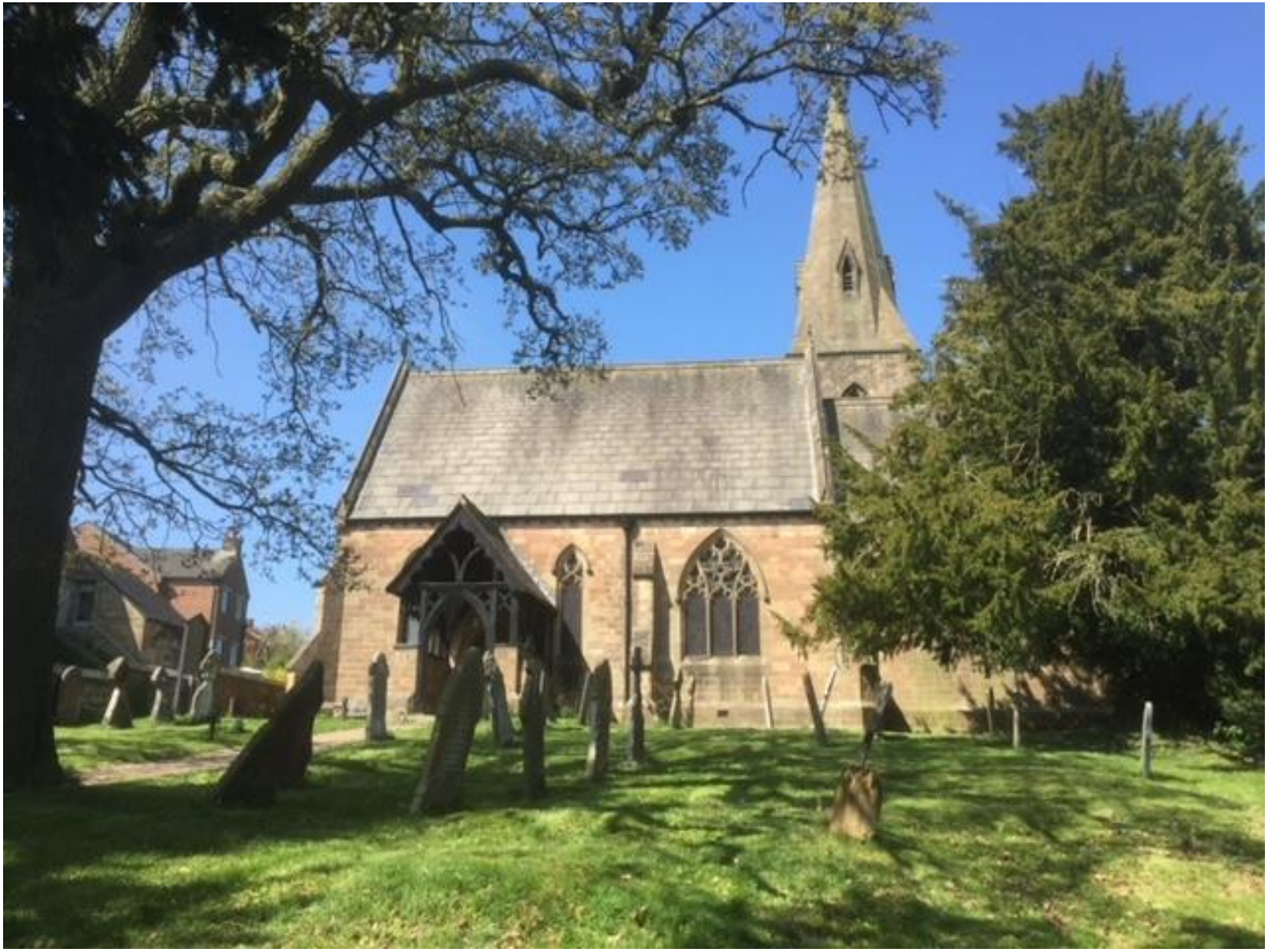
CHANGE
IS
INEVITABLE

THE STORY OF IDRIDGEHAY CHURCH



ST. JAMES'S CHURCH
IDRIDGEHAY
1855-1955

Vicar
Revd. Geoffrey Busby

Vicar's Warden
Mr. William Deaville

People's Warden
Mr. J. A. Beeson

FOREWORD

THIS account of Idridgehay Church has been undertaken at the invitation of the Parochial Church Council as part of the celebrations to mark the centenary of the parish. The writer is a newcomer, but the facts have been derived from people who have spent their lives in the village. Particular mention must be made of the help given by Mr. Deaville, Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Hastings, Miss Hurt, Mr. Harry Riley, Mr. Wheeldon, *The Derbyshire Advertiser* and, perhaps most of all, by Lt.-Col. Whiston, whose scrapbooks have been a storehouse of knowledge. To all these people and many others, grateful thanks are due for having so cheerfully submitted themselves to much questioning and interviewing and also for the extensive searches they have so readily made amongst old photographs, old documents, and, not least,
in the recesses of their memories.

