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GUIDE TO  
THE PARISH CHURCH  
of  
**ALL SAINTS'  
WESTON**

*with Notes on its History*



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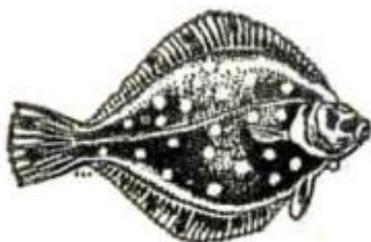
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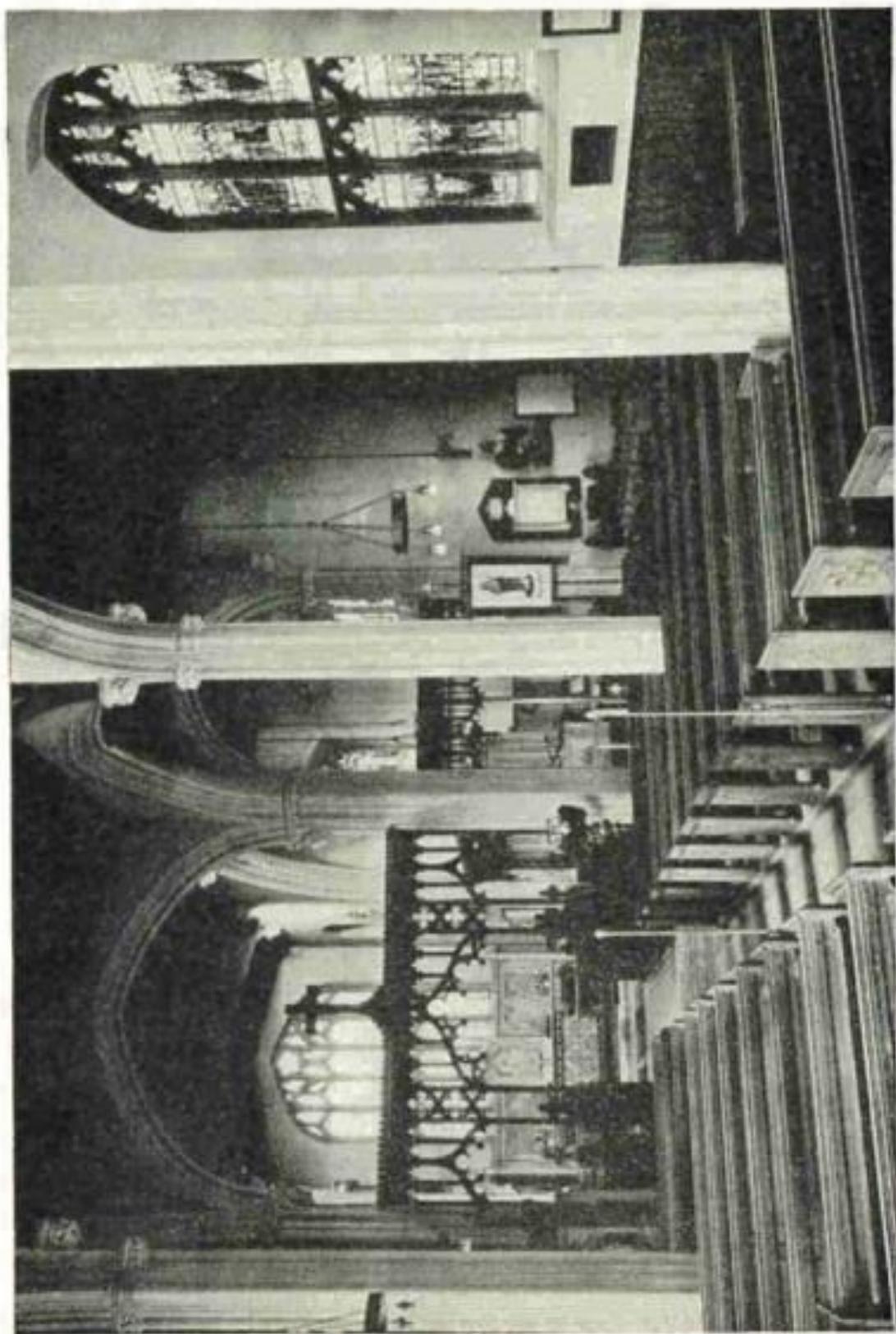
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Interior of All Saints' Church, Weston, Bath



The Parish Church of All Saints, Weston, Bath  
*—by the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Rowsell*

## INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

The usual entrance to the Church is by way of the south porch. This porch with the nave is the rebuilt Church of 1832. At the east end was a shallow sanctuary which was pulled down when the Church was enlarged by the building of the present chancel and transepts in 1893.

**MEMORIAL TABLETS.** The most noticeable feature of the nave is the number of memorial tablets. The oldest and most interesting of these, however, is not in the nave but in the south transept. This is a half length figure of Alderman Sherston who died in 1641; he was Mayor of Bath in the year 1632. According to Collinson, the 18<sup>th</sup> century historian of Somerset, this was originally a large monument recessed in the south wall of the nave of the old Church. It was taken down at the rebuilding, and apparently all but the figure destroyed; it is likely that there were columns on either side as was usual with monuments of this date. The figure was then placed on the east wall of the tower where it remained for more than a hundred years, becoming encrusted with layers of lime wash. It was removed to its present position in 1956, cleaned and painted as it was originally. The Sherston family owned land on Lansdown.

Of mural tablets in the nave that to William Oliver on the north wall is of interest as he was the Dr. Oliver of biscuit fame. The family owned Weston Manor for many years but seldom lived here, the house being let. The most curious inscription is that on a tablet high up on the south wall, to the memory of John Sprye “who was carried off in the prime of life by overheating himself and then plunging into cold water”. Also on the south wall of the nave is a large memorial to Dr. Cheyne, a well known 18<sup>th</sup> century physician, with a practice both in London and Bath. The Countess of Huntingdon and Beau Nash were among his patients. It is likely that he was a frequent visitor to Weston, as the Vicar, the Rv. William Cheyne, was his half-brother. This monument and that commemorating the Rev. James Barclay are signed by the Bath sculptor, Prince Hoare.

The most striking memorial in the nave is that to General Joseph Smith on the north wall. This fine work by Charles Viner, now too high for it to be seen to advantage, must have dominated the wall in the small medieval church. Also by Viner is the memorial to the Countess of Dundonald.

Several tablets commemorate members of the Parry family. The elder Dr. Parry built Summerhill on Sion Hill (now pulled down) in the 1780's. His younger son was the distinguished Arctic navigator. On the west wall is a tablet recording the death of Christiana Gaskell, a great granddaughter of the famous W. Penn.

In the chancel are some interesting memorials, including one to the Mace family, at one time the chief landowners of the Parish. Bryan Little, in an article on Weston sculpture<sup>1</sup>, draws attention to the unusual capitals of the columns with “inturned volutes”; he thinks this monument may be by Ireson of Wincanton. On the opposite wall is a memorial to the Leir family who succeed to the Macie estate. Also in the chancel are tablets in memory of the Rev. William Cheyne, Vicar of Weston, 1737-1767, and a recent one in memory of Prebendary Bromley, Vicar from 1912-1947. The Duncan brothers who are commemorated by a tablet on the south wall, were well known in Bath for their interest in the cultural life of the City. Before coming to Bath, Mr. Philip Duncan had been Curator of the Ashmolean Museum as well as a Fellow of New College, Oxford. He and his brother John were founders of the old Bath

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<sup>1</sup> Somerset Countryman: October, 1956.

Literary and Scientific Institution for which they did much valuable work. In 1868, Mrs. John Duncan, then a widow, and her daughter were living at Westfield Lodge in the Weston Road. Subsequently Miss Duncan became the wife of the second Bishop of Manchester.

