



The Parish Of
BROUGHTON-CUM-FILKINS
Oxfordshire

A short history of the ecclesiastical parish and the churches
First published 1988 & revised 2007

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all those who have shared their knowledge though, of course, all errors are mine.

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THE PARISH CHURCH

‘Halloa! Here’s a church!’

There was nothing very surprising in that; but again, I was rather surprised, when he said, as if he were animated by a brilliant idea:

‘Let’s go in!’

(Charles Dickens. Great Expectations)

I love the village parish church
the humble graves
and rhyming verses
to those who made it
what it is
and haunt its precincts still:
the printed list of incumbents
beginning in the fourteenth century,
the unlatched door
and polished brass,
and hassocks
buttoned red and square.
the hymnals piled in tidy rows
all ready for Sunday School.

I love the gently kind of quiet
which filters through
the pale green light
distilled by glass
in traceried windows (perp),
the Norman carving
round the font,
the rood screen
of a later date (restored);
the sense
of always Being There...

(Joan Edwards. Sunday)

INTRODUCTION

OUR TWIN VILLAGES of Filkins and Broughton Poggs straddle what has always been an important north-south route from the high Cotswolds to the Thames, and beyond to the South Coast. No doubt the easy availability of good water from the many local springs led to early settlement here. 'Filkins' is probably the 'Ing' or meadow of Filica the Saxon, perhaps from the Hwicce tribe from which is derived 'Wychwood', the ancient forest around Burford. The Filkins 's' is possibly an allusion to the traditional division of the village into Upper and Nether Filkin.

'Broughton Poggs' is the enclosure-by-the-brook belonging to the Norman Pogeys family of Stoke Poges fame. There might well have been even earlier settlement here since the Roman Ackerman Street runs through Bradwell Grove only two miles to the north. Over the centuries, often in the course of quarrying work, all sorts of Romano-British and Saxon remains have been unearthed, including a Saxon burial ground uncovered in 1855/6 in 'Purbrick's Close' (beyond where is now the swimming pool.)

Curiously, although the two villages are separated from each other only by the narrow Broadwell Brook, they long remained separate parishes. Broughton Poggs was always a small but autonomous parish centred on its ancient parish church 'nestling amongst the leafy glades of Broughton Hall' as one chronicler put it. Filkins was, until the mid 19th century, part of Broadwell parish, a much larger entity which, besides the villages of Broadwell and Filkins, stretched from Holwell, only a mile or so from Burford, to the detached village of Kelmscott on the north bank of the Thames.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE PARISH OF FILKINS

FOR SEVERAL REASONS, mostly connected with the tenure of the ancient Manor of Broadwell, while Broadwell had the parish Church of St Peter and St Paul, and both Holwell and Kelmscott had chapels of ease, Filkins had no regular place of worship. Villagers had to travel the mile or so to Broadwell, and the intervening fields are criss-crossed with several churchgoers' footpaths and dotted with stone stiles on which heavy coffins could be rested. Latterly, some worshippers preferred to go to Broughton, as the registers indicate.

As early as the 13th century, Filkins differed from Broadwell in that there were many small freeholders (22 out of 36 households in 1279). Perhaps this long independence of body led to the independence of thought underpinning the widespread religious non-conformism of the 19th century and the socially inclusive development of Filkins (relative to some surrounding villages) in the 20th century. At any event, by the 17th century, Filkins was becoming the most economically developed part of the parish.

This is reflected in the Churchwardens' Accounts which have a separate page for Filkins entries, and by the fact that instead of a Vicar's Warden and a People's Warden, there was a Broadwell and a Filkins Warden. Similarly there

were two Surveyors of the Roads for Broadwell but four for Filkins: two for Nether and two for Upper. The growing importance of Filkins within the parish is also illustrated by the fact that from the early 18th century onwards almost all the vicars of Broadwell parish lived in Filkins. From 1726 until his death in 1762, Henry Whitfield lived at Hall Place in Filkins (which was probably the house now known as the Old Bakehouse.) Thereafter the Colston family of Filkins Hall provided several generations of vicars.

At the beginning of the 18th century, most of the parish was owned by George Hamilton, the 6th Earl of Orkney. Hamilton's wife, an ex-mistress of William III, was one of the great hostesses of her age, and a formidable woman. Jonathan Swift remarked that 'she squinteth like a dragon' but was also one of the wisest people he knew. Hamilton himself was one of Marlborough's generals at the Battle of Blenheim, and if he ever visited his estate in Broadwell, no doubt he and the Duke, by now ensconced in his palace at Blenheim, shared a bottle or two over their old campaign maps.

