

SEPTEMBER 1967

# HALSALL PARISH MAGAZINE



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“The Rectory,” Halsall. Tel. 321.

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## MONUMENTAL MASON

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The Rectory,  
Halsall  
12th August, 1967

My Dear Friends,

An event of great importance and historical interest takes place this month. On Sunday evening, 3rd September, the Bishop of Warrington will dedicate the Barton Memorial Window during a special service at 6.30 p.m. We are looking forward to the Bishop's visit and I hope that there will be a full representative congregation in church on this great occasion.

The window is to be placed in the north aisle at the western end and its three lights have the figures of St. Oswald, St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert. The tracery has emblems associated with the three saints as well as the Blundell emblem. The mission church was built by Canon Blundell. The inscription reads:

"Reader remember with thanksgiving all those who worshipped God and served Him in the Mission Church of St. Oswald, Barton, from its erection about the year 1870, until its destruction by fire, January, 1965."

The artist is Mr. Harry J. Stammers of Old Bradwell, Buckinghamshire. He is renowned for his work in the cathedrals at Canterbury (5 light window in St. Anselm's Chapel), Lincoln (3 single light windows, Airmen's Chapel, north transept), Lichfield (3 light nave window) and Lanark (seven windows in Blacader Chapel). Other fine Stammers windows in Lancashire may be seen at Standish (east window), Blackpool, St. Stephen on the Cliff (2 light nave windows and 2 light single windows in All Souls Chapel) and at Croston (east window of Lady Chapel).

The window in Halsall Church is a fitting memorial reminding us of the work of the Church in the hamlet of Barton for well nigh a hundred years. In another place in this magazine there appear summaries on the lives of the three saints depicted in this lovely memorial window.

Now a word about the Gift Day. The Parochial Church Council unanimously agreed that this should be held on Sunday, 3rd September, and I shall remain in church all day to receive the gifts from parishioners and friends. It is hoped that we shall receive once again your enthusiastic support to enable us to repay our loan to the Fabric fund.

You will remember we borrowed this money for the initial deposit to the organ builders when the contract for the new organ was signed. We all hope very much that this year will see the Fabric fund re-imbursed, and this will depend largely on the way in which you all support the Gift Day. Please bring or send your gift to church any time between 8 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. on Sunday, 3rd September, and thank you all in anticipation of a total, equal, if not better, than the one last year, which was £316.

A completely different item is the subject of my last thoughts this month. The problem of parking. You might say what has that got to do with a Rector's letter in a parish magazine? Only this—we must all pay greater attention to this problem. On two occasions last month instances of thoroughly bad parking caused great inconvenience to people with whom I had to deal. Maybe we have all been guilty of this at one time or another. Let us resolve that so far as we are able we will always park our cars with due consideration for others.

It is fitting in this context for me to express the thanks of the Parochial Church Council on behalf of all those who worship at St. Cuthbert's, to Mr. and Mrs. H. Dickinson at the Scarisbrick Arms Hotel for allowing us the completely uninterrupted use of the hotel car park, both in Summerwood Lane and at the front of the house. It is something we all take for granted—what a shock we should get if the usual "NO PARKING" barriers appeared one day! It is a privilege we all appreciate very much indeed.

God bless you all,

Your sincere friend and Rector,

HERBERT BULLOUGH

ST. OSWALD (d. 642)	ST. AIDAN (d. 651)	ST. CUTHBERT (d. 687)
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St Oswald was the son of King Ethelfrith, King of Northumbria, and he was forced to flee to Scotland when Edwin seized the kingdom after his father's death in 616. He spent some time in exile with the monks of Iona who led and baptised him into the Christian faith. Towards the end of 633 he gathered all the fighting men he could muster, and they were few, and led them out to meet the British king and his great army.

The battlefield was near the Roman wall, not far from Hexham, its name "Heavenfield". Oswald bade his men cut wood from the trees and make a cross, and he erected it in a prominent place on the battlefield. This done he commanded his soldiers to pray. On the next day his small army defeated Caedwalla's army of Welshmen and Penda and his men of the English Midlands were given cause to fear. Northumbria, in its joy of victory, promptly crowned Oswald, one of its own royal house, as its ruler and king. He ruled for eight years and then Penda found his chance. In 642 he met Oswald in battle at "Maserfelth", possibly Oswestry, "Oswald Tree" in Shropshire, killed him and crushed his army. Oswald was only 37 when he fell in battle.

