



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,
ROUNDHAY

Roundhay
Centenary
Souvenir

1826—1926



Foreword



THIS booklet, written primarily in celebration of the Centenary of St. John's Church, Roundhay, is published in aid of the Parochial Hall, the foundation stone of which was laid on August 18th, 1927, by Col. Sir Edward Allen Brotherton, Bart.

The need for such an institution has long been apparent. Its future value will be recognised by all who have noted recent housing extensions in the vicinity of Oakwood, where the new building is situated. In the immediate neighbourhood are to be found the bulk of the population who constitute St. John's Parish; accordingly there is all the more reason for establishing here some common centre of religious and social influence.

The Parochial Hall, indeed, is designed to serve the requirements of everyone in the Parish, without distinction of creed or class. It is significant of the spirit of the times that this new enterprise has been rendered possible through the goodwill and co-operation of members of other Denominations, and that they will have a share in the management.

A Short Story of Roundhay

By W. H. SCOTT

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Early History

IT was the Nicholson family of Roundhay Park who gave the first impetus to the growth of Roundhay as a whole. This they did by building and endowing St. John's Church in the year 1826. But while the century which has elapsed marks a definite stage of progress in local church life, it was not until comparatively recent years that any great increase in the population began to be recorded. Since the township was absorbed by the City of Leeds, in 1912, conditions have changed rapidly and, latterly, they have changed at a greatly accelerated pace. Thus it is that new responsibilities are laid upon the present generation who, while they have cause for congratulatory retrospect, must still bear in mind the serious problems that lie ahead.

The earlier period of history, nevertheless, presents many points of interest worthy of attention, and they are as notable as those of almost any other locality on the fringe of a great city. Consider the position at the beginning of the 19th Century. Leeds, then a town of little more than 53,000 inhabitants, could be approached from Roundhay only by a rough cart track through the thickly-wooded regions of Gipton and Gledhow—relics of the forest in which John O'Gaunt hunted in mediæval times—and it was not until the year 1808 that powers were obtained to construct a road along which people could travel conveniently to the Leeds market, by way of Sheepscar.

In those days the landowners at Roundhay were Mr. Thomas Nicholson and Mr. Samuel Elam, who, in 1803, purchased the estates from Lord Stourton. Lord Stourton had inherited the property from the ducal family of Norfolk, into whose hands it had come by marriage with one of the Saviles of Copley, a descendant of Thomas, Lord Darcy of Templenewsam.

As regards the Manor of Roundhay, the lordship of which Mr. Thomas Nicholson acquired in 1811, it also passed through many hands in earlier times. When Kirkstall Abbey was in the hey-day of its prosperity, the monks of that religious house owned a Grange at Rondehaia, and they were granted additional pastures there by Robert de Laci, the great Norman overlord of Leeds. From the de Laci family the property came into the possession of the Duchy of Lancaster and then of King Henry IV. It remained a Royal Manor until 1628 (two years after the first Leeds Charter of Incorporation was granted) and was then given to the City of London by King Charles I, the annual rental at that date being

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ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, FROM WETHERBY ROAD

£25 10s. 3d. in the money of the period. The London Corporation sold it for £850 in the following year to Stephen Tempest of Broughton, from whom it passed, after the Civil Wars, to William Lowther, and then, in 1688, to John Savile of Methley; and it was from the trustees of his descendant John Savile, Earl of Mexborough, that Mr. Thomas Nicholson purchased the Manor in 1811.

Developments naturally followed the Leeds and Roundhay Road enterprise of 1808. Two years later, Mr. Elam's land on the north-east side of Wetherby Road, came into the market; and soon substantial stone-built houses began to spring up at Oakwood and along the fringe of Springwood Road, North Lane and Dib Lane. Meanwhile, Mr. Thomas Nicholson erected the Mansion and formed the Park, as we now know it, although some years elapsed before the work of constructing the two lakes was finished. The larger lake, made by the unemployed of those Napoleonic days, was named "The Waterloo," in commemoration of the famous battle of 1815.