Later, after the estates had passed to Hamilton's son-in-law, the Earl of Inchiquin, the old Manor House in Broadwell was destroyed by fire about 1740. Only the stone gate piers remain. The Inchiquins moved to a smaller 'Jacobean' house at Bradwell Grove. In 1804 William Hervey, already a large local land owner, bought the 2000 acre Broadwell Manor and set about adding to it with further purchases in Filkins and Broughton Poggs. He was induced 'by the local gentry' to buy Filkins Hall because they had heard that the chartist Feargus O'Connor was interested and they did not want another of his radical Minster Lovell allotment schemes here.¹ Hervey employed the well known architect/builders Richard Pace & Son to replace the existing Bradwell Grove house, which was 'too gloomy to be pleasing', with a large Gothic pile (now the headquarters of Cotswold Wildlife Park.)

Probably because his seat was no longer in the centre of the parish and also because he might not have liked the growth of dissenters' meeting houses (one of the first of which, a Baptist chapel near Broughton Mill, is now a garage), Hervey determined that each of the villages should be separate parishes. This was by no means an unusual aspiration in the mid 19th century, for it was an age of frenetic church building. In 1800 there were about 10,000 parish churches. By 1872, nearly 1000 had been entirely rebuilt, and a further 3200 new ones built from scratch.

Hervey started with Holwell and in 1842 applied to the diocese to rebuild the 'ancient and ruinous edifice'. Having promised 100 free seats, he recruited 100 villagers to petition the Bishop. In 1845 he got his way and rebuilt the chapel, adding a burial ground at this own expense. The curate of Broadwell, Charles Astley, became the first vicar of Holwell. Hervey's church was itself pulled down by the next squire, W H Fox, and replaced in 1894, but there is evidence to suggest that Hervey had re-used the original windows of the 'ruinous edifice' in his building and generally concocted a somewhat rustic structure. The provision of a simple structure was certainly his intention when he turned his attention to Filkins in 1851, when an application was made to

¹ There is a strong suggestion that Filkins Hall was considered at this time as a possible site for Marlborough College which was then being planned. If Filkins had been chosen, what a difference that single decision would have made to the later development of the village.

the diocese to allow a church here. There is now no plan extant, but it was probably a Cotswold barn-like construction with a traditional stone roof. It was to seat 120 adults and 50 children and was estimated at £900. Unfortunately for Hervey and the other originators of the plan, George Street, the young (only 30 at the time) diocesan architect was asked to comment.

Street rather sniffily observed that there was no architect's name on the plans and concluded that designer and contractor was one and the same. 'It is clear', he wrote, 'that one of very important parts of an architect's function, the superintendence of his designs, can only be impartially exercised best when there is no personal interest in the matter'. (One wonders how the Lechlade architect/builder Richard Pace had so ably managed the excellent stable block at Filkins Hall earlier in the century.) Street went on, however, to lambast the particulars of the design, which he said 'were very poor'. The roof timbers were far too weak for the '25 foot span' while 'the roof covering [was] of the heaviest kind'. The bell-tower opening was too small for the proposed bell, it would be impossible to kneel between the crowded pews, no gutters were shown, and the vestry apparently had a flat roof.

Street finished his report with 'the fact is the plan is far from good and not cheap. So wide a church with a large poor roof can never look really well and is practically as expensive as a church consisting of a nave and one aisle would be.' Not surprisingly the church as Hervey had proposed did not get built. In 1855, after further plans had been submitted for a larger church designed by G E Street himself, the church was built with a north aisle, a lighter-weight roof, a larger bell turret, and (of course!) gutters.

Paul Joyce, an architect and self-confessed 'ardent member of the Victorian Society' when visiting Filkins in 1968 declared that St Peter's is 'without doubt one of the very best of Street's early works, and a masterpiece of a great Victorian architect.'²

Meanwhile William Hervey busied himself with the paperwork. In February 1855, by an Order in Council, it was ordained that with the next change of Broadwell incumbent, Filkins would be separated from the parish and attached to Broughton Poggs. A certain amount of behind the scenes activity must have gone on because, before the end of the year, Thomas Goodlake resigned as vicar of Broadwell to become the first rector of Broughton Poggs-cum-Filkins. He was an excellent choice for, not only had he helped Hervey with the scheme, he also contributed a third of the money required to build the new church. This was an important consideration in a new parish where the living was always poor. Later in the century, Herbert Court Sturges, the vicar in the 1880's complained not only that his stipend was very low, but that there was 'a lack of resident gentlemen' to help with general parish finance.

The new church in Filkins was completed and consecrated to St Peter by Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford, the son of the anti-slaver William Wilberforce. The ceremony took place on Easter Tuesday 1857 and was

² Though he queried whether the octagonal font was Street's work, considering it of earlier 19th c. origin.

described in the Oxford Church Calendar. Bishop Wilberforce, who was so persuasive an orator as to be generally known as 'Soapy Sam', preached to a text from St John: 'And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side...' There were thirty clergy present including the Bishop of Jamaica who was present perhaps as a guest of William Hervey who owned several West Indian sugar plantations. Mr Hervey himself, at over 80, was too ill to attend. Later the rector, Thomas Goodlake, hosted a dinner for the builders, and the village children paraded round the church singing hymns.

