

2. The Church Buildings

2.1 The First Chapel c. 1360 - 1547

In the middle of the fourteenth century, a terrible plague visited England. Its effects were so great that the Black Death of 1348 and 1349 is one of the great events of English history. At least one third of the people died. In the West Riding, out of 141 priests, 96 fell victims to the Black Death.¹ Other notable local events included the Elland Feud 1312 to 1353 - see Section 1.3 above.

It was against this background that the first chapel of St Matthew was built. At that time the Christian church in England was the Roman Catholic Church under the leadership of the Pope in Rome.

The **first chapel at Rastrick** was built in the fourteenth century, very soon after the Black Death of 1349. It was a very small and humble place of worship containing *"the image of Our Layde, graven in wode, the image of St Matthew unto whom it is dedicated, and the image of another saint named St.——— And there stood in the street nigh to the chapel door one cross of stone, very finely graven with fretted work."*² - Could this be a reference to a cross mounted in the Saxon Cross base? The incumbent from 1368 to 1411 was named Thomas del Cross (see below).

In the St Matthew's Pageant, (see Local Ecumenical Partnership below) Jim Farrer describes the church thus: *'The chapel comprises two small rooms set end to end. The larger, about 30 feet by 17 is where the worshippers stand or perhaps sit on a few wooden benches. Its whitewashed walls, standing about eight feet in height, are pierced by small, mullioned windows containing white, translucent glass in tiny panes. Its roof, low in pitch and with open rafters, is covered with locally quarried stone slates. (Editor Note: slate is not available locally in the West Riding – these are likely to have been stone 'flags' from the local sandstone which easily splits into thin sections.) There is a tiny porch with stone wall-benches upon which the children of wealthier families are schooled in the basics of Latin and logic. At the far end of this room, the Nave, is a wooden screen of painted panels depicting St Mary, St Matthew and another saint to whom the chapel is dedicated. Filing the archway above this screen is another painted panel illustrating, crudely but forcibly, the "Last Judgement". On the left is St Peter holding his keys with the "Just" standing before him, their faces, with saintly entreaty, praying to be allowed entry to the Holy City. Opposite are the "Damned", pock marked, warty and broken-teethed being pitchforked into the eternal flames of hell by a hoard of grotesque demons. Centrally above is Christ seated on the Throne of Judgement. Before the screen, suspended from a beam spanning between the rafters, stand the Holy Rood, a carved replica of Christ hanging upon the Cross, flanked by St Mary and St John, crude and rustic in character, but the very centre of the simple villagers' worship. Fixed to a rafter just beyond the Rood is a pulley over which passes a cord on which hangs the Pyx – a small casket in which is placed the sacrament at the Mass. This was elevated at the consecration before the wondering gaze of the people as the priest chanted the words of the ancient Latin liturgy. This room was about half the size of the nave and in it were also said or sung the Daily Offices and Masses for the souls of the deceased benefactors of the chapel.'*

¹ The Story of Old Halifax T.W.Hanson

² old Manuscript in St Matthew's Parish archives 'Accounts of the Restoration of Rastrick Chapel'

In 1363 the first Curate **John-de-Bretton** was appointed to this first chapel in Rastrick. (J.F.) See also Manorial Rolls 16 October 1363 - *John-de-Bretton capellanus mentioned under Rastrick* (sic). This first church was built as a Chapel of Ease from Elland. Before the chapel was built, the population of Rastrick had to journey to the Parish Church at Elland (St. Mary's, built in 1180, (see Section 2.1 above)) over "*causeways decayed for want of repairing and foule in winter*". However, after 1363, they still had to travel to Elland for marriage or for the burial of the dead.

The Manorial Rolls also record at Brighouse Court 19 November 1364 "Under Rastrick for Wakefield Court appears the name **John de Colereslay** - capellanus (chaplain).

The Rolls of 1368 have an interesting entry :

Turn at Brighous, die Lune, 28 May. Jury, Wm. de Bradelay, Henry de Risssheworth,—de Stokes,—de Lockwode, John de Hopton,

John Drake, John Jagger, John de Brighous, Ric. de Halywell, Eob. Pynder, Thos. de Dalton, Eic. Lassels. The old constable reported his cases, and a new constable was elected at the Spring Turn. Thomas del Crosse, capellanus, Rastrick (graveship), v. Henry Robynson de Berkesland ; Thos. paid 2d.

What had the Rastrick Chaplain **Thomas del Crosse** been doing with Henry Robinson of Barkisland, to have to pay 2 pence at court?

In **1379 a capitation or Poll Tax** was imposed by Parliament, granted to King Richard II, in order to finance the Hundred Years War 1337–1453 between England and France. The tax ranged from 4d. to £6.13s.4d. per head. Every lay person over the age of 16 years who was not a beggar had to pay a groat (4d or 4pence) to the Crown.

The records for Rastrick show:

RASTERIK 4d (1 Groat) each

Thos. fil Julian et ux.

John de Wodehous et ux.

John Stokkes et ux.

John de Tutil et ux.

Wm Tinghill et ux.

Henry Alisaundre et ux.

Wm Scheplay et ux.

Ric. Buthrode et ux.

Robt. Bull et ux.

John Hanneson et ux.

John del ffirth et ux.

Henry Malinson et ux.

Henry ffox

Alice del Hall

Margeria Walker

Wm Alynson

Isabella de Scheplay

Beatrix dau. John

Johanna dau. John

(et ux. indicates including wife)
Total 12 married, 7 single, 6s.4d. ³

14 men and 5 women, (unmarried). The tax was applied to every married man for himself and his wife plus every man or women sole (unmarried) over the age of sixteen. Merchants and farmers were assessed at higher rates.⁴ However, none are mentioned in this reference for Rastrick in 'Rastrick, Fixby and Hipperholme' by YorkshireCDBooks and confirmed in myrastrick.com ⁵ by Andy Eccles

Hence we have a picture of the **population of Rastrick in 1379** : 31 adults plus children under 16 years old. In the preceding 60 years the population had approximately halved.

An extract from the Manorial rolls for Rastrick paints an unfamiliar picture of the life of the St Matthew's curate in 1393: *"The 'hawking' in the common fields of Herteshead, Rastrick, Brighous and Hiprom, let this year to John Piper, capellanus, for 6d. The same occurs next year ; and for Sourby &c. to John vicar of Halifax for 6d. **John Piper** was curate of Rastrick chapel in and before 1411. John Kyng became vicar of Halifax in March, 1389, (or 1390 we should now say.) An artist may here draw the burly priests mounted on horses, attended by gay ladies and squires, with the hawks perched on their shoulders ready to pounce upon unwary birds. A savoury smell at the Rastrick parsonage would repay the 6d. outlay."*

In his lecture to the Halifax Antiquarian Society on 7th November 1905, J. Lister M.A. quotes from the old manuscript, then preserved at Rastrick Church, which describes a housestead next to the chapel "wherein some time ago (as report is) dwelled a Hermit, who was the principal founder of that chapel'. Apparently folk in the Halifax Parish were accustomed in the 17th century to attributing the foundation of their place of worship to these 'holy recluses', a similar origin being attributed to the Halifax Parish Church. In 1582 Robert Ramsden paid to the Duchy of Lancaster a rent of 8d for the use of the chapel and chapel yard, and 2d for the priest's house, the ruined housestead, or, by courtesy, the hermitage.⁶

Here we have, therefore a picture of the curate /chaplain John-de-Bretton, Thomas del Cross, John Piper, John Bottomley, John Brooksbank or Thomas Ovington living in a small cottage next to the chapel. What change of fortune occurred between 1363 and 1547? Why did the cottage fall into disrepair?

This was a tumultuous period in English history during which the Wars of the Roses (1455 to 1485) between the houses of Lancaster and York took place, each house seeking to establish themselves as the rightful ruler of the kingdom. The closest battle to Rastrick took place at Sandal Castle outside Wakefield in 1460, when Richard, Duke of York was defeated by the Lancastrian forces. Wakefield is only some 17 miles from Rastrick, so it is quite possible that the ripples of such events had an effect here in the Calder valley.

Rastrick Chapel was a **Free Chapel** i.e. it was founded by the principal landholders of the district - the Firth family of Boothroyd were largely responsible for its origin. Free chapels

³ <https://www.yorkshirecdbooks.com/Tana/wrypics/pt1379.htm>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poll_Tax_of_1379

⁵ <https://myrastrick.com/fourteenth-century-rastrick/>

⁶ J Lister M.A. Rastrick Chapel and School, Halifax Antiquarian Society 1905

were places of worship over which the bishop had no jurisdiction. The priest, doubtless, was maintained by yearly voluntary contributions and fees for masses etc, and his appointment was in the hands of the founders.⁷

At sometime before the year 1240 the Nunnery / Priory at Kirklees, some 3.5 km (about 2 miles) as the crow flies from Rastrick, had been established (see Section 1.2 above) and then was finally surrendered to King Henry VIII in 1539.

The Church of England had been formed under an Act of Parliament in 1534, with King Henry VIII (reign 1509 - 1547) as its supreme head. As a Free Chapel Rastrick Chapel came under an Act of Parliament (the Chantries Act) passed in the first year of Edward VI (1547-1553) reign, suppressing charities and free chapels. It was not surprising then, that in 1547/48 the Chapel was closed. The result of the Reformation of the Church in England was that Rastrick lost its chapel. This, shortly before Archbishop Thomas Cranmer prepared his Book of Common Prayer in 1549.

In the days of Edward VI, Robert Ramsden was a representative of the Firth family, by his marriage with Joan, sister and heiress of Thomas Firth of Dighton.³

A turbulent period of English history under the reign of Mary I (1553 to 1558), daughter of Henry VIII followed, when Mary attempted to re-instate Roman Catholicism as the state religion, and no doubt local churches were in turmoil. Thomas Cranmer was denounced by the Catholic Queen Mary I for promoting Protestantism, he was convicted of heresy and burned at the stake in 1556.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603), the Rastrick chapel is described as a *"Decayed chapel by want of maintenance"*. This was the time of the Reformation, when the Chapel's endowments (if any) would have been confiscated, its tithes appropriated by the King and given to Thomas Cromwell, Lord of the Manor of Wakefield, who in 1578 leased the building to Robert Ramsden, for use as a barn. (J.F.). When Robert died, his son Henry became the owner. In 1597 an Inquiry was held at Elland, due to an Act of Parliament entitled *"A godly statute to prevent the misappropriation of charitable funds."* It was arranged that, *"The people of Rastrick would pay Henry Ramsden 40 shillings and that he would surrender the chapel and chapel garth to the inhabitants of the town."*

That Henry Ramsden should become the 'owner' of the barn seems odd, since this father, Robert, was only a leaseholder to Thomas Cromwell, Lord of the Manor of Wakefield. (Ed.)

