

THE ANGLICAN CHURCHES AND CLERGY OF CHELTENHAM



S^T. MARY'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM.

Drawn, Printed & Published by G. Rowe Teacher of Drawing Chelt.

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**Cheltenham Local
History Society**

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Abbreviations

AEGM	Anglican Evangelical Group Movement
BCMS	Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society
CCCS	Colonial and Continental Church Society
CCEd	Clergy of the Church of England Database
CEZMS	Church of England Zenana Missionary Society
CF	Chaplain to the Forces
CGS	Cheltenham Grammar School
CKLHS	Charlton Kings Local History Society
CLHS	Cheltenham Local History Society
CPAS	Church Pastoral Aid Society
CPC	Cheltenham Parish Church (The Minster)
CMJ	Church's Mission to the Jews
CMS	Church Missionary Society
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EA	Evangelical Alliance
ECE	Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England
EIC	East India Company
FRHS	Fellow of the Royal Historical Society
<i>GNQ</i>	<i>Gloucestershire Notes and Queries</i>
HM	Headmaster
ICCS	Inter-Continental Church Society
ICM	Irish Church Missions
IVF	Inter-Varsity Fellowship

<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
LEP	Local Ecumenical Partnership
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
LSPCJ	London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews
MI	Monumental inscription
NSM	Non-Stipendiary Ministry
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
OMF	Overseas Missionary Fellowship
PCC	Parochial Church Council
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PTO	Permission to officiate
RAMC	Royal Army Medical Corps
<i>RCED</i>	<i>Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline</i>
RMC	Royal Military Chaplain
RTS	Religious Tract Society
SAMS	South American Missionary Society
SCM	Student Christian Movement
SPG	Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
SS	Sunday scholars (Sunday school)
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin
TCF	Temporary Chaplain to the Forces
URC	United Reformed Church
<i>1851 Census</i>	National Census of Religious Worship, conducted on 30 March 1851
<i>1882 Census</i>	Local Census of Religious Worship, conducted on 5 February 1882

INTRODUCTION

Since February 2013 the ancient parish church of Cheltenham, dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, has been known as Cheltenham Minster. In terms of its origins in the 8th century it may well have been a minster church having oversight over smaller chapels at Leckhampton and Charlton Kings.¹ When the population of the market town was relatively small there was sufficient seating in the parish church for the parishioners but from the mid to late 18th century the situation changed with the increasing number of visitors to the spas.² In 1788, following the visit of George III and his family, the town became an attractive location for fashionable society and a popular destination for health seekers and pleasure seekers, and there was a steady increase in the number of visitors from 2,000 (in 1801), 20,000 (in 1826) and to 36,000 (in 1841). Considerable expansion took place in and around four fashionable estates – Lansdown, Montpellier, Pittville and The Park – which became popular locations for retired Indian Army officers and colonial civil servants.³ By the beginning of the 19th century, it was obvious that the parish church could no longer accommodate all those who wished to attend the services. A correspondent to the *Gentleman's Magazine* observed that: 'I understand the church there is very much crowded, there is not sufficient accommodation for the inhabitants and visitors to the Wells in the season; and it is very much to be wished a chapel of ease was erected there for the benefit of the numerous nobility and gentry visiting the place.'⁴ There was some concern too that the new Cheltenham Chapel in St George's Square (which initially used the liturgy of the *Book of Common Prayer*) would attract worshippers who could not be accommodated in the parish church.⁵ But whatever the religious preferences of the visitors to Cheltenham it was recognised that 'there are great spiritual advantages to be had in that town along with the air and the waters, and six weeks there will be eminently refreshing to us.'⁶ The spiritual advantages were mostly Evangelical.

¹ Outside of the town centre were the five hamlets of Alstone, Arle, Naunton, Sandford and Westal.

² 'In 1650 Cheltenham was still just "a market towne ... about 350 families there".' D. Very and A. Brooks, *Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean* (London) 2009, 226.

³ S. Fraser, 'Exiled from Glory': Anglo-Indian Settlement in nineteenth century Britain, with special reference to Cheltenham, University of Gloucestershire, Ph.D., 2003. From a database of 1,181, 50% were Indian Army officers and 28% British Army officers.

⁴ Letter dated 23 October 1808. *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1809, 40. It was not until 1823 that Holy Trinity was opened as a chapel of ease and another 75 years before it became independent of the parish church.

⁵ A. Munden (ed.) *The Religious Census of Bristol and Gloucestershire 1851* (Bristol) 2015, 323-330.

A. Munden, Church and Chapel attendance in Cheltenham in 1882, CLHS (2022) *Journal* 38:45-55.

⁶ G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871-72), chapter 71. The novel was set in the early 1830s.

Steadily the population of Cheltenham rose from 3,076 in 1801 to 35,051 in 1851 and to serve the community and to promote the gospel twelve additional Anglican churches and chapels were opened. It had been the intention of Charles Simeon, the patron of the parish church, that on the resignation or death of the incumbent, Francis Close, the parish should be subdivided into districts or parishes. The transition from district to parish was a lengthy legal process and not unrelated to the income of the incumbent of the parish church who derived fees for conducting weddings, funerals, the churcing of women and from the erection of monuments.⁷ The family of five churches associated with Cheltenham parish church were Holy Trinity, St Paul, Christ Church, St Peter and St Luke, which, apart from the first, all owed their existence to the energy and enterprise of the perpetual curate, Francis Close 1826-56.⁸ Holy Trinity, which had been erected during the incumbency of his predecessor, Charles Jervis 1816-26, was where Close began his ministry in Cheltenham as the curate in charge 1824-26. The Evangelical ethos of the parish church and these five churches played a significant part in shaping the development of the religious life of the town, in the provision of education for the children of both rich and poor and in the training of teachers.⁹ Until their own private chapels were opened, four churches accommodated the staff and pupils of Cheltenham College (at St Luke's 1854-58); the staff and students of the Teacher Training Colleges (male students at St Paul's 1847-1910 and female students first at St Paul's 1847-69 and then at the Temporary Church, followed by St Matthew's 1869-1910);¹⁰ and the staff and pupils of the Dean Close Memorial School (at St Mark's 1889-1909).¹¹ While it had been the intention of the principal and approved by the council of the Cheltenham Ladies' College to erect a chapel, the plan was never carried out and instead the pupils attended different churches in the town.¹² The religious outlook of the Cheltenham Ladies' College was

⁷ The modest, fixed stipend was £40 a year but, according to Francis Close in 1832, 'there are no certain sources of income' particularly from fees (weddings, funerals, churcing of women and monuments) – much of which came from Holy Trinity church and the Easter offering (£200-250 a year) which amounted to about £700 a year. By 1856 Close had an income of over £1,200 a year which included an Easter offering of £500. He received no income from pew rents at the parish church and until he was presented with The Grange, he had to pay £100 a year to rent Monson Villa. For a brief period, he was also the rector of Hatford, Berkshire 1832-35 for which he received an income of about £300 a year. From his income Close paid the stipends of his curates, gave generously to support mission at home and overseas and towards and in the erection and maintenance of churches and schools.

⁸ A. Munden, *A Cheltenham Gamaliel, Dean Close of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham) 1997.

⁹ It was estimated that Close raised a total of £100,000 for his various projects in Cheltenham. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 18 November 1884.

¹⁰ 'The row over the chapel' at St Paul's College in 1910 represented a sign of a 'less theologically distinctive religious life' in the college free from the narrower confines of the Evangelicalism of the local churches. C. More, *The Training of Teachers 1847-1947* (London) 1992, 29 (note), 38, 151.

¹¹ Some of the pupils and students from all of the named institutions also attended other places of worship.

¹² A. C. Clarke, *A History of the Cheltenham Ladies' College 1853-1953* (London) 1953, 136.

Anglican but not Evangelical; during Close's incumbency Cheltenham College was decidedly Evangelical; and the Dean Close Memorial School (like the Teacher Training College) was founded upon identical 'Scriptural, Evangelical and Protestant' principles.

Over the centuries the fabric of Cheltenham parish church had been enlarged, altered and adapted and by the mid-19th century it was in a poor structural condition and because of burials inside of the building, it became a danger to public health. To solve the problem of accommodating an increasing number of worshippers the cheapest and easiest solution had been to erect galleries at the west end, the two side aisles and transepts. Most of the box pews on the ground floor (and the seating in the galleries) was privately owned and the pew-owners were strongly resistant to making any changes to the seating arrangements. As well as being the venue for Sunday services the parish church was used for other purposes, such as baptisms, marriages, the churching of women and funerals (with interments in graves and vaults inside the building or outside in the crowded graveyard). Members of the parish vestry met in a room off the north side of the chancel which was also used for the meetings of Close's 'Sacramental Class' and when there were larger numbers in the group they met in the chancel. The vestry also housed a lending library. There were three principal entrances to the building – the south door (in the transept), the west door and the north porch,¹³ facing the High Street, then the main thoroughfare of the town. The room above the porch was used for a variety of purposes such as a venue for meetings, holding polls on the rates and for the election of parish officers. From 1787 it accommodated the Sunday school and from 1729 the Charity School for boys (opened in the High Street in November 1713) where between 20-40 pupils were educated in reading, writing and arithmetic. In 1847 the school moved out of the poorly lit, crowded 'very unhealthy and inconvenient'¹⁴ room and relocated to new premises in Devonshire Street.¹⁵

There was only extremely limited accommodation for 100 poor people in the parish church and to alleviate the situation, the free church of St Paul was opened in 1831. Ten years later, Close floated the idea of enlarging the parish church by moving the west wall some fifty feet to accommodate 900 to 1,000 more people. He recognised that 'the ancient and venerable

¹³ The last significant change to the fabric of the building was made in 1890 when the south porch was erected.

¹⁴ *Cheltenham Journal*, 28 June 1847.

¹⁵ The school consisted of two classrooms (40' x 30' and 12' x 10') and a cottage for the master. The school closed in 1992.

parish church is a structure altogether inadequate to the spiritual necessities of the parishioners ... it appears that, while 2,000 persons are often packed within its crowded pews and aisles, *barely 1,500 can obtain sittings within its walls!* ... and scarcely a Sunday passes without some person fainting during the service.’¹⁶ In 1847 a visitor described the scene. ‘I never before saw such a congregation in my life, for the size of the building: it seemed as though they were piled on each other’s heads – tier upon tier, they sat with their eyes intent upon the reading desk, until the vicar (*sic*), making his appearance from the vestry, occupied his place.’¹⁷ During Close’s incumbency, nothing came of his proposal to enlarge the building, but it was seriously considered again in 1863 and 1875, and a more radical solution was to demolish the church and to replace it with a new building. When essential repairs took place to the fabric of the church in 1859, a timber and iron-clad building known as the ‘Temporary Church’ was erected in nearby Clarence Street and became a popular venue for Sunday services and even after the parish church was re-opened some 1,500 people preferred the alternative place of worship, and while this congregation increased, the numbers declined at the parish church. When Charles Dent Bell became the rector in 1872, he was faced with a parish church in a poor state of repair and a vibrant congregation meeting nearby at the Temporary Church. Two years later he wrote: ‘We are proposing to build a new parish church in Cheltenham [in place of an] iron building erected about sixteen years ago. [And the] Bishop holds his visitations and confirmations in this church.’ However, at the same time the parish church badly needed improvement. ‘The chancel, moreover, is so narrow and confined that the voice of the officiating minister cannot penetrate into the body of the church’ and ‘the structure is intolerably hot in summer, and very cold in winter.’ The plan was ‘to restore the parish church, to remove the galleries and reseat it throughout. This will diminish the room of the church but will render it more comely and decent for worship.’ ‘It is also proposed to build [at an estimated £20,000] in place of the temporary iron structure a new parish church in a central position, and one which shall be worthy of the town and neighbourhood of Cheltenham.’¹⁸ More controversial was the proposal to make the new church, the parish church, and to reduce the status of St Mary’s to that of a chapel of ease. While Bell had the support of the bishop and the patron it was unacceptable to members of the congregation and to the wider local community, and in 1879 the proposal was dropped,

¹⁶ F. Close, *A letter respectfully addressed to the parishioners, inhabitants and visitors of Cheltenham, about the parish church* (Cheltenham) 1841, 4, 5. Italics in the original.

¹⁷ [J. Leech], *The Church Goer. Rural Rides. Calls at Country Churches* (Bristol) 1847, 256.

¹⁸ LPL, ECE 49448. Proposed substitution of new (St Matthew) for old church (St Mary) Cheltenham, St Mary proposed district, letter from C. D. Bell to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, 13 December 1878.

and St Matthew's became the chapel of ease to the parish church. The foundation stone was laid in January 1877, the church consecrated on 17 April 1879 and on the completion of the building a thanksgiving service was held in February 1884. However, the anomaly of having two Anglican churches in close proximity has remained an unresolved issue ever since.

The erection of the two proprietary chapels of St John and St James were outside of the control of Francis Close and the clergy of St John's were supporters of the Oxford Movement making it 'the only church in the town which had daily prayers, and where is a choral service and surplice choir, and as much ritual propriety observed as the church in its present state admits of.'¹⁹ Under the terms of the Forty Year Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV, c.103), the patronage of St John and St James passed from trustees to the incumbent of the parish church, ensuring (initially at least) that future clergy would be Evangelicals. The change in churchmanship was most evident at St John's, when an Evangelical was first appointed in 1864 whereas at St James' the churchmanship had been less confrontational and seamlessly moved in a more Evangelical direction.

At St John's the incumbent, William Spencer Phillips, who lived on the Isle of Wight appointed curates in charge, one of whom, George Roberts, 'attracted all the high churchmen in Cheltenham indeed all with ritualistic proclivities, for this was before Prestbury acquired fame in this matter.'²⁰ In 1863 the patronage of St John's passed to the rector of Cheltenham and in 1869 Edward Walker transferred it to the Simeon Trustees. From 1864 those Anglo-Catholics who had attended St John's relocated to St George's Hall in the High Street (provocatively situated very near to the parish church) and in 1867 there was a heated debate in the local press when Roberts also opened the York Rooms in Grosvenor Terrace for worship. The following year the bishop withdrew his licence permitting St George's Hall to be used as a place of worship and the congregation moved to a temporary wooden building in Pittville until All Saints church was consecrated on 2 November 1868. When he returned to Cheltenham in July 1871, Dean Close (who had been a personal friend of Arthur Armitage's father²¹) was invited to preach at St John's he recalled that 'the church was built for the

¹⁹ *The Ecclesiologist*, 1863, 24:151.

²⁰ Anon. *A History of the Church in Cheltenham*, 32.

²¹ Arthur Armitage was the vicar of St John's church 1864-1903.

purpose of maintaining religious views diametrically opposed to his own; he had attended at the ceremony of its consecration, but during all the years he had afterwards continued incumbent of the parish, he had never again entered the building, and had never been invited to occupy its pulpit.’ But since the recent introduction of Evangelicalism to the church ‘the gospel was faithfully preached, where the sacraments were simply and fittingly administered and where the services were conducted without ostentation or elaborate ceremonial.’²²

As the population of the town increased more churches were erected, districts were formed, and parishes created. During the interregnum at Christ Church 1859-60, Edward Walker, the incumbent of the parish of Cheltenham, was involved in the formation of the new district of St Mark’s (within the parish of Christ Church) that included the hamlets of Arle and Alstone. The Evangelical tradition at St Mark’s was maintained by the appointment of three trustees - the rector of Cheltenham, the vicar of Christ Church and a Simeon Trustee – later by Wrekin College, Wellington, Shropshire after which the patronage passed to the Martyrs Memorial Trust now administered by CPAS.²³ By 1882, of the twelve Anglican churches (together with three mission buildings) in the town, ten were Evangelical, and only All Saints (and later St Stephen’s) were Anglo-Catholic. In the adjacent parish of Charlton Kings, Holy Apostles erected by the ardent Protestant layman, Charles Cook Higgs, was initially licensed for worship in 1872 but not consecrated until after his death in 1885.

From the 1830s, theological opinion within the Church of England was polarised by the emergence of the Oxford Movement and by the publication of ninety *Tracts for the Times*. The movement had been inspired by the romanticism of Sir Walter Scott, who, according to John Henry Newman, ‘turned men’s minds to the direction of the Middle Ages.’²⁴ The pre-Reformation church was the source for a reinterpretation of the Protestantism of the teaching of the Church of England and a passion for Gothic architecture that provided the architectural setting for ritualistic worship. But, in the opinion of Francis Close, the restoration of churches was the restoration of popery, and in criticising the publications of the Cambridge Camden Society, he maintained that ‘Romanism is taught *Analytically* at Oxford, it is taught

²² *Cheltenham Examiner*, 5 July 1871.

²³ Wrekin College, which was purchased by a group of influential Evangelicals in 1921, soon began to acquire other schools and the patronage of numerous parish churches to ensure an Evangelical succession, under the ever watchful eye of the ambitious and determined Rev Percy Warrington. R. Edrich, *Bayley’s Children. A History of Wrekin College 1880-2005* (Shrewsbury) 2005, 55-83.

²⁴ *Report of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline* (1906), paragraph 12855A.

Artistically at Cambridge - that it is inculcated theoretically, in Tracts, at one university, and it is *sculptured, painted and graven* at the other. The Cambridge Camdenians build churches and furnish symbolic vessels, by which the Oxford Tractarians may carry out their principles – in a word, that the “*Ecclesiologist*” of Cambridge is identical in doctrine with the Oxford *Tracts for the Times*.²⁵ The internal layout of Anglican churches was markedly changed reflecting the developing theological convictions of the day with the focus being on the communion table rather than the pulpit. Some concern was expressed from a resident that after the Sandford district was created ‘a Puseyite church’ might be erected since ‘I know they are trying hard for it.’²⁶ However following the lead given by Close and his successors at the parish church and by most of clergy in the town, the many churchgoers in Cheltenham were strongly opposed to the introduction of ritualism.

On 5 November 1840, Close preached the first in a series of annual sermons at the parish church ‘on the subject of Romanism, both within and without the Church [of England]’²⁷ and until 1859 the *Book of Common Prayer* included a service called ‘A form of Prayer with thanksgiving, to be used yearly upon the 5th day of November.’ In 1851 he said: ‘we have not only enemies from without, but traitors within; it is from us that the apostates have departed to popery, even dignitaries of our church, and there are other dignitaries remaining with us who ought to follow those who are gone.’²⁸ He was strongly opposed to the Oxford Movement and to the consequent introduction of ritualism into the Church of England. He saw through ‘the fallacy of attempting to unite a spurious Catholicism with the faithful Protestantism of the Church of England,’ and while the Tractarians boasted in being ‘Anglo-Catholics’²⁹ he regarded them as ‘our modern pseudo-Protestant[s].’³⁰ Initially, some of the ‘ritualism’ that was introduced was modest and relatively unimportant, for example having a cross and two candles on the communion table, and should a clergyman wear a surplice (rather than a black gown) in which to preach a sermon. But much more fundamental were changes in matters of doctrine, belief and practice. For Close, ‘ritualism is opposed to the

²⁵ F. Close, *The ‘Restoration of Churches’ is the restoration of popery, 5 November 1844* (London) 1845, 4.

²⁶ *Cheltenham Journal*, 19 August 1844.

²⁷ F. Close, *The Footsteps of Error* (London) 1863, 11-12. He did not publish the 5 November sermons of 1849-50.

²⁸ Close, *Footsteps of Error*, ‘Semper Idem; or, popery everywhere and always the same’, 309.

²⁹ Close, *Restoration of Churches*, 24.

³⁰ F. Close, *The departure of the righteous ... with a brief obituary of the Rev H[enry], Blunt* (London) 1844, 28.

usage, genius and principles of the Reformed Church established in this land ... ritualism is perilous to the soul because it is essentially Romanism.³¹ Fundamental questions were should a communion table be made of wood or stone? Should it be called a 'table' or an 'altar'? Should candles be used for anything other than providing illumination? Should a clergyman wear a black scarf, a coloured stole or eucharistic vestments? Should he be called a priest and should he hear private confessions and pronounce absolution? Close made his position perfectly clear. A table was not an altar, a pastor was not a priest, a communion service was a memorial and not a sacrifice and there was no real presence of Christ in the elements of bread and wine but in the hearts of believing communicants.³² Until the middle of the 19th century Holy Communion was invariably administered only three or four times a year and gradually this increased from being held monthly to a weekly service favoured by Anglo-Catholics. All of these contentious issues and more were to be found in the churches of Cheltenham.

In 1867 (the year in which George Roberts opened the York Rooms for worship), a memorial was sent to the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol and signed by 2,300 Cheltenham residents that included 'the names of 8 incumbents, 8 curates, 12 churchwardens, 2 sidesmen, 16 clergy, 4 baronets, 9 magistrates, the Lord of the Manor, the High Sherriff, 1 admiral, 2 naval captains, 12 generals, 9 colonels, 10 majors, 5 captains, 1 barrister, 3 lawyers, 16 physicians, 9 surgeons and a large number of tradesmen of all descriptions.' 'We, the undersigned, clergy and laity of the parish of Cheltenham' expressed 'the deep anxiety we feel in consequence of the introduction into our reformed church of ritualistic practices, foreign to the simplicity of its form of worship ... such a state of things in our church is calculated to excite the most serious alarm in the minds of all true Protestant Churchmen.'³³ The signatories were all men, and given at the time there were many more female churchgoers, their support would have given additional opposition to ritualism. In October 1871 the Church Association held a two-day congress in Cheltenham. A number of well-known Evangelicals were the speakers and included the influential leader J. C. Ryle, who introduced a discussion on 'The falsification of history, especially in reference to the Reformation and

³¹ F. Close, Church Association Lectures, *Ritualism*, 19 February 1867 (London) 1867, 16, 19.

