

D. J. Fox

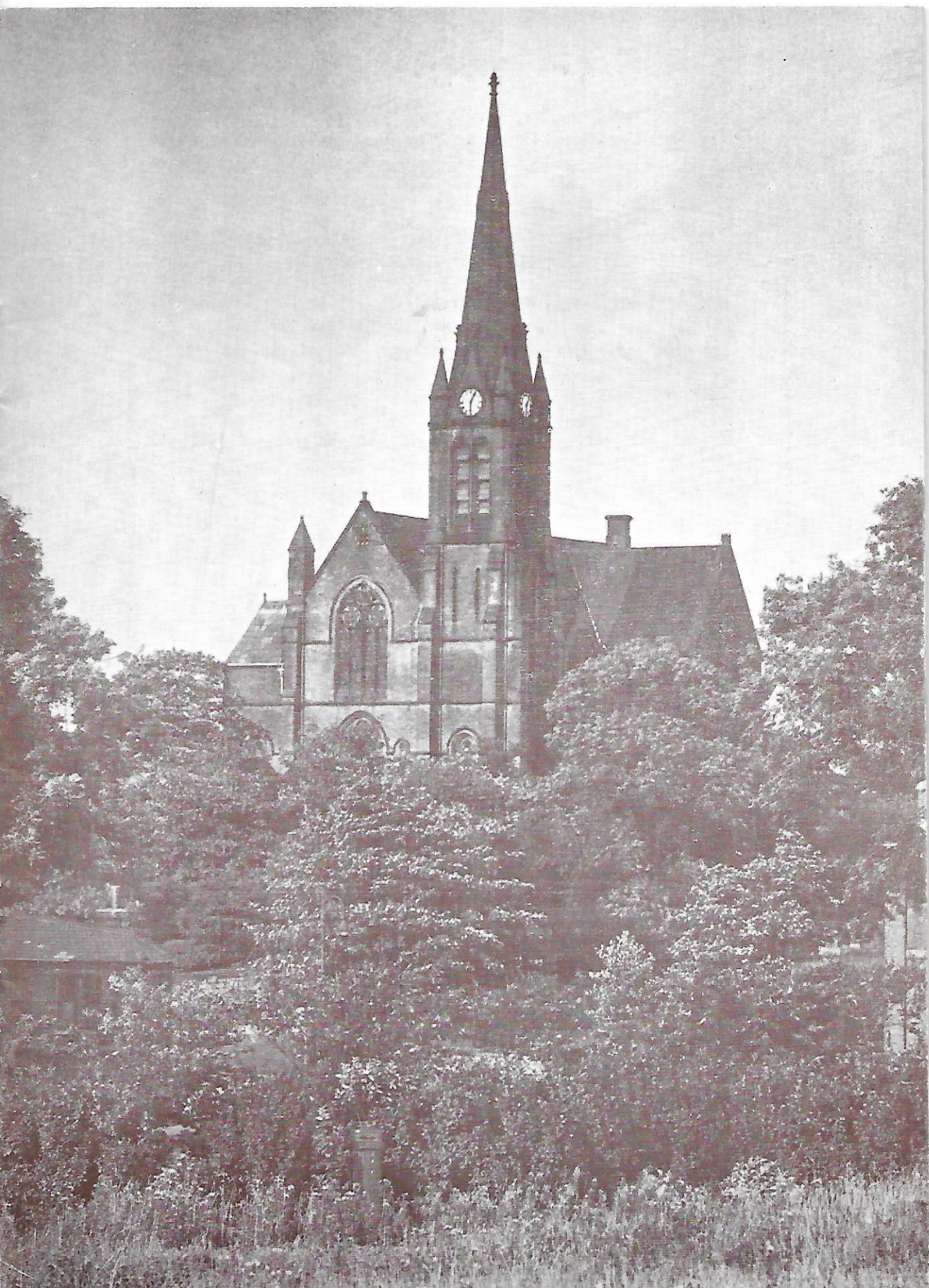
1650

St. Mary's-in-the-Wood
Congregational Church

1950

IF the church of our day were to become just another mutual benefit society or social centre, the soul of it would die. If on the other hand, it concerned itself only with sanctimonious ceremonies and pious phrases, it would lose contact with this world's realities. It would be of little importance to write down the history of such a church, for, as Carlyle has reminded us, "The history of the Church is the history of the invisible as well as of the visible Church.

In this our day and generation we should be prepared to learn a lesson from the story of our forefathers in their weakness and in their strength. We should be more realistic than the pagan can ever be, facing our human life as we know it with all its hopes and fears, its laughter and love and tears. We should be more earnest in meeting the problems of pain and evil in the world, willing to be burden-bearers for the Master's sake, knowing that He is in our midst whenever and wherever we gather to serve His Kingdom. Let us encourage one another in every kindly thought and good work, believing that we are surrounded by an unseen cloud of witnesses who belong with us to the mighty Church Invisible and Invincible. Let us, then, live bravely and happily as those who deal with heavenly merchandise, and at the end of their labours have a rendezvous with immortality.



