

St Johns Burnley Road

On the 16th August 1788 Dr Cleavey, Bishop of Chester consecrated St Johns church. The steeple was built ten years later. The national school was built in 1829 paid for by subscription. The Rev Joseph Ogden was the first incumbent, he came from Sowerby Bridge returning there after several years at Bacup. The next resident Reverend in 1796 was from Cumberland, he was the Rev William Porter.

At this time the Burial fees were, Seven years of age and upwards 4s 10d each. 1s 8d out of this was paid to Newchurch, the Rev of St John received 1s 6d, his clerk 2d and the sexton 1s 6d. Under seven years of age the fee was 2s each. The Baptismal fee was 10d each. The first burial to be recorded in the Parish register is that of Susan Wife of Nicholas Slater Backup aged 60 years October 12 1788. The second entry is that of Mr Nicholas Slater himself who died six days after his wife. The first Baptism entry in the Baptism records is that of John son of Lawrence Fielding of Spotland Carrier and is dated 29th October 1788.

No marriages were performed at St Johns until 1837. The first Marriage entered there is of James Butterworth Bachelor of Full age Calico Printer Upper Brandwood in the Parish of Rochdale to Elizabeth Ashworth Spinster of Full age of Bacup. Mr Porter died on May 4th 1839, however a year before his death he employed a curate by the name of the Rev Robert K Cooke. In June 139 The Rev B Allen came to Bacup and stayed for just under ten years. Succeeded by the Rev Benjamin Tweedle who arrived in Bacup in 1850. Rev Tweedle left Bacup for Lytham for health reasons and died there in 1858. He was succeeded by the Rev J.F. Brindle, 7000 internments had taken place in the St Johns churchyard up to the time of its closure in 1863. When the Rev Arthur Phillips arrived in Bacup in 1877 he found himself with no church because the first St Johns Church had collapsed 6 years earlier on April 19 1871. The Sunday school was used as a temporary place of worship however that also had to be repaired before it could be used. The new church was opened on 21st June 1883 by the Lord Bishop of Manchester the Rt Rev. James Fraser. The greatest service that the church ever saw was for the memorial service of Queen Victoria on the 2nd February 1901 when over fifteen hundred people assembled. By 1907 the Sunday school like the old church had now collapsed and a grand scenic bazaar was held for four days from April 17th April 20 in the Mechanics Institute to raise funds for the rebuilding of the Sunday school were a grand total of 15,000 was raised.

July of 1909 saw the death of Rev Phillips by the time the Rev Vickers English took up his place in the parish the Sunday school had been rebuilt. On the 10th December 1915 a special service was held in memory of those who had fallen in defence of their country. A service of praise and thanksgiving was held in the church on November the 17th 1918. February 16 1924 saw Colonel Bolton unveil the War Memorial built in the grounds of the parish church engraved on the four sides are the names of those from St Johns Parish who died during the Great War of 1914-1918. The Rev Vickers English made his last appearance in Church on 13th October 1929 having been poorly for some time and confined to the vicarage at Rosehill House.

Bacup Times May 16 1936.

The Rev Vickers English of 38 Higher Lane Whitefield who up to his retirement in 1929 was for nearly 20 years vicar of St Johns Church Bacup. Died early on Sunday Morning while staying with his Father-In-Law Henry Jones 157 Rochdale Road Bacup. Married twice he was in his 79th year and leaves a Widow, Son and Daughter.

Rev Eric Lindsay Forster M.A 1947-1952

Another Brummie, the ninth incumbent was inducted 27.11.47. He obtained his BA from Worcester College Oxford in 1933 and MA Wycliffe Hall Oxford in 1938. Ordained priest 1940, he served as Curate of The Church of the Saviour Bolton until 1941, then acting Curate Mottram in Longendale 1941-42, Curate Christchurch, Skipton 1942-44, and Curate of St George's Church Redditch, Worcs. 1944-47. Over 6 foot tall, he had a striking figure and a fine speaking voice. And was sometimes rather comical as he rode a small motor bike, with no helmet, and his cassock flying out behind him. He was married with 3 children.



Rev Arthur Phillips.