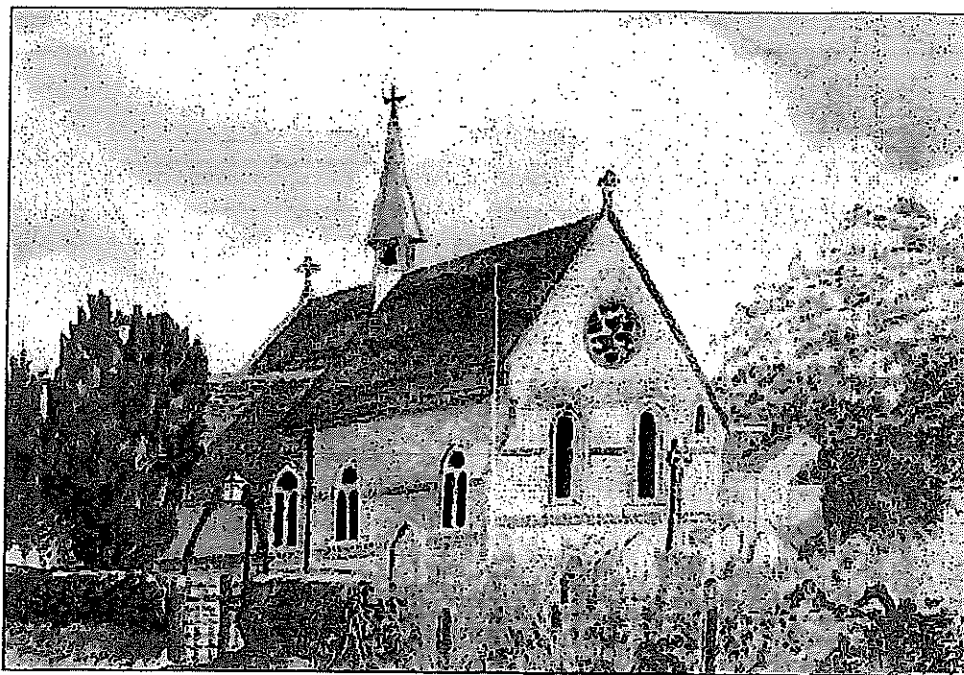


An Abridged History of Fauls Church and Parish



"Drawn and Painted by Mrs Annie Davies"

Compiled by

Roger West to Celebrate the first 150 years

In Fauls church, there is a brass plate at the base of the window adjacent to the pulpit, which tells us that George Robinson of Mickley was the first "contributor to Fauls Church".

Archdeacon John Allen had become Vicar of Prees in 1846 and a very worth while pastor he proved to be. It seems one of his main concerns early on was so few Fauls people were prepared to walk the two to four miles to attend services at Prees Church. On visiting the outpost of Mickley and airing his concerns on this subject to Mr Robinson, he was greeted with the response "What we want Vicar is a church at Fauls" (the first contribution). In that instance John Allen, with the spiritual welfare of Fauls people at heart, pursued that goal with vigour and determination.

His first approach to the powers that be, Lord Hill of Hawkstone, was met with a very quick rebuttal. "There's no need for a church at Fauls, Archdeacon". Later as Lord Hill's eldest sons 21st birthday became imminent, he tried again.

There had been meetings to discuss how best the son and heir's majority was to be celebrated. He knew vast sums of money would be raised for this purpose. At one meeting in the Red Lion, (lots of wild ideas) including the building a monument of young Rowland on top of Press hill were aired.

John Allen then wrote "two letters". The first to Squire Sandford, the second most powerful man in the area.

"If all the money raised was to be squandered on the festivities of a single day I will give two pounds, but if a more worthwhile memorial, like a new church at Fauls, I will give one hundred pounds", wrote the Archdeacon.

The second letter, to Lord Hill suggesting that a sum of money be collected for the building of a new church at Fauls - "As an enduring memorial of the esteem in which subscribers held the personal character of Lord Hill, that their wish that his heirs may be like him" (I love that!). He'd got Lord Hill over a barrel.

He then goes on to say, "If your Lordship would be so kind as to supply the site and the bricks, I will make my self responsible for collecting the money and building the church". Lord Hill duly agreed and Archdeacon Allen's first mission was accomplished through a birthday.

Then the Archdeacon with the wind in his sails, would write as many as twenty letters before his coffee, to all the friends of the Hill family who he thought would be interested in the spiritual welfare of Prees parish. Hence the money was raised in a very short time.

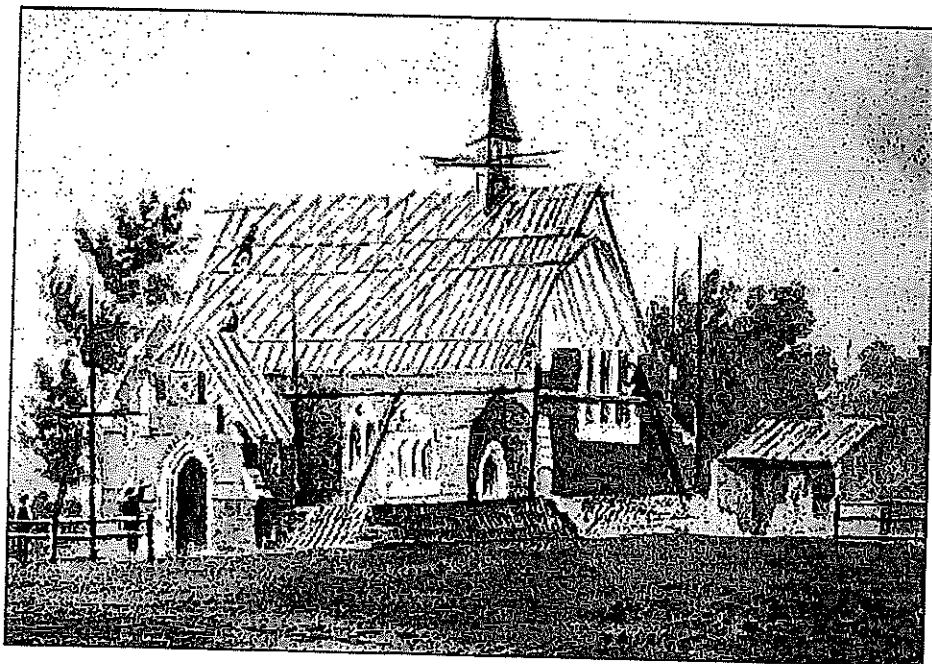
The list of contributors is fascinating. Members of Parliament, Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Bishops, Colonels, twenty eight vicars (usually five pounds) and several widows who gave sixpence each. The "Widow's mite" being just as valuable.

All in all one hundred and twenty two good souls contributed to the building of Holy Immanuel, Fauls. Oh! And George Robinson donated five pounds to his idea.

On Tuesday December 5th 1854, the Hon. Rowland Clegg Hill celebrated his twenty first, in the presence of all the local V.I.P.'s; by cutting a square hole at the North West corner of the proposed new church. The venerable Archdeacon asking for "blessings on our work today".

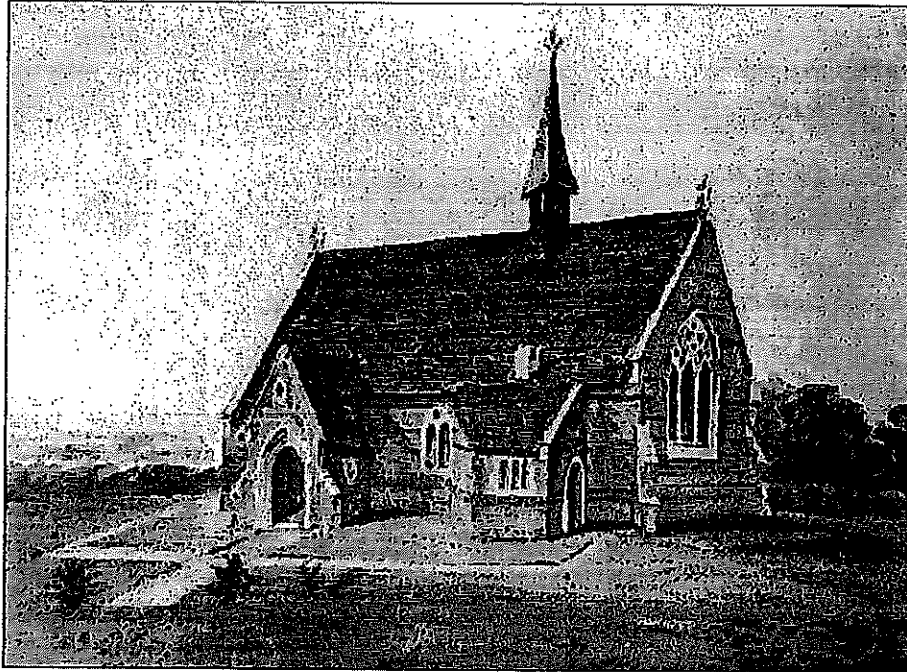
Many times I have been privileged to hear snippets of "hearsay", little gems from the past and none more so than Mr Ridgeway's of Darliston's disclosure about his grandparents. They had been summoned to the little croft where the church was to be built to harvest the root crop and generally tidy it up, for the above ceremony to take place, as the plans were not sufficiently advanced for the laying of the foundation stone.

