

Overview of Section F

Section page

FULL OVERVIEW

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Tracing a little of the History of the Parish

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The Interior of the Old Church



Interior St. Pauls, Burdett Rd E.

An early interior view of the first St. Paul's, Bow Common



Easter 1905

Two descriptive accounts follow, of the first church of St. Paul, Bow Common. The first is contemporary with the church itself (1905)³² and the other is from 1967³³.

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St Paul's, Bow Common, Burdett Road, Limehouse, consecrated in 1858, is a very striking specimen of a town church, and, in *motif*, takes up ground intermediate between St Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, and St Mary's, Stoke Newington. Mr Rhode Hawkins, who at a slightly subsequent period built churches in Star Street, Paddington, and at Exeter, both at the cost of one munificent individual, was the architect.

In this instance Mr Hawkins has given us a nave and aisles of the same height, all under separate gables, a square-ended sanctuary, and a tower, forming the south porch, crowned by a spire—an octagonal broach with haunches dying on the oblique sides. An iron crown was to have encircled the spire at about two-thirds of its height, according to the architect's original design, but it was omitted in the execution.

Perhaps the ensemble of St Paul's, Bow Common, would have been improved by the equalization of the width of its nave and aisles; as it is, the former is too broad in proportion to the latter, that is to say for the "hall" plan in which the church is cast.

Were the nave and aisles of almost equal width as at St Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, a much greater appearance of length would have been secured for the interior.*

The columns are tall circular ones, with capitals (except to that on either side marking the commencement of the *chorus*) simply moulded.

The stained glass in the great east window, by the Messrs Powell, was inserted a few years after the completion of the church. It is a remarkable composition, but one which can only be appreciated after some study. The main subject, which is the Genealogy of our Lord, as sprung from Jesse, is crossed at intervals by bands of deeply tintured groups in miniature, producing a curious and at first somewhat perplexing effect; while in the large cusped circle above the five lights is a finely-treated Session in Majesty—a white-robed figure of our Lord against a ruby ground.

The decoration and furniture of the sanctuary were carried out in 1869 from the designs of Street.

*A screen carried right across the church, in the manner of some West Country examples, would do much to remedy this defect.

Historically, St Paul's, Bow Common, is interesting as having been built and endowed by William Cotton, of Leytonstone, to whom, on account of his untiring exertions in the cause of East London Church Extension, Bishop Blomfield gave the honourable title of "lay archdeacon." The son of the founder, the Rev. A. B. Cotton, became the first incumbent of St Paul's, and to it, Bishop Blomfield bequeathed, on his deathbed, a gold service of Eucharistic plate that had been made for Queen Adelaide.

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WILLIAM COTTON, a Director of the Bank of England and the Treasurer of the Metropolis Churches Fund, built and endowed this church at his own expense. He had bought most of the land (including an old rope manufactory) which was to form St. Paul's parish and this land he proposed to cover with streets of houses. He believed that when a landowner was instrumental in bringing people to live in a new district it was his duty to provide for their spiritual welfare.

The architect of St. Paul's was Rhode Hawkins who designed a church with a nave of five bays with separately gabled aisles and a short sanctuary. This sanctuary and the first bay of the nave formed the chancel, marked off from the rest of the nave by a large wooden roof truss carried on short marble shafts, instead of the more usual stone chancel arch. At the south-west corner was a three-stage tower capped with a stone broach spire. The height of the aisles and nave arcades, together with the lack of a separate chancel, gave the interior great spaciousness.

To Cotton's deep regret his great friend Bishop Blomfield did not live to consecrate St. Paul's, which act was performed by his successor, Archibald Campbell Tait, on October 30, 1858. The first vicar was the founder's son, Arthur Benjamin Cotton. On his death-bed Blomfield had given Cotton a chalice, paten and flagon, once the property of Queen Caroline, which she had desired the Bishop to present to a new church in the Diocese of London. Later these were melted down and remade into a larger chalice and paten.

Shortly after the consecration of St. Paul's the London Diocesan Building Society held a meeting at which the Bishop of London read a congratulatory address to William Cotton, who was then in his 73rd year. In the address the Bishop thanked him for all that he had done in the cause of church extension in the diocese. Replying to this Mr. Cotton stated that Bishop Blomfield had been able to build, or to assist in building, 78 new churches in the London Diocese; he revealed that in response to one of the Bishop's appeal sermons a congregation had given the sum of £1,200.

George Edmund Street decorated the walls of the chancel and designed new furnishings for it in 1869. In the same year the east window was filled with glass made by Powell, of Whitefriars. The rood and beam, as well as the reredos of the Lady Altar, were designed by Sir Ninian Comper in 1905.

St. Paul's was badly damaged by bombs on September 20, 1940, and had to be closed; the congregation moved to the mission church of St. Barnabas, Rowsell Street, and baptisms were performed at Holy Trinity, Tredegar Square. Later, on March 19, 1941, the damaged building was gutted by incendiary bombs.

The remains stood until 1958 when they were cleared to make way for the *avant-garde* church designed by Robert Mcguire. This was consecrated on April 30, 1960, and is completely different from its predecessor, and has indeed provoked much comment and criticism. The interior has recently been decorated by mosaics by Charles Lutyens.



More early views in the first years of the 20th century, the right hand view clearly having been taken at Christmas. There is an open chancel screen in place which looks too elaborate and solid just to be part of the decoration of the church for Christmas. More than once the new church sailed close to the shores of illegality! When consecrated it was not yet in the decorated form that we see in all these views. A simple and (as we would see) innocent enough device on the east wall was immediately challenged by a Privy Council judgement!

In 1908 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the church a very good and helpful 'Retrospect' was published written up by the first Vicar, Rev. Arthur Cotton. The whole of this document is reproduced here very shortly. This reports that:

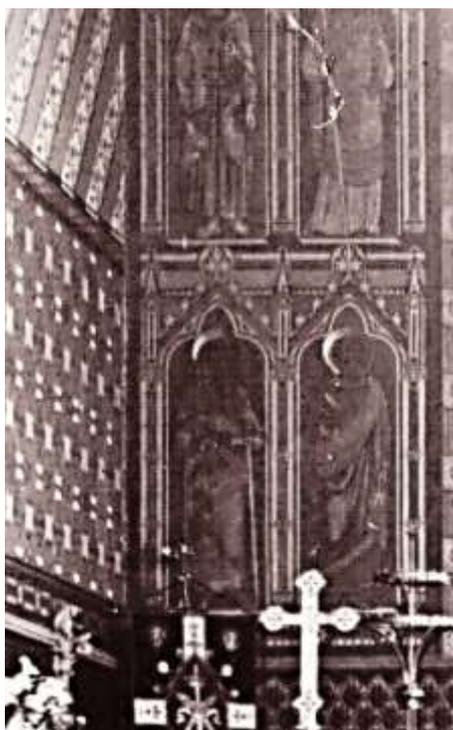
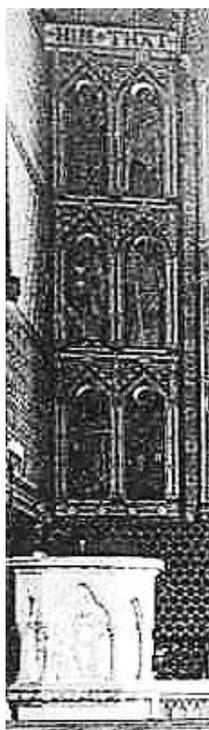
'At the consecration of the Church the only decorative feature in the chancel was floriated Greek cross of white marble let into the Canterbury pattern tiles on the East wall, and this apparently innocent ornament was objected to because it appeared to stand on the Holy Table and was thereby, according to a recent Privy Council judgment, an illegal ornament, but at the last moment it was allowed to remain.'

Very shortly a full account will be given of the huge controversy which arose from the church's petition to erect a 'Rood Beam' across the chancel entrance - a very simple beam with a large rood (crucifix) standing above on the beam. The case reached the newspapers and the grave offence which was in danger of being caused was that of 'Ritualism.' The 'Oxford Movement' represented a move by High Church Anglicans to restore to the Church of England some of the more ancient traditions of the Christian Church into the Anglican Church's theology and liturgy. This movement began in the early 1830's and very soon was seen as a 'Romanising' tendency within a reformed and basically Protestant Church.

In particular, how churches were adorned was viewed with great sensitivity. And so, crosses on altars and large crucifixes were seen as 'crimes' of Ritualism! For sure William Cotton and his son Arthur (first Vicar) and even Bishop Blomfield were of a broader catholic identity and this continued to be the ecclesial flavour of the church right through to these days of controversy with the Rood Beam.

The kind of open metal screen shown in the view above probably was on the 'safe' side of controversy and had no inflammatory symbolism or iconography on it. But by 1909 the church wanted a proper rood beam and as that proved too much, the case went to trial!

Even so, it is interesting to see, as the church began to be decorated how much figurative decoration was put into the church, certainly at the east end. The great architect **George Edmund Street** was commissioned to design the chancel. This fine example of Gothic Revival did not prove to be problematic to those with scruples about Ritualism! These not very good views are extracted from other general views:



An extract from the Retrospect of 1908:

'On completion of the Jesse East window, designed by Mr. G. E. Street, the well-known Architect, and executed by Powell of Whitefriars, Mr. Street was commissioned to make sketches for the chancel walls and roof decorations, and a design for the Reredos. The erection of this necessitated the removal of the Greek Cross, which if not legal was certainly not symbolical, and its removal was not regretted.

The decoration of the chancel was the work of the congregation, and the cost of the East window was provided for by the sale of old family diamonds inherited by Mrs. Cotton. They were thus converted into paste, though not in their original form.'



Another great name - that of **Sir Ninian Comper**, another renowned architect of the Gothic and Classical revival - was also associated with the church in the design of the Lady Chapel.

Again from the Retrospect: *'In 1905 the Lady Chapel was separated by a stone screen, the Altar was enlarged, and a very beautiful reredos with a Calvary and figures of St. Paul with his companions, St. Peter, St. Barnabas and St. Luke, painted on mahogany, designed by Mr. Comper was erected, in memory of Mr. Counsell Jeffery who for 30 years*

had been Churchwarden. The expense of this memorial was defrayed by his widow and family.'

Scandal and Controversy at Bow Common.

In 1859 Bow Common hit the headlines with the scandal of the great Nuisances of smells and toxic fumes. Now 50 years later, this time it was the church which hit the headlines! In 1907 the Church Council had decided that they would like to erect a Rood Beam in memory of Ellen Jeffery (possibly a relative or even the widow of Mr. Counsell Jeffery who had been Churchwarden for 30 years and in whose memory the Lady Chapel had been dedicated in 1905). Even to this day, churches are not free to add or remove anything major from their buildings without specific permission that this would be judged appropriate. For all such works, from a new High Altar to a new boiler, a 'Faculty' has to be applied for and the full weight of the law could be applied if there was serious doubt about the church's petition. Indeed, this turned out to be one such case! The articles in the press are reproduced below and speak for themselves. The first section is not relevant to the Bow Common petition but gives a vivid impression of how contentious ritualism was at that time.

Alleged Ritualism in the East End.

Rood Beam for a Bow Common Church.

Mr. J. A. Kensit attended at the Principal Registry in London on Monday afternoon, in accordance with the requirements of the citation, to deliver his objections to the confirmation of Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang as Archbishop of York. Mr. Kensit makes six ritual charges, and alleges that at certain East End churches, of which Dr. Lang has had oversight, confessionals have been set up, that high, low, and requiem masses are regularly offered, and that at St. Augustine's, Stepney, and Holy Trinity, Hoxton, the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph are invoked as the "friends of sinners." Mr. Kensit's document was accepted, and, according to the terms of the citation, four Bishops attended to consider the relevancy of the same at the Church House, Westminster, on Wednesday.