Goodlake proved himself a good shepherd to his new flock, for by 1858 'the unruly rabble playing pitch and toss' outside the church at service time had been enticed in to swell the now 'numerous congregation'.

The plan had always been to close the church in Broughton Poggs as the new church in Filkins was opened (this explains the same dedication to St Peter), and this was duly done. However, the parishioners in Broughton Poggs complained so bitterly that Bishop Wilberforce authorised its re-opening in 1863. Therefore, in 1864 the break-up of the old parishes was completed when Filkins was made into an autonomous Parish, with the Bishop of Oxford as Patron. Robert Morgan Price became the first vicar (strictly, he was perpetual curate). The indefatigable William Hervey died in May 1863, just too soon to see this final development.

There was one more episode before the new parish of Filkins was truly launched. Mr Goodlake and his successors retained the rectory at Broughton Poggs, and so on the appointment of Robert Price in 1864, Charles R Smith who lived at Filkins Hall, unilaterally put up £557 to buy at auction a vicarage for the new incumbent. Unfortunately Mr Smith almost at once fell on harder times and a group of local clergy got up a petition, quite unknown to Mr Smith, to ask their friends for money.

The vicar of Kencot, Mr Edward Sturges, wrote to a friend '...when I add to this that Mr Smith has eleven children and a much narrower fortune than that he possessed until recently I am sure I enlist your sympathy.' They also wrote to the Diocesan Board who sent Street out to check the property. The Ecclesiastic Commissioners reported that the house was 'a somewhat awkward one in respect of arrangement' and that some of the floorboards were 'somewhat worm eaten'.

However, the Commissioners concluded that 'the house seems to be desirably situated and is probably a sufficient residence', and from various sources the money was raised, including £50 from Mr Price, so he must have liked his new house well enough.

THE CHURCH OF ST PETER, FILKINS

THE CHURCH of St Peter, Filkins stands on a triangle of land carved from the field now attached to the house which had probably been Hall Place³. Charles R Smith of Filkins Hall wanted the church built further into the field, near where the bus shelter now stands. It is also said that he offered a peal of bells to try to get his way. A house or barn belonging to Dees Farm, which lies behind the church, was demolished to make way for St Peter's. The freestone came from the Windrush quarry belonging to the Jackson family who also built the church. A review of Street's preliminary designs in 'The Ecclesiologist' approvingly comments that Street so liked the thick and thin coursing of the stone in the old barn, he decided to use the same coursing in his new building.

St Peter's is approached through a wrought-iron gate made at the Trinders' forge in Filkins, a family of blacksmiths for three generations and still going strong. There used to be an ironwork arch over the gate incorporating an oil lamp as a war memorial.

The church itself is 'simple and subtle in local stone', according to John Betjeman who attended the centenary service in 1957⁴. This subtlety is reflected in the apsidial East end which is semi-circular at ground level but grades vertically towards polygonal. This was Street's first church to be built with an apsed chancel, though he had previously designed (but not built) a similar chancel for a new cathedral in Lille. It was a habit amongst medieval builders to incorporate design features used elsewhere in the area, a practice revived by Street and his contemporaries to good effect. The south porch arch is based on the moulding of the west window rear-arch at St George's, Kelmscott.

The church consists of a nave, choir and north aisle, with a north vestry much enlarged later in the 19th century. This was a common ecclesiastical embellishment at that time, for the increasing elaboration of services led to the need for a larger vestry in which to store far more 'equipment' like vestments, candlesticks, altar frontals, flower vases and hymn books. The north aisle arcade is supported on round pillars whose capitals and bases all have different mouldings. This theme of 'different but similar' also occurs in the 14th century-influenced window tracery.

No two windows are the same, a feature very clearly illustrated by the windows in the north aisle. The church is surprisingly light and airy with

³ A curious circumstance, for Hall Place had been the home of an 18th century vicar of Broadwell. Hall Place was afterwards the Clark family's bakery until 1980, and the field is still known as Clark's Field.

⁴ The 100th anniversary was held over a weekend in June to coincide with St Peter's Day rather than at Easter when the church had been originally consecrated. There was a full and happy programme of events but the Wilts and Glos Standard reported that while a new chant for the Magnificat composed by Sam Goodenough of Filkins Hall was well-received, his organ playing was interrupted by a power-cut, and the last two hymns had to be accompanied by Miss Judith Cripps on her clarinet. These problems might have helped decide the PCC in 1959 to commission Geo Osmond of Taunton to completely overhaul the organ and replace 'the poor type of exhaust pneumatic action, known to be most unreliable' with a new 'electro pneumatic action' for £984.

several clear glass windows and those in the north aisle, though stained with interesting non-figurative ornament are pale enough to admit substantial extra light.