Archdeacon Allen must have been truly amazed at the response to his appeal for subscriptions to build a church at Fauls Green. His idea of connecting it with the birthday in Lord Hill's family, plus his boundless enthusiasm, endeavour and countless begging letters, the money flowed in like a present day lottery grant. So much so, he was able, in conjunction with church architect Mr. Ferrey of Charing Cross, London, to plan a church of considerable quality and design. The following picture illustrates Fauls Church under construction.



"Fauls Church under Construction"

The construction of Holy Immanuel took about 18 months and seems to have gone smoothly, with very few problems or complaint. The contractors were Messrs. Nevett of Ironbridge and they proved to be an excellent choice. The completed church is seen below.



"A Painting of the completed Fauls Church"

Wherever the discerning eye should fall, it is well rewarded with a combination of Victorian Architecture and craftsmanship at its very best, resulting in a little gem of a building. Yes, the nameless craftsmen signed their names with the quality of their workmanship. But! we can name one man - "a local lad", whose contribution to the building of Fauls Church was considerable, George Williams. George was in charge of Lord Hill's brickyard that made the 88,250 bricks necessary.

You could almost say, George lived over the shop - in that day 'Yew Tree Villa' would have been a little black and white cottage with a thatched roof.

Well! to get to his place of work, he would just have to cross the road, through his own vegetable garden (incidentally, his great, great, grandson still owns that little croft today) across the field at the back of the Talbot Inn, where Lord Hill's brickyard was situated. Here was an excellent seam of clay that was just right for the making of good quality bricks. Fortunately it was only about half a mile from the church, which is on top of Fauls bank. Unfortunately, for the many shire horses of the tenantry, it was at the bottom of the bank. For George and his men, it must have been hard, laborious toil working with sticky clay in all weathers. I'm sure an aerial

photograph would show a well worn path under that beautiful lawn of today, to the door of Mr. Ruscoe's, Talbot Inn and refreshments (liquid).

Twenty-two members of the Estate tenantry, from all areas of the district, supplied the horse and cart transport for the 88,250 bricks from the brickyard to the building site. I think it was usually part of the Tenants Agreement, to supply a horse and cart when needed.

There is only one instance of a farmer being paid for this work. I enquired of my good friend, Mr. Richard Chidlow, "What weight would a caring waggoner ask his shire horse to pull,?" his immediate reply was "No more than ten or twelve cwts, even with a chain horse up that bank. That represents over 600 journeys, a lot of organisation. The supply and demand must have been delicately balanced. Mr. Hares from Fauls Farm, hauled the biggest quantity 8,500, Mr. Hopkin from Darliston 6,600, Mr. Worthen (Squire Sandford's brother-in-law) 6,760, Mr. Woolridge from Moreton Wood 2,250, Mr. Robinson from Mickley (his idea) chipped in with 3,000 and so on. I noticed the contractors cart went down for 250 (were the bricklayers running out?)

Also, the very good Vicar carted 550 bricks, "Did he pick a few up as he passed the brickyard each time he visited the work site? I think he did". 29,000 of the bricks made, were for decorative purposes, involved in the string courses, eaves detail and arches. The dye for the blue tracery bricks around the church cost 12 shillings (60p. in today's money).

George Williams was laid to rest in the shadow of "his bricks" in 1890, aged 82 years - What a memorial.

Archdeacon Allen certainly imposed his 'waves of enthusiasm for a church at Fauls Green on the Second Viscount Hill. So much so, having given the site and the bricks (which were valued at over a £100), Lord Hill now decided to build a Vicarage at his own expense, after grants of £200. A Vicarage that later, Archdeacon Allen described in a letter to Bishop Lonsdale was of such quality, "It will still be there in 500 years time". Lord Hill used his own Estate workers for this little 'masterpiece'. Mr. Denham, who was the architect, in a letter described them as some of the best tradesmen he'd ever had the pleasure of working with; it was indeed an embarrassment even to find a tiny problem.



"Fauls Parsonage under Construction"



"Fauls Parsonage Today - now a Private Residence"

The contractors, Messrs. Nevett of Ironbridge, estimate for the building of Fauls Church was £600, exclusive of bricks. But! it is a fact of life; all jobs seemingly accumulate additions to the contract. There were 13 items to add to the final bill, extra depth of footings, extra door in vestry with Grinshill stone dressing, inlaid Minton tiles in the communion area and so on, resulting in a total of £643 6s. 6d.

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To finally get the Church up and running, the bell ringing for the consecration on May 20th, 1856, took another £115 4s.4d. on 27 various outlays. The architect, Mr. Ferrey, charged £25 for his excellent services, which included travelling from London. There was conveyance of land, compensation for damage to land and fences, levelling the site, all the necessary furniture, Oh! and two foot scrapers leaded and set in Grinshill stone, which cost 8s. 6d.. The item I liked best was 'beer for luncheon'; the workmen must have made a very good job of celebrating the completion of Fauls Church.

Of course lots of items were given by people from far and wide -the whole project seemed to abound with goodwill. Mrs. Whitfield from Prees gave the inkstand in the vestry. Mr. Denison who gave the single bell at Fauls came from London. Mr. Denison, who later became Lord Grimthorpe, was a friend of the Archdeacon and wanted to contribute to the Church.

He also designed the bell which was made by Warner Brothers of Cripplegate, London, who were famous for making the Great Bell of Westminster. The cost of the bell was £13.12s.0d. which he defrayed.

The stained glass in the East window, depicting the 'Crucifixion' was donated by the first incumbent, the Rev. Henry Meynell, who also gave the communion vessels. He had good family support, his mother gave the embroidered communion cloths and his sister gave the alms dish.

The total bill for completion of Fauls Church was £748.10s.10d., this represented a shortfall of only £46.10s.0d. but as usual, this was no problem and was covered by the collection at the consecration service on May 20th, 1856. These accounts were audited in the presence of the Vicar and the Prees Church Wardens, Mr. Hales of Sandford and Mr. Dutton of Fernyleas.

The Archdeacons desire was to have a 'Chapel of Ease, at Fauls, with a Curate, who would also look after Prees Parish for him during his absences. For this he was happy to contribute £50 to the Curate's annual income of £80, the office work being done at Prees. But with Lord Hill's liberality in building that splendid Vicarage (possibly he thought one day a member of his own family would be Vicar there) it was decided that Fauls would have its own Vicar and become a Parish in its own right, the patronage with the Vicars of Prees. The arrangement with Archdeacon Allen and Rev. Henry Meynell was excellent and Fauls Parish went from strength to strength.

The first church wardens at Fauls were Mr. Adams of Hoar Stone and Mr. Hares of Fauls Farm. It was their wish that Fauls should be a separate parish - and expressed this at a vestry meeting at Prees. The decision was not taken easily and with considerable regret after all, many generations of Faul's people had worshipped there, and beneath the shadow of the walls, many lay sleeping. Also at this time, Prees Church was in a bad state of repair, for which they considered part of the

blame was there's. Faults, forming their own Parish, involving the townships of Mickley, Darliston, Sandford and Lower Heath, comprising of a hundred households and over 500 people – took income away from Prees.

To help allay this concern, a considerable sum of money was raised by the people of Faults. It was handed over to Archdeacon Allen at a vestry meeting at Faults, with the wish that it be spent on the fabric of Prees church. At the same meeting Squire Sandford expressed "respect and gratitude that they had ever felt for him as their vicar", and it was with sadness, that Faults separated from him and the old Parish church. The Archdeacon said "You have made me very happy with this contribution, for now, I long to see the restoration of Prees church". This was achieved in 1863-4 and the Faults contribution was used to refurbish the west window, as a parting gift from the people of Faults. The Archdeacon also emphasized how indebted he was to the generosity of Lord Hill for the existence of a church at Faults, which will be an advantage to the people in every way.

Lord Hill's monetary input into Faults parish – the church, land and bricks, and that magnificent vicarage, was nearly £4,000, probably today, the equivalent of several hundred thousand pounds! This was a fantastic gesture considering his earlier reluctance. Possibly his own personal chaplain had a bearing on his early thinking. Every Sunday, the Rev. Bolland would come down from Hawkstone, through the North Lodge, in his horse and carriage to take a service at Lower Heath School. These services were well attended but mostly by the younger element of the parish, and continued for a while after the church was opened.

Lord Hill's "reluctance", was very understandable at this time, as he was involved in a massive amount of building throughout the Hawkstone Estates. He had inherited the estates from his grandfather, Sir John Hill in 1824. Sir John had spent £100,000 on politics, as well as producing in the teens of children – thus the fabric of the estate had suffered. Hence, the need to modernise all the farms, their main basis of income. The logic was all in place, a tenant must have good barns and well drained land to make a living and pay a fair rent.

To mention a few locally – Mr Hopkins of the Vale and Mr. Hares of Faults Farm would have been very proud of their new buildings. The 'Rolls-Royce' buildings of their day, two storeys with cow tying, feeding passages and fodder storage over. These buildings, possibly after one and a half centuries, have out lived their agricultural usefulness. But possibly, 'as in others', they may become barn conversions. Whatever it is, it will help to perpetuate the memory of a good, caring landlord and in his endeavour to keep every one happy, and he never stopped building!

So Faults church and its parish came out of a birthday, I like to believe, with an Archdeacon with vision before his time and a kindly Viscount, it would have happened anyway.