The ceremony of confirming the election of Dr. Cosmo Gordon Lang to the Archbishopric of York took place on Wednesday at the Church House, Westminster. A number of Mr. Kensit's followers marched up and down Great Smith-street with a banner. The preliminary proceedings took place in committee room No. 2 at the Church House. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided. Mr. J. A. Kensit attended, being accompanied by Mr. C. J. Wiseman and Mr. Benjamin Nicholson, a member of the Church Association.

Mr. J. A. Kensit read his protest. It stated that as a communicant member of the Church of England and secretary of the Protestant Truth Society he desired, in accordance with the citation, to offer objections to the confirmation. These objections were, briefly, as follows:—(1) That Dr. Lang had encouraged in the East End of London the most flagrant law-breaking in many churches; (2) that the evidence of Dr. Lang before the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline showed that he was unfit to administer the laws and discipline of the Church; (3) that Dr. Lang had already failed to maintain Church discipline, as shown by his failure to clear out the confessional boxes; (4) that Dr. Lang had taken part in the most extreme services—e.g., at the Church of the Holy Redeemer, Clerkenwell; (5) that an East London vicar had distributed most objectionable papers as a guide to the young girls for confessing by means of "a private talk"; that the father interfered, and the children were not allowed confirmation; and that Dr. Lang, according to his own statement in "The Times" of April 27th, 1907, wrote to the father "regretting his misunderstanding of his vicar's position"; (6) that Dr. Lang's preaching and teaching had been sacerdotal throughout his ministry; lastly, that many faithful and law-abiding ecclesiastical dignitaries had been passed over in the choice for this high position, with the apparent intention of thrusting to the fore a comparatively young and inexperienced cleric from among that party which had already brought their Church into so great danger.

THE ROOD BEAM AT ST. PAUL'S, BOW COMMON.

Vicar's Petition Fails.

At a sitting of the Consistory Court of London, held at St. Paul's, the petition of the Rev. Walter Forster, M.A., vicar of St. Paul's, Bow Common, was heard by Dr. Tristram, K.C., who was attended by Mr. C. W. Lee, registrar.

The petition was by the Vicar and Churchwardens for a faculty to authorise the erection across the entrance to the chancel of a beam with a central cross upon it bearing the figure of our Lord crowned and figures of the Virgin and St. John. The evidence was heard on January 14th.

The Chancellor, in delivering judgment now said that in this case the vicar and both the churchwardens of the parish had applied to the Court by petition to grant a faculty authorising them to make the following alterations in the parish church, namely: To erect a beam across the entrance to the chancel enriched with gilt cresting, and having the following inscription on its face and scroll: "O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that taketh away the sins of the world," made out to each end with vine foliage in gold on green ground with a central cross on the beam containing the figure of our Lord "crowned and reigning on the Tree," and idealised figures of the Virgin and St. John, the latter with his emblem carved in pear-wood on gilt and coloured work.

In support of the application the Vicar gave the following evidence, namely: That he had been vicar for eight years, and previously thereto assistant curate of the parish; that the population of the parish was about 14,000; that there was accommodation in the parish church for a congregation of about 800, and that at the morning and evening services on Sundays it amounted to about 400, including children; that at a vestry meeting duly convened for the purpose of considering the application, and held on November 11th, 1908, at which from 20 to 30 parishioners were present, a resolution was passed unanimously to accept the offer of a rood beam according to the description given in memory of the late Ellen Geoffrey by members of her family, who were formerly resident in the parish. The vicar also stated that the expense of the alterations would be paid for by the members of the family of Mrs. Geoffrey, and would amount to £270. The architect of the church said that he had prepared the original plan of the chancel screen and of the figures which were to surmount it. The width of the screen was 30ft.; the total height of the crucifix which surmounted the screen was 13ft. 10in. The front of the crucifix was 7ft. 3in. The figure of the Virgin Mary was 3ft. 6in. in height, and also the figure of St. John. The figure from the upper part of the screen was 14ft. in height. The crucifix was to be erected in plain wood. The figure of the crucifix projected about 15in. The other two figures of the Virgin Mary and St. John also projected 15in.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said it was clear from the judgment of the Vicar General at the confirmation of the Bishop of Birmingham's election in January, 1902, that the matters alleged in the remonstrance or protest did not fall within the purview of their action and responsibility in the confirmation proceedings. That decision of the Vicar-General's was brought in due course of law under the consideration of the King's Bench during the following weeks, and on February 10, 1902, judgment was there delivered by the Judges of the High Court. The Lord Chief Justice said:—"It is not, in my opinion, necessary to decide that in no case can any objection be raised at the stage of confirmation which might have to be investigated by the Vicar-General or the Archbishop . . . but I hold, for the

reasons I have given, that the Vicar-General ought not to entertain, still less to adjudicate upon, charges of the character alleged in the objections tendered by either of the opponents to the confirmation in this case."

After further discussion the proceedings closed.

At the London Consistory Court, held at St. Paul's Cathedral on Thursday last week, before the Chancellor of the Diocese, Dr. Tristram, K.C., the Rev. Walter Forster, Vicar of St. Paul's, Bow Common, appeared in person to support a petition praying for a faculty authorising the erection of a rood beam in his church. The Chancellor read the petition, in which it was stated that a Vestry meeting held last November resolved to accept an offer of a rood beam to be given in memory of Ellen Jeffrey, and to apply for a faculty to erect it. The cost of the beam was estimated at £272, and the Rev. W. Forster, in his evidence, said that the Jeffrey family were formerly parishioners, and when residing in the parish attended the church. No one appeared to oppose the application. The Chancellor said the application was the first of its nature which had come before him as Chancellor of the Diocese of London. The application was for a faculty to erect a screen across the church, and on the centre of that screen to place the figure of Our Lord on the Cross, with the figure of the Virgin Mary on one side and the figure of St. John on the other side. The question of whether such a rood loft with a crucifix upon it might be erected came before Lord Penzance in the case of "Clifton v. Ridsdale," and Lord Penzance made some remarks unfavourable to its erection. Those observations were appealed against to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. That, however, was thirty years ago. Before he gave his judgment, he would have to consider whether, after the decisions of the Court of Arches and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, he would be justified in granting the faculty. He would also have to consider whether he would be justified in granting a faculty in the exercise of his discretion. He would therefore reserve his decision, and would deliver a written judgment at a later date.

Having exhaustively reviewed the ecclesiastical law on the subject, the Chancellor said that in the present case he should decline to grant the faculty for the erection of the rood screen in the church on the same ground as in December, 1873, he refused to grant a faculty for the erection of a baldacchino in St. Barnabas, Pimlico (see L.R., 4 Adm. and Eccl., 207, and Tristram's "Consistory Judgments"), which was described as a handsome marble structure or canopy with a pointed roof and three gables pointing different ways, supported by four columns standing apart from the east wall of the church, and would cover the holy table, extending about 2ft. beyond the west side of the holy table, leaving sufficient space for the celebrant priest to stand within the canopy, in imitation of the baldacchino erected over the altar of St. Peter's at Rome. The ground on which he was urged to erect it was for the purpose of giving greater dignity and honour to the holy table in the church of St. Barnabas. His answer to that was that the honour and dignity to be given to the Communion table in our churches had been provided for by the rubrics and canons, and he held that it was not within the province of that Court to issue faculties for the purpose of giving greater dignity and honour to the holy table than the simple dignity which was prescribed by the law. After consideration he had come to the conclusion that the erection of a screen at the entrance to the chancel of a church with a beam and rood placed on the beam as prayed in this case was a church ornament within the meaning of the rubrics, and as it was not prescribed by the rubrics, or could in any way be regarded necessary or subsidiary to the performance of the services of the church, he must decline to order the faculty to issue. As he had said, he had inspected the church in the presence of the vicar, and it was only due to the vicar to say that there were no ornaments in the church to which objection could be taken. The vicar pointed out to him that if the faculty for the screen were granted it would materially assist in strengthening the church. Therefore, if the family were prepared to erect the screen proposed, which was a very handsome one, without a rood, and substitute for the rood a cross, the Court would be prepared to grant a faculty for that purpose on application being made in Chambers.

The faculty, therefore, stood refused.

Alas, I have no source for the above very clinical and forensic article. It is very careful throughout not to impose personal or editorial opinion as to the ills or otherwise of ritualism.

Not so the items which follow! The only note I have is that they from EEM (or EEH). My guess is that 'EE' might stand for 'East End' and so this could be a local newspaper's view of these matters.

"ROOD BEAM" FOR A BOW COMMON CHURCH.

Faculty Applied For.

At the London Consistory Court, held at St. Paul's Cathedral, on Thursday morning, before the Chancellor of the Diocese, Dr. Tristram, K.C., the Rev. Walter Forster, Vicar of St. Paul's, Bow Common, E., appeared in person to support a petition praying for a faculty authorising the erection of a rood beam in his church.

The Chancellor read the petition, in which it was stated that a Vestry meeting held last November resolved to accept an offer of a rood beam to be given in memory of Ellen Jeffrey, and to apply for a faculty to erect it.

The alteration proposed in the church was thus described in the petition:—

"To erect a beam, enriched with gold cresting, across the entrance to the chancel, with the following inscription on its base and scroll: 'O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father that takest away the sins of the world,' made out to each end with vine foliage in gold on green ground.

"On a central cross the figure of our Lord (Archbishop Benson's rendering) crowned and reigning on the Tree, and idealised figures of the Virgin and St. John, the latter with his emblem carved in pear wood, of gilt and coloured work."

The cost of the beam was estimated at £272, and the Rev. W. Forster, in his evidence, said that the Jeffrey family were formerly parishioners, and when residing in the parish attended the church.

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would have to consider whether, after the decisions of the Court of Arches and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, he would be justified in granting the faculty. He would also have to consider whether he would be justified in granting a faculty in the exercise of his discretion. He would therefore reserve his decision, and would deliver a written judgment at a later date.

[Lloyd's Encyclopaedic Dictionary interprets the meaning of a Rood as follows:— "A cross or crucifix, specifically a representation of the crucified Saviour, or, more generally, of the Trinity, placed in Catholic churches over the altar-screen, hence termed the rood-screen. The wood consisted of the three Persons of the Trinity, the Son being represented as crucified. Generally figures of the Virgin and St. John were placed at a slight distance on each side of the principal group, in reference to the Gospel according to St. John, 29th chapter, 26th verse."

A "Rood-Beam" is a beam across the entrance to the chancel of a church, for supporting the rood.—Ed. "E.E.N."]

Article of 30th March 1909

The Chancellor's Decision has been made.

A few issues ago I gave information to readers concerning an application made to the Consistory Court of London by the Rev. W. Foster, vicar of St. Paul's Church—"Cotton's Church"—for a faculty to erect a "rood beam" in the church. I furnished the official interpretation of the term "rood beam," and am now able to tell you a little more concerning it.

The application came before the Consistory Court last week, and the vicar appeared to support his application. It was elicited that the "beam" would be 30ft. wide—from one side of the church to the other—and suspended from it would be a crucifix with an image of the Saviour crucified, 13ft. 10ins. in height; also a figure of the Virgin Mary 3ft. 6in. in height; and a third image, that of St. John. The "beam" figures were thus described by the Chancellor: A beam containing the figure of our Lord crowned and reigning on the tree, and idealised figures of the Virgin and St. John—the latter with his emblem carved in pearwood and coloured work.

