

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NABURN.

In order to understand the place of the Anglican Church in the village it is necessary to go back to the 13th century and the arrival of the Palmes family to Naburn Hall. The first mention of a religious presence in the village is the erection by the Palmes family of a chapel of ease dedicated to St. Nicholas, in the grounds of the Hall. The chapel was served by various priests from the parishes of St. George and St. Dennis in York.

In 1354 an endowment (or chantry) was set up by John de Barton of Naburn to pray for the King (Edward III), for himself, his wife Alice and other members of his family and the endowment money came from rents received from properties in York and Naburn.

In 1402 the Archbishop of York transferred the endowment to Stillingfleet but required the priest from Stillingfleet to celebrate mass at Naburn every Tuesday. This appears to have continued until the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII in about 1530 when the ties to Rome of the Catholic Church were broken, and the endowment was passed to the State.

There remained strong support, however, for the Church of Rome, despite Henry's decrees, but the various changes imposed brought about decline in attendance and the chapel was poorly served by local priests and gradually fell into disrepair.

Naburn village at this time was partly in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Holy Trinity in Acaster Malbis and partly in the Parish of St. George and St. Dennis in York.

By 1742 the chapel at the Hall was in such a poor state that George Palmes sought and obtained a faculty to rebuild it which he did at his own cost to seat 100 people. The chapel was not big enough to hold a full congregation and there was no burial ground associated with it so many of the villagers worshipped at Holy Trinity Church in Acaster Malbis and had their relatives buried there. On foot and by ford until the lock was built in 1757 and then on foot and by ferry, it was the easier of two difficult journeys, the other being to York.

There was a small vault beneath the chapel in which some of the Palmes family were interred but it was not available to the ordinary people of the village.

This chapel was demolished in 1870 after the "new" church had been built and a smaller chapel solely for the use of the Palmes family was built in the wood adjoining the Hall. It is the ruin of this third chapel that now remains - the building is not consecrated.

The villagers longed for a local burial ground where they could more readily tend the graves of their deceased relatives and the opportunity for this arose in 1842 when a separate Ecclesiastical Parish of Naburn was created. It was not until 11 years later, however, that a plot of land was given to the Parish by the Rev. J. Sabben, the incumbent of St. George and St. Dennis, upon which a church could be built and a graveyard created.

St. Matthew's Church was built centrally on the plot and surrounded by the graveyard. The cornerstone was laid on St. Matthew's Day, 21st September, 1853 by William Lindsey Palmes who was Patron of St. Matthew's, Vicar of Hornsea and Rural Dean, and the church was formally opened by the Archbishop of York in July 1854. The Churchwardens at the time were John Penty and James Leaf and both the Penty and the Leaf families are buried in the churchyard. John Penty junior died 1855 aged 10, John Penty senior died 1866 aged 58 and his wife Mary died 1877 aged 65. James Leaf senior died 1872 aged 68, his elder son Matthew