June 1796 (L28/10/12/2). No further detail as to who was buried is evident.

Enlargement of the chapel was soon necessary and in 1823 the decision was taken to demolish the rear wall of the chapel and extended back. A vestry was added and the roofline was lifted by a further 5 feet for the erection of a gallery to take the increasing congregation.

In 1834, the time had come for further expansion. "Carrying the back wall of the Chapel to the utmost verge of the northerly side of the land at that time in their possession provided the space for two rooms. Each partitioned off, one being on a level with the floor of the chapel, and the other level with the gallery, access to the top room being had by a flight of stairs outside the building. Here the school met and thrived for 20 years." (Hist. Notes - Richard Gill) The rear graveyard had a planned 513 grave plots, but there must have been pressure for a playground for the schoolchildren. This resulted in a loss of 110 grave plots at the rear of the chapel, and a playground was laid out, paved and fenced off from the graveyard.

"In 1852, a further portion of land was purchased at the back of the chapel and the present large schoolroom was built. The portions of the chapel building which had for so many years been used for school purposes was then thrown open so that the length of the chapel inside was greatly extended. About this time, the fiddles, and other musical instruments, gave place to an organ." (Hist. Notes - Richard Gill)

The whole of the land for the rear graveyard (Old Yard) had not been laid out for graves. The first line of graves was laid one or two rows away from the western boundary and it looks as though the space between the boundary and the first row was used as a garden.

The rear graveyard was further extended in 1868 and 697 grave plots were set out which included the garden area mentioned above.

In total, there were 1,247 grave plots, but not included in this figure were 4 additional plots squeezed in along the southern boundary, bringing the total to 1,251.

The graveyard can be confusing when referring to the burial register. Each entry is taken up by a row across two leaves of the register, it gives full details for the deceased, including the date of the burial, cost of the burial, grave number and occasionally the minister who carried out the service. If the plots were numbered 1 - 1247, it would be straightforward to locate a grave. Instead, there are three distinct graveyards. The Front graveyard, which is the oldest part of the cemetery, has graves numbered 1 - 147. The Old graveyard which is directly to the rear of the chapel, is the second oldest and has graves numbered 1 - 403. The furthest graveyard, the New yard, has its graves numbered 1 - 697. The register sometimes differentiates between graveyards but frequently does not.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES AND SEXTON

Trustees of the Chapel kept an eye on the accounts and the graveyard plan, or appointed stewards to ensure that the books were properly entered up and empowered the Sexton to spend a little money on tidying up the yard.

Although there is no indication of the Sexton having a helper, he must have had some help in digging the graves and lifting gravestones. It must have been a very laborious job each grave measuring 6 feet 4 inches by 3 feet and in the early years graves were not less than 6 feet deep, later the depth of the standard grave was 9 feet and then for an extra amount the grave could be deeper still.

In 1887, the Trustees decided that there would be "no internment in the graveyard without a burial service, and a fee paid to the officiating minister". In 1888, a sub committee was set up "to see to the interests of the yard where special attention is required". In 1889, the Chapel Keeper was informed, "persons can engage whom they choose to do their lettering on grave stones and that he has no authority to charge commission".

Various requests were made to the trustees regarding the graveyard that can be found in the "Trustees Meeting Minutes". (ML28 Man. Cent. Lib. Archives) In March 1889 the trustees were requested to purchase the graves offered by Mr. Worth." January 1890 saw a dispute when a Mrs. Bronson bought a new grave only to find that 2 bodies were interred in the grave already. Mrs. Bronson insisted on having her money back but the trustees only offered £1 2s. 6d. as the receipt implied. She insisted on the full £2 5s. 0d. Eventually a new grave was offered to her or she could have the full amount if not satisfied.