At once he was honoured as hero, saint and martyr. Every year, the brethren of the church of Hexham offered their Eucharist on the day of the battle, 5th August, in thanksgiving for his work among them. More than sixty churches since his time have been dedicated in his name. His head, which was deposited in St. Cuthbert's coffin in 875 was found at Durham in 1827.

It is Oswald's work for the conversion of his people to Christianity which especially draws our interest. Very soon, after he had been crowned king, 633-634, he began the labour which, he hoped, would bring not only his fighting men to the fulfilment of the pledge made by them on the eve of Caedwalla's slaying, but all his kingdom into the Christian Church. He sent a request to the monks of Iona, in whose abbey he had been baptised. Would they give him a bishop who would travel around his lands to preach and to win the heathen? They chose a monk named Aidan. He was consecrated bishop for King Oswald and his Northumbria. Aidan was given Lindisfarne as his diocese.

Aidan arrived in Northumbria probably in 635. Soon he was journeying around his great see, through town and country on foot, preaching, baptising, doing all a mission bishop's work. He always longed for solitude, even deeper solitude than he could find with his monks upon Lindisfarne. Then he went off by himself to a cell which he had built upon the isle of Farne, one of a group of seventeen islets, mingled with rocks and reefs, lying a mile and half from Bamburgh, their nearest approach to the shore. Farne Island is about seven miles by sea from Lindisfarne.

For ten years after the death of Oswald, Aidan lived on in Northumbria and saw much trouble. He founded many new missionary outposts. He carefully educated a group of twelve English boys to be future ecclesiastical leaders of their people, among them, St. Chad. It was Aidan who diligently taught St. Hilda in her earlier years as abbess of Hartlepool, before her rule in Yorkshire over the monastic life of both men and women at the abbey of Whitby.

Aidan died on 31st August, 651, it is said, at grief at the murder of his great friend, St. Oswin.

Thirdly, we think of St. Cuthbert, who owed much to Aidan. As a lad, like St. Patrick, he tended flocks of sheep in the Scottish hills on the banks of the Tweed. Cuthbert had been born at the time when Aidan began his work in Northumbria and he must often have heard of this missionary bishop. At sixteen years of age he decided to seek a monastery.

The monastery was Melrose, said to be founded by Aidan. Its abbot, when Cuthbert entered, was Eata, one of Aidan's pupils at Lindisfarne. Cuthbert held high

respect for women, and on one occasion when he was visiting Lady Hebbe, half sister of St. Oswald (her name is still remembered in St. Abbs Head) at her abbey, the story has it that two seals came up out of the North Sea to warm with their breath and rub vigour into Cuthbert's feet as he stood absorbed in prayer and numbed with cold upon the shore under Coldingham's cliff.

About 658, when Cuthbert had been some seven years at Melrose, the abbot Eata received a gift of an estate at Ripon in Yorkshire that there he might build a new monastery. Eata gladly did so and became abbot of Ripon. Cuthbert went with him to Ripon.

In 676, feeling the call to a solitary life he withdrew to the Island of Farne, where he remained as a hermit for eight years. In 684 he was elected Bishop of Hexham but he was unwilling to accept the see. In the following year, however, when Eata had become Bishop of Hexham, Cuthbert allowed himself to be consecrated Bishop of Lindisfarne. His short episcopate of two years was marked by great missionary zeal and energy. Carlisle, though in Cumberland, was part of Cuthbert's diocese. In 686 Cuthbert felt he could do no more and he was released from his duties as bishop and he at once returned to his little house on Farne to live there the last months of pain and sickness. Much of the time he was alone, for in winter the North Sea was rough with storm and kept the monks of Lindisfarne from crossing those seven miles to care for him. He died on March 20th, 687, and his body was taken to Lindisfarne. More than a hundred years went by and the relics were still in the church in the floor of the sanctuary. In 793, raiders from Norway filled Northern England with horror by landing on this holy isle of St. Cuthbert to plunder and destroy. Lindisfarne could not survive the attack and when the monks left the island they took with them the relics from their church: the bones of St. Cuthbert, those of Aidan and the head of King Oswald.

Tradition records that for seven years they wandered from place to place in flight before the invaders. They came to stay in Chester-le-Street, near Durham, in 883, and there for more than another hundred years, the bishop in charge of Northumbria, with the relics and the monks who guarded them, held his seat.

The community left again in 995 and for three or four months they stayed in Ripon, Yorkshire. In the same year Ealdun established his see at Durham and there his monks built a church and laid once more, the relics to rest.

In the Cathedral Library at Durham, the fragments of the chest of wood which was made to honour St. Cuthbert's relics in 698 are still guarded. Within its cathedral his bones, with the head of St. Oswald beside them, still keep their place.