“Ye Churche of St. Mary’s in Morlege Woode”

HISTORICALLY, Troy Hill is one of the most ancient parts of Morley, and the sanctuary thereon, which is now known as St. Mary’s-in-the-Wood Congregational Church, stands upon ground that was hallowed long before William came to conquer. With the Morley sky-line of to-day pierced by so many stacks, reminding us of busy mills, and the streets vibrating to the sound of so many buses and lorries driving in from the surrounding cities, it is difficult to imagine Troy Hill and the surrounding countryside as it appeared in the days when the Light of the Christian Faith first came to this Island, and kindled hope in the hearts of the natives who then lived on these seven hills.

The slopes of Banks Hill and that of Troy were covered with pine, oak and beech trees, and rising from the stream, the sides of the valley were strewn thick with broom and gorse, with bilberry and blackberry bushes. Down the valley tiny bee-shaped huts, made of twigs and branches covered with mud and clay, marked the dwelling-places of those men and women who left no written page to tell us their story. As like as not, they built a caer, or fortress, on the summit of Troy Hill, from whence they could protect themselves in times of danger; and amongst the crags and trees they practised their mysterious rites and raised their monuments to the dead. It is even possible that Troy Hill was once a place where Druidic priests gathered to worship and make sacrifice. Wolves and boars still infested the woods around, and here and there in the clearings were little patches of corn, oats and flax. Whilst some of the ground was given over to the needs of cattle, pigs, goats and sheep, men were carefully cultivating the open ground. But there were morasses and swamps abounding in this area, and probably the nature of the countryside gave rise to its name. Primitive men called the swamp and marshland by the name of Mor—so this became Morlege—“the district of swamps and morasses.”

In this area, now so changed to our eyes, early Christians dedicated a piece of ground to the worship of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. There are strong indications that a sanctuary was erected in early days on Troy Hill, the heart of Morlege and the hub of the Roman road system hereabouts. The holy shrine may have had a Roman or Celtic origin; but tradition holds firmly that in the days of the Anglo-Saxon settlement this site was chosen for a Christian place of worship. If built by the Saxons, then it was in all likelihood a wooden structure erected in a clearing among the trees, and distinguishable from the Saxon dwellings rather by its dimensions than by any special architectural features.

It was at this time that Princess Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, the Christian King of Kent, came up north with her Roman missionary, Paulinus, to marry Edwin, the pagan King of Northumbria. Not long after their marriage the King was baptized into the Christian Church. Paulinus was sent around the northern kingdom to preach the Glad Tidings. He went from York to Dewsbury, and, passing along the roads, he would quite probably travel along the road that led by way of Morlege, and so visit the only Church in this neighbourhood, the church in the woodland on Troy Hill.

During the centuries that followed, Christian work and worship touched the lives of many people throughout the northern kingdom. Preaching stations were established, and stone crosses erected to mark the sacred ground from which the Word of God was being unfolded. The strange, square stone, which even now lies in the churchyard of St. Mary's-in-the-Wood, is considered to be the base of one of these early crosses.

Can we visualize our forefathers climbing the long hill, rising from what we now know as Churwell, and coming from Tingley and Gildersome, through pasture and woodland to Troy Hill, to listen to a brown-robed monk bow in prayer before God in a little chancel on the hill? Many gifts were made in those days to the sanctuaries of Christendom. It was the custom to present land, together with the families living thereon, for the maintenance of priests and places of worship. By the time of the Norman Conquest,

one third of the land was in the possession of church authorities, and was, therefore, exempt from all taxes. It is supposed that the land now known as Longcroft, which belongs to St. Mary's to this day, was a part of such an ancient gift.

The spreading light of Christian faith and teaching seemed for a time to be clouded over, when the Normans, under William the Conqueror, came north to subdue the stoutly resisting English on the Plains of York. The Plains covered an area stretching from the Humber to the Tyne, and included Morley. For a long time, Christian men and women had awaited the Millenium, the end of the Ages in the year, 1000 A.D., but this cruel invasion of their peaceful homesteads seemed to be the end of everything. Towns, villages and manors were destroyed; the land lay waste for nine years, and during the winter of 1069, about 100,000 people died of cold and starvation. Some sold themselves into slavery, rather than die of hunger.

The utter desolation of the land tells its own pitiful story in the phrase which occurs in the Domesday Book—"the land is waste". In this amazing book of surveyance and census, we read:

"In Morley, Dunstan had six carucates of land for geld (subject to taxes), and six ploughs can be there. Ilbert has it, but it is waste. Pasturable woodland, one league long and one broad. In the time of King Edward, value forty shillings".

