

Parish of St Aidan, Sudden, Rochdale 100 years ago

From Sudden Notes written by Rev Hartley Harrison in *St Alban's Church Magazine*

May 1912

We have received from Mr Temple Moore a copy of the "*Building News*", containing pictures of a new Church recently completed by him at Barnsley, doubtless as a reminder that St Aidan's is not yet begun. Miss Crompton has kindly sent a cheque for £500, the first instalment of her generous promise of £1000 to the Building Fund.

October 1912

Our notes must give the place of prominence this month to the reminder of the nearness of the long-promised visit of the Lord Bishop of the Diocese to the St Aidan's District. We have received a letter from his Lordship confirming his kind promise to preach at Sudden Mission Room at the 6.30 service on Sunday evening, October 13th. This is probably the first time we have had the opportunity of welcoming a bishop at Sudden Mission Room, and we hope that his welcome will be a hearty one. We have no doubt that the Bishop's desire will be to give us, in connection with his visit, encouragement and stimulus in the now urgent work of arising to build the New Church. On the Saturday following there will be a meeting of all interested in promoting the building of St Aidan's Church. There will be Tea (6d each) at 5pm, on Saturday, October 19th, followed at 6-30 by a "Church Builders' Conference", and most earnest invitation is given to all who would like to be present.

November 1912

The visit of our Diocesan Bishop on October 13th drew to Sudden Mission Room the largest Adult Congregation which has ever assembled within its walls. All joined heartily in the simple service, and a sum of £6 7s 9d was contributed to the new Church Building Fund.

On the Saturday following his Lordship's visit there was an enthusiastic conference of "Church Builders" when the Church Building Committee was re-instituted and urged to proceed without delay with the arrangements for starting the building of the New Church. Much readiness to help the work by taking collecting-boxes was manifested. The profit of one guinea on the Tea was devoted to the Church Building Fund. The treasurer, Mr Verity, reported that gifts and promises already received amounted to £2,048 2s 5d. He was resolved to inaugurate a "Million Pennies Scheme" which is approximately the amount needed to complete our Building Fund for the New Church. The meeting adjourned to Tuesday, October 29th, when there was again a Tea and a large gathering. The chief business transacted was the preliminary arrangement for a Town Hall Bazaar about a year hence.

December 1912

A very large attendance and a profit of £9 at the Annual "At Home" of the Church Lads' Brigade, opened by Colonel Sir George Kemp on November 23rd, bore witness to the warm place the St. Aidan's Lads hold in the hearts of many friends. Sir George presented first-class medals for five years' excellent service to Second-Lieutenant A.W. Smith, Sergeants H. Simpson, J.A. Rogerson and Corporal G.E. Howarth. Before leaving Sir George added to his kindness by consenting to join the Building Committee of the New Church.

Members of St Aidan's visited three recent Church Bazaars which have been so successful. We have ventured to take the Town Hall for St Aidan's Bazaar in November (20th, 21st, 22nd) next year, in the earnest hope that our efforts may meet with similar blessing.

February 1913

The result of the subjection of Temple Moore's beautiful design for our new Church to the cold arithmetical calculation of his quantity surveyor has involved us in perplexity and disappointment. The estimated cost would be so much in excess of our expectation that we cannot venture to proceed with the original design without much further consideration. Mr Temple Moore is preparing a modified design which will shortly be before us, and then we shall have to decide whether to build a Church, more or less complete, at a cost more within our power, or some portion of the kind of Church on which we had set our hopes.

April 1913

Much progress has recently been made with the preparations [for the building of the new Church]. A large new site on higher ground in the same field which contains Canon Hartley's original generous gift has been tested and surveyed, and can be purchased without delay. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners will return the old site to Canon Hartley, who will kindly devote its value, when a purchaser is found, to the Church Building Fund. A fine design by Mr. Temple Moore for a Church of simpler architectural character has been approved by the Building Committee, and we have good hopes of seeing the Foundation Stone laid by Lady Rochdale before the Spring is far advanced.

May 1913

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have signalled their approval of the new Site, and have given instructions for the carrying out of its conveyance to them in place of the old one. The New Church will gain much in its elevation and aspect for this exchange. The Commissioners have also drafted a scheme to be presented shortly to His Majesty in Council for the constitution of St Aidan's as a separate Ecclesiastical District.

On Tuesday, April 22nd, Mr Temple Moore sent us his completed design for the New Church which was heartily approved at a meeting of the Building Committee on the same evening. In many ways they seem to promise us a finer and more unique Church than the original plans of which they are a severe modification. The matter is now in the hands of Mr Temple Moore, to be pressed forward with the least possible delay.