G. F. K.

Idriagehay,
June, 1955.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

JUNE 18th, 1955	Centenary Bazaar (opened by Lt.-Col. Whiston) an opening of South Sitch Gardens.
JULY 13th, 1955	Wirksworth Rural Deanery M.U. Garden Meeting Ecclesbourne Hall.
JULY 24th, 1955	Eve of St. James. Centenary Festival Evensong. Preacher—The Very Revd. The Dean of Lichfield.
OCTOBER 6th, 1955	Harvest Thanksgiving and Centenary Supper. Preacher at Evensong—The Right Revd. Bishop Sinker

1855-1894

ON the first Thursday in August, 1855, the new Church at Idridgehay was consecrated by Dr. John Lonsdale, Bishop of Lichfield, for that Diocese was then very large in size and extended into five counties, including the whole of Derbyshire. The Bishop was therefore a long way from home, and he was a guest at Alton Manor for the occasion.

Fifteen months earlier, on the 22nd April, 1854, the foundation stone had been laid over a representative set of coins of the period, and the Church was built to plans drawn by Mr. H. I. Stevens, the well-known Derby architect of the day. He chose a style which is described in an account of the time as ". . . of the fourteenth century", and one of the principal subscribers to the building fund wrote while it was still in course of erection:

"I think it will be one of the nicest little Gothic Churches in Derbyshire".

Certainly twentieth-century parishioners have reason to be grateful to Mr. Stevens for his simple and pleasing design. The site for the Church was on land obtained from the Wright family, whose descendants are still closely connected with the district, and the stone needed for the building was got from the same quarries which a few years earlier had supplied the materials for Alton Manor. Local people took a share in the work of building the Church; the farmers carted the stone and many of the fittings, including the wrought iron gate of the churchyard, were made on the spot by the village blacksmith. By the middle of 1855 the Church and its furnishings were all complete and on the morning of the 2nd August a large congregation had assembled for the Service of Consecration. Many people whose names are still well known in Derbyshire were present; naturally a Walthall was there, and amongst many others the eyes of those living in the Ecclesbourne Valley will be specially caught by the names of the Reverend Robert Gell and of Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Curzon.

About 11 o'clock the Bishop arrived and was met by the Clergy at the West Door where, after the formal petition was presented to him, a procession was formed which made its way to the Altar, reciting the 24th Psalm as it went. According to the newspaper report of the proceedings:—

"The musical portion of the Service was ably performed by the Choir of the Parish Church, Wirksworth, who intoned the Service and sang the chants exceedingly well".

So that even a hundred years ago the Wirksworth Choir was commended for its singing and was as warmly welcomed at Idridgehay as it is to-day. The Bishop

