

A Short History of a Table at Oakwood Church

I was recently in the New Room at Oakwood Church and a chance remark by Linda Holden led us to examine this table in more detail.



The Inscription reads *Presented to the Trustees of Roundhay Wesleyan Chapel by Mr. James Akeroyd, July 3rd 1874*. This was the opening day of 'Ladywood' the 3rd of our Methodist Church buildings.

Mr James Akeroyd was born around 1826 in Armley but his address has always been shown as Roundhay. James Akeroyd lived just around the corner from the church at Hollin Hill House off Oakwood Lane, previously known as Horseshoe Lane. He lived there with his wife Elizabeth (nee Hutchinson) and their son James Hutchinson Akeroyd. James had married Elizabeth Hutchinson on April 22nd 1863, at The Parish Church, Leeds.



James's business, James Akeroyd and Sons, was a family run stone merchant business. The family owned Soothill Quarry.

At the time of his death aged 75 in 1899, a local newspaper reported that James had been the oldest resident in Roundhay. Elizabeth was to outlive him by many years, dying in 1924 at the grand age of 91. She is buried in Roundhay St John's graveyard. This photo of Elizabeth was taken around 1910.

James Akeroyd chose a very well respected Cabinet Maker for his gift of this table to mark the opening of the Church in 1874. The manufacturer was F. Danby's Upholstery and Cabinet Works, Leeds. Francis Danby ran a business from Upper Head Row (now The Headrow), which also made the seats and fittings for the Council Chambers in Leeds

Town Hall. According to the 1871 census Francis employed 14 men and 2 boys.

The table is looking a little used. Maybe this special gift, which may be our oldest artefact, deserves a light restoration recognising its place in the long history of Roundhay Methodist Church, which in 2016 will celebrate 30 years in this our 4th building.

By Sharon Donaldson