## AFRICA EXPECTANT

**Canon John Kingsnorth writes about the significant changes in Tropical Africa during the last three years.**

Perhaps the most significant event in recent African history was the overthrow of President Nkrumah of Ghana, and it was significant in two ways. It showed that when power led to corruption the young African state had the resources within itself to cut out the canker of corruption—and to do so in what was surely one of the most gentlemanly revolutions in history! But secondly, it was a shock to the pan-African idealism of many of the new nations.

Nkrumah had been the apostle of the pan-African ideal, and had inspired many others with this ideal in the days where it was the rallying cry against Colonialism. Nkrumah was the hero of the pan-Africanists. But now it was seen that this hero was no messiah; he was as subject to corruption as any other man.

His fall came just at the time when the pan-African ideal was no longer needed to combat colonialism, and the new nations were finding they had to concentrate all their energies on their own economic growth, and on building a nation out of a number of different tribes. Nkrumah's fall was the end of the pan-African dream—for the time being.

### New pan-Africanism

In spite of differences there is something of a common approach to life among Africans and this, and the economic need of large regional groupings in the modern world, will probably lead to a new pan-Africanism in time, but not until the individual nations have grown into true national consciousness, overcome tribalism, and become much stronger economically.

In the meantime the fight is on all over free Africa—and the enemies are the same everywhere—poverty, ignorance and disease.

Both to overcome the reactionary forces of tribalism and to organise all the latest resources of the newly awakened giant to fight the three enemies, strong central governments are needed, and so one-party states and military governments are the order of the day. We may not approve, but it ill becomes those who sit on the affluent side of the great gulf that divides have and have-nots in the modern world to be over-critical.

Tanzania has shown that there can be democracy in a one-party state. In its last elections nearly half the cabinet lost their seats; in one place, where a European candidate stood against an African, the European got in on an almost entirely African vote. So a one-party state does not mean dictatorship, as, judging entirely from Western precedents, we tend to assume.

### Church in charge

What changes have taken place in the Church? First, it has become more consciously the Church, and not just a mission. There has been quite a battle to get the letters UMCA or SPG (or even USPG) eliminated from hospital, school and church notice board, but the battle is now over! The Church properly governed by a synod (normally with an overwhelming African majority on it), is in charge.

Naturally there have been changes in the relationship of this Church to the State. Under colonial rule the Churches were accorded privilege and status if not respect. Being kind to Churches is after all part of the British way of life. Now the Church breathes a healthier atmosphere even if some of her privileges are gone. Her message is listened to as a message, and not because it's what a white man says: and she is judged by her fruits.

Some schools, mainly primary schools, have been handed over to local authorities. There is often gain here in that parents are far more involved in the education of their children than they used to be. The Church still maintains a strong stake in higher education. It seems now that the Church is more ready to hand over, and the State less keen to take over—so perhaps a *modus vivendi* will be reached in which the Church continues to run those schools that it can run efficiently as models of Christian education, and hands over the others. The new states positively beg the Church to continue its medical work and often give better grants than the Colonial Government gave.

The Church continues to recruit large numbers of missionaries and indeed cannot get all it needs. But often there is a new look about these missionaries. The Church in Malawi asks for an agriculturalist and USPG and Christian Aid between them produce one. Zambia has a roving educational team of three members: a Stewardship organiser, a Youth Leader and an Adult Religious Education expert. Several dioceses recruit for their Lay Training Institutes.

### Steps to unity

There have been considerable advances in these last few years in ecumenical co-operation. Botswana is the newest of the new countries with a government sympathetic to the Church but terribly anxious that denominational rivalry shall not encourage tribal rivalry.

At the capital of Gaborone there is a new church shared by Anglican and Congregationalists, with two identical houses attached, one for the minister of each denomination. On Sunday separate services are held in the morning, and a combined service in the evening. But more dramatic is the controversial decision of the Province of Central Africa to allow Anglicans to communicate at the Communion celebrated by a Free Church minister, in certain carefully defined circumstances when refusal to do so would emphasise the scandal of disunity and tend to parade it before the world.

It has become clear recently that no headlong rush into unity is going to be possible. The All Africa Conference of Churches and many of the denominational leaders are ready for it, but the steady and conservative man-in-the-pew, who was taught in his youth to know very clearly the difference between himself and his 'separated brethren', is not interested in reunion. Here the Church in Africa has learnt from the experience of others not to go faster than the man-in-the-pew and is moving with care.

