

WASC 801

On Her Majesty's Service

WASC 801

CODE No. 27-31

WALTHAM ABBEY CHURCH MONTHLY.

August, 1904.

BAPTISMS.

- July 26—Beatrice Rosetta Caroline Sapsford.
 „ 29—Gwladys Edith Marjorie Sims.
 „ 4—Leonard Wakelin.
 „ 10—Clifford Dick Chapman.
 „ 10—Maud Ethel Saltmarsh.
 „ 17—May Elizabeth Slade.
 „ 17—Winifred Annie Palmer.
 „ 17—James Moses Stephen Ward.

MARRIAGES.

- June 25—At the Mission Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, Upshire—Lothar George de Bunsen, Esq., of Southacre, Cambridge, and Miss Victoria Alexandrina Buxton, daughter of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, Bart., G.C.M.G., and the Lady Victoria Buxton, of Warlies, Waltham Abbey.
 „ 30—Mr. Arthur Guiver, of Albury Ride, Cheshunt, and Miss Frances Jane Lapwood, of this parish.
 July 17—Mr. John Henry Challiss, and Miss Margaretta Maud Ward, both of Woollard Street.
 „ 18—Mr. Reuben Schofield Wakerley, of Radyr, Glamorgan, and Miss Eleanor Wicks, of Sewardstone Green.

DEATHS.

- May 23—Mrs. Edith Sarah Newnham, daughter of the late Mr. J. M. Button, of Sun Street, and wife of Mr. Frederic Philip H. Newnham, of Harrow, aged 30 years. Interred at Harrow.
 „ 30—Mrs. Mary Cannon, wife of the late Mr. Joseph Cannon, of Gilston, Essex, and mother of Mrs. William Garrett, of Farm Hill. Died at Farm Hill, aged 86 years. Interred at Gilston Churchyard.
 June 22—Mr. Arthur Ernest Holgate, son of Mr. Daniel Holgate, formerly of Fountain Place. Died at Walthamstow, aged 32 years. Interred at Waltham Abbey.
 „ 24—Mr. William Wilson, of Goff's Terrace, Enfield Highway, and formerly of the Market Place. Died at Edmonton, aged 89 years. Interred at Waltham.

- June 29—Mrs. Mary Jones, widow of the late Mr. David Jones, Master of the Leverton Endowed School, High Bridge Street. Died at Parkhurst, 32, King's Road, Leytonstone, aged 60 years. Interred at Waltham Abbey.
 July 1—Mr. Holgar Kirkeby, of Eastbrook Road, and formerly of Copenhagen, aged 30 years. Interred at Copenhagen, Denmark.
 „ 1—Mrs. Harriet Elizabeth Haggard, of Fountain Place, widow, aged 82 years.
 „ 3—Mr. Charles Garner, of Buckley Road, Brondebury, London, aged 61 years. Interred at Waltham Abbey.
 „ 4—Leonard Wakelin, infant son of Mr. William Wakelin, of Sewardstone Street, aged 13 days.
 „ 5—Lilian Maud Plumridge, infant daughter of William James Plumridge, of Silver Street, aged 14 days.
 „ 10—Ernest William Clark, son of Mr. John Clark, of Copt Hall Green, Upshire, aged 11 years.
 „ 12—Mrs. Elizabeth Thorn, of Crooked Mile, aged 57 years.
 „ 13—Mr. Samuel Barnard, of Woollard Street, son of the late Mr. Daniel Barnard, of Holyfield, aged 23 years.

THE HISTORY OF THE ABBEY CHURCH OF WALTHAM HOLY CROSS.

CXLVIII.

On completing the second year of his ministry at Waltham, the Reverend Thomas Pickthall prevailed on the parishioners, in Vestry assembled, to sanction a Sunday *Evening* Service, at which he promised to deliver a weekly sermon, instead of the usual discourse in the afternoon. In the Vestry Minutes, dated 15th October, 1808, we find the following record: "The Rev. Mr. Pickthall having recommended the opening of the Church at six in the evening every Sunday until Lady-day next, and offering to preach a Sermon for the Improvement of the Labourers, Man-Servants, and others, who cannot attend the afternoon service, from their avocations engaging that part of their time, and as every attempt of this sort appears calculated for good purposes: It is ordered and agreed that the Church be opened accordingly, under the direction of the Minister, Churchwardens, and Overseers, and that the Afternoon Sermon be dispensed with, whilst one is

preached at Evening Service. Also ordered that Candles be provided for such service, and that Mr. Thos. Thompson be requested to take the direction of the Singing Gallery and lighting up the Church, and that a proper person be appointed by the Minister and Churchwardens for opening the pews." At a subsequent Vestry, held fifteen months later, on 8th January, 1810, it was resolved that the Salary of the Church Clerk be raised from fifteen to twenty guineas a year, "in consideration of the additional duty incumbent on him by attending the Evening Lectures, the sum of eighteenpence weekly was also awarded to the Beadle for the extra work imposed upon him by this change." The lighting of the Church for the Evening Service involved the parishioners in the further expenditure of more than £20 per annum, as we find from a later entry, dated 12th April, 1819: "Cash paid to T. Thompson for Candles, £22 15s."