Memorials in the north transept include tablets commemorating the Leir family, and one to the family Whittington, descendants of the famous "Dick". Here also is a memorial to Mrs. Resbury Hocker<sup>2</sup> who established Dame schools in the Parish at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These were held in cottages, and at one time as many as 80 children were attending them. On the north wall is a brass in memory of the Rev. R. Hayes Robinson, author of the well known hymn "Holy Father, cheer our way", his son was a most popular Curate of Weston at the end of the last century. Over the Vestry door is a tablet commemorating the gift of the Rectory to the Parish by John Harington of Kelston in 1699. Near the organ is a bronze memorial to Guy Humphrey, who fell in the South African War.

Many of these memorials have been moved from their original positions either at the time of the rebuilding of the Church in 1832 or in 1893, when the east end was enlarged. It is noticeable that the majority are in memory of Bath residents and visitors. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries it was the fashion to have burials in the pleasant country churchyard at Weston, and it must also be remembered that in the days before cemeteries it was not always easy to find a place of burial in the city. To anyone interested in memorials of this date in Weston Church will repay examination. More than twenty have family arms as part of the design; many of these were coloured, and three on the west wall have recently been repainted.

In a category somewhat apart from the ordinary wall tablet is the carved wood plaque in the Memorial Chapel. It is in memory of Colonel Maule of "Rocklands", Weston Lane, and was placed here in 1955. Some visitors may be interested in the following description: "In the centre of the plaque is the badge of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, below which is a laurel sheaf on which is superimposed the letters I. E. F. D. which, as some may remember,

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<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Resbury Hocker. The lady was unmarried. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century this title was given to women and girls whether married or not; it is merely the contraction of the old "Mistress". See also "Mrs." Isobel Cheyne, sister of the Rev. Will. Cheyne.

stood for INDIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE 'D'. Above the badge is a scroll on which are the names of the major battles of the Mesopotamian campaign of the 1914-18 War. At the four corners are emblems of the main Artillery Units, some of which were under command of Colonel Maule, who was C. R. A. at the latter part of the siege. The outer border is composed of roses, shamrocks and thistles, intertwined by a scroll on which is written the names of the two ships that took the force to Mesopotamia, the port of disembarkation, and the actions leading up to the siege of Kut-el-Amara. Thereafter the names trace the course of the march of the British prisoners-of-war to their final camp at Yuzgat. The last two names on the scrolls are Smyrna, the port of embarkation for home, and the name of the ship, 'Assaye'. Centred at the top of the border is the Maule crest, while below the regimental badge is a grenade and the word 'Kut', with dates of the siege. The plaque was designed by a fellow prisoner-of-war and was carved by Colonel Maule while in captivity, with a small pocket knife."

ANCIENT TOMBE LID. Centuries older than any of the mural monuments is the carved slab now in a recess in the north wall of the chancel. It was found under the old south porch when workmen were digging for the foundations of the new Church in 1830. The slab was first placed in the Vicarage garden and later in the crypt. It is 12 inches thick and bears a raised foliated cross with the following inscription in raised Lombardic lettering of the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century.

GALFRIDI TUMULO REQUIESCVT OSSA SUB ISTO  
QUI FUIT ANTISTES H DV FUIT IPSE SUPSTES

This was translated by the late Dean Armitage Robinson:

BENEATH THIS TOMB LIE THE BONES OF GEOFFREY WHO WAS PARISH PRIEST  
HERE WHILE YET HE LIVED

Other authorities, however, do not agree with this translation. The late Canon Spurrell wrote to the record office concerning it and in the letter he received in reply it was stated that the writer had never known the word "artistes" used of anyone but an Abbot or Bishop. There was a Godfrey, Bishop of Bath, 1125-1135, and in an entry in the Abbey charters commemorating benefactors there is a reference to this Bishop as "Galfridus Episcopus Bathoniensis". This

Godfrey is said to have been buried at Bath Abbey, but at the date of his death the Norman Abbey was unfinished, and it seems possible that he was buried at Weston, one of the Abbey manors, possibly with the intention that his body should be later transferred to the Bath Abbey. We have no reference to a Geoffrey as Parish priest, and the tomb slab seems of too elaborate a character to be that of a Vicar of so small a parish as Weston then was.

WINDOWS. When the chancel was built in 1893 the east window of the 1832 Church was replaced in the new east wall. Originally it was of four lights only; above were the Royal Arms (Weston is a Crown living), the Arms of the Bishop of the Diocese, Bath Abbey (the Prior was patron for about 400 years), and the Rev. John Bond (Vicar). Below were the Arms of the Leir, Oliver, Eccles and Purlwent families, all landowners in the Parish. In 1864 this glass was replaced by the present eight figures representing the writers of the New Testament, the four Evangelists above, and SS. Peter, Paul, James the Great and Jude below. The window was given in memory of General Home and Mr. Batsford, both residents in Weston Road. When the chancel was enlarged the proportions of the window were altered, the lights being shortened at the bottom and a centre one depicting Our Lord above and St. John the Baptist below, added. The two small windows in the chancel commemorate members of the Humphrey family who lived for many years on Newbridge Hill.

In the Memorial Chapel the east window is in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Ward, also of Newbridge Hill. The large south window is a memorial to Miss King and also to the Tudor family. The Tudors lived in Kelston Knoll and were well known for their interest in the City of Bath, William Tudor being Mayor in 1828. Miss King lived in a small house near the Grove, pulled down many years ago; she is still remembered by the older inhabitants of the Parish for her beneficent activities.

The south transept window commemorates Sidney Nutcombe Quicke. The Quicques were a prominent Templecombe family, but for some years they lived in Weston at "The Grange", Weston Park and also in the Weston Road. Among the Saints depicted in this Te Deum window is St. Alphege, the Saxon Saint, who was born in Weston; he is also to be seen in the window near the south door. The north transept window and those in the nave were all given by members of the Carr family of Weston Manor.

The glass in the east window is by Wailles of Newcastle; the other windows are by the Whitefriars firm of Powell, their trade mark, a tiny white friar, may be seen in the lower right hand corner of the nave window next to the south door.

SCREENS. The Chancel screen was given in 1901 by the Rev. T. Whale of "Mountnessing", Weston Park, in recognition of the work done by the Vicar (the Rev. E. Hardcastle) in enlarging and beautifying the Church. Designed by Mr. E. H. Harbottle, it was carried out by the firm of Dart in Exeter. The screen separating the Memorial Chapel from the South aisle was given by Miss Archer Thompson, of "Montrose" (now "Mulberry House") in memory of her parents and brother. It is of better workmanship than the chancel screen.

ALTAR AND REREDOS. The altar was given by General Home in 1857. He also gave the original reredos of four panels on which are painted the Creed, the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. It was greatly improved by the addition of the beautifully carved central figure of the Ascending Christ, given in 1893 by Mrs. Fraser, widow of the Bishop of Manchester. The Altar rails were given in memory of Mr. Henry Trickey, Churchwarden for 48 years.

MEMORIAL CHAPEL FURNITURE. The Altar and rails were given by the Stallard family, some of whom lived in Combe Park and others in the Weston Road. Miss Hilda Stallard was a most devoted worker in Weston Parish for many years. The pews were given by the late Prebendary Bromley as a memorial to the Misses Pinder, two sisters who did much good work in and for the Parish. The cross and candlesticks commemorate Mrs. de Ridder.

PULPIT. Given by the Pinder family in memory of their parents who live at "Brookfield". It was originally intended that it should be of wood to match the choir stalls.

LECTERN. A memorial to Mrs. Basford. Given in 1897.

PROCESSIONAL CROSS. The gift of Mrs. Hall, of "Bryn Briallen" (now "Weston Park House").

LITANY DESK. Given by Miss Archer Thompson. The panel facing east is a very old piece of oak from Wells Cathedral, carved by Miss Archer Thompson. The desk is now in the sanctuary.

