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***AND THE CHILDREN'S TEETH ARE SET ON EDGE***

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• CHAPTER 1 •

## *The Razing of Caton Chapel*

E'en now the devastation is begun,  
And half the business of destruction done;  
E'en now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,  
I see the rural virtues leave the land:  
Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,  
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,  
Downward they move a melancholy band,  
Pass from the shore and darken all the strand.

**Oliver Goldsmith**

In the summer of 1863 the incumbent of Caton Chapel, the Reverend Arthur Christopherson (M.A. St John's, Cambridge) made the following entry in the Vestry minute book.<sup>1</sup> It was the first sign that the ancient chapel of Caton, built at the time of Henry VIII, was about to be raised to the ground and replaced with a modern neo-gothic edifice designed by the Lancaster architect H. G. Paley.

*"The following Notice was publicly placed at the principal entrance of Caton Church on Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> of May, 1863.*

*Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the Parishioners of Caton will be held in the Church on Thursday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of June, at 12.30, for the purpose of deciding on the plans for the alterations and improvement of Caton Church – and for other purposes connected with carrying them into effect."*

The Township of Caton was a Chapelry within the Parish of Lancaster in the hundred of Lonsdale whose Parish Church was St Mary's in Lancaster, otherwise known as the Priory Church. Hence Caton Chapel was of the established church and not a non-conformist chapel as its designation as a chapel might otherwise suggest. Its patron was the Vicar of Lancaster and it had a perpetual curacy with an income, around 1848, of £140. Governance of church affairs and of the affairs of the Township lay with the Vestry whose principal officials were the churchwardens, the members of which were drawn from the local landowners and in principal there were four for each quarter of the village - Townend, Brookhouse, Caton Green and Littledale. The Vestry effectively ruled the Township through the appointment of churchwardens, overseers of the poor, constables, surveyor of the highways and collectors of taxes. The landowners from each of the four quarters of the township

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seemed to operate an informal rota system with no landowner from each quarter serving for more than one year. After about 1841 this began to change with John Edmondson – the Lord of the Manor – and later his son Thomas representing the Brookhouse quarter every year. In practice the number of men taking parish decisions was very small.<sup>2</sup>

In itself this reflected the changing pattern of land ownership in the area. In the Land Tax Assessments of 1763 and 1796 no estate was assessed at more than £50 and, by using an assessment of 4 shillings per acre, no estate can have been bigger than about 250 acres. By 1843 half the town was in the hands of only four men with one estate of over 1000 acres and 3 others of between 300 and 1000 acres. Four men had simply gobbled-up the former yeoman farming families. In 1873 these were T. W. Faithwaite, who lived in Bolton le Sands, The Edmondsons of Gresgarth Hall, James Dodson of Litledale Hall, B. P. Gregson of the Willows and James Walmsley of The Elms. John Edmondson of Gresgarth Hall, which was formerly known as Grassyard Hall, held 1208 acres built up from his father's original purchase in 1796 of an estate of 527 acres from the Rawlinson family. He did his with money made from his Worsted Mill in Mytholmeroyd and with the estate he also purchased the title of Lord of The Manor for £27. The Rawlinson's in the person of Henry Rawlinson, merchant and M. P. for Liverpool had themselves purchased the estate in 1780 on the death of his father Abram Rawlinson of Lancaster, *'a merchant of great eminence in that town'* and prominent in the West India trade.<sup>2</sup>

Of those landowners eligible to be Churchwardens one man sat on the Vestry Committee only once between 1820 and his death in 1882 and that was John Greg, in 1831. John Greg was the local Mill-Owner, and at that time manager for his father, Samuel Greg, in the firm of Greg & Co. John Greg, who became a town councilor and a Mayor of Lancaster after the municipal reforms of 1835, owned an estate, Escowbeck, and a cotton mill in Caton, Low Mill. He was also the owner of another large Cotton Spinning concern in Moor Lane in Lancaster. Perhaps his absence from the Vestry was because he was a Unitarian and a member of the governing body of the Unitarian Chapel in St Nicholas Street, Lancaster. But otherwise, he was a respected member of the local landed community, and welcome to worship at Caton Chapel, which he undoubtedly did, keeping a pew there for his family. Perhaps his sitting on the vestry council in 1831 merely reflected a wish to assert his landed rights as a newcomer to the community. Whatever the case may be, and perhaps he simply couldn't spare the time from all his other concerns, he did involve himself in church affairs, in particular, when it came to "improving" Caton Chapel, and, whether his influence was decisive, the issue itself proved divisive.

The Vestry minute book of Caton Chapel is simply a record of decisions taken at the meetings of the Churchwardens. There is no record of any discussion, or of proposals and counter-proposals, minutes of the last meeting, any other business and so on – except apparently grudgingly – when a meeting became polarized. So it is that the first account that the chapel was facing problems, indeed that its destruction was imminent – and there is no prior evidence of unusual requirements for repairs or of a need for additional funds beyond the normal annual allowance was the entry in the minute book made by Arthur Christopherson.

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Below the entry were inscribed the names of the incumbent, Arthur Christopherson, and the Churchwardens in attendance, John Edmondson and Thomas Baynes. But they are not signatures, the whole is in one hand, that of Arthur Christopherson. The page also conveys the strong impression that the record was made after the momentous decisions of the later 4<sup>th</sup> of June meeting had been taken and was entered “to keep the record straight.” Perhaps the fact that he is going to get a New Church is worth keeping a proper minute book for!

The meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> of June resolved to appoint a committee to decide upon the “*best plan for the alterations and improvement of Caton Church, with authority to carry their decisions into effect*”. The building sub-committee consisted of Arthur Christopherson, John Edmondson, Bryan Pagett Gregson, John Greg, and Thomas Baynes. It is not clear how many sidesmen were present but Arthur Christopherson signed the Vestry minute book as the incumbent and the Churchwardens John Edmondson and Thomas Baynes also signed the entry in their own hands.

On Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> of June Arthur Christopherson recorded that the committee had been to the architectural offices of E. G. Paley in Lancaster for a consultation, “*when after considerable discussion, & ascertaining Mr. Paley’s opinions on the subject, it was concluded that the best plan would be to take down & rebuild the whole of the Church – tower excepted, as soon as the necessary funds are provided.*”

This is so remarkably precipitate that Edward Paley must already have been put in the picture and have made a preliminary survey of the site. But then the wheels started to turn rather more slowly and it was not until three months later, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September, that the Reverend Christopherson recorded that he had announced in Church a meeting of the parishioners to discuss the improvements which now involve razing most of the present structure to the ground. He had some difficulty in writing out the minute and, after composing a page with numerous deletions and amendments, ended by crossing out the whole and rewriting it in fair copy on the following page.

After the first rush that took just a few days to get the project moving it is not clear what has caused the delay. Perhaps it was simply a matter of raising the necessary funds, or drawing up more detailed plans, however the tenor of the notice and subsequent events suggest otherwise. The notice posted, and read out in Church that Sunday, read;

*“It being thought desirable that another general meeting of the Parishioners should be held for the purpose of ascertaining most distinctly the wishes of the Parishioners, as regards the Alterations & Improvements of the Church. The following Notice was duly given on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> of September 1863.*

*Notice is hereby given that a general Vestry Meeting will be held in Caton Church on Friday the eighteenth day of September 1863 at four o’clock in the afternoon, for the purpose of considering and deciding – whether it is desirable to take down the existing Church (tower excepted) & to restore and rebuild it in such manner as may afford greater convenience & accommodation.”*

The tenor of which suggests there is some dissent from the idea that the Church should be leveled. That could simply be, where was the money to come from? However, in the event, money was not going to be any problem at all. Also the structure is to be torn down, not because it is in such a dilapidated condition that

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there is no alternative to complete reconstruction, but simply to provide “greater convenience and accommodation”.