During the early months of the year 1809 certain repairs were effected in the Sunday Schoolrooms, probably the Lady Chapel and the old Chantry, at the east end, which were used for the purpose. In the Vestry Minutes of April 10th, 1809, we read: "At this Vestry it was agreed that a Moiety of the Bill delivered by Messrs. Hancorne and Wiggs, of £42 and upwards for repairing the Sunday Schoolrooms, shall be paid by the Overseers of the Poor, if not otherwise provided for and discharged."

During the year 1809 it was found necessary to rebuild the south and west sides of the upper portion of the Tower, which had been repaired at the cost of about £2,000 eleven years before, when the ancient battlemented parapet and north-east turret were removed. The repair of this upper stage had been so badly executed that "an architect," writing in 1807, referred to it as "a paltry substitute of four stone walls with oblong holes set up by way of a Belfry," and he adds that he was not surprised to learn that "this same Belfry is already so far become *unsafe* that it is shortly to be *taken down*."* This correspondent also charges the custodians of the venerable edifice with neglect of duty in allowing unsightly obstructions to disfigure and to block the entrance to its sacred courts. He writes: "So dead are the guardians of this Church to Edward's refined architecture, that the West Doorway . . . is partly hid by hutches and timber piles; the West Porch serving more for the purposes of a lumber shed than the introductory pass to a sacred sanctuary, the House of God!" Two years later, on 22nd August, 1809, a Vestry was held "to consider the repairs necessary to be done to the Steeple, on the report of the Surveyor, Mr. Patience," who stated that "it would cost £250 to repair it in the way pointed out in his plan, but that he recommended, in preference, the taking down of the same to the Belfry floor; the expense of which he estimated at £1,100, as he could not warrant the first mode being secure for any certain period," and the parishioners, thinking it too great an undertaking without the assistance of another Surveyor, resolved "to ask the opinion of Mr. Saxon, the

architect," and "that the Churchwardens who had the conduct of the late repair of the Steeple be directed to lay the accounts of the expence thereof before the said Vestry." At a second Vestry meeting, on September 12th, 1809, after Mr. Saxon's report had been read and duly considered, it was "ordered that the work be done under his directions, and that he may be at liberty to employ such persons to execute the same as he may think proper, and *that without delay*, and it is also ordered that the Vestry Clerk do call upon the Churchwardens to produce their accounts and vouchers on 22nd September next . . . and that from the year 1797." This resolution shows the dissatisfaction with which the parishioners regarded the bungling operations in the repair to the Tower in 1798, and the enormous expense which had been incurred to little purpose. We cannot ascertain how the authorities replied to this challenge, as the transactions of the Vestry fixed for September 22nd are not recorded.

A third Vestry was summoned to meet on 10th April, 1810, when Mr. Saxon's mode of restoring the two sides was approved, and it was decided to repair the south side first. The architect was accordingly instructed "to give directions to Mr. Hodge for erecting the scaffolding, and taking down the *South* side thereof, and when that is done they wish to receive his report whether a contract can be made for the remainder or not, as they desire the same to be done entirely under his directions." The signature of the Rev. Thomas Pickthall, as Chairman of Vestry, is here for the first time appended to the Minutes.

A fourth Vestry was convened on 2nd August, 1810, when "it was ordered that a copy of the letter sent to Mr. Saxon, and which was written this day in Vestry, be herein inserted, and is as follows, namely:

"Waltham Abbey, 21st Aug., 1810.

"SIR,—I have laid your last letter before the Vestry, and am desired to inform you that having read your first report, of the 1st of September, 1809, wherein you say that the repairs of the Steeple would not exceed £280, and also your letter of 6th April last, wherein you also say that after the south side was taken down a contract for the remaining parts might be made, they therefore wish to know from you whether that cannot be done, for they otherwise fear it will much exceed your first estimate, as you speak of £200 for what remains to be done, and as the persons employed now go on very slowly, it may tend to expedite the Business.

"They also wish to know what you think the expence already incurred will amount to, including the finishing of the South side.

"I have the Honor to be, Sir,

"Your most obedt. hble. Servant,

"JOS. S. JESSOPP, Vestry Clerk."

