EXPLORING BUILT HERITAGE

Sharing research, Interpreting heritage

Rebecca Preston
My brief – to investigate the documentary and visual archives relating to the church ground and fabric held in different archives to create:

• a chronology of building and restoration works up to the present day;

• a digital archive of all known images and maps and aerial surveys.

The Gentleman’s Magazine, May 1829
Communication

Regular meetings
• of the central project team
• with partners, Islington Heritage and Art + Christianity
• with the Volunteer Co-Ordinator

Monthly research reports
• May to September 2019

Communication and sharing research
• with the Diocese of London Parish Property Support
• with the Tales from the Crypt Project Manager
• with Edward Holland, architect, who prepared the Conservation Management Plan
• and with the Volunteer Co-ordinator
Sharing learning and research – joint archive trips:

London Metropolitan Archives
Sharing learning and research – joint archive trips:

Islington Local Studies
August 2019
Learning from experts and the building:

Talk to the Islington Society by Kevin Rogers, head of parish property support at the Diocese of London

May 2019
Attending sessions with archivist Julie Melrose at Islington Local History Centre, who introduced us to the range of sources available to research the church, local people and area, May 2019
Sharing and learning:

Walk and talks at the church with New River College pupils and staff

September 2019
Learning from the historic streetscape with the volunteers

Sharing and learning:

In Lonsdale Square – listening to the histories of former residents, 2019
Holy Trinity, Cladesley Square, Islington: Chronology of site acquisition, works and repairs, c.1811–1980

Introduction and acknowledgements:

Holy Trinity, Cladesley Square, was built in 1826–29 to a Tudor Gothic design by Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament, and forms the focal point of one of the best-preserved squares in the Bannbury Conservation Area. When the congregation dwindled in the 1970s the Diocese of London closed the church for Anglican Worship and between 1980 and 2017 it was leased to the Colonial Church of Christ. By 2017 the building had deteriorated and was again closed after being declared unsafe for public use. The Diocese then began the research and fundraising necessary for its urgent restoration and re-opening as a community resource to be known as the Cladesley Centre.

Until 1814, when St Mary Magdalene, Holloway was consecrated as the chapel of ease, St Mary Islington was the only Anglican church in the rapidly growing parish. In May 1825, the Commissioners for Building and Promoting the Building of Additional Churches in Populous Districts made arrangements with the parish to build three additional chapels, with encouragement from the chancellary Vicar of St Mary’s, the Rev. Daniel Wilson, later Bishop of Calcutta. Although this was not the original plan, all three chapels - Holy Trinity, Cladesley Square (consecrated 13 March 1829); St John’s, Upper Holloway (2 July 1829); and St Paul’s, Bals Pond Road (23 October 1828) - were designed by Sir Charles Barry. The parish contributed £12,000 towards the building of the churches and fitting them up for divine service, the sum borrowed under a loan Act obtained in 1824. In July that year, Wilson told the Commissioners that ‘the site for one new church is already obtained & rallied in, conveniently situated in the very heart of the New Buildings in the Bals Pond Road [later Liverpool Road]. The plot for what became Holy Trinity lay at the centre of Islington Square, which was very soon known as Cladesley Square, and the building of the chapel from 1826 appears roughly contemporary with the surrounding residential development. This lay on an area of land called the Stonefields or Stonefield Estate, which was donated in 1517 to the parish of Islington by Sir Richard Cladesley. Cladesley Square is also commemorated within Holy Trinity in a splendid stained glass altar window by William Willment.

This chronology contributes to the restoration project and contains transcriptions of manuscript and other primary source material relating to the site and building of Holy Trinity, which were gleaned from research conducted in April–September 2019. Because they were built in tandem and shared some of the same contractors, the document also includes references to St Paul’s and St John’s. To assist with understanding the building and informing conservation policies, chronological sequences of maps and plans and images of the church were collated alongside.

I would like to thank Rosie Fraser, Edward Holland, Kevin Rogers and Susan Skeff for their help with the research and also the archivists at the three principal archives consulted: the Church of England Record Centre (CERC); Islington Local History Centre (ILHC); and London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). The Tales from the Crypt project team is additionally grateful to Islington Heritage (Museum and Local History Centre) for generous permission to reproduce images from its collection.