The matter of the dilapidation of the Chapel had been “tried-on”, some 60 years before, by the incumbent, Reverend Payler Matthew Proctor. In 1801 the Bishop of Chester wrote to the Church Wardens about his Commission to look into the dilapidations of the Chapel.<sup>1</sup> The Commission consisted of the incumbent, the Vicar of Bolton, the Rector of Halton, Timothy Parker Esq. and Charles Gibson the owner of Quernmore Park, who is commemorated by a Memorial Tablet in the present Church. His Lordship informed the churchwardens that the altar rails were in a ruinous state, there were “*incroachments*” of the seats on the communion rails, the reading desk and pulpit were ill constructed, improperly situated, and should be removed to the East End of the Chapel, “*the flagging of the East and West Isles wants repairing and the floor of the Altar with the parts leading thereto*” wants “*new laying*”. The Chapel was too small and “*it is become necessary to make most of the space unoccupied*”. To effect this, without any enlargement of the building the Bishop suggested replacing the old forms and benches with new ones and extending them over the central aisle. Also “*the greatest part of the forms in the body of the Chapel are in a ruinous state.*” But those made of oak may be used in “*the present unoccupied space under the gallery*”. “*We therefore require You without delay to remove such erections as have been made without legal authority and to put the Chapel into a complete state of repair.*” The reference to “*legal authority*” reflects the fact that any modification or addition to the fabric of the church, or the introduction of any item for use in the church, requires written authority or “*Faculty*” from the Bishop’s Commissary Court.

This elicited a pretty dusty response from Churchwardens of the day who wrote back, “*it appears the said Chapel has been represented to your Lordship as in a ruinous situation which we think ought not to have been done as we by no means conceive it to be in that condition*”. They detailed the sums spent on “*repairing and beautifying*” the Chapel over the last ten years. As to whether the Chapel was too small, “*we humbly presume to say such representation is totally erroneous as we have never seen our Chapel so fully attended but a greater number might have been comfortably accommodated.*” They then detailed the improvements that had latterly been made, “*in the year 1791 the Chapel was neatly ceiled which before lay open to the slates in the year 1792 it was newly flagged in 1795 or 1796 a new Pulpit was erected in a neat modern style But for the propriety of its situation we do not presume to determine we also deny the rails of the altar being in a ruinous state but they may want some trifling repairs and we do not recollect any new seats being erected adjoining the Altar*”.

They admitted the comments on the paving, and the condition of some of the forms had merit but that the expense at the time was too great for the parishioners who were small tenant farmers, many on short leases with high taxes and “*uncommonly high*” poor rates. It was impossible to spread the cost by borrowing the sums required since they could only borrow as individuals and not as a collective body. Given the long war with France the country was then engaged in their response had some merit. For good measure they made some allegations of their own; “*We farther beg leave to say we are totally strangers to the manner in which our Chapel has been represented except from your Lordships Injunction and recommendation wherein we see it called*

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*Ruinous We also beg leave to say we find ourselves much surprised any body of Gentlemen could so misrepresent the situation of our Chapel to your Lordship particularly the Revnd. R Thomas of Bolton and the Reverend Mr Stainbank of Halton either of which places we presume to inform your Lordship are in a Tenfold more ruinous state.”*

No doubt they were exhilarated at putting this shot across the bows, but it would, in the end, be to no avail. John Edmondson’s father kept a copy of a later letter on this controversy from the Revered Proctor that he characterized as “*remarkable for its insolence*”, hardly words you would expect the Lord of the Manor to use about the village parson.<sup>3</sup>

The incumbent had written to inform Edmondson and the Church Wardens that work in the Chapel, resulting from the Bishop’s Commission, must stop for Passion Week but the Commission was still in force and would remain so. “*we must therefore be very cautious and not bring ourselves into trouble.... for my own part therefore, unless what you may think proper to do is done strictly agreeable to the commission I cannot interfere.*” “*I shall leave these hints for your consideration – Before I came to Caton – I always had the confidence and was treated with respect by my different wardens In return I paid them every possible attention and this, Sir, I should have equal pleasure in doing to you all – I will call upon you in the course of the week – When I hope a mutual wish to oblige and accommodate will influence us both.”*

He added that he had been sent a request for extra forms under the gallery to accommodate Sunday scholars, “*I received the inclosed note from Mr. Gibson last night – something like the following answer would I think be a proper compliment ‘The Chapel Wardens of Caton write with Mr. Proctor in assuring Mr. Gibson they will be at all times ready to oblige him.’ I have sent it for your approbation – As Mr. Gibson wishes for an early answer – you may, if you please, write it out and sign your name*” He enclosed a blank sheet of paper.

Insolent? – Relationships between the Established Church authorities and the parish were at a low ebb in Caton at this time, and not for the first or last time. Thus John Edmondson’s grandson would accuse the incumbent much later in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century of “popery”. What work was done in 1802 is hard to say but from the evidence of the wedding of John Edmundson’s daughter Harriet in 1858 it appears that the benches were not continued into the central aisle.

*“At a very early hour, the young friends of the bride were busy entwining flowers amidst wreaths of evergreens previously placed on the pillars of the old church, festooned in its ancient porch, twisted on the oak communion rail, or hung above the altar. Arches of the same kind were strung across the aisle, and nothing could be more beautiful than their effect when the bride, elegantly and simply dressed, and followed by her bridesmaids, made her appearance under them on her father’s arm.”*<sup>4</sup>

Evidence from some water colours of the church interior painted by Margaret Gregg shortly before the Chapel’s destruction suggests the reading desk and 3-decker pulpit were moved from a central location to the East end and one might guess that the flagstones were also attended to.<sup>5</sup>

Returning once more to 1863, the Reverend Christopherson recorded that “*a general Vestry meeting was held in Caton Church on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> day of*

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September 1863, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon" and added "*The Following Resolution (turn over*" (sic). It appears that the initial minutes of the meeting made just prior to, or at the beginning of the meeting for the resolution itself was recorded on the next page in a different hand and read;

*The following Resolution was Proposed by Mr. Gregson Seconded by Mr. Drinkwater.*

*It is the opinion of this meeting that it is desirable to take down the Church (tower excepted) and to rebuild & restore it in such manner as to afford greater convenience, comfort & accommodation and that application be forthwith made to the Lord Bishop of the Diocese for Faculty to carry into effect this Resolution.*

*This Resolution was carried with one dissentient"*

Each member of the council signed the page: Arthur Christopherson, Chairman, B. P. Gregson, John Drinkwater, Thomas Baynes, John Lambert, Thomas Lupton, John Stackhouse, Timothy Jackson, John Bibby, Thomas Townson, John Bradley, and Robert Williamson. The dissentient was John Edmondson, the Lord of the Manor, who it is clear from the minute book was distinctly unhappy, for, on the next page was recorded the fact that before this resolution was put to the meeting and passed, John Edmondson had proposed quite a different resolution;

*"Proposed by Mr. Edmondson that the roof be taken down & the walls stand and the roof be put back on again.*

*This Resolution when put to the meeting was not seconded but was supported by Mr. Edmondson alone.*

*The original Resolution, as on the preceding page, was then put and carried."*

Clearly he was not happy to see the chapel torn down and insisted that his dissent and counter proposal, which was put to the meeting first, was entered in the minute book. What is perhaps more surprising than his dissent and obvious pique is that he has no support among the other churchwardens. It is far from clear at this distance why he had no support, or indeed what, or who, had swayed them all to take this step in such apparent unanimity. One may suspect arm-twisting of one kind or another but the evidence is now wholly elusive.