³² F. Close, *Our absent Lord, not present in the sacramental elements* (London) 1867, 19-21.

³³ *Cheltenham Journal*, 26 January 1867.

the character of the reformers as perniciously repeated by the advocates of ritualism.’³⁴ This falsification was typical of those who supported Tractarianism (and later Anglo-Catholicism) and were determined to ignore the Protestant character of the Church of England in favour of an invented ‘catholic’ interpretation of church history that ignored the significance of the Reformation in favour of an idealistic mediaeval church.

From when it opened in 1868 the tradition at All Saints was Anglo-Catholic, but at St Stephen’s this tradition was only introduced after the church had opened. St Stephen’s was a chapel of ease in the parish of Christ Church and initially it reflected the Evangelicalism of that church, and it was only in the early 20th century that it became Anglo-Catholic.³⁵ Inevitably the churchmanship of All Saints and St Stephen’s was permitted to change under the patronage of the Bishop of Gloucester, and by the time that the new church St Philip and St James, Leckhampton had been opened in 1882, the tradition there had also become Anglo-Catholic. In the nearby parish of Prestbury, the village became a centre of controversy over the introduction of ritualism by the incumbent, John Bagot de la Bere. His innovations were unchallenged since he was both the patron and the incumbent of the living and while he had support from his fellow Anglo-Catholics he was much opposed by the Evangelicals in Cheltenham and the services were disrupted by anti-ritualists.³⁶ From his deanery in Carlisle, Francis Close wrote a series of six letters to the editor of *The Rock* newspaper against the activities of the English Church Union (ECU). ‘In the Cheltenham branch I naturally feel peculiar interest and rejoice to find that there is very little of Cheltenham in it but its name. No Cheltenham clergyman, none of the nine churches in the town, admits the society, but the “branch” assembles in a suburban village, conspicuous for its ultra-ritualism. Number of members present not recorded.’³⁷ Initially there were very few supporters in the locality but over the course of the next forty years the numbers increased so that by 1909 there were 104 members of the Cheltenham branch of the ECU. Apart from All Saints and St Stephen’s within the town, three nearby parishes became identified with Anglo-Catholicism –

³⁴ *Cheltenham Looker-on*, 14 October 1871. In referring to the Tractarians the historian H. M. Gwatkin condemned ‘the scandal of their uncritical methods and unhistorical dogmas [and] for the literature with which the successors of that school have flooded the country is little better than a dream.’ H. M. Gwatkin, *Early Church History to AD 313* (London) 1909, 1:6.

³⁵ Edward Cornford, the first curate in charge of what was called the ‘Tivoli chancel’ (later St Stephen’s church chancel) had been the chaplain to the Evangelical, Henry Cotterill, the Bishop of Grahamstown 1856-71.

³⁶ N. Yates, *Anglican Ritualism in Victorian Britain 1830-1910* (Oxford) 1999, 250-252.

³⁷ F. Close, *The English Church Union’ a Ritualistic Society* (London) 1868, 14.

Prestbury, Elmstone and briefly Lower Guiting, where for about six months in 1897-98 a small monastic community, known as St Bernard's Monastery, was established in the unoccupied vicarage.

In the diocese of Gloucester eight extreme Anglo-Catholic churches were identified in the report of the *RCED* of 1906.³⁸ Locally they included St Mary's, Prestbury and All Saints, Cheltenham where a witness described what he saw at a Sunday morning communion service held on 21 August 1904. The congregation consisted of 50-60 adults (of whom there were only eight communicants) and 150 children. Such services where there were few if any communicants (and mostly children some of whom were as young as three or four) were severely criticised by their opponents. 'All Saints, Cheltenham, is a large building with a striking and handsome interior' in which there were two communion tables, 'one in the chancel, and one in a small chapel on the south side of the chancel.' There were eight lighted candles and three suspended red lamps in the chancel: and in the side chapel three or four unlit candles and a single suspended red lamp. 'The officiating clergyman was vested in a white or cream coloured chasuble, together with an alb, stole, amice and maniple.' The ceremony included private prayers said by the priest, crossing himself, the chalice was mixed (wine and water), he washed his hands, the manual acts were obscured, and as the consecrated elements were elevated the church bell was rung three times at each elevation.³⁹

The patronage of the parish church

While it is believed that Christian worship has been conducted on the site from the 8th century, the fabric of the parish church had its origins in the early 12th century. In the Middle Ages there were two chantries attached to the church and dedicated to the Virgin Mary and to St Katherine both of which were dissolved in the mid-16th century.⁴⁰ In 1133 Henry I granted the endowed curacy to the Abbey of Cirencester and remained so until it reverted to the Crown during the Reformation. Thereafter it was held on a lease to various

³⁸ *RCED*. All Saints, Cheltenham (paragraphs 6517-6521); St Barbara, Ashton-under-Hill (paragraphs 8325-8331); St Edward the Confessor, Kempley (paragraphs 6162-6171); St George, Brockworth (paragraphs 6398-6400); St Mary the Virgin, Prestbury (paragraphs 6522, 8140-8142); St Mary, Dymock (paragraph 6161); St Michael and All Angels, Bussage (paragraphs 536-547); and St Paul, Gloucester (paragraph 6397). Seven churches were known as the 'incense churches' – Brockworth, Bussage, Cranham, Elmstone, Lower Guiting, Kempley and Prestbury. *Gloucester Chronicle*, 6 July 1901.

³⁹ *RCED*, paragraphs 6517-6521.

⁴⁰ Craven and Hartland, *Cheltenham Before the Spa*, 138-141.

individuals – Sir Henry Jerningham, William Grenewell, Richard Stephens, Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam and Sir W. Ryder. The lease of 17 February 1597 was for 40 years at £75 13s 4d, and in 1612 the rectory was granted to Sir Baptist Hicks and held by members of the Capel family until it was sold by them to Joseph Pitt in 1799. Many of the curates who served at the church had been graduates of Jesus College, Oxford and there was obviously some informal relationship with the college over the appointment of the clergy. The Gloucestershire historian, Samuel Rudder recorded that ‘the college derive their title from Sir Baptist Hicks, and by agreement between them, the incumbent must not continue longer than six years. The minister has surplus fees. Here is no parsonage house.’⁴¹ The qualifications for those clergy who ministered at the parish church were clearly specified. They should be ‘an able and sufficient preaching minister ... who should be a Master of Arts of two years standing at the least when he should be chosen, and being unmarried, might be therewith maintained successively and continually for ever.’⁴² The annual stipend was fixed at a modest £40 and this was supplemented by ‘surplice fees’ – from weddings, funerals, the churching of women and the erection of monuments. From September 1812 the fee income for the incumbent was increased when the churchyard was purchased for by the parish from Joseph Pitt for £100 and soon further extended when adjoining land was purchased for £600. The fee income rose significantly from £700 in the 1830s to £1,200 in the 1850s.⁴³ Under an Act of Parliament of June 1816 the rights of patronage and presentation were transferred from Jesus College to the property developer Joseph Pitt. Within a few months he had sold the right of appointment of clergy to Charles Simeon, the vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge for £3,000, and at his insistence Pitt agreed to appoint his nominee Charles Jervis to the perpetual curacy, and so it was that he became the first in a succession of Evangelical incumbents.⁴⁴

⁴¹ S. Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire (1779)* (Stroud) 2006, 336.

⁴² An Act for effectuating an exchange of the advowson of the church of the parish of Bagendon, in the county of Gloucester, belonging to Joseph Pitt, Esq., for a right which the principal, fellows and scholars of Jesus College, within the city and University of Oxford, of the foundation of Queen Elizabeth, have, in the nomination of a curate to the curacy of the impropriate rectory of Cheltenham, in the said county, also belonging to the said Joseph Pitt. Act session 1816, 56 Geo III, Royal assent given 22 June 1816, 2.

⁴³ Unless some arrangement was made the income from the surplice fees was much reduced when new parishes were created and following the opening of the new municipal cemetery in 1864, the incumbent of the parish church received £300 in compensation for loss of income from the fees previously received from the burials in the parish cemetery in the High Street.

⁴⁴ Jervis became the perpetual curate of Cheltenham on 21 August 1816. Munden, *Evangelical in the Shadows: Charles Jervis of Cheltenham*, *The Churchman* (1982) 96:142-150.

To secure a succession of Evangelical clergy there was ‘the problem of continuity’ in the appointment of those holding similar convictions.⁴⁵ While an individual clergyman could promote Evangelical ministry during his incumbency this would inevitably cease after he was no longer in post (having resigned or died). If his successor was of a different churchmanship, then there would be no continuity of Evangelicalism. In 1813 Simeon had become involved in ecclesiastical patronage when he became a trustee of the trust established by John Thornton and through that experience gained insight into the workings of the patronage system. Simeon inherited a legacy of £15,000 from his brother and this, together with financial support from his friends, enabled him to acquire the advowsons of a number of livings. In an age when livings were bought and sold as real estate Simeon believed that he was different from those who acquired the right of presentation for financial gain. ‘They purchase *income* – I purchase *spheres*, wherein the prosperity of the established church, and the kingdom of our blessed Lord, may be advanced; and not for a season only, but if it please God, in perpetuity also.’⁴⁶ This was secured by his purchase of the advowson of Cheltenham and Simeon reported to Isaac Milner, the Dean of Carlisle. ‘Cheltenham, where there are ten thousand souls, besides ten thousand visitors, or nearly so, is mine. It was to be sold for £3,000, and I instantly secured it: and the Lord has raised up friends to concur with me; so that the burden is light.’⁴⁷ Simeon’s principle was ‘first act, and then ask; and leave it to the Lord to send friends to my assistance, or not, as it shall please him.’⁴⁸ Simeon had given his attention to ‘the purchase of livings (which I commit immediately to trustees in perpetuity) that in them may be preached those doctrines which have produced so happy an effect on my own soul.’⁴⁹ ‘Why have I bought those livings?’ he asked, ‘Not to present *a* good man to each, but to fill them with men who shall prove great and leading characters in the church of God.’⁵⁰ In making appointments he made it clear that he was not swayed by petitions presented to him commending a popular and favoured curate. ‘From every place I have had petitions upon petitions and for fit persons too. But where then is my knowledge of persons, my judgment, and my right of patronage, and my conscience, if I too readily and without extreme vigilance comply with them. I must not only do *well*, but the *best* that I can *possibly*

⁴⁵ C. Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order* (Cambridge) 1940, xvi, 246, 310.

⁴⁶ W. Carus, *Memoirs of the Rev Charles Simeon* (Cambridge) 1847, 780.

⁴⁷ M. Milner *The Life of Isaac Milner* (Cambridge) 1842, 635-636. The letter is undated, but from the context it was in the summer of 1816.

⁴⁸ Carus, *Memoirs of Charles Simeon*, 591.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 590.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 749.

do; and I must spare no pains to effect this.’⁵¹ This principle became evident in Cheltenham when in 1826 Simeon nominated Francis Close to the incumbency of the parish church. The two men had known each other since Close had been an undergraduate in Cambridge. He continued to support Close in his ministry and on at least six occasions preached in Cheltenham⁵² and their friendship continued until Simeon’s death. He was well satisfied. ‘If I had never done more than purchase Cheltenham, I should be already well repaid for all the pains I have taken, and all the labours I have expended.’⁵³ In 1817 the first seven Simeon Trustees were appointed, five of whom were clergy – William Marsh, John Sargent, Charles Simeon, Daniel Wilson and William Carus Wilson, and two were laymen – Lord Calthorpe and John Thornton. By the time of Simeon’s death in 1836, the Simeon Trustees were responsible for the nomination of clergy to twenty-one livings.⁵⁴ Simeon had made a wise choice in his appointment of Close, and during his thirty-year ministry as the incumbent of Cheltenham, he promoted church-building and school-building; the training of teachers, the education of the poor and middle-classes and the promotion of mission at home and overseas. Following the example of his mentor, Francis Close was an outstanding preacher and attracted the largest congregation in the diocese of Gloucester.

Two of the Cheltenham clergy were highly regarded by members of their congregations and received positive support from them as they exercised their ministries. Initially Francis Close rented the nine-bedroom property Monson Villa⁵⁵ and he and his family lived there until in 1839 members of his congregation and other supporters presented him with The Grange,

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 746-747.

⁵² 10 September 1820; 18 October 1821; 24 October 1822; 16 March 1828 (at Holy Trinity in the morning and at the parish church in the evening); 19 June 1836.

⁵³ Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order*, 203. The ‘letter’, published in *The British Critic* (1836) was cobbled together from various confidential letters and published much to the annoyance of Simeon which he condemned as ‘a grievous act of treachery.’ Carus, *Memoirs of Charles Simeon*, 779.

⁵⁴ E. A. Eardley-Wilmot, *Simeon’s Patronage Trust* (c.1930), 6. A. J. Tait, *Charles Simeon and his Trust* (London) 1936, 39-40, has 18 March 1833, 39-40; H. H. Henson, *Sibbes and Simeon* (London) 1932, 38-39, has 18 March 1829. While the Trust is undated, the context suggests 1835, *Memoirs of Charles Simeon*, 747-748.

⁵⁵ From 1847-50 Monson Villa was rented as accommodation for the female students of the Church of England Training College; between 1850-69 at the former hospital in the Lower High Street; and from 1869 at St Mary’s Hall in St George’s Place. From 1847-50 the male students were housed nearby in St Julia’s Cottage (and in an adjoining property) in Oxford Passage and from 1850 at St Paul’s College, Swindon Road. In 1961 the female department vacated St Mary’s Hall and transferred to The Park as St Mary’s College and at the renamed Shaftesbury Hall, in St George’s Place, additional teaching space became available for St Paul’s College. The Training College was sometimes called the Training School or the Normal College (hence ‘Normal Terrace’, off Swindon Road). St Julia’s Cottage (later St Julia’s Villa) must have been a substantial property (Hart, *History of Cheltenham*, 164) and for a few months in 1847 had been the residence of the quack doctor, Baron Spolasco.

situated next to Christ Church.⁵⁶ The Close family lived there until they moved to Carlisle and owned the property until it was sold in 1866. Similarly, the congregation of Holy Trinity were equally generous and in 1842 they presented John Browne with East Hayes in Pittville Circus Road. Later Camden House, Clarence Square became Holy Trinity vicarage which had been bought from the proceeds of the sale of two houses owned by Susan Stokes (the daughter of the Evangelical, George Stokes) and from 1890 was occupied by Percival Smith.

Until the late 18th century, the clergy who served at the parish church were technically assistant curates (and some of the early clergy were called chaplains) and Walker's three predecessors were all 'Perpetual Curates' – Henry Foulkes, Charles Jervis and Francis Close. In 1856, on becoming the Dean of Carlisle, Close favoured the appointment of his curate Talbot Greaves to succeed him, but it was not the policy of the Simeon Trustees to appoint even a favoured curate to the living.⁵⁷ A year later, Edward Walker succeeded Close as the perpetual curate and remained so until he became the first clerical rector of Cheltenham.⁵⁸ In 1843 the rectory was purchased from the estate of Joseph Pitt (which included 'the rectory', the pews and sittings in the chancel and other pews) by the firm of Cheltenham solicitors, Newman and Gwinnett, and on being purchased for £500 in 1863, the title and the rights and duties of the rector were transferred to the incumbent of the parish church. Walker resigned as the last perpetual curate and immediately became the first rector. Initially, on becoming the incumbent there being no parsonage house, he and his family lived at 22 The Promenade but on becoming the rector, 8 The Royal Crescent became the official benefice house, the rectory. To defray the cost of the property, £600 was given by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and over £1,000 by local subscribers.

Thereafter the patronage process in appointing successive rectors by the Simeon Trustees was quite straightforward until in 1937 a minor controversy occurred when Robert Bren, the then vicar of St Mary, Leyton, was offered the living (valued at £725 a year) and he caused quite a

⁵⁶ The Grange cost £3,000, and by March 1839 all but £765 had been raised. *Cheltenham Journal*, 18 March 1839.

⁵⁷ *The English Churchman*, 23 February 1899. William Robert Fremantle, the vicar of Middle Claydon 1841-76, and dean of Ripon 1876-95, had been invited to succeed Close in 1856 but decided to remain in his parish.

⁵⁸ Numerous sources mistakenly refer to Francis Close as the 'rector of Cheltenham'. This is incorrect. He was the 'perpetual curate of Cheltenham' 1826-56. In 1863 his successor, Edward Walker, became the first clerical rector of Cheltenham.

stir when he withdrew his acceptance. As the son of Henry Alfred Bren, the principal of the Teacher Training College 1895-1921, Robert was already familiar with the ministry of three Cheltenham rectors and had also been confirmed at St Matthew's. While the Simeon Trustees nominated him to the living and the Bishop of Gloucester was prepared to institute him, the PCC (who at that time had no say in the appointment) wanted to interview him since questions had been raised about his character and suitability.⁵⁹ As a previous rector, Henry Albert Wilson, the Bishop of Chelmsford, sympathised with Bren (one of the clergy in his diocese) who was not prepared to be interviewed. From his own experience Wilson knew that 'Cheltenham is a peculiarly exacting parish. I do not believe any living person possess all the qualities for which it calls. Mr Bren would fill the post well. No PCC has any right to ask a priest nominated for a benefice to appear before them and be cross-examined by them.' And Wilson insisted that the clergy of his diocese should 'refuse to undergo such an inquisition.'⁶⁰ However, later in 1937 during the appointment process for the new rector of Cheltenham, the candidate John Brownson Goodliffe, met with the two churchwardens and PCC before it was announced that he had been nominated to the living.

Varieties of Evangelicalism

Within the Church of England Evangelicalism has never been a monochrome movement with some individuals being more conservative and others more liberal in their theological convictions. This was certainly so in Cheltenham, where the incumbents of the parish church ranged from the moderate Calvinism of Jervis, Close, Walker and Bell, to the later Liberal Evangelicalism of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement promoted by Wilson and Goodliffe. In the town the influence and theological convictions of the incumbent of the parish church had a marked impact upon those churches in the town where he was either the sole patron or a trustee. On leaving Cheltenham in November 1856, Close looked back over his thirty-two years residence in the town. He recalled that he had 'laboured honestly and to the best of my ability ... to promote what "I believe to be the truth – the interests of the true Evangelical religion" and my name and my work here, is in no small degree, been identified with such principles.'⁶¹ These Evangelical principles were obvious to Close but some of his successors were less clearly identified with traditional Evangelicalism. Throughout his

⁵⁹ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 27 March 1937.

⁶⁰ *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 23 April 1937. *Western Daily Press*, 8 March 1937.

⁶¹ *Cheltenham Mercury*, 6 December 1856.

ministry Close could rely upon the widespread support from over a third of the inhabitants of the town, and in 1856 when he left Cheltenham for Carlisle, twenty-three of the parochial clergy presented him with an address and a Bible on an oak stand.

While there were relatively few Evangelical clergy in the diocese,⁶² it was widely recognised that ‘Cheltenham had the character of being an Evangelical town.’⁶³ The Evangelical clergy of the town included incumbents and their curates and many other clergy and their families who had settled in Cheltenham were attracted by the dominance of Evangelicalism. There was a vibrant Evangelical succession at Holy Trinity, which mirrored the Evangelical churchmanship at the parish church. As the incumbent, Francis Close appointed two Evangelicals to the curacy of Holy Trinity, first Thomas Truebody Thomason 1827-28 followed by John Browne 1828-57. Browne was second to Close in the ministerial hierarchy of the town and his successor Gordon Calthrop (appointed by Edward Walker), was an eloquent and popular preacher who was the select preacher at Cambridge in 1857 and 1874. From the summer of 1859 Calthrop held open air services in Sherborne Street and, like other Evangelicals, was a strong opponent of ritualism. ‘I believe I am justified in saying that their avowed object is to un-Protestantise the Church of England – to undo, that is, the work that was done at the Reformation, and to bring us back to what they are pleased to call “catholic” doctrine and “catholic” practice.’⁶⁴ On leaving Cheltenham, Calthrop became the first vicar of St Augustine, Highbury 1864-94 and was an influential Evangelical in the capital. Later, Percival Smith, the curate in charge of Holy Trinity 1884-94 preached against ritualism. ‘Ritualism may be defined as a superstitious use of symbols and ceremonies ... ritualism is self-imagined worship; it is that which adds to God’s worship symbols either created by fancy or adopted from impure forms of religion.’⁶⁵ At Holy Trinity, he ‘maintained that position of deep spirituality for which it has long been renowned.’⁶⁶ The Evangelical, Arthur Hoskins, who was successively the incumbent of St Peter’s and St James’, ‘declared his love for the Protestant church, and as regarded ritualism, though there were those among his own congregation anxious to introduce a little of it into the services of their church, even this

⁶² From 1836-97 the diocese of Bristol was united with the diocese of Gloucester.

⁶³ *Gloucester Journal*, 5 February 1910.

⁶⁴ *Islington Gazette*, 28 April 1871.

⁶⁵ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 17 November 1886.