MAP

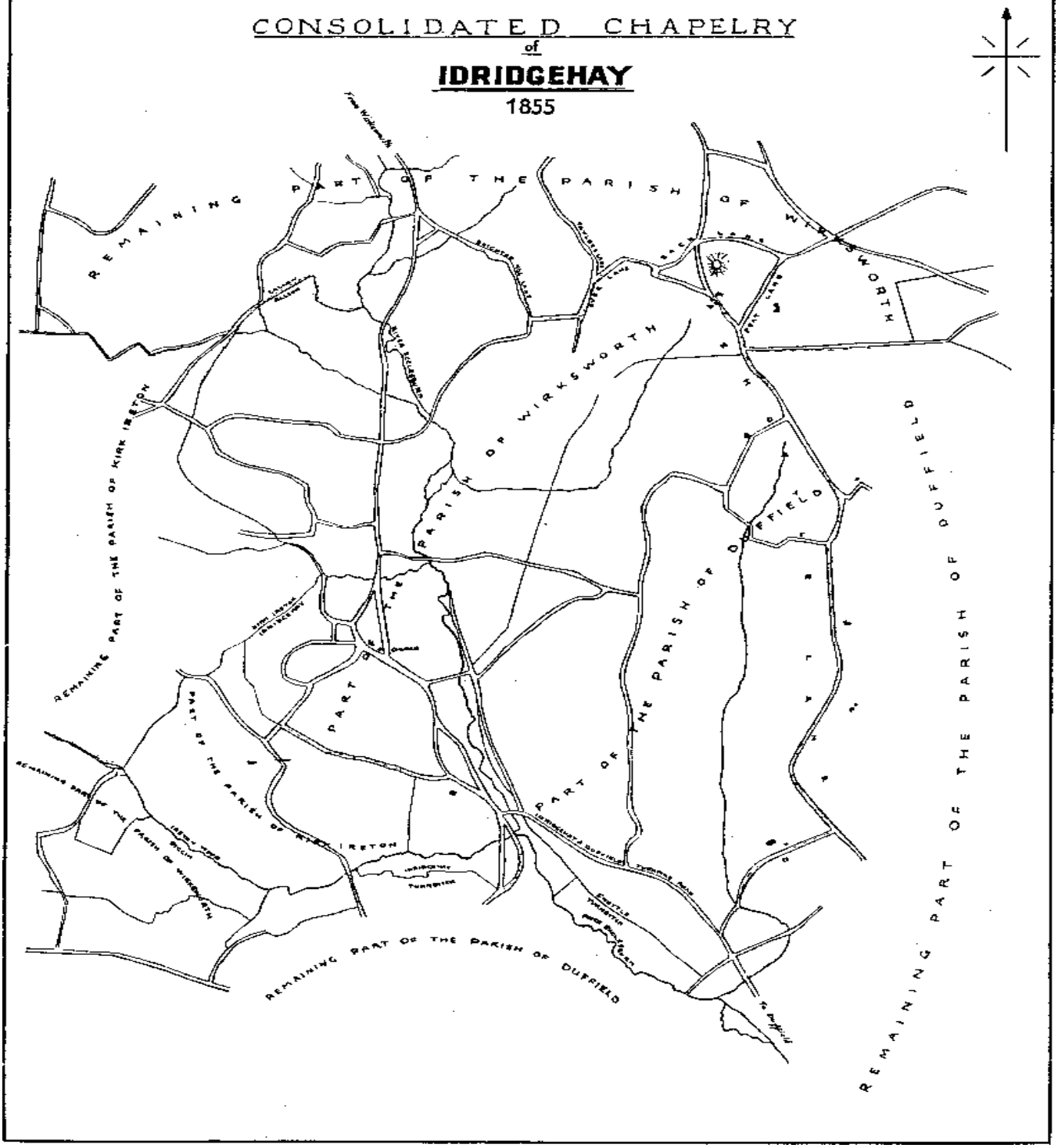
of the

CONSOLIDATED CHAPELRY

of

IDRIDGEHAY

1855



preached the sermon and chose as his text "serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing" (Psalm 100, v. 2).

> "His Lordship gave a plain, simple, and Scriptural explanation of the words of the text and applied the subject to the particular occasion on which they had met together. He also alluded to the example and princely munificence of one individual who had contributed so largely to the erection and endowment". This reference was to Mr. Robert Cresswell, of Idridgehay, who had given £500

to the Building Fund and £1,500 for the Endowment. The total cost of the building of the Church was £2,400 "raised by voluntary contributions and grants", but the grants from various sources only amounted to £360 so that indeed it could be truthfully said that Mr. Cresswell was responsible for the greater part of the funds needed for the Church. Mr. James Milnes, of Alton Manor, gave £600, but all the other subscribers put together only raised between them an additional £152, although more money came in later as the result of a direct appeal, including £100 from the Duke of Devonshire.

At the close of the Service of Consecration a collection was taken, and bearing in mind the changed value of money, it is interesting to read that "The alms of the congregation amounted to the handsome sum of £75".

The new Parish of Idridgehay was formed out of part of Kirk Ireton, Wirksworth and Duffield. Wirksworth was not small in size, but Duffield up to the mid part of the nineteenth century had been of enormous extent. It consisted chiefly of woodland, park, and common land, and formerly was part of Duffield Frith, a royal forest from Norman times until the seventeenth century, when the whole area was disafforested in law and given free development according to the local needs. The fact that the district was for so long a royal forest no doubt accounts for the relatively small number of villages in the Ecclesbourne valley, and the date when it was freed from feudal restrictions is clearly portrayed in its many late seventeenth or early eighteenth-century houses and farms.— The fact that the land passed out of direct royal control during the last stages of the feudal system may have been responsible for a community largely composed of small landowners not dissimilar to the "Statesmen" of the Lake District and possessed of much the same independent spirit. It is quite impossible to-day to trace the boundaries of the ancient Parish of Duffield with any precision, but certainly much of the Forest extended into the neighbouring Parishes of Mugginton and Wirksworth. Anthony Bradshaw, the Deputy Steward of the Frith in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, whose nephew, incidentally, was John Bradshaw the regicide whose signature appears at the head of the death warrant for the execution of King Charles, has left us a rhyme on the laws and customs of the Forest entitled *A Friend's due commendation of Duffield Frith.* In these verses he described in charming Tudor English the "bounds and grounds of Duffield Fee", which may give some idea of the extent of the Parish:

"Whoso with me will take sweete ayre on topp of chevin hill
Most bounds and grounds of Duffield Fee may view and take his fill. (from
Alderwasleigh to Burley Yat, so north and south it bendeth
from Collin's clarke to Hough p'Ke site, it east and west extendeth."

