

# Christ Church Cockermouth

## An Historical Summary

### Setting the Scene

In 1801 the population of Cockermouth was around 2865 largely in and around Market Place, Main Street, and then grew to 4,500 in 1831, 5775 in 1851 and 5355 in 1901. The railway network developed in West Cumbria and arrived in Cockermouth in 1845. The first station was at Low Road site up to 1870 - then a station was built where the Mountain Rescue Building is in Station Road.

### Industries

From the 1700's to early 1900's, more than 20 mills existed based on the abundance of water power from Rivers Derwent and Cocker, Tom Rudd Beck and Bitter Beck. However, most of the mills closed by 1900.

### Buildings that preceded Christ Church on the Site

A weaving shop and dwelling are shown on an 1839 map at the junction of Back Lane [now South Street] and Gallowbarrow Went.

### The Parish – History

The mother Church of the Parish was at Brigham and in 14<sup>th</sup> century extended from River Marron to Bassenthwaite Lake and from Derwent to Honister. Chapels of Ease were built at Cockermouth, Buttermere, Embleton, Lorton, Mosser, Setmurthy, Wythop.

The Cockermouth Chapel had been called St. Marys. When Bradshaw [Michael Portillo Railway series], arrived in Cockermouth in 1863, he records the name of the Church as St. Mary's, not All Saints as it is today.

David Thomson, [previous Rector at Cockermouth], also refers to this dedication in his 'Brief History of All Saints Church'.

### Christ Church History

In 1830's, a second Anglican Chapel/Church was suggested for the town [note population growth]. Designed by Bruce of Whitehaven, Foundation Stone laid by Percy Wyndham in 1863, consecrated and opened by Samuel Waldegrave, Bishop of Carlisle in 1865.

Revd. H.B.L. Puxley, MA, [assistant curate of Cockermouth] had been recognised as the person who had played the leading role in raising the required funds for the Christ Church project and had been expected to be the first Vicar.

Appointment went to William Williams (see picture right). Rev. Puxley was appointed to All Saints later in 1865.



Cost of Church £4,000, seating for 800, to serve a parish carved out of Brigham [Cockermouth west of the Cocker] and Bridekirk [the Gote area].

Typical 19<sup>th</sup> century features – plain tower with large pinnacles, long nave windows and three galleries on iron columns. There were changes in 1873 and 1933 [new doorway]. In 1960, a side chapel was built as a memorial to those who died in World Wars. There are a number of memorials in the Church, particularly to individuals who had made a considerable impact in the town [Robinson Mitchell in 1888, Harrison Mitchell in 1909, Humphrey Senhouse in 1914, Dr. Henry Dodgson in 1882.

Church Rooms erected in 1880 for £1,000, the large hall seating 200.

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### Team Ministry

The 2 parishes of Christ Church and All Saints were joined in a united benefice in 1939. In 1977, a further development linked All Saint's, Christ Church, St. Cuthbert's at Embleton and St. Margaret's at Wythop with 1 team ministry.

In 2004, St. Bridget's Church joined the team and in 2014, a further development took place whereby Christ Church, Great Broughton joined us, and St. Cuthbert's at Embleton and St. Margaret's at Wythop joined the Binsey Team.

In 2015 under the guidance of Godfrey Butland Christ Church became part of the Grasmoor Mission Community.

### Surprise Visitor in our 151st Year

On Sunday 21st February 2016, Maree Glasson, attended the Communion Service at 10.45 at Christ Church. She is the Great, Great, Great Granddaughter of Rev W Williams – our first vicar from 1865 to 1879. She was on holiday from Victoria in Australia. Our warmest greeting to her and her relatives in Australia.

An image of Rev. William Williams was subsequently received from Maree and is added to this document.

### Herbert Lavallin Puxley

In July 2021, Joan Ingrams of All Saints Church responded to an appeal by me on Facebook for information on Herbert Puxley. Joan had a detailed summary of his life and ministry and an image of him which is now added to this document.

- Born 1st July 1836 to John Lavallin Puxley and Fanny Rose Maria (maiden name not yet

discovered)

- Baptised 22nd July 1836 at Clifton St. Andrew, Bristol.
- BA aged 17. MA aged 27. Attended Brazenose College Oxford where he also contributed to its magazine.
- The 1841 census shows him and two brothers, Henry, and Edward in the care of three servants in Clifton. Henry, the eldest, was born in Ireland.
- They are described as being of independent means.
- Aged 14 in 1851 he is at Sandhurst in the Gettermen Cadets.
- In 1861 he is a curate at Cockermouth, aged 24, and staying with the Mashiter family in Whitehaven on the night of the census.
- He married Catherine Benson, of Cockermouth, aged 19, 11th May 1869 in London, though I have also found a record of the marriage in Paris on 8th May 1869.
- In 1871, according to The Census, they have a daughter, Sybil aged one year, and a month old son, Robert. They later had a daughter, Kate, one called Louisa and another son, Harry. And a daughter, Zoe Hylida.
- Herbert was by this time, Vicar of All Saints. The family lived at the Parsonage with 2 nurses and 2 servants.
- In 1876 on 11th October he was initiated into the Freemasons at Chicheby Lodge, Thrapston.
- In 1877 he is with his brother, Edward, in Great Catsworth, St, Neots, Cambridgeshire.
- In 1879 he became Rector of Catton with Stamford Bridge, Yorkshire, having left Cockermouth behind.
- By 1881 he is in his new parish of All Saints in Low Catton, Pocklington, Yorkshire. - - - They are still there is 1891.
- He died in 1908 aged 71 in Carmarthen, having been high sheriff there in 1864.



