

LIVING STONES

The Story of the People of Albany Road Baptist Church, Cardiff

1894 - 1994

BERYL M. JONES

This partially digitised version of 'Living Stones' by Beryl M. Jones contains just the Preface and first two chapters plus a few additional later photographs. Thank you to the author for giving us permission to digitise the early history of the area and church.

Ted Richards, Roath Local History Society. June 2022

PREFACE

When any organisation approaches its Centenary, it seems appropriate to look back and present some sort of account of its history during the past hundred years. The high points and times of great celebration are remembered, as are the periods of difficulty and times of sadness. Both the mistakes and successes of the past are brought to mind in the hope that the organisation in question may learn from its own history and benefit from its wealth of experience as it moves into its second century.

In this respect, a church is no different from any other organisation, and so as Albany Road Baptist Church moved towards its Centenary, it was considered desirable that a written account of the first one hundred years of its history should be produced. The initial inspiration for the work stemmed from one of the former elders of the Church, Mr. Ellis Sellick, who undertook some of the original research and planned the basic outline of the book. Sadly, Mr. Sellick passed away before he had completed the first draft, and his notes were put to one side. Eventually they were passed to me in February 1993, along with a request to revise them and complete the history in time for the celebration of Albany Road's Centenary in 1994.

It has been a privilege to work on this project, and I am indebted to Mr. Sellick both for his initial vision and for the meticulous notes he had made in respect of the earliest period in the Church's history. Much of his original framework has been retained, as has his choice of title, "Living Stones", which is particularly apt for a book which deals with the history of a church. It is derived from the First Epistle of Peter, chapter 2 and verse 5, where the Christian community is described in terms of a spiritual house, a building whose cornerstone is Christ Himself, and which is comprised of "living stones", namely, the individual members of that community. Later in the same passage, the apostle reminded his readers that the true mission of the church is to

"declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

To press the metaphor a little further, it should be remembered that before stones could be used for building, they had to be prepared by the master builder, and some required more shaping and fashioning than others. So it is in the church, which is comprised of individuals at various stages in their spiritual pilgrimage.

Thus, in presenting the history of any church, it is necessary to bear in mind that it is comprised of fallible individuals, who have made a commitment to Christ at some point, and by His grace are striving to live up to their high calling. Consequently the picture, which is portrayed in that history, will be flawed since the perfect church does not exist. What is true in general terms is also true of Albany Road in particular.

Therefore the account set forth in this book speaks of failure as well as success, and refers to periods when morale was low and there was little evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in the midst of the fellowship, as well as to the times when the Church received great spiritual blessing. To have ignored the bad times and simply presented an idealised portrait of Albany Road over the years would not have been faithful to the testimony of the records. So this book is presented as a true and faithful account of the history of Albany Road Baptist Church from its foundation to the present day.

I must also place on record my appreciation to all who have assisted me with its preparation. To those members who have loaned photographs, orders of service etc. I am deeply grateful, as well as to those who have helped to clarify some points of detail from the distant past. It is also appropriate to express my appreciation of the gracious hospitality extended to me by Rex and Audrey Mason on the occasion of a visit to their cottage in Mid-Wales, when we passed several pleasant hours recalling some of the main events of their time at Albany Road. Finally, I must thank the membership of Albany Road itself for entrusting me with this task, for allowing me such ready access to all the Church Records, and for their constant support and encouragement throughout.

BERYL M. JONES

Bryn-y-Nant

Llanedeyrn

April 1994

CHAPTER 1

THE COTTRELL ROAD YEARS

A Baptist Church comes into being usually to meet the needs of an expanding urban area. Albany Road Baptist Church in the Roath Park district of Cardiff was no exception.

Cardiff was first settled in Roman times, when a garrison fortress was established near the mouth of the river Taff, and a small civil community took root nearby. When the Romans withdrew in the late fourth century, a much diminished settlement of peasants and fishermen survived until the Normans reached Cardiff towards the end of the eleventh century. They re-fortified the old Roman garrison and erected the keep, which remains a familiar landmark in the present-day city of Cardiff. The castle became the principal residence of the Norman lords of Cardiff.

A small town was soon established in the shadow of the castle, and this continued in existence within the original medieval boundaries, virtually unchanged, until the nineteenth century. During the nineteenth century, Cardiff rose to become the principal coal-exporting port not just for South Wales, but also in the world. This development was accompanied by a very rapid increase in the town's population. In 1835, the town was reconstituted as the borough of Cardiff, which then consisted of two wards, North and South, with a combined population of 8000. By 1894, when Albany Road Baptist Church was formed, the population of Cardiff had risen to over 120,000.

The Baptist cause was established in Cardiff early in the nineteenth century. In 1806, Bethany was founded in Wharton Street for English speakers, whilst a group of Welsh-speaking Baptists began meeting together for worship in 1811. This group was responsible for building a simple, white-limed chapel in the lower Hayes in 1821, known as Tabernacl. It was rebuilt in 1865, and both Bethany and Tabernacl met the challenge of the growing population of Cardiff and engaged in the activity now known as church-planting. Bethany fostered the daughter churches of Bethel at the Docks, Hope, now called Calvary, in Canton, and Tredegarville. Tabernacl was responsible for the establishment of Llandaff Road, Siloam and Salem. In its turn, Tredegarville went on to sponsor new Baptist churches at Maindy, Grangetown, Pearl Street, Splott Road and Rumney. As well as providing the initial finance for each of these new churches, the mother church also invariably provided the nucleus of members for the new cause, an example to be followed many years later by Albany Road in respect of Christchurch, Llanedeyrn.

In 1875 the parishes of Roath and Canton were absorbed by the rapidly growing town. Roath has a long history in its own right. Its original name was "Rath", still retained in the Welsh form "Y Rhath", which was a name derived from an ancient Celtic term meaning "an earthen fort". The existence of a fossatum or ditch of the kind which would form part of the defences of such a fortification has long been associated with the site of Roath Court. One school of thought has suggested that this was the royal centre of the Welsh rulers of the region prior to the coming of the Normans. However, soon after the Normans built Cardiff Castle, lands were cleared at Roath to form the basis of a manor, which became the "home-farm" to supply the castle with provisions for its substantial household.



Cottrell Road in May 1894

A manor house was built opposite the church of St Margaret's, and adjacent to it stood the barton or grange, where hay and corn were stored. Several wattle and daub cattle sheds were also built in this vicinity. A nearby stream, later known as Roath Brook, which today flows through Roath Mill Park and Waterloo Gardens, provided power for the mill, which was rebuilt in successive ages, the last one remaining in existence until 1897. A small wooden bridge spanned the stream near the church, and this gave access to the track which led up Penylan Hill. Roath Manor itself operated much as any other medieval manor: the tenants cultivated strips in open fields in exchange for a small rent and unpaid labour on the lord's arable land. However, Roath was not entirely typical, for records indicate that there were a number of permanent servants employed on the manorial lands as well, and they were housed in cottages which stood towards what is now known as Albany Road. In addition, considerable emphasis was given to dairy produce on the manor, and pasture for the large herd of milking cows extended along the banks of Roath Brook, probably as far as the present Blenheim Road.