The Manorial Rolls of 1599 (see Appendix A - J Horsfall Turner) record that in that year (1599) Henry, son of the deceased Robert Ramsden, paid 6d (pence) heriot (death duty) for a house called The Chapell and gardens. This is further evidence that Henry was the owner of the Chapel, although the dates are confusing.

A Sketch of the first Chapel (and the Second) can be found in Appendix L, where there are also photographs, taken in July 2017, of the possible position of the Chapels in the churchyard. See also the Jeffrey's Map surveyed by Ainslie in 1770 showing the position of St Mathew's Chapel in Appendix W.

The story is continued in the next Section: the Second St Matthew's Chapel.

⁷ J Lister - Rastrick Chapel and School - Halifax Antiquarian Society 1905

2.2 The Second St Matthew's Chapel: 1602 - 1797

The story of the second Chapel is told in various sources:

Wright's "Antiquities of Halifax" records that "*Rastrick Chapel was built in the year 1400; it was afterwards converted into a barn and sold to Robert Ramsden but was recovered by virtue of a commission directed to the Archbishop of York. Sir John Savile, of Bradley, Knight, and several others who sate (sic) at Elland, set all to rights again about the year 1601. The Chapel was repaired in 1602, and divine worship performed in it for the first time after the reparation, on January the 1st, 1603.*"

Also, an extract from 'History of Brighouse and its Co-operative Society':

Of the first and second Churches, the best account is from a MSS (Manuscript) in the custody of the Vicar of Rastrick.

The Chapel at Rastrick dedicated to S. Matthew, commonly called S. Matthew's Chapel. Memorandum that in the 39th year of Queen Elizabeth, a Parliament was begun at Westminster, the 24th October, 1597. and divers statutes made and entitled "An Act to reform deceits and breaches of trust touching lands given to charitable uses," by virtue of which a Commission was awarded. By which Commission Sir John Savile of Bradley, Kt. Baron of the Exchequer; John Favour, Doctor of Law, Vicar of Halifax; Robt. Kaye and William Ramsden, Esquires, two Justices of the Peace, sat at Elland and empanelled a jury to enquire of any breaches, who presented as followeth:-

"Item, we present that in the town of Rastrick there is one ancient chapel builded as is thought above 200 years since by the inhabitants of Rastrick, dedicated to S. Matthew, wherein Divine Service has been used within the memory of man, which is converted to a lathe or barn to the great hurt of the inhabitants, and late sold to Robert Ramsden, but the inhabitants are desirous in regard they are two miles from the Church (Elland) that it be restored to them again, and they mean by a voluntary service to maintain divine service as in former times."

"It appeared that Mr. Baron Savile, upon suit made by Mr. Thornhill and John Hanson, called Henry, son and heir of Robert Ramsden, and showed him that his father had no right to the Chapel, but in the end ordered that he should be paid 40s to deliver it up. The inhabitants then began to rebuild it, and on 28 March 1602, had a common day's work, and pulled down the old wall and began a new one. [Ed. This was the 'old wall about the garth' i.e. the boundary wall surrounding the chapel and the 'housestead' (in ruin), 'wherein some time ago there dwelled a hermit' - chaplain?] They hired two wallers, who had 6s 8d besides their diet and much ale. Most of the stones were got in a croft of John Hanson's. They then began to build the chapel and on 2nd August another common day's work was made. The stonework seems to have cost £4 1s 8d besides a window which Mr Thornhill and John Hanson made, which cost 14s 4d. The roof cost 30s in wages. John Thornhill, Esquire, gave two trees, Henry Ramsden one, John Hanson two, Nicholas Thornhill and Edward Hanson one. Total cost £3 1s 6d. In November it was ready for thatching

("Thatching" appears to be an error of transcription somewhere :- 'Theaking' consisting of moss, lats, nails and slate - 'gotten from the mines of John Hanson and Henry Ramsden' see below for more details)⁸.... with some slates that were given, that

⁸ Stone Roofing Association - Working the Elland Flags www.stoneroof.org.uk

cost £1 15s 11d. The plastering cost £1 19s 4d. The seating cost £3 13s 4d., the pulpit 5s 4d. There were 20 stalls, besides the quire, and Mr Thornhill was to have 5, Henry Ramsden and John Hanson were to have 2½ each."

The MSS then goes on to state "That there was ordinary service so distinctly done and read and Psalms so well-tuned and sung in that chapel that pleased Mr. Dr. Favour (to encourage the people in well-doing) to preach there in May 1606, and Mr. Moor, parson of Gistley, and divers others had preached there before."

There was such resort of people to this chapel that the 20 seats would not place them, and the inhabitants thought good with the wood which remained to stall the nether end. A bell was borrowed for a time of Mr. Wm. Ramsden, but in February 1606, he called for it back, and it was resolved that a new one should be bought. It cost £3 13s 4d., and the fixings 6s 8d. Total cost £4 0s 0d. The money was obtained by subscription.

It is believed that the old Chapel was built close to the road by the 'Upper George' Inn.'

With regard to the new stone required to construct the second Chapel, in a paper of 1905 to the The Halifax Antiquarian Society, Lister states that 'landowners employed labourers to quarry the stone on their own land.'⁹

A sketch of the Second Chapel of St Matthew can be found in Appendix L.

The following are extracts from a paper given to the Halifax Antiquarian Society on November 7th, 1905, by J Lister M.A. titled 'Rastrick Chapel and School - Their Early History' :-

In a section describing the re-walling of the chapel garth (an area or garden surrounding a building) in March 1602:

"The labourers that gat stone" had 3s 2d worth of ale, "besides much ale given". These delvers delved their stone in a croft of John Hanson's, in Rastrick, and by his "draught" of oxen, and that of John Mallinson, of Toothill, the stone was drawn to the chapel ground. The workmen employed in walling the garth were tabled (perhaps lodged) for ten days with divers of the leading inhabitants, thus two days with John Mallinson, of Okes (sic) Green; two days with John Hanson at Woodhouse; two days with John Mallinson, of Toothill etc. so that the board of each man seems to have cost the modest sum of 4d. a day. 'The whole charges of enclosing the garth came to 19s 9d.'" plus the getting and loading of the stone - 24 loads - valued at 8s.; total 27s 9d.

(John Hanson of Woodhouse was the last of a line of John Hanson's all living at Woodhouse, Rastrick from 1377 to 1621. In his will of 1621, he left an annual sum of 20 shillings to Rastrick Church for the teaching of a school there)¹⁰. Editors note: 20 shillings or 1 pound in 1621 would be worth about £250 in 2017.¹¹

and then describing the building of the chapel walls:

In April of the same year, they were told that John Hanson, John Mallinson, of Toothill, and Thomas Hanson, of Brighouse, fescid [that is, fastened, let] Rastrick Chapel i.e. the nave without the quire (= chancel, Ed.) to be walled to the square at 3s a rood¹². Time was an element to the contract; the work had to be begun after Palm Sunday - which in 1602, fell

⁹ J. Lister 'Rastrick Chapel and School' 7 Nov 1905

¹⁰Malcolm Bull's Calderdale Companion

¹¹ See <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/monetary-policy/inflation/inflation-calculator>

¹² rood = unit of linear measure, between 16.5ft and 24 ft (5.0m - 7.3m)

on the 31st March - and was to be finished to the square by 20th August next. [*Ed. It is difficult to see how this timescale was met, since the walls of the old chapel were not demolished until the 17th August according to the old manuscript.*] The contractors were Messrs. Sowden - John and Brian. These masons were to have clay and all stones brought to the ground, and to have one workman of [at] the charges of the inhabitants to fill the wall" - with clay - and to temper their mortar. Mr John Hanson paid them "in earnest" 2s 4d. and "when the stones were almost dighted, 8s. - that is prepared.

Some of the terminology is not clear, but I believe that 'fescid' is a contractual term implying that in effect Hanson and Mallinson were what in today's civil engineering terms were the 'employers' letting the contract and paying the contractor.

Also 'the square' might have the meaning of the shorter side of the old chapel building below the gable end of the roof. The end of this older building had yet to be demolished.

The rebuilding of the Quire (chancel) was carried out under a second contract between Mr (John?) Thornhill and John Hanson and the same workmen (John and Brian Sowden) who had walled the Chapel, but at the enhanced rate of 3s 4d a rood. Perhaps this was an attempt to encourage the Sowdens to speed up the work, which appears to have been behind programme. John Thornhill, the younger and John Hanson paid for 'the putting in of a great stone window' at their own expense at a cost of 13s 4d. whilst Henry Ramsden (the previous owner of the barn / decayed first chapel) paid for 'another window and for the walling in which it was set.' Hanson and Ramsden were the owners of the local quarries which supplied the stone for the rebuilding of the boundary wall, the chapel and quire walls and the roofing stone 'slates'.

The roof main timbers were installed under a contract with John Stone, carpenter, with the timber being supplied by the local landowners.

On 14th November another contract was let 'with the same workmen who walled it' for the completion of the roofing - 'theaking' consisting of moss, lats, nails and 'slates' - Elland flags sandstone from the local mines of John Hanson and Henry Ramsden. The term 'slate' is local usage not to be confused with slate, quarried in the English Lake District and in North Wales. A Paper titled 'Early Timbered Buildings of the Huddersfield District' by James Walton B.Sc., F.S.A. describes in great detail the construction techniques employed in Stone Slate Roofs and mentions Rastrick Chapel in 1602. Sphagnum moss was used as a joint filler.

Lister is quoting from an old manuscript, partly quoted by Watson and still preserved at Rastrick Church, he says, in the introduction to his lecture. This no doubt is the same manuscript that is quoted from in 'History of Brighouse and its Co-operative Society' as being in the 'custody of the Vicar of Rastrick'. The document is now held at the West Yorkshire Archives in Wakefield under Rastrick, St Matthew Parish Records - 'Accounts of the Restoration of Rastrick Chapel' parchment covers (1 vol.) with typed transcript D52/115.

Recapping, therefore, in 1602 the work of demolishing the old building and erecting the new one began. *Twenty-four families of the township of Rastrick and the hamlet of Brighouse gave a days work (Ed. actually 2 days work - 28th March (Thursday under Gregorian Calendar¹³ but Sunday under Julian Calendar) and 2nd August (Friday under Gregorian but Monday under Julian Calendar)) to pull down the first chapel prior to the building of the second chapel.*¹⁴ These twenty-four families comprised the total number of families in the small township of Rastrick, according to the Manorial Roll reference of 1605.

¹³ The Gregorian Calendar, still in use today, was introduced in 1582 superseding the Julian Calendar

¹⁴ David Knox, son of Rev Ian Knox

This labour was in addition to hired workmen and contractors who carried out the re-building of the Chapel.