The transition of Fauls into a parish in its own right seemed to fall nicely into place. Bordered by several other parishes, all it needed was a line drawing between Prees and Fauls. Possibly this boundary line was established on the gathering area of the 14 principal farms, based on the old tithe barn, which also would have been the focal point and situated in the village of Darlaston. Of course, by now, the tithe barn had recently ceased to be used for its original purpose but continued to be used for agriculture. Sadly about 50 years ago, the preservation orders of today, were not in place soon enough to save it. The thatched roof had been replaced by corrugated sheeting, which was suffering storm damage and became dangerous. It was demolished without the knowledge, "that it was the old tithe barn" and immediately regretted.

It stood in the grounds of The Grange (shown below), at Darlaston, with its gable against the road. It is a certain fact, had it survived, it would have had the most caring owners and been restored to its former glory with its thatched roof.



"The Grange at Darlaston"

Incidentally, the tithe barn at Prees, of similar construction, sat on huge blocks of sandstone, with oak framing and board cladding was demolished some time after the mid 19th century. The sandstone blocks were used in the retaining wall around the churchyard and around the school play area. It was situated in what is now part of the churchyard.

The boundaries established, the Rev. Henry Meynell, and then did a master plan of the district of Fauls. It was a gem of local history; he plied us with so much fascinating information. At this time the plan shows us, there were 99 dwellings, all numbered, with names of family and how many occupants. There were 114 people

in Sandford, 179 in Darlaston, 135 in Fauls, 27 in Mickley, 20 in Northwood and 32 in Lower Heath — 507 in all.

Number one was Squire Sandford of Sandford Hall and 99 was the Parsonage House at Fauls. Of all those 99 families, my eye rests on, only four have descendants in the parish today. It is a certain fact that there is only one family, numbered 59 on the original plan in 1856, still living at 59 today — the Benbow family. Three William Benbows span this time and the first William rang the bell at the consecration service of Fauls Church, when he was 16 on the 20th May, 1856. The other long serving families of Fauls Parish are the Williams and Wilkinsons of Darlaston and the Ridgways of the Broadhay.

When I look down the 99 names and numbers, other interesting snippets ring bells. For instance, John Maddocks who lived at number 9, which is adjacent to Moreton Wood, was the ancestor of Gough Whitlam, former Prime Minister of Australia. His cousin, a lady came in search of their roots about 3 years ago. She told me John's sixth son Edward, had emigrated to Australia in 1888.

Also that John had been involved in the building of Fauls Church but did not know in what capacity. I was able to tell her that John Maddocks had carted 4,500 bricks from yard to Church site.

Mr Oakley lived at number 38 on the plan, at 'Moat Farm'. He was one of Lord Hill's game keepers. I'm sure he would have been very proud of William his grandson, who became a Member of Parliament for the Wrekin. Rev. Harold Burton told the assembled children of Lower Heath School, "We should all be grateful to Mr. Oakley for this achievement — it brings honour to our school".

Mind you they were big friends and went shooting together. It follows that Mr. Oakley, who was a gamekeeper, would have been big friends with John Watkins at number 25, victualler of The White Lion Inn at Darlaston. He was very much into hunting and very much supported coursing events. It left me feeling a bit sorry for the local hares and otters down the Bailey Brook at Sandford. The White Lion Inn was just over the wall from the tithe barn, and nicely situated for business.

Richard Benbow did live there, where a portrait of Admiral Benbow gazed down on the living room scene, denoting the family connection.

The Reverend Meynell's map of the district chapelry of Fauls Parish, tells us there were 16 dwellings in Darlaston, numbered 18 to 34. Darlaston was the gateway to Fauls Green, literally, as a tollgate or turnpike was situated there. In the mid 19th century Susan Harvey lived at No. 18 and was the collector of tolls. She had recently taken over this job from Mr. Machon, the blacksmith, who lived opposite her at No. 19. At No. 22 lived Mr. Powell, a wheelwright and shopkeeper, the "Doug Davies" of that day!

William Dickin at No. 34 was a farmer and butcher and descendants of his family eventually emigrated to South Africa. Another farmer, Joseph Dicken of No. 32, was also the dispenser of medicine – diversification in farming is not new! Mr. Adams was the first tenant of a brand new farm comprising house and buildings at No. 33 in the centre of the village. Built by the courtesy of the 2nd Viscount Hill, with bricks supplied by George Williams; the manager of Fauls brickyard.

Darlaston seems to have been quite a busy little village and it was to become much busier with all the building work taking place at Fauls Green Church and Vicarage. This must have disturbed Susan's daily routine of tending her stock and growing vegetables, much more frequently as she rushed to collect the tolls.

At least ten shire horse wagon teams would have gone backwards and forwards through the tollgate, hauling loads of bricks from the brickyard and transporting them to site. The owners of three of those teams were Dicken – (goodness five families of them, I expect they were all related). From Platt Farm, Prees and Prees Wood. Others were Mr. Wilkinson from Bank Farm, Mr. Powell from Manor House Lane and Mr. Houlding of Cruckmoor. Between them they hauled nearly 40,000 bricks! In addition to the wagons, there would have been much more related traffic.

I suppose that the activity generated here, would have been similar to the building of an 18th century canal or 19th century railway and with the toll road coming through a small country village, it would have generated much excitement.

I loved to visit the late William Sutton and listen to him reminisce. He told stories of all this activity, as though through his grandfather's eyes. Even when his grandfather was over 80, he told William stories and talked enthusiastically of having watched the building at Fauls take shape. How inconvenient it was for him to go to school at Lower Heath, but once school was complete and on a Saturday morning, he would make a beeline to Fauls and stand with a gathering of people, some of whom had walked miles to watch the progress. William's Uncle and Auntie were the keepers of the Talbot Inn at Fauls.

On either side of William's fireplace, hung two beautiful pieces of porcelain with verses that his grandfather had brought back from the Isle of Man in the late 19th century. These pieces were inscribed as follows and the sentiment would stand anyone in good stead today:-

*"Goe not halfway to meete a coming sorrow,
Butte thankful bee, for blessings of today,
And pray, that thou mayest blessed be tomorrowe,
So shalt thou go with joy upon they way.*

*Seek out the good in every man,
And speak of him the best ye can,
Then will all men speak well of ye,
And say how kind of man ye bee."*

I suppose, more or less out of the blue, the little village of Fauls Green was to witness a most memorable event, with the realization of Archdeacon Allen's perseverance in building a church at Fauls. The consecration of Fauls Church by Bishop Lonsdale of Lichfield, took place on the 20th of May 1856. I doubt whether many of the people of Fauls, or the parish, would have darkened the church doors to have been part of this event - such was the influx of people, some being (V.I.P.'s) who had travelled from far and wide.

At this time there were 135 good souls residing at Fauls Green, according to the Rev. H. Meynell's map, living at 24 dwellings numbered 35 to 59. They were mostly employed in farming, with some having a second string to their bow. Mr. Hatton was one of these; he lived at No. 36, which was to be named 'Church Farm'. He was also a collector of revenue taxes. What a day for him and his family, this is where the festivities took place after the consecration service. Mr. Oakley, one of Lord Hills's Gamekeepers lived at No. 38, 'Moat Farm', now having been restored to its former glory. Next door at No. 39 was the local pub, the 'Talbot Inn', run by Mr Ruscoe, farmer and victualler. George Williams, brick and tile maker at No. 40. At No. 42 was a Sara Jones, who must have been a very enterprising lady, she had started a small infants school - I suppose this probably meant a nursery

The 20th of May 1856 was a Tuesday; the consecration service was at 3 p.m. the weather was kind, providing a most delightful day for the large gathering of people assembled for this occasion. The Church must have been a very pleasing spectacle, for the many visitors, with its decorative banded red and blue Staffordshire roofing tiles. Some of the visitors were well travelled, coming from Derbyshire, Staffordshire and all quarters of Shropshire. 36 of them were Vicars, suitably robed for this auspicious occasion. I bet the parishioners provided a considerable gallery to view the dozens of horse drawn vehicles, coaches, carriages, landau etc. discharging their occupants. Notably of which, were Viscount and Viscountess Hill, the Hon. Rowland Clegg Hill (whose majority, was used by Archdeacon Allen, as an excuse to build the Church) and other members of the family, Squire Sandford and his family and of course Bishop Lonsdale of Lichfield. Incidentally, the Bishop and Archdeacon Allen were great friends - having been at Cambridge together, so it must have been a very important get-together for them both.

The Bishop is on record as saying when the living became vacant at Prees, he wanted the best man possible for the job- the man was Archdeacon Allen and he was proved right.

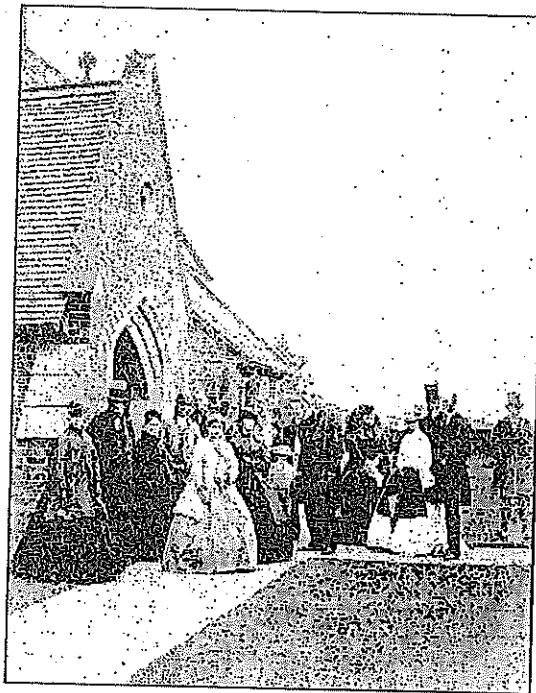
When he left Prees, after being Vicar for 40 years, there was much sadness and many tears. Fauls Church must have been a wonderful satisfaction to him and what a memorial.

