

## A BRIEF GUIDE TO

### ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH HASLINGTON

#### **Into a New Century and a New Millennium**

The church is made up of a building and the congregation who worship there. In Haslington, the church has many reminders of the individuals, both Lords of the Manor and ordinary villagers, who have peopled its history and contributed to its upkeep and refinement. This work continues today.

Worship continues at St. Matthews, which is now a United Benefice with St. Michael's Church, Crewe Green.

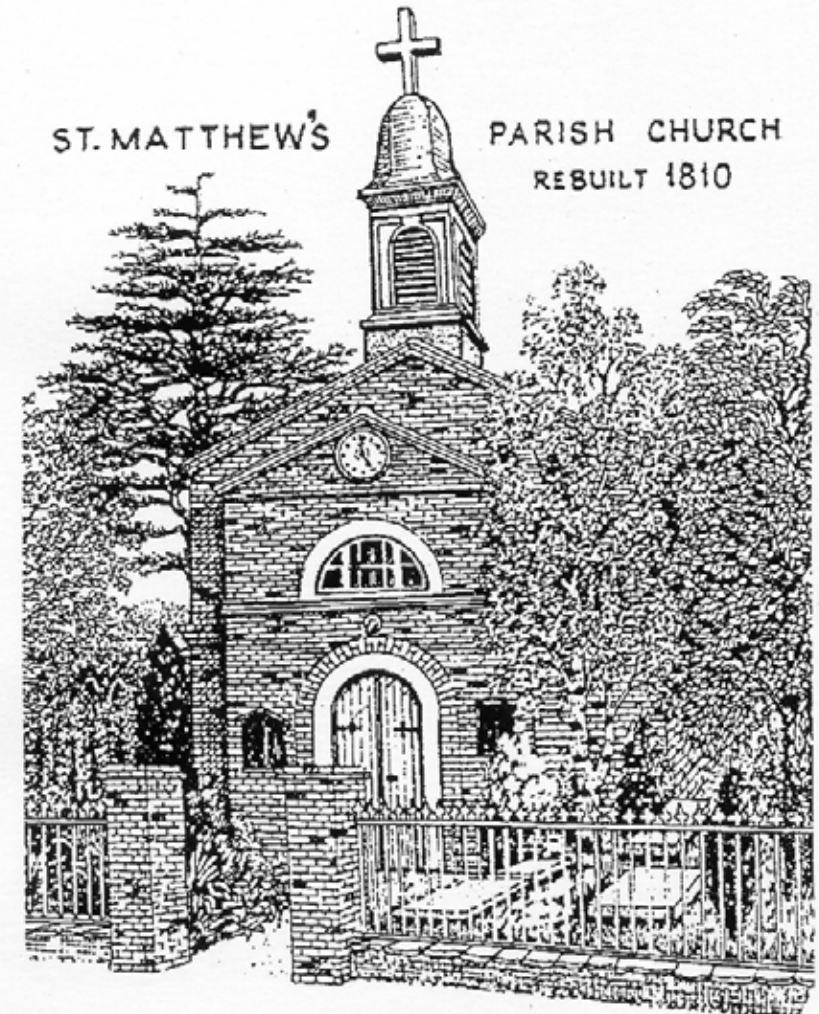
The active PCC and the members of the Church Family work hard to make the Church a living church.

Refurbishment continues with gifts of new altar frontals, lectern and pew bibles and millennium kneelers. The porch floor and church entrance incorporating handrails have been improved and the renovation of the bellcote and interior decoration have been completed.

#### **Bibliography**

CCRO St. Matthew's Church Records  
"Notitia Cestriensis" Chetham  
Various Directories as stated

Research by Graham and Barbara Harvey  
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## Introduction

The Parish Church, dedicated to St. Matthew, stands in the centre of the village. Its origin is of a very early date, although there is some controversy about the exact date because reference books on the subject differ. It was originally referred to as a "Chapelry"

## The First Chapel, Waterloo Road c1302

The original Haslington Hall was built on a site in Waterloo Road in the 1200s and probably had a domestic chapel built by the Vernon Family for the ease of themselves and their tenants. According to Bishop Gatrell, a noted Historian, "*The Hall of Haslington with the Chapel and all other buildings thereto belonging were licenced for a meeting in AD1302.*" Omerod gives a list of chaplains of Haslington Chapel from 1302. The Parish records go back to 1645. They record baptisms and marriages. The earliest were written in Latin. Records were also kept of donations to National Calamities, such as, fires, floods or pestilence in such places as Cambridge, Blackburn and Morpeth.