Dunstan is the first person of whom we have record by name in ancient Morley references. He was a wealthy thane, or landowner, of Danish descent. His Hall was close to Troy Hill, so that the priest might act as his private chaplain. The fields in those days were grouped centrally towards the hill and church. There were orchards, woodlands, pasture-grounds and cultivated fields, and the little huts of the inhabitants straggled round the outer edge of the tilled ground. The distribution of the tilled ground in this area remained very much the same for eight hundred years, that is until 1830. The taxable value of the six hundred acres around the church was forty shillings in the days of Edward the Confessor

(1041-1066). There would, of course, be some additional land, tilled by the clergy, which, according to custom, was exempt from taxes. After the Normans had subdued their opponents, William set up a Royal Commission to value every piece of land throughout the country. A thorough census was made of all oxen, asses, swine and sheep. All properties and people came within this survey. Morley at that time was capital of the "Morley Wapentake," a group of at least thirty-seven towns, and consequently the king's deputies sat in St. Mary's Church to gather their information concerning land, live-stock and people. Thus it came about that the following entry was made in the Domesday Book:

"According to the verdict of the men of Morlege Wapentake, concerning the Church of St. Mary, which is in Morley Wood, the King has a Moiety (half share) of the three festivals of St. Mary's, which belongs to Wakefield. Ilbert and the priests who serve the church have all the rest."

Ilbert, mentioned in these notes, was a certain powerful and wealthy Norman Count, named Ilbert de Lacy, who came to this "thridding" on behalf of William, and stripped Dunstan, the Danish thane, of all his property. He took possession of the hall and lands and the church. Ilbert was a person to be reckoned with even by the king himself. The king conferred upon him 164 manors in various parts of the country. De Lacy became First Lord of the Manor of Morley, and later, the title of Baron of Pontefract was added to his honours. In Pontefract the count built himself a castle worthy of a king. The Domesday Book entry concerning the offerings at the three festivals of St. Mary's, hints at a dispute which arose between the count and the king on this matter.

About the year 1120 A.D., Robert, the son of Ilbert de Lacy, erected a chancel on Troy Hill. Traces of this chancel are said to have been found when the Old Chapel was being demolished in 1875. Robert founded the Church of Batley, and reduced St. Mary's to a Chapelry dependent upon Batley, thus transferring a share of the tithes of St. Mary's to the Batley Church. Both churches were afterwards handed over to the Nostell Priory, and St. Mary's began to decline. The de Lacy family died out, and the Morley Manor and lands

passed out of their possession to that of another influential Norman family. Our Church to-day owes a great deal to a young lady of this latter family, a woman named Euphemia. She married a nobleman named Nicholas de Rotherfield, and together they lived near to Troy Hill as Lord and Lady of the Manor. They wanted a chapel and a chaplain, and therefore made application to the Prior of Nostell Priory. A licence was granted, and thus the fabric of the long neglected chapel on the hill was either restored or rebuilt, and then re-dedicated to God in the name of St. Nicholas, the patron saint of de Rotherfield's family.

This Norman Chapel stood for over two hundred years, when, in 1322, a division of the Scottish Army swept the country and ravaged far and wide, laying waste towns and villages from Carlisle to York. They wintered in Morley, and when the town had served their purpose they destroyed it. The church on the hill seems to have also suffered in this, for when the Old Chapel was being demolished, the ancient Norman wall stones bore the scorch marks of intense heat. The Morley people with native courage bent stoutly to the task of restoring the burnt chapel, and doing what they could, they made it one of the best buildings in the town, for this was to them the House of the King of Kings.

Just before the time when Shakespeare came into the world, a tithe-barn was built on Troy Hill for the purpose of receiving the produce of the rectory and the tithes of the parish. By the time Shakespeare laid down his pen, this barn was converted and became the nave of the chapel. Side aisles were added to enlarge it, and about the time of the Declaration of Indulgence by James II, the barn-section and the old portion of the chapel were combined, forming one building with the nave and chancel. This in time came to be known as "The Old Chapel". It lost the name of St. Nicholas, and was called again by its original name, St. Mary's-in-the-Wood.

The story of St. Mary's is also the story of our Morley ancestors in their homesteads around the Hill of Troy. Here amidst the trees men had worshipped God in diverse ways. Here, in the clearer light of the Christian Faith, the power

of the Druid priests died, and a new hope was kindled in human hearts. Here the Celtic gave way to the Roman form of Christian worship; and the Roman Church held sway until Henry VIII fell in love with Anne Boleyn. The destiny of unborn millions was being shaped because of their meeting; and with them the destiny of St. Mary's and its people. Henry's decision to get a divorce from Catherine, his first wife, led to a rupture between the Church of England and Rome. Henry defied the Pope, and he himself became Head of the Church of England. So the links between St. Mary's and the Roman Church were broken by royal decree, and the Church became Protestant. As the pages turn, we read a story of a vigorous Christian people seeking freedom—freedom to worship God as they felt in their hearts He was calling them. And we see Congregationalism coming to birth.

Royal Coat of Arms



Charles The Second

"The Quest for Freedom"

WE take up our story of St. Mary's in that period of history, over three hundred years ago, when men were striving for a purer expression of the Christian Faith. It was feared by some that the Church of England, which had shaken off the yoke of Rome in the reign of Henry VIII, might again be corrupted by Romanish influences. Many of the extreme Protestants disliked the use of the Prayer Book, and objected to the elaborate ritual and sacred images and crosses. They regarded formal prayers as lacking in spiritual power and feeling, and in their earnest efforts to "purify" the worship of the Church, they came to be known as Puritans.

