

## **CHRIST CHURCH VICARS BIOGRAPHIES**

*Parish of Whitehaven Publication HS 10*

### **JOHN RIMMER**

**(1<sup>st</sup> Vicar)**

From the 1851 census we know that he was born around 1807 in the Liverpool area, as was his wife in 1811.

He had married his wife at Liverpool St. Philip on 13<sup>th</sup> June 1830.

In 1844 (after priesting at Chester) he was appointed as a Curate to the Parish of St. Bees with special responsibility for developing a ministry to the Preston Quarter area of Whitehaven.

Without a building this was initially developed in the Newtown Sunday School Room. This building was in poor condition. In March 1845 the Glass House School was licensed for divine service. On 25<sup>th</sup> August 1845 he was licensed as Vicar of the new Parish (created by Order in Council 10 days earlier). He oversaw the purchase of land for the new Church later in 1845, and the subsequent building of the church. Finally the Church was opened on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1847.

In 1865 the population was 4,131 and his income was £220

From the 1851 census we know that the vicarage was at Wood House, St. Bees (now within the area of the Woodhouse Estate, Whitehaven). Their son, John was then 18 & daughter Mary was 19.

John subsequently moved away from the district. It is believed that he returned to the Merseyside area (Ormskirk/Southport), and it is known that he had two children- Grace and Sydney Richard. As far as can be traced Mary never married.

By 1871 the Vicarage was at 151 Queen Street

John retired on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1883, after 39 years service to the Parish and in failing health at the age of 76. Even then the Bishop had to persuade him to relinquish his responsibilities. He was given a pension of £85 per year but died on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1884. He left £9,592/14/6.

He was buried after a 12 noon funeral on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1884 in St. Bees Churchyard. His grave is flanked by those of his sister, Sarah, and his daughter, Mary. His wife Frances (nee Whittle) predeceased him and was also buried on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1878 at St. Bees

As of Spring 2010 the grave slab is too badly worn to be able to read the inscription.

### **STUART HALL**

**VICAR 1883 to 1888**

He graduated from Durham University in 1878, was deaconed that year then priested in 1879 at Durham. He was Curate at Thornley (co. Durham) from 1878 to 1880 then Vicar of St. Nicholas to 1883.

He was instituted to the living of Christ Church on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1883, by the Archdeacon of Kendal.

In the interim the parish had been looked after by Revd R. Lincey L.T. of Liverton, Saltburn by the Sea.

He was Chaplain at Heidelberg (Germany) from 1888 to 1889, then Vicar of Rotherham St. Paul (New Brunswick, Canada) from 1890 to 1892, Curate of Stoke-Damarel 1892 to 1894, Vicar of Bickleigh (Devon) 1894 to 1895, Horrabridge (Plymouth) 1895 to 1897, then returned to Heidelberg from 1899 to 1901. In 1901 he went to Durbanville, Cape Colonies (now South Africa).

**CHARLES GEORGE CALVERT**

**VICAR 1888 to 1892**

He graduated from Jesus College, Cambridge in 1856, was deaconed the following year & priested in 1858 at Ely. He was then Curate of Boxford (Suffolk) to 1862 & then Thetford to 1863 then Upwell to 1868. He became Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin, Wiggshall in 1868, then in 1877 became Chaplain at Heidelberg to 1888 (succeeded there by Stuart Hall above). On leaving Christ Church he became Rector of Kilmartin St. Columba (Argyll).

**THOMAS SCUDAMORE CUNNINGHAM**

**VICAR 1893 to 1898**

He trained at St. Bees Theological College, was deaconed in 1877 & priested in 1878 at Oxford. He was curate at Newton-Blossomville (near Bedford) from 1877 to 1880 then Burwell to 1882, Felpham to 1882 & Pakenham to 1884 (all in Cambridgeshire/Suffolk). He then became Vicar of the Scilly Isles from 1885 to 1888, St. Feock (Cornwall) to 1891 then was Chaplain at Ghent.

After leaving Christ Church due to his and his wife's ill health he swapped livings with the Vicar of Marden with Chirton (Salisbury). He died in the June quarter of 1913, at the age of 58 in the Devizes Registration District.

