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| **Transcription of the Abbotsham Parochial Diary**  **1916-1960 part 1**  **1916 - 1937** | |
| **Church** | 1193 May 29th Bull of Celestinus “Abbedisham cum ecclesia Santa Helene ibidem constructa.” |
| **Vicarage** | Appears to have been formed in 1269 |
| **Terrier & Inventory** | An inventory was prepared in 1884 by Rev Robert Walpole Sealy Vidal & is filed in the Diocesan Registry. |
| **Pulpit** | Erected in 1896 was given by Misses Turner |
| **Lectern** | In the same year the lectern was given by the Sealy Vidal family in memory of Capt W Sealy Vidal R.E. |
| **Bells** | In 1911 the Vestry Meeting decided to re-hang the bells at a cost of £147:12:4; The work was completed on 24th November and a tablet was placed in the Tower Wall to record the works. The old oak was used to make a screen at the entrance to the belfry. |
| **Memorial Tablet** | On 28th March 1916 the Memorial tablet to the late Ambrose J C Heriz-Smith was dedicated |
| **Parochial Church Council** | On 19th May 1916 at a public meeting of the congregation a Parochial Church Council was formed with rules approved by the Bishop and on 3rd June 1916 this Council held their first meeting whereat Miss G P Turner was appointed Hon. Secretary (and she remained so until the Enabling Act 1919 instituted these councils throughout England again becoming Secretary under the Council appointed under the Act) |
| **Heating Apparatus** | 30th June 1919 during this week the apparatus was finally fixed by Messrs Garton and King of Exeter (see Appendix for Special Thanksgiving Prayer) |
| **Sexton** | 1st May 1919 at a Vestry Meeting held this day Mr Alfred Glover was re-appointed Sexton on demobilization. |
| **Visitation** | 13th March 1920 On this day the Rural Dean visited the Church and took an inventory of Plate etc. |
| **Parochial Church Council** | 6th April 1920 On this day the first Parochial Church Meeting under the Enabling Act was held when it was decided that the Council should consist of the ex officio members, namely the Incumbent, the two Churchwardens (if communicants), the Lay Representative to the Diocesan Conference, the three Lay Representatives to the Rural Decanal Conference (all these were ex officio by Statute) and 14 elected lay Representatives to the Council, making 21 members in all. 23rd June 1920 the first Meeting of this Council was held when Miss G P Turner was appointed Secretary. |
| **Reredos** | In July 1920 Mrs Sealy, Patron of the living, presented a new carved oak Reredos with gilt background as a memorial gift in memory of her late husband Rev Robert Walpole Sealy who had been Vicar for 33 years and also of their son (this was finally erected in August 1921) |
| **War Memorial** | 1920 October 10th The memorial Cross to those who died in the War erected outside the Church and the Shrine inside were dedicated |
| **Council** | 1922 April 18th At a Parochial Church Council Meeting held this day, the number of elected lay Councillors was increased to 16, making with the ex-officio Members, 23 in all. On the same date, at a Vestry Meeting, Mr C. H. Pickard resigned the post of People’s Warden and Mr H. A. Lomas was elected in his place. |
| **Book Rests** | 1922 September In this month Canon J A Kempe, the Vicar, presented to the Church two oak book rests which were placed on either side of the Choir Stalls nearest the Sanctuary, on condition that they were kept for use in the Church and were never sold. They were constructed from old oak bought by the Vicar when in a former Parish in Cornwall |
| **Lamps** | In November 1922 12 “Aladdin” lamps were purchased at a cost of about £42 for the better lighting of the Church. |
| **Church Money** | On March 17th 1923 the Church Council passed a resolution that all Church moneys be placed in the Bank in the name of Abbotsham Parish Council and that cheques be signed by the Vicar and Churchwardens for the time being or any two of them as being the Treasurers appointed by the Council |
| **Sexton’s Fee** | On the same date the Council fixed the Sexton’s Fee for digging graves as follows :- Single graves 15/-, double graves 25/- |
| **Caretaker’s Salary** | On 2nd May 1923 the Council increased the Caretaker’s salary by 1/- per week and on December 17th following it was again increased by £1 per year for lighting the lamps at the gate, making a total of £15 per annum (excluding the usual quarterly payments for materials) |
