

the parish church
of
St OSWALD



A short guide: the Church,
its history, its patron Saint
and the manor of NORBURY.

F O R W O R D

The more one thinks about it the more one is astonished that during the international depression years of the early thirties the people of Norbury and Thornton Heath could build a lovely church. A visiting preacher recently described the church as "most restful and dignified"; indeed it is a church which continues to grow on one.

This booklet is the work of a group of young people and we thank them for the great amount of research which has gone into it. It was inspired by the forthcoming Fortieth Anniversary of the Consecration of the church on May 16th.

We take this opportunity of paying tribute to all who helped in any way to build St. Oswald's Church; there are a number of them who are still very active members of the congregation. We are grateful for their vision, determination and courage - an example for all of us to follow.

This anniversary is a time of thanksgiving to Almighty God for St. Oswald's Church, and it is a time of rededication. We pray for His grace in the coming years that this church and parish may continue in joyful worship and service for His glory and the extension of His Kingdom.

Our Patron Saint was a royal layman and we thank God for St. Oswald. The dedication serves to remind us that we are all of "a royal priesthood" and as we read this commemorative booklet, it reminds us of the privileged place we hold in this community.

EDWARD RUSTED.

Vicar.

THE HISTORY OF SAINT OSWALDS

The beginnings of our church date back to the early twenties. The community was growing, and the people felt that the distance to the parish church of St. Paul's was too great. So, the Reverend Fletcher (vicar of St. Paul's) invited The Rev. P. E. Wilson to come and form a new parish. (A suggestion that it should be a daughter church of St. Paul's fell through, due mainly to financial troubles at St. Paul's). Mr. Wilson had the title of 'Minister of the conventional district'.

The name of our church came from the small Mission church given to us by St. Paul's as a temporary place of worship. This building was to have been moved to our present site, however, the few people that worshipped there and the residents of Hythe Road, where it was situated, raised a petition against its removal. Therefore the gift was not accepted. The name, however, was retained for the new parish.

Many ways of raising money were put into operation in these early days: appeals were sent to every house in the parish, and people promised to give so much weekly, by becoming 'Red booklet Holders'. A money box, in the shape of the church was put at the back of the temporary church (now Church Hall), which was the first building erected at a cost of £4,000+. When money was inserted, a bell rang. Many children happily dropped in pennies to hear the bell ring! A mile of pennies was formed from Virginia Road, to the church, and people were encouraged to purchase bricks to go onto the new church. Grants, from the Archbishop's new churches fund amounted to £7,000, and parishoners loaned money at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ interest rate. The temporary church was dedicated on November 3rd, 1928 by the Bishop of Dover, work having begun on June 6th.

The Permanent Church. A group of parishoners were taken by coach to Bromley, to see a church, the design of which could be well suited to St. Oswald's. Carol and Passmore, architects, then drew up designs for our church. A description follows later in the booklet.

May 1st. saw the cutting of the first sod by alderman .
W. Peet J.P. (Mayor of Croydon) and the foundation stone
was laid by the Bishop of Croydon, Dr. Woods, on Saturday
July 22nd., 1933.

The cost of the church was as follows :

church building	£10,287.
organ	£ 1,545.
bells (6)	£ 180.

On May 16th, 1934, the new church was dedicated by the
Right Honorable Cosmo Gordon Lang, Archbishop of
Canterbury.

Notable events in St. Oswald's history.

1938: 1 year since Percy Wilson left the parish. Altar
gates dedicated to him.

1949: Ideas discussed for enlarging the sanctuary, by
moving the altar back, and adding a few more feet to the
building. This fell through, due to lack of funds.
However, a new altar design was adopted. This was as
follows:

Carved oak surround	£100
Dorsal in Blue Gloucester damask	£ 35
Gilded cross and two candlesticks (Gold leaf, burnished on oak)	£ 25
Strip lights.	£ 25
4 Seasonal altar frontals	£140
Architect's fees.	£ 25

The appeal for this was launched in 1950, and the new
fittings were dedicated on May 27th, 1950.

