

A Guide to
St Elizabeth's Roman Catholic Church
Scarisbrick

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This guide is dedicated to all parishioners and Priests, past and present, who over the generations have built and supported the Church and Catholic school in Scarisbrick.

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Preface

Much of the information contained in this guide was initially prepared for a Flower Festival and Historical Exhibition held at St Elizabeth's in 2013. The research had been done by the authors over several years and this exhibition was a first attempt to show people the heritage that we all took for granted. At that time there was no intention to publish a history, but in 2020 it was decided that so much more information about Scarisbrick and the Church had been uncovered that a Heritage Weekend would be arranged. Therefore, the history was revisited for this event and put into a format where it could be published. This document is intended to be both a history and a guide for visitors. We hope you come to appreciate the Catholic heritage of Scarisbrick and the beauty of St Elizabeth's Church as much as the authors.



St Elizabeth's circa 1939

Chapter 1: Historical Background to Catholicism in Scarisbrick

1.1 Early Catholic Worship

Scarisbrick is the most extensive township in West Lancashire, measuring 5 miles from northwest to southeast. It is situated in flat open country between Ormskirk and Southport covering an area of almost 8400 acres. In 1798¹ Scarisbrick's population was 1035 rising to 3865 in 2011.

It is a collection of several small hamlets, Snape in the west, Bescar (a corruption of Birch Carr) in the centre, and Drummersdale (anciently Drumbles dale) in the east. Then there is Gorsuch (formerly Gooseford syke) in the south west with Hurleston (formerly Harleton) in the south. Barrison Green forms the eastern edge and the southern boundary is given by Asmol (previously Aspin wall). Until the advent of roads and railways it was a remote area of mosses and mists, yet it has a long and strong Catholic tradition. Using information from the 1767 Recusant lists Scarisbrick's Catholic population was over 20%² at this time.

The Catholic tradition in Scarisbrick can be traced back continuously to the 12th century when Gilbert de Scarisbrick, then Lord of the manor, and Walter his son made grants of land to Cockersand Abbey³ which was founded in 1180.

When Burscough Priory was built for the Augustinian order in 1189 under the patronage of Robert Fitz-Henry, Lord of Lathom, the Scarisbrick family endowed it with lands in the surrounding area. The connection between the family and the priory continued until the latter was dissolved in 1536. Several members of the Scarisbrick family were buried in the family chantry at the priory.

The first mention of a chapel in Scarisbrick is in 1420 when Joan Scarisbrick obtained permission from the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry to hold '*divine services in a low voice*'. The presence of the chapel is confirmed in the will of Thomas Scarisbrick in 1530 when among its contents are listed:

*"...two vestments, two chasubles, two albs, a chalice, a corporal, a supra altar, altar cloths, two mass books and twelve images in closed boxes and two images not enclosed..."*⁴

With the dissolution of the monasteries and the Elizabethan church settlement, the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were bleak times for English Catholics who had to face decades of harassment and persecution. Throughout this time a Catholic presence was maintained in Scarisbrick despite the exceptional measures taken by the government to ensure Catholics conformed. At about this time we find many examples of people showing outward signs of

conformity while remaining loyal to the old religion. For example, in 1571:

"...Edwarde Scarisbrick, Justice of the Peace, seldom communycateth, his children trained up in popery and his daughters never come to church...."

and in 1590:

*"...Edwarde Scarisbrick of Scarisbrick Esq in Ormeskyrke parish of faire and ancient living, conformable he but not his wife...."*⁵

When the new hall at Scarisbrick was built in the 16th century a chapel was included. According to Brother Foley⁶ this chapel was 'about 30 feet long by 20 feet wide, with a room off it for the family, and wainscoted in dark wood. The people heard mass on the landing and staircase as best they could'.

In his diary of 1732 Robert Scarisbrick describes: *"ye seats in ye chapel made from green citterminster stuff not carpet..."*⁷

From the early 17th century because of the restrictions on Catholics, the boys of the Scarisbrick family were sent abroad to be educated at the Jesuit College of St Omers in France and several became Jesuit priests (See Appendix 1). Edward (1639-1709) became one of the chaplains to the court of the exiled James II in France whilst his brother Henry (1641-1701), served the parish of Scarisbrick from 1679-1688⁸. Without the Scarisbrick family's adherence to the Catholic faith we wouldn't have a parish today.

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries the priests resident at Scarisbrick Hall were from the Jesuit order. At this time there was a clandestine school there, run by the Jesuits, for sons of the Catholic families from around Lancashire to prepare them to go to the Jesuit school at St Omers. Many books used by the boys were left at the Hall and they contain their names and comments written in them. These books are now in archives at Douai Abbey in Berkshire.

In 1773 the Jesuit Society was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV under pressure from some of the royal courts of Europe. This suppression had a major effect in Scarisbrick. No more Jesuit priests, even sons of the Scarisbrick family, were able to serve the community. Instead, from 1792 until 1802, Abbé Buché from Chartres served the parish. He was one of the French émigré priests who came to England to escape the violence of the French Revolution. He returned to France in 1802 and his place was taken by another French émigré priest Abbé Dorival.

The Penal Laws against Catholics were reduced by the Relief Acts of 1778 and 1791 and then, in 1829, the Catholic Emancipation Act removed most of the remaining restrictions.

The chapel in the Hall remained in use by the family and the Catholic tenantry until 1812. A list of priests who served at Scarisbrick Hall is in Appendix 2.

1.2 St Mary's Roman Catholic Chapel (1812 - 1888)

In 1812, Scarisbrick Hall, where the Catholic tenantry had previously worshipped in the chapel, was being renovated for Thomas Scarisbrick (1785-1833) by Rickman and Slater of Liverpool⁹ who he had employed to 'encase the building in stone'. Thomas purchased the tithe barn at Bescar for use as a mission church, this became St. Mary's, and it was opened for worship on 1st day of November 1812 by Abbé Dorival. When he left Scarisbrick in 1825 the mission was accepted by the English Benedictine community.

Between 1843 and 1846, Charles Scarisbrick, who had inherited the Hall when his brother died in 1833, enlarged the barn. All the work was paid for by profits made by the Priest's Farm in Martin Lane, which was part of the Scarisbrick Estate.

In 1860 Charles Scarisbrick bought the two acres of land on which St Mary's stood from the entailed estates, and just three days before he died in May 1860 he sold the same area of land to Mr William Hawkshead Talbot, his solicitor, and Dr John O'Donnell his personal physician. On the 14th November of the same year, these gentlemen conveyed this piece of land into the Benedictine Trust¹⁰, with Rev. Richard Hoole OSB of St Mary's, Lady Anne Scarisbrick, Rev Peter Allanson OSB and Rev Thomas Benney OSB as the original trustees. As well as stating that the Parish Priest should be a Benedictine of English descent, the Trust stated that the land around the chapel was to be used as a burial ground and the cottages on the land either used as a school house or pulled down and the materials used to build a school house. In the event these were sold in the future the proceeds had to be used for the continuation of the Catholic Church in Scarisbrick.

Charles Scarisbrick was buried in the graveyard of St Mary's and there is a curious anecdote regarding his burial. It is said that when Charles built the presbytery he ordered a gap left in the garden wall and he would never disclose the reason for this order. After his death, it was discovered that under the terms of his will¹¹ his body was to be carried to the grave in a straight line from his house. His instructions being complied with, it was discovered that the line passed through the hole in the garden wall which had evidently been left for that purpose.

According to the Southport Independent in March 1872 when it was reporting the funeral of Charles' sister, Lady Anne Scarisbrick, St Mary's chapel was described as:

"... singularly meagre and destitute of any architectural feature, and, except the altar, might

very well be taken for a puritan place of worship. The windows are circular headed, and the square doors are simple house doors. The ceiling except to the chancel is flat. The chancel ceiling is slightly arched and painted in a representation of clouds, but it is clearly the daub of a village artist..."

A further description was given in the account of the Marchioness de Castéja's funeral¹²:

"The interior of the chapel was very sombre looking, as befitted the occasion. The coffin rested on a bier in front of the altar, on a beautiful pall given by the late Charles Scarisbrick Esq., and used at his funeral, whilst a larger pall in red and gold draped the steps of the altar. The latter pall was purchased by the late Lady Scarisbrick. Both palls were surmounted by a beautiful floral cross formed of immortelles, lilies, and other choice flowers. The coffin was surrounded by lighted candles, and a canopy of black cloth was formed above. The altar frontal was draped with black cloth, and on each side were arranged some beautiful plants from the conservatories at the hall. The iron pillars over the sanctuary were covered with crape, and two portions extended cross-wise over the coffin."



St Marys' Chapel standing alongside St Elizabeth's Church 1889

When the new church of St. Elizabeth's was opened in 1889, St. Mary's Chapel was demolished, and the bricks were used to extend the school of St Mary's which had been

opened in 1872. This is the reason that, although the church is called St Elizabeth's, the parish school is called St Mary's.

1.3 St Elizabeth's Church (1888 - Present)

St Elizabeth's Church is in the Early Decorated style¹³ to the design of Peter Paul Pugin (1851-1904), youngest son of Augustus Welby Pugin, the architect of Scarisbrick Hall. It is built with stone facings of Woolton stone and dressings of Runcorn stone. The 1893 the Lea Handbook to Ormskirk states the cost of building the Church as £10,000.

In total the church is 107' long, 38' wide and 41' high to the ceiling of the nave. The internal stonework, except for the altar, choir balustrade and the font, which use Caen stone, is of white Stourton. The tower, which has three stages, is 90' high and the belfry stage is pierced on all four sides with openings with tracery heads filled with louvres. The main roof is covered in Bresley tiles.

The principal contractors for the build were Treasure and Son from Shrewsbury, with the altar and font being supplied by Boulton's of Cheltenham. Hardman and Powell of Birmingham supplied the tabernacle doors and the gates to the baptistry, who subsequently supplied the stained-glass windows in the church. The parquet floor and the oak benches were made by Bennet Furnishings Company of London and Glasgow¹⁴.

The account in the Ormskirk Advertiser¹⁵ shows the internal arrangement at the opening of the church:

'The Church consists of nave, chancel, the Castéja chantry, and one aisle on the gospel side, tower, baptistry etc. The chancel which is apsidal in form is divided from the nave by a stone chancel arch and is lighted by two light windows with cusped and traceried heads in each bay, the centre window being higher than the others. The Castéja chantry is on the Gospel side and is approached from the outside through a private porch. It consists of two bays divided by a stone arch, one bay of which has an arch opening into the chancel, the arch of the other opening into the nave which is divided into six bays.'

The aisle is on the Gospel side and has an arcading supporting the clerestory, which is pierced with three light windows, with cusped and traceried heads. The nave is lighted on the south side with two light windows, with cusped and traceried heads. There is an organ gallery at the west end, supported by three arches, above which is a balustrade, highly moulded, and wrought in Caen stone. In the gable at the west end is a four light traceried window, beneath the gallery are three small windows with traceried heads.'

There have been several changes to the interior of St Elizabeth's since it was built. Structurally the most significant change was made in 1923-24. In July 1923, Andre Marquis de Castéja sold Scarisbrick Hall and its contents and the family's link with Scarisbrick was severed. On 5th July Weld & Weld, Andre's solicitors, wrote to the Abbot of Douai saying the Marquis¹⁶ *"desires to present this (the Castéja Chantry) to the owners of the church together with the pews and screen separating the chantry from the church"*. He goes on to ask that the *"chantry be turned into a Lady Chapel as a memorial to the parishioners who fell during the war, and a Memorial tablet in marble to be erected as a memento giving the names of the soldiers, including Count Emmanuel de Castéja"*. The Dowager Marchioness (Andre's mother) presented a group of Madonna and Child by Luca della Robbia to be placed near the altar. The Castéja Chantry was opened up to the main body of the church and the Lady altar was moved to its new position under the south window of the chantry.

In 1924 a low-pressure hot water heating apparatus was installed by Young, Austen and Young of May Buildings, Liverpool. As well as a boiler and radiators, the installation included running a 2" pipe under the clerestory windows so that the possibility of a down draft is 'obviated'. This can be clearly seen on an old postcard of the church's interior¹⁷.

The stained-glass windows in the church, which are described in detail later, were installed over several decades. The first stained glass to be installed was the one immediately behind the high altar, which depicts the Visitation. It cost £100 and was presented by the Catholic tenantry, being fitted shortly after the opening of the new church¹⁸.

The inscription reads:

'In memoriam perennem Remegii de Biaudos Scarisbrick et Emmanuelis de Castéja hujus ecclesiae fundatorum, Catholici haud ingratis Coloni hanc fenestram posuerunt die viii mensis Decembris 1889'

"In perpetual memory of Rémy de Biaudos Scarisbrick and Emmanuel de Castéja the founders of this church, the very grateful Catholic tenantry erected this window 8th December 1889"

The window behind the Lady Altar was installed in 1939 to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of St Elizabeth's.

At some time after 1924, wooden panelling was installed around the lower walls of the Sanctuary. This was almost certainly to overcome a problem with rising damp; the church having been built on a swampy area.

The final major changes came between 1965 and 1970 because of guidance given by Vatican II. Father Mark Ackers supervised the extension of the predella and the installation of a new oak altar which allowed Mass to be said with the celebrant facing the congregation. Thankfully, it was agreed not to change the original High Altar. The oak lectern and credence table also date from this time.



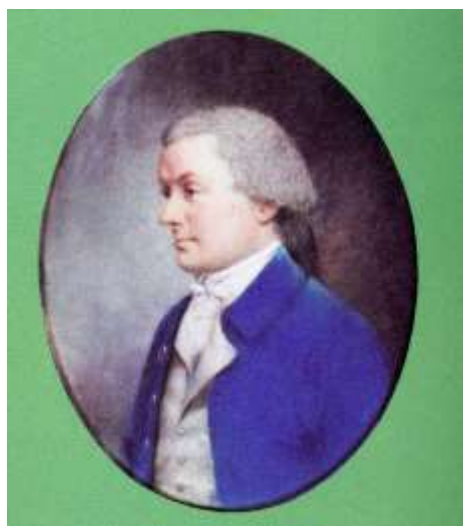
Sanctuary with Angel Decoration circa 1939

At the same time significant changes to the interior decoration were made, with the angels, which decorated the Sanctuary and Lady Chapel walls, being removed. The current Sanctuary and Lady Chapel ceilings date to this time, but some of the other decorations introduced e.g. to the arch around the baptistry, have been painted over in subsequent re-decorations.

