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Site Name: (OLD) HOPE ENGLISH CONGREGATIONALIST CHAPEL.

PRN: 57354

My Site File Ref. No.: CARD/COHC

Site Type: Nonconformist Meeting House; Garage; Printing works

N. G. Ref.: SN 1786 24598

Period: Post-Medieval; Modern

History:

The building stands on the east side of Carrier's Lane, abutting the rear of No. 40 St Mary Street. About the year 1836 Mr. Thomas Lloyd came to Cardigan from Haverfordwest in order to establish a Foundry on the Mwldan, using English-speaking Nonconformist workers from Pembrokeshire. He quickly resolved to establish an English Nonconformist Chapel at Cardigan, as there was no other such facility in the town. The Hope Chapel record book from 1887 records:

"...In 1836 Mr. Thomas Lloyd settled in Cardigan as an Ironmonger. He as well established a large anchor and chain cable works and a ship smithery. Bringing with him a large number of work people from a district in Pembrokeshire where English was the vernacular, he found no service in that language at Cardigan except at the Parish Church, and as the bulk of his work people were Nonconformists this was soon found to be a great disadvantage, and in consequence, with the assistance of the Welsh Independent Church of Capel Mair it was determined to establish an English Chapel for his workmen and others..."

"...Mr. Lloyd had taken a lease for 21 years of premises in St. Mary St. and he proceeded to convert a portion of these in Carrier's Lane into Hope Chapel. Mr. Lloyd was of course assisted by friends in this undertaking..."

In 1837 the chapel was built as an English Congregational chapel by Thomas Lloyd, an ironmonger and founder, of No. 40 St. Mary Street, with assistance from Rev. Daniel Davies of Capel Mair Welsh Congregational Chapel on Feidrfair. Prior to the completion of the new building the congregation had met in a loft behind No. 39 St. Mary Street. Iron gates for the chapel were provided from Thomas Lloyd's own ironworks. The first sermon at Hope Chapel took place on Sunday, October 2nd 1837 and seven ministers attended and took part. Rev. David Phillips attended and was the first Pastor of Hope Chapel, from 1838 until 1845. On October 3rd 1837 the first members were enrolled, namely: Thomas Lloyd, ironmonger, of No. 40 St. Mary Street (formerly of Haverfordwest); Martha Lloyd, his wife; Jane Jenkins of Pwllhai (formerly a member of Capel Mair); Elizabeth Lloyd of St. Mary's Lane (formerly a

member of Capel Mair); William Groombridge, of Kilgerran (formerly of Stoddhurst, London); and Elinor Davies of St. Mary Street (formerly a member of Capel Mair).

On December 10th 1840 ironmonger Levi James of Myers, Lloyd & Davies joined the chapel, having come to Cardigan from Narberth. In 1845 Rev. D. Phillips, the minister, left the chapel. His wife died in February 1847 aged 44 years, after a long illness. On May 28th 1847 the following article appeared in the 'Welshman':

"...CARDIGAN.—On Monday last (being Whit-Monday) a tea meeting was held at Hope Chapel, and was very numerous and respectably attended by persons of every denomination in the town. The exclusive object of the meeting was the benefit of the sabbath school in connection with that place of worship. Tea being over, Mr. Thomas Lloyd was unanimously voted to the chair. In a short and comprehensive speech the worthy chairman took occasion of the opportunity afforded him to state what the object of the tea meeting was, and what it was not; that it was not (as it had been falsely reported) for the purpose of defraying any expenses incurred either by himself or others, in travelling from place to place to oppose the Government Education scheme, and that not a penny of the profit of the meeting would be appropriated to any other purpose than that of purchasing bibles, testaments, and reward books for the diligent and deserving of their sabbath scholars. On resuming his seat the chairman called on Mr. Clougher to address the meeting, then upon the Rev. D. Phillips, and lastly upon the Rev. N. Thomas, Baptist minister, Cilfowyr. The meeting was concluded by singing and prayer. The speeches were interesting and appropriate. The meeting was a clear indication that the sabbath school stands high in the estimation of the inhabitants of Cardigan and from the fact of so many of the different denominations being present, we may safely infer that bigotry is in a dying state here..."