The Puritans were tolerated at first; but when they became troublesome to the government, laws were passed against them and penalties were inflicted. Queen Elizabeth in dictatorial fashion determined that the Established Church should exercise religious supremacy in England. Not only was the Pope's authority destroyed in this country, but both priests and people were ordered to conform to the royal decrees regarding religious worship with threats of punishment and imprisonment of those who disobeyed. Priests were required to acknowledge Elizabeth as Supreme Head of the Church, and to use the revised Protestant Second Prayer Book of Edward VI, and to accept the statement of doctrine contained in the Thirty-Nine Articles of Belief. It was a penal offence to hold services anywhere except in a church. It was a punishable offence to hold family prayers in a private house if any visitors were present. Many people who broke this law were flung into prison: the fight for religious freedom was on in real earnest.

Fifteen people were cast into Bridewell Gaol, London. But they elected their own minister and a deacon, and the brave little band called themselves "The Privye Church in London." They drew up a kind of constitution, declaring in the words of Jesus Christ, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in

My Name, there am I." Even here in prison they could find fellowship with one another and communion with their Lord and Master, and here where they were thus assembled they were the "church." No earthly monarch could debar them this. Their petition was sent to Queen Elizabeth: it still exists. The minister and his deacon died of gaol-fever; but to-day Memorial Hall, the Headquarters of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, stands on the site of that prison where those brave people bore witness for Him Whose Service is perfect freedom and perfect joy.

This shackling of the religious life of the people made the extreme Protestants more defiant. The Puritans were particularly strong in the north, and here in Morley the conflict was continued with tremendous vigour. A Puritan form of worship was introduced in St. Mary's Chapel. The earliest indication of this in available records is in the account given of the ministry of Rev. Samuel Wales, a Presbyterian of the days of James I, a devout Puritan, and a true pioneer of Non-conformity. He was a man after the heart of most Morley folk in those days, and St. Mary's strengthened itself under his ministry.

Of what happened in the Old Chapel immediately after the period of his ministry, we can glean very little; but we do know that the country was passing through crucial years. The struggle between Charles I and the Parliamentarians developed into the Great Civil War. Cromwell and his Ironsides were victorious, and the soldier from Huntingdon became Lord Protector of England. The power of the Puritans was increased in the days of the Commonwealth, and, although St. Mary's Chapel continued to be a dependency of the Church at Batley, the Puritans held sway in Morley. At this time, the Lord of the Manor, the second Earl of Sussex, was so much in sympathy with the Puritans in the neighbourhood that he gave expression to it by granting the Presbyterians of St. Mary's Chapel a lease of "One p'cell of Land called Chapell Yeard wherein the Chapell of Morley now standeth . . . And all the singular tithes of corne, grayne, grasse, and hay . . . all that Dwelling House, one Croft, and orchard . . . One close of Land known by name of Longcroft, . . . to have and to hould until the full end and term of Five Hundred Years, for the benefit of a Preaching Minister at the Chapell of Morley."

(It is interesting to record here that by a Deed of Conveyance, dated 31st July, 1950, the freehold of the above mentioned land has been secured, and is now in the keeping of the trustees of the Church).

According to Whitaker, an antiquarian churchman, this circumstance in the history of Protestantism in England (whereby the Puritans owned the parish church and grounds) "remains, perhaps, the only instance throughout England and Wales of an ancient established place of worship—a parish church—which was not restored to the Established Church at the Restoration." So, although nominally St. Mary's at the time was under the care of the Established Church at Batley, the Vicar's deputy in charge at Morley was a Puritan. But, with the Restoration of the Monarchy, King Charles and his advisors determined to crush Puritanism. In 1662, the Act of Uniformity was passed, which required all persons to attend the services of the Established Church, and all clergymen to conform to the Book of Common Prayer. Two thousand clergymen refused and were ejected. Here we come upon the terms "Nonconformists" and "Dissenters." The Rev. Etherington, who was then the Vicar's deputy at St. Mary's, conformed and pledged himself to conduct services in accordance with the tenets of the Established Church. No doubt, the Puritans in Morley resented this, and Etherington left in the following year under a cloud. Whilst the deputy held services in the orthodox form at St. Mary's Chapel until about 1689, only about a dozen attended. During this period, however, the people of St. Mary's who desired the Nonconformist way of worship gathered privately under the pastoral care of their own minister.

