

Clergy and preachers 1820-1837

The living of the parish of Deddington was, and still is, owned by the Dean and Canons of St. George's Chapel, Windsor.¹

There were three incumbents during the years 1820-1837. The vicar in 1820 was the Rev. John Faulkner, who had been vicar since 1790, although there are few references to him in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*.

William Wing of Steeple Aston (born 1810) "well recollects the Rev. John Faulkner in the reading desk facing north with a clerk's seat below and a pulpit above, the whole forming a regular *three-decker*".²

Faulkner died in December 1820 after a long illness. His son, Charles Faulkner (1798-1871),³ and grandson, Charles Duffell Faulkner (1827-1894),⁴ were subsequently to play prominent roles in Deddington affairs.

For most of the period the incumbent was the Rev. Richard Greaves M.A. (1793-1870), who was vicar 1822-1836. He had married the sister of the Rev. William Wilson (c.1791-1867), head of the staunchly Evangelical Wilson family and the largest landowner in Over Worton.

Greaves gained a reputation as a powerful Evangelical preacher, and filled the parish church to capacity on successive Sundays.

Greaves, who was fluent in German, and had lived in Lausanne, networked with Evangelical circles in Oxford and on the Continent.

John Hughes (1787-1860), was Greaves' first curate from 1822-1826. Likewise a zealous Evangelical, he is said to have even eclipsed Greaves as a charismatic preacher. A tribute after his death recalled "the animation, earnestness, and thrilling pathos" with which he addressed his congregations".⁵

¹ The living of the parish of Deddington was an early endowment of St. George's Chapel, which had been founded by Edward III in 1348. The right of presentation was then held by William de Buhun, lord of the 'Duchy' manor, who granted the advowson to the Dean and Canons of Windsor in 1350.

Deddington was originally a rectory, the incumbent receiving both the great and the small tithes. As provided by canon law, the transfer of ownership of the living to an ecclesiastical body caused the greater tithes to be appropriated by the new ecclesiastical patron when the current rector died in 1352, and his successor incumbent became an impropriate vicar entitled only to the lesser tithes.

² 'History of Deddington - A Supplement to Marshall's Deddington' by William Wing, reprinted from the *Oxford Chronicle* 1879.

https://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/18533/1879.SupplementtoMarshallsDeddingtonbyWilliamWingSectotheNOxArchSoc.pdf

³ See profile:

<https://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/newspaperreferencestodeddingtoninpreviouscenturies/jacksonsoxfordjournalandbanburyguardian1850-59/bios/B4faulkner,Chas.pdf>

⁴ See profile:

<https://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/newspaperreferencestodeddingtoninpreviouscenturies/jacksonsoxfordjournalandbanburyguardian1850-59/bios/B5faulkner,C.D..pdf>

⁵ Memoir prefacing 'Sermons by the late Venerable John Hughes, Archdeacon of Cardigan', ed. Richard Hughes, 1864. Bodleian Library, 100 e.931.

So great were the crowds that were drawn to Deddington to hear Greaves and Hughes preaching at the morning and afternoon services on Sundays, occasionally including undergraduates who had travelled from Oxford, that a gallery was built at the west end of the south aisle of the church to accommodate them.⁶

Hughes was a Welshman. Exceptionally for a minister at the time, he did not have a university degree. Whilst at Deddington he was also an active proponent of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

In 1826 he suffered the great personal tragedy of losing his wife, Jane, aged 37, after a short illness, which she bore with great fortitude, leaving him a widower with 6 young children (including 4 daughters) under 9, the youngest born just two weeks before her death.

The sermon preached by the Rev. Greaves on this sad occasion was printed.⁷ After leaving Deddington shortly afterwards, Hughes went on eventually to become Archdeacon of Cardigan.

Hughes' son was told "that [Deddington] had once been known as "Drunken Deddington," but that the whole town underwent a moral transformation during the period" of his father's curacy.⁸

Hughes' son also recounts "that it became a custom in almost every family to have a cold dinner on the Sunday, so that they might all be able to attend and derive full benefit from the morning and afternoon service".⁹

John Hughes was also credited with persuading the local farmers to pay their labourers' wages on a Friday evening rather than on a Saturday night, to obviate the butchers' shops otherwise being open on a Sunday morning, with the consequent appearance of desecration on the streets of Deddington.¹⁰

John Henry Newman (later Cardinal Newman), then an undergraduate at Oxford, had occasion to visit Deddington in the 1820s, as he was a regular visitor to Over Worton to see his close friend, the Rev. Walter Mayers, curate of Over Worton.¹¹

On occasion, Newman rode over to Deddington to dine with Rev. Greaves. On 19 September 1825 Newman accompanied the Rev. John Hill, Vice Principal of St. Edmund Hall, and "the acknowledged 'standard bearer' for the evangelicals in Oxford", on a visit to Deddington. After dining with Greaves, they attended a meeting of the