The Bishop and his officials met the clergy at the church door, and then walked in procession to the communion table, repeating the 24th Psalm. The sentence of

consecration was read by J. Mott, Esq. Registrar of the Diocese and signed by the Bishop. The usual service then followed, Rev. H. Meynell, first incumbent, Vicars of Whixall, Calverhall, Hodnet and Prees taking part. But! what I liked best, the choir of Viscountess Hill's School (Lower Heath) under the direction of the Master, Mr. Goffin, chanted the 'Verite Te Deum' and Jubilate, then sang the 84th and 'Old Hundredth' Psalms – near raising the roof.

The Rev. John Hill, second son of the 2nd Viscount, preached an excellent sermon on "The lord has made us joyful". At the end, he made an appeal for a generous collection to complete payment of the church – it was £45. 10s. and did just that. So Fauls was finally on the map, even mentioned in the London Gazette. Yes! It must have been a very long day of travel for horse and people – it made me think.

*'The curfew tolls the knell of passing day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The Ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me'.*



"This photograph of a group outside Fauls Church was taken in 1865. It was framed and presented to Mr Oakley, Archdeacon Allen in the centre and the Rev. H. Meynell and his wife are on the right."

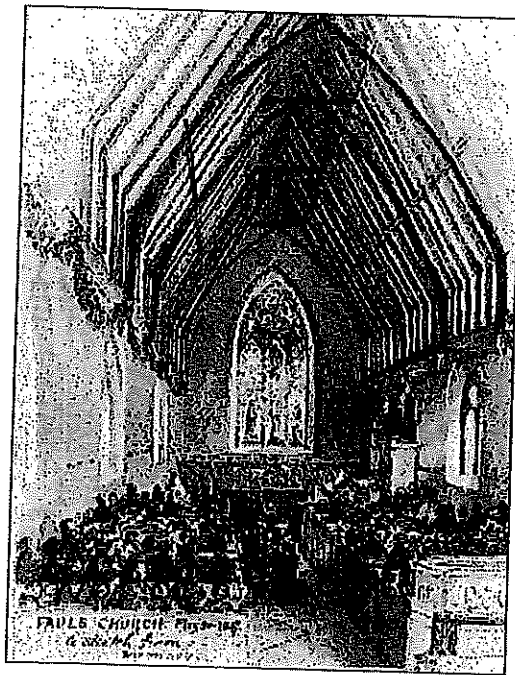
May 20th 1856, being a very memorable day in the formation of a new parish at Fauls Green – the 'consecration of the church'. The day when the church was packed with V.I.P.'s and the powers that be, from far and wide, to celebrate this occasion. But! I think the service on the following Sunday at 3 o'clock, 25th of May

would have been far more memorable for the parish and the locals. It was their turn to participate for the first time – goodness, and to some degree. For this afternoon service, the church was unable to hold the congregation; this was frequently the case during the first three months.

It appears, the Venerable Archdeacon Allen, having had considerable difficulty in persuading Fauls people to attend services at Prees, but now we had got our own little church, he couldn't keep us away – over two hundred were turning up for these services. This created problems; the church was designed to accommodate one hundred and twenty five adults and forty two children. The local carpenter was pressed into service, to make ten little oak benches, which butted up to the pews on the north side, providing seating for twenty more people – one of these benches still exists.

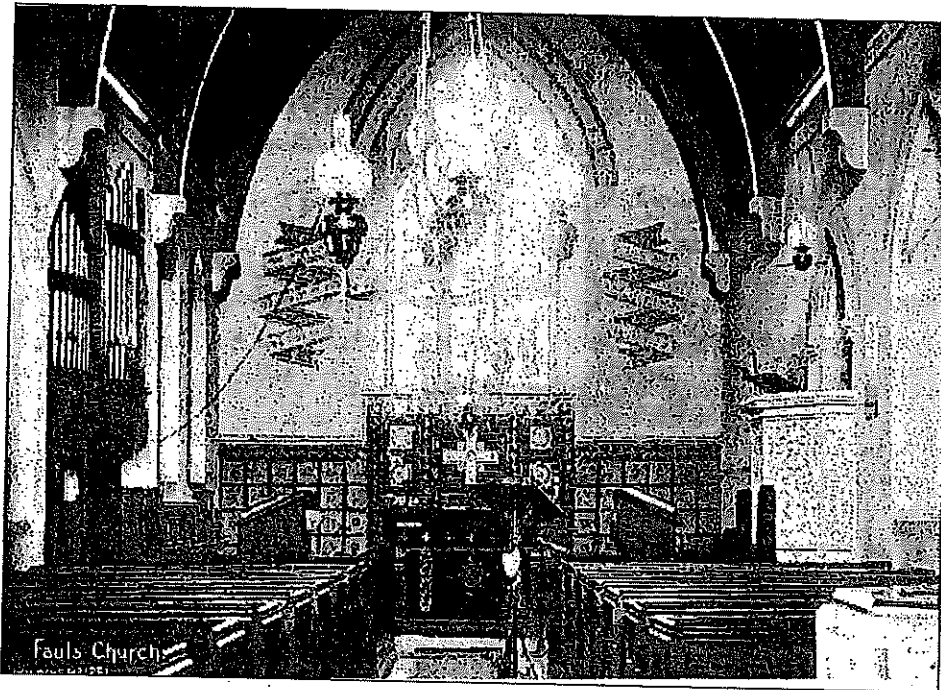
Yes! The people of Fauls parish took to their beautiful little church and the Vicar Henry Meynell, like Aylesbury's to a pond. But! It was not all 'sweetness and light' quite. There were bound to be teething problems with this quantity of people congregating, possibly to do with that age.

There seems to have been two areas of concern. The first was to accommodate the wealthier inhabitants, without giving up too much space. It was where they sat and who they sat with, that was the problem – who knows, perhaps we didn't bathe as much in that day! Then there appears to have been some agro between Lord Hill and Squire Sandford's tenantry. It was at last decided, that the first six pews on the north side, should be for Lord Hill's tenants and the four front pews on the south side, for Squire Sandford and his tenants. Each seat was divided between two houses, by this arrangement two sittings only could be given to each Farmhouse.



"F Meynell Sketch of the Interior of Fauls Church"

The gallery was made free 'for men only'. Women were not allowed beyond the lectern, this was the domain of singing men and boys, the Church wardens and the Parsonage seat. All these arrangements improved things somewhat, but not entirely.



"A Photograph showing the old oil lamps"

With the approach of winter and its temperatures, for some, sitting in a cold church was not such a good idea and the congregations became more manageable. The big concern became, some form of central heating or warming apparatus. The expense of this was readily subscribed and W. H. Smiths of Whitchurch carried out this work, which entailed digging a vault drainage and two cast iron pipes all around the church. This was a huge success and was completed ready for the Christmas service of 1856.

The total cost was fifty one pounds, nine shillings, six and a half pence. This apparatus lasted for over a hundred years – what an investment!

When the Rev. Henry Meynell arrived to be the first incumbent of Fauls Church, Mr. Hares of Fauls Farm, a tenant of Lord Hill, commented, "Goodness they have put but a lad in charge of us". This comment earned him some displeasure from the boss, Archdeacon Allen.

Mr. Hares had hauled the biggest quantity of bricks in the building of Fauls Church, eight thousand, five hundred –well; he did live on the door step. He was soon to learn, the Vicar was more than equal to the job.

Henry had been educated at Cambridge; it must have been a very testing time for him to negotiate the first twelve months, with all the many teething problems, with such a large congregation. He was well liked, the nice touch was, and he must have educated Mr. Hares in the process, because he chose him as his Warden after the first twelve months.

May 20th 1857, being the first anniversary of the consecration of Fauls Church, was a day the first incumbent was 'determined to celebrate' in fine style. The first year "had gone well", on the tide of enthusiasm generated by the parishioners. The Rev. Henry Meynell, who came as a boy, as hinted at by Mr. Hares, won the plaudits of the man who had appointed him, Archdeacon Allen, as good a priest as one could find anywhere in the land.

Henry had celebrated Divine Service 68 times; administered Holy Communion 11 times; 6 baptisms; 2 burials; 3 marriages by licence 10 shillings each and 2 by banns at 6 shillings each. The bell ringer received £1 6s. 0d. by vote of the vestry.

The Rev. Henry Meynell was a Derbyshire man. He created a trend that has generally existed to this day, between the dozen or so incumbents Fauls have had - 'a very good relationship between Vicar and parishioners'. He certainly established his personality, generosity and good will on the new parish for ever. He helped design, and paid for, the stained glass East window - a beautiful focal point in Fauls Church, depicting the crucifixion. He gave the first 150 Ancient and Modern Hymn Books and numerous other necessities.