Belper, Turnditch and Heage were certainly within the boundaries of the Parish of Duffield, and at each of these places there was a Chapel to serve small communities on the fringes of the Forest. This great unwieldy parish was not divided up until the eighteen-forties, and it was only then that the Chapelries of Heage, Belper and Turn-ditch become independent. This was an era of great church expansion, for the population was growing rapidly and more churches were urgently required to meet its needs. In 1846 the Parish Church of Hazlewood had been consecrated, and it was to serve the northern part of the Ecclesbourne Valley that a Church was built at Idridgehay. There is little doubt that the initiative in the matter came from James Milnes and Robert Cresswell.

Mr. Milnes was a relative newcomer, who before he settled in the district had lived in Darley Dale. But a railway was about to be constructed, and Mr. Milnes felt and indeed said quite plainly that the peace of Darley Dale was about to depart for ever, that it would become overcrowded, and indeed no gentleman could live in such a place. So before the railway was opened in 1849 he had removed himself and his family to the Ecclesbourne valley, which was more to his taste and which he considered unspoilt as many people think it remains to-day. And there he bought some land and built Alton Manor, "a large handsome Elizabethan mansion".

Mr. Cresswell was a land agent who lived in the beautiful half-timbered Tudor house which stands on the main Derby road, and which was built by one of the Mellor family, whose home it was for many generations. How Robert Cresswell came to occupy the family home of the Mellors is not clear, although it is true that one of his sisters had marriedz Mellor and there is surely more than coincidence in the fact that the first incumbent of the Parish was Thomas Vernon Mellor, whose direct ancestor was a Robert Mellor who had settled in Idridgehay in the early years of the sixteenth century. The Revd. Thomas Mellor was therefore returning to the land of his fathers when he came to Idridgehay. Although he descended from a younger son, his grandfather was a Derby doctor and his father a Colonel Thomas Mellor, also of Derby. Long past historical events are brought very close when it is realised that quite a number of local people still alive to-day well remember the Revd. Thomas Mellor, whose father was in the Army at the time of the Peninsular War. At the time of his presentation to the living, Mr. Mellor was 34 years of age, and he remained in Idridgehay for the rest of his life.

Shortly after the Church had been consecrated, a site for a parsonage was given by Mr. Cresswell about a quarter of a mile south of the Church. Mr. John Parkin,

the Idridgehay surveyor and land agent, under whose "gratuitous superintendence" the Church had been built, described the site in these words:

> "Situate in the valley of the Ecclesburn on a gentle elevation . . . on the Wirksworth . . . Turnpike Road, leading from Wirksworth to Derby".

The "neat parsonage" was built mainly of brick made locally, no doubt by George Hardy up at Cliff Ash, and stone was reserved for architraves and window frames. This may have been because Mr. Milne's quarry was getting worked out, but more likely because brick was cheaper and easier to work. While his parsonage was in building, Mr. and Mrs. Mellor lived at Cliff Ash Cottage, and no doubt the present form of this house and the general layout of the garden dates from this time.

For ten years after the Church had been built the Sunday School had been held at a room in "The Black Swan", but this was obviously an unsatisfactory arrangement, and steps were therefore taken to secure a convenient site for the building of premises which could serve for day school and Sunday school. A plot of land was eventually obtained from Mr. William Deaville, forbear of the present Vicar's Warden, and the first of a succession of five generations to bear the same Christian name. The school was constructed of brick faced with stone, which was also used for the rather delightful mullioned windows of Gothic character. The building remains a pleasing monument of an age not always noted for its architectural achievements.

In the early days the living was in the joint patronage of Robert Cresswell and James Milnes, and the arrangement was that presentations were to be made by them alternately. However, by 1875 both men had died, and their heirs agreed together to transfer the patronage to the Bishop of Lichfield, and since that time it has remained in the hands of the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield.

In 1867 the railway to Wirksworth was opened and as a result of the improved communications with Derby considerable development took place, and it became possible for professional and other people to live in the country and work elsewhere. Much building accordingly was carried out, and the Church was seen to be more than ever justified by a greater increase in the population than had been anticipated. What, indeed, would poor Mr. Milnes have said about all this? But he did not have to face such a bitter blow, for he died in 1866 and was spared the mortification of seeing the railway make its way into his new retreat.

Mr. Mellor's reign lasted all through the long period of the British peace in the latter half of the last century in the heyday of Victorian prosperity, when life for many may have been harder but in some respects was more colourful. There is no doubt that before the First World War there was more pageantry than exists to-day.