⁶⁶ *The Churchman*, (1894) 8:390.

would prove dangerous, and they might depend upon it, so long as he was pastor, this would not take place.⁶⁷

A number of the Evangelical clergy in Cheltenham were neither particularly conservative nor liberal in their theology and adopted a more moderate non-partisan position, and they included Joseph Finch Fenn, the vicar of Christ Church who was ‘regarded as an Evangelical, but his sympathies were far too large to be restricted by party ties’⁶⁸ and kept away from controversies; much the same could also be said of Charles Henry Bromby, the vicar of St Paul’s, whom Francis Close described as ‘a Protestant pastor who has not intrigued with Rome.’⁶⁹ His successor, Thomas Valpy French, ‘regarded himself as an Evangelical, and his warmest interest was in the CMS; but he was against that narrow partisanship which was prevalent in Cheltenham, uniting with the Joseph Finch Fenn in supporting SPG and always advocating breadth of sympathy and union.’⁷⁰ A later vicar of St Paul’s, George Philips Pearce, was regarded as ‘a convinced “Evangelical”, [who] worthily maintained the reputation which Cheltenham has for many years had as a centre of Evangelical church teaching; and his faith was happily free from bitterness and controversy.’⁷¹ During his incumbency the church was considered to be even more Evangelical than Holy Trinity; there being at St Paul’s no surpliced choir and the lady singers wore their own clothes and hats.⁷² During the incumbency of his successor, Thomas Henry Cave-Moyle, he moved the church away from the previous Evangelical tradition to a ‘non-party’ type of churchmanship.⁷³ However, he was succeeded by the more Protestant George Freeman Irwin who served as the clerical secretary of two campaigning bodies, the Church of England League⁷⁴ which merged in 1906 with the National Protestant Church Union to form the National Church League. At St Luke’s, George Despard had served as a regional secretary of CPAS for six years and then the incumbent of two strongly Protestant churches in Kilburn before coming to Cheltenham. George Pruen Griffiths, the first vicar of St Mark’s, was described as ‘a strict Evangelical

⁶⁷ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 12 May 1868.

⁶⁸ B. H. Blacker, *Gloucestershire Notes and Queries* (London) 1887, 3:581.

⁶⁹ F. Close, *The ‘Restoration of Churches’ is the Restoration of Popery* (London) 1845, 25.

⁷⁰ H. Birks, *Thomas Valpy French* (London) 1895, 1:155.

⁷¹ *Gloucestershire Echo*, 15 August 1906.

⁷² *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 June 1901.

⁷³ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 13 February 1932.

⁷⁴ In 1904 there were 14,000 members of the Church of England League (including 500 clergy).

[who] was broad-minded and tolerant with others whose views differed from his own.’⁷⁵ Much the same outlook was evident in the first headmaster of the nearby Dean Close Memorial School, William Herman Flecker 1886-1924,⁷⁶ whose ‘spirituality nourished high-mindedness and sobriety, plainness and prayerful observance of Evangelical precept.’⁷⁷ An ordained staff member at Dean Close School, Wilfrid Henry Isaacs 1897-1904 was a fervent Protestant and had invited John Kensit to speak in Cheltenham.⁷⁸ In the nearby parish of Leckhampton, Joseph Esmond Riddle, the first incumbent of St Philip and St James, was ‘the gifted scholar and the beloved pastor of a devout congregation,’ and was ‘a vigorous defender of Evangelical principles against the Tractarian movement.’⁷⁹ He supported the Protestant outlook of the RTS and ‘considered there was no greater enemy to popery, or semi-popery, or Tractarianism and every other description of error, than the RTS.’⁸⁰

Generally, Anglican Evangelicals followed the common custom of wearing a black gown in which to preach. At the parish church this had been the practice of both Close and Walker. But throughout the Church of England it became more usual for clergy to preach in a surplice rather than in a gown, and when this was discussed at the parish church in 1871 Walker came to the conclusion that clergy should obey the law as it then existed and in this he was supported by the churchwardens and members of the congregation.⁸¹ However, in 1888, under his successor, Charles Dent Bell, who was described as an ‘eloquent preacher and vigilant defender of the Evangelical faith,’⁸² the surplice became the normal attire for the preacher.

Given the relative uniformity of churchmanship in Cheltenham meant that John George Derrick was able to move seamlessly from one curacy to another: from St John’s, 1878-81; to Christ Church 1881-84 and to St Stephen’s 1884-85. In addition to the clerical duties, he

⁷⁵ *Cheltenham Look-On*, 13 July 1910.

⁷⁶ Flecker, who was the school chaplain until 1911, was also a curate at St Mark’s church 1886-89. He was the author of books on church history and liturgy and lectured in the town on the history of Protestantism (1897) and the Prayer Book (1904). He was also the examining chaplain to the low church Bishop of Sodor and Man (James Denton Thompson) 1912-24. Forthcoming article A. Munden, ‘The trials of Dr William Flecker’.

⁷⁷ M. A. Girling and L. Hooper, *Dean Close School: The First Hundred Years* (Cheltenham) 1986, 25.

⁷⁸ Isaacs had previously been the headmaster of Trent College 1890-95.

⁷⁹ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 13 February 1856.

⁸⁰ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 4 December 1845.

⁸¹ Gloucestershire Archives. P78/1 CW 4/5, March and May 1871.

⁸² E. Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society* (London) 1899, 3:798.

prepared young men for university and was regarded as an able scholar. He then served for a brief period as a chaplain in Bengal, and on returning to England through ill-health, became the curate of St Luke's 1886-87 before becoming the chaplain to the Cheltenham Union workhouse 1887-1907. It was said of him that 'he never sought preferment in the church and attached himself to no school or party.'⁸³ Augustus Poynder served four curacies in Cheltenham. Initially at St Mark's 1900-03; Christ Church 1903-05; St Peter's 1906-08 (where he was the curate in charge during the illness of the vicar) and again at St Mark's 1908-10. On leaving Cheltenham he became the vicar of St Paul, St Helier, Jersey 1910-23.⁸⁴

During the first half of the 20th century Liberal Evangelicalism became the dominant influence within the movement. Initially meetings were private and regional 'Groups' of clergy met for study and discussion and assembled in larger national conferences with the aim to reinterpret Evangelical principles and to apply them to modern life.⁸⁵ In 1923 it emerged from the shadows as the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. The imprecise motto of the AEGM – 'The truth shall make you free' - indicated both its breadth of opinion and a new fluidity of outlook. 'Modern Evangelicals' (as they called themselves) were anchored 'to certain fundamental truths by a long rope' were prepared to 'go forth upon that voyage of discovery' towards gaining 'a deeper and a fuller knowledge of the things belonging to the Kingdom of God.'⁸⁶ Nationally, the AEGM was much more popular among the clergy than the laity and failed to gain their widespread support and so it remained a predominantly clerical organisation. Henry Albert Wilson, who was a member of 'the younger and more liberal school of Evangelicals'⁸⁷ an active member of the AEGM, was the rector of Cheltenham 1915-28 and Bishop of Chelmsford 1929-50. He convened the first Cheltenham Conference in 1916 which was held annually until 1929 when it was transferred to Oxford.⁸⁸ Over the years there were two common themes. The first was in the promotion

⁸³ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 24 July 1907.

⁸⁴ Augustus Poynder (who was fluent in Esperanto) had trained for Independent ministry at Cheshunt College 1887-91 and briefly at the London College of Divinity before being ordained deacon in 1892 and priest in 1893.

⁸⁵ From six Merseyside members in 1905, the movement grew to over 1,500 clergy in the 1930s. The first Cromer Convention was held in 1928 and three important centres were Cheltenham, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne and Holy Trinity, Marylebone.

⁸⁶ 'Liberal Evangelicalism: what it is and what it stands for', *The Churchman*, April 1915, Vol. 29, .283, 284. The unnamed author was simply described as 'one of the ablest writers among the younger Evangelicals'.

⁸⁷ A. Atherstone, 'The Cheltenham and Oxford Conference of Evangelical Churchmen', in A. Atherstone and J. Maiden (eds.) *Evangelicalism and the Church of England in the Twentieth Century* (Woodbridge) 2014, 112.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 109-135, 297-310. The final conference was held in Oxford in 1976.

of Evangelical unity and the second in the pursuit of ecumenism. Wilson's own commitment to liberalism was made clear in his introductory essay on 'The development of Evangelicalism' in *Liberal Evangelicalism* published in 1923. Three other Cheltenham clergy who were equally active members of AEGM included Henry de Candole, the vicar of St James' 1895-99, later Dean of Bristol 1926-33;⁸⁹ William Heaton Renshaw, the vicar of St Peter's 1909-16 (previously he had been a curate in Birkenhead where the first private meetings of the liberal Evangelicals had taken place) became chaplain to the AEGM member, Guy Warman, the Bishop of Truro; and Stanley Howard, the vicar of St Paul's, 1951-76 who organised national summer gatherings of the AEGM.

Two incumbents were both Liberal Evangelicals and Freemasons – John Brownson Goodliffe, the rector of Cheltenham 1937-58 and Ernest Eldridge, the vicar of St James' 1941-65, the Provincial Grand Chaplain of Gloucestershire.⁹⁰ Earlier, before the emergence of Liberal Evangelicalism, Christopher Venn Child, the vicar of Christ Church 1884-1901 was a Provincial Grand Chaplain of Gloucestershire and of the United Grand Lodge of England, and some of the non-parochial clergy who were Freemasons included Herbert Kynaston, the principal of Cheltenham College 1874-88, who had been the Provincial Grand Chaplain of Gloucestershire and William Earnest Beck, the principal of St Paul's College who was both a Liberal Evangelical and a Freemason.⁹¹ In both colleges a masonic lodge was opened in 1907. It is clear that the three college principals (Henry Bren 1895-1921, William Beck 1921-49 and Anna Monk, the principal of St Mary's College 1921-38) 'all steered the college away from a conservative Evangelical orientation towards a more liberal one'⁹² and 'it is noteworthy that the college firmly supported the SCM. While this encompassed most shades of religious opinion including liberal Evangelicalism, it did not accept the more theologically conservative Evangelical teachings – [which had been] one reason for the break

⁸⁹ P. J. Jagger, *Bishop Henry de Candole his life and times 1895-1871* (Leighton Buzzard) 1975, 17-18.

⁹⁰ Nationally, there was a close association between the AEGM and Freemasonry. In Cheltenham there were about 100 Freemasons in two masonic lodges, the Foundation Lodge and the Royal Union Lodge. Throughout Gloucestershire in 1902 there were 17 masonic lodges with a membership of 860. In April 1941 about 230 masons from the county attended an annual service held in the St Paul's College Chapel.

⁹¹ Beck had also taught at St Aidan's College, Birkenhead 1908-21 and was vicar of St Anne's 1915-21. Also in Birkenhead, Guy Warham had been the vicar of Birkenhead 1902-07 and was on the staff of St Aidan's College as the vice-principal and lecturer 1901-07 and principal 1907-16. Following Warham's consecration, Beck became his examining chaplain when he was successively the bishop of Truro 1919-23, Chelmsford 1923-29 and Manchester 1929-47. On leaving Cheltenham Beck became the Dean of Worcester 1949-57.

⁹² C. Moore, *The Training of Teachers 1847-1947* (London) 1992, 153-154.

with the IVF.⁹³ But by the mid-1950s the AEGM was a spent force and as a national organisation it closed in 1967, and by the 1970s liberal Evangelicalism was eclipsed by the revival of conservative Evangelicalism under the national leadership of John Stott, the rector of All Soul's church, Langham Place, London and at Cheltenham parish church by the rector, Geoffrey William Hart 1973-93.

At a time when there was very limited engagement between denominations there was a remarkable coming together of the clergy and ministers of the town in providing financial support for James Smith (1802-1862) known simply as 'James Smith of Cheltenham'. He became a prolific writer of devotional tracts and books who had first come to the town in 1829 and died there in 1862. During the course of his ministry, he had been the pastor of Bethel, Salem and Cambray Baptist churches, and for eight and a half years had been Charles Haddon Spurgeon's predecessor at the New Park Street Chapel in Southwark 1841-50.⁹⁴ In 1861 Smith had a stroke, and a committee was formed consisting of several nonconformist ministers and two Anglican clergy (Edward Walker, the chairman of the committee, and Charles Calthrop) who were committed to raising funds to support him.⁹⁵ What united churchmen and nonconformists was their opposition to Roman Catholicism, the promoting of the RTS and their support for Sunday observance. For Christians the biblical command to 'remember the Sabbath day, [and] to keep it holy' (Exodus 20:8) was a principle to be observed by *all* people and was believed to be a positive and not a negative principle for their wellbeing. From 1836 some attempt had been made to secure Sunday observance in the town, but the position became more focused in 1839 with the creation of the 'Society for the prevention of the desecration of the Sabbath in Cheltenham' and its vicinity. Under the chairmanship of Francis Close it was widely supported in the town. On a typical Sunday three years before, 130 shops were open in the Lower High Street and neighbouring streets from 9.00am to 11.00pm and in 1839 the number had risen to 439. Serious as the matter was considered to be, Close believed that moral persuasion was better than coercive measures to control the Sabbath-breakers and by the following year this became obvious when only a few shops were open, and by 1847 the majority of shops were closed on a Sunday. The effect

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 153. The Inter-Varsity Fellowship began in 1919, and in 1975 the name was changed to the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship. Hugh Evan Alexander Hopkins, the rector of Cheltenham 1958-73 had been an IVF travelling secretary 1937-39.

⁹⁴ On the Baptist chapels in Cheltenham, see Munden, *Religious Census 1851*, 325-326.

⁹⁵ *Cheltenham Mercury*, 15 November, 29 November, 6 December 1862

was obvious. 'At present Cheltenham, with a population in the season of nearly 40,000 inhabitants, stands unrivalled by English, if not Scottish towns, for its calm and tranquil state upon the Sabbath day.'⁹⁶ The efforts of the committee of the Society were particularly directed against the desecration of Sunday in the delivery of letters by the Post Office and in the running of trains by the 'Sabbath-breaking railways.'⁹⁷ In Cheltenham, in common with many other towns and cities, petitions were presented to parliament to address their opposition to the desecration of the Sabbath.⁹⁸

In the 1880s, the promoters of Protestantism sought to inform the public about the dangers of ritualism through the distribution of tracts and other literature and by addresses given by colporteurs at meetings (sometimes in the open air and at other times in public buildings). From 1893 there were about ten horse-drawn 'Protestant vans' in various parts of the country some of which were still in use until before the First World War. The vans were sponsored by the Church Association and the National Protestant League and located mostly in the midlands and southern counties, and targeted towns and villages where there were Anglo-Catholic clergy. The 'Bishop Hooper Protestant Van', painted dark blue and cream travelled around Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire under the direction of Samuel Bradfield and the 'Oxford Martyrs Protestant Van' in Oxfordshire under Thomas Brady. Occasionally this more aggressive Protestantism disturbed the tranquillity of Cheltenham, and John Charles Wilcox, the vicar of Sheepscombe 1895-1906, was the chaplain to the 'Wickliffe Preachers' associated with the militant Protestantism of the volatile John Kensit, the founder of the Protestant Truth Society. Throughout the country Wilcox often shared the same platform with Kensit and their well-supported meetings were frequently disturbed by their equally militant opponents. In May 1900, Wilcox gave two addresses in Gloucester (one to a crowd of 500) and one in Ambrose Street, Cheltenham to a crowd of 100 mostly working-class men under a large banner 'Treason in the Church of England'.⁹⁹ The Bishop of Gloucester reprimanded Wilcox and told him not to enter another parish without first

⁹⁶ *Cheltenham Journal*, 29 May 1843.

⁹⁷ F. Close, *A Sermon preached at St Botolph's Church, Aldersgate Street, on behalf of the City of London Temperance Association* (London) 1860, 7.

⁹⁸ See appendix 4.

⁹⁹ *Gloucester Citizen*, 9 May 1900.

obtaining permission from the incumbent and his response was that ‘he was a citizen and his tongue should not be stopped.’¹⁰⁰

Francis Close has often been wrongly dismissed in negative terms – ‘he was against the trains and against the races’ – but in fact he had a very positive view of the railways. ‘It must appear to everyone that this internal communication throughout the land is and must be a great blessing to the country. I should be very sorry for a moment to be an enemy to it.’¹⁰¹ He was a frequent railway passenger and described the experience as a ‘most delightful mode of travelling’¹⁰² and commended the development of the railway network throughout the country. He applauded the limited number of Sunday trains run by the London and Birmingham railway but was highly critical of the main offender, ‘the Leviathan Sabbath-breaker, the Great Western Company’¹⁰³ for running trains on Sundays. What Close and many 1,000s of Cheltenham residents objected to was not the railway but the desecration of the Sabbath. ‘These Sunday railway chariots are the chariots of mammon – defying the law of God.’¹⁰⁴ While the opening of the station in Jessop’s Nursery in 1847¹⁰⁵ was convenient for travellers the noise of the trains, the unloading of luggage and the hiring of carriages disturbed the peaceful character of the town and the worshippers in all of the churches and chapels. A large number of residents (Close included) were supportive of having a railway from Cheltenham to Oxford but they rightly opposed the construction of a mile long, deep and wide cutting running parallel to the High Street (and with a station situated near the market) that would result in the demolition of many houses, the reconfiguration of the roads and streets, the disruption of the gas supply as well as having a detrimental effect on the water table. Moreover, the noise and the dirt from the trains would annoy the residents and dissuade visitors and invalids from coming to the town. While Birmingham was an industrial town, familiar with the smoke and noise of engines, ‘but to Cheltenham smoke and noise would be ruin.’¹⁰⁶ Close favoured having a single central rail terminus and with the new line

¹⁰⁰ *Stroud News*, 23 September 1898.

¹⁰¹ F. Close, *Report of the speeches delivered at the annual meeting of the Cheltenham society for the prevention of the desecration of the Sabbath, on Friday, 28 February 1845*, 13.

¹⁰² *Cheltenham Journal*, 4 March 1844.

¹⁰³ F. Close, *A Lecture on the merciful adaption of the Sabbath to the wants and necessities of man* (London) 1844, 17.

¹⁰⁴ Close, *Report of the speeches*, 17.

¹⁰⁵ It was replaced by a larger station in 1894 and was finally closed in 1966.

¹⁰⁶ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 16 October 1845.

running through a tunnel. But even underground, trains would disturb the sleep of the inhabitants and the visitors to the detriment of the business of hotels and lodging houses.¹⁰⁷ While the initial plan was very unpopular there were later several attempts to promote a railway line to Oxford on a more northern route well away from Cheltenham.

Close, together with other Christians, were opposed to the races for moral, spiritual and social reasons and he regularly preached against the races in Cheltenham and later in Carlisle. During race week the town was invaded by an influx of ‘gamblers, rogues and dissolute persons, following the races from place to place ... [so that] these wicked amusements are as injurious to the temporal as they are to the spiritual interests of the inhabitants of this town.’ When the races were taking place, many residents left the town ‘driven away by prevalent immoralities, disorders, rioting and drunkenness.’¹⁰⁸ Close made it clear that the poor are ‘enticed away by bad company to spend his money, and violate the Sabbath upon the racecourse. But for this, our town would be one of the quietest and best regulated in the kingdom.’¹⁰⁹

Another half-truth about Close was over his attitude towards alcohol. While he lived in Cheltenham, he was a moderate social drinker, but gave up alcohol having inherited gout from his father (at the time it was believed that the condition was related). In 1855, a year before he left Cheltenham, Close became an abstainer but not yet a teetotal crusader and he later confessed that had he remained in Cheltenham he probably would never have supported the teetotal cause. But ‘when I moved northward and was thrown where I now have the happiness of labouring amongst the industrial classes ... then I thought something must be done, and I must take my part in this great movement.’¹¹⁰ In Carlisle the situation changed. Close took the pledge, associated himself with the temperance cause and became known as the ‘Teetotal Dean’.

¹⁰⁷ F. Close, *To the Parishioners and Inhabitants of Cheltenham* [on the Cheltenham to Oxford Railway] (Cheltenham) 1846.

¹⁰⁸ F. Close, *A Sermon, preached in the parish church of Cheltenham, on Sunday morning, 10 July [1831] and principally directed against the races* (Cheltenham) 1831, 11.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 13

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13, 14.

On-going support for Evangelicalism in the Anglican churches in the town was through the promotion of societies like CMS and CPAS and in the support given to uphold the principles of the Protestant Reformation. Formed in the late 1860s the Cheltenham Church Association was under the leadership of the rector, Edward Walker and George William Chamberlain, the minister of St James church. The number of supporters was as follows:¹¹¹

Year	members	associates	total
1868	398	315	713
1869	337	237	574
1870	302	208	510

The clergy of Cheltenham 1799 to 2020

Over the course of two hundred years there were 165 incumbents (or those of incumbent status) or curates in charge of the thirteen churches and chapels. Of these men 96 were Oxbridge graduates, 46 from other universities and 23 had been trained at a theological or missionary college (some of whom subsequently obtained a degree). Of those twenty-three individuals, thirteen of them had trained at Evangelical colleges; and at least one (or so it would appear) had no formal theological training. This exception was possible since ‘the function of ordination belongs exclusively to the bishop’ and the candidate having been examined and made the required declaration of assent and taken the oath of allegiance is then ordained.¹¹²

Cambridge	Oxford	Dublin	Durham	Other universities	Theological colleges
52	44	9	9	28	23

Out of these clergy, four became bishops, four became deans (or provosts), seven became archdeacons; and a number served as rural deans (or more recently called area deans) and

¹¹¹ *Cheltenham Mercury*, 21 January 1871.

