

## MORE GLEANINGS FROM THE DEANERY MAGAZINES

### The Revd W Cotton Risley, Benefactor of St James Church, Clifton



We have been reminded that the consecration of St James' Clifton took place on 10th June 1853. Fifty years later *Deddington Deanery Magazine* described the celebration of its Golden Jubilee:

'On Wednesday, June 10th the Jubilee of St James was celebrated.

The foundation stone was laid on September 8th 1851; the church was consecrated on June 10th 1853. Previously services had been held in a barn by the Revd George Venables, now Canon of Norwich, to whom and to the energy and liberality of the late Revd W Cotton Risley, the people owe their church. At 8 o'clock there was a choral celebration of Holy Communion. At 2.30 there was a special form of Thanksgiving Service. The Bishop of Reading preached and the following clergy were present' (a very long list).

'At 5 o'clock 146 people sat down to tea in barn. Evensong was at 7.30 when the preacher was the Revd W C Risley (Willy, son of Revd W Cotton Risley), Rector of Shalstone. The singing at all the services must be mentioned and great praise is due to the organist, Mr Wolgrove, and the choir. In spite of incessant rain we shall be able to look back to the day as a time when the people assembled with one accord to render thanks to the Almighty God for his many blessings given to us.'

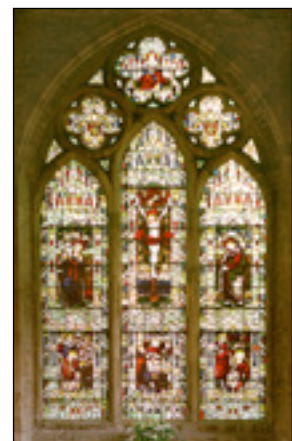
It is interesting to record that one copy of the form of service used at the laying of the foundation stone has been preserved. It is hoped that when the centenary of the Church is celebrated some of the younger ones who took part in this Jubilee will have their copies of the Form of Thanksgiving Service and that they will have remained as true to their Church as Mr J Drinkwater who, though in his 79th year, is still 'doorkeeper in the house of his Lord' and as true as Mr T Hone, who has been in the choir ever since the Church was built. There follows a precise statement of accounts in connection with the Jubilee: the expense of washing-up 2s., sawdust 6d, and choir boys and girls 6s.

2003

### The East Window, 1888

The parishioners of Deddington can now congratulate themselves in having the large east window of their fine church filled with good stained glass. The work was entrusted to one of the finest artists of the day, C E Kemp, Esq., of London.

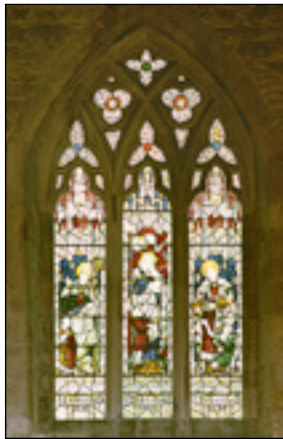
The window was unveiled on Monday, February 13th, and dedicated at the special service held on that day. The Vicar, the Revd Thomas Boniface, spoke in his address of the twofold use of such windows: firstly, to beautify the house of God and, secondly, as a means of instruction. Several of the local clergy were present on the occasion and a full choir who sang the anthem "How beautiful upon the mountains" by Smith and Dr Steggalla's "Te Deum". A full list of contributors to the window fund is given in



the October 1888 issue of the Parish Magazine: parishioners, clergy, amongst them the Dean of Windsor, friends of the church from other parishes, but also proceeds from bazaars and sale of work, the offertory at the Dedication Service, bank interest and £15 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The cost of the window, including fixing, came to £298 12s. and the wire guard cost was £10 10s., total £309 2s. The project to fill the east window with stained glass was set on foot in November 1886 when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were restoring the chancel of the Church and proposed to repair the then plain glass window. The Revd Boniface writes in the November 1886 Parish Magazine that 'in the event of the scheme for a stained glass window being carried out we shall want all our friends to help'.

### **North Window, 1900**



A beautiful stained-glass window has recently been put in the north aisle by Mr John Churchill of Bath in memory of his parents, who formerly lived in Deddington and were worshippers at the church, sitting near to where the window is erected.

