

Hartford Parish Church

1875 – 1975

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THE
PARISH CHURCH
OF
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
HARTFORD
1875 — 1975

FOREWORD

by

THE BISHOP OF CHESTER

There are two aspects of any Centenary Celebrations. One is the inevitable and proper looking back with thanksgiving for the work of many many devoted Christians throughout the 100 years.

Mr. Ian Newton's excellent history of your parish indicates with careful discrimination the salient points in your long life and mentions the individuals, both clerical and lay, who have contributed so much to your own heritage.

But it is the second aspect of a Centenary Celebration which must motivate you. The heritage has been accepted and enjoyed and must be enhanced and developed, not only for the sake of our Lord, Jesus Christ, but also so that we may pass on to our children that which we ourselves obtained. I am informed that at the consecration of the church in 1875, Canon Barclay used as his text for the sermon:

“Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord,
to prepare His ways.”

I can think of no better scriptural motto to guide and inform you in these your celebration days, and to encourage you for the future.

I would wish to extend my personal thanks to Mr. Newton for this excellent effort, and wish you all the joy of a real Christian jubilee.

VICTOR CESTR:

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST HARTFORD

INCUMBENT CURATES

1825 THOMAS AINSWORTH

On 11th January 1825, the Patrons, Messrs John Marshall, James Royds and Richard Mather, nominated Rev. Thomas Ainsworth, M.A. to the incumbent curacy of the church. He was Licenced on 13th January 1825, and resigned on 14th January 1846, "... being visited by Almighty God by severe sickness."

1846 JAMES ROYDS

Rev. James Royds was nominated to fill the vacancy by the Patron, James Royds, on 23rd January 1846. He resigned on 2nd March 1864.

The New Parish of St. John Hartford was constituted by an Order in Council of the 12th September 1863.

VICARS

1864-1908	EDMUND EDDOWES
1908-1914	NORMAN JOHN NEIL GOURLIE
1914-1925	HARRY HERBERT PITTS
1925-1939	ERNEST SCALES OLIVER
1939-1958	FREDERICK PHILIP CHEETHAM
1959-1969	MAURICE JAMES FRASER WILSON
1969-	JOHN ALEXANDER WARDLE

IN THE BEGINNING

The beginning must surely have been 20th December 1821. On that day a meeting was held of the inhabitants of the Township of Hartford, in the Parish of Great Budworth, to raise, by private subscription, sufficient funds for the building of a church.

The meeting resolved: "That considering the Population of This place amounting to near 800 Persons and its distance from any Church, the Expediency and Necessity of such an Undertaking is self apparent." It was further agreed that every contributor of £50 be entitled to a pew in the church. The nearest church at that time was more than two miles from Hartford, and Great Budworth is about five miles away.

There is no record of the number who attended that meeting, but we do know that at least seventeen persons promised sums of fifty or one hundred pounds, making a total of £950. Mr. John Wrench offered part of one of his fields for the site for the church, and the remainder of the field for a churchyard.

From this simple beginning the present Church of St. John the Baptist was to rise. The path was not always to be smooth. Troubles were to come only weeks after that first meeting, and eventually the church was to fall into such a state of dilapidation that it would be necessary, in less than fifty years, to have to completely take it down.

THE BUILDING AND CONSECRATION 1822-1824

The building of the church was started. On 29th March 1822, Mr. Jonathan Fowls, of Witton, contracted with Messrs Thos. Marshall, John Wrench, William Holland and Richard Mather, all of Hartford, to complete the erection of the edifice for the sum of £1,280. The total cost was to be something over £1,450. The foundation stone was laid by Thomas Marshall, Jnr.

Relations between Mr. Thomas Marshall and the Rev. G. Okell, of Witton, were strained from the beginning. Mr. Marshall had had the blessing of the Bishop of Chester to proceed with the scheme to build a church or chapel, provided it had the consent of both Mr. Okell and his Patron, Sir J. H. Leicester, Bart. Mr. Okell withheld his consent.

During 1822 much correspondence was entered into. Mr. Okell was chiefly concerned that a new church or chapel at Hartford would take some of his living from him. In April, the Bishop wrote to Mr. Okell, in an attempt to smooth things over. Mr. Bradburne, who was closely connected with the new venture, invited Mr. Okell to attend a meeting of subscribers of the new church on 2nd May. Mr. Okell declined. In July, Mr. Bradburne invited Mr. Okell to the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone. This invitation Mr. Okell also declined. Nevertheless the building proceeded.

This is not the place to go into the very protracted correspondence that followed, or to pass judgement on the various arguments which were raised. Suffice it to say that the much hoped for consecration of the church in 1823 had to be delayed.

At a meeting held by several of the subscribers on May 4th 1824, it was resolved that out of the sum arising from the pew rents, fifty pounds should be paid annually to the Spiritual Person officiating as Incumbent, five pounds to the Chapel Clerk, and five pounds ten shillings should be retained in the hands of the Trustees for further contingent expenses.

On the 19th August 1842, an application was made to Charles James, Lord Bishop of Chester, for permission to purchase the newly-built church. The differences which had delayed the opening of the church had, at long last, been resolved.

The application was signed by:

Rich. Mather	C. Ansdell
W. Bradburne	John Marshall
Catherine Saxon	James Royd
John Powell	John Johnson
Thomas Eyes	Samuel Higginson
Richd. Lowndes	Thos. Antrobus

being "twelve Substantial Householders of the Township of Hartford."

The Bishop's consent to the application was granted on 22nd November 1824.

On Wednesday, 8th December 1824, the Lord Bishop of Chester attended at the new Chapel erected at Hartford, and performed the Office of Consecration. He then proceeded to Consecrate the ground surrounding

the chapel for the purpose of Christian Burial. He preached the sermon and administered the Sacrament.

A far from happy beginning, but the church had, in substance, come to Hartford.

The church had seating for about 150 people. An amusing little ceremony took place during each service. The church was heated by a central stove, and one of the sexton's duties was to poke the stove during the hymn before the sermon, so that the noise might be drowned by the singing.

THE DEMOLITION OF THE OLD CHURCH

As we have seen, the old church was to have a limited life, and on Monday, 14th April 1873, the plans for a new church were finally approved at a vestry meeting of the Parishioners, held in the schoolroom.

Two main problems faced the Vicar and the Parishioners before the rebuilding of the church could be started. The plans of the new church allowed for a bigger edifice, and there was every likelihood that some of the graves would have to be disturbed. The second problem was where to hold Divine Service during the period when there would be no church.

The Faculty, dated 8th May 1873, to take down the old church and build a new one solved the problem of the graves. The relevant part of the Faculty states that it had been represented that "*. . . if it shall be necessary to interfere with any graves or the bodies interred therein it is intended where practicable to arch over and cover with a substantial layer of concrete any grave enclosed within the walls or otherwise interfered with without removing the remains interred therein but where it shall be found absolutely necessary (or the owner of such grave shall prefer it) to remove such remains carefully reverently and decently to reinter the same in the Churchyard and that any Persons possessing any graves or burial places which may be disturbed or interfered with shall upon application have other proper burial places assigned to them in the yard of the said church and that all Tombstones Monuments Stones Slabs or Brasses removed or interfered with will be replaced as far as possible in similar situations in other parts of the Church.*"

No records have been discovered of any graves being moved in consequence, but two marble monuments to the Marshall family, dated 1831 and 1838 are to be found in the Baptistry of the present church, and no doubt these were removed from the old church and replaced.

The second problem was overcome by the granting, on 16th June 1873, of a Licence, following an application to the Bishop by Rev. E. Eddowes, for permission to use the National Schoolroom.

The Licence reads:

*WILLIAM by Divine Permission Lord Bishop of Chester
To all Christian people GREETING*

WHEREAS The Reverend Edmund Eddowes Clerk M.A. Vicar of the Vicarage and New Parish of Hartford in the County and Diocese of Chester has represented to us that the Parish Church of Hartford aforesaid is about to be entirely taken down and rebuilt on which account it will not be available for the Performance of Divine Service therein AND WHEREAS it has also

been represented to us that it would be for the Spiritual benefit of the Parishioners of Hartford aforesaid if the Room or Building known as the Hartford National Schoolroom situated in the said Parish and under the pastoral Superintendence of the said Edmund Eddowes were duly licensed for the Performance of Divine Service according to the Rites and Usages of the Church of England until the said Church is reopened for the Performance of Divine Service therein WE THEREFORE do by these presents grant our full Licence Faculty and Authority for the Performance of Divine Service in the said schoolroom that is to say for Reading Common Prayer Preaching the Word of God and administering the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper in the said Schoolroom and for persons to assemble therein for the said purpose PROVIDED ALWAYS that this our Licence shall continue in force only until the said Church shall reopen and be used for Divine Service or until we or any of our successors shall see fit to revoke the same

GIVEN under our hand and Episcopal Seal the sixteenth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy three and of our Consecration the eighth.

WILLIAM CHESTER

Now all the hurdles had been cleared, and work on the new church, which had been designed by Mr. John Douglas, could begin.

Mr. Edward Hubbard has kindly written the following note:

John Douglas (1830–1911) was one of the leading provincial architects of his generation, and received national, and a degree of international, recognition within his lifetime. He was born at Sandiway, where his father (who designed Hartford Lodge, now Whitehall) was a builder; he studied under E. G. Paley of Lancaster, and set up practice in Chester in or before 1860. From 1884 his firm practised as Douglas and Fordham, and from 1897 as Douglas and Minshull. He was himself a landowner at Sandiway, and designed a number of buildings there, as well as being responsible for Oakmere Hall (1867) and for work at Vale Royal for his early patron the second Lord Delamere.