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Those who follow and take interest in such matters will be interested to learn that the Chancellor refused the vicar's application. In doing so he said it was stated that the "rood beam" and screen had been offered by members of the family of the late Mrs. Geoffrey to her memory. Respecting this, if the family were prepared to erect a screen without a "rood," and substitute a cross for the "rood," he would grant a faculty for that purpose.

The vicar's application thus very properly failed, and it should, I think, be gratifying that this attempt still further to Romanize St. Paul's Church has been frustrated.

It was at this church — “Cotton’s Church” as it was then familiarly called— that some of the earliest attempts were made to introduce what were described as “High Church” practices. Half a century ago, at the same time as the Rev. Brian King was creating uproar and riot at the church of St. George’s-in-the-East, the services at St. Paul’s, Bow Common, were grievously complained of, and became a source of offence to many churchmen. The services were frequently interrupted, and much excitement ruled.

But people got tired of objecting, for it was evident that individuals in high quarters winked at the innovations and illegal practices; and all through the years that have passed there has been in progress a steady leavening process, until to-day High Churchism is the rule in the churches rather than the exception.

But it would now seem that a line is to be drawn, and that Dr. Tristram, the Chancellor for London, is inclined to say to the clergy, “Thus far, but no farther.”

There are also these undated comments which follow, clearly from the same newspaper and which, again, express the writer’s undiluted opinions about High Church practice, and are also revelatory about St. Paul’s, Bow Common being a widely recognised and contentious focus for such practices and protests, alongside the better-known and notorious St. George-in-the-East.

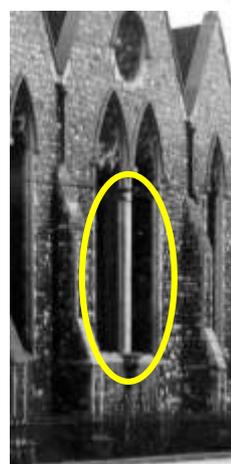
The application, reported in another column, of the Rev. W. Foster, of St. Paul’s Church, Burdett road, for a faculty to erect in his church a rood screen, on which it is intended to place the figures of our Lord, the Virgin Mary, and St. John, reminds one of the exciting times we had when “Cotton’s Church,” as St. Paul’s was then called, was erected. It was one of the first specially devoted to High Church services, and our columns of those days contained many letters of protest against “Popish practices,” and so forth.

Not even the old-timers in church seemed to know anything about this pedestal on the old church - and certainly nothing about the Rood Beam controversy. However, on examining early photographs - there it was! But, even more intriguingly, by the time of the War, there was no sign of the canopy over the niche any longer, though the base was still there! One is intrigued as to what led to its removal - and when!

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Probably you have noticed the empty stand and canopy built on the Burdett road frontage. It was quite understood in those days that sooner or later a figure of the Virgin Mary would stand in the vacant position, and there was a great row at the suggestion.

We have made great advances since then. Ritualism is now practised in so many churches that we have lost count; and after the Rood-Beam, probably the next application from the clergy of St. Paul’s will be for a faculty to place a figure of the Virgin on the pedestal prepared for it about fifty years ago.



After all that the Rood Beam appears!

As mentioned previously the church had virtually no records at the time of my arrival in 1995, with Fr. Kirkby not seeming to believe in keeping records of any kind! However, there must have been scattered items because, during the vacancy before I arrived, they were collected together by a couple of church members into a small but invaluable archive, very well ordered and displayed in an album. It was after I had done my own researches some years later and had 'discovered' the story of the 'Ritualist Controversy' of 1909 that I looked more carefully at the few interior views of the old church which had been preserved. After so much contention and the public shame, almost, of having a faculty denied – at some later time the verdict must have been reconsidered and the faculty granted because among the archived images there was just one of the church **WITH** a Rood Beam in place!" Alas it is a dark image and not very clear – but, after all that trouble and argument, there it is! It appears to be Harvest-tide but the year is unknown.



In the gloom of this view it can be seen that is precisely the design of Rood Beam which had been proposed by the church in 1907 and subsequently refused. The figures of Christ on the Cross, as well as of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. John can just be seen atop the beam spanning the church and the wording which runs across the face of the beam and below the figures is exactly as proposed in the faculty petition.

It is over matters like this one and also the mystery of the disappearing niche for a statue on the west face of the church that I really regret that no records were preserved before my time. Far more regrettable is the total lack of any archive of the planning and execution of the Maguire and Murray building apart from the scant mentions in the Minutes of the PCC already shared in these pages a long way back. None of this material can ever be retrieved now and certainly none from a century ago. When the old church was first damaged externally, the interior seems not to have suffered too greatly as the organ (seen in the final view of the church at the bottom of this page) was able to be removed and stored subsequently in the church school and then in St. Luke's church nearby. By the time the incendiary bombs fell 6 months later all records and valuables would have been removed to safety. But none of those seems to have been preserved.

In the great scheme of things these are minor matters but so often such records retain a marker of how far larger issues in the wider church impacted locally upon a forgotten place like Bow Common and those finger-prints of history are always of interest to those who come after who would otherwise know nothing of the 'family history' of the congregation and community which they join.

During 2001 when the church began to investigate what was underground, in relation to its drainage system, a trench was dug alongside the south wall of the church hall. By nature I am curious always about what lies beneath our feet unseen, or what may once have stood where we are. I could not resist exploring what could be seen inside the trench!

Useful things, but not very exciting, could be seen - tree roots, power cables, damaged pitch fibre drainage pipes & a lot of earth!

But, just by chance I spied amidst the diggings a pale glimpse of something which seemed to be coloured red! It was a piece of decorative tiling and could only



have come from the paving of the first church! Nothing else has ever stood here and certainly nothing so grand as to have decorative tiling such as this! This small fragment of tiling could just be all that remains of the first church of St. Paul's, Bow Common! But for sure there must be many other fragments and other remains and as drains are renewed it may just be that some of these may be spotted although the bulk will lie beneath the 'new' church & will never now be revealed. A **final view** of the church is below.



THE INTERIOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

(Photo by S. W. Buck

A final glimpse – first, of land ownership belonging to the Incumbency as at 1889 and then of rental income from 22 properties, to provide or supplement the incumbent's stipend, very likely. These leases began as early as 1862, probably at the point of the properties' construction by William Cotton, assuring the church he had built in 1858 of a guaranteed stream of income to help support the incumbent for the next 99 years, assured in his Will. As will be seen, soon demographic changes in the parish led to big challenges, financially, and of not enough staff to do the work. Such income would have been essential in tough times.

A Terrier of all and singular the Buildings, Lands, Tithes, Tithe Rent-Charge, and Emoluments, belonging to the Rectory, Vicarage, or Incumbency of Saint Paul, Bow Common in the Archdeaconry of London and Diocese of London, made in the year 1889-90

Separate Papers of similar size, if any such be required to be attached to this Terrier, should be headed with the name of the Incumbency as above.

1.—Set forth a general description, with No. on Tithe Commutation Map (or No. on Ordnance Survey Map distinguished thus O.S.), or with a Tracing of such Map, and subjoin particulars of—

(a) The Parsonage house, with outbuildings, and the extent of garden or close surrounding the same.
Is it occupied by Incumbent? If not, by whom, and on what terms?

No. 37 O.S. Parsonage and Stables

(b) Any Farm belonging to the Benefice, with its buildings and acreage, name of tenant, the rent and length of tenure.

No

(c) Any other building belonging to the Benefice, with name of tenant, the rent, and length of tenure.

No

(d) Any other several Fields belonging to the Benefice, and where situated, with acreage, names of tenants, and the rent and length of tenure.

No

(e) Any Houses, the ground-rent of which is payable to the Incumbent, the amount of such ground-rent, and the date at which it expires.

*22 Houses in Spurdell R^d Edward St. Moorhouse St. and
Jenners R^d Total £137.10.0
Dates expiring from 1761-1764
(See Paper annexed)*

2.—Set forth separately any sum or sums payable to the Incumbent for his own use out of any land, or from any source other than is hereafter specified.

*£150
£140 per annum paid by Executors of W^m Cotton's London
Tithe Charge on certain ground in Rhode will etc.*

3.—Is there any Loan or other charge secured upon the Benefice? If so, give particulars.

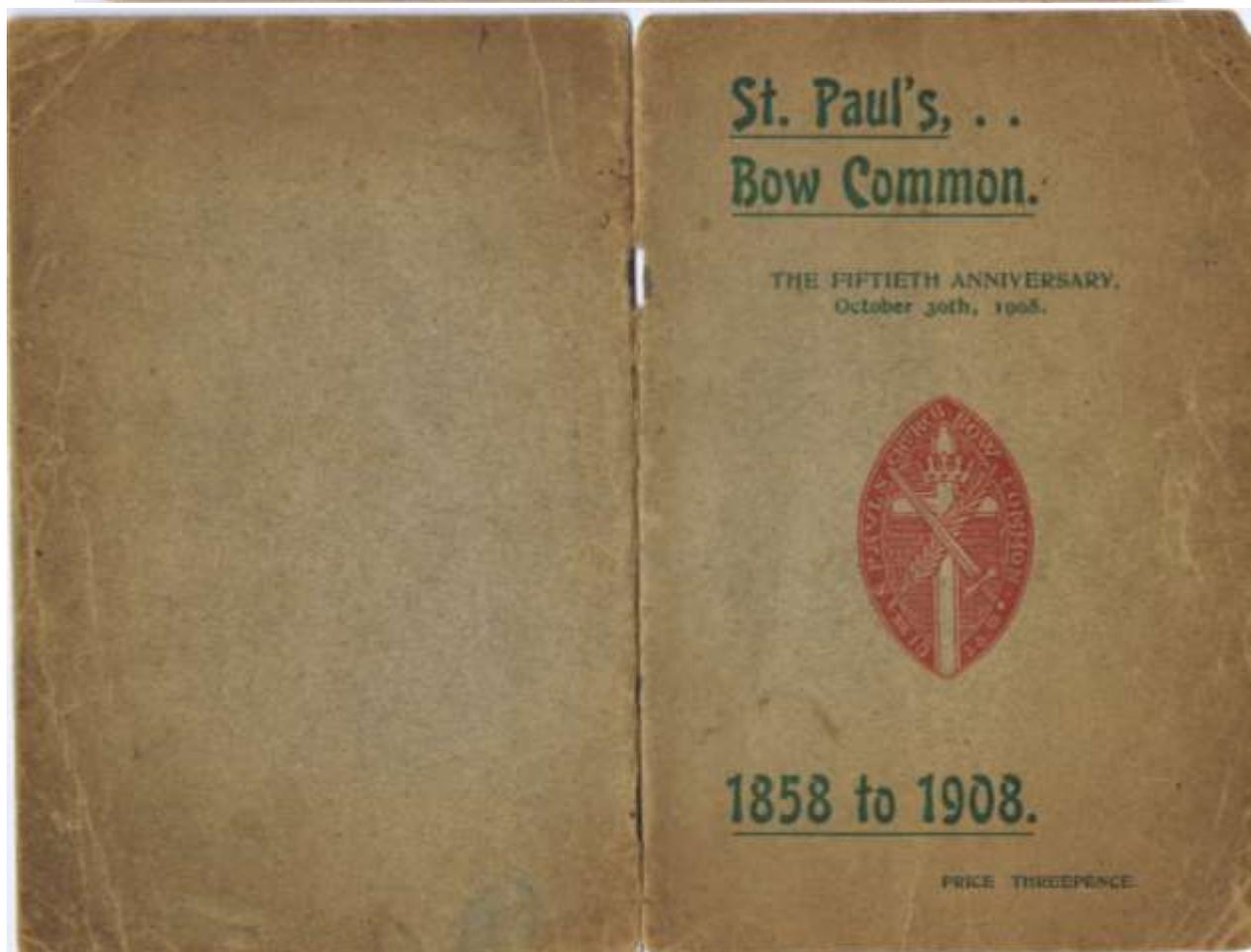
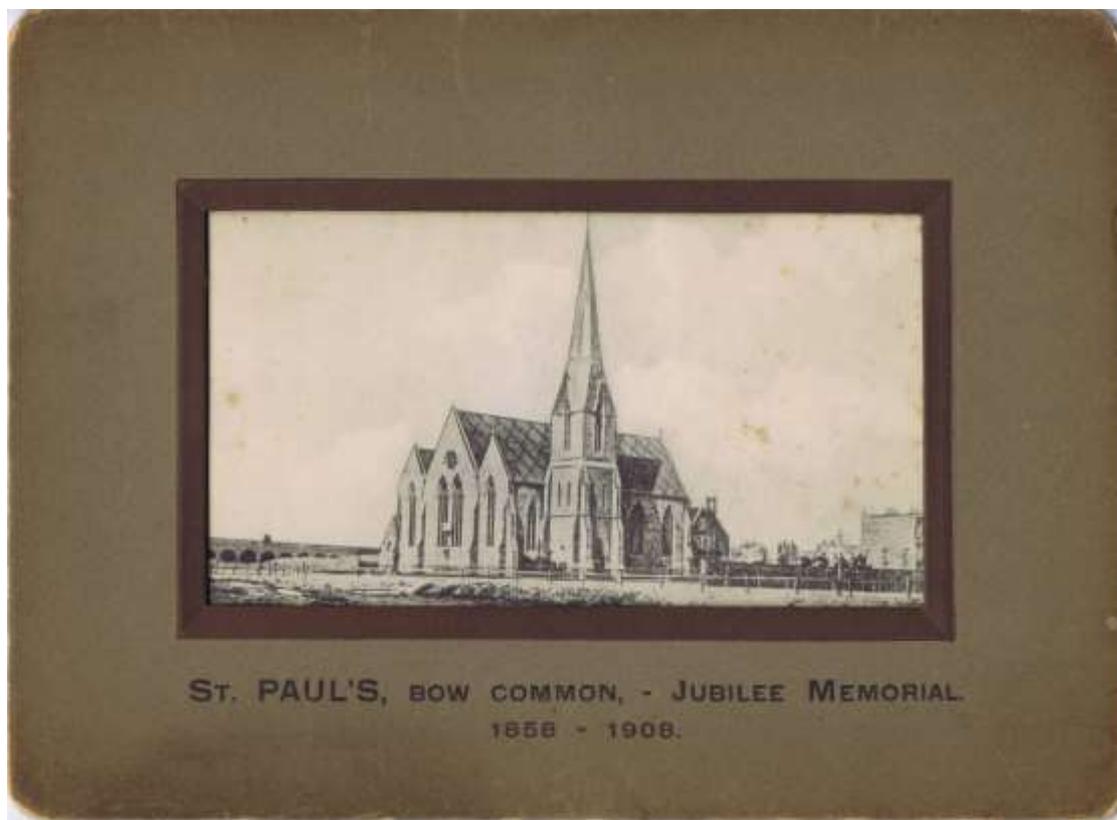
No