He also volunteered to help Lord Hill by paying for the building of the coach house and stables, boundary wall at the Vicarage, Lord Hill provided the bricks. This all nicely adds up to a most pleasing scene for the village on the 16th June, 1858, this was the return of Henry and his wife, after their marriage. The village had been gaily decorated by them a reception to be cherished. A tent was erected, tea was served to the ladies and more substantial refreshment for the men, loaves, tea and sugar were given to the poorer householders.

May 20th, 1857 was a Wednesday, the first anniversary of the consecration of Fauls Church. The weather was kind, the wealthier inhabitants had been generous with their subscription, so these celebrations could be held in the appropriate manner, in keeping with the desires of their much respected Vicar, Henry. Anyway, we know the Victorians loved spectacle, pageantry and banners, that day it came to our little Parish of Fauls.



"The 20th of May 1857, a celebration to mark the first anniversary of Fauls Church opening. A sketch from memory by F Meynell Esq."

The congregation had gathered on Mr. Hatton's field opposite the Vicarage. The large Waterloo Tent had been kindly loaned by Lord Hill, for this special occasion. The interior had been tastefully decorated with flags and evergreens, attached to the canvas, depicting the names of the various townships in the Parish (goodness). At 3 o'clock they walked in procession to the Church singing the 100th Psalm. The churchwardens, Mr. Hares and Mr. Adams went first, preceded by a banner bearing the inscription:

"Fear God, Honour the Queen, Love the Brotherhood".

Then the clergy in surplices, two by two, the Red Cross Banner, singing men and boys, the Bishop's Banner, Lady Hill's School bearing the Hill Banner, the Sandford Banner, visitors and parishioners

The church was decorated with garlands hung from corbel to corbel, along the walls. Over the entrance the following texts were worked in flowers, surmounted by a cross:

*"Peace be within thy walls", and below:
"O enter His Courts with praise"*

Goodness, never seen anything like that before at Fauls! There were no flowers on the window sills. The first lesson was read by Archdeacon Allen, Vicar of Prees; the second by the Rev. H. Bolland, chaplain to Lord Hill. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Macauley, Rector of Hodnet. After the service, the congregation retraced

their steps to the old General's Waterloo Tent. Here, Mrs. Powell, of the shop at Darliston, (the wheelwright's wife) had provided all things needful in a most satisfactory manner for a feast, aided by the farmers' wives and numerous ladies of the neighbourhood to which ample justice was done by young and old, plus the cup of good cheer was well taken of.

Yes, the special occasion had been well and truly celebrated, as mentioned by Archdeacon Allen in a short address. Books were presented to the choir boys, the evening hymn was sung, then people took their leave, the day had been well spent.

*"Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air, a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds".*

Just to mention, Rev. Henry Meynell was much troubled by illness during his stay at Fauls. The Bishop licensed a curate to cover for him, for one spell and on another occasion, he was absent for six months, culminating in his resignation as Perpetual Curate of Fauls on the 6th August, 1866. The first Vicar had been very popular.

Yes! It appears to have been a very sad day for Fauls Parish, when the Rev. Henry Meynell was forced to resign as Perpetual Curate through illness. But! his 10 years in charge, although much interrupted with his illness, had seen the building blocks of a successful "parish and community", well and truly laid.

Henry was one of only three incumbents of Fauls, who meticulously kept a record of parish events and its history. Of course his 'master piece' was the parish plan, depicting all households, families and numbers.

Also in 1858 he instituted a Fauls Parochial Library, where every parishioner, whether rich or poor, could borrow books from. Henry would exchange books after every service or up to 12 o'clock on Saturdays, at the Vicarage. Of the 99 households, 85 of these families availed themselves of this facility. Henry continuously added volumes to this library, especially with the younger element in mind. On his departure, there were 400 volumes in circulation. Just to mention three of them, "Railways" would have been popular, I wondered what - a "Trap to Catch a Sunbeam" was about and "Think before you drink". It was a theme of Henry's and much emphasis was put on persuading his parishioners to refrain from the produce of the hops, 'especially at Harvest time'. Henry reminded the farmers in the Fauls and Prees Magazine, of Mr. Brown, an extensive agriculturist from Huntingdon, who gave his men money instead of beer or cider.

Tea, coffee, and lemonade were the refreshment and claimed 'was a big success'.

In 1860, Henry started the Fauls 'penny bank', to encourage people to save. When the depositors had reached five shillings (25p.) it was taken to Whitchurch Savings

Bank, where interest was given at 3%. In the first half year, £13 16s. 4d. was deposited by 31 people, of which 16 were able to open an account. Henry also started a clothing club at the Vicarage, for the benefit of the parishioners other than Lord Hill's tenants.

After Fauls had been up and running for six years, it still needed a very important piece of furniture – an organ, "to increase the fervour and heartiness of the worship". So at Henry's suggestion, parishioners and friends responded and made the money available – this meant over 50 contributors.

Henry entered into negotiations with Thomas Lewis of Westminster, London, whose specification and estimate was duly accepted. In a letter, Mr. Lewis apologises profusely for the extra cost of £12 to cover transport and installation and would be very pleased if they would accept a donation of £1 10s. from him, the total cost was £79 10s. 0d. Mr. Lewis played the organ for its first service – Easter Day 1862. He wrote, "He was pleased to get back to London at 10 o'clock, on the same day he had left.

The new organ coincided with the need, at that time, to promote congregational singing in the Diocese. Henry very soon had an excellent choir, he organised a Choir Master from Derby to come four times in the summer of 1862 to train the singers. In the autumn, they participated in a Choral Festival of united choirs at Whitchurch, to celebrate Harvest Festival; this became an annual event at different churches. We do not know the name of the first organist, only that he or she was paid £2. per annum. Fauls had a choir of considerable note for the next 85 years, they gave many concerts. Ladies were not allowed in the choir at this time

It must have been a sad day for the people of Fauls and Rev. Henry Meynell, at the death of Mr. George Robinson of Mickley, April 1865. It was "his idea" that a church was needed at Fauls and encouraged Archdeacon Allen. It was decided by Henry, the church wardens and the friends of George, that a suitable memorial was appropriate. This took the form of a stained glass window, fixed adjacent to the pulpit, depicting "The sower and seed, the separation of tares from the wheat". I'm sure George would have liked that – what a beautiful memorial.

The Rev. Henry Meynell's final spell (of many) away from his parish of Fauls, through illness, was in the month of May, 1866. This time he was unable to return, and on August the 6th, he was forced to resign the Perpetual Curacy of Fauls, and the Venerable Archdeacon Allen of Prees, nominated the Rev. John Barrett Lennard B.A. of Magdalene College, Cambridge, as Mr. Meynell's successor.

On September 14th, 1865 Fauls celebrated their Harvest Festival. Every year since the consecration of Fauls Church, the parishioners had been accustomed with, "just a church service". But! this year, Henry was resolved to mark the festal character of the day more strongly. In fact, this was going to be the first Harvest Supper at Fauls.

As usual, expense was no problem; there were 26 contributors of which Henry was the most generous, followed by Squire Sandford and Archdeacon Allen. So, to complete the scene, the Waterloo Tent was imported from Hawkstone and erected on the field adjacent to the Vicarage. Just in passing, the tent, so named, was issued to General Lord Hill on the 13th of April, 1815, prior to the Battle of Waterloo. I suppose this must have created a lot of interest. All festivities at Fauls took place under canvas; we didn't have the luxury of a church hall until 1938.

The day was gloriously fine, the golden beams of an autumn sun seldom shone on a brighter and gladder scene than that which was presented at Fauls on Thursday September 14th 1865. An arch of oak branches loaded with acorns and flowers, spanned the entrance to the grounds, bearing in the front, the motto, "Welcome to all" and on the reverse, "God bless our Festival". Another arch was erected by the parishioners over the churchyard gate. The tent was gaily decorated with flags and the choicest of flowers arranged as only ladies hands can arrange them. Prompt at four o'clock the Rev. H. Meynell having said Grace, the business of the first Harvest Supper at Fauls was underway.

The tables laden with piles of food, disappeared like magic, only to be replaced by still larger piles. Over 200 people partook of this excellent fayre, having eaten their fill; they wandered around the Vicarage gardens, the younger ones joining in games, their elders quietly seated on the lawn, enjoying the bright happy scene. I must mention Miss Powell of Darliston, who with her team was responsible for the catering, or the 'Mrs. Freda Ridgway' of that day.

At six o'clock the tolling of the church bell, summoned all to the 'graver duty of the day'. Over the church porch, the text "*O enter His Courts with Praise*" was worked in bright flowers, which shone most beautifully in the slanting rays of the setting sun. On the east wall were banners bearing the words, "*He giveth food to all flesh, for his mercy endureth for ever*", and over the altar, "*Thou crownest the year with Thy Goodness*".

The pulpit was richly decorated with crosses of scarlet geraniums and white asters, pendants of fuchsias hung from the corona and at intervals along the walls were fern leaves arranged as 'fleur-de-lys'.

The church was at once filled to overflow; every available inch of room was occupied in the aisle and chancel, porch and vestry. The service was most hearty and devotional, especially the singing of the harvest hymns. The service was conducted by the incumbent, lessons were read by the Rev. E. Cheere and the Rector of Whitchurch, Rev. W. H. Egerton, who also preached an eloquent sermon on "the providence of God". The collection went to the Shrewsbury Infirmary. A very happy, contented congregation quietly dispersed, more than happy with the extra dimension of "a feast" to celebrate their harvest home.