In 1847 a report was made of the Sunday School here, taught by Thomas Lloyd:

"...ENGLISH INDEPENDENT CHAPEL: I visited this Sunday School on December 6 and listened to the examination of one of the classes by Mr. Lloyd, who devotes much attention to this school, and his instruction to the class, and the answers he elicited, were very satisfactory. I also examined another class and found them very well read in the Scriptures. This is a superior Sunday school..."

On April 20th 1849 the following item appeared in the 'Principality':

"...CARDIGAN. On Good Friday, Mr. Richard Hancock, of Brecon College, was publicly set apart to the work of the Christians at Hope chapel, Cardigan. The morning service was introduced by the Rev. James Griffiths, Saint David's. The Rev. Simon Evans, Penygroes. then delivered a discourse on Protestant Dissent, which was deep, clear, and convincing. The usual questions were asked by the Rev. Daniel Davies, Cardigan, and an earnest prayer suitable to the occasion was offered up by the Rev. Henry Griffiths, president of Brecon College. The charge to the minister was given by the Rev. Thomas Luke, Goodwick, in his own evangelical and pathetic style. The Rev. John Davies, Glandwr, concluded by prayer. In the evening the Rev. Samuel Thomas, Newport, introduced the service; the Rev. Evan Lewis, Brinberrian, addressed an appropriate and impressive charge to the church after which, the Rev.

Henry Griffiths delivered a discourse on "The Development of Immanuel in History. It was a magnificent display of learning and eloquence, and bore the Stamp of the rev. gentleman's comprehensive and vigorous mind. The attendance was large and respectable, and the singing in the best taste. The services on the day had a thrilling effect on all present, and will no doubt be long remembered for good, The follow in ministers assisted on the occasion —The Rev D. Bateman, Fishguard; Abednigo Jenkins, Brynmair; D. Phillips, Cavan. There were present also the Rev. John Evans, Hermon; Ll. Rees, Trewyddel; R. Thomas, Baptist minister, Kilfowyr..."

In 1849-50 Rev. Richard Hancock was the second Minister here and ran the 'Cardigan Academy' school in Pendre. On June 1st 1849 the following report appeared in the 'Pembrokeshire Herald':

"...CARDIGAN.—On Monday last, being Whit Monday, the annual tea meeting for the benefit of the children of the Sunday school connected with the Hope chapel. was held in that place. The Sabbath school teachers, and especially the female portion, exerted themselves nobly in disposing of tickets, and in the getting up of the tea, plum cake, &c., which we think, if we may judge from the happy and cheerful countenance, of about 250 individuals, gave every satisfaction, and seemed to prove that each one had partaken of the cup that cheers but don't inebriate." The tea being removed, it was proposed by the Rev. Richard Handcock, seconded by Mr. Thomas Lloyd, that the Rev. Daniel Davies should take the chair.

The rev. gentleman, upon taking the chair, said he was most happy to meet them upon the present occasion, and to see such good feeling and unanimity amongst brethren of various denominations, all anxious to promote the interests of Sabbath schools. He was happy to inform them there was nothing new about tea meetings. It had been his privilege many years ago to attend a similar meeting in London, which was presided over by that honourable soldier of the cross, the late Rev. Matthew Wilks, and he was happy to bear testimony that evening to the unwearied exertions of the Ladies upon that occasion to forward the cause of truth and benevolence. The worthy chairman then called upon Mr. Thomas Lloyd to address the meeting.

Mr. Lloyd in a clear and lucid maimer gave the meeting a most interesting account of his own experience connected with Sabbath schools, which extended over a period of 46 years, proving what a great blessing the institutions of Sabbath Schools had been to the community at large, and gave several instances of individuals holding the highest and most honourable situations who acknowledged that the first impression of right, truth, and piety was received in the Sabbath school.

The Rev. Nathaniel Thomas, Cilfowir, Baptist minister, next addressed the meeting. Mr. Thomas said that he had been a Sunday school scholar and teacher, and had ever felt a great interest in Sabbath schools, as he considered them nurseries of the church of God, and that God had in many instances owned and blessed the labours of the Sunday school teachers,—men of the first talent of the day- the most devoted in the work of the ministry, as well as the stout hearted missionary that has left his home and the land that gave him birth, with all that was near and dear to him by the ties of nature, to proclaim the liberty of the Crass to distant heathens, in many instances dated their first and lasting impressions to the religious teaching they received in the Sabbath school. The rev. gentleman closed an able address by urging

upon all Sunday school teachers the necessity of renewed exertions, assuring them that the work was honourable and of that nature that would insure them a reward.