During November 1602 (and presumably December also, the roofing was completed, but we are told that it was during the following year 1603, that the building was plastered and "shot over with lime" according to J. Lister. Were the stalls or seats installed before or after the internal plastering? Lister says that '*John Stone, the carpenter, contracted to fit out the timber seating, some twenty stalls or seats in the chapel besides the quire. Mr Thornhill, who owned one-fourth of Rastrick, paid for five of these. Henry Ramsden paid for two stalls and a half 20d, and the rest of the people proportionately.*'¹⁵

The new Chapel must have been a hive of activity during the last few weeks of 1602. It seems likely that the work was not complete by New Year's Day when the first service was planned.

On the 1st January 1603 Gilbert Thomson of Mirfield, nominated by Doctor Favour, Vicar of Halifax, took the first service at the new chapel. Gilbert Thomson, who was more than sixty years old, was a layman and was "tolerated" by Dr Favour and the inhabitants to read morning and evening service there 'durante bene placito' (during good pleasure) of him (Dr Favour) at Rastrick. However, "*There was no bell to call the people to matins and evensong.*" A bell was lent by Henry Ramsden but, "*He calling for his bell, which he lent unto us the inhabitants resolved to buy a new one.*" The new bell cost £4-12shillings. (But see above where the Manuscript states £4 0s 0d.)

How were the expenses of running the new chapel to be met?

About one year after the completion of the new Chapel, John Hanson, Henry Ramsden, Thomas Firth, Thomas Hanson, and Edward Hanson petitioned the Duchy Court of Lancaster, reciting their contributions to the re-building project, 'humbly entreated his Honour' to grant a licence to enclose and improve from the waste and commons in the said township some few acres of ground. A rent was to be paid of 4d per acre to the Lord of the Manor, but the enclosure would form a small endowment for the services and education to be provided in Rastrick Chapel.

The Parish Records in the Wakefield Diocesan archive (West Yorkshire Archives, Wakefield) (D52/55 with transcript in D52/86) contain a Copy of the decree (dated 3 June 1605) for enclosing 10 acres of the waste and commons of the township of Rastrick to be held according to the custom of the manor.

The building of the new chapel and this subsequent enclosure is referred to in the Manorial Rolls dated 1605 which are quoted by J Horsfall Tuner in his book 'A History of Brighouse, Rastrick and Hipperholme', see Appendix A. One of the purposes was re-introducing the schooling of young people who had been spending their Sunday afternoons in 'unlawful games' rather than attending divine service.

A school was held from the church from around 1621, which subsequently became Rastrick Grammar School.¹⁶

Rastrick's second chapel although 18ft (5.5m) longer than the first chapel, differed from its predecessor mainly within. The Holy Rood, the Pyx and the lurid Doom were replaced with furnishings, which conformed to the requirements of the new order of Services as set

¹⁵ J. Lister M.A. 'Rastrick Chapel and School'

¹⁶ Malcolm Bull's Calderdale Companion

out in the Book of Common Prayer. In place of the screen was a light, open structure with a gate through which at the words “Draw near with faith” in the Eucharist, those who wished to take the Holy Sacrament would pass. A wooden table was placed lengthwise in the middle of the chancel. On the east wall were hung two large boards of varnished oak on which the ‘Ten Commandments’ and the ‘Lord’s Prayer’ were inscribed. The only decoration in the nave was the Royal Arms hung prominently above the chancel gate in honour of the King as head of the Church of England.¹⁷ (It is not clear which king is referred to here – Elizabeth I was succeeded by James I on 24 March 1603. The Royal Arms currently hanging in the church belong to later monarchs: William III and George III, see below.) The total cost of the new chapel was £15-12s-11pence, the new pulpit cost 5s-4pence.

In 1630 (or thereabouts) Roger Attey became the first incumbent at St Matthew’s after a gap of some 83 years since the first chapel was closed down. A period of 27 years had passed since the re-opening service led by Gilbert Thomson. The new furnishings described above by Jim Farrer for the celebration of the Eucharist must have been added perhaps towards the end of this period.

In his will of 1642, Nathaniel Waterhouse (1586-1645), left the sum of £2:0s:0d as stipend to the minister of Rastrick Chapel (amongst the 12 Chapels in the Vicarage of Halifax) for preaching a sermon on the first Wednesday of the month, as part of what was to become known as the Waterhouse Charities. Nathaniel Waterhouse had prospered as a merchant, salter, selling salts, oils and dyes to clothiers in Halifax. The bequest is recorded on a ‘very large stone monument of classical design, which has been painted over, fixed to the north wall of the church, between the first and second windows from the east’¹⁸ in Halifax Parish Church - now Halifax Minster.

The **Royal Arms** hanging on the front of the north gallery are an unusual if not unique example of the Arms of King William III. The Royal Arms were placed in churches from the time of Henry VIII and is the oldest still existing in the churches of the extensive Ancient Parish of Halifax. There is no date given, but it is inferred both from an error in William’s own coat of Nassau and also from the rare arrangement, for those days, of the four kingdoms England, Scotland, Ireland and France that the Arms belong to the first years of William and Mary’s reign, probably 1689 or 1690. Within a few days of his accession William renounced his historic claim to the throne of France and the new Arms became a relic of great rarity. (J.F.) It is believed that there are only three such Arms in existence. See the [photo gallery](#) on the church website.

¹⁷ Jim Farrer’s Pageant of St Matthew’s Anglican and Methodist Church 1978

¹⁸ ‘The Monumental and other Inscriptions in Halifax Parish Church’ by E.W. Crossley. Brigham Young University Library www.archive.org/details/monumentalotheri00cros



Royal Arms of William III and Mary

The church silver from this era comprises a silver flagon dated 1711 and a silver chalice with the inscription "This piece of plate was given to Rastrick Chapell by Sr John Armytage Bartt. of Kirkelese".

There are 3 possible John Armytages:

1. Sir John Armytage 1629-1676 2nd Baronet of Kirklees [in the parish of Hartshead]
2. Sir John Armytage 1653 - 1732 4th Baronet of Kirklees [in the parish of Hartshead]
3. John Armytage 2nd Baronet of Kirklees [in Hartshead] b. 1732 d. 1758, educated at Eton and Cambridge, Member of Parliament for York 1754 to 1758 and died as a volunteer during the battle of Saint Cast, Brittany, France (one of the battles between Britain and France during the Seven Years' War 1756-1763) see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Armytage

The second Sir John Armytage (1653 -1732) sold the Watt Ing Farm to the curate of St Matthew's in 1727 (see below).

Rastrick became a parish in 1720, but in 1724 joined Elland cum Stainland and Fixby parish, then changed in 1739 to Elland with Greetland.¹⁹

*"In 1720 the Governors of **Queen Anne's Bounty** granted £200, to augment the living of Rastrick church. In 1760, three grants of £200 each were also given by them, which sum was met by £600 raised by the congregation, making £1200 in all. This amount was invested in 1772, in the purchase of an estate at Nayden Dean, in Lancashire. In 1822, the endowment received a further addition of £200 from the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty."*²⁰

In 1727, St Matthew's Church purchased the property Upper Watt Ing, a 16th century timber framed house in Norland from Sir John Armytage (1653-1732) the fourth Baronet of Kirklees.²¹

¹⁹ www.geograph.org.uk/article/Rastrick---West-Yorkshire---Part-1 courtesy of Humphrey Bolton, reproduced under the Creative Commons Licence

²⁰ "Old Brighthouse" by Derek Rastrick, 1986

²¹ Malcolm Bull's Calderdale Companion

The St Matthew's Parish Records (Parcel D52/50) contain various documents relating to Watt Ing (note the absence of 'Upper') including the following:

19 April 1727

Tripartite Indenture of bargain and sale between:

- 1) Sir John Armytage of Kirklees bart.
- 2) The governors of Queen Anne's Bounty
- 3) John Metcalf, clerk, curate of Rastrick Chapel,

of messuage and dwelling house commonly called Watt Ing and cottages adjoining with appurtenances in Norland, reciting a) a deed by which 1) and John Bedford promise £200 to meet £200 from the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty for the perpetual augmentation of the curacy of Rastrick and b) Sir John Armytage's promise to convey land to the value of £400 consideration £200.

Other papers relating to Watt Ing are included with the Records up to a valuation of Watt Ing Estate dated 30 May 1809 and also a valuation of the wood or trees on a farm called Watt Ing, township Norland, n.d. 1823

The Parish Records (Parcel D52/54) also contain miscellaneous papers relating to Naden Dean Farm, including memoranda of agreements etc. between curate of Rastrick and tenants of farm n.d. c.1774 - 1823

The Parish Records in the Wakefield Diocesan archive (D52/59) contain subscription lists with amounts promised towards obtaining Queen Anne's Bounty 1759 - 1761. Later in the mid 19th century, the records also include another alphabetical list of subscribers in Rastrick, Brighouse and Fixby towards procuring Queen Anne's Bounty for Rastrick Chapel.

The church bell (see below - Section 2.3) in the present building is thought to date from 1765, making it one of the few artefacts from the 2nd Chapel to have survived.



Detail from map of Yorkshire, surveyed between 1767 and 1770, published according to Act of Parliament 25 March 1712 by 1771 by T. Jefferys²²

Note Bridge End, Rastrick Common, Gooder Lane, Church Street, Tofts Grove, Delf Hill and Lower Edge road. The branch road towards the east, just south of Bridge End, could indicate the ancient route leading to the Snake Hill Ford, which was located, I believe, just west of the downstream junction of the Brighouse Canal and the River Calder.

St Matthew's Church (The second Rastrick Chapel) is shown in a sketch elevation and also as a rectangular building in plan, at the tip of the spire of the sketch church.

²² British Library Online Gallery <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/maps/uk/zoomify133731.html>

2.3 The Present Church building (1798 to 1999)

'There was a Chapel here (Rastrick) as early as the year 1411, which was taken down and handsomely rebuilt about five and thirty years ago. The population of this flourishing village amounts at present to 2796 souls.' There follows a list of yeomen, blacksmiths etc. Source: History, Directory & Gazetteer of the County of York: Queenshead, Rastrick. Edward Baines 1822.

Quoting from "Old Brighthouse" by Derek Rastrick 1986:

"About the year 1754 or 1755, a brief was obtained for procuring funds for repairing the old or erecting a new church; but nothing was done towards this object until the year 1797, when the present church was erected, and it and the burial ground were consecrated on the 15th April, 1798."