The original manor house was rebuilt in Elizabethan times and became known as Roath Court. Further alterations were made during the eighteenth century to result in the elegant building which is familiar to the present generation as the funeral home of James Summers and Son Ltd. However, at the time that Roath was added to Cardiff, the parish was still essentially rural in character, and had changed little in five hundred years. A small village had developed in the shadow of Roath Court and St Margaret's Church, and those who lived there were principally engaged in agriculture. Albany Road itself was no more than a country lane, which probably ran as far as the town boundary at the end of City Road and Crwys Road, the site of the town gallows. City Road was still known as Castle Road and was the eastward limit of Cardiff. By 1890 however, much had changed. The Plasnewydd area had been built and Albany Road had been developed as far the Claude Hotel, with mainly residential property, although even then there were some shops.

In 1893, the Secretary of the Cardiff and Penarth Baptist Association, Rev W.E.Winks, who was also the pastor of Bethany, thought the time was right to establish a "Mission" in the rapidly-developing suburb of Roath. As a result of his enthusiasm and vision, the Association rented the upstairs room of a fairly large building in Cottrell Road. The lower part of the building was used as a stable for horses. It is known that one, Mr Albert Hayes, who lived at No. 162 Cottrell Road, was a cab proprietor. In those pre-motor-car days, he would have required stable accommodation for the horses which drew his cabs. Thus it is very likely that his were the horses stabled beneath the Mission Hall. The first family in Cardiff to own a motor-car lived in Newport Road, but did not acquire their vehicle until much closer to the end of the century, by which time Albany Road Baptist Church was some five or six years old. Thus those who gathered for worship in that upstairs room in Cottrell Road in 1893 would have known horse-drawn traffic only, although the more intrepid amongst them may have owned a bicycle. Not for them however, the frustration of a traffic jam in Albany Road, or the problem of finding a parking space convenient for the Mission Hall. Instead those early worshippers would have known the warm smell of horses and the gentle clip-clop of hooves shuffling in stalls, as well as an occasional neighing to punctuate the sermon.

The building itself now forms part of the "Cane & Pine Shop", which fronts on to Albany Road. However, in 1893, the upstairs room could accommodate about one hundred people, although there was a partition which was used to divide the room into two smaller rooms as required. A rostrum was placed at one end and a harmonium was installed. Access was by means of an internal staircase. When the building ceased to be used as a stable, it became a small warehouse, and one owner recalled that, when he took possession, he found the ground floor was cobbled with a centre gully running lengthwise. Thus the stalls would have been located on either side so it is likely that those who attended the services at the Cottrell Road Baptist Mission would have had to walk between the stalls to reach the staircase. Records note that cork matting was purchased for the stairs, although this was later replaced by oil-cloth, which was purchased for a sum of 14s.11½d.

The inaugural meeting of the Cottrell Road Baptist Mission was held on Thursday 20 July, 1893. It commenced with a prayer meeting at 2.00 p.m., and this was followed by a service at 3.00 p.m. The preacher was Rev W.E. Winks, and he took as his text "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven" (John 3:5). It is difficult to think of a more apt theme for the start of a new Baptist cause. A Communion Service was held at its conclusion, followed by tea which was served at 5.30 p.m. About 100 sat down to the meal, and the names of the ladies who presided at the tables are carefully noted in the minutes. They included, amongst others, Mrs Knight, whose husband was the minister of Longcross Street Baptist Church, and Mrs Edwards, wife of the Principal of the Baptist College. A public meeting was held in the evening, and this was chaired by Alderman Thomas Rees, J.P., who was a well-known Baptist layman, and who was generous both to the Mission and then to the new church. A brief business meeting also took place to appoint an executive committee to organise the running of the Mission. Mr D.F.Thorne agreed to accept to role of Secretary.

The need to appoint a caretaker was also pressing. A charwoman had been engaged to clean the room thoroughly prior to the inaugural meeting, but a caretaker was required to prepare the room for the services. A sum of 3/- per week was agreed as the caretaker's wage, and Mr and Mrs John Jermine of 90 Cottrell Road duly took up the position. They became founder members of the church, and long after their caretaking days ended in June 1896, they remained in active membership. Mr Jermine went on to become a deacon, and later, in 1922, he was appointed as the first Elder of the church, an office he continued to hold until his death in 1939.

Sunday services at the Mission Hall commenced on 23 July 1893, and a Sunday School was formed in August. Rev George Muller of Bristol, who founded the Muller orphanages, donated Bibles and New Testaments for the children, although they were expected to buy their own hymn-books at a cost of 2d each. The minutes of the early days of the Mission reveal a very real vitality and enthusiasm. A series of special evangelistic meetings were held between 17 and 29 September, and handbills publicising the event were distributed in the neighbourhood. By the end of the year, the executive committee was receiving repeated requests to consider the formation of a fully fledged Baptist Church. An approach was made to the Association and subsequently, the Mission Committee received a letter:

"Cardiff and Penarth Baptist Association Cardiff

22 March 1894

My Dear Sir

The following is a copy of the Resolution passed in our meeting held last night at Woodville Road Chapel.

Resolved:

that the Brethren and Sisters now meeting at Cottrell Road be formed into a Church, subject to the guidance, oversight and financial control of this Association, with power to receive and dismiss from membership and to administer the Ordinances.

Yours truly

(Signed) W.E. Winks

Mr D.F. Thorne

Hon. Sec. Cottrell Road Mission Hall."

Albany Road Baptist Church came into being on Wednesday 23 May, 1894. A congregation of about fifty gathered in the afternoon to hear the Association President, Rev Caradoc Griffiths of Woodville Road, speak on the "The Nature of the Christian Church". Letters of transfer from various churches were read in respect of twenty-eight founder members: six from Splott Road (Mr J.H. Harries, Mr and Mrs John Jermine, Mr Thomas Jones and Mr and Mrs D.F. Thorne); five from Woodville Road (Mr and Mrs T. Abel, Mr Robert Hooper, Miss Mary Ann Hooper and Miss Emily Neale); five from Tabernacle, Penarth (Mr and Mrs Kuhike, Mr and Mrs G.H. Davies and Miss Bessie Bray); four from Longcross Street (Mr and Mrs J.G. Marsh and Mr and Mrs R. Davies); four from Bethany (Mr and Mrs L.J.M. Hollott, Mrs Lottie Lloyd and Mr Thomas Rees); two from Calvary, Treforest (Mr and Mrs W. Williams) and one each from Tredegarville (Mr Walter Waite) and Lake Road, Portsmouth (Mrs Jessie Rees, wife of Mr Thomas Rees).

They received the right hand of fellowship from Rev. Griffiths and then the first addition to the Church was received into membership, Mr Herbert Lloyd, who had been baptised at Woodville Road the previous Sunday. Mr Lloyd served the Church faithfully, eventually becoming a deacon, and later an Elder. Until his death during the 1950s, he was rarely absent from the prayer meeting held by the deacons on Sunday evenings prior to the service. His wife, Lottie, was also one of the founder members transferred from Woodville Road that day, and together they enjoyed a long and happy marriage, celebrating their diamond wedding just the day before Mrs Lloyd died in 1951. Fifty-seven of those sixty years were spent as active members of Albany Road Baptist Church, but at the time of

the foundation of the church, they were a young married couple, keen and eager to serve the Lord in the new venture in Roath.

