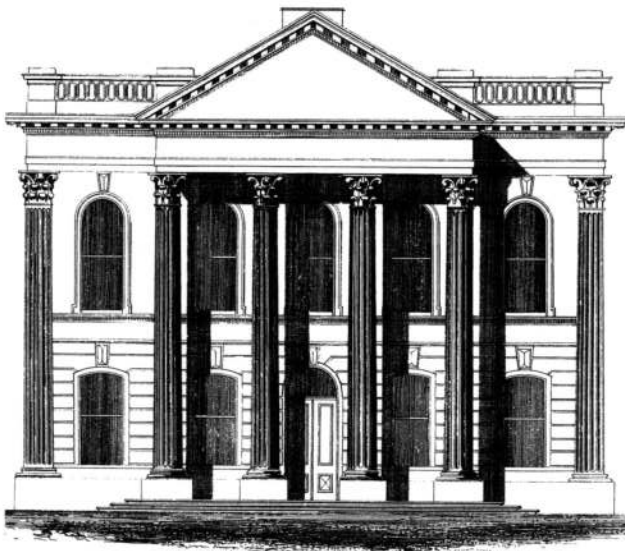


ROUND THE CHURCHES

Drawing: M Ward & Co

47: Darling Street Methodist Church

Text: Robin Toner



Darling Street Methodist Church was designed in 1863 by W J Barre, who also designed the Ulster Hall, Albert Clock and University Road Methodist Church in Belfast.

in 1867. It is the third chapel on this site, and quite a contrast to the original 'plain building with thatched roof and earthen floor' built in 1793.

It is fronted by Corinthian pillars and distinctive portico. The inside of the church is as impressive as the outside. It reveals a high timbered ceiling, and the 40 windows in the side walls give a startling impression of great light and greater engineering skill. Ornate plaster cornices complement the ceiling boards, and a decorative arch highlights the pulpit which, like that of most Methodist chapels, is the focus of the building.

This fine building, looking out proudly on Darling Street, was built at a cost of £3,200 and opened

The church has its roots in the Tonyloman society planted by 'Trooper' John Smith from Tandragee in 1763, and many Enniskillen Methodists have witnessed similar zeal in their faith ever since.

The society is famous for having had two Westminster MPs in membership at one time: Edward Mitchell for North Fermanagh, and Jeremiah Jordan for South Fermanagh.

A former Lord Mayor of London, Sir William McArthur, remembered his roots when he encouraged the society to build a large hall and classrooms on the site of the old preaching house in which he had worshipped. The funds he provided ensured that the building we know today as the McArthur Halls was opened in 1887.

Another son famous for speaking of the love of God was Senator Gordon Wilson, at the time of his daughter's death in the Remembrance Day bombing rightly won him the Methodist gold medal in 1988. The example of all the saints who have witnessed their faith in the Darling Street society has inspired the church's outreach through the work of the Barnabas Centre.