✓ St Pauls Row Common
Schedule of Ground Rents

Property	Annual rent	Term
199 Burdett Road	26 . .	99 years from Lady day 1864
27 Edward Street	} 20 . .	99 " " Midsummer 1864
28 D ^o factory		
School adjoining		
22 Edward Street	} 9 . .	99 . . Lady day 1865
21 D ^o		
20 D ^o		
19 D ^o		
18 D ^o	} 4 10 .	99 " D ^o " D ^o 1865
17 D ^o		
16 D ^o	} 9 . .	99 years from Lady day 1864
15 D ^o		
14 D ^o		
13 D ^o		
6 D ^o		
1 Woolmore Street	13 10 .	D ^o D ^o
2 D ^o	} 4 10 .	D ^o D ^o
3 D ^o		
4 D ^o	} 4 10 .	99 years from Christmas 1863
5 D ^o		
6 D ^o		
13 D ^o	} 19 4 .	99 years from Michaelmas 1862
14 D ^o		
15 D ^o		
16 D ^o		
13 D ^o	} 6 8 .	99 years from Christmas 1862
14 D ^o		
15 D ^o		
16 D ^o	} 6 8 .	99 years from Christmas 1862
64 Turners Road		
70 D ^o	5 . .	} 99 years from Lady day 1865
	5 . .	
	<u>£ 137 10 .</u>	

The First St. Paul's, Bow Common 50 Years on ...

In 1908 the first church of St. Paul's, Bow Common celebrated its Golden Jubilee, just as we did in 2010 for the second church. A commemorative booklet was produced and is reproduced here in its entirety.





To all the Friends, past and present,
of St. Paul's, Bow Common.

Dear Friends,

As many of you have asked for some account of the early history of this Church and Parish, and the many interesting facts which have become vague and uncertain tradition amongst an ever changing population, I have compiled the following account.

We are indebted to the first Vicar, the Rev. A. B. Cotton for the "Retrospect," and for his description of the East Window, privately circulated when the window was completed: to this I have merely added a few dry facts and figures of recent date.

Your affectionate Friend and Vicar,

W. FORSTER.



REV. A. B. COTTON.

A RETROSPECT

ON THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF

St. Paul's, Bow Common.

THIS parish is an ecclesiastical district formed out of the parishes of Stepney, Limehouse and Bromley. The first mentioned having at the time a population of 60,000 attached to the old Church.

The new district contained 1,400 inhabitants. The houses were for the most part on the fringes of the parish, namely in the streets leading out of Rhodeswell Road, at one time known as Ragueswell Road, and in Bow Common Lane, the eastward boundary. There were a few scattered houses and cottages on the so called Common, which consisted mainly of stubbark fields and a rope walk, intersected by prospective roads, some of which in their first stage were gravel pits of considerable depth, as the greater portion of Bow Common lies on 16 feet of gravel, which no doubt contributes to the healthiness of the district. On a dark night these roads were a source of apprehension to church-goers coming from the direction of the Bow Road, and on one occasion the Curate, at the head of a party consisting of members of the choir and congregation, although he carried a lantern for his and their benefit, suddenly found himself at the bottom of one of these gravel pits, and many of the party followed his lead. Fortunately no bones were broken.

The Church was consecrated on October 30th, 1858, by the Bishop of London (afterwards Archbishop Tait). The Architect was Mr. Robt. Hawkins, whose Churches of

St. Michael, Padlington, and St. Michael, Evesham, a few years later attracted considerable notice. It was built and endowed by William Cotton, of Leytonstone, and his motive for doing so is best expressed in his own words, spoken at a meeting of the London Diocesan Church Building Society, held on the 5th of November of the same year, when he was the recipient of an address congratulating him on the completion of the Church. In the course of his reply to that address Mr. Cotton said:

"With reference to the building and endowing of the Church at Stepney, I have for so many years passed on those who were letting their land for building, and thus bringing together a large population, that it was their duty to make some provision for the spiritual wants of their tenants, that I should have been very much to blame if I had not acted on the principle I have endeavoured throughout my life to enforce."

and in reference to this, it may be mentioned that in conjunction with Bishop Blomfield, he had been mainly instrumental in raising previously a considerable sum, sufficient to build ten new Churches in Bethnal Green, one of the ten (St. Thomas) being his own gift.

At the consecration of the Church the only decorative feature in the chancel was a floriated Greek cross of white marble set into the Canterbury pattern tiles on the East wall, and this apparently innocent ornament was rejected because it *appeared* to stand on the Holy Table and was thereby, according to a recent Privy Council judgment, an illegal ornament, but at the last moment it was allowed to remain. On completion of the Jesse East window, designed by Mr. G. E. Street, the well-known Architect, and executed by Powell and Whitechairs, Mr. Street was commissioned to make sketches for the chancel walls and roof decorations, and a

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design for the Reredos. The erection of this necessitated the removal of the Greek Cross, which if not legal was certainly not symbolical, and its removal was not regretted. The decoration of the chancel was the work of the congregation, and the cost of the East window was provided for by the sale of old family diamonds, inherited by Mrs. Cotton. They were thus converted into pious, though not in their original form.

The Memorial Tablets in the nave are a distinctive feature of the Church, the idea being taken from the Church of St. Paul's, Mile End, of which Canon Renswell was the Vicar.

Such simple memorials, for rich and poor alike and in the Church where rich and poor meet together, might even where there is a God's acre, help to unite in spirit, as they do at St. Paul's, the Church militant and expectant, in that place "Where Saints on earth in concert sing,
With those whose work is done,"

far better than the monumental crosses and elaborately carved tombstones in a country Church-yard, which are too often erected merely as a mark of respect for the departed.

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In 1883, the upper part of the tower spire, having been damaged by gales or by lightning, was repaired, the Cross regilded and a new lightning conductor fixed at the cost of £130.

In 1905, thanks to a legacy of £300 left by the late Thomas Walklate and to the generosity of a few old friends the Church was thoroughly renovated internally at the cost of £350.

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THE SIDE ALTAR.

In 1905 the Lady Chapel was separated by a stone screen, the Altar was enlarged, and a very beautiful reredos with a Calvary and figures of St. Paul and his companions, St. Peter, St. Barnabas and St. Luke, painted on mahogany designed by Mr. Comper was erected, in memory of Mr. Connell Jeffery who for 30 years had been Churchwarden. The expense of this memorial was defrayed by his widow and family.

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During the incumbency of the first vicar the Rev. A. B. Cotton, the population rapidly increased ten-fold from 1,400 to 14,000 souls, and the Church was filled to overflowing, but after twenty years of ever increasing work he effected an exchange of Livings with the Rev. Rowland T. Plummer, who became the second Vicar in 1878. In 1892, Church life was at its highest activity, the parish being worked by a staff of five priests. Communion on Easter Day, numbered 508, baptisms 330 for the year, nearly a hundred candidates were presented for Confirmation each year, and 1,300 children were being taught in the various Sunday Schools, but since then the population has changed very much and work has suffered, and the second Vicar resigned in 1900, completely broken down in health, and was succeeded by the Rev. W. Forster, who had been Assistant Curate since 1885.

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The Church Plate.

A SET of Holy Vessels in silver gilt consisting of a large flagon, two chalices, two patens and an alms dish of Eighteenth century design and characteristic of the period, were presented by Bishop Blomfield on his death-bed to Mr. Cotton for use in St. Paul's. They were formerly the property of Queen Caroline and were used in her private Chapel.

A few years afterwards a silver gilt Paten and Chalice set with 90 jewels were presented to the Church by Members

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of the congregation and friends, and Queen Caroline's plate was then only used on Festivals, but as they were, as will be understood from their date, of most inconvenient form, with the consent of the Bishop, they were recast into a large silver Chalice and two Patens.

A small silver Viaticum for the Communion of the sick, and silver Pyx box were subsequently given.



THE REV. ROWLAND T. PLUMMER.

The East Window.

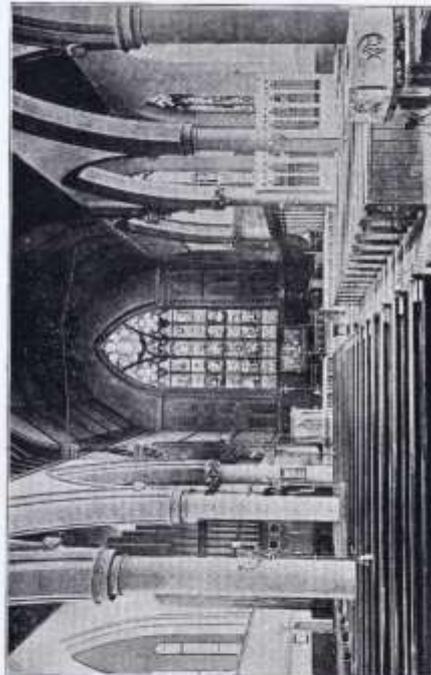
THE East window is remarkable for the richness of its colouring, the elaborate character of its design, and the due subordination of its parts. It has remarkably little shading, a mode of giving depth of effect very sparingly used in old glass, but very profusely in most modern work.