One south wall window has a later stained glass in memory of Lady Kathleen Weaver which was installed in 1927 by her husband Sir Lawrence Weaver. The Weavers were close friends of Sir Stafford Cripps and his family. They had first met in 1917 when, as Controller of Food Supplies, Sir Lawrence had invited Stafford to take over the 'Wart Disease of Potatoes' section. Later, in 1923, the two men founded the well-known but short-lived Ashted Pottery to provide work for ex-servicemen.

The Weaver memorial window combines with the chancel and east window stained glass (possibly by Clayton & Bell) to illustrate the entire life of Christ from annunciation to resurrection. In the top panels of the east window are angels with the words 'Sanctus Sanctus' which draw the eye towards the convenient translation 'Holy Holy' on the painted beam against the starry sky-scene of the chancel vault.

After his damning words about the proposed church roof, Street ensured that his church was well lidded. The trusses are substantial, though graceful, and supported on decorative corbels. The choir ceiling is completely lined with timber, and there is the unusual 'rood beam' positioned behind the chancel arch. The polychromatic paintwork of the starry heavens on the chancel ceiling was added by Hugh Cunynghame, the vicar from 1874 to 1882) as part of his high-church introductions (which also included stained glass, altar candlesticks and daily matins) intended as a riposte to the growing strength of the non-conformists in the village.

G E Street had a large practice in Oxford and then in London, from which he designed the Law Courts in the Strand. At one time he employed both William Morris and Philip Webb, later practitioners in what became known as The Arts and Crafts Movement. He encouraged the movement's commitment to 'total design', insisting wherever possible on overseeing the design and production of all the fittings in his buildings. Street probably designed the embroidered altar frontal (made by Jones & Willis Ltd of Birmingham), for instance, which has hung in the handsome oak case on the south wall since 1985. The rain water heads, with their Gothic motifs cast into the metal also show this attention to detail. Street and Morris shared a keenness to use the most indigenous materials. The pews here are in elm, the same timber that Morris later used in re-seating Kelmscott Church.

George Swinford relates that 'the pulpit was originally on the other side' but was moved when the vestry was enlarged by R Farmer. He also remembered the 'choir-boys' vestry at the West end being installed by Mr W Trinder, and helping to lay the square black and white tiles on the chancel steps. The tiles were a gift from Sir Stafford Cripps who lived nearby at Goodfellows Farm. George Swinford also carved the list of vicars of Filkins on the board on the west wall. Nearby there is an oak war memorial and crucifix, from Mowbray's of Oxford, which was installed in 1922.

In the rear vestry there is another, painted, board detailing the various charities in the Parish of Broughton-cum-Filkins, an interesting relic of the

very short lived joint parish. The brass altar rail is supported by some fine twisted iron-work pillars laden with bunches of grapes worked up from horseshoe nails by the resourceful Blacksmith Holloway. The rail probably dates from around 1870, but it is thought that the addition was made under Street's direction. Mr Holloway had previously been a policeman, and lived for many years in part of the ruined Filkins Hall after it burned down in 1876.

The Piscina is a copy of that at Broughton Poggs but with a stone credence table inserted. Although some of the pews have, over the years, been altered or removed (the choir stalls are now in oak) it is still possible to tell the children's pews in the north aisle (set at 24" centres), from the adult pews in the nave (set at 33½" centres), all exactly as Street's original plans.

Outside, a walk around the church reveals two rather soulful stone heads carved on each side of the west window moulding staring at nothing in particular. These are the extent of obvious external decoration with the exception of a fine set of crosses, one in feathery wrought iron, the others in stone which crown the south porch and march along the roof ridge towards an excellent open bell cote. This has been modified, since originally it housed two bells.

George Swinford Senior remembered them saying 'Who'll help - we two, we two' answered by Broughton's single toll of 'I, I'. His son, also George Swinford, remembers them simply as 'Ting and Tang' - a reflection of their poor sound. The single bell was re-cast from this old pair by Mears & Stainbank in 1969, and re-hung in memory of Dr Colin Ede, a churchwarden, by his widow, Doris Ede, and family.

The church was re-roofed in concrete tiles with 1961. A sample tile kept from the original roof suggests that it was probably laid in courses of black and red, perhaps with a zigzag effect as on Street's Cuddesdon Theological College. This rather strident roof patterning was one of the less popular features of Street's work.