His five-hundred or so buildings range from Surrey to Scotland, though most are concentrated in Cheshire and North Wales, and he carried out an enormous number of commissions on the Eaton Estate for the first Duke of Westminster. One of his best-known works is the half-timbered range on the east side of St. Werburgh Street in Chester (c. 1895–9).

Douglas's output was largely ecclesiastical and domestic, and his buildings are mostly of highly individual character, and are marked by picturesque effects of massing and outline, sure proportions, careful detailing, and a superb sense of craftsmanship and feeling for materials.

1873–1875

The ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone took place on Wednesday, October 29th 1873 at 3 p.m.

A procession formed up at the schoolroom, consisting of members of

the Building Committee, Clergy, Choir and school children. They walked to the churchyard, where a service and the ceremony took place:

Hymn: "Onward, ever onward"

Psalm 84: "O how amiable are Thy dwellings"

Prayers

The Vicar then asked Lieut.-Colonel Marshall to lay the foundation stone, presenting him with a trowel for the purpose

Hymn: "The Church's one foundation"

Prayers

Hymn: "Christ is made the sure foundation"

In the cavity of the stone was placed a copy of *The Guardian*, and a parchment document upon which was inscribed:

"Re-building of St. John's Church, Hartford. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the above Church was performed by Lieut.-Colonel Marshall, of Hartford Beach, on the 29th day of October A.D. 1873. Building Committee: E. Eddowes (Chairman) W. Okell, J. Ridgway (Churchwards), T. H. Marshall, J. B. Littledale, F. L. Schwinde, Egerton L. Wright."

Also placed within the cavity were a florin, shilling, sixpence, fourpence, threepence, penny, halfpenny and a farthing. The collection amounted to over £50.

The contractor was Mr. R. Beckett of Hartford, and the masonry work was sub-contracted to Mr. John Holland of Northwich. Mr. Walter Edwards was Clerk of Works.

On 18th June 1874, a fête and fancy fair was held to raise funds for the new church. This was held in conjunction with the Northwich Athletic Club, and was a great success. Arrangements were made with the railway companies and the steamer owners plying the Weaver, to offer special facilities for intending visitors coming by rail from Liverpool, Warrington, Runcorn, Crewe, Chester, Sandbach and Manchester, and by river from Acton Bridge, Weaverham, Northwich and Winsford.

So great was the enthusiasm, that the shops in Northwich and the neighbouring villages decided to close at noon.

The weather was ideal. The venue was a field in front of the Manor House, Hartford. This was owned by Col. Marshall and occupied by Mr. Holland. A great crowd turned up, to be amused and entertained by marionettes (Italian Fantoccini) performances by Professor Follows, or "Gilbert's grand equestrian tournament and panoramic views", or skittles and side shows. The band of the 22nd Regiment, stationed at Chester, played during the afternoon, as did The Weaver (Winsford) Brass Band. The tea tent did a roaring trade, and besides a general refreshment tent, there was one specially set apart for the use of ladies and children.

The Fancy Fair was opened by Col. Marshall at 1.30 p.m. There were articles for sale from all over the world, "from pokers and tongs made in the village of Hartford, to babies' rattles made in Japan." During the afternoon, Mr. Blunden, organist of Witton Parish Church, played a selection of high-class music on the piano.

The day also included an athletic sports, with various races, including a Volunteers Race of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, for Volunteers in full uniform, High Jump, Cricketers' Half-mile Race, One Mile Race, Half-mile Hurdle Race and Pole Leaping, which was won by J. Dean, from Northwich, with a leap of 9 ft. 8 ins. Not bad for 1874!

Dancing went on until 9.00 p.m., when most people set off for home, and by 10.00 p.m. the field was totally deserted.

That this was undoubtedly a very successful event can be judged from the gross takings of £800. After expenses of £520 had been deducted, a total of £280 was paid into the building fund.

What did the church look like in 1875? We can get some idea by reading contemporary accounts. By June more than £4,000 had been raised towards the cost of the church. A princely sum, but still not enough to complete the edifice as planned by the architect. Nevertheless, the building was impressive, built as it was near the principal thoroughfares. In Roman times a branch of Watling Street passed through Hartford. The church was built to an early Gothic style, and the design allowed for two porches, one on the north side and the other on the south. These two porches were executed in English oak. The church consisted of nave, north and south aisles, chancel and transepts. The foundation for a tower had been laid, but funds did not stretch to the building of this portion. The planned tower was to incorporate a spire, and an artist's impression of the completed building is certainly striking.

The north transept was planned to be used as a children's chapel, and the organ and vestry were housed in the south transept.

The outside walls of the church are Kerridge stone, with red Eddisbury stone as an additional dressing. The interior walls are lined with Kerridge stone, though the arches are of Kelsall stone. The pillars are of redstone. The roof was covered with brindle tiles.

The chancel ceiling was made from pitch pine, with moulded ribs and boarding. Pitch pine was also used for the choir seats.

Seating for over 500 persons, on open pitch pine pews, was free.

The old font from the previous church was cleaned and placed at the west end of the church.

The pulpit was paid for by subscription. Mrs Eddowes took upon herself the task of raising the sum required. Its base is of white stone, with a carved oak upper part. The altar rail was also of oak.

In 1875 there was only one stained glass window in the church, situated in the north transept. It represents Peter walking on the sea, and was the gift of Mr. Knowles in memory of his son, Edward. Edward Knowles had been captain of the Northfleet, which was run down by the *Murillo*, off Dungeness, in January 1873. Later a monument was erected in the churchyard to Edward Knowles, and is situated today between the north entrance and Chester Road. All the other windows were glazed with cathedral glass of various tints.

Several gifts had been given to the church in that June. The communion, made of oak, was covered by a "costly and magnificently worked cloth", being the gift of the ladies of Hartford. The ornamental work had been done by Miss Lynes, of Chester. Colonel Cross gave the chairs and

kneeling stools and the chusions for the communion rail were worked by and given by the ladies of Hartford.

The Lych gate, in memory of Miss Maria Anne Coulthurst, was in the course of erection. This was the gift of the two Misses Coulthursts, and their sister, Mrs. Booth Grey.

After much hard work and generosity, all was ready for the 24th June. St. John the Baptist, Hartford, was once again to be the focus of the village.

THE CONSECRATION

The work was done. A fine new church stood in place of the old brick building, which was described by one reporter as: "... having no pretensions to architectural character, and with general arrangements quite out of keeping with modern ecclesiastical edifices." A severe criticism, perhaps, but certainly the new church was "... in every way very much superior to its predecessor."

The day chosen for the consecration was St. John the Baptist's Day, Thursday, 24th June 1875. The weather was beautifully fine, and at the appointed hour of eleven o'clock, the church was well filled. Visiting clergy included Ven. Archdeacon Johnson, Northenden; Rev. Canon Barclay, Runcorn; Rev. G. Gibbons and Rev. G. W. Clapham, Witton; Rev. R. Marsh, Castle-Northwich; Rev. T. H. Gillam, Weaverham; Rev. G. Willett, Little Leigh; Rev. J. W. N. Tanner, Antrobus; Rev. Mr. Garnett, Delamere; Rev. Mr. Livingstone, Liverpool and Rev. Mr. Green, West Derby, Liverpool.

The organ had been refixed following the rebuilding of the church, and Mr. Curnow, the organist, played a voluntary from a trio by Reisseger whilst the Bishop and clergy took their places.

The Bishop was received by the Vicar, the Wardens, Mr. Okell and Mr. Powles and by the Sidesmen, Col. Marshall and Mr. J. Ridgway. A petition requesting the Bishop to consecrate the new church and churchyard was read, to which the Bishop declared his willingness to do so. Accompanied by the clergy, the Bishop then proceeded to consecrate the new burial ground.

The consecration and dedication of the church then followed. The deed of conveyance was presented to the Bishop, who placed it upon the Communion Table, and offered several prayers "supplicating the presence of the Lord with those who were gathered together to consecrate that place with all humility and readiness of heart to the honour of His great name, separating it from henceforth from all unhallowed, ordinary and common uses, and dedicating it entirely to His service."

The Bishop requested Mr. Gamon to read the sentence of consecration.

Morning prayer was conducted by the Vicar, Rev. E. Eddowes. The lessons were read by Rev. Gillam and Rev. Gibbons, and Canon Barclay preached the sermon, using for his text: "Thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare His ways."

The collection realised £57.