The Rev. Christopher Nesse, M.A., was their pastor in these days. If only we had a record of his ministry, we could read a story of heroic men and women who, in peril of persecution, came together to praise God and hear His Word. In singing they dared not raise their voices, lest they would be overheard. Every magistrate was expected to hound them down; informers were everywhere, letters were intercepted, families were broken up, and devout worshippers were outrageously taken off to prison. The gaols were soon crowded with such unfortunate

people, and many died of gaol fever. During the days of Nesse the persecution was at its height. The names of at least sixty thousand Nonconformists have been collected, who in those dreadful times suffered in various ways for their principles. Nearly eight thousand died in prison during the reign of the so-called "Merry Monarch," and we shall never know how many died in exile from their native land. Many of the Nonconformist preachers endured poverty, often receiving only two or three shillings for their services as they stood in the aisle of a church to which they had come to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. Before God, can we be fainthearted or indifferent in our worship when the very ground is hallowed by those unseen witnesses? Should we not live worthier of their sacrifices and try to make their dearest dreams come true? We may not know the names of our forefathers who bore so bravely through those years of trouble in St. Mary's, but let us be glad that their names are in the "Golden Book" among the unforgotten of God.

In 1689, when William and Mary were proclaimed King and Queen of England, the Act of Toleration was passed, and preaching licences were granted to Nonconforming ministers, provided they took the oath of allegiance. The Rev. Joseph Dawson, a son of Abraham Dawson of Morley, applied for a licence, and in July a certificate was granted by the Leeds Sessions, in the following terms:

"To certify yt Joseph Dawson of Morley, Clerk, doth make use of his house in Morley to assemble in for ye service of God as allowed by a late Act of Parliament."

So it came about that the Parsonage House, standing on the site of our present Sunday School, in Back Lane (now Commercial Street) became a place of worship for the Morley Nonconformists. The old Chapel of St. Mary's had been claimed by the Established Church, but the trustees of St. Mary's held tightly to their deeds, and appropriated the rent from the leased land towards the maintenance of their ministers. So the maintenance of the Old Chapel became increasingly difficult, as there were no endowments and few worshippers who were ready to conform to the Established Church's form of worship. Eventually an arrangement was made whereby the Established Church authorities gracefully made way for the

rightful owners, and the people of Morley were able to return to their own spiritual home in the Old Chapel. The Rev. J. Dawson, in the pastoral charge during this period, remained in the ministry of St. Mary's until he died in 1709.

In one sense the battle was over and won, and now the people of St. Mary's could sing their hymns and psalms without fear of being overheard and harried off to prison for worshipping God as they felt to be right. But the worship of the Almighty God involves an exercise of body, mind and spirit; and men's thoughts concerning His will should not remain static, but continue to find nourishment and grow, bearing ever lovelier blossom and fruit, and the Christian Faith should seek to render the noblest service possible in its own generation. As one might imagine, therefore, in St. Mary's the modes of worship and of religious thought were undergoing many changes in the passage of years, as the hearts and minds of men contended for those things they deemed enduringly good and true.

Whosoever wishes to ponder for awhile over the old records will find that those who ministered in St. Mary's during the past three centuries were men of varying schools of theological thought. It is not for us here to attempt to wrestle in our minds with such doctrinal intricacies, it is sufficient for us to note that among those who stood in that long prophetic line, there were men in St. Mary's courageous enough to reason out before God the meaning and purpose of life, and ready to express their convictions. It is thus that Congregational worship reaches out to a fuller and richer interpretation of God's Word.

In the meantime, the "Old Chapel," or "T'owd Chapel," as the Morley people affectionately called it, was showing signs of structural weakness. The very stones bore silent witness of five hundred years of history. Within these walls had been heard the sound of Roman Ritual, Reformed Liturgy and Puritan Prayers, and during the cruel days of the Black Death, in times of small-pox and plague, many a soul had come heavy-hearted to this sanctuary to seek the help and comfort of God. But in 1875 the Old Chapel was deemed unsafe. It was therefore demolished, and the present church was built—men called it "the new" St. Mary's-in-the-Wood Congregational Church.

There are some good friends with us here to-day who can recall the time of its erection. If only we could look farther back to that "distant scene," when "T'owd Chapel" was in its prime. Perhaps we would meet Ben, the old chapel-keeper, who on finding the Royal Coat of Arms of King Charles the Second lying in the chapel broken into fragments, went running to the minister's house crying in wild dismay, "Old Dagon has tumbled down and broken to bits!" Ben was the son of a "dog-whipper". The "dog-whipper" was the term given to the one whose office it was to keep good conduct among the people in chapel, to rouse the sleepers overcome by the long sermon, and to bring in any who broke the Sabbath law in not attending divine worship. Let us follow the dog-whipper, as he goes along Back Lane with the sexton and constable, after the pastor has begun his sermon, to search the highways and lanes for Sabbath desecrators. After wandering round for half an hour or so, we find them returning; but they *pass* the gate of St. Mary's and go round to the "Fleece," where a goodly fire is blazing, and where we find some of the choir members from the chapel sitting behind their tankards of ale. Yes, they have slyly crept down the stairs of the gallery as soon as parson gave out his text. The old St. Mary's bell, striking twelve, will give them ample warning; and, sure enough, as it sounds the hour, they make their way back and creep into their places a little flushed after their escapade. We go into the chapel during evening service. There is no order about the pews: they are all shapes and sizes, and it is very cold, for there is no heating, and only candles light the building. Many of these people have come from outlying districts, trudging along narrow footpaths and through wastes. A few of them are farmers' wives who have travelled here on pillioned horses. The pastor announces the closing hymn and the congregation turn about to face the choir and organ in the back gallery, and thus they sing their praises. In the spirit we join them, and would deepen our fellowship with them, as they worship our fathers' God.