ORGAN. The present organ, by Sweetland of Bath, was subscribed for by the parishioners in memory of Mrs. Hardcastle, wife of the Rev. E. Hardcastle, who died in 1892, only a year after coming to Weston. The organ replaced a small one given by the Tudor family and placed in the gallery. Originally it had two manuals only, the third being given some years later by Mr. and Mrs. Carr. When the choir vestry was enlarged, Prebendary Hoets hoped that the organ might be moved and placed above the vestry, but this was found to be impracticable.

FONT. This is a memorial to Mrs. Hardcastle, being given by the children and other friends. It is the third font that has been in the Church, as Mr. Philip Duncan had given one earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It seems a pity that the font from the medieval church was not retained, even though it may have been very plain in character.

ROYAL ARMS. These are on the front of the gallery. They are the Arms of William IV, being contemporary with the 1834 Church. These differ from those of Queen Victoria by having a small shield with the Hanoverian Arms superimposed on the larger one. The Arms, which are considered to be of very good workmanship, were carved and given by Mr. J. Jones, a Weston parishioner. It is probable that it was he who restored the great West Door of Bath Abbey which work was carried out about this date by a Mr. James Jones.

OAK CHESTS. An entry for the purchase of an "oaken coffer" appears in the Churchwardens' accounts for 1746; it is possible that this is the chest now at the east end of the south aisle. The one near the organ appears to be of a later date.

CHURCHWARDENS' STAVES. Given by Mr. John du V. Arnol Davis (Churchwarden).

BEADLE'S STAFF. This was given by Miss Carr. The Royal Arms on it were repainted and it is now used as a Verger's wand.

CHURCH PLATE. Weston possesses some interesting and valuable plate. One chalice and paten is of Elizabethan date and another is of the time of William and Mary, being dated 1692. There is also a silver flagon dated 1739 and two silver dishes given by the Rev. John Bond in memory of his parents in 1854. A large silver-gilt chalice was given in 1916 by Miss Ann Pinder in memory of her sister, Mary Pinder. A curious and unusual possession is an Apostle spoon dated 1647, its history and purpose are unknown.

For many years these pieces of plate were all kept in a safe in the vestry, but recently those of ancient date and not in use were taken to the Bank for greater security.

BELLS. The Church bells have played a great part in the history of the Parish. We do not know when they were originally cast, but in 1739 the Churchwardens' accounts tell us of the re-casting in that year. "Be it remembered in November 1739 Weston Six Old Bells was taken Down and Caryed to Chewstoke and new cast by Thomas Bilbie for fourty pounds h added 100 of new metal for five pounds the weight of ye Old Bels." The weights of the old bells are then given. The writer continues, "The new Bells was fetch in February 1739, in two wagons by men and boys, itt being a hard frost." I believe that the Weston men and boys went only as far as the New Bridge to meet the bells. With regard to the dated it must be remembered that New Year's Day was then March 25<sup>th</sup>. The weights of the new bells are then given and "they was new hanged by John Bushe John Fennell twenty pounds."

Shortly after the return of the bells there are various entries concerning them in the Churchwardens' accounts, including payments when a temporary bell was returned to Walcot and for a Feast for the ringers. To pay for the recasting the Church rate was quadrupled and there was evidently some trouble over this for we read that at a Vestry meeting held in January "Whereas John Lambert does refuse to pay ye Church rate, we do agree, that as soon as ye bells are cast and hung up the Church Wardens shall proceed according to law against the said John Lambert and others who shall refuse to pay ye Church rate."

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century there are many entries in the Churchwardens' accounts that refer to the bells: "Paid for a point of oyle for the bells 8d." "The

ringers at the Coronation Day (George III) 6/-" "To a Bellrope 5/-""Paid for the ringing for the victory at Dettingen 6/-". This last entry is slightly puzzling as our bells appear to have rung before the battle took place! A possible explanation is that as this date other countries in Europe had adopted the New Style of Calendar, but England had not, so that history books give the Continental and our Parish Clerk the English date – or perhaps when he made up his accounts he had forgotten the exact date. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century Weston bells rang for November 5<sup>th</sup> and May 29<sup>th</sup> (Restoration of Charles II).

The recast bells of 1739 rang for more than 200 years with only minor repairs. Then, in 1952, it was found to be absolutely necessary that they should be relined and rehung. This work, together with completely new iron fittings on a frame put in by Stokes of Woodbury, Devon, in 1894, was carried out by the firm of John Taylor, Loughborough, at a cost of £1,054. The bells, with two new ones added to make the octave, were dedicated on March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1953, by the Archdeacon of Bath (the Ven. E. A. Cook) in the presence of a large congregation which included a representative of the Lord Chancellor (Patron of the living under the Crown) and Mr. I. J. Pitman, M.P. for Bath – Weston being, since 1951, in that Constituency.

We do not know if the original bells had inscriptions; of those recast in 1739 only one is inscribed. This bears the words "Thomas Scudamore, gentleman and Mr. Thomas Peckstone, churchwardens, 1739, T.B." Of the two new bells, the treble (given by Miss Carr) is inscribed "In memory of William and Susannah Carr", and the second "In memory of Prebendary Francis Arthur Bromley, Vicar of this Parish 1912-1947. The gift of Friends".

The weights of the bells are as follows: Treble, 3 cwt. 16 lbs.; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3 cwt. 3 qtrs. 17 lbs.; 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4 cwt. 3 qtrs.; 4<sup>th</sup> 5 cwt. 0 qtrs. 10 lbs.; 5<sup>th</sup>, 5 cwt. 3 qtrs. 13 lbs.; 6<sup>th</sup>, 6 cwt. 2qtrs. 22lbs.; 7<sup>th</sup>, 7 cwt. 3 qtrs. 19 lbs.; Tenor, 12 cwt. 0 qtrs. 21lbs.

The chiming apparatus has also been restored, with hammers added for the two new bells.

## THE CHURCHYARD

When the Churchyard was closed for burials in 1876<sup>3</sup> it had been used as a burial place for at least 600 years; it has been estimated that some 10,000 interments were made during that time. Originally the northern boundary was where the footpath runs east and west; the additional ground to the north was consecrated about the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As there had always been a right of way north of the old Churchyard this footpath remained a public path, unlike the other paths which, though open to the public, are the property of the Church. A drawback to this use of the Churchyard by the public is that it is apt to be forgotten that it is consecrated ground.

The oldest tombs are probably two low, coffin shaped stones near the north west corner. Two massive altar-shaped tomb stones south-east of the Church are of a type used in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but are actually of 18<sup>th</sup> century date. Nearby is the tomb of Thomas Warr Atwood, a drawing of which was used by Walter Ison as a decoration of the title page of his "Georgian Bath". A notably fine memorial is that to General Joseph Smith near to the entrance to the Vicarage. This and two others were restored by the late Mr. Cook of Bath about twenty years ago. Very many of the stones commemorate Bath residents and visitors of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a pathetic feature is the large number of children who died in infancy. The stone used for most of the memorials is of a kind that flakes easily, so that in many cases the inscriptions are obliterated. The late Mr. Crozier Cole made a careful copy of all those still legible, together with those on the interior walls of the Church, and these form a most valuable record. About the middle of the northern addition to the Churchyard it will be noticed that there is a blank row without stones; it was here that the victims of an outbreak of cholera were buried. It was apparently thought unwise to open this ground again for later burials.

Among the people of some note who are buried at Weston, besides Dr. Oliver and the two Cheynes already mentioned in connection with their memorials in the Church, are William Falconer, a well-known Bath doctor and another member of the same family, Jane Falconer, whose husband, a poet, was lost at sea; also Sir Charles Frankland, "Consul General for many years at Lisbon".

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<sup>3</sup> In a few cases family graves were re-opened at later dates.