Having broken the back of the dissent that seems to have erupted over the plans to demolish the chapel, those in favor once again moved quickly. The Diocese was immediately approached to issue faculty and a notice was duly issued on the Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> of September. The existing notice appears to be a fair copy of the notice which had to be displayed in the church, inviting anyone able to do so to give just cause in law why Faculty for leveling the Chapel and raising a new church should not be issued. The Bishop's notice began by outlining the present intentions, and recounted the meetings held and decisions taken, including the special meeting of the parishioners at which the fatal resolution to raze the chapel was passed. It mentioned the plans that had already been drawn up and went on to say that all Tablets erected in the old Chapel were to be carefully taken down, preserved, and put back up again in the new church. Thus these, at least, represent a fair record of such tablets as were placed on the walls of the old chapel during its lifetime.<sup>3</sup>

The Faculty required that any bodies exhumed during the leveling of the church or the laying of the foundations of the new church should be reverentially collected and re-interred and the "*gravestones or other monuments connected with*

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*such bodies restored or replaced*” It is not clear whether bodies were found and re-interred during the rebuilding but there had been discussions in the early part of the century on the costs of intra-mural interment and so there may well have been. The faculty notice also stated the intention “*to make use of and Apply such of the said Old Church as may be found fit and proper on and about the erection of the New Church and to Sell and disperse of such of the said materials as may be found unfit for the purposes aforesaid and apply the proceeds arising from such sale on and about the erection and completion of the said new church*”. What was understood by this promise to use “fit and proper” parts of the old chapel is not clear but only a minute fraction was incorporated in the new church.

The notice estimated the cost at four thousand pounds, to be raised by voluntary subscription and deposited at the Lancaster Banking Company in the names of Gregson, Baynes and Christopherson. John Edmondson refused to be involved and indeed he had already resigned from the Vestry council. The origin of the funds that the building committee proposed to use was not mentioned, nor was the fact that the ordinary parishioners could not possibly raise the sum required.

The provenance of this copy of the faculty notice is interesting.<sup>3</sup> On the first page, alongside a passage summarizing the first Vestry meeting held on the subject of the destruction of the chapel, “*...a Vestry meeting of the Parish, District, or Chapelry of Caton, was held...*” the word “*false*” has been inscribed and underscored in the margin. Probably it was done in pencil for it has later been erased but the indentation in the paper remains perfectly clear. Just below this, alongside a passage summarizing the calling of the second Vestry meeting, the word “*false*” is again written and underlined. Farther down the document, where the notice gives the date of the second meeting and the contents of the notice issued for calling it, the word “*false*” is again written in the margin and underlined. It is impossible to say who wrote these words or when they were written but we can be certain it was not Arthur Christopherson. It is tempting to see the hand of John Edmondson.

Messrs Christopherson, Gregson and Baynes must have come back hot foot from Manchester, that Thursday night, bearing the Bishop’s notice in order to get it posted up in Church the following morning, since the time appointed to hear any objections was the following Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> of September between 11am and midday. Such was the haste with which they wanted to proceed. Nothing further was recorded in the Vestry minute book until Faculty was received from the Bishop on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1863. The issue of Faculty gave them the green light to go ahead with their plans for the chapel. Christopherson’s note of this recorded that application for Faculty was made immediately after the Resolution had been carried i.e. on or shortly after the 18<sup>th</sup> of September meeting. He also recorded that;

*“On the 28<sup>th</sup> Oct notice was received that Mr. J. Harp had been instructed to oppose the issue of the Faculty, on behalf of Mr. Edmondson & Mr. Dodson of Littledale –*

*This opposition was withdrawn & the Faculty was decreed on the 10<sup>th</sup> Nov<sup>br</sup> 1863.”*

John Edmondson had found an ally in Mr. Dodson and was determined to oppose the destruction of the church by instructing legal counsel and taking his opposition to the Bishop. As the Lord of the Manor, it hardly seems likely he would

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have done this in the teeth of a united community in support of the project. No doubt there was buttonholing and lobbying on both sides. The fact that Faculty was not issued on the 31<sup>st</sup> as anticipated suggests that Edmondson and perhaps Dodson and their solicitor took the train down to Manchester that Saturday to appear before the Bishop's Surrogate to voice their objections. Why they withdrew their objections and who prevailed on them to do so is not known. Perhaps they had little chance of success as a minority of two among the churchwardens, regardless of the opinions of the wider community, and perhaps this was the tenor of the legal advice they received. Perhaps their concerns underlie the assurances about incorporating the body of the old church into the new. Whatever the case may be the modernizers won, and the issue of Faculty freed them to move in the demolition men.

John Edmondson's ally the Rev. John Dodson had been vicar of Cockerham from 1835 to 1849, but seceded from the Established Church, whereupon he retired to his estate in Littledale, and opened a Free Church (Congregationalist) in which he ministered for thirty years. He died in 1890. There is more than a clue here why successive incumbents of Caton Chapel had trouble with the parishioners of this traditional farming community. The Church was becoming increasingly focused on the magical mumbo-jumbo of the liturgy, and the form of the Chapel had to be bent to this end, hence the moving of the pulpit, in the ecclesiastical fracas of 1802, from its central position to the east end and the creation of a greatly enlarged chancel in the present, 1863 controversy.

## *Razing the Old, Raising the New*

Arthur Christopherson ticked off the last few months of the life of the ancestral Chapel of Caton in a few brief entries in the Vestry minute book. In December of 1863 he recorded the signing of contracts for the work with Robert Foxcroft of Caton, Mason, Charles Blades of Lancaster, Carpenter and Messrs. Willan and Cleminson of Lancaster, Plumbers and glaziers. A brief one line entry records the chapel's destruction.

*"In January 1864 the Works were commenced and on Feb 29<sup>th</sup> 1864 the taking down of the old Church was commenced."*

By Tuesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May the destruction was complete, the site cleared, and the new foundations laid out, for on that day the ceremony of laying the foundation stone for the new church was held. It was recorded in some detail in the two Lancaster newspapers of the day and give a glimpse of the powerful forces harnessed to foist a new church, emphasizing a high church style of worship, onto a community which probably had no wish for either.<sup>6,7</sup>

The Rev Christopherson, assisted by his curate T. M. Remington, conducted the ceremony. Prayers were offered up based on a text from the obscure Old Testament book of Haggai – *"Build the house, and I will take pleasure in it; and I will be glorified."* The Reverend Christopherson and his curate conducted the service in prayer and then called on the guest of honour, Mrs. Adam Hodgson, to lay the foundation stone:

*"I have much pleasure in requesting that you will lay this stone today – the foundation of one of the pillars of the house of the Lord. I know the deep interest*

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*which you yourself have ever taken in this work since it was first commenced, and especially I remember the deep interest that your lamented husband took in the work and which he often expressed to myself. His friends and yours have kindly and liberally assisted us in carrying out this great work, and I will at once express the pleasure I feel in handing you these tools in order that you may lay the foundation stone of this building”.*

At this point a bottle was placed inside the stone, containing ten silver and copper coins, a parchment, on which was written two sentences from the Scriptures, the date May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1864, and the name of the lady who performed the ceremony, Emily Hodgson; along with the names of the incumbent, the curate, churchwardens, architect and contractors.

*“The rev. gentleman then handed a very handsome silver trowel and oak mallet to Mrs. Hodgson. The trowel was most liberally presented by Mr. C. Blades, one of the contractors, and the mallet was made from the old oak of the church. A bed of mortar was then spread to receive the stone, and was “finished off” by Mrs. Hodgson with the silver trowel. The stone was lowered, tapped into its proper position by Mrs. Hodgson with the mallet, and that lady having assured herself by testing the surface of the stone with a spirit level that it had been laid satisfactorily, another prayer was offered, and the proceedings terminated.”*

Mrs. Hodgson then said – *“In the faith of Jesus Christ, I lay this foundation stone of a church to be built on this hallowed place where we and our fathers have worshipped; to be called by the name of the blessed Apostle, St Paul, and to be forever dedicated to the service of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Amen.”* After which prayer was again offered and the hymn – *“This Stone to Thee in faith we lay,”* was sung and the ceremony concluded with the blessing.

