

Berea Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Caernarfon Road, Bangor.

NPRN 6705

Berea Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel was situated on the west side of the Caernarfon Road at Glanadda on the south-western outskirts of Bangor. The chapel cause was founded in 1858 and the original chapel was erected in 1860 and rebuilt in 1881. The 1st and 2nd editions of the OS 1/2500 map show a building that measured overall, approximately 11m. SW-NE by 13m, with a small protruding porch on the SE side. The chapel is listed in (1) as Glanadda. The statistics given (gathered in 1905) must refer to this first building and are 350 seats in the chapel and 340 in the schoolroom. In 1907 the chapel had been rebuilt into the form that survived, together with a schoolroom of the same date, until demolition in 2003.

The 1907 chapel measured overall approximately 17m. SW-NE by 19m. It was designed with a typical, rather overbearing Edwardian Classical style façade: a central bay flanked by two square stair turrets projecting both forwards and sideways from the main body of the chapel. The façade was cement rendered and was of two tiers with the central bay rising a further half tier. The lower tier was of flat and angular detail with, at the corners of the stair turrets, pairs of flat stylised Doric pilasters linked by proud horizontal fillets, rising from a substantial plinth. These were echoed at the outer corners of the central bay by similar detail but with the fillets broken between the pilaster columns in each. Twin entrances in the central bay and single entrances in each stair turret were closed by double doors set in recessed openings, square-headed and dressed with a raised border and large moulded keystones. The second tier was of rounded detail: on the stair turrets, the pilasters were continued above a secondary plinth as half-round Ionic columns supporting an architrave of convex profile, topped by segmental tympana. Each turret had a large round-headed window in a deep flared recess of the same form. The central bay had a triple square-headed widow above the plinth, with a segmental pediment above, and above this, in the half-storey, a short triple window framed by stylised Doric detail. The bay was topped by a pediment, the central portion of which was gabled. At the sides, the pilasters continued in similar fashion to the stair turrets as far as architrave level, with plain panels above to the pediment.

The side elevations of the stair turrets were similar to the front except that the doorway was replaced by a round-headed window similar to that in the second tier. The body of the chapel had two tiers of four pairs of square-headed windows, each pair with a common sill and horizontal drip moulding above. The roof was of slate.

The schoolroom and vestry complex lay behind and to the rear-right of the chapel. It was of Edwardian Arts and Crafts style, typified by the schoolroom to the right, which had a hipped roof and an entrance porch with wide, flares wing buttresses. The windows were a mixture of single and double sashes, set in shallow segmental arched openings which were surrounded by moulded dressings. The walls were rendered and the roofs were of slate.

The twin central doors led to a vestibule which gave access to the chapel and by way of side doors, to the stair turrets. These also had their independent access from outside. Dog-staircases led to the gallery. The interior of the chapel was relatively subdued. There were two aisles leading to the Sedd Fawr and pulpit which were against the rear wall. The pews were plain, the central block consisting of twelve rows. The side pews were divided into three blocks. In that furthest from the pulpit the seats were dog-legged, part at 45 degrees and part parallel with the sides of the chapel. In the remaining two blocks the seats were parallel to the sides. The Sedd Fawr was on a slightly raised dais and bounded by a solid paneled screen. The pulpit was of the rostrum type approached either side by curved stairs. Behind it at a higher level was the organ console approached by

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another curved stair on the right-hand side only, the left being occupied by a doorway through to the vestry. The organ was set in a basket arch that had plaster responds and entablature. The gallery ran around three sides of the chapel and was supported on cast-iron columns with capitals of scroll legs supporting the bearing plate. The gallery front was panelled and the internal corners were curved. The gallery pews were plain bench type, their layout echoing that of the ground floor.

The schoolroom and vestry complex was accessed from the chapel through a doorway to the left of the Sedd Fawr, which led to a landing. From the landing, a small room lay to the left; a half stair led up to the minister's room and the rear of the organ loft, while another half stair led down to the lower level and a suite of small rooms below the minister's room. At the lower level, to the right, a corridor led to the large schoolroom which had a stage at its east end. At the west end a part of the hall with a tiered dais, could be partitioned off with a room divider. The corridor and the hall both had independent access from outside, the latter via a porch. The roof of the hall was supported by open timber trusses of an unusual flattened round profile.

(1) Royal Commission on the Church of England and Other Religious Bodies in Wales and Monmouthshire. Volume VI: Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence Nonconformist County Statistics, 1911 (Carnarvonshire Nonconformist Statistics for 1905)

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