| **Lamp on Gate** | In September 1923 Miss G P Turner gave this lamp |
| **Mission** | 1924 February 16th-26th a ten day mission was held in the parish (see Register of Services and Canon Kempe’s notes thereon) |
| **Council** | 1924 April 23rd At a meeting held this day, the number of Church Councillors inclusive of ex-officio members was increased to 24. |
| **Sale of Glebe** | 1924 August 15th On this day the Vicar sold 30 perches of land for the purposes of erecting a Parish Hall thereon |
| **Prayer Books** | In September the same year the Council purchased new Prayer books, Hymn books and Psalters for the choir |
| **New Churchyard** | 1926 October 11th On this date the Bishop of Exeter consecrated the addition to the churchyard given by Canon Kempe in 1924, the Register of Services is signed by W. Exon, G Payne Cook, Ivan L Gregory and the Vicar |
| **Vicar** | 1926 November 2nd On this date Canon J A Kempe tendered his resignation. |
| **Communion Plate** | In December 1926 two Patens, one silver and one Sheffield Plate; a silver Flagon and an Alms Dish were stolen from the plate chest in the Clergy Vestry and were never recovered. |
| **New Vicar** | 1927 March 8th On this day Rev Edmund Arthur Du Cane M.A. Oxon (Magdalen College) was inducted to the living by the Bishop of Crediton. |
| **New Paten** | In January 1927 a silver Paten bearing date 1726 was given by an anonymous donor to replace that stolen in December 1926 and |
| **Insurance** | in the same month the Church Plate was insured in the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company for £100, Chalice £75, Silver Paten and Pewter Paten £25 |
| **Faculty** | 1928 March 2nd On this date the Council approved the application of a faculty to reserve a grave space for Canon Kempe |
| **Windows** | In August 1928 the two windows over the Chancel Arch were made to open so as to regulate the ventilation. |
| **Redecoration** | In September 1928 Redecoration and repairs to the Church were commenced at an estimated cost of some £220 A special fund was raised by a fete, collections etc. |
| **New Churchyard** | During 1928 the Council expended the sum of £16-15-0 in erecting a boundary bank in the new churchyard. |
| **Sunday School Cleaner** | 1929 July 30th At a meeting held this day it was decided to pay the Sunday cleaner (Mrs Tallyn) the sum of £1 per year ( a further sum of 2/6 per meeting in the School is payable beyond the regular salary) |
| **Harvest Home** | 1929 September 15th The Harvest Festival and on the next day there were sports for the children and adults with tea, concert and dance |
| **Heating Apparatus** | 1929 In the Autumn of this year a new front portion was put in the boiler at a cost of £10-7-7, the work being done by Morris of Bideford |
| **West Wall** | At the same time the West wall of the Church was covered with a waterproof dressing at a cost of £5-5-4 |
| **Psalms** | On November 29th 1929 the Council decided, at the suggestion of the Vicar, to adopt the special psalms for Morning and Evening Prayer as set out in the revised Lectionary |

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| **Church Kneelers** | On July 8th 1930 the Council finally decided to purchase some new kneelers (cost about £3) and to place them and also the present kneelers used at the Altar Rail and about the Church and to replace a piece of carpet at the Altar Rail |
| **Tower Wall** | 1930 July In this month it became necessary to place a lead soaking on the roof between the tower wall and the church roof, this and certain necessary repairs to the roof timbers cost £20:1:0 |
| **Harvest Home** | 1930 Sept 14th was the Harvest Festival and on the following day were held the usual sports, tea, concert and dance |
| **Bier** | 1931 March In this month the P.C.C. decided to purchase from Mr Moase a bier (for which the reduced charge of £1 plus 2/6 for painting was made) a condition of sale being that no charge should be made to relatives for its use |
| **List of Vicars** | In the same month a list of Vicars and Patrons, prepared from the Diocesan Registry and written by Mrs Howell was framed and hung behind the choir stalls on the North side. (finally hung up in August) |