This text is very similar to 'History of Brighthouse and Its Co-operative Society' relating to Rastrick Church :

*"It is probable that for 150 years the old edifice continued much in the same form as before described. However, about 1754 or 1755, a Brief was obtained for procuring funds for repairing the old or erecting a new Church. The sum obtained amounted to about £120, but nothing was done at the time, and the money was lent to Mr Radcliffe for many years at 4 per cent compound interest. In 1777 it amounted to £213 17s 1½d. In **1782**, Mr Radcliffe having died, and his widow having married Mr. Thomas Gill, of Brighthouse, an agreement was made between the latter and Thomas Thornhill, of Fixby; John Armitage of Woodhouse, Merchant; Abram Hanson, of Boothroyd, gentleman; Thomas Greenwood, of Rastrick, Worsted Stuff Maker; **John Morton**, contractor (see below) ; Jonas Gledhill, of Brighthouse, Shopkeeper; Luke Howarth of Hipperholme, woolstapler, that the money should remain in Mr Gill's hands till it was wanted, at £4 10s per cent compound interest. In 1798 the new Church was built, the sum then amounting to £383 6s.; and on the 13th April of that year consecrated. There does not seem to be any account of the building, the architect, or the cost.*

Note re. John Morton :

The John Morton mentioned above in 1782 died in 1794 aged 71, and is buried in St Mary's Church, Elland. He and his family are also mentioned by Horsfall as he had the lease and was a trustee for the Independent Chapel at Bridge End, which was built around then. He was not I think a contractor but was in fact a Corn Factor and farmer of Birds Royd. I have read his will which is at York. So I think your reference to "contractor" is probably a transcription error. As far as I can remember it also says Corn Factor in "The History of Brighthouse and Its Co-operative Society".²³ [Ed.I have checked this reference and 'Cornfactor' is correct'.]

One of the oldest family gravestones in the churchyard, now forming part of the path outside the west door, is that of John Morton of Birds Royd, Rastrick, who died on March 28th 1799 aged 45 years, son of the John Morton above who died in 1794, and also his wife Hannah and their children, one of whom was also called John.

²³ Source : Ralph Shepherd email 16 November 2016

The Parish Records for St Matthew's held in the Diocesan Wakefield office (West Yorkshire Archives) include the following document (D52/47) ²⁴:

30 Dec 1797 Copy bargain and sale by Thomas Thornhill of Fixby, esquire to Sir George Armytage of Kirklees.bart., Henry William Coulthurst D.D., vicar of Halifax, and Richard Clayton of Leeds, gent. and others, of Chapel Croft, Rastrick and newly erected chapel, with pews and fixtures and appurtenances, Thomas Thornhill conceding to a request by the inhabitants of Rastrick to allot a parcel of land for building the chapel thereon and making a chapel yard etc.

signed and sealed, Thomas Thornhill and Richard Clayton
endorsements.

and also an Indenture of deed of trust of the same date (D52/48) ²⁵ between Thomas Thornhill of Fixby, esquire and Thomas Hanson of Boothroyd, gent., Luke Haworth of Brighouse, gent. and others, reciting D52/47 and declaring that the property was bargained and sold for uses and intents etc. and upon specific limited trusts. In addition the document includes ground and gallery plans of the chapel showing pewholders with typescript transcription.

Thomas Thornhill of Fixby clearly was the owner of Chapel Croft and the land where the new Church had been erected, including the present 1798 churchyard. However, part of the present churchyard, where the Second Chapel had stood, was already owned by the Rastrick parishioners: In 1602 Henry Ramsden (son of the late Robert Ramsden) had been paid 40 shillings to 'deliver up' the first St Matthew's Chapel (by then decayed), to the people of Rastrick. According to Lister : *An order, it would appear, of the Court of Chancery confirmed the right of the inhabitants to their ancient property. The old MS. says:- "Every fourth part of the township bare 10s towards this payment (of 40s) to Mr Henry Ramsden very willingly.*

This Chapel and the land was most likely located next to Church Street near the Saxon Cross and formed but a small part of the present churchyard. See Section 2.2 above. The Second St Matthew's Chapel was according to the old manuscript "*It is believed that the old Chapel was built close to the road by the upper 'George' Inn.*" For a photograph of the Upper George Inn see Section 3 Churchyard below. The plot of the Chapel garth contained the first chapel 13.1m long plus the housestead (ruined cottage), and later the second chapel 18.6m long.

The present church, a handsome ashlar-faced building with tower, cupola, dome and weathervane, was built in 1797. The church and churchyard were consecrated on the 15th April 1798.

The original **clock** in the tower was installed around 1807, at a cost of £43, because "*As a general inconvenience has been observed to arise from Want of greater accuracy in the hour of attendance upon public Worship, and as various descriptions of work people constantly experience a disadvantage from not being able to ascertain the Hour of the Day, and consequently at a loss to know when to begin and when to leave off their work; it has occurred to several gentlemen to be xxxx of a public Clock, proposed to fixed in the steeple of Rastrick Chapel which would xxx the above inconvenience, and otherwise prove a valuable acquisition to this Town and Neighbourhood;- This paper is therefore presented with a View of soliciting and collecting the voluntary Subscriptions of those who approve*

²⁴ See Appendix B1

²⁵ See Appendix B1

*the Design and wish to contribute towards the Attainment of an Object which promises to the Inhabitants at large so much real and extensive Utility. February 11th 1803”*²⁶



The Anglican and Methodist Church of St Matthew, Rastrick December 2009

A ground plan, elevations and sections of the Church were drawn by John Kirk & Sons, Architects of Huddersfield and Dewsbury in 1872. The drawings represent possible extensions to the present church and are stored in the Diocesan archives. (parcel no. 127)²⁷

The present clock, which came from a church in the Diocese of Carlisle, replaced the original one in 1953. It is powered by a system of falling weights and needs winding regularly every week by hand! The 1953 Faculty also included for the renovation of the hands, dials and hammers.

A plaque in the church narthex states that *‘This Clock was installed to Commemorate the Coronation of our Gracious Queen Elizabeth II, the cost being raised by many residents of this Parish. It was dedicated on July 19th 1953 to the Glory of God and for the benefit of the Parish by the Right Reverend A.H. Morris M.A. L.L.B. Bishop of Pontefract.’*

In 1973 the west face of the clock was taken down and replaced by a new dial. (The old face is stored in the clock tower), whilst the north face was re-furbished.

²⁶ Paper in West Yorkshire Archive Service Records Ref D52/2

²⁷ See Appendix C1



The Church Bell, from 1765

The church bell, 19 inches in diameter, is believed to date from 1765, is mounted in the tower, but is only used by the hammer from the clock to strike the hour. The timber cradle supporting the bell has been deemed to be in need of renovation and therefore the bell has not been swung during the 21st century. The bell rope can still be seen in the tower staircase. Further events took place in the 1930s affecting the frame supporting the bell - see below works by Clifford Riley (Page 2.3.19).

On the 25th September 1818 the **Royal Arms of King George III** (1760-1820) were displayed somewhere within the church. On the back of the arms are painted G. Goldthorpe, J. Thornton Chapel Wardens, with the date '1818 September 25'. Today these Arms hang on the front of the south gallery.



Royal Arms of King George III

The Royal Arms of William III and Mary dated 1689 (see Section 2.2 above) hang on the north gallery.

Both of the Royal Armorial Hatchments were cleaned and varnished in November 1950, and a note of this and the names of the churchwardens of the time, Fred Marsden and Stanley Hirst, were inscribed on the back.

In the early 19th century, Rastrick, among with other towns and village was hit by the effects of the Napoleonic wars, which brought in their train, economic distress, internal strife, extreme poverty, starvation and despair. ²⁸ In about 1826 the Revd. Thomas Burton, incumbent of St Matthew's, wrote that '*Never in his 26 years in Rastrick had he seen people "in such a state of utter destitution, not having bread to eat"* In August 1826 a committee

²⁸ Dawson : "History on your Doorstep"

was set up with Revd T Burton as chairman and included John Clay and J.T.Clay (Ed. possibly Joseph Travis Clay 1804-1892). Their first effort was the improvement of the gradient of Toothill Bank, where about fifty to sixty men were employed.

The Elland and Greetland parish became Elland parish in 1862.

Changes to the Georgian building began to take place in 1867 when the first stained glass windows were inserted (see below).

In 1874 the **St John's Mission Room** with a new day school and Sunday School were built on St John's Street, Gooder Lane. The opening service at the Mission Room took place on the 14th August 1874. This was a daughter church to St Matthew's, Rastrick.



See Appendix K for further details of St John's, Rastrick.

The Nave and Chancel in 1875

In 1875 under a great refurnishing, the box pews on the ground floor were replaced with a 'sea of low-backed pews of pitch pine', but leaving the elegant Tuscan columns supporting the gallery, where the box pews remain to this day.

*'From 1798, when the present Church was built, it remained in much the same condition till 1875, when a faculty was obtained. The Church was then re-seated with open stalls: the three-decked pulpit was divided and removed to the north and South of the chancel, and a central passage was formed, at a cost of from £400 to £500.'*²⁹ The design was by William Swinden Barber F.R.I.B.A. (1832-1908) a Brighouse architect, who also designed the building which is now the Brighouse Civic Hall (1866) and St Matthew's Church, Lightcliffe

²⁹ History of Brighouse and Its Co-operative Society

(1874-1875). Barber was born in Southowram and lived in Bonegate Hall, Brighouse, but also spent time in London between 1857 and 1863.³⁰

*'In 1879 there were further alterations. The Vestibule wall was pulled down and pews were fixed to the extreme end of the Church; the organ was moved from the west gallery into a chamber south of the choir seats; a new vestry was erected, with oak pulpit and brass lectern. The east end was decorated, and the east window was fitted with stained glass.'*³¹

Changes also took place in the sanctuary. An altar replaced the communion table and the inscribed tablets on the east wall were replaced with the frieze depicting 'Goodly Fellowship of the prophets and Glorious Company of the Apostles'. The design was again by Barber and the work was painted by John Brook of Huddersfield.



The frieze on the east wall of the Sanctuary depicting depicting the 'Goodly Fellowship of the prophets and Glorious Company of the Apostles'. See Appendix M for Details of the figures.

³⁰ Steve Oxley, School of Decorative Art

³¹ History of Brighouse and Its Co-operative Society by Jon.Caldwell



The ceiling over the sanctuary received the painting of 'Christ in Majesty'.

The original painting was probably done by William Swinden Barber as part of the 1875 'Great re-furnishing', but this is not certain. The work is similar to a roof decoration in Tower House, Kensington, London where the artists were Frederick Weekes and Henry Stacey Marks. Barber was working in London at the time this work was completed.

The present work is not the original but was repainted following the replacement of the entire roof in 1967 (see below).

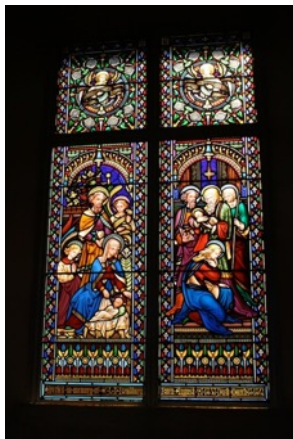
The repainting was carried out by local artist Bernard Colgan of Moor End Road, Saville Park, Halifax who was in business as a Decorator at 10, Harrison Road, Halifax. Bernard was born in 1925 and was a prominent member of a local group of artists. He died in about 2016, whilst living at Luddendenfoot. Steve Oxley of The School of Decorative Art, Manchester, recalls that Bernard had problems with the bronze powder that he used to create the gold effect in the painting. Bernard's trademark was a ladybird.