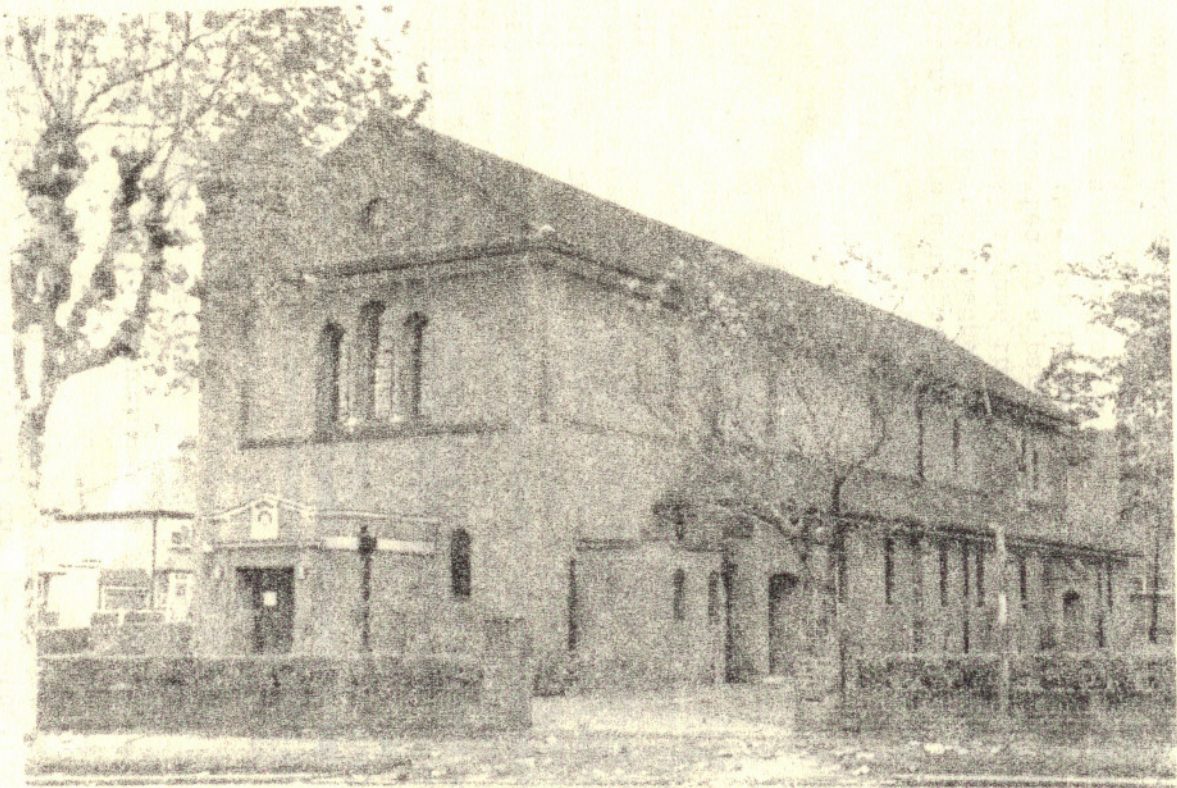
1951: Mr. Earnest Pudney resigned as organist after 21 years.

1956: The wall around the church was constructed at a cost
of £200 (donated by a parishioner). Previously, there was
a fence and this was in need of repair.

1959: saw the dedication of the 'Enterprise' (scout
headquarters). In the Jubilee festival, £400 was raised
towards the construction of a 'daughter' church,
St. Oswald's Lesthoto, South Africa.

1968: The church was flooded, causing considerable damage
to the church floor, and the boiler room.

A list of the clergy follows on Page 7.



PRIESTS WHO HAVE SERVED
AT ST. OSWALD'S.

INCUMBENTS :

<u>WILSON</u> , Percy Edward:	1928-1937.
<u>GREENAWAY</u> , Frederick William:	1938-1945.
<u>FREEMAN</u> , John:	1945-1951.
<u>WILLIS</u> , Harold:	1951-1960.
<u>DOE</u> , William Frank:	1960-1968.
<u>RUSTED</u> , Edward Charles William:	1968-

CURATES :

<u>BUDD</u> , Kenneth George	1931-1936.
<u>KIRK</u> , George:	1938-1941.
<u>HARRISON</u> , Alan William:	1941-1943.
<u>MONCUR</u> , Henry Alexander:	1943-1946.
<u>MALLET</u> , Peter:	1951-1954.
<u>EVANS</u> , Stanley Munro:	1954-1957.
<u>TOWSE</u> , Anthony Norman:	1957-1960.
<u>TOWNSEND</u> , Peter:	1964-1967.
<u>DUNCANSON</u> , Derek James:	1970-1972.

