

## THE CLERGY OF MARYPORT ST. MARY'S CHURCH

*By I.S. Nicholson*

*This draws heavily on the Church 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Guidebook, compiled by Donald Leighton in 2010.*

The first recorded service in the Church was on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1760 but the first Vicar did not formally arrive until 25<sup>th</sup> March 1761- **Joseph Gillbanks**, who had previously been at Bowness-on-Solway and before that at Martindale (by Ullswater) where he had been Assistant Curate in June 1755. By as early as 1762 galleries had to be added to the Church and an extension to the churchyard.

The parish had previously been part of the ancient parish of Crosscannonby to whom parochial fees had to be assigned until July 1766.

The Church was not actually consecrated until 4<sup>th</sup> August 1763. It had cost £865 to build plus other costs leading to a total cost of about £1,094.

Banns of Marriage did not have to be read until the 1781 Marriage Act-unfortunately Maryport did not comply with the Act until September 1786 which rendered all marriages in the preceding 5 years technically invalid.

In 1792 and 1793 various charges were laid against Gillbanks concerning behaviours since around 1785. This culminated in a 3 page petition alleging that he was a “Common and Habitual Drunkard & Profane Swearer, reprobate, Immoral Life unbecoming to a Clergyman”, that he had been drunk & disorderly in the street, had refused to conduct Sunday services & the occasional Offices etc etc. Eventually a 14 point series of accusations was brought to the Consistory Court in December 1793/January 1794. He was found guilty of 13 of the charges on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1794 and deprived of the living forthwith.

His successor was **Anthony Dixon** who was licensed on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1794 (he had previously been Assistant Curate of Crosscannonby). He resigned of “old age” in 1845 and died in 1847. In 1836 transepts were added to double seating accommodation at a cost of £1,520. In 1847 the tower was raised to its current height and an organ installed, at unknown cost.

The third Vicar was **Richard Featherstone**. He was born in Northumberland and had previously been curate at Poulton-le-Fylde. He arrived in October 1845 but resigned in December 1849 to go to Bolton.

He was succeeded by **George Williamson** who had been Curate at Longford, Derbyshire. He “read in” on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1850 and resigned on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1850- 12 days later!!, departing on 13<sup>th</sup> July. The reason for this brief stay is not recorded.

The fifth Vicar was **William Bewsher**, formerly Curate of Astbury, Cheshire. He “read in” on 18<sup>th</sup> August 1850 and left to Radwell, Hertfordshire in November 1867.

He was succeeded by his Curate, **Alfred Oates**, inducted on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1867. He stayed until 1880. In 1874 the East Window in memory of Joseph Pocklington Senhouse was installed. In 1872 the daughter church-Christ Church (by the harbour) was opened- it closed in 2013.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **William Pascal Schaffter** from 1880 to 1886. He was born at Madras, India on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1835 and ordained in 1861 in India where he was a Church Missionary Society Missionary at Tinnevely from 1861 to 1870, Madras 1871 to 1877 and in Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] from 1878 to 1879. He had married a Theresa Stammer at Brighton, Sussex on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1861 and his father was a Paul Pacifique Schaffter. He moved to Selby, Yorkshire after Maryport and died there in post on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1898. His father, Paul Pacifique, was Swiss by birth but living in India by 1830. His mother, Angelica Juliana Van Someren is thought to have been born in India and died in the Indian Mutiny on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1859 aged about 38. William Pascal was one of 10 children. A Vicar of Indian/Swiss origins must have been very different for this Parish! The European origins of his mother are not traceable.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Edward Sampson** 1886-1892. The church was substantially rebuilt to its current (2014) form in 1890 to 1892. Most of the remainder of the current Stained Glass was installed as part of this rebuilding. An anonymous donor bought out all the pew rents so all seating in the “new” church was free. St. Mary’s finally became a separate (from Crosscannonby) Parish by order in Council of 31<sup>st</sup> January 1893. However this did not finally take full effect until the death of the Vicar of Crosscannonby in 1918- due to his freehold rights.

9<sup>th</sup> Vicar 1892-1902 ?? The organ was replaced with the current instrument (formerly in Chester Cathedral) in 1900, rebuilt 1933.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Frederick Herbert Taylor** from 1902 to 1907. He then moved to St Bartholomew’s Church Camberwell, London (replacing his successor at Maryport!!). He was ordained in 1885. He was Curate and Precentor of Newcastle Cathedral from 1885 to 1888 then Succentor and Choir Chaplain of Ripon Cathedral 1888 to 1896, then Minor Canon and Vicar of Ripon 1896 to 1899. He was then Vicar of Dacre [near Pateley Bridge] in the Diocese of Leeds (as opposed to the Diocese of Carlisle) from 1899 to 1902 before coming to Maryport.

He was succeeded by **John Arthur Richards** from 1907 to circa 1918. He was deaconed in 1886 in the Diocese of London. He served Curacies at Kilburn St Luke from 1887 to 1888, Holy Trinity Maidstone 1888 to 1891 and St John the Evangelist Kingston on Thames 1891 to 1896. He was then Perpetual Curate of St Bartholomew, Camberwell, London from 1896 to 1907. In 1910 the rood beam was added.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **C H Hawkins** c 1918-1933. *Not in 1932 Crockfords!!*

The 13<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Edward George Henry Hymas** from 1933 to 1942. He gained his degree in 1923 at the University of Bristol. He was ordained in 1925 and was Curate of Bournville, Birmingham until 1930 and then Curate of St Paul, Balsall Heath, Birmingham from 1930 to 1932 before coming to Maryport.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Derek Gordon Blake** from 1942 to 1957. He was born in 1910 and ordained in 1936. He served his curacies at Bermondsey St Crispin 1936 to 1939, then Plumstead St Margaret to 1942. Maryport was his first posting as a Vicar. In 1957 he moved to Carlisle St Aidan & Christ Church to 1969 and then to Holme Cultram St Cuthbert from where he retired to Cockermouth in 1988.