## Omerod's List of Chaplains

INSTITUTED.	CHAPLAINS.	PATRONS.	VACANCY.
1302, 7 kal. Aug. [1317, viij Id Decembr'	Henricus de Kaveyleya. Thoñ de Vernoun.	D'nus Rad. de Vernon. Dñus Rad de Vernoun, milit'.	
1318, x kaln Septembr'	Wills de Vernon, cliëus,	Dñi Radí de Vernon, militis senioris,	P. resig. Thoñ de Vernon, ult' capel (on being presented to Davenham.)
1331, noñ Septembr'	Edmundus de Coton, cliëus,	Mağri Rië de Vernon dñi de Haselynton,	P. resig Wilti de Vernon, ult' r'cor', 6 Aug. ult'.
1340, viij ktn Septembris	Walt'us Dammary, capellus,	Dñi Radí de Vernon, militis,	P. resig Edmüdi de Coton, ult' rector'.
1356, iij Id Marcij	Johes de Scolalgh, clicus,	Dñi Roği de Trumpynton, militis,	P. resig dñi Walt'i Dammary, ult' r'cor'.
1364, ij noñ Maij.	Wills de Tyknes, clicus,	Dñi Johis de Delves, milit',	" Et dca capella vacare incepit
in Septia p̄ post octav̄ Pasche et qđ Johes de Scholhall ultimus possessor ejusdem cont&it mat' moniū & solemp̄ cū quad̄ Margareta de London vidua."]			

## INCUMBENTS

1669 - 1686	William Hassall
1686 - 1703	Joseph Cope
1704 - 1721	Richard Kelsall
1721 - 1766	Thomas Wright
1766 - 1771	Bruce Storr
1771 - 1773	John Kent
1773 - 1774	Roger Kent
1774 - 1777	James Stringer
1779 - 1805	John Kent
1805 - 1813	Sir Thomas Broughton
1814 - 1828	Robert Littler
1829 - 1838	Henry D Broughton
1838 - 1841	Walter J Clarke
1841 - 1857	Joseph Bradley
1857 - 1868	Charles White
1868 - 1877	Edward R Parr (First Vicar)
1877 - 1903	Edward H Rose
1903 - 1932	Alfred J Ward
1932 - 1936	Arthur B Leaman
1937 - 1945	Frederick C Coates
1945 - 1951	Basil R L Jones
1951 - 1954	Orlando A Waller
1954 - 1958	Thomas Lever
1958 - 1968	John H McMillen
1968 - 1973	Cecil A M Thornton
1974 - 1987	David W Smith
1987 - 1991	Max R M Ramsay
1992 - 2005	Peter Geddes
2006 -	Anne Lawson

## The Churchyard

There was no churchyard in Haslington until 1811, before this date anyone who died in Haslington had to be carried to Barthomley for burial. It was consecrated with the church on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 1811. The first burial on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 1812 was of Elizabeth Beech who died aged 35 years. The oldest gravestone is that of Jane Merrill, 14<sup>th</sup> April 1813. Half an acre of extra land was given to the Parish by Sir H D Broughton in 1882. Other generous donations of land have been made by Colonel Humphrey Watts (formerly of Haslington Hall) and the Leech Family.

## The Sandstone Font



On the north side of the churchyard is an old sandstone font. There is no record of its history, but it is believed to have been in the old St Matthew's church.

## The Clock

This is situated on the outside of the porch and dates from the 1890's



## Haslington Chapel c1500 – 1810

Haslington Hall was rebuilt on its present site when Sir Frances Vernon returned home from the Spanish Armada. He used materials from three wings of the Old Hall along with woodwork salvaged from wrecked Spanish galleons to construct the Hall, which today stands a mile east of the village. St. Matthew's Church was also built in half-timber from materials reclaimed from the Old Hall. The style of the first church was that of a traditional black and white Cheshire Church of the 1500s. The houses round it were in the same style and there is still a neighbouring cottage dated 1510. This church remained for 150 years of worship until it was replaced in 1810. Tradition says that the church burnt down, but there is no available written evidence to confirm this. Omerod says "*An ancient chapel of timber and plaster was taken down a few years ago (mid 1800s) and its site has been occupied by a modern building...*" The Vernon Chapel became famous as a dissenting preaching house. The second incumbent, Joseph Cope, was ejected from Sandbach in 1662 soon after The "Revolution" and became installed in Haslington. He kept up a very considerable congregation until he died aged 83 years.

In 1704 the Vernons renewed their association with mainstream Anglicanism.



## **THE CHURCH 1810 - 1910**

In the early 1800s the ancient chapel of timber and plaster was declared to be “so dilapidated as to be almost ruinous” and was pulled down. It was rebuilt, at his sole expense, by the Rev. Sir Thomas Broughton of Doddington Hall, who was the local Landowner and minister of the Chapel.

The new church was a plain Georgian brick building with a nave and a western turret with a white wooden bellcote. The eastern window contained specimens of ancient painted glass from Doddington Hall. The Cheshire Directory of 1864 refers to the window as “curious old glass said to be the oldest in the district.”