VERGERS :

Mr. Pike'	1929-1938.
J. Leacy.	1938-1943:
A. Fytche.	1943-1946.
L. Ashman.	1946-1951.
W. Davies.	1951-1962.
N. Pratt.	1962-1964.
W. Groves.	1965-

A DESCRIPTION OF THE CHURCH AS IT APPEARED IN
THE SERVICE OF CONSECRATION, MAY 16TH., 1934.

This new church, which will accomodate 429 persons, is designed in the Byzantine manner, this type of building having been adopted partly from motives of economy, both as regards first cost and maintenance, and partly for the reason that it was considered more suitable to the locality than a Gothic building.

The walls are faced externally with multi-coloured bricks, stone being sparingly used for copings, cornices, gable crosses, etc. The arches to windows and doors are formed with tiles. The roofs are covered with pantiles and the buttress weatherings with plain tiles. All external doors and frames are of oak.

Internally the walls and arches are finished with white plaster with a rough surface and the columns and caps are of oak and timber construction of Columbian pine, stained grey.

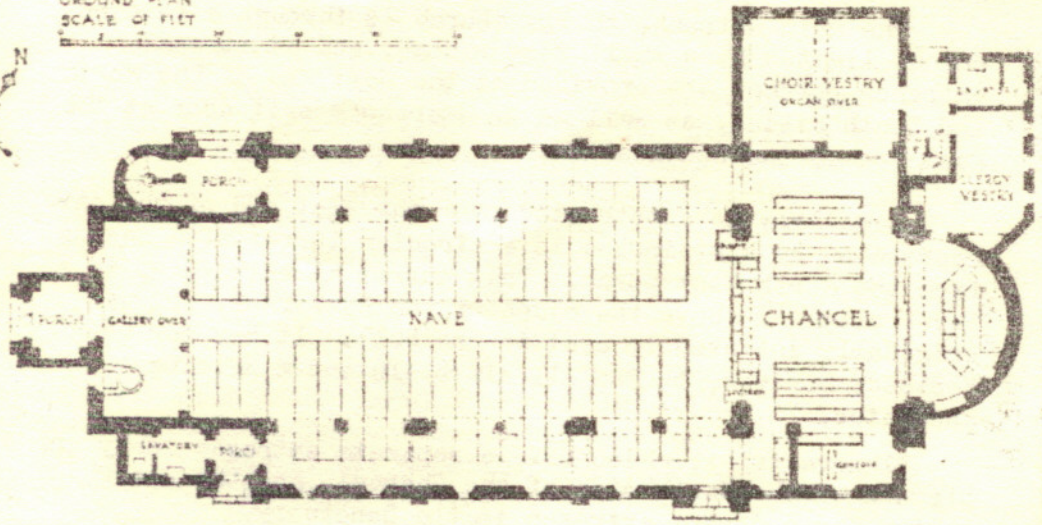
The chancel has a segmental plaster ceiling and the apse at the East end is covered with a semi-dome of plaster of Hyrib.

The gangways in the nave and aisles are paved with oak blocks, and the spaces with Columbian pine blocks. The paving and steps in the Chancel and Sanctuary are of re-constructed Hopton Wood stone with wide black corners. The porches and lavatories are paved with 9" x 9" heather-brown tiles.