As well as receiving the founder members of the church, this first meeting was also the occasion to elect the first diaconate of Albany Road Baptist Church. Five deacons, together with a Secretary and Treasurer, met a week later when arrangements were made for the conduct of the services, the prayer meetings and the Communion services. A mid-week preaching service was held on Thursdays, and prayer meetings on Mondays and at 10.00 a.m. on Sundays. It was decided to have "Contribution Envelopes" and "to divide the membership of the Church into districts so the same may be equally allotted between the Deacons for visitation." It was also agreed that "all meetings of the Diaconate to finish by 10.00 p.m."

In those early days, there were two issues which engaged the attention of the Church. One was that of "Drink Traffic", when, after discussion, it was agreed that no person who held a licence for the sale of intoxicating drink, or who held shares in the licensed victualling trade, should be a member of the Church. The reader should bear in mind that the discussion and decision took place in the context of a society where the Temperance Movement was in its heyday.

The other question was rather more contentious, namely, whether to have "open" or "closed" communion. A special Church Meeting was held in October 1894 to consider the matter and reach a decision. The meeting was not very well attended, eighteen members only being present. Eventually, on the casting vote of the Chairman, Mr. Thomas Rees, it was decided that only baptised believers from other Baptist Churches could be invited to join the members around the Lord's Table.

The "First Anniversary Service of the Cottrell Road Baptist Mission Church" was held on Sunday 21 July, 1894, and handbills advertising it were distributed in the neighbourhood. This dating caused much confusion in later years, although it clearly related to the anniversary of the inauguration of the Mission rather than that of the Church. The notice included a special invitation to "parents whose children do not at present attend any Sunday School, or who have just settled in the neighbourhood, to send them to the Children's Service at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons." The Secretary preserved a copy of the handbill, noting in the margin that "these services were well-attended and the collection amounted to £2.16s.2d."

The congregation increased rapidly and even as early as September 1894, the Church asked the Association "to consider the advisability of taking steps to secure better accommodation". It was pointed out that congregations had increased and the accommodation was not satisfactory for Sunday School purposes. As an immediate response, the Association promised to supply additional seats and to alter the partition to improve the situation in the short term. Later in the year a Band of Hope was started, and book stall provided.

Among those who joined the Church during that first year was Mr. T.W.Chance from Erwood, Brecknockshire. He remained closely associated with the Church for most of the next sixty years. Following a few years' absence, when he held the pastorate of High Street Baptist Church, Merthyr Tydfil, he returned to Cardiff in 1908 to take up a post as Professor of Church History and Financial Secretary of the South Wales Baptist College, when he entered into membership once more. Subsequently, he became Principal of the College, but he continued to serve the Church as deacon and Elder, always ready to give wise guidance or to preach on Sundays when required. His prayers

at the mid-week prayer meeting were long remembered, with one member describing them as "lifting you to the very gates of heaven". Eventually, in 1953, ill-health forced him and his wife to return to Erwood to be cared for by a relative, until his death just before Christmas 1954. Surely Albany Road is privileged indeed to have had a man of the calibre of Principal Chance in membership for such a long period.

Early in 1895, the Association Committee co-opted three members of the Church to consider with them a suitable site for building a School-Chapel for the Church. By March of that year, they had decided "on the corner of a new road to be constructed from Albany Road near the junction of Penylan Road, across the Tredegar Estate in a north-easterly direction." This road was later to become known as Blenheim Road. Subsequently an instruction was given to Messrs. Habershon and Fawckner to prepare "a pencil sketch of the intended buildings" to include seating for 600 adults.

During the first six months of 1895, the membership increased to 53, but it was reported that "the Sunday morning prayer-meeting had been discontinued in consequence of non-attendance, and that other weeknight meetings had not been as well attended as might have been expected." However, a Tonic-Solfa Class was started on Tuesday evenings in the smaller of the two rooms, under the leadership of Mr Waite, to improve the singing. The Treasurer was able to report that the Church was self-supporting, paying the annual rental on the hall of £26 from its own funds, and thus it was no longer dependent upon the Association. Sadly, it was also reported to the deacons that cash was missing from the collection baskets, so they were replaced by collection boxes.

The Communion Plate and Chalice had been borrowed from Bethel Baptist Church, Pomeroy Street, and this loan was renewed each year until 1898, when the Church purchased its own at a cost of £3.6s.8d. At each Communion Service, an offering was taken for the "Poor Fund" and a box for further contributions was also made available at the mid-week meetings. It must be remembered that, in those days, there was no Welfare State, no unemployment benefit and no Health Service. Poverty was a very real problem and assistance came only from the Poor Law Guardians, or, as a last resort, the "Workhouse". The Church did what it could to alleviate some of the suffering in the neighbourhood by distributing money from the "Poor Fund" to needy cases known to it.

The framing of the Rules for the Church and the compilation of a List of Doctrines much exercised the members during 1895. On the whole, they found it easier to agree on the Rules than on the Articles of Faith. One rule which was strictly enforced for a number of years, but which subsequently faded from memory, was that any member who was absent from the Communion Service or from the ordinary services of the Church for three consecutive months, without reasonable cause, was considered to have withdrawn from the Fellowship. The Diaconate was left to define "reasonable cause". The Articles of Faith included statements on the "Trinity, Original Sin, Justification, the Ordinances of Believers' Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the Holy Scriptures, the Resurrection of the Dead and the Eternal Happiness of the Saved and the Eternal Misery of all who die impenitent."

The plans for the new School-Chapel were submitted for consideration at the end of August 1895. They were then returned to the architect with a request for various modifications to be incorporated, including no side galleries, a moveable screen between the Infants Classroom and the main hall, the provision of a heating chamber and a boiler and wash-house, as well as the inclusion of a baptistery. The modifications were made and by the beginning of 1896, the plans were well-

advanced. The total cost of building the School-Chapel amounted to £2400, an initial £800 being the responsibility of the Association with the assistance of the Church. The balance of £1600 was obtained by arranging a mortgage with interest charged at a rate of 4%. The plans were eventually approved in the autumn and it was agreed that building would commence when £400 had been raised.

For the greater part of 1896, the Church Meetings were pre-occupied with the framing of the Trust Deed for the new building. It was a long and complex business and caused several heated discussions. A resolution that the Trust Deed should not include a stereo-typed creed but only a general statement as would ensure that the building would be "secure for the Baptist Denomination" was defeated in favour of a detailed Trust Deed "similar to that adopted by Longcross Street Baptist Church." This decision led to a disagreement with the Association, which wanted a Trust Deed more in line with wishes of a minority of the Church members. The Church insisted upon its own way and was even prepared to break with the Association and assume all liability for the new building. Eventually, the Association withdrew its objection and by the end of 1896, the Secretary reported that the Doctrinal Clause had been included in the Trust Deed.

