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The St Mary's Heritage Project

OPENING OF ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GLASGOW,
Thursday, 9 November, 1871.

- Sermon preached by the Rt Rev. Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle (extract)
- A description of St Mary's Church. (Glasgow Herald)
- The Earl of Glasgow's toast at the luncheon following the opening of St Mary's, and Mr Oldham's reply.
(Glasgow Herald)

SOURCES:

Sermon - S. Mary's Glasgow Magazine, December 1884

Description and toast - Glasgow Herald, Friday 10th November, 1871.

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OPENING OF ST MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GLASGOW, 1871.

- Sermon preached at the opening of S. Mary's Church, on 9th November, 1871, by the Rt Rev. Harvey Goodwin, Bishop of Carlisle. (Extracts)

Acts xix., 7. And all the men were about twelve.

What then shall we regard as the work and mission of this branch of Christ's holy Catholic Church at the present time? I know not what future God may have in store for it, any more than I know what may be in store for the Church of England; and, therefore, I cannot say that it may not increase and grow until it again entirely overshadows the land. But that will not be in our time; it is difficult to imagine that it ever can be at all; but anyhow, our business is chiefly with the present, and with the work and mission of the Episcopal Church now. And when we ask what these are, I should be sorry to limit the answer by saying that they consist in supplying the opportunities of Divine worship upon the model of the Church of England for those who do not like the Presbyterian form. Merely to do this would not be a very high office. It would tend to the comfort and edification of a certain small number of people, but it would not be a general benefit and blessing; it would be merely a machinery for supplying a certain form of religion to those who liked it and chose to pay for it; this, at least, would be the character in which it would be generally regarded. I should like to see a higher office assigned to the Episcopal Church of Scotland, and I think we may very well regard her as God's witness in this land for truths which are neglected, or forgotten, or denied. The number of the men may be but as twelve, yet they can do this. And I may observe, that in assigning such an office to the Episcopal Church, I am counselling no uncharitable aggression, and no bitter controversy. What she had to do, so far as those round about her are concerned in her doings, is *to hold fast that which she has*. If her position be a true and tenable one, she possesses certain traditions and privileges which Presbyterians have eschewed, and her business is so to keep her traditions and improve her privileges as to make manifest their value, and lead others to desire to possess them.

[The Bishop then dwelt upon such points as the use of the Book of Common Prayer; the recitation of the Psalms of David as part of the daily office of the Church; the Communion Office; the reverence due to holy places; Church music, &c., and concluded with this excellent and weighty advice: -]

Your office and your privilege, so far as this country at large is concerned, are to bear witness to truths which Christ has given into your keeping. A very small band of men can do this. Did not twelve men once, by the simple force of testimony to a truth which they knew, turn the world upside down, and build the Church of Christ upon its ruins? And so it may be that a very useful and honourable post has been assigned to the Episcopal Church of Scotland; but it is a difficult post, and if she is to fill it as Christ would have her to fill it, several things are necessary. There must be *unity*, there must

be *moderation*, there must be *zeal*. Twelve men may have great force as witnesses, but they must be thoroughly agreed amongst themselves, twelve men may teach thousands, but great moderation and discretion will be needed to make the lessons acceptable; and twelve men may produce, as we know, a great moral and religious revolution, and may claim and gain nations for Christ, but it can only be through such zeal as that which animated the hearts of apostles, and martyrs, and confessors in primitive times. *Unity, moderation, zeal* - these things, at least, are necessary.

- A description of the Church, 1871.

(Glasgow Herald, Friday 10th November, 1871.)

The church thus happily opened is situated at Holyrood Crescent, in the Great Western Road, and promises when completed to be one of the finest ecclesiastical edifices in the city. It is estimated to cost about £20,000, and already about £10,000 have been provided towards that amount. So far as the work has yet gone, the outlay has been about £15,000. The church was designed by Mr Gilbert Scott, of London, and the architecture is Gothic, of the period of the fourteenth century.

The church consists of a nave, 100 feet by 30, north and south aisles and transepts, chancel and chancel aisles. Externally, the walls are of rubble, faced with Lanark stone in courses. At the south-east corner a massive tower has been carried up to a height of 40 feet, and this it is proposed eventually to crown with a spire 200 feet high, in which will be placed a peal of bells; but this portion of the work has been deferred in the meantime.

