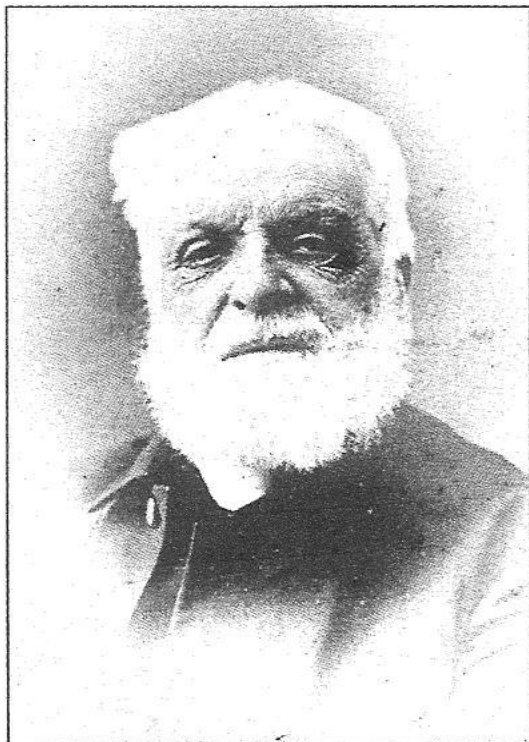


The first vicar of Christ Church

The creation of Christ Church is due largely to the vision, driving force and persuasive powers of the vicar of the day, the Reverend Joseph Ibbetson



Rev Joseph Ibbetson, vicar of Ayton 1827-1878.

Joseph Ibbetson was born in Middlesbrough in 1801 and after studying for an MA at St John's College Oxford became curate at Darlington in 1824. He was appointed vicar of Nunthorpe and Curate at Newton-under-Roseberry in 1825 and then vicar of All Saints Great Ayton in 1827

In 1834 he married Elizabeth daughter of Thomas and Ann Simpson of Nunthorpe Hall in All Saints Church.

He soon made his mark on the new parish in various ways! In the vestry minutes of 1828 it was decreed that *"in future, no allowance of ale or liquor be given at any of these meetings"* And later, one of his parishioners, David Bottomley the local bobby used to bring his noisy jackdaw, "Jack" into church – he argued that if there was a choice between listening to a noisy jackdaw on the window sills or listening to Rev Ibbetson's sermon he was in no doubt which one he would choose!!

In 1840, the Churchwardens were authorised to purchase a new copy of the authorised version of the Bible as *"the existing one is incorrect"* By 1844, the register of books held by the church included *"Cause of the decay of Christian Piety"*, *"Considerations upon Eternity"* and *"The Triumph of God's revenge against unjust and premeditated murder"*!

Thus settled into the parish, he set about making some more fundamental changes! Not satisfied with the existing vicarage (now Winford House) it was at Ibbetson's instigation that a new vicarage was built in 1846, *"thus securing to the Parish, the benefit of a resident Clergyman"* The old vicarage became the "Bob and Tanner", a temperance hotel!!!

He then set about improving All Saints by having a vestry built in 1849.

However, with the development of whinsone mining and the influx of people into the village in the 1860s it was soon apparent to Ibbetson that All Saints would not be able to accommodate the growing population who wanted (or needed) to worship there. This would certainly have been true if the statistic in 1860 that typically 542 people went to church out of the village population of 1032 was to be repeated in later years! He considered extending All Saints but there was already insufficient space in the graveyard, so he set about persuading the high and mighty to help him raise funds for a new Church. In his prospectus produced in 1866 he writes:

"...it was deemed desirable to rebuild the Church on a new site ...as near as possible to the old Burial Ground. Captain Marwood has given a valuable piece of land for the purpose. While the village is surrounded by scenery so lovely and beautiful, the House of God ought to have a corresponding character, such as becomes its sacred purpose"

A subscription list was opened in 1866 to raise funds for the new Church- Captain Marwood contributed £300, Rev Ibbetson himself gave £75 -even the Archbishop of York and the Archdeacon were on the list as were hundreds of private subscribers some of whom came from as far afield as Liverpool, Leicester, Birmingham and London. Altogether over £2000 was raised after the first appeal – a good start on the £5000 needed to build the new Church

However, owing to a depression in the iron trade, further funding proved to be very difficult and the project was abandoned. Things were made even more difficult when his wife of 35 years, Elizabeth, died on 2nd January 1969. Described by many as a "faithfull shepherdess and exemplary handmaid of the Lord" she had worked tirelessly to provide comfort and support to the sick and poor of the parish. (see accompanying article by Ian Pearse)

In 1873 however, Revd Ibbetson restored to full vigour and aided by the newly- created "Building Committee" managed to raise sufficient funds for work on the new church to commence.

