

CHAPTER 8

The second 20 years

From the foregoing chapter it is obvious the Church was not in a very strong position financially, but it must be remembered there was a general depression throughout the 1890s and quite a lot of unemployment, so the parishioners must have been very determined in their efforts to keep the Church during the difficult years.

The first meeting on 12th January 1910 opened with a piece of good news: Following an interview between Sir Henry Stephen (that is Matthew Henry Stephen of "Glen Ayr") and the Vicar-General, plus the fact that the Church had made a substantial payment on account of the arrears of interest on the mortgage money, the Vicar-General had announced the Moorebank Estate grant would be restored to the Church, although the grant would not be quite as big as formerly.

Also the minutes of this meeting recorded that Mr. Amory, the Organist, had tendered his resignation. The Treasurer was instructed to pay Mr. Amory any money which may be owing to him at the time of his resignation and the Secretary was instructed to give Mr. Amory a testimonial, as requested.

At the meeting of 29th March, 1910 it was announced the licence for the letting of the Church Hall had been received. In this connection Mr. A.J. Cox was named as Licensee of the hall, Mr. Cox being a churchwarden at that time.

A special committee was proposed at the meeting in April with the object of raising funds so that the debt could be wiped off.

The hall was let to a Mr. Anderson for the purpose of showing motion pictures, the rental being £3/10/- per week and a lease was prepared for a period of six months. However, after four months Mr. Anderson gave one week's notice as apparently the enterprise was not as successful as he had hoped. The Church Council then let

the hall for elections to be held in October, but apparently Mr. Anderson had not moved out as he was informed he must vacate the premises by a certain date "or proceedings would be undertaken".

The Church Council had written to the Archbishop asking that St. George's be made a parish, but the Archbishop replied that it could not be made a parish until the mortgage on the land had been discharged.

During the meeting of 5th October it was stated that Mrs. Withers had been acting voluntarily as organist for some months and it was decided to give her £5/5/-.

Nothing particularly noteworthy appears to have happened until 1911. There were several references in the minutes of the monthly meetings about small amounts being received for the letting of the halls and there was also an interesting item about a Mr. Sykes paying £3 per quarter for the use of the organ by his pupils, even though the organ appeared to be greatly in need of alterations being carried out and even needing to be moved forward. It was decided that a Mr. Richardson should be asked to supply a full report of the work required and of course the cost that would be incurred.

At the Annual Vestry Meeting held on 16th April, 1912 the Rector's stipend was increased to £240 per annum and the warden proposing the increase said the small increase was no indication of the sterling service Mr. Todd had rendered to the parish, but it was as much as the wardens could see their way clear to offer.

The organist, Mrs. Withers, also received an increase in salary from £12 to £20 per annum and the secretary spoke in very praiseworthy terms of the services she had rendered.

A vote of thanks was expressed to the ladies who were now collecting money for the church each month and it was decided these collections should be used for the liquidation of the mortgage on the land, instead of the annual Sale of Work. This was only the second mention of a Sale of Work since the one prior to the

building of the first part of the church, but apparently the ladies had been working for these sales all the years.

At the meeting of 19th May, 1912 the Rector reported the Archbishop had sanctioned the requesting of grants and therefore the Rector's Warden Mr. John White and one of the People's Wardens, Mr. Williams were authorised to write to certain reputable firms asking if they would grant a sum of money towards the Organ Restoration Fund.

Another piece of interesting news occurred in the Minutes of 15th July, 1912. This was that the Small Hall was to be moved back so that it would be alongside the large hall and £25 should be paid off the mortgage, providing the moving of the small hall did not exceed £15. (Actually the cost was only £12, but nevertheless only £20 was paid off the mortgage.)

The cost of the Organ repairs, which Mr. Richardson said were absolutely essential was £100, so apart from sending a letter to St. John's Darlington, asking if it could assist with this cost, it was decided to obtain another quotation from a Mr. Holroyd and this was accepted, the work to take three months.

