

St. CATHERINE'S CHURCH - PORT ERIN.

The foundation stone of this pretty little church was laid by Bishop Hill in 1878. In a bottle placed beneath the stone is a document which reads as follows:

"The foundation stone of this church, erected to the honour and glory of God, in the memory of Jane, wife of William Milner, of Port Erin, and dedicated to S. Catherine, was laid by the Right Reverend Rowley Hill, D.D., Lord Bishop of Sodor and Man, on Thursday, December 12th, 1878, the 42nd and 43rd year of her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria; Henry Brougham Loch, Esq., C.B. Governor of the Isle; J. T. Clucas, Captain of Rushen; E. W. Kissack, B.A., Vicar of Rushen; Herbert R. Finnis, curate; Richard Qualtrough, parish clerk; John Kermode, Thomas Kneen, Thomas Moore, William Williamson, churchwardens."

The late Mr. Milner, whose safes have made his name familiar in all parts of the world, spent the last years of his life at Port Erin, to which place and its people he was much attached. He died on the 30th September, 1874. By his will, dated 21st March, 1872, he bequeathed £1,000 to the vicar and churchwardens of Rushen for the erection of a church to be called S. Catherine's. The church was also a memorial to the late Mrs. Milner, who died on the 3rd September, 1874, and no more useful one could have been erected. There is accommodation for nearly 200, and all the seats are free and open.

Manx Church Magazine - September 1893.

A great improvement in the interior of this church has been made by the alteration of the seats. This alteration, together with the addition of kneeling boards, has been carried out and has added materially to the comfort of the congregation.

Manx Church Magazine - February 1894.

A well attended meeting was held at Mr. Clague's room, on Monday evening, January 15th, to consider the question of the enlargement of S. Catherine's Church. After considerable discussion it was unanimously decided that it was necessary to enlarge the Church to afford accommodation for the increased number of visitors to this favorite watering place. The Vicar and Mr G. L. Trustrum were deputed to interview an architect to obtain a plan and estimate of the cost by the proposed extension and increased elevation of the Church.

Manx Church Magazine - March 1894.

Mr. Jas. Cowle, architect, has visited S. Catherine's to suggest the best way for the enlargement of the Church. Probably the enlargement will extend westward about 22 feet, so as to give 80 sittings more, and will be proceeded with at once to meet the requirements of the large summer congregations.

Manx Church Magazine - May 1894.

A meeting has lately been held at S. Catherine's with respect to the addition to be made to the Church. Mr Cowle's plans were submitted to the meeting, and it was finally decided that the Church should be extended westwards some 25 feet, and that a short tower should be built at the south-west end over the porch. The addition of the tower was in accordance with Mr Cowle's plan, and will make a good finish to the west end of the Church. A large guarantee committee was formed, so that the work could proceed, if necessary, at once. The Rev. J. T. Pearce was chosen secretary, and Mr. Turnbull, treasurer; the he Vicar and Messrs. J. Clague, G. h. Trustrum, Thomas Clague forming the building committee.

Manx Church Magazine - June 1894.

At a meeting of S. Catherine's Church the estimates for the extension of the church were submitted, and it was finally decided to accept that of Messrs. Callister, builders, Port St. Mary. The total cost of extension of the church westward some 25 feet, the erection of a tower at the South-west corner of the new structure, and the completion of the work in the interior of the Church will amount to £294. To meet this amount a body of guarantors has been formed, consisting of the Vicar, Messrs. J. Clague, T. Clague, W. Gold, W. Hedge, J. Maddrell, J. Mylrea, G. I. Trustrum and E. Turnbull - Mr. Turnbull acting as secretary, and Rev. J. T. Pearce as treasurer. Already subscriptions have been promised. With the strong Committee named above it is expected that before the season closes a large portion of the money to be expended will be collected.

Manx Church Magazine - August 1894.

As the addition to S. Catherine's will be completed by the 1st of August, an opening service will be held on Thursday evening August 2, at 7.30, the Lord Bishop being the preacher.

Manx Church Magazine - September 1894.

Dedication Service - On Wednesday, August 1st, a dedication service was held at S. Catherine's Church, the addition to the Church being completed. By this enlargement 100 more sittings have been added to the nave - a requirement which was greatly needed by the large congregations. The small tower which has been erected at the south-west corner has added greatly to the beauty of the structure. The addition of 25 feet to the nave has thrown the whole structure into better proportions. In the old building the chancel was much too large for the size of the church. The total cost will be about £300, of which not quite £100 has already been raised. The Vicar and the Committee will be glad to receive contributions towards the Improvement Fund from all who consider that by proceeding with building the addition at once the best course has been taken for improving the structure and meeting the needs of an increasing congregation. The dedication service took place at 7.45 p.m., the Lord Bishop being attended by the clergy. After the second lesson, the Bishop, clergy and sidesmen going into the new part, the Bishop read the special prayers of dedication. After singing a short appropriate hymn, the congregation all kneeling, the Bishop preached an excellent sermon on "The use of Opportunities". The collection, which amounted to £3 was given to the Church Improvement Fund.