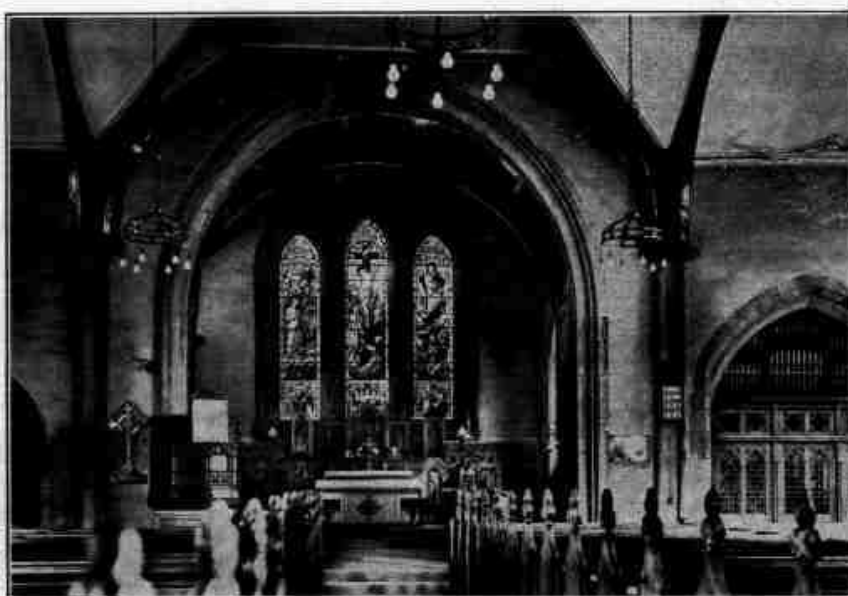
Foundation of the Church

MR. THOMAS NICHOLSON'S wealth was acquired in the shipping industry, and, although a Quaker, it is understood that he cherished the idea of building and endowing a church on the borders of his park. He died in 1821, however, and it was left to his successors to carry out his intentions. His widow—he died without issue—had possession of the estate until her death in 1833, and it then passed to his brother, Stephen Nicholson, a banker, who founded the Church in 1826.

In 1858, Mr. Stephen Nicholson also died without issue, and he bequeathed the estate to his nephew, William Nicholson Phillips, who, residing in a neighbouring house, had for some time managed the property for his uncle. He now assumed the name of Nicholson, but he did not live long to enjoy his inheritance. He died in 1868, and, in accordance with instructions to his executors, the whole of the property was dispersed, the main portion, including the Mansion and Park, being sold to the Leeds Corporation in 1872. Mrs. William Nicholson, who died in 1871, retained the patronage of the Church, and it was acquired later, first by Mrs. Varley and then by the Kitson family. Meanwhile the Lordship of the Manor was purchased by Mr. J. M. Sagar-Musgrave, of Red Hall, Shadwell.

Mr. James Kitson, the first of his name to become patron of the Living, resided at Elmet Hall, which he had erected on land bought from Mr. William Nicholson in 1863. Mr. Kitson was the father of the first Baron Airedale, whose brother, Mr. Hawthorn Kitson, succeeded to the Elmet Hall property and the Patronage. And now, in the Church's Centenary year, the patronage has been transferred by his executors (he died in 1899) to a Board consisting of the Bishop of the Diocese, the Archdeacon of Leeds, the Lay Secretary of the Leeds Church Extension Society and two members of the Parochial Church Council of St. John's, Roundhay.

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ST. JOHN'S CHURCH—EAST END

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A church, school, vicarage and almshouses were all comprised in the original Nicholson scheme, but many years elapsed before that scheme was completed. First of all, in respect of the Church itself, much preliminary procedure was necessary. Following a petition to the Crown, an Act of Parliament had to be obtained. This was passed in April, 1824, and building started in September of the same year. On January 16th, 1826, the Church was consecrated by the then Archbishop of York; and on March 12th the first regular service was held.