A Subscription for the Rebuilding and Enlargement

OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF AYTON, IN CLEVELAND, 1866.

THE ancient Parish Church in this Village was built, probably, 800 years ago, when the Population was not one tenth of its present number. For some time past there has been an increasing desire among the Poor to avail themselves of the Services of the Church; it therefore needs considerable enlargement, that it may accommodate the Inhabitants who wish to attend it. Many parts of it, through age and damp, are in a state of decay.

It was at first thought that a new Aisle on the North side, affording 80 additional sittings, together with the improvement of the present seats, would be a great benefit. This would have cost about £1100. or £1200.

But on further consideration, it is deemed desirable to rebuild the Church. This has been strongly recommended, by many competent to judge, as the most effectual and satisfactory plan. There is difficulty in combining the new work with the old: and it is desirable that the number of sittings should be in proportion to the population, which is now 1500. It will be seen that with this population there should be accommodation for nearly 500, which can only be obtained by rebuilding. The cost of this would be about £2800.

As it was found impossible to give the New Church the additional width needed, without interfering with several graves, and also rendering the foundations difficult and expensive; it was deemed desirable to obtain a New Site for the Church, as near as possible to the old Burial Ground. Captain Marwood has given a valuable piece of Land for the purpose. But the new roads and fence-walls, and other charges, will obviously add much to the above estimate.

An appeal is therefore made to the Landowners and Inhabitants, and to all others who are interested in the religious welfare of the Parish, for their aid and co-operation. It is felt, even by some of the poor, that while the Village is surrounded by Scenery so lovely and beautiful, the House of God ought to have a corresponding character, such as becomes its sacred purpose.

Subscriptions will be thankfully received by The Rev. J. Ibbetson, Rev. M. Rowntree, and the Churchwardens, Ayton; also, at the Darlington District Bank, and the National Provincial Bank, in Stokesley.

HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK, £20.

THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON CHURTON, £10.