*"And once again,
To thank God for the ripened grain,
For crops safe carried, sent to cheer,
His servants through another year.
For all sweet holy thoughts supplied,
By seed time and by harvest-tide".*

Yes! The day was most certainly 'well spent'.

The "Special Harvest Festival", almost seemed to be the Rev. Henry Meynell's 'swan song' I ponder, did he know his days at Fauls were numbered through illness, for in just 8 months, this is what happened.

In Henry's first address to Fauls people he said, "I come not just as your pastor, but also as your friend", these sentiments bubbled through his incumbency. He certainly left the parish in good shape; there were 225 regular church goers and 100 communicants. He also helped to start the first magazine in 1862. It was quite touching to see how his family, friends, parishioners and clergy rallied around and helped him, especially his wife, an Irish girl from Laharadin, County Cavan in Ireland.

It was a shame, having brought so much joy to the parish; it was now brought cruelly to a close.

On the 20th May 2006, Fauls Church and its parish will celebrate its 150th anniversary. Shadowing these years from George Robinson's idea of a church", Arch Deacon Allen's "none stop enthusiasm to achieve it", the second Viscount Hill's generosity and his desire to celebrate his son's "majority in this way" - I have arrived at the year 1866. So far, the journey has been a pleasure and a joy to record. - As I have mentioned earlier the first vicar the Reverend Henry Meynell said on his arrival "I have not only come as your pastor I come as your friend". This proved to be so true. On one occasion Henry wrote "there are shadows in every sunny spot and sadness mingles with every earthy joy".

On the turn of 1866 Fauls parish and the surrounding countryside was plunged into "doom and gloom" with the outbreak of the cattle plague or as we know it today foot and mouth disease. It caused considerable agricultural distress. On February 14th being Ash Wednesday the first day of Lent was deemed a humiliation day for the cattle plague. There were two services held in Fauls Church 11 in the morning and 7.30 in the evening. Lady Hill directed Mr Goffin the school master to give children a "Holy Day" so they could accompany their parents (who were also given absence from their work place) to church. These two services for all denominations resulted in vast congregations. All offerings through Lent and the Year went to the Cattle plague relief fund; which was distributed to the most deserving. Henry who had never been a well man faithfully "toiled in the vineyard" with his flock but my August his health forced him to resign the perpetual curacy of Fauls.

Henry had meticulously recorded the early years of Fauls parish - even to mentioning Mrs Jones who had sold 229 religiously related items i.e. bibles etc in her shop at Darliston during the tragic year of 1866.

Henry resigned on the 6th of August 1866 and on the first of September the parish was put in charge of the Reverend John Barrett Lennard BA, who became the second vicar of Fauls. John who had been educated at Cambridge was chosen by Archdeacon Allen of Press. He was licensed by the Bishop of Lichfield on the 1st of November 1866. John was to be Vicar of Fauls for 10 years from 1866 to 1876.

My first impressions were that John had spent little time in recording the passage of his decade at Fauls. I judged in haste (isn't this a frailty of us all) without full knowledge. So I was to learn Fauls proved to be a "sad stay", for John and his wife Isabella but they left a beautiful memorial to their family on Fauls church.

On Easter Monday 1867 the vicar called a meeting at the vicarage with a view to starting a cricket club. This was met with "much enthusiasm" - a committee was formed of the Reverend J Barrett Lennard, Mr Hatton and Mr Whitfield. The members contributed seven shillings and sixpence each with donations from Lord Hill and Arch Deacon Allen, Mr Hopkins of Darliston (Buckley's today) kindly gave them permission to play on a pasture field (without charge).

During the summer they met 4 times per week and enjoyed many pleasant games. So much so it was decided to employ Mr Worrell to level and prepare a better strip for the following season (with Mr Hopkins blessing).

Mr Worrell charged 17s and sixpence for this service to provide more even bounce. I suppose the sound of "ball on willow" and the joyful accompanying cries must have been like a breath of fresh air in the village, contrasting the sadness of the cattle plague. I like to think that the new vicar (who did not mention the disease once) used the prescription of sport to aid the parish through a difficult time. Just to tarry with one sad come happy story, Richard Dicken (one of the cricketers), was eventually to suffer the loss of all his stock. The family were devastated and forced to leave the district. His son emigrated to South Africa where he became a very successful farmer as is his family still today. Richard and his family before him were tenants on Lord Hill's estate at Ford farm (Pembertons today).

An epitaph in the Church Yard.

*"As I was, so be ye
As I am, ye shall be
That I gave, that I have
What I spent, that I had
Thus I end all my cost
What I left, that I lost"*

The Rev. John Barrett Lennard, the second incumbent at Fauls, in a ten year period, which provided him and his family with an experience that, was more akin to the shadows of life. What with the Cattle Plague, which seemed to go on and on, the Lennards also suffered the death of their 6 year old daughter, Emily Isabella. Hence, 'I think'. John's little contribution to the recording of his ten years at Fauls. But, in my mother's words, "More often than not, there is a story between the lines"; I found this to be so true, with John Barrett Lennard and his wife Isabella.

When Fauls Church was built in 1856, it became synonymous with the School at Lower Heath, which had been built 57 years earlier in 1799. The Hill family of Hawkstone were also builders of the School, or as it was known in that day, Industry Hall. It was a revolutionary venture for the late 18th century, with the 'strong desire' of the Hill family, that the children on their Estate, would have the opportunity to work with their hands, learn to read, write, receive religious instruction, to help them become worthy members of the community.

When John Barrett Lennard arrived as Vicar of Fauls Parish, the School was known as Viscountess Hill's (Church of England) School Lower Heath. This meant John would be a regular visitor to help and check their religious education - which he did very well. His wife Isabella also gave the children lessons in sewing. They were to join a team of very enthusiastic, dedicated teachers under Robert Goffin, the first headmaster, who Lady Hill brought there in the 1830's. Lady Hill, who was the wife of the second Viscount, devoted forty years to the education of the estate children (she supported four other schools); it was said Lower Heath was her favourite.

On the 12th August, 1875, there was a public meeting held in the Schoolroom. The Rev. J. B. Lennard, Vicar of Fauls presided, when to mark the respect and esteem of friends and neighbours, the teachers were each presented with a 'Testimonial', on resigning the charge of their Schools. This marked the end of John Lennard's stay at Fauls, and in the autumn he resigned.

The School was put under different management and fully taken over by the State Education system, that's another story!

When John first arrived as Vicar of Fauls, there were boundary problems, maybe these had been marked on the map, but in reality were not very sensible. So John set about doing another Parish Record, following beaten track and centre of stream, where possible. As a result Fauls had four more properties. Notification of this was published in the London Gazette.

This document is a valuable contribution to the history of Fauls, marking all the dwellings (109) and names of occupants in 1867. John also mentions at some length, a Mr. Harper, who left a sum of money, the interest of which, must be "specifically distributed to the widows, blind and poor householders of Darliston". Which would indicate a close connection - as John mentions the Harper family owning

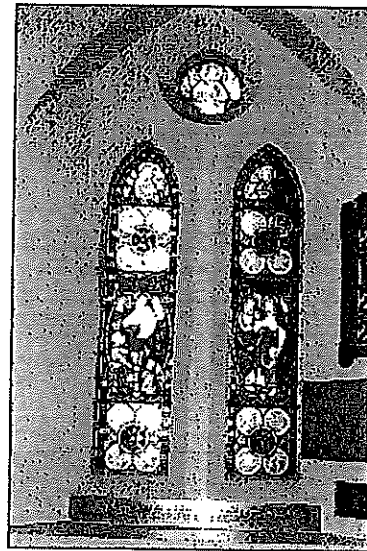
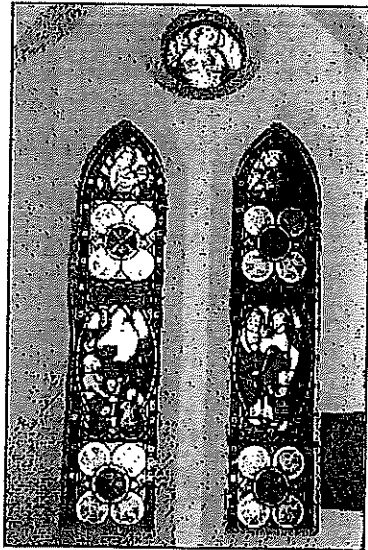
Moat Farm, Fauls. It was a member of this family, who married into the Adam's family (possibly of Darliston Farm), combined the two names, and their son being the founder of Harper Adams College at Edgmond.

Thanks to Mr. Harper, the Vicar in 1870 was able to give 2s.6d. each to widows; Ruscoe, Hartley, Williams, Wilks and Jones; 2s. 6d. to two blind people, J. Ridgway and Anne Williams 9s. 10d. between poor householders Ridgway, Porter, Gregory, S. Porter Jones and Taylor.

I never, but never, go into Fauls Church, without admiring the beautiful stained glass windows – especially the two on the north side. They contain two lights each, the one window depicts "Christ blessing little children" also "Christ setting a little child in the midst of the Disciples". The subjects of the other windows are "The Good Shepherd" and "Christ's Charge to Peter". To describe the intricacy and details require a better hand than mine.