The subject of the window is charity (Mr and Mrs Churchill being both charitable). The central figure represents charity and the figures on either side, St Martin, Bishop of Tours, with the beggar at his feet, and St Elizabeth of Hungary giving alms. The window was designed by Mr C E Kempe, the same artist who designed the large east window. (A faculty has been granted by the Chancellor of the Diocese for the erection of this stained glass window.)

(undated)

### **Revd Boniface's New Year Address, 1879**

In his 1879 New Year's address, Thomas Boniface, the new incumbent of SS Peter & Paul, wrote: 'One change is a Parish magazine which I hope will be a welcome visitor at every house. It will be published monthly, price 2d, and will contain wholesome and religious reading suitable for English church people; a record of Church work and other events of interest in connection with the Parish'.

Twelve months later we read: 'The Parish Magazine, which now has a circulation of 160 copies monthly, does not nearly pay its way ... the Vicar is a considerable loser by it. Some alterations, therefore, in the cover may have to be made next year'.

The *Magazine*, printed at Deddington Post Office by J. Whetton, General Printer, Stationer, Bookseller, Linen and Woollen Draper and Seller of China, Glass and Earthenware, survived until 1893 when News from the Parish became part of the *Deanery Magazine*. I like to think that the Vicar's purse was saved by the increasing use of advertisements which began to appear in the publication, of which my favourite proclaims: 'The Great Family Medicine Of The Age! Whelpton's Vegetable Purifying Pills & Vegetable Stomach Pills' which are particularly suited to weakly persons, being exceedingly mild and gradual in their operation, importing tone and vigour to the Digestive Organs.'

Just what the duplicating team of today's *Deddington News* needs before printing the 1020 monthly copies!

2000

## Reflections on Christmas 1888, Revd Thomas Boniface

'We have again been engaged in keeping with the great Christian Festival, the Festival of the Glad Tidings. The old story, which never seems old, and which has been retold for so many hundreds of years in our beloved country – yes, and perhaps (for) nearly as long here in our dear old town of Deddington. Our churches have told it in their joyful services and by their festal attire which the usual loving hands and ungrudging gifts have spared no pains to make beautiful ... our church bells have proclaimed to all alike the joyful news.

Friends and relations have met to keep the great day together and to realise by association something of the peace and goodwill. Nor have the lesser tokens on the Festival been wanting. The bright appearance of our shops and their crowds of eager buyers, the heavily laden postman bringing Christmas greetings from absent friends, haven't been noticeable. All this, and much more, has proclaimed the joyful message and brought home even to the dullest and most careless the Christmas news. May it not have fallen upon deaf ears but served, as it should, to encourage the strong, raise the weak, to arouse the careless and to rekindle and inflame all hearts to a greater appreciation and grasping after all the benefits the great Christmas Event has brought within our reach.'

2000

### Dust to Dust ...

Am I the only one who shed a sudden, very unexpected, tear while watching two tractors digging trenches in the flat earth where once our vicarage had stood? So many memories lay there where now not one old stone was to be seen. Not one old stone of the house where the first issue of the *Deddington News* was laboriously printed on an ancient Gestetner machine by Mary Robinson and the Revd George Palmer, working deep into the night to fulfil the distribution schedule.



I couldn't see a single little keepsake left over from the vicarage where George's wife Nora, founder of the 'revived' church choir, spent much time on her piano bringing music and song back into Deddington.

Not one old stone left of the Vicarage from where the Revd Richard Hannah and his wife Pat had cared so lovingly for ailing villagers.

Not a speck left of the Vicarage, from which the Revd Ken Reeves, nursing a very sore heart, had been hurried on to his new parish.

And for why all that haste? The vicarage and garden, where those gorgeous plums ripened in profusion every autumn, were left empty, unloved, allowed to decay for many years – a blot on the Deddington landscape!

I now grieve, seeing the old vicarage no more, but I live in the hope that its lively spirit will enter the new, and again bless all that dwell in it.

2005

*The complete collection of Ruth Johnson's writings, which originally appeared in Deddington News between 1990 and 2010, can be found [here](#)*