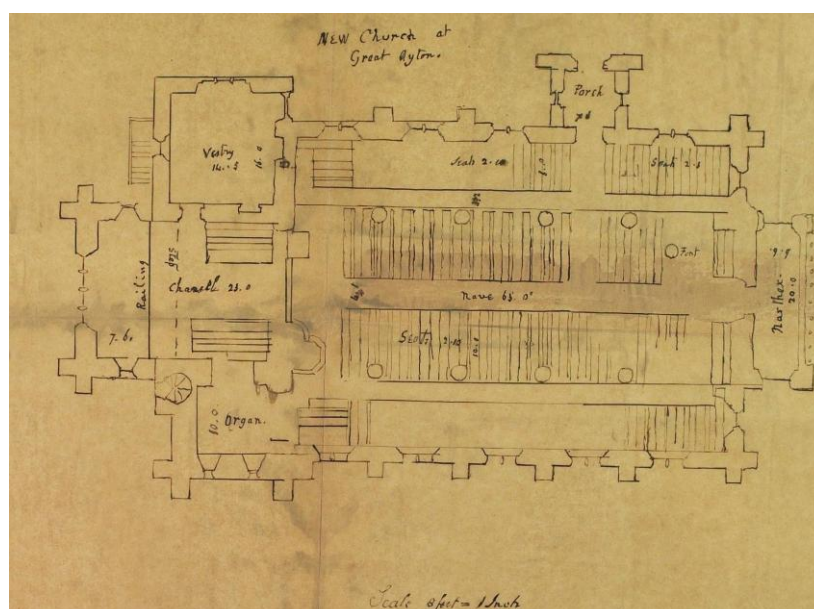
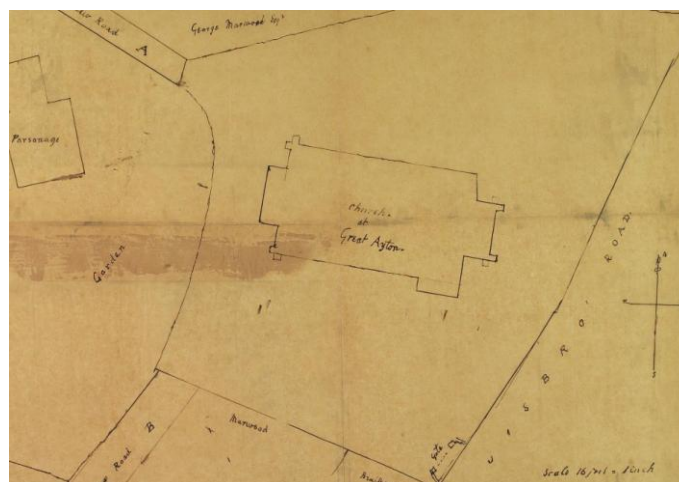
£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Captain Marwood,..... 300 0 0	Mr. Eldon, 10 0 0	W. Whythead, Esq. York, 2 2 0
He will also rebuild the	H. L. Thornhill, Esq. ... 5 0 0	Mr. John Pringle, Sen. ... 2 2 0
Chancel. Estimated 200 0 0	Mrs. Vollum, Hartlepool, ... 5 0 0	Mr. S. Hunter, 2 2 0
Isaac Wilson, Esq. } 500 0 0	T. Colling, Esq. Guisbro', 5 0 0	Mr. Kilvington, 2 0 0
W. R. I. Hopkins, Esq. } 100 0 0	Rev. Canon Coates, Sowerby, 5 0 0	Rev. C. Bailey, Marton, ... 1 1 0
Charles Wynne Finch, Esq. } 100 0 0	R. Simpson, Esq. York, ... 5 0 0	Mrs. Loy, 1 1 0
George Jackson, Esq. ... 100 0 0	C. Lowther, Esq. Bawtry, 5 0 0	Mr. F. Sanderson, Stockton, 1 1 0
A True Friend, 100 0 0	Mrs. Russell, Scarborough, 5 0 0	Rev. I. R. Ellis, 1 1 0
Rev. J. Ibbetson, 75 0 0	R. Barrall, Esq. Durham, 5 0 0	Mrs. Hustler, Acklam Hall, 1 1 0
James Emerson, Esq. ... 50 0 0	The Misses Burrell, Do. ... 5 0 0	Miss Rickatson, London, ... 1 1 0
F. H. Ward Jackson, Esq. } 50 0 0	Rev. J. Cartwright, Do. ... 5 0 0	Mrs. Mathews, Do. ... 1 0 0
Liverpool, 50 0 0	Hon. Colonel Duncombe, 5 0 0	Mrs. Taylor, Whitby, 1 0 0
Rev. W. V. Harcourt, 25 0 0	Rev. Canon Hull, Eaglescliffe, 5 0 0	Mr. Ord, Guisbro', 1 0 0
Lord Feversham, 25 0 0	Rev. T. Collins, Knaresbro', 5 0 0	Two Friends at Yarm, 1 0 0
Rev. W. Ward Jackson, 25 0 0	J. W. Pease, Esq. M. P., 5 0 0	Mr. P. Donaldson, 1 0 0
Mrs. W. Simpson, York, } 25 0 0	Wm. Danby, Esq. Elmfield, 5 0 0	F. Clough, Esq. Eastingwold, 1 0 0
for a Memorial, 25 0 0	Thomas Noton, Esq. London, 5 0 0	The Misses Clough, Do. ... 2 0 0
R. Ward Jackson, Esq. ... 21 0 0	Rev. T. H. Dixon, 5 0 0	Geo. Peirson, Esq. Ormesby, 1 0 0
Captain Pennyman, 20 0 0	J. R. Lee, Esq. Birmingham, 5 0 0	Mrs. Hunton, Lofthouse, ... 1 0 0
T. Hustler, Esq. 20 0 0	Mr. John Watson, 5 0 0	A. Friend, Thirsk, 1 0 0
Dr. Loy, 20 0 0	The Misses Mello, 5 0 0	Rev. E. Jowett, Do. 1 0 0
Leonard Armstrong, Esq. 20 0 0	A Friend, 5 0 0	Mr. Devey, 1 0 0
Anonymous, 20 0 0	Mr. John Stowpe, 5 0 0	Mr. W. Weatherill, 1 0 0
Mr. John Hebron, 20 0 0	Miss E. Martin, 5 0 0	Mr. P. Murray, 1 0 0
Rev. G. Nightingale, 10 0 0	Mr. W. Winn, 5 0 0	Mrs. Biggins, 1 0 0
Rev. H. J. Duncombe, Sig-	Mrs. Carlen, 5 0 0	Miss A. Watson, 1 0 0
ston, 10 0 0	Miss Weatherill, 5 0 0	Mr. W. F. Pratt, 0 10 6
Captain Chaloner, R. N., 10 0 0	Mrs. Curry, 5 0 0	Mrs. Dunning, Whitby, ... 0 10 0
J. T. Wharton, Esq. 10 0 0	Miss Jackson, Stokesley, ... 5 0 0	Mr. G. Jaques, Stockton, ... 0 10 0
C. F. Hutchinson, Esq. ... 10 0 0	Mr. Wm. Barker, Do. ... 5 0 0	Mr. G. Bennington, Do. ... 0 10 0
Mrs. H. Simpson, York, ... 10 0 0	Mr. H. Fawcett, Do. ... 5 0 0	Mr. T. Parkinson, Do. ... 0 10 0
Mrs. Favell, Keswick, 10 0 0	Rev. C. Cator, Do. ... 5 0 0	Mr. W. Bowman, Leicester, 0 10 0
J. C. Hopkins, Esq. Elton, 10 0 0	R. R. Burgess, Esq. Do. ... 5 0 0	Mrs. J. Bowman, Do. ... 0 10 6
Rev. M. Rowntree, 10 0 0	M. Gilbertson, Esq. Egham, 3 0 0	Mr. John Bennisson, 0 10 0
Miss Hunter, 10 0 0	Rev. F. H. Morgan, 3 0 0	Mr. E. West, Kildale, 0 10 0
Mr. Joseph Longstaff, 10 0 0	Mr. Ed. Barker and family, 3 13 6	Mr. J. Bayne, 0 10 0
Mr. John Pringle, Jun., ... 10 0 0	Rev. F. Earle, Whorlton, ... 2 2 0	Mr. Watson, 0 10 0
Mr. James Milligan, 10 0 0	Mr. J. Thomson, Wortley, 2 2 0	Sums under 10s. 2 15 0
Mr. William Hauxwell, ... 10 0 0	A Friend, 2 2 0	
Mr. William Sandersen, ... 10 0 0	E. W. Cropper, Esq. 2 2 0	