Although at that time Roundhay had but a small population—some 200 altogether—the spiritual needs of Shadwell and Seacroft had also to be considered, and the combined number of their inhabitants was some 1,100. All this district, indeed, was then included in the parish of Barwick-in-Elmet; accordingly many people had several miles to walk or drive in order to attend public worship. These facts were stressed in the Petition, and proved unanswerable.

"It would," pleaded the Petitioner, "be of great benefit and utility to the inhabitants of Roundhay and the said other inhabitants if a Church or Chapel-of-Ease were erected within the said Township of Roundhay, therefore Stephen Nicholson, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subject, doth most humbly beseech your Majesty that he may build a Church or Chapel-of-Ease, with a gallery, and to make a piece of land into a cemetery or Burial Ground."

Thus it came about that sanction was granted for a Perpetual Cure and Benefice, the Church to be known as "Saint John's Church for ever," and that permission was given also to build a house for the residence of the Minister.

Memories of 100 Years

THE work of the Church of England in and around Leeds has extended greatly since then. In due time both Seacroft and Shadwell became separate parishes with churches of their own, and in more recent times the old parish of Roundhay has been divided by the provision of St. Edmund's Church in the Lidgett Park district.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Springwood Road was built in the year 1874, but the history of this Church in Roundhay dates back to a much earlier period. Indeed, the Methodists can claim the distinction of having provided the first place of public worship in the village. As far as can be ascertained, they held their first services in the year 1805, in a little chapel in what is now North Lane, formerly called Chapel Lane. The old building stood in the grounds adjoining the residence of Mr. Joynt. The chapel was erected by two devoted Methodists, John and Joshua Burton, on their own land, and was their private property. On their death the property passed into other

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WILLIAM NICHOLSON



STEPHEN NICHOLSON

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hands, and the Methodist community therefore purchased the site at the corner of Springwood Road and Ladywood Road, where their present Church provides seating accommodation for 400 worshippers. A schoolroom was added in 1884. The present Minister is the Rev. R. Gibson Lawn.

What was St. John's Church like in the old days? Externally it has not changed much, except for the mellowing of years and the chancel extension effected in 1885. The grey sandstone of which the walls are composed was quarried at Shadwell, and although the Early English style of architecture is of a debased type, the elevated and secluded situation on the verge of charming woodland, overlooking a pastoral landscape, gives the edifice a certain quiet dignity and beauty, now matched by the adornments of the interior.

Internally it is a very different church from that which satisfied the first worshippers. Apart from the lengthening of the chancel and the addition of another vestry, the flooring, the seating, all the furnishings, were modernised some forty years ago.

The following particulars regarding the interior of the old church appeared in the Parish Magazine many years ago:—

"The chancel was then only 15 feet long and there was but one vestry—the present choir vestry. The pews, according to the custom of those days, were high, each having its own door; there were two square pews in the angles of the two transepts. In the chancel were a few seats used by the Squire (Mr. Nicholson) on the one side, and the Vicar's family on the other. The sittings in the nave were arranged then as they are now, but in the transepts some seats were placed under the windows, with a narrow passage between them and the rest of the pews. A 'three-decker' stood on the north side of the chancel arch. The windows were of plain glass, and the congregation were protected from the sun, during the Summer months, by crimson blinds."

"For some years the singing was accompanied by what can only be termed a barrel organ, for it was worked by a handle and played but a limited number of tunes. Later, a small organ was erected in the gallery, and remained there until the enlargement of the church in 1885, when the present fine instrument was placed in the chancel."

The internal adornments are familiar to all who regularly attend St. John's Church, and they have been provided in increasing numbers since the alterations and improvements of 1885 were made. Decorative Mosaic is a distinctive feature. Nave, chancel and transepts are all floored in this style, and a beautiful form of Mosaic was also chosen for the War Memorial which was erected in the chancel a few years ago. The choir stalls, reading desks, altar rails and organ case are of light oak and the seating of the nave and transepts is in harmony with it. The gallery—once used for the organ and choir—is retained, seated with plain benches.