TRUSTEES CHARGES

	1879	1895	1916
New Grave	£1 1s. 0d.	£2 5s. 0d.	
Morning Burial	7s. 6d.	10s 6d.	17s. 6d.
Evening Burial	5s. 0d.	7s. 6d.	12s. 6d.
Stranger Burial	7s. 6d.		
Child Burial	5s. 0d.		
Headstone	£1 0s. 0d.	£1 15s. 0d.	
For right of placing Head Stone with Coping to do		£1 0s. 0d.	£1 5s. 0d.
For right of placing Head Stone with Palisading		£2 2s. 0d.	£2 5s. 0d.
The right to erect a Monument		£5 5s. 0d.	£5 5s. 0d.
The right to erect a Monument with railings round		£1 1s. 0d.	£1 1s. 0d.
For foundation of Brick for Head Stone, 9 Ft. deep		£1 5s. 0d.	£1 7s. 6d.
For right of Brick Grave		£1 1s. 0d.	£1 1s. 0d.
Brickwork for Grave 9ft. deep			£6 0s. 0d.
Brickwork for Grave per foot extra depth			14s. 0d.
Flag	£1 12s. 0d.		£12s. 6d.
Minister's Fees			
Morning Burial	5s. 0d.	5s. 0d.	6s. 0d.
Evening Burial	2s. 6d.	2s. 6d.	3s. 6d.
Sexton			
Opening new grave nine feet deep	6s. 0d.	6s. 0d.	10s. 0d.
Below nine feet, per foot in depth		2s 6d.	2s. 6d.
Re-opening Grave	3s. 0d.	3s. 0d.	7s. 6d.
Extra charge will be made (per foot) until the re-opening does not exceed 8ft.			1s. 6d.
Moving Flag	1s. 0d.	1s. 0d.	2s. 6d.
Moving Headstone	2s. 6d	2s. 6d.	5s. 0d.
Moving Railings			

RULES OF THE GRAVEYARD

1879	Every Grave to be covered with a full-sized Stone within twelve months after internment; in default of which, the Grave will be considered as the Property of the Trustees.
1895,1900	Every Grave to be covered by the Purchaser with a full sized Stone, within twelve months after Internment, in default of which all right in the grave will be Forfeited.
1916	Every Grave to be covered by the Purchaser with a full sized Stone, within twelve months after Internment, in default of which all right in the grave will be Forfeited.
1879,1895,1900	A fine of One Shilling per hour will be charged if Funerals are late.
1916	A fine of 1/6 per hour will be charged if Funerals are late.
1879,1895,1900	Arrangements for Lettering can be made through the Sexton.
1916,1956	Arrangements for Lettering must be made through the Sexton.
1879,1895,1900,1916,1956	Sunday Interments are not allowed, except in cases of necessity.
1895,1900,1916,1956	No Head Stones, Railings, or Monuments to be erected without the previous consent of the Trustees, and the payment of the dues directed by them.
1895,1900,1916,1956	Iron Railings are not allowed except in connection with a large Vault.
1895,1900,1916	All Private Graves and Vaults, Monuments and Memorials, must be kept in repair by the owners.
1956	All Private Graves and Vaults, Monuments and Memorials, must be kept in repair by the owners, and the Trustees do not accept responsibility for loss or damage.
1895,1900,1916,1956	Other Fees to be subject to agreements with the Trustees.
1895,1900,1916	Notice will be given when repairs are needed and if such repairs are not made within six months after the issue of such notice, the Memorial will be removed.
1895,1900,1916,1956	Interment of still born children allowed only in Family graves, with the usual Sexton's Fee for opening Grave.
1956	The Trustees will undertake the care and maintenance of Graves at an Annual Fee of £2 on application to the Sexton.

PEOPLE WHO REACHED A CENTURY OR MORE

Mary Howarth died 10 February 1812 aged 102 years buried in the Front Yard No. 68.

Mary Jane Brown died 2 February 1876 aged 100 years in the New Yard No. 62.

Jane Bethel, died 12 September 1920 aged 100 years and 2 months, buried in New Yard No. 389.

Ellen Wood, died 8 August 1892, aged 100 years and 5 months, burial place within this graveyard is unknown.

COMMEMORATIONS FOR THOSE KILLED IN WWI

And not buried within the cemetery.