**HENRY THOMPSON ADAM**

**VICAR 1899 to 1917**

He graduated from Cambridge in 1876, was deaconed the same year & was priested in 1877 at Norwich. He was Curate at Lynn Regis to 1879, then Calne to 1892. He then became Vicar of Marden with Chirton before exchanging livings with Thomas Scudamore Cunningham. He retired from Christ Church to 14 Stanley Road, Lytham, Lancashire due to ill health, where he died on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1928 at the age of 75. He lost a son, Henry William during WW1, who had been training for the Ministry before WW1.

**REGINALD SAMUEL EDWARD OLIVER**

**VICAR 1917 to 1926**

He graduated from the University of London in 1886, was deaconed in 1890 & priested the following year at St. Albans. He married at All Saints, Kenly, Surrey on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1891

He was Master of Dedham Grammar School and Curate of Dedham from 1890 to 1893, then Curate of Leeds St. Matthew from 1895 to 1896, Idle 1896 to 1898 & Eastwood 1898 to 1902. He became Vicar of Milburn (Westmorland) in 1902, moving to Frizington in 1910.

While at Whitehaven he was a member of the Rotary Club and of the Old Board of Guardians.

He was the first Vicar of Frizington, as it had previously been part of Arlecdon Parish.

After leaving Christ Church he became Rector of Kirkandrews on Eden with Beaumont & Grinsdale where he finished his ministry, and then retired to Loweswater, where he died in the December quarter of 1953.

**HERBERT CONWAY JOYCE**

**VICAR 1926 to 1930**

He graduated from Hertford College, Oxford in 1911 with a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Modern History Degree, and gained his MA in 1919. He was deaconed in 1920 & priested in 1921 at Winchester. He served curacies at East Meon to 1921 & Petersfield to 1924. He then became Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop of Carlisle to 1926 & again from 1931 to 1934. From 1924 to 1926 he was also Secretary of the Diocesan Board of Finance. He was instituted and inducted on 28<sup>th</sup> January 1930.

After leaving Christ Church he became Vicar of Raughton Head with Gatesgill, where he still was in 1941.

**GEORGE WILFRID ARNOLD**

**VICAR 1931 to 1936**

He was born a South African in Natal, but the family moved to England when he was still young. He started his working life as an Apprentice with Vickers at Barrow Shipyard but then went to University. He graduated from Queens College, Cambridge in 1911 & gained his MA in 1919. He was deaconed in 1911 and priested in 1912. His curacies were at Workington St. John to 1915 then Millom St. George to 1922. There he was Curate in Charge of Haverigg St. Luke. He also worked as a fitter at Millom Ironworks during the War Years. He was Vicar of Colton from Easter 1922 to 1931. He was also a Canon of

Carlisle Cathedral.

After leaving Christ Church he went to Burgh by Sands, where he died on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1946 at the age of 60 (after an illness of over a month), where he was buried on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

He was a bowls devotee (and a member of the Port Carlisle Club), and also belonged to the Carlisle Burns Club. He was also Chaplain to RAF Great Orton and a Freemason.

From the report in the Cumberland News of 16<sup>th</sup> March 1946 we know that the service was conducted by the Vicar of Carlisle St. Cuthbert & the Vicar of Kirkclinton with the committal conducted by Canon Postlethwaite of Broughton in Furness, with full Masonic Rites.

His wife, Florence Louise (nee Heseltine), went to live at Roxburgh House, Criffel Street, Silloth after his death and died on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1956, at the age of 67. She was buried on the 24<sup>th</sup> in the same grave as her husband. They married at Barrow in Furness in the March quarter of 1914.

This grave is in the churchyard extension (across the road from the church), on the west side, 2<sup>nd</sup> row in, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the North Wall.

The Parish has a photograph of his grave. The inscription reads: IN TREASURED/AND/AGREEABLE MEMORY OF/GEORGE WILFRED ARNOLD/VICAR OF THE PARISH OF BURGH BY SANDS/1936-1946/WHO ENTERED INTO HIGHER SERVICE/11 MARCH 1946/AGED 60 YEARS/HIS FAITH WAS ABSOLUTE/ALSO HIS BELOVED WIFE/FLORENCE LOUISE/WHO ENTERED INTO REST/21 NOV 1956/AGED 67 YEARS.

### **REGINALD MAYALL**

### **VICAR 1937 to 1941**

He was born on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1872 at Holy Trinity Vicarage, Darwen. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School and graduated from Cambridge Corpus Christi College in 1894 & gained his MA in 1904. He was deaconed in 1896 & priested in 1897. He was then Curate of Penrith to 1902 & then Birmingham St. Martin to 1905.