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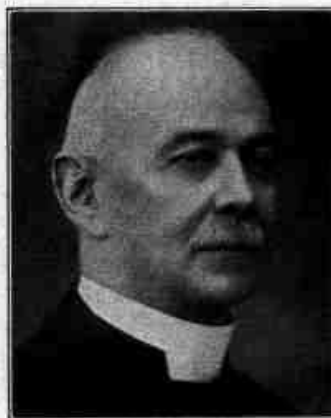
Rev. THOMAS DAVIS
1839—1887



Rev. REGINALD SIMPSON
1888—1901



Rev. EDWARD E. WARD
1901—1904



Rev. T. LIDDESDALE PALMER
1904—1923

Family Memorials

THE Church preserves several memorials of its patrons, including mural tablets to the memory of Thomas, Stephen and William Nicholson and their wives respectively, whose remains are interred in vaults beneath the Church. The earliest tablet bears this inscription:—

Thomas Nicholson, Roundhay Park. Died 1821; to whom the township of Roundhay is primarily indebted for the erection of this Church, which has been built and endowed in furtherance of his benevolent intention. Also of Elizabeth, his wife, Died 1833.

The beautiful east window, an artistic example of its kind, was erected in memory of William Nicholson; and the equally beautiful triptych was the gift of Mr. Hawthorn Kitson, whose father, Mr. James Kitson, a former Patron, gave the organ.

Other memorials there are which testify to the zeal of the old Roundhay residents and their attachment to the Church. The pulpit was the gift of Mr. Henry Marshall Sykes; the lectern was presented in memory of Mr. Francis Lupton, who died in 1884; and the Lupton family are represented further by a mural tablet and a fine stained glass window in the nave. "Storied windows richly dight" are, indeed, a striking feature of the Church's internal adornments. The "Pilgrim's Progress" window in the south transept and the south window in the chancel are both associated with the Hudson family.

Another window (in the nave) commemorates the forty-eight years' ministry of the Rev. Thomas Davis, the first resident Vicar of Roundhay. Mr. Davis was appointed in 1839 and, until the Vicarage was built and ready for occupation in 1841, he was accommodated with rooms at the Mansion. His two predecessors, or their curates, however, rode over from Barwick every Sunday to take the services.

During the century 1826-1926 St. John's has had seven Vicars. In the same period there have been 38 Churchwardens, 18 of whom—from 1826 to 1894—held office in turn without a colleague.



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List of Incumbents

Ven. Archdeacon MUSGRAVE	1826-1827
Rev. JOHN DODSWORTH	1827-1839
Rev. THOMAS DAVIS	..	..	1839-1887
Rev. REGINALD SIMPSON	..	..	1888-1901
Rev. EDWARD E. WARD	..	..	1901-1904
Rev. T. LIDDESDALE PALMER	..	..	1904-1923
Rev. T. NOEL PEARSON	..	..	1923-

Past Patrons

Mr. STEPHEN NICHOLSON.
 Mrs. STEPHEN NICHOLSON.
 Mr. WILLIAM NICHOLSON.
 Mrs. WILLIAM NICHOLSON.
 Mrs. VARLEY.
 Mr. JAMES KITSON.
 Mr. HAWTHORN KITSON.
 Executors of Mr. HAWTHORN KITSON.

Curates

For many years past St. John's Church has been without a regular curate. Following are the names of those who in turn assisted the Incumbent at various times in the earlier period:—

JOHN WORGAN DEW, 1826.
 H. CHORLEY.
 H. D. WILLIAMS.
 J. WINTER.
 E. A. RICHARDSON, 1859.
 C. H. DRUMMOND, 1862.
 J. SEDDONS.
 ARCHDALE TAYLOR.

A. H. POWYS.
 J. C. MACREDY, 1875.
 E. C. IRWIN, 1877.
 W. CARSON, 1878.
 REGINALD SIMPSON, 1880-88.
 C. P. MORRIS, 1889.
 H. J. ALLAN, 1895.