In the minutes of the meeting of 7th May, 1913 payment of £1 per pew rental appeared and it is interesting to note that this parishioner kept paying the pew rental although three others ever did so and they not regularly. Twelve Prayer Books were purchased at this time for use in the church, so apparently some attended church services without bringing their own prayer book, which was the usual custom.

An advertisement inserted in "The Sydney Morning Herald" and the "Daily Telegraph" on 5th July, 1913 called for a quote for a motor to operate the organ. Quotes of £120/9/- and £114 were received, but apparently it was thought electric power would be preferable for during the following month advertisements appeared in the same papers stipulating electric power. There is no reference in the minutes following as to what quotes were received and it was not until the minutes of a meeting held on 7th November,

1917 that there is any further reference to the power for the organ. It reads: "It was moved and seconded that the lowest tender be accepted for new water service for the organ from Main to footpath Cock" and apparently the payment in the February minutes which is: "13/12/18 Water Board (Organ) £2/13/2" refers to this.

It is interesting that at the Vestry Meeting of 15th April, 1914 it was moved that one-tenth of offertories be sent to the Church Missionary Society for Foreign Missionary work and there was not one vote against it.

The insurance cover for the church and halls at this time was:-

Church	£1,600
Organ	300
Large Hall and Piano	500
Small Hall	<u>150</u>
	<u>£2,550</u>

Just about this period the church was getting into serious financial trouble again with outgoings exceeding income. The Rector was receiving only £17/18/4 per month, not the £20 per month decided at a meeting some months before and in addition, the Rector was even donating money to the money collected monthly by the ladies.

At a meeting on 1st April, 1915 a letter was read from Mrs. Withers advising she had had a bereavement in the family and she would be resigning as organist on 4th August, 1915. Her resignation was received with regret and it was moved that a letter of sympathy be sent to her, the letter to also express the church's appreciation of her efficient service.

The Rev. Todd presided at the meeting of 1st September, but he advised he would be leaving the church at the end of the month to take charge of a church in Lidcombe. He announced the total receipts for the year up to 6th October, 1915 including money from the Sale of Work was £209/0/11, whereas the total expenditure amounted to £213/5/11, leaving a debit of only £4/5/-. He advised the Rev. John Bidwell would be replacing him.

The Rector's resignation was received with the deepest regret. Mr. White spoke of the good work he had done for St. George's and everyone expressed the hope he and his family would be very happy at Lidcombe.

The Rev. John Bidwell was appointed Rector at St. George's on 29th July, 1915 and he lived at 163 Windsor Street. He chaired the meeting on 3rd November, 1915 and reported he had contacted Mrs. Withers and she agreed to continue as organist at a salary of £20 per annum. The Treasurer reported that £49/5/7 had been raised by the Sale of Work, so that the church had an amount of £69/4/11 plus £2/8/6 for the Sunday collection less expenses totalling £21/8/5, which meant the church had £50/5/- in hand and it was the first time for a very long while there had been a credit balance.

It was announced by the Rector that he had appointed Mr. Quinsay as Verger at a salary of £26 per annum and Mr. J.A. Fox as his warden.

A couple of months later electricity was installed in the halls: three 300 c.p. lamps in the large hall and one 100 c.p. in the porch and one of each in the hall and porch of the small hall.

About six months previous to the time of which we are speaking, the Commercial Bank had requested permission to erect a small kiosk within the church grounds, for which it was prepared to credit the church with 5/- per week until the cost of the building had been paid and then they would pay the 5/- per week. The Church agreed to this arrangement, but apparently the Bank did not get the business it anticipated and after 20 weeks, the Church was presented with an account for £17, being the cost of the building which was £27 less 20 weeks at 5/- per week. The churchwardens pointed out to the Bank, there had been no suggestion at any time that the church would be obliged to pay anything. It was finally agreed the church would pay £7. This proved quite a good investment, for the kiosk was let to a Mr. Walters, a bootmaker, who was a tenant of church property for many years. His rental was originally 12/6 per week and a few years later 15/- per week.