In a garrison town troops were often to be seen in brilliant uniforms of scarlet or blue or in the more sober green of the rifle regiments, and of course in London on a great occasion exotic military styles in white and gold and otherwise unusual in character gave a picturesque touch to the scene. The internal combustion engine

had not yet driven the horse and horse-drawn vehicles off the road, and if the countryman was not often dazzled with martial splendour, at least he could often see a smart turnout such as a phaeton with a pair of good horses, which was, indeed, something to catch the eye. And, even to-day, the limousine cannot compete on a formal occasion with a carriage and pair. So there really was something to look at in Idridgehay on a Sunday morning when the Squire, Mr. Henry Walthall, drove up from Alton Manor in his carriage, followed by a brake carrying the domestic staff all in their neat uniforms. The Vicar would also arrive at the Church in his carriage and after leaving him there the coachman and footman solemnly returned with it for Mrs. Mellor. Mr. and Mrs. Henry Swingler and their children, and generally a small house party came in similar state from Ireton Wood House, so that the attendance of people at Matins was not small. Mr. and Mrs. Parkin were also in the congregation, and amongst others who helped to swell the numbers was the Robotham family who lived for a time at Ecclesbourne Hall. The Whistons were another legal family in the neighbourhood, and although their house was just outside the parish boundary in Hillcliffe Lane, some of its members attended Idridgehay Church, including Lt.-Col. W. R. H. Whiston, who has now been closely associated with parochial life in Idridgehay for over sixty years and is happily still with us.

During the whole of the time that Mr. Mellor was Vicar he only had five wardens. For the first six years the Wardens were Robert Cresswell and James Milnes. Mr. Cresswell died in 1863 aged 79 and was succeeded by John Parkin, who was continuously in office until his death in 1881 when he was followed in his turn by his son John Robert Parkin who remained a Warden until 1896. James Milnes died at the age of 73 and was succeeded by Henry Walthall-Walthall, who was thereafter Warden for no less than forty-six years.

In 1893 the Vicar's only child, Captain Henry Vernon Mellor, was married at Mackworth Church to Miss Patience Earle, the daughter of a Major George Earle, formerly of the 14th_Foot (now the West Yorks Regiment). The wedding was a tremendous affair—triumphal arches all the way from the bride's house to the church and a carpet was laid the whole length of the churchyard, and half the county was there.

However, the next year Thomas Mellor died, and old folks who remember him have made it quite clear how sincerely he was missed by all in the neighbourhood. Although he ruled his flock with a firm hand—failure to attend church on Sunday was promptly followed by a visit and a stern reprimand—he was obviously a person who was liked and held in esteem by everybody. His family filled one of the south windows of the Church with stained glass as a memorial to him, and a similar memorial was put in another window on the same side by the parishioners. Stained glass had already been placed in both east and west windows by his surviving sisters in memory of Robert Cresswell.

1894-1922

THE living was only vacant quite a short time when Mr. Mellor's successor was appointed. This was the Revd. James Benjamin Crump, who before coming to Idridgehay had had a parish in the Black Country at West Bromwich. The new Vicar was well into his sixties, but his family nevertheless was still comparatively young. The eldest, a son, it is true, was a medical student, but there were in addition five other children, a second son and four daughters, all of whom were under the age of twenty-one.

The Crump family quickly settled down and all its members soon began to play their parts in the life of the parish. The Vicar himself took a great interest in the already flourishing Sunday School: in addition he held special services in the Church for the children of the village on Sunday afternoons, and on occasion would himself play the organ. Mrs. Crump had soon started a branch of the Mothers' Union, which, it will be remembered, had begun some years earlier in a small way in the Hampshire village of Alresford, and had rapidly extended throughout the country. In due course Miss Hylda Crump organised a branch of the Girls' Friendly Society, an association which had come into existence in 1875, just a year before the Mothers' Union, in order to provide practical friendship for all girls and women who needed it, and especially to help the many young women working in domestic service or in other jobs far from their homes. The Idridgehay Branch of the Girls' Friendly Society took an active role in parochial life for many years, and in conjunction with the Mothers' Union was responsible for much of the work connected with garden bazaars and other efforts organised on behalf of the Church. But of course it was not all work, and pleasant parties and outings were had from time to time, and these added much to the interest and enjoyment of the young women belonging to the branch.

But the Girls' Friendly Society was not the only activity which Miss Hylda Crump started. In addition she took the main initiative in raising a women's hockey team and a tennis club. Hockey at first was played on the vicarage field and tennis on the hard court at Ithersay House, fated to be destroyed by enemy action in 1941, but at that time in the occupation of Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick. It was not until much later on that the clubs were able to share the use of a sports ground generously given to the village by General Walthall.