¹¹² A. T. Lawrence, *The Law Relating to the Church and Clergy* (London) 1921, 11..

honorary canons.¹¹³ At the same time there were many other clergy living in Cheltenham who served as assistant curates, principals of the Teacher Training College, chaplains of schools and colleges; headmasters and masters of schools; men of private means who had no cure of souls, retired clergy and valetudinarians.¹¹⁴ A few of the clergy had previously served overseas or, on leaving Cheltenham, subsequently worked overseas and a number of them became distinguished missionaries, three of whom were EIC chaplains. Thomas Truebody Thomason, a former curate of Charles Simeon, served in Calcutta as an EIC chaplain and biblical translator 1808-26. He was briefly the curate in charge of Holy Trinity 1827-28, returned to India, and a year later the already sick man died in Mauritius. Joseph Richards who served in Bengal as an EIC chaplain 1854-74, became the curate in charge of Holy Trinity 1875-78. Robert Bruce Boswell, who spent three months as a curate at Cheltenham parish church in the summer of 1831, served in Calcutta as a chaplain with the EIC 1831-56, and on returning to England, was the chaplain to the EIC alms-house in Poplar in the East End of London 1856-60.

Two of the mostly widely supported Evangelical societies were CMS (overseas) and CPAS (in England and Wales). Cheltenham had a long-standing association with the 'Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East' and an auxiliary branch was founded by Charles Jervis in 1824. Men and women, ordained and lay, served overseas and received support from the churches of Cheltenham through giving and by prayer. Sermons were regularly preached on behalf of CMS and four of the clergy had the honour of being invited to preach the annual sermon before the Society in London. This was a prestigious occasion attended by the great and the good of the Evangelical party and considered to be 'the blue riband of evangelical churchmanship.'¹¹⁵ Francis Close, who had supported CMS since he was a teenager in Hull, was a frequent speaker in London and elsewhere, an honorary life governor and the preacher of the annual sermon in 1841. In his sermon he identified CMS as 'an Evangelical institution, a gospel preaching institution.'¹¹⁶ Subsequent preachers of the annual

¹¹³ Much more difficult to trace are the assistant curates who subsequently became bishops, deans and archdeacons. For some of the assistant curates at Cheltenham parish church, see Appendix 3.

¹¹⁴ For full biographies of the many clergy who lived in Pittville, see the 'Pittville History Works' website.

¹¹⁵ Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, 1:76.

¹¹⁶ F. Close, *A Sermon, preached at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, on Monday evening, 3 May 1841, before the Church Missionary Society* (London) 1841, 17. This was the first occasion at which CMS was publicly referred to an 'Evangelical institution'. Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, 1:289, 387.

sermon were Archibald Boyd (in 1864), Thomas Pownall Boulton (in 1881)¹¹⁷ and Thomas Valpy French (in 1884). Christopher Venn Childe, the vicar of Christ Church, delivered a speech at the centenary meetings in London in 1899. He was well fitted for the task. His godfather, Henry Venn (the leading missiologist of the 19th century) had been the secretary of CMS 1841-72, and his father, Charles Frederick Childe, had been the principal of the Church Missionary College in Islington 1839-58.

Thomas Valpy French, who has been described as ‘the most distinguished of all CMS missionaries’¹¹⁸ who served in India 1851-60 and 1861-64 was for five years the incumbent of two Cheltenham churches – briefly at St John’s 1864 and then at St Paul’s 1864-69. He returned to India 1869-73 and after serving in two English parishes in Erith, Kent and St Ebbe’s, Oxford, became the Bishop of Lahore 1877-87. Other clergy involved with CMS included Gordon Calthrop the curate in charge of Holy Trinity 1858-64 who served on the home staff 1855-64, and Joseph Richards, who had served as a chaplain in Bengal 1854-74 was briefly the curate in charge of Holy Trinity 1875-78. Charles Forbes Septimus Money the vicar of St Luke’s 1883-88, had been an association secretary of CMS 1848-55 and a prominent member of the CMS committee.¹¹⁹ Henry Alfred Bren who had been the principal of the Robert Money Memorial School, Bombay 1881-89, returned to England and became the CMS association secretary for West Yorkshire 1890-94, before being the principal of the Cheltenham Teacher Training College 1895-1924. Later, three of the incumbents of Christ Church were involved with CMS – Edward Norman Spear, John Kingsmill Cavell and John Rossiter Harwood. Herbert Carnegie Knox, the minister of St James’ served with CMS in China 1888-93. Anthony Ramsden Cavalier, who trained at the CMS Missionary College in Islington, and was only briefly the vicar of St Paul’s served with both CMS and CEZMS. While some clergy served overseas with CMS (f.1799) there were others with more conservative theological convictions who were involved with the breakaway Bible Churchmen’s Missionary Society (f.1922).¹²⁰ A former BCMS missionary, Lawrence Harold Totty, who retired to Cheltenham in 1972 and officiated for four years at Holy Trinity was a

¹¹⁷ Boulton, who was the most distinguished of Francis Close’s curates 1849-53, was the theological tutor at Cheltenham College 1853-63 and the first principal of the London College of Divinity 1863-84.

¹¹⁸ Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, 2:65.

¹¹⁹ He was the nephew of Robert Money (1775-1803) a lay member of the EIC after whom the Robert Money Memorial School was named.

¹²⁰ In 1990 the name was changed to Crosslinks.

key figure in the survival of the church. From the faithful few during his ministry the congregation grew to becoming the largest in the town. Charles Neill, the vicar of St Mark's, served as a medical missionary at Ranaghat Nuddea, West Bengal. He had been at university with Charles George Munro whose father had begun an independent family mission which was subsequently transferred to CMS.¹²¹ Neill served a number of brief incumbencies that were interspersed with further overseas service with the LSPCJ and BCMS.¹²² The Anglo-Catholic, Kenneth Cecil McPherson, served the first thirty years of his ministry in the Indian sub-continent until becoming the vicar of All Saints 1946-49; and Arthur Michael Hollis, the vicar of St Mary, Charlton Kings 1937-42, became one of the first bishops in the Church of South India 1947-60.

Soon after the CPAS was founded in 1836, an auxiliary was formed in Cheltenham and in that year over £100 was given in subscriptions. For Francis Close, CPAS 'was strictly, and without any reservation, a truly Church [of England] society' 'whose objects were the spread of sound gospel principles.'¹²³ The Society provided grants to support clergy and 'lay agents' in needy areas of the country and the income came from parishes, collections after sermons, subscriptions, donations and legacies. CPAS was criticised for providing grants for laymen but Close welcomed this and valued the good that was done by clergy and laity working together. But why did a relatively wealthy community like Cheltenham need financial support? Two grants of £100 were given to the new districts of Tewkesbury Road and Sandford (later, St Peter's and St Luke's) to establish congregations that would become self-sufficient and provide a guaranteed and not fluctuating stipend from the giving of a poor congregation. It was hoped that the awarding of these grants would challenge wealthy congregations to increase their giving to CPAS. In 1845 and 1853 Close spoke at the annual meeting of CPAS in London and ten years later preached the annual sermon, and in 1865 Archibald Boyd, the vicar of Paddington (and previously of Christ Church, Cheltenham) preached the annual sermon. In the jubilee year (of 1886) grants of £80 each supported curates at St Paul's and St Peter's, Cheltenham. At the same time income came from collections after sermons (£173 13s), the jubilee fund and from individuals at Cheltenham

¹²¹ Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society*, 3:234.

¹²² One of his sons, Stephen Charles Neill (1900-1984), who had been educated at the Dean Close Memorial School, became a distinguished scholar, missionary, ecumenist and Bishop of Tinnevely, India 1939-44.

¹²³ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 November 1849; 4 December 1845.

parish church and St Matthew's (£45 14s 6d), Holy Trinity (£30 15s), St Paul's (£24 11s 6d), Christ Church (£19 7s), and St James (£24 17s 11d). In 1886 grants were provided for a total of 618 clergy and 157 lay agents. Six of the Cheltenham clergy had been staff members of CPAS. The two earliest were Edward Walker in 1849 (later incumbent of Cheltenham parish church) and George Despard 1857-63 (later vicar of St Luke's). At the turn of the century, Albert Edward Clease 1897-1903 (later vicar of St Peter's), Edward McLaren Marsden 1898-1901 (later vicar of Holy Trinity) and Lindsay James Coursey 1908-11 (later vicar of Christ Church). In more recent times, John Alexander Risdon (later team vicar of Holy Trinity) was the candidates' secretary of CPAS 1974-77.

Suicides and a misdemeanour

Sadly at least six clergy who had served in the area committed suicide. In 1834, William Goddard, only a matter of months after his appointment to the incumbency of St Mary, Charlton Kings, took an early coach to Gloucester, bought a large pistol and bullets and shot himself in the head blowing away all of his skull above the jaw. He left a suicide note addressed to his wife. 'My Dear Eliza, I am going to Gloucester, never to return. I have never been insincere, not wilfully so, but I have deceived myself about my interest in salvation and die in despair.' At the inquest, his immediate predecessor at Charlton Kings, who had known him at Oxford believed that 'Pat' as he was known was certainly mad. The inquest jury found Goddard to have been insane.¹²⁴ Later, Denwood Harrison, died when he was the vicar of Holy Apostles, Charlton Kings 1897-1904, and his decapitated body was found on a local railway line. The coroner's verdict was that he committed 'suicide whilst temporarily insane.'¹²⁵ A later vicar of Holy Apostles, Reginald James Northcott 1939-44, committed suicide sixteen years after leaving the parish. In 1960, shortly after retiring to Worthing, he died at home with his head in a gas oven 'while the balance of his mind was disturbed.'¹²⁶ For some years he had suffered from poor health having been gassed in the First World War. William Clifford Aston, who had been a curate of St Luke's 1881-83 and was later the curate in charge of St Peter's, Leckhampton, took his own life by poison in 1904 'a verdict of suicide while in an unsound state of mind.'¹²⁷ And eighteen years earlier, his

¹²⁴ *Gloucester Chronicle*, 19 April 1834.

¹²⁵ *St James Gazette*, 3 October 1904.

¹²⁶ *Worthing Gazette*, 28 September 1960.

¹²⁷ *Ross Gazette*, 18 February 1904.

brother Arthur had committed suicide by shooting himself 'while temporarily insane.'¹²⁸ Frederick Richard Averill Hoare, the curate of St Paul's, Cheltenham 1887-89 was later the Rector of Birkin and Beal near Selby 1919-22. He had a nervous breakdown in 1915 and subsequently suffered from depression and committed suicide in the Aire and Calder Canal. His suicide note read: 'I can bear it no longer. God have mercy on me and mine and pardon all my wrong doings. I am best off the face of the earth. O my head. My head. F. R. A. Hoare'. The coroner's verdict was that he had 'drowned himself while temporarily of unsound mind'.¹²⁹ William Edward Thompson, the vicar of Drifffield 1880-87 and rector of Edmondsham, Dorset 1887-88 subsequently lived at Meole-Brace, Shrewsbury. In 1905 he stayed for three months in lodgings at 38 Leighton Road, Cheltenham and committed suicide by taking a narcotic substance to alleviate his delusions and sleeplessness. The coroner's verdict was that he committed 'suicide in a state of temporary insanity.'¹³⁰ In the case of Albert Augustus Lintern, who had been a curate of Holy Trinity 1908-09, and rector of Burnham, Norfolk 1910-33, he was found dead in his garage with the car engine still running. The coroner ruled that it was an accidental death there being no suggestion that it had been suicide.

Thirteen years after leaving Cheltenham, the body of Evelyn Dora Sheldon, the wife of a former rector, was found dead at the foot of Beachy Head in Sussex. Some years before she had experienced a mental breakdown and had since struggled with insomnia and depression, and the coroner's verdict was that she had committed 'suicide while the balance of her mind was disturbed.'¹³¹ In April 1908 Kathleen Mary Trye, the eldest daughter of Reginald Edward Trye, the rector of Leckhampton, married Arthur Frederick Griffiths (aged 48), the nephew of George Pruen Griffiths, the vicar of St Mark's. In September 1908 Arthur, who was described as a gentleman farmer of Bishop's Cleeve, committed suicide and tragically his two younger brothers had also committed suicide by shooting themselves: Edward Llewellyn Griffiths (aged 31) in April 1893; and Walter Hepworth Griffiths (aged 36) in January 1905. Thomas John Eastwood, the bachelor curate of Christ Church 1940-42 and vicar of St Luke's 1943-58, who was much involved in the Boy Scout movement, was twice arrested for

¹²⁸ *North Devon Journal*, 30 December 1886.

¹²⁹ *Leeds Mercury*, 25 September 1922; *Burton Observer and Chronicle*, 28 September 1922.

¹³⁰ *Stroud News and Gloucestershire Advertiser*, 5 May 1905. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 6 May 1905.

¹³¹ *Eastbourne Herald*, 4 June 1949.

indecent exposure in Tewkesbury in 1949 and in Worcester in 1959, and on both occasions was acquitted of the offence. However, it ended his clerical career as the vicar of Heaton Mersey, Stockport 1958-60 and he resigned from parochial ministry. In 1961 he was described as a schoolmaster in Essex and soon afterwards returned to Cheltenham and lived there until he died in 1986.¹³²

Church seating

In the 19th century a contentious issue concerned the provision of seating for worshippers. Legally every parishioner had the right to be accommodated but the poor were disadvantaged by what was provided for them. Fixed seating called pews were ‘appropriated’ or ‘unappropriated’ and the different classes were identified by where they sat in church. In older buildings (like Cheltenham parish church) a limited number of seats (or sittings) were provided for the poor on benches located in the central aisle and in free seats in obscure corners of the building. For the rest, they bought or rented pews each of which usually held five to six sittings. There was a scale of fees – more for those in prominent locations in the centre of the nave or in the front of the galleries and only the owner or tenant (and members of their family) were legally entitled to occupy the pew, and that ceased when they no longer lived in the property. A ground rent was paid for each sitting towards the stipend for the minister and the salary for the parish clerk. Once pew rents were phased out collections were taken and the evidence at the time showed that this increased the level of income.¹³³

Strange as it may seem today, the ownership of some of the pews were annexed to particular houses and advertisements in the press gave details of the sale or rental of a property and of an attached pew. For example, in the parish church, 8 St George’s Place had a pew in the north gallery to seat four persons and Somerset House, off St James’ Square, had a pew in ‘which a tenant will be entitled to occupy.’¹³⁴ The shop and dwelling, at 6 North Street, had a pew in the north gallery in James church, let at £1 11s 6d per sitting, per annum and when 5 Pittville Terrace (now Clarence Road) was sold by auction it also included a pew containing

¹³² *Gloucester Echo*, 11 February 1949; *Birmingham Post*, 5 December 1959; *Lynn Advertiser*, 7 April 1961.

¹³³ In 1954, when the pew rents at Christ Church were finally abolished, the income of £170 came from 120 individuals, 103 of whom agreed to the pew rents being abolished.

¹³⁴ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 24 September 1873.

five sittings in the south gallery in St John's church. The buying and selling of pews was a lucrative 'capital investment' and in Holy Trinity church four pews containing 21 sittings located in different parts of the building were each let for between £1 1s and £1 11s 6d and with an additional annual ground rent of 5s. 'The considerable and increasing demand for sittings in this church, and the superior situation of the above, justify the auctioneers in asserting that a safer or better investment cannot be obtained.'¹³⁵ At the parish church it was the intransigence of the appropriated pew owners that delayed the restoration of the building and at Holy Trinity considerable expense was entailed in the purchase of all of the pews prior to the creation of a parish.

Hymnbooks and frequency of services

The 'church' is made up of the people of God who meet together to worship him by singing his praises. An early hymnbook widely used in the Church of England until well into the 19th century was *A New Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the tunes used in churches* by Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady (1696). During the late 18th and early 19th centuries many hymn books were published for the use of congregations of churches in larger towns, some of which had the same collection of hymns but with a different title page. Hymns expressed different theological positions some being Calvinistic and others Arminian;¹³⁶ many of the main collections were Evangelical hymns, and others represented High Church Anglicanism and later, Anglo-Catholicism.¹³⁷ Generally Anglican Evangelical congregations favoured *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer* (1870)¹³⁸ rather than the ubiquitous *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (1861) which was considered by them to express too much high church teaching. In 1892 a survey found that 10,237 churches used *Hymns Ancient and Modern*; 1,444 used *Church Hymns*; 1,420 used *The Hymnal Companion to the Book of Common Prayer* and 372 used other books. In 1911 a discussion took place at Christ Church

¹³⁵ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 18 May 1859.

¹³⁶ There are too many hymn collections to list here, but the *Olney Hymns* (1779) was Calvinistic and the Wesleyan Methodist *Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodists* (1780) was Arminian.

¹³⁷ High church Anglican: *The Christian Year* (1827) and *The Hymnal Noted* (1852). Anglo-Catholic: *The English Hymnal* (1906).

¹³⁸ Edited by Edward Henry Bickersteth (1825-1906), Bishop of Exeter 1885-1900. 'It differs from *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in its larger proportion of subjective hymns, and also in its sacramental hymns which aim at a more moderate expression of Eucharistic doctrine.' F. A. Anglionby, *The Life of Edward Henry Bickersteth* (London) 1907, 114. Charles Dent Bell regarded *The Hymnal Companion* as 'one of the best hymn books that I know.' *Lakes Herald*, 16 July 1881. *The Hymnal Companion* was revised in 1876 and 1890 (when it included 601 items) and remained in use in some Evangelical churches until the 1960s.

over replacing the *Church Hymn Book* with *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. While one member of the congregation had serious reservations about making the change, the vicar made it clear that he was not going to introduce a hymn book that would promote Tractarianism, ‘but the *Ancient and Modern* is not a party thing now’ and was used in many Evangelical churches.¹³⁹

During the 19th century several different hymn books were used at Cheltenham parish church. Before coming to Cheltenham, Charles Jarvis had edited a hymnbook - *Select Portion of Psalms and Hymns, for the use of the Congregation of the Parish Church of Clewer* (1806) and he had adapted this collection as the basis of *Psalms and Hymns selected for the use in the Church of Cheltenham* (1814). Initially this hymn book was used at the parish church and at Holy Trinity until Francis Close introduced a new book edited by Thomas Cotterill.¹⁴⁰ The first edition, published in 1810 was called *A Selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public and Private Use, adapted to the Festivals of the Church of England*, and was adopted at the parish church as *A Selection of Psalms and Hymns, used at St Mary’s Church, Cheltenham*.¹⁴¹ This book included 150 Psalms, 146 hymns, six doxologies and six concluding hymns; it included a comprehensive index and had a list of suitable tunes. Close’s successor, Edward Walker had married the hymn-writer, Mary Deck. The Deck family were members of the Christian Brethren, and Mary’s brother, James George Deck composed hymns. Mary wrote about ten hymns and James over thirty many of which were included in Walker’s hymn books. It was said that James Deck’s ‘compositions are marked by directness of aim, simplicity of language and great earnestness’ many of which were on the theme of the Second Coming of Christ.¹⁴² When he had been the incumbent of St Matthias, Salford, Walker had published a collection of hymns called a *Selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public and Social Worship* (1855) and when he came to Cheltenham he published an *Appendix* containing further hymns (1858).¹⁴³ More hymns were added in a second *Appendix* (known as the *Cheltenham Collection*) and published in 1878 by Walker’s

¹³⁹ *Cheltenham Echo*, 17 April 1911.

¹⁴⁰ The hymn writer, Thomas Cotterill (1779-1823) was the Minister of Lane End, Staffordshire 1808-17, and then of St Paul, Sheffield 1817-23. The contents of various editions of his hymn books helped to shape subsequent hymn books.

¹⁴¹ 25th edition, 1838.

¹⁴² J. Julian, *A Dictionary of Hymnology* (London) 1915 (revised edition) 285.

¹⁴³ Reviewing the book, it was said that though it was thoroughly Evangelical, it was not better that the book it replaced: it was too big (340 pages) and contained 249 hymns. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 23 November 1858.

successor, Charles Dent Bell.¹⁴⁴ Before he moved to Cheltenham, Bell had been the minister at Ambleside and inspired by the beauty of the Lake District, had published numerous poems and hymns, sixteen of which were included in the *Cheltenham Collection*. For the consecration of St Matthew's church on 17 April 1879, Bell composed a special hymn, 'Be with us, gracious Lord, today.'¹⁴⁵ In 1882 he published *Hymns for Church and Chamber* and two years later he added an *Appendix Selected for the Use of Cheltenham Churches* as a supplement to the *Hymnal Companion* and which included five of his own already published hymns.¹⁴⁶

By the mid-century there were several different hymn books in use in the Anglican churches in Cheltenham.¹⁴⁷ This prompted someone to complain that this was perplexing for visitors and residents 'who remove from one part of the town to another.'¹⁴⁸ Churchgoers purchased their own hymn books, which cost between 1s 0d to 3s 0d, though some cheaper collections were sold for under a shilling and could be purchased in local libraries. In 1901 a visitor to St Philip and St James complained that no hymn books were provided for visitors as in other churches in the town. By 1908 in the fifteen churches in the town (and including Cheltenham College) there were 'no less than ten editions of various collections of hymns in use.'¹⁴⁹

Hymn books in use in 1866¹⁵⁰

St Mary and the Temporary Church

Selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public and Social Worship
(Edward Walker, 1855) and the *Appendix*

Holy Trinity

The Church Psalter and Hymn Book (William Mercer, 1854)¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁴ A 13th edition was published in 1881.

¹⁴⁵ See Appendix 5.

¹⁴⁶ *The Hymnal Companion* edited by Edward Henry Bickersteth was first published in 1870.

¹⁴⁷ In 1872 in one Worcestershire town there were thirteen different hymn books in use in the parish churches.

¹⁴⁸ A letter to the editor from 'Laicus', *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 21 September 1858

¹⁴⁹ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 26 November 1908.

¹⁵⁰ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 4 August and 17 November 1866.