Willie Yearsley drowned at sea whilst serving his country 16 July 1917. New Yard No. 147.

Richard Arthur Holland who died of wounds in Egypt 23 November 1917. New Yard No. 203.

Private Thomas Smith killed in action 5 May 1916 aged 31. New Yard No. 234.

Corporal C.E. Smith died whilst a prisoner of war in Germany 1918. New Yard No. 240.

Private James Shepherd killed in action in France, 31 July 1917. New Yard No. 304.

Walter Honniball killed at Gallipoli; 7 August 1917 aged 25 years. New Yard No. 366/367.

Fred Moores killed in action 27 May 1918, aged 28. New Yard No. 368.

John William Johnson killed Suvla Bay; 24 August 1915 aged 33 years. New Yard No. 389.

Harry Johnson died of wounds in Germany, 20 May 1915, aged 16. New Yard No. 430.

Corporal Arthur Smith who fell in the Battle of Mons, 14 September 1914 aged 33 years. New Yard No. 459.

Albert Johnson killed in action at Wyschaete, France, 14 July 1917. New Yard No. 480.

Philio Frederick Hover killed in action 11 February 1916 aged 24 years. Commemorated New Yard No. 538.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration was conducted on the 16 June 2002 at 15:00hrs. not long before the chapel was demolished. Thirty-five people attended, and Rev. Jeff Walker conducted the service.



Vera Rawlinson and Doreen Robinson(right) holding a plate(see front cover) that hung on the vestry wall prior to the sale of the chapel in 1970.
27 March 2002 ©Heaton



1991

View from Barton Road.