Although much of the time of the Vicar and his family was spent in affairs of the parish, Mr. Crump also took great care of his garden, and his wife took equal pride in her house, but of course the problems of running house and garden at that time

were few compared with those in the mid-twentieth century. Still, a man with a young family to bring up could not continue to carry on in quite the style of his predecessor, but it was possible all the same to live in considerable comfort, and the whole scene around the turn of the century is vividly recalled in some nostalgic verses written a few years ago:

"How many summer tea times has the cakestand
Been carried by the maid
Across the lawn and placed beside the table
Under the Cedar's shade?
How many sermons have been slowly written
Where these dark boughs hang low
And the herbaceous border says consider
The lilies how they grow?
.....
For here the frontier of Past and Present
Less definite appears
This drowsy morning might belong to any Of
sixty sunny years".*

Both Mr. and Mrs. Crump were greatly loved for they were sympathetic personalities always ready to join in the joys and sorrows of the parishioners, but apart from family matters, the problems they had to deal with were limited for national affairs impinged little on the inhabitants of a village at that time. Indeed, the events of the great world disturbed Idridgehay hardly at all; the Boer War caused scarcely a ripple on the placid sea of local interest and, of course, there were no casualties amongst the sons of the district in that war.

In 1907 Mrs. Mellor, the widow of the first Vicar, died and was buried in Idridgehay. Although she had gone to live in Derby on the death of her husband she had never quite. broken her local association, for she had kept on as a summer residence Cliff Ash Cottage which had been her home in the early years of her marriage.

As time went on the various members of the Crump family began to make their own way in life. The eldest son, after qualifying as a doctor, had married and settled in practce: the marriage of Miss Florence Crump to Mr. E. B. Clegg, a Lancashire manufacturer, took place in 1903, and two years later Miss Mary Crump was married to Mr. W. R. H. Whiston (better known nowadays as Lt.-Col. Whiston) who had already been taking an active part in parish life for over ten years and indeed had been reading the lessons at the Sunday services since 1895. It was a tragically short wedded life for Mrs. Whiston died suddenly at her home only three weeks after the marriage had taken place. The lectern is a memorial to her given by her

* Reproduced by permission of the proprietors of *Punch*.

parents. Before 1910, Mr. Cuthbert Crump had also married, and Miss Winifred Crump had obtained a post at the Girls' Modern School, Bedford, as assistant mistress, so that only Miss Hylda Crump remained at home.

Mr. Henry Walthall, of Alton Manor, had been in failing health for some time and Mr. W. R. H. Whiston succeeded him as Churchwarden in 1914. He was to remain in office continuously for the next thirty-four years, although Idridgehay did not see him much during the war years since he had rejoined his old regiment the Sherwood Foresters, and he was in the army at home or in France throughout the war, retiring with the rank of Lieut-Colonel. In point of fact during Mr. Crump's twenty-eight years at Idridgehay there were only four Wardens, Mr. Henry Walthall followed by Lt.-Col. Whiston, and Mr. John R. Parkin succeeded by Mr. William Deaville, who was a Churchwarden for thirty-seven years.

In 1916 Mr. Henry Walthall died, and was succeeded at Alton Manor by his nephew, who at that time was on active service in France where he had been and remained throughout the war. It was not until 1919 that Brigadier-General E. C. Walthall and his wife were able to live permanently at the family home and to take the share in local and county affairs which they have continued now for nearly thirty-six years. One of the first duties which the new Squire had to perform was the unveiling of the memorial to the men of the village who had been killed in the war. This was placed at the end of the spinney just below the Church, and took the form of a Celtic Cross executed in granite. On its base were inscribed the names of the six people who had given their lives, including that of Philip, Lt.-Col. Whiston's young brother who fell in France, not long after leaving school.

Mr. Crump's eightieth birthday fell in 1914 and the parishioners made him a presentation of a silver salver and a purse of money on this occasion. Despite his great age, Mr. Crump carried on his parochial work throughout the First World War, but towards the end of it he found the standard which he had set himself was too high to maintain. or instance, he had always at Christmas made a point of visiting every parishioner, and since he had no other form of transport he had perforce to do so on foot. Clearly things could not continue like this, and it was accordingly decided to appoint a curate. The Revd. C. L. Curry was chosen, and he remained in Idridgehay for four years, and for a few months in 1923 he was in sole charge of the parish after Mr. Crump had died in the previous December at the great age of 88 years.