Thus membership of the Church was limited to those "who had professed their faith by being immersed in water", whilst "all Church Rules framed in the future would be subject to the Trust Deed." Also, if the Church were to be disbanded, then the property and all assets must be conveyed to the Society called the "Particular Baptists". At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Baptist Denomination consisted of General and Particular Baptists, the former being Arminian and the latter, high Calvinistic in theological outlook. The Baptist Union was founded in 1813 and it proved to be a meeting ground for both denominations in the ensuing period when high Calvinism declined, and when the views of General and Particular Baptists on predestination ceased to diverge so sharply. Also the question of an open communion which welcomed all believers to the communion Service, or a closed one, which was restricted to those who had been baptised by immersion, was no longer regarded as an obstacle to unity. Open Communion steadily gained favour amongst the Particular Baptists, although a minority dissented and formed a sect known as Strict and Particular Baptists. In 1891 though, the General and Particular Baptists united in one organisation.

Something of the two schools of thought however, seems to have lingered on and coloured some of the discussions relating to the Trust Deed. Originally, the Church had decided upon a "Closed Communion", but four years later, it was decided "that at each Communion Service an invitation be given to baptised believers who are members of Christian Churches to remain. " The insistence upon Baptist Churches was dropped and no definition was given as to what constituted "baptism". Gradually, over the years, the fact that the Church had adhered to the Particular Baptists was forgotten.

Despite the apparent pre-occupation with the Trust Deed in 1896, the real work of the Church was not overshadowed. Baptisms took place in Woodville Road Baptist Church and the Sunday School steadily increased in numbers. The ladies formed a "Dorcas Society" which met to make garments for distribution to the poor in the winter months. Years later, the name "Dorcas" was forgotten but the ladies still met and worked to produce a variety of hand-sewn items which were sold at the

Annual Zenana Mission Sale of Work for the Baptist Missionary Society. The needs of the Young People were not overlooked either, and a Christian Endeavour Society was formed.

Sunday services had been led by visiting ministers, who were paid fees which varied from £1.10s.0d to £2.10s.0d. Students from the Baptist College also led worship and they were paid 5/- per service, although there was a proviso that the Church would pay £1 if "the best preachers in the College were sent." By the end of 1896 though, the Church felt that the time had come to "proceed to appoint a Pastor". This must have been an occasion for rejoicing amongst the founder members and other worshippers in Cottrell Road, although, in the event, three years passed before the wish was realised. Nonetheless, the fact that the desire was present as early as 1896 must have been seen as evidence that the Lord had been blessing the work of the Mission and adding to its numbers. One item from the minutes of 1896 has a curiously modern ring to it though - "the Chairman requested members to sit in the front seats and assist singing on Sundays. "No such request was necessary though in February 1897, when the Mission Hall was packed out to hear an American ex-slave choir in concert.

Meanwhile, the Building Fund was steadily growing and the time was approaching when the actual building work could start. It was reported at the beginning of July 1897 that a sum of £415 had been raised and so the work was put in hand, and the foundation stones were laid on 22 September 1897 by Alfred Thomas M.P., later to become Lord Pontypridd, and by Mr. J.G. Marsh, the Sunday School Superintendent. The site was well-chosen and the planners had the foresight to leave vacant the front part facing Albany Road, so that, in the future, the Church building proper could be erected on it.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1895 shows a cottage standing on the vacant land. When the Church acquired the site, it became the landlord of that cottage, which was in a very dilapidated condition. Therefore, it was considered that the tenancy should be terminated and the cottage demolished, so notice to vacate the premises within seven days was served upon the tenant, a Mr Meredith. The deacons received a letter from Mrs Meredith, asking that they be allowed to remain for another few weeks "until her husband obtained work, as he had been discharged by his employers in consequence of his having received notice to quit the cottage."

Evidently the acquisition of the site by the Church was less than auspicious for the Meredith family. On learning of their plight, the deacons agreed to let the notice remain in abeyance "until the tenant could get a house to suit him." Subsequently, the Merediths obtained accommodation in Cottrell Road and the cottage was finally demolished in May 1898, the debris being used to raise the level of the ground outside the Infants Classroom, now the Church Lounge.

This rather amazing incident affords pertinent comment on the attitudes which were accepted in those days. On the one hand, the diaconate apparently had no qualms about making a family homeless, whilst on the other, they considered themselves to be showing true Christian magnanimity in suggesting that they employ "some who are at present out of work" to undertake the demolition at a cost of not more than £2.2s.0d. It is to be hoped that the reduced circumstances of the hapless Mr Meredith did not compel him to become a member of the demolition squad.

The only houses in Albany Road listed in the Cardiff Directory for 1897 are four thatched cottages, which were located at intervals along the road between Roath Court and the site of the present

Roath Clinic. One was the Roath Village School where pupils paid 1d per week for the privilege of attending. Board Schools were introduced under the Education Act of 1870 and the Albany Road Schools were built in 1887. Thus the majority of the scholars attending the Cottrell Road Baptist Mission Sunday School almost certainly would have received their elementary education in Albany Road School. However, early in 1897, the Cardiff School Board rented the Mission Hall from the Church for £1 per week for use as a Day School. It was noted that no desks were required since the boys would be doing "slate work".

By the close of 1897, the membership of the Church had increased to 77. For four years, the members had worshipped in a room above a stable, first as a Mission and then for three years as a Baptist Church. As they welcomed in the New Year of 1898, the members knew that in a few months' time, they would be worshipping in their own School-Chapel, with the facilities to work more fully for the Kingdom.



Cottage in Albany Road in 1883

CHAPTER 2

EDWARDIAN DAYS

Eventually the great day arrived. Handbills were distributed around the neighbourhood to advertise that on Wednesday 2 March, 1898, the "New School-Chapel in Albany Road" would hold opening services. They commenced with a prayer meeting at 11.00 a.m., followed by a preaching service at 3.00 p.m. and a Public Tea at 5.00 p.m., for which a charge of 1/- was made. A second preaching service was held at 7.00 p.m. and the guest preacher for the day was the well-known Rev.D.J. Hiley of Bristol.

The building had been designed primarily as a School. Right from the outset, when it was at the planning stage, and subsequently during its actual building, the members looked forward to the time when their Church building proper would be erected on the vacant site. Meanwhile, the new School-Chapel was to serve a dual purpose, which was reflected in its title.

The building had two entrances in Blenheim Road, clearly marked "Boys' Entrance" and "Girls' Entrance". Evidently mixed classes were not known in these late Victorian days. The "Boys' Entrance" led into a small vestibule with a staircase, which gave access to three classrooms upstairs and also to the Gallery. One of the upstairs rooms was used for mid-week meetings, a practice which continued well into the 1960s and another became the Sewing room, where the ladies met for work. The Gallery was reserved for the Choir, and a small pedal organ was installed there. The Choir was formed in April 1898 with a Choir Committee consisting of the Conductor, the Organist and "three members of the Church not being members of the Choir." This was a wise move, designed to ensure that the choral contribution to the worship actually served the needs of the congregation. The Organist was a certain Mr W.J.Budding, who, along with his family, had recently transferred from Splott Road. A donation of £2. 10s.0d by another member allowed for the purchase of hymn-books "for the use of visitors". Members were expected to buy their own "to avoid unnecessary expenditure".