At the monthly meeting of 5th September, 1917 the Treasurer announced 150 envelopes had been printed and 125 accepted by members of the congregation for quarterly offerings to be made against the Debt Fund. One hundred and twenty-five members of the congregation had taken an envelope, but only 31 had returned in time on the required date, so there were still 94 outstanding. Also 150 special collection boxes had been given out at the beginning of the Lenten season, but only 107 returned on Easter Day and there were 43 missing.

At the meeting of 2nd March, 1916 a vote of thanks was expressed to Mr. Moses of 11 Cooper Street by Mr. John White for his gift of a Roll of Honour to be hung in the church, so that the names of all those who had or were serving in the war from this parish would have their names printed on the board and members of the congregation could mention them in their prayers. (At this point it might be appropriate to mention that ultimately two Rolls of Honour with the names of those who served during that war were displayed on the rear wall of the church until about 1975, when dramatic changes were made to the Church.)

From this period on Tea Meetings seemed to be held quite regularly. These Tea Meetings may have been a very good way of members of the church getting to know each other better, but, if the idea was to raise money for the church, it only did so at the expense of the parishioners. About £10 was collected each night, but the huge quantities of food donated by the church members would have cost far more than the amount raised.

At a meeting held on 1st May, 1917 a letter from a Mr. Needham was read. This letter applied for permission and sole right to conduct select and well-behaved ballroom dances and classes in the large hall on two evenings and one afternoon and evening each week. One of the churchwardens, Mr. Bentzen, had told Mr. Needham his request would be favourably received and therefore Mr. Needham had advertised the dance evenings and afternoon and evening classes and had had a calico sign made. The Rector said that, as many of the

parishioners had spoken against dancing in the hall, he had no option but to refuse Mr. Needham's request, but the church was prepared to explain the matter to Mr. Needham and to reimburse him for the money he had outlaid. Mr. Bentzen thereupon gave notice of his intention to resign. He did just that, so a special meeting had to be held on 16th April, 1916 to elect a people's churchwarden to replace him. Mr. Cox proposed Mr. White, Mrs. Clywick seconded the motion and he was unanimously elected.

Council decided that a special In Memoriam Service should be held on 8th September, 1918 for Fallen Soldiers and this should be advertised in two newspapers.

The Rev. Bidwell was in the chair at the meeting of 23rd September and although no explanation is given in the minutes of the next month's meeting, the Rev. N.H. Bootle was welcomed as Acting-Incumbent and he was in charge of the church for the following nine months.

At this time the Bank Balance was £10/12/10 and £3/7/6 had been paid in that evening by the lady collectors, which meant there was a credit of £14/0/4, but the amounts passed for payment that evening totalled £29/14/11, so the church at that time had a minus balance of £15/14/7.

The Rev. R.H. Bootle presided at the next meeting and he was in charge at the meeting of 2nd October, 1918 at which it was announced £300 was to be lent by the Church Building Loan Fund, this amount having been requested by the Rev. J. Bidwell. This loan meant the church would be saved £50 per year interest on the mortgage, as the Church Building Loan was interest free.

At the meeting of 4th December, 1918 the Rev. Bootle suggested that a special account be opened at the Edgecliff Commonwealth Savings Bank in the name of "The £300 Loan Repayment A/C" and money raised from Cantalass, Concerts, Socials, Christmas Trees, etc. be paid into that account.

It was also agreed at that meeting that Mr. Quinn, the Verger, be authorized to let the Large Hall to suitable applicants with a

minimum charge of £1 and he was to receive 2/- in the £1 as commission.

No meeting was held in February, 1919 on account of the prevalence of the Pneumonic 'Flu which was raging at that time and the Government regulation prohibiting all public meetings. For the information of those who do not or cannot remember that time, it was the one and only time in Sydney when one was prohibited from appearing outside one's home without wearing a mask covering the nose and mouth. At the time so many people were dying that the bodies were picked up by carts and buried immediately. Speaking of wearing masks: It is an offence at all times in Japan for anyone to appear in public with a common cold without he or she wears a mask.