⁶ The gallery was constructed of unpainted deal. By the 1850s, when it was described as "most unsightly" by Charles Faulkner, it was threatening the stability of the south aisle, ultimately prompting the controversial restoration and 'repewing' of the parish church in 1858. See https://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/18132/A2parishChurch.pdf

⁷ 'The substance of a sermon preached in the Parish Church of Deddington, Oxon, June 4th, 1826 : on the occasion of the death of Jane, the wife of the Rev. J. Hughes, curate' by the Rev. Richard Greaves, pp. 16, 4½ x 7½ in. Worcester College Library, XA.3.19(19).

⁸ See footnote 5.

⁹ *Ibid.* Inform. one of the Canons of Winchester, who a former Oxfordshire clergyman.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ 'Newman at Deddington', Brian Carter, 2002.

<https://www.deddingtonhistory.uk/people/indexn/jhnewman>

Church Missionary Society, at which Newman delivered "the first speech I ever made".¹²

After Hughes moved on, Greaves' next curate (1827-1831) was Edmund Dewdney. He appears to have been another forceful speaker, speaking out against slavery at a meeting in Oxford in October 1831 (see below).

When Dewdney left Deddington in 1831, there was an auction of his possessions at his rented house called The Green (Blount's Farm). While *Jackson's Oxford Journal* does not mention any successor curates, Mr. Vine was curate in 1836.

The newspaper reports record Greaves' involvement in various good causes in the district, including the establishment of a Banbury District Labourers' Friend Society in 1833 (see [Poor relief](#)).

¹² *Ibid.*

Greaves owned another church living, the rectory of Tooting Graveney in Surrey. He may also have had some Irish connection, since in 1833 he made a donation of £5 to the Cork Episcopal Free Church.

Whilst Greaves was a prominent preacher, if he published any collections of his sermons, none survive. The last page of the pamphlet with the sermon he preached on the death of Jane Hughes does, however, contain a notice of the publication of another sermon by Greaves.¹³

He did, nonetheless, edit a number of religious publications. He was the editor of a modest 12 page (plus covers) monthly publication (4½ x 7½ in.), price 1d., printed in Banbury, called 'The Good Samaritan', which began in 1828. It is not known for how long it continued to be published. Two issues from 1830 survive at the Bodleian Library.¹⁴ The backsheets of the two surviving issues of 'The Good Samaritan' publicise the publication of two collections of reprints of old religious works edited by Greaves.

Two collections of sermons were published by John Hughes in his lifetime, the first in the mid-1820s, which may be expected to have included some preached at Deddington, and the second in 1843. He was preparing a third volume of sermons at the time of his death, which were published by his son, together with a memoir, in 1864.¹⁵ This included some of the sermons published in the first collection.

Richard Greaves resigned as vicar of Deddington in May 1836. In later retirement in Cheltenham he became a Unitarian.

It seems, however, that Greaves' resignation had been anticipated. Risley was looking around for a new living, and had written to the Bishop of Oxford about the living of Deddington on 31 March 1836, and to the Canons of Windsor on 21 April.

Although Greaves did not resign until 26 May, Risley had already taken a tenancy of Deddington House in New Street (in preference to the Vicarage, rebuilt 1822, in Church Street) on 9 May. By 19 June Risley had been appointed vicar of Deddington. In due course Risley purchased Deddington House (now called Deddington Manor).¹⁶

Risley, born 1798, matriculated at New College, Oxford in 1816, and was elected a Fellow in 1821. He was also admitted 'a Collector of the Determining Bachelors' the same year. He seems to have been intent on a career in the church, becoming a

¹³ '*Speedily will be published, by the same author, A BLESSING ATTENDING the FAITHFUL USE of the MEANS of GRACE; a Sermon preached in the Parish Church of Deddington, Oxon, by the Rev. R. GREAVES, Vicar, Sep. 3, 1826, the Sunday following a Confirmation and Visitation held in that Church by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese.*'

¹⁴ 'The Good Samaritan, ministering to the moral wounds of man', ed. R. Greaves, Vol. I, Nos. 3 & 5, January and March 1830. Bodleian Library, Per. 1419 e.5515.

¹⁵ See footnote 5.

¹⁶ Risley agreed to rent Deddington House in 1836 from Lord Carrington, one of the creditors of the bankrupt solicitor, Samuel Churchill, who had a mortgage over the house. Risley purchased the property in 1844, although ongoing proceedings in the Court of Chancery meant that he did not acquire unfettered freehold title until 1850. The name of Deddington House was changed to Deddington Manor in 1930.

deacon in 1821 and curate of Tingewick, near Buckingham, until 1828. In the 1820s, he served as dean of arts, bursar and sub-warden of New College. Unlike his predecessor at Deddington, he was an orthodox Anglican.

