

Appendix - History of the Church

= History of =
St. Mark's Church,
BATH.



By A. G. COLE

Lecture on the History of St. Mark's, Lyncombe

Foreword.

"But thou, O Lord . . . shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come; for Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

Ps. 102, v. 12-14

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The following extracts from the "*Bath Chronicle*" and the "*Bath Herald*" reports are given in an introduction to the Lecture: —

The interest of a large number of parishioners of St. Mark's was shown by a record attendance of the C.E.M.S. and friends on Monday, April 18th, 1910, at the Parish Room, Holloway, to hear a paper read by Mr. A. G. Cole, on "The History of St. Mark's Church," the chairman being the Rev. G. E. Hillyard, curate-in-charge. Mr. Cole is fitted in a singular degree to take this subject as he has been officially connected with St. Mark's Church for 24 years, 19 of which he has acted as verger and clerk.

This lecture was considered to be instructive and of such deep interest, that, besides a most cordial vote of thanks being accorded the lecturer, it was unanimously decided to have it printed verbatim.

Before bringing to your notice a few facts in connection with the history of St. Mark's Church, I should like you, if possible to try and realize the position of the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe in the year 1820, just 90 years ago.

I especially wish this, because there is a tendency in these days to say that the site of the Church was badly chosen, but, at that time, at any rate, the whole of the residential part of the parish of Lyncombe, lay in the immediate neighbourhood.

All of that now densely populated district of Oldfield Park, Hayesfield Park, Bloomfield Gardens and Avenue, and the Beechen Cliff Avenues were all green fields, and it is only during very recent years, (well within the recollection of most of us) that the need of a new district Church for West Lyncombe has arisen.

Yet, at the same time, there is still in the close vicinity of St. Mark's a population capable of filling it two or three times, if you could get them to come.

Just one more glance backward before I proceed with my history, and that to show what changes have arisen during the last century.

The population of Lyncombe and Widcombe in 1831, was 8704. In 1901, the population has increased to 14,372, and I expect at the next census in 1911 it will show another large increase.

The Church accommodation consisted of Old Widcombe Church and St. Mary Magdalene, which was restored and re-opened for the Celebration of Divine Service in 1824, and continued to be used until the consecration of St. Mark's Church in 1832, when it was again closed for awhile.

There were no National or Council Schools, no Railways, Electric Cars, Bicycles or Flying Machines. Gas, as an illuminant for public purposes, was struggling for an existence, and Votes for Women had not been heard of.

Then it was that the Burial Ground which now surrounds St. Mark's Church was first laid out, the original approach to which being the steps in Claverton St. Soon after the inhabitants of the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe began to find that the church accommodation was too small for their requirements, so they purchased from Mr. Mant, the owner of the Beechen Cliff estate, a portion of ground in close proximity to the Burial Ground, for which they paid £459, and ways and means were discussed for building a new Church, and plans, specifications and estimates were prepared for a Church capable of holding 1,600 people, at a cost of £8,249. But owing to the limited funds of the parish, and a consequent inability to engage two Curates, it was deemed advisable to reduce the accommodation to 1,200 people.

At that time, there was in existence a body of men called "His Majesty's Commissioners for Building New Churches." These gentlemen were approached by the parishioners, and after a great deal of correspondence, the following resolution was passed by the Commissioners:

28 February, 1826

"That the Board, having taken into consideration the extent of population and the want of further Church accommodation in the parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe, deem it expedient that a new Church or Chapel should be built therein, capable of accommodating 1,200 persons, including such a number of Free Seats as the nature and extent of the population may require, and in respect to which the applicants are requested to communicate with the Lord Bishop of the Diocese. That the Board will grant in His Majesty's name, out of the Parliamentary Fund, two-thirds of the expense of erecting such Church or Chapel, on the site already provided in case the parish will furnish the remaining one-third, and that the applicants to be requested to obtain plans, prepared on as low a scale of expense as possible, and send the same with an estimate, for the consideration of the Board."

As a result of the above resolution, a notice as follows, was published during Divine Service at Old Widcombe Church, on Sunday, July 16th, 1826, by Aaron Fry, Clerk of the parish.

