

Transcription by Louise Wheatley of *the report in the York Herald*
[or was it the *Yorkshire Gazette* ?] Saturday 29 December

CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH OF ST. OSWALD, FULFORD, 24th December 1866

(Column 1 of 3)

The interesting ceremony of consecrating the church of St. Oswald. Fulford, near this city, was performed on Monday last, by his Grace the Archbishop of York.

Within the last twenty years at least three separate efforts had been made to build a church suitable to take the rapidly increasing requirements of the parish of Fulford, but until within the last two or three years without success. The small old church, inconveniently though picturesquely situated on the banks of the Ouse, seated at the utmost only 150 persons, an amount of accommodation which was very small in comparison with the population of the parish, which now numbers at least 2,600 persons. Built, as Lawton in his Collections, [*Collections Relative Churches Chapels Within Diocese York ... Rerum Ecclesiasticarum de Dioecesi Eboracensi* by S. G. Lawton, 1842] states, and consecrated with its little burial ground as long ago as 1349, "by reason of a pestilence and great mortality" which then prevailed, it remained for several centuries large enough for the spiritual wants of the village of Foulforth, as it was formerly spelt and called, but was quite inadequate to the requirements of the Fulford of the present day and as the present burial ground is proposed to be enlarged, it seems most probable that the church will end its days as it began them more than five centuries ago as a mortuary chapel.

About two and half years ago, an effort was made in earnest by the present incumbent (The Rev. H. M. Clifford), immediately on his appointment to the living, for a new church on a new site near the village, and that effort having been most nobly supported by the principal parishioners, by the Rev. Canon Jefferson and others, the result is the **beautiful church** which has been reared from the design of Mr. J. P. Pritchett [junior] architect, Darlington, which now stands **an ornament to the South approach of our city**, and the spire of which may be seen as it glistens in the sunshine many a mile round.

It is built at the North entrance of the village and has sitting for 450 persons. The **seats, the pulpit, the reading desk, and the communion rails** are all the munificent gift of the **Rev. Canon Jefferson**, in addition to a donation of £300, whilst the family of the patron, W. H. Key, Esq., Miss Key, R. Fenwick, Esq., and Mrs. Fenwick, G. J. Yarburgh, Esq., T. Barstow, Esq., and Mrs. Barstow, Mrs. Col. Richardson, Lord Wenlock, the Hon. and Rev. S. W. Lawley, G. Dodsworth, Esq., W. Hotham, Esq., Miss Chomley, J. Clifford, Esq., F. L. Mawdesley, Esq., Major Wilson, and Mr. Feather have subscribed sums of from £50 to £500 each. The **font** is the 'in memoriam' gift of the family of the late **Captain and Mrs. Lefroy**, who lived and died at Fulford. The **new books** were presented by **Miss Cholmley**, a handsome **silver flagon** for the holy communion by **J. Clifford, Esq.**, some very beautiful **linen for the communion table** by **C. K. Corder, Esq.**, of Belfast and **two chairs** for the communion table by **Miss Stracy**.

The total estimated cost of the church was £4,788, including £450 for the site, and of this sum £4,180 has been raised previous to the consecration, leaving a deficiency of £600.

The design of the church comprises nave with aisles, transepts, and chancel, with aisles forming a vestry on one side, and an organ chamber on the other. The extreme dimensions inside are length, 100 feet; width across nave and aisles, 40 feet; width across transepts, 60 feet; height from floor to ridge, 60 feet. At the south west corner is placed a tower with spire 140 feet high.

The style is early decorated, with a decided early French character in the details, in accordance with the prevailing practice of leading architects. The principal feature is the design of the steeple, which is severely plain for a considerable height, and highly ornamented at the belfry stage, having two windows on each face, with double shafts of red stone in deeply recessed jambs, finished by carved caps supporting richly moulded arches, and which, with carved strings and bold cornice crowning the whole, give a very rich effect to this portion of the design. From this cornice springs the spire, which is massive and at the same time made highly ornate by spiral broaches, lucarne lights, and strings of tile pattern, all of decidedly foreign stamp. Owing to the level nature of the country, the spire, which is the highest in the district, is seen for miles around, and it is, we understand, owing to this circumstance that the architect has taken so much pains to render the higher details effective.