It is a Jesse window, or representation of the genealogy of Christ, the subject being supported by a foliated ground work intended to represent a tree, on which are to be found the chief personages in the line of the Messiah.

First, examining the groundwork, we see at the foot of the middle light the figure of Jesse in a recumbent position and from his side proceeds the stem of that tree of which our Lord is the BRANCH, the Rod out of the stem of Jesse. Above Jesse, but under the lowest medallion is David, and it is noticeable that all the texts illustrating the different subjects of the medallions are taken from his prophecies. Above the lowest medallion is Solomon, the builder of the Lord's House, and between the middle and upper medallion is the Blessed Virgin. Passing from the centre light, but still confining our attention to the ground work; on each side of David are types of the Messiah as Prophet, Priest and King. — Moses, for says he, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me, Him shall ye hear." — Samson and Gideon the deliverers of the Israelites from the Philistines and Midianites, as Christ is the Deliverer of His people from their spiritual enemies. — Melchizedek; "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Above these on the one side are four Kings of Judah for "it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah," — Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa and Hezekiah. On the other side, the four greater prophets; "they are they which

testify of Him," — Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. — Passing now to the Medallions and tracery of the three horizontal lights, the lowest contains the Nativity, and events which preceded and followed it. The middle, the Passion of our Lord, and the exquisite ruby tint is most appropriate to this, which represents Him as "Coming from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah." The upper, the Ascension witnessed by the Angels. The tone of this is dark and sombre, but the eye passes on to the bright tracery above, in which the glory of Heaven itself is represented, and that vision is unfolded to view, which the disciple whom Jesus loved was permitted to gaze upon. The subject of each medallion is as follows —

1. The Annunciation of the Angel to the Virgin, "I waited patiently for the Lord."
2. The Salutation of the Mother of our Lord, "O how amiable are Thy dwellings."
3. The Manger of Bethlehem, "Thy seed will I establish for ever."
4. The Manifestation of our Lord to the Gentiles, "All kings shall fall down before him."
5. His presentation to the Temple, "Thou art fairer than the children of men."
6. His agony in the garden, "Save me O God, for the waters are come in even unto my soul."
7. His bearing the Cross, "I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit."
8. His Crucifixion, "They pierced My hands and My feet."
9. His descent from the Cross, "I am poured out like water, all My bones are out of joint."
10. His Resurrection, "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered."



(Paint by W. W. Hook)

THE INTERIOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

- 11, 12, 14 and 15. Angels witnessing the Ascension.
 13. His Ascension, "Set up Thyself O God above the Heaven."
 16. Our Lord in glory surrounded by the Elders, "Who cast their crowns before the Throne," and the Heavenly Choir of the Angelic Host who stand round about the Throne and worship God having harps in their hands and saying, "Amen. Blessing, and Glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen."

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The other painted windows are:—

- (1) In the Chancel the window by Hardman was placed in memory of the founder of the Church by his children.
 (2) In the South Aisle, the Angel Window in memory of John William Chapman, 1872, given by his sister.
 (3) In memory of Counsell Billings Jeffrey, (April, 6th 1876), representing the Conversion of St. Paul, the Election of St. Matthias, Pentecost, the Healing the Lame Man in the Temple, the Judgment of Sapphira and the Stoning of St. Stephen.

This window was intended to be the first of a series running round the Church depicting the history of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles, but the remaining five windows are yet to be filled.

- (4) The large West Window, in memory of Matilda Lloyd, 1864, depicting the chief Miracles of our Lord, was the gift of W. H. Lloyd, Churchwarden.
 (5) The other West Window, in memory of Helen Mary Archer, 1875, represents the events recorded in the History of Mary the Sister of Lazarus, entitled, "Memories of Bethany."

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The Organ.

ORIGINALLY there was a small two Manual organ by Gray & Davison which is now in the Church of St. Saviour's, Poplar. In 1877 it was decided to have an organ worthy of the Church and the late Henry Willis who had rebuilt the organ at St. Paul's Cathedral was entrusted with the work and the present magnificent instrument is the result, which is insured for £2,000. It consists of 3 Manuals and a pedal organ, containing 34 speaking stops, 7 couplers, and 7 composition pedals, in all these are 2,080 pipes, the pedal Viols forming the west front and the great diapasons the south front. It has a second high pressure wind chest which supplies the Great and pedal reeds and works the pneumatic action of the great organ. The voicing and tone leave nothing to be desired, and the work is particularly effective. It was opened at the dedication festival, October, 1877, by Mr. (now Dr.) W. S. Hoyte, Organist of All Saints, Margaret Street. The following is the specification:—

Great Organ CC to G.		Swell Organ CC to G.	
1. Dulciana Diapason, Metal, 16 Ft.	1. Lieblich Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.	1. Lieblich Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.	1. Lieblich Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.
2. Open Diapason, 8 Ft.	2. Open Diapason, Metal 8 Ft.	2. Open Diapason, Metal 8 Ft.	2. Open Diapason, Metal 8 Ft.
3. Open Diapason, 8 Ft.	3. Salicional, 8 Ft.	3. Salicional, 8 Ft.	3. Salicional, 8 Ft.
4. Clarinet, Wood 8 Ft.	4. Vox Angelica, 8 Pipes, 8 Ft.	4. Vox Angelica, 8 Pipes, 8 Ft.	4. Vox Angelica, 8 Pipes, 8 Ft.
5. Harmonic Flute, Metal 4 Ft.	5. Lieblich Gamba, 8 Ft.	5. Lieblich Gamba, 8 Ft.	5. Lieblich Gamba, 8 Ft.
6. Diapason, 4 Ft.	6. Gemshorn, 4 Ft.	6. Gemshorn, 4 Ft.	6. Gemshorn, 4 Ft.
7. Flute, 2 Ft.	7. Flageolet, 2 Ft.	7. Flageolet, 2 Ft.	7. Flageolet, 2 Ft.
8. Fifteenth, 2 Ft.	8. Sizzura, 2 Pipes, 2 Ft.	8. Sizzura, 2 Pipes, 2 Ft.	8. Sizzura, 2 Pipes, 2 Ft.
9. Mixtur, 2 Pipes, 2 Ft.	9. Cornet, 8 Ft.	9. Cornet, 8 Ft.	9. Cornet, 8 Ft.
10. Bassoon, 8 Ft.	10. Bassoon, 8 Ft.	10. Bassoon, 8 Ft.	10. Bassoon, 8 Ft.
11. Clarion, 4 Ft.	11. Clarion, 4 Ft.	11. Clarion, 4 Ft.	11. Clarion, 4 Ft.
Choir Organ CC to G.		Pedal Organ CCC to F.	
1. Viola da Gamba, Metal 8 Ft.	1. Open Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.	1. Open Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.	1. Open Diapason, Wood 16 Ft.
2. Dulciana, 8 Ft.	2. Violon, Metal 16 Ft.	2. Violon, Metal 16 Ft.	2. Violon, Metal 16 Ft.
3. Lieblich Gamba, Wood 8 Ft.	3. Violoncello, 8 Ft.	3. Violoncello, 8 Ft.	3. Violoncello, 8 Ft.
4. Clarinet, Flute, Metal 4 Ft.	4. Octobass, 8 Ft.	4. Octobass, 8 Ft.	4. Octobass, 8 Ft.
5. Cornet Flute, 4 Ft.			
6. Percussion, 2 Ft.			
7. Corno & Basson, 8 Ft.			

Couplers.

1. Swell to Great (Common). 2. Swell to Great (Self-Action).
 3. Swell to Great (Single Octave). 4. Choir to Great.
 5. Swell to Pedals & Great to Pedals. 7. Choir to Pedals.
 Four Composition Pedals, Great Organ.
 Three Composition Pedals, Swell.

The gallery over the Vestry was designed for an Organ but we are glad to say, was never used for smothering this noble instrument.

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THE CHURCH IN 1896.

The Schools.

SOON after the consecration of the Church the nucleus of a future School was formed. Most of us who are East Enders have heard of "the Church that commenced in a Stable," St. Paul's Schools commenced in a Cottage; perhaps at one time it was a week-end country house as it had the name of "Garden Cottage," but the railway arteries had invaded the Garden, if it ever existed. It stood in St. Paul's Road, the trains passing almost overhead. The two ground floor rooms which were on each side of the door were thrown into one and formed the School for boys; one of twenty cottages opposite the Church was taken for girls and infants.

School rooms and furniture were dilapidated and makeshift, but answered their purpose, though during the evening lessons rat hunts often occasioned inevitable attractions and distractions.

The first stone of the present Schools was laid on August 11th, 1855, by the Bishop of Oxford, (Willaforte), and the opening took place on May 31st, 1856, when the Bishop of Rochester, (Wigram), dedicated the buildings and held a Confirmation in the evening. The attendance at the Schools under an able staff of teachers rapidly increased, though the days of compulsory attendance and School Board visitors had not arrived.

At the Sixth Anniversary Festival the Vicar was able to announce to the congregation and friends assembled in the Schools, that they were now and had been for some time quite full, and that it was imperative to have another School.

A Mission School was soon afterwards opened in Russell Street, which after doing excellent work for many years, was considered unsuitable for elementary education in

1885, but is still most useful for Sunday School and other educational purposes.

The best evidence of the character, during many successive years, of the education as regards both religious and secular subjects, is afforded by the class lists in the yearly Sixpence examinations in Religious knowledge, and the Parliamentary Blue Books containing H.M. Inspectors' Reports, in which unstinted praise is given by Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Remond and others to St. Paul's Schools by name.

Continuation Schools and Evening Schools for boys and men were then in full swing, the latter being one of the many good works undertaken by men volunteers, amongst whom were Edmund Hay Currie, Counsell Jeffery, Henry King and others as teachers. No less important or satisfactory in its results was the work of the united hand of Church workers of both sexes, in Sunday School, Parish and Church, nobly working together, and yet constantly changing during the years of the Church's minority, and it would be tedious to mention names.

In 1886, the Mission School was enlarged and fitted up for other purposes, and much useful work has been carried on there ever since. A Soup kitchen flourished there for seventeen years, but was closed in 1900 owing to lack of workers.

After fifty years the National Schools are still doing excellent work in bringing up children in the faith and fear of God; they have been a source of financial anxiety for many years, until in 1905, when with the assistance of the Rev. A. B. Canton they were placed in a thorough state of repair with all modern improvements at a cost of £500.



The Endowments.

IN addition to building the Church and Schools, the Founder generously provided an income for the Vicar, which amounts to £297 10s., and is derived from (a) an annual charge of £150 upon the ground rents of 43 houses in Rhodeswell Road, Dixon Street and Copenhagen Place, (b) £137 10s. being the ground rents of twenty-six houses situated near the Church. In the year 1961 these latter rents will begin to fall in and the Living will then become about £1,000 a year, (c) £10 per annum from the Ecclesiastical Commission granted in 1871.

The above is the gross income, but as there are heavy charges and expenses in connection with this Benefice, the net income so far as the present Vicar is concerned consists of a house and something less than £20 a year, which leaves nothing to provide for the work of one of the largest parishes in the East End of London.