"County of Somerset, Parish of Lyncombe and Widcombe

Notice is hereby given, that a Vestry will be held in the Vestry Room, belonging to this parish, on Thursday next, the 20th inst, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, to

appoint a Committee to assist the Churchwardens in superintending the building of a new parish Church, according to the estimates, plans and specifications laid before and approved by His Majesty's Right Honourable and Honourable Board of Commissioners for building New Churches, and also to take into consideration the propriety of purchasing one quarter of an acre of land of Mr. Mant, to enlarge the new Burial Ground in this parish."

At the meeting, the resolution was put and lost, and the following amendment was unanimously carried:

"That a Committee be appointed with the Churchwardens, to investigate and ascertain what will be the probable expense to the parish, for building a Church in the Burial Ground, with every other matter or thing relating thereto or connected therewith, and that the Committee to be authorized to call in such professional aid as they may deem necessary, at the expense of the parish, and to report the result of their enquires at a Public Vestry."

The Committee held its first meeting on July 24th, 1826, and it was not until March 18th, 1830, that they were able to present a report to the Vestry, but during that period they worked very hard, by writing letters, by personal interviews, and in every conceivable way to bring about the object they had taken in hand. The following is a copy of the report:

"The Committee appointed by Vestry held on the 20th of July, 1826, to enquire into the probable expense to the parish for building a Church, have now to lay their first report before them assemble by Public Vestry this day. They do not conceive it necessary to refer to the correspondence with His Majesty's Commissioners relative to the preparation of plans, receiving estimates, and other incidental matters connected therewith, as that correspondence would be too voluminous to submit in an official shape on the present occasion. The Committee therefore have only now to acquaint the parish that the total amount of the estimates for building a new Chapel, including the purchase of the site, amount to £5777 9s., one third of which – £1925 16s. 4d – was to have been defrayed by the parish. But they have the satisfaction to state that that sum has been collected by provide subscriptions, and forwarded to His Majesty's Commissioners, into whose hands the erection of the building is now consigned. That the deeds, assignments, and other necessary arrangements have been completed, and preparations are now in progress for the ceremony of laying the foundation stone.

The Committee repeat that they feel much pleasure in thus being able to state that the expense heretofore anticipated by the parish, has been prevented by the benevolence of private individuals, and as two years may elapse before the building is complete, and the interior equipments necessary, they look forward with every degree of confidence, that the same

spirit of Christian feeling and liberality which has so especially manifested itself on this occasion, will also be exhibited on that, and they therefore have every reason to suppose, no call whatever will be necessary on the parish, and that under these circumstances and expectations, the expense cannot possibly at present be defined.

In conclusion, they acquaint the parishioners that they will continue to perform their duty with zeal as heretofore, and with proper attention to the interests of the parish."

It is of interest to note that before the Church was built, there was no access to the site from Holloway. I find that at one of the Committee meetings, a Mr. Lewis attended and delivered an estimate for the approach to the new Burial Ground and intended Church from Holloway, £487.

And again in 1864, a sum of £64 4s. was voluntarily subscribed by the parishioners, for defraying the cost of railing off the present path through the Churchyard.

As we have heard from the report, the total cost was estimated at £5,777 9s., but was subsequently increased to £6,069, and was made up of the following items:— Builder's estimate, £5,100; Architect's Commission and Clerk of the Works, £510; and purchase of Site, £459.

We will now see how the money was raised, and I may say that in those days, they could do some queer, very queer things. (I rather think that the Committee of the proposed new Church for West Lyncombe, wish they could do the same now). For instance, it was quite legal for them to levy a rate on the whole of the parishioners of the parish, to help build a Church, and, as a matter of fact, the Commissioners did offer to lend the Committee £1,000 at 4 per cent interest repayable in 4 years, and to be secured by a charge on the parish rate.

It was also common under the 33rd Section of the 59th Act of George III, Chapter 124, to sell the seats of the church, that is, one might buy a seat in perpetuity, for a good round subscription, but fortunately for the future incumbents of the church, it was not found necessary to resort to this plan, for, by the generosity of His Majesty's Commissioners, of the total amount required, £4,346 was paid, leaving £1,723 to be raised by the local Committee.

The Corporation of Bath gave £500 towards this amount, which, with other liberal subscriptions, the Committee succeeded in getting, and finally by some gentlemen coming forward and guaranteeing the last £300, on September 1st, 1829, the total amount was forwarded to the Commissioners, and on the 16th April, 1830, the foundation stone of St. Mark's Church, was well and truly laid.