I appreciate that long legal documents are often left to lawyers, and are of little interest to most of us, but the Sentence of Consecration is an important one in the life of our church, and I make no apology for including it here:

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST HARTFORD SENTENCE OF CONSECRATION

Dated 24th June 1875

WILLIAM by Divine permission LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER

To all Christian people GREETING

WHEREAS the Church of Saint John the Baptist Hartford in the county and our Diocese of Chester having become much out of repair and dilapidated a Faculty was on the Eighth day of May One Thousand eight hundred and seventythree granted by our Consistory Court of Chester to the Reverend Edmund Eddowes Clerk M A Vicar of the Vicarage and New Parish of Saint John the Baptist aforesaid and to Christopher Cheshire and John Ridgway Churchwardens of the said New Parish in authorizing them and their Successors Vicar and Wardens as aforesaid to take down the said Church and rebuild it upon the same Site with some extension thereof according to the plans thereof deposited and now remaining in the Public Episcopal Registry at Chester AND WHEREAS the said Church was accordingly taken down and a new Church or Edifice intended for such (being that in which we are now assembled) hath by means of Voluntary Contributions of divers pious and well disposed persons been built in its place in accordance with the Terms of the said Faculty partly upon the Site of the Old Church and within the limits of the Churchyard and partly upon land added to the said Churchyard as herein after is mentioned And the said new Church hath been finished furnished and adorned with all things necessary for the performance of Divine Service therein according to the Rites and Usages of the Church of England AND WHEREAS the Inhabitants of the said Parish of Saint John the Baptist Hartford aforesaid being in want of Additional Ground for the burial of deceased persons within the said Parish in order to supply this want and to provide a better site for the said site for the said new Church Two several pieces of land adjoining the said Churchyard containing altogether One rood and twenty Perches in statute measure have been purchased and laid to the said Churchyard And the said land hath Two several Indentures or Deeds bearing the date respectively the Sixth day of August One thousand eight hundred and seventytwo and the Fourteenth day of June One thousand eight hundred and seventythree and now deposited and remaining in the said Public Episcopal Registry been duly conveyed unto the said Edmund Eddowes and his Successors Vicars and Incumbents of Hartford as aforesaid to the intent and purpose that the said land should be added to the said Churchyard and appropriated as and for a Site of a new Church and partly as a Cemetery or place of burial of the Dead AND WHEREAS the said land conveyed as aforesaid and not occupied as the site of the said new Church hath been properly enclosed and laid out so as to form Part of the said Churchyard and we are now Petitioned to Consecrate this Edifice to the Honor and Service of God and Celebration of Divine Offices only and to set apart and Consecrate the said land as an addition to the said Churchyard and a place for the Christian Burial of the Dead according to the Rites

and Usages of the Church of England WE THEREFORE favorably inclining to this pious request and by our ordinary and episcopal Authority proceeding to this Separation Dedication and Consecration of this Edifice as it is now finished furnished and adorned and of the said land so added to the said Churchyard as aforesaid And first of all humbly calling upon the only High God of Heaven and Earth Father Son and Holy Ghost for a Blessing upon this our present purpose DO for ever Separate this Edifice and the said land so added to the said Churchyard from all common and profane uses and wholly devote and dedicate the said Edifice to the Worship and Service of God and the Celebration of Divine Offices only according to the Rites and Usages of the Church of England and do set apart the said land as and for a place for the Christian Burial of the Dead according to the Rites and Usages of the Church of England AND WE DO CONSECRATE this Church as it is now particularly delineated and shewn on the plan annexed to these presents and signed by us to the Honor of God and the sacred uses aforesaid by the name of "THE CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST HARTFORD" to the intent that the same with the yard thereto may remain from this time a Holy place and Holy ground And we do openly and publicly pronounce decree and declare the said Church of the new Parish of Saint John the Baptist aforesaid to all intents and purposes whatsoever AND we do decree this Church shall be and continue in all respects in the same position Ecclesiastically and parochially with the same rights and privileges and subject in all respects as the old Church of Saint John the Baptist Hartford aforesaid heretofore hath been AND saving the Dignity and Honor of our Cathedral Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary in Chester we reserve to ourselves and our Successors our Ordinary right and jurisdiction in the premises and a power of visiting this Church in like manner as the old Church of Saint John the Baptist Hartford aforesaid and as other Churches within our Diocese are wont to be visited All and singular which premises we hereby decree confirm and establish by this our Sentence which we now read and promulge.

WILLIAM CHESTER

THIS SENTENCE of CONSECRATION was openly and publicly read and promulged upon Thursday the Twentyfourth day of June in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and seventyfive In the Prescence of

Edmund Eddowes M A	Vicar of Hartford
Edward R Johnson M A	Archdeacon of Chester
John Barclay M A	Vicar of Runcorn and Rural Dean
Geo Gibbons M A	Vicar of Witton
John Gamon Not: Pub:	Registrar of the Diocese

THE CHURCH TOWER

On March 12th, 1883, the Vicar invited the co-operation of all Parishioners in the effort necessary to complete the church by the building of the tower. He was very conscious of the great amount of money which had been subscribed over the previous ten years, and he suggested that half the sum

required should be raised by subscription, and the balance by means of bazaars, and garden parties.

The original estimate for the erection of a tower was in the region of £2,000. This had been reduced to £1,540 as the result of the purchase of the whole of the stone of Winsford Church at a cost, including delivery to Hartford Bridge, of £100. There was £213 in the bank, so that in March 1883, £1,327 was still required.

In August of that year it was decided to hold An Olde Englyshe Fayre, combined with a Flower Show and Athletic Festival, to raise funds towards the erection of the tower. It was held in Grange Park and Lord Egerton of Tatton performed the opening ceremony. The central attraction was the Olde Englyshe Fayre which was held in an oval tent, 175 feet long, 75 feet wide and 40 feet high. Total receipts were £799, of which £550 went to the building fund.

On Thursday, 14th April 1887, the tower was formally dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Chester. The design was by Messrs Douglas and Fordham, and the contractor was James Holland, of Northwich.

The tower is about 70 feet high, built in the form of a square, with a circular turret staircase on the south side, and is built of red stone. The walls, at the base, are nearly six feet thick, reducing to three feet six inches at the top, and are finished above the roof with a battlement coping. The clock was by Mr. Joyce of Whitchurch.

Between 1866 and 1887, £10,742 14s. 3d. was spent on the work of rebuilding, and the total cost, including church, tower, pulpit, organ, enlargement of the churchyard and peal of bells (1897) was £12,508.

SOME ORNAMENTS ADDED TO THE CHURCH 1900-1960

There is a danger of presenting something of a catalogue when describing additions to a church. This brief history is not intended to be a catalogue. Instead, one or two additions from each decade are listed, to show that the members of the church cared for, and were interested in, the fabric of the church as well as the spiritual benefits they received. Neither have the most important necessarily been included. Often it is the small, simple addition which, though not greatly conspicuous, is of real value in itself.

On 17th February 1902 a vestry meeting agreed that a screen should be erected under the chancel arch at the west end of the church. It was further agreed that the screen should be made of oak. Dr. Cook had left one hundred pounds to the Vicar and Wardens for the benefit of the church, and it was decided that the cost of the screen should be defrayed out of this legacy. A Faculty was accordingly granted by Francis John, Lord Bishop of Chester to the Rev. Edmund Eddowes and to W. Moss, Esq. and J. Moore, Esq., the Churchwardens, on 26th February 1902.

A Faculty was granted by the Bishop on 9th October 1916 to take out the plain glass from the first window on the south side of the nave and insert stained glass. This was to be a Memorial Window of Lady Lucy Martina Marshall, of Bryn-y-Coed, Upper Bangor. The window contains figures representing "Saint Anne" and "Saint Lucy", and the cost was defrayed by her children.

Henry Luke, Lord Bishop of Chester, granted a Faculty to Rev. H. H. Pitts, the Vicar, and to W. M. Bratt, Esq., and A. E. Powles, Esq., the Churchwardens, on 20th February 1920, to remove plain glass from two lights of a window in the south aisle and to insert a stained glass window. This contains two figures representing "Saint John the Baptist" and "Saint James", and was the gift of members of the family of Thomas Horatio Marshall, Knight, formerly of Hartford Beach. The window is dedicated as a memorial to him.

A vestry meeting, held on 14th October 1920, agreed to erect a Churchyard Cross as a War Memorial and a record of the men of the Parish who fell in the First World War. It was decided to place the cross near the main entrance. The cross is made of stone, and was paid for by voluntary contributions. The necessary Faculty was granted on 8th November 1920, and the War Memorial was Dedicated on Saturday, 27th November 1920, by the Rt. Rev. H. L. Paget, D.D., Lord Bishop of Chester.

The inscription ran:

"In grateful Memory of 63 gallant men connected with the Parish, who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-19."

The Order of Service at the Dedication was:

Processional Hymn: "Praise to the Holiest"

National Anthem

Sentences

Psalm 23

Lesson: Book of Wisdom, Ch. IX. 1-9

Anthem: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee"—Williams

Two Minutes Silence

The Apostles' Creed

Collects

Hymn: "O valiant hearts, who to your glory came"

Sermon: The Lord Bishop

Hymn: "Through the night of doubt and sorrow"

Blessing

During the procession to the Memorial, Mr. J. W. Williamson, the organist, played Funeral Marches by Chopin and Mendelssohn.

The Unveiling: General Sir Henry de Beauvoir de Lisle, Bart., K.C.B., G.O.C.-in-C., Western Command

Dedication: The Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Chester

The Last Post

Hymn: "On the Resurrection morning"

Reveille

Blessing

A vestry meeting was held on 11th February 1925 to discuss some form of marking the fiftieth anniversary of the consecration of the church. It was decided to build a new choir vestry on the east side of the existing vestry. It was necessary to make an opening in the east wall of the church to give

access to the new vestry, and it was resolved to position a brass tablet bearing an inscription to record that the new vestry was a thank-offering. The cost of this undertaking was met from voluntary contributions, and the Bishop gave his Faculty on 14th December 1925.

A meeting of the Parochial Church Council, held on 21st January 1936, agreed to the placing, on the south wall of the Baptistry, of a panel of mosaic, being a copy of the painting of "The Last Supper" by Leonardo da Vinci. This was the gift of John Issac Watts of Beechfield. The Faculty was granted on 7th July 1936.