Chapter 2: Key Members of the Scarisbrick & Castéja Families

The history of the Scarisbrick and Castéja family is too extensive to give a full description here, so this section will be limited to information on the later members of the family who were particularly associated with St Mary's and St Elizabeth's.

2.1 Thomas Scarisbrick née Eccleston (1785-1833)



Thomas was the eldest son of Thomas Eccleston-Scarisbrick and his wife Eleonora Clifton of Lytham Hall.

Thomas inherited Scarisbrick on the death of his father in 1809¹⁹ and changed his name to Scarisbrick as required by his father's will. He purchased the old tithe barn and converted it for use as a chapel for the Catholic tenantry of the estate since he was having Scarisbrick Hall renovated.

In 1815, he married Sybella Georgina Farrington but they had no children so when he died he was succeeded by his brother Charles.

An extract from his obituary²⁰ gives an outline of the man who has been described as "Progressive Lancashire Agriculturalist"²¹

"The agricultural improvements which have, during late years, rendered the county of Lancaster as conspicuous as any other district in this kingdom, owe, in a very great measure, their use and subsequent success to his active and enterprising spirit. He loved the theory as well as the practice of the most interesting science which can engage the attention of the human intellect."

"...he was one of the most engaging men of the present day ... and had the constitution of his country permitted it, (i.e. if he was not a Catholic) his knowledge and talents would have given him weight in the public estimation, and pointed him out as possessing the qualification necessary to form an active and useful senator."

2.2 Charles Scarisbrick (1801-1860)



Charles was the third son of Thomas Eccleston-Scarisbrick. Like many previous generations of his family, he was educated at the Jesuit College at Stonyhurst, and was brought up a staunch Roman Catholic. He inherited the Wrightington estates on the death of his father and in 1833 he also inherited the Scarisbrick estate.

Thomas Eccleston's will was bitterly challenged by Charles' sisters²² who felt their father had never intended for one son to have all the estates. They fought him through the high courts for several years, but the case was eventually found in his favour.

Although he never married, Charles had three children by his mistress Mary Ann Braithwaite who was a gardener's daughter. He lived with her and the children at his town house in Pall Mall, London. Whilst his children were brought up as Protestants, the religion of their mother, he remained a staunch Roman Catholic.

When Charles inherited Scarisbrick Hall in 1833, he set about creating a mansion in the Gothic style to house his collection of antiques and carvings. It is not clear when Charles first met Augustus Welby Pugin, but in 1836²³ he commissioned him to make a garden seat and the rebuilding of Scarisbrick Hall followed later.

As well as his interest in the arts, Charles²⁴ had a keen interest in, and understanding of, the sciences; he designed rockets and tested them on Martin Mere. He took a keen interest in agriculture, experimenting with new crop varieties.

Charles was involved in many businesses, he owned coal mines at Wigan, a chemical factory at Shevington and he installed pumps at Crossens to ensure that Martin Mere remained free from flood waters.

Charles died at Scarisbrick Hall and was buried, following a strictly private funeral, in the graveyard of St. Mary's Chapel. His will²⁵ stated that all the land, property and assets he had bought during his lifetime were to provide an income for his three children.

2.3 Lady Anne Scarisbrick (1788-1872)



Anne was the third child of Thomas Eccleston- Scarisbrick. In 1807 she married Sir Thomas Windsor Hunloke, of Wingerworth Hall Derbyshire, at St Mary's Chapel in Scarisbrick; she was nineteen and he was thirty-five.

The couple who had four children, moved to Paris shortly after their youngest son died in 1815²⁶, probably due to financial difficulties. Sir Thomas died there in 1816. Whilst Anne continued to live in Paris, she was a frequent visitor to the UK. Lady Anne had a colourful life, being a close friend (some say lover) of the Bachelor Duke of

Devonshire, who paid for a magnificent house in Sydenham for her, where she lived, with her daughter Charlotte, from 1855-1861²⁷.

When Charles died, Anne inherited Scarisbrick and made a triumphant²⁸ return in June 1861 to take possession of the estates where she lived until her death. She employed Edward Welby Pugin, Augustus Pugin's elder son, to complete the lavish renovation of Scarisbrick Hall.

2.4 Eliza Margaret de Biaudos - Scarisbrick, Marchioness de Castéja (1810-1878)



Eliza was the youngest daughter of Lady Anne. She was born at Wingerworth and was educated by the English Augustinian canonesses in Paris.

On the 20th July 1835, she married a Frenchman, Rémy Léon de Biaudos, Marquis de Castéja, at the British Embassy in Paris. They had only one child, Léon "Clarence" de Biaudos, born 1st September 1838, who died only two weeks later (16th Sept 1838).

Eliza returned to England with her husband in 1870 due to the uprisings in Paris and came to Scarisbrick on the death of Lady Anne when she inherited the Scarisbrick estates. She adopted the 'Scarisbrick' as part of her name by royal licence.

Eliza's death at Scarisbrick Hall was sudden and unexpected. Her funeral was conducted in the old St Mary's church and then her body was transported for internment at the family mausoleum in Wingerworth. The works to build St Elizabeth's were initiated shortly after

her death and following the consecration of the church in her memory her body was finally brought back and laid to rest in the Castéja vault.

An extract from her obituary ²⁹reads: *“The death of the Marchioness has cast considerable gloom over the neighbourhood, where her ladyship was very popular for her amiable disposition and her practical benevolence. She had not been in good health for some time, but her condition did not preclude her from taking outdoor exercise, and this she continued to do up to Saturday last on which day she drove out. On Sunday, during the early part of the day, the Marchioness was apparently in spirits more buoyant than usual. In the evening, however, after entertaining at dinner, company her ladyship had staying at the Hall, she was suddenly seized with a paralytic stroke. The Marchioness suffered acutely until Wednesday when she died, after receiving the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. The Protestants of Scarisbrick, equal with those of the Catholic community, shared her liberality, a very recent and praiseworthy action on her part being the gift of a suitable site of a statute acre and a half of land, near Scarisbrick Church, for the building of a new none denominational school. The tenants on the Scarisbrick Estate ever received the utmost kindness and consideration at the hands of the late Marchioness, and in their welfare she took a lively interest. The great improvements undertaken on the whole of the estate are evidence of this. Immediately her Ladyship’s death became known, the flag was hoisted at half-mast on the church tower and muffled peals were rung on the bells. In recording the death of the Marchioness we may say that during the late Franco- German war, prior to taking possession of the Scarisbrick estate – she distinguished herself by unremitting attention to the wounded and starving sufferers in Paris, and her memory will ever be treasured in France.”*

2.5 Rémy Léon de BIAUDOS-SCARISBRICK (1805-1899)³⁰



Rémy Léon became Marquis de Castéja on the death of his father in 1828. He was an elite member of French aristocracy.

In the revolution of 1830 Rémy defended Charles X as he fled from Paris. After leaving the army in 1835 he married Eliza Margaret.

In 1870 he was given the responsibility of the resources of the National Guards. He took part in all the uprisings in Paris until 1871 and his name is on the first list of medals given after the siege of Paris.

The Marquis de Castéja had 3 illegitimate children. Eliza brought them all up in the warmth of her home; this complicated family was an understanding one. Rémy Léon recognised the eldest on his majority and, with his wife, adopted him in 1872, a rare occurrence in those times.

Following Lady Anne's death Rémy took over the management of the Scarisbrick estates, using the legal and administration skills he had developed from working alongside his father.

Rémy and Eliza lived in Scarisbrick until her death in 1878. Although the estates passed to Rémy (because they had been disentailed) he returned to Paris leaving the management of the estate to his son and heir Marie Emmanuel.

In 1887 Rémy and his son decided to build a new church at Scarisbrick in memory of his wife. Pugin and Pugin, the famous London architects, were engaged and Peter Paul Pugin, was the main architect for the church which was to be dedicated to St Elizabeth.

Rémy died in 1899, in Paris where he was laid to rest in the beautiful Père-Lachaise cemetery.

His estates in Scarisbrick, Halsall and Downholland passed automatically to his eldest son, Marie Emmanuel, Marquis de Castéja.

2.6 Marie Emmanuel ALVAR de BIAUDOS-SCARISBRICK (1849-1911)



Marie Emmanuel was the illegitimate son of Rémy Léon and Mercedes Alvarez. One rumour, in the Castéja family, is that Mercedes was the illegitimate daughter of Lady Anne Scarisbrick and William Cavendish the bachelor 6th Duke of Devonshire³¹.

In 1874 he married Gabrielle de Faret de Fournès, daughter of the Marquis de Fournès. The marriage certificate refers to Marie Emmanuel having been decorated with the 'médaille militaire'.

When Marie Emmanuel returned to Scarisbrick with his bride in 1874 he was accompanied by his father the Marquis and arrived by train at Ormskirk station. According to the Ormskirk Advertiser:

"Joyous peals were rung on the bells of the Parish Church, and the Volunteers, headed by their band, met the party at the station and escorted them through the town. The Marquis

was much pleased with this spontaneous mark of respect and invited the Volunteers to luncheon at Scarisbrick Hall”.

The couple had four children: Marie André (1875-1961); Marie Adolph Alphonse Francis, (1876-1922); Marie Robert Stanislas (1879 – 1980); Marie Emmanuel Rémy (1880-1915).

Marquis Marie Emmanuel died at Scarisbrick Hall on Saturday 23rd September 1911, after a very short illness³². He was buried in the family vault at St Elizabeth’s. According to an account in the Ormskirk Advertiser³³

...the remains of the deceased had rested in the private chapel at Scarisbrick Hall overnight ...at a little before 11am the appointed bearers composed of some of the leading farmers of Scarisbrick, Halsall and Downholland ‘ bore the coffin ‘ on the shoulders of the stalwart bearers through the wood to the church’ ‘The procession, which was headed by Mr Superintendent Hodgson and a posse of police, was as follows: The coffin, immediately followed by the nurse and two nuns, The Marquis, and the family mourners, the household staff, the gamekeepers, the gardeners, the farm employees, and the estate workmen.’

When the cortège arrived at church, two rows of children from the three Scarisbrick schools, and those of Halsall and Haskayne, lined the path to the church. The girls were dressed in white with black sashes and the boys in sombre clothes. The church had been draped in purple with ferns and palms flanking the altar and was full to capacity.

Gabrielle survived him for many years dying in Paris in 1937.

2.7 Marie André Léon ALVAR de BIAUDOS de CASTÉJA (1875-1961)



André, the eldest son of Marie Emmanuel and Gabrielle was born in Paris. In 1898 he married Pauline Viel de Lunas d'Espeuilles in a private ceremony in Paris. After their honeymoon, the couple returned to Scarisbrick. The event was extensively reported in the Ormskirk Advertiser³⁴ and celebrations stretched over two days. On the first day the couple came by rail and carriage to Scarisbrick Hall.

The next day children from all the local schools marched to Scarisbrick Hall, were treated to entertainment and tea and each child was given a medal to commemorate the home-coming of Count and Countess André.

The couple had three children: - Charles Gabriel (1899 – 1930); Robert Léon Antonin (1900-1920); Bernard George (1901-1999).

In 1923, André sold the Scarisbrick estates, returning to his native France. Before leaving, he gave the Priest in charge of St Elizabeth's, Scarisbrick the sum of £120p.a, of which £100 was for the priest's maintenance, and £20 towards the upkeep of his family vault and for the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the repose of the souls of the members of his family³⁵.

At some time during the 1940's Andre separated from his wife Pauline and went to live Tenerife, while she remained in Paris. After Pauline died André married for a second time in 1952. He died in 1961 and is buried in Santa Cruz Tenerife.

Chapter 3: Building and Furnishing St Elizabeth's

3.1 Architects - Pugin & Pugin (1851-1928)³⁶

Pugin and Pugin were a London based family firm of ecclesiastical architects. The firm originated in the Westminster office of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852), the great pioneer and exponent of the Gothic revival in England, the principal architect for Scarisbrick Hall, and the designer of the interior decoration and architectural details of the Houses of Parliament in London.

His sons Cuthbert Welby Pugin (1840-1928) and Peter Paul Pugin (1851-1904), known as PPP, succeeded to the firm after the death of their older brother Edward Welby Pugin (1834-75) who worked with Lady Anne on Scarisbrick Hall.

They worked exclusively in the Gothic style and produced an astonishing number of buildings, alterations and furnishings for Roman Catholic churches in almost every diocese in Britain. Most of their buildings, like St Elizabeth's, incorporated external carvings of saints and clerics but the sculptors remain unknown.

Peter Paul Pugin was the principle architect responsible for St Elizabeth's.



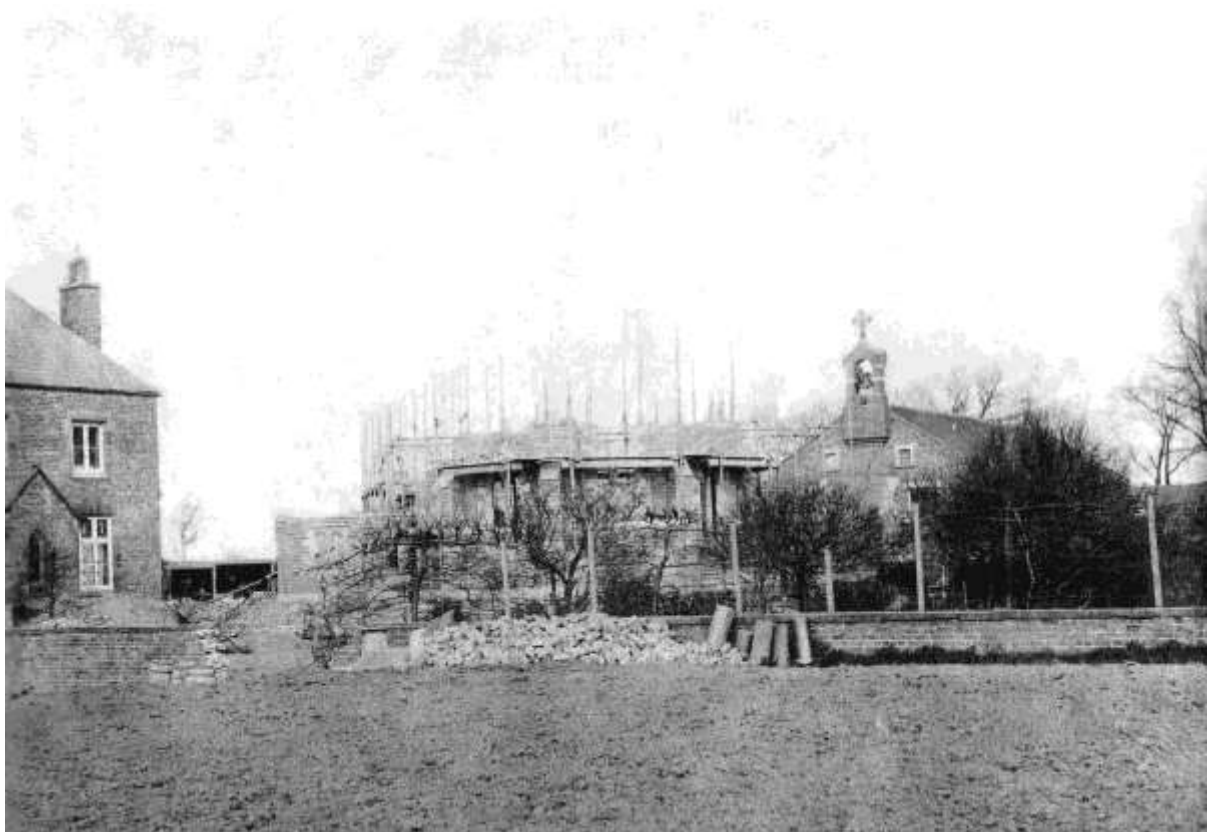
3.2 Builders - Treasure & Son, Cheltenham

The main contractors for the building work were Treasure and Sons of Cheltenham. This family business, founded in 1747, is still in existence today and specialises in the renovation of historic buildings.

