

# SOUTHAMPTON PUBLIC LIBRARIES

CLASSIFICATION

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SUBJECT *CHURCHES.C.E.* SOURCE

*St. Luke*

*S.D.E.*

DATE

*18.9.53*

## Church of St. Luke

**THE** Parish of St. Luke, Newtown, was formed from the large parish of St. Mary and comprised the small village of Newtown, consisting chiefly of Onslow-road and Fanshawe-street. Close by, the Royal South Hants Hospital—then called the Infirmary—had already been built.

St. Mary's-road was called Love-lane then and it connected Newtown with the town itself.

From the hill which was chosen as the site of the new church, farmland sloped down to the banks of the Itchen. Market gardens and a few cottages bordered the ancient road through Bevois Valley, along which the armies of the Black Prince and Henry V once marched passing through what is now Rockstone-lane on the way to the Bar-gate.

The church was dedicated to "the beloved physician," St. Luke on account, perhaps, of the nearby hospital.

### THE INCUMBENTS

Initially, the church consisted of a nave without chancel or aisles but with a gallery at the west end of the organ. Aisles were added to the church in 1860 because of the increased congregation.

First Vicar was the Rev. Frederick Russell, "a learned man and student of the early fathers of the church" (wrote Miss F. J. Mitchell in a 1931 article on the history of the parish). He died in 1872 and is commemorated by a marble tablet near the vestry.

### CRICKETER VICAR

He was succeeded by the Rev. F. H. Bowden-Smith, who was noted for his charity towards the sick and poor. A good cricketer, he encouraged sport among the men and boys, and St. Luke's cricket eleven was said to be one of the best amateur teams in the South.

He built, at his own expense, a brick mission room near Stag Gates, which formed the nucleus of what was to be St. Barnabas Church—destroyed in the blitz.

In 1881 Mr. Bowden-Smith took up another appointment and the Bishop appointed the Rev. Dr. William Willcox Perrin senior curate of St. Mary's. Congregations increased during his incumbency, people even coming in from the then churchless Bassett.

Later, the new parish of St. Barnabas was formed.

### GENERAL GORDON'S COMMUNION

It was on a Sunday morning in 1885, records Miss Mitchell, that General Gordon, whose sisters were members of the congregation, knelt at the High Altar of St. Luke's to make what was his last Communion in England before he sailed to Egypt Khartoum—and his death.

Following Dr. Perrin's appointment as Bishop of British Colombia (he was later Bishop of Willesden) the Rev. F. G. Montagu Powell, in whose time the Vicarage was bought and enlarged, became Vicar. Then, in 1899, Mr. Powell exchanged livings with the Rev. Dr. James Trevasakis, a learned man and a powerful preacher and personality.

### RURAL DEAN'S RECORD

He resigned in 1923 and the living was accepted by Southampton's present Rural Dean, Canon H. Douglass Caesar, who is still Vicar and whose remark-

was keenly interested in open air services and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Bible.

### THREE MISSIONERS

Following the service of the Rev. E. G. D. Fawkes and then the Rev. W. Favell, a parish mission had been fully planned by 1930, and when it came into being in 1931 was received with great enthusiasm.

The three missionaries were the Revs. E. K. Jones, L. A. Matthews and A. B. Gould.

In 1939 the Vicar was called up as a Territorial Army Chaplain and the parish was left with two deacons.

But help came from Father Wright, a missionary bound for South Africa, who was delayed at Southampton.

By April the next year Canon Caesar was released from the Army. Added to his full round of services was the strain of warden's duties.

### CHURCH HIT

Finally, on November 23, 1940, the church was hit by a bomb.

Services were held, as usual, the next day—a Sunday—worshippers traversing debris and broken glass.

Most of the stained glass windows were shattered irretrievably, but worst damage was caused to the bell tower and baptistry at the north-east corner of the church.

The bell, given in honour of Father Nairne 40 years before, crashed and is still rung from a makeshift arrangement outside the church.