Two meetings of the Parochial Church Council, held on 14th November 1947 and 24th March 1948, discussed and approved a proposal to introduce into the church a glazed cabinet of oak, to be placed on a window-sill on the north side of the church. The cabinet was to contain a Book of Remembrance recording the names of those of the Parish who had served in the Second World War. The cost was defrayed by voluntary contributions. The Faculty was granted on 30th July 1948.

A Faculty was granted on 22nd April 1949, following a recommendation by the Parochial Church Council at their meeting held on 21st January 1949, to convert the organ from an all-pneumatic action to an electro-pneumatic action, and to re-position the console. The cost to be met by voluntary contributions.

The organ was built by August Cern in 1904. Following the conversion to electro-pneumatic, the detached console was supplied by the Essend Organ Company. The fan was driven by a 1½ h.p. motor, single phase, and wound for a 440 volt supply. The 12 volt D.C. supply for the action, obtained from a transformer-rectifier supplied by the Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company, was housed in the vestry – it had a somewhat annoying hum!

The note magnets were mounted in the organ and when energised lifted air valves which in turn lifted other valves which admitted air pressure to groups of pipes. The stop magnets were also mounted in the organ and operated the stops via air valves in a similar manner to the note magnets.

In 1962 Messrs Rushworth and Draper were invited to instal a new electro-pneumatic four piece extension organ at a cost of about £2,700.

A meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on 18th March 1954 agreed to place an additional inscription on the War Memorial in the churchyard as a record of those members of the Parish who fell in the Second World War. The cost to be met by voluntary contributions. Douglas Henry, Lord Bishop of Chester, gave his Faculty to Rev. F. P. Cheetham, the Vicar and to W. E. Ellis, Esq. and R. W. L. Wood, Esq., the Churchwardens on 13th July 1954.

As a result of a meeting of the Parochial Church Council, held on 16th November 1955, and the granting of a Faculty on 7th March 1956, it was agreed to fix a handrail of oak to the pulpit. The meeting was told that this would be the gift of an anonymous donor, but today there is a brass panel which tells us that the handrail is the gift of the children of Annie Gaunt.

Other gifts given to the church over the years include, The Reading Desk, an eagle, which was given by the Misses Powell and their pupils.

They had a school at Oaklands. The brass cross was given by Mr. and Mrs. George Joynson, of Mersey Vale, and the brass flower vases were given by Mrs. and Miss Fryer, in memory of Mr. Fryer, who died on 19th August 1934.

Recently Revised Standard Version Pew Bibles have been given, in memory of Bert and Eva Munford, to mark the Centenary of the Consecration of the Church, 1875-1975.

FROM THE MINUTES AND RECORDS

1864

E. Eddowes appointed Vicar of Hartford.

1866-67

Col. Marshall gave the site, and the Vicarage was built at a cost of £1,500.

1872

The Chester Road site of the Churchyard was purchased from Messrs. Greenall and Coward, at a cost of £395, which was raised by subscription.

1873-75

The present church was built.

1875

The first Christenings, on June 27th - John and Thomas Golden, Robert Sutton and Emma Ridgway.

The first Funeral was on 8th July, (?) Dawson.

The first Marriage was between John Moore and Sarah Winfield, on 22nd September.

1878

The field at the east end of the church was purchased at a cost of £900. Major Littledale collected the money.

1884

The school was enlarged at a cost of £702. Major Littledale was again responsible for collecting subscriptions.

1885-87

The tower was built.

1893

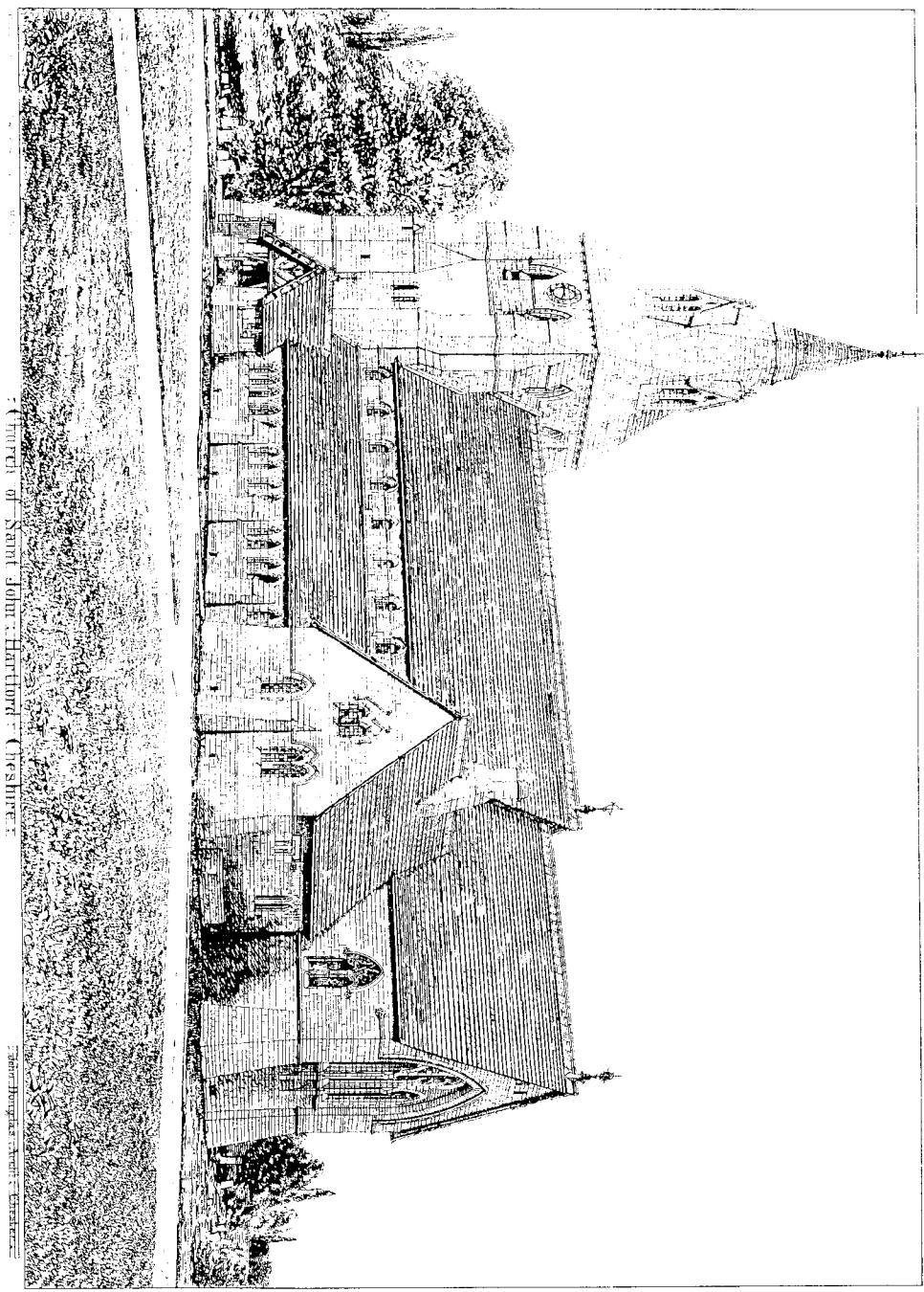
Rev. E. and Mrs. Eddowes celebrated their Silver Wedding. At a special concert, held in the school, Col. Marshall presented them with a silver lamp and illuminated address. Mention was made of the 28 years Mr. Eddowes had served the Parish, during which time the church and the vicarage had been built and completely freed from debt. Col. Marshall went on to talk of the school, "... one of the best equipped and arranged schools in the neighbourhood."

A Fancy Bazaar was held to raise funds to defray the expense of enlarging the school, which raised £194.

1894

The first meeting of the Hartford Parish Council was held on Monday, 17th December. Rev. E. Eddowes was a member.