The reporters were well briefed by the building committee and the architect was on hand to set them straight should they be in any doubt. One reporter said;

*“The church, which has lately been taken down, appears to have been rebuilt about 200 years ago, and contains no features of architectural interest, except the Norman doorway, which is the remnant of a church of much earlier period. Other moulded stones apparently of the same date which have been found in the walls show that at one time a handsome church existed here. The walls of the last church were very poorly built, and the builders had barbarously mutilated and used as common stones many memorial stones of former ages, marked with crosses and other emblems. The condition of the old walls amply justifies the decision of the parishioners to rebuild them from the foundation.”*

In the same spirit the other reporter delivered his received wisdom,

*There must therefore have been a church at Caton for many hundreds of years, and as the church could hardly have been needed had there not been a moderate congregation, this is a fair evidence of the antiquity of the village.*

*The old church – the one just destroyed – was built some two hundred or two hundred and fifty years ago. It was by no means a specimen of architectural beauty – on the contrary it was not a sightly object, and but for the extrinsic interest derived from the Norman gateway, it possessed no attraction of its own as a building. Although there were no remarkable points about it of a positive nature, there was a negative one which rendered it extremely inconvenient and uncomfortable – it was in very bad repair, and its condition in this respect could not*

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*be improved to any great extent as it was so badly built that repairs and alterations were constantly needed.*

From the reporters we learn how the destruction of the chapel and the rebuilding of the church have been financed.

*Some time ago a gentleman who had formerly been connected with the neighbourhood, Mr. Adam Hodgson, came to reside near Caton from Liverpool. It had previously been determined to rebuild the church, and he took considerable interest in the proposed undertaking, but his death unfortunately prevented him from seeing it carried out. At his death, however, the change was actively inaugurated by a subscription list to defray the anticipated cost - £2,400. Mr. Hodgson, it should be said was a gentleman possessing many good qualities, and had earned for himself the respect and esteem of all who knew him. When the subscription list was in progress, therefore, a large number of the friends who had known Mr. Hodgson in Liverpool co-operated heartily with the parishioners of Caton in subscribing for the new church, as a testimony of the great regard they had felt for the deceased gentleman.*

*As far back as the memory of old people can reach, great alterations and improvements have been talked of but never hitherto accomplished. ... Towards the accomplishing of this object, the friends of the late Adam Hodgson, Esq., of Liverpool, who died at Scarthwaite, near Caton, in December, 1862, have largely contributed. Mr. Hodgson had always taken a deep interest in Caton, and was ever ready to assist in every useful work there, and he had frequently expressed his wish to help in restoring or rebuilding the Old Church. His friends thought that to unite with the parishioners in the attainment of this object, which he had so much at heart, would be a fitting testimony of their personal affection and a commemoration of his invaluable services to the church.*

For the great and the good at the ceremony, now that it was over, it was time for lunch, which was probably held at B. P. Gregson's house, The Willows in Townend. No doubt there was a fair stream of carriages bearing parson's, landowners, employers and their families, plus a couple of newspaper men, trundling back down the hill through the village of Brookhouse, through the green fields separating Brookhouse from Townend to pull up at Caton Hall. This anyway seems a likely scenario since one of the reporters mentions, in discussing the antiquity of the village, a Roman milestone found in Artlebeck in 1803. He can only have seen this at Bryan Padgett Gregson's house.<sup>8</sup>

For the forty or so workmen lately employed destroying the chapel and soon to commence work on the new structure Mrs. Hodgson hosted a dinner in the schoolroom, just around the corner, in New Street, later that evening "*and it need scarcely be added that ample justice was done to the good things provided.*"

In October Christopherson was able to triumphantly record in the Vestry Minute Book the opening and consecration of his new and more convenient edifice;

*"The work was carried on successfully and the new Church was consecrated by the Bishop of Manchester on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1865.*

*As no name could ever be found connected with the old Church, the new Church was dedicated to the service and Glory of God, under the name of St Paul, by which name it is henceforth to be known and distinguished."*

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Adams's wife, Emily Hodgson seems to have taken particular interest in the naming of the church and some effort was put into trying to find the original dedication of the chapel which no-one seems to have known. Already by early July of 1863 she had received a reply from an ecclesiastical authority in Amersham mooting a number of different approaches, including searching various old ecclesiastical texts and attempting to establish the date of the Parish feast day. The first difficulty was that the chapel had been in several different dioceses at various times including, Lichfield, Chester and Manchester. This would mean searching the Cathedral Libraries of three dioceses. One possibility was to use the date of the Parish feast in conjunction with a "list of the Romish saints" – "*their almost innumerable saints.*" However, if the feast day was at Michaelmas nothing would be established as Henry VIII ordered all parish feast days to be held on that day. Only if the order had been disobeyed would the feast day be useful as the ancient practice was to hold the feast on the Sunday following the saint's day. Presumably this was not a productive line of enquiry. A reference was found in the writings of the antiquary Leland that the Bishop of Durham had given the village of Catton, or Ketton, to the church of St Cuthbert, thus it was possible it would have taken that name. However, whether this referred to Caton or to Catton in Yorkshire could not be distinguished. Dugdale's *Monasticon Anglicanum* was held out as a hope, but dashed because Lancaster was an alien priory established as a cell of the Benedictine Abbey of St Martin of Seez in Normandy and the deeds were thought therefore to be at Rome. The search continued until at least the end of October 1863 when a reply in the negative was received from the Chetham Library in Manchester as the result of their enquiries.<sup>3</sup>

The consecration of the church was recorded in Lancaster's newspapers but there was little new to add to the story. The reporter from the *Lancaster Gazette* had an interesting and incorrect variant on the Adam Hodgson story and reported that he had subscribed almost half the amount required to build the church before his decease. Over 120 people attended the service from Lancaster in addition to those from more distant parts, and every seat in the new church was occupied. There was a murder of parsons present, nearly every vicar and incumbent for miles around turned out for the occasion. Of the great and the good, Mr. John Greg, Mr. B. P. Gregson, and Mr. Fenwick the local M. P. were all present. The text was again taken from the book of Haggai –there must be nothing else suitable in *The Book*. A collection of £96 was taken, prints of the architect's drawings of the church were on sale, and one reporter let slip that there was still a debt remaining upon the building.<sup>9,10</sup>

The dimensions of the new Church were described in the *Lancaster Gazette* after the ceremony.

*The plan will consist of a nave, 66 feet long and 16 feet 6 inches wide, divided from north and south aisles 66 feet long and 12 feet 6 inches wide, by an arcade of four arches of moulded stonework supporting the clerestory; total height of nave from floor to ridge of roof, 34 feet; total width of church 46 feet outside measurement ; and total length, 105 feet; chancel 33 feet long and 16 feet wide, with north and south aisles, and 30 feet to ridge of roof. The old tower will remain, but will be opened to the church by an arch.*

## *And the Childrens Teeth are Set on Edge*

The account in the Lancaster Guardian hardly differed from the Gazette, and there must have been a handout or a briefing by the architect, perhaps around a display of his plans. Certainly there was an architectural drawing on sale to raise additional funds. The dimensions of the new church of 105 feet by 46 feet compared to those of the old chapel of about 90 feet by 40 feet. Thus some 6 feet were added to the width to provide north and south aisles and some 15 feet to the length and the new pillars along these aisles now supported a clerestory. The small increase in width allowed the addition of extra seating in the north and south aisles where previously box pews had lined the walls. However, there was also a loss of seating as the old chapel had previously included a gallery at the rear of the chapel, which was not replicated in the new church.