I do not know whether the Bath newspapers of the day gave an account of the proceedings, but here is a paragraph taken from the "Annals of Bath," by Captain Rowland Mainwaring, published in 1838:

"On the 16th April, 1830, the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the new Church at Widcombe took place. The parties composing the procession (which was headed by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese) were received on the ground by the high constables, T. Watchurst and F. Hedger, Esq., and after the usual ceremonies had taken place, the stone was lowered to its destination, after which the Lord Bishop offered up a devout prayer for the success of the undertaking. The following is the inscription engraved on the brass plate, affixed to the upper portion of the stone:

To the honour of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and to promote the Protestant Worship of the United Church of England and Ireland, the first stone of this Church was laid in the name of our Blessed Saviour, on the 16th day of April, in the year of our Lord, 1830, in the eleventh year of the reign of King George the Fourth, and the sixth year of the translation of the Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells. Charles Crook, *Vicar*; Rowland Mainwaring, John Wright, *Churchwardens*; G. P. Manners, *Architect*; James Chappel, *Builder*.

The Bells of the Abbey and Widcombe Churches rang merrily on the occasion throughout the day and, at the conclusion of the ceremony, the workmen were regaled with a substantial meal.

Thus, through the liberality of the Corporate Body, who voted £500 towards the erection of the above Church, the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, and His Majesty's Commissioners for building Churches, (who advanced £300 beyond the usual two-thirds which they are empowered to furnish), was an example set to the well wishers of the Established Church, which was liberally followed by the opulent inhabitants of the city and its environs, and a commodious Church commenced in that populous parish capable of containing 1200 persons of which 630 are free sittings. We shall shortly have to announce its consecration."

The expenses of laying the foundation stone, (including I expect the substantial meal to the workmen), amounted to £30 4s. 4d., while the fees payable and paid to the Bishop for the Consecration, were £41 8s. 8d., and were solemnly declared by the Committee to be part of the unavoidable expenses connected with the building of the church, and as such were paid out of the Subscriptions.

The following is Captain Mainwarings's account of the Consecration: –

On the 27th of April, 1832, the consecration of Widcombe New Church dedicated to St. Mark, took Place The morning was auspiciously fine. At eleven, the Lord Bishop of the Diocese attended by his son, The Reverend

Chancellor Law, was met at the west door by the churchwardens, and a large body of Clergy, and proceeding up the centre aisle, to the Communion Table, the ceremony of consecration commenced. At the conclusion, Divine service was performed, and an appropriate sermon preached by the Reverend Charles Crook, Vicar of the Parish.

The interior of this admired structure presents on every side the appearance of lightness, convenience and comfort. The body of the church is divided into ten arched compartments, supported by Gothic pillars. A handsome gallery projects from three sides of the building, and at the western end is the choir, on the panels in from of which is the following inscription, with the Royal Arms emblazoned in the centre:

This Church, which is capable of accommodating twelve hundred persons, was built in the year 1831, by subscriptions, aided by a grant from His Majesty's Commissioners for building Churches and Chapels. In consequence of such grant, six hundred and thirty sittings are hereby declared to be free and unappropriated for ever. Charles Crook, Vicar; Joseph Large, Robert Ashman, Churchwardens.

The following liberal contributions were made to the Church, in aid of its heavy expenses:

Two tasteful and appropriate altar chairs by Mr. Manners, the Architect; the Communion Plate by Robert Ashman, Esq.; Altar and Prayer Books, with the black hangings used in Lent, by T. P. Clarke, Esq.; the Bible by the Rev. T. S. Sawbridge; the Velvet Covering for the Communion Table, by F. Hedger, Esq.; and the linen for the same by Mr. George Shaw, Abbey Churchyard."

At the time of its consecration, the Church was under the control of the Rector of Bath, who was also Vicar of Lyncombe and Widcombe, so a Curate was appointed, and a salary assigned to him, from the letting of the seats according to a scale duly approved by the Commissioners, and I also find that the clerk was allowed £15 per year out of the pew rents, but alas, the poor clerk of to-day, don't see the colour of the pre rents, much less handle them.

One sometimes wonders what our forefathers did for light. The Church has at different times been lighted with oil, ordinary gas burners, and now we have the incandescent lights, and I do not know of a Church that has such good light, both natural and artificial.