1923 - 1943

THE Revd. W. S. Crawford, D.D., succeeded Mr. Crump, and like him had previously held a living in Staffordshire, although in this case not in the Black Country but in the rural part of the county to the north-west. Dr. and Mrs. Crawford were quite elderly when they came to Idridgehay, and their two children, a son and a daughter, were grown up. Mr. Donald Crawford, having served as a Midshipman in the Royal Navy, had already embarked on his career, and was no longer living at home. The first war had only recently ended and one of its results had been the breaking down of some of the taboos which had previously prevented the daughters of professional men from undertaking a business career. Ursula Crawford, therefore, in keeping with the spirit of the times, worked as a secretary in London until her marriage in September, 1928, to her cousin, Robert Crawford, a retired Lieutenant-Commander of the Royal Navy.

Later in the same month the death took place of Mrs. Crump who had been living with her two unmarried daughters in Bedfordshire, and her body was brought to Idridgehay for burial beside that of her husband. The additional stall on the north side of the chancel, matching the one opposite, is a memorial to her, while the altar rail and a mural tablet were erected in memory of Mr. Crump. Mr. Henry Walthall, and various members of the Milnes family, had already been commemorated by a wall tablet and brass memorial on the north wall of the Church and by stained glass in the windows of the same side. The stained glass in the south windows of the chancel is in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Thorneby, the legatees of the Cresswell family.

Also in 1928 two acTes-of land were fenced for a playing field and made available to the village by Brigadier-General Walthall, who quite rightly insisted that the responsibility for the future of the field and its upkeep should lie with the residents, who accordingly formed a committee for this purpose. General Walthall said at the time:

> "The girls are the great standby; they are very enthusiastic and they keep the young men keen too. Many of them have just left grammar school and they are anxious to have opportunities of keeping up their games."

The playing field was indeed a welcome acquisition; the hockey club for the first time now had a proper ground and the tennis club was no longer dependent on private generosity for the use of a court. A cricket pitch was also laid out and arrangements were made for the playing of basketball; in addition, a small pavilion

was erected in which there was accommodation for dressing rooms as well as a tea room. The playing field and pavilion were formally opened by Mrs. Walthall on Saturday, 25th August, and for a long while were actively used and enthusiastically supported. All sorts of efforts were organised which not only raised the money needed to maintain the building and grounds, but were also much enjoyed by those taking part in them. As time went on, however, the number of people making use of the sports facilities became fewer. This was probably due to a variety of causes, but lack of zest on the part of the young can almost certainly not be included amongst them. There are always times when the number of young people is smaller than others. Families were not so big as they had been in the past, and there was also the inevitable drift from the land. Broadcasting developed greatly in the twenties and thirties and ready-made entertainment became available on a scale never known before but, above all, perhaps communications improved to such an extent that it became possible for those keen to play or watch games to do so under conditions immensely superior to any that could be provided in a village.

Perhaps similar reasons have led to the regrettable disbandment of the local Scouts and Girl Guides for whom so much work was done between the wars by Mrs. Edwards (the niece of Mrs. Walthall) and others. It must be admitted that there is now a Y.M.C.A. (which, despite its name, caters for both sexes) and its members make full use of the sports ground. But there is no doubt that community life began to decay in other directions about this time and the concerts and dances and other entertainments in the school and elsewhere which had been such a feature of the village, ceased to be held. It seems a pity that this is the case, for talking with older people leaves no doubt that they were the source of much pleasure.

Mrs. Crawford, who with her husband had always been held in much affection in the village, died in 1937 after having been in failing health for some time. Her place as Enrolling Member of the Mothers' Union was taken by Mrs. Walthall, who has now been the devoted leader of the Idridgehay Branch for eighteen years.

Two years later The war came and many evacuee children, chiefly from the southern counties, were billeted in Idridgehay. Others also sought security from the dangers of war in its rural isolation, but one night in April, 1941, an enemy aircraft was heard overhead, and in a very short time tremendous explosions shook the entire neighbourhood. Two land mines had fallen, one near the southern end of the village and the other in some open fields. Fortunately there was no direct hit, but the damage done by the blast was so great that the vicarage and three other houses in the area proved quite impossible to repair, and all had eventually to be demolished.

The Vicar's daughter, whose husband had died suddenly while on a Home Guard exercise near Hulland a year previously, was staying with her father and was able to shepherd the household into the safety of the cellar. There they remained while the house shook and rocked above their heads, but in due course they were helped

out by the Home Guard, little the worse. Dr. Crawford was in hospital for a week following this episode, but soon recovered, having spent part of the time in bed composing some gay lines on his experience, which started:

"If you're waking call me early, but I had hardly gone to bed, When I thought I felt the ceiling gently fingering my head".

The vicarage was quite uninhabitable, but a cottage was found at Hillcliffe Lane for Dr. Crawford and his daughter, and there he remained for the next two years.