The appearance of the old Chapel of Caton is not known in any great detail, there seem to be no extant photographs, but the architect E. G. Paley drew up a ground plan of the Chapel before commencing its destruction noting the disposition of the various monuments then in the Church.<sup>3</sup> In addition there is a remarkable series of watercolours painted by Margaret Greg, John Greg's daughter, giving views of the interior of the Chapel, one of which shows the three-decker pulpit which was replaced with a more modern single-decker made from oak from the Chapel. Finally there is a watercolour, which may also be by Margaret Greg, but the style appears to be different, although it could be a youthful work, which depicts the exterior of the old Chapel viewed roughly from the south.<sup>5</sup>

As to the remains of the ancient chapel, of which very little was re-used in the building of the new church, little can be told from the records. None of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century windows or arched entrances were used in the new church. A single Norman Arch was incorporated semi-decoratively, along with some medieval grave markers, and the communion rail, lectern and pulpit were fashioned from the old oak of the chapel for which latter two items Mrs Hodgson paid £120. Another entry in the list of contributions suggests that the old materials of the chapel were sold for the princely sum of £2 15s. Considering the carting costs for the enterprise amounted to £111 18s 6d, including over £62 to one firm of carters and over £42 for extra labourers and carters this may not be so surprising. Thus the stone, roof tiles and medieval windows did not travel very far, but where the arched medieval doorways went is anyone's guess.

The mason, Robert Foxcroft, bought the old materials. He was by far the biggest contractor on site being paid £1235 10s 2d for his work, but this sum would have included materials and labour.<sup>3</sup> In February 1865 Henry Morpeth, a farmer from Hornby, agreed to sell a parcel of land lying between the Wesleyan Chapel, on the east side of Brookhouse Road, and the Land adjoining the Station or New Inn. It was sold to the trustees of the Loyal Lune Lodge, Branch No 420, of the Independent Order of Oddfellows of the Manchester Unity. The land was staked out and in use as a garden on ground belonging to the Inn; it may have been used by the Oddfellows as an allotment as the society held its meetings in the Inn. However, their intention was to use the land for a meeting house, a decision taken in December 1864. However in May 1865 they decided to sell almost three quarters of the plot to Robert Foxcroft making a loss of around 10% compared to what they had paid.<sup>11</sup>

## *The Razing of Caton Chapel*

Foxcroft borrowed £400 in September 1865 from the John of Gaunt Benefit Building Society using the land as surety, along with any dwellings he intended to build, plus four shares he held in the society. In December he borrowed a further sum of £200 and pledged a further two shares. In June 1866 he borrowed a further £155 on the property and pledged a further one and a half shares. In December 1866 he pledged the same property as security for his accounts with the Lancaster Banking Company, whilst declaring the interest of the John of Gaunt Building Society. On this plot Robert Foxcroft built two substantial cottages using the old stone from Caton Chapel as may easily be seen from the arched medieval windows. In May of 1868 the Oddfellows decided to sell the remainder of the plot to Foxcroft and he raised a further mortgage of £200 from the Second Lancaster and District Mutual Benefit Building Society and built stables with workshops or quarters above, linked to the cottages by an arched carriageway.

Between March 1869 and August 1870 Robert Foxcroft defaulted on payments on one or more of these mortgages. The Lancaster Banking Company took possession and paid off the other mortgagees. Finally the bank sold the whole to James Cragg in April 1875 for £740. The houses were now in the occupation of Robert Foxcroft and James Fell and the stable was being converted into a dwelling house and shop. And that is where Caton Chapel, now known as Vale Cottage, stands today, its appearance relatively unchanged since that time.

## *Mammon*

It is almost impossible to know how the inhabitants of Caton divided over the issue of tearing down the ancient chapel and rebuilding the church in a Victorian style. Little detail is available about the people involved, their land holdings, or their relationships. Although there is clear evidence of some dissension the majority of the churchwardens seem to have been in favor of the project. The traditional comfortable account that the chapel was in great need of repair seems to be just that, comfortable words. Nevertheless, the origin of the project to rebuild Caton chapel can be ascertained, as can the source of the money to finance it.

The cost of improving Caton Church was estimated at about four thousand pounds but in the end it came in under budget at £3085 : 8s : 9d. Even this included some £203: 15s for the purchase of land to extend the burial ground, for which the owners were also compensated with equivalent land owned by the township.<sup>3</sup> The accounts for the fundraising and building were prepared and printed up in December of 1867. These show £1733 : 9s : 8d was raised by Messrs Christopherson, Gregson and Baynes, of the fund raising and building committee, about 56% of the final cost. Of this about £1350 can be attributed to parishioners, since in many cases the place of residence of the donor is also given. The non-parishioner donors came from all over the country, some from near Kendal or Lancaster, some from greater distances such as Evesham or Clifton. Many probably had some connection with the parish, of the women, some may have moved away to marry, or have been married to someone from the Parish, but they are not parishioners in either case. Of the funds attributable to the generosity of the parishioners, about £385 came from various members of the Gregson family including £105 from Bryan Padgett Gregson. The

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Incumbent and his wife, Mr. & Mrs. Christopherson, raised just under £230. Mrs. Hodgson, from Scarthwaite, gave £170, John Greg gave £100. Seen in this light the ordinary parishioners contributed only about £465 to the rebuilding fund and even this may be inflated by lack of knowledge of the background of the contributors. This was only about 15% of the total cost.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of the crucial Vestry vote to build a new church the following churchwardens were ranged against John Edmondson; Arthur Christopherson (the Chairman), B. P. Gregson, John Drinkwater, Thomas Baynes, John Lambert, Thomas Lupton, John Stackhouse, Timothy Jackson, John Bibby, Thomas Townson, John Bradley, and Robert Williamson. The sizeable contributions of the Christophersons and the Gregsons have already been mentioned. Of the churchwardens John Drinkwater gave £50, John Lambert gave £10, and John Bradley gave just £1. John Edmondson gave nothing in cash but donated the labour to have the extra graveyard ground walled around – presumably he felt that extra accommodation of this nature was a real need in contrast to the extra accommodation that was to be provided in the new church.

The other churchwardens cannot be shown to have given a single penny piece; although it is true that their contributions could be hidden amongst those given by the Christophersons or collected during the Consecration Service and so on. An extra fund was raised for painting the church, for furniture, and for standard lamps and choir benches. The amount raised came to almost £135. The Christophersons contributed over £42, and the Gregsons also contributed strongly. John Edmondson was prepared to give £6 to this fund, and even Thomas Baynes could be persuaded to part with ten bob. Mrs. Drinkwater gave a pound along with the same combined amount from Mr. & Mrs. Lambert. There is no sign that any of the other churchwardens contributed to this fund either.

Thus it remains a mystery how all the other churchwardens were brought along. A few men, like John Drinkwater and John Lambert, seem to have been enthusiastic but the enthusiasm of the remainder did not seem to run as far as parting with hard cash. It appears from this point of view they were merely compliant, but it has to be remembered that these were hard times in Lancashire. But why they sided, to a man, with the Incumbent and with B.P Gregson and John Greg, rather than with John Edmondson is now probably impossible to say.

### ***The Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund.***

The remainder of the cost, £1351.19s.1d, about 44% of the total, was raised from contributions to the Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund, mentioned in the press reports. Adam Hodgson had recently retired from an active life as a director of the Bank of Liverpool, a partner in the cotton brokerage of Hodgson & Riley, and numerous directorships and advisory positions in other companies. He died in December 1862 aged 74 at Scarthwaite.<sup>12</sup>

It is the view from Scarthwaite which brings Caton such fame as it enjoys. Scarthwaite lies on a bend in the river known as the Crook of Lune about 4 miles north east of Lancaster. Viewed from this rocky outcrop the valley of the Lune opens out into a level flood plain bounded to the north by the high banks of Burton

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Wood and to the south by the fells of Caton Moor. In the distance can be seen the high Pennine hills dominated by Whernside and the flat top of Ingleborough Hill. The scene was brought to the attention of the romantically curious by a letter from the poet Gray, written to Dr. Wharton, his travelling companion, who was laid up in Brough with an attack of asthma.