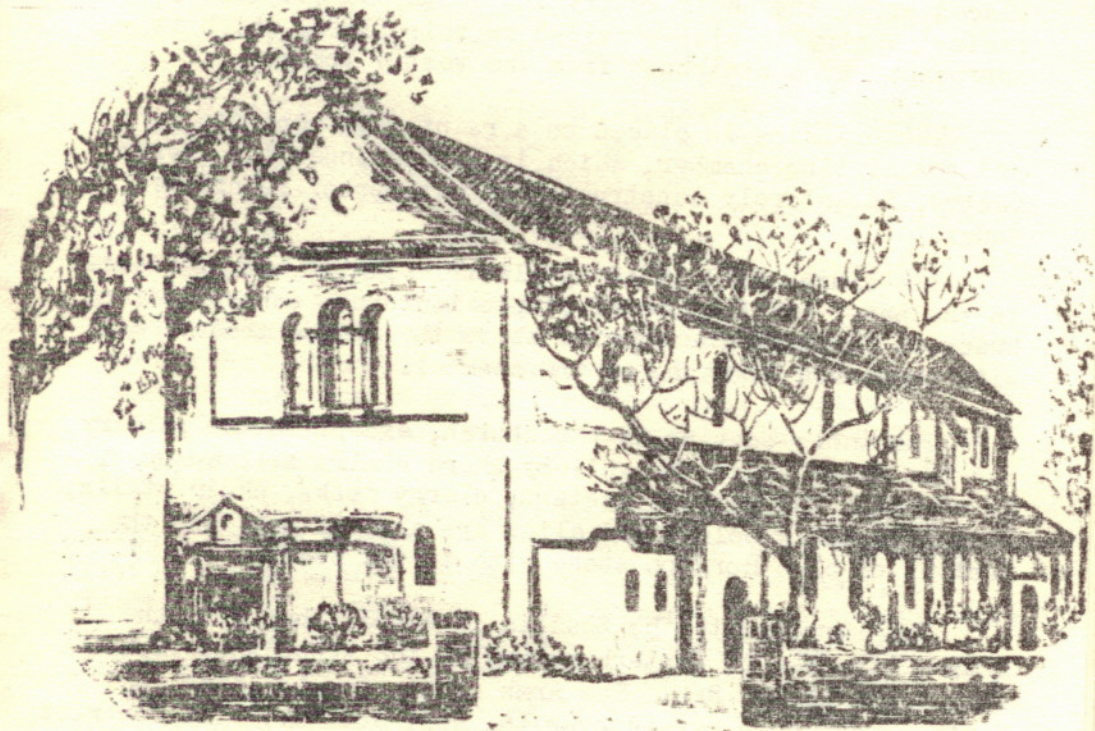
The plan of the church (see opposite) consists of a nave and aisles of three main bays, measuring 58' 3" x 41' overall, each bay being sub-divided into two subsidiary bays, and each chancel with apsidal termination to the sanctuary, measuring 34 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' x 25' overall. The nave has a western extension, measuring 25' x 21'. The North aisle is continued Eastwards to form a chancel aisle, and at the East end of the South aisle, there is a small altar recess for use at occasional celebrations, separated from the chancel by an arch.

There is also a recess for the organ console on the south side of the chancel.

GROUND PLAN
SCALE OF FEET



PLAN OF ST. OSWALD'S CHURCH.



The main entrance to the church is through a western porch, lighted by a small saucer dome, and additional entrance porches are provided at the West end of the North and South aisles, as well as an emergency exit door at the East end of the South aisle.

A gallery is constructed over the West end of the nave, approached by a staircase in a circular turret with access from the North West porch. This turret is carried up to a level slightly above the ridge of the Nave roof, and was originally intended to contain one bell. It has now been decided, however, to install six bells and a chiming apparatus.

The vestries, which have a separate entrance lobby are planned on the North side of the Chancel, and the clergy vestry has a direct entrance to the Sanctuary.

The organ and chamber for the blowing apparatus are placed above the choir vestry and North Chancel aisle. A ladies' vestry is also provided on this floor, which is approached by a staircase from the vestry lobby.

The building is placed on a reinforced concrete raft and the heating chamber, which is placed under the clergy vestry, is entirely constructed of waterproof reinforced concrete.

The church is lighted by electric light, with pendants in the nave, in the form of simple lanterns, suspended from brackets fixed on the cornice above the arcade arches, and with concealed lighting in the chancel.

The whole seating in the church, except in the gallery and the space under the gallery where chairs will be used, is of oak. The pulpit, lectern, clergy desks, choir stalls, communicants' kneelers and altar are also of oak, and the font is of blue Hornton stone with an oak cover.

The surround to the Sedilia is embellished with the arms of the See of Canterbury and of the archbishop impaled with those of the See. The arms of St. Oswald, King and Martyr, have been carved over the West doorway. The Contract amount for the building and all fittings (except organ and bells) heating, lighting, drive, paths, oak fencing and gates is £10,082. 7s. 6d.