| **Lamp for Belfry** | At the same time it was decided to purchase a new lamp for the Belfry, the cost of this was £1.12.9 |
| **Council Secretary** | In the same month Miss G.P. Turner, the first Secretary to the Council retired and Lieut. Col J.C. Bassett was appointed in her place. |
| **Dry Rot** | In August 1931 the dry rot that had appeared, particularly in the back pews on the South side, was repaired at a cost of £66:9:3, the money being raised by a special appeal. |
| **Tower Flag** | In the same month Mr H A Lomas presented a St George’s flag for use on the Tower |
| **Harvest Home** | 1931 Sept 13th Harvest Festival followed on the next day by the usual sports and entertainments |
| **Church Registers** | In February 1932 the Council decided to obtain copies of the Church Register prior to 1655 which were obtainable |
| **L.W.O.** | In December 1931 Mrs Ashby took over the duties of Treasurer to this fund vice Miss Vidal who had resigned |
| **Vicarage Dilapidations** | 1932 June 21st At a meeting held this day, the Council decided to endeavour to collect £10 as a contribution towards the Assessment made by the Diocesan Dilapidations Board in respect of the Vicarage, this sum was allocated and handed to the Vicar with the hope that it might become an annual contribution |
| **British Legion Flag** | At the same Meeting the Council approved of the flag recently acquired by the Abbotsham Branch being hung in the Church near the shrine, this was shortly afterwards done at a ceremonial parade |
| **Churchyard Fees** | At the same Meeting it was also decided that the sum of £5 be charged for all non-parishioners who had no claim to be buried in the Churchyard, such charge to be over and above the usual fees payable in such cases |
| **Harvest Home** | 1932 September 18th Harvest Festival followed next day by the usual sports, tea, concert and dance |
| **Church Warden** | Mr F. Turner who had been Vicar’s Warden for 9 years died at Bath in October 1932 and was buried in the new portion of the Churchyard, his being the first grave in that portion |
| **Monthly Mission Intercession** | 1932 November 1st At a meeting held this day the Council decided that in future these services should be incorporated with the Sunday evensong |
| **Faculties** | 1932 December – The Council unanimously approved the application for 2 faculties. 1. To reserve grave spaces for the Misses Turner next to the grave of the late Mr F Turner. The faculty was granted and is dated 17th January 1933 and 2. For a memorial tablet to the memory of the late Flying Officer White (Note the family subsequently decided not to proceed with the tablet) |
| **Church Warden** | 1933 April At the Vestry Meeting held this month the vicar nominated Lt Col J C Bassett as his Warden vice the late Mr F Turner |
| **Finance** | An appeal was launched to provide funds to meet last year’s deficit in the Churchwarden’s a/cs and to pay for the new boiler which would be necessary and to have something in hand for contingencies. This was done and the result was £67-16-0 |
| **Lay Rector** | 1933 May 27th The Lay Rector Mr Henry Terrell Peard of Union Bank Chambers, Katherine Street, Croydon died without disposing of the office by will. His executors are Noel Davis Peard L.L.B. and Mervyn Hubert Peard of the above address |
| **Bellringing** | On June 23rd 1933 the Vicar held a meeting of Bellringers and those interested and discussed arrangements for the more regular ringing of the bells |
| **Bishop’s Visit** | On Wednesday July 26th 1933 the Bishop of Exeter visited the Parish and conferred with the Vicar and Churchwardens on recent returns rendered at his request |
| **Death of Former Vicar** | 1933 July 24th On this day Revd. Philip Richard Piper Braithwaite died and on 28th July was buried at Abbotsham – on the following Sunday “For all the Saints” was sung in his memory |
| **Prayer and Hymn Books** | In August 1933 the Churchwardens purchased from Harpers of Bideford 3 doz Prayer and 3 doz Hymn Books as the number available for Visitors had proved inadequate as a number Scouts and Guides had of late attended the Church when camping |

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| **Harvest Home** | Harvest Festival was on 10th Sept 1933 and was followed on the next day by the usual sports, tea and dance, the concert unfortunately fell through this year |