THE PARISH OF BROUGHTON POGGS

DURING ALL the centuries of growth and boundary alteration in Filkins, Broughton Poggs changed little. It was always a small parish both in area and population, and rather insular. The register shows fewer than average contacts with people and places more than a few miles away, and although Broughton is in Oxfordshire its position has always dictated strong links with villages to the west into Gloucestershire. Indeed, at various times the ecclesiastical parish of Broughton Poggs has included small pockets of Gloucestershire within its boundary.

There have always been close links with Filkins too. The register contains many references to worshippers from Filkins unwilling to traipse over the fields to Broadwell.

The owners of the Manor of Broughton have included some notable characters. During the 16th century it was included with lands given to Ann of

Cleves on her divorce from Henry VIII. During the mid 18th century the Manor belonged to Sir William Burnaby, a naval officer, who commanded the Jamaica squadron and introduced the first constitution (Burnaby's Code) to Belize which later became British Honduras.

Then there was 'a gentleman named Cresswell' who bought the hall and promoted boxing tournaments on the lawn. He invited well-known pugilists of the day to show off their skills against unwilling villagers who happened to pass. George Swinford tells of a later Squire Hardcastle who, in the early years of the 20th century, bought himself 'a new fangled motor-car at the age of 91.'

The most illustrious Broughton family has been the Goodenoughs. They had been yeoman farmers in Broadwell and Kelmscott for generations, and came to Broughton in the 17th century. William Goodenough leased the Manor from the Earl of Orkney, and having obtained the advowson, installed his second son, also William, as vicar. The ensuing Goodenough dynasty filled both hall and rectory with distinction. William's son went on to become Bishop of Carlisle, and his son, Edmund, became Dean of Wells. Edmund's grandson, Frederick, returned to the parish of the family's origin (except, of course that it wasn't anymore!), purchasing Filkins Hall in 1922. He had very much wanted to buy Broughton Hall, but was thwarted by the owners who were unwilling to sell. Several of the Goodenoughs have also been keen natural scientists: Bishop Samuel had a genus 'Goodenia' named after him. There have also been prominent soldier Goodenoughs and banker Goodenoughs.

The church registers tell us much about life in the Parish. These are the calamities: just before the service on Christmas morning 1639, half of one side of the church 'from the chancel to the doore' fell down. The register states boldly that the incident was entirely 'by negligence of the wardens'. The succeeding years' accounts are full of expensive items for stone and timber and labour to restore the damage.

Then there are the years of plague: 1603 for instance, when 'a putrid fever now raged' and nine villagers were buried, against a yearly average of one. There are smaller tragedies too. In 1767 there were buried George, Ann and Eleanor Temple 'triples in but one coffin', and in 1777 they buried William Lock 'who being drunk, fell into a ditch & was drowned.'

There is the record of the burial of Daniel Saunders in 1678 'ye first to be buried in woollen'. This followed a new law insisting on woollen shrouds to help the English woollen weaving trade, and to preserve cotton for paper-making.

The inevitable human round is poignantly illustrated by the record of the burial of Jane Saunders and the christening of her grand-daughter, also Jane, on the same day in February 1680.

In the mid 17th century, Vicar Matthew Bull records that he was forced to carry out a burial, though the deceased should properly have been buried in Broadwell. The dead woman's son-in-law was so insistent as to threaten to dig the grave himself and find his own priest. On a somewhat lighter note, during the first half of the 17th century, the vicar was one James Wallinger. He and Mrs Wallinger appear to have had at least sixteen children and were

pretty constantly in and out of the church christening one or marrying another. Perhaps it was during one of these regular family outings that James' son John, when about twelve, sneaked into the vestry and on a blank page in the register scrawled 'John Wallinger is my name, and with this pen I wrott the same.' What Mr Wallinger Senior said is not recorded.

THE CHURCH OF ST PETER, BROUGHTON POGGS

BROUGHTON CHURCH consists of a nave, tower and choir. The tower is very early, the two bell openings in the west wall have been compared with the arcading in the south wall of the Saxon chapel in Bradford on Avon. Certainly the semicircular-headed arches and square pilaster with square single-stone capital is typical of pre-Conquest work.

The early English north porch is interesting in that the south door is generally the principal entrance to a church, helping to exclude cold north winds. In this case the village lies almost entirely to the north, so to enter by the south door would have been too inconvenient. Nevertheless the principal windows are on the lighter south side. Both north and south doors are identical with single-stone recessed tympana. That above the south door was at one time pierced to accommodate a stovepipe. Happily it has since been restored.

The Chancel arch is low, barely nine feet high, with piers that batter inwards towards their bases. The slight traces of roughness from the masons' axes together with the otherwise plain impost and arch stones form a simple yet imposing frame to the choir beyond. There is now no trace of a rood beam (which would have to have been very low) though the complete re-timbering in the 19th century and the layers of plaster effectively mask 1000 years of architectural change both here and elsewhere in the church.