Documents at Lancashire Record Office³⁷ show that there was a detailed agreement between the Count and the builders, with the Marquis reserving the right to replace any materials which he did not approve of. As the following letter shows, the relationship was a good one:

July 2nd 1889 – a letter from Count Emmanuel to Messrs Treasure and Sons³⁸

I have just returned from Scarisbrick where I have been with my father, it was the first time the Marquis saw the Church which you have now completed. I am pleased to be able to tell you the Marquis was charmed with the building, he and I find that apart from the architectural beauty, the Church is built in a very substantial and satisfactory manner. We both very sincerely and truly compliment you on the thoroughly good workmanship. I feel great pleasure in being the mouthpiece of my father the Marquis in conveying to you his satisfaction with the Church and having this opportunity to address you in this letter.



3.3 Sculptor -Comte Eugène Nicolas Clément D'Astanières (1841-1918)³⁹

Eugène, Comte d'Astanières, sculptor of the 'Omnipotentia Supplex' statue on the Lady Altar was born in Paris in 1841. He was a courageous and highly decorated cavalry officer who was severely injured in the Franco- Prussian war of 1870.

During his prolonged recuperation he turned his attention to art and studied extensively with Jean Falguière, the preeminent French sculptor of the day. D'Astanière quickly mastered the art of sculpture and was recognized by the Salon of 1882 with a Gold Medal for his first exhibited work.

Around 1897 he settled in Capbreton in South West France; his studio was in his villa on the shore. He produced a considerable number of works, many of them on a religious theme. As well as his works still at Capbreton there are many in churches, state museums and private collections around France. He died at Capbreton where another copy of the statue of 'Omnipotentia Supplex' stands on his grave.

3.4 Stained glass & Metal Work⁴⁰ - Hardman Powell & Co

The stained-glass windows were designed and made by Hardman's of Birmingham, a company who had a long working relationship with the Pugin family and were also responsible for stained glass and metal work at Scarisbrick Hall.

The Hardman family established a button, token and medal manufacturing company in Birmingham in the middle of the 18th century. The firm, which by the late 1830s included representatives of the Powell family, was a supplier of metalwork to A.W.N. Pugin made to his design. At Pugin's request the company began producing stained glass in 1845, also to his design.

After Pugin's death, his pupil, John Hardman Powell, returned to Birmingham where he was the company's principal designer during the design and manufacture of the early stained-glass windows at St Elizabeth's. He was talented and deeply religious, a Roman Catholic like Pugin and his fellow partners in Hardman.

3.5 Painter - Diogène Ulysse Napoléon Maillart (1840-1926)⁴¹

Maillart, the painter of the Station of the Cross at St Elizabeth's, was born into a family of small farmers in Picardie not far away from the Castéja family's chateau at Framerville a place where Rémy Léon spent a part of his childhood. Maillart also worked in a village near Rouen, where Gabrielle, Marchioness de Castéja, lived⁴². It is therefore likely that the family had known the artist for some time before commissioning the works for St Elizabeth's.

He studied at the École des Beaux-arts in the workshop of Léon Cogniet. He won the Prix de Rome in 1864, aged only twenty-three.

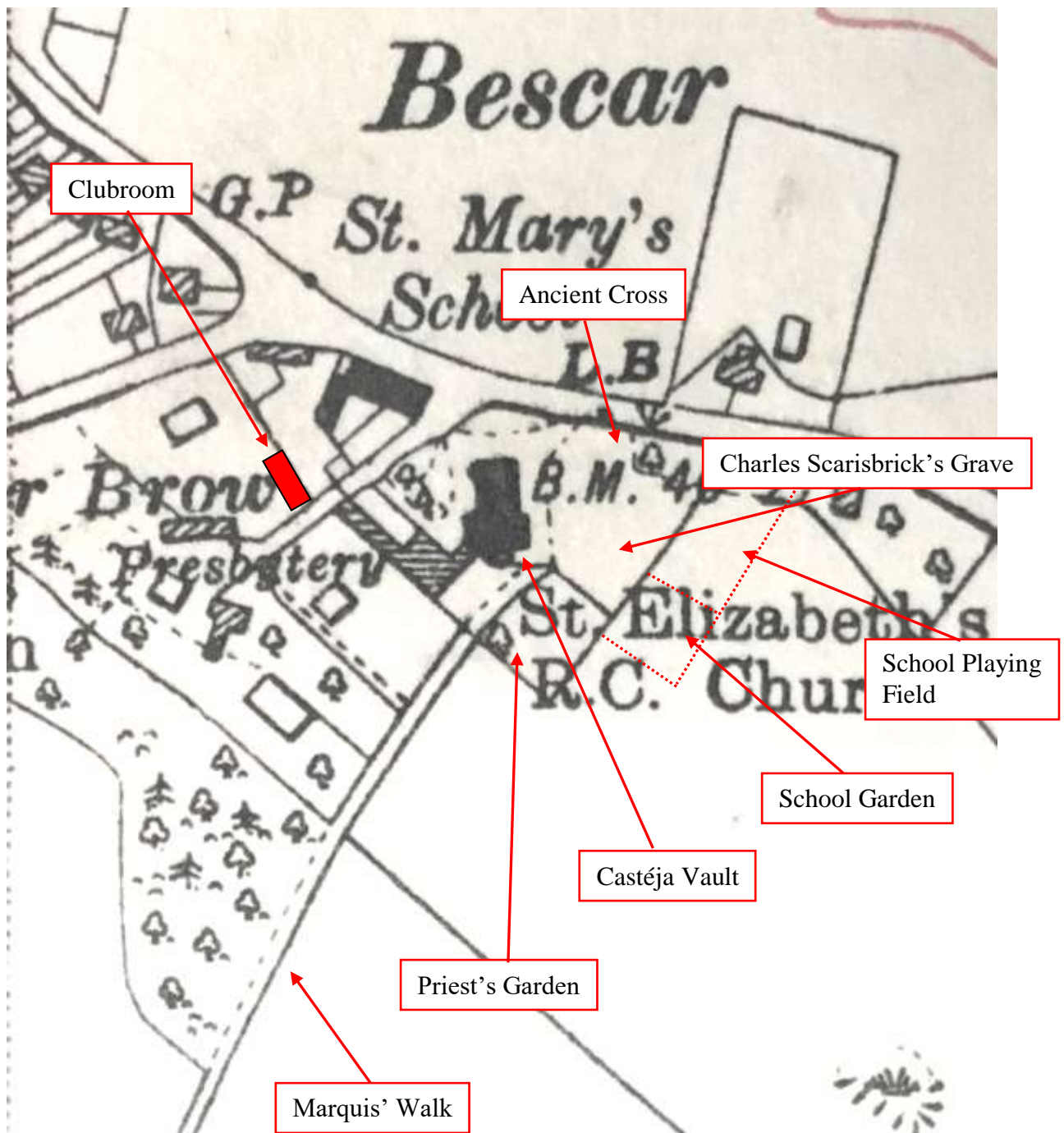
After returning from Rome in 1869, he was appointed a Professor of Drawing at the Gobelins Manufactory. From 1873 to 1877, he was the Inspector of Art Works and exhibited in the Salon every year until his death in Paris.

In addition to his painting, he was also a prolific author, writing a work on Byzantine art and a general history of the fine arts. He became a knight in the Légion d'honneur in 1885 and is buried in the Cimetière du Montparnasse.

3.6 Cabinet Maker - Joseph Mathias Fawke (1842-1918)

Joseph Fawke made both the Lady Altar and the Organ casing at St Elizabeth's⁴³. He was born in Haverford West in Pembrokeshire, the son of a cabinet maker. The places of birth of Joseph's siblings in the census records show the family moved to Southport between 1847 and 1855. In the 1861 census the family were living at 241 Lord Street and Joseph was an apprentice cabinet maker to his father, who employed 3 boys at the time.

In 1872 Joseph married Kate Nightingale at Holy Trinity Church Southport. They had four children and the censuses show that the family continued to live on Lord Street until Joseph's death. He is buried with his wife Kate in Duke Street Cemetery in Southport.



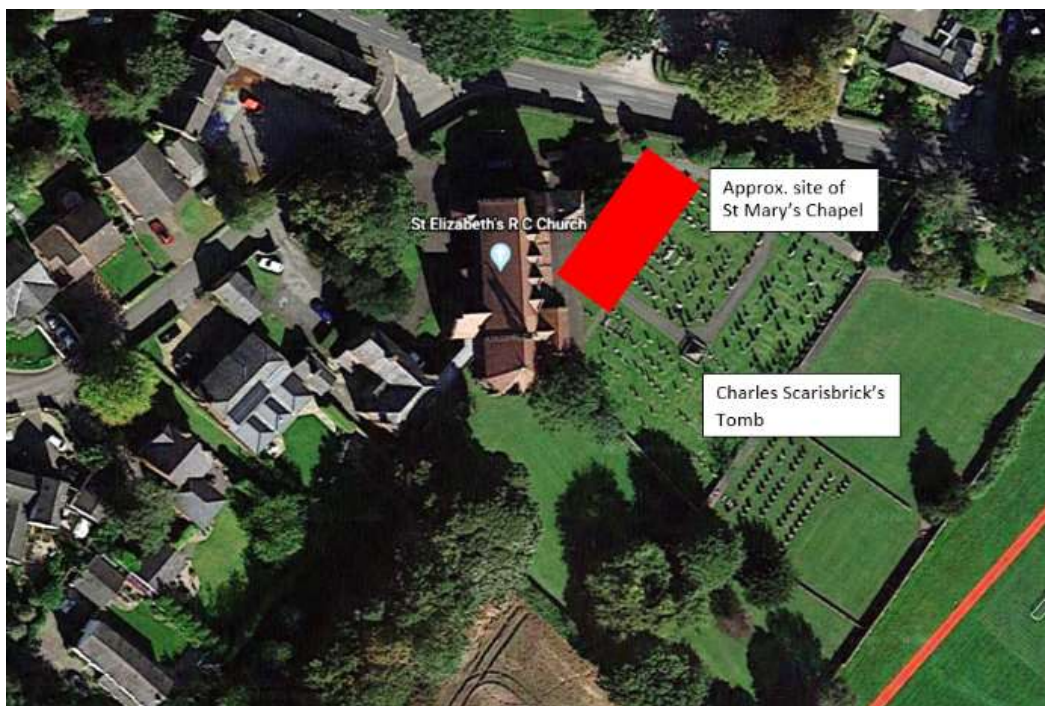
Extract from 1928 Ordnance Survey Map

Chapter 4: The Church Grounds

The church grounds have changed overtime as St Elizabeth's has been built and the graveyard extended. The plan shows an OS map of the site in 1972 and gives the details of previous uses of the area of the new graveyard and highlights some of the features which will be described in the following section.

4.1 The Graveyard

The positions of the oldest graves in the cemetery are difficult to understand, until you know that the old church of St Mary's originally stood in what is now the central portion of the graveyard. The oldest graves are therefore at the east and south sides of the cemetery with the grave of Charles Scarisbrick in the centre.



Aerial View 2019

Notable graves

The cemetery contains many surnames which are still common is Scarisbrick today and several of the priests and teachers who have served the Church and school are buried here. The first Parish Priest to be buried here is **Fr Richard Benedict Hoole** (1826-1865) who is also named in the Benedictine trust document.

Close by is the grave of **Fr James Benedict Rowley**, Parish Priest at the time St Elizabeth's was built. Many of his letters to Hardman's, the stained-glass suppliers, exist in the Hardman archives in Birmingham Central Library and show him to have been meticulous in his approach.

In the same grave is **Fr Francis O'Shaugnessy** who came to Scarisbrick to recover from the effects of WW1 during which he had been decorated with the Military Cross for his services to soldiers wounded and killed on the battlefields.

Between the holly bushes opposite the bottom of the church steps is the grave of **Fr Bruno Teeley** (1955-1965) and **Fr Mark Ackers** (1965-1970). Fr Teeley was responsible for negotiating with the LEA regarding the building of a new school, although it wasn't started until 1974 and Fr Mark was responsible for the reordering of the interior of the church post Vatican II.

Fr Cuthbert Griffin (1925-1955) one of the longest serving Parish Priest's is buried close to **Miss Mary Mackintosh** who was a teacher at St Marys from 1931 until 1970 and Head Teacher from 1960. These graves can be found close to the Castéja entrance, whilst the grave of **Miss Mary Baines**, Head Teacher from 1899-1917 can be found in the central section.

A full list of the priests who have served at St Mary's and St Elizabeth's is in Appendix 3.