It was intended when the Church was opened, to hold only morning and afternoon services, but the congregation were not satisfied, but wanted an evening service, so a long correspondence took place between the Rector of Bath and the Curate of St. Mark's, and finally the Rector of Bath wrote, "If you insist on having evening service, the you must pay for the lighting, for I shan't," so from that time until 1881, the Curate or Vicar paid some portion of the lighting account.

The heating of the Church has been a source of constant anxiety to the authorities, and at the present time, the Churchwardens are still looking for an apparatus that will heat the Church to suit everybody's individual taste.

From 1832 to 1835, the Church continued to be a Chapel of Ease to the Church of St. Peter and Paul, (otherwise known as Bath Abbey), with Curates appointed as occasion required, but at the latter date, it was decided to form a separate Ecclesiastical Parish, and the Rev. J. W. Sproule, who at the time of the foundation of the parish of Lyncombe, was acting as Curate of the Church, was preferred as its first by the Simeon Trustees, in whose hands the patronage lay.

About the year 1870, a new parish was formed for the district of South Lyncombe, with St. Luke's as its Parish Church, the mother church of St. Mark's being allowed £1,000 as compensation (which sum was eventually devoted towards the building of the Vicarage), each Incumbent, until it was built, receiving the interest of the money towards his house rent.

Mr. Sproule remained as Vicar until 1881, (having been minister of the Church for 31 years), when to the great regret of his parishioners, he passed over to the majority, and was succeeded by the Rev. E. J. Wemyss Whittaker, during whose incumbency in 1883, the Church was renovated and reseated, the galleries were put back, the chancel thrown out, the four stained-glass figures were removed from the centre to the sides of the chancel, the old reredos was taken down and fixed at the bottom of the Church by the west entrance, and the organ and choir stalls were removed from the west gallery to their present position. This was done at a cost of between two and three thousand pounds.

It entirely altered the appearance of the interior of the Church to its great advantage, so much so, that the original builder would fail to recognise his own handiwork.

The sitting accommodation was slightly reduced, although as was explained by the Rev. Wemyss Whittaker at a Vestry meeting when the matter was brought forward, as follows:

"That under the old arrangement it was supposed that there was accommodation for 1,250 people. He said 'supposed' because it was never possible. The Church had been measured before anything was done, and it was found that the accommodation would not give more than 14 inches each to 1,100 people. The matter had cropped up in other Churches, and the fact was, it was a regular dodge to get money at the time the Churches were built. For that Church to accommodate 1,200 people, it would be necessary for the people to sit as close as herrings in a barrel, each person having one foot space. The present accommodation allowed 15 or 16 inches for 1,000 people."

A further reduction of the seats (about 70) has been made at various times, but notably in 1894 when the gallery in the west end of the Church was converted into a ringing chamber on the occasion of the gift of a peal of 6 bells, which was left as a legacy by the late Mr. Thomas Spender, of Tyrol Cottage, Entry Hill.

Thus, at the time of writing in 1910, the Church is capable of accommodating (according to the above figures) 930, and not 750 as is the number given in the Bath Directory. Perhaps some one interested will have the figures tested and corrected.

In 1885, the beautifully proportioned Brass Lectern now in use was given to the Church by Mrs. Kemp, as a memorial of her husband.

In the same year, the parish Room in Holloway was presented to the Church as a gift in his life time by the late Robert Porter, Esq. of Westfield House.

In 1891, five new windows were put into the south aisle at a cost of £57 15., replacing the original ones, which were very dilapidated.

In 1892, £37 12s. was paid for repairs to the pinnacles round the Church, and I am almost sure that the pinnacles on the tower would look better, if a similar amount was spent on them.

In 1889 and 1893 respectively, the Mission Church in the Lower Bristol Road and St. Bartholomew's Church, were opened for Divine Service, thus largely increasing the responsibility of the Vicar, the Rev. Wemyss Whittaker, who in 1895, in consequence of a severe illness, felt compelled to resign the living, and the Rev. J. T. Muller was appointed, and commenced his ministry here on January 1st, 1896.

In 1894, (during Mr. Whittaker's incumbency) a dispute arose as to right of way to the Church leading up from Claverton Street, and a great deal of legal expense was incurred before the matter was finally decided in favour of the Church. Again as recently as 1907, the Churchwardens had to assert their rights when the Corporation of Bath altered the steps in an objectionable way.