Mention must also be made of that eccentric Bath attorney Samuel Purlewent who directed in his will that 18 poor people of Weston should attend him to his grave and that afterwards they should be regaled at "The Crown" with "a good boiled ham, a dozen fowls, a sirloin of beef, with plum puddings...No friends or relations whatever to attend my funeral". Though Mr. Purlewent's death is recorded in the local paper of that date it is not stated whether these directions were carried out. We have reason to be grateful to him for, as an ardent Freeman of the City, he worked and schemed for years to have the Commons, where are now the Victoria Park and High Common, leased to builders. This property belonged to the Freemen (the initial "F" remains to this day on the pillars at the bottom of the High Common) and Mr. Purlewent considered that it would be a highly profitable investment!

The Churchyard cross near the steps leading to the south door was erected in 1898 in memory of the Rev. John Bond, Vicar of Weston for 56 years. It is of Ham Hill stone upon a bed of 30 tons of cement. The figure of the Good Shepherd was first moulded in clay, then taken in reverse in Plaster of Paris from which another plaster cast was taken, and from this mould the stone was sculptured. The memorial was designed by Mr. E. Buckle, the Diocesan architect. The inscription, now nearly illegible, is as follows: "To the glory of God. In grateful memory of the Rev. John Bond, M. A., Vicar of Weston, 1826-1881. This cross was dedicated at the Feast of All Saints, 1898, by his devoted parishioners and friends".

Until the year 1951 the whole cost of the upkeep of the Churchyard was borne by the Church. It was then found that, owing to the length of time it had been disused, Bath City Corporation could be asked to bear the cost of keeping the grass cut – this work their men carry out most efficiently.

The large number of trees will be noticed. None of these is of great age, but there are some unusual varieties of cedar. It will also be noticed that, most regrettably, many tomb slabs, necessarily moved when the Church was rebuilt, have been used as paving stones.

## REGISTERS

Our Parish Registers begin in the year 1538, three years after Thomas Cromwell first ordered them to be kept.

At the end of the year 1558 a note in Latin states that during the reign of Philip and Mary (1553-1558) many registries are missing. During these years there are entries of only eleven baptisms and six deaths.

There is also a note in the first book as follows: "In the first year of King James it was ordered by a Canone of ye Chuche that all registers of Churches should be written over again in parchent, whereas before most were written in paper, and so they should continue for ever, whereupon Mr. Dr. Powell, then Archdeacon of Bath, command me to write the Register Books again as now it is out of the old paper register wherein I doe acknowledge Religiously that I have followed the ould paper Register fairly and word for word without any addition as far as it did reache to. The ould Register to this day I kepe and mean to leave it to posteritie."

Until the year 1598 the registers are in English, then, during the incumbency of Thomas Peckstone, in Latin, then in English, except during the incumbencies of David Macie and John Chapman (1698-1737). Several leaves appear to be missing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and there are very few entries during the eleven years of the Commonwealth when all Prayer Book services were forbidden. There is a special note in 1656 which states that John Macie and Alice Day of Northstoke were married before John Harrington, Justice of the Peaces, on Aril 14<sup>th</sup>, at Kelston. This John Mace was a great grandson of the Rev. John Macie, who had married in 1549, the year clerical marriages became legal.

During the first hundred years of resignation the Baptisms numbered 596, Marriages 173, and Burials 412. In the second hundred years there were 769 Baptisms, 148 Marriages and 675 Burials<sup>4</sup>. For many years, especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, there are an excessive number of burials, owing to the practice of burying Bath residents and visitors at Weston. Dates sometimes cause

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<sup>4</sup> Though I have carefully studied the old registers myself, the actual statistics quoted here, are taken from "Notes on Weston" by Clement Bush.

misunderstanding unless it is remembered that until 1752 the New Year began on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

The names that occur most frequently in the early registers are Atwood, Apprice (variously spelt), Bletchley, Bristowe, Macie, Taylor, Sheppard and Lansdown. Of these only the Sheppards remain in the village at the present time. The Macies, who came from Widcombe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and became prosperous landowners, can be traced for six generations.

After the first two centuries the entries increase rapidly. In the year 1798 there were 31 Baptisms and 65 Burials. At this time the population has been estimated to have been about 1,000. During the next fifty years it rose to over 3,000. A considerable number of people were settling in the district now Lower Weston. The Church of St. John the Evangelist was built in 1838, but for forty years it remained a daughter Church of All Saints. A conventional district was carved out of the old Weston parish soon after the new Church was built and in the year 1878 this was made into a separate Parish; it comprises all the land south of an irregular line through what is now the Royal United Hospital, passing from thence to Newbridge Hill, Partis College remaining in the Parish of All Saints.

The formation of the separate Parish of St. John the Evangelist naturally greatly reduced the population of All Saints. It was not until after World War II when building began on a large scale that the population of the old parish again reached 3,000. At the present time (1957) it has risen to between 5,000 and 6,000.

Present day statistics of births, marriages and deaths cannot really be compared with those of earlier years for several reasons. In 1953 a Free Church (Moravian) was built at the west end of the Parish; this building is licensed for marriages and baptisms, and burials also take place there. In these days, too, there are many more civil marriages which, as they take place in the Register Office in Bath, are not recorded at Weston. With regard to baptisms it also has to be borne in mind that the custom of bringing babies to Church for Baptism is by no means so universal as in past times. During the year 1956 there were 52 Baptisms, 31 Marriages and 14 Burials at All Saints' Church. If the number of

burials at the present time is compared with the number in 1798 it will be seen what a high proportion must have been non-parishioners.

## CHURCHWARDENS' ACCOUNTS

These accounts, which we have from the year 1739, were kept originally in long, narrow parchment-covered books, by the Parish Clerk. The writing varies from the good copybook hand of James Stock to the untidy scrawls of some of the clerks. The spelling is eccentric, but at that time even well educated people spelt much as they pleased.

The work of the Churchwardens was more varied than it is today when one would not be likely to meet with the entry "paide for 5 young foxes and a oulde one 6/-," or "what I laid out about the Bridge in the street 1/-." But many of the items are similar to those we might find in the accounts of the present day. In 1742 3/6 was paid for mending and cleaning the clock, and a new Communion Table Cloth was brought for £1.1.0. Rough casting the interior of the Church cost £1.6.0, and fifteen years later it was whitewashed at a cost of £1.5.0. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century there is no reference to any form of lighting, heating or music.

The Holy Communion was celebrated four times a year, when we have the entry "paide for bread and wine and the bottell 3/3" and the "sarplies" was washed at a cost of 1/-. This surplice was a voluminous garment and very costly, for we read that in 1783 the Churchwardens bought "14 yards of fine Holland to mak the sarpellis at 5/6 yard." There are many entries concerning the bells and clock. Litter was evidently a problem even in those days for we read that at the time of the Coronation of George III William Sheppard was paid 1/- "for wheeling away rubbish" – a shilling was the usual labourer's pay for a day's work.

In the year 1750 it was agreed that there should be a new pulpit and reading desk; they were to be placed in a different position from the old ones "the other side of the Church below the great window." There is no actual entry of the cost of the pulpit, but a bill of £17 was paid to a Mr. Parker at about the same date. Moving the pulpit apparently caused some trouble, for a Vestry

Meeting a complicated rearrangement of pews is decided upon; it is too long to quote it in full but the final passage is as follows: "Whereas Mr. Macie has the consent of Mr. Ditcher, Mrs. Whittington and John Fennel to move his pew into ye room above ye old Reading Desk, it is agreed yt all others who shall be dispossessed of their places, shall be accommodated in ye two new pews, that will be erected in ye room out wh Mr. Macie's pew is moved. It is agreed that ye Rev. Dr. Hall shall have ye old Reading Desk entirely to himself, he agreeing to surrender ye place where Mr. Macie's Pew now stands. It is likewise agreed that Mr. Macie may if he thinks proper, erect a Pew in ye empty space by the back Door, provided he surrenders ye Pew where his servants now sit." As we hear no more, apparently this arrangement was satisfactory to all parties.