| **Death of a Former Vicar** | Revd Canon J.A. Kempe (Vicar 1915-1927) died on October 20th 1933 at  Bideford and was buried in Abbotsham Churchyard on 23rd. The Robed Clergy present were the Vicar, Revd J. L. Gregory (Rural Dean) and Revd F Manning Rector of Bideford – On Sunday 22nd the Vicar made special reference to the late Canon at Morning Prayers |
| **New Boiler** | The old boiler having got beyond repair, a new one was put in by Mr A. W. Bennet of Bideford at a cost of £23.10.6 which was paid for out of the Appeal Fund, the boiler was first used in October 1933 |
| **Armistice Sunday** | November 12th 1933. In addition to the usual services, a combined service was held in the afternoon at which 130 were present – the Preacher was Revd W. T. Kershaw, Baptist Minister of Bideford – the total amount collected for Lord Haig’s Fund during the day was £7.11.7. |
| **Church Fabric** | 1933 October, during this month the surface water drains around the church were found very defective and these were dug up and cement gullies put in at a cost of £14.10.0, which was found by the Appeal Fund – this was apart from the gully behind the War Memorial which was part of the dry rot repairs following. These latter were rendered necessary by fungus and dampness appearing in the north wall at the west end of the Church, similar to that dealt with on the south wall both of which had the floor below ground level. The total cost of taking out all the pews and woodwork and replacing also draining and cementing the outside and under the west end amounted to £74.7.6 which was paid at Xmas 1933 out of the Churchwarden’s a/c. |
| **Rural Dean** | 1934 March 22nd The Rural Dean Revd Ivan L. Gregory visited the Church and entered his report in the Rural Dean’s book |
| **Visitation** | 1934 April 11th Archdeacon visited the Rural Deaneries of Hartland and Torrington at Torrington – The Vicar and Churchwardens attended and the latter made their presentments |
| **Bells** | 1934 May 20th Whitsunday – For some weeks past there has been difficulty in getting sufficient support to ring the bells, but this morning they were rung again by an almost new team under Mr Davies who had taken a great deal of time to get it together. |
| **Fete** | 1934 June 20th A fete was held at Cornborough by kind permission of Mr & Mrs H A Lomas; the object was to raise the sum that would be sufficient 1. To enable the debt of £74.7.6 due to the Churchwardens a/c is owed in respect of the dry last year to be paid off (sic) 2. To provide a balance to be divided between the Church Day Schools, The Nursing Association and the Parish Hall. The support and interest within the Parish was splendid but that from outside was not so good and the profit realised only amounted to £66.0.3 and this accordingly was paid the Churchwardens. |
| **Choir & Ringers** | 1934 August 26th The Annual Outing took place at Ilfracombe |
| **Presentation** | 1934 August In this month a most beautiful violet altar frontal, a silk veil and burse for the altar linen were presented to the Church by the Misses G P & M Turner in memory of their cousin Miss Grace Turner |
| **Harvest** | 1934 Sept 9th Harvest Festival (photographs of the decorated Church were taken and copies are in the book of notes on the Services) the sermon in the evening was preached by the Archdeacon of Barnstaple Revd Prebendary F Emlyn Jones and the congregation numbered 134. On the following day the sports were held followed by Parish tea, concert and dance. Most unfortunately the Vicar was unable to be present on Monday owing to a very sharp heart attack just after lunch, he will be unable to undertake anything for a considerable time and in the meantime Revd H J Nind kindly undertook to attend to any urgent matter and to take duty the following Sunday |
| **Armistice** | 1934 November 11th The usual combined service was held at 3.30 pm when Mr W. T. Kershaw of Bideford again preached: Legion members and the standard attended as usual and the collection was for Lord Haig’s Fund |
| **Choir & Ringers** | 1935 January 30th The custom of a winter entertainment was revived when the Vicar and Churchwardens invited the Choir and Ringers to tea in the Parish Hall followed by an entertainment kindly arranged by Mr Bartlett also games |