This 16<sup>th</sup> Century glass was sold in 1910 to help pay for the new Chancel.”It is much broken and pieced and it will be impossible to insert in the New East Window.” (Faculty number 1152)

The church built in 1810 is referred to in several documents as being restored or rebuilt at various dates. Bispham’s Directory (1850) says..”*the structure underwent a complete reparation in 1848. The living is endowed with £20 per annum a perpetual curacy augmented with £200 benefaction, £200 Queen Anne’s Bounty and £1143 Parliamentary Grant.*”

When the church was rebuilt in 1810 it was stated that there was no evidence that the old chapel had been consecrated. The old Chapel was closed in 1810 and the new one consecrated on 15<sup>th</sup> November 1811 by the bishop of Chester.

Haslington was part of the Parish of Barthomley and there is a letter dated 1689 asking for Haslington to become a Parish. It became a district in 1860 and a parish in 1870. In the letter of 1689 it was recorded that the curate was paid £20 p.a

## **The Lectern, Communion Table, Rails, and Choir Stalls**

These are all of oak and were bought for the new extension in 1910.

## **The Pulpit**

The pulpit is made from oak and dates from 1810. It was repositioned when the church was extended in 1910.

## **The School Plaque**

This commemorates the National and Infant School for children of both sexes, with residence for the Master, which was erected in 1859-60 at a cost of £1,600 on land presented by Sir Henry Delves Broughton, Bart. (now Delves Broughton Court) The vicarage is built on the site of the Master’s house.

## **The Sanctuary Lamps**

These three lights were installed in 1947. In 1971 they were in poor repair and money was donated to install candle-type fittings.

## **EXTERIOR**

One hundred years separates the western and the eastern ends of the church.

The west is of 1810, a brick Georgian building with arched windows and a narrower entrance bay. It has an arched doorway and over it a lunette (semicircular) window. A cupola stands a little behind on the west gable containing one bell.

The east is of 1909, designed by Reginald T. Longden. The style is decorated with a seven light east window. Plans were made to rebuild the whole church in this style to accommodate the change from pulpit centred worship to resurgence of emphasis in Holy Communion and resultant renewed interest in chancel and sanctuary.

## THE CHURCH TODAY

### INTERIOR

The Church is a place of light. The high East Window and the tall round-arched windows of the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century nave are finely proportioned and allow unhindered light. The walls are smooth, plastered and reflective of that light and give good acoustics.

### Doors

The West Doors were placed in 1962 in memory of The Reverend Thomas Lever M.C. vicar 1954 – 1958. They were donated by his sister.

### The Baptistry

The font was repaired and altered to mark the centenary celebrations of the school in 1959. The faculty for the removal of the pews and the repositioning of the font was applied for in 1962. In December 1975 a table and a tapestry picture of “Jesus the Good Shepherd” was donated by Mrs Susan Mcloed to form a children’s corner and altar. The carpet was given by the M.U. to mark their centenary year.

### The Organ

The present organ was purchased for £600 in 1967 from Reeves & Merner of Talke. It was second-hand and the price included a 25-year guarantee!

### The West Gallery

This was probably constructed for musicians and the choir before the coming of the organ and the enlargement of the church.

### The Bishop’s Chair

The Oak Bishops Chair was given in memory of Mr. Bloor by his widow in 1967. The dedication of the chair was delayed because of an outbreak of “foot and mouth” disease in the village.

## Some Interesting Facts about the Church taken from the Records

- 1778** There were 74 houses, no families of note, no Papists or non conformists. None who disregarded religion. The incumbent resided in Nantwich as there was no house in Haslington. *“Absent from one Sunday to another, one Sunday excepted.”* One service per Sunday except once a month by agreement. Communion four times a year – Easter about 40 communicants. Sir Thomas Broughton was Patron. No parsonage, no glebe. Chapel in tolerably good repair. No free school or charity school.  
*Signed John Kent (Deacon 21<sup>st</sup> Sept. 1766, priest 25<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1767)*
- 1789** About 100 houses 30 – 40 backward in coming. No services on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month. Holy Communion 3 times a year, Christmas, Easter and one other. Between 50 – 60 communicants. Sunday School.  
*Signed John Kent.*
- 1892** Kelly’s Directory says.....”*St. Matthew’s is a plain edifice of brick, consisting of nave and a western turret containing one bell: there is also at the west end a clock dated 1694: the church affords 200 sittings. The church is in the rural deanery of Congleton, archdeaconry of Macclesfield and diocese of Chester.*
- 1914** Kelly’s Directory adds.....”*a chancel, vestry and organ chamber were added in 1910 at a cost of £1700. The church affords 300 sittings.”*
- 1904** St Luke’s Church, Oakhanger Moss, which from 1873 formed part of the Parish of St. Matthews, reopened its Mission Room. It was part of the Parish until 1952 when it was transferred to the Parish of Christ Church, Alsager.





*The church 1810 - 1910*



*The building of the new chancel 1910*