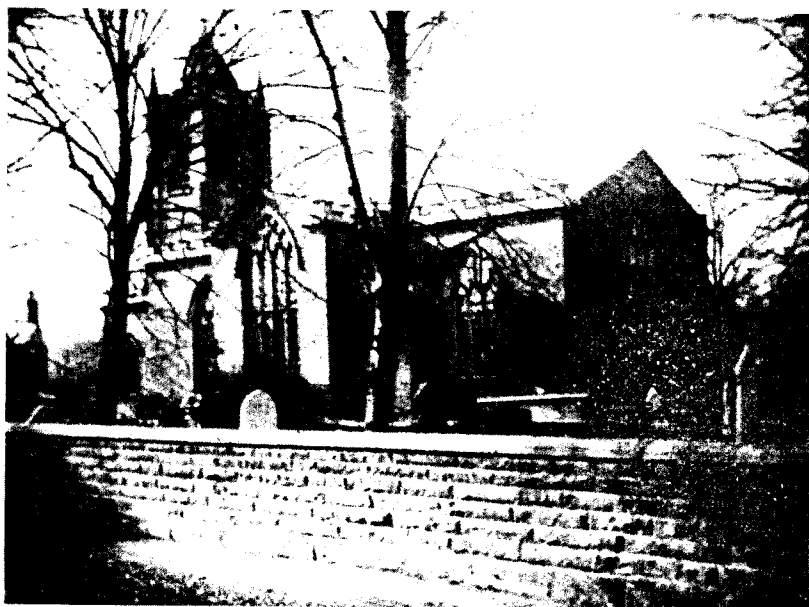
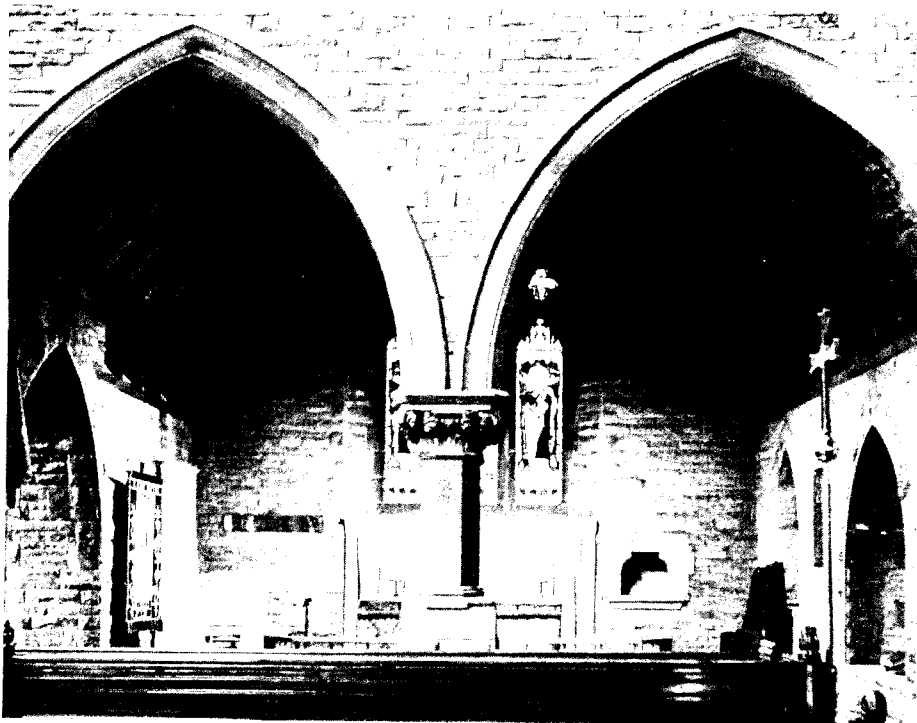




CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN, HARTFORD, HAMPSHIRE.

JOHN BOURNE, ARCHT. & ENGRAVER.





VIEW OF FORMER CHURCH – CONSECRATED IN 1824

1895

The public bakehouse closed. It stood on what is now part of the churchyard, and villagers brought their bread to be baked, each family having a special identification mark.

1896

The old church had been partially financed by pew rents. These had been abolished with the building of the new church, but a sum of fifty pounds had to be paid to the Vicar in lieu. This money had to be found from other sources, and presented something of a problem for the Churchwardens. Therefore in March they proposed to revive the ancient custom of the Easter offerings being given to the Vicar.

The Bishop had recommended that this custom be adopted throughout the Diocese.

It was the hope of the Wardens that a considerable sum would be raised, thus enabling them to support other charitable institutions from the offertories, which they had been unable to do.

Their appeal to the congregation was successful, and the Easter offertory realised £31 1s. 10d. They were in the happy position of being able to pay the half-yearly sum of £25 to the Vicar, and have a small balance in hand.

1897

On June 9th, the Archdeacon of Chester Dedicated the bells which had been placed in the tower to commemorate the 60th year of Queen Victoria's reign. The cost of the Peal of Six Bells was £416, the money being raised by subscription.

1900

At the Easter Vestry the Vicar informed those present that the land and cottages adjoining the west of the church had been purchased by William Hatton, Esq., and that he had made a gift of the same for improving and enlarging the churchyard. A Certificate of Consecration was issued by Francis John, Lord Bishop of Chester, on 6th June. Mr. Hatton paid £750 for this land. It is that piece where the War Memorial stands today. Four cottages had to be pulled down, and the cost of laying out the land and enclosing it with a stone wall was £120. This was met by a voluntary subscription.

1903

The Vestry meeting, held on 17th April, was informed of a very generous legacy of £2,000, left by Mr. William Hatton. The annual income was to be shared equally between the poor of the Parish, the due maintenance of the churchyard and the Curate Fund.

1904

The new organ was erected at a cost of £450, the money being raised by subscription. It was Dedicated by the Venerable Archdeacon Woosnam, and Dr. Bridge, M.A., Mus. Doc. Oxon., the Organist of Chester Cathedral, gave a Recital.

The Easter Vestry had to be held in the schoolroom "... in consequence of the Church Vestry being occupied by the builders in erecting the new organ."

1905

The Rev. R. A. White took the chair at the Vestry meeting and he touched upon the Vicar's long and tedious illness "... and with one accord the meeting voiced their expression of sympathy with the Vicar in his trouble."

1907

Though the Vicar had been able to attend the Easter Vestry in 1906, he was again unwell in 1907. The curate took the chair and before the business of the meeting was dealt with, everyone adjourned to the Vicarage "... but the Vicar being far from well, was unable to take any part in the proceedings and a unanimous wish was expressed by all present that he would soon be restored to his normal health and strength."

1908

On his retirement, Mr. Eddowes, who had been Vicar for 44 years, received an illuminated address and a cheque for £344. During his time as Vicar, he officiated at the Christenings of 1,647 children, at the weddings of 453 couples and at the funerals of 1,049 persons.

A report, made on 21st May, estimated that a sum of £62 10s. 0d. would be needed to make good the dilapidations to the vicarage. The vicarage stood in 4 acres of land, and had six bedrooms and three dressing rooms.

On June 6th, Rev. N. J. N. Gourlie was Inducted by the Bishop of Chester. This was an important occasion, as it was the first Institution and Induction in the history of the Parish.

1909

The accounts showed a deficit of £6 7s. 2d. £543 12s. 10d. had been spent on improving the vicarage, of which £190 was contributed by Parishioners. On 12th February an amateur dramatic entertainment was held in the school. Three short plays were performed, "The Crystal Gazer", "Why Women Weep" and "My Milliner's Bill". £45 was raised towards the cost of new electric wiring and fittings in the nave of the church.

On April 5th the Bishop of Chester conducted a Confirmation Service, the first in the history of the church. There were 204 candidates, including 77 from Hartford.

1910

A scheme was launched to raise 4,000 shillings, to help pay for the new heating system. People using the church were invited to subscribe a shilling towards the fund.

On the 20th May, the church was full for a memorial service for King Edward.

Three Choristers between them had served the choir for a total of 87 years. Mr. Thomas Gregory had been in the choir for 29 years, Mr. Walter Moore for 31 years, and Mr. J. Southern for 27 years as organist and choirmaster. Master J. Moore, following his father's footsteps, was the treble soloist in the same choir.

1911

A debit balance of £1 15s. 1d. was reported. The No. 2 account showed that the debit balance of 1910 had been reduced to a debit balance of £49 0s. 10d.

The Vicar reported that negotiations were well advanced for a plot of land, at a peppercorn rent, on which to erect a mission building. The plot of land in question was at the end of Romanes Street, off Darwin Street, "in the crowded part of the Parish". The Mission Room was built at a cost of £420.

On 12th July, a Garden Party and Sale of Work made about £250.

1913

On June 8th, the Bishop attended morning service, and preached from the text: "The God of all Grace".

1917

A deficit of £36 8s. 8d. was reported by the Treasurer. The Mission Room account, on the other hand, showed a favourable balance of £50.

The Vicar spoke of the irreparable loss the Parish had sustained in the death of Sir Thomas H. Marshall.

A portion of the field next to the churchyard, measuring just under an acre, was drained and levelled, and enclosed with a retaining wall, prior to consecration, at a cost of £452.

The Vicar suggested that, owing to the Food Controller's request, no tea should be provided at the annual Garden Party.

1918

Though the accounts showed a deficit of £17 5s. 2d., it was reported that £150 had been given to war charities during the year.

The Mission Room was flourishing.

1920

The accounts were in credit to the tune of £1 16s. 11d.! The Mission Room account had a credit balance of £160.

1922

The Sanctuary was added to the Mission Room at a cost of £285.

1926

The problem of finance was still a serious one. The Wardens had to report a deficit of £70 17s. 4d. The Vicar pointed out that the first thing Church people should remember was that they were members of a Society, and being members, they should seriously consider what amount they ought, in fairness, to contribute weekly towards the upkeep of the church. If they were absent one Sunday or more, they should make up for their absence the next time they attended. In the past, the voluntary system had been over emphasised, and haphazard collections were the primary cause of deficit balances. How true this sentiment is in 1975.

The Choir Vestry was added at a cost of £536.

A bazaar, held in October, made a profit of (according to a pencil addition to the minutes) £1,000.

1927

A sum of £167 was raised to meet the cost of vicarage dilapidations.

1928

The profit from a bazaar was £342. Mr. Powles presented £100 to the church.

1929

Mr. A. E. Powles, Churchwarden, reported as required by the Parochial Church Councils' (Powers) Measure, 1921: "The fabric is in good order. The defective oak louvers in the Belfry windows have been renewed and repaired. The Cassocks, surplices and service books are in good repair, 100 additional Prayer Books and two book-racks have been provided. The ornaments are all in good order."

The Vicar announced that the Parish had now been divided; but that for purposes of marriage and burial, residents of the old Mission District would receive, during his Vicariate, the same benefits as Parishioners. An explanation here may be helpful. By an Order in Council of the 21st March 1929, the District of Holy Trinity, Northwich was constituted, comprising portions of the Parish of St. Helen, Witton and St. John the Baptist, Hartford. The portion of this Parish which was given up was the portion on the Northwich side of the Iron Bridge.

The Church Hall was built and equipped at a cost of over £1,000.