Fifty years have brought about great changes in this parish; like all our neighbours we have suffered greatly by removal, and the influx of aliens. Some few, notably the Churchwardens, Messrs. McDonald and Conway, the Lady Superintendent, Miss Mitchell of Wood Green, are still working with us, having been connected with the Church from its consecration, and we have many good friends at a distance who have not forgotten the place where they first received the Holy Sacraments, their training in Spiritual matters and the ever increasing needs of S. PAUL'S, BOW COMMON.

LONDON
D. & A. S. HAYES, PRINTERS,
15, BUCKINGHAM ROAD, E.C.

Also in 1908 there was a sobering and revealing article about the first 50 years of the church in the East London Church Chronicle.

St. Paul, Bow Common, E

This parish, which now lies in the centre of the East London, was formed 50 years ago, out of the parishes of Stepney, Limehouse and Bromley, and in those days had some pretensions to be a delightful "common," so dear to the hearts of East Enders, consisting mainly of rhubarb fields, rope walks, a cricket field and various gravel pits, bounded by the Bow Common Lane, which contained a few country cottages and the tortuous Rogues' Well Road which still retains the appearance of a not-knowing-where-it-wants-to-go sort of lane

In those early days a magnificent church was built by the late William Cotton, the founder of St. Andrew, Bethnal Green, and was consecrated in 1858 by Rt. Rev. Dr. Tait, the Bishop of London.

The Church stood in a lovely position in the fields, with the Blackwall Railway Extension in the background. On a dark night the good people might be seen picking their way across the fields with the aid of lanterns, and occasionally coming to grief in the gravel pits. Then roads were made and houses sprang up like mushrooms, and the great Church was filled with suburban residents during the incumbency of the first Vicar, Rev. A.B. Cotton, who resigned in 1878 after twenty years' work.

During the incumbency of the second Vicar, Rev. R.T. Plummer, the population increased to nearly 15,000, but with the removal of well-to-do people, financial difficulties arose, and he was compelled to appeal to the E.L.C.F. (East London Churches Fund) to provide stipends for the Assistant Clergy. £ 135 per annum was granted for a second Curate, and with the help of volunteers, the parish was worked by a staff of five clergy and many lay-helpers, until disaster came in the utter breakdown in the of the Vicar's Health and his resignation in 1900.

Since then difficulties have increased by the immigration of an alien population and the overwhelming growth of poverty. Again, the E.L.C.F came to the rescue with a further grant of £30 per year: but the parish has only a staff of three priests and a very few lay-workers.

The Church still retains many beautiful features, relics of more prosperous days: A very fine Jesse window designed by Street, a magnificent organ, a painted chancel (now faded), and a set of Holy Vessels, formerly the property of Queen Caroline, which were presented by Bishop Blomfield.

The schools began in a small way in dilapidated, rat-infested cottage, but in 1859 the foundation stone of the present school was laid by Bishop Wilberforce. The Schools have the largest playground in London, with a swimming bath, and in spite of recent legislation are more than holding their own.

This parish, like many in the East End, has buildings and everything needful, but lacks the necessary workers but must have gone under long ago, but for the E.L.C.F. A ship has been the emblem of the Catholic Church since primitive times, but in the East End it must be likened to a ship without a crew to man it.

St. Luke's, Burdett Road

The present day **church** is still called St. Paul's, Bow Common but following post-war reorganisation of parishes and re-building only certain churches, the **parish** which this church serves became the parish of **St. Paul with St. Luke, Bow Common**.

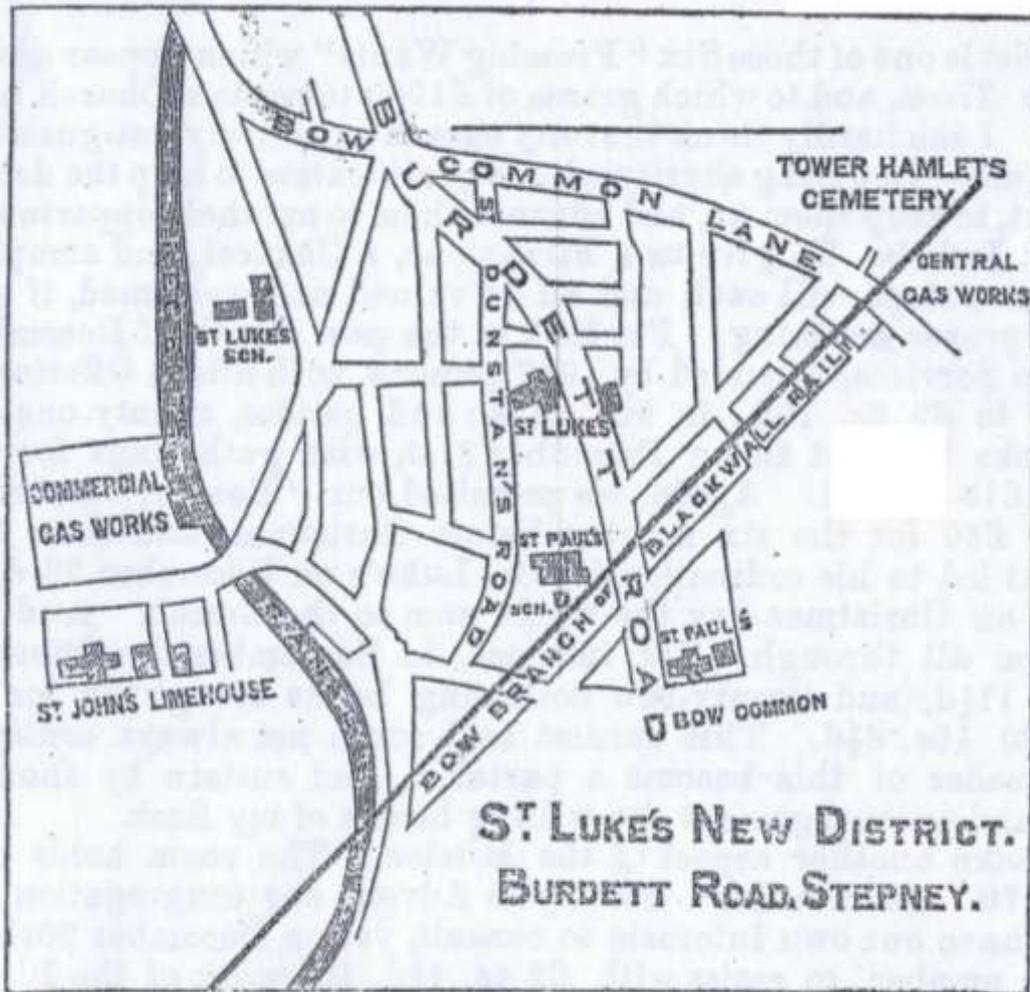
Therefore part of any history of this parish should include an account of the church of **St. Luke, Burdett Rd.** especially as it became the home for the displaced people of St. Paul's, Bow Common after their church was destroyed in the War. As is now known, the church of St. Paul, Bow Common was the gift of William Cotton to the people of the area and those who would come to live in the housing he was soon to build, and with the support of the Bishop of London, Charles Blomfield, this led to the creation of the Ecclesiastical District of St. Paul, within the large and ancient parish of Stepney. Later this became the Parish of St. Paul, Bow Common. This was in 1858. Poverty and need were great in this part of the East End, though as the Booth poverty maps showed a little earlier, conditions could be very different just a street or two away. And in 1865 a Mission enterprise was created on the edge of St. Paul's parish, within an area which was part of the parish of Holy Trinity, Mile End.

The first service was held in the school rooms of St. Paul's, Bow Common and the venture soon proved to be much needed. It was soon clear that a permanent church would be needed for this work. In 1867 the tireless and devoted Mission priest, Revd. William Wallace wrote this **Appeal Leaflet**. Funds were urgently needed.

St. Luke's Mission, Burdett Road, Stepney

“IS it far beyond St. Paul's?” “Yes,” I said, “as far as Hyde Park is from the Cathedral. When I come to you it is on a Bow and Stratford omnibus, which charges the same fare from my door, 441 Mile End-road, to the Bank, as it does from the Bank to Piccadilly.” “What a very long street you live in.” “Yes, a very grand road runs through the whole length of the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town, from Whitechapel to Bow, and I live at the Bow end of it.” “I know” said the prelate, for it was to one of our bishops I was describing St. Luke's, “the Regent's Canal,—are you east or west of that?” “Immediately to the east, and just south of Mile End Road: a triangle in fact between the Bow branch of the Blackwall Railway, the Regent's Canal, and an old lane, a little back from Mile End Road, called Bow Common Lane.”





“And now, do you like the work?” I was oblig’d to answer, “Very much, —there is so much interest, so much clergy man’s work in it,” I said. “Is the church holding her own, or advancing in the east?” “Yos, if the Bishop’s Fund gets thoroughly carried out, great arrears will be overtaken, and for my part,

I trust nothing will prevent its complete execution.”

This conversation was before a sermon preached in behalf of this

Mission, in St. Michael’s, one of the Pimlico churches, the congregation of which have assisted materially the work of St. Luke’s.

To call attention to the work of the Bishop of London’s Fund, and invite assistance for a permanent church in this new district now ready to be separated from the parish of Holy Trinity, Stepney, I have put together a few facts, and further information can be had from myself, or from the office of the Fund, Pall Mall. We have reached a point now in which any foreign aid will be of the utmost service to encourage and sustain the efficiency of the Mission.

On October 15th, 1865, we began in a school, lent by the Rev. A. B. Cotton, son of the late venerated William Cotton, and to this moment we have never spent any funds provided from any source in aid, except upon the site for the Church and my salary. Our own Offertory has paid all expenses, and now that the cost of supplying the room with chairs and necessary church furniture has been repaid, it is a great satisfaction that the money of St. Michael’s Aid Fund is untouched for the work we have at heart, the erection of our church.

This economy is all we can reach to among ourselves. Dock-labourers, bricklayers, gas-men, these are 5000 out of 6000 inhabitants, and almost every house has two or more families residing in it. We have no land-owners, and I admit candidly that the Bishop’s Fund has given every wealthy person near us work more directly appealing to their aid.

Our district is one of those Six "Pressing Wants" which appear advertised in *The Times*, and to which grants of £1200 towards a Church have been made. I can hardly think that any case is more truly designated as *pressing* for aid. In giving charity what a gratification to help the decent and diligent, to keep them up, and advance them to another opportunity. So with St. Luke's. To give us a First-stone, a Chancel, and complete church; these steps will each and all be valued and welcomed, if past experience proves anything. For look at the past month of December. Twenty-two Services, attended by 1987 persons, with fifteen Offertories, amounting to £9 2s. 10d., in 907 coins: and besides, twenty-one collecting books brought in on December 31st, with gatherings for one quarter of £19 9s. 2½d. Again, we promised our "Reader," a student of King's, £30 for the six months before Christmas, and since that engagement led to his ordination for St. Luke's on December 23rd, he gave back on Christmas-day the whole sum to the church. And this has gone on all through. For instance, in September the Offertory was £7 2s. 11½d, and twenty-two collecting books brought in for the quarter £20 10s. 6½d. This earnest zeal could not always continue. Will the reader of this become a partaker, and sustain by show of sympathy and encouragement the willing hearts of my flock.

Let me take another aspect of the Mission. The room holds conveniently 170. On the third Sunday in Advent our congregation was 190. We have our own interests to consult, yet on December 20th we met, 192 in number, to assist with £2 4s. 4½d, the work of the Bishop of Nelson, who expressed his pleasure at the order and attention of the people, young and old. We had a Confirmation in April, and thirty-five candidates were presented. In the whole of Trinity parish 316 children were baptized in 1865, and 338 in 1866, both years being a great increase on former registers. A week-day Service with special

reference to Christmas Communion was held on the Fridays in December, and 71, 61, 41, and 85 were the congregations. Could we obtain funds to build even the Chancel of our church, we would hope to have devout and frequent Communions.