¹⁵¹ First edition 1854, enlarged 1856, re-arranged 1864, Appendix 1872. 'For many years this collection was at the head of all the hymnbooks in the Church of England, both in circulation and influence.' Julian, 725.

St Paul	<i>Hymns Adapted for Christian Seasons</i> (Thomas Valpy French, c.1865) ¹⁵²
Christ Church	In 1843 <i>A Selection of Psalms and Hymns to be used at Christ Church, Lansdown</i> ; and <i>Psalms and Hymns for Public, Private and Social Worship</i> (Henry Venn Elliott, 1835) ¹⁵³
St John	<i>Psalms and Hymns</i> , (SPCK, 1855) ¹⁵⁴
St James	In 1833 there was <i>A Selection of occasional Hymns for St James's Church</i> (new edition 1843); and <i>Psalms and Hymns by the Rev G. W. Chamberlain</i> (second edition 1866) ¹⁵⁵
St Mark	<i>Psalms and Hymns</i> (SPCK, 1855)
St Philip and St James	<i>Psalms and Hymns</i> (SPCK, 1855)

Frequency of services

All Anglican churches in the town used the liturgy of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662) the only difference being the times of the services. By the mid-century Sunday worship was mostly held in the morning and afternoon (and in some churches in the evening).¹⁵⁶

Immediately following Morning Prayer, Holy Communion was generally administered in most churches on the first Sunday in the month, apart from St James' where it was on the third Sunday in the month, and St John's was the only church in the town where a weekly communion service was held. At St Mary's, St Paul's, St Peter's and St James' on the Friday

¹⁵² This book was compiled by the minister, contained 180 psalms and hymns. Birks, *Thomas Valpy French*, 1:156.

¹⁵³ This hymn book was an 'Evangelical book of some importance ... it was mainly the channel through which Martin Madan's altered text of Watts, Wesley and others, came into modern hymnals, and also included 'some of his sister Charlotte's finest productions.' Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology*, 336.

In 1911 Christ Church replaced the *Church Hymn Book* with *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. *Gloucestershire Echo*, 17 April 1911.

¹⁵⁴ First published 1852 and enlarged in 1855. First *Appendix*, 1863 and second *Appendix*, 1869. By 1860 also in use was *A New Selection of Hymns for the Holy Seasons and Anthems used at St John's Church*.

¹⁵⁵ Subsequently the *Hymnal Companion* was in use until it was replaced in 1934 by *Hymns Ancient and Modern*.

¹⁵⁶ Once gas lighting had been installed in the early 19th century, churches and chapels held evening services.

before the Sunday communion service there was a 'lecture' to help communicants to prepare themselves for the sacrament.¹⁵⁷

St Mary

Sunday: 11.00am, 3.00pm and 7.00pm. Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month and a sacramental lecture was held on the previous Friday at 7.30pm in the infant schoolroom as preparation for the communicants. A missionary lecture was held on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the St James' Square infant school. Prayers were said in church on Wednesday, Friday and all Holy Days at 11.30am; and there was a Wednesday afternoon service at 2.30pm. During Passion Week (the week before Easter) there was a full morning service each day (with an address by Francis Close) and on Good Friday a morning, afternoon and evening service.

Holy Trinity

Sunday: 11.00am, 3.00pm and 7.00pm. Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month. On Friday morning a lecture and service were held at 11.00am.

St Paul

Sunday: 11.00am and 7.00pm. Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month and with a sacramental lecture as preparation for communion was held at 7.00pm on the previous Friday in the St Paul's National school.

Christ Church

Sunday: 11.00am, 3.00pm and 7.00pm; and a Sunday evening lecture in the Alstone school at 7.00pm. Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month at 3.30pm.

St Peter

Sunday: 11.00am and 6.30pm; and on the last Sunday in the month at 3.00pm.

Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month and with a sacramental lecture to prepare for communion was held at 7.00pm on the previous Friday. On the last Sunday in the month a lecture on the catechism was held at 3.00pm.

¹⁵⁷ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 14 January 1852. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 25 March 1852.

(St Luke) the Sandford district

Sunday: 11.00am, 3.00pm and 7.00pm; Thursdays at 7.00pm; Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month. A lecture was held in the Naunton infant school in Exmouth Street every Wednesday at 7.00pm.

St John

Sunday: 11.00am and 3.00pm; and on Holy Days at 11.00am and 3.00pm. Holy Communion was administered every Sunday and on Holy Days; and on the first, third and fifth Sundays at 8.30am and on the second and fourth Sunday after Morning Prayer. Daily prayers were held at 8.00am and 4.30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday; and at 11.00am and 4.30pm on Wednesday and 11.00am and 7.30pm on Friday.

St James

Sunday: 11.00am, 3.00pm (at 3.30pm from May to August) and 7.00pm. Holy Communion was held on the third Sunday in the month and with a sacramental lecture to prepare for communion held on the previous Friday evening.

St Mark

Sunday: 11.00am and 6.30pm. Holy Communion was held on the first Sunday in the month. A lecture was held on Wednesday evening in the school; and on Friday evening before the first Sunday in the month.

‘A tour of our churches’

From January to August 1901 the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic* included a series of articles on ‘A tour of our churches’ and made comments on the different churchmanship.

St Matthew, was described as an ‘Evangelical church’.

Holy Trinity, was described as ‘a low church’ with a central pulpit; and where an evening communion service was held.

St Paul, had an Evangelical sermon and the choir did not wear surplices but consisted of ladies wearing their own clothes and hats until in 1904 surplices were introduced. Students from the nearby Teacher Training College attended the church.

Christ Church, was ‘a low church’ with a surpliced choir but no one turned to the east to recite the creed.

St James, was ‘an Evangelical church’ where the two lady vergers were dressed in black. The choir sat at the back of the building and listened to a ‘long sermon’. It was a ‘model service of the Evangelical form’.

All Saints, where the tradition was ‘high’ and where the congregation turned to the east to recite the creed and bowed their heads at the name of Jesus. A ritualistic service in the mission room was well attended.

Confirmation service, May 1860

In May 1860 the triennial confirmation service conducted by the Bishop of Gloucester was held at the Temporary Church and it lasted for three hours from noon to 3.00pm, and there were 706 candidates.¹⁵⁸

Candidates	male	female
St Mary	23	105
Holy Trinity	36	139
St Paul	20	47
Christ Church	14	63
St Peter	2	10
St Luke	14	43
St John	4	30
St James	7	43
St Mark	13	11
St Philip, Leckhampton	20	22

¹⁵⁸ *Cheltenham Looker-One*, 26 May 1860. In November 1846 when there were 800 confirmation candidates, the service lasted for four hours. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 5 November 1846.

From various other parishes ¹⁵⁹	16	9
Cheltenham Grammar school	15	-
Totals	184	522

The figures show that many more women than men were confirmed, and this imbalance was reflected in church attendance on Sunday. In 1901 the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic* recorded that at St John's church, 90% of the congregation were women and at St Philip and James, Leckhampton, the ratio was six women to one man.¹⁶⁰

The creation of team ministries

Nationally, and throughout the 19th century many hundreds of churches and chapels were erected for potential rather than actual congregations, and that explains why it was that churches were rarely full and at every service there were empty pews. While the Victorians were a church-going people, by the mid-19th century only about half of the population attended any place of worship.¹⁶¹ The Religious Census of 1851 revealed that the largest congregation in Gloucestershire was at St Mary, Cheltenham (2,000)¹⁶² and in the local census of 1882, the largest morning congregation was at Christ Church (1,080) followed by St Matthew's (855).¹⁶³ Nationally, there had been a gradual decline in church attendance from the 1880s, which by the 1960s was in free fall, and Cheltenham was typical of communities where there were too many churches and too many clergy serving a declining number of worshippers. Since then, three Anglican churches have been closed (St John's, St James' and St Peter's) and two (St John's and St Aidan's) were demolished. To rationalise the situation and to enable the Church of England to be more effective in providing pastoral ministry and in extending its witness throughout the town, several team ministries have been formed. These are groups of parishes that are served by a team rector with team vicars, and assistant curates or a single benefice served by several clergy. In such instances adjustments have to be made over patronage and subsequent appointments being made by the Diocesan

¹⁵⁹ Some of the 16 boys were from Cheltenham College, which held its own confirmation service at another time of the year.

¹⁶⁰ *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 2 March 1901 and 31 August 1901.

¹⁶¹ Today the figure is well below 10% of the population. On a typical Sunday in 2018, there were a total of 3,400 Anglican worshippers in the whole of the Cheltenham deanery.

¹⁶² With a morning congregation of 1,600; and afternoon congregation 1,000 and an evening congregation of 2,000 and was 'always full and crowded'. Munden, *Religious Census 1851*, 321.

¹⁶³ A. Munden, Church and Chapel attendance in Cheltenham in 1882, CLHS, *Journal* 38 (2022), 46.

Board of Patronage.¹⁶⁴ In and around Cheltenham (and in some instances outside of the original parish boundary) several team ministries have been created, some dissolved and others reconfigured. From 1971 St Matthew's church was shared with the Methodist Church, but the arrangement was discontinued in 1989. From 2007 a smaller team was established consisting of Holy Trinity and St Paul's, and in 2013 the Minster benefice consisted of St Mary with St Matthew and St Luke and was the culmination of a number of previous experiments dating back to 1976 that had also included Holy Trinity and St Paul's. For a brief period, St Luke's was united with St Michael, Whaddon but this partnership was based more on geography than churchmanship and the combination of different theological traditions proved to be unworkable.

The North Cheltenham Team Ministry which was formed in 2008, consists of five churches – All Saints, Pittville; St Mary, Prestbury; St Nicholas, Prestbury (1970); St Lawrence, Swindon Village (and St Peter Cheltenham) and St Mary Magdalene, Elmstone Hardwicke with Uckington. Of these, only All Saints (under the episcopal supervision of the Bishop of St Ebbsfleet) is within the town, and St Peter's was closed in 2008. The South Cheltenham Team Ministry was formed in 2009 and consists of five churches – St Christopher, Warden Hill (a Local Ecumenical Partnership, The Church in Warden Hill, with the United Reformed Church 2010-22); Emmanuel, Cheltenham (with Cheltenham Network Church CNC); St Peter, Leckhampton; St Philip and St James, Leckhampton and St Stephen, Cheltenham. The West Cheltenham Team Ministry which was formed in 1984, consisted of the parish church of St Mark together with the daughter churches of St Barnabas (1946), St Silas (1962 – subsequently closed) and St Aidan (1950 – subsequently demolished). The team proved to be unworkable and was dissolved but it was revived in a new form in 2018 as the Parish of West Cheltenham consisting of the three worship centres of St Mark, the Oasis Centre (incorporating St Aidan and St Silas) and St Barnabas.

¹⁶⁴ Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

Sources

The sources that have been used are the online resource the Clergy of the Church of England Database (CCEd) of clergy from the 16th century to 1835; the files of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at Lambeth Palace Library; the British Newspaper Archive; successive editions of *Crockford's Clerical Directory* and the *Clergy List*; the online resource ACAD, A Cambridge Alumni Database; the records of Cambridge graduates (an online version of J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*) and of Oxford graduates (J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*); the *ODNB*; the biographies of clergy in the Pittville History Works website and from the Gloucester diocesan directories. I am also personally grateful to a number of fellow local historians, librarians, archivists, clergy and friends who have provided information and helpful comments and suggestions. My special thanks to Kath Boothman and Alison Pascoe for their local knowledge, meticulous proof reading and helpful suggestions. Inevitably there will be a number of minor errors in this publication particularly in the case of the earlier clergy at the parish church who were merely recorded as having been in post, but the precise duration of their ministries and personal details are unclear, and frustratingly some information is unclear and unobtainable. Sometimes clergy officiated months before they were formally instituted and inducted or licensed.

Hopefully this complete listing of the incumbents of all the Anglican churches and chapels in Cheltenham may be of use to local historians, those researching their family trees and of interest to clergy and members of their congregations. In this publication the thirteen churches within the original parish of Cheltenham are included, and also the neighbouring parishes of Leckhampton (which includes St Philip and St James) and Charlton Kings (which includes Holy Apostles) are given but they are not included in the overall summaries of information.

In the two years 1974-76 when I served as a curate of Cheltenham parish church, I sat at the reading desk nearly opposite the list of former incumbents. Many of those names have remained unknown figures from the past, but a few, like Charles Jervis, Francis Close, Edward Walker and Charles Bell have, over the years, become my constant companions and their clerical careers and my historical research have gone hand in hand in Cheltenham and elsewhere and through them extended my knowledge of the nineteenth century church. I

welcome any comments, corrections and additions to the text and if any of this publication is quoted elsewhere I would expect to be identified as the author.

There are two editions of this publication. The on-line edition includes the introduction and lists just the names and duration of the incumbencies of the clergy, and the published form includes the introduction and the full biographies of the clergy and of their clerical careers.

Alan Munden

Newcastle upon Tyne, 2024

CHURCHES
WITHIN THE PARISH OF CHELTENHAM

ST MARY THE VIRGIN (Cheltenham Parish Church; Cheltenham Minster)

Patron From 1816 Charles Simeon, and from 1817 the Simeon Trustees

Sittings 1,200 (of which 100 were free) with standing room for 900

1,165 sittings and benches in the aisles for about 190 poor (in 1818)

After the restoration of 1875-77 the seating was reduced to about 600

1851 Census Morning 1,600 + 120 SS; afternoon 1,000; evening 2,000

['Always full and crowded']

1882 Census Morning 294; evening 140

History The mediaeval church of St Mary the Virgin, was the original parish church serving the whole of Cheltenham and which on 3 February 2013 became a Minster Church. Over the centuries it was adequate for the population of the market town congregation and as the numbers of residents and visitors increased several galleries were erected and during the ministry of Francis Close upwards of 2,000 people could be accommodated in the building. Just how full the church could be was apparent in April 1856 when the church was reopened after repairs to the roof and Close preached to such a large congregation that many people stood in the aisles throughout the service. Over the years, three almost identical proposals were made in 1841, 1863 and 1875 to enlarge the building by extending the nave westwards; and a more drastic solution was to demolish the building and to replace it with a new church. When repairs to the fabric took place services were held in the infant school in St James' Square or in the Town Hall. Interments for the whole parish took place in the crowded churchyard and in vaults inside the building and consequently in 1859 the building was declared to be both unhealthy and dangerous and was temporarily closed. Odours were emitted from the interments under the floor, the galleries were unstable and to remedy the situation the floor was covered with charcoal and then nine inches of concrete, the south wall was underpinned and the galleries repaired.

While the church was closed for two years the congregation met for a few months in the Town Hall until the 'Temporary Church' was opened in Clarence Street. While further repairs took place in the 1860s the restoration of the church was hindered by a number of recalcitrant pew owners. However, during the incumbency of Charles Dent Bell sufficient funds were raised to restore the parish church 1875-77 (when the roof was repaired, the box

THE MINSTER BENEFICE

pews and galleries were removed, and new gas lighting and heating installed) and to erect a permanent church in Clarence Street. An outcome of the changes to the parish church was that the number of seats was reduced, the north porch (which became the baptistery) was no longer the principal entrance, and a new south porch was erected in 1890. In 1910 electric lighting replaced gas lighting (first installed in 1827).

The Charity School for boys that opened in the High Street in November 1713 was transferred to the room above the north porch in 1729 and remained in the parish church until November 1847 when a new schoolroom (costing £680) was opened in Devonshire Street. In 1955 the boys were transferred to the girls' school in Knapp Lane (on the site of the workhouse) which had opened in 1856 and was enlarged in 1895). In November 1828 an infant school was opened in temporary premises in St James' Square and replaced in July 1830 by a permanent multi-purpose building used as an infant school, the venue for public meetings and occasionally for church services. The building was enlarged in 1857 and infant teachers were trained there in what was known as the Cheltenham Central Infant school. The National school (f.1816) had opened in Bath Road in 1817 and in 1828 a branch National school was opened in the High Street and a Ragged School in 1849. Situated nearby in the High Street were the Tudor Grammar school (rebuilt on the same site and re-opened in 1889 but demolished in 1967 and replaced by a new building in Hesters Way) and St George's Hall (licensed for worship in 1867 for the discontents from St John's church).

ST MATTHEW, CLARENCE STREET

Architect Ewan Christian

Consecrated 17 April 1879

Cost £25,000

Sittings 1,600 (of which 400 were free)

1882 Census Morning 855; evening 808

History During essential building work at the parish church the 'Temporary Church' was opened in Clarence Street on 3 November 1859, and was, unlike the parish church, spacious, comfortable, warm and well ventilated. The structure was of cast iron clad externally with corrugated iron and inside the walls were lined with wood painted stone

THE MINSTER BENEFICE

colour and seated 1,600 (of which 400 seats were free). A small west gallery had seating for 80-100 people and a small organ. This was replaced in 1866 by a Willis organ which was subsequently transferred to the permanent building and enlarged. In December 1876 the Temporary Church was relocated to Bays Hill Terrace and remained in use until the new St Matthew's church was opened on the Clarence Street site. The Temporary Church was sold by auction for £150 to the Severn and Wye and Severn Bridge Railway and transferred to Lydney junction as a carriage shed and workshop. It was repaired in 1904 and finally demolished in 1924.

The foundation stone of St Matthew's church was laid on 6 January 1877 by the prominent Gloucestershire Freemason, Sir Michael Edward Hicks-Beach MP. Two years later, with the approval of the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol and the patron the Simeon Trustees, the rector, Charles Dent Bell, proposed that the new church should become the parish church but after this received considerable local opposition the proposal was withdrawn, and St Matthew's became a chapel of ease to the parish church. The hymn 'Be with us, gracious Lord' was composed by Bell and sung at the consecration of the church on 17 April 1879, however it was not until 1883 that the building was finally completed, and in February 1884, John Charles Ryle, the first Bishop of Liverpool, preached at a special service. Subsequently the spire was removed in 1952, the tower lowered in 1972 and internally the building was reordered in 1971-72, 1988 and in 1999 at a cost of £600,000.

From 1971-89 the building was shared between the Anglican and Methodist Churches but the partnership failed and from 1976 an informal union was established between the parish church with St Matthew, Holy Trinity and St Paul and was formalised in 2007. A further configuration took place in 2012 as the Minster benefice consisting of St Mary with St Matthew and St Luke.

ST MARY'S CEMETERY CHAPEL AND BURIAL GROUND, High Street

Architect Rowland Paul

Consecration 19 September 1831

Cost £571 0s 8d (chapel); £5,106 18s 6d (two acres of burial ground)

THE MINSTER BENEFICE

History In 1829 the sexton of the parish church stated that in the past eleven years there had been over 3,000 interments in the parish churchyard and always with four or five coffins in each grave, and in the same year Close reported that there were about 400 burials each year. Given the very limited one acre burial ground available at the parish church a new two acre cemetery was opened in the High Street in 1831 and Francis Close officiated at the first burial (of Elizabeth Pritchard aged 44). In October 1864 a new 18-acre municipal cemetery was opened in Cemetery Road (Bouncers Lane) and though the St Mary's burial ground was closed in 1894, interments continued to take place until 1921. During the 1880s the 'Old Cemetery Chapel' became a Mission Church and Sunday evening services were held there and by the mid-1930s it was known as the 'St Mary's Church Army Mission'. After many years of neglect, the cemetery was cleared and reopened on 20 May 1966 as the Winston Churchill Memorial Garden. More recently the chapel became a gymnasium.

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J. Sawyer, *Cheltenham Parish Church* (Cheltenham) 1903

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‘Inscriptions in Cheltenham Parish Church’, Blacker, *GNQ*, 2:607-611 [Blacker was the curate of Charlton Kings 1875-76, and curate of Cheltenham parish church 1876-78]

GNQ (1879-81) MI (inside St Mary’s) 1:5, 7-8, 19; (in the churchyard); 1:1, 232, 345n; (in the parish cemetery, High Street) 1:4, 14, 373; 2:373, 365, 410, 440, 492, 559

For 252 gravestone inscriptions (up until 1877) in St Mary’s burial ground see *GNQ* (1887), 3:425-432, 521-528, (598), 608-615, 651-663

Gloucestershire Archives. St Mary P78/1; St Matthew P78/9

Clergy

Richard Drake 1522

Reginald Lane 1540

Thomas Auster 1544

Thomas Ball 1548

Edward Grove 1540, 1548

John Eden 1550

Stephen Poole 1551

Richard Cokes 1558

William Walsingham 1570

Reynold Lane 1558

Thomas Champneys 1561

Thomas Jones 1567

John Evans 1573

Richard Clough 1576

William Howell 1584

Thomas Butterson d.1590

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William Panton 1590-1624

John English 1624-42

John Bayles 1635

Christopher Bayles 1642

Benjamin Bourne 1647

William Snow 1648

John Cooper 1650-60

Maurice Roberts 1660-62

James Bowen 1664

Henry Maurice 1668-71

Thomas Lloyd 1671-73

Ralph Weld 1675-87

Kenrick Puleston 1688-92

Luke Williams 1693-1709

William King 1694

Richard Gregory 1695

Henry Mease 1709-15

Humphrey Lloyd 1716-24

Peter Maurice 1716

Thomas Ray 1716

Humphrey Maurice 1716

Thomas Edwards 1724-29

George Stokes 1729-33

Edmund Meyrick 1734-

THE MINSTER BENEFICE

Thomas Morgan 1741-54

Jones Read 1754-67

John Lloyd 1767-78

Hugh Hughes 1778-89

Henry Llewellyn 1789-93

William Rowlands 1793-

Henry Mesham 1794-99

Henry Foulkes 1799-1816

Charles Jervis 1816-26

Francis Close 1826-56

Edward Walker 1857-72

Charles Dent Bell 1872-95

Edmund Lally Roxby 1895-1907

Francis L'Estrange Fawcett 1907-15

Henry Albert Wilson 1915-28

Leonard Gordon Melville Sheldon 1929-36

John Brownson Goodliffe 1937-58

Hugh Evan Alexander Hopkins 1958-73

Geoffrey William Hart 1973-93

Timothy Patrick Watson 1994-2003

Andrew John Morrison Dow 2004-10

Tudor Francis Lloyd Griffiths 2011-17

Richard Murray Coombs 2018-

HOLY TRINITY, PORTLAND STREET

Patron Originally the incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church; from 1898 the Simeon Trustees; from 2007 the Diocesan Board of Patronage

Architect George Allen Underwood

Consecrated 11 April 1823

Cost £14,000

Sittings 1,350 (of which 444 were free)

1851 Census Morning 1,056; afternoon 738 ['the number was apparently below the usual average']

1882 Census Morning 776; evening 868

History In the 19th century, Holy Trinity was the first Anglican church to be erected in Cheltenham and (apart from St Matthew's) was the most expensive to build and remained a chapel of ease until 1898. Until 1877 there were 1,350 sittings (906 were appropriated and 444 were free) but in that year after internal improvements had taken place the number of sittings was reduced to 342 in the galleries and 484 on the ground floor making a total of 826 sittings. The church was further reordered in 1892, 1915 and 1994.