The Rev. Richard Handcock, minister of the place, begged to return his sincere thanks to the ladies who had exerted themselves in getting up the tea, and also those individuals who had kindly supported and responded to the call, hoping to meet them on many similar occasions. Mr. Handcock then proposed a vote of thanks to the worthy chairman, seconded by Mr. Thomas Lloyd, and acknowledged by Mr. Davies, after which the choir sung a beautiful piece for the occasion, which reflects great credit upon them, the meeting was then closed by prayer, separating highly delighted with the entertainment..."

In April 1850 the chapel was licensed for the solemnising of marriages. On April 16th 1850 Rev. David Evans of Swansea married Mary Lloyd, a daughter of ironmonger Thomas Lloyd, at Hope Chapel. The Chapel book's account of the history continues:

"...The first sermon was preached Sunday 2nd October 1837 by the first Pastor, the Rev. David Phillips who remained for some years. He was succeeded by the Rev. Richard Hancock who left somewhere about the year 1850. During this period the small chapel was well filled and the Church was fairly prosperous..."

The following article appeared in the 'Pembrokeshire Herald' on May 3rd 1850:

"...TESTIMONIAL TO THE REV. R. HANCOCK.

On Tuesday evening, the 30th ult., an interesting meeting took place at the Hope Chapel, the members and friends of that place having made a subscription for the purpose of presenting their young and devoted minister. Rev. Richard Hancock, with a suitable testimonial of their esteem and regard; accordingly the young ladies of the congregation provided, gratuitous, an excellent tea for the subscribers. After tea was removed and a hymn sung, Mr. Thomas Lloyd was called to the chair, and after briefly explaining the pleasing object of the meeting, called upon Mr. D. Lewis to read the list of subscriptions, the effect of which was evident in the appearance of several of the most valuable Works suitable to a Christian minister, such as the Hebrew Childe Concordances, Dr. Kittos's Biblical Encyclopedia, Bloomfield's Greek Testament, Lexicon, &c., &c. We believe upwards of ten pounds worth of books had been procured.. Mr. Lewis spoke at some length and stated that all persons who had contributed, had done so with the greatest Readiness, all evincing their warmest sympathy with such a laudable undertaking. Mr. Lloyd then rose, and in a most powerful and pathetic address showed his warmest attachment to Mr. Hancock, concluded by presenting the Rev. Gentleman, in the name of the Church and friends of the congregation, with the valuable present of books.

Mr. Hancock acknowledged the kindness and expression of sympathy of his friends with the deepest feelings of gratitude, and stated that the great object of his life was to endeavour to improve the condition of mankind in general, and urged upon those present the necessity of united co-operation in endeavouring to advance the social, moral, and religious condition of the town of Cardigan and he felt that if his

Public efforts to do good had in any measure proved a blessing to his fellow townsmen, he was amply repaid for any exertions which he had made, and assured them that there should be nothing wanting on his part, under the easing of kind Providence, in promoting the happiness and well being of those with whom he had the honour to be so dearly Associated with., Rev. Daniel Davies congratulated his Rev. friend upon receiving such a token of affection from his church, and that the church itself may expect to reap the benefit of his exertions.

Mr. Levi James next addressed the meeting, expressing his happiness at being present on so interesting occasion, and trusted that God would ever bless the labours of the Rev. gentleman, and make him the honoured instrument of doing much good in the town of Cardigan. Mr. W. W. Mitchell then came forward and spoke at some length and with great warmth, stating that although he was not a member of the church worshipping in the place where they were then assembled, yet he had the highest regard for Hancock as a Christian minister, and one who appeared to have the interest of his native town at heart. Mr. M. then alluded to the several interesting and scientific lectures which Mr. Hancock delivered to the Mechanics Institution, and hoped that he would continue to contribute of his knowledge in promoting the interest of such an excellent institution, as thought that knowledge was the hand-maid of religion, a diffusion of which worked wonders in bringing man to the eminence of virtue, truth, and piety.