'T'Owd' Chapel



The original Saxon building was, no doubt, comparatively small. The Norman structure, of a later date, remained partially intact with the chancel end of the Old Chapel depicted above. This chancel was built of rough cobble stones that had never been shaped or cut with tools of any sort. The nave or body of the chapel was at one time the tithe barn of the Lord of the Manor of Morley, but later it was joined to the chancel in the 16th century, thus making the building more commodious for the increasing population of the town. The gallery was a further addition made at the end of the 17th century. One or two other alterations were made before the building was finally demolished in 1875, and the new St. Mary's was erected on the site extending several feet in every direction beyond the limits of the Old Chapel.

This church, dedicated on 5th September, 1878, is of Gothic design. Its stone was hewn from the Northowram quarries, near Halifax. The beautifully proportioned tower and spire reach to the height of one hundred and seventy feet from the ground. The building is about one hundred feet long, and forty-five feet across the nave. The roof is open timbered, and many of the windows are adorned with lovely stained glass memorials.

St. Mary's-in-the-Wood Congregational Church.

1650—TERCENTENARY—1950



FREDERICK BARNES B.A.
1862 — 1865



GEORGE SOUTHEY B.A.
1866 — 1875



JOHN MORRIS D.D.
1842 — 1854



JAMES WONNACOTT
1854 — 1860



WILLIAM ANDERTON M.A.
1877 — 1884



AMBROSE SHEPHERD D.D.
1885 — 1891



FREDERICK H. CARR
1945 —



D. LINCOLN JONES B.A., B.D.
1891 — 1900



JOHN W. HOLDSWORTH
1900 — 1906



WILTON E. RIX M.A.
1907 — 1911



HENRY A. INGLIS M.A.
1913 — 1923



A. GRAHAM ELDRIDGE
1926 — 1933



FREDERICK W. TUGWELL B.A.
1935 — 1940

THE MINISTERS

1627- — Samuel Wales
— 1662—Samuel Etherington
1665-1671—Christopher Nesse, M.A.
1673-1674—David Noble, M.A.
1674-1675—Samuel Bailey,
1675-1677—Thomas Sharp, M.A.
1677-1680—Robert Pickering, M.A.
1688-1709—Joseph Dawson
1709-1763—Timothy Alfred
1763-1794—Thomas Morgan
1795-1803—Samuel Lucas
1806-1807— Spencer
1807-1815— Duncan
1817-1837—Abraham Hudswell

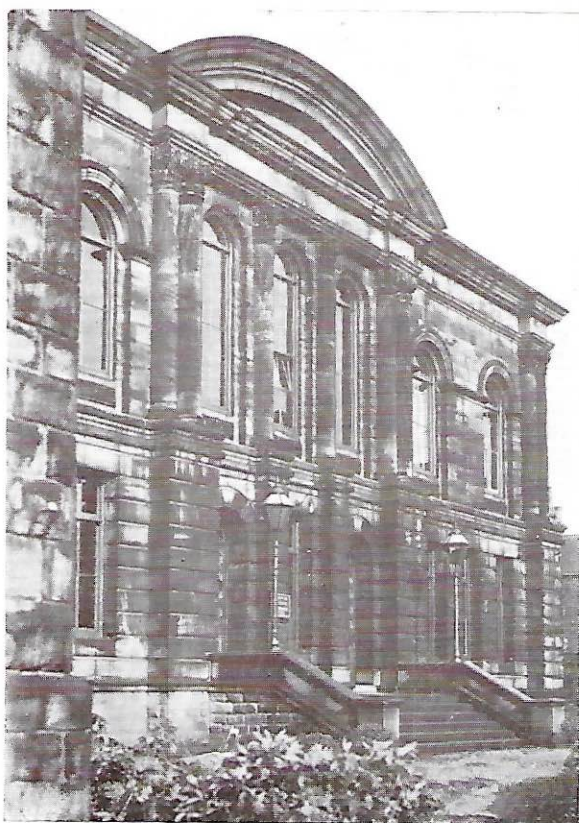
1837-1841—Joseph Fox
1842-1854—Joseph Morris, D.D.
1854-1860—James Wonnacott
1862-1865—Frederick Barnes, B.A.
1866-1875—George Southey, B.A.
1877-1884—William E. Anderton, M.A.
1885-1891—Ambrose Shepherd, D.D.
1891-1900—D. Lincoln Jones, B.A., B.D.
1900-1906—John W. Holdsworth
1907-1911—Wilton E. Rix, M.A.
1913-1923—Henry A. Inglis, M.A.
1926-1933—A. Graham Eldridge
1935-1940—Frederick W. Tugwell, B.A.
1945- —Frederick H. Carr



THE PULPIT

. . . should not be associated with formal, unbending solemnity. It should be the place from which men and women may hear, through the heart and mind of the preacher, the Word of God speaking to the needs of their day, and showing them how our human everyday life is illumined with meaning and blest with purpose.