At the centre of the graveyard is the tomb of **Charles Scarisbrick**, which bears the inscription *'Much respected by his numerous tenants & neighbours'*. Charles was buried at St Mary's on Saturday 12th May 1860. In accordance with his wishes it was strictly private:

'Respecting my own funeral it is my wish to be buried privately in the burial ground I have enclosed round my Scarisbrick Chapel: no undertaker to be employed: but mourning to be made for the men servants by the tailors that now work for them: the women's mourning to be made by the country milliners. No invitations to relatives or others to attend. A plain oak coffin, hand-made- no hearse

but the coffin to be borne by six or eight of my keepers....to go through the East gate by as

*direct a route as practical, thro' the Cliffs to the South west angle of the wall enclosing the cemetery, where an opening may be made in the hedge to pass through in to the ground'*⁴⁴

"The melancholy procession he had ordered left Scarisbrick Hall at 11.30 am. and his remains were deposited in a vault in the centre of the burial ground; the service for the dead being read most impressively by the Rev Margison"⁴⁵

The newest graves are in the graveyard extension, opened and blessed by Bishop Kevin O'Connor in 1993. This was formerly the school garden and playing field of St Mary's old school. The school garden was initiated by Miss Richmond who was head teacher from 1930 to 1960 and was continued by Miss Mackintosh who first came to teach at Scarisbrick in 1931. It was a source of vegetables and a home for chickens during WW2. The garden was separated from the playfield by a hedge and in the time after the new school was opened in 1974 the area became very overgrown. Over the course of several weeks, the area was cleared and drained by the Halsall, Simpson and Houghton families under the 'supervision' of Fr Leo Arkwright.

4.2 The Marquis' Walk, Entrance to the Castéja Chantry and Family Vault

Moving back towards the church the private entrance for the Marquis and his family can be seen on the side of St Elizabeth's and continuing towards the Priest's Garden the Castéja vault can be seen behind what is now the Lady Chapel.



Castéja Tomb



Marquis' Walk

In an 1888 an agreement⁴⁶ was made between the Priest in Charge of St Mary's and the Marquis de Castéja for a new path which would not pass through the graveyard to the road, but which would cross the garden in front of the presbytery to a gate leading to the 'Marquis' Walk'; a newly created path lined with lime trees which went straight to the Hall. This path was for the exclusive use of *'themselves, their families and guests'*, but not their servants. This allowed the Castéja family and their guests to enter their private chantry in the church by the specially designed side door. The remaining lime trees are subject to a tree preservation order.

The family vault contains the remains of Eliza, Marchioness de Castéja, whose remains were brought back to Scarisbrick in 1890. Her adopted son Marquis Marie Emmanuel is also buried here and there are inscriptions for both Rémy Léon, Eliza's husband and Emmanuel, youngest son of Marie Emmanuel who was killed in the 1st World War.

4.3 The Presbytery

The presbytery seems to have been built in the 1860s. The 1839 tithe map shows Fr Richard Hoole, the Parish Priest, living at a house in Bescar, where he is also listed in the 1851 and 1861 censuses. St Mary's chapel house appears in the census for the first time in 1871. Before this the priests had mainly lived at the Hall, although there is a record of Fr Robert Johnson living at Limekiln House near Heaton's Bridge in the 1780s.

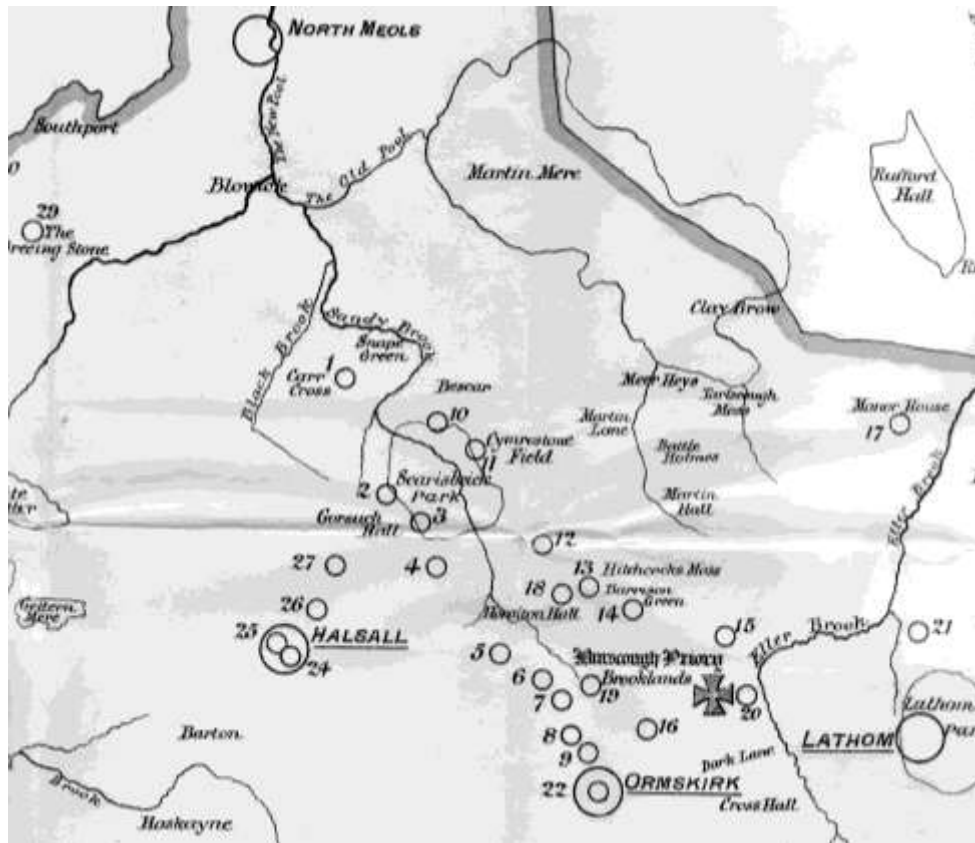
The presbytery was not linked to St Mary's chapel. The cloisters were added when St Elizabeth's was built and are clearly shown in the 1893 ordnance survey map. As well as quarters for the Parish Priest, the presbytery had a self-contained flat for a resident housekeeper.

4.4 The Wayside Cross



In the area called the "Hundred of West Derby" there are upwards of one hundred ancient crosses recorded on old ordnance survey maps.

The ancient cross in the graveyard at St Elizabeth's, which is not in its original position, is one of a series of eighteen⁴⁷ mediaeval crosses within a circle of 4-mile radius of Scarisbrick.



There are three long ranges of crosses leading from Scarisbrick Park to Ormskirk Parish Church, Halsall Church, and the site of Burscough Priory. They are thought to have been resting places for funeral processions for those who had rights of burial at these ancient churches.

A description of one of the crosses on the west side of Scarisbrick Park, says the cross stood six feet high. Elsewhere some of the crosses are described as being made of oak fixed in the stone bases.⁴⁸

4.5 The Foundation Stone for St. Elizabeth's Church.

The foundation stone can be seen internally from the Sanctuary and externally to the left of the Castéja tomb. It was laid on 18th December 1887⁴⁹ by the Right Rev. Monsignor John Fisher, D.D. who was for many years a friend of Lady Anne Scarisbrick, her daughter the Marchioness Eliza and all the Castéja family. He was assisted by the Right Rev Abbot Hickey of Ormskirk and Rev Father James B Rowley, the Parish Priest of St Mary's Chapel. Among those present at the laying of the stone were Count and Countess Marie Emmanuel de Castéja, Mr P Pugin, Messrs James Forshaw, James Culshaw and James Charnock (school managers), Thomas Munford (land steward) and a large number of the tenantry of the Scarisbrick estate. Despite the weather which was described by the journalist present as 'boisterous and inclement', several hundred people attended the event⁵⁰.



A temporary altar had been erected near the site of the foundation stone, and here Monsignor Fisher performed the first part of the service, and, after the stone had been laid, the Litany of the Saints was recited. The Count presented to Monsignor Fischer a silver trowel with an ivory handle with the following inscription:

'Presented by the Count and Countess de Castéja to the Right Reverend Monsignor Fisher D.D., V.G, on his laying the foundation stone of the Church of St Elizabeth at Scarisbrick on 18th December 1887'. A bottle was placed in the cavity beneath the stone. In it were placed a

copy of 'The Tablet', a complete collection of the jubilee coins of the realm, and a parchment scroll. On the scroll was inscribed in Latin 'On the 18th day of December, in the year 1887, the foundation stone of this Church dedicated to St Elizabeth and built in memory of the late Marchioness de Castéja by the Marquis, Count and Countess de Castéja, was blessed and laid by the Right Reverend John Henry Fisher, D.D., V.G., domestic prelate of his Holiness Leo XIII, being Pope, and celebrating the jubilee of his priesthood; Bernard being Bishop of Liverpool, Victoria being Queen of Great Britain, reigning 50 years; and the Rev J B Rowley OSB being the priest of the mission. Pugin and Pugin Architects'.⁵¹

4.6 The Bells

St Elizabeth's has two bells:



The first can be seen from outside the church above the roof over the chancel arch, and is the one which had hung in the old tithe barn church of St Mary's and summoned the faithful for over 40 years.



The second hangs in the tower, it is a single 9 ½ cwt bell, 36" in diameter and 28" high and was cast by Charles Carr Ltd of Smethwick. This bell, which is often rung before Mass on a Sunday and at other auspicious occasions, was given by the Castéja family on the occasion of the marriage of Count André, the

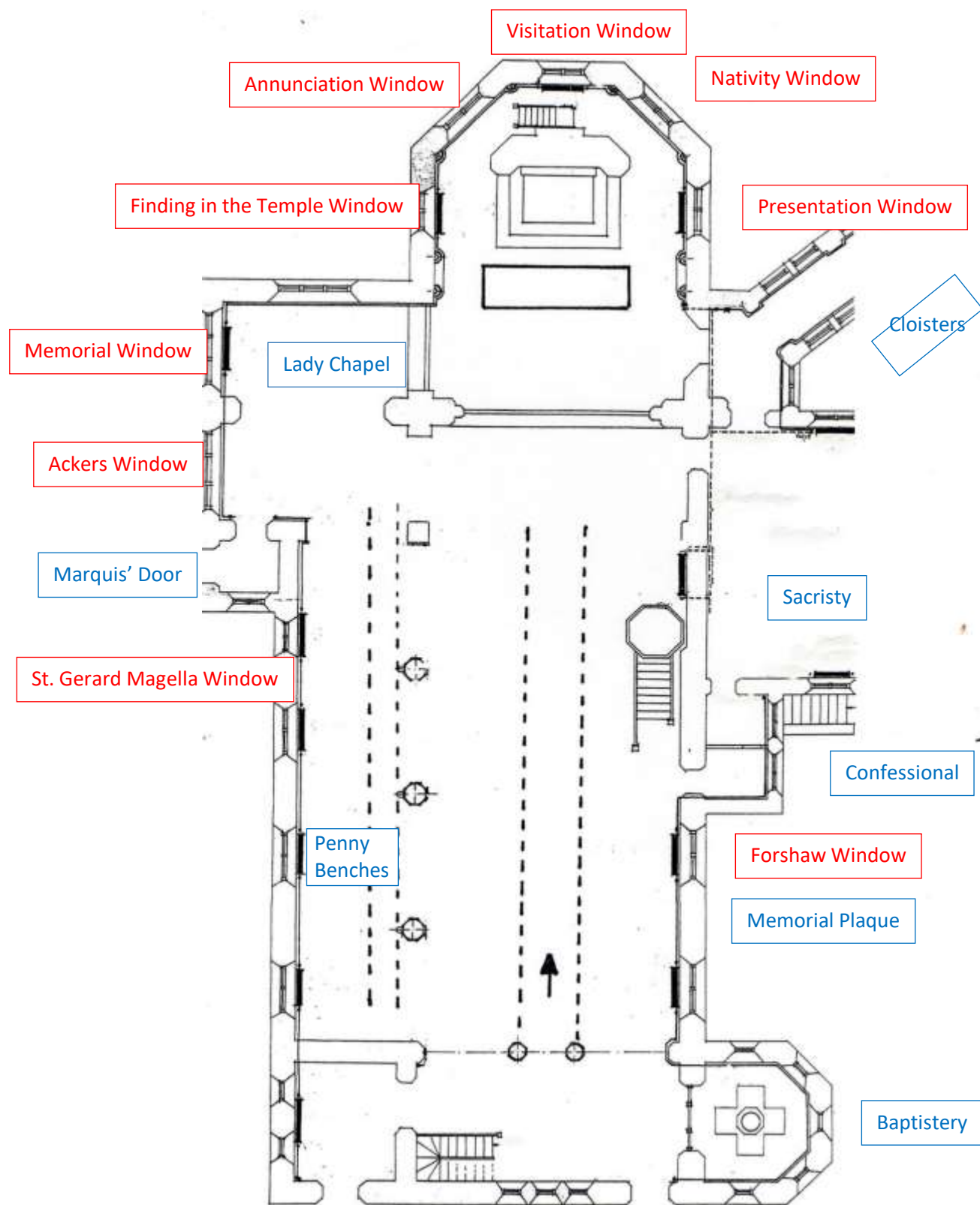
eldest son, and was named 'Pauline' in honor of his bride. The inscription on the bell reads:

"I summon the faithful, I mourn the dead, I give praise to God. In thanksgiving for the marriage of his beloved son Andre, in the year 1898, Emmanuel Biaudos de Castéja gave me in honour of St Elizabeth, the Marquis de Castéja being my father"

Blessing of a Bell at Scarisbrick

"An interesting ceremony took place on Monday, when the Right Rev Dr. Whiteside, Roman Catholic Bishop of Liverpool, blessed the bell. "The ceremony opened with a recital of several songs these were followed by the blessing of the water, and the washing of the bell with the holy water. When the washing of the bell was completed the Bishop made the sign of the cross on the outside of the bell with the oil of the sick, praying that the bell might be sanctified for the use of the Church. Then the Bishop made the sign of the cross seven times on the outside of the bell with the oil of the sick, and four times on the inside with the Holy Chrism, saying at each unction "May this bell be sanctified and consecrated, O Lord, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost to the honour of St Elizabeth; peace upon thee." The unction was followed by the incense to the bell, and a prayer to God.

After the ceremony, the Bishop, clergy and party were entertained by the Count and Countess to lunch at the hall.⁵². "



Plan of St Elizabeth's Church

Chapter 5: Inside St Elizabeth's

The church is on a raised platform called 'the battlements'. A close inspection of the stone joints on the upper edge of the battlement reveals that there was once a metal balustrade running the full length. This along with the railings surmounting the low wall around the church grounds were removed as part of the war effort for WW2. The holly hedge which now stands above the wall was planted at this time.