*“The scene opens just 3 miles from Lancaster. To see the view in perfection you must go into a field on the left. Here Ingleborough, behind a variety of lesser mountains, makes the background of the prospect: on each hand, up the middle distance, rise two sloping hills, the left clothed with thick woods, the right with variegated rock and herbage; between them in the richest of valleys the Lune serpentines for many a mile, and comes forth ample and clear through a well-wooded and richly-pastured foreground. Every feature which constitutes a perfect landscape of the extensive sort is here not only boldly marked, but also in its best position.”*<sup>13</sup>

The view is also reputed to have been praised by the Faerie Queen herself as one of the finest views in her dominions and, long before it was known as “Grays Station” or “Grays Seat”, it was known as “The Queen’s Brow” and close by lies a spot known as “Queens Well”. The scene is also well known from a water colour painted by J.M.W. Turner ‘The Crook of Lune looking towards Hornby Castle’. The painting was commissioned as part of a publishing scheme in which the already famous painter would execute 120 watercolours for engraving as illustrations for a “History of Richmondshire”, for which he was to be paid £3000. Unfortunately, 1816 – ‘eighteen hundred and froze to death’ - was ‘the year without a summer’ caused by the eruption of Mount Tambora on the Island of Sumbawa in the Dutch East Indies and only twenty paintings were completed when the project collapsed.<sup>14</sup> The weather was not the sole culprit, there was a distinct lack of enthusiasm for the antiquarian bent of the project. In the foreground of Turner’s painting is a workman carrying a pickaxe, perhaps because the site was a quarry, but it has been seen as a reference to the changing nature of the village.<sup>15</sup> Iron founding, flax spinning and cotton spinning were already established in the village when Turner painted the scene. Just over twenty years later the Director of the Bank of Liverpool bought Scarthwaite, and its celebrated ‘view’, so strongly associated with the romantic movement of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. There he built himself a fine country house, the spot apparently selected “under the auspices of Mr. Gilpin and Sir John Nasmyth”.<sup>16</sup>

Adam Hodgson, the confidential director of the Bank of Liverpool, almost certainly acquired Scarthwaite when the estate of John Dockray came up for sale in November 1839, since the designers William Sawrey Gilpin and Alexander Nasmyth died in 1843 and 1840 respectively. The sale notices described the property as “*that most desirable and beautiful estate called Scarthwaite, containing 121 acres of rich arable, meadow, pasture and woodland within a ring fence.*” It was to be offered in one or more lots to be determined at the time of the sale. Adam Hodgson took the bulk of the estate, if not the whole, including the neighbouring farm of Cornclose or Three-Mile-House “*an excellent Grazing or Milch Farm... containing about 40 acres of Excellent Meadow and Pasture*”.<sup>17</sup>

The Land Agent, Jonathan Binns, whose father will later appear briefly in the story, was unstinting in his praise of the estate’s virtues; “*For a residence it is every*

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way most desirable, being justly celebrated for scenery, surpassing any other in the Vale of Lune. The Estate is pleasantly elevated, and commands the whole extent of the beautiful Vale and winding course of the river, and its richly wooded and varied banks as far as Hornby Castle, terminated in the distance by the noble and characteristic mountains of Ingleborough and Wharfedale.”

“This interesting spot has acquired a well-merited celebrity from the pen of West and other tourists; it is a place from which nearly all the views of the vale have been taken, and it is thus noted in the correspondence of the poet Gray....

“The sportsman, as well as the admirer of nature, may here luxuriate in amusement, the river abounding with fish, and the neighbourhood with game. The opportunity of purchasing a property more eligible, uniting more beauties and advantages, seldom or never offers. As railway communication between Lancaster and all parts of the Kingdom will shortly be established, annihilating distance, a residence in the country will be compatible with the bustle and activity of the town.”

The house was described in *A Topographical Description of England* published in 1848.<sup>18</sup> “*Scarthwaite, on the bank of the Lune, is the seat of Adam Hodgson, Esq., commanding the whole extent of the vale, and the winding course of the river; the precise spot selected by Mr. Hodgson for his house and terrace... has long been distinguished as ‘Gray’s Station,’ and shares in all the exquisite scenery that gives celebrity to the vale.*” The gardens were laid out by Edward Kemp, a leading Victorian park and garden designer. Kemp began as an apprentice at Chatsworth under Joseph Paxton, the designer of the Crystal Palace. Paxton laid out Birkenhead Park between 1842 and 1845 and Kemp was appointed head gardener in 1843 and remained so for the next 40 years. Scarthwaite is described in his book *‘How to Lay Out a Garden’* published in 1850.<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately Kemp only described the entrance and lodge. He did not describe the house, most of which has since been demolished and only the extension, built by Adam Hodgson on his retirement from business in 1859, now remains.

Kemp describes Scarthwaite as “*an exceedingly delightful place in the valley of the Lune, about three miles above Lancaster, which I arranged for Adam Hodgson, Esq., of Liverpool. It is called Scarthwaite, and the house is planted on the spot which has been aptly described by the poet Gray as presenting ‘one of the best afternoon views in England ... On the north side, within the estate, is a wooded eminence, scarred with rock, and broken by an old quarry. And the place has had the advantage, in the disposal of its woods, of artists no less distinguished than Mr. Gilpin and Sir John Nasmyth.*”

“*The entrance is in the bay of a curve in the high road, and the lodge is a successful production, in the cottage Gothic style, of Mr. H. P. Homer, of Liverpool. It is proposed to erect low walls between the piers shown in the wing fences, and to put a low iron fence, composed of two or three strong horizontal bars, with merely the necessary uprights at intervals, on the top of these walls. The drive, which is only between 300 and 400 yards long, will be kept entirely within the enclosure of the dressed grounds.*” It rather sounds as if, at the time of writing, it was a work in progress.

H. P. Homer was a leading Liverpool architect of the time and a vice-president of the Liverpool Architectural and Archaeological Society. His work included designs for a number of schools and in 1849 he won first prize in a competition to

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design a new lay out of the streets of Liverpool with his theme of *Rus in Urbe* whose novelty was the inclusion of a great many parks and open spaces.<sup>20</sup>

When Scarthwaite was sold after the death of Adam Hodgson's wife in 1875 the house was briefly described as well arranged and convenient consisting of; Entrance Hall, Dining, Drawing and Business Rooms, Library, and excellent Offices on the ground floor, and on the chamber floor 10 Bedrooms, beside Dressing Rooms, and Bath Room. Cellars, Larder, Dairy, &c., are in the basement. It stands in the middle of well-wooded and tastefully laid-out grounds, comprising together with Gardens 26 acres. Stables, Coach-house, and Gatekeeper's Lodge, are in the grounds.<sup>21</sup>

Adam Hodgson, the Liverpool bank director who bought Scarthwaite was John Greg's cousin on his mother's side. Adam Hodgson's mother Elizabeth was the eldest of the three daughters of Adam and Elizabeth Lightbody of Liverpool. John Greg's mother, Hannah Lightbody was their youngest daughter who married Samuel Greg, the famous Cotton spinner and merchant of Manchester.<sup>21</sup> Adam Hodgson was also more distantly related to Bryan Padgett Gregson. Adam Hodgson's father was Thomas Hodgson, his cousin, Isabella, had married Bryan Padgett who was B. P. Gregson's grandfather.<sup>2</sup> They were also close neighbours and, of course 'quality'; B.P. Gregson's brother, Samuel was the M.P. for Lancaster.

There were roughly seventy contributors to the Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund who gave donations varying from £150 to 10 shillings. The largest contributor was a Mrs. Hodgson of Clifton. She was probably the widow of Adam's elder brother Isaac. The Reverend George Townshend Fox of Durham gave, as will be seen, the highly significant sum of £100. The M.P. Thomas Berry Horsfall also gave £100. He was the son of the Liverpool merchant Charles Horsfall. Thomas Darnley Anderson, of the Liverpool merchants Glen and Anderson, brother-in-law of T. B. Horsfall, and Mayor of Liverpool in 1859 gave £100. He retired to Waverly Abbey, Farnham in Surrey and died in 1875 leaving an estate of £250,000. He had paid for the building of Emmanuel Church in West Derby Road at a cost of £15,000 and had also paid for the Schools attached to St George's Church, Everton and Christ Church, Everton. His brother George Henry Horsfall gave £20. Edward Moon contributed £100. He was the son of Richard Moon, chairman of the LNWR.