1930

The final account for the Mission Room was presented. It showed a credit balance of £2 11s. 10d., and it was agreed that this should be handed over to the working party.

The profits of a bazaar came to £138.

1933

The bazaar profit was £273.

1935

The bazaar profit was £300.

1937

Mr. John Mercer retired as People's Warden. His resignation was accepted with regret, and a hearty vote of thanks was unanimously accorded Mr. Mercer for his long and faithful service to the church. He had been Sidesman and then People's Warden for 35 years without a break.

1938

A short report was read of a meeting which had been held at the vicarage, between five members of the Parish Church and five members of the Wesleyan Church, and the Vicar confirmed that a United Service would be held in the Church on Sunday, 19th June, and that the address would be given by Bishop Tubbs.

The Vicar read a letter of thanks from the Secretary of the Chester Diocesan Board of Finance for the payments of the full quota for the year 1937:

Dear Brother,

The Board is thankful to observe that your Parish has again completed the contribution to the Diocesan Fund, at which it is assessed. You have given them another proof of the soundness of your teaching on the subject, and of the methods by which your people are invited to give it practical effects. To you and to them the Board offers their grateful congratulations and best wishes for all the work which you and they share.

1939

Canon Oliver was presented with a cheque and an illuminated album on his farewell to the Parish.

1940

There was a debit balance of £120. An Appeal Sunday was arranged for 30th June, and the Bishop of Manchester, Dr. Guy Warman, preached at morning service. Nearly £122 was raised.

The Church Hall was made available on Sunday evenings for the use of H.M. Forces stationed in the village.

1941

£22 was raised by the ladies of the Parochial Church Council at a Bring and Buy sale.

The church was without a Clerk and Sexton, and two of the sidesmen were called up.

1942

Mr. Newman resigned as schoolmaster on 31st August. A Gift Day realised £93.

1943

The grave digger was called up. A make-shift "pool" of grave diggers was set up from men employed at Witton Cemetery, Witton Parish Church and Davenham Church. This was not very successful, and by October the "pool" was discontinued.

A scheme to do something within the Parish to keep the churchyard tidy met with little response.

1944

Mrs. Perry made a personal application on 12th April to use the Church Hall as a school.

On 21st June the Vicar told the Parochial Church Council meeting of the difficulty in obtaining boys in sufficient numbers to keep the choir at anything like its proper strength. The meeting unanimously carried a proposal that ladies be invited to join the choir. They were, and they joined!

1945

An attempt to extend the Freewill Offering Scheme was all too often met with phrases like "the time is not opportune" or "there's a war on". It stated that the Parish generally was in a moribund condition. (The aftermath of war).

The black-out curtains were removed from the church.

1946

Mrs. Emily Charlotte Cawley left £25 for the repair, furnishing or equipment of the church. It was agreed to ear-mark this sum for the organ fund. She also left £25 for the Church Hall.

1947

The Rural Council expressed a desire to acquire the only field which was Glebe land for a housing estate. They offered £200 for the 2½ acres, but finally agreed to pay £300. It was pointed out, that though this was less than had been hoped for, the Rural Council had powers of compulsory

acquisition, and at 1939 values. Following numerous breakages, new bell ropes were purchased.

1948

A bazaar was held at Beechfield in aid of the organ fund. This took place on 5th June, and raised £304.

Mrs. Watts presented a magic lantern to the church.

1949

The Church Hall was redecorated.

A Faculty was granted for the renovation and conversion of the organ.

Following the tampering with of the offertory boxes, it was suggested that stronger boxes be installed.

1950

Two Chubb wall-safes were installed to replace the existing offertory boxes. A Faculty was not required for this, but the Archdeacon's Certificate was.

By May, the pipe work of the organ had been completed, but the console was not in position.

The British Legion undertook the cleaning of the War Memorial.

1951

Work on the organ was completed towards the end of the year.

1952

An enquiry was received from the Parish Council as to whether the names of the fallen of the last war could be added to the War Memorial.

New hymn books were ordered.

Mrs. Bolton and Mr. Wood were elected to represent the Parochial Church Council on the joint Coronation Committee of the Parish Council.

1953

The Vicar had to spend £18 on necessary fencing at the vicarage. It was resolved to pay half of this from church funds.

1954

Designs were drawn up and approval given to the Parish Council's request to add an additional tablet to the War Memorial.

At a meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on 11th November, the Vicar stated that some money raising effort was essential. A committee was formed to consider suggestions.

1955

Mr. Street resigned as sidesman, an office he had held for nearly 40 years.

The Vicar emphasised that there was a need for a pulpit handrail. It was proposed to use some of the money left over from the gift from Mrs. Gaunt's children, and the donors had agreed.

1956

The Faculty for the pulpit handrail was granted, and the handrail was duly erected.

1957

The Vicar reported on the state of the vicarage, and a sub-committee was formed to consider the whole question, including whether to sell the property and buy or build a new vicarage.

1958

On July 3rd, the Vicar announced his intention of resigning the living and leaving the Parish at the end of September.

1959

A Processional Cross was given by Mr. and Mrs. Jameson.

1960

At a Parochial Church Council meeting, held on 16th June, a plan of the new vicarage was on view.

A Faculty was applied for to re-wire and light the whole church.

1961

It was resolved to have the reredos re-decorated. Work was started on the new vicarage, and the old vicarage was placed in the hands of auctioneers.

1962

Messrs Rushworth and Draper were invited to install a new electro-pneumatic four piece extension organ at a cost of approximately £2,700.

In a letter from the Vicar to the General Diocesan Secretary, he mentioned the problem of heating the vicarage and went on, "... not only am I still in the old house but likely to be so for some months yet."

1963

The Vicar mentioned that he had been given £100 for a memorial to two people buried in the churchyard, and asked for ideas.

The clock and faces were renovated.

It was agreed to have the church floodlit at Christmas as well as at Armistice time.

1964

The British Legion undertook to clean the War Memorial.

A letter from the General Diocesan Secretary to Mr. Wilson, stated, "Hartford stands out in the matter of Stewardship and if all did the same we could dispense with formal quotas."

In reply, the Vicar expressed his desire to increase the capacity of the Church Hall by 25%, together with a proper stage, more adequate kitchen facilities and new toilets.

1965

A special meeting was called for 2nd December to deal with the matter of the enlargement of the Church Hall.

1966

At a meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on 24th November, it was resolved that a Faculty be sought to remove the existing Baptistry Screen from the church. It was planned to replace it with the existing Chancel Screen, together with the memorial tablet, and to close the ends of the chancel pews in consequence. The Faculty was also to cover the wish to substitute the bar used to close the Communion Rail by a pair of gates.

1967

On 30th November the Vicar stated that the Faculty for the gates in the Communion Rail had been granted, but that the Faculty for the removal of the screen was still awaited.

1968

The Church School closed at the end of the school year. It could not be sold or disposed of for a period of twelve years, and the County Council asked for a ten year lease on the building for the use of the College of Further Education.

1969

On the night of October 5th/6th, six brass collection plates and the alms dish were stolen. It was agreed to replace the collection plates with wooden ones, and the alms dish with a 16" brass dish.

On 12th November, Rev. J. A. Wardle was Inducted. It was agreed to have a peal of bells for the service, and a get-together in the Church Hall afterwards.

1970

A cheque for £100 was received re Clara Hayes Legacy.

It was decided that Morning Service be re-timed to begin at 10 a.m.

1971

At a meeting of the Parochial Church Council held on 11th February, it was resolved to make application for a Faculty seeking permission to form, in the churchyard, a Garden of Remembrance for the burial of cremated remains.

It was agreed to change the choir vestry into the clergy vestry and Vicar's office. The choir would use the former clergy vestry.

1972

The Bishop of Stockport preached on 30th January.

It was agreed that, as part of the centenary project, a fellowship room be provided, either attached to, or within the church.

A report by John Taylor and Company on the bells stated that all the bearings needed replacement and the clappers needed to be refurbished. (Well, they had been there for 75 years!)

It was agreed to hold public baptism at the Family Service.

The first meeting of the centenary committee was held on 21st September.

It was resolved to apply for a Faculty to remove all kerbstones in the churchyard, and to level and grass over the area affected.

1973

It was agreed that, as from 1st February, the Series 3 Communion Service be used.

It was considered that the churchwardens should look into a scheme for engaging the services of a Church Army Officer to live and work amongst the people of the Greenbank estate.

The Vicar announced that the churchyard was in receipt of a legacy of £5,000 for keeping the paths tidy and the grass cut.

1974

Because of vandalism, it was agreed to keep the church closed during the week, and that the key could be obtained from the vicarage. This was in July. In September the culprit had been found, and the church was re-opened during the week.

An estimate for £450 was received to make the bells usable for the next few years.

Some of the pews were taken out of the church, and sold. This had the advantage that it created room to make a vestibule at the west end of the church, and also to extend the chancel into the nave of the church.

At a meeting of the Parochial Church Council, held in September, it was stated that a smaller font would be made available from Christ Church, Winstford, when the font was removed from the Baptistry.

Panic bars were fitted to the door of the Church Hall.

1975

It was decided that the choice of the Pew Bibles be left to the Vicar, in consultation with the donor.

It was agreed, in January, to purchase new curtains for the main doors of the church, and to put down carpet tiles on the platform extension of the chancel into the nave.

A working party was arranged to brush down the interior walls and stonework in preparation for the Centenary. And so we are here. One hundred years in the life of this present Church of St. John the Baptist have passed, and we look forward to the next hundred with confidence and faith.