St Elizabeth's is entered through double doors surrounded by a stone arch which carries two carved heads at either end. A similar decoration can be found on the external windows; all the 'heads' are different, the carver is unknown. The wooden doors open into a porch situated beneath the bell tower. A Perspex cover in the ceiling shows the place through which the ropes for the main bell once hung.

On entering the church through the glass doors, the stairs to the choir loft are on the right with the Baptistry immediately ahead. It is worth stopping to look at the staircase to the choir which is similar in its design to the staircase in A W N Pugin's house in Ramsgate.

5.1 Three Windows at the Rear of the Church

In her will Ann Maddox left money for the Parish Priest (Fr Griffin)⁵³ *"to use as he thought fit"*. Part of this money was used, to install the stained-glass windows here at the rear of the church and in the baptistry. The windows bear the inscription *"Pray for the soul of Anne Maddox February 1st 1942"*

The three windows depict, from left to right, Blessed Richard Whiting, St. Benedict and

Blessed Hugh Farringdon. All were Benedictine Abbots and no doubt chosen because St Elizabeth's has been served by priests from the Benedictine monastery of Douai since the beginning of the 19th century.



Blessed Richard Whiting was the last Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Glastonbury. When Henry VIII's commissioners arrived there they arrested the abbot, sent him to the Tower of London for questioning and without trial he was returned and martyred in Somerset. The window depicts him holding the Tower of the 14th century church of St. Michael which is on the top of the Tor where he was martyred. The coat of arms in the window is that of Glastonbury Abbey.

St Benedict was the founder of the Monastic Order which bears his name. He was born in Italy around 480 A.D. After leaving his home to devote his to God he spent time in Rome where he became disillusioned with the lax morals and left to live as a hermit. He was subsequently persuaded to become Abbot of a neighbouring monastery where he established his rule. The story goes that the monks rebelled against his strict regime and eventually tried to poison him. Benedict made the sign of the cross before drinking and the cup broke spilling the poisoned wine, hence the broken cup depicted in the window. In another story a raven took away a poisoned piece of bread. The raven and broken chalice seen in this window are part of St Benedict's story and the shield is symbolic of the Benedictine order.

Blessed Hugh Farringdon was the Abbot of Reading Abbey. He was a friend of Henry VIII, helping him to find evidence to justify his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. At the suppression of the monasteries Hugh was accused of High Treason, dragged around the streets of Reading on a hurdle and hung drawn and quartered outside the Abbey. The hand in a reliquary shown in the window represents the hand of St James, the most important relic at Reading. The coat of arms is that of Reading Abbey and the three shells are the symbol of St James seen all along the Pilgrims Way to Santiago.

5.2 The Baptistry

Just outside the Baptistry, the builder's stone can be seen high up on the left-hand side, it bears the inscription *"Treasure and Son. Builders Shrewsbury"*

The apsidal baptistry is located close to the entrance which is liturgically symbolic as it is by baptism that individuals join the Church.

The baptistry gates were made by Messrs Hardman & Powell and bear a Latin inscription:



*"Amultus Lava mea ab unquitate mea" –
"Wash me with love and cleanse me from
my sin"*

Early pictures show that the Baptistry was decorated in a similar style to the high altar, with the 'Gothic designs' typical of Pugin interiors. A very early photograph shows that around the frieze of the Baptistry was written *'In nomine Patris et Filius et Spiritu Sancti Amen.'*

Church records show that the first baptism in the new church was that of James Simpson, son of John and Teresa Simpson nee Charnock on 2nd June 1889.

All the imagery on the font and in the surrounding stained-glass windows is related to events which occur in the Bible or the early life of the Church.

5.2.1 The Baptismal Font



The Caen stone font is octagonal in form with four principal sides. The eight sides recall the eighth day of Christian Holy Week, the first day of the resurrection. St Ambrose⁵⁴ explains that a font should be octagonal "because on the eighth day, by rising, Christ loosens the bondage of death and receives the dead from their graves." Internally the lead lining divides the font into two parts from one of these water flows through a hole to the earth below. The four major sides of the font are decorated with Creation (image on left); Noah in the Ark; the Tree of Life in Eden and a Rod and the

Two Chalices filling with water. The latter represents Moses in Exodus, hitting the rock out of which water flowed. This was a common symbol of the Eucharist.

5.2.2 Baptistery Windows

Clockwise, from the left, the windows are as follows:

1. Augustine is sent by Pope Gregory to preach Christianity to the heathens in England where he landed in 597. St Augustine went on to found the cathedral at Canterbury.

2. St Peter Baptises Cornelius: Acts: 10:34-48

Cornelius was a Roman centurion based at Caesarea and became the first Gentile (non-Jew) to be baptised.

3. John the Baptist baptises Jesus: Matthew 3:13-17

John the Baptist baptised his cousin Jesus in the river Jordan.

4. Ananias baptises St Paul: Acts 9: 10-19

Saul was on his way to persecute the Christians of Damascus when he encountered the voice of Jesus and was struck blind and told to go into the city. In Damascus Ananias baptised Saul, who became Paul and went on to become one of the pillars of the Church.

5. St Augustine baptises St Aethelbert:

The conversion of Aethelbert, King of Kent brought a further 10,000 people to be baptised.



5.3 The Nave⁵⁵

5.3.1 The Stations of the Cross



The fourteen Stations of the Cross were installed in the Church on the eve of its opening. They are painted and enameled on zinc, a very new technique at the time, by the famous French artist Diogène Ulysse Napoléon Maillart (1840-1926). They are hung around the church in frames specifically designed for them by Peter Paul Pugin. Similar works by Maillart can be found in the parish church of Saint Sylvan in Chavily Milon in the French Loire valley.

5.3.2 The Benches

These are solid oak, and like the parquet floor were made by Bennett and Company of London and Glasgow.



By a legal document dated 1887⁵⁶ *"twelve seats or sittings in the body of the church between the centre of the church and the end furthest from the sanctuary shall always be reserved by the incumbent priest for the use, free of charge, of the servants at Scarisbrick Hall"*. The Scarisbrick Almshouses, once known as St Mary's terrace, were also built by the Marquis in 1884 for retired servants from the Hall and estate, and there are benches which still bear plaques stating that they are for *"The Hall"* , *"The Agent"* and *"Almshouses"* but they are no longer in their original position.

When the church was built, most parishioners would have to walk to church in the rain, so the benches were thoughtfully equipped with brass handles to hold umbrellas. The handles are still on the benches, but the original cast iron drip trays under them to collect the water and protect the wooden floor are now missing, only the fixture remains can be seen.

Bench Rents

This was a system by which the Church could collect more funds. Parishioners paid a weekly or monthly sum to have the privilege of having particular seats reserved for their sole use. These the benches in the centre of the Church, have metal cardholders into which a card with the family name was inserted. The system was dropped some time ago but parishioners who have lived in the parish all their lives still tend to use the same benches whenever possible – old habits die hard!

The “Penny Benches”

This is the name given to the side benches which do not have the cardholders. Scarisbrick was a large farming area; each year it was the custom for labourers, usually from the west of Ireland, to come and help with the digging of the potato crop. They lived on the farms and, being Catholics, came to Sunday Mass. They could not be expected to pay bench rent so used the side or “penny” benches putting a penny in the collection!

5.3.3 The Dedication plaque



This can be seen on wall of the main aisle between the first two windows. At the top of the plaque are the skillfully carved Arms granted to the Marquis Rémy Léon and Marchioness Eliza by Queen Victoria. The beautiful picture (left) was sent to us by Count Jean-Denis de Castéja and is a great help with the interpretation. The Marquis' Arms at the back show the Arms of Scarisbrick 1st and 4th quartered with the Biaudos Arms 2nd and 3rd:

The Marchioness's Arms are in front, the arms of Scarisbrick 1st and 4th quartered with those of Hunloke 2nd and 3rd.

Above the Arms on the plaque, can be seen the coronet which signifies a French Marquis – the coronet carries acanthus leaves alternating with groups of three pearls. This can be seen more clearly at the top of some of the windows around the church.

5.3.4 Stained Glass in the Nave



The Forshaw Window was installed in 1913 by the children of James and Mary Forshaw to whom it is dedicated. James and Mary were both born in Scarisbrick and married in St Mary's in 1870. James started out his working life as a farmer, coalman and potato dealer but later concentrated on the 'produce dealing'.

Close inspection of the bottom of the window shows four faces. Censuses show James and Mary had two boys Joseph and John, but the grave book shows they also had a daughter Catherine who died aged 6. Perhaps there was a fourth child, yet to be found, and the faces represent their 'family'.

The scene represents St Margaret Mary Alacoque receiving her vision of the Sacred Heart. She had an intense devotion to the Sacred Heart and instituted this devotion in the Church and the Catholic tradition of communion on 'First Fridays'.

The four small windows above the Pulpit

This collection are all connected to the Castéja heraldry. At the top on the left is the lion above the French Marquis' coronet and on the right is the Scarisbrick dove with a cross on its breast. The lion and the dove refer to the Biaudos de Castéja motto '*In Bello Leones in Pace Columbae*'. On the bottom are the Biaudos and the Biaudos - Scarisbrick Arms respectively. These were installed in 1895 for the Count de Castèja. Similar heraldry can be seen above the window in the choir loft.

Window in the 'Penny Benches'



'Pray for Margaret Jane Holman who died August 22nd 1912. Memorial window erected January 1913'.

Margaret Holman was the wife of Henry Holman the house steward for the Marquis de Castéja at Scarisbrick Hall. This window represents St. Gerard Magella, born 1726, who came from a poor family living in the hills to the south of Naples and became a lay brother of the Redemptorist Order. Through his prayers for a woman in labour he has come to be the patron saint of all mothers and mothers-to-be. Many miracles have been attributed to his intercession. He is depicted holding the crucifix which symbolizes the Order of Christ the Redeemer on the Cross.

5.3.5 The Pulpit and Last Supper Plaque

The Pulpit which was not made for this church dominates the central nave. When the Church of St. Elizabeth's was being built the pulpit was found in a lumber room over the joiner's workshop at Scarisbrick Hall where it had been for many years.



The structure was originally three separate pieces which possibly came from different churches on the Continent. The pulpit itself is oak and is a mid-17th century Dutch carving whilst the staircase, also oak, is late 17th or early 18th century Flemish or Dutch carving and is recognised to be of a very high quality of workmanship. The base was originally much higher, 10'8", and had to be cut down to fit in

to the church. Around the body of the octagonal pulpit can be seen the four symbols of the Evangelists: The Angel for St. Matthew, the Bull for St. Luke, the Lion for St. Mark and the Eagle for St. John.

A possible link to the pulpit can be found in Charles Scarisbrick's papers⁵⁷ at Lancashire Record Office. So, we read that, in January 1833:

"....one hundred pounds shall be paid for Pulpit with all its accessories then delivered restored and complete." In October 1839 he paid £100 for a *"... fine carved oak pulpit staircase."* and *"cleaning and repair ditto £13"* and in 1846 he mentions buying a *"pulpit stem"*.

The carvings were transported by rail to Wigan and then by canal to Scarisbrick Bridge.

At the bottom of the pulpit steps a door leads off the nave into the penitent's side of the Confessional room. The priest's side is accessed from the sacristy.

The Last Supper Plaque was initially in front of the altar at St. Mary's and was placed in a new frame to match the rest of the design in St. Elizabeth's.

It is also possibly this is another of Charles Scarisbrick's purchases. Certainly in 1833 he mentions buying a "Last Supper" and, in 1839 he pays £36 for *"making altar for panel painting and gilding to complete"*⁵⁸ for Scarisbrick Church".



5.3.6 Statues of the Sacred Heart and St Joseph

These two statues, which are hand carved and thought to have originated in Bavaria, were presented by Mr & Mrs Henry Swarbrick, of New Hall, Scarisbrick in 1918, in thanksgiving for the safe return of their twin sons Tom and Harry from the Great War. Tom studied for the priesthood and became a monk of Douai Abbey. Harry had been wounded and gassed. After convalescence abroad, he married and set up a Ham and Bacon Manufactory in Ormskirk, but sadly died in 1928 as a result of his injuries, leaving his wife and five young children. His youngest child Gerard, born in 1928, took over the business in 1951, and lived with his wife in Scarisbrick until 2001.

There is a wonderful view of the carved balustrade of the choir loft and the side of the organ casing from this point.



View of the Choir Loft decorated for the Harvest Festival in 1978

5.4 The Sanctuary

The apsidal sanctuary is separated from the nave by a stone chancel arch. When the church was first built the walls and ceilings around the sanctuary, as well as those around the Lady Altar, were stenciled with images of angels and floral designs in the 'modern Gothic' style of Pugin which can be seen in early photographs of St Elizabeth's. These designs were unfortunately painted over when the Church was re-organised post Vatican II.



The main altar is made from Caen stone, a light creamy Jurassic stone brought from Normandy. The altar was designed by Pugin but executed by Boulton of Cheltenham. The Altar table is supported by four marble columns and is decorated with panels bearing emblems of the Blessed Sacrament: Chalice surmounted by a Host; the Lamb of God and Manna coming down from Heaven. The chased brass doors of the tabernacle were made by

Hardman Powell of Birmingham. The crucifix of the Mass sits on the throne above the curtained Tabernacle which was used for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. The canopy, which is supported on twelve marble columns, soars 25 feet towards the roof.

The present modern altar placed below the altar steps, on an extended predella, is solid oak and was designed and installed by Ormsby's of Scarisbrick, in the early 1970s as a result of the Vatican II reforms. The lecterns also date from this time.

The Sanctuary Lamp which hangs on a counter weighted brass chain is exceptionally fine, delicate and is made of French silver. It has not been possible to decipher the makers mark, but it was most likely bought, like the Stations of the Cross and the Omnipotentia Supplex Statue by Marquis Rémy in France.

On either side of the sanctuary are the niches where the Sacred Oils and wine and water for the Mass were stored, and around the back of the altar is the piscina where the Sacred Vessels could be washed, the water flowing directly to the earth.

The small wooden tables were specifically designed for the sanctuary and have small feet which are located into holes in the floor.

Close inspection of the Sanctuary shows that the wooden wall paneling was not part of the original design but was introduced sometime after the original heating system was installed in 1924. The evidence for this is original painted decoration behind the radiators and the detailing of the paneling around the piscina.

5.4.1 Stained Glass Windows on the Sanctuary

The heraldry in the windows is that of Biaudos described earlier. The windows around the apse of the sanctuary depict the five joyful mysteries of the rosary, although not in order they are described anticlockwise.

