

LANGDALE Incumbents

1745 Richard Steele
1780 William Crawford
1781 Thomas Jackson
1819 William Jackson
1828 Daniel Green
1829 Owen Lloyd
1842 Stephen Birkett
1860 James Coward FIRST VICAR
1885 Robert S Hulbert
1905 John M Tredennick
1911 William Heyes
1926 Leonard Argyle
1931 George C Dunning
1953 Geoffrey W Ellison
1961 Richard R Savill
1972 Graham [William Harrington] Hartley¹

¹ Graham was born in 1921 in the Conwy area of North Wales, but his family moved to Knowsley, Merseyside early in his life and that was where he grew up.

He started a career in banking but then the Second World War came. He was wounded on VE day and spent a considerable time in Hospital recuperating from a leg injury. During that time he decided to enter the ministry, though it was to be some years before that was to become a reality.

He was ordained on 23rd September 1962 and served his curacy at St. Cuthbert, North Meols (Southport) to 1965. He then went to Kano (Nigeria) for a year. On his return to the UK he became the Vicar of his home parish- Knowsley St. Anne (Merseyside) from 1966 to 1972. He was, however, a country Vicar at heart and moved to Langdale (Chapel Stile) Holy Trinity in 1972. He stayed there until 1981, and was a member of the Langdale and Ambleside Mountain Rescue Team.

He moved to Egremont in 1981 (where he worked with Canon Eric Chapman), where he had responsibility for Haile and Wilton. The new team ministry at Egremont was inaugurated on 23rd June 1981. He is remembered with great fondness by the villagers for his wonderful pastoral care, but also for introducing many of them to fell walking of the adventurous kind. This was when he took a party of young and old up Great Gable via the Gable Girdle, around Angel's Leap, up the Sphinx Gulley and via Westmorland Craggs. Many were quaking at the knees after this memorable ascent but a group of the parish went on many more scrambling trips, including to areas of Scotland recommended by Graham.

He arrived in Haile after the sale of the Vicarage (much regretted by priest and people alike), so lived at the Gulley Flatts Rectory (4 Fell View Drive), initially with his older sister Vere Harrington Staff until her death on 21st December 1982.

In 1985 he moved to the Parish of Whitehaven as Team Vicar & Hospital Chaplain, taking up those posts on 4th December. A peal of 1,260 Grandsire Triples was rung for this occasion.

The Chaplaincy had been held for many years by Hensingham St. John, although the Vicar of St. James had also frequently been the Chaplain of the old Infirmary in the town before the West Cumberland Hospital was built.

1987 Walter Wade

1995 Philip A Manning

1997 Andrew J Folks BA

The Chaplaincy was the major part of Graham's work in Whitehaven, and many will remember his quiet but inspired leadership in fully integrating the Hospital into the ministry and life of the Parish. A Parish Visiting Team to the Hospital was quickly set up, and many will remember taking part in the services at the Chapel- both on a Sunday afternoon and at major festivals. The Hospital Services at Christmas and Easter were an important part of the celebrations of the Parish. While he was in Whitehaven he lived at the then Vicarage on Leathwaite. His work at the Hospital was continued by Russell Rebert and then Ian Grainger until 1994. While he was at Kells St. Peter John Kelly was also Chaplain from 2003 to 2005.

He retired from Whitehaven back to his beloved hills of Langdale from 20th May 1988 (Whit Sunday). There he took up an advisory role again in the Mountain Rescue Team and took up water colour painting.

His health began to deteriorate in the summer of 2010 and he died at Staveley Abbey retirement home on 16th March 2011, and was buried at Langdale New Cemetery on 29th March 2011. This beautifully located cemetery is behind the village school, on the opposite side of the main road from the Church.

We thank the Parish of Egremont for their considerable assistance in the preparation of this obituary.