A SHORT HISTORY OF NORBURY

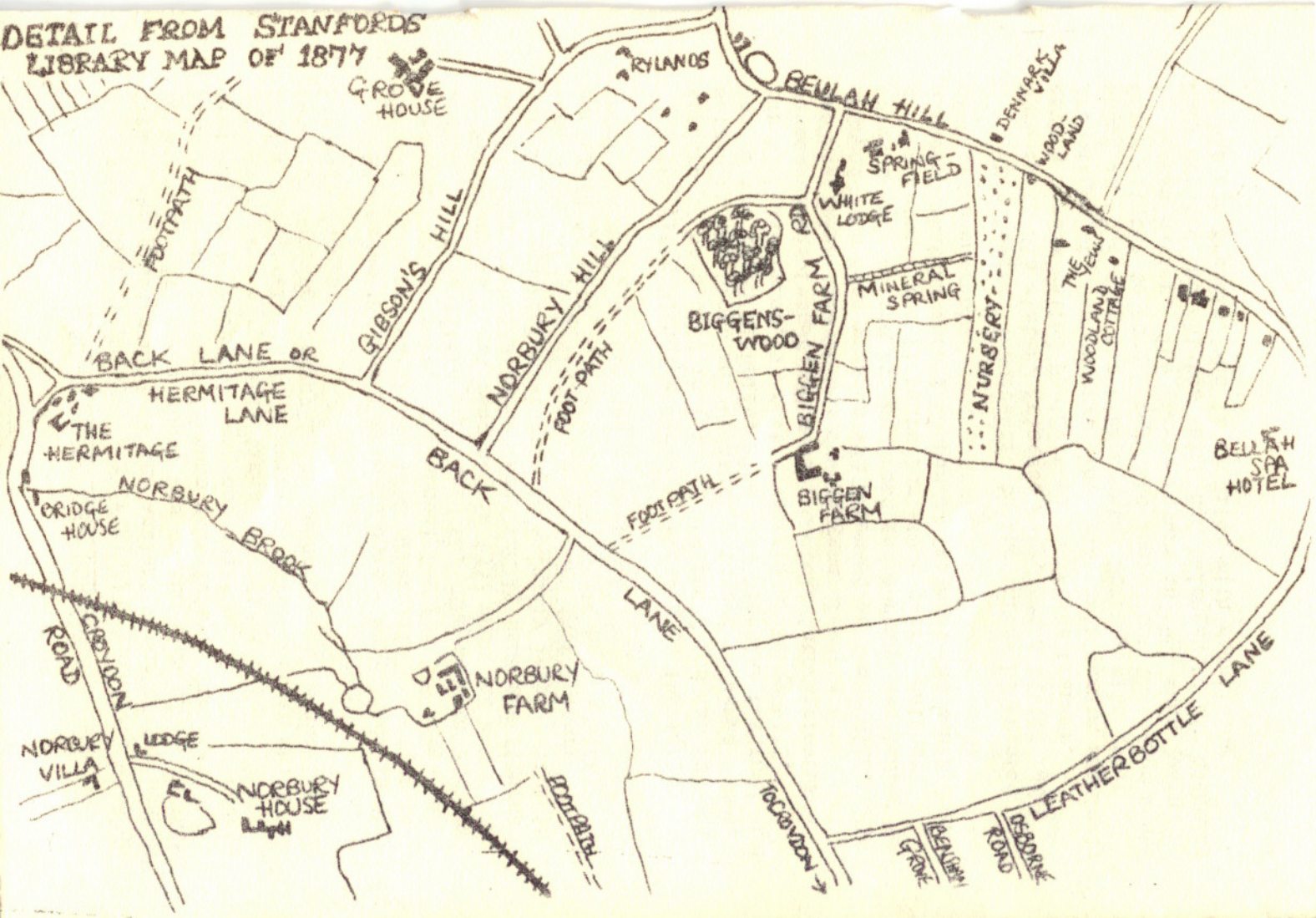
The Manor or Norbury was originally identical with or formed the greater part of the ancient manor of Benchesham or Bencham. Its manor house was on the side close to where Kensington and Norbury Avenues meet today. The more pretentious Norbury Hall was not built until 1802. Courts were held from very early times, the first record, dated Easter 1229, relates to a marriage settlement in which one Peter de Bendings conveyed the manor to John de Kemsing and his wife Idonea.