Manx Church Magazine - June 1896.

At Evening Prayer on Sunday April 19th, the Lord Bishop dedicated the new reredos, which had been erected by Mr. G. L. Trustrum, and Miss. Trustrum, in St. Catherine's Church, in memory of their father, mother and brother. The reredos is made of oak, and the carved work being executed by Mr. Ambrose Kelly of Peel. It consists of three panels, the centre one being considerably larger than the side ones. In the middle a large cross of oak, overlaid with brass, stands out in prominent relief. The whole is noble in design, and is an elegant niece of Manx carved work. The service on the evening of April 19th was largely attended, numbers of people having to go away. The surpliced choir, under Mr. Arthur Cregeen's charge; rendered the hymns, psalms, and anthems with excellent effect, Mr. T. Cregeen singing the solo part in the anthem capitally.

A new stained-glass window has been placed in the west end of S. Catherines Church. The work has been carried out by Messrs. Knight and Co. of

Leeds. The window represents S. Matthew. As there are in all four small lights in the west end, it is hoped that very soon all will be fitted up with stained glass, the subjects in the four being the four evangelists.

Manx Church Magazine - July 1896.

An organ fund has been opened in connection with S. Catherine's, Mr Arthur Cregeen, the organist, acting as honorary secretary, and Rev. J. T. Pearce, treasurer. They will be glad to receive contributions towards this fund. The organ which will eventually be placed in the church will completely fill the present organ chamber, and will cost approximately £300. When a sufficient sum has been secured the present organ will be sold, and the new organ case, together with as many stops as will be necessary to accompany the ordinary church service will be erected. This can be carried out when the fund amounts to £100. The rest of the stops will be added as the funds will allow. It is hoped that those who attend the church will contribute towards this object, and will use their influence to bring this matter before the visitors during the summer season. Now that Mr Cregeen has taken so much trouble to get an efficient choir, an effort ought to be made to provide him with a better organ.

Manx Church Magazine - August 1896.

The old font which was formally in use in the Parish Church, but which had been lying buried in the churchyard for many years until it was discovered when a grave was being opened, has been set up in St Catherine's Church. The font consisted of a large block of granite. This has now been placed on an octagonal shaft and base of limestone, and erected at the west end of the church. The whole work looks very well, is an addition to the interior of the church, and reflects credit upon the workmanship of Mr. John Cubbon, stonecutter, of Castletown.

Manx Church Magazine - July, 1897.

The Vicar gratefully acknowledges the gift of a Communion Service, consisting of two chalices, a flagon, and two patens, from Mr. J. C. Wace, of Ealing, Middlesex. The service will be placed in St. Catherine's Church, Port Erin, which has not hitherto had a Communion Service belonging to the Church.

The Vicar has also received from the Misses Banner (Liverpool) and Mrs Dr. Rose, ten beautiful carved panels for a new pulpit for St. Catherine's. It is intended to have a suitable oak frame made in which to place the panels; and the Vicar will be glad to receive contributions towards the cost of providing such a frame work for the Miss Banners kind and valuable gift. A brass lectern is also much needed for St. Catherine's pulpit.

Manx Church Magazine - September, 1898.

The following useful and much needed articles of church furniture have been presented to S. Catherine's Church, Port Erin, viz., a brass lectern for pulpit, by Mr Thomas Clague, brass alms dish by Mr John Clague; and a brass book stand for Communion Table by Mr James Mylrea and Rev J. T. Pearce. To each of whom the Vicar returns his grateful thanks for their welcome gifts.

Manx Church Magazine - May, 1902.

The Foundation Stone of St. Catherine's Hall and Sunday School was laid on Friday afternoon, March 21st, by Mr. Alderman Jennis, The Hut, Port Erin. The

proceedings commenced at 3.30 with the hymn "The church's one foundation". Prayers were then said by the Vicar (Rev. C. H. Leece). A short address by the Vicar followed He then handed to Mr. Jennison a silver trowel and ivory mallet, and asked him to kindly lay the foundation stone of St. Catherine's Hall. Alderman Jennison at once acceded to the Vicar's request, and having declared the stone well and truly laid, he, in a short and appropriate speech, expressed the pleasure he felt in taking part in the ceremony. Mr. Jas, Mylrea then proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Alderman Jennison for his kind interest in coming from Manchester specially to perform the duty. This was seconded by Mr. Briscoe, and carried with applause. Mr Jennison having suitably replied, the Sunday School children sang the hymn "We are Soldiers of Christ, Who is mighty to save" and the proceedings concluded with the Doxology and Benediction.