Bernard Colgan also carried out original work in the Ukranian Chuch in Lemon Street, Halifax. Sadly that church was sold in 2016 and is now closed.³²

³² Steve Oxley, School of Decorative Art

Stained glass windows were inserted in the Church in 1875 (or 1879 to 1889).

The window on the south wall east end has an inscription on a brass plate: To the memory of the late Rev. Thomas Hayne, 33 years Incumbent of Rastrick who died 12 March 1871 aged 68. Subject: St Matthew; Jesus having supper with him. The window is by Cox and Sons, London.



The window on the South wall 2nd from West bears the inscription: Erected in memory of W.L.H. Bradbury born August 27th 1857, died March 18th 1861; Double window with 4 lights. Subject of main (bottom) left light : Nativity. subject of main (bottom) right light : presentation in Temple. Top lights : decorative

In 1879 there were further alterations. The South-east Vestibule wall was pulled down and pews (four choir stalls) were fixed to the extreme end of the Church; the organ was removed from the west gallery into a chamber south of the choir seats; a new vestry was erected, with oak pulpit and brass lectern. The apse at the east



end was decorated, and the east window was fitted with stained glass. ³³

The East Window

³³ History of Brighouse and It's Co-operative Society

This East window, depicting the Transfiguration (centre light) with Angelic Figures in the two side lights, was installed "To the Greater Glory of God and in memory of their Mother (Edith Beaumont Bates). The window was dedicated by Hugh Travis (Clay), Janet Elizabeth (Clay) and Marjorie Beaumont Clay". It was made in Leeds by Powell. Edith Beaumont Bates died in 1889 so the east window must have been installed around 1889, and not 1879.

Note that Hugh Travis Clay M.A. (1875-1957) presented a paper to the Halifax Antiquarian Society on 3rd February 1948 titled "Early Inhabitants of Rastrick" in which he described the pre-Norman Cross in the churchyard - see 'The Saxon Cross base' above. Travis Clay also reputedly found the Ecclesiastical Boundary Stone in 1913 - see Section 1.7 above.³⁴

The **stained-glass** windows in the east wall, north and south galleries were dedicated to the Greater Glory of God and in memory of the mother of Percival Travis Clay (1881-1954) and Wilfrid Travis Clay (1882-1945). Their mother, Edith Beaumont Bates, was born in 1850, married their father Arthur Travis in 1875, and died in 1889. The subjects are 'The Annunciation' and 'Jesus appearing to Mary



Magdalene'
North Gallery, East Wall



South Gallery, East Wall

The window on the East wall South aisle has as its subject 'The laying of the foundation stone of the Temple.' it carries the inscription "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of Fairless Barber, born in Rastrick, January 11th 1835, died March 3rd 1881."

The maker was Powell of Leeds.



³⁴ Then Corpus of Anglo Saxon Sculpture Vol VIII http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=194

Fairless Barber was an evangelist for temperance and worked with the Brighthouse Mechanics Institute and the Penny Savings Bank. His daughter Margaret Fairless Barber (1869-1901) was an author using the pseudonym Michael Fairless, who wrote amongst other books 'The Roadmender'.

The description of the remaining the windows continues on page 2.3.11

St Matthew's has a leather-bound copy of the King James' **Bible** (including the Apocrypha) in two volumes. The bible was presented by the Teachers and Scholars of the Sunday School on the occasion of the re-opening of the Church on the 29th November 1879.

An extract from the Huddersfield Chronicle Saturday 29th April 1854 (courtesy of Margaret Usher) reads as follows :

*Opening of the **New Organ** at Rastrick Church.*

On Wednesday, April 19th, two musical services were performed in the above church. The Rev. W. Whyatt officiated, supported by the choir of the Leeds Parish Church. Mr. Frobisher presided at the organ. The church was moderately filled in the morning and quite filled in the evening. On Sunday, April 23rd, two sermons were preached; in the morning by the Rev. Thos. Hayne, the incumbent; and in the afternoon, by the Rev. J. Haigh, incumbent of St. Paul's, Huddersfield. Miss Whithorn, Miss Crosland, and Messrs Carter, Milnes, and Ramsden were the leading vocalists. Mr. Holt presided at the organ. The church on both occasions was full, many having to stand during the whole service. Upwards of £40 was collected towards the fund being raised by the churchwardens to pay the necessary expenses of conducting the services of the church, which have hitherto been defrayed by church-rates. The cost of the organ, £256, was nobly subscribed by the inhabitants and their friends in December last, including a donation of £50 from Miss Thornhill, of Fixby Hall. The committee appointed to carry out the necessary arrangements in obtaining the organ were C. H. Macaulay, of Woodhouse, Thomas Bradbury, of Holly Bank, and Alan Rayner, of Snake-hill. Great satisfaction was exhibited by the congregation with the qualities of the organ, and which were pronounced by Mr. Frobisher to be superior to those of any organ yet built by Mr. Holt, who, it will be remembered, was the builder of the organ in St. George's hall, Bradford, and several others in the neighbourhood.



Organ Pipe Casing



The Organ Console

The **present organ** was built by Conacher in its current position during the 1879 alterations to the church interior (see above reference to the East Window). Parish records in archive include letters with specification for the new organ and estimates for cleaning and maintenance work from Conacher & Co and James Conacher & Sons.

A 1922 faculty allowed 'the re-erection of the new organ in a new chamber to be made in front of the gallery, the lower part of the old chamber to be formed into a vestry, the removal of 4 pews in the gallery and the removal of a stained glass window in the east end of the gallery.' The fate of the window might be found later in the section the stained glass.

The new organ was dedicated at a recital held on the 12th December 1922.

The organ was later rebuilt in 1948. Details of the organ are available on the [National Pipe Organ Register](#) (see Appendix E) . See Conacher's website for further information about the company. The original company's Springwood works at Water Street, Huddersfield now appears closed, but the company has an address at Smithy Steads, Cragg Vale, Hebden Bridge, about 12 miles from Rastrick. The St Matthew's organ is currently maintained by J.M. Spink Ltd. of Wakefield.

To see and hear the organ, click on this [Ralf Hansjosten and friends link](#) filmed on iPhone 5C on their visit to St Matthew's on the 1st March 2014.

In 1881 the **Rastrick Parish** was formally made out of the Parish of St Mary, Elland, the Revd Robert G.Irving (photo in Appendix B) being vicar. The vicar received from the Ecclesiastical Commission in London, a copy of the London Gazette of the 22nd July 1881, which contained a copy of an Order of Her Majesty (Queen Victoria) in Council assigning a District Chapelry to the Church of St Matthew Rastrick. For a copy of the letter from the Ecclesiastical Commission see Appendix R.

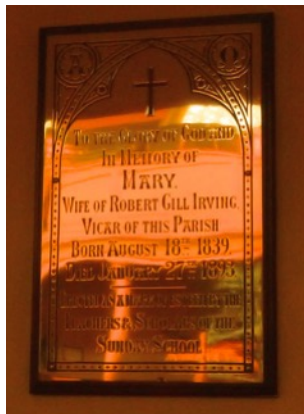
Of the remaining **stained glass** windows on the south wall, the Window 2nd from the East is inscribed : "To the Glory of God and in memory of Mary Harriet (Berry) youngest daughter of John Graham Berry and his wife Josepha of Broomfield, Fixby and Dorothea Josepha, his wife obit (died) 16th July 1880 aetat (aged) 25". The subject of the window is 'Jesus at the home of Martha and Mary'



The east end window (north side of the apse) depicts Jesus blessing the children and is inscribed "To the Glory of God and in memory of William and Jane Aspinall, their sons Alfred and George and their daughter Sarah Ann Wythes, This window is dedicated by their second Son William Aspinall 1897". It was also made by Powell Bros., Leeds.



The stained glass window on the North wall East end was dedicated by Robert Gill Irving, Vicar of this Parish to the Glory of God and in loving memory of his wife, Mary, born August 18th 1839 and died on January 27th 1893 (aged 54). The window's subject is 'The Women and the Angel at the Tomb'. The maker was Powell of Leeds.



Shortly after, a **brass tablet** was erected on the north wall "To the glory of God and in memory of Mary, wife of Robert Gill Irving, Vicar of this Parish, born August 18th 1839, died January 27th 1893. Erected as a mark of esteem by the Teachers and Scholars of the Sunday School."

The north wall middle window was dedicated in 1895 by the daughter of William and Selina Hodgson in their memory to the Glory of God. The subject of the window is 'The woman touching Jesus' garment'. The window was made in Leeds by the Powell brothers.



In 1922 one stained glass window was removed from the east end of the gallery (Diocesan Faculty Records), and then in 1928 stained glass was re-inserted into a window on the north side. The Faculty should reveal which window is referred to.

Wall Tablets:

During the 19th century stone or marble **tablets** were erected on the walls of the church as follows :

Sacred to the Memory of William Armitage of Crow-trees who died in 1815, Mary Archbell, his sister who died in 1818, and also his wife Margaret Armitage, who died in 1854.



Sacred to the Memory of John Armitage of Lower Woodhouse who died in 1828, William Armitage Archbell, his brother who died in 1838, his nieces Emma (died 1820), Mary (died 1823) and Ann Armitage Archbell (died 1838), and John Archbell, who died in 1844.

At the east end of the south wall: "Sacred to the Revd. Thomas Burton, M.A. for 36 years the Incumbent of Rastrick. He died the 6th day of May 1837 in the 67th year of his age. His remains are interred in the Chancel of this Church."



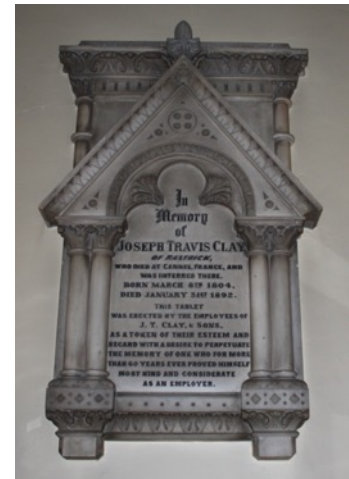


At the south end of the west wall: "Sacred to the Memory of John Atherton of Rastrick, County of Yorkshire, Esquire in the Commission of the Peace for the county Palatine of Lancaster and also for the West Riding of the County of York Late Captain in the 6th the Royal First Warwickshire Regiment of Foot who died at his seat Woodhouse, Yorkshire on the 3rd October 1845, and also interred in the family vault Margaret Armitage, only daughter of the above named who departed this life August 25th 1844 aged 7 months."

On the north wall (inside what is now the churchwardens' booth):

To Joseph Travis Clay, interred at Cannes (1892), erected by employees.

