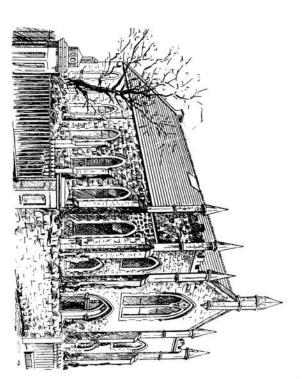
## ROUND THE CHURCHES

## 32: Banbridge Methodist Church

Text: Dr John Wright



appropriate that the birth of services were held in the stable instigation of the Misses Walsh came in 1785, when, at the Methodist presence in the town Indeed, the first indication of a of his having preached there of occasions there is no record through Banbridge on a number in Newry Street. It seems highly of Mr John Bradford's property Though John Wesley passed

> in such a resonant location. Banbridge Methodism took place

eventually to the Market House proved to be an effective and and services were transferred to the increasing numbers attending soon proved to be too small for charismatic speaker. The stable John Kerr of the Lisburn Circuit Mr Bradford's upper room and The first preacher, the Rev

Despite the schism in

in the Market House. congregations of over a hundred Edward Sullivan, addressed Primitive Methodist minister, in the town and in 1827 the Society continued to prosper Methodism the

opened with 25 teachers and 145 entire cost of the building. The subscriptions, almost covered the collection, together with earlier following week a Sunday School Primitive chapel in 1831. The the inaugural service of a new Rev Adam Averell, spoke at The celebrated evangelist, the

steward and other church dispute in 1852 between a society nineteenth century - though prospered in the first half of the awakening which benefited all the Society. However, the 1859 an acrimonious and prolonged including the Wesleyans religious persuasions in the town Revival brought a great spiritual leaders caused much unease in Wesleyans

£2,400, of which sum £1,500 The mock-Gothic building cost of the present church was laid by In 1870, the foundation stone McArthur,

> who left money in her will for this generosity of Miss Sarah Ferris was added in 1956, thanks to the the new church was held on previously. The first service in the United States some years townsman who had emigrated to was donated by John Glass, a Thursday 25 May 1871. A vestry

church and the community. enormous benefit to both the church. It has proved to be of hall was erected at the rear of the Greenaway, a splendid church minister, the Rev James Herculean efforts of the then In 1981, thanks to the

together with enhanced seating system have been installed, repair. A new organ and audio extensive refurbishment and of the church has undergone and modern central heating.

More recently, the interior

in their local community. contribution to the Lord's work seek to make their own heritage and, under the guidance the Rev Desmond Curran, they of the superintendent minister, Methodists are mindful of their Today's