What, if infinitives are split and sentences are broken, so long as the preacher speaks plainly and sincerely, with prayerful thought and good courage, so that the waverers and wanderers long for the Father's arms again, so that the hungry are fed with the Bread of Life, and the honest doubters are girded by renewed faith. Then, if burdened souls find strength, and the weary find peace, and if the bewildered and troubled feel assured that God is able and willing to carry them through, the preacher's words are not in vain. The Lord who loves and redeems has stood beside him.



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THE ABUNDANT LIFE

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The Sunday School is a splendid structure, of which our forefathers must have been justly proud. It was erected in 1900 and stands on the site of the old Parsonage, opposite the Morley Library. It is a commodious place and has a story all its own of many activities extending over the last half a century. This brief survey, however, is not intended to be historical. Rather it is to serve as a kind of documentary picture of some of the activities now familiar to the friends of St. Mary's in this Year of Grace—1950.

During the Second World War, when the whole of the Sunday School building was requisitioned by the West Riding County Council, a Children's Corner was introduced in the north end of the church transept, and Sunday School services were conducted by the teachers through those difficult and

dangerous days. The present Minister came up with his family from the south-west on V.J. Day to begin his ministry; but it was not until 1947 that the school premises were relinquished and again were available to us. Then the Sunday School scholars and teachers held a lovely Dedication Service and a family gathering with the parents marked the "home-coming." The Sunday School is at present made up of Beginners, Primary, Intermediate and Bible Classes. The Bible Class is composed of "young men and maidens" in their teen ages, and is in charge of the minister. Special services are usually held in the Church.

Fortunately, the Fellowship Room was released to us in 1945, and social activities were commenced without delay. A St. Mary's Guild was formed for people of all ages. The aim of the Guild, which has thrived happily ever since, is "to strengthen and enrich the life and fellowship of those who join, to find and foster the latent talents thus discovered, and to be a means of mutual instruction and helpfulness." The Guild has been well supported and has brought the members and friends of St. Mary's together as a big family with debates and devotional evenings, music, drama and song, quizzes and question-times, lectures and all manner of experiments to deepen the spiritual and social life of its members.

A number of Church and Guild members entered the Leeds and District Congregational Churches Festival held in 1947, and St. Mary's carried off awards for painting, needlework, crochet-work, elocution, music and singing. A dramatic group was formed, and presented "The House with the Twisty Windows." Esme Church, of the Bradford Civic Theatre, highly commended the players and they were awarded first prize in the drama section. So the St. Mary's Players were established. They made it their aim and purpose "to develop and encourage the vocal, musical and dramatic talents of its members; to promote good entertainment for the community; to serve the Church and other worthy causes; and to foster and enrich an ever-increasing company in a great fellowship."

A spacious stage was erected in the school hall, and before the first performance of "Pink String and Sealing

Ter-centenary Diaconate with Minister and Choirmaster



MR. MAURICE SYKES
Deacon, Church Treasurer and Organist

MR. J. W. DENNIS CHAPMAN
Choirmaster

MR. S. G. PRIESTLEY
Deacon and Church Secretary

REV. FREDERICK H. CARR
Minister

MR. SAM WESTERMAN
Deacon

MR. ALBERT GLOVER
Deacon and Choir President

MISS D. M. HEMINGWAY
Deacon

MR. LORENZO BARRON
Deacon

MISS ADA STEAD
Life Deacon

MR. ALEX WILSON, J.P.
Deacon

MISS RENE GOALBY
Deacon

Also: **MR. THOMAS FOX** (Life Deacon)
and **MRS. H. APTLEYARD** (Deacon)



Within These Hallowed Walls

As we approach St. Mary's-in-the-Wood from Queen Street, the building soaring high above us bears a graceful dignity, and over the walls that skirt Troy Hill, blossoms of Azalea, Hawthorn and Rhododendron bend their fragrant sprays. Here, in the heart of a busy town, is an Old-World picture that is constantly renewed.

Passing through the gate, we mount the first flight of steps and climb the pathway bright with Old English Flowers. Shall we slip into church by way of the vestry-end? We have the key! We follow the narrow path on the south side, threading our way between graves that remind us of generations long gone to their rest. Yonder on our right is the Mausoleum, erected by the Scatcherd Family, and, as we lift our eyes to its grim, grey walls, we see near a willow an ancient sun-dial, and a strange square stone which is believed to be the base of an old preaching cross from Saxon times. Near to the vestry door, we pause to marvel at the detailed clearness of inscriptions on tombstones which have withstood the winds and rains of nigh three hundred years.