Advertisements in the local press gave an indication that things were happening .In 1873 tenders were invited for demolition work on the old church and for the provision of stone and ‘first class’ stone wallers. By 1875 a contractor was needed to dismsntle and remove the scaffolding.

The architects Ross and Lamb of Darlington (the former an ex- pupil of Friend’s School) had been engaged to supervise the work and prepare drawings to show the site on which the church was to be built and the layout of the church itself. The only drawings which have been found were in fact rather crude sketches but they seem to have been adequate to support the faculty application to the Diocesan authorities. The faculty is unusual (to say the least) in that there is remarkably little detail with the bulk of the responsibility for ensuring a satisfactory project being laid on the shoulders of the Vicar, the Churchwardens (Richard Johnson Sayer and William Dixon) and the “Building Committee” comprising George Marwood, Isaac Wilson and William Randolph Innes Hopkins – as wealthy landowners they could be trusted! However, by present day standards the wording of the faculty gives an excessive amount of scope to the developers!

“the whole of the said work to be effected and carried out in strict conformity with the ground plan hereunto annexed marked A which has been approved and sanctioned by his Grace the Lord Archbishop of York....”

The remainder of the faculty was a detailed account of the part demolition of All Saints Church and the uses to which the redundant stones were to be put!!



The faculty was dated 29th April 1876 and the citation was posted on the door of the new church on 7th May 1876 – a retrospective faculty for a new church would be unheard of at the present time- perhaps this is further evidence of Revd Ibbetson's persuasive powers in convincing those in authority that "everything will be alright on the night"!! And on 20th May 1876 the new Church was ready to be used for the first time.

Described as "one of the most handsome structures in the North Riding", it was 63ft long by 44 ft wide inclusive of the aisles with a spire 120ft high. The walls were made of 'hammer-dressed sueck rubble with ashlar quoins'. Masonry work was carried out by William Heccle of Great Ayton and the joinery work by William Martin also of Great Ayton. Other craftsmen came from Durham, Darlington and Middlesbrough.

The official capacity of the church was 356 adults and 88 children (excluding the choir!) At the opening services, held in fine weather, the church was said to be "well filled in every part."

On 12th March 1877, Christ Church was finally consecrated by William Thomson, Archbishop of York.

His labours in Great Ayton complete, Joseph Ibbetson finally retired in 1878 and chose to spend his retirement in Darlington until his death in 1887. Little is recorded of his final years or the manner of his death. Suffice to say that this remarkable man has been commemorated by a fine marble plaque in Christ Church and an elegant tomb in All Saints Churchyard where his ministry in Great Ayton began 52 years earlier