The main hall extended the length of the building, although it was possible to screen off the section under the Gallery by means of a moveable, half-glazed partition. On the left-hand side of the hall were five classrooms, and a small kitchen to the right of the dais. Another two classrooms were situated on the small corridor, which led from the "Girls' Entrance". The dais with the baptistery underneath stood at the opposite end of the hall from the entrances. It was enclosed with a rail and the preaching desk stood in the centre. On the right-hand side of the dais, a door led to the Infants' Classroom. This room was tiered originally, similar to a lecture room, and until the room was altered in 1987 to become the present Church Lounge, the tier marks were still clearly visible on one wall.

Cardiff & Penarth Baptist Association

NEW SCHOOL CHAPEL, ALBANY ROAD.

OPENING SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2ND, 1898.

Prayer Meeting at 11 a.m. Sermons at 3 and 7 p.m. by

Rev. D. J. HILEY,

(BRISTOL).

PUBLIC TEA at 5 p.m. Tickets 1s. each.

SUNDAY, MARCH 6th, at 11 a.m., 3 and 6-30 p.m.—

Preacher: Rev. SAMUEL JONES, (Brecon).

SUNDAY, MARCH 13th—

Preacher: Rev. PRINCIPAL EDWARDS, D.D., (Cardiff).

SUNDAY, MARCH 20th—

Preacher: Rev. THOMAS THOMAS, (Risca).

SUNDAY, MARCH 27th—

Preachers: Rev. W. E. WINKS and Rev. W. G. DAVIES.

Sunday Services commence at 11 a.m. and 6-30 p.m. Collections at each Service.

A HEARTY WELCOME TO ALL.

Roberts Brothers, 15, Working Street, Cardiff.

Handbill of Opening of School Chapel

By present-day standards, the building was not well equipped with toilets, although their provision must have been considered adequate when the plans were drawn. There was one outside for Men, adjacent to the Infants' Classroom, whilst the Ladies' room was situated off the Infants' Classroom. The needs of the female membership were given further consideration when "a brush and comb for the Ladies' Lavatory was purchased at a cost of 3s.8d." Clearly this was an age with different standards of hygiene.

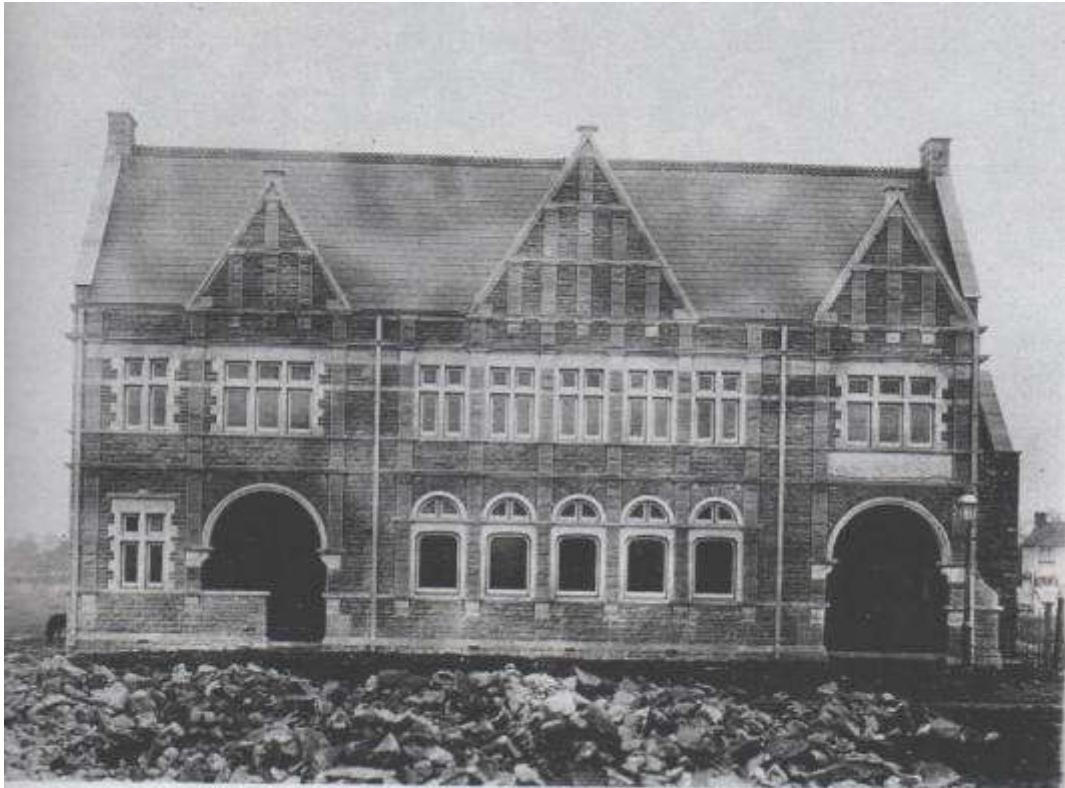
The building brought delight to the members. Mr Thomas Jones was appointed as caretaker on a part-time basis at a remuneration of £9.12s.0d per annum, but this was soon increased to £26.0s.0d to cover the additional hours required. However, these early days were not without their share of problems, some of which have a modern currency. Vandalism, for instance, surfaced soon after the opening and handbills were printed offering a reward of £1 for information leading to the conviction of anyone found wilfully damaging the premises. In 1899 that reward was paid: whether or not criminal proceedings were brought against the miscreant is unknown, although it seems unlikely, given that a certain boy's parents are mentioned as having paid a sum of ten shillings to replace a broken window. Later the Secretary was asked to write to the Head Constable calling his attention to the "annoyance caused by boys outside our place during weeknight services."

The Church Minutes reveal little of the impact of the opening of the School-Chapel on the surrounding district. It should be remembered though that this was the period when the immediate neighbourhood was being developed itself. Marlborough Road School was built and opened in 1899 to serve the needs of the growing community, which was settling in the new property being built on the Tredegar Estate. The opening of Albany Road Baptist School-Chapel was part and parcel of this local development. Nevertheless, within three months of the opening, the membership had increased from 77 to 110. Indeed, numbers had been steadily increasing during the previous two years. Baptismal services had taken place, but these had been held at Woodville Road. Once the School-Chapel had opened however, baptisms took place in the Church's own baptistery, and what a joy it must have been on 18 September 1898 to witness seven young people from the Sunday School making their confession of faith in those waters.