The west front, which is parallel with and not far from the high-road, has a double recessed and shafted doorway, with carved caps in the centre, and above a handsome four-light window, with moulded jambs, mullions and tracery, having also carved caps and moulded bases; on each side are buttresses, with carved crocketed canopies.

The east window has five lights, and is similarly moulded to the west, and flanked by similar buttresses. The aisles, which are comparatively low, in accordance with the style, have three-light windows, with flat segmented arches, and the clerestory over them has circular quatrefoil and cinquefoil windows, all double splayed and having label moulds. The ends of the transepts have each two long two-light windows, surmounted by a handsome **rose window**, having red stone shafts, carved caps, moulded tracery, label moulds, etc. All the arches have an outer rim of stones alternatively of different colours.

Internally the nave is divided from the aisles and transepts by pillars of red stone, on moulded bases, raised on plinths so as to show above the tops of the seats. These have very elaborately carved caps, and support boldly moulded arches. The chancel arch is similar to, though somewhat richer than, the rest. The aisles of the chancel are divided from it by double arches with similar bases and caps and with moulded spandrels. The roofs, which are open to the apex, have all the timbers moulded, and the principal rafters are supported by **carved angel corbels**. The roof of the chancel will be somewhat richer than the rest, being boarded above the circular braces.

The east end has a **reredos**, with red stone shafts, carved caps, and moulded arches. The pulpit, reading desk, altar rail- and seats, as we have already said, are the gift of the Rev. Canon [Column 2 starts here] Jefferson, who has, we hear, taken great interest and a great deal of trouble in the erection of this church, besides being the liberal contributor we have stated, although none of his property in the parish [*he was from Thicket Priory, Thorganby*].

The **pulpit** is a very handsome specimen of work, being executed by Forsyth and Co of London, from the **design of the architect**. The shafts and cornice are in alabaster, the rest of the material being Caen stone, and the **carving is very beautiful**. The **reading desk is of oak, by the same carver**. The **altar rails are iron and brass, by Skidmore and Co., of Coventry**, and are very light and elegant. The whole of the **seats** are massive and handsome, a considerable sum having been paid by the Rev. Canon Jefferson to have **better seats** than was originally intended. The **font** is executed by Forsyth and Co. from an ancient model selected by the family of the late Capt. And Mrs. Lefroy [there is a 15th Century font at St Peter's Church, Petersfield, Hampshire].

The church is warmed by Messrs. Haden of Trowbridge, on their warm air plan [see www.hevac-heritage.org/victorian_engineers/haden/haden.htm - *A potted history about this family of famous engineers from Trowbridge Wiltshire with each generation being instrumental in pioneering advancements in the science of heating and ventilating.*]

The lighting is effected by a corona at the crossing of nave and transept, and by standards in the aisles.

The front of the ground is enclosed by an iron railing, executed by Messrs. Close and Co., of the Phoenix Foundry, York. [*originally located just inside the City walls near Fishergate Bar, and later moved to a vacant site off Leeman Road*]

The whole of the works have been designed by Mr. J. P. Pritchett, F.I.B.A. of Darlington, and carried out under his superintendence, assisted by Mr. Law, the clerk of works. The carving has been done by Messrs. Burstall and Taylor of Leeds [*see below*] and the whole of the works, except the items before mentioned, have been executed by the contractor, Mr. Weatherley, of York [*see biographical references at the end*]

The article continues with a long description of the consecration service. This is transcribed below.

(Columns 2 (continued) and 3)

The consecration service commenced at eleven o'clock, shortly before which hour the Sunday school children and the clergy walked in procession from the village to the church, singing a suitable hymn. The building (which the villagers had decorated with evergreens, and the motto – '*Glory to Go in the Highest*' was well filled, and the Archbishop, attended by his Registrar (E. V. Harcourt, Esq.) and chaplain (the Rev. G. H. Philips, of Dringhouses) was received at the West door by the minister and clergy, the churchwardens, and some of the principal inhabitants.