The windows were painted by J. B. Lennard (Vicar) and his wife Isabella J. Barrett Lennard, as a memorial to their child Emily Isabella, who died aged 6 years.

Just to mention, Emily died on the 6th January, 1869. Her parents requested leave of absence from the Parish for twelve months, which was granted by the Bishop of Lichfield.



John's only entry in the Parish Records for his last four years as Vicar of Fauls, was briefly to mention these widows – yes my mother was right, the story can be 'between the lines'

On the 20th of May, 2006 Fauls Church and parish will celebrate its 150th Anniversary. For 113 of these years the church had 9 incumbents and in 1969 the parish reverted back under the charge of Prees Vicars.

Of these nine Vicars, the Rev. Harold Burton M.A stayed by far the longest. Mr. Burton, a Lincolnshire man, was born in the year Fauls church was built. His stay of 44 years from 1883-1927 (was cut short by illness) indicates the degree of affection, Vicar and parishioners held for one another. Likewise, the Rev. J. S. Caddick-Adams M.A., was the second longest serving Vicar, he followed Mr. Burton and was at Fauls for sixteen years, before his untimely death. He was a Staffordshire man. They were both educated at Oxford university. The remaining years were split between seven Vicars.



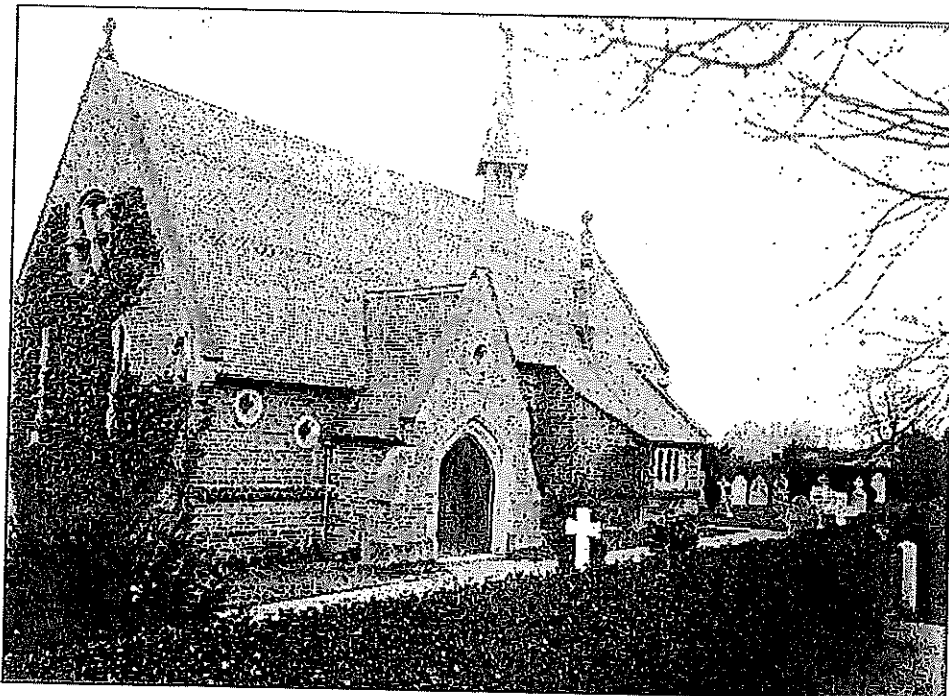
"Reverend Harold Burton"

Harold Burton and his wife were very much involved in country sports, including sailing. His Vicarage must have been a very busy place, with lots of staff, horses and two Springer Spaniels, which were always at heel. But, his heart was in the right place - one of the first things he did, was to found a Coal Club for the benefit of the parishioners. He supervised the building of the new organ chamber for the church in 1895. This was built in memory of the 3rd Viscount Hill, in whose honour the church was erected. The chamber was built by subscription at a cost of £130.

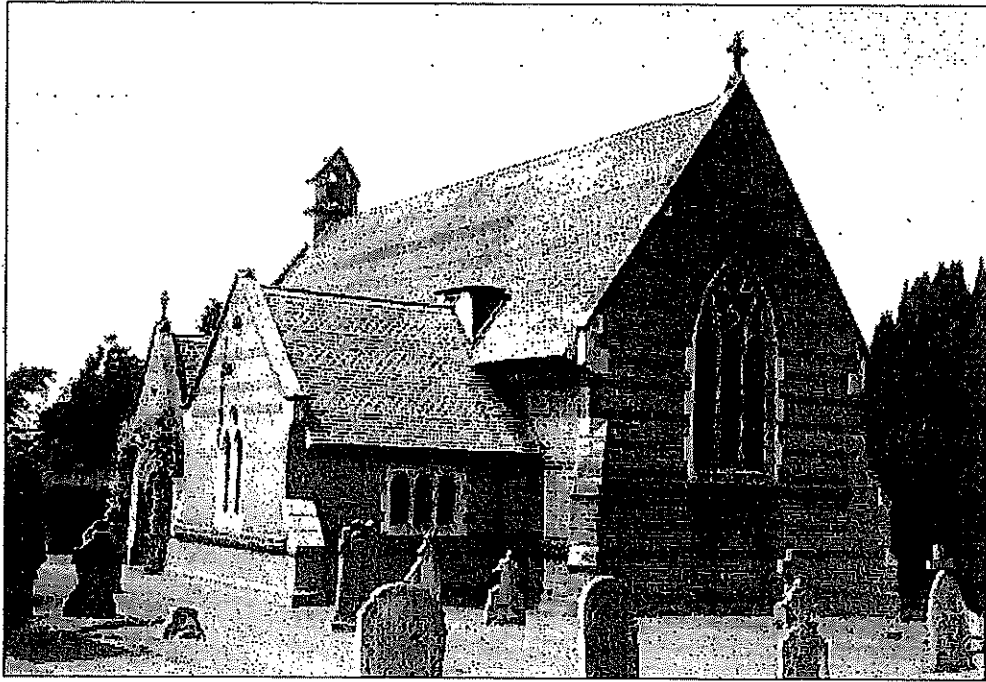


"Laying of the Foundation Stone for the organ Chamber Extension 1898"

He also built a new Vestry, in memory of his wife's recovery from serious illness – the cost of which he defrayed.



"A Photograph of Fauls Church showing the Vestry - 1904"

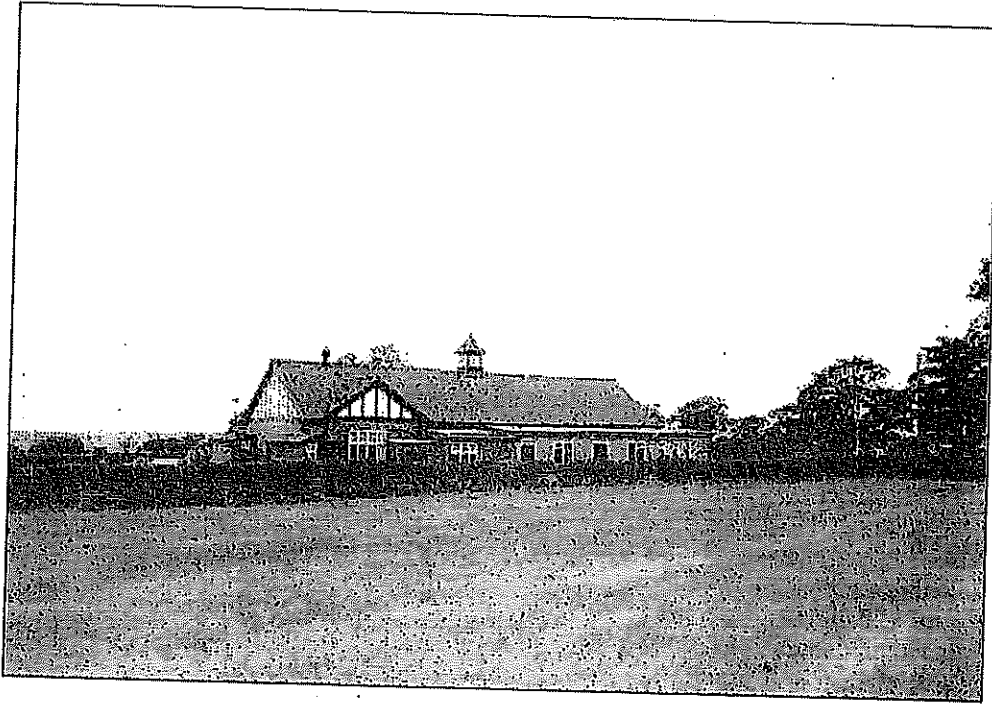


"The New Vestry built by Reverend Burton"

The church's Golden Jubilee in 1906 was celebrated by a public tea, sports and dancing on the lawn till 9.0 clock. Mr. Burton wrote: "It was a great pleasure to see so many members of the Hill family present, and also many parishioners who had been at the Consecration 50 years ago", and it was worthy of note that the bell was rung by Mr. Benbow, who had rung the bell at the Consecration of the church in 1856. Mr. & Mrs. Burton prided themselves on having an excellent Church Choir. He also kept the church records meticulously. Yes, the Burtons were true benefactors of Fauls parish.