As well as such high points, there were also losses. Names were erased from the Church Roll for non-attendance, and the deacons were zealous in visiting members who had become indifferent. The church Rule regarding attendance at the Sunday services and at the Communion Service was rigorously applied: three consecutive absences resulted in visitation by the deacons, and if a valid reason was not offered, erasure was the inevitable consequence. Communion cards were used to record attendance, a practice which continued in operation until after the Second World War. However, the minutes also indicate that a number of people were received into membership by "restoration". This followed visitation by two church members, who had to report to the Church Meeting. Transfers of membership, both in and out of Albany Road, were frequent occurrences, sometimes people staying but a few months before moving on to another part of town, or away from Cardiff altogether. Many were single young women, and probably they were engaged as maids in the larger households of Roath Park and Penylan, as those areas developed.

In the autumn of 1898, attention once more was given to the question of appointing a Pastor. The deacons undertook a visitation of the whole membership with the object of raising £100 to establish a pastorate fund. Special envelopes were produced so that the members could make their

additional contributions for this fund. In January 1899, a special meeting was held to determine the stipend which should be offered to a prospective minister. The outcome of that meeting was that the maximum should be £156 per annum with no manse. This was a generous sum in view of the fact that the average wage was about £2 per week.



School Chapel on completion, 1898

The Church was ready to give a call by this time, but first a fortnight of special prayer meetings took place prior to making the final decision. Five names were brought to the Church for consideration, out of which Rev W. Howell Williams of Nantwich was chosen. The call was then given to Rev. Williams, and a deputation of three deacons travelled to Shrewsbury to meet him on 4 February 1899 to discuss the terms of the appointment. They travelled by train and their combined return fares amounted to £2.17s.2d. It proved to be a profitable journey for the invitation to become Albany Road's first Pastor was accepted, and the Church was duly informed that "his belief is strictly in accordance with the Trust Deed and Rules of the Church." It was agreed that Rev Howell Williams should commence his ministry on 3 April 1899, that his stipend would be £132 per annum, payable monthly, and that he would receive 20 days holiday a year, but including only two Sundays. This was increased to three Sundays the following year, but the Pastor's salary was not reviewed until 1905, when it was increased to £145.

Copies of the correspondence between Mr Thorne, the Church Secretary and Rev Howell Williams are preserved in the Minute Book. As well as setting out the terms of the appointment, the

Secretary asked for guidance as to the format of the Recognition Service since he had "not had any experience in meetings of this kind and would be thankful to receive suggestions as to how matters should be arranged." The requested advice was carefully detailed in Howell Williams' response, which was sent by return of post. It was agreed that prior to commencing his pastorate, Mr Williams would preach on Sunday 12 March, and conduct a baptismal service on that occasion, for which event he was asked "to bring his dress with him." Four candidates were baptised, including Robert Hollyman, who went on to become a deacon and greatly respected Elder of the Church.

The date for the Induction and Recognition Tea was set for Wednesday 10 May 1899. Careful preparations were made in the weeks leading up to it. New tables and trestles were purchased at a cost of £4.7s.0d and additional table-cloths for 8/-. On the day, over 400 attended the Recognition Tea. Also concern was expressed that there was a deficit of £32 on the current account and members were urged to make special additional contributions on or before Sunday 2 April, so as to clear this debt in time for the commencement of Howell Williams' ministry. The deacons met in the week-night meeting room to receive the donations, which amounted to £26.18s.0d, and then a further contribution of £9.10s.6d was pledged by one of the deacons to be paid by 7 May, in time for the Recognition Service. The Church also prepared for the coming pastorate by holding a week of special prayer meetings from 17 - 20 April.

Howell Williams made an immediate impact on the neighbourhood. Congregations increased and requests to transfer membership to Albany Road were numerous. By the end of the year, over 30 such requests had been processed, including those of Mrs Elizabeth Dennison and Mrs Catherine Dennison from Tredegarville, Mr and Mrs H.A. Hopson from Grangetown, and Mr and Mrs William Dennison from Longcross Street, names by no means unfamiliar to succeeding generations at Albany Road, including the present one. During the first year of his ministry at Albany Road, Howell Williams baptised seventeen people, and the Church continued to grow in the following years as well. By the close of his ministry in 1910, the membership had increased to 270 from the 110 on the roll at the outset. Howell Williams was a gifted preacher and was much in demand as a guest preacher at anniversary services in and around Cardiff. His sermons were well-known and some were published in book form, although, unfortunately, no copy has survived.

Although the Church increased numerically during those years, there were mounting financial problems. Apart from the additional demands made upon the resources by the pastorate, the Church was still faced with the task of paying off the mortgage on the School-Chapel. One of the schemes advanced to raise funds to reduce the debt was that "the Lady-members of the Church be kindly asked to endeavour to arrange for making articles for sale." This suggestion was taken up with some enthusiasm and a very successful Sale of Work was held at the beginning of April 1900, realising £53.16s.3d.

A circular letter had been received from the Association informing the churches that the Association was in debt to the tune of £560 "arising from the erection of the new chapel at Albany Road." The letter went on to request that each church should bear a proportion of that debt, the proportion to be based on the membership of the Church. The sum requested from Albany Road was £27, and it was agreed that it be paid from the proceeds of the Sale of Work "on the strict understanding that no further claim will be made in respect of the Albany Road premises." When the Association made a further appeal in August 1902, the Secretary was instructed to reply that neither the Church nor

individual members would be able to send a contribution, since they had met their obligation fully at the time of the previous appeal.



Sunday School Teachers, 1903

The deacons were greatly exercised by the whole question of Church Finances during first decade of the twentieth century. It was an age when real wages were falling and many people had to live and raise a family on an income of less than twenty-five shillings a week. Some members simply did not have the money to give and all too frequently there was a deficit on the current account. A Finance Committee was established to consider how the problem might be tackled, and a special financial appeal was launched with the membership being urged to make additional contributions. Special envelopes were produced which could be used weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually, as the individual wished. The result was an additional 15s10d a week, bringing the average weekly offering to £5.7s.2d, which was barely enough to meet the expenditure.

Even though some members lacked the resources to give much, considerable concern was expressed at the number of members who contributed very irregularly, and some who gave nothing at all. Various schemes were tried to overcome the difficulty and to awaken the membership to its financial responsibilities but a crisis was reached in July 1903 and a special Church Meeting was held one Sunday evening after the service. The Treasurer pointed out that a sum of £10 was required immediately in order for the Church to meet its obligations which would become due at the end of the month, and that unless the members contributions improved, a similar situation would occur in September. It was an occasion for plain speaking, and the meeting was told the reason for the present situation was because about 66 members either never gave anything, or contributed very irregularly. Those present were urged to increase their giving by 3d a week, if at all possible, and they were "earnestly requested to give in the spirit of sacrifice, in the same spirit of the Master.

Trusting that the result would be a closer bond of fellowship, emanating from the Spirit of God, continuing in the same, our Church would be awakened to the sense of its spiritual and temporal needs." There was a little improvement as a result of this meeting, but many still failed to give on a regular basis, and an offer to install electric lighting in the Chapel was refused because the Church had insufficient funds available.