| **Visitation** | 1935 May 1st The Churchwardens attended the Ordinary Visitation of the Archdeacon of Barnstaple at Bideford and made their presentments (the Vicar was away at the time) At the lunch which followed Abbotsham Churchyard was held up by the Rural Dean as an example to other Parishes and was much praised for the way it was kept |
| **Jubilee Day** | 1935 May 6th In common with the rest of England the Parish kept the Jubilee Day in a fitting way – a full report taken from the Parish Magazine appears opposite (included in the Appendix to this transcript) The Vicar and Mrs Du Cane were unfortunately away |
| **Alms Bags Book Markers &** | In June 1935 the P.C.C. purchased two white book markers to replace the existing ones which were completely worn out and also two red alms bags which the Church did not at present possess |
| **Third Party Insurance** | 1935 June Cases having arisen of late in which Parochial Church Councils had been held liable for personal damages to visitors and members of the congregation arising out of some small defect in the building or surroundings, it was decided to insure against this possible liability to the extent of £2500 in any one accident and this was accordingly done with the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company. |
| **Choir & Ringers** | 1935 August 14th The annual outing was held at Ilfracombe Cutting from the Parish Magazine opposite ( included in the Appendix to this transcript) |
| **Fete** | 1935 July 24th A Fete was held in the Butty Field on behalf of the Parish Hall and Church Day Schools in equal shares and resulted in a profit of £74:4:4, this was equally divided. (Report included in the Appendix to this transcript) |
| **Harvest** | Held on September 15th 1935 There were 50 Communicants and Congregations of 93 and 120 in the morning and evening respectively and £5.19.6 was collected for Bideford Hospital – The sermon in the evening was preached by the Revd Prebendary F M Wallington Vicar of Barnstaple – On the following day there were the usual sports, tea, concert and dance but, owing to the very stormy weather the attendance was not as good as usual. ( Report included in the Appendix to this transcript) |
| **Boy Scouts** | 1935 October 24th There have never been any Scouts in the Village, but today, after considerable previous consideration, a meeting of boys was held and 8 names were taken with the idea of forming a patrol to be attached to the 3rd North Devon (Bideford) Group. Subsequently the Vicar kindly placed his loft at their disposal and subsequent meetings were held and the “Hawk” patrol – 9 strong was formed |
| **Altar Guild** | In accordance with a suggestion made at a previous PCC meeting an Altar Guild was formed in August 1935: the following were the first members:- Mrs Du Cane, Mrs Facey, Mrs Glover, Mrs Kiernander and Mrs Rawden |
| **Armistice** | 1935 November 17th The usual United Service was held today - there were more ex-servicemen than usual which was gratifying – the congregation numbered 106 and the collection was for Lord Haig’s Fund, the amount being £3.10.1. The sermon was preached by the Vicar (Revd E. A. Du Cane) and the lesson was read by Mr Frayne of Barnstaple Local Preacher – The collections for the whole day came to £6.3.3 |
| **Organist’s Salary** | 1935 December 10th The PCC increased the organist’s salary to £30 per annum on the understanding that he should carry out all running repairs free of charge |
| **Insurance** | The above necessitated correspondence with the Ecclesiastical Insurance office and the schedule attached to the policy (A28003 Employer’s Liability Insurance, Church Workers) was amended to cover this increased salary, this did not affect the premium. |
| **Nativity Play** | 1935 December 13th The School Children gave a splendid play in the Parish Hall, the singing and acting were reverently and excellently done – Mrs Beer was in charge and to her belongs the credit – Mrs Rawdon kindly assisted with the production ( Report included in the Appendix to this transcript) |