On the receipt of the Architect's reply a fifth Vestry meeting was held, on 3rd September, 1810, when it was decided to repair the *West* Side, in accordance with the Architect's recommendation. The following short paragraph occurs in the Minutes: "Ordered that the work be done on the *West* Side of the Church

* *Gentleman's Magazine*, No. CXIII., page 929.

Steeple, agreeably to Mr. Saxon's advice in his letter of the 24th August last, and that the same be done as speedily as convenient."

The final settlement of the account, however, was not made until three years later, when the authorities resorted to drastic measures to raise the amount required to defray the expenses, as we learn from the Minutes of a sixth Vestry, held on 12th October, 1813, when the following paragraph occurs: "It appearing to this Vestry that there is a deficiency of £359 and upwards due and owing from the Churchwardens to the Surveyor, Builders, and others, for the repairs done to the Church Steeple, and that the arrears of the last Church Rate are not nearly sufficient to answer the same. It is therefore ordered that such arrears of the last Church Rate as are due from persons able to pay, be immediately enforced by legal measures, and that a Rate at sixpence in the pound be forthwith granted to the present Churchwardens, who are directed to make out and collect the same. Also ordered that the Churchwardens do employ the Vestry Clerk to enter the last Rate as are due from persons able to pay, be immediate account of their payments and arrears."

It is singular that the upper stage of the Tower, which was the cause of so much trouble and expense to our predecessors in the parish at the beginning of the 19th century, should again be the fruitful source of anxious solicitude at the beginning of the 20th century, but we trust that this dilapidated portion of the venerable structure may soon be repaired, and improved in such a manner that our successors in the next century may have no cause to complain of inferior style, material, or workmanship.

Shortly after the repair of the Tower in 1810-11 a disastrous explosion occurred at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, and resulted in the loss of eight lives. This fatal accident took place on the Lower Island below Waltham Lock, at a quarter-past eleven on the morning of November 27th, 1811, when No. 4 Press House first exploded, setting fire also to the Corning House and Reel House. Seven poor Workmen were killed on the spot, and Thomas Wiltshire, foreman of the Reel House, the only survivor, died on December 13th, from the effects of the terrible shock and burns which he had sustained. The names of the other victims were as follows: William Stevens, foreman of Corning House; Benjamin Parker, Thomas Belsham, Henry Wakeland, John Grapes, Joseph Chapple, and Daniel Goats, Corning House men. The following account of the disaster was published in the *Cambridge Chronicle* of November 29th, 1811:

"A DREADFUL ACCIDENT.

"A powder mill at Waltham Abbey was blown up on Wednesday last, eight lives lost, and seven of the persons left families. The whole of the town of Waltham was in great danger, as it was thought the magazine would have been blown up. A man was, in consequence, sent through the streets of Waltham to caution the inhabitants to leave their houses instantly. No further explosion had, however, taken place at the date of our last account. At Stepney a mirror

of plate-glass was broken by the shock; at Hackney several panes of glass were forced in; and at Blackwall the windows throughout the whole street were shattered. Near the New Road, Marylebone, several of the houses were much broken; and the labourers who were excavating in the park felt the ground shake where they were at work. Even ships on the river were shaken. Some of the morning papers mistook it for an earthquake. This seems singular that the shock should be felt so much more in London, while the damage done in the town was but trifling, excepting that the current of air at the time might have directed the concussion from the town."

The Funeral Service was solemnised in the Abbey Church, but not until December 16th, three weeks after the explosion, as the shattered remains of one of the poor men were not discovered for some time, and Wiltshire was not released from his sufferings until December 13th. The mutilated forms of the unfortunate victims were reverently laid in one grave in the Churchyard, the Rev. Thos. Pickthall officiating, and he records the interment as follows:

"Burials, 1811.—December 16th, Wiltshire Thomas, one of the eight poor men who were destroyed by the explosion of the Powder mills on the Lower Island. The names of the others are inserted from memory, as no proper account was transmitted to the Registrar." These names appear in the following order: "Stevens, Chappel, Parker, Wakeling, Goats, Grapes, Belsher." Below this sad list is appended a memorandum referring to the Burials of the whole year: "The above have been duly and faithfully entered by me,

"THOMAS PICKTHALL, Curate."

Donations and allowances were eventually granted to the bereaved relatives by the Board of Ordnance, and William Peyton, or Paton, a carpenter, also received a donation of £20, in recognition of his heroic act at the time of the accident in extinguishing a firebrand that fell near the door of the Magazine, which had been forced open by the explosion, thus securing the safety of the town and inhabitants. The demand for Gunpowder throughout the period of the Continental wars was so heavy that the men in the Factory were working at high pressure seven days a week. It is related* that "the horses (who set the machinery in motion) had bells on their harness, and when they passed round they struck against a spring which caused the ringing of a small bell, to let the heads of the Factory Department know if they performed their work regularly, and at the proper speed. These work-bells were to be heard jingling from mill to mill all the way along each side of our marsh, at the same time as our Church bells were chiming for Divine Service."