Except during the weeks of his last illness, Dr. Crawford did not miss a single Sunday duty by reason of sickness throughout his stay at Idridgehay, and even after he was bombed out of his vicarage he used to walk the long mile from Hillcliffe Lane to the Church in time for 8 o'clock every Sunday. After the celebration was over he would have a cup of tea with the Hurts, take the morning service, walk home, and then walk the double journey again in the evening. Not a bad achievement at nearly eighty years of age!

Dr. Crawford died in 1943, having been incumbent for twenty years, and during that time had been looked upon as a kind, thoughtful and studious Vicar. On his gravestone are the following words from the 91st Psalm:

"Thou shalt not fear any terror that flieth by night . . . For he shall give his angels charge over thee".

Dr. Crawford's experience of Churchwardens was even smaller than that of either of his predecessors, for Lt.-Col. Whiston remained Warden during the whole of his time in the living, and William Deaville after having served for thirty-seven years was followed by Samuel Jackson, who was in office until 1943. Mr. Jackson was indeed a staunch churchman since every Sunday for fifty years or more, with the utmost regularity, he had walked all the way from his home at Biggin to attend the services.

Since Dr. Crawford's-time there have been five Wardens, Lt.-Col. Whiston carried on until 1947 and was followed by Mr. J. P. Groom, who held office for one year only and was succeeded by Mr. J. Smith who resigned at the end of 1952. There are few Derbyshire parishes in which a woman has acted as Churchwarden, but Idridgehay is one of them, for in 1943 Mrs. Walthall took the place of Mr. Samuel Jackson, and remained a Warden until 1950. In that year Mr. J. A. Beeson became Churchwarden and has continued in office since that time. William Deaville is the other Churchwarden, and was first appointed in 1953. He is a member of one of the oldest families in the district and is a grandson of the William Deaville who was Warden from 1896 until 1932.

But Churchwardens have not been the only members of the laity to render service to the Church. Mrs. Hastings has been associated with the Sunday School ever since the early days of Mr. Crump's time as Vicar, and on the formation of the Parochial

Church Council in 1921 she was appointed its first Secretary, only resigning this position within the last year or two. Then Miss Margery Hurt, who is connected with those Wrights on whose land the Church was built, has been organist for at least thirty years—she cannot really remember exactly when she did take on the job. And she played the piano too, for those dances and concerts and choir parties at the vicarage which used to be such fun. Mr. Harry Riley is another firm supporter of the Church, and he has been a Sidesman these last thirty-five years. And, of course, there are others, although it is impossible to mention all by name. But turning over the pages of a scrap book there is hardly an account of a bazaar or an effort of any kind which lacks a reference to these willing workers. Surely they, can ask for no better testimonial.

1943-1955

THE obstacles to filling Dr. Crawford's place were great, for not only was the war in a critical stage, but man power also was stretched to the limit, and the absence of a vicarage coupled with the general housing shortage was a further difficulty. In the circumstances it was decided not to proceed with an appointment, but instead the Revd. (now Canon) S. L. Caiger, the Vicar of Wirksworth, was asked to take over the duties of the parish as Priest-in-Charge, and Idridgehay remained under his care until he was appointed Vicar of Osmaston.

During all this time it was only due to the efforts of Lt.-Col. Whiston, and more recently of a most excellent body of Lay Readers that the Sunday services were kept going at all, since it was only possible to arrange for a curate to come from Wirksworth to hold a celebration once a month. For years Lt.-Col. Whiston read the prayers at the services every Sunday, and even now Lay Readers have to be called in from time to time.

In 1944 a presentation consisting of a gold wristlet watch, a cheque, and an illuminated address was made to Lt.-Col. W. R. H. Whiston by Brigadier-General Walthall in appreciation of his fifty years' service to the Church and village. Another notable event during these years was the unveiling, in 1948, by General Walthall, of a memorial to those killed in the Second World War, which is in the form of an oblong tablet of natural stone fixed to the interior south wall with lettering in Aldine Roman type, coloured green. It is a somewhat surprising fact that seven men lost their lives in the recent war compared with only six who died during the First World War, in which, of course, the total number of casualties was very much greater.

In 1951, the Revd. Geoffrey Busby came to Wirksworth and followed Canon Caiger as Priest-in-Charge of Idridgehay. This year, to the great satisfaction of everyone, and in accordance with the Pastoral Reorganisation Measure, not only has the parish a Vicar of its own once more, but it has been fortunate enough to be able to welcome Mr. Busby who, in January, 1955, was formally instituted to the living which he holds jointly with that of Wirksworth.

So, the wheel has turned full circle in exactly one hundred years, and a considerable portion of the "new" parish of Idridgehay has in a sense returned to the Mother Church from which it sprang.