| **Death Of His Majesty King George V** | His Majesty passed away on Monday January 20th 1936 and on the following Sunday (January 26th) special prayers were offered, hymns sung and address given followed in the morning by the playing of “O Rest in the Lord” and the singing of the first verse of the National Anthem. The Vicar being unwell both services were taken by Revd H J Nind. The congregations were good and all were in mourning at the Nation’s loss. On Tuesday 28th January 1936 there was a plain service with prayers following the funeral at Windsor and on Sunday February 2nd, at Morning Prayer, the Special Form of Service (Form III) was used for the Communion Service. A muffled peal was rung before the service. (Order of Service included in the Appendix to this transcript) |
| **Freewill Offering Fund** | Mrs Kiernander having, under Doctor’s orders, given up the Treasurership of this fund her place was taken by Col Bassett as from 1st January last |
| **Sexton** | Mr A. W. Glover in February 1936 (29th) met with a serious accident through falling from a ladder and cracked a bone in his heel, he was taken to hospital and only remained a short time; but whilst at home he had pleurisy, pneumonia and a clot of blood and was seriously ill. |
| **Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meeting** | These were held on Tuesday April 7th 1936 when the Churchwardens and sidesmen were all re-appointed. All accounts were as usual examined & were satisfactory except the Churchwarden’s a/c which was in debt and Serious economies were proposed for consideration by the PC Council |
| **Easter Day** | There were the usual three celebrations at which there were 97 Communicants – Morning Prayer 66, Evensong 59 – Collections totalled £15:19:2 for Vicar’s Easter Offering. The bells were rung |
| **Rural Dean’s Visitation** | The Rural Dean (Revd Ivan L Gregory) visited the Church on Wednesday 29th and expressed his approval of Everything and entered his report in the Rural Dean’s book |
| **Archdeacon’s Visitation** | This took place on Thursday April 30th 1936 at Torrington : the two Churchwardens (Col Bassett and Mr H A Lomas) attended and made the usual presentments – The Archdeacon, in his charge, laid special reference on the inadequacy of some Church insurances and, afterwards, suggested that Abbotsham should considerably increase the sum of £2800 for the fabric of the Church against fire. He also stressed the fact that iron boxes were a very poor substitute for fireproof safes for the custody of Registers. The Churchwardens promised to look into both these matters: A combined Ruri Decanal Conference of the Deaneries of Hartland and Torrington followed |
| **Visitors** | At the evening service of Sunday June 28th 1936 a party of about 26 came from Bradworthy and after the service 6 of them with two of our ringers rang a peal |
| **Chalice** | In June 1936 the base of the Chalice had become loose and it was necessary to centre it: this was done by Truscott of Bideford who made a drawing of it and gave it to the Church for the purpose of putting with the Terrier |
| **Harvest** | Held on 13th Sept 1936. There were 46 communicants at Morning Service and 97 at Harvest Service at which latter Revd H. J. Hind preached – The total collections were £6.19.9 which was divided between Bideford Hospital and Church Expenses, this division being rendered necessary by the depleted state of the Churchwardens’ a/c. On the following day there were the usual sports (This time in Mr Turner’s field below the Vicarage) tea, concert and dance. The Abbotsham Patrol of Boy Scouts took a prominent part in both sports and the concert and were a great help. Mrs Seely presented the prizes in the Schools for the children’s sports. The lessons in the evening service were Isiah XL and St John X 1-29 |

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| **Insurances** | The wishes of the Archdeacon referred to earlier were carried out in September 1936 – a new fire policy was effected to a total amount of £12,500, the details of which are set out in the “Notes on Terrier” A new safe was also installed at a cost of £8.7.0 which was collected for the purpose and partly by the “Appeal Fund” |
| **Armistice Sunday** | Held on 15th November 1936 – There was the usual united Service at 3pm at which the congregation numbered 93 – The sermon was preached by Mr C Smith the Baptist Minister and the collections for the day amounted to £5.19.8 The Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies paraded and were inspected by Mr Lomas, District Scout Commissioner who congratulated them on their turn out. |