Large windows above the altar and the Cranbury-avenue entrance were bricked or boarded up, but wintry draughts swept the church for a long time.

### INSTITUTE LOST

The church lost the Alfred-street institute, and although a temporary hall was erected in 1949 alongside the church in Onslow-road, the loss of the old Institute is still regretted.

Plans are afoot, although not fully decided upon, to erect a worthy hall within the structure of the church itself.

The Rev. C. G. D. Swinnerton, curate at St. Luke's, whose pen has recorded the history of the parish in a commemorative booklet, adds in conclusion

"This brief account should not end without recording the pride which St. Luke's felt when the Vicar succeeded the present

Bishop of Peterboro (Rt. Rev. Spencer Leeson) then Rector of St. Mary's, as Rural Dean in 1949. He had for long represented the diocese as a Proctor in Convocation and was made an honorary Canon of Winchester Cathedral soon after the war . . ."

### DEDICATION FESTIVAL

St. Luke's centenary dedication festival begins tomorrow—a day of retreat and preparation conducted by the Rev. Fr. Manson, SSJE.

On Monday—the eve of the consecration day's anniversary—the High Mass and sermon at 11 am. The preacher at Evensong will be the Rev. J. R. Lambeth, son of Mr. Charles Lambeth, a churchwarden, and one who was brought up in the parish.

On Tuesday—feast of the dedication—there will be a procession, High Mass and sermon at 11 am. The preacher will be the Bishop of Truro (the Rt. Rev. E. R. Morgan, former Bishop of Southampton). The Archdeacon of Winchester (the Rt. Rev. Bishop Leslie Lang) will be the preacher at Evensong.

The Rev. R. J. Allen, Rector of Bishopstoke, will preach at Wednesday's Mothers' Union festival.

On Thursday there is to be a special service for all communicants, at which the Bishop of Winchester (the Rt. Rev. Dr. Alwyn Williams) will preach.

The sermon at the morning service for Sunday, September 27, will be given by the Rev. W. H. J. Burt, who was assistant priest for 12 years—from 1938 until 1950. The Bishop of Southampton (The Rt. Rev. K. E. N. Lamplugh) will preach at the evening service.

Another former member of the clergy at St. Luke's, the Rev. William Favell (Vicar of St. Paul's, Brighton), who was assistant priest from 1928 until 1935, will preach at Evensong on Monday, September 28.



St. Luke's—the displaced bell is hidden behind the tree in the centre of the picture.

—"Echo" photo.



Canon Caesar



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First Vicar was the Rev. Frederick Russell, "a learned man and student of the early fathers of the church" (wrote Miss F. J. Mitchell in a 1931 article on the history of the parish). He died in 1872 and is commemorated by a marble tablet near the vestry.

The next incumbent, the Rev. William Jebb Few, was only Vicar for three years, but during that time he laid a foundation of Anglo-Catholic teaching which never entirely disappeared. A window was put up to his memory in the present sacristy.

### CRICKETER VICAR

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### RURAL DEAN'S RECORD

He resigned in 1923 and the living was accepted by Southampton's present Rural Dean, Canon H. Douglass Caesar, who is still Vicar and whose remarkable record of 30 years (all but three months) in one parish exceeds that of any other Church of England clergyman in the town.

It is interesting to note that, between the three of them, the Rev. Frederick Russell—the first Vicar, the Rev. James Trevaskis and Canon Caesar complete a total of 77 years' service out of the hundred years of the church's existence.

Soon after his arrival the Vicar obtained the services as assistant curate of the Rev. R. A. R. Spread, later to become Vicar of St. Michael's, Southampton. Then came the Rev. D. J. Roberts, who

was keenly interested in open air services and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Bible.

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Canon Caesar

services day  
the line opened in 1889  
were six services a day.  
are (first-class) from New-  
Freshwater, 3s.; second-  
third-class, 1s. Return  
4s., 3s., and 1s. 9d.  
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