Joseph Travis Clay attended Rastrick Grammar School and was one of the founders of Rastrick Church School. See Appendix B for his photograph



At the north end of the west wall :

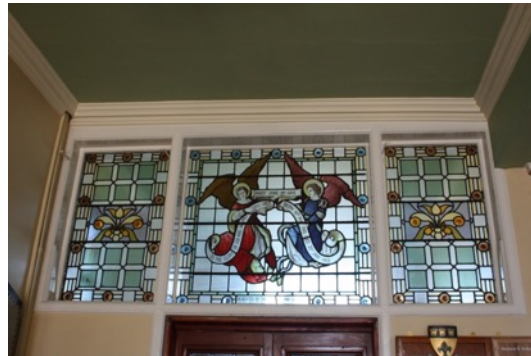
To James Arthur Nuttall, "Who lost his life in rescuing another in the Atlas Mill fire December 21st 1898. erected by his fellow members of the Young Men's class of Rastrick Church Sunday School. Aged 19."



Also on the west wall, a casualty of the First World War :

“In loving memory of Oswald, only child of Frederick and Mary Ann Sutcliffe of Croft Hollow 2nd Lieut 1/4 K.O.Y.L.I. (Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry) Aged 20 Years, Killed in action in France Nov 3rd 1916, Interred in the Military Cemetery at Hébuterne November 4th”

Oswald's aunt, Miss Sutcliffe of Far Headingley, placed the bronze and marble tablet in his memory at St Matthew's Church, Rastrick. The memorial was designed and executed by Leeds sculptor E. Caldwell Spruce, and unveiled by Rev William Mason³⁵, Vicar of St. Matthew's.



The **stained glass** above the doorway to the west porch is unusual in that it was dedicated by the teachers and scholars of Rastrick Church Sunday School “To the Glory of God and in memory of Mary Jane McGhie born 16th May 1845 died 25th January 1902. The window depicts Two Angels.



The last **stained glass** window to be installed in the church was on the North wall at the West end depicting ‘The Good Samaritan’. The inscription reads “To the Glory of God and in memory of Margaret McGhie who died May 11th 1927 aged 80 years. Also in memory of William Kaye who died April 14th 1915 and of Martha who died December 7th 1908, brother and sister of the above Margaret McGhie. This window was given by their two friends Mary Ann Stirzaker and Arabella Wilson of Rastrick.”

External polycarbonate sheeting was added to the ground level stained -glass windows in August 1992 as protection against vandalism. The installer was Glasstec of Liversedge and the cost £3,250.

³⁵ Malcolm Bull's Calderdale Companion

William Marsden's Charity

By his will, dated the 8th April 1889, with one codicil dated the 1st December 1891 and proved at Wakefield the 2nd September 1892, of which a probate copy was produced at the Inquiry by Mr. W.J. Chambers, of Brighouse, solicitor, William Marsden, late of Clifton, in the Parish of Dewsbury, bequeathed, among other legacies and after the death of his wife, the sum of £100 free of legacy duty to (amongst others i.e. Bridge End Chapel, St Paul's Wesleyan Chapel, Brighouse, the Methodist New Connexion Chapel, Brighouse and St Martin's Church, Brighouse):

The churchwardens for the time being and their successors of Rastrick Church

Upon trust in each case to invest the same upon one or more of the securities therein-after mentioned, and to apply the interest and annual produce arising from the said sum of £100 for the benefit of the respective choirs of each of the aforesaid place of worship.

For Rastrick Church, the churchwardens stated that they had invested part of their sum of £100 in the purchase of a sum of £85 Lancashire and Yorkshire £3 10s percent Preference Stock (1891), and the balance in that a sum of £1 0s 2d New Consols. These stocks now stand in the names of Messrs. William Smith and Arthur Travis Clay, both of Rastrick. The interest on the former, amounting to £2 19s 6d yearly, is paid into a special choir fund, that on the latter is accumulating.³⁶

In 1874 the **St John's Mission Room** with a new day school and Sunday School were built on St John's Street, Gooder Lane. The opening service at the Mission Room took place on the 14th August 1874. This was a daughter church to St Matthew's, Rastrick. (see Appendix K for further details)

The **vicar's vestry** in the south-east corner of the building was added in 1888. The construction of the foundations must have been inferior to the main building, since the two-



storey extension is slowly rotating away from the south wall of the church.

In November 1895 a **Grand Bazaar** was held in the Town Hall, Brighouse by the 'Rastrick Church and Schools' with the objects of

1. Defraying the cost of Re-decorating the Church and
2. To render liberal aid to the funds of the Church Day Schools, whereby the existing Debt may be liquidated, and the efficiency of the Schools maintained. and the requirements of the Education Department fully satisfied.

³⁶ Report on the Endowed Charities of the Parish of Halifax 1894-95

The scheme included for the Re-flooring of the School, the Building of a new cloakroom and other necessary alterations.

Patrons of the Bazaar included

The Right Rev. The Lord Bishop of Wakefield and Mrs How

The Ven. Archdeacon Brooke and Mrs Brooke

The Ven. Archdeacon Donne and Mrs Donne

His Worship the Mayor of Brighouse and Mayoress

Other patrons are listed in the Official Handbook.

A photocopy of the Official Handbook is to be found in Appendix N.

In the Halifax Deanery a scheme for church extension in the town and district was inaugurated at a meeting on 6 November 1900. Its objects were to obtain sites, build and enlarge churches and mission churches, and make grants towards the stipends of additional clergy. It was accepted that in regard to the last item it would co-operate with the Diocesan Spiritual Aid Society. In consequence, in 1902, the Halifax and Rural Deanery Church Extension Society was formed and proposed inter alia a new parish near Brighouse Station carved out of the parish of Rastrick. This became the **Rastrick St. John's parish**³⁷ in 1916 (Humphrey Bolton).

Ordnance Survey Bench Mark



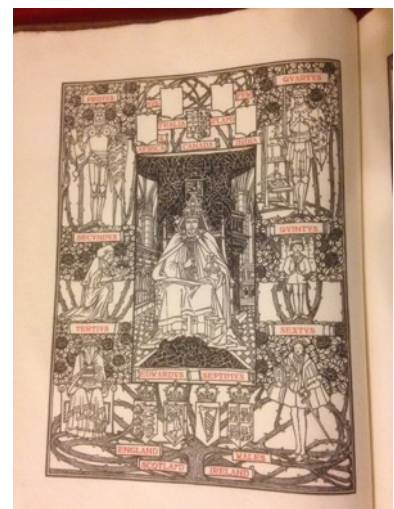
The Ordnance Survey of May 1908 gives the value for the bench mark on the wall of the church in the north-west corner as 371.8 feet above sea level. The Benchmark has a value of 113.2027 m above Ordnance Datum (Newlyn). It is a 3rd Order bench mark, last verified in 1959

Image from geograph.org.uk website

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In 1907 Hugh Travis Clay (see the East window above) made a gift to St Matthew's Church of a beautiful Limited Edition copy of the 1903 Prayer Book which was prepared for King Edward VII.

Frontispiece of 1903 Prayer Book



³⁷ Wakefield Diocese Celebrating 125 Years

Two very similar photographs taken around 1900 :



St Matthew's Church 1900



St Matthew's Church c.1915

In the above photograph, note the sets in Church Street on the left, before the tram tracks of 1923, and the absence of the war memorial from the Great War 1914-1918. Wrought iron railings and 'The George' P.H. in place.

churchwarden/History of St Matthews/church history [η](#)



St Matthew's Interior c. 1920

Note the choir stalls on the south side of the sanctuary and the north-east vestibule, and the pulpit set on the sanctuary step.

In 1922 the organ was placed in a new chamber, having been moved to the east end of the south gallery previously in 1879(see above for further details).

In 1926 a brass wall **tablet** was erected at the east end of the south wall:

"In loving memory of Fredric Rayner, who for 37 years (1872 -1909) was organist and honorary choirmaster of this church, during which time his willing help and active interest in church music was widely known and appreciated. This tribute of affection is erected by his sisters August 9th 1922."

In 1928 electric lighting was installed at St Matthew's Church, just five years after electric tramcars began to traverse the road outside.

According to Clifford Riley in his book 'A Village Blacksmith', shortly after he started work at G.S Whitley and Co. in 1937, he carried out repairs to the beam supporting the bell by the addition of metal clamps to hold the cracked beam together. Later, Mr Riley also reconstructed the wrought iron railings which support the communion rail, by bending the old railings to a curve and fabricating new railings to match, to make up the extra length needed in the new semi-circular communion rail. This was, no doubt, part of the sanctuary re-ordering of 1949. ³⁸

The Interior was re-decorated in 1935, and then in 1949 the sanctuary was re-ordered, following a rebuilding of the organ (see above).

In November 1950, both of the Royal Armorial Hatchments were cleaned and varnished

³⁸ 'A Village Blacksmith' by Clifford Riley 2007

and a note of this and the names of the churchwardens of the time were inscribed on the back (see above).

1951/2 saw the re-decoration of the interior of the church and also 'the removal of a pew from each side of the main aisle and the making of two seats out of the pews to replace the forms used by the choirboys.'

The present clock, which came from a church in the Diocese of Carlisle, replaced the original one in 1953. A plaque at the foot of the tower staircase reads: 'The Clock was installed to Commemorate the Coronation of our Gracious Queen Elizabeth II, the cost being raised by many residents of this Parish.' (See also original clock of 1807 above)

The present **weathervane** (20 feet high) was made by G.S.Whiteley & Company, a family blacksmith business which was located in the smithy at the bottom of Ogden Lane, Rastrick was added in 1956. The weathervane was an exact copy of an earlier version that had rusted and had been taken down for safety. The construction is described in detail, down to the brass bush, which was pressed into the centre boss to take the spindle of the rotating arm. The lighting conductor, made of copper, was refurbished and re-used. Weighing about 600lbs (272kg), the whole weathervane, having been trial assembled in the Blacksmith's yard on Ogden Lane, was erected by steeplejacks. The whole story of the weathervane is described by Clifford Riley in his book 'A Village Blacksmith'.³⁹

Whiteleys was the last working forge in Calderdale, originally founded in 1860 but closed in 1995. A buyer could not be found for the business - neighbours had already been complaining about the noise it made, so it had to be demolished. The land was subsequently sold and in the early 21st century the land was used for housing, which has been named 'The Forge'. The company's main business was toolmaking and maintenance for the local quarries, although their most famous work was probably this wrought-iron weathervane which crowns the church tower.⁴⁰



The weathervane on the tower

³⁹ Clifford Riley - 'A Village Blacksmith'

⁴⁰ <https://lowercalderlegends.wordpress.com/2010/03/21/g-s-whiteley-co-blacksmiths-rastrick/>

1957 saw the sad death of Hugh Travis Clay (see also The East Window, above) in Jersey (Channel Islands). His ashes are interred under a stone memorial plaque in the floor of the Narthex:



1958 saw the installation of additional lighting and the replacement of the boiler with an 'Automatic under-feed coal boiler and five radiators'.