Manx Church Magazine - September 1902.

On Tuesday evening, August 5th, St. Catherine's Hall, Port Erin, was formally opened by the Vicar in a short address. The Committee under whose direction and supervision the building has been erected, are as follows : Rev. C. H. Leece (Vicar) Rev. J. H. Davis (Curate) Mrs. Edw Maddrell, Mr. F. W. Briscoe (Sidesman) Mr H. Clague, Mr James Mylrea and Mr. T. Tookey. Mr. Armitage Rigby was the architect, and the contractors were Messrs. Vim. Costain and Sons (masonry, etc.) and Mr Henry Clague (joiner work).

Manx Church Magazine - October 1908.

Thanks to the following for their gifts to the Church - Miss Trustrum : Large Prayer Book for Reading Desk. Mrs. Clara Costain and Mrs Newbold: Bookmarkers.

Manx Church Magazine - November 1908.

On Friday 16th ult., a number of Church workers, chiefly from Port Erin and district, met at the vicarage. The Vicar explained that the Trustees of St. Catherine's Hall had recently handed the Hall to him as representing St. Catherine's Church.

Manx Church Magazine - September 1910.

New oak stalls were placed in St. Catherine's Church, Port Erin, last month. They are the gift of Mr. G. L. Trustrum. The work was carried out by Mr John Kelly of Kirk Michael, whose excellent workmanship is well known. The new stalls form a very handsome addition to the furniture of the church, and the Vicar desires, on behalf of the sidesmen and congregation of St. Catherine's, to thank Mr Trustrum for his generous gift. On Monday evening, the 15th August, at a special service at 8 p.m. the Lord Bishop publicly dedicated the new stalls. The service was taken by the Vicar and the Revs. R. Ferguson and F. Barton Horspool also took part. The Bishop preached an appropriate and interesting sermon.

Manx Church Magazine - October 1910.

In addition several valuable gifts have since been made to the church, viz. - silver paten and chalice by Mrs. Pilkington and Miss Handley, Bradda; silver paten for Credence Table, Mr. J. V. Jackson, Bradda; Frontal cloth for Communion Table, Rev. F. B. and Mrs Horspool. Frontal for _pulpit lectern, Miss Trustrum, Kneeling stools and carpeting, Mr R. H. Kennaugh. Book markers etc.

Miss Jessie Chadwick. We offer our grateful thanks to the donors for their kind and valuable gifts.

Manx Church Magazine - December 1910.

A special service was held at St. Catherine's at 3 p.m. the Vicar dedicated the new silver vessels recently presented to the church.

Manx Church Magazine - August 1911.

At the 8 O'clock service on Sunday morning, July 16th, at St. Catherine's Port Erin, the Vicar dedicated two gifts, viz., a Brass Book Stand for the Holy Table (subscribed for) and a Silvermounted Vessel for Communion Service, given by Iris. A. Barton Horspool.

St. Catherine's Church Organ.

A meeting was held on 22nd November 1911, when it was agreed that a new Organ was necessary for St. Catherine's. A number of meetings were held, concluding with the following notes.

Manx Church Magazine - January 1913.

At a consistory Court held in Douglas on Saturday, Nov. 23rd., the Vicar-General heard evidence in support of application for a faculty to enlarge the organ chamber at St Catherine's Church. No objection was made to the application, and a faculty was granted. The plans having been approved by the Port Erin Commissioners, Mr. T. Costain, builder, commenced the work the following week.

Manx Church Magazine - April 1913.

Our new Organ at St. Catherine's Church, Port Erin, was dedicated by the lord Bishop, on Wednesday evening, 5th March. The Vicar and Rev. H. T. Devall and Rev. R. Ferguson, assisted in the service. There was a large congregation, and after the dedication, the Bishop delivered an eloquent address.

Manx Church Magazine - November 1913.

At a meeting of the Organ Committee the total expenditure including cost of organ, enlarging of organ chamber, etc., amounted to £509.

Vicar's Notes, September 30th, 1939.

A new Electric Organ-Blower has been installed by Messrs. Rushworth and Dreaper of Liverpool and has proved a great success. (the cost was £56)

Vicar and Warden's Minutes.

Sept. 1948 - New heating fitted at Church.