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century all expenditure was met by means of the Church rate (abolished 1868) which was levied on Church people and Dissenters alike. All parishioners above cottagers were assessed for this rate which was usually 1d. or 1½d., but could be doubled for any special expenditure – it was quadrupled the year that the bells were cast.

It is often said that the 18<sup>th</sup> century was a time when Churches were sadly neglected, but our Churchwardens' accounts with the numerous entries for repairs and renewals do not give the impression of a neglected church. Doubtless according to modern standards the services were few and not so reverently conducted as they are today, but the many service papers bought for special occasions (Lent appears to have been regularly observed) seem to show that there was a live Church in the Parish.

## **THE PARISH CLERK**

The Parish Clerk was an official of some importance all through the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. Besides keeping the accounts, he took a prominent part in the Church services, his seat at Weston, in the 1832 Church, being in front in the gallery. At one time he and his family formed the choir. Always it was his duty to lead the singing of the metrical psalms and the responses. Frequently he was also an Overseer, so that he was responsible for the collection of both the Church and Poor rates, besides a variety of other duties connected with the Church and Parish. For many years at Weston the

office was held by James Stock. The work of this worthy man was evidently much appreciated by the Vicar, the Rev. John Chapman, who wrote the following lines:-

*To James Stock, Parish Clerk.*

*James, whose deportment grave and solemn gait*

*Befit thy years and wisdom long preside,*

*The hallowed desks first ornament and pride,*

*Nor ever let thy pious zeal abate.*

*When, (it may fortune shortly) in the grave*

*Shall ruthless death command me to be laid,*

*See the due rites of sepulture are paid,*

*And chant in sad funeral notes a stave.*

*To recompence thy Zeal and duteous love,*

*When I remingle with my parent dust,*

*May thy new Master at my instance prove*

*Kind to thy feelings, to thy virtues just.*

*So many successive years rich tribute bring*

*Of fees and trimmings to his hand and thine,*

*Till envious fate raise a new Clerk to sing*

*Thy requiem as well as thou wilt mine.*

Probably Mr. Stock made a considerable sum from the “trimmings” for Weston was a popular Church for weddings as well as for funerals.

## **HISTORY**

### **THE MEDIAEVAL CHURCH**

When the boy, later to become St. Alphege, was born at Weston in the year 953, we do not know whether there was a Church to which he could have been taken for Baptism. There is no mention of one in the Domesday survey, but that is not conclusive evidence that the little "tune" was without a place of worship, for Churches that are known to have existed at that time are not always mentioned. The dedication, anciently "All Hallows," usually indicates a Saxon foundation. In a Bull of Pope Adrian dated 1156 (only 70 years later than the Domesday survey), the possession of land at Weston "wherein is a Church" is confirmed to the Monastery at Bath.

Nothing remains of this 12<sup>th</sup> century Church. It is not ever certain that it was on the same site as the present building. Mr. Whale, a Weston antiquarian of the last century, believed that the first Church was on Lansdown. There is undoubtedly a record of such a building being demolished in 1551, but is doubtful if this was Weston Church. The Mediaeval Parish Church, the tower of which still stands, was undoubtedly built before the middle of the sixteenth century. The Lansdown Church must not be confused with St. Lawrence Chapel, a fragment of which survives, incorporated into Chapel Farm; this was the Chapel of a Hospice for pilgrims to Glastonbury.

The later Mediaeval Church, known as "All Hallows", was probably built in the fifteenth century, but it is impossible to date exactly. The tower remains, and an old print shows the whole Church in a similar style of perpendicular architecture. If the west doorway, restored about 1834, is a copy of the old one, it is more typical of the later fifteenth century, but an old sketch shows this doorway with a pointed ogee arch similar to that of the present south porch, and this type of arch was more often used in the late fourteenth century. The sketch, however, is so roughly done and the drawing of other parts of the tower so inaccurate, that it is not really very helpful.

Throughout the Middle Ages the whole of Weston was part of the property of Bath Abbey so that the Prior would have been responsible for the building of the Church. The only reference to it we have (apart from two wills) prior to the

eighteenth century, is in a survey of Chatries made in 1548 where it is stated that there is an obit<sup>5</sup> founded within the Parish Church. "One tenement with a gardyne ther callyd the churchhouse in the occupying of the wardens of the same church ...IJs."

The tower that remains is of three stages with angle buttresses and four crocketed pinnacles. Slight projections in the battlements, based on gargoyles, originally supported four more pinnacles. These became unsafe early in the present century and taken down. The old print shows a cock as weather vane, and a square-faced clock placed lower in the tower than the present one. On the south west buttress are marks showing that the wall has been plugged, possibly for the plate of a sundial or for a lantern. This tower was, of course, in much better proportion to the old nave and chancel than it is to the present one.

The mediaeval Church, which seated only 170 people, sufficed for the needs of the parish for several hundred years. So late as the year 1800 the population of Weston was only about 1,000. During the next fifty years it rose to over 3,000. When young Mr. Bond was appointed Vicar in 1826 there was no doubt that it was time that there should be a larger place of worship for the rapidly growing parish.

## **THE REBUILDING OF THE CHURCH**

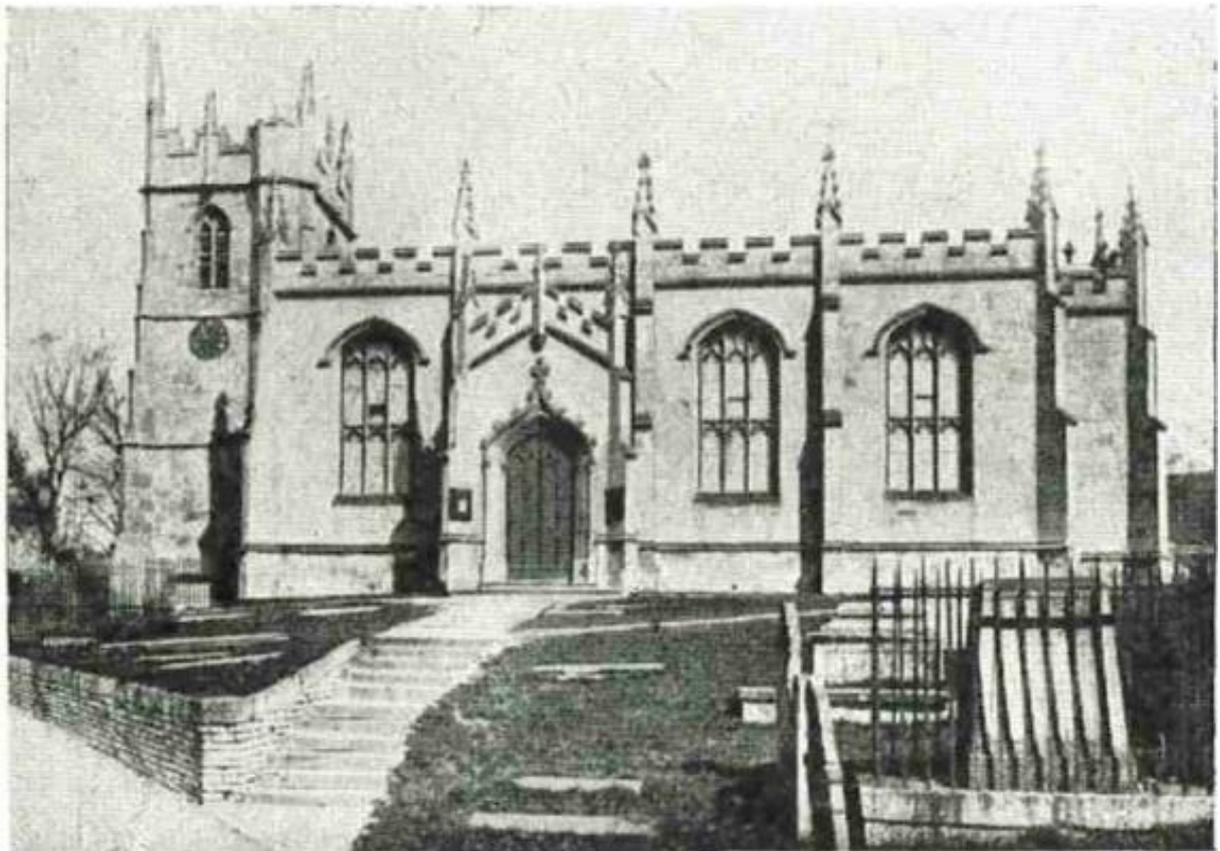
In the minutes of the first Vestry Meeting held after the arrival of the Rev. John Bond, we read that it had been called "to take into consideration the propriety and best means of making an application to the Church Building Society in aid of a design to rebuild or enlarge the existing tower to be retained. It was unanimously agreed that an early application be made to the Society, and at a subsequent meeting we read that a grant of £300 was given. Mr. Pinch, the architect of St. Saviour's, Larkhall, and St. Mary's, Bathwick, was called in to design the new Church. His plan was a nave with aisles, a very shallow chancel, and south porch, the building to be in the perpendicular style. This is the nave