On either side of the chancel arch is a hagioscope or squint (the south one being slightly larger than the north one), to allow for a view of the altar from the side pews. The church is lit mainly by the two south side windows. The western one is comparatively modern and in a decorated style, with characteristic ogee or 's' curved mouldings. The eastern window is three headed, with a rear-arch and super-arch, though the upper window tracery is not old.

The window has been filled with a stained glass memorial to members of the Goodenough family. It depicts St John and St Joseph flanking an image of Christ based on Holman Hunt's 'Light of the World'. The lower panel illustrates the Goodenough crest. The memorial was erected by John Goodenough's daughter Charlotte Anne, who is herself commemorated in the West window which shows Christ blessing the children.

The east gable contains two lancet windows which are widely splayed. The rear-arches and hood mouldings are restorations and fit rather uneasily closely to the roof timbers. The stained glass depicts The Fall and The Resurrection and is again a Goodenough memorial, though this time it is designed to cover the field as the inscription running along the bottom

reveals: 'In memory of William Goodenough... and many of his descendants who lived at Broughton Poggs...'

The rather crude figures of Adam and Eve are explained by some as substitutions by a former vicar who did not care for the state of undress ordained by the original artist.

There are also small early English lancet windows in the north and south walls of the choir, and also a low leper window and splendid shoulder arch doorway in the South wall. The leper window no doubt originally had hinged wooden shutters, but no traces now remain.

Next to the organ is a large monument which records the life and curious circumstances of the death of William Goodenough (of east window fame) in a long Latin inscription. It details how he came to the Manor of Broughton, was a Jolly Good Chap and married Penelope Needham. They had twins who soon afterwards died together with their mother. Within a month or two William married Annabella, who, the tablet records, was the daughter of Sir Edward Bathurst of Lechlade. She bore him a son, also William, and afterwards a posthumous daughter, for the memorial sadly relates that William Senior died in 1673 after an unfortunate accident involving the branch of a tree. The inscription adds that his widow has erected the memorial partly as a warning to others against the dangers of trees.

Thus began the long association between the Goodenoughs, and Broughton Poggs and Filkins. The first generation to live at Filkins Hall is remembered with the memorial to Frederick who bought the Hall, and the last with the memorial to Sam⁵, just below, and his mother, Dorothea, to the right. On the south wall on either side of the altar-rail are similar tablets to another William Goodenough and his wife. This William was rector here during the 18th century. Underneath Mrs Goodenough's tablet is a memorial carved by Richard Westmacott who was both father and grandfather to Professors of Sculpture at the RA. On the north wall is an excellently carved modern memorial to Richard Burls, who left a generous endowment to the church when he died in 1999.

The altar-rail is a simple but pleasing piece of oak work. Its hinge and hand-cut screw are engraved with the maker's name 'Collett', a very well known local name. There are still Collett joiners and stone masons roundabout. To the south of the altar is a trefoil head piscina, similar to those at Shilton and Bampton though here with a quatrefoil drain-sink. GE Street carried the design on to his new church in Filkins. Near the chancel arch is a stone slab in the floor commemorating Mary Stephens. This is of interest because at some time it has been reversed, unless it was unusually installed with the head towards the altar. It dates from 1719 which is during the twenty year period for which the parish register is missing. Mary Stephens died at the age of 89, a good age in the early 18th century.

On the north wall nearby is a memorial to Margaret, the wife of Sir William

⁵ Sam Goodenough played the organ here (as well as in Filkins Church: see footnote 4.) After it was renovated in 1967, he noted to the rector that it had been moved and now obscured 'the oldest and most interesting wall tablet' (to his forebear). The Goodenoughs triumphed all round and the organ was moved back.

Burnaby, who sounds a truly excellent lady. Sir William's name and exploits were not added on his death in the space left for them. This is probably because within a surprisingly few years of the saintly Margaret's death he married Grace Ottley, thirty years his junior, and presumably his life took a very different course to the chagrin of his earlier family.

The nave is separated from the tower by an early 13th century arch. The rectilinear piers are similar to those of the chancel arch but have been chamfered and grooved to relieve their plainness. There are, on the tower side, fragments of Norman herringbone stonework at the base of each side of the arch. These are possible remnants of an earlier smaller arch and have been re-incorporated. The font is a very early circular basin on one massive base-stone. There is no evidence of any lead lining. The twin rough crosses on the south east side may be consecration marks or later graffiti. Certainly the font has twice been repaired with new stones set into the rim.

There is a painted wooden cross brought back from a French graveyard commemorating several soldiers from the Oxford & Bucks 52nd Light Infantry, including Captain Hardcastle of Broughton Hall, who died during 1916. There is another war memorial, erected by the parish, in the churchyard.