Rights to the manor were to change many hands in the future. Land prices around 1296 offer little comfort to to-day's house-buyers. The annual fee for 338 acres of arable land was little more than £6. The name of Norbury or Northbury is first recorded in 1337 when the manor was acquitted by Nicholas Carew whose family name now figures largely in manorial history. In a family legal action in 1464 - one of many disputes - we learn that Norbury contained "A hall, a bakehouse, a cattleshed, a stable under one roof, a barn and a sheepfold".

The fifth Nicholas Carew to succeed to the title appears to have died in infancy and the Carew manors were seized by the Crown and eventually passed to James Carew, son of the third Nicholas. The name Nicholas returned when Sir Nicholas Carew, a great favourite of Henry VIII, succeeded his father. However, he fell into disfavour - one historian said it was over a game of bowls - was charged with high treason and beheaded on Tower Hill. His estates were seized by the Crown and Norbury was leased to a John Hatcher for 21 years for £10 a year. Hatcher directed that he should be buried "without the south door of Croydon church".

When Edward VI succeeded to the throne he granted Norbury to his sister, Princess Mary, and a little later gave a meadow called Purley Mead to Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Princess's tenure seemingly ended in 1552 when the king granted Norbury with other Carew estates to Lord Darcy, who leased out the manor house to George Butler. The Carews return in 1554 when Queen Mary granted the estates which had belonged to Sir Nicholas to his son Francis, who is credited with rebuilding

DETAIL FROM STANFORDS
LIBRARY MAP OF 1877



Beddington House, where he entertained Queen Elizabeth on at least two occasions. When he died his nephew Nicholas Throckmorton succeeded to the estates and assumed the name Carew. Sir Nicholas was succeeded by his son Sir Francis, who was a Royalist in the civil war - and, financially embarrassed, mortgaged the manor for £500.

The estates passed through many hands until the name Carew returned when Sir Benjamin Hallowell, one of Nelson's distinguished admirals, added the name to his own. Norbury remained in his family until 1859 when Norbury was bought by William Goldsmith who lived in Norbury Hall.

The map on page twelve is an extract from Stanford's Library Map published in 1877 and on it can be seen many interesting features of Norbury at that time.

Green Lane was called Back Lane, the section between the junction with the main Croydon Road and Gibsons Hill also being known as Hermitage Lane. Northwood Road was called Leatherbottle Lane because of "The Leather Bottle" a small Beer House. At the top of Leatherbottle Lane was the Beulah Spa, described by Professor Michael Faraday as being "one of the purest and strongest of the saline spas in the country, distinguished for the quantity of magnesia". The ornamental pond at the top of Norbury Hill was once a watering place for horses and cattle. It was called locally the "Big Pond", and when frozen over was used for skating

Close to the junction of Biggen Farm Road, now Biggin Hill, and Beulah Hill stood a house called "Springfield", demolished in 1906. Charles Dickens visited it many times and it was there that he set part of 'David Copperfield'.

St. Oswald's Road was little more than a footpath leading from Back Lane to Biggen Farm, which was situated on the junction of what are now know as St. Oswald's Road and Brickfield Road.