At the meeting of 7th May, 1919 it was decided a letter be sent to the Board of Health asking them to inspect the unsanitary conditions of the land near the Large Hall caused by the flooding by manure from the rear of the adjoining premises, in spite of many requests by the Church for the owners of the property to rectify the matter. At the meeting of 4th December, 1919 the meeting was advised the Health Department had instructed the owners of the stables adjoining the Large Hall to suitably pave and drain the area. This was the first indication that there were stables adjoining the church property.

The Rev. J. Bidwell attended the meetings of 2nd July, 1919 and 6th August, 1919 and there is nothing in the minutes to explain why he had been missing for 9 months. However, the writer was able to contact Mr. Bidwell's daughter and learnt just what had happened. He had acted as *locum tenens* for Archdeacon H.S. Begbie at St. Stephen's Church, Newtown, whilst the Archdeacon was in England on leave and after returning to St. George's for about two months, during which time the above-mentioned meetings were held, the Rev. Bidwell was transferred to St. Thomas' Church at Rozelle.

The Rev. J. Poole chaired the meeting of 1st October, 1919 and he appeared to have had a curate to assist him as a Mr. R.H.

Chapple assisted the Rector during the three years he was at St. George's.

At the meeting of 13th December, 1919 a rather unusual request was made by the verger - he requested that his granddaughter be appointed verger in his place. Although there is nothing in the minutes of the meetings at that time as to whether the granddaughter did get the job, apparently she did, for in the minutes of a meeting on 3rd April, 1922 the following sentence appears: "Miss Mallyon resigned as Verger".

Mr. C.K. Dunstan who had been an organist at the church for some years resigned in 1921 and an advertisement was put in the paper for a replacement. Seven organists replied and the Rector was at a loss to decide which one should be engaged, so he invited them all to attend one Saturday afternoon and the churchwardens also. The applicants had to play a piece of music and the churchwardens were to decide the successful one. Fortunately they were all in favour of a Miss Graham being chosen, her salary to be £30 per annum. On 5th December, 1922 a letter was received from a Mr. Newell stating he wanted to rent two blocks of land in front of the church halls for the purpose of erecting shops. The churchwardens requested the Secretary to advise Mr. Newell that no offer would be accepted and no building would be erected in front of the church.

It was moved at the same meeting that the allowance for the Rector's rent be increased from £1/13/0 to £2/18/4 per month and that £5 per annum be allowed for the Rector's telephone bill.

There are three photographs amongst the records of the church which have been taken in the studio of a professional photographer and these depict:

- (1) *1923 St. George's 'B' Grade Premiers*
18 players in football gear (two said to be absent when photograph was taken)
- (2) 1924 (No heading)
17 in football gear plus an Ambulance attendant and Mr. Levingston (Secretary)
- (3) *Eastern Suburbs Junior Rugby League Premiers and St. George 'A' Grade Winners of the "Foster Shield" 1922*

12 players in Rugby Shorts and Jumpers
Photographs of Rev. Harley Jones, J. White (Patron), T. Sincocks (Ambulance Officer), T. Martin, (Treasurer) and H. Levingston (Secretary).

Therefore it would appear members of the church, or some of them at least, were good football players. It has been said by local residents that it was due to the Paddington Teams that the Hampden Street area was chosen for the construction of Trumper Park, but confirmation of this has not been found.

At the meeting of 7th January, 1924, the Rev. Poole advised he would be leaving St. George's on 21st January and the Rev. C.L. Williams had been appointed in his place and he would be taking up duties on 27th January. One of the churchwardens said the resignation would be accepted with very great regret and Mr. Poole's name placed on record for the splendid work he had accomplished during his four year's ministry at St. George's. Mr. Poole thanked Mrs. Twiss and Sister Mary Holman, two of the ladies of the Church Committee, for the wonderful assistance they had given him.

The year 1925 seemed to have passed very smoothly under the Rev. Williams' leadership and the Diocese accepted it as a full parish on 25th October, 1925. The meeting of 19th May, 1926 is only mentioned because the Ladies' Guild was formed that year and the Guild became quite important in the years that followed.