The internal woodwork from roof to pews has been several times renewed, the pews were replaced in oak in the 1950's, several carry dedication plaques⁶. The lectern, which stands on a fine octagonal pillar is also oak and is another Goodenough memorial (William d. 1951). The curtain beam across the tower arch is modern and nicely carved.

The west window splay indicates the immense thickness of the tower wall, though an inspection of the outside shows that the lower portion of the wall has been thickened at some time. It has been suggested that this might have been in preparation for a proposed raising of the squat saddleback tower. In any event the tower is now curiously oblong in plan.

The south door into the choir has what might be a scratch sundial on the lintel. In the graveyard, to the south west, is a corner for the Goodenough family. Down the south side of the graveyard is an interesting group of headstones deeply sculpted with cherub heads and wings, including one wonderful double cherub example. There is also an interesting, and curiously homemade-looking, iron memorial. Both hall and rectory lie to the north west of the church. The rectory was a 17th century house much enlarged by Richard Pace early in the 19th century.

⁶ The children of a previous incumbent subscribed £50, and noted that the old pews carried 'the marks of [their] teeth on the book rests.' Their father must have preached some sermon!

BROUGHTON-CUM-FILKINS, THEN AND NOW

BY THE 19TH century, Filkins was much the larger and more important of the two villages. In 1851, just before Filkins joined Broughton Poggs, the respective populations were 606 in Filkins, and 127 in Broughton. Billings directory lists eight ‘gentry, professionals and tradesman’ in Broughton, but 68 in Filkins.

Nevertheless in many matters the two villages had always acted as one unit. At one time, for instance, the two village mills were jointly operated. Broughton Mill ran in the morning while the water was impounded at Filkins for afternoon milling.

In these circumstances, quite why Bishop Wilberforce acceded to the requests of Broughton parishioners (however strident) to re-open the church is not known, for certainly in the years after the parishes were split up again in 1864, Broughton undoubtedly suffered just as Broadwell had done when William Hervey dismembered it. During the late 1860s, after the church had been re-opened, the Vicar of Broughton got himself into hot water with the Diocese over alteration work for which a faculty had not been obtained. Like many incumbents and churchwardens before and since, the Rev. Farmer was trying to react to changes in his parish faster than officialdom condoned (in this case a loss of congregation to the new church in Filkins.).

Mr Farmer wrote to Mr Dodd, the Diocesan secretary explaining that formerly, heavy box pews had seated 90 at ground level and that a gallery had been installed to seat another 42, mainly worshippers from Filkins. This had been very dark and anyway no longer required once Filkins had built its own church. The population of Broughton, he said, had never exceeded 136. In these circumstances he had felt quite justified in removing the gallery (of which there is now no trace) and reseating the ground floor with open pews.

He accepted that he had jumped the gun, but protested that ‘most of the work that I have done eg. repairs to the lead roof, plastering, repairs to stonework I was compelled to begin without further delay.’ He pointed out that much of the work had been paid for out of his own pocket. No doubt he would happily have passed on the bills if Mr Dodd had been awkward about the faculty. The Diocese does not appear to have raised any objection.

At the parish break-up in 1864, Mr Goodlake’s successor as Rector of Broughton Poggs-cum-Filkins (John Farrar) was living in the rectory in Broughton Poggs, and remained there as the rector of Broughton Poggs. The first vicar of the newly autonomous Filkins, Mr Price, moved into his new vicarage, Green Dragon House⁷. So two parishes, two parsonages and two priests. Unfortunately there were not really two reasonable livings.

The living of Filkins was worth only £29 a year rising in 1866 to £63 a year⁸. In

⁷ So called because there is an unlikely local suggestion that it might have been built as an 18th century coaching inn.

⁸ This compares with a national average of £303 in 1835. The highest paying living was Doddington in Cambridgeshire at £7306, but there were many curacies worth less than £50. During the 18th century and beyond, these anomalies prompted many innovations to level out parsons’ stipends. Queen Anne’s Bounty was established in 1704 to distribute clerical

1885, Herbert Sturges (then the vicar) got up a collection partly to erect the memorial to his predecessor Hugh Cunnyngame, and partly to augment his living. Mr Cunnyngame had been a popular priest, and had had a marked effect on the parish, not least because of his high-church introductions.⁹ More importantly, as Mr Sturges wrote, 'Mr Cunnyngame carried on the work of the parish for nine years for nothing, giving back to the parish the small income of the living.' £1300 was raised, with many small donations from within the parish. Mr Cunnyngame got his memorial (on the north wall of the chancel), and the living was significantly augmented.