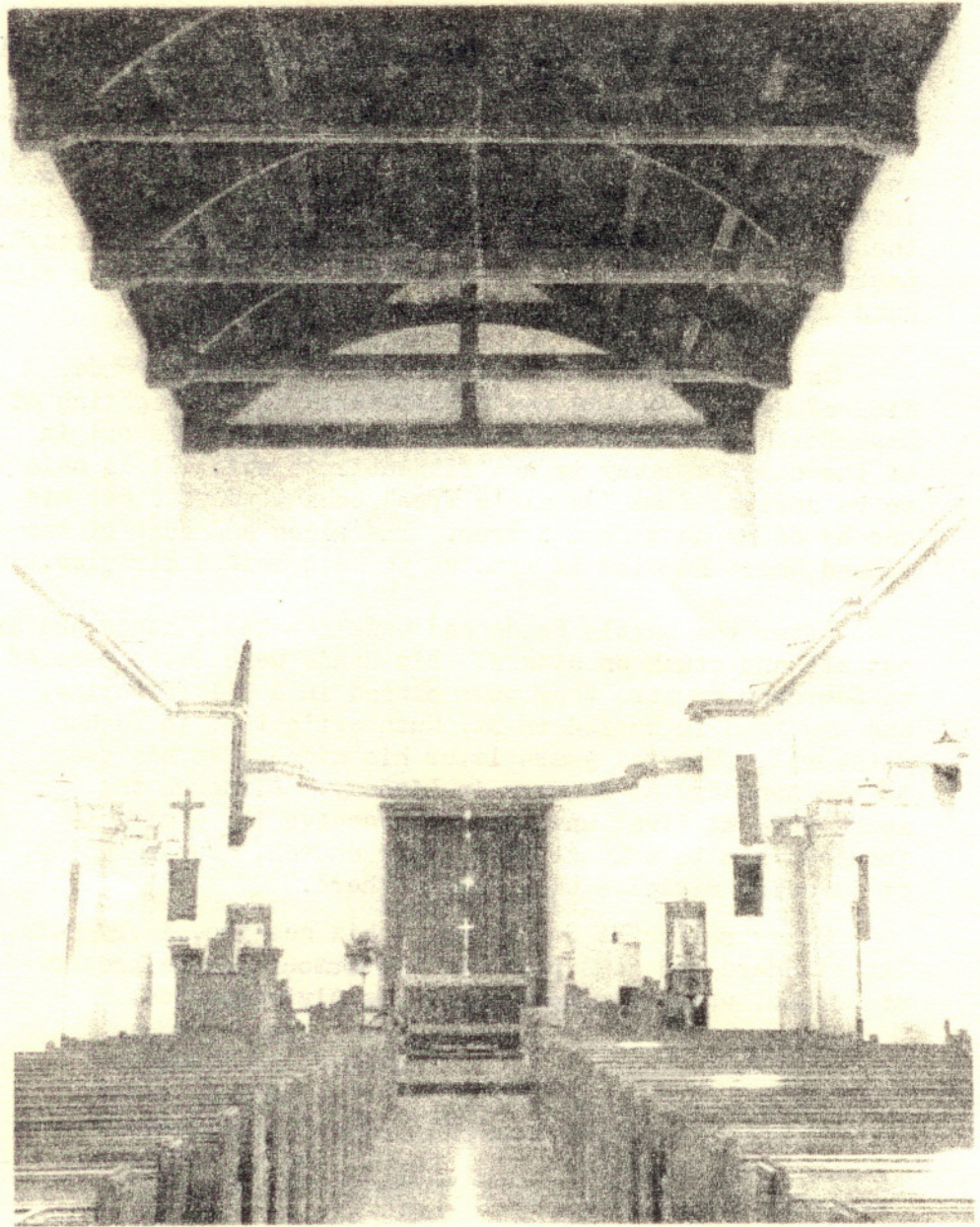
St. Oswald's church was constructed on a concrete raft over what, one parishoner said, was locally known as the "stink pond"!

OSWALD, KING AND SAINT.

Oswald was born about 605, the second son of Ethelfrid, King of the Northumbrians and Acca. In 617 his father was defeated and killed by Raedwald, and Oswald and his brothers were driven out of Northumbria. They took shelter with the Scots at a monastery established by St. Columba on Iona. Oswald lived there for 16 years and was converted to Christianity.

Eamfrid, Oswald's elder brother, was accepted as king by the people of Bernicia in 633, but was killed the following year on his way to meet King Caedwalla to sue for peace. Oswald seized the opportunity to become king and advanced from the north with a small army. He camped near the Roman wall at a place called Hefenfelth or Heavenly Field, some seven miles north of Hexham in Northumberland. There he had a vision of St. Columba, and as he promised, Oswald defeated Caedwalla in the ensuing battle. By this victory Oswald became King of Northumbria. Before the battle, Oswald had erected a cross, which for many years after his death was venerated by the people of Hexham.

Oswald settled at Bamborough and invited the monks of Iona to send him a bishop. Oswald worked with the Bishop, Aidan, to spread the gospel and gave him the island of Lindisfarne for his see. Christianity spread rapidly, churches were built and lands given to monasteries, which were peopled by Scottish monks. Oswald completed the Minister of St. Peter at York, which was started by his uncle, Eadwine.