The burden of debt in respect of the outstanding mortgage continued to press throughout this period. Notice was given that an attempt to pay off £100 by the beginning of 1902 would be made, and that the Pastor and Treasurer would attend on Christmas Day to receive contributions. A "Penny-a-Week Fund" was established in November 1902 to raise a "substantial sum toward the Building Fund" and by 1906 £122.3s.5d had been collected by this means. Further Sales of Work were held in 1903 and 1906, which raised £110.2s.3d and £228.9s.9d respectively. The latter was a particularly grand affair, spread over two days and included such stalls as plain sewing, fancy sewing, dolls, sweets, flowers, provisions, variety, gentlemen, polish and a bran tub, as well as an evening concert. What was sold on the gentlemen's stall is unclear, but it attracted £12.10.6d in donations alone. Little by little the mortgage was reduced and then in 1905, the Church received an interest-free loan of £300 from the Baptist Building Fund, which eased the situation to some extent.

Despite the parlous state of the Church's finances during the first decade of the twentieth century, growth was apparent within the fellowship. Baptisms were held regularly, sometimes stretching over two services to cope with the number of candidates. Additional baptismal gowns were bought in April 1901 at a cost of £1.4s.0d each, whilst in January 1902, the deacons were authorised "to purchase a further six baptismal dresses, towels and shawl." Mindful of the need for modesty, the Secretary was instructed "to provide lead for the dresses of female candidates." Whilst much of this growth was the result of Howell Williams' faithful ministry and challenging preaching, it must be remembered that in the latter part of 1904 and early in 1905, the famous "Welsh Revival" led by Evan Roberts occurred. Whether or not there was a direct impact upon the Church by the Revival is uncertain, but in December 1904, the pastor received requests for baptism from 12 candidates, followed by another 25 in January 1905.

Although not on the scale of the first Pentecost, the numbers presented the Church with both pastoral and logistical problems. On the pastoral side, many of the candidates were very young, and so the pastor felt it necessary to seek parental consent before proceeding with their baptisms. He was also conscious of the responsibility borne by the Church in respect of these young people, and he arranged a "nurture group" for them. Also it was reported that those appointed to visit the candidates for church membership found it impossible to cope with the large numbers and so additional visitors were commissioned. They formed what would be recognised today as a pastoral care committee. The existence of this group certainly proved fortuitous during the latter part of Howell Williams' ministry, as will be seen below.

On the logistical side, even with the additional baptismal gowns which had been purchased in recent months, there were insufficient to go round, and so neighbouring churches were approached to loan their stock together with several baths. The latter were used by the candidates in order to drain off the water immediately after their baptism, and later the wet gowns were collected in the same baths and taken off to be laundered. With these practical problems overcome, when the baptismal day arrived, half the candidates were baptised in the morning service and the other half in the

evening service. On both occasions, the children were allowed on to the platform, under the strict supervision of their Sunday School teachers, to witness the baptisms. The impression this made on young minds must have been great indeed.



Rev. and Mrs Howell Williams

The records also indicate that there was a great sense of fellowship apparent amongst the members during these early years in the School-Chapel. Both the Church Anniversary and the Annual Church Meeting were regarded as opportunities for "social teas". In the case of the Church Anniversary, the tea regularly took place on the Wednesday following the Anniversary services, and there was always an associated lecture, which followed the meal. One was on the subject of "A Visit to Egypt", which it was announced would be illustrated by costumes, photographs etc. Later the lectures were abandoned in favour of another preaching service, often led by the same guest minister who had taken the previous Sunday services. The tea however, remained as an institution, and the shopping list for the Anniversary Tea in 1901 makes interesting reading: 3 lbs tea, 15 lbs sugar, 10 lbs butter, 5 gallons milk and 68 lbs cake. A modest charge was made for the tea and the proceeds were given to the Building Fund.

For a number of years, the Annual Church Meeting was preceded by a "Members' Tea", with the deacons being responsible for all the arrangements. One would order the cake, specifically recorded as "sultana, rice and cherry" on one occasion, another the bread and crockery, another milk, sugar and tea, whilst yet another was responsible for calling together a group of ladies to co-ordinate the preparations and to preside at the tables.

The Members' Tea and Annual Meeting in 1902 was an occasion for particularly great celebration. When Howell Williams arrived at Albany Road, he was a bachelor. Within a few months of the start of his pastorate, he received into membership a family transferring from Newport. Subsequently, one of the daughters began to attend the pastor's baptismal classes, and then, after her baptism early in 1900, romance blossomed. The couple were married in August 1902, and the diaconate sent the following telegram:

"Your deacons unite in sending sincerest wishes for future happiness and prosperity, praying God's richest blessing may rest on the union this day."

The church members subscribed towards a wedding gift of an oak, roll-top writing desk for the pastor and an easy chair for his new wife. These gifts were presented at the Annual Meeting, immediately after the tea, which had taken on a party atmosphere.

With the celebrations over, the church looked forward to a time of added blessing now that the pastor had a wife to support him in his ministry. A Young Men's Bible Class, led by the pastor, commenced on Wednesday evenings, and a few months later, plans were afoot to start a similar class for Young Women, to be led by one of the deacons. Mrs Williams involved herself in pastoral visitation and organised a Sewing Class for Young Women. The Sunday School continued to flourish, with a regular flow of scholars seeking baptism and church membership. Early in 1903, one of the young men, Henry Budding, responded to God's call and became the first ministerial candidate in the history of the church.

The Choir also continued to make a regular contribution to the worship of the church. A request for permission to "remain in Chapel for about half an hour after Sunday evening service for singing practice on wet evenings" was readily granted, but begs the question as to what the Choir did when it was not raining on a Sunday evening. Nonetheless, solos, duets and anthems were frequently included in the services, although a request was made that such items be included before the sermon, rather than afterwards to ensure that nothing detracted from the pastor's message.

In these early years of the twentieth century, it became customary for the church to hold a week of special prayer meetings at the beginning of the year, and also in October at the start of the winter programme. The main topic at these special prayer meetings in January 1906 was a series of evangelistic services planned for March, and as a result of that mission, baptisms were held in April and May. In June, the pastor left for a well-earned holiday, but instead of returning after three weeks, the deacons received a letter from an eminent chest specialist in Liverpool, advising them that Howell Williams had consulted him, and that a diagnosis of tuberculosis had been confirmed. The specialist went on to recommend that Mr Williams be granted two months' leave of absence for special treatment and rest. However, by September, it was clear that the pastor had developed a rapid tuberculosis for his condition had deteriorated to the extent that the Liverpool consultant indicated that the leave of absence should continue until at least the end of March 1907. In those days, for severe cases, doctors recommended a period of treatment at special clinics in Switzerland, and this course of action was suggested to Howell Williams. A testimonial was hastily organised by the Cardiff District of the Glamorgan and Carmarthenshire English Baptist Association, and as a result, the pastor and his wife set off for a prolonged stay at Davos in Switzerland, better-known today as a ski-resort. Hopes of a speedy recovery were soon dashed, and for a considerable period of time, there was a real possibility that he would succumb to the disease. His leave of absence was

further extended until June 1907, when a letter was received from Mrs Williams informing the church that, in the opinion of the Swiss doctor, the pastor's stay should not be interrupted, for any such break in his treatment could have disastrous consequences.