A petition was presented to the Archbishop praying that he would consecrate the church, which petition was read by J. Buckle Esq., Deputy-Registrar. His Grace having signified his consent to consecrate the church, he and the clergy, and others attending upon him, proceeded up the chief aisle towards the communion table, repeating the 24th Psalm alternately as they went.

The Clergy present were the Rev. Canon Hey, the Rev. Canon Jefferson, the Rev. H. M. Clifford (the incumbent), the Rev. G. H. Philips, the Rev. G. Rowe, the Rev. R. Daniel, the Rev. H. H. Short, the Rev. H. V. Palmer, the Rev. A. Clark, of Elvington, the Rev. L. J. Procter, of Bolton Percy, the Rev. W. Plumptre, of Escrick, and the Rev. J. S. Tomlinson, of Thorganby.

Among the congregation were the Lord Mayor, the Sheriff, Mr. Ald. Hill, Dr. Matterson, W. Whytehead, Esq., W. J. Coltman, Esq., W. Gray, Esq., G. Dodsworth, Esq., J. Clifford, Esq., T. J. Barstow, Esq., C. D. Barstow, Esq., R. Fenwick, Esq., W. W. Hargrove, Esq., F. L. Mawdesley, Esq., and J. B. Pritchett, Esq., of Darlington [*should be J. P. Pritchett*]

The Archbishop having taken his place near the communion table, received the instruments of conveyance, and then proceeded with the service in the usual form, after which the Rev. H. M. Clifford read the prayers, the lesson being read by the Rev. Canon Jefferson and the Rev. Canon Hey. The former gentleman read the collect for the day, etc., and the Archbishop offered appropriate prayers and read the communion service. The 242nd hymn was also sung, and the Epistle and Gospel were read by the Rev. G. H. Philips. The 100th Psalm was likewise sung. The Bridgewater services in A and Hymns Ancient and Modern were used. Dr. Monk presided at the **harmonium** in the morning, and Mr. Tuke of York, in the afternoon. The choir (which has been trained by Mr. Marshall, of Fulford, and which was assisted by some ladies and several amateurs from York), efficiently performed its duties.

The sermon in the morning was preached by the Archbishop, who selected his text from Hebrews i., - 1,2. – ‘God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, both in these last days spoken unto us by His Son’. His Grace observed that they were met together to open this house to the glory and worship of Almighty God, through Christ, and he had chosen a text which was part of the service for the following day, for, as they knew, they were opening the church at the time they were celebrating the first coming of Christ in the flesh among us. Before he proceeded with his subject, he would say that this **church had been erected with great zeal on the part of those who had promoted it**, and under no ordinary difficulties, and the result they had seen that day. **The church would be a possession of that parish for ages to come, if so long the world shall last, and it had been prepared by nothing less that great effort, great zeal and great diligence.** Let those who belonged to that parish return thanks that day and the following, as they met at the first of the regular services, that God had put into men’s hearts to do this **excellent work.**

The subject on which he was about to speak to them was the speaking of God through His Son. He would speak of Christ as a preacher of the Father’s will. In the first place the apostles linked together the speaking by the prophets and the speaking of the Son, and so did Christ. In His sublime sermon on the mount he explicitly said, ‘Think not that I am come to destroy, but to fulfil.’ ‘I am not come to destroy, but to fill up’ would be a true translation of the Greek words. He referred to the finished work of Christ and the rules and conduct by which man was to be guided, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself’. It was God without, so it was now the spirit of God within them. By bringing it up into the new life which He gave them, He had filled up – not destroyed. His Grace showed that the moral part of the law being eternal in its nature was taken up by our Lord and carried into the gospel, and the ritual provisions were wiped off from the law because the need of them had ceased. Man ceased to sacrifice not because the Redeemer had said, ‘Henceforth thou shalt not sacrifice the bull and the goat’, but because the sacrifice of Jesus had been offered, and therefore there was no meaning in the pouring out of the blood of bulls and goats.