1. Finding of the boy Jesus in the temple. Luke 2: 41-50

'Given by Joseph Bond and his wife Agnes in thanksgiving for many blessings received in this Church'

Joseph and Agnes were both baptised in St Mary's church and married at St Elizabeth's in July 1911. Joseph was an altar server and Agnes played the organ here. She died in 1942 and Joseph in 1961 and both are buried in the graveyard. Joseph's father James was a coachman for the Castéja family, and his uncle became Fr Leonard Bond OSB, a monk of Douai Abbey.

2. The Annunciation. Luke 1:26-38

'Ora pro anima Emmanuel de Biaudos Scarisbrick, Marquis de Castéja obiit Sept 23 1911. Catholici coloni hanc fenestram posuerunt XXIII mensis Sept 1912. Annos Natus 63

Pray for the soul Emmanuel de Biaudos Scarisbrick, Marquis de Castéja died Sept 23 1911. The Catholic congregation positioned this window 23rd of the month of September 1912. Aged 63 years.

Pray for the soul of Emmanuel de Biaudos Scarisbrick, Marquis of Castéja, who died on 23rd September 1911. Aged 63

This window and the 4th window in this series were paid for by the Catholic congregation in 1912 in memory of the Marquis Marie Emmanuel de Castéja who had died the year before.

3. The Visitation. Luke 1:39-45

'In memoriam perennem Remegii de Biaudos Scarisbrick et Emmanuelis de Castéja hujus ecclesiae fundatorum, Catholici haud ingratis Coloni hanc fenestram posuerunt die viii mensis Decembris 1889' 'In Pace Columbae In Bello Leones'

This was the first stained glass window to be installed shortly after the opening of the new church. It cost £100⁵⁹ and was presented by the Catholic tenantry in thanksgiving for the gift of the church by the Marquis and the Count. The pane at the top of the window is a dove representing the Holy Spirit.

4. The Nativity. Luke 2: 1-13

'Ora pro anima Emmanuel de Biaudos Scarisbrick, Marquis de Castéja obiit Sept 23 1911. Catholici coloni hanc fenestram posuerunt XXIII mensis Sept 1912. Annos Natus 63

Installed in 1912 in memory of Marie Emmanuel, Marquis de Castéja, by the Catholic community. (See comments under No. 2)

5. The Presentation in the Temple. Luke 2: 22-32



"This window is erected by André Marquis de Castéja DSO to the glory of God and in memory of his brother Count Emmanuel de Castéja, sergent 6ième Bn C.P. décoré de la médaille militaire de la Croix de Guerre who died in hospital of wounds received in action at Souchez France 10th Oct. 1915 R.I.P."

The window was erected in memory of André's youngest brother. André had visited Emmanuel in hospital, but he died a few days later. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre which is shown in the window.

The window shows the Cathedral of Rheims surmounted by the Arms of the Archbishop-Duc of Rheims. At the top of the window is the coronet of a French Marquis which is repeated at the top of the adjacent window. The brothers would have been told of the memories of their grandfather, Rémy, who had been present at the

Consecration of Charles X at Rheims in 1825.

In 1914 the Germans started bombarding the Cathedral. This was shocking, especially because the direct target was the irreplaceable mediaeval Cathedral which had such importance to the French nation. Perhaps by including this iconography, André wanted to commemorate both the French side of the family and their links to the Cathedral.

6. Window over Door into the Cloister

'Presented by J A Bond at one time an altar boy and his wife at the same time organist in this Church' (See window 1).

This window depicts, on the left St Tharsicius and on the right St Cecilia.

St. Tharsicius is the patron saint of Altar servers and is represented here dressed as an altar server of the early 1900's. He is shown carrying the Host in a ciborium.

St. Cecilia is the patron saint of musicians. She was martyred in Rome possibly around 230AD. When the Academy of Music was founded in Rome in 1584 she was adopted as the patroness of musicians.

5.5 The Lady Chapel

The Lady Chapel, previously known as the Castéja Chantry, has a private entrance for the family.



The plan from 1924⁶⁰ shows that at the time the Church was built it was permanently separated from the north side aisle by a solid wall, the sanctuary by a set of altar rails and the nave by a carved screen. The plan also shows the original position of the 'Lady Altar' was not in the chantry but in the main body of the church facing the "penny benches".

In 1924 there were structural changes to the Chantry, the present altar was moved to its new position under the south window of the Chantry and the arch was opened out. These changes explain the different floor levels in the current Lady Altar and the marks on the floor and the stone pillars.

Until relatively recently, the space outside of the altar rails contained the Prie Dieu of the Castéja family. These can now be seen, with new upholstery, on the Sanctuary, but for many years they remained in place in the Lady Altar unused by a congregation who still held the family in great respect.

The old, folding celebrants chair is to a Pugin design but it is uncertain whether this was designed for the church or came to the Church when the Chapel at Scarisbrick Hall was deconsecrated.

5.5.1 The Lady Altar.

The Lady altar was built, and installed by Mr. J Fawke, cabinet maker of Southport (the same person who had made the organ casing).

'It is constructed of fumigated Danzic oak, from the designs by Mr. P. P. Pugin, in the early decorated style, harmonising with the architecture of the church. It has a super altar, and in the centre at the back is a canopy supported by four carved pillars enshrining the beautiful statue of the Virgin "Omnipotentia Supplex". Right and left are traceried panels, the carving and moulding are of bold design, and are further enriched by gilded roses and fleur de lys. At the foot of the panels are the opening lines of the 'Salve Regina' ('Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, Hail our Life, Our Sweetness and Our Hope)'.⁶¹

This beautiful altar was a gift of Count Marie Emmanuel⁶² and was formally blessed on Sunday 3rd May 1896 by Fr Rowley the Parish Priest conducted the services:

5.5.2 Omnipotentia Supplex Statue.

This title of Our Lady was commonly used in the 19th century, the statue was 'solemnly blessed and inaugurated during the afternoon service on August 20th 1893⁶³ by Fr Rowley.

Before its current position, the statue had been placed on a temporary altar. It is about five feet high and was especially carved for St Elizabeth's at a cost of £200.

*'Our Blessed Lady is represented in an attitude of prayer, her hands clasped in earnest supplication. She has just quitted the earth, which is beneath her, and has mounted the clouds, which still envelop and conceal her feet, and is actually at the moment pleading for her devout clients who have sought her intercession. The globe, representing the earth, is marked with three signs of the zodiac, typifying the months of July, August and September, the harvest months of hay and corn, and, consequently more interesting to this agricultural district.'*⁶⁴



The statue is on a 'bearing' and by turning it an inscription is revealed which reads: *'Presented by the Countess de Castéja to the Church of St Elizabeth's, Scarisbrick, Lancashire, on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 15th day of August 1893'*. The sculptor has signed his work on the right-hand side of the base. Prayer cards with an engraving of the statue were given to parishioners when the statue was blessed.



5.5.3 The Della Robbia

This group, of Madonna and Child was presented by the Dowager Marchioness Gabrielle⁶⁵. According to a letter from Marquis André it was purchased in Rome in the middle of the 19th century by the aunt and uncle of the Dowager Marchioness. *'They took it to Paris in the seventies where it remained in their garden, Rue Gay-Lussac, until their death when it went to my mother (the dowager marchioness) who was her uncle's god child'*⁶⁶. There is a similar Della Robbia in the National gallery in Washington.

5.5.4 The Altar Rails and Kneelers

The Altar rails were originally in the arch leading from the Lady Altar to the sanctuary. According to a letter from the Marquis André to Fr Griffin the original kneelers were specially made and donated by Mrs. Casilda Ince Anderton from Brooklands. She was the granddaughter of Lady Anne Scarisbrick, being the illegitimate daughter of Anne's son Sir Henry J. J. Hunloke. She is buried in the graveyard beside her daughter and grandchildren. By the early part of the 21st century these were very worn and were replaced by the current kneeler cushion made by Ormsby of Scarisbrick.

5.5.5 The War Memorial

When the de Castéja family sold their estates they gave the chantry to the parish on the condition that it was made into a chapel where the men from the parish who died in the First World War could be commemorated.

The memorial at St Elizabeth's only commemorates the Catholic men from Scarisbrick who died.

A full list of all the Scarisbrick men who died in WW1, which was researched for the Centenary of the start of war are on the new memorial at Scarisbrick village Hall. A full list of the casualties in WW2 is yet to be completed.

For the 1st World War:

Emmanuel de Castéja: (1880-1915) was the youngest son of Marie Emmanuel. He was educated in Paris. In 1913 he married Jeanne Marie Claude de Kergolay, and they had a daughter, Elizabeth, born in 1914 and a posthumous son Emmanuel born in 1916.

John Forshaw: (1888-1915) John was the son of Peter and Mary Forshaw and lived in Scarisbrick all his life. John was educated at St Mary's primary school and before the war he was a farmer. He landed in France on 12th March 1915, was wounded on 26th September and died on 28th September 1915. The list of items returned to his mother at Heaton's Bridge Post Office are photos, postcards, watch & chain (glass broken) a rosary, a watch case, a religious book and 3 keys.

Richard Wright: (1894-1915) Richard was, the son of George and Alice Wright, who lived in Hurleston Green. Richard was educated at St Mary's primary school and before the war he worked as a ploughman at Shaw Hall. He landed in France on 12th March 1915, was injured on 8th October 1915, during the battle of Loos and died in the Military hospital on 6th

November. Richard is buried in Les Gonards Cemetery in Versailles. Among the items returned to his parents were a set of false teeth and a set of Rosary beads.

Edmund Wandsworth Aughton: (1894-1916) Edmund, the son of Charles and Sarah Aughton was baptised at St Elizabeth's. In the 1901 census he is living with his mother at 29 Lancaster Road, Southport. Edmund died on board HMS Invincible which sank during the Battle of Jutland on the 31st May 1916.

Thomas Massam: (1888-1918) Thomas was the son Thomas and Ann Massam of Black Moss Farm, Scarisbrick and he was educated at St Mary's school. He married Ann Kershaw at St Elizabeth's in 1911 and after her death he had married his second wife, Teresa, only six weeks before he was killed in action, at his gun, in France on September 18th 1918. 'His wife has received letters from his captain and the chaplain who buried him, stating how he was a splendid gunner and was well liked by all in the battery, and that he died in serving his country and at his gun. The chaplain adds that he had a Christian burial in a proper cemetery. He was 29 years of age and had been in France eighteen months; he left a widow and one child'.

Joseph Richard Lydiate (1899-1918) Joseph was the son of Richard and Elizabeth Lydiate, his parents had married in St Elizabeth's in 1888. His father was a teamster on a farm. Joseph was educated at St Mary's school at which time his family were living at Diglake. Joseph died on 9th April 1918 at the battle of Loos.

For the 2nd World War:

Francis Charnock: (1917-1942) James was the son of James and Elizabeth Charnock of Bescar Lane. He was educated at St Mary's and before the war he lived with his wife Gladys in Burscough. He was killed whilst serving on board the light cruiser HMS Hermione in the Mediterranean when she was torpedoed by a German submarine U-205 and sank with the loss of 87 men.

James Charnock: (1916-1944) James was the son of James and Eleanor Charnock from Drummersdale. He was educated at St Mary's primary school and before the war was an agricultural labourer. James was a 'chindit' being parachuted behind the Japanese lines in Burma in 1943 and fighting the Japanese in Jungle warfare.

5.5.6 Reliquaries



The Box Reliquary

The details of the box reliquary are given in a letter on Scarisbrick Hall headed notepaper in the Douai Archive⁶⁷ which states:

“The relics contained in the shrine presented by the Marchioness de Castéja to the Chapel at Bescar are portions of the bodies of St. Flora, St Concordius and St Celsus. They were taken from the catacombs of St Castulus now closed at Rome by permission of the reigning Pope, were verified and attested by his Eminence Philip Thomas Howard Cardinal of Norfolk and presented to the Rev Thomas Eccleston, Rural Dean who after forty years of missionary labour in these parts was interred in the Harkirk now within the enclosure of the Park at the Hall Little Crosby on the 16th of March 1696. They were opened attested and resealed by the Right Rev James Smith Bishop of Calliopolis in partibus and the first Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District who was consecrated May 13th 1688 and died May 13th 1711. On the 2nd September 1872 they were verified and placed in the shrine and duly attested”.

The Small Reliquary

This reliquary is carved in a light wood. The central piece has been made with great care and is a detailed embroidery – much of it in gold thread – seeming to represent a catafalque with a cross in gold within a crown above with gold embroidered wings on either side of the crown. On the underside it has the inscription WI/WO 1668. The origin is unknown and the contents unverified but there are two certificates in the Scarisbrick archive for the bones of St Thomas the Apostle and St Stanislaus Kostka, the latter being a Jesuit saint; both certificates are dated 6th July 1888.

5.5.7 The Lady Chapel Windows

Window behind the Lady Altar

In 1895 the small windows above the main lights which depict the Scarisbrick and Castèja Arms were installed by Count Emmanuel. The main window was left as clear glass until 1939 when the stained glass was ordered from Hardman's to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the church but was not fixed in place until 1944 because of the war. The cost in 1939 was £140. The window depicts: on the left St. Anne and St. Joachim who are, by tradition, the parents of Mary; in the centre the Coronation of Our Lady and on the right St. John the Baptist and St. Elizabeth.

Commemorative Window for Soldiers killed in WW1 & WW2



'Blessed are those who die in the Lord' This chapel was dedicated, and this window was erected by Ann Maddox, to ask prayers for those who died in the Two Great Wars.

This window was installed during Fr Griffin's stewardship of the parish to commemorate soldiers killed in both World Wars. In Hardman's Day Book, the window is described as three lights depicting: on the left, Our Lady with Saint Gabriel, the angel holding a lily which symbolises her virginity; in the centre the seated figure of Our Lord and on the right St. George and St. Michael. The base across all three lights depicts the Consecration in the Requiem Mass with a member of each of the armed services represented. Our Lady and St. George appear to be pleading, probably representing prayers and intercessions for all killed in the war. The catafalque is covered in the Union flag which is very unusual in a Catholic church.

Memorial Window for John Edmund Ackers



Erected in Memory of John Edmund Ackers who died April 29th 1943 RIP

John was only a young man when he was killed in a road accident. He was driving his lorry along the East Lancashire road in a thick fog, leaning out of the window to see the lines of the road, when he crashed into one of the islands. The lorry overturned and he was crushed underneath. There was a large funeral here because he was well-known, a member of the local football team as well as being in the Home Guard.