THE SCHOOL

A note on the school may be of interest, partly because we can learn something about the background of the Parish over the years.

In 1879 Mr. Knowles was the schoolmaster, at an annual salary of £70. By 1884, this had been increased to £100. Promises of nearly £700 had been made that year towards the proposed enlargement of the school, and on March 7th a contract was signed for the work. The contract was for £628 15s. 0d. In 1886 Mr. Knowles resigned, and the Managers appointed Mr. Pierce as Headmaster. He was assisted by his wife and two daughters, at a joint salary of £140, house and garden free, and with a bonus of £10 if "good examination results were achieved". In 1889 a school bell was provided, to be rung five minutes before school time, to ensure better punctuality. On 17th August 1891, the Managers accepted an offer from the Education Department of a fee grant of 10/- per head upon all children from 3 to 15 years of age.

On 17th May 1892, permission was granted to H Company of the Volunteers to use the schoolroom for two nights a week during the winter months, for drill. During the year a piece of land was given to the school in order to widen the passage to the girls and infants entrance. Also a porch, similar to the one at the west end, was built onto the east end of the school.

In 1886 the Managers were informed that about 70 children living in the Castle part of the Parish were attending the new school at Castle-Northwich. The Castle Managers were short of room, and asked the Hartford Managers to do something about the situation. It was agreed that it would be better to provide more accommodation at Castle, than to have to enlarge the Hartford school and employ extra staff, and so in 1897 a joint Hartford-Castle bazaar was held, which raised £307 towards the cost of enlarging the Castle school.

A meeting held on 31st October 1901 was informed of a Legacy of £100 which Mr. G. Hatt-Cook had left for the benefit of the school. Dr. Moreton asked the Managers for the use of the school for his daughter's coming of age dance. They agreed that on such a special occasion no charge should be made, except for one guinea for the electric light. (And we complain today of our electricity bills!)

The Education Act of 1902 came into force on 1st July 1903, and the responsibility for paying teachers' salaries passed to the County Council. The Parish Council appointed Mr. Charles Platt as one of the school managers, and the County Council representative was Mr. J. W. Smith, of Weaverham. Under the 1902 Act, it was required that a Correspondent be appointed, through whom all communication with reference to the school may be made. The Vicar was elected to this office.

In 1905 Mr. Pierce resigned. 250 applicants were received for the post, and these were eventually reduced to four. Mr. Armstrong was appointed, and his wife was appointed a supplementary teacher.

Holidays were much shorter in 1906-07. The dates agreed were:

Christmas	24th December to 4th January
Easter	29th March to 5th April
Whit	20th and 21st May
Summer	29th July to 23rd August

An extra three days were available at the managers' discretion.

In 1907 the older boys had swimming instruction during school hours.

On 8th June 1908, Rev. N. S. N. Gourlie was elected a foundation manager and Correspondent.

In 1909, discipline problems were in evidence. One boy, who was dismissed from the school, was taken back only after his mother appealed to the managers. Even so they made a condition that the boy's conduct had to improve. Another boy assaulted one of the teachers who had punished his younger brother. The boy was fined 20/- by the magistrate.

The heating system was not very good. The log book records that on January 8th 1912, the temperature was only 40°, rising to 45° during the day. The caretaker was dismissed!

In 1914, Rev. H. H. Pitts was elected Correspondent. In 1916 an offer from the Trustees of the Hartford Parish Council Allotments of a piece of land 10 yds. by 20 yds. for a school garden was accepted. By October the school was placed in grade D instead of B, for heating, lighting and wear and tear. It was agreed to make the effort necessary to bring the school up to standard. Mr. Armstrong resigned at the end of 1916, and he was succeeded by Mr. C. E. Newman. His appointment was for the duration of the war only. He nearly made it; he resigned in 1942!

Part of Sir Thomas Marshall's will read: "... to raise and pay out of the rents of my real estate or by mortgage or sale of the said premises or any part thereof the sum of £1,000 to the Managers for the time being of the Hartford National Schools, to be used by them for the general purpose of the Schools, but it is my wish that so far as possible such sum shall be treated as capital."

On 8th July 1918, the Vicar reported that he had visited the homes of all the cases receiving medical attention through the visiting nurse. It was resolved that: "... Where, after reasonable time, parents have failed to follow the advice of the school medical officers, the names of the children be given to the N.S.P.C.C. for their help."

Mr. Eddowes died on Friday, 18th October 1918. At their meeting, held on 21st October, the managers, standing, carried a vote of condolence and sympathy with the family of the late Rev. E. Eddowes, for so long a time Vicar of Hartford, and for so long a worker for Hartford Schools.

The two cottages next to the school were purchased in 1920 for £690.

In 1925, the *Daily Mail* tests were held. The Headmaster reported that 88% of the children gave correct results in Arithmetic and 77% in General Knowledge, as against 17% in the London schools.

Rev. E. S. Oliver was elected chairman and Correspondent in 1926. It was agreed that the heating of the school by open fires was both uneconomical and unsatisfactory, and that estimates should be obtained for a hot water pipe system.

A Singer sewing machine was purchased for the use of the older girls at a cost of £5 15s. 0d.

It was proposed to build a senior school in Hartford in 1934. The managers agreed to accept this proposal provided that all the other schools in the area transferred their pupils at the age of 11+.

Canon Cheetham was elected chairman and Correspondent in 1939. Following a communication from the County Authority, the Headmaster and the Vicar looked into any measures relating to Air Raid Precautions. By 1940 air raid shelters had been provided to accommodate all the children.

There were 90 local and 61 evacuee children in the school in 1942. The County Authority established a system for providing school dinners.

Mr. Newman resigned on 31st August 1942, after 25 years as Headmaster. He was succeeded by Mr. R. W. L. Wood, who was appointed, as was the practice of the County Authority, on a temporary basis for the period of the war. One of the first things Mr. Wood did was to install bee-hives. These were paid for by the sale of produce from the school garden.

On June 1st 1945, a memorandum was read from the Bishop pointing out the procedure which would be followed in the re-organisation of church schools under the Education Act of 1944. This dealt with the status of "Aided" schools and "Controlled" schools. The Bishop was in favour of church schools being retained as "Aided" schools. A development plan for Hartford Schools was produced by the Director of Education in 1947. The plan suggested that the present site and buildings were inadequate, and proposed a new school, the cost of which was to be about £15,000. It was resolved by the managers that objection to this plan be made to the Ministry of Education, on the grounds that insufficient consideration had been given to the potential of the present site.

The Parents' Association was formed in 1947.

In 1948, attempts were made to obtain a playing field. It was hoped to use the Vicarage Croft, but the cost of making it good was too much.

A communication from the Diocesan Education Authority was received in 1949, stating that "... Hartford C. of E. School, scheduled under the development plan for closure in due time, as the existing premises cannot be adapted to meet the Ministry of Education Building Regulations ... meantime to be retained on aided status."

A special meeting was called by the managers on 4th December 1951, when the Vicar read from the proposed development plan, which included a proposal to close the school in about five years. It was agreed to protest to the Minister of Education.

Mr. Wood resigned in 1953, and Mr. J. Gotsell was appointed Head Teacher.

The "battle" for aided status was eventually lost, and the school became controlled from 1st September 1954, and was moved to new premises in 1968.

THE CHARITIES

Vicar Trusts, Benefice of St. John the Baptist, Hartford.

ELIZABETH KYNASTON MYTTON THORNYCROFT

The origins of this charity are obscure. According to a Tablet in the choir vestry, dated 1853, Mrs. E. K. Thornycroft bequeathed the sum of £50, the money being invested in the joint names of Rev. John Thornycroft and the Incumbent of Hartford Church. It was bequeathed to the poor of the township of Hartford. At a meeting of the Parish Council, held on 12th August 1895, a letter from the Charity Commissioners was read stating that Mrs. Thornycroft did not make any charitable bequests, and that the sum of £50 was probably given by her in her life time. They directed that a Trustee should be appointed to act, with the Vicar, and H. Hatt-Cook, the Chairman of the Parish Council, was duly appointed.

CHARITY OF CATHERINE CONSTANCE GREY

The Instrument creating this Charity is dated 23rd March 1852, and was for the poor of the Chapelry of Hartford.

CHARITY OF WILLIAM HATTON

The Instrument creating this Charity is dated 3rd April 1903, and was for

- (a) The Poor of the Parish of Hartford
- (b) Curate's Fund
- (c) Maintenance of the Churchyard.

The Rev. E. Eddowes attended a meeting of the Parish Council, held on 10th October 1904, to explain the position of these three charities. He reported that they amounted in the whole to about £5 or £6 per quarter, and had been distributed among the poor in the shape of coal. It appears that some people who were not really in need had received coal, and two new Trustees were appointed to act with the Vicar in the management of the Hartford Parochial Charities. Mr. T. Birtwistle and Mr. H. Booth were appointed Trustees.

The income, in 1961, amounted to:

Catherine Grey £8 p.a.
Elizabeth Thornycroft £1 5s. 8d.
William Hatton (Poor) £28

The Charities Act, 1960, obliged local authorities to organise a review of their local charities. It was felt that whilst most charities were fulfilling the wishes of the donor, some were duplicating the facilities provided by the welfare state, and also that some charities of long-standing, but with little income, may be feeling that the moneys were insufficient to be of the greatest help where most needed.

In 1968, the church authorities at Hartford made a move to produce a scheme for one grouped charity for the benefit of the poor generally, to include those of Mrs. Catherine Grey, Hatton for the Poor and the E. K. M. Thornycroft Bequest. The Charities of William Hatton for the Curacy Fund and for the upkeep of the Churchyard, were considered ecclesiastical charities, and as such, would remain separate.