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<sup>5</sup> Obbit. A small sum of money left to a Parish Priest as payment for prayers to be offered up each year on the anniversary of the donor's death. At Weston in 1535 Sir John Arnold left "a ew shepe to pray for"

and south porch of the present Church. The altar stood where are now the chancel steps, the chancel occupying the space of the first bay westwards.

The total cost of the new Church was just over £3,000. Of this £1,000 was raised on credit of the Church rates, and subscriptions brought in £843. We still possess the list of subscribers, headed by the Vicar's donation of £200. In the accounts it is stated that the sale of pews brought in £473; presumably this means that the congregation bought pews, as old materials sold for only £10.



Exterior of the 1832 Church

— *From an old photograph  
by the courtesy of Miss Gray*

The first stone of the new building was laid on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1830, two months after the ascensions of William IV, by the Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Law. It was a great day for the village with a procession through the parish. During the rebuilding which took two years, services were held in the National School (the western part of the school at the bottom of Trafalgar Road) which has been built about fifteen years earlier, and which was specially licensed for this purpose.

The new Church was consecrated for Divine service on Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1832, by the same Bishop who had laid the foundation stone. There was a large and “highly respectable” congregation at the Service which was of a quite ambitious character, the choir rendering two anthems by Handel and the Halleujah Chorus.

**PROCESSION**  
from the  
National School to the Church  
for the  
Laying of the Foundation Stone  
August 7th, 1830

TWO CONSTABLES  
with staves

GENTLEMEN OF THE PARISH  
two and two

MR. PINCH (Architect)                      MR. PINCH (Junior)  
with plans    with measuring rod

THE BUILDERS  
MESSRS. AUST, SEWARD and VINCENT  
bearing the mallet, plumb rule level and square  
to be used by the Bishop

TWO MASONS

TWO CARPENTERS

TWO PLASTERERS  
in clean dresses and white aprons

THE WAYWARDENS

THE OVERSEERS

THE CHURCHWARDENS  
with wands

Two Constables    Two Constables  
The Rev. W. WILKINS    THE VICAR  
Curate

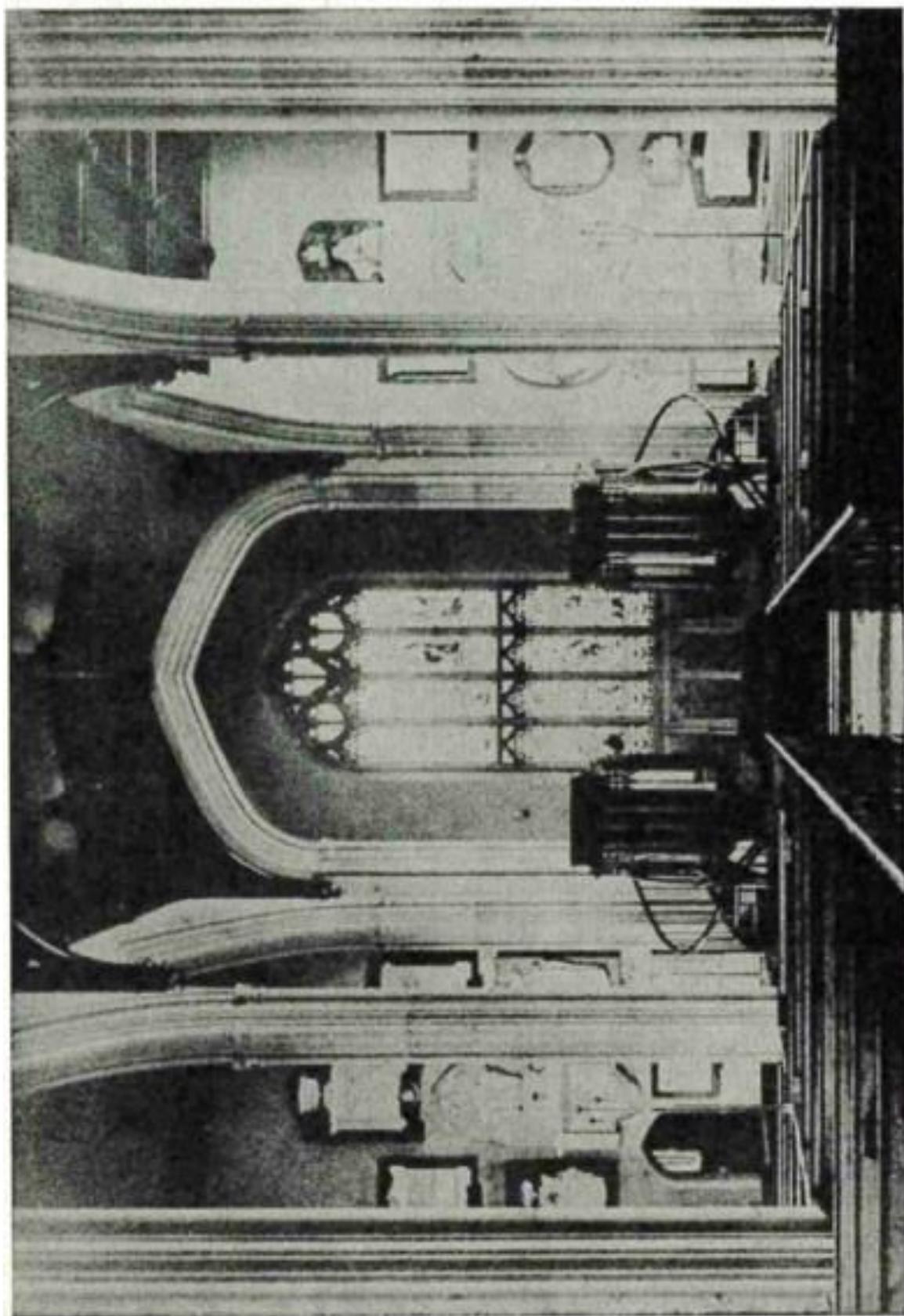
THE LORD BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE  
Clergy resident in Bath and vicinity

CLERK OF THE PARISH

TWELVE CHARITY BOYS

TWELVE CHARITY GIRLS  
headed by their Master

TWO CONSTABLES



—From an old photograph by the courtesy of Miss Gray

Interior of the 1832 Church

It was not until March 1834 that the Committee appointed by the Vestry to carry out the rebuilding “having finished their labours and discharged the several claims upon the Parish arising from the said work beg leave to lay before the general Vestry the following report of their proceedings.” In this report it is stated that after the Committee have discharged all claims made upon them have in hand a balance of £35 5s. 10½d., even though various extras had to be paid for that were not in the original estimate, including the addition of a crypt. Mr. Pinch received £140. The cost of books, hangings, window blinds (why blinds?), hassocks, Communion carpet and cloth was only £38 though of course this represented a very much larger sum than now. Appended to the statement of accounts is a plan of the new Church showing the seating accommodation which was increased to about 520. The pews were high with doors (the present panelling of the nave is of the wood from these pews) that of the Leir family, the principal landowners, square. The font was on the north side near the west door.