One Easter, when dining with Aidan, the servant whose duty it was to aid the poor, told the king, that the streets were crowded with poor crying out for alms. Oswald ordered that the food prepared for himself should be given to the crowd, and said the silver dish containing the food should be broken into small pieces and distributed among them. Aidan seized the king's right hand and said "May this hand never decay". Legend has it that many years after his death Oswald's right hand was still preserved.

On 5th. August, 642, during the war against Penda, King of Mercia, Oswald was killed after fierce fighting at Maserfelth, now called Oswestry, Shropshire. The origin of the name Oswestry is not without interest. It is said to be derived from "Oswald's Tree" because Oswald met his end by being hung from a tree. The place and dust of the ground where he died is reputed to have worked miracles.

After the battle Penda had Oswald's head, hands and arms cut off and stuck on stakes. His hands were later removed to Bamborough where they were placed in a silver shrine, and his head is buried in St. Cuthbert's tomb in Durham Cathedral. Several years later his niece gave his body to the monastery at Bardney-in-Lindsay. Although the monks were at first unwilling to receive it, a miracle induced them to take it into their church. Subsequently, it is said, miracles were worked there.

Other relics of St. Oswald - his sceptre, ivory horn, his standard and some parts of his armour - were preserved at Durham, where his memory was greatly venerated.

ENGLISH CHURCHES DEDICATED TO SAINT OSWALD.

(this list contains Anglican PARISH churches only)

- Acton (Worleston) Cheshire.
 Althorpe (Keadby) Lincs.
 Arncliffe, Yorks.
 Ashbourne, Derby.
 Askrigg, Yorks.
 Backford, Cheshire.
 Bedminster Down, Somerset.
 Bidston, Cheshire.
 New Bilton, Warwickshire.
 Blankney, Lincs.
 Bolton, Yorks.
 Bordesley, Warwickshire.
 Bradfords, (Little Horton) Yorks.
 Broadwaters, Worcs.
 Broughton-in-Airedale, Yorks.
 Burneside, Westmorland.
 Chester.
 Collingham, Yorks.
 Compton abdale, Glos.
 Crowle, Worcs.
 Dean, Cumberland.
 Dunham-on-Trent, Notts.
 Dunham-On-Trent (Ragnall) Notts.
 Durham.
 East Harlsey, Yorks.
 East Stoke, Notts.
 Farnham, Yorks.
 Ferryhill Co. Durham.
 Filey, Yorks.
 Flamborough, Yorks.
 Fulford, Yorks.
 Fulham, (Anselm Road) S.W. 6.
 Gloucester (Coney Hill).
 Grasmere Westmorland.
 Hartlepool, West Durham.

ENGLISH CHURCHES DEDICATED TO ST. OSWALD (Continued).

Hauxwell, Ycrks.	Strubby, Lincs.
Hebbern Durham,	Swinbrook (Widford) Oxon.
Hecklington (Howell) Lincs.	Thornton-in-Lonsdale, Yorks.
Highnam (Lassington) Glos.	Thorton-Steward, Yorks.
Hooe, Sussex.	Tile Hill, Worcs.
Hinstock, Salop.	Walcot, Lincs.
Horton-in-Ribbledale, Yorks.	Warton, Lancs.
Hotham, Yorks.	Warton, Warwickshire.
Kirk Sandall, Yorks.	Winksley, (Grantley) Yorks.
Kirkoswald, Cumberland.	Winwick, Lancs.
Knuzden, Lancs.	York (St. Oswald Fulford)
Leathley, Yorks.	Yorks.
Luddington, Glos.	
Lythe, Yorks.	
Malpas, Cheshire.	
Manchester (Colyhurst).	
Methley, Yorks.	
Middlesborough.	
Millhouses, Yorks.	
Netherton, Lancs.	
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, (Eccles District, Walker Gate).	
Norbury, S.W.16.	
Oswestry, Salop.	
Paddlesworth, Kent.	
Peover, Cheshire.	
Preesal, Lancs.	
Preston, Lancs.	
Rand, Lincs.	
Ravenstonedale, Westmorland.	
Rockhampton, Glos.	
Rounton West, Yorks.	
St. Oswald-in-Ulsmere, Worcs.	
Sheffield (Abbeylea) Yorks.	
Shiney Row, Durham.	
Shipton-Oliffe, Glos.	
Sowerby, Yorks.	
Stoke East, Notts.	