The vergers' bench near the north-west door was removed in 1959 and an oak showcase installed, which now contains the Edward VII Prayer Book, made in 1903 and given to St Matthew's by Hugh Travis Clay (see above and also east window and Saxon Cross) in 1909.



St Matthew's, Rastrick c.1960

Then in 1962 black beetles were discovered to have eaten their way through much of the timber roof, which was also affected by dry rot. Restoration and alterations followed. Additional tubular heaters were placed under the choir stalls and on the window cills of the east window. In 1963 the north-east vestibule was demolished and the four choir stalls divided, two to the north and two to the south of the chancel; the pulpit was moved from step to floor level, following the removal of the front pews from the nave and the semi-circular altar rail was installed.

On Wednesday 11th December 1963 at 7.30 p.m. a Service of Thanksgiving was held for the Restoration of the Present Church in the 600th year of the Foundation of the First Church in Rastrick. The preacher was the Venerable J.F. Pratt M.A., Archdeacon of Buckingham and former Vicar of Rastrick (1946-1949). Also present were the Venerable J.F. Lister, M.A., Archdeacon of Halifax and Vicar of Brighouse, the Revd. H. Birch, M.A., Vicar of Coley (Vicar of Rastrick 1949 - 1960) and the Revd. I.C. Knox, M.A., the current Vicar. The choir and congregation sang the Te Deum and the choir sang an anthem.

In 1967 Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-1983) and co-author Peter Leach, wrote of St Matthew's Church in his 'Buildings of England Yorkshire: The West Riding: Leeds Bradford and the North':

"Handsom ashlar-faced building of 1796-8, tower with circular cupola. the long side towards the street is of five bays with entrances in the first and the last. Between the entrances small rectangular windows in wide blank surrounds. The surrounds are arched and the arches(?) comprise the large semi-circular upper windows. Interior with three galleries on Tuscan columns. Plate Chalice of 1711. In the churchyard, NW of the church cross base of C11 in style similar to Birstall and Hartshead."

It seems that the problems with the roof had not gone away. Emergency repairs had to be carried out in September 1967 under an Archdeacon's certificate. First a Faculty was granted in January 1968 for the removal of the existing stone slated timber hipped roof and replacement with Redland 'Stonewold' interlocking concrete tiles etc. at the expense of Rentokil Ltd', who presumably had unsuccessfully carried out works in 1963/62 to combat the black beetles and dry rot. Following that, a second Faculty was granted in July 1968 for 'The replacement of timber trusses of roof in steel to same shape as existing roof, the trusses to be covered with concrete roofing tiles of a dark colour to simulate the old stone slabs and the provision of a new ceiling, ceiling joists, purlins and rafters.' The roof was replaced, this time with a steel frame.



The old timber roof trusses being removed in 1967



Bottom Chord of old timber truss replaced in steel RSJ 1962?
Note deflection of bottom chord



Straps and steel bolts on bottom chord of roof truss inserted in 1962/63 after Rentokil's work



Original fractured timber bottom chord after removal of straps and bolts



The new steel roof truss during construction in 1967

1969 saw the removal of the large brass lectern and its replacement by an oak lectern. A new oak prayer desk was provided and inscribed 'To the Glory of God and in memory of Robert and Florrie Thorpe', as was the lectern.



The Oak Lectern



The Oak Prayer Desk



The Priest's Chair and Desk, inscribed 'In memory of Henry and Anne Nelson and their daughters Sarah and Emma'

On the 23rd July 1970, under the leadership of the Rev Ian Knox, the vicar of St Matthew's, and the Rev Frank Smith, the Methodist Minister of Crowtrees Methodist Church, a 'shared building agreement' was drawn up, to enable the Methodists to use the parish church. (See Local Ecumenical Partnership below.)

An event of note outside St Matthew's occurred in June 1970 when the contract for the construction of the Outlane to Hartshead M62 motorway began on site. The contract had been awarded to W. & C. French in the sum of £10.125 million. During the following months dump trucks loaded with sandstone rock passed by St Matthew's Church on their way to embankments further along the motorway to the east, because there was no haul-road across the River Calder, the railway and the canal at the site of Kirklees Viaduct. The motorway was opened to traffic in December 1972 and now forms the southern boundary to the Parish of St Matthew, Rastrick.

In 1974 an oak cover was provided for the font with a crown of thorns made of nails from the old roof.



The Crown of 'Thorns'

At that time the font was located just inside the west door, and close-by an oak board with glass case was fixed to the wall. It contains a Book of Remembrance of the founders and benefactors of Crowtrees Methodist church. (See also Section 7.)



The Book of Remembrance



The story of the church from 1349 to 1989

In 1989 John Winstanley of Castlefields, Rastrick, donated a fine calligraphy display titled 'The Anglican and Methodist Church of St, Matthew, Rastrick' outlining the story of the church from 1349 to 1989. The work now hangs on the south wall of the narthex.

Faculties in the 1990s included the following works and additions :

August 1990: Cupboard in the porch, the amplification system, a gas heater in the choir vestry (now used as office/kitchen), outside lighting over the entrance and the provision of a seat in the churchyard.

In June 1992 polycarbonate sheeting was fixed to the outside of the 13 exterior stained-glass windows.



The interior of the church before 1999

In September 1993 the Brighouse and Rastrick Branch of the Royal Air Force Association presented an oak Easter Candle Stand to St Matthew's to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of R.A.F.A.. The candle stand is located in the apse.



The R.A.F.A. Candle Stand

2.4 The Present Church building in the 21st Century

A **major re-ordering** of the interior of the church was carried out in the new Millennium in 2000/2001.



The narthex was formed by the positioning of an ash and glass screen under the west gallery.

The octagonal Gothic Revival font was moved from the rear of the building (where the narthex is now) to the front where the pulpit stood.



The original pulpit was removed and sold (to the U.S.A.), the friezes were cleaned and new lights installed. The interior of the church was re-decorated in pastel shades giving the whole building a lighter appearance. The architect for this work was Peter Langtry-Langton of P. & J.H. Langtry-Langton of Bradford. The contractor was the local firm Apex Construction, Frank Elam being the building manager. The cost of the work was in the region of £95,000.

The children of St Matthew's – the Beavers, Brownies, Cubs and Rainbows helped to raise £340 by collecting around 20,000 coins and forming a ring of copper around the outside of the church walls. The churchwardens overseeing the project were the late Edgar Fawthrop and Brian Spence.

In 2006 two new oak hymn boards and hymn numbers were kindly donated by Brian and Jean Spence. They were made by Ben Kendall of Scholey Avenue, Rastrick.

A new blue altar frontal together with burse, stole and veil were purchased in 2008/9. Then, in March 2009 a similar set in red were provided thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor.

In September 2009 Mr Stanley Firth presented the Church with the gift of an upright Ibach piano.

External maintenance to the tower, aimed at improving its waterproofing, was carried out in 2010 by a local builder, Garry Handley.



Scaffolding to Tower, 2010



In addition, stone repair works to the apse window mullions and to the boiler house door frame were undertaken by M&G Stone Ltd of Keighley. The final cost of all these repairs arising from the 2008 Quinquennial Report was about £8,000, which were financed in the main by a generous anonymous donation.



New Stones to Apsse Window Mullions

The works were overseen by churchwarden, Richard Kay, a chartered civil engineer.

In 2010, the roofing felt to the vicar's vestry was replaced by the Competent Asphalt Co. of Mirfield. The same company carried out repairs to the mastic asphalt waterproofing of the flat roof of the apse in April 2010.

Also in 2010 a new earthing system for the tower lightning conductor was installed by M. Hird & Sons of Keighley at a cost of £970.33, following the failure of an earth resistance test. The earthing system consists of 3 copper rods driven vertically into the ground at 2 metre centres to the west of the lightning conductor in the churchyard on the west side of the tower.



Location of 3 Lightning Conductor Rods in Churchyard

The external window frames to the gallery, tower staircase and apse were re-painted in September 2011 by W. Barber & Son (Painters & Decorators) Ltd of Ripponden. Later, in June 2013, the external frames to the ground floor windows and the two doors were re-painted by a working party of parishioners lead by the churchwardens. The four lighting columns (not in use) in the churchyard were repainted at the same time.



St Matthew's after repainting 2013



One of the repainted Lamp Posts

In 2014, following a water leak through the roof at the west end, the west gallery wall and the ceiling were re-painted by W Barber (Painters and Decorators) Ltd. of Ripponden. Colin Barber, who carried out the work, reminded me that the family business started in Rastrick, occupying the shop across the road from St Matthew's at the junction of Crowtrees Lane and Jumble Dyke. The opportunity was taken to re-paint the main staircase walls and ceiling at the same time. Colin Barber kindly re-painted the east wall of the apse at his own expense, as a gift to the church, as part of this re-decoration.

In June 2014 repairs were made to the organ wind reservoirs. The leathers in 5 units had become stiff with age and were replaced with new in the workshop of J M Spink, Organ Builders of Leeds at a cost of £942.00. Malcolm Spink and his son Anthony carried out the work.

Also in 2014, it was realised that the electrical wiring system no longer met current standards, so under a faculty granted in 2014 rewiring took place during March/April 2015 under the supervision of churchwardens Derek Hansord and Richard Kay. The contractor for the work was Andrew Greenwood Electrical of Shibden, Halifax.

The churchwardens also promoted a scheme for the installation of emergency lighting to comply with Health and Safety requirements for the growing demand for concerts held in Church in the evenings. The work was done under the same faculty and contract as the rewiring. The total cost of the works amounted to around £14,000 including VAT.

Money was raised to cover the cost of the work by the church through events such as Christmas fairs and concerts, supported by generous anonymous gifts, a grant from Calderdale Methodist Circuit of £2,500 and £2,151.68 from the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme .

Concurrent with the re-wiring scheme, Northern Power Grid through its agent Freedom Network Services, replaced the supplier's consumer unit and G4S Utility Services installed a new 'smart' electricity meter, which could be read remotely. A faculty for the work, which was to include excavation in the churchyard to replace incoming supply cables had been granted, but in the event the excavation was not required.

In 2015 a faculty was granted for a new extension Roll Board to include the names of Vicars and Methodist ministers in chronological order, from the time when St Matthews came together as a single congregation with a single purse in 2004. The existing board was duly modified and hung next to the narthex entrance door (See Section 8 L.E.P.). The lettering on the new board was created by John Hansord , with the re-varnishing by Churchwarden, Derek Hansord



The Roll Board of Chaplains, Vicars and Ministers from 1363 to 2015

At the same time a calligraphy showing the names of Methodist ministers who have served Crowtrees / St Matthew's during the time when the two congregations were coming together was mounted on the west wall of the Narthex.



The Calligraphy and associated artwork was drawn by Helen Hayman.