In 1897, the beautiful Caen stone Reredos was erected by Mrs. James Stone and family in memory of the late Mr. James Stone, who was Churchwarden for a period of 12 years.

In 1902, the Baptismal Font was removed from under the Tower to its present position in the Church. The Lyncombe Vicarage was also built (but not entirely paid for) during the incumbency of Mr. Muller, and the plot of ground in Oldfield Road for the proposed new Church in West Lyncombe, was secured, but in 1903 Mr. Muller, having partially recovered from a severe illness, feeling that the work of the parish was too great a responsibility for him, exchanged with the late Vicar, the Rev. L. R. Hancock of Clutton, to whom, after a stay of 6½ years, was offered the incumbency of Holy Trinity, Richmond, Surrey, and as Mr. Hancock's incumbency of St. Marks' is of so recent a date and well-known to all of us I will not dwell further on it. Notwithstanding, I cannot ignore the fact that £80 was spent on the ventilation of

the Church, nor shall we soon forget the splendid effort made by the C.E.M.S. in 1908, when in about 3 months, they succeeded in raising the necessary funds to clean and decorate the interior of the Church, and making it look, as the Rural Dean said at his last visitation, "More attractive than he had ever seen it." On this occasion, several handsome gifts were presented; notably, the Handsome Communion Cloth, New Carpet for Chancel, Brass Ewer and Kneeler for Font, Alms Dish and Book Rests for Communion Table, Frontal for Pulpit, New Book Markers, and 50 Kneelers for the Centre Aisle.

At the present time, I feel sure we are all of us anxiously awaiting the arrival of our New Vicar, the Rev. M. E. Welldon, who has accepted the living, and will doubtless be warmly welcome when he arrives. But in the meantime, I would suggest we all do our best, by regularity in attending the services, to help our esteemed Curate-in-charge and the Churchwardens.

The living of Lyncombe is a poor one financially, and the income is mainly derived from the letting of the seats in St. Mark's Church. There is also an endowment of £100 tithe, worth at present value about £68. Thus with the Pew Rents, Tithe and certain Fees for Marriages and Burials, an income of about £200 per annum is made up, but if you set against that the enormous and constant demands made upon the purse of the Vicar, you will find, that unless a Vicar has private means, he would soon starve on the living of Lyncombe.

Of the character of the services at St. Marks', one need hardly say, in view of the patronage being vested in the Simeon Trustees, that they are of a purely Evangelical type, but, looking back over a period of nearly 40 year's connection with the Church, one is forcibly struck by with the difference between the way the services are rendered, and if the changes had been made suddenly instead of by gradual changes, they would have caused consternation to the congregation.

However, I do not think many of us would like to read Psalms verse by verse, and as for a mixed choir, we should fancy we had got into a chapel, and I am very sure I do not want the job of going into the vestry (as the sexton had to do in years gone by) to help the Parson change his surplice and put on his black gown before preaching the sermon. My opinion is you cannot have too bright and hearty a service, and the more congregational you can get it, the better.

In conclusion I will give you a few statistics, although I am afraid they are dry reading.

There are about 300 services held annually in the Church. There were 63 celebrations of Holy Communion last year, and 1929 Communicants.

The number of Baptisms recorded from No. 1 in 1843 to April 15th, 1910, were 5596, the largest number at any one service being 20. (Poor Parson, I expect he was tired and wanted his tea when he had finished). One poor unfortunate infant (not one of the above 20), I find was christened, Primrose, Olive, Clematis, Asteria. What

a name to struggle through life with. I remember the Vicar who baptized the child said to her mother, "Is this your first?" "No sir," she said, "My twelfth." And I suggest that perhaps the poor woman thought she would finish the bunch and have done with it.

The marriages solemnized at St. Mark's Church from 1856 (prior to which date the Church was not licensed for marriages), to April 1910 were 1500. I find the most popular day is Sunday. Out of a given 100 weddings, Sunday claims 26, Monday 25, Tuesday 9, Wednesday 10, Thursday 10, Friday (not any), Saturday 22. We have never had a wedding on a Friday during the whole time I have been acting as Clerk.

We have had 2 Deaf and Dumb weddings, 1 Blind Bridegroom (although I suppose some people would be unkind enough to say, the men were all blind), and at a recent wedding, the Bridegroom was an Austrian and his best man a Dutchman. We have fortunately had no very unpleasant circumstances at any wedding in my recollection, most of the happy couples behaving in a reverent and orderly manner, and is any lady or gentleman present contemplates matrimony in the near future they cannot do better than come to us and we will see them through.