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Churchwardens

JAMES ERNSHAW BAKER	1826-27	WILLIAM S. SYKES	1880-81
EDWARD ELLERTON	1827-36		1897-99
JOHN HARDWICK	1836-41		1911-12
JOHN HARTLEY	1841-44	WILLIAM C. MYERS	1881-82
ROBERT HUDSON	1844-62	WILLIAM H. MALLINSON ..	1882-86
WILLIAM CADMAN	1862-66	THEODORE P. BROCKLEHURST ..	1886-87
HENRY M. SYKES	1866-71	JOHN HALL	1887-88
WILLIAM LEDGARD	1871-72	WILLIAM CARBY HALL	1888-90
JAMES KITSON	1872-76		1912-14
WILLIAM H. HARDISTY	1876-80	WILLIAM LUPTON	1890-94
		THOMAS WALKER	1895-97

Two Wardens elected Yearly from 1897

WILSON HARTNELL	1897-99	W. PENROSE GREEN	1906-11
	1901-02	C. HAROLD TETLEY	1911-14
THOMAS OLDROYD	1899-1904	H. LIONEL SMITH	1914-15
	1914-16	GEORGE ADAM HART	1915-18
CHARLES J. BERRY	1899-1901	FRANK WOODHEAD	1916-17
EDWARD J. SILCOCK	1901-04	WILLIAM HERBERT SCOTT ..	1917-20
	1909-11	GEORGE A. CAMPBELL	1918-20
S. D. CRAWFORD	1904-05	CHARLES W. LILLIE	1920-25
H. SECKER WALKER	1904-05	FREDERICK SWALES	1921-26
GEORGE H. FINDLAY	1905-06	THOMAS B. JOHNSON	1925-
RICHARD KILBURN	1905-06	J. R. HOLTON	1926-27
G. DAWSON WARD	1906-09	WILLIAM SEFTON POMFRET ..	1927-

Organists

— MIDDLETON	—	OSWALD HUDSON	1890-1902
— RAMSDEN	1861-62	HERBERT SOWRY	1902-07
E. J. DAVIS (Miss)	1862-83	HERBERT C. TROTTER	1908-14
W. TANKARD	1883	HARRY PICKARD	1914-18
S. PECKOVER	1884-85	GERALD W. SPINK	1919
D. FITTON	1885-88	R. MOUNTAIN	1920-
ALFRED BROUGHTON	1888-90		

Vergers

JAMES HAISTE	1826-54	THOMAS HAWKINS	1880-1906
WILLIAM REED	1854-59	SAMUEL WINDER	1906-1912
WILLIAM BRITTON	1863	WILLIAM NEEDHAM	1912-14
MARTIN HANDLEY	1863-64	THOMAS WIMPENNY	1914-15
THOMAS HAWKINS	1864-76	ALEXANDER C. BILTON	1915-20
WILLIAM HAW	1876-80	ALBERT HESELDEN	1920-

The Parochial Hall Foundation Stone-Laying

THE foundation stone of the Parochial Hall was laid on Thursday, August 18th, 1927, by Colonel Sir Edward Allen Brotherton, Bart.

The Hall has been designed by Mr. W. D. Dawson, and the contractors are Messrs. Banks Mawson and Sons and George Nettleton. The building consists of a main hall, with stage, basement room for lads' club, a large billiard room, and reading rooms for men and women.

The Lord Mayor of Leeds (Alderman Hugh Lupton), who was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, presided.

The Hall, he said, was designed to meet the need of the communal life of Roundhay, and in speaking of Roundhay they could not but recall the fact that for over a century its history had been bound up with that of the Nicholson family. In 1815 Mr. Thomas Nicholson built the Mansion, and later Mr. Stephen Nicholson built the Church, the almshouses and the vicarage. Roundhay had a history of its own in citizenship of which it was very proud.