He then returned north to become Chaplain to the Bishop of Carlisle (1905 to 1918), jointly with Vicar of Wigton from 1905 to 1910 (also with Waverton & Dundraw from 1907). From 1906 to 1910 he was also Chaplain of Wigton Workhouse. He was a Forces Chaplain from 1917 to 1920 (and was mentioned in dispatches). He was Vicar of Windermere St. Mary from 1911 to 1937 (& Rural Dean of Ambleside from 1927). He was appointed as Rural Dean on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1940 and was made an Honorary Canon on the same date.

He went to Walton near Carlisle from Christ Church and died on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1944, and was buried at Windermere.

As a memorial the parish of Walton raised the funds to install electric lighting in the church in 1945 to 1946.

By 1937 the population of Christ Church with Holy Trinity Parish was 11,130 with an income of £400.

He had three brothers- Charles A, Harold and Robert P.W. He never married.

When at Windermere he was an efficient administrator, and put the parish finances back in order, after problems caused by the falling away of pew rents. He also introduced electric lighting and a new heating system.

### **JAMES OLIVE**

### **VICAR 1942 to 1961**

He was born around 1891, and gained his Licentiate in Divinity at St. David's College, Lampeter in 1919. He was deaconed in 1920 & priested at Manchester in 1922. He was curate at All Saints, Rainford from 1922 to 1925 then was Salford University Chaplain to 1928, and then Vicar of Pendleton St. Ambrose until 1941. He was then Rector of Stoke Lacy from 1941 to 1942 before coming to Whitehaven on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1942. He retired from Christ Church to Morecambe on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961 where he died on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1966, leaving his widow Elsie.

There is evidence that he served in the Royal Army Medical Corps in WW1, as service number 81799.

He moved from Pendleton in 1941 because both the Church and Vicarage had been bombed and destroyed. He had married a Violet Clibborn at Prescott in 1921. Violet suffered long term effects from the 1941 bombing. While the couple were walking at Milnthorpe, Westmorland Violet collapsed and died

suddenly on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1948 aged 60. After a funeral at Christ Church on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> April she was cremated at Manchester on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

James later remarried his long-time housekeeper, Elsie Hughes, on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1961 at Christ Church.

**NICHOLAS SCARTH DIXON**

**VICAR 1962 to 1970**

He was born in 1936 and ordained in 1956 (after gaining his BA & MA at Cambridge Gonville & Caius then training at Westcott House, Cambridge). He served his curacy at Walney Island St. Mary between 1956 and 1962 and was instituted to Christ Church on 20th September 1962.

On October 31<sup>st</sup> 1968 he married Gillian Ruth Needham, the daughter of the Vicar of Aspatria at Aspatria Church. The bride worked at Carlisle City Maternity Hospital.

After leaving Christ Church at the end of January 1970 he became Vicar of Blofeld with Hemblington (Norfolk) to 1977, then returned to Cumbria (to Bowness) until 1979. He then served at Frizington & Arlecdon from 1981 to 1987 and finally Barton, Pooley Bridge & Martindale to 1995 when he retired to Penrith. At Arlecdon he reestablished the Sunday School (or the Sunday Club as it was known) in the old 1878 Sunday School building.

**HENRY LEONARD ARMSTRONG LUCAS**

**VICAR 1970 to 1971**

He trained at Lincoln Theological College in 1943, was deaconed in 1944 & priested in 1945 by the Bishop of Monmouth. He was Curate of Carlisle, Holy Trinity from 1944 to 1945, then Monmouth St. Mary from 1945 to 1948. He then became Curate-in-Charge of Studham with Whipsnade in 1949, Curate of Hawkshead from 1950 to 1953, Rector of Gosforth from 1953 to 1963, Vicar of Netherpton with Grasslot 1963 to 1965 & Priest in Charge of Embleton with Wythop from 1965.

He left Christ Church due to ill health, and retired back to Embleton.

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Produced by I.S. Nicholson

The information contained within these bibliographies has been extracted from CCed, Crockfords, Bishops Acts Books at Chester to 1865, Bishops Registers at Carlisle from 1865 and many other sources, including censuses, GRO indexes, and wills.