

There were several periods in Hankerton's past history when Nonconformists lived in the village and had their own independent meeting houses. There were certified places of worship in 1775 and 1800 with a Calvinistic Methodist meeting house in 1809. Other meeting houses were noted in 1831 and 1833.

In 1837 the Rehoboth Chapel for Strict Baptists was built in Chapel Lane. On Census Sunday in 1851 the attendances at the services, led by William Beard, were 100 and 120 people.

The Painters of Common End Farm, Joseph and his father John were both preachers at the chapel. Joseph carried on the family carrier and farm business until after his mother died and he married. He became a well-known preacher in the Coventry area.

The last service was held in the chapel in 1968 and it was closed and sold in 1971. It is now a private dwelling.

The great granddaughter of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century deacon recorded some interesting information about the chapel.  
**From 'Granddaughter of the Earl's Carpenter written by Jenny Todd.**

My dad's grandfather was a man called Charles Pennell. He was the deacon at the Baptist Chapel in the village and he lived in a house next to the chapel. At the time there was a row of houses next to it, which were demolished long ago. He died in 1940.

My oldest brother can remember him and thought he was a real cowboy as he used to wear a hat like a Stetson. His trousers pulled up to his chest with a large belt round his middle. In his young days he was quite a tear-away, but one day he had an experience in his life that turned him to God. From then on his life was changed and he became a mainstay of the Baptist Chapel.

In the Baptist chapel people are fully immersed when they are baptised, but because there wasn't a baptistery in the chapel, they were baptised in the river at Malmesbury. I have been told that folk came from miles around to witness these baptisms. My grandmother Annie, Charles Pennell's daughter, was married at the chapel in 1900 and baptised in February 1909 and apparently there was ice on the water! My dad was born in May 1909, just 3months later, which shows that she must have been quite a strong person.

They didn't have a piano or organ at the chapel so my Grandmother, Mary Woodward would start all the hymns.