Rebecca Preston, September 2019
Chronologically organised transcriptions from manuscript and other primary sources:

The Stonefield Estate or “Fourteen Acres” given to our parish by Mr Cloudsley for the pious uses before enumerated, contains, according to a survey hanging in the vestry room, 16 acres 2 rods and 17 perches. These premises, though appropriated by the tenant to superstitious uses, escaped being seized by the crown at the dissolution of chantries. I Edward VI, probably by reason that part of the produce having been directed to be given to “poor people”, or perhaps by motives of respect to the feoffees or executors of the testator, who were persons of great respectability, and connected with the parish, particularly one of whom, Sir Thomas Lovel, who in the preceding reign, possessed great interest at court. Thus it is most probable that he same was suffered to remain vested in feoffees for the use of the parish, as it continues at the present day. The Stone Field is now let to Mr Rhodes, at £25 per annum for the remainder of the lease, which will shortly expire, when it is expected the ground will be let on building leases, with considerable advantage to the parish.

The great increase in the value of land near London since the time of Henry VIII is exemplified in the Stone Field. This plot of ground, then let at the annual rent of £4, has lately been valued in the fire simple at the sum of £22,800, on an application being made by the Corporation of London to purchase the same as an eligible spot for the removal of Smithfield Market.


The vestry clerk presented a memorial from Mr Richard Bodfield, the Tenant of the Land called “Stonefields” belonging to this Parish requesting a reduction in the Annual Rent of the said land, on account of the difference in the present value of land and when he took a Lease thereof when it was agreed that the said memorial be refer’d, for future consideration.

ILHC, St Mary Vestry Minutes, Easter Tuesday, 8 April 1817, p. 167

Places where Plans for new Churches or Chapels have not yet been received: Hornsey, Islington, St Pancras [but only 1500 total accommodation]

CEBC, Fourth Annual Report of His Majesty’s Commissioners, 17 June 1824, p. 6

In cheerful compliance with your letter of July 10, I immediately requested the churchwardens & vestry clerk, to furnish me with the necessary information. I have myself only just been induced into this great living & therefore an as yet unable to say much from personal observation.

The population of Islington was by the census in 1821, 22,417, but from the immense number of New Buildings incessantly erected since, the population now must be nearly 30,000.

It may advantage be taken at 25,000

the existing accommodation in the church & parochial chapel is only for 2,500 persons; 1200 in the church & 1300 in the chapel.

There are no separate townships but the whole surface of the parish is almost every part is rapidly covering in houses; and as the parish is 10 miles, 2 roads, 11 poles in extent & contains 3032 acres 3 roads in area, a large part of the population is 2, 3 or 4 miles from the church itself.

at least four new churches or chapels are wanted, in order to accommodate a third part of the population.

the site for one new church is already obtained & railed in, conveniently situated in the very heart of the New Buildings in the Back Road.

the money that can be raised by a rate is, 1 foot, at present: none: the parish having had 30,000£ to pay for 5 acres of Burial Ground & the New Chapel lately erected in it but it is hoped that the present rate of about 3000£ a year might be continued & appropriated ... to the expenses of new churches & chapels.

Letter from Rev. Daniel Wilson, Barabbary Park, to Guy Jenner, 19 July 1824, CEBC, ECEC/7/1/18112

Application from the Minister Churchwardens and other inhabitants of the parish of St Mary Islington in the patronage of Rev Daniel Wilson

Parish of St Mary Islington 25,000 population at 1821 census

Parish is reputed to contain 3032 acres 3 roads

The intended New Church is proposed to be built upon Land belonging to the parishes i.e. the exact site or name not mentioned nor is there a site plan attached as suggested by the form

attached; New Chapel at Cloudsley Square, sketch of a scale of pew rents and gallery plan, sketch of a scale of pew rents on ground and gallery

New Chapel at Balls Pond Road, sketch of a scale of pew rents on ground and gallery

Form of Inquiry on applications being made to HM Commissioners for building and promoting the building of additional Churches in populous districts, 25 September 1824, CEBC, ECEC/7/1/18112

The Trustees of the said Parish Report That in consequence of the number of buildings which have lately been built and are now building within this Parish various new Streets and Roads have been set out. That the sever al builders together with the inhabitants resident in [ illegible small word] of the New Streets have made application to the Trustees to form and make such New Streets and Roads according to the provisions of the Act of Parliament.
Detail of OS, surveyed 1871, The British Library