Many missionaries, as well as African Christians themselves, are conscious of the exciting opportunity of being in at the grass-roots in the building of new nations. They regard this as a greater privilege than the status-privileges given by former rulers. The state on its side seems more ready to treat a privilege-free Church as a friend and ally. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia said suggestively recently: 'There is always the possibility of a relationship such as that which existed between the stubborn King David and even more stubborn Prophet Nathan.'

Their relationship certainly was not an easy one, and neither king nor prophet was prepared to pull any punches. And yet, king and prophet, each consumed by the passion of his office and acknowledging his vocation to service, became, in their diversity, one instrument through which God granted Israel one of the most blessed periods in her entire history.'

### Troubles exaggerated

There is one other change that must be recorded, a rather startling one; this time a change on the home front and not in Africa. Compared with three years ago Africa is out of favour: its image is tarnished. There seems little doubt that this is having some effect on the Society's income. But how odd! If this impression were anywhere near the truth Christians who had any inkling of what Mission was about, should be more anxious than ever to pour themselves into Africa. Christ came to call sinners, not the righteous, and his Church is 'the citadel of hope on the edge of despair.'

But in fact, the impression of a continent in chaos is entirely false. Chaos is a result of decline and disintegration: Africa's troubles, much exaggerated by sections of the Press (and by propaganda from Rhodesia) are the birth-pangs of new nations.

Partly, I suppose, this false impression is an inevitable result of the very nature of modern news media—only that which can be screamed in a headline, or hold its own against Z-cars, is worth reporting. So the education explosion in nearly all independent territories goes unreported—so do the growing agricultural revolution, improvements in communications, the light in the eye of men learning to love freedom, and the new relations of Church and State.

Probably there will be more coups and more revolutions: more disappointment and more disillusion (though only those who have illusions can be disillusioned). There will also be peaceful progress, rapid learning from experience, the slow and painful victory over poverty and disease—only you won't hear so much about these.

### 1st HALSALL SCOUT AND CUB NEWS

At the time of going to Press the Scouts are busy preparing for their Summer Camp on the 19th August. A Coach has been arranged and we all hope they will have good weather and a very enjoyable week at Portmadoc.

We have two events in the near future, a Coffee Evening on Wednesday, 27th September, at 27 Renacres Lane, Shirdley Hill, from 7.30—9 p.m., when we look forward to your support, and in October a Black Friday Dance in the School Hall from 8 p.m.—1 a.m.

We promise this will be an hilarious event, so don't miss it. Tickets are on sale now, as also are tickets for our Annual Draw which once again we are holding at the October Dance.

These may be obtained from all Scouts, Members of the Parents' Committee, Mr. Midgeley and myself.

P. R. SAUNDERS.

### THE MOTHERS' UNION

The next session opens with a service in church at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 5th September. It is hoped that all our members will try to attend. There will be a committee meeting following the service, in the vestry. The meeting in October will be at 7.30 p.m. and the meetings in November, December and January, will be at 2.30 p.m. ALL meetings will be held in the vestry. The programme will be printed in the October issue of the magazine.

### SERVERS' ROTA

- Sept. 3—8.00 a.m. Malcolm Serjeant.  
10—10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Tony Gaskell.  
17—9.00 a.m. Jim Heaton.  
6.30 p.m. Gordon Midgley.  
24—8.00 a.m. Peter Balmer.  
10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, John Pounds.  
Oct. 1—8.00 a.m. Brian Heaton.  
8—10.30 a.m. Harold Grimshaw, Malcolm Serjeant.

### SANCTUARY FLOWERS

- Sept. 3—Mrs. Ord.  
10—Mrs. R. Brett.  
17—Mrs. Blundell and Mrs. Park.  
24—Miss Mawdsley and Mrs. Parker.  
Oct. 1—Harvest—The Congregation.  
8—Mrs. W. Halsall.

### SIDESMEN'S ROTA

- Sept. 3—H. Baldwin, W. White, W. Robinson, E. Blackhurst.  
10—R. Heaton, J. Colley, J. Grimshaw, G. Midgley.  
17—R. Lewis, H. Rimmer, J. Cheetham, H. Gaskell.  
24—G. Porter, S. Park, T. Grimshaw, N. Britnell.  
Oct. 1—E. Grimshaw, H. Gawne, J. Heaton, J. Banks.

### HOLY BAPTISM

- "Entered into the family of Christ's Church."  
Aug. 13—Elaine, daughter of Arthur Henry and Carol Mary Gilbert.  
Jeremy Stephen, son of Charles Stephen and Jane Marion Bouchier.  
Andrew William, son of John Brian and Cecelia Webster.  
Dianne Jane, daughter of James Arthur and Betty Wilkinson.

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