The widow depicts: on the left St. Edmund, a 9th Century King of East Anglia and patron of Douai Abbey above the Arms of St. Edmund; in the centre Our Lady of Sorrows above the Pietà and on the right St. John the Divine who wrote the Book of Revelation, hence the book and the pen in the window above the image of a king/bishop seated on a throne, holding an orb and with a sword in his mouth.

5.6 The Choir Gallery

Entered via a narrow staircase the choir gallery gives a magnificent view over the interior of the church and access to the belfry. The original kneelers, no longer used by the choir because of Health & Safety, used to be arranged in front of the balustrade. An example can still be seen.

5.6.1 The Organ⁶⁸

When the Church was opened it was announced that the congregation had expressed a desire to contribute towards the purchase of an organ, as a result a committee was formed and over £400 was raised. The organ was built by Mr Henry Ainscough of Preston (1850-1923) and was placed on the south side of the choir gallery, leaving the west window unobstructed. The case for the organ was made in Dantzic oak by Mr Joseph Fawkes of Southport at a cost of £170.⁶⁹ The organ 'opening' took place on the last Sunday in July 1889.



The inscription on the brass plate reads:

'This Organ was erected by the Voluntary Subscriptions of the Catholic Tenantry of the Scarisbrick Hall Estates AD1889 and was encased from the design of P. P. Pugin, Architect, by the Marquis de Castéja A.D.1890'.

Originally the organ was pumped by hand with members of the choir taking it in turns to operate the bellows manually. Electric bellows were installed later. During the tenure of Fr Philip Robinson, who was himself an FRCO, the organ was given a major overhaul.

In 2018 it was awarded a Grade II Historic Organ certificate and the National Pipe Organ Register states "This is perhaps the finest small organ case in the Archdiocese of Liverpool". A full description of the organ can be found at <https://npor.org.uk> the code for the organ is C00158".

5.7 Church Artefacts



5.7.1 The Monstrance

The monstrance at St Elizabeth's pre-dates the current church. On the underside is an inscription: *"Presented to St Mary's Scarisbrick by members of the Altar Society December 1885"*.

It is made of brass to a traditional gothic ray design with repousse decoration to the six-sided scallop base and enamelled decoration to the knob. Twelve amethysts are set around the circular opening which is decorated with stylised wheat and vine in front of rays. The top is surmounted by a cross.

5.7.2 The Chalices

1. The Pre-reformation chalice was in daily use until the late 1960's, it bears the inscription *'Pray for the soule of Isobel Daniel deceased 10th July 1623'*. It is silver, stands 7" high, and the base shows distinct hammer marks. Each of the seven faces of the knob are engraved

with a quatrefoil ornament, and the upper side of the foot with a cavalry cross. Unfortunately, there is no tradition at Scarisbrick as to who Isobel Daniel was. This chalice is identical to the Molyneux chalice at St Alexander's, Bootle.

2. The Castéja chalice was given to the Church on the occasion of the coming of age of André, Count de Castéja in 1896. It is a highly decorated piece which bears many symbols of religious significance on a silver gilt stem and base surmounted by a gold cup. It bears the inscription *"Presented to the Church of St Elizabeth's Scarisbrick by the Count and Countess de Castéja on the Occasion of the Coming of Age of Andre de Castéja February 13th 1896"*

5.6.3 The Big Six Candlesticks – these are solid brass and very ornate: more suited to a cathedral than a country parish church. The four smaller ones are about 27" high while the two larger ones are 32" high and whilst there are no markings on them, in light of the origin of the tabernacle doors it is quite likely they came from Hardman Powell.

5.7.3 The Funeral Palls

The funeral palls are now kept at Douai Abbey but are returned to the parish for exhibitions. Both palls were used at the funeral of the Marchioness Elizabeth in the old chapel of St. Mary's in 1878.



"...The coffin rested on a bier in front of the altar, on a beautiful pall given by the late Charles Scarisbrick Esq and used at his funeral whilst a larger pall in red and gold draped the steps of the altar. The latter pall was purchased by the late Lady Scarisbrick⁷⁰ "

The Coat of Arms design on the black pall decorated with red and gold was executed especially for Lady Ann Scarisbrick by E.W. Pugin. It shows the Scarisbrick shield in front of the Hunloke Arms (blue and gold).

Chapter 6: St Elizabeth's Memories and Traditions

Like all churches in the 21st century St Elizabeth's is now experiencing a period of rapid change, not in the building itself but in its congregation and services, so this final section will record some of the past traditions.

6.1 Sodality Groups

In common with most Catholic Churches St Elizabeth's had several groups for example the Children of Mary, the Women's Guild and the Men's Guild. Members of the group would sit together monthly at the front of the church; in the case of St Mary's Primary School children the pulpit side was used. Each group undertook different activities; for example, the Women's Guild was mostly a social group, but they also organised and provided refreshments for other church functions. All the groups came together for the processions in May and June each year.

The church was not only a place of worship but a community who socialised together. For example in the 1950s and 60s there were regular parish coach outings for families to venues such as the Pantomime in Blackpool.

6.2 Processions

The processions were very popular and members of the village often came and stood in the church grounds to watch. The children were instructed and practiced by the teachers for weeks in advance on how to walk with the crooks ("crook, two three four"), ring bells, strew flowers, walk in procession and genuflect properly. The processions were a show case of school and parish!

In May each year a procession was organised in honour of Our Lady. A child from Standard 4, the top class of the Primary school, was chosen as May Queen to have the honour of crowning the statue of Our Lady at the Sunday afternoon procession. The May Queen was attended by a cushion boy (carrying the crown which was decorated with lily of the valley) and two train bearers, along with four crook carriers, two in front and two behind. These children were generally from the First Communion class. The previous year's May Queen walked in the Procession too, as did all the school children with blue sashes over their shoulders. The Children of Mary carried a second statue of Our Lady in the procession on a hurdle and some of the men of the parish carried religious banners between different groups of the congregation. The service generally started at 3pm in church, progressed through the graveyard and Priest's Garden with everyone singing hymns to our Lady before

re-entering the church. The statue of Our Lady on the sanctuary, which was decorated with flowers, was then crowned to the hymn 'Bring flowers of the fairest, bring flowers of the rarest'. Benediction was held to complete the celebration.. The last procession took place in the 1990s.

Old May Procession Photographs



The Corpus Christi procession in June followed a similar format, but this time the Parish Priest carried the Blessed Sacrament in the Monstrance under a baldicchino supported by four men of the parish, one at each corner. The priest was preceded first by the children who had made their First Communion that year; the boys rang small bells which hung on chords from their necks and the girls strewed flower petals from baskets. For this procession all the children wore red sashes and the service generally ended with Benediction in the Priest's Garden on a temporary altar in front of the cloister door.

Old June Procession Photographs





6.3 Harvest Festival

In late September or early October, the Harvest Festival was celebrated to thank God for a successful harvest. One year Fr Griffin changed the date agreed for the festival as all the harvest was not yet in.

The first record of a Harvest Festival at St Elizabeth's was in 1901 when it was reported in the Ormskirk Advertiser⁷¹:

"On Sunday the harvest festival was held in connection with St Elizabeth's Church Scarisbrick, when the interior of the sacred edifice was very effectively decorated for the occasion.

The material for the charming effect produced had been supplied from Scarisbrick Hall for the High Altar and private chantry.

The former had a background of plants with vases of flowers which were intermixed very tastefully with wheat. Two splendid bunches of grapes were suspended over the tabernacle.

The chantry of the Marquis de Castéja gave evidence of a considerable artistic work. The tree windows were decorated with plants, choice fruits and festoons of pyrus lanthus, with brilliant coloured berries on the foreground.

The beautiful Lady altar with its unique statue was set off with plants and fruits and well selected vegetables.

The pulpit, which is a splendid piece of carving of the Dutch and Fleming school, was charming decorated with festoons of corn, tied up with knots of crimson flowers.

The windows in the chancel were filled with choice palms and fruit which reposed upon a bed of moss and fern, while the front, which faced the window box, festooned with Siberian crabs. Sheafs of corn were placed about the altar.

The windows in the church were fitted with corn; the distinctive features in them being a model haystack and a Dutch barn.

The baptistry was specially dealt with by the introduction of a screen placed against the gates, which was decorated with fruit and corn, and flowers, and among them a large loaf occupied a conspicuous position."

The whole parish was involved in decorating the church for this annual event, the scale of this is evident in the following notes from Miss Richmond (Head Teacher 1930-1960 and parishioner until she left Scarisbrick in 1988) to Fr Eckersely the incoming parish priest for the 1971 harvest:

"The work of decorating the church begins on the Tuesday before when the straw work is put in position. (This straw was made by the children of St Marys in the early -mid 1930s). After that there is a certain amount of coming and going but the big task is undertaken on the Friday especially in the evening when the men folk bring the produce and carry it in.

Certain families undertake to decorate a well-defined area and many have done so for half a century. People are asked in church to help those who are undertaking the actual work by giving flowers, produce or a donation most especially for the decoration of the sanctuary.

Because grapes, eggs etc. are placed on top of the altar rails there is (a different) arrangement for Holy Communion. During the three Masses the centre gates are left open. The front benches each side of the aisle are brought forward somewhat, the priest goes the

length of these giving Holy Communion. Between the Masses and during Benediction the centre gates are closed. For Benediction, the procession of priests and servers comes into the sanctuary through the side door (the Marquis' door) and there is a cigar box full of leaflets for use on this occasion. On them are printed the hymns sung on this occasion: "Lord of the Living Harvest", "Te Deum" and "Come ye thankful people come".

Beside the Sacred Heart Statue is placed a box with a notice Harvest Offerings.

Hundreds of people visit the church during the day to walk around. Coach parties come from Bolton, Wigan and elsewhere. The Women's Guild provides teas and the profits go to the Harvest Collection.

On the Friday before the Harvest and the Monday after it is a good idea not to have any late masses. On Friday the school children are coming laden with flowers and produce (If you can it is a good plan to go through the school and admire the gifts brought. It pleases the children and their parents. Fr Teeley made quite a point of this, he was very good with the children. But it should be early on before it is stacked away).

On the Monday after, as soon as the Mass is over, the adults begin to dismantle their arrangements. Some of the farmers bring produce hampers and boxes in which to pack the things like potatoes, vegetables etc. There used to be bakery trays in the coach house in which they put the grapes, peaches and the like. A lot of this is lined up in the cloister.

Finally, there is a sale in the club room (on Monday) night. The cake in the Lady Chapel is raffled during the evening. The pillar straw we take down on Tuesday night because the youths who put it up want to go to the sale on the Monday night!

When all is over the church floor is usually scrubbed. In Fr Teeley's time and possibly in Fr Griffin's, the two women who cleaned the church were paid and I fancy too the people they asked to help them usually widows and people who needed the money. It wouldn't be much but it was acceptable.

The Papal flag is in position for the event.

I think that covers everything."

A Harvest in the 1950s



The 1978 Harvest Festival



6.4 Centenary Celebrations



In 1988 St Elizabeth's celebrated its centenary. In April and May that year the church was redecorated in a 'refreshing light green'⁷² in anticipation of the celebrations. To mark the occasion commemorative plates and mugs were commissioned and a number of social and religious events held. For example, on 17th January there was an Ecumenical Service, in May Archbishop Worlock celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass and there was another in November when Bishop Harris came to visit. There were 'buffets, a garden party, an OAP Hot pot supper and much more'⁷³





6.4 The Club Room

In June 1950, the parish applied for planning permission to erect a 'pre-fabricated hutment'⁷⁴ for use as a youth club on land behind St Mary's school yard. In effect it was a series of old hen cabins attached together to form a building. It was improved in the late 1960's when Fr Mark arranged for a kitchen with modern units to be added to the side. There were also outside toilets of the same era as the toilets of the old school.

This building was the location of many parish activities and events. During the 1950s and 60s there was a youth group run by older parishioners each week. During the sessions there was music, snooker and table tennis. In fact, the church had a team in the local table tennis league!

On Sunday evenings there was a regular whist drive when people from across the local area would come for the evening, play cards, have a cup of tea and a cake and there were some modest prizes for the winners.

Tuesday evening was Women's Guild night and they frequently arranged Bingo evenings to raise funds for the Church. The Christmas Bingo was a major event and far too popular to be held in the clubroom. Tickets were sold and people were sat in the Main room and the Infant room of the old school. Jim Simpson was the caller and he had a runner in the Infant room, so everyone had a fair chance.

The school was also used as the overflow for refreshments on Harvest Sunday. The clubroom could manage the steady flow of visitors who came, but for the coach parties tea was served in the old school.

The club room was also the site of the Monday evening Harvest sale and a place where jubilees and retirements were marked.



Miss Murphy's Retirement July 1983

6.5 Field Day

The field day was the major social and fundraising event of the year, organised by the Social and Development Society of St Elizabeth's and attracted many visitors from neighbouring parishes. It was first held in 1946 in order to raise £30,000 for the new school building fund. The event was always held on a field at Acker's Damwood Farm off Hall Road.



Field Day 1954



Field Day 1946

"On August Bank Holiday Monday in 1954⁷⁵ over 4000 people attended the event opened by Eve Boswell a radio and television star.

The procession to the field started at noon from St Mary's school and was led by St Elizabeth's May Queen together with her retinue (in a horse drawn landau) and consisted of Leyland Motors Prize Broadcasting Band, troupes of Morris Dancers and fancy dress characters.

The field was organised to provide two event rings. The first contained a raised stage area on which the dignitaries and the May Queen's party sat. Events in the two rings included: a fancy dress parade; a Morris Dancing contest; a pony gymkhana and various races. The five aside football competition for a silver challenge cup produced some keen competition. Other attractions included a ladies football match between Halsall and Scarisbrick, an exhibition of English and foreign birds, a clay bird shoot, a Punch and Judy show, pony rides, children sports, stalls and side shows. The day ended with a dance in St Mary's school".



6.6 School Activities

St Mary's school has always been an integral part of St Elizabeth's parish. Until the 1980s, when the impact of the socio-economic changes of the 1960s were fully felt in Scarisbrick, activities involving the teachers and children were central to the life of the parish.

