Chapel graveyards mean that even before the Act was repealed burials could be performed by Methodists with Anglican rites. The main chapel has been renovated, refloored and re-roofed mostly of the original pews. The Burial Laws Act 1857 dictating changes to lighting and heating it remains a good example of a period Primitive Methodist chapel.

Builtin 1845 it was opened 2 years before StMark’s, in 1834 for £20. Since then it has been in continuous use by Methodists, more recently Deepdale and Dent united.

No longer in use for public worship Grade II Listed

The Quaker Meeting House at Brigflatts is the oldest in northern England. Constructed in 1675, the building is considered one of England’s vernacular gems. George Fox (1624 -1691), was the founder of the Quaker movement or Society of Friends. At the grand Hiring Fair in 1652, Fox preached in the churchyard of Sedbergh Parish Church and again at nearby Furness Head.

The entrance to the chapel, which holds a plaque in their memory, is open every day, though on weekdays.

This is why Methodists Chapels seldom have graveyards. However in the western dales the often remote locations and availability of land made graveyards desirable and possible. Cautley Wesleyan Chapel roadside cost just £106 6s 8d and the graveyard has been extended at 3s 6d per plot.

The Quaker Meeting House at Brigflatts, is a Grade II Listed building and incorporated features of contemporary railway architecture in its interior including yellow and red railway bricks and pewcells which echo railway benches. Its interior is a surprising contrast to its solid Shap granite exterior. The distinctive ‘railway’ church of St James’ now hosts a fascinating exhibition of Tebay’s history. Grade II Listed

18x70

Chapel dates from 1885. In 1909 a pipe organ with nearly 600 pipes was installed, built by Messrs Nelson & Co, Durham which was basically unchanged, with painted box-like tiered seats. The interior remains unchanged, with painted box-like tiered seats and an oak pulpit. Apart from minor changes to lighting and heating it remains a good example of a period Primitive Methodist chapel.

Built in 1841 probably by two stonemason brothers, the small site for the chapel required a simple layout. The interior remains basically unchanged, with painted box-like tiered seats. The entrance to the chapel is an oak door. Apart from minor changes to lighting and heating it remains a good example of a period Primitive Methodist chapel.

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The Burial Ground nearby (very near Brigflatts Meeting House), is still in use and contains the remains of over 700 worshippers, including the poet Basham. Bunting, one of whose poems is entitled ‘Brigflatts’. Parking is very limited. Visitors are asked to park on the layby on the A683 opposite the shore, and narrow lane signposted to Brigflatts.

From around 1810 Methodist services were first held in Chapel House in Crosby Garrett and occupied by three local families – Close, Barker and Nicholson. The much needed larger chapel was built in 1882 costing £310. Methodist churches were usually built on the edge of town, but Crosby Garrett chapel is situated in the middle of the village, with St Andrew’s Parish Church at one end and close to Railway Station running over the viaduct at the other. The chapel became a United Chapel when the Baptist Chapel closed in 1992.

Originally built as a meeting house by the Society of Friends in 1701, it was bought by Wesleyans in 1834 for £20. Since then it has been in continuous use by Methodists, more recently being converted 'Dentdale' when Dent and Dent united.

With the coming of the railway at Tebay, the Church of England deemed it necessary to create a separate parish church from the one at Orton and erected a church and vicarage for the growing population of railway workers in 1880. C J Ferguson, a Carlisle-based architect designed the building and incorporated features of contemporary railway architecture in its interior including yellow and red railway bricks and pew cells which echo railway benches. Its interior is a surprising contrast to its solid Shap granite exterior. The distinctive ‘railway’ church of St Jarlath’s now hosts a fascinating exhibition of Tebay’s history. Grade II Listed

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Sixty years later, John Wesley (1703-91) a Church of
life. They became known as
Brigflatts in 1675.

The ‘Breakaway’ Churches
How they came to be
In the mid-seventeenth century, George Fox (1624-91) led a group of believers in
the northern fells and dales who criticised the established Church and its hierarchical
structure and worship. Out of this grew the Religious Society of Friends, often referred
to as Quakers. They gathered in homes for
worship until the first northern Meeting House was built at
Bragflatts in 1675.

Sixty years later, John Wesley (1703-91) a Church of
England clergyman, was at the centre of a movement seeking to re-energise the nation’s religious
life. They became known as Methodists. Wesley gathered the followers into small
groups for spiritual development and mutual care, ministered to by travelling and
local preachers. He never intended to
create a schism in the Church of England, but
the end of the eighteenth century Methodism had become
a separate church.

By 1811 Primitive Methodism emerged in the north, as a
response to the feeling that, with the decline of open-air
preaching, the Wesleyans had lost their earlier enthusiasm and
vigour. Sometimes called ‘Ranters’ they had a greater
appeal to the lower classes particularly potters, miners and
workers on the land.

Methodism was spread by travelling preachers from the
north east and had a lasting relationship with the railway
workers. In 1932 Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists
bodies joined together with the United Methodists
(a previous grouping) to form The Methodist Church.

Some Quakers later became Methodists, attracted by
the lively preaching and hearty singing, or because they found
the expectation that they should marry within their own
fellowship too restrictive.

Churches and Social Justice
Both Quakers and Methodists emphasised a disciplined life
style coupled with a concern for the community and social
justice. Some Quaker industrialists built homes and facilities
for education and leisure, such as at Nenthead. They were
early leaders in prison reform and pacifism. The Methodists in
this part of Cumbria were significant providers of
spiritual help to the railway workers. Education and
care of children and the elderly were a feature of their
work. Methodism also played a large part in forming
Trade Unions and the beginnings of the Labour Party.

Many of the remaining non-conformist faith buildings in the
dales heralded from the 19th century to cater for the changing
spiritual needs of the local population and to address the
needs of its new migrant population.

All the churches and chapels included are open daily
throughout the year unless indicated otherwise.
Each provides further information about its own history and
its locality. There are many others churches and
chapels of all denominations in the area and we hope
you will visit them as you pass.

Tourist Information:
For more information about the area and to help you plan
your trip please contact: Sedbergh Tourist Information
Centre. Tel: 015396 20125

www.visitcumbria.com
www.ctfc.org.uk

Mission to the Naviges

Railways & Religion
in the Western Dales

• A trail of a dozen small, simple and serene chapels,
churches and meeting houses in the western dales
whose existence is linked to the history of the
railways.

• Imagine the now tranquil areas around Sedbergh, Dent,
Tebay and Ravenstonedale were once echoing with
the noise of the 19th century growth of the railways.

• Understand the lives of the thousands of migrant
workers known as navigators or ‘navvies’ who came
with their families to build the railway lines, many of
which are long gone along with their once-vibrant
stations.

• Visit some of the Christian missions that were built to
serve these hard working people and are testament to
their struggles.