



The Maldens and Coombe Heritage Society

(Founded 2012)

WHERE WAS THE BAPTIST'S MEETING HOUSE?

Julian McCarthy

I love old maps. They take you back in time and you can use the map to visit the places today and to see the location. Old references too – they are the spark to the fuse! When I read 'there once was.' or 'there used to be...' the fuse is lit!! I have to find out – call it interest or obsession (I am not that clear as to which one it actually is!)

Anyway, having read about early New Malden (in Merryweather) as below, I thought I would locate St James' Church, the New Malden Gas Works and the Baptist's Meeting House.

This paper covers the last of these.

Source:

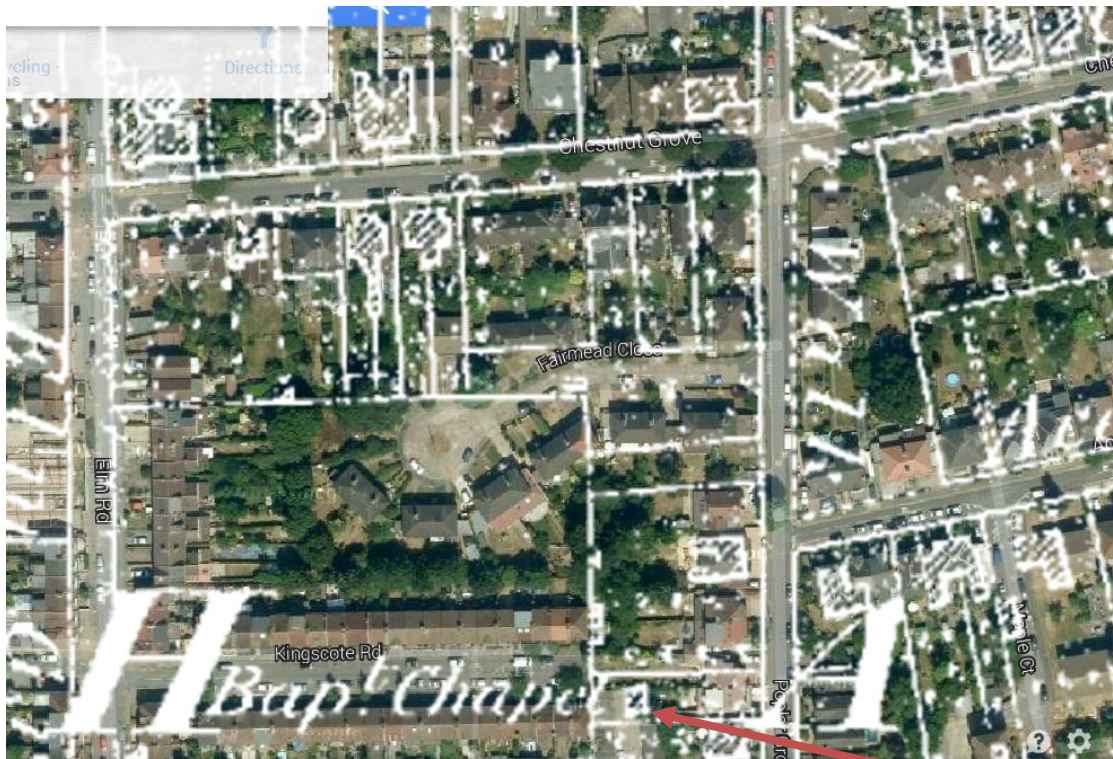
Besides the district church, the only other place of worship was a small meeting room of the Baptists in Poplar Grove, which was opened on Good Friday, 1861. The congregation removed to the more commodious iron chapel in the Kingston road, on Nov. 16th, 1875, when the opening sermon was preached by Dr. Landells. The Wesleyan Chapel was built in 1867, and opened on the 10th of June, 1868. Trinity Free Church of England, an iron

(From Merryweather 1887)

The original Baptist chapel, built in the garden of a house in Poplar Walk (now Poplar Grove) is the forerunner of today's fine Baptist Church, Kingston Road, rebuilt after complete destruction in the second world war during a daylight bombing attack on Malden.

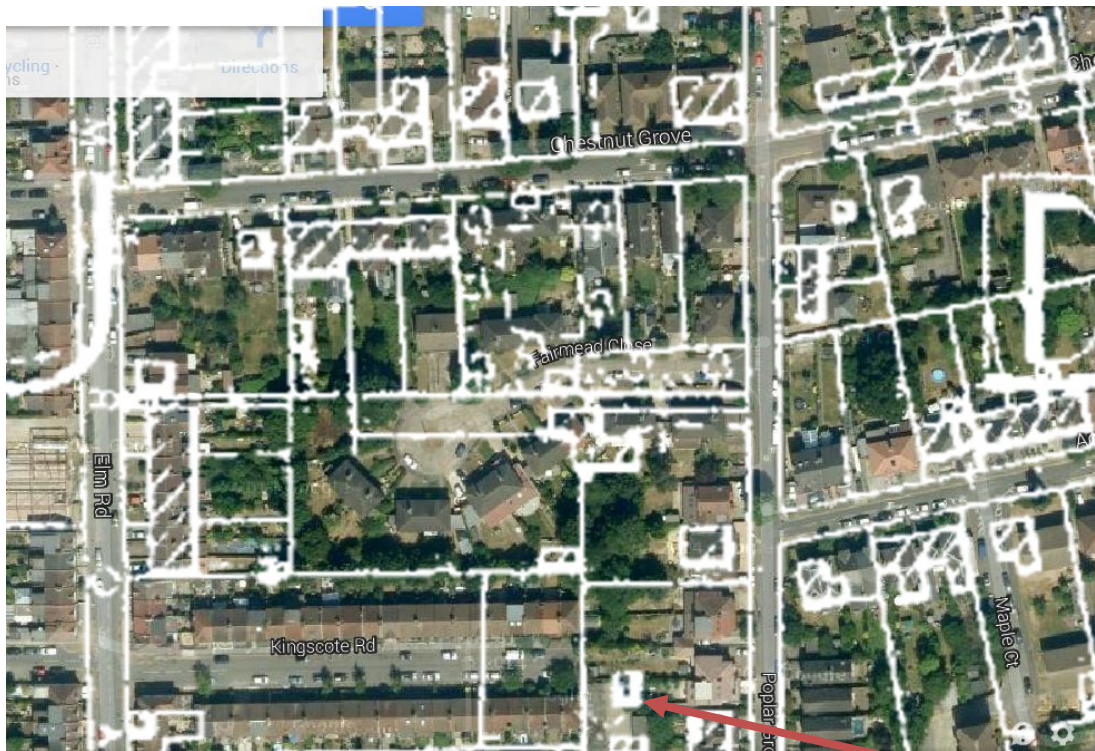
(From Bellars 1977)

And so the fuse is lit! Looking at the maps and overlaying on a satellite image of the area we can see the location quite clearly.



Overlay of the 1867 map

Chapel



Overlay of the 1898 map

Chapel

Today, there is nothing to be seen. There is a corner of a turning bay and an edge of the garden of No.16 Poplar Grove, with a slight drop in the ground level, possibly where bricks and foundations were removed.



From the Turning Bay



From The Garden at the end of the turning bay
(There is a distinct 'dip' in the ground by the fence on the right)