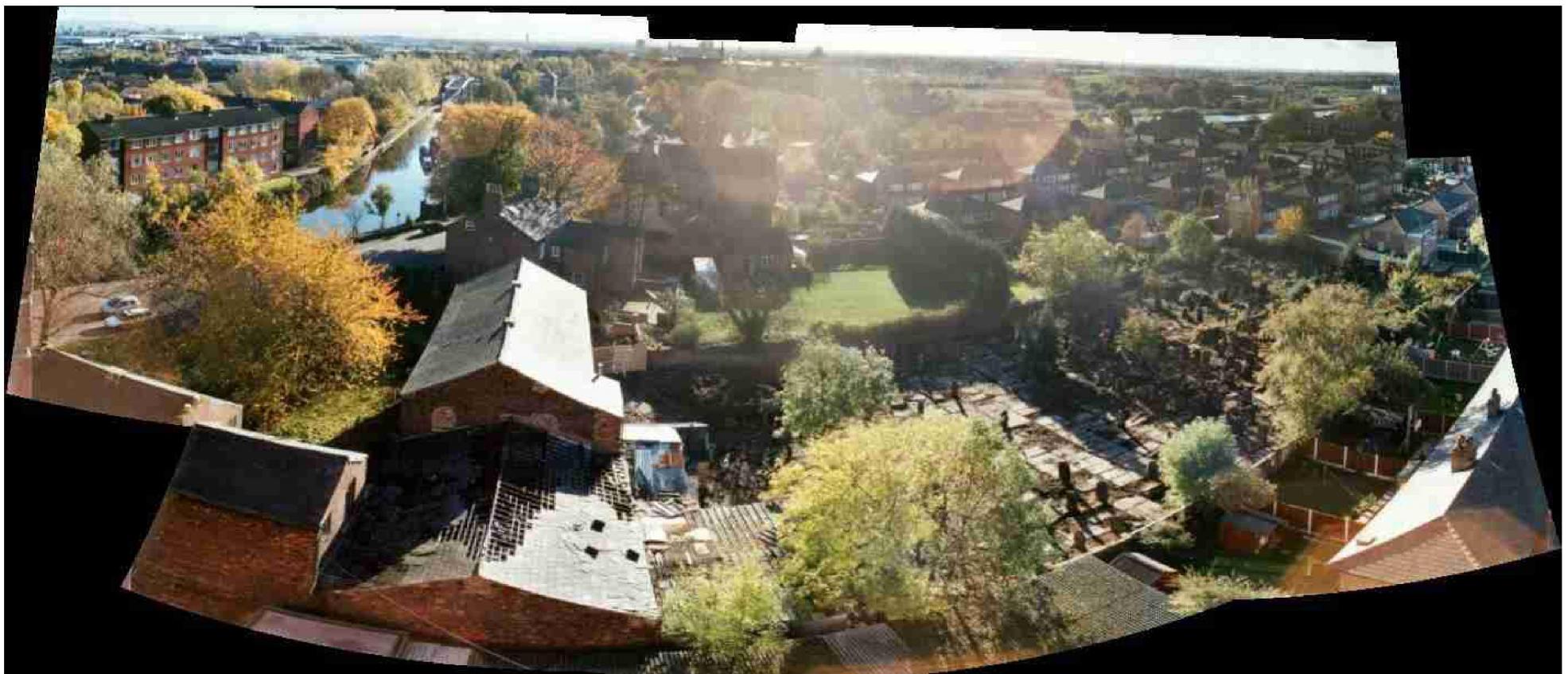
©Heaton



1991

Rear Graveyard.

©Heaton



November 2001

Panoramic View of Barton Wesleyan Chapel and Graveyards taken from Mees Square flats looking South.

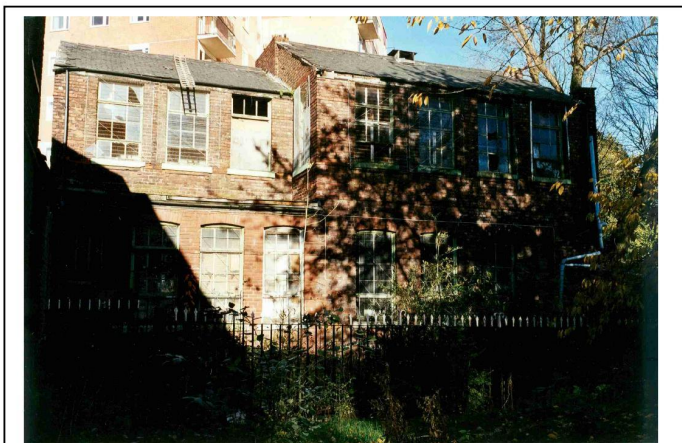
©Heaton



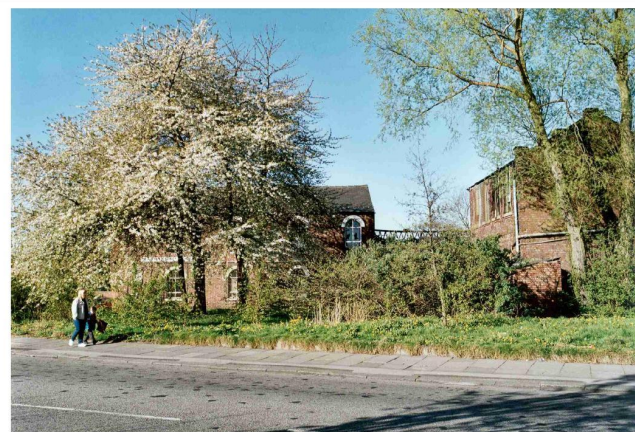
November 2001

Chapel, School and Front Graveyard.

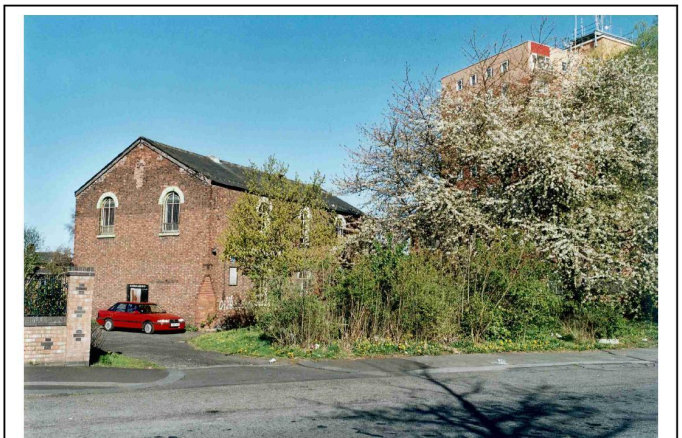
©Heaton



School Buildings on the Northern Boundary of the Front Yard.
5 November 2001 ©Heaton