When completed this Church would not seem to have had any great beauty, but a writer in the “Bath Journal” describes it quite enthusiastically – “The edifice is entirely new” he writes, “with the exception of the tower, which formed part of the old building, and which for want of sufficient funds, the parishioners had found themselves obliged to retain (?). The style is of the latest, or perpendicular English. Two rows of beautifully proportioned pillars support a richly embossed ceiling, painted oak ... The whole is greatly admired, and reflects very great credit upon the taste and skill of Mr. Pinch the architect. The interior is judiciously fitted up so as to economise room. The pulpits are exceedingly elegant, after the style of St. Saviour’s, Walcot. Mr. Jones who executed the carving department, presented a beautifully carved King’s Arms which appear in front of the choir.” The ceiling here described as “painted oak” is plaster which for many years remained painted to represent oak. The panels have recently (1954) been painted white, and it hoped at some future date when funds are available, that the ribs and bosses may be painted with colour. The choir at that date and for many years was in the gallery. The “elegant pulpits” were a most curious feature of the Church. An old photograph shows them as high carved structures exactly alike on either side of the Chancel arch. Possibly one was used as a lectern.

The Church remained structurally unchanged for about 60 years. In 1864 a new clock was purchased with £100 given by Mrs. Haggard in memory of her

brother Theodore Tickell who had lived at Beaulieu Lodge, Newbridge Hill – possibly this is our present clock. Three years later the Church was lighted by gas, the whole expense of installing it being borne by the Vicar, the Rev. John Bond. It would seem that before this date there had been no lighting at all in the Church. In 1846 a small organ was presented by the Tudor family and placed in the gallery.

## **THE ENLARGMENT OF THE CHURCH**

After the resignation of the Rev. John Bond in 1881 there were several short incumbencies of which little is recorded. In 1891 the Rev. Edward Hardcastle was appointed as Vicar and a new era began for Weston.

The project of enlarging the Church had been launched before his arrival. The scheme, which was for the lengthening of the chancel and addition of transepts, had his wholehearted approval, and it was put in hand immediately.

It was fortunate time to undertake the work. Mrs. Fraser, who before her marriage to the Bishop of Manchester, had been a Miss Duncan, gave largely towards the cost, in addition to her gift of the central Figure of the reredos. The houses in Weston Park had not long been built and were occupied by retired professional men and people of independent means, almost all keenly interested in the Church and Parish, as were also the residents in Weston Road. Some of these families remained for many years, giving every possible assistance to successive Vicars. About 20 of the houses in Combe Park had also been built, and there too were many friends of the Church.

The architect of the new building was Mr. E. H. Harbottle of Exeter. His original intention was that the organ should be placed in the north transept. A drawing of the design makes it appear much more spacious than it actually is, but it must be remembered that the screens were not part of the original plan.

The design was carried out with only minor alterations – half length angels were added to the chancel arch, and the pulpit differs from that shown on the plan which is very similar to the “elegant pulpits” of the 1832 Church. The materials and workmanship of the chancel and transepts are of better quality than in the nave. The roof is of oak with carved bosses and there is carving on the pillar capitals. A great improvement carried out at this time was the reseating of the nave with oak pews of the open bench type with well carved

ends. Ownership of pews was abolished but sittings are allotted to any members of the congregation who ask for them – at Evesong all seats are free.

Though the enlargement still further dwarfs the old tower, it greatly improves the interior proportions of the Church, besides adding to the seating accommodation which is now nearly 600. The total cost, apart from gifts, was about £4,000, of which £600 remained to be raised at the time of the Consecration.

Owing to the illness of the Diocesan Bishop, Lord Arthur Hervey, the new work was consecrated by Bishop Bromby on St. Peter's Day (June 29<sup>th</sup>) 1893. A large congregation assembled for the service when the choir were in surplices for the first time.

The Consecration took place in the morning and was followed by a lunch at "The Crown". Later there were sports, and a Floral Dance by the girls of the village. The local paper reported that 800 persons including children sat down to a tea, and "the bells rang merrily."

### **AFTER 1893**

The only structural addition to the Church since 1893 have been the clergy vestry and the enlarged choir vestry. These were built in 1909 during the incumbency of Prebendary Hoets who succeeded Mr. Hardcastle in 1901.

About five years later the Church was lighted by electricity, the installation being paid for by money given to the Vicar (the Rev. F. A. Bromley) by Mr. W. S. M. Goodenough for some Church improvement. At first the electricity was used for lighting only, but a few years later it is superseded the old hand blowing of the organ. Mr. Goodenough, who was Churchwarden for 37 years, die in 1914, and in the following year the oak doors of the south and west porches were put up in memory of him. The oak seats in the south porch, made and carved by members of the Deaf and Dumb Institute in Bath, are in memory of Mrs. Hargood-Ash.

### **WAR MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

After the 1914-18 War it was decided by the Parishioners that the formation of a chapel at the east end of the south aisle should be part of a Memorial to Weston men who had fallen in that War. Mr Mowbray Green was called in to

design the Chapel which did not involve any structural alterations apart from the blocking up of a door in the south wall. It was dedicated on St. Patrick's Day, 1921.

### VICARS OF WESTON

<b>1297</b>	Jordanus Joh. le Knight	<b>1643</b>	Will. Crofts, M.A.
<b>1318</b>	Rob. de Ayschelegh	<b>1671</b>	John. Masters, A.M.
<b>1339</b>	Henr. de Forde	<b>1677</b>	Thos. Skinner
<b>1348</b>	Will. de Fowlere Mattheus Bremull	<b>1690</b>	Joh. Barry, A.M.
<b>1412</b>	Thom. Hulle	<b>1691</b>	Jac. Barry, A.M.
<b>1436</b>	Joh. Phelippes	<b>1698</b>	Jac Croom
<b>1492</b>	John. Chancellor	<b>1701</b>	David Macie, A.B.
<b>1493</b>	Will. Beddeford John. Babour	<b>1737</b>	Will. Cheyne, A.M.
<b>1501</b>	Will. Wodeward	<b>1767</b>	John Chapman, A.B.
<b>1502</b>	Gilb. Wodeward	<b>1808</b>	Thomas Wilkins, M.A.
<b>1514</b>	Humf. Cauk	<b>1826</b>	John Bond, M.A.
<b>1525</b>	Clemens Eryngton	<b>1882</b>	Ernest Cowan, B.A.
<b>1541</b>	Joh. Macy	<b>1889</b>	John A. Leaky, M.A.
<b>1555</b>	Hen. Townsend	<b>1890</b>	J. A. Bailey, M.A.
<b>1576</b>	Bernard Adams	<b>1891</b>	Edward H. Hardcastle, M.A.
<b>1595</b>	Ric. Jefferay	<b>1901</b>	M. E. Hoets, M.A.
<b>1597</b>	Thos. Pockston	<b>1912</b>	F. A. Bromley, M.A.
		<b>1947</b>	E.J. Rowe

It is likely that the de Hesdin family, Norman landowners of Weston, built the original Church and appointed priests to serve it. When the ownership of the Manor passed to Bath Abbey the Prior was responsible for the spiritual welfare of the parish, but it is unlikely that it was ever served by the monks themselves. After 1200 the establishment of Vicarages went ahead with great rapidity. The Prior remained patron of the living until the Dissolution in 1539, but in later years the right of presentation was sometimes sold. At the Dissolution the advowson passed to the Crown.