The Churchyard at one time was a large source of income to the incumbent and sexton, but was closed by an Order in Council in 1855.

From 1820, when first laid out, to 1843, we have no record of interments, but from 1843 to 1909, 3732 Burials took place, the largest number in one day being 7.

There are many yarns told about the sextons of old, but as they are mainly of a gruesome character, I think it best to avoid most of them. But here are a couple of stories both of which I believe to be true:—

It is related of a certain Clerk of the Parish, that it sometimes happened that there would be funerals at Old Widcombe and St. Mark's at the same time, and as in those days it was the custom to give the Clerk a hat-band, the old gent use[d] to send one of his hats down to St. Mark's by his wife, who acted as his deputy and this secured the hat-band, and even after the old man's death, his hat was still brought forward y his widow who continued to act as sextoness.

Not long ago an old gentleman well over 70 years of age walked into the churchyard, and in the course of conversation he told me he attended the Church 60 years ago, and amongst the many old parishioners he asked for was the Old Sexton. "Old Finisher" as we boys used to call him. Of course the old chap was dead and gone. But the mention of his name brought a flood of recollection to both of us. We pictured the old man as he used to appear on Sundays, with his white corduroy trousers and wooden clogs and not even a nice long black gown to cover them.

He was supposed to keep order amongst the boys of the Sunday School, but I am sure he made more noise than the boys he was set over. On one occasion having fallen asleep (as was his custom during the sermon) one of the boys introduced a live

black-beetle into his open mouth. What a row there was! But I am glad to say the old man took and gave every boy there a good hiding.

I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to increase your knowledge, and, I trust, your interest in our beloved Church of St. Mark's. Let us in our day and generation, see that there is nothing lacking for the preservation and necessary repairs, so that the Church may be well and decently maintained for the worship of Almighty God.

— APPENDIX. —

*List of Vicars, Curates, and Churchwardens of St. Mark's
Lyncombe.*

VICARS.

1856	Rev. J. W. Sproule	1896	Rev. J. Muller
1881	Rev. E. J. Wemyss Whittaker	1903	Rev. L. R. Hancock
1910	Rev. M. E. Weldon (Vicar Designate)		

CURATES.

1832	Rev. William Chave	1885	Rev. M. D. Lines
1843	„ Joshua R. Watson	1886	„ F. M. Caulfield
1843	„ G. Valpy	1888	„ R. Bushell
1845	„ G. B. Cashman	1891	„ J. Elliott
1847	„ G. K. Keogh	1893	„ H. A. Crabbe
1850	„ J. W. Sproule	1893	„ A. J. Clark
1856	„ H. C. Minchin	1895	„ W. J. Spink
1857	„ C. Greenside	1896	„ G. E. Ffrench
1860	„ J. Colwill	1897	„ E. Augustin Marriott
1861	„ W. S. Sprague	1901	„ E. C. Wood
1861	„ A. Medland	1903	„ C. M. Becker
1865	„ W. Stokes Shaw	1904	„ E. C. Pitt Johnson
1874	„ W. Lionel Green	1905	„ A. S. Thompson
1878	„ John Corvan	1907	„ E. W. Shephard Walwyn
1881	„ F. H. T. Tarrant	1907	„ J. Seaver
1882	„ Thos. P. Williams	1908	„ G. A. Willan
1884	„ J. K. Quarterman	1908	„ P. C. Ingrouille
		1908	Rev. G. E. Hillyard.

CHURCHWARDENS.

1832	Joseph Large, Esq.	1873	Henry Whitley, Esq.
1832	Robert Ashman, Esq.	1881	G. Sparks, Esq.
1845	P. Rooke, Esq.	1881	G. Dixon, Esq.
1845	H. Brett, Esq.	1884	James Stone, Esq.
1850	Lieut. Col. Trouson	1889	J. D. Taylor, Esq.
1851	G. Waldron, Esq.	1896	S. J. G. Stone, Esq.
1855	G. A. Jones, Esq.	1903	F. Mullett, Esq.
1856	James Bullock, Esq.	1905	R. F. Houlston, Esq.
		1908	H. R. Wright Sayers, Esq.