School Buildings and Chapel from Barton Rd.
16 April 2002 ©Heaton



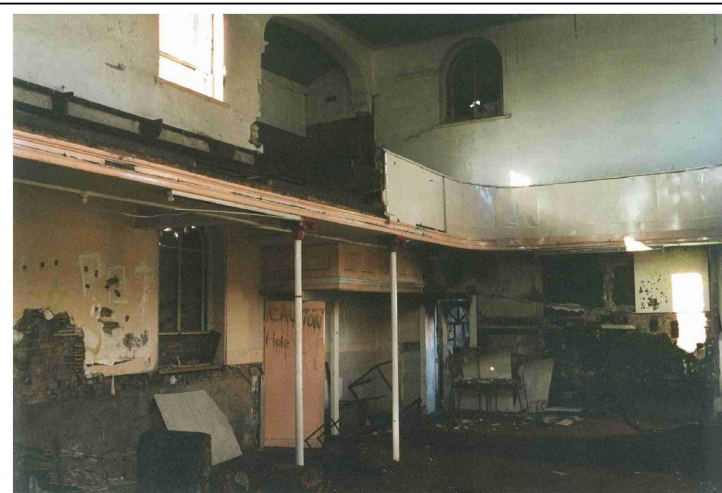
Chapel and Front Yard in Spring.
16 April 2002 ©Heaton



Date Stone from front of the Chapel.
July 2002 ©Heaton



Oldest Part of the Chapel - Entrance and Supported Gallery.
November 2001 ©Heaton



The Extended Chapel with Organ Loft and Supported Gallery.
November 2001 ©Heaton



Entrance to Rear Graveyard.
5 November 2001 ©Heaton



July 2001 Developers Notice. ©Heaton



Developers Notice to the Public.
5 November 2001 ©Heaton



Panoramic Picture of the Fire Damaged School built as a Extension to the Extended Chapel.
November 2001

©Heaton



June 2002 Final Outdoor Service Prior to Demolition. ©Heaton



June 2002 Final Outdoor Service Prior to Demolition. ©Heaton



Chapel and School Demolished.

July 2002

©Heaton



Foundations along the rear of the Mees Square garages
looking at Grave No. 403.

July 2002

©Heaton



Foundations and Grave No. 403
Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Demolition rubble and stacked gravestones
Front Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Stacked gravestones near Burgess memorial
Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Heaped gravestones near grave 403
Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Heaped gravestones near grave 403
Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Foundation trench and grave No.
403 Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Foundations and graves 402 and 403
Old Yard.

July 2002

©Heaton



Gravestones heaped beyond the development in the Old
Yard.

2002

©Heaton



Clearance of gravestones in the Old Yard.
11 June 2003 ©Hart



Clearance of gravestones in the Old Yard.
11 June 2003 ©Hart



Clearance of gravestones in the Old Yard.
11 June 2003 ©Hart



Clearance of gravestones in the Old Yard.
11 June 2003 ©Hart



August 2003

New Yard grassed over – later to be taken up for further monumental inscription recording.

©Heaton



The wrong memorial erected on the Front Graveyard.
7 September 2003

©Heaton



Lawn dug up for recording and relocation of gravestones.
No Date ©Heaton



Lawn dug up for recording and relocation of gravestones.
No Date ©Heaton



Relocation of gravestones from the Old Yard.
No Date ©Heaton



Laying out gravestones ready for white gravel infill between the spaces.
No Date ©Heaton



Barton Wesleyan Chapel and Front Graveyard.

Original Drawing by N. Hayes 1971.

City of Salford Art Gallery Collection.

Photographed by E.J.E. Heaton