To give greater freedom and independence to what was a proprietary chapel (where the pews were bought and sold as real estate) three of the clergy supported the acquisition of all of the private pews. The lengthy process was started under John Hall Shaw; continued under Percival Smith (when £2,000 was raised for the 'private pew redemption scheme') and concluded under Percy Waller in 1896. In 1898 Holy Trinity was no longer 'a church under bondage' subject to the parish church, but 'the district chapelry of the Holy Trinity' (*London Gazette*, 2 December 1898) and in the following February, Percy Waller became the first vicar. While funerals had been conducted since 1823, no baptisms took place until 1881 and no marriages until 1896.

The patron of Cheltenham parish church, Charles Simeon, had prepared a sermon on 1 Kings 8:28-30 'for the opening of Trinity church at Cheltenham' but illness prevented him from preaching, however the whole text was included in his collection of sermon outlines *Horae Homileticae* (1836), 3:338-351. Soon there was much controversy over the appointment of George Bonner as the curate in charge and his correspondence with the Bishop of Gloucester

HOLY TRINITY

was published as a *Statement of facts and copies of and extracts from letters, in reference to the refusal of the Hon and Rt Rev Henry Ryder (late Bishop of Gloucester, now of Lichfield and Coventry) to license the Rev George Bonner as assistant minister of Trinity Church, Cheltenham. In a letter to a member of the congregation* (1824). On not being licensed Bonner's supporters rallied round him and erected St James, Cheltenham, where he was the first minister 1830-40. Under the patronage of the incumbent of the parish church several notable curates in charge were appointed to Holy Trinity – Francis Close, Thomas Truebody Thomason, John Browne and Gordon Calthrop.

Holy Trinity had a small churchyard and a very extensive crypt for interments. A National school was opened in 1835 (and closed in 1906); an Infant school was opened in 1840; a Mission Room was opened in Sherborne Street in 1880, an adjacent Coffee Tavern in 1882; and a Parish Room in 1893. These properties were sold in the 1980s and Trinity House was purchased in 2000.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 14

A. Munden, A 'fountain of salvation' – Holy Trinity Church, CLHS (2023) *Journal* 39:30-36

For biographies of some of the Holy Trinity clergy see Pittville History Works: 'people'

GNQ (1879-81) Monumental Inscriptions (172 inside the church; and from 1823-77 there were 894 in the small churchyard and crypt) 1:2, 88-90, 90-92, 96-97; 101-103

Gloucestershire Archives. P78/1; P78/4

Clergy

George Bonner 1823-24

Francis Close 1824-26

Thomas Truebody Thomason 1827-28

John Browne 1828-57

Gordon Calthrop 1858-64

Edward Lillingston 1864-74

HOLY TRINITY

Joseph Richards 1875-78

John Hall Shaw 1878-84

Percival Smith 1884-94

Percy Waller 1894-1912

Edward McLaren Marsden 1912-25

William Grist 1925-32

Arthur Willoughby Habershon 1933-35

James Mervyn Glass 1936- 50

Cyril Walter *John* Catchpole 1951-73

Lawrence Harold Totty 1973-77

John Alexander Risdon 1977-86

Paul Harris 1987-93

Mark Robert Bailey 1994-2016

Andrew Kenneth Eric Blyth 2017-

ST PAUL, ST PAUL'S ROAD

Patron Incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church; from 2007 the Diocesan Board of Patronage

Architect John Forbes

Consecrated 12 July 1831

Cost £6,871 1s 10d

Sittings 1,400 (of which 700 were free)

1851 Census Morning 700 + 200 SS; evening 1,200 [with a larger evening congregation than usual]

1882 Census Morning 458; evening 514

History In 1825 Charles Jervis, the incumbent of the parish church, planned to erect a free church for the poor. A site was given and £1,500 was raised, but most of the fund-raising and the erection of the building took place under his successor, Francis Close. The architect, John Forbes described the building as ‘Grecian Ionic with portico and tower’ but the Cambridge Camdenians referred to ‘the disgusting paganism of St Paul’s’ – in not having a large chancel, did not face east, had no high altar, piscina, credence table, rood screen, or bells. ‘In front of [the church] was a considerable open space of ground, the resort of the idle and the dissolute, a nuisance to the church and to the neighbourhood, which it became absolutely necessary to enclose.’ It was purchased for £230 ‘available for ever as church property.’ (F. Close, ‘“The Restoration of Churches” is the Restoration of Popery’. *The Footsteps of Error* (London) 1863, 98).

In 1829 the foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of Gloucester. As the ‘Free Church’ it was a chapel of ease to the parish church until a district was assigned in August 1846, and became a parish in 1870. Internally the building was slightly modified in 1857 and the pews replaced in 1863. The church was re-ordered in 1904 when the changes included a new reredos, choir stalls, a moveable pulpit on rails and modifications to the galleries, and at the same time a surpliced choir was introduced. Further minor changes took place in 1917 and in 1933 when the Cave-Moyle memorial chapel (also called the Lady Chapel) was opened [Cave-Moyle was the vicar of St Paul’s 1904-26].

ST PAUL

Until St Paul's College Chapel was opened in 1910 the male students from the nearby Teacher Training College attended St Paul's church and the female students until 1869 (when they moved from what is now Normandy House in the High Street to St Mary's Hall [Shaftesbury Hall] and worshipped at the nearby Temporary Church and then at St Matthew's church). At St Paul's College, the foundation stone of the chapel was laid by the Bishop of Gloucester on 25 January 1909 (St Paul's Day) and the building dedicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury on 11 June 1910. The building, which was designed by Charles Hodgson Fowler to seat 406 people, cost about £10,000. The seating was collegiate and the sexes were separated by the choir located in the centre pews and with the men, sitting at the west end and the women at the east end each having separate entrances!

There was a Mission Hall in Swindon Road (now a Hindu Community Centre) and two schools: a National school opened in 1836 (and became the model school for the training college 1847-54) and an infant school in Brunswick Street in 1848.

Sources

H. Birks, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Valpy French* (London) 1895, 1:152ff

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 19-21

M. Wellings, Anglo-Catholicism, the 'Crisis in the Church' and the Cavalier Case of 1899, *JEH*, (1991), 42: 239-258

Gloucestershire Archives P78/1; P78/10

Clergy

Sir Henry Thompson 1831-33

Thomas Page 1833-36

Charles Greenall Davies 1836-40

John Hodges Sharwood 1840-43

Charles Henry Bromby 1843-64

Thomas Valpy French 1864-70

ST PAUL

William Henry Wright 1870-88

Anthony Ramsden Cavalier 1888-90

George Philips Pearce 1890-1903

Thomas Henry Cave-Moyle 1904-26

George Freeman Irwin 1926-29

William Retallack Bellerby 1929-50

Stanley Reginald Kekewich Howard 1951-76

Paul Francis Brading Fiske 1976-80

Fred Collard 1981-92

Stephen Jonathan Tyrrell 1992-2004

Vacant 2004-2006

Roger James Widdecombe 2006-

CHRIST CHURCH

CHRIST CHURCH, MALVERN ROAD

Patron Originally there were three Trustees (Francis Close, William Carus and Pearson Thompson) and transferred after forty years to the incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church and from 1880 the Simeon Trustees

Architect Robert William and Charles Jerrard

Consecrated 21 January 1840

Cost £18,111 15s 7d (principally raised by 160 shares at £105 = £16,800)

Sittings 1,835 (of which 434 were free)

1851 Census Morning 1,460; afternoon 800

1882 Census Morning 1,080; evening 701

History The church (known as 'Christ Church, Alstone') was erected as a proprietary chapel under the Forty Year Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV, c.103). The foundation stone was laid by Francis Close on 10 October 1837 and he and his family lived next to the church at The Grange 1839-56. The cost of the church was mostly funded from 160 shares each of £105 (which entitled each subscriber to seven pews, with an annual ground rent of 5s); and a few donations and subscriptions. Until a district was formally assigned in 1865 (*London Gazette*, 4 April 1865), Francis Close and Archibald Boyd recognised a conventional district; and, following the death of Edward Walker, the rector of Cheltenham, a parish was created in 1872. Minor internal alterations took place in 1865, 1888-89, 1893 and 1955-57. Within the parish the chancel of St Stephen's church was licensed for worship in November 1874, and the building was completed in 1883. Initially it was a chapel of ease and served by curates from Christ Church and became a separate parish in 1884.

For reminiscences of Alfred Peachey Cox's curacy at St Aldate's, Oxford 1885-90, see 'Concerning Canon Christopher' (1917) numerous quotations from which are included in J. S. Reynolds, *Canon Christopher of St Aldate's, Oxford* (Abingdon) 1967. The most well-known curate at Christ Church was Frederick William Robertson 1842-47 (who succeeded the first incumbent Charles Edward Kennaway as the perpetual curate of Holy Trinity, Brighton 1847-53).

CHRIST CHURCH

The first infant school in the parish of Cheltenham was opened in Alstone in April 1827 (and licensed for worship in 1834) and a National school in 1843 (one of three schools opened during Boyd's incumbency one of which was an infant school in Malvern Road in 1850).

Sources

C. Beardsley, *Unutterable Love. The passionate life and preaching of F. W. Robertson* (Cambridge) 2009

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 28-29

S. A. Brooke, *Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson* (London), 2 vols, 1866

J. K. Cavell, *The Story of Christ Church, Cheltenham* (Cheltenham) 1962

A. Munden, F. W. Robertson (1816-1853), 'Philosopher, poet, priest and prophet', CLHS (2008), *Journal* 24:41-46

S. Rudman, *Victorian Legacy* (Cheltenham) 1998

R. Whiting, *Christ Church 1840-1990* (Cheltenham) 1990

GNQ (1879-81) MI [49 inside the church], 1:81-83.

Gloucestershire Archives P78/3

Clergy

Charles Edward Kennaway 1840-42

Archibald Boyd 1842-59

Joseph Finch Fenn 1860-84

Christopher Venn Childe 1884-1901

Alfred Peachey Cox 1901-18

Francis Hanmer Webb-Peploe 1919-37

Lindsay James Coursey 1937-48

Edward Norman Spear 1949-52

CHRIST CHURCH

John Kingsmill Cavell 1952-62

David Charles St Vincent Welander 1963-75

John Rossiter Harwood 1975-91

Edwin Alan Crofton 1991-2002

Timothy James Edward Mayfield 2003-19

Simon Alexander Heron 2020-

ST PETER, TEWKSBURY ROAD

Patron Originally there were five trustees - three clergy (Francis Close, John Browne and Charles Bridges [vicar of Old Newton, Suffolk]) and two laymen (John Stuckey Reynolds [of Hampstead] and Percival White [of Clapham]) and successor trustees

Architect Samuel Whitfield Daukes

Consecrated 22 March 1849

Cost £4,651 16s

Sitting 1,050 (of which 700 were free)

1851 Census The attendance was not recorded in the Religious Census

1882 Census Morning 278; evening 310

History In 1836 an Infant school was opened in Waterloo Place and it was licensed for worship in 1844. Over £2,000 for the new church came from the Evangelical body the Church Extension Fund (f.1844). On 6 September 1847 the foundation stone of the church was laid by Sir Willoughby Jones MP. The design of the church was in the 'Norman Romanesque style' (*Illustrated London News*, 7 April 1849) and was based on Holy Sepulchre church, Cambridge. Always critical of Francis Close, *The Ecclesiologist*, had little good to say of St Peter's apart from the remark 'though we can never approve of a Romanesque style for a new church, there is something rather pretty and pleasing in this church.' (*The Ecclesiologist*, (1863) 24:152). Minor changes were made in 1911 that included a new reredos, choir stalls and moving the pulpit a few feet to the left.

Inside St Peter's church is a monument to the wealthy Evangelical benefactor, Jane Cook (1775-1851), who was interred in the churchyard. She gave the five acre site for the Teacher Training College in Swindon Road (valued at £2,500) and a further £500 towards the cost of the building and the site for a school in the St Peter's district. She gave at least £600 towards the erection of St Peter's church and £2,600 to complete the building of Christ Church, Jerusalem (opened in 1849). In her will (of 1850) she left £100,000 for the support of numerous Protestant societies and causes. She was interred in the small churchyard of St Peter's church.

ST PETER

A district was established in August 1845 and it became a parish in 1868. The parishioners were some of the poorest in Cheltenham and in 1931 the average Sunday collection was only 30s; and the income from the annual pew rents was only £10-12 (*Cheltenham Chronicle*, 31 January 1931). In the parish there was a National school opened in 1850, a coffee tavern in Tewkesbury Road opened 1879, and a Christian Institute and a Mission Hall in Swindon Road opened in 1905. Internal alterations to the church were made in 1911. It was closed in 2008 and the building was then used for other purposes the latest being The Rock Youth Centre.

The first incumbent, William Hodgson, was a wealthy clergyman and brother-in-law of Disney Robinson, the Perpetual Curate of Woolley, Yorkshire 1833-68 and who lived in Cheltenham 1844-c1855. His wife, Frances Rebecca Robinson was a wealthy woman following the death of her husband in 1869 and of her brother William in 1873. Both husband and wife were involved elsewhere in the building and patronage of churches.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 30-31

GNQ (1879-81) MI, 1:4-5, 42-43

The Ecclesiologist (1848), 9:396

Church and People (March 1912) 23:270-274

Illustrated London News, 7 April 1849

A. Munden, 'The munificent friend of Israel' – Jane Cook of Cheltenham (1775-1851), *CLHS*, (2001) *Journal* 17:34-41

A. Munden, 'Was Jane Barker a "Sabbath breaker and an adulteress?"'. *CLHS*, (2021) *Journal* 37:55-59

Gloucestershire Archives. P78/1; P78/11

Clergy

William Hodgson 1845-66

Arthur Hoskins 1867-84

ST PETER

Abraham Henry Herbert Orpen-Palmer 1884-1909 (Orpen-Palmer from 1892)

William Heaton Renshaw 1909-16 (later Heaton-Renshaw)

Albert Edward Clease 1916-28

William Edward Miller Williams 1928-33

Stanley James Richards 1934-51

Charles Leslie Ward 1951-60

Sidney Albert Dunn 1960-63

Eric Walter Thomas Lane 1963-65

Joseph Henry Godfrey Evans 1965-73

Sydney Thomas Lambert 1973-78

Herbert John van der Linde 1978-84

William Frank James Everitt 1984-99

Stephen William Eldridge 2000-08

ST LUKE, COLLEGE ROAD

Patron Incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church

Architect Frederick Webster Ordish

Consecrated 7 November 1854 (originally the dedication was to have been All Saints). The enlarged chancel was consecrated on 3 January 1866

Cost £5,738 7s

Sittings 1,040 (of which 526 were free)

1851 Census The attendance in the schoolroom was not recorded in the Religious Census

1882 Census Morning 791; evening 578

History In August 1816 the foundation stone of the first National school in the town was laid in Bath Road and which opened in January 1817 (enlarged in 1836 and 1880 and closed in 1931) and an infant department was established in 1836. From 1843 the building was licensed for public worship and until the church was opened Francis Close appointed curates to serve in what was called the Sandford district (created in 1845). He and his wife bought the site of the church for £100. St Luke's church was a chapel of ease and with a district assigned in 1855. From 1854 to 1858 afternoon services were held at St Luke's church for the staff and pupils of the nearby Cheltenham College. The first College chapel was dedicated by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol on 24 February 1858 and it was replaced by a much larger building dedicated by the Bishop of Gloucester on 11 June 1896. It had cost £12,000 and seated 650 boys.

In 1834 the Naunton infant school was opened in Exmouth Street (and closed in 1907) and the church hall in Clare Street was sold in 1931. In 1970 a new church hall was opened in St Luke's Place. St Luke's Mission Church (known as Emmanuel from 1881) in Naunton Terrace was licensed on 15 May 1873. It was destroyed by fire in 1916 and Sunday services were held in the Naunton infant school which was licensed for worship until Emmanuel church was consecrated on 23 October 1937.

In 1939 a diocesan commission recommended the amalgamation of the parishes of St Luke and St John and the closure and demolition of St Luke's. The scheme was considered again in 1947 and 1953 and on both occasions was strongly resisted by the congregation of St Luke's. When a united benefice was formed in 1966, St Luke's church survived but St John's

was closed and demolished the following year and some of the furnishings were transferred to St Luke's.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 31-32

A. Munden, *A History of St Luke's Church, Cheltenham 1854-2004* (Cheltenham) 2004

Gloucestershire Archives P78/7

Clergy

Joshua Rundle Watson 1843-46

Stephen Westbrook 1847-51

William Fraser Handcock 1852-71

John Astbury Aston 1871-83

Charles Forbes Septimus Money 1883-88

George Despard 1888-1902

Hubert Evan Noott 1903-16

Charles Cousens Petch 1916-42

Thomas John Eastwood 1943-58

Norman Haddock 1959-84

Jeremy Michael Whales 1985-93

Michael John Lodge 1993-2005

Robert Carlyle Pestell 2006-12

Michael Workman 2012-16

Patrick Edward Wheaton 2016-

ST JOHN, BERKELEY STREET

Patron Originally there were two clerical trustees – Daniel Richard Leake Moxon and William Spencer Phillips. On Moxon’s death in 1828 he was replaced by his brother, Rev William Charles Moxon, then by Phillips as the sole trustee until his death in 1863 followed by his widow Penelope until 1868. In 1863 the patronage passed to the incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church, and from 1869 the Simeon Trustees

Architect John Buonarotti Papworth. The changes made 1870-74 were under the supervision of the local architect, C. M. Muller

Consecrated 22 January 1829; new apse 1 December 1870

Cost £7,000

Sittings 740 (of which 200 were free)

1851 Census The attendance was not recorded in the Religious Census

1882 Census Morning 720; evening 581

History The church was opened as a proprietary chapel erected under the Forty Year Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV, c.103). As the sole trustee Phillips owned 72 pews (62 under the consecration deed and a further ten were purchased for about £1,000). A district was created in 1866 and in 1966 the adjacent parishes of St Luke and St John’s were united.

In 1826 not all members of the parish church had welcomed Francis Close’s appointment as the perpetual curate and they had favoured his fellow curate, Daniel Richard Leake Moxon and on him not being appointed his supporters resolved to provide him with a chapel. Once it became clear the former chapel in Grosvenor Street where Thomas Snow had ministered was unavailable, the process was then set in motion to erect a new chapel with Moxon as the first minister, but within two months of the opening of St John’s he unexpectedly died on 29 November 1828.

During the incumbency of the absentee William Spencer Phillips, he appointed a succession of curates in charge who were supportive of the Oxford Movement and it was the only church in Cheltenham that held daily services and a weekly communion service. While both St James’ and St John’s were independent of the superintendence of Francis Close, under his successor the situation changed and after 1863 the patronage of St John’s was transferred to

ST JOHN

the rector of Cheltenham and thereafter Evangelical clergy were appointed. Edward Walker wanted it to become a district church and since he found being a patron was a painful duty and gave him no pleasure, he transferred the responsibility to the Simeon Trustees. In June 1867 those members of the congregation who opposed the change in churchmanship moved to St George's Hall, in the High Street, and the building was licensed by the bishop for worship until March 1868 after which a temporary wooden church was erected in Pittville Circus prior to the opening of All Saints church.

Before the 1870s the St John's building was described as being 'little better than an engine shed in appearance' (*Cheltenham Examiner*, 18 November 1874) and was extensively reordered and rebuilt 1870-74 so that the building had 'little resemblance to its original condition.' (*Cheltenham Examiner*, 7 December 1870). A new apse was consecrated on 1 December 1870 and on 15 November 1874 a service was held to mark the completion of the building works costing about £5,000 for an enlarged west end, the brick walls encased with stone, Gothic windows replaced the previous ones, and internal improvements increased the number of seats by 200-300. Electric lighting was installed in 1901. In 1905 several alterations were made including the provision of a new reredos (in memory of Arthur Armitage); and the erection of an adjacent church hall to hold 350 people. In 1966, on the creation of a united benefice, St Luke's church remained but St John's church was closed, deconsecrated and demolished the following year, and some of the furnishings were transferred to St Luke's. In the film 'If' (directed by Lindsay Anderson and released in 1968) the school speech day was filmed in the church hall.