Accordingly, on 6th December 1972, the Charity Commissioners ordered that the scheme be established under the title of THE HARTFORD CHARITY.

The body of Trustees is made up of five members. One Ex-officio Trustee, who is to be the Vicar, Two Nominative Trustees appointed by the Parish Council and Two Co-optative Trustees, who have to be persons, who through residence, occupation or employment, or otherwise have special knowledge of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. John the Baptist, Hartford.

A WALK ROUND THE CHURCH, 1975

It is worth taking a moment or two to walk round the church. It is a sizeable building, and though it may lack some of the atmosphere of older churches, it nevertheless has a calm and tranquility which savours of peace. The nave is separated from the aisles by an arcade of piers and arches. The aisles are narrow, with long rows of little windows.

Entering by the south door, and walking up the south aisle, we come to a group of stained glass windows. The first four are a memorial to George Marshall. They contain figures representing St. Edmund, St. Oswald, St. Alban and St. George. The inscription reads:

"To the Glory of God and in loving memory of George Marshall, Captain Royal West Kent Regt., who died in West Africa, June 28th 1900. These four lights are placed here by his relatives."

A further memorial inscription has been added to the first window-sill. It reads:

"This inscription is added to the dear memory of Charles Cecil Marshall, for 40 years Vicar of St. Chad's Church, Leeds, who died at Broadclyst, Devon on May 6th 1949."

Fixed to the wall, just beyond these windows, is a brass tablet:

*To the glory of God
and in memory of
GEORGE MARSHALL
Captain, The Queen's Own
Royal West Kent Regiment
who died on 28th June 1900
Died of Wounds received in Action
near Kamassi, Aged 31 Years
he was buried at Edabia
Gold Coast Territory*

*This tablet was placed here by his
brother officers in loving
remembrance and appreciation of his
gallant and soldierly conduct*

The next two sets of windows also contain stained glass. The first pair contain figures representing St. John the Baptist and St. James, with the inscription:

"To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Thomas Horatio Marshall, Knight, C.B., of Hartford Beach, May 9th 1920."

The second pair contain figures representing St. Anne and St. Lucy, and the inscription reads:

"To the Glory of God and in very loving memory of Lucy Martina Marshall, these two lights are placed here by her children, Nov. 19th 1916."

Passing behind the organ we come to the Choir Vestry on the right, and the Vestry directly in front of us. In the Choir Vestry there is a tablet concerning the Elizabeth Thornycroft Bequest. It reads:

*"Bequest
to the Poor of the township of Hartford*

*1853 Mrs. E. K. Thornycroft
late of Sandiway, deceased,
bequeathed the sum of FIFTY POUNDS
Which is invested in the Northwich
Savings Bank, in the joint names
of the Rev. John Thornycroft and
the Incumbent of Hartford Church
to be applied by them for
the benefit of the poor of Hartford
£50 0. 0."*

In the Vestry a brass tablet records:

*"To the Honour and Glory
of God
This Vestry is erected
as a thanksgiving and to commemorate
the 50th anniversary of the Consecration
of the Church on
24th June 1875."*

The Plate consists of a Chalice, engraved "Hartford Church 1963", and a Chalice, Flagon and Platter, all engraved "The Gift of Elizabeth Marshall, The Wife of Thos. Marshall, Esq. To St John's Church, Hartford. 8th Dec. 1824."

On the south wall of the chancel will be found a brass tablet in memory of Rev. E. Eddowes:

*"To the Glory of God and
Sacred to the Memory of
EDMUND EDDOWES, M.A.
Vicar of the Parish from 1864-1908
During his Ministry this Church was built
with Tower Bells and Organ, also the Vicarage
and Schools
Born Sept. 28th 1833 Died Oct. 18th 1918 at
The Cottage Loughborough*

Erected by his Widow and three Children"

His grave will be found in the churchyard near the Lych Gate.

The striking East Window, with a sculptured reredos beneath of "The Last Supper", four of the disciples sitting with their backs to us, is flanked by stained glass windows in the north and south walls of the chancel. These windows contain figures representing St. Matthew and St. Mark on the north side, and St. Luke and St. John on the south. Their inscription reads:

"An humble offering from William Hatton".

The north transept is used as a chapel. This was refurnished in 1962, and was dedicated, together with the new organ, by the Bishop of Birkenhead on 7th April, 1963. The stained glass window in its east wall contains a representation of Peter walking on the sea, and beneath, and incorporated in the window, an inscription:

"In memory of Edward Knowles, Captain of the Northfleet, who went down with his ship whilst endeavouring to save the women and children committed to his charge. Jan. 22nd 1873."

Also on the east wall will be found a brass tablet:

*"To the Glory of God
in memory of
WILLIAM HATTON
Born January 23rd 1826
Died February 25th 1903*

*This tablet was erected by his Sister
Mary Hatton, 1904."*

The stained glass window in the north wall of the transept contains representations of St. Peter flanked by Sarah and Elizabeth. A brass tablet bears the inscription:

"This window is an humble offering to God and the Church by William and Robert Hatton, in pious memory of their Father and Mother, Peter Hatton of Belle Vue, Sandiway, who departed this life A.D. 1843 aged 58 years Bessy Hatton, his wife, who departed this life A.D. 1856 aged 70 years."

A platform has recently been added to extend the chancel into the nave. The pulpit, which has a carved oak upper part mounted on a white stone base, has an oak handrail. A small brass panel bears the inscription:

"The Handrail was given in 1956 in memory of Annie Gaunt by her children."

The Vicar's Reading Desk has an inscribed top which reads:

*"To the Glory of God
and in Memory of
Thomas Horatio Marshall
of Hartford Beach
1917."*

Recently another Reading Desk, being an exact copy, has been given in memory of Frank Nixon (1895–1973), and new hymn boards have been given in memory of Samuel Capper by his wife and sons.

The original font has been removed from the Baptistry. It has been replaced by a font from Christ Church, Winsford, which will be seen on the south side of the new platform extension of the chancel. This font was probably designed by Edmund Sharpe in about 1840. Sharpe was responsible for the rebuilding of Davenham Church. He was a notable architect and architectural historian.

Walking back down the north aisle we come to a brass tablet fixed to the wall. It reads:

*"To the Glory of God
and
In ever Loving Memory
of
HERBERT HATT-COOK
of Hartford Hall
in this Parish
who Died 23rd June 1922
and was buried at
Bathampton, Bath
Aged 68 years."*

We next come to the only stained glass window in the north aisle. Its inscription reads:

"In loving memory of Egerton Leigh Wright born July 15th 1829 died Novr. 27th 1878."

On the next window-sill stands a glazed, oak cabinet containing a record of the names of those of the Parish who served in the war.

Near the north entrance there is fixed to the wall a Roll of Honour of the men of the Parish who answered the call of King and Country in the Great War 1914–18. Facing us, in the west wall, is a stained glass window containing figures representing St. Barnabas and St. Lucy. If we go out through the north door for a moment, and walk round to the base of the north west corner of the tower, the letters GH will be seen carved on a stone quite near to the ground. They stand for George Hodkinson, who was Sexton for many years. Returning to the church, we proceed to the Baptistry.

The Baptistry is entered through an oak screen. A brass tablet tells us that it was placed in the church:

*"To the Glory of God and in Memory of
GEORGE HATT-COOK,
of Hartford Hall, in this Parish.
This screen was erected by
the Parishioners A.D. 1901."*

The screen was originally placed under the Chancel Arch, and the Chancellor's permission had to be sought before it could be moved to its present position.

Facing us is the West Window, containing three figures, the centre one representing Solomon. A brass tablet beneath reads:

*"To the Glory of God and in memory of
JOHN BOLTON LITTLEDALE
This Window is erected by his many friends A.D. 1809."*

Two marble tablets are placed on the north wall. One reads:

*"Sacred
to the memory of
Thomas
Eldest son of Thomas Marshall Esqr.
of Hartford Beach
Born November 18th 1802
Died March 20th 1838."*

The second is to the memory of the man who did so much to build the first church. It reads:

*"Sacred
to the Memory
of Thomas Marshall Esquire
of Hartford Beach
who died 21st June 1831 aged 65*

*He is buried
within the precincts of these holy walls
to the blessed erection of which
it was his high privilege first to lead the way
His affectionate Widow
and grateful children
mourn him, but in joyful hope*

*In the same vault are interred
the mortal remains of Elizabeth Marshall
Widow of the above Thomas Marshall, Esquire
She died April 22nd 1841 aged 76."*

On the west wall will be found a brass tablet with the inscription:

*"To the glory of God and in Commemoration
of the 60th year of the reign of
Victoria Our Beloved Queen
The Peal of 6 Bells was added to
this Church by the Parishioners*

June 20th 1897."

There is a sculpture of a small child sleeping peacefully, her head resting on her arm, a bunch of lilies in her hand, on the sill of the south window. The inscription reads:

*"In memoriam
Lillian Mary
beloved daughter of Capt. John Wm.
and Mary Jane Pearson of Hartford
who died Nov 16th 1879
aged 2 years and 10 months."*

On the wall is a certificate which states:

*"The Tower of the Church is in
Union with the Chester Diocesan
Guild of Church Bellringers."*

Returning to our starting point we pass, on the west wall at the end of the south aisle, a stained glass window containing figures representing St. Luke and St. Dorras.

Recently the floor of the church has been covered with carpet tiles and new light fittings installed.