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### Christ Church Some Steps along the way

**1830's** A second Anglican Church is suggested

**1831** Map shows Weaving Shop and dwelling on map of Sullart Street/Went

**1843** New Workhouse built nearby

**1863** 29th July, Foundation Stone of Christ Church laid by Percy Wyndham

**1865** 13th June, Samuel Waldegrave, Bishop of Carlisle consecrated & opened Christ Church

**1865** Plaque notes the efforts/exertions of Rev. H. Puxley to the new church

**1865** Rev W. Williams appointed vicar – Rev Puxley later appointed Vicar of All Saints.

**1865** Cockermouth /Keswick/ Penrith Railway opened for passenger traffic

**1875** Mayo Statue unveiled

**1877** Inmates of workhouse enjoyed Christmas lunch. Church provided gifts of food to inmates

**1878** Cockermouth & Workington Water Act – water supplies from Crummock Water commence

**1880** Church Rooms erected

**1881** June, flower service held – flowers then donated to sick wards of workhouse + infirmaries

**1881** Electric street lights installed

**1884** Fairfield School erected

**1887** June, Queen Victoria's Jubilee thanksgiving service

**1888** April, fruit & flowers sent to infirmaries, Union Workhouse

**1892** Allerdale Touring Club trip to Switzerland [President, Vicar, Revd. Knowles]

**1894** Sunday School Trip to Seascale – 2 special trains [1,000+ passengers]

**1894** Campaign led by Miss Walker regarding degrading treatment of women at local hirings

**1894** 160lbs of beef donated and distributed to deserving families

**1894** Soup kitchen opened for the poor - 70-80 families benefited

**1895** Supper provided by ladies committee/wardsmen /sidesmen for unemployed men

**1895** District Nurse Nathan worked with the church to provide help to the sick poor of the town

**1895** Harris Park presented to the town

**1895** August choir Outing to Wasdale Head

**1895** Gift of apples & grapes sent to inmates of the workhouse

**1906** Parish Room Memorial Cloth signing took place [note-signed]

**1911** Boys Brigade photographed at camp

**1914** Corporal Hetherington, former Bible Class Member, posted to the front line in 1914– WW1

**1914** Cpl. Hetherington writes to his mates and recorded 30 Cockermouth lads at the Front

**1915** West Cumberland Times record Cpl Hetherington's communications.

**1918** It was recorded that J Tracey, G Donnelly, J Bigrigg, G W Bell & H Martin lost their lives.

**1930's** Garden fetes at Hames Hall. Dancing on lawn to Billy Bowman's band

**1932** July, Boys Brigade camped at Allonby – marched there via Maryport

**1933** New doorway added

**1939** United Beniface of Christ Church & All Saint's established

**1960** Small Side Chapel added as a memorial to those killed in the World Wars

**1965** Centenary Celebrations – service on 13th June, birthday party also held

**1967** Pevsner 'An extraordinary design, still with features of the early 19th century.....'

**1977** Cockermouth Team Ministry established with St. Cuthberts & St. Margaret's

**2009** Cockermouth Floods – one of the major recovery bases

**2014** St. Bridget's at Bridekirk join the Team

**2014** Christ Church, Great Broughton join the Team

**2014** St. Cuthberts & St. Margaret's join Binsey Team.

References – J Bernard Bradbury ['History

# Christ Church Cokermonth

## An Historical Summary

of Cokermonth'], Aline Elliott [Christ Church – A brief History], David Thomson [History of All Saint's Church] and George Bradshaw's Railway Handbook of 1863] Thanks also to Gloria Edwards of Cokermonth Heritage Group for contributions received.

### Incumbents of Christ Church

1865 W. Williams  
1879 J. Green  
1885 J. Ewbank  
1888 T. Knowles  
1894 H.J Palmer  
1899 N.E. Dixon  
1911 A.V. Hodges  
1928 J.W. Hall  
1931 J.W. Hopkinson

### Incumbents of United Benefice of All Saints & Christ Church

1939 R.W. Crook  
1957 P.C. Eliot  
1962 W.E.A Pugh  
1971 V.D. Clarke  
1974 J.L.R. Crawley

### Cokermonth Area Team Ministry

#### Team Rector

1977 J.L.R. Crawley  
1986 S.H. Willcox  
1994 D. Thomson  
2003 W.E. Sanders  
2015 G. Butland  
2020 J. Charman

#### Team Vicar

1977 C.S. Fuller  
1988 N.D. Perkinson  
1992 I.M. Rumsey  
2004 C. Goddard  
2011 A. Thompson

#### Team Curates

2002 B. Phillips

2005 A. Rockey  
2009 P. Pye  
2016 J. Griffiths

### NSM

2001 M. Goddard

### NSM House for Duty

2004 I. Halsall

### Versions

Joan Ingrams & Stan Leigh  
February 2016  
Updated July 2021



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### Some historic Photos

