

THE INSTITUTE & Primitive Methodist Chapel

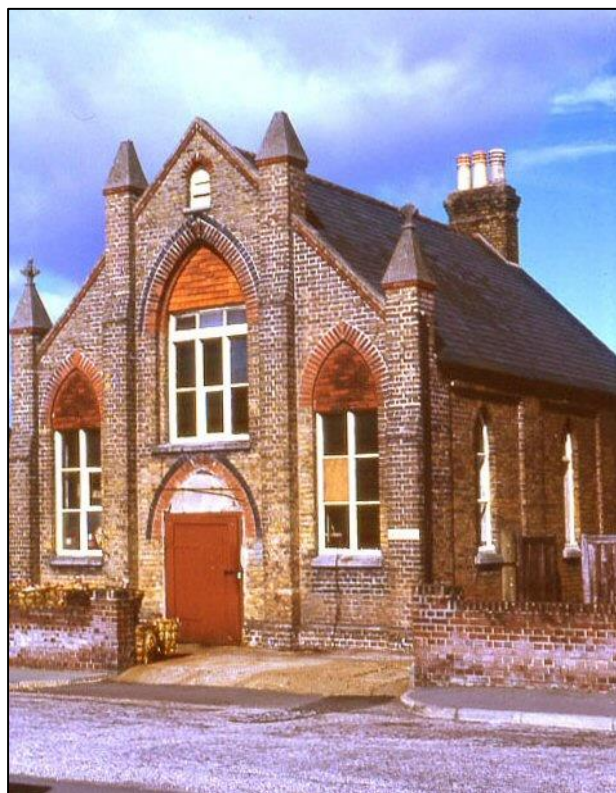
Note by Alfred T. Walker c. 1980

The Institute, as it later became known, was building on land where the Albion Road car park now stands. When it was rented by Trustees of the Crispe Charity in 1869, it is not now known what it had originally been built for, nor what it was used for up until that time.

In 187 the building was bought for £500 by the Vicar, the Rev. J. P. Alcock, Major William Morrison Bell and a few other prominent gentlemen in the village, so that it could become a Community Centre for local activities. The Infant school continued to function in it during the daytime, while 'Penny Readings', 'Lantern Slides', 'Musical Entertainments' and educational classes were held there in the late afternoons and evenings.

In the 1920s and 1930s it was used by the Kent Education Committee to hold classes in Woodwork, Needlework, and Cookery for the pupils at Park Lane Schools, when peripatetic teachers were employed. At that time, the schools had a senior department for both boys and girls up to the age of 12 or 14.

When Mrs Gray (of Birchington Hall – later to become Spurgeon's) bought the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Albion Road in 1892, the children moved across the road from the Institute. Sometime after the new Infant school was built in Park Lane (in 1926) and the Albion Road Infant School had been closed, the Chapel building was bought by the Birchington Engineering Company, and thus formed part of their manufacturing premises in Albion Road. It was not until the factory finally closed and the site was sold for redevelopment in c. 1989 that the Chapel was demolished and the last connection with the Old Institute was finally severed.



PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHAPEL – 1875 - 1989