**Charles AW Ryley Eckersley** 1957-1966, formerly of Kells St Peter, Whitehaven. He was born in 1916.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Ian McDonald German** from 1966 to 1978 when he retired. He was born in the March quarter of 1909 in the Derby area (the son of Herbert Graham, a Railway Engineer's Accountant) and trained at Egerton Hall, Manchester in 1934. He was deaconed in 1934 & priested in 1935 by the Bishop of Barrow. He was Curate of Cockermouth Christ Church from 1934 to 1936, Carlisle St. Mary & St. Paul 1936 to 1938 & Minister of the St. Herbert District, Currock, Carlisle from 1938 to 1943. He was a Chaplain to the Forces from 1943 to 1946, then Vicar of Broughton Moor to 1966. He was also Rural Dean of Whitehaven from 1953 to 1966 and an Honorary Canon of Carlisle Cathedral from 1961, and the Bishop's Officer for Mission & Unity. In retirement (at St. Bees) he assisted at St. James' Church and Christ Church, Whitehaven until his death on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1983. The funeral, on 6<sup>th</sup> February, was at St. Bees Priory followed by cremation. His ashes are interred in the Priory Graveyard. He married Elizabeth Casson on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1936 at Distington when he lived at 80 Warwick Road, Carlisle.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **David Creighton Crook** from 1978 to 1982. He was born in 1937 and trained for the ministry at Cuddesdon College. After ordination in 1963 he served his curacies at Workington St Michael to 1966 then Penrith St Andrew to 1970. He was then Vicar of Barrow St James 1970 to 1978 before coming to Maryport. He was then Team Vicar of Greystoke, Matterdale and Mungrisdale from 1981 to 1987, including Watermillock from 1984. He retired to Penrith in 1988.

The 18<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **Joseph Hogarth** from 1982 to 1991. He was born in 1932, and deaconed on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1967 & Priested on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1967. He served his Curacy at St Mary Walney Island until 1971. He was then instituted to the Parish of St. James, Whitehaven on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1971 at 7.30pm. After leaving there at Christmas 1975 he became the Vicar of Millom with Thwaites from 10<sup>th</sup> January 1976 to 1982 and then Maryport to 1991. He then became Vicar of Consett (Durham) until 1997, from where he retired to Dartford where he continues to live in 2014.

The 19<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **William Kelly** from 1992 to 1997 (with Flimby from 1993 to 1996). He was born at Netherton, Maryport in 1935 in the neighbouring parish of All Souls and is the elder brother of John Kelly, formerly of Kells St Peter and Whitehaven St James' among other parishes. William Kelly was ordained in 1960 and served his curacy at Walney Island until 1966. He was then Rector of Distington to 1971, and then Vicar of Barrow St Matthew to 1981. He was Rural Dean of Furness from 1977 to 1981 and an Honorary Canon of Carlisle Cathedral from 1979 until retirement and Director of Ordinands from 1981 to 1992. He was Vicar of Dalston from 1981 to 1992 and Rural Dean of Carlisle 1983 to 1988. From 1986 to 1992 he was Priest-in-Charge of the neighbouring Parish of Raughton Head with Gatesgill. He was subsequently Priest-in-Charge of Arthuret with Nicholforest and Kirkandrews-on-Esk until retirement to Carlisle in 2000.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Vicar was **David Crauford Bickersteth** from 1997 to 2006 who became Team Rector of Maryport, Netherton & Flimby in 2004. He was born in 1950 and ordained in 1975. His curacies were at Beverley Minster from 1975 to 1979 then Farnborough, Hampshire 1979-1981. He was Priest-in-Charge of Dearham, near Maryport from 1981 to 1985 then Rector 1985 to 1986. He was then Rector of Gosforth with Nether Wasdale and Wasdale Head from 1986 to 1993 and then Priest-in-Charge of Harraby (Carlisle) to 1997. While at Harraby he was also the Diocesan Chaplain to the Mothers Union. From 2006 he has been Rector of Draycote-le-Moors with Forsbrook (Diocese of Lichfield) and Priest-in-Charge of Upper Tean since 2008. [*Note- the spelling of Crauford is correct*].

The 21<sup>st</sup> Vicar from 2007 to 2010 was **Kevin Stuart Ellis**. Born in 1967 he trained for the Ministry at the London Bible College and Queens College, Birmingham. He was ordained in 2001 and served his curacy at Matson, Gloucester from 2001 to 2004. He was a Team Vicar in the Maryport Team Ministry from 2004 to 2007 and became Team Rector in 2007.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Vicar since 2010 is **Gillian Mary Hart**. She was born in 1957. After gaining her degree at Sheffield Polytechnic in 1979 she trained for the ministry on the Carlisle Diocesan Course from 1992

to 1995 and was ordained in 1995. She was Curate of Burgh by Sands with Kirkbampton and Kirkandrews-on –Eden with Aikton and Orton from 1995 to 1999. She was Diocesan Youth Officer from 1999 and Chaplain to St Martin's College, Carlisle from 1999, at which time she lived at Irthington Vicarage. She was Rector of the Barony of Burgh from 2003 to 2010, Diocesan Advisor for Women in Ministry since 2008 and an Honorary Canon of Carlisle Cathedral since 2010.