In 1828 Risley was appointed curate of the rectory of Souldern, and a domestic chaplain to Lord Carteret. Later that year he stood down as a Fellow of New College when he married Miss Susan Wells of Adderbury. The following year, 1829, he was appointed vicar of Whaddon in Buckinghamshire, a living in the gift of New College. In 1831 he was appointed an agent for the Clergy Mutual Assistance Society.

Risley lived at the rectory in Souldern, and *Jackson's Oxford Journal* records the birth of a daughter and three sons to his wife, Susan, during their residence there from 1828 to 1836. A fourth son was born shortly after Risley moved to Deddington with his young family. Shooting appears to have been one of Risley's favourite winter pastimes, and he is recorded as taking out a Game Duty Certificate punctually each year.

Shortly after arriving in Deddington in 1836, Risley was appointed a Justice of the Peace, making him the only magistrate resident in the town on the Deddington Bench.

He resigned as vicar in 1848 for reasons of family ill health, although he continued to live at Deddington House for the rest of his life until his death in 1869.

Risley was a substantial landowner, and had wide connections with the Anglican hierarchy, in particular Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford 1845-1869, the landed gentry and local aristocracy.

At the inaugural meetings of the Banbury Association for the Protection of Agriculture and the Bicester Association for the Protection of Agriculture at the end of 1834, Risley was nominated as one of 29 Vice-Presidents of each of the Associations.

Risley's politics were Conservative. At the time of the 1837 general election, he actively supported the Conservative campaign by allowing the Vicarage to be used as the Committee Room of one of the Tory candidates, Lord Norreys, and made two speeches at the subsequent celebratory dinner at Deddington (see [1837 election](#)).

Combined with his considerable status as a magistrate, his sense of social awareness and his ready benevolence, Risley came to exercise significant influence and authority in the locality, effectively performing the role of squire of Deddington in the absence of a dominant local landowning family.¹⁷

The most important source of information about the Rev. W.C. Risley is his diaries, of which 39 volumes survive at the Bodleian Library (MS. D.D. Risley c.66-72). Extensive extracts from the Risley diaries, with editorial commentary, have been published. See *'Early Victorian Squarson - The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington, 1835-1848'*, and *'Mid-Victorian Squarson - The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Former Vicar of Deddington, 1849-1869'*, edited by Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson, The

¹⁷ At a presentation to the Rev. Thomas Boniface, Vicar of Deddington, in 1903, the Vicar made reference to the Rev. W.C. Risley's eldest son, the late Holford C. Risley (died 1903), as "their late good squire". *Banbury Guardian*, 17 December 1903, page 7.

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/BL/0001523/19031217/128/0007?browse=true>

Banbury Historical Society, Vol. 29, 2007 and Vol. 32, 2012. See also Rob Forsyth's biographical notes, and identification of other sources.

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15 June 1822, page 3

Oxford News.

On Sunday last a Sermon was delivered in Deddington church by the Rev. A. [sic] Greaves, for the benefit of the distressed Irish; from Acts 20 c. 35 v. after which, the inhabitants, with their accustomed liberality subscribed the sum of 24*l*. 15*s*. 1½*d*.; and on the Wednesday preceding, the Friendly Societies of Deddington, with the Clergyman who preached their Anniversary Sermon, contributed 5*l*. 5*s*. making a total (exclusive of various sums transmitted by individuals to the neighbouring Banks) of 30*l*. 0*s*. 1½*d*.

27 July 1822, page 3

Oxford News.

On Saturday last the Second Anniversary of the Deddington Branch Bible Society was held at that town, J. Wilson, Esq. President, in the Chair. The Report of the Committee having been read by Mr. C. Faulkner; resolutions were moved by the Rev. Legh Richmond, Rev. T. Woodroffe, Rev. W.E. Hony, Rev. C. Wetherell, Rev. A. [sic] Greaves, G.F. Stratton, Esq. Mr. H. Churchill, Mr. J. Harris, Mr. T. Fardon, &c. The meeting was more numerously attended than either of the preceding ones, and the sum of 18*l*. 14*s*. 2½*d*. was contributed at the close of it; which being added to what has been collected before, by the Society and Association, makes a total of 264*l*. 7*s*. 2½*d*. out of which 110*l*. have been presented, as a free donation, to the Society in London. The number of Bibles and Testaments issued this year, is 109, which make a total of 229, distributed since the formation of the Society.

26 July 1823, page 3

Oxford News.