On November 23rd, 1812, it was reported that 22,000 barrels of 90 lbs. each had been made since the beginning of the year, and the hope was expressed "that 30,000 barrels would be manufactured in 1814 with

* See "Historical Notices of the Royal Gunpowder Factory," by the late W. Winters, F.R.H.S., page 63.

the aid of the new mills and one Corning House." It was further stated "that the quantity could be raised to 53,000 barrels by adding an horse mill: two double mills on Lower Island, four ditto at Upper Mill Yard, and four at Cheshunt inlet."

J. H. STAMP, Curate.

19th May, 1904.

WALTHAM ABBEY.

The 19th annual Church Parade of the local Friendly Societies was held on Sunday afternoon, July 3rd, when the service in the Abbey Church was conducted by the Vicar, the Rev. F. B. Johnston, who also preached an appropriate sermon on Exbdus xxi. 19. In the concluding portion of the discourse an earnest appeal was made on behalf of the Tottenham Hospital, the Hertfordshire Convalescent Home at St. Leonards-on-Sea, and the Cheshunt Cottage Hospital. In referring to the Convalescent Home the Vicar alluded to the serious loss recently sustained by that institution through the death of Canon Burnside, its pious Founder and devoted manager. The collection in the Church and streets amounted to £25.7s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$.

On July 10th sermons in aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society were preached at the morning and evening services in the Abbey Church by the Rev. H. A. Raynes, Home Superintendent, who also preached in the afternoon at the Mission Church, Copt Hall Green.

The annual Festival of the Waltham Abbey Branch of the Mothers' Union took place on July 7th, when a special service was held in the Abbey Church at 3.30. An impressive sermon was preached by the Rev. W. Sydney C. Seacombe, Secretary to Missions to Seamen. After the service the members were entertained to tea by the lady associates in the Victoria Hall, kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. and Mrs. J. Parnell, who also generously provided tea for Associates and Friends on the beautiful lawn in front of their residence.

WALTHAM ABBEY CHURCH TOWER FUND.

At the meeting of the Ladies' Bazaar Committee on June 22nd it was decided that application should be made for the use of the new Town Hall about the third

or fourth week in October, and the application has since been granted by the District Council.

At a meeting of the General Committee on July 5th the Hon. Clerical Secretary reported that Mr. J. A. Reeve, the architect, had received tenders as follows from the three local firms invited to send in estimates: Mr. P. Paul, £2,090; Mr. E. J. Hanchel, £2,000; Mr. J. Bentley, £1,759. It was then unanimously agreed to accept Mr. Bentley's tender, and after a financial statement by Mr. J. Eve (one of the Lay Secretaries), in which he showed that the sum of £1,600 was practically assured, the Committee decided to guarantee to raise the five hundred pounds still needed to cover all expenses connected with the work of restoration, that there might be no further delay.

Donations to the Fund, and articles for the proposed Bazaar will be gladly received by the Hon. Secretaries, and by Miss M. B. Lee, Hon. Sec. to the Ladies' Committee.

FOURTEENTH LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

	£	s.	d.
Per Rev. F. B. Johnston—			
Sums already acknowledged	£1,743	11	7
Miss A. E. Francis		3	0
Per Mrs. Bury—			
Mrs. Hyde Clark		3	0
Miss M. A. Tottenham		1	0
Per Miss M. B. Lee—			
Rt. Hon. Sir Albert H. Hime, K.C.M.G.	5	0	0
Mrs. Kingsley	5	0	0
Per Mrs. Renshawe—			
A Friend	1	0	0
Per Mrs. J. M. Bentley—			
Mrs. Bentley, Sen....	1	1	0
Per Miss E. Dean, Collecting Card	0	5	6
Per Mr. A. G. Hubbard—			
Interest on money deposited in the Bank, and returned by J. Parnell, Esq....	0	17	1
		20	2
Amount already acknowledged	1,743	11	7
	<u>£1,763</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>

The Abbey Church Bells were rung on June 24th in honour of the King's Birthday, which was celebrated on that day.

On the following day our local Ringers went on their annual outing to Hornchurch, and after a pleasant drive through the Forest rang upon the peal of eight bells in the steeple of that pretty Essex village. The Hornchurch Ringers paid a return visit on July 9th, when they ascended our ancient tower, and took part in some merry peals on the Abbey Church Bells.