In the Abbey Charters there is an entry "Walter, Prior, presents Adam de Karliun, a man learned and acceptable to the Bishop, to W., Bishop of Bath and Wells, and prays him to institute him to the Vicarage of Weston, near Bath." The date is not given, but Walter de Anno was Prior 1261-1290.

Also in the Abbey Charters is a copy of a letter written by our Vicar, Jordanus more than 650 years ago. Edward I always in need of money to carry on his Wars with France and Scotland, had asked for large sums from both clergy and laity. The clergy had been forbidden by the Pope to pay money to anyone for secular purposes, but the King said that if they did not give they would be outlawed. Afraid of having his goods seized Jordan paid the sum asked for, and then tried to make his peace with the Archbishop by writing the following letter: "To Robert, Archbishop of Canterbury from his devoted son Jordan, Vicar of Weston, near Bath, greeting with all due reverence and obedience. Chained to this spot by chronic weakness of the flesh, I am unable to come to your reverence's presence. I have sent a clerk beloved to me in the Lord to seek my absolution from the excommunication I incurred on account of the royal protection accepted under compulsion ..." An entry, dated about six weeks after this letter is a declaration from the Archbishop absolving the penitent Jordan.

There is little doubt that the 14<sup>th</sup> century Vicars Henry de Forde and William de Fowler perished in the Black Death of 1348-49. In many Somerset parishes there are two or even three Vicars in the Plague years. The clergy as a whole were devoted in ministering to their flocks and the mortality among them was very high.

Of the next Vicar, Matthew Bremull, it is recorded that he exchanged with Thomas Hulle who was a Chantry priest at the altar of St. Kalixtus in Wells Cathedral. He died in 1436 and was succeeded by John Phelippes. This Vicar, who remained at Weston for 56 years, was appointed Coadjutor to the Maser of St. John's Hospital, Bath, in 1459; when the adjutor died John Phelippes managed the affairs of the Hospital during the vacancy. It is recorded that "the Bishop commends him for his success in administering the goods of the Hospital".

John Phelippes died on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1492, and in the same year John Chancellor was instituted, but he resigned in 1493 when William Beddeford was appointed. It is not recorded whether he died or at what date he left Weston. His successor, John Barbour, died in 1501, and the Vicar who followed him resigned the following year, so that in ten years there had been five Vicars.

With Humphrey Cauk and Clemens Eryngton we come to the beginning of the Reformation period, but we have nothing recorded of either of these Vicars. They were the last to be appointed by the Prior of Bath Abbey which was dissolved in 1539. Shortly before the Dissolution the right of presentation had been sold to two Weston men, evidently with an eye to the appointment of John Macie, a local man (1541). We know that he inclined to the new ways of thought in religion for he married in 1549 and was deprived under Queen Mary in 1555. He had four children and apparently continued to live in the Village until his death in 1595. One would suppose that his residence in Weston did not make the work of the Catholic Henry Townsend very easy! But apparently Townsend was not a very ardent Catholic for he must have accepted the Elizabethan settlement – Bernard Adams was not appointed until 1576.

At the end of the sixteenth century, in the year 1597, began the long incumbency of Thomas Pockston, the Vicar who tells us that he copied out all the entries in the register onto parchment. He lived until 1643, a few months after the Battle of Lansdown. It was said that the troubles of that time hastened his end.

His successor, William Crofts, remained at Weston, so far as we know, throughout the Commonwealth and for some years into the reign of Charles II. For ten years all Prayer Book services were prohibited, and in many parishes

the Vicars were ejected and Presbyterian or Dissenting ministers put in. a fascinating speculation is that Mr. Crofts held services in the almost hidden room in the old part of the Vicarage<sup>6</sup>. But outwardly he must have obeyed the Government orders.

Nothing is recorded of the four Vicars who followed William Crofts, but with David Macie, appointed in 1698, we come to an interesting piece of local history.

This David, a great great grandson of the sixteenth century vicar, was born and presumably brought up in the village. As his baptism is recorded in the year 1666 he was probably ordained in the early 1690's. Meanwhile in the village of Kelston John Harrington's young daughter Amie had been growing up and becoming friendly with David. Two years after he had become Vicar they were married. In the meantime Amie's father John Harrington, desirous of making life more comfortable for the young couple and for future Vicars of Weston, made over the Rectorial tithes (which he had recently bought), and the house by the Church with its garden and outbuildings, to the Vicar and his successors, with the condition they should reside there. The Rectorial tithes were worth £4 (of very much greater value then than now), and the house was the small Jacobean part of the present Vicarage. Probably the Vicars already lived there, possibly paying rent to the Rector. One would expect this to be the beginning of a long incumbency, so that it is somewhat surprising that only one year after the marriage, a new Vicar, John Chapman, was appointed.

The Chapmans were a very well known and influential family of clothiers. So much did they consider themselves to be rulers of Bath that it is said that one of them suggested that his Arms should be substituted for the traditional ones of the City! About fifty years before this John Chapman became Vicar, the family had built or rebuilt Chelscombe on the slopes of Lansdown; their coat of arms may be seen on the porch today. It is likely that in 1701 they were still living there. The family also owned a clothing mill on the Weston side of the River. John Chapman died and was buried at Weston in the year 1737.

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<sup>6</sup> The Jacobean part of the Vicarage was probably built about this date; one end of the stone paved floor of this room is raised by a step where possibly an altar stood.

With the advent of William Cheyne, whose incumbency lasted until 1767, we come to the era of the extant Churchwardens' books, from which we learn rather more of the Church life of the Parish, though little of the personality of the Vicars. Apparently Mr. Cheyne was unmarried, his sister Isobel keeping house for him. Doubtless they often entertained their half-brother, D. Cheyne, who very likely brought with him some of the notable personalities of Bath.

William Cheyne died in 1767 and was succeeded by another John Chapman. In addition to holding the living of Weston he was Vicar of Bathford and Master of St. John's Hospital. He lived at Weston for about 30 years presumably putting in a Curate at Bathford. But for ten years 1795-1805 the minutes of the Vestry Meetings are not signed by him, so that presumably during that period he was not living in the Parish. Shortly before his resignation he enlarged the Vicarage by the addition of two large rooms on the south-east side, with bedrooms above. Mr. Baldwin, the architect of the Guild Hall in Bath, was called in, and he designed the typical late Georgian front, with delicately carved pilasters that we see today. When in 1808 Mr. Chapman resigned he had been Vicar for 41 years. It is remarkable that throughout the eighteenth century there were only three Vicars.

John Chapman was followed by Thomas Wilkins. A little later in the nineteenth century a Miss Wilkins married into the Leir family who had succeeded the Macies as chief landowners of the Parish. Through Mr. Wilkins was Vicar for 18 years there is very little record of his incumbency. Owing to the Napoleonic Wars, bad harvests and the great increase in the cost of food, the earlier years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were years of great distress in the Parish.

With John Bond, who succeeded Thomas Wilkins in 1826, we come to modern times. He came to the Parish as a young and energetic man. Having considerable private means he gave generously to the Church and Parish. Besides the rebuilding of the Parish Church and the rebuilding of St. John's, Lower Weston, he devoted his energies and money to the rebuilding of the schools and the formation of the Men's Club and Reading Room, which organisation has survived to the present time. The tradition of his benevolence and generosity still lingers today. He resigned in 1882 and left Weston; notes in later Parish Magazines show that he kept up his interest in the Parish until his death.

This long incumbency was followed by several short ones of which we have little record. Then in 1891 the Rev. Edward Hardcastle came to Weston. The great work carried out during his ten years at Weston was the enlargement of the Church, but he was also responsible for the building of the Church Room and the addition of a large room on the ground floor of the Vicarage with bedrooms above. This was paid for partly by gifts from parishioners and partly money raised on mortgage. Mr. Hardcastle is still remembered with affection by the older residents of Weston.

The present century, with its two World Wars, has brought many changes to the Parish. Improvements and gifts to the Church are recorded under "History".

J. HARGOOD-ASH (1947).

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