Independent of the direction of Francis Close (and initially opposed by him because the church had no parish) a National school was opened in April 1842 and a new school in Albion Street was opened in 1867 (and remodelled in 1929). A church hall was opened in Albion Street in 1905.

Sources

H. Birks, *The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Valpy French* (London) 1895, 1:151-152

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 18-19

The Ecclesiologist (1863) 24:151

D. O'Connor and C. Jamieson, The Rev William Spencer Phillips, CKLHS (2015), *Research Bulletin*, 61:43-44

ST JOHN

B. Taylor, St John's, Cheltenham: Early Years, *Gloucestershire History* (1997), 11:16-19

Gloucestershire Archives P78/1; P78/6; for the demolition of St John's church see also P78/7
IN 4/16

Clergy

William Spencer Phillips 1828-63

William Morgan Kinsey 1831-42

Alexander Watson 1841-51

Fielding Palmer 1841-45

William John Edge 1852-53

George Roberts 1853-64

Thomas Valpy French 1864

Arthur Armitage 1864-1903

Frederic Brodie MacNutt 1903-07

William Fairlie Clarke 1907-15

John Charles Elliott 1915-16

Cyril Henry Lancaster 1916-56

Cuthbert Charles Walter Cooper 1956-65

Norman Haddock 1966-67

ST JAMES, SUFFOLK SQUARE

Patron Originally there were three lay trustees (John Browne, of Salperton Park, John Eldridge and H. E. Dodsworth) selected by the shareholders; and from 1870 the incumbent of Cheltenham Parish Church

Architect Edward Jenkins. Completed by John Buonarotti Papworth

Consecrated 5 October 1830

Cost £10,500

Sittings 1,400 (of which 350 were free)

1851 Census Morning 1,400 + 200 SS; afternoon 600 + 200 SS [‘The attendance seldom or never varies’]

1882 Census Morning 634; Evening 451

History The chapel was erected by the supporters of the first minister, George Bonner (see Holy Trinity church) and was opened as a proprietary chapel and erected under the Forty Year Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV, c.103). The site was given by James Fisher and in the presence of a crowd of 2,000, the foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of Gloucester on 29 November 1825 and consecrated on 5 October 1830. During the incumbency of George Chamberlain the central, three-decker pulpit was removed and new seating was provided at a cost of £731. In 1870 an application was made for a district to be assigned but this was refused by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and a parish was not created until 1916. In 1971 the parish of St James was united with St Philip and St James, Leckhampton. Two years later St James church was deconsecrated and closed in 1976 and it became a parish hall for St Philip and St James, Leckhampton. Subsequently the former St James church become a pizza restaurant. In 1865 a National school was opened in Great Norwood Street.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 14-18

GNQ (1879-81) Monumental Inscriptions [22 inside the church], 1:4, 5, 72-73

P. J. Jagger, *Bishop Henry de Candole. His Life and Times 1895-1971* (Leighton Buzzard) 1975

Gloucestershire Archives P78/1; P78/5

Clergy

George Bonner 1830-40

James Balfour 1840-43

Francis Duncan Gilby 1843-57

George William Chamberlain 1857-84

Arthur Hoskins 1884-95

Henry Lawe Corry Vully de Candole 1895-99

Percy Augustus Nash 1899-1911

Herbert Carnegie Knox 1912-17

George William Boothroyd 1917-33

Arthur Oswald Lukyn-Williams (formerly Williams) 1933-41

Ernest James Morritt Eldridge 1941-65

Ettrick Harold Eynon 1965-72

ST MARK, CHURCH ROAD, LANSDOWN

Patron Originally there were three trustees (the incumbents of St Mary, Christ Church and a Simeon Trustee); in 1921 acquired by Wrekin College, Shropshire and subsequently transferred to the Martyrs Memorial Trust, now administered by CPAS

Architect John Middleton

Consecrated 8 February 1862

Cost £4,700

Sittings 517

1882 Census Morning 328; evening 291

History The first services in the area were held in the kitchen of a farmhouse and soon George Pruen Griffiths opened a school and mission hall. He was a wealthy man and contributed £1,200 towards the erection of the church and the endowment and initially received no parochial fees. On 20 September 1860 the foundation stone of St Mark's church was laid by William Carus, a Simeon Trustee, and vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge. Significantly, at the consecration on 8 February 1862, the clergy wore surplices rather than black gowns. In 1862 the district (including Arle and Alstone) became a parish.

The spire was finally completed in 1886. In 1889 St Mark's church was enlarged by the erection of two transepts at a cost of £1,200 to accommodate 100 boys from the nearby Dean Close Memorial School and this arrangement continued until a temporary school chapel was dedicated on 23 January 1909 and was replaced by a permanent building dedicated on 1 November 1923. In the church gas lighting was replaced with electric light in 1930.

St Mark's National school was erected in 1865 and an infant school was established in 1876 (in all Griffiths opened four schools in the parish). A mission church (later called St Silas) was opened in Hester's Way in 1885. After being demolished in 1952, a temporary church was opened on the site, replaced again in 1959. In 1911 a church hall was opened in Rowanfield Road, from 1988 known as Emmanuel Church, which merged with St Mark's in 2003-06. In 1946 a temporary building erected in Orchard Way was replaced by a permanent building (St Barnabas) in 1973. In 1954 a former Army hut was erected in Coronation Square and a church was dedicated as St Aidan's on 12 March 1960. St Silas merged with St

ST MARK

Aidan's 2003-06. The two churches of St George and St Thomas (founded in the 1940s) closed in the 1960s.

The Parish of West Cheltenham, which was created in 2018, includes St Mark, St Aidan and St Silas, and St Barnabas.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 37

Gloucestershire Archives P78/8; See too St Silas P78/14; St Aidan P78/15; St Barnabas P78/16

Clergy

George Pruen Griffiths 1862-1910

Charles Neill 1910-13

Harry Hill Merryweather 1913-28

Cecil William Jameson 1929-44

George Roger Woodhams 1944-61

George Edward Bottomley 1961-76

Thomas John Curtis 1977-86

David Gordon Williams 1987-2003

Paul Harris 2004-11

Stephen Allan Bowen 2011-18

Rodney John Paterson 2018-

ALL SAINTS

ALL SAINTS, ALL SAINTS ROAD, PITTVILLE

Patron Bishop of Gloucester

Architect John Middleton

Consecrated 2 November 1868

Cost Not known

Sittings 870

1882 Census Morning 698; evening 641

History: From June 1867 members of the congregation of St John's church, led by the curate in charge, George Roberts, met for worship in St George's Hall, in the High Street and which was licensed for worship by the Bishop of Gloucester. Since it was in his parish, Edward Walker gave his permission, but when additional services were being held in the York Rooms, Grosvenor Terrace, he objected, and the bishop withdrew the licence. A public correspondence about the situation was published in the *Cheltenham Examiner*. A temporary wooden church was erected in Pittville Circus and services were held there from March 1868 until All Saints church was consecrated on 2 November 1868 and a district was assigned the following year. In 1867 Roberts left Cheltenham and became the Rector of Beachamwell, Norfolk where his predecessor Corbett Metcalfe Moore had been the incumbent and who was licensed to the All Saints district before becoming the first vicar in 1868. In 1871 the temporary wooden church was then re-erected in London until St Luke, Redcliffe Square was opened in August 1873.

The church was designed to have a tower and spire (which were never built) and the stump of the tower was capped with a gabled roof in 1992. In 1898 a small apse was added to the Lady Chapel.

An infant school was opened in Grosvenor Terrace in 1869; a small mission room was opened in Sherborne Place in October 1882, licensed for worship 1889. It became known as St Faith's Mission Church and closed in 1936. All Saints school was opened in Fairview Road in 1891. A second mission room was erected in Whaddon Lane in December 1907 and was replaced by a small wooden building licensed for worship 1914 and dedicated to St Michael which was replaced by a permanent building in Whaddon Road dedicated in January

ALL SAINTS

1937 (and demolished in 2002). Following the consecration of St Michael's on 10 September 1966 a new parish was created.

Since 2008 All Saints is one of the five churches in the North Cheltenham Team Ministry comprising St Mary and St Nicholas, Prestbury; St Lawrence, Swindon Village (where the team rector is based); and St Mary Magdalene, Elmstone Hardwicke with Uckington

Sources

Correspondence between Edward Walker and Corbett Moore, September to October 1867, *Cheltenham Examiner*, 16 and 23 October 1867

L. Ambler, *All Saints Church Cheltenham* (Cheltenham) n.d.

L. Ambler, *The Parish Church of All Saints Cheltenham, an illustrated guide to the church* (Cheltenham) 1980

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 37-38

Gloucestershire Archives P78/2

Clergy

Corbett Metcalfe Moore 1868-86

George Lawrence Harter Gardner 1886-1911

Philip Marmaduke Cramer Johnstone 1911-46

Kenneth Cecil McPherson 1946-49

John Wood 1949-74

Robert Harrington Torrens 1975-84

Colin Mynett 1984-89

Walter James Jennings 1989-98

Stephen Simpson Gregory 1999-2006

Michael Graeme Cozens 2003-14

David Robert Smith 2015-

ALL SAINTS

All Saints vacant in 2018

Robert James Wright 2018-2023

David Lawrence Lawrence-March 2023-

ST STEPHEN, ST STEPHEN'S ROAD, TIVOLI

Patron Bishop of Gloucester

Architect John Middleton

Licensed 6 November 1874 (chancel)

Consecrated 20 December 1883

Cost Tivoli Chancel over £1,000; the completed building £12,000

Sittings 580 (in the completed building)

1882 Census Morning 96; evening 73 (in the Tivoli Chancel)

History The church, which was built in stages, was erected in memory of Mary Jane Fenn, the first wife of Joseph Finch Fenn, the vicar of Christ Church 1859-84 [and commemorated in the east window of St Stephen's]. The foundation stone of the 'Tivoli Chancel' (or 'Memorial Chancel') was laid by the Bishop of Gloucester on 4 November 1873 and he licensed the building for worship on 6 November 1874; an organ chamber and vestry were completed in 1876; and work began on the nave and aisles in December 1881. The completed building was consecrated on 20 December 1883 and with further work in 1886, 1888 and 1892, but a planned tower and spire (above the entrance porch) were never erected. From 1874-83 the building was a chapel of ease to Christ Church and as such reflected the Evangelicalism of the mother church and was served by curates until a parish was created in 1884. The first curate who served at the Tivoli Chancel was Edward Cornford (who had been the chaplain to Henry Cotterill, the Evangelical Bishop of Grahamstown 1856-71) and from 1862-75 the vicar of Cam, Dursley. He combined the roles of incumbent and curate and perhaps the situation became impossible, and Cornford sought the advice of the bishop and other people and had 'no alternative but to resign.' (*Stroud Journal*, 20 July 1878). Without having a secure Evangelical patronage that tradition was lost at St Stephen's and by the beginning of the 20th century the churchmanship was Anglo-Catholic.

The Tivoli Mission Room was opened in 1873; the Lansdown and Tivoli Coffee Tavern in Tivoli Place in 1879 (replaced in 1890); a church hall in Albany Road in 1888; and by 1949 there was a mission church of St Barnabas. In 1995 the parish was united with Emmanuel, Cheltenham. Since 2009 St Stephen's has been one of five churches in the South Cheltenham

ST STEPHEN

Team Ministry comprising St Christopher, Warden Hill; Emmanuel, Cheltenham; St Stephen, Cheltenham; St Peter, Leckhampton and St Philip and St James, Leckhampton.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 39

I. M. F. Kirby and B. E. Torode, *St Stephen's, Cheltenham* (Cheltenham) 1973

B. Torode, *The Story of Tivoli 'near the town'* (Cheltenham) 1998

Geoffrey Thomas Berwick, the curate at St Stephen's 1936-39, wrote an unsympathetic and wholly negative account of Francis Close, 'Close of Cheltenham: Parish Pope' (mss, 1938) and published in *Theology*, September 1939, 39:193-201; October 1939, 39:276-285

Gloucestershire Archives. P78/3; P78/12

Clergy

Edward Cornford 1873-78

Francis Alexander Homfray 1878-80

John Cecil May 1878-85

Charles McArthur 1883-90

Edward Linck Jennings 1891-1915

Frederick Wildman Goodwyn 1915-17

Robert Leighton Hodson 1917-25

Albert Edward Addenbrooke 1926-36

Ronald Huntley Sutch 1936-41

Geoffrey Frank Hilder 1941-48

Arthur James Maxwell Saint 1948-60

George Arnold Willis 1960-64

Frederick Harford Cross 1964-71

Joseph *Desmond* Gott 1972-89

ST STEPHEN

John Harrison Heidt 1989-95

Ian Edward Burbery 1995-98

Peter Henry Naylor 1999-2007

Vacant 2007-2012

Nicholas Duff Davies 2012-23

EMMANUEL (I) NAUNTON TERRACE

St Luke's Mission Church (from 1881 known as Emmanuel)

Licensed 15 May 1873

Sittings 800

EMMANUEL CHURCH (II) FAIRFIELD PARADE

Patron Bishop of Gloucester

Architect Herbert T. Rainger

Consecrated 23 October 1937

Cost £10,222 8s

Sittings 500

History St Luke's Mission Church (from 1881 known as Emmanuel) in Naunton Terrace was licensed on 15 May 1873 and rebuilt after the roof collapsed following a heavy snowfall in January 1875. After the building was destroyed by fire in 1916 services were held in the Naunton infant school which had been licensed for worship. The foundation stone of the new church was laid on 10 October 1936 by Sir John Birchall MP and consecrated on 23 October 1937. A conventional district was formed in 1918, an ecclesiastical district in 1922 and a parish in 1932, which was united with St Stephen in 1995. Since 2009 Emmanuel has been one of five churches in the South Cheltenham Team Ministry comprising St Christopher, Warden Hill; St Stephen, Cheltenham; Emmanuel, Cheltenham; St Peter, Leckhampton, and St Philip and St James, Leckhampton.

The Cheltenham Network Church had its roots in the Glenfall Fellowship which started in 1990 and more formally instituted under a Bishop's Mission Order in 2015. The Cheltenham Network church is part of the New Wine network of churches and was launched in 2020 with the aim 'to build communities that grow followers of Jesus of all ages.' From 2021 the Network Church has been based at Emmanuel.

Sources

P. Bradstock, *Emmanuel Church, Cheltenham: the story of its life* (Cheltenham) 2006

A. Munden, *A History of St Luke's Church, Cheltenham 1854 to 2004* (Cheltenham) 2004,
23-24

Gloucestershire Archives. P78/7; P78/13

Clergy

1873-1937 served by the clergy of St Luke, Cheltenham

Herbert Daniel Peel 1922-41

Edward Charles Hanson 1942-63

Eric James Hoskin 1963-70

Kenneth Brian Hobbs 1970- 88

Ian Edward Burbery 1989-98

Peter Henry Naylor 1999-2007

Jacqueline Margaret Rodwell 2008-14

Kenneth Leslie Shill 2015-21

Sarah Jane Futcher McDonald-Haden 2022-

ST MICHAEL, WHADDON ROAD

Patron: Vicar of All Saints and then the Bishop of Gloucester

Architect: David Stratton Davis

Consecrated: 10 September 1966

Cost: Not known

Sittings: Not known

History: In All Saints parish a small mission room was opened in Sherborne Place in October 1882 and was subsequently known as St Faith's Mission Church and closed in 1936. A second mission room was erected in Whaddon Lane in December 1907 and was replaced by a small wooden building licensed for worship in 1914 and dedicated to St Michael. This in turn was replaced by a permanent building in Whaddon Road dedicated in January 1937 (and demolished in 2002). The conventional district of St Michael, Lynworth, was established in 1947; an ecclesiastical district in January 1953 and the parish of St Michael, Cheltenham following the consecration of the building on 10 September 1966. Vandals destroyed the local Methodist church in September 1995 and in the following February the building was burnt down. Later in 1996 a Local Ecumenical Partnership was formed between the Anglican and Methodist churches and the benefice is now called the United Church of St Michael.

Sources

Gloucestershire Archives P78/17; P78/2 CW 3/7 and 8

Clergy

Initially served by the clergy of All Saints, Cheltenham

Hubert George Goddard 1947-60

Peter Charles William Walker 1960-66

Anthony John Minchin 1967-74

Leonard John Hendry 1974-78

Ian Archibald Robb 1979-90

ST MICHAEL

David Ian Lawrence 1991-2006

Robert Carlyle Pestell 2006-13

Rodney John Paterson 2014-18

Ashley Stuart Collishaw 2019-2023

ST MICHAEL

CHURCHES

OUTSIDE OF THE PARISH OF CHELTENHAM

The parishes of Leckhampton and Charlton Kings are not included in the overall summaries

ST PETER, LECKHAMPTON

Patron From 1894, the Lord of the Manor; Augusta Warren Neville Wyatt. In the following year she appointed her son in law, William Clifford Aston as the curate in charge. In 1905 she bequeathed the patronage to her family and the following year they presented it to the Bishop of Gloucester

Sittings 318 (142 free)

1851 Census Not given for 30 March; but the average attendance over the course of the year was morning 100 + 65 SS; afternoon 160 + 65 SS

1882 Census Morning 207; evening 420

History The earliest known chapel at Leckhampton, which dated from the early 12th century, was substantially rebuilt in the 14th century; altered 1833-34 and rebuilt and enlarged 1865-66. Within the parish St Philip and St James church was opened in May 1840. Since 2009 St Peter, Leckhampton has been one of the five churches in the South Cheltenham Team Ministry comprising St Christopher, Warden Hill; St Stephen, Cheltenham; Emmanuel, Cheltenham; St Peter, Leckhampton and St Philip and St James, Leckhampton.

Sources

GNQ (1879-81) Monumental Inscriptions [48 inside the church and 94 in the churchyard] 1:6, 60-62]

E. Miller, *The History of Leckhampton Church* (Leckhampton) 2006

E. W. B Cordingly, *Beyond Hatred* (1967)

L. Cordingly, *Down to Bedrock* (2013)

Gloucestershire Archives. P198/2

Clergy

Henry 1162-1199

Faulk of Penebrig 1270

Walter Burdon 1286-1287

Adam of York 1287

ST PETER, LECKHAMPTON

John Gamage 1297-1303

William of Eyleworth 1347-49

William of Blechesdon 1349-54

William of Farendon 1354-

Richard Banystur 1546

Robert Fynche -1549

Rhys Jones 1549-70

Ralph Gynes 1570-1612

Humphrey Stodard 1620

Henry Williams 1620-37

Rowland Crosby 1647

Humphrey Randell 1650

Robert Jones 1654-1707

Thomas Norwood 1707-34

John Brown 1735-38

Richard Arthur 1738 (10 months)

Clement Headington 1738-44

John Trye 1744-66

Edward Draper 1767-1825

Thomas Commeline 1825-30

Charles Brandon Trye 1830-84

Reginald Edward Trye 1884-1928

There were curates in charge during the period of sequestration 1895-1928

ST PETER, LECKHAMPTON

William Clifford Aston 1895-1904

Henry Proctor 1904-12

Frederick William Bidwell 1912-15

Augustine John Hodson 1915-21

Francis Reginald Standfast 1921-28

Frederick William Sears 1928-38

Henry James Hensman 1938-40

Eric William Bradley Cordingly 1941-54

Edgar John White 1955-66

Geoffrey Coleridge Ford 1966-70

Eric Walter Brewin 1970-81

George Robert Henry Smith 1982-94

Adrian Charles Berry 1995-2002

Paul Wilkinson 2003-15

Gary Brian Grady 2016-

ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES, GRAFTON ROAD
(in the parish of Leckhampton)

Patron Originally trustees, then the Bishop of Gloucester

	<i>First church</i>	<i>Second church</i>
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<i>Architect</i>	Edwin Hugh Shellard	John Middleton
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<i>Consecrated</i>	1 May 1840	13 April 1882
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<i>Cost</i>	Not known	About £9,000
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<i>Sittings</i>	850	860
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1851 Census Morning 507 + 150 SS; afternoon 510 + 150 SS

1882 Census Morning 583; evening 432

History Within the parish of St Peter, Leckhampton, was a chapel of ease dedicated to St Philip and St James, which was erected under the 40 Year Act of 1824 (5 Geo. IV, c.103) by the rector (and lord of the manor) Charles Brandon Trye 1830-84. The building, which seated 850 (350 of which were free) was 85' 0" from east to west and 41' 0" wide, with a tower 86' 6" high and with a burial crypt. Initially, it was a conventional district until a parish was created in 1869. Over the course of three years, 1879-82, a new building was erected on the same site, but rather than providing a temporary church in which to worship during the building work, the new was constructed around the existing church and there was very little interruption to the services. The chancel and chancel aisles were erected first and after an iron nave was erected the new nave was constructed over it. When the church was opened the tower was only 27' 0" high; when it completed in 1903 it was 180' 0" high (and in memory of the third vicar, William Henry Hutchinson). The seating of the second church was 860, only ten more than in the previous building. The reredos from the first church was gifted to Shurdington. On the day of consecration, 13 April 1882, the choir wore surplices for the first time. After a lengthy legal process, the church was extensively reordered in 2021.

A school was erected in 1864 and extended in 1873. Within the parish, St Christopher's church, Lincoln Avenue, Warden Hill was dedicated on 15 July 1961 and became a parish on 1 January 2010. From 2010-22 it was a LEP with Warden Hill, URC.