Mr. George Griffiths, in conclusion, expressed a hope that meeting would have a tendency for good, and that they would be all united in the bonds of love and unity in carrying on the cause of truth, benevolence, and Christianity, assured that he that is faithful unto death will receive the crown. A vote of thanks being given to the young ladies for the Excellent manner the tea was got up, and likewise to the Worthy chairman, the meeting was closed by singing and prayer, separating much delighted with so truly an interesting party....”

Membership at the chapel fell following the closure of Thomas Lloyd’s Mwdan Foundry in 1850 and the dispersal of the workers. Rev. R. Hancock left that year. In 1851 there were 71 attendees and 35 scholars at the chapel on a Sunday morning, 67 afternoon scholars and 85 attending in the evening. Rev. Richard Hancock was still the Pastor according to the religious census of that year. The chapel book continues:

“...Mr. Lloyd now determined to abandon his business transferring the ironmongery business to Mr. Levi James and discontinuing the chain and anchor works. This led to the dispersion of his work-people and consequent lessening of membership of Hope...”

In 1854 Rev. Robert Breeze became the Pastor for a short time. The chapel book notes:

“...The Rev. Robert Breeze became Pastor in 1854 – he remained but a short time with us, obtaining employment elsewhere...”

The pastorate was then vacant and the chapel was the only Independent English Nonconformist chapel in the county. Rev. Daniel Davies of Capel Mair

assisted with the services as often as possible at that time. On January 3rd 1855 Launcelot Lowther joined the congregation. Rev. Robert Breeze, the Minister, left in 1855. The chapel record book notes:

“...Then followed a period when the Church was without a Pastor and depended upon supplies which were exceedingly irregular and difficult to obtain from the fact of Hope Chapel at this time being the only English Nonconformist place of worship in the County. Still despite this very serious disadvantage the Church remained united and fairly successful. The Rev. Daniel Davies, Pastor of the sister Church at Capel Mair supplied so often as possible during this time...”

In 1858 the lease on the property expired and the chapel was advertised for sale. It was purchased for £125 from Levi James of No. 40 St. Mary Street by public subscription in 1859. The chapel record book catalogues the events in the following words:

“...In 1858 the lease held by Mr. Lloyd expired and the owner of the freehold gave our church notice to quit. Soon afterwards the whole premises were advertised for sale in one lot. We ineffectually endeavoured to induce the owner's agent to separate Hope Chapel from the other premises. Prior to the Public sale, the friends came to an understanding with Mr. Levi James that if he purchased the premises at the auction he would re-convey the Chapel to the Trustees of the Church for one fourth of the purchase money of the whole. Fortunately the premises were knocked down for the sum of £500, consequently the friends obtained their chapel for £125. This sum was soon obtained through the kind assistance of many local and other friends, and the building was duly enrolled in the Court of Chancery...”

In 1861 Rev. David Jones became the Pastor of Hope Chapel. He left in 1865. According to the chapel record book:

“...Under the advice of Rev. Daniel Davies the Church was induced to call to the Pastorate a young student from New Quay – David Jones – studying in Cardigan for a Town Missionary and he was admitted some time about the year 1861 and remained until the year 1865...”

In August 1867 Rev. John Newman Richards was ordained at Hope Chapel and became the Pastor until 1872 when he left for Pembrokeshire. The chapel book records:

“...Another interval followed when the Church was without a minister, but about August 1867 the Rev. John Newman Richards accepted the Pastorate and remained between 5 or 6 years...”

The following account was written in about 1874:

“...In 1837, Mr. Thomas Lloyd, Haverfordwest, a businessman settled in this town. He was a member and preacher with the Independents, but had no knowledge of Welsh, and with help from Mr. Daniel Davies, Capel Mair, made an effort to set up an English cause here. A few people backed him, a small chapel built and a church formed. Soon after Mr. David Phillips, from Rotheram College, came here. After a