The principal entrance is from the west, through a very handsome doorway. Internally, the building is a fine specimen of church architecture. The nave is separated from the aisles by arcadings, consisting of six arches with enriched moulded cases, shafts, and capitals; while bold and lofty arches separate the chancel and the transepts from the nave. The pillars are of a beautiful white stone [from Bath] which possesses the very desirable quality of hardening with exposure to the atmosphere, and retaining at the same time its purity of colour. The walls are in rough plaster, and the whole is covered by a high-pitched timber roof, open, save at the intersection of the nave, chancel and transept, where there is wood-roofing.

The side-walls are pierced by a number of two-light windows, and in the chancel aisle there is a handsome tri-light window. A fine stained-glass window, by Messrs Clayton & Bell, of London, has been inserted in the central compartment; and there are other two stained-glass windows in the church - one in the chancel aisle, the other in the south aisle of the nave. The window first mentioned has been procured by subscription; but the other two are gifts to the church - the one by Mr Angus Turner, and the other by Mrs Spens, and it is anticipated that other members of the communion will emulate their example.

The internal fittings are strictly in harmony with the architecture of the church. A very chaste and beautiful reredos has been supplied by Messrs Farmer & Brindlay, of London. It is of Caen Stone, with marble shafts, the cross being white marble inlaid with mosaic, on a background of alabaster. The nave and aisles are seated with open pews in polished pine, the chancel stalls being in oak, and two fine oak screens separate the chancel and the north chancel aisle. The organ, which has been supplied by Messrs Hill, of London, occupies the south chancel aisle, and presents two fronts - one to the chancel, the other to the aisle. It contains three complete manuals and a pedal organ. The great organ contains all ten stops; the swell organ, eleven stops; the choir organ, six; and the pedal organ, four stops.

At night the church is lighted by means of a string of lights carried along immediately under the clerestory windows, while corona lights depend (sic) from the nave and transepts, and the chancel is lighted by two magnificent standard lights.

The contractor for the work was Mr John Thomson of Peterborough; Mr Conradi was clerk of works; and the contractor was represented by Messrs Bradford, Frisby, and Pepper. The seats for the nave were fitted up by Messrs James Lamb & Sons, Glasgow and Greenock; the gas-fittings by Messrs Potter & Son; and the heating and ventilating apparatus by Messrs Coombe & Son, Glasgow.

- The Earl of Glasgow's toast at the luncheon following the opening of St Mary's, and Mr Oldham's reply.

(Glasgow Herald, Friday November 10, 1871).

The extensive article in the Herald includes a description of the opening service on the previous forenoon, a summary of the sermon by the Bishop of Carlisle, and an account the luncheon at the Queen's Rooms which followed.

. . . The Earl of Glasgow proposed 'The health of the incumbent of the new church, Mr Oldham.' In doing so his Lordship alluded to the past history of the Episcopal Church and contrasted the time when its ministers conducted the service in an obscure alley, clothed in black serge, the garment of sorrow, to the present time, when the black serge had given place to the white surplice, the garment of gladness. His Lordship concluded by expressing the hope that the new church just opened would do a great work in this city, and gather around it, not only individual members of the congregation, but the sympathies of the West of Scotland. (Applause.)

Mr Oldham, in reply, said the externals of public worship were of value just so far as they promoted a living faith in Christ, and so far as they assisted us to realise how the gospel of Christ met the moral and spiritual wants of mankind. (Applause.) He trusted that their new church would do that for them by deepening their devotion and by elevating their thoughts. A congregation in a country place might not be called on to concern itself with much on the outside of its own borders; but in a great city like Glasgow, it became the Churches to do something to comfort the many aching hearts and wearied spirits around them. He expressed himself ready to be a fellow-labourer with those of other denominations in this work; for, at the present time, in the face of so much open infidelity and so much latent scepticism, it was not for Christians to wrangle with each other - rather it was for all to draw as much as possible together. He hoped that the congregation of St Mary's would not be wanting in this respect. (Applause)., &c.