In the second place, he said the gospel called us children of God, and called God our father. Jesus proclaimed everywhere that God the father was living, true, perfect God, author of all light and of all life, perfect in holiness, and who fills all places with His great power and presence. He taught them to pray to their father, which art in Heaven. The same name which Jesus used towards Him, they were taught to use, and not merely because He had created them, but because there was a loving and continual relationship between us and Him. He was no longer the omnipotent ruler of nature only, but the father of their spirits, the friend that dwelt with them, the Maker that loved what he had made, and would not have them to perish. Could they hope for such an indwelling? What a comfort it would be to them if they had that assurance.

His Grace referred to the encouragement held out by the language of Christ; and next explained that the kingdom of God meant the reign of God, and His prevailing over all that opposed itself against Him. He also described the nature of faith, observing that faith in the gospel is really an act of the whole soul, a choice of the will by which they adhered to Christ, and founded on an intellectual opinion that He is Lord and God. The faith demanded of them was not a single sentiment, it was an act of the soul, in whose belief of a fact was the most prominent but not the only ingredient. It implied two things. It meant that they wanted such a thing as a Saviour, and it implied that they recognised in Jesus the Lord the power to save them. He remarked that if they all read their Bibles and studied the words of Jesus as though they were sitting at his feet, then the assaults of objectors would do them no harm.

He also dwelt upon the responsibilities of each person observing that he and they had seen the Lord and heard him. All the lessons of His teaching and of His life were accessible to all of those who had a Bible and possessed the power to read it. Now when they sinned, they crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. They defiled their body, though they knew it was the temple of the holy God, that is to say, they were able, by the light which was given them, to understand that every sin was an outrage against God, and in corrupting themselves they defiled a temple He made to dwell in. He asked them to resolve to mark their sense of this by crucifying some shameful passion, by plucking out of their bosom some darling sin. Then were they Christ's disciples indeed. Let not the crucified Redeemer include them amongst His persecutors. Let Him not have to say of them that He had taught them. He had come into their churches and spoken to them in language clearer than the prophets knew. He had called and entreated, they had known and desired Him, and were none of His. From each a fate might God, of His infinite mercy, deliver them, might He make them earnest hearers of the word He had to speak, in order that the word might not only be a boon to the understanding, but light and life and a transformation of the soul, so that it might be renewed in the image of the most holy Christ.

After the sermon a collection was made, the offertory sentences being read by the Rev. G. H. Philips, and the service was brought to a conclusion by the Archbishop offering another prayer and pronouncing the benediction.

Through the energy of the incumbent, and the painstaking and liberality of a number of ladies in the district, a new and commodious school-room has also been erected in the village. This room (which has been neatly decorated by the villagers with flags, banners, evergreens, etc) was appropriated to the **reception of those who had been invited to partake of luncheon there**. This luncheon, which was both profuse and excellent, had been provided by the families in the neighbourhood, and it was served up under the superintendence of Mr. Smithies, of the De Grey Rooms, in this city, at the conclusion of the morning service, and most of those who were then present partook of the substantial fare which had been presented so handsomely by the contributors.

The **afternoon service** commenced shortly after three o'clock, but the congregation was not so numerous as in the morning. The Rev. H. T. Cattley read the prayers, and the Rev. Canon Hey and the Rev. A. J. Clark read 'the lessons. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Canon Jefferson, from Hebrews x., 25. – 'Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is'. The rev. gentleman proceeded to show that from the earliest ages of the world places had been set apart for the public worship of God, and had been frequented by His people; then noticed some of the excuses commonly made for the neglect of public worship; afterwards pointed out some of the benefits of attending public worship; and lastly, asked what improvement they had made of the privileges they had enjoyed in God's house, urging them to be grateful for the mercies they had received. In the course of his sermon, **Canon Jefferson said the church in which they were then assembled had just been entirely built, and notwithstanding that liberal contributions had been made there still remained a considerable debt to be paid off**. It was a matter of much thankfulness, and very great gratitude to God, who had disposed so many so liberal to come forward and aid in this work. The name of every owner of property in the parish, and pretty nearly all the occupiers in the parish, were liberal contributors, as well as several who did not happen to be either owners or occupiers in the parish. He saw the names, as very liberal contributors, of those who were formerly connected with the place, and live in it, but were now removed from it, and he saw the names; of one or more who never before heard the name of Fulford. **All had been most liberal in coming forward to help in this**

high and noble enterprise. As he had just state, there still remained a considerable debt, and he asked the congregation to do what they could to remove it.

