

To survive these night-time temperatures the snowdrop closes up, keeping in the little warmth it has been able to gather from the weak winter sun in the daytime: a meagre store of energy, but enough to survive the night.

Little wonder then that at Rode Hall they provide such an attraction and draw so many each year to admire them during February and March.

The name 'Snowdrop' was not always associated with these flowers. They were more commonly known as the 'Fair Maids of February' or 'Candlemas Bells' and village girls would pick bunches of them to wear as a posie to symbolise their purity. We know them today, however, by their more familiar name which describes perfectly this little jewel of a flower: a real drop of snow white purity and a flash of vivid green amidst the colourless landscape of winter.



Welcome to All Saints' Church Odd Rode



Services at All Saints'

- 1st Sunday of the month - 8.00am No service
10.30am Sung Eucharist
6.30pm Evensong
- 2nd Sunday of the month - 9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am All Age Worship (*Laity lead*)
- 3rd Sunday of the month - 8.00am No service
10.30am Sung Eucharist
- 4th Sunday of the month - 8.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Sung Eucharist
- 5th Sunday of the month - 9.00am Holy Communion
10.30am Joint Parish Service (*Alternate churches*)

For further information on the activities and services of the three churches in our parish - please use the website www.oddrodeparish.org

Scholar Green



The building of All Saints' Odd Rode

Randle Wilbraham of Rode Hall commissioned Gilbert Scott (an architect so admired by the Victorians) to draw up plans for a church in the new parish of Odd Rode.

This new church was designed in late C13th style and Pevsner (the architectural critic of post-war Britain) has called it a triumph of academic type - of good Gothic design.

The foundation stone was laid in June 1863 and the builder was John Gallimore from Newcastle-under-Lyme. Stone was used from the quarries of Mow Cop and Kerridge at Macclesfield. Gallimore, who was also a joiner, made the timber roof, which Gilbert Scott likened to the ribs of a ship. He also made the pews to the architect's design.

Scott was also working on the Albert Memorial and he used some of the sub contractors on both schemes. J B Philip, for instance, who carved the statue of Jesus over the West door and F A Skidmore who provided the ornamental ironwork screen to the Chantry.

The Chantry (behind the choir stalls) is where the Wilbraham family still sit on a Sunday. Here can be seen a stone rosette from the church of St Vladimir in the Crimea, sent back by Randle's brother Richard during the war.



Note the stone columns, polished like marble, the decorative stone capitals and especially the sculpture of the bird, placed so that Randle and his wife Sibella could see it from their pew.

Randle and Sibella Wilbraham's memorial is the marble reredos behind the altar. It was installed in 1887 and is a representation of Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper*



The church was built in a year. The parishioners had generously contributed to the furnishings but then the bills started to arrive like hailstones in a blizzard. The unfortunate Gallimore wrote on September 30th 1864 that he was unable to meet his liabilities due to having underestimated the cost of labour and everyone is demanding payment of their bills. His liabilities were £1,721.7d.

Randle Wilbraham then settled £1,000 over the £5,913/13/6d final bill as he said he would not worship in a church that had broken a man. He was by this time also in overdraft. His payment to Minton of £84.9s.0d for the floor tiles had caused a deficit. This coincided with the outbreak of the dreaded cattle disease (foot and mouth), which caused all the rents at Rode to be cut off and Randle was forced to mortgage his estate.

Snowdrops

Each year thousands of visitors flock to our parish: they come to see the magnificent collection of snowdrops that has been nurtured over many years in the grounds of Rode Hall.

Though a familiar sight, snowdrops are not native plants in the UK. They are not recorded as growing widely in Britain until the late eighteenth century. Though certainly native to Brittany in Northern France they were first planted in this country in monastic gardens in the medieval period and only after that were either self-propagated or were deliberately planted elsewhere. Despite their small size and fragile appearance, snowdrops are incredibly hardy. They are found at altitudes up to 2,700 metres and can survive in temperatures as low as minus fifteen Celsius.