He remembered attending a luncheon when the township was taken in by the City of Leeds, and it being said that Leeds had not done this to obtain the Roundhay ratepayers' money, but because they wanted to enlist their services. How Leeds had drawn upon the personnel of Roundhay had been demonstrated by the succession of Lord Mayors. Indeed, there had been so many that the Lady Mayoress had described Roundhay as a perfect "Mayor's nest."

Roundhay was proud of its residents, and he regarded it as a happy circumstance that Mr. Nettleton, to whom the building of the hall had been entrusted, was of long Roundhay descent, living to-day in a house which his grandfather had built over a hundred years ago. In 1491, Roundhay then being Crown land, an assize of timber was taken, and in the documents relating to it appeared the name of one Nettleton, from whom Mr. Nettleton was descended. They were fortunate, too, in being able to secure Sir Edward Brotherton to lay the foundation stone, for his interest in Roundhay was possibly greater than that of any other person.

Sir Edward, in performing the ceremony and declaring the stone to be well and truly laid, said that Roundhay was almost a community by itself, and such a hall had long been one of its needs. It would serve its purpose in the fullest way, for its management was to be non-political and non-sectarian, a public meeting place for the community.

The Vicar of St. John's, Roundhay (the Rev. T. N. Pearson), moved a vote of thanks to Sir Edward, which was seconded by Mr. Arthur Lupton, and supported by Mr. Victor Lightman.

Roundhay Rhymes

(For Old-Time Characters), by W.H.S.

Recited by Children at the Parochial Hall Bazaar, December, 1927.

THE SQUIRE

WHEN I came to Roundhay what did
I see?
Hill and dale and greenwood tree,
Many a flowery meadow bright,
But hardly a house or farm in sight.

Then I made me a park and a mansion as
well,
And soon other people came hither to dwell:
So I built them a church on a very fine plan,
And that's how the Parish of Roundhay
began.

THE PARSON

I'M the first parson of Roundhay,
But here I had no abode;
From Barwick-in-Elmet I rode
On my dappled grey mare every Sunday.
'Twas a long way to go,
But duty, you know,
Should always be well and faithfully done
By parson and people and everyone.

THE SCHOOL TEACHER

RIDDLE me, riddle me ree!
Who do you think I be?
I'm the school teacher
That followed the preacher
Who taught in the church.
Where there's a church there's a school—
That is a golden rule:
So I taught in the school.
And if you make search
You will find there is still a school and
a church.

THE SEXTON

DING dong bell! ding dong bell!
For worship, wedding or funeral knell;
Sexton, clerk and verger, I
Served the church in years gone by:
Times have changed and so have you,
But the good old church stands staunch
and true.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

ONCE was a blacksmith, a jolly, jolly
blacksmith,
Whistling at work and singing,
For horses and waggon went everywhere,
And kept my anvil ringing.
But everyone rides in a motor to-day,
And the smithy is closed—it does not pay;
And where my forge was once a-glowing
The motor-cars hoot and petrol is flowing!

THE FARMER'S WIFE

JOG-TROT to Leeds market, to sell what
we could,
I rode with my goodman through Gipton
Wood;
But we throve better still when a highway
was made,
And the Nicholsons brought us new open-
ings for trade.
To-day you are part of the City of Leeds,
With tram-cars and buses at all sorts of
speeds,
And the noise and the bustle that now never
cease
Seem strange when I think of the olden-time
peace.

MAYOR OF LEEDS, 1800

IN me a Mayor of Leeds behold!
A man of mark in days of old,
Before Leeds heard of Roundhay.
Of course we knew the country round
Was once a Royal hunting ground,
But no one went to Roundhay.
Since then a century has passed,
And everybody knows at last
How much Leeds owes to Roundhay.
The people come from far and near
To breathe fresh air and get good cheer,
And roam the Park at Roundhay.
And when Leeds wants a new Lord Mayor
It finds him out at Roundhay, where
They've always one or two to spare—
A real "Mayor's Nest" is Roundhay!

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LADYWOOD WESLEYAN CHURCH (see page 7).

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