The Third Anniversary of the Deddington Branch Bible Society, and Ladies' Association connected with it, was held in Deddington church, on Friday the 18th instant. The meeting, which was attended by at least twelve hundred people, was far more interesting than either of the former. J. Wilson, Esq. President of the Society, took the Chair, at half-past five o'clock, when the report of the Committee was read by Mr. C. Faulkner. Resolutions were then moved and seconded by the Rev. J. Hill, Vice-principal of St. Edmund

hall, Rev. R. Greaves, Vicar of Deddington, Rev. W. Wilson, Vicar of Walthamstow, Rev. J. Hughes, Secretary to the Parent Society, Rev. J. Hughes, Deddington, G.F. Stratton Esq. Dr. Macbride, Principal of Magdalen hall, Rev. T. Scott, M.A., Rev. T. Woodrooffe, M.A., Rev. Mr. Wood, Rev. C. Smalley, Rector of Brailes, &c. The Society has transmitted to the Oxford Auxiliary, during the past year, the sum of 100*l*. which being added to what has been sent before, amounts to 210*l*. given as a free donation towards furthering the noble object of the institution. The number of books distributed since the last anniversary is one hundred and one, which with those previously issued by the Worton Association, and this Branch Society, makes a total of 3020 copies of one or both Testaments, which have been put into circulation in the neighbourhood of Deddington.

14 April 1827, page 3

Oxford News.

The Rev. J. Hughes, late Curate of Deddington, in this county, has been recently presented with an elegant piece of plate, bearing the following inscription:-

On the one side - "To the Rev. John Hughes, of Llwynglas, Cardiganshire, four years Curate of Deddington, Oxon. Presented Christmas, 1826."

On the other side - "A Memorial of respect and affection for a faithful and diligent Minister, from the Parishioners of Deddington."

Cheltenham Chronicle, 14 October 1830, page 3

ANTI SLAVERY MEETING. - A numerous and highly respectable meeting was held on Thursday last at the Assembly Rooms, for the purpose of considering the propriety of petitioning Parliament on the subject of the immediate amelioration and gradual abolition of West Indian Slavery.

Report on meeting and speakers.

The Rev. Edw. Dewdney, curate of Deddington, Oxon, then rose and delivered a speech replete with powerful argument, in which he distinctly proved the practice of Slavery to be both impolitic and sinful, at once at variance with our duty to God and man; and such was the conviction he produced on the minds of his hearers of the national disgrace of Colonial Slavery, that he was frequently interrupted by unanimous bursts of applause, and strong expressions of sympathy for the sufferings of our fellow creatures. After the excitement occasioned by this flow of eloquence had subsided, the meeting was addressed by

24 September 1831, page 2

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE,

DEDDINGTON, OXON.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

By Mr. CHURCHILL,

On Wednesday the 5th day of October, 1831, - All the neat HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE and other Effects, on the premises called the Green, in Deddington aforesaid, in the occupation of the Rev. Edmund Dewdney, who is leaving; comprising mahogany four-post and tent bedsteads, with furnitures, feather beds and bedding, flock mattresses, mahogany dining, Pembroke, and other tables, mahogany side-board, mahogany and painted wardrobes, dressing tables, mahogany and other chairs, piano forte, carpets, pier and swing glasses, wash-hand stands, night tables, a quantity of stone and tin ware, and a variety of kitchen requisites, mash tub, casks, and the brewing and dairy utensils. The whole may be viewed on the morning of sale, until eleven o'clock, at which time precisely the auction will commence.

Catalogues may be had at the Inns in the neighbourhood; place of sale; and at the auctioneer's office, in Woodstock.

Northampton Mercury, 5 April 1834, page 4

Report on meeting at Banbury National School for the formation of an Auxiliary Association of the Church Missionary Society.

Moved by the Rev. R. Greaves, Deddington, seconded by Mr. G.C. Greenway, Lay Secretary to the Parent Society, and resolved unanimously: - That this meeting deplores the ignorance, superstition and degradation of Heathen and Mahomedan nations, and views with gratitude to God the labours of the Church Missionary Society for their improvement and conversion. That to afford the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Banbury an opportunity of cooperating in the Christian duty of evangelizing the Heathen, an association be now formed in aid of the Church Missionary Society, to be called "The Banbury and North Oxfordshire Church Missionary Association."

Oxford University and City Herald, 6 August 1836, page 3

University and Clerical Intelligence.

On Thursday se'nnight, the Rev. William Cotton Risley, M.A. late Fellow of New College, and Vicar of Whaddon, Bucks, was instituted, by commission, to the Vicarage of Deddington,

in this county, void by the cession of the Rev. R. Greaves;
patrons, the Dean and Canons of Windsor.

26 November 1836, page 3

Oxford News.

The Rev. William Cotton Risley, of Deddington, qualified
to act as a Justice of the Peace of this county, at the
adjourned Sessions on Saturday last.