(Column 3)

Immediately on the conclusion of the afternoon service there was **a feast for he poor in the school-room** at which about 180 sat down, and were regaled with Christmas fare, to which a copious supply of wine was added by Wm. Cooper, Esq., and an abundance of beer by W. Hotham, Esq. the incumbent presided, and on the conclusion of the repast the incumbent addressed a few words to the villagers, speaking of the **kindly spirit in which their new church had been built**, and hoping that the spirit of unity which had sprung up amongst them might grow and increase and be cemented more closely every year. He drew their attention to the fact that there were now **300 more sittings are every service than they had ever had before** and said that all excuses for absence from church on account of want of room would henceforth be taken away.

Mr. Ald. Hill passed a vote of thanks to the incumbent for all his exertions and trouble in having brought the church and schools to so successful a termination, which was seconded by the Rev. T. H. Cattley, and carried unanimously. The incumbent having thanked Mr. Hill and the meeting for the kind way in which they have received the toast, proposed that they should conclude the evening by singing 'God Save the Queen', which was most heartily done.

The collections were as follows: Morning service, £84 8s 3d; afternoon service, £18 1 7d; Miss Stracy's collection, £16; Christmas offertory, £8 6s 2d; total £121 11s.

END OF ARTICLE

REFERENCES TO BURSTALL & TAYLOR OF LEEDS and WEATHERLEY & RYMER OF YORK

[see en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_Burstall - **Benjamin Burstall** (15 October 1835 – 14 January 1876) was a sculptor, architectural sculptor and stone carver, based in Leeds, West Riding of Yorkshire, England.

See also [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Taylor_\(sculptor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_Taylor_(sculptor)) – **Matthew Taylor** (Leeds 2 February 1837– Arthington 9 July 1889). (fl. 1861–1889) was a sculptor based in Leeds and Arthington, West Yorkshire, England. He was apprenticed to Catherine Mawer, and was known in his day for bust, medallion and relief portraits, and statues [see image on her 'faux' Romanesque head] From around 1861 to 1876, he worked in partnership, at Burstall and Taylor, Sculptors, with Benjamin Burstall (1835–1876). Their function has been described as "marble masons and statuaries, sculptors." The partnership was based in Cookridge Street, Leeds, and ended when Burstall died of tuberculosis. Taylor was the "gifted sculptor" of the 1870s angler's tomb in Woodhouse Cemetery.^[21] In July 1880 he exhibited "excellent works" at The Yorkshire Art Exhibition.¹ Between 1871 and 1876 he was at 6 Hillary Street, Leeds, describing himself as a sculptor.^{[14][23]} In 1881 he was trading at 52 Cookridge Street, Leeds, describing himself as sculptor and stone carver. Between 1881 and 1889 he was living at St Peter's Cottage, Arthington, in Wharfedale, where he died. On 3 October 1888, at the opening of Leeds City Art Gallery, one of his sculptures was in the central museum court. In 1889 he exhibited multiple works at the Spring Exhibition at Leeds City Art Gallery.

[See yorkcemetery.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/York-Cemetery-Lord-Mayors-1-Trail-Jan-2017.pdf **Ralph Weatherley** (1817-1879) Liberal Councillor (Bootham Ward) 1856 Alderman 1865 until his death in 1879 Sheriff 1863-4 Lord Mayor 1867-8. Ralph was a Freemason and Partner in the firm of Weatherley and Rymer, a considerable Building Contractor employing over 150 tradesmen, labourers and boys. In 1850 the firm was located in St Leonard's Place adjacent to Bootham Bar, premises formerly occupied by John Tilney. Their works included the restoration of Heslington Hall, the building of St George's and St Wilfrid's RC Churches, Poor Clares Convent, Lawrence Street and Darlington Bank Top (Main Line) Station. In 1866 Ralph retired from the business in favour of his brother, Robert, and Peter Rymer. He died on 26 June 1879, aged 62, in n Scarborough leaving Effects of under £14,000