The endowment of Broughton Poggs included 10 houses, a shop and a factory in Islington. These had been subject to 90 year leases, and for decades the rectors had enjoyed the benefit of the ground rent (£79 in 1951). The leases all fell in during September 1952. No proper inspections had ever been made or repairs carried out, in several cases the actual lessees were not known, and the houses were in multiple occupation. The rector, Mr Chick, was concerned that his liability for dilapidations would swallow up any income from new leases, so the decision was taken to sell all the properties. Dr Colin Ede oversaw the process which was not finally completed until 1966, with the sale of the factory at 39 and 39a Bavaria Road for £6,500. Eight of the houses had been sold at auction in 1953 for between £100 and £350 each¹⁰.

In 1921, by an Order in Council, Broughton Poggs and Filkins were united as one benefice (Broughton Poggs-cum-Filkins), such union to take effect with the next vacancy in Filkins. At the same time the decision was taken to sell Broughton Rectory which was in poor repair. Under ecclesiastical rules the sale price would be lost to the benefice after the union was effected, but this difficulty was surmounted by selling it to Frederick Goodenough, who let it to subsequent rectors of Broughton Poggs until the union eventually took effect in 1942, after the resignation in Filkins of AS Cooper Austen¹¹. In 1941 the decision was taken to sell Green Dragon House (the Filkins vicarage) and build a new (and smaller) vicarage for the united benefice to the north of the church, on a site given by the Cripps family. The new vicarage was largely completed in 1950 at an inclusive price of £5477/7s/9d, partly realised from the sale price of the old.

As the rural ministry declined still further, in 1981 Broughton Poggs-cum-Filkins was combined with Broadwell, Kencot and Kelmscott, and in 1984 with

taxes among poorer livings, and then the Ecclesiastical commissioners, later the Church Commissioners, took on more powers to control church money from a central fund, until today all clergy of the same rank receive more or less the same stipend.

⁹ As recently as 1982 Tony Burden, then the vicar of Filkins, noted that Filkins 'was traditionally always regarded as 'high' [church] and Broughton Poggs 'low'.'

¹⁰ Although the decision to sell the properties was a reasonable one in the context of very cautious church law and custom in financial matters, it is instructive to note that those of the eight houses which remain have been split into three flats, each of which now fetch up to £250,000. The property in its present state in 2007 would be worth in the order of £8-10m. The sale of the 12 Broughton properties was one tiny part of the total sale of church property nationally at that time.

¹¹ Mr Austen built St Peter's House, adjacent to the church, as a retirement home, but never lived there. In fact during some of the later years of his incumbency (1937-9) he lived in the south of France.

Langford and Little Faringdon to form the Broadshire Benefice¹². At the same time the separate parishes of Broughton Poggs and Filkins were united into one parish¹³. In 1995 the benefice was further amalgamated with the Shill Benefice of Shilton, Alvescot and Black Bourton: a total of 11 parishes, 12 churches and 15 villages. When this monstrous amalgamation was listed on the court page of *The Times*, a correspondent wrote to the paper humorously but in sorrow at the Church of England's apparent collapse¹⁴.

Now in 2007, this geographically huge benefice of Shill Valley and Broadshire is administered from the vicarage in Shilton, and supported by a house-for-duty priest at Filkins vicarage and retired clergy. William Hervey and others who strove mightily to split up the large Parish of Broadwell have ultimately been frustrated by history.

St Peter's, Filkins and St Peter's, Broughton Poggs are very different buildings built 30 generations apart, and yet both were built by men moved to bring their fellows closer to God. And both churches have been lovingly cared for by generations who have sought the same end. Next door to Broughton Church is the old Manor farmyard which, with changing agricultural practice, recently became redundant and has largely been converted to housing. Most buildings eventually lose their original purpose, but the vast majority of parish churches soldier on undaunted.

Altars have been moved. Candlesticks, stained glass, statues, and 'new-look' bibles have come, and gone, and come again as ecclesiastical fashions change. But it is a tribute to Christianity's eternal values that our parish churches, the one ancient the other comparatively modern, continue to be loved and looked after and have a continuing role as principal public buildings in our village.

St Peter's, Broughton Poggs has been 'nestling among the leafy glades' since time immemorial, and in 2007 St Peter's Filkins celebrates the 150th anniversary of its consecration. But still today, whatever the changes wrought in the parishes and the outside world, a thousand years of worshippers would feel at home in either church.

Reader, look about you and wonder.

© Richard Martin, *Cotswold Woollen Weavers, Filkins 1988, 1993 & 2007*

¹² The initial plan was for the vicarage of the enlarged benefice to be in Langford, but in fact it remained in Filkins.

¹³ The united parish is officially called 'Broughton Poggs with Filkins', but is generally referred to (echoing the old name of the united benefice) as 'Broughton-cum-Filkins'. For instance on the list-of-vicars board in Filkins Church.

¹⁴ In 1984, the year of amalgamation, Broughton Poggs with Filkins had over 40 on the electoral roll. In 2007 there are 19.