Likewise, even more, was the Rev. J. S. Caddick-Adams who followed him in 1928. Mr. Caddick-Adams was a bachelor, a very sincere devoted priest and a brilliant musician, respect for him was total. He was regularly seen around the parish on his bicycle; with his little dog Tojo, trailing behind after him. His family were brick and tile makers, from Stoke-on-Trent. He proceeded to shower the parish with his generosity. First, he put electricity into the church. He then built a Church Hall, a facility the parish had needed for many years - he knew no way would they ever achieve this - he built this in remembrance of his mother.

The new Hall was opened on Tuesday 13th December, 1938 at 3 o'clock, by Charles Rowland the 6th Viscount Hill, among other dignitaries present were Mr. Harold Burton (Rev.) who spoke about the history of his 44 years as Vicar of Fauls.



"Fauls Church Hall"

The Vicar expressed regret at the absence of Mr. Robert Taylor, retired Headmaster of Lower Heath School, where all the parish festivities had previously taken place. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Burton had been excellent custodians of our parish as School master and Vicar for 44 years, both passed away the following year at 89 and 84 years respectively.

The opening ceremony completed, the Vicar then proceeded by playing the piano, with several other accompanists, Mrs. Sandford singing, to entertain the 166 people present - many of them were well travelled. The following tea must have been very acceptable.

The festivities continued at 7.30 p.m. with a cavalry charge of 250 people, enjoying a social and dancing to Gwyn Morris's Band from Wrexham. Admission was 1s. 0d. refreshments at moderate charges - goodness, I feel out of breath just writing this!

The following year 1939, the Vicar built a Verger's Cottage, adjacent to the Hall. This time there was no rejoicing - the War had descended upon us. The Vicar's untimely death after 16 years was mourned by many people far and wide. His hobby had been the Railways, and watching express trains.

Mr. Percy Mellor, who had become Verger, Sexton and bell ringer in 1930, moved into the cottage. Mr. Mellor had been wounded in the 1914-1918 War, serving in the Royal Marines; he discharged his duties as Verger and bell ringer for nearly 60 years, without hardly missing an attendance, until he was nearly 90 years old.

Likewise, Mrs. Kate Williams was the Church organist for 50 years. She struggled the last twelve months with her health but guts and determination got her there, with no time to spare.

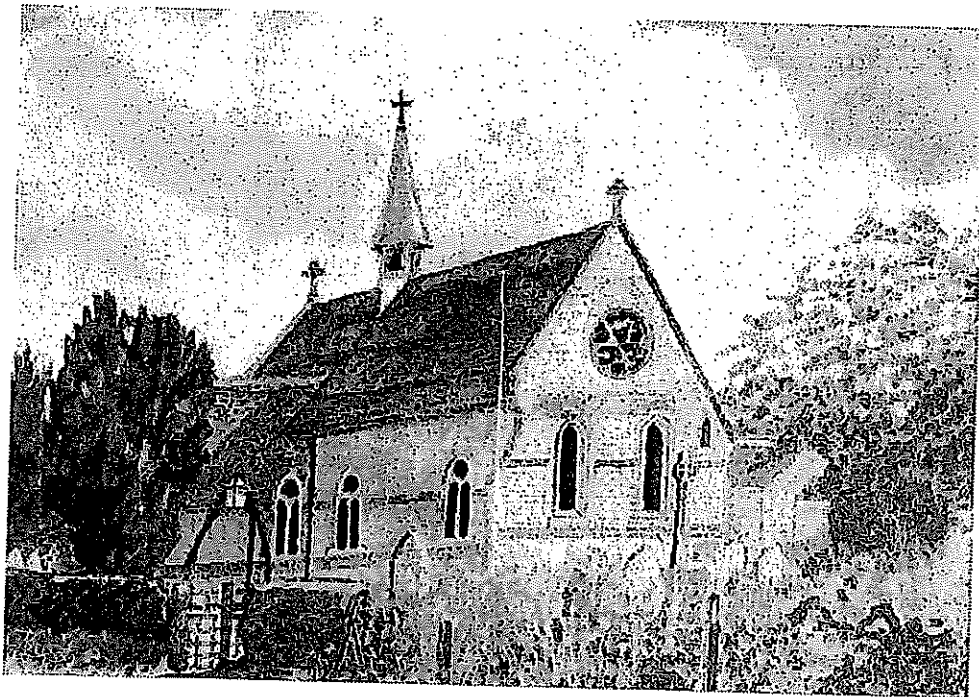
Most incumbents of Fauls have enjoyed a good working relationship with the P.C.C. "None more so then today", where a dedicated few 'leave no stone unturned'.

The Rev. J. C. Caddick-Adams homely Parish Hall is kept busy with Supper Evenings, Sunday Lunches, Whist Drives etc. all in aid of church funds.

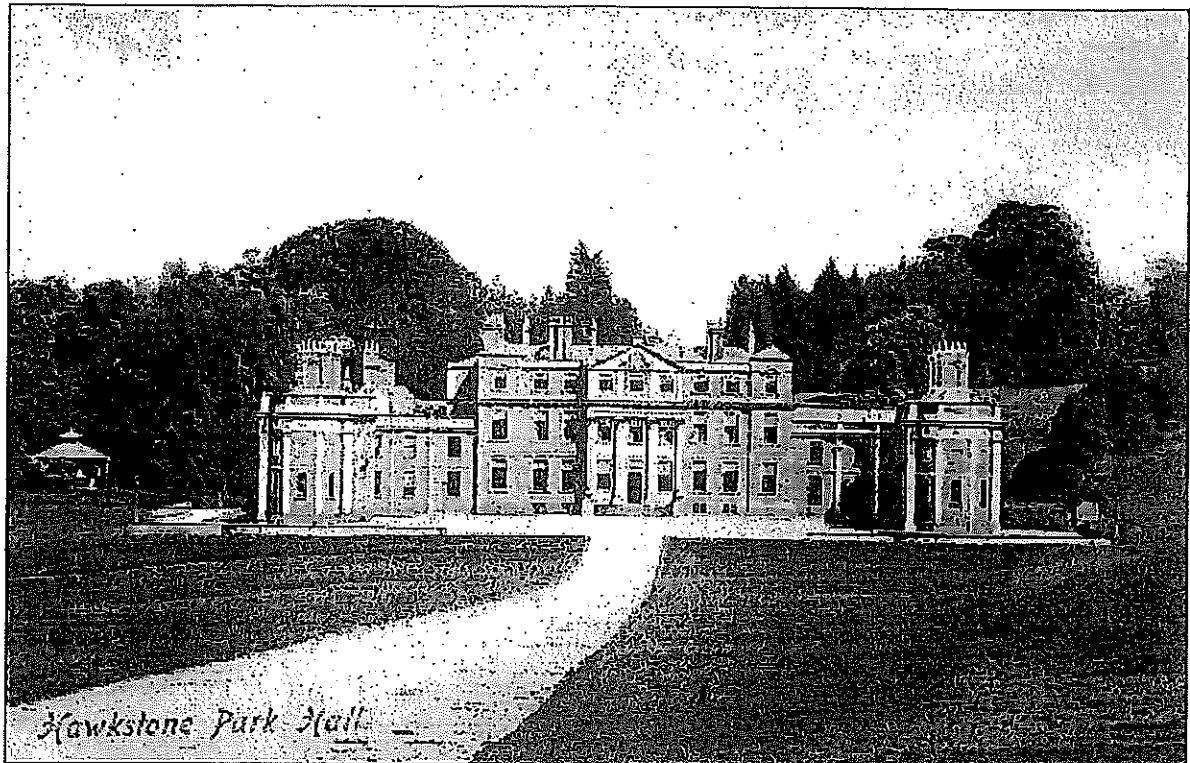
The scene for the new parish of Fauls had been well set by the first vicar, Rev. Henry Meynell, who said on his arrival: "I not only come as your pastor, I come as your friend". This proved to be so true. On one occasion he wrote:

*"There are shadows in every sunny
spot and sadness mingles with
every earthly joy".*

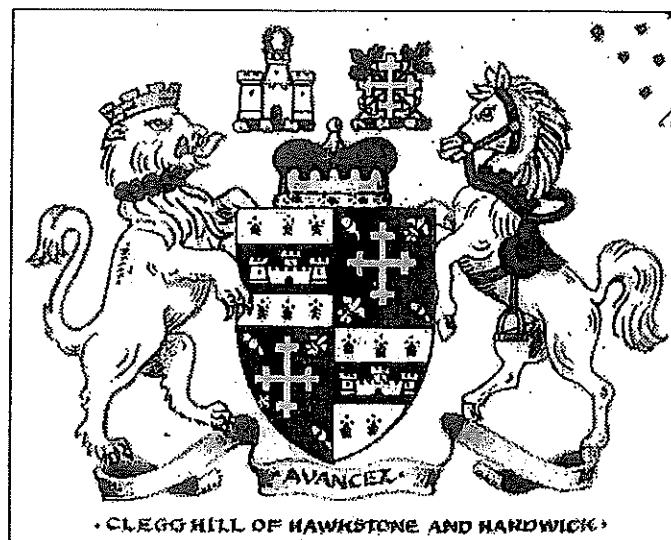
When Henry was forced to leave through illness after ten years, the whole parish was very, very sad. Fauls have enthusiastically celebrated every National event.



"Fauls Church Drawn and Painted by Mrs Annie Davies"



"Hawkstone Hall – Old Seat of the Hill Family"



"The Hill Family Coat of Arms"