Come in, please! Here we are in the vestry! It's a small place, quite neat and trim, but it also bears remembrances of the past. Above the door is a clock which ticked the hours away before William and Mary became King and Queen of this land—maybe, in the days of the Merry Monarch! The clock ticks solidly on—but never tells us a word. That photograph over the cupboard is that of Herbert James Hemingway. It is a composite picture, made up of several photographs, and giving us a charming likeness of one who was a good servant of God in this church. Alongside is an illuminated list of St. Mary's pastors from 1627 to the present day. On the opposite wall are grouped photographs of those who have ministered in St. Mary's during the past century and beside it a print of the Old Chapel as it stood in 1830.

Let us go into the church! We turn into the chancel and face the east window. This is the First World War Memorial Window. Beneath the rose window high in the chancel the four upper lights depict Christ as King, Shepherd, Judge and Healer. The four lower lights portray four Biblical Stories. A Tablet beneath keeps in remembrance those who served and died through those days of conflict 1914-1918. The organ on our right, a beautifully toned instrument, is an enrichment to all our services, and is in the good care of our gifted organist, who has played at this console for twenty six years. The organ was presented by Messrs. Tom Oakes, Charles Scarth and John Wilson as a memorial to Emmanuel Bradley, Esq., who generously and liberally contributed towards the erection of the Church and also as a memorial to Rev. George Southey of the Old Chapel—4th Jan. 1883.

As we step down from the chancel and look up to the arch high above us, we read "O Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness". It is a fitting exhortation, for beauty does indeed grace this sanctuary. See, how the hidden lights behind the arch flood the chancel like sunlight, revealing the soft blue of the chancel walls and the dove grey of the arch supports, and shining on the flowers that bedeck the communion table!

The pulpit, of Indian teak, and the chancel rails are a fine example of the skill of the wood-carver. The choir-stalls, you will note, are out in front. It is unusual in a Gothic building, but the cold discomfort of the choir in winter in their former position under the east window, the limited seating capacity there, and the wide margin between the choir and the congregation made it seem more practical to bring the choir-stalls here, where added heating installations have been introduced, and where the minister is able to address his choir and congregation as one congenial company.

The north end of the transept has been converted into a Children's Corner: it was an innovation of the war years. Here is a stained window representing our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane; and on the opposite wall you see the Royal Coat of Arms of Charles II set up in the year 1664.

As we walk down the aisle on the north side, we pause to contemplate and admire the windows on either side under the gallery. Those on the south side represent, first, Sir Galahad, with quotations from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King"; then, the Parable of Talents, with a likeness of the Old Chapel on the hill in the landscape at the back; and the third picture is one of our Risen Lord inviting His disciples to breakfast on the shore of Tiberias. On the north side we see, first, The Way, the Truth and the Life; then, Jesus with Mary Magdalene beside the Empty Tomb, and the angels of Faith and Hope on either side; and here is our newest window representing Jesus leading children of every clime along the road to the Kingdom of Love.

We go through the double swinging doors into the porch where on either side of the front entrance we come upon two very neat little stained windows, one of John, the Beloved Disciple, and the other of Mary, the Beloved Mother. Climbing the spiral steps on the south side, we find on the first landing the stairs that lead up to clock and belfry. If you care to make the laborious ascent, you may see the inner workings of the clock with its four dials, and, what is more intriguing, you may see the Pancake Bell, which is said to have been brought from Kirkstall Abbey about the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. It is probably "high-born," as it contains a goodly quantity of silver, and its inscription suggests that it was cast—or re-cast—near the close of the seventeenth century *Soli Deo Gloria*—"to the sole glory of God".

We think you should come with us into the gallery of the church. These lovely windows up here will bear the closest scrutiny. Isn't this west window beautiful with its studies of the Resurrection and the Sower, with the angels reaping the golden harvest? On either side are illustrations of the Master's words, "I was an hungered and you fed me . . ." This window on the south side of the gallery is a fine Triology: Mary at the feet of Jesus, (Meekness); Jesus with the children gathering to His arms (Gentleness); and the Good Samaritan (Goodness). The big window in the south transept is a true

inspiration with its picture of the great white Throne of God and the apostles, prophets and white robed throng bringing their homage.

Shall we sit down here a little while within these hallowed walls? Can you see again, my friend, in your mind's eye, those forefathers of ours who gathered here long ago by candlelight and sang to the same God whom we adore? God make us more worthy of their courage and devotion! Whenever we assemble here in the Name of Jesus, we are joining with them and all God's faithful servants here on earth and yonder in the eternal light of heaven.



*This hath He done and shall we not
adore Him?*

*This shall He do and can we still
despair?*

WE trust that the reading of this Ter-Centenary Souvenir Booklet has not only aroused new interest and kindled old memories, but we pray that God will use it to deepen our faith in His Power and Providence made manifest in all generations.

Humbly and gratefully, we have herein recalled the vision and courage of our forefathers. The Light Divine that led their steps is shining bright before us. So let us here and now rededicate ourselves to follow faithfully. With this hope and prayer we commend this to you and yours.

FREDERICK H. CARR,
Minister.

S. G. PRIESTLEY,
Church Secretary.

Compilers.

September,
One Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty.