The Calligraphy of Crowtrees Methodist Ministers who have served at St Matthew's 1970 to 2004

In February/March 2016, Colin Barber of W. Barber (Painters and Decorators) Ltd. was once more engaged to carry out re-decoration of the interior of the Church. This time completing the north, south and east walls of the nave and also the Narthex, all to the original colour scheme adopted in 2000. The colours were from the Dulux 'Heritage' range, which by 2016 were no longer available. However, by digital scanning the record sample swatches of the original colours, Colin was able to obtain perfect matches from his paint supplier. Thanks to Archdeacon Anne and the churchwardens,

Derek Hansord and Margaret Brown for ensuring that all necessary permissions and specifications were in order.



The Nave in March 2016

The total cost of all the internal re-decoration carried out by Colin Barber over the period 2014-2016 was about £5,900. Some of this cost was offset by an insurance claim.

Reducing energy used in the churches became increasingly important in the early 21st century, as heating costs rose and the 'Green' agenda to protect planet Earth from global warming was at the forefront of national thinking. Forty-eight years previous in 1968, when the roof to the church was replaced, fibreglass insulation about 1 inch thick had been laid above the nave ceiling. Having completed the church re-wiring in 2015, the time was right in March 2016 to add 270mm thickness of Knauf Earthwool Loft Roll 44 to reduce heat losses through the ceiling. This work was carried out by local company Dyson Energy Services of Brighouse. at a cost of around £1,800 including VAT (at 20%)



270mm Earthwool Loft Roll Roof Insulation above Nave Roof

In March 2016, Competent Asphalt of Mirfield were called in to carry out repairs to the asphalt in the roof guttering at the west end next to the tower.

Also during the summer of 2016, further refurbishment works were carried out to the tower, including cleaning and repainting the weathervane. It is thought that this was the first time that the weathervane had been repainted since its installation in 1956. All these works required steeplejacks using roped access. At the same time, repairs were carried out to the lightning conductor on the tower. Three additional lattice copper earthing mats covered with bentonite clay were added in the ground, close to the tower's base, to improve the resistance to earth. Opportunity was also taken to repaint the louvres of the belfry. All these works were carried out by Access Maintenance Solutions of Morley at a cost of £5,269.

In the autumn of 2018, water was once more coming from the west end roof gutter and flowing down the inside west wall in the gallery. Competent Asphalt of Mirfield were again called in to renew the asphalt lining, but this time extending the waterproofing up under the adjacent roof tiles.

During 2019, the purchase of two LED television screens enabled the use of audio-visual material during worship. The installation of the wiring for the screens proved problematic, but the supplier of the wiring system, Treble Clef of Brighouse ably led by Robert Brett was eventually successful in providing a wired rather than a wi-fi solution. The system is controlled from the Church Laptop computer positioned at the front of the south aisle.

During the winter of 2019/2020, which was exceptionally wet - Global warming no doubt, the problems with water coming into the building from the tower roof returned. After taking advice from the Architect, it was decided to renew the waterproofing membrane to the square tower roof surrounding the cupola, and at the same time improve the drainage from the roof. Whilst scaffolding was in place, the timber louvres to the bell tower were re-painted.

Water damage had occurred to the ceiling of the gallery staircase and to the west wall of the nave. When our builder Gary Handley of Sunnyvale Avenue Rastrick attempted to repair the lath and plaster ceiling, most of the ceiling fell, bringing with it copious amounts of trapped water and narrowly missing one of the workforce! The repairs were carried out during late spring/early summer of 2020 during the COVID-19 closure of

the building. The total cost of the works was in the region of £8,800, with part funded by an insurance claim. The works were overseen by churchwarden Margaret Brown.



Scaffolding for external repair works to the Tower, June 2020

Problems with water incursion into the tower, in particular onto the clock casing continued during the winter 2020/2021. Following advice from the architect it was decided to install a fine mesh to the inside of the timber louvres of the bell tower, in an effort to divert any wind-blown water entering the tower via the louvres. The mesh was dressed to pass through the louvres at the bottom and finish outside the bottom louvre to drain any water away. The work was done by former churchwardens Derek Hansord and Richard Kay in August 2021. During the work opportunity was taken to clear debris from the floor of the bell-chamber, that had been blocking the drainage outlets at the bottom of the louvres.



View of the Bell Tower from the South -
grey mesh visible at the bottom of the
louvres
Aug 2021



Access to the Bell Chamber
August 2021



Mesh fixed to the inside of the Bell Chamber Louvres Aug 2021

During 2021 the **clock** in the bell tower became unreliable. The hands on the two external faces would stop from time to time just before the hour. Opportunity was taken to engage Time Assured Ltd. of Mansfield to inspect the clock mechanism and recommend a solution. During the latter part of 2021, the chiming mechanism and the drive to the west face were disconnected to ascertain if they were the cause.

Time Assured Ltd carried out repairs to the brass bushes, which were badly worn, in the dial works of both west-facing and north-facing clock dials in June 2023 at a total cost of £2,150 plus VAT. They accessed the outside faces on the scaffold provided by contractors working on the tower roof.

The work was financed through a grant of £2,650 from the Benefact Trust, which also went towards the associated tower works.



Dial works back from the workshop



Refurbished dial works to west clock face

The window-frame and glazing of a window at first-floor level behind the organ pipes on the east elevation of the vicar's vestry extension was found to be rotten during 2022 and was replaced by Jack Fielden Joiners of Ovenden in December 2022. The window frame had been subject to water leaking from the gutter outlet above for several months.

New window Frame installed (top left)



In June 2022 a Property Team was set up to assist churchwarden Margaret Brown with the maintenance of the church buildings. The team consisted of Richard Kay and Derek Hansord, both former Churchwardens, Geoff Senior, Parish Centre Manager and Bob Young, Treasurer.



Churchyard Notice board

Around October 2022 new aluminium noticeboards with opening display windows were erected in the churchyard and mounted on the Parish Centre wall.



Parish Centre Notice board

The tower roof had continued to leak into 2022. During winter storms, water was found dripping onto the lower staircase from 3 possible routes: 1. The weather vane support rod, 2. The masonry dome and 3. The four pitched roofs surrounding the belfry. Architect David Barker of AHR Building Consultancy, Huddersfield was brought in to advise and prepare a contract for repair works.

In March 2023 a tender in the sum of £27,950.00 plus VAT from Malden Roofing Contractors (Sheffield)Ltd. was accepted for tower roof waterproofing. Specialist sub-contractors Bauder Ltd of Ipswich applied their Liquitec waterproofing system to the four pitched roofs.



Scaffold to tower



Bauder 'Liquitec' to Pitched roof

Opportunity was taken to improve the positive drainage from the pitched roofs by the introduction of two additional downpipes on the west side. Access Maintenance

Solutions of Batley completed the work by sealing the weathervane rod as it passes through the masonry details surmounting the cupola and carrying out strategic pointing.



Pointing to Cupola Top



Sealing of weathervane to masonry Ball

The lightning conductor was reconnected by Lightning Protection Services of Leeds and tested. The test failed to meet the requirements for resistance to earth, but this was attributed to the company not taking account of the multiple earthing rods and earthing mat. The Architect was satisfied that no further earthing work was required, taking into account the history of the earthing installation.

Unfortunately, the works were only partially successful. Winter storms beginning December 2023 led to further water leakage into the clock chamber part of the tower. All the foregoing Tower Repairs were financed through two generous legacies from former members of St Matthew's.

During the summer of 2023 opportunity was taken to engage Colin Barber of W. Barber & Sons Ripponden to repaint twelve first floor window frames and the doorframe and window above to the main west entrance door. The cost was £1,989.00, which included taking down and replacing the protective polycarbonate screens and wire mesh frames. Some rotten wood was repaired in the west facing window over the kitchen.



Repainted window frames on South Elevation

Cleaning and refurbishing of the organ pipes took place in March 2024 to remove years of accumulated dirt and dust. The work was carried out by J.M .Spink Ltd of East Ardsley under the direction of Anthony Spink. The cost was of the order of £4,900.00 plus VAT.



Dismantling and
Cleaning of the
Organ pipework

St. Matthew's Church is a Grade II* listed building. Details of the listing are available on www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-338806-church-of-st-matthew-brighthouse

During the Summer of 2024, opportunity was taken to repair and/or replace roof drainage guttering and downpipes. The down-pipe to the south of the semi-circular apse had been subject to blockages over several years and had led to internal damage to the internal plasterwork. The architect David Barker (AHR Building Consultancy, Huddersfield) recommended increasing the diameter of the pipe from 75mm to 100mm.

Repair and Replacement of Downpipes to east Face of Vicar's Vestry, South side of Apse May 2024.



Agreement was sought from the DAC and the Archdeacon to replace the existing cast iron pipework with Heritage type Cascade Cast Iron effect PVC pipe by Brett Martin of Staveley, Derbyshire. The works were successfully carried out by Frank Ryan & Sons of Bradford in May 2024 at a cost of £1,025 including VAT.

At the same time, Frank Ryan & Sons were able to renew the lead outlet to the guttering surrounding the Vicar's Vestry extension to the main building. The outlet had been broken, and the leakage had been the cause of the rotting of the window frame below. Water had been seen to be either leaking from or overflowing from the cast-iron guttering surrounding the vestry in March but close examination by Ben Ryan of

Frank Ryan & Sons had shown that the problem was a blocked gutter, this despite regular autumn / winter cleaning. The cost of this work was £229.20 including VAT.



In April 2024 an application was submitted to and approved by the DAC and the Archdeacon for the replacement of the existing grey PVC gutter to the south side of the nave with PVC Brett Martin Cascade cast-iron effect Deepstyle shaped gutter in black. The existing gutter had been leaking from the joints and had been subject to a

recommendation for renewal in the Quinquennial Inspection Report of 2023. This work was also carried out by Frank Ryan & Sons in one day in July 2024 at a cost of £1,399.20 including VAT at 20%.

Brett Martin Cascade Deepstyle cast-iron effect Guttering to South of Nave July 2024

In October 2024, after many months taken finding a suitable contractor, the re-roofing of the kitchen/office finally took place. The roof had been leaking for many months and identified in the 2023 Quinquennial Reports requiring re-roofing with the addition of roofing membrane. The contractor Frank Ryan & Sons of Bradford had difficulty finding a scaffolding company willing to provide the necessary boarded scaffold to prevent unauthorised access as required by Ecclesiastical Insurance.



Re-roofing in progress



Re-roofing complete 18 October 2024

Close-boarded scaffold for Kitchen/Office Re-roofing October 2024



The works included the provision of 300mmm rock wool insulation (visible in the photo above) and the construction of a new box lead gutter adjacent to the tower wall with welded expansion joints every two metres. The total cost of the works was £7,763.40 including VAT at 20% , which was reclaimable.

In May 2025, the internal damage to the plasterwork (see above) in the form of cracks in the east wall of the chancel were repainted by Colin Barber of W. Barber & Sons Ripponden. At the same time opportunity was taken to repaint the outside of both north-facing doors to the church building.