ST PHILIP & ST JAMES, LECKHAMPTON

In 1971 St James was united with the parish of St Philip and St James. Since 2009 St Philip and St James has been one of five churches in the South Cheltenham Team Ministry. The team rector Gary Grady is based at St Peter, Leckhampton.

Reports on the two consecrations. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 7 May 1840; 18 April 1882

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 29-30, 39

Diocese of Gloucester Consistory Court. St Philip and St James. 15 July 2018 (Internet)

GNQ (1879-81) Monumental Inscriptions [inside the first church] 1:4, 5-6, 14, 67-68

Gloucestershire Archives. P178/2

Clergy

Joseph Esmond Riddle 1840-59

Lawrence John Harrison 1859-64

William Henry Hutchinson 1864-1901

Arthur Chorley Woodhouse 1901-11

Richard Arthur Hay Hay 1912-30

John Murray Ballard 1931-40

Oswald Dalby Parker 1940-58

Ettrick Harold Eynon 1958-81

David Charles Nye 1981-95

Peter Lindsay Chicken 1996-2006

Ian Paul Bussell 2007-2011

Nicholas Duff Davies 2012-23

ST MARY, CHARLTON KINGS

Patron From 1832, Jesus College, Oxford and later the Bishop of Gloucester

Sittings 781 (free 150)

1851 Census Morning 444 + 126 SS; Afternoon 381 + 116 SS; Evening 164

1882 Census 289; evening 384

History Initially the church was a chapel of ease to Cheltenham parish church and subsequently became a separate parish. An extensive rebuilding and restoration took place 1876-78 when it was enlarged, the galleries were removed, and new seating provided. The building was reopened by the Bishop of Gloucester on 25 April 1878 and the chancel dedicated on 7 November 1878.

Charles Leslie Dundas (1876-83) introduced Anglo-Catholicism to St Mary's.

Sources

GNQ (1879-81) Monumental Inscriptions [38 inside the church], 1:26, 121-123

M. J. Greet and M. Paget, 'Ministers and Incumbents at St Mary's', *Charlton Kings Local History Society, Bulletin*, (1986), 16:43-54

M. Paget, *A History of Charlton Kings* (Gloucester) 1988

Gloucestershire Archives. P76

Clergy

Roger Mottelowe 1537-45

John George 1545

Richard Elbrow 1546-48

William Hall 1548-53

Raynold Lane 1556-59

Richard Linsey 1563

James Ballard 1571-73

ST MARY, CHARLTON KINGS

Richard Kerye 1577-78

James Thomas 1585-91

Walter Rolfe 1594-98

Henry Tiler 1602-03

Thomas Church 1604-10

John Crowther 1610-11

William Gorton 1612-14

William Dedicote 1615

[Unknown] Wells 1621-22

Richard Winsmore 1622

R[unknown] Walker 1622-24

Hugh Williams 1624

Richard Brooke 1624

Richard Murrell 1633-46

John Marston? [dates unknown]

Richard Harrison 1648-60

Humfrey Randall 1662-63

Robert Mansell 1663-65

William Wynne 1676-83

Maurice Jones 1695

David Gwynn 1711

Morgan Leyson 1717-28

John Edwards 1741

John Jones 1750

ST MARY, CHARLTON KINGS

Robert Roberts 1751-

John Weeks Bedwell 1771-74

John de la Bere 1783-

Edward Morgan -1799

Benjamin Capel Heming 1802-11

Walter Rees Morgan Williams 1814

Robert Williams 1815-30

Charles Henry Watling 1830-34

William Goddard 1834

James Frederick Secretan Gabb 1834-75

Charles Leslie Dundas 1876-83

Thomas Moore 1883-86

William John Mayne 1886-92

Thomas Hodson 1892-1906

Edgar Neale 1906-37

Arthur Michael Hollis 1937-42

Walter Thomas Wardle 1943-48

Thomas Carlyle Joseph *Robert* Hamish Deakin 1949-73

David Saville Yerburgh 1974-85

Graham Trevor Bryant 1985-2002

Michael Garland 2003-

HOLY APOSTLES CHARLTON KINGS (in the parish of Charlton Kings)

Patron Charles Cooke Higgs and after his death his sister, Ruperita Sandes; then the Bishop of Gloucester

Architect John Middleton

Licensed 5 June 1871

Consecrated 2 June 1885

Cost £8,500

Sittings 650

History The church of the Holy Apostles was erected at the sole expense of Charles Cooke Higgs (1796-1884) who laid the foundation stone on 13 March 1865. The church was licensed for worship on 5 June 1871, but since Higgs wanted to ensure that the tradition of the church reflected that of his own Protestant Evangelicalism, he refused to allow it to be consecrated during his lifetime. However, a year after his death the consecration took place on 2 June 1885 and three months later a parish was created on the 22 September. In his will Higgs stipulated that the liturgy should be from the *Book of Common Prayer* and that the patron ensured that the minister of Holy Apostles ‘shall not intone or use monotone and other ritualistic practices and observance during his incumbency of the said church’ (Will dated 11 April 1883). In June 1970 a fire damaged both the fabric and fittings and the church and it was then restored and reordered.

Adjacent to the church the school opened in 1873.

Sources

S. Blake, *Cheltenham's Churches and Chapels*, 38-39.

P. Clifford, *The Church at the Crossroads. The Holy Apostles Millennium Celebration* (Cheltenham) 2000

D. O'Connor, Charles Cooke Higgs – an eccentric benefactor, CKLHS, *Research Bulletin*, (2014) 60:5-16

D. O'Connor, The Unfortunate Denwood Harrison, CKLHS, *Research Bulletin*, (2014) 60:54-59

D. O'Connor, Holy Apostles – in the Bishop's Hands, CKLHS, *Research Bulletin*, (2014)
60:24-26

M. Paget, The daughter church: the first years of Holy Apostles, CKLHS, *Research Bulletin*,
(1986) 16:41-43

Gloucestershire Archives. P386

Clergy

Frederick Howson Potter [changed his surname to Neville in 1880] 1871-83

Edward James Bower 1885-90

Francis Hargrave Tindal Curtis-Raleigh 1890-97

Denwood Harrison 1897-1904

Hubert Alfred Corke 1904-1919

Alfred Henry Rhodes 1919-38

Reginald James Northcott 1939-44

Charles Theodore Peers 1944-66

Patrick Spencer Murray Walton 1966-81

Elliot *Malcolm* Duthie 1981-94

Raymond Copping 1995-2000

Rodney John Paterson 2001-18

Ashley Stuart Collishaw 2018-

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Anglican churches and chapels in Cheltenham

Church	Patron
St Mary the Virgin, the ancient parish church [1,600]	Trustees
St Matthew chapel of ease (1879) [1,600]	
Holy Trinity (PC) (1823) [1,000]	Trustees (now DBP)
St Paul (1831) [1,600]	Trustees (now DBP)
Christ Church (PC) (1840) [2,075]	Trustees
St Peter (1849) [1,050]	Trustees (closed)
St Luke (1854) [1,040]	Trustees
St Luke's Mission Church (1873 later called Emmanuel (1881) and replaced by the new Emmanuel Church (1937)	
St John (PC) (1829) [800]	Trustees (closed)
St James (PC) (1830) [1,400]	Trustees (closed)
St Mark (1862) [617]	Trustees
All Saints (1868) [870]	Bishop of Gloucester
St Stephen (1883) [580]	Bishop of Gloucester
St Michael (1966)	Bishop of Gloucester

The dates in brackets () refer to the year of the consecration. The numbers in brackets [...] refer to the number of sittings (which vary from source to source).

DBP Diocesan Board of Patronage

PC Proprietary chapel without parochial rights; the repairs and maintenance were the responsibility of the proprietors. All four proprietary chapels in Cheltenham (Holy Trinity, Christ Church, St John and St James) were consecrated (though elsewhere that was not always the case). The clergy of such chapels were licensed by the bishop with the consent of the incumbent of the parish in which the chapel was situated; and the bishop had the power to revoke the licence.

In 1850 Francis Close informed the Ecclesiastical Commissioners about the seating provision in the then seven churches in the town.

LPL, St Luke's Church, EC 16087. (St Mary, Holy Trinity, St John, St James, St Paul, Christ Church and St Peter). Form of Inquiry, 2 November 1850.

In 1818 Cheltenham Parish Church had 1,165 sittings, together with benches in the aisles for 190 poor people.

APPENDIX 2

Church architects

Twelve architects were involved with local church in and around Cheltenham,

Ewan Christian (1814-1895)	St Matthew (1879)
David Stratton Davis (1917-2000)	St Michael (1966)
Samuel Whitfield Daukes (1811-1880)	St Peter (1849)
John Forbes (c.1795-)*	St Paul (1831)
Robert William and Charles Jerrard	Christ Church (1840)
Edward Jenkins completed by John Buonarotti Papworth	
	St James (1830)
John Middleton (1820-1885)	St Mark (1862), All Saints (1868)
	St Stephen (1883), Holy Apostles (1885)
	St Philip and St James, Leckhampton (ii) (1882)
Frederick Webster Ordish (1821-1885)	St Luke (1854)
John Buonarotti Papworth (1775-1847)	St John (1829)
Rowland Paul (-1850)	St Mary's Cemetery Chapel (1831)
Herbert T. Rainger (1884-1958)	Emmanuel (1937)
Edwin Hugh Shellard (1816-1895)	St Philip and St James, Leckhampton (i) (1840)
George Allen Underwood (1793-1829)	Holy Trinity (1823)

*S. Blake, 'The Unfortunate Mr Forbes: the rise and fall of a Cheltenham architect', CLHS (1989), *Journal 7*: 7-27

APPENDIX 3

Assistant curates mostly serving at Cheltenham Parish Church

Robert Gell	1817-18	Cantab	£120
John Davies	1817-19	Oxon	£120
Daniel Richard Leake Moxon	1824-26	Cantab	£120
Robert Denny	1824-26	Oxon	£120
Francis Close	1824-26	Cantab	£150
John Missing	1826-28	Oxon	£40
Henry Withy	1828-30	Oxon	£120
Hamilton Sydney Beresford	1830-31	Cantab	£150
William John Shatlock	1830-35		£50
Robert Bruce Boswell	1831	Cantab	£90
Frederick Arnold	1831-33	Cantab	£90
Samuel Edward Bernard (1)	1832-35	Cantab	£60
Thomas Boodle	1835-36	Cantab	
Charles Herbert	1835-38	Cantab	
William Henry Hill	1837-39	Cantab	
Samuel Hands Field	1839-40	Oxon	
Dennis Louis Cousins	1839-43	Cantab	£60
David Wheeler	1840-41	Oxon	
William Hawkins	1840-43	Oxon	HM CGS
Joseph Corbett Turnbull	1842-43	Cantab	Cheltenham College
Joshua Rundle Watson	1843-46	Cantab	Sandford district
Roger George Kingdom	1845	Cantab	£60

Charles Forbes Septimus Money	1845-46	Cantab		
Maximilian Geneste	1846-48	Oxon	£100	
James Fisher	1847-50	Oxon		
Stephen Westbrook	1847-51	Cantab		Sandford district
Henry Frederick Jones	1848-49	BA	£100	
Thomas Pownall Boulton	1849-53	Cantab	£100	
Elisha Lorenzo Clark	1849	Cantab	£60	
Robert Hepworth	1850-55	Oxon		
George Aldington	1851-53	Lit.	£60	
William Fraser Handcock	1852-54	Oxon	£100	Sandford district
Samuel Edward Bernard (2)*	1853	Cantab	£100	
Thomas Smith	1854-55	MA	£100	
Talbot Aden Ley Greaves	1854-56	Cantab		
Charles Evans	1855-57	Cantab	£100	
John Rooker	1855-57	Cantab	£100	
George Heaton	1856	Cantab	£50	
William James Pollock	1857-60	TCD	£100	
Marcus John Bickerstaff	1858-62	TCD	£80	
Robert Braithwaite	1859-62	Lit.		
Henry Monsarrat	1861-65	TCD	£100	
John Ellam	1862-64	Cantab		
Henry Joy	1862-69	TCD		
Charles Bury	1863-64	Oxon	£120	
Robert Wyndham Guinness**	1864-67	Cantab	£100	

James Dennett	1866-69		£105
Charles Dunlop Smith	1867-71	Oxon	£100
Richard Ward	1869-75	TCD	£175
John Hall Shaw	1870-74	TCD	£175
William Henry Franklin Hepworth	1871-72	Cantab	£100
Robert Thomas William Brayne	1872-76	Cantab	
Henry John Jauncey	1874-76	Oxon	
Beaver Henry Blacker***	1876-78	TCD	
Cecil Talbot Sweet-Escott	1876-79	Cantab	
Robert Christopher Oake	1877-80	St Aidans	
Jonathan Searer****	1878-80	TCD	
Herbert Gordon Miller	1879-82	Cantab	

*Chaplain of the General Hospital and Cheltenham Refuge.

**Resigned having been inhibited by Edward Walker for preaching extemporary sermons.

*** Blacker was the first editor of *GNQ* 1879-90 and contributed over 60 entries to the *DNB*.

**** Searer was an active Freemason and had been a Past Master of a Cheltenham lodge.

Of the 54 clergy listed above, 28 graduated from Cambridge (Cantab), 12 from Oxford (Oxon) and 6 from Trinity College, Dublin (TCD).

Those curates having a small stipend may have been non-graduate clergy or licensed to the parish but served as a hospital chaplain or schoolmaster, and those on small stipends soon moved away to a more lucrative position elsewhere. The stipend was paid quarterly, and the curate had to live in the parish. The bishop's licence may have been granted before or after the commencement of public ministry. Most of the early clergy served at the parish church and at Holy Trinity.

Generally, Francis Close preached at the parish church at the morning or evening service (or both) and the curates at the afternoon service, and from 1859 Edward Walker mostly preached at the Temporary Church and the curates officiated at the parish church.

Main source: Gloucestershire Archives P78/1 In 2/1

APPENDIX 4

‘Address and protest to the directors of the Great Western Railway’ (1845)

We the undersigned, inhabitants and visitors of the town, and immediate vicinity of Cheltenham, willing to express our conviction that the introduction of the railway terminus into the heart of the town will be a great convenience, are nevertheless, very apprehensive that new and unprecedented evils and annoyances will be occasioned thereby, if your trains are allowed to run on the Sabbath day.

We desire solemnly to record our conviction that this practice is as unnecessary as it is contrary to the laws of God and of our country. We have hitherto been perfectly free from such a desecration; and it is satisfactory to know that the interests of the existing line have not suffered from their voluntary obedience to the divine command.

Under these peculiar circumstances, we indulge the hope that you will not, by introducing Sunday trains, do violence to the religious principles and feelings of so many persons in this town, hitherto distinguished by the peaceful character of its Sabbaths.

Report of the speeches delivered at the annual meeting of the Cheltenham Society for the prevention of the desecration of the Sabbath, on Friday, 28 February 1845 (Cheltenham)
1845

APPENDIX 5

**Hymn composed by Charles Dent Bell and sung at the consecration of St Matthew,
Cheltenham, 17 April 1879**

Be with us, gracious Lord, today; *variant texts*
This house we dedicate to thee;
O hear thy servants as they pray,
And let thine ear attentive be.

Look down from heaven, thy dwelling place,
Thy richest blessings we implore;
And may the shining of thy face,
Rest on us now and evermore.

Within these walls let holy peace,
Let love and *peace* be always found; *truth*
May burdened hearts *find here* release, *and sweet*
And souls with richest grace be crowned.

May here be heard the suppliant's sigh,
The weary enter into rest;
Here may the contrite to thee cry,
And waiting souls be richly *blest*. *blessed*

Here when the gospel sound is heard,
When here proclaimed the saving name, *And*
May hearts be quickened, moved and stirred,
And souls be kindled into flames.

Here may the dead be made to live,
The dumb to sing, the deaf to hear;
And do thou to the humble give
Pardon and peace instead of fear.

Make this, O Lord thine own abode;
Thy presence in these courts be given;
Be this, indeed, 'the house of God',
And this in truth the 'gate of heaven'.

The last verse of the hymn quotes words from Genesis 28:17 – 'How dreadful [i.e., awesome] is this place! This is none other than *the house of God*, and this is *the gate of heaven*'

The words of the hymn are from the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 April 1879, and subsequent published variants are in italics. A tune that could be used for the hymn is 'Westminster New' (cf. Ride on, ride on in majesty).

APPENDIX 6

Cheltenham entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)

Clergy

Alfred Barry (1826-1910) Principal of Cheltenham College 1862-68; Principal of King's College, London 1868-83; Bishop of Sydney 1884-89

Andrew Bell (1753-1832) Educationalist; originator of National schools. Retired to Lindsay Cottage, Cheltenham

Charles Bigg (1840-1908). Schoolmaster and ecclesiastical historian. Classics master at Cheltenham College 1865-71; Principal of Brighton College 1871-81; Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Oxford 1901-08

Thomas Pownall Boulton (1818-1884) Curate of Cheltenham Parish Church 1849-53; Theological Tutor at Cheltenham College 1853-63; Principal of the London College of Divinity 1863-84

Archibald Boyd (1803-1883) Perpetual Curate of Christ Church 1842-59; Dean of Exeter 1867-83

Charles Bradley (1789-1871) Vicar of Glasbury, Brecknockshire 1825-71; first minister of St James, Clapham 1828-55; retired to Cheltenham

Charles Henry Bromby (1814-1907) Vicar of St Paul's church 1843-64; Principal of the Teacher Training College 1847-63; Bishop of Tasmania 1864-82

George Butler (1819-1890) Vice-principal of Cheltenham College 1857-65; Principal of Liverpool College 1865-82; Canon of Winchester 1882-90. In 1852 he married **Josephine Elizabeth Butler** (nee Grey) (1828-1906) social reformer and women's activist

Francis Close (1797-1882) Perpetual Curate of Cheltenham Parish Church 1826-56; Dean of Carlisle 1856-81

Frederick William Dwelly (1881-1957) Curate of Cheltenham Parish Church 1911-16, vicar of Emmanuel, Southport 1916-25; Canon of Liverpool Cathedral 1924-31; first Dean of Liverpool Cathedral 1931-55

John Finch Fenn (1819-1884) Vicar of Christ Church, Cheltenham 1860-84

Thomas Valpy French (1825-1891) Perpetual Curate of St John's church 1864; Vicar of St Paul's church 1864-70; Bishop of Lahore 1877-87

Henry Hall-Houghton (formerly Houghton) (1823-1889) Curate of St Peter's church, Cheltenham 1849-52; then non-parochial due to poor health. Biblical scholar

Henry Highton (1815-1874) Assistant master of Rugby School 1841-59; Principal of Cheltenham College 1859-62

Rowland Hill (1744-1833) ordained deacon in 1773, and when no bishop would ordain him priest, he became a nonconformist minister, thus 'wearing only one ecclesiastical boot.' He spent the summer months in Wooton under Edge and was the minister of Surrey Chapel, London and opened Cheltenham Chapel (in 1809) and acquired Mill Street Chapel, Leamington (in 1831)

Thomas William Jex-Blake (1832-1915) Principal of Cheltenham College 1868-74; Headmaster of Rugby School 1874-87; Dean of Wells 1891-1910

William Morgan Kinsey (1788-1851) Clergyman and traveller. Curate in charge of St John's church 1831-42; Rector of Rotherfield Greys, 1843-51

Herbert Kynaston (formerly Snow) (1835-1910) Principal of Cheltenham College 1874-88; Vicar of St Luke, Kentish Town 1889; Canon residentiary of Durham Cathedral and Professor of Greek at the University of Durham 1889-1910

Joseph Esmond Riddle (1804-1859) Classical scholar. Perpetual Curate of St Philip and St James church, Leckhampton 1840-59

Frederick William Robertson (1816-1853) Curate of Christ Church 1842-47; Curate of St Ebbe's, Oxford 1847; Minister of Trinity Chapel, Brighton 1847-53

Charles Simeon (1759-1836) Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge 1783-1836; patron of Cheltenham Parish Church

Some other significant figures

Dorothea Beale (1831-1906) Principal of the Cheltenham Ladies' College 1858-1906

Lilian Mary Faithfull (1865-1952) Principal of the Cheltenham Ladies' College 1907-22

Richard Pate (1516-1588) founder of Cheltenham Grammar School

Henry Skillicorne (1678/9-1763) a former mariner who moved to Cheltenham and became responsible for the development of the town as a spa, and whose large monument is in the nave of Cheltenham Parish Church

Samuel Wilderspin (1791-1866) A Swedenborgian who became a nominal Anglican and pioneer in infant education. Lived in Cheltenham from 1828

In the *ODNB* there are 878 references to 'Cheltenham'. Those listed above were mostly Anglican clergy (in parochial ministry or in educational establishments) but many more people lived there for a brief period, having been born, or educated or died in the town. Short-term residents included the novelist **Anthony Trollope** (1815-1882). Like his mother, Fanny Trollope, Anthony disliked Evangelicals and living for several months in the winter of 1852-53 at 5 Paragon Buildings in the Bath Road, he was able to observe the enemy first hand. His caricature of Francis Close appeared as *Obadiah Slope* in the 'Barchester Chronicles' (1855-67) and in the town of 'Littlebath' (Cheltenham) where the rich heroine encountered the *Rev Mr Stumfold* and his fellow Evangelicals in 'Miss Mackenzie' (1865). A hundred years later, **Percy Howard Newby** (1918-1997) the novelist and BBC administrator, trained for teaching at St Paul's College 1936-38 where he set his novel 'A Step to Silence' (1952).

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