There was another Moon who gave £10; this was William Moon who invented a raised alphabet for assisting the blind to read and who promoted Societies for the Home Teaching of the Blind of which Adam Hodgson was a great supporter.

Sir Mark Wilks Collet, who the following year became a director of the Bank of England, contributed £50. Collet, after early business difficulties, particularly during the credit crisis of 1837, became for some years a sub-manager at the Bank of Liverpool on a salary of £500 pa before joining the firm of J.W. Cater & Collet & Co. His former partner in the Liverpool & London merchant house, J.W. Cater also gave £25. Collet later joined the much larger concern of Brown & Shipley which was one of the largest cotton importers from the American Deep South. The head of that firm, Sir William Brown, gave £10.

The Rev. T. P. A. Champneys gave £20.10s. He was Adam Hodgson's brother in law since Hodgson married Emily Catherine Champneys, the daughter of the Rector of Badworth in Yorkshire. Dudley Ryder gave £20; He was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Harrowby, the former Lord Sandon in his father's lifetime, and was the M.P. for

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Liverpool from 1831 to 1847 when he entered the Lords. William Rathbone, the famous Liverpool social reformer, gave £20; he was another of Adam Hodgson's cousins through Rathbone's marriage to Elizabeth Greg, John Greg's sister, and in whose family firm Adam Hodgson had begun his commercial career, trading to the United States and the Baltic as Hodgson, Rathbone & Co in the timber and cotton trades. His son, William Rathbone junior also gave £10.

An S. Martin gave £20; he was probably the Evangelical Congregationalist minister and popular lecturer Samuel Martin who was one of the first vice-presidents of the YMCA. G. Pritt, the head of a Liverpool law firm gave 15 gns. Thomas Bouch, an Africa and West India Merchant, gave £10. Edward Cropper, the son of James Cropper, the Cotton Broker and noted Slavery Abolitionist, and who had married Zachary Macaulay's daughter, gave £10. David Hodgson, who was not related to Adam Hodgson, also gave £10 and although then retired and living in Carlisle, was a former Liverpool councilor and Mayor (1845) and a considerable supporter of the Established Church. Also donating £10 was Charles Inman, son of Charles Inman, who was at one time a partner in the carriers Pickfords & Co, but subsequently a managing director of the Bank of Liverpool.

Others who contributed £10 included his cousin Phillip Henry Fletcher, G. H. Lawrence a Liverpool merchant, son of Charles Lawrence, chairman of the Liverpool to Manchester Railroad, and a councilor and Mayor in 1846. His wife was Jane Earle sister of the merchant William Earle, one of his brothers, Charles Washington, was the incumbent of St Luke's, the gift of which was in the Lawrence family, and another, who also gave £10, was a major general in the Rifles. Samuel Smith who was for many years the manger of the Bank of Liverpool and a prominent Liverpool philanthropist gave £10. Charles Groves, who gave £10, was born in London, made a moderate fortune in Calcutta before returning to Liverpool where he became first an agent for the New British Iron Company and then entered into a partnership in the Royal Exchange Assurance Company. He was also a director of the Liverpool Commercial Bank and the Millom Iron Company. He was active in the church building movement of the Church of England and treasurer of the Chester Diocesan Church Building Society. It is said he devoted almost the whole of his income to variously endowing churches and other church charities.

James Lister, who gave £10, was a founder and manager of the Liverpool Union Bank, and a director of the Liverpool Gas Company. The son of a Baptist minister he was himself a member of the Church of England and involved in numerous charitable works such as the Institute for the Blind. The Reverend Hugh McNeile who gave £10 was known as the Lion of St Jude's whilst the incumbent of that parish. He was a potent Evangelical Christian preacher and will feature large in the story at a later time. Major H. L. Powys-Keck (£10) of the Horse Guards was of a landed family from Leicester and was perhaps known to Adam Hodgson through his cousin John Pares. He was active in the Church temperance movement and The Soldiers Daughters Home.

Charles Turner M. P., who gave £10, was born in Hull, joined the London Stock Exchange, travelled to North and South America and India, and then joined Sands, Turner & Co in Liverpool, East India merchants. He was elected to the Liverpool Council in 1850 but took little part but nevertheless was a member of the Docks Committee and chairman from 1851 to 1857 and a member of the Mersey

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Docks and Harbour Board from 1857 to 1875 and chairman 1859-1861. He was elected member for Liverpool in the corrupt election of 1852 and unseated a few months later on petition. He was an Old School, Church and State Tory the founder and a past chairman of the Royal Insurance Company and on the board of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company.

William Robertson Sandbach (£10) was a shareholder in the Bank of Liverpool and a Liverpool merchant. He was a relative of Henry R. Sanbach, the president of the Roscoe Club, and husband of William Roscoe's granddaughter.

The Rev. Ashton Ellis (£5), vicar of Huyton for 56 years, and who, in conjunction with the Earl of Derby, endowed a new church at Roby and gave £1000 to endow a new church at Whiston. Along with Adam Hodgson he was a prominent supporter of the Chester Diocesan Church Building Society and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Edward Robert Bickersteth (£5) a prominent Liverpool surgeon, was brother of the Bishop of Ripon and son of the rector of Sapcote in Leicester and related by marriage to Hodgson through the Pares family of Leicester. Christopher Bushell (£5) made a fortune as a merchant and broker in the wine and spirit trade, particularly it is said, at the time of the Crimean War. He was a prominent churchman, a member of the Church Building Association, a staunch Tory, and a leading light in establishing the Liverpool Education Board and University College, Liverpool.

The Rev. Fielding Ould (£1) was for ten years incumbent of Christ's Church, Liverpool and from 1855 the rector of Tattenhall, Cheshire. Along with the Rev. Hugh McNiele, he was the soul, if not the heart, of ultra-Tory politics in Liverpool.

It would tax the patience to go on in this vein but truly the Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund was a roll call of the great and the good of Liverpool. Adam Hodgson had made many friends and contacts through his large and respected cotton brokerage trading on the Liverpool Exchange. He had been a founder of the Bank of Liverpool and for many years its managing director as well as a founding director of the Liverpool to Manchester Railroad. Arguably the contributions of Greg and Gregson, not to mention that of Adam Hodgson's wife, could easily have been accounted under the Adam Hodgson memorial fund, instead they were placed on the parishioners account. Perhaps the Adam Hodgson fund was not so munificent as anticipated, after all, when old men die many of their friends have preceded them. To the modern eye the sums donated seem small. However, all the contributors were involved in the widespread Victorian habit of philanthropy and donated to many different causes. Estimating relative value between then and now is not straightforward but a sum of £10 using an RPI inflator would be worth about £750 today or using a GDP inflator almost £950. The present day cost of the project to rebuild Caton chapel would have been about £300,000.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless the question remains as to why it was that this memorial fund should be established in Caton to fund the building of a new church? The immediate answer to this question is rather surprising and is to be found in Adam Hodgson's will.<sup>23</sup>

Adam Hodgson's last will and testament depicts a man of a meticulous nature, as befits a bank director, but also a man of considerable piety with strong religious convictions, which seem to go beyond the usual acknowledgements to the Maker at the contemplation of a trying time to come. It begins;

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*I Adam Hodgson of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster Esquire being mindful of my mortality do this Thirteenth day of April One thousand eight hundred and sixty one make my last Will and Testament as follows. First I so commit my body to the earth whereof it is - desiring it to be decently and privately buried in the Church yard of Caton if I shall die within reasonable distance thereof and if not then in the Church yard of the Parish wherein I shall happen to die as quietly and with as little expense as may be. My Soul and Spirit trusting in God's infinite mercy for Christ's sake I recommend into the hands of God the Father who created me the Son who redeemed me and the Holy Ghost who sanctified all the people of God. I humbly confide in the power of Christ's Resurrection and that through the Grace of Christ my Saviour my body soul and spirit may be presented blameless before the presence of Almighty God Amen.*

Adam Hodgson's will, as it had to do, turned to practical matters, and the very next sentence explains all our trouble; why it was that 'The Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund' was raised.