A further testimonial was raised, and then in September the news which reached the church from Switzerland indicated that at last there was some discernible improvement in the pastor's condition. However, he was still far from being strong enough to return and it was recommended that he remain in Davos until the following spring. Finally, in March 1908, the church received much better news from the doctor in Davos, together with a letter from Howell Williams himself, to the effect that he would return home in April and should be well enough to resume his duties by mid-May.

A further letter from the pastor informed the congregation that he planned to leave Davos on 14 April, and intended being home in time to attend the Church Anniversary in May. There was great rejoicing at his return and a "Welcome Home" meeting was organised to greet the pastor and his wife, and to offer thanks to God for his restoration. It soon became apparent though, that Howell Williams had not regained his former strength: he became prone to colds, which laid him low for several weeks at a time. Given the nature of his complaint, as a matter of practical expediency, a separate communion cup was purchased for the pastor's personal use, for at that time the church did not use individual cups at communion. A rota of deacons was drawn up to assist the pastor at the services, so as to allow him to conserve his strength for preaching.

Throughout the pastor's two-year absence, the church had continued to pay his salary. As well as fees to visiting ministers who had supplied the pulpit on Sundays. Obviously this added to the financial burden placed upon the membership, and worry over money, plus anxiety over the pastor's health, had an adverse effect upon the congregation. The spiritual life of the church declined, and a number of members transferred to other churches. An attempt to overcome this was made on the occasion of a social gathering at the Church Anniversary in 1907, when several deacons gave short talks on various aspects of church membership. Pastoral visitation was undertaken by the deacons, together with those members who had been specifically appointed as visitors at the time of the Revival. A "Mutual Improvement" class was established, mainly for young people. After his return, Howell Williams paid tribute to these efforts, acknowledging that "under exceptional difficulties that Church had managed to hold her own." Nevertheless, it was recognised that morale amongst the members was at a low ebb.

The pastor's restoration provided that church with the impetus to embark upon a full-scale renovation programme in the School-Chapel. Classrooms were repaired and refurbished, one being set aside for the use of the pastor, and the sanctuary itself was also redecorated. The cost of these renovations, which amounted to £57.18s.9d, was off-set by the proceeds of concerts given by the Choir and also by the Young People, and the whole project served to renew the fellowship. Under Howell Williams' guidance, the spiritual side improved as well, and members were urged to be alert to welcome visitors attending Sunday services as a means of building up the congregation.

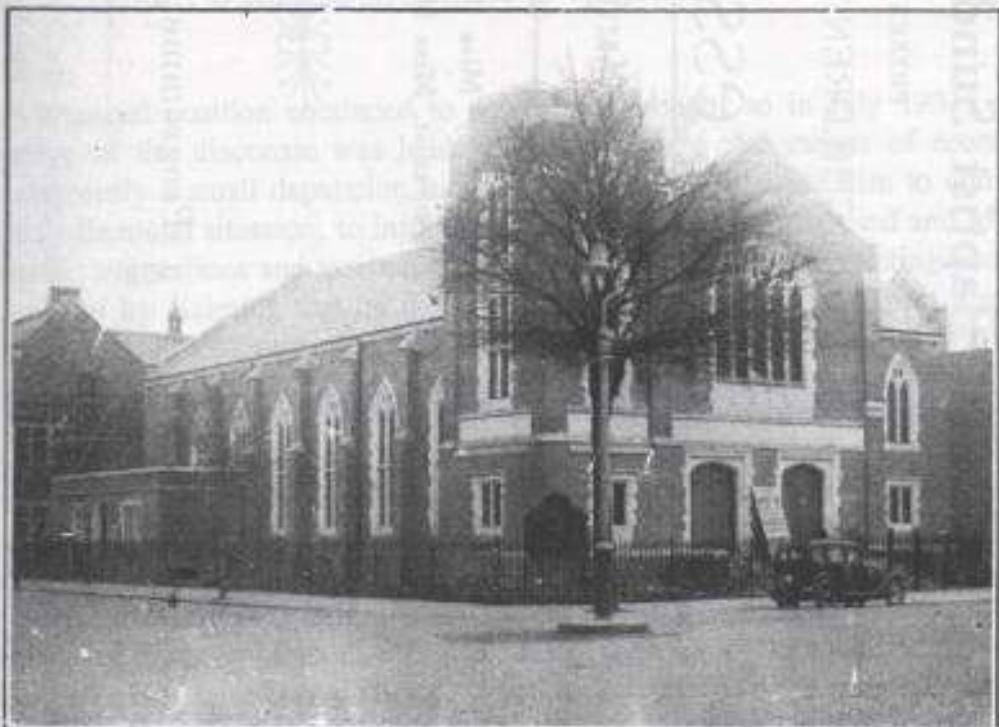
Despite all the difficulties, the original vision of a Church on the vacant site facing Albany Road never faded. Even before the outstanding debt on the School-Chapel had been fully cleared, a "New Church Building Fund" had started. In July 1909, the Cardiff and Penarth Baptist Association invited representatives from all the churches in the association to attend a "conversazione" at the Baptist College to discuss the possibility of arranging a United Bazaar in aid of this fund. It no doubt helped

that one of the deacons was also the Association Secretary at the time. The project was taken up with enthusiasm, and the pastor reported at the annual meeting in October that it was hoped to raise £1000 at the bazaar. He went on "we rejoice, that in the great task before us of providing a New Baptist Chapel for this growing district, we are not to be left entirely to our own devices and resources. This promise of practical help and sympathy from without ought to stimulate us as a Church to greater zeal."

The bazaar was scheduled for October 1910, but earlier in that year, the church was dealt a heavy blow. It was perhaps almost inevitable, given the continuing delicate state of Howell Williams' health, that in May 1910, the pastor informed the diaconate that he had accepted a call to the pastorate of Gilgal Baptist Church, Porthcawl. The decision was taken on health grounds only, for he believed that it would be better for him to live at the seaside. It was a wrench for him to leave Albany Road, especially in view of the consideration and support given to him during his illness. He wrote in his resignation letter, "I can never forget the devotion and affection lavished upon me during my period of service in your midst, especially during those two dark years when my life was despaired of. Your ministry of sympathy and comfort and help in that trying time will remain with us both as an imperishable memory to the last." He left Albany Road at the end of June 1910 and remained at Gilgal until his untimely death early in 1917.

Albany Road Baptist Church,

CARDIFF.



OPENING OF NEW CHURCH BUILDING

Wednesday, Dec. 14th, 1932

OPENING CEREMONY at 3 p.m., by

THE LORD MAYOR OF CARDIFF

(Alderman C. F. Sanders, J.P.).

Cover of Opening of New Church Building



Church Jubilee, 1944



Farewell Dinner for Rex and Audrey Mason, 1965



suggest appropriate amendments. This whole review exercise proved to be very worthwhile: the various committees took it seriously and by the beginning of

The Sanctuary, 1982



...the chairs, already bought for the previous lounge, were brought out of storage. Although it could not be used for the usual lounge, it has proved to be an asset on the occasion demanded. After Sunday Service, 1982