Let me describe the service of Monday evening, December 31st. The room, 60 feet by 23, used as an infant school, has a gallery at one end. On this two prayer-desks stand, and on the floor a lectern. At the south side on three tiers are a few boys to sing, below them an harmonium, played by a gentleman, a clerk in a railway office, who voluntarily conducts the choir. Then begin two sets of benches on either side of the room, girls to sing in the front of one, grown boys to sing in the front of the other. Any little children are brought up to the front of these and put on low forms, being taught to kneel and respond loudly. Then, still on either side, as many chairs as we can get in. Hymn books on every seat. Prayer-books for all who need. For this night, Anthems for our willing but not very educated singers, (Monk's, Hallelujah! For unto us a Child is born); and myself to read the prayers, the Incumbent of Trinity, the Rev. F. Simcox Lea to preach, and the Deacon and one of the men to collect the Offertory in bags.

An unusual number of better-dressed people are mixed with the attendants from the district, for it is Quarterly Collection night, and each person having a book is invited to come and present openly the book and money collected as an "offering to the Lord."

The room is decorated solely by the persons present, and everything, books, gas, warming, servants' work, ornaments of the place and of the ministers, has been paid for by themselves. "O come, all ye faithful" is sung heartily by all, and nobody thinks of not responding with loud and long Amens. The Psalms for the 30th evening are sung, full of praise; and the prayers are reverently followed. A few words respecting the past and the prospects of the future from myself precede the Hymn before Sermon, and then Mr. Lea preaches a Homiletic extempore discourse upon the 90th Psalm, which realizes all a Mission Service requires, and bringing us all, this closing night of the year, before Him who is our refuge from one generation to another, wins us to the prayer that we may so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom, and to the adoring desire, "The majesty of the Lord our God be upon us, Prosper Thou our handy work." "Brief life is here our portion," from the Rhythm of St. Bernard is sung, while the Offertory of £2 4s. 0½d. is being collected, and when at last the Benediction is taken up by the kneeling congregation with their song of "Part in Peace," St. Luke's final service of 1866 is religiously closed.

I have not spoken of the temporal need of St. Luke's. We had the cholera among us, with its warnings and the results of Christian benevolence; we have the want of work trying us now, but to build the church is a sure way of aiding both now and always.

If this account of our work will persuade any, to whom God has given the power and will, to aid His Church's mission, our prayers will not fail to remember them as benefactors before the throne of grace.

January, 1867.

W. WALLACE, M. A.

As one reads the Appeal Leaflet above, both the need as well as the great efforts and persistent striving are evident.

The Revd. William Wallace, a great priest and a great man, is shown in the view to the right.

His incumbency was a long one, from 1865 - 1913, at 48 years the longest incumbency of any parish priest in either of the parishes of St. Paul or St. Luke. I think Fr. Kirkby comes next at 43 years!

He is shown here in August 1914, following retirement from St. Luke's in December 1913. He died on 9th September 1915 in Budleigh Salterton, Devon.



In fact, just at the last moment the necessary funds were raised by a perilously narrow scrape and the church was consecrated on 18th October 1869. This account, from "Stepney Churches - An Historical Account" by Gordon Barnes (Faith Press 1967) relates what happened.

ST. LUKE Burdett Road

THIS parish originated with services which were held in the schools of St. Paul's, Bow Common. The first service was held by the Rev. William Wallace, D.D., on October 15, 1865. For some years Wallace had been eager to work in the East End and had asked the Bishop of London to allot him a mission district. The vicar of Holy Trinity, Tredegar Square, from which St. Luke's parish was to be taken, welcomed somebody to work in the southern part of his district where small streets of working-class houses were being built on either side of the new Burdett Road. The Bishop told Dr. Wallace that he would have to raise about £17,000 to build a permanent church, schools and a parsonage house. But undeterred, he speedily gathered a congregation and set about collecting money to build the church for which a grant of £1,200 was made by the Bishop of London's Fund, and much help given by the wealthy congregation of St. Michael's, Chester Square.

When building started in 1868 it seemed that only the nave and aisles could be erected owing to shortage of money; the Treasurer of the Building Fund, the vicar of Holy Trinity, was so cautious that he proposed the height of the nave walls should be reduced by 3ft. in order to avoid running into debt. Fortunately a friend of Dr. Wallace, Shaw Stewart, guaranteed the amount needed, but there was some doubt about the building of the chancel. However, at the last moment, an unknown benefactor gave £1,500 to enable the church to be completed in time for it to be consecrated on October 18, 1869. The total cost was £5,342.

The architect, A. W. Blomfield, designed a large church of red brick and stone, in a style described by T. F. Bumpus as Italian Romanesque. There was a clerestoried nave of five bays with side aisles and a chancel of two bays, a nave arcade of obtuse pointed polychrome brick arches carried on short round stone piers with carved capitals. All the windows of the clerestory were round-headed, and the east window consisted of three round-headed single lights with a large sex-foil, flanked by two small quatrefoils, in the head. The three lights had slender shafts with carved capitals. At the west was a large 'wheel' window with three round-headed singles below and under these a shallow brick porch. There was no tower but a big double bell-cote on the eastern gable of the nave. All the windows were filled with stained glass designed by Daniel Bell, who also designed the three mosaic panels which served as a reredos. When the church was demolished in 1961 an attempt was made to save these panels but unfortunately they disintegrated.

During and after the second World War St. Luke's was used by the congregations of St. Paul's, Bow Common, and St. John's, Halley Street, who had been forced from their own churches by bombing. In 1959 the small remaining congregation moved to a broken-down mission church, St. Barnabas's, Rowsell Street, and St. Luke's was closed. Vandals speedily moved in and in a very short time the interior was a shambles; all the stained glass was smashed, floorboards were torn up, electric wiring ripped out and one evil-minded person went to the trouble of cutting a swastika in the bowl of the stone font. The organ was removed and given to St. Saviour's, Poplar.

As St. Luke's had not suffered badly during the war surely it would have been more economical to repair it and to use it as the church of the united benefice of St. Luke with St. Paul instead of building, at great cost, a new church of St. Paul's a short distance down the Burdett Road. St. Luke's was demolished early in 1961.

In 1928 in the local newspaper, the East London Advertiser there was a report on the state of the churches (including St. Paul's, Bow Common) and half way through it tells the story of St. Luke's, Burdett Rd. (marked red).

East London Advertiser
AND
TOWER HAMLETS INDEPENDENT.

Chief Office: 357, Mile End Road, E.1.

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 1928.

TELEPHONE: EAST 0257.

**CHURCH LIFE IN
EAST LONDON.**

◆

The induction last Saturday of the Rev. R. J. Goodwin B.A., as Vicar of St. Paul's, Bow Common, may well serve as a reminder of the changes which have come to the district since the church was consecrated, just 70 years ago. Like most churches in East London it was carved out of the mother parish of Stepney, whose grey old tower still stands "four square to all the winds that blow," in a green oasis amid a wilderness of bricks and mortar. It was built to meet the spiritual needs of what was then a new residential district which had not altogether lost its rural character. The population attached to the parish church of St. Dunstan numbered 60,000, and the parish of St. Paul's comprised 1,400 inhabitants. Bow Common had long ceased to resemble anything which we associate with that name. It consisted chiefly of market gardens on which rhubarb was largely grown, and there was also a rope-walk. Such houses as then existed were mainly in the streets leading out of Rhodeswell Road, which at one time was known as Rogueswell Road, though there had been no well there within living memory.

The greater part of Bow Common lies upon sixteen feet of gravel, and the excavation of this had left pits of considerable depth which were a source of no little danger. It is on record that one dark night a party consisting of members of the choir and congregation were going to St. Paul's church from the direction of Bow Road when the curate, who, with lantern in hand, headed the procession, suddenly found himself at the bottom of one of these gravel pits, with several members of the party on top of him. Fortunately no bones were broken, and after the victims of the accident had disentangled themselves they were hauled out and proceeded, with increased caution, to take part in evensong.

St. Paul's, Bow Common, owes its existence to Mr. William Cotton, of Leytonstone, a gentleman who had been mainly instrumental, in conjunction with Bishop Blomfield, in raising money sufficient to build ten new churches in Bethnal Green, St. Thomas', which was one of the ten, being his own personal gift. His reason for building the church of St. Paul's, Bow Common, was explained by him at a meeting of the London Diocesan Church Building Society held on the 5th of November, 1858. Replying to an address congratulating him on its completion, Mr. Cotton stated that he had for many years impressed on those who were letting or selling their land for building, and thus bringing together a large population, that it was their duty to make some provision for the spiritual needs of these people. Realising that example was better than precept, he built and endowed the church, which was consecrated on October 30th of that year by Bishop (afterwards Archbishop) Tait.

The population in and about Burdett Road steadily grew, that well known thoroughfare gradually changing its character from a good middle-class residential area to one that is already half given over to trade and industry, and will doubtless in time be entirely commercial. Meanwhile, however, the streets leading off Burdett Road were built up, and the need for spiritual provision manifested itself in several directions. The building of the East London Tabernacle, which was made famous by the Rev. Archibald Brown, and the erection of the Burdett Road Congregational Church, another stronghold of Non-conformist effort, both justified themselves, as also did the construction of St. Luke's Church. This latter will always be associated with the late Dr. Wallace, and in the story of his life and work which his widow made a labour of love, the origin of that church is related. It was in the Autumn of 1865, the year that saw the establishment of the "East London Advertiser," under the name of "The Tower Hamlets Independent," that the necessity for a centre for religious teaching made itself apparent. The Rev. F. S. Lea, then Vicar of Holy Trinity, Mile End, offered the Rev. William Wallace the missionary curacy of the Southern portion of his parish, which was afterwards known as St. Luke's. The young clergyman, full of zeal and enthusiasm, went to inspect the district. "The impression I at once formed," he said, "was that St. Luke's was a very fair parish and an important place for the Church's labour. The streets were all new and laid out in regulation width; the one-storeyed houses, ground and upper floor, seemed suited for the class of people—gas men from the adjoining works; dock labourers, whose wives and children live here; and some small shopkeepers to supply the needs of the place.

But most of the houses contain two or more families, and in this alone lies any objection to the dwellings of the people. The Lancashire workmen, whom I had known in Blackburn, did not pay more for a whole house than the labourers do here for half." And this was 63 years ago.

The first services at St. Luke's, Burdett Road, it is interesting to remember, were held in the infant school-room of St. Paul's, Bow Common, of which the Rev. A. B. Cotton was then incumbent. With the exception of the last named church, St. Luke's was the first church that had been built in Stepney for a period of 30 years. St. Paul's had made rapid progress, the population of its parish increased from 1,400 to 14,000, and the church was usually filled to overflowing.

In 1892 its activity was such that the services of five priests were required to do justice to it. At the Easter Day Communion that year 508 persons were present, and 1,200 children were being taught in the Sunday Schools. It would scarcely be fair to compare that state of things with that of to-day. The neighbourhood has changed, the ill-health of the Vicar was also responsible for much, and the exodus to the suburbs entailed a loss to the church which it was probably difficult to repair. Whether it is possible to recapture the old enthusiasm we cannot say, but the new incumbent of St. Paul's, Bow Common, will have the best wishes of many people for the success of his labours.