*I leave to my friend the Reverend George Townsend Fox of Durham the sum of fifty pounds to be applied by him to some little memento of a glowing and devoted Christian friendship matured by affection and confidential intercourse during a period of more than thirty years.*

This answer leaves a host of questions begging, but at least it can now be understood why the Reverend Fox contributed exactly £100 to the 'Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund.' Adam's 50 and his 50 can, with a little zealous application, become a new church, quite some little memento!

Before tackling the begging questions, and the main point of the story, a quick Defoeian aside; there is not much to be gained from discussing the detailed bequests that Adam Hodgson makes to his wife and surviving 7 children. His wealth at probate was not huge, under £35,000, though later revised upwards, and may be testimony to a life of munificent philanthropy. It is also apparent that Adam Hodgson was redecorating his home, Scarthwaite, at the time of its writing and was concerned about its progress when he died. So he made detailed provision for the money to be available to finish the work in the event of his death, which rather depended upon exactly when he died and how far the work had progressed. He had recently built an extension to Scarthwaite, probably so that his extensive family could more conveniently visit. No doubt the new extension made the original décor of the main house look shabby. The extension is dated 1858 and bears, over the door, his initials and those of his wife, along with his crest, a dove bearing an olive branch. This extension is now all that remains of his house, the original main building has been demolished and his extensive and expensively landscaped grounds have been turned into a caravan park!

The next question; who was the Rev. G. T. Fox and why did he choose to raise the "Adam Hodgson Memorial Fund"? George Townshend Fox was the incumbent of St Nicholas' Church in Durham and was the third son of a prosperous family of merchants and shippers. He was an Evangelical Christian committed to parish work and the work of the Church Missionary Society. He was considered a charismatic preacher in his day with a relaxed informal style, able to draw sizeable congregations to hear him speak and many of his sermons were published.<sup>24</sup>

## *The Razing of Caton Chapel*

In 1779 HMS Speedwell, Lt William Henry Fox commanding, docked in Tyneside on pressgang duties. Here he met 16 year old Catherine Paine who was attending boarding school and shortly afterwards they were married over the blacksmith's anvil in Gretna Green. The couple remarried in Jarrow later and lived in Dockray Square, North Shields. In 1781 George Townshend Fox was born and in 1783 Anne Fox. Shortly afterwards Lt Fox fell off the gangplank of his ship and died. Catherine moved to Westoe and later remarried Thomas Robinson a rope manufacturer of South Shields.

Catherine's son George Townshend Fox (1781-1851) was apprenticed rope-maker in his stepfather's business. During his life he pursued numerous business interests, but principally a ropery at Jarrow Slake. In 1807 he married Anne Stote Crofton, only daughter of a South Shields Ship owner and heiress to property at Harton. He took an active part in public affairs, was the first president of the South Shields Mechanics Institute, a captain of the South Shields Loyal Volunteers, a member of the Newcastle upon Tyne Society of Antiquaries, a member of the Linnaean Society and the Zoological Society. He provided the £500 required to purchase the Wycliffe Museum. George Townshend Fox had six sons and two daughters. Of the daughters Isabella married Henry Hayne in 1846, Her Majesty's commissary judge in Brazil. Of the sons, William Fox (1812-1913), the fourth son, emigrated to Wellington, New Zealand buying an estate in the Wanganui district which he called Westoe. He divided the estate into plots for sale with deferred payment becoming a 'private colonist'. He visited England as an Honorary Delegate for the Province of Wellington in pursuance of a free constitution for the colony, which was granted in 1852. After visiting the US and Canada he returned to New Zealand in 1853. He was four times premier of New Zealand and played an active part in subduing the Maori's during the Maori Wars.

The seventh child of George Townshend Fox was Henry Watson Fox (1817-1848) who went to India as a Church Missionary in 1840. Henry Watson Fox had briefly attended Durham Grammar before attending Rugby under Matthew Arnold. His education was completed at Wadham College, Oxford.<sup>25</sup> At Wadham, Henry Watson Fox met the curate of St Ebbes William Weldon Champneys. This was undoubtedly a relative of Adam Hodgson's wife who was the daughter of the Rev. Henry William Champneys who became Rector of Badworth in Yorkshire. The family was also related by marriage to the influential Hornby and Stanley families, the heir of the latter being the Earl of Derby. Henry Watson became a Sunday School teacher for William Weldon Champneys but formed the ambition to have a parish of his own or to do missionary work. Henry Watson was ordained in December 1840 by the Bishop of London and married Elizabeth James daughter of the G. H. James of Wolverhampton. He volunteered for the Church Missionary Society and his work was eulogized by his brother George Townshend Fox in a collection of letters about Henry Watson's life.

He spent some years in India among the Teluga of north-west Madras where his wife contracted a fatal disease of the liver and died just as they were about to flee to England with their 3 children, the younger of which died on board the vessel on the homeward journey. He returned to India, abandoning his children to the care of relatives, but was again forced to return through illness and died soon after

## *And the Childrens Teeth are Set on Edge*

appointment as secretary to the missionary society. A Fox Memorial fund was raised at Rugby school.

Of the early life of George Townshend Fox's third child little is known except that George Townshend Fox (1810-1887) '*was not intended for the ministry in early life, and spent several years in America, where he was the intimate friend of Bishop McIlvaine, ... but having mixed with the world, and arrived at years of maturity, he selected the sacred office, .... Being anxious to impart to others those precious truths, which under the power and teaching of the Holy Ghost, had both influenced and changed the current of his own affections.*' His early working life in America was with Adam Hodgson's cotton brokerage of Hodgson & Riley where he looked after the American end of the business. The powerful influence of his brother's missionary work, which he depicted as an apotheosis, may account for his entering the ministry. He took a BA in 1848 and MA in 1851 at Trinity College Cambridge. He was awarded an *ad eundem* M.A. by the University of Durham in 1851. He was ordained in 1848 by the Bishop of Chester and his first Curacy was in Chester. Shortly afterwards he took the curacy of St Oswalds in Durham. '*The style, as well as the substance, of his sermons was original and striking, being a steady, consistent testimony in favour of the evangelical principles he so ably and faithfully maintained to the end of his days. Mr Fox had none of the usual conventionalities of pulpit orators, but spoke in an easy, natural, earnest and impressive way.*'

In 1858 he became the incumbent of St Nicholas's Durham through the patronage of the Marchioness of Londonderry. Practically his first act was the reconstruction of the church replacing the old and 'unsightly' edifice by one more in keeping with the requirements of the parish, and the prominent position of the building. A committee of parishioners was formed, a fund launched, and the rebuilding was speedily accomplished at a cost of about £5,500, of which Fox contributed nearly £1,200 and the Marchioness £1000. The Rebuilding Committee balked at the expense of adding a spire to the church, so Fox contributed the entire cost of £300. He also paid for the cost of cleaning and repairing the church.<sup>26</sup>

So when the Reverend George Townshend Fox arrived in Caton to comfort the widow and to commence his duties as an executor of Adam Hodgson's will the fate of Caton Chapel was sealed. There was an ecclesiastical bulldozer in the township and the little matter of a "small memento" to be arranged.

One question remains; who was this man, Adam Hodgson, that he should have raised to the memory of his life and work the lasting, albeit anonymous, memorial that is St. Paul's Church, Caton? It is certainly anonymous. Without consulting the records of the time there is no evidence in the church recording its rebuilding or of the people who undertook it and promoted it. There is no memorial tablet recording the event, no inscription on the foundation stone recording that it was laid by Mrs. Hodgson; it is all perfectly anonymous. So who was Adam Hodgson?