At the meeting of 4th February, 1927 the Rev. Williams resigned as Rector of St. George's, as his wife's health had been affected by proximity to the sea. His three years as incumbent at St. George's had been quite successful in that there were no financial problems.

At the Annual Vestry Meeting of 27 April, 1927 the Rev. Robert Harley Jones was the Rector in charge of St. George's. At the meeting he raised the question of having a Church Paper, but a decision was left to the Church Committee. At this meeting it was proposed by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. McDonald that the Parish

Council give serious consideration to the buying or building of a rectory.

Two months later the minutes of the meeting recorded that Mr. John White and Mrs. Graham had donated a "magnificent article" to the church, namely, a very fine oak pulpit.

Two major projects were being considered by the Parish Council at this time. One was the building of a shop on church property alongside the large hall and the second was the purchase of a house suitable to be a rectory. Regarding the proposed shop: one of the churchwardens was requested to interview Mr. Walters, the bootmaker who was using the kiosk in the church grounds, if he would be prepared to move into the shop at a higher rental, if a shop were to be built on the vacant land. With regard to the purchase of a house: A letter was to be written to the Archbishop asking if the Diocese would be in favour of the church purchasing "Cumberland" in Duxford Street for a rectory and if so, would the Church Loan Council be prepared to lend the money, as the Church's debt on the land now stood at £350 and the Church had £38 in hand to reduce that amount, so this debt should be cleared in 3 - 4 years.

For the first time in the Church's history, it was decided that a Church Committee be chosen to meet with the Rector and Churchwardens each month. This was thought to be a forward step, as it meant there would be members of the congregation present at meetings instead of just the Rector and Churchwardens, two of whom were of course chosen by the congregation and one by the Rector.

It was discovered there had been an encroachment on the church's property next to the large hall and as the owners of the adjoining property would not do anything about correcting their alignment, the matter was placed in the hands of a lawyer. Two months later the lawyer sent a claim to the owner of the property but still nothing happened, so the Church made a further enquiry to the lawyer. The reply said the delay was due to the fact that at first there was a delay in obtaining Counsel's opinion, then the Archbishop failed to sign the discharge of mortgage, although it

was sent to him months ago, then a further delay was caused as the property was actually in the name of the Church Property Trust and its consent had to be obtained before they could proceed.

About this time a request was made by a Mr. E.C. Webster for permission to run social glee parties in the hall, but the Church Council decided the hall was to be let for Church functions only.

At the meeting of 8th June, 1927 the Rev. Harley Jones again raised the question of having a Parish Paper. He said the cost would be about £60 per year and he had already received promises of £40 worth of advertising, so success seemed to be assured. He said at present it meant only about £1 per month to the church to make up the difference. It was moved and seconded that £1 per month be put into a Parish Paper Fund.

The Rector then read correspondence in reference to house and land values for a rectory and having considered such high prices, Mr. Williams, one of the churchwardens, outlined some of the advantages of building a rectory on the church's own land. Mrs. Graham suggested a Rectory Fund be started and those present made a donation amounting to £17/2/- to start the Fund.

A Special Meeting was held on 29th June, 1927 as it had come to Council's notice that a Mr. Hugh had his property, 2 Broughton Street, Paddington, up for sale. The Rector announced that Mr. White who was an expert in the building line had checked the house and said it was worth the price of £1,592 as other suitable houses in the area were in the vicinity of £2,000. The house could be bought for a deposit of £150 and £2/10/- per week. So it was decided to purchase it. One of the churchwardens, Mr. F. Wallace, offered to lend £100 free of interest and this amount plus the £17/2/- donated to the fund, with £14/18/3 belonging to the Old Boys Club which had lain dormant for a number of years, plus £27/19/9 from the church funds made up the deposit.

On 2nd August, 1927 it was announced that a letter had been received from Bishop Coadjutor Gerald D'Arcy-Irvine, approving the

purchase of the house for a rectory and the method of payment and advising that £500 would be made available to the church.

Also at that meeting it was announced that Messrs. Hillsey and Stanley, in conjunction with Mr. and Mrs. Pike would hold a concert every 3 months, the money received to go to the Rectory Fund and it was reported the last concert they had given realized £9/1/6.