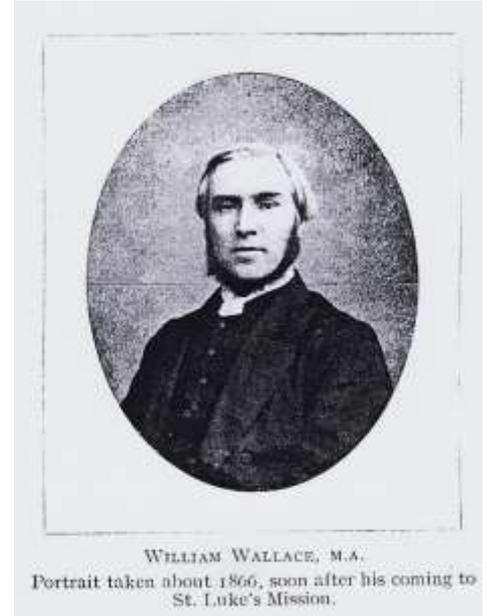


A view of 1908 looking south along Burdett Rd., showing St. Luke's at the right and in the distance above the railway bridge can be seen the misty outline of the spire of St. Paul's, Bow Common.

Some more small glimpses of St. Luke's and of William Wallace:



St. Luke's, seen from Timothy Road.



WILLIAM WALLACE, M.A.
Portrait taken about 1866, soon after his coming to St. Luke's Mission.



CLERGY, CHURCHWARDENS AND SIDESMEN.
Group taken about 1890.



Rev. J. B. Spruie, M.A.
Vicar of Brompton, 1914.

THE CHOIR, 1913.

Rev. Wm. Wallace, D.D.

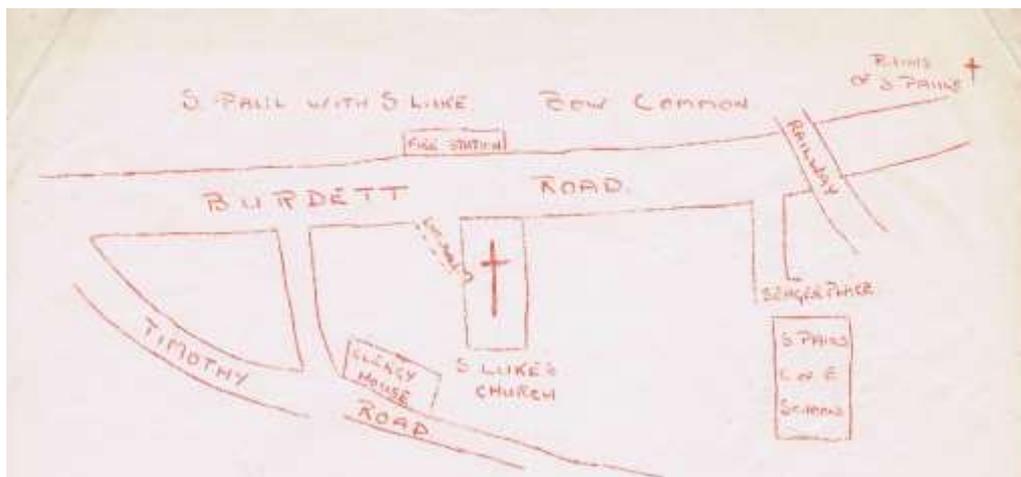
Another view of 1908 showing the interior of St. Luke's, Burdett Rd.



Below is a pre-War photograph, before the church was bombed in 1940, The array of statues give a flavour of the High Church tradition of this church at the time.



An admirable witness to the continuing work of the local church even after the War had done its worst! St. Paul's Church is shown as in ruins but the church was leafletting residents who remained in the parish, with this invitation to come to St. Luke's - even when your church is reduced to ruins and times are hard, your church is there for you and worship and church life continues! Admirable!



If a copy of this leaflet has been left at your house, it means that you live in the Parish of S. Paul with S. Luke, Sow Common, and if you claim to belong to the Church of England, S. Luke's, Burdett Rd is your church.

The above sketch is printed to show you where your church is. You can use it at any time, for it is open all day for quiet prayer, and you will be welcome at any service. The entrance is by the side door from Burdett Road. The chief Sunday service is at 10.0 a.m. Baptisms take place at the end of this, and all present are invited to meet together for refreshments in the Clergy House afterwards. Here you will find the Church in this place, meeting for worship and fellowship.

Our two priests and lady worker will help you at any time, in any way they can. You can find us at the Clergy House, Timothy Road. We shall be calling on you during the next few days, and shall be ready to answer any question you might like to ask about us, and what with God's help we are trying to do.

May God our Father guide and bless you.



Two views around 1953-54: on the left is a view of St. Luke's and, in the distance, the stump of the steeple of the bombed out St. Paul's Church, beyond the railway arches. On the right is a view of the Clergy House in Timothy Road behind the church.



Two views taken in 1919:

The upper view is of the west front of St. Luke's Church, seen from St. Dunstan's Rd. (later Timothy Rd.).

The main façade normally seen on photographs is the east front in Burdett Rd. accessed via a side entrance from the main road.

To the left of the church is the Vicarage and Church House.

The lower view is also from St. Dunstan's Rd. looking back at the church with the Vicarage in the foreground.

There is a later view of the Vicarage some years later in 1953/54 on the previous page.



Final views of the interior of St. Luke's in the time of Fr. Kirkby, during the 1950's



Churchgoing in our Area at around the peak of attendance in the early 1900's.

By the turn of the century two churches had been built in our immediate area as well as a lot of housing. The community was settled without, yet, the disruption of war or mass population movements. The churches were established parts of society and churchgoing was the norm, though by no means universal. The tables which follow give a snapshot of Christian religious adherence in Stepney in the year 1904.

Borough of Stepney									
CHURCH OF ENGLAND									
CHURCH.	MORNING.				EVENING.				Total for the Day.
	Men.	Women.	Chilrn.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Chilrn.	Total.	
St. Anne's, Limehouse . . .	67	129	194	390	165	195	470	830	1,220
St. James', Ratcliff . . .	16	17	26	59	19	46	60	125	184
St. John's, Limehouse . . .	15	53	60	128	14	10	81	105	233
St. George-in-the-East, Cannon Street Road . . .	46	37	51	134	46	202	72	320	454
Christ Church, Watney St. . .	45	45	108	198	29	71	54	145	343
St. John's, Grove Street . . .	11	10	27	48	17	25	14	56	104
St. Mary's, Johnson Street . . .	38	47	79	164	28	61	40	129	293
St. Peter's, London Docks . . .	153	147	584	884	51	67	90	208	1,092
St. Paul's, Shadwell . . .	15	11	114	140	18	17	19	54	194
St. Dunstan's, High Street . . .	99	172	145	416	107	261	94	462	878
St. Faith's, Shandy Street . . .	32	71	203	306	37	121	77	235	541
St. Augustine's, Sottles St. . .	123	296	132	551	64	185	34	283	834
St. Benet's, Mile End Road . . .	29	28	128	185	30	75	61	166	351
Christ Church, Jamaica St. . .	32	43	109	184	55	109	120	284	468
Holy Trinity, Tredegar Sq. . .	45	91	172	308	64	126	94	284	592
St. Luke's, Burdett Road . . .	14	9	40	63	13	16	45	74	137
St. Matthew's, Commercial Road East. . .	26	13	110	149	25	53	37	115	264
St. Paul's, St. Paul's Road . . .	43	87	243	373	39	109	92	240	613
St. Peter's, St. Peter's Road . . .	7	11	24	42	6	11	...	17	59
St. Philip's, Oxford Street . . .	44	172	60	276	47	139	70	256	532
St. Thomas', Arbour Square . . .	19	50	35	104	28	79	51	158	262
All Saints', Mile End New Town . . .	32	43	151	226	31	71	58	160	386
St. Olive's, Hanbury Street . . .	8	4	18	30	8	24	23	55	85
Christ Church, Spitalfields . . .	25	24	81	130	26	35	54	115	245
St. Mary's, Spitalfields . . .	10	11	43	64	22	27	75	124	188
St. Stephen's, Spitalfields . . .	10	8	59	77	21	39	49	109	186
St. Mary Matfelon, White- chapel . . .	89	112	70	271	434	315	148	897	1,168
St. Barnabas', Whitechapel . . .	3	3	48	54	5	12	74	91	145
St. Jude's, Whitechapel . . .	24	19	90	133	72	119	51	242	375
St. Mark's, Whitechapel . . .	23	10	59	92	29	41	34	104	196
St. Paul's, Whitechapel . . .	27	36	90	153	31	57	43	131	284
St. John of Wapping, Ch. St. . .	12	13	112	137	17	46	94	157	294
St. Peter ad Vincula, Tower of London. . .	114	36	30	180	3	5	53	61	241
Total . . .	1,296	1,858	3,495	6,649	1,592	2,769	2,431	6,792	13,441

As we can see, churchgoing was a far more popular thing to do in 1904 than it is a hundred years later! Even so, **only 5%** of the total population actually went to **Church of England churches** in our area, exceeded only by Nonconformists who were supported by 7% of the population and 3% going to Roman Catholic churches. In all 81% of the population didn't go to church at all.

At **St. Paul's, Bow Common** a huge 613 people went through the doors every Sunday! 148 adults went to church in the evening and 130 in the morning. However children (age 15 or under) formed 55% of those who went to church - 335 every

Sunday! Ours was the 5th most attended church in Stepney.

At **St. Luke's, Burdett Rd.**, 137 people went to church every Sunday with 62% of these being children.

Denominations gathering in Stepney on their holy days are shown, with the Church of England as the greatest gathering, with the Jewish 'Church' at 94% of that figure and Roman Catholics at 63%. Next came Evangelical Mission Churches at 53%.

In 1883 it was observed that, 'Out of 2,290 persons living in

consecutive houses at Bow Common, only 88 adults and 47 children ever attend [a place of worship]' - a situation that the observer blamed on the conditions in which they lived.

EAST LONDON—STEPNEY									
DENOMINATIONAL TOTALS									
DENOMINATION.	MORNING.				EVENING.				Total for the Day.
	Men.	Women.	Chilrn.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Chilrn.	Total.	
Church of England . . .	1,296	1,858	3,495	6,649	1,592	2,769	2,431	6,792	13,441
" " Missions . . .	36	28	449	513	226	257	454	937	1,450
Wesleyan Meth. Church . . .	184	217	678	1,079	386	677	1,010	2,073	3,152
Primitive Meth. Church . . .	32	11	118	161	280	83	160	523	684
Welsh Cal. Meth. Church . . .	21	4	15	40	49	71	47	167	207
U. Meth. Free Church . . .	11	15	85	111	17	29	38	84	195
Baptist Church . . .	397	353	538	1,288	540	1,004	483	2,027	3,315
" Mission . . .	...	...	...	...	3	2	5	10	10
Congregational Church. . .	259	256	702	1,217	915	602	579	2,156	3,373
" Missions . . .	26	34	191	251	125	224	679	1,028	1,279
Presbyterian Church . . .	35	39	44	118	48	69	46	163	281
Evan. Mission Services. . .	467	417	1,916	2,100	778	1,532	1,353	3,663	5,763
Unitarian Church . . .	5	2	68	75	21	32	58	111	186
Brethren . . .	55	46	11	112	61	55	22	138	250
Society of Friends. . .	195	171	64	430	49	106	131	286	716
Salvation Army . . .	45	35	21	101	306	277	38	621	722
Foreign Prot. Services . . .	146	80	52	278	130	69	13	212	490
Roman Catholic Church . . .	1,409	2,607	2,529	6,545	439	750	668	1,857	8,402
Other Services . . .	114	133	262	509	347	463	280	1,090	1,599
Jewish Church . . .	7,959	1,106	3,562	12,627	...	...	...	...	12,627
Grand Totals . . .	12,692	7,412	14,100	34,204	6,312	9,131	8,495	23,938	58,142