few years he left for his home area of Cilcennin where he remains, but with no connection to religion. After his departure a call was sent to Mr. Richard Hancock, Brecon College, in 1849, he was also here for a few years, then moved to Llanelli, Carmarthenshire. The next minister was Mr. R. Breeze, but he only stayed for two to three years. In 1861 Mr. D. Jones was ordained here, he was a student at the time in Mr. D. Palmer's school in this town. He was here for six years, then went to Neath and is currently in America. Next came Mr. J. N. Richards, a student from Brecon College, he was here from 1869 and 1873, when he moved to Penygroes, Pembrokeshire. Soon after this a call was sent to Mr. Lewis Beynon of Bristol, he is the current minister. This has been a small and weak cause from the start, it could not be much different as there is only a small English population in the town, most of them being with the established church if anywhere. There was many gaps of a year or more between one leaving and the other arriving as ministers, Mr. Daniel Davies would fill in as minister at those times. Mr. T. Lloyd, who began the cause with Mr. Davies, is still alive in Newport, Monmouthshire. His daughter is the widow of Mr. David Duduley Evans, Baptist minister in that town...."

In November 1873 Rev. Lewis Beynon of Bristol became the Pastor. According to the church record book:

"...After an interval of a few months from his leaving, Mr. Richards was succeeded by the Rev. Lewis Beynon from Bristol. At this time a suggestion was made by a valued member that some improvement should be attempted in the arrangement of the Chapel which was exceedingly inconvenient, the situation being also very bad, in a narrow lane. After consideration it was determined that if possible a better site should be secured and a new Chapel erected. The carrying out of this was facilitated by the I. O. G. T. being desirous of obtaining a Hall for their meetings. Negotiations with them eventuated in an arrangement for their purchase of the old chapel..."

On May 7th 1879 work began on a new Hope English Congregational Chapel at Pendre. On October 22nd 1880 the property was sold off for use as a temperance hall by the 'Association of Good Templars' for £200. In 1885 the Salvation Army founded a local headquarters here. The Salvation Army left in December 1888. On October 2nd 1914 the former Temperance Hall was suggested for use as a cottage hospital. In June 1920 it was advertised for sale.

On April 3rd 1925 permission was granted for a door on runners to be installed for Griffiths Bros., who moved their motor repair business here from Bridge End, Cardigan. From 1925 until 1936 Griffiths Bros. had a Motor Repair Shop here. In April 1936 Ifor Griffiths left to set up his own garage – Pioneer Garage, at Bridge End, Cardigan. The motor repair shop was referred to in 1937.

On November 7th 1952 the first issue of "*The Cardigan & Tivy-Side Advertiser*" to be produced at the new print works here was published. The print works here continued to produce the newspaper weekly until the works closed in 1991.

In 1992 the building was Grade II 'listed'. The gates still exist and were held at the back of No. 39 St. Mary Street in 1999. The original window and frame were damaged in June 2003. In September 2008 planning permission was being sought to

turn the building into a café with residential accommodation over. Permission was granted in late 2009, but no work had taken place as of August 2014. During 2015 a large portion of the rear wall collapsed. In late 2017 and early 2018 the building was renovated and extended, and was given a new roof covering. The work continued internally to 2020. A new cocktail bar and restaurant called 'Yr Hen Printwyracs' opened here in the summer of 2021.

Description:

In 1992 the building was described by CADW:

“...1837 former English Congregational Chapel, sold c1879 and used until 1991 as printing house of Cardigan & Tivy-Side Advertiser.

Blue lias rubble stone with slate roof, half-hipped to south end. West side wall has 2 windows, long 12-pane sash to left with timber lintel and off-centre 6-pane window, formerly 12-pane sash, with painted stone voussoirs, the lower half lost for workshop entry with big timber lintel. Later infill with double doors. One ornate wrought iron gate affixed to wall, to right of entry. Blocked door at left against rear wing of No 40 St Mary Street.

South end wall has lean-to on ground floor, first floor 12-pane sash with red-brick cambered head. Plaque to left 'Hope Chapel 1837'. Rear has one window with red brick head and one with timber lintel...”

Sources:

Pigot's Directory of South Wales 1835

Hope Chapel Record Books

The Welshman 1847

The Principality 1847

Slater's Directory of Wales 1850

The Religious Census of 1851

Post Office Directory 1871

Cardigan & Tivy-Side Advertiser January 1868; 05/12/1873; 1879-80; 29/05/1887; 1914; 1920; 1925; 1932; 01/11/1935; 1936; 1937; 21/01/1938; 07/11/1952; 29/07/2008

Capel Mair, D J Roberts 1955

Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest – Cardigan, CADW 1992.

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