The Rector spoke at the meeting of 3rd September, 1927 of the alignment of two shops he now proposed should be built on the vacant land adjacent to the church and he said the Paddington Council had said it would favourably consider the proposal, but had asked for full particulars.

On the 18th September, 1927 the church was consecrated by Bishop Gerald D'Arcy-Irvine at 7.15 p.m. There is no report about the opening in the minutes of the following meeting, but from the Register of Services it was found £5/1/8 was the amount of the collection that evening, so there must have been a good attendance on that occasion, as it was very rarely that the collection exceeded £2.

At the meeting of 5th November, 1927 the Parish Council studied the plans of the two shops proposed to be constructed on a 30' x 30' block on the western side of the church, the Rector advising the meeting that the plans had already been approved by the Paddington Council. The Rector was then given authority to proceed with the building of the shops and report developments to the Parish Council at the next meeting. Actually it was not until the middle of 1930 that the two shops were built.

The main item of discussion at the meeting of 1st May, 1928 was the letting of the large hall to Mr. Hickey for the showing of motion pictures. Mr. Hickey was already the manager of the Five Ways Picture Theatre, which was an old iron building with a tin roof and asphalt floor. If there were any heavy rain it was practically impossible to hear any of the dialogue of the film and as the floor sloped from the back to the front quite considerably, one of the attractions of attending the pictures for the young ones

was rolling noisy tins down the aisles. A new theatre was built on the site about this time, so the church hall must have been used whilst the new brick theatre was being constructed. The writer attended the opening night of the theatre, which was quite a gala affair. One could sit in the stalls or dress circle and there was a milk bar and lounge upstairs. Woolworths bought the building about 15 years ago for a supermarket, then it became Flemings Food Store and now Clancy's own it.

The bootmaker, Mr. A.K. Walters who had been renting the kiosk for his business for some years sent a letter to the Parish Council saying the kiosk was now inadequate for the business and he asked to be allowed to lease a new shop, when it was constructed. This proposal was discussed at the meeting of 16th April, 1929 and an answer was to be sent to Mr. Walters to the effect that his application would be considered most favourably when the shops were built.

It has been difficult to give a true indication of the financial position of the church at any particular time, as the various treasurer's records have not been preserved and the only figures available are those entered in the minutes of the meetings. They give the amounts collected monthly by the ladies and also the amounts to be paid, but there is no record of donations, proceeds from Tea Meetings, Harbour Excursions, Sales of Work etc. until 1939 when copies of the Balance Sheets presented at the Annual Vestry Meetings are included with the minutes. There are of course the Registers of Services which give the amounts of offertories taken at each service and occasionally mention is made of financial crises, but the church seems to have been managing fairly well during the period of which we are speaking. This is particularly good when it is considered 1929 was near the middle of the worst depression this country has ever experienced. Everyone who was unemployed had to work to receive any financial assistance from the Government. Professional men such as doctors, lawyers and

engineers were even glad to do manual work such as making roads or even more menial work to obtain the dole.

From 1910 - 1929 inclusive

Number of marriages	199
Number of baptisms	1860

When you see that the next paragraph refers to something which happened in 1930, you will be thinking it should begin the next section i.e. The Third 20 years (1930 - 1949), but when you read the next page, you will understand why it has been put at the end of this section:-

On 29th May, 1930 the church borrowed £1,000 from the Church Building Fund on Lot Nos. 4 and 5 at 8% interest payable quarterly for 3 years. The loan was granted on the following terms: "Land - Lots 4 and 5: Not to be used for the purpose of carrying on the trade or business of a publican, distiller, brewer, wine, ale or beer seller or any dangerous, noxious or offensive trade or business whatsoever and also that no such lessee shall use or permit to be used the said premises for Sunday trade in any form and also a condition of re-entry by the Lessor for non-payment of rent by the lessee within a reasonable time to be therein specified or a breach of non-performance of any of the covenants therein contained and so as every lessee execute counterpart and covenant thereby for payment of the rent thereby reserved."