The schools involvement in the processions and harvest has already been mentioned, as has the parishes commitment to providing funds for a new school, but the teachers at St Mary's had a profound impact on the lives of many older people still living in the village today. The names of Miss Richmond and Miss Mackintosh, previous Head Teachers, were and are held in great respect. A note written on Miss Mackintosh's retirement in 1970 states *"always modern and energetic in the scholastic field yet devoted above all to the spiritual values in education. She has always had the love and respect of all her pupils"*⁷⁶



First Communion Party 1967

The teachers prepared children for their First Holy Communion, encouraged daily Mass attendance in Lent (cocoa was available in school afterwards to go alongside breakfast sandwiches) and organized entertainments for parents and parishioners in the Priest's Garden. These ranged from Scottish dancing to Fancy Dress balls and everything in between. As today the Parish Priest was a regular and welcome visitor to school.

6.7 Parish Vocations

The vocations from the Parish that we are aware of all came in the 19th and 20th centuries. If you are aware of anyone we have missed please let us know.

Father James Massam (1812-1893)⁷⁷



James, the son of William and Esther Massam, was the last person to be baptised before St Marys opened on 1st November. Esther died when James was only 14 months old and he was taken to his grandfather's house in Wrightington where he was brought up. When he was eight years old, James was sent to Newborough day school, some three miles from Wrightington. Rev. Father Cooper, O.S.B. from Douai was in charge of the flock at Wrightington Hall and under him James made his first confession and communion.

He was confirmed by the Right Reverend Bishop of Penswick, of the Northern district. It was on this occasion that he expressed his desire to study for the priesthood, and the Bishop, after testing his knowledge in Latin promised to send him to college.

On 22nd November 1826 he sailed from Liverpool for Lisbon, a journey which took six and a half days, where he went to the English College and was ordained on 18th July 1837. He returned to England in 1837 and having spent a month in at home he went to the Potteries where he served most of his priestly ministry. He was Parish Priest at Longton where he built a church designed by Edward Welby Pugin. In 1882 he retired as and in 1893 he moved to care of the Alexian Brothers at Newton Heath, near Manchester where he died.

Brother Anselm Kershaw OSB (1832-1924)⁷⁸



BROTHER ANSELM LEAVING DOUAI, MAY 27th. 1903.

Joseph was the son of Robert and Ann Kershaw who were farmers in Bescar. In 1844 he joined the school in Douai, France. Very early in his scholastic career, while seated near a window reading a book, he was injured by glass splinters as a cricket ball broke the window. The injuries eventually resulted in total blindness. After leaving the school he entered the novitiate and was professed

in 1851. Despite being blind he taught in the junior school and members of the community took it in turns to read to him, according to his obituary 'he was an intelligent and attentive listener who carried away with him the knowledge he gained'. When the community left France Anselm went to the monastery at Great Malvern and then to Douai Abbey in Upper Woolhampton in 1909 where he stayed until he died.

Dom Joseph Austin Kershaw OSB, Titular Cathedral Prior of Gloucester (1853-1928)



Joseph was the son of Julia and William who was an agricultural labourer on the family's farm in Bescar⁷⁹. It is likely he was baptised at St Mary's but the baptismal records for this period are missing. In the 1861 census Joseph is listed as a scholar as St Mary's school wasn't open at this time it is likely he was schooled by Fr Hoole in the school room in the Priest's house. In 1865 he entered the school at Douai, France where he remained until 1871 when he left and returned to study medicine. However according to his mother 'it

was not his place he was like a fish out of water⁸⁰ so eventually returned to Douai, was professed in 1875 and ordained 1881. He worked on the parish missions in Merthyr Tydfil, Swansea, Liverpool and Cowpen where he died after 27 years of service.

Monsignor William Pinnington (1856-1932)



William, the son of William and Margaret Pinnington, was baptised at St Mary's. He was admitted to the College at Lisbon in 1869 and was ordained priest in 1880⁸¹. He served his first curacy at St Mary's in Wigan and was appointed Rector at St Iphonsus's Liverpool in 1886⁸² before becoming Parish Priest in 1888.

In 1887 his predecessor had purchased land for a church, school and presbytery. The need for a school was urgent and on the 19th August 1888 Bishop O'Reilly laid the foundation stone. The following year the school was officially opened however within a few years the new school was grossly overcrowded with 1,200 children, so Fr Pinnington erected a separate infants' school for which the foundation stone was laid in 1893.

He was devoted to education and child rescue and responsible for the establishment of a number of institutions devoted to the care of children and the sick⁸³. By 1906 the parish population was 6,138 and the church was inadequate. Fr Pinnington, who was appointed as Canon of the Diocese in 1910, procured a site for a new church in Great Mersey Street, which was opened in 1911 by Bishop Whiteside. A new baptistry and chapel were added in 1917; within a very short time this became a Memorial Chapel commemorating the hundreds of men killed in the First World War.

In 1915 William became Vicar General of the Diocese⁸⁴ and in 1928, when he celebrated his Golden Jubilee, Pope Pius XI created him a Protonotary Apostolic a rank just less than that of a Bishop.

Dom Leonard Joseph Bond OSB (1889-1963)⁸⁵



Leonard, the son of James and Jane, was the last person to be baptised in St Mary's chapel. His father was a coachman to the Castéja family at Scarisbrick Hall. He was educated at Douai (France & England) and took the name Joseph when he was professed. He was ordained in 1916. He is buried at St Joseph's Frizington where he had been Parish Priest for 27 years.

Dom Thomas Ceolfred Swarbrick OSB (1896-1966)⁸⁶



Thomas, the son of Henry and Ann who lived at New Hall farm, was born in Southport. His early education was at St Joseph's Academy Dumfries, but feeling the call to the priesthood he transferred to Douai in 1912. His time there was cut short when he was called up to the forces in 1917 and during WW1 he fought alongside his twin brother Harry. After the war he returned to Douai and was ordained in 1926 and the next year started work on the mission parishes. Due to ill health he was transferred to Frizington in 1965 where he died.

Fr Coelfrid was the uncle of Gerard Swarbrick who was for many years a parishioner of St Elizabeth's.

Brother Adrian (Arthur Joseph) Houghton OSB (1910-1982)

Adrian was the adopted son of Jack and Mattie Houghton who lived latterly in Bescar Brow Lane. He was professed at Fort Augustus in 1937 where his 'gifts of a clear mind, energy and much goodwill, found their scope when he was given charge of the poultry yard, then the kitchen, later the school refectory and finally the shop. A devout and serious monk, he made the Eucharist the centre of his life⁸⁷. After 45 years he died there after a short illness.

Appendix 1: Vocations from the Scarisbrick Family (17th – 19th Century)

Parents	
Edward Scarisbrick & Francis née Bradshagh	Edward Scarisbrick S.J. (1639-c1709) Henry Scarisbrick S.J. (1640-1701) Thomas Scarisbrick S.J. (1642-1673) Francis Scarisbrick S.J. (1643-1713) Elizabeth Scarisbrick O.S.F. (1652-1691)
James Scarisbrick & Francis née Blundell	Edward Scarisbrick S.J. (1663-1735) Joseph Scarisbrick S.J. (1673- ?)
Robert Scarisbrick and Anne née Messenger	Edward Scarisbrick S.J. (1698-1778) Henry Scarisbrick S.J. (1703-1744) Francis Scarisbrick S.J. (1701-1789) Mary Scarisbrick O.S.F. (1713-1790) Frances Scarisbrick O.S.F. (1707-1736) Elizabeth Scarisbrick O.S.F. (1705-1732)
William Scarisbrick and Elizabeth née Ogle	Ann Scarisbrick O.S.F. (1945-1811)

Appendix 2: List of Priests who served at Scarisbrick Hall

From	To			
1622		Michael	Alford S.J	d London 8.7.1640
1622	1640	Francis	Thompson S.J	
1641	1642	Cormac	Fields S.J	
1642	1643	Bryan	Cansfield S.J	alias Christopher Benson
1643	1648	Lawrence	Sankey S.J	
1648		Henry	Howard S.J	alias Christopher Benson
1648	1666	Ferdinand	Poulton S.J	alias Palmer;Served in Lancashire from 1640, d of the plague in 1666
1666	1673	Peter	Bradshaigh S.J	Died in Lancashire in April 1676
1674		Thomas	Scarisbrick S.J	Son of the squire. Died at Scarisbrick
				Tutor at the Hall
1663	1680	Christopher	Bradshaigh S.J	
1674	1678	John	Penketh S.J	
				Tutor at the Hall
1679	1688	Henry	Scarisbrick S.J	
1689	1693	John (Joseph)	Malbon S.J	
				Son of the Ince Blundell family. Died at Lytham and was buried at Harkirk
1692	1702	Thomas	Blundell S.J	
1698		Albert	Babthorpe S.J	Many years a missionary in Lancs and was Rector more than once
1701	1707	John	Smith S.J	Died London 1745. Aged 85. Later Rector of the London district
1707	1716	John	Maynard (Cuffaud) S.J	
				A secular priest. His name occurs in many of the books form St Marys library
1716	1731	William	Scarisbrick S.J	
				Served the Lancashire Missions for many years. Removed to London about 1748-9 ; and died there 1766.
1731	1747	Cornelius	Murphy S.J	
1753	1767	Thomas	Conyers S.J	
1735	1775	Nicholas	Fourniers (alias Clough) S.J	Died at Lydiate 1779 aged 71 (LH622)
1768		Raymond	Harris S.J	
1771	1778	Edward	Scarisbrick S.J	Buried at Ormskirk in 1778
				Lived at Limekiln House near Heatons Bridge
1774	1791	Robert	Johnson S.J	
1791	1792	John	Hurst S.J	

1792	1802	Abbe	Buchet S.J	French émigré priest
1802		Thomas / John	Kenyon O.S.B	At Scarisbrick for only a few months
1802		William	Chew O.S.B	
1802	1825	Abbe Louis Joseph	Dorival	French émigré priest

Appendix 3: List of Scarisbrick Priest 1812 to present⁸⁸

							Scarisbrick		
Baptised	Monastic Name		Born	Died	Monastery	Professed	From	To	
Abbe Joseph Louis		Dorival					1802	1825	French émigré priest. Opened St Marys Chapel 1st November 1812. Buried at St Anthonys , Scotland Road
Christopher	Augustine	Shann	1801	1860	Ampleforth	1819	1824	1826	Accepted Scarisbrick on behalf of the Benedictines. Ormskirk 1854-1858
Richard	Benedict	Hoole	1798	1865	Douai	1824	1826	1865	Buried at Scarisbrick
Richard	Placid	Birchall	1812	1885	Douai	1833	1865	1865	Ormskirk 1861-1865. Only at Scarisbrick for June & July
Peter	Ignatius	Greenhough	1801	1870	Ampleforth	1891	1865	1870	Buried at Scarisbrick
John	Placid	Hall	1819	1890	Downside	1836	1870	1872	Built the old St Marys school. Buried at Scarisbrick
							1882	1884	
William	Anthony	Bulbeck	1822	1903	Downside	1841	1873	1882	
Essington	Dunstan	Ross	1838	1902	Douai	1858	1884	1887	
James	Benedict	Rowley	1834	1898	Douai	1855	1887	1898	Ormskirk 1868-1873. Buried at Scarisbrick
James Robert	Oswald	Furniss	1847	1918	Douai	1868	1897	1912	
Arthur	Anthony	Jordan	1847		Douai	1896	1912	1913	Also served as a WW1 Chaplain
James	Gilbert	Atherton	1858	1934	Douai	1879	1913	1918	
	John Francis	O'Shaughnessy	1877	1925	Belmont	1897	1919	1925	He was an Army chaplain, with the rank of Captain, to a Scottish regiment in northern France in WW1 and was mentioned in dispatches. Buried

									at Scarisbrick
Joseph	Cuthbert	Griffin	1877	1925	Douai	1896	1925	1955	Died 25th March 1955. Buried at Scarisbrick

							Scarisbrick		
Baptised	Monastic Name		Born	Died	Monastery	Professed	From	To	
Richard	Bruno	Teeley	1888	1965	Douai	1911	1955	1965	Buried at Scarisbrick
James	Mark	Ackers	1911	1970	Douai	1932	1965	1970	Reordered St Elizabeths post Vatican 2. Died visiting sick parishioners at New Hall Hospital. Ormskirk 1947-1952. Buried at Scarisbrick
John	Aelred	Eckersley	1901	1972	Douai	1921	1970	1971	Great interest in astronomy. His present on leaving Scarisbrick was a telescope. Buried at Birkley
Gerard Victor	Philip	Robinson	1915	1993	Douai	1934	1971	1991	Fellow of Royal College of Organists. St Mary's new school was built and opened during his tenure.
Daniel	James	Donovan	1917	2003	Douai	1937	1991	1992	
James	Leo	Arkwright	1924	2010	Douai	1949	1992	1996	Electrician in RN 1946-48
Francis	Francis	Hughes	1956		Douai	1982	1996	2003	Sick Leave 2002
Charles	Bernard	Swinhoe	1931	2020	Douai	1953	2002	2002	
Michael	Louis	O'Dwyer	1935	2020	Douai	1954	2003	2006	
Bernard	Godric	Timney	1945		Douai	1963	2006		Ormskirk 2002- present
Bernard	Benjamin	Standish	1958		Douai	1987	2006	2009	

Brendan	Boniface	Moran	1941		Douai	1961	2009		Ormskirk 2009 - present
	Richard	Yeo			Downside		2013	2018	Resident at Scarisbrick. President English Benedictine Congregation
Andrew	Hugh	Someville Knapman	1968		Douai	2002	2019		

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- ² Calculated from the number of Catholics in 1767 Recusant list (Worrall, E.S., Return of Papists for 1767) and population from 1798 census.
- ³ Ferrey, A & Brownbill, B, *History of the County of Lancaster, Vol. 3 (Lancaster, 1983), pp265-276*
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- ⁹ Baily, John Leslie Thomas Rickman, Architect and Quaker :the early years to 1818 University of Leeds 1977, PhD Thesis,
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- ¹¹ LRO, DDSc 78/4/23
- ¹² Ormskirk Advertiser, 21st November 1878
- ¹³ Ormskirk Advertiser, May 2nd 1889
- ¹⁴ Ibid
- ¹⁵ Ibid
- ¹⁶ St Elizabeth's Archive
- ¹⁷ Young, Austen & Young, Quotation Letter, 10th Jan 1924 (St Elizabeth's Archive)
- ¹⁸ Hardman Archive, Birmingham Central Library, Correspondence from Fr Rowley, 1889
- ¹⁹ National Archives prob 11/1511
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- 32 The Guardian 25th September, 1911; page 14
- 33 Ormskirk Advertiser 28th September 1911
- 34 Ormskirk Advertiser 25th August 1898
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