Plan for new heating system, 1920, LMA

Digital archive of all known visual sources and maps:
Detail of photograph, c. April 1939
Islington Heritage

EPW050847 ENGLAND (1936). Detail from Historic England Archive, Britain from Above: https://britainfromabove.org.uk/
Interpreting heritage, sharing research:

- Good documentary research is always balanced with physical evidence
Plan of the church as it was before 1867, published 1902
The British Library
Before and after the works of 1901
Henry H. Tasker, Architect & Surveyor, 43 Penton Street
Drawings from the Faculty bundle, LMA, P83/TRI/093
CLOUDESLEY CENTRE
FORMER HOLY TRINITY CHURCH,
CLOUDESLEY SQUARE,
ISLINGTON, LONDON

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

for London Diocesan Fund

March 2019

Edward Holland
Holland Heritage

www.hollandheritage.co.uk
Tales from the Crypt exhibition timeline (extract)

Curated by the Volunteer team

Design by Chris Wells

HISTORY OF THE CLOUDESLEY CENTRE

1811
"An Act to enable the trustees of certain lands, called the Stone-fields, situate in the parish of St Mary Islington in the county of Middlesex to grant building leases thereof for a term not exceeding 99 years"

1825
Revd Daniel Wilson, Vicar of St Mary’s, Islington, petitions for a new church to be built on the site in ‘Islington Square’ (later Cloudesley Square)

1826
Charles Barry’s plans accepted for the church and building starts in September

15 December 1828
Barry reports ‘there is but little to do now at Cloudesley Square Church’

1829
Building is finished, total cost of £11,899

19 March 1829
Holy Trinity Church is consecrated by The Bishop of London and Revd Hunter Francis Fell is appointed Vicar

21 November 1829
Mary Jones, of Stonefield Terrace, is the first person to be buried in the crypt, aged 68

16 June 1834
Eliza Harvey, of 48 Lonsdale Square, is the last person to be buried in the crypt, aged 49

21 May 1855
Order to cease burials in the crypt

1868
Chancel remodelled and new Vestry offices built

1879
New choir stalls, prayer desk and lantern installed to celebrate the church’s Jubilee (50th anniversary)

1885
Organ moved from the west gallery to the chancel and improved

1889
A new iron pulpit given by churchwarden

1901
North and South galleries removed, West gallery enlarged and new open benches replace box pews. Electric lighting installed throughout the building
LEGACY ZOOM WORKSHOPS

In order to share the learning from the project the London Diocesan Fund are hosting three legacy workshops on Zoom based around three different themes: researching records and understanding significance; developing arts and creative projects; and interpreting heritage. All workshops will also cover key topics of community engagement, project visioning, and funding opportunities.

The three workshops are:

**Zoom Workshop 1: Exploring Built Heritage**
Understanding your building, its significance, and how to utilise archives
Book at: bit.ly/crypt_workshop1

8 September
9:00am – 1.00pm
(including 30min break)

**Zoom Workshop 2: Art and Heritage**
Incorporating creativity and the arts in your heritage project
Book at: bit.ly/crypt_workshop2

6 October
9:00am – 1.00pm
(including 30min break)

**Zoom Workshop 3: Interpreting Heritage**
How to interpret, exhibit and communicate heritage
Book at: bit.ly/crypt_workshop3

3 November
9:00am – 1.00pm
(including 30min break)
EVENING TALKS

In association with the Islington Society, the London Diocesan Fund are hosting three evening talks from members of the project team, to share the learning from the research project. The talks will be held online via Zoom at 7pm and last around an hour.

Talk themes and dates:

Talk 1: Dr Rebecca Preston
The Building of Holy Trinity, Cladesley Square
Wednesday 23 September

Talk 2: Dr Susan Skedd
Telling Tales: Retrieving the lives of the first residents of the Cladesley Square district, c.1820—1855
Wednesday 21 October

Talk 3: Mrs Rosie Fraser & Mrs Laura Moffatt
Delivering a grant-funded project
Thursday 26 November

To book a place for any of the free talks please email Islingtonsociety@aol.com
Any questions?