Notes on the History

1 Simeon's Trustees

The parish of Widcombe has 'Simeon's Trustees' as its patrons and A G Cole refers to this as conferring an evangelical flavour to St Mark's. Charles Simeon (1759-1836), an evangelical minister, was the founder of the Church Missionary Society and The London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews (1809) (which is now known as The Church's Ministry Among Jewish People) and acted as advisor to the East India Company in the choice of chaplains for India. In English law, patronage is a form of property and, at one time, it could be bought and sold. He pioneered the buying of advowsons, or patronage rights, for evangelical purposes. It persists as Simeon's Trustees and is a patronage trust nominating incumbents for vacant benefices in the Trust's gift. It has the following number of livings: 94 sole; 17 joint; 17 Patronage Boards; 18 turns.

2 C.E.M.S.

The article refers on a couple of occasions to C.E.M.S. without explanation. This is the Church of England Men's Society. It was formed in 1899 by Archbishop Frederick Temple by the amalgamation of the Church of England's Young Men's Society, the Young Men's Friendly Society and the Men's Help Society. *A time to be born and a time to die: a report to the Council of the Church of England Men's Society* by Rev John Moses, Mar 1985. It was dissolved in 1986.

3 St Matthew's church, Widcombe

Curiously, the history does not refer at all to St Matthew's Church, Widcombe Hill. It was built after St Mark's in 1849.

4 Captain Mainwaring

The history quotes from Captain Mainwaring. This is a book entitled *Annals of Bath from the Year 1800 To the Passing of The New Municipal Act*, by Captn Rowland Mainwaring, RN, printed by Mary Meyler & Son 1838.

5 Cemetery Dates

The history states that the cemetery was laid out in 1820. However, the sale of the land only occurred in 1825. It also states that the cemetery was closed in 1855 by an Order in Council. It is clear from the memorials that remain that burials continued after this date with the number per year in the burial book not diminishing significantly until the new burial ground on the Lower Bristol Road opened in 1861.

6 Number Buried

The details of those buried in the period 1825-1843, the history states as being unknown. These are in the St Thomas à Becket register as the register for St

Mark's didn't start until 1843. The history has "from 1843 to 1909, 3732 Burials took place". To this needs to be added the 2579 burials that are noted in the St Thomas à Becket registers for the period 1825-1842. There are a further 500 burial entries after 1842 in that burial register; some of those burials would have been in St Thomas's burial ground but many would have been at either St Mark's or, after 1861, at the new burial ground on the Lower Bristol Road.

Also of note is *Burial Ground Accommodation in Bath Inquiry before P H Holland Esqr at the Guildhall, Bath Novr 18th 1857*. This meeting occurred because George Grey, Secretary of State for the Home Department had instructed that an inquiry be made as to whether the Order in Council of July 1855 had been observed relating to closure of certain cemeteries and limitations in numbers of bodies per grave. In the evidence from Mr Dallaway, a churchwarden at St Mark's: "The inhabitants of St. James have availed themselves of a portion of the Ground which was bought by a Burial rate levied in Lyncombe & Widcombe, & only pay a fee of 2/6 for the Burial of their poor whi[ich] I consider an infringement of parochial rights of St. Marks." There was then a debate about whether St James had a statutory right to have its poor buried in an adjacent parish and, if so, why it wasn't also using the Abbey cemetery but favouring St Mark's. So some burials at St Mark's would appear in the burial register for St James. However, it is not clear that the burial register would be specific about who was buried where as this type of information does not appear in either the St Mark's or St Thomas' registers.

The report to the Burial Board Committee by George Parfitt dated 26 May 1858 'upon the present state of the several Burial Grounds within the City and Borough of Bath', includes a table giving the yearly average of interments, the number of grave spaces and the period when to be closed. For St Mark's, the yearly average of burials was 154, the number of grave spaces 365 and that the cemetery was to be closed in 1859. It also has:

"There is great difficulty found to provide the necessary grave spaces for the interment of the poorer portion of the population, in consequence of the Burial Grounds of the City Parishes being closed, and the over-crowded state of St. Mark's and Walcot Burial Grounds.

At St. Mark's Burial Ground, during the past seven years, no less than 1,047 Bodies have been interred in that portion of the Ground now in use; *I therefore recommend that that portion of the Ground be closed:* and I have prepared a Plan for interments in that portion of ground now vacant."