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## Scotforth St. Paul's Church History



Although the village of Scotforth has existed since before the Norman Conquest, it did not have its own church until 1876. From 1845 Curates from St Mary's Lancaster held services in Scotforth School.

In 1870 an appeal was launched with a building committee chaired by Edmund Sharpe, a local architect. Sharpe's interest in Romanesque architecture explains why the church was built with round Romanesque arches when pointed Gothic arches were in fashion.



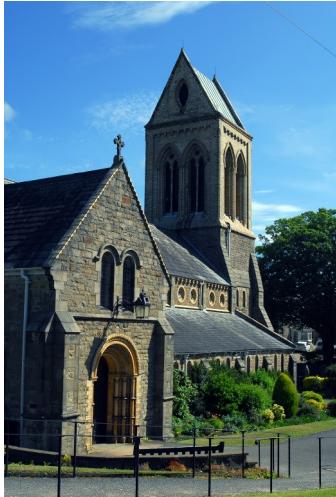
The committee was evangelical so the church was designed without a central aisle to prevent pompous processions. Moulded terracotta was used instead of carved stone to save money. According to Pevsner, the tower is the really impressive part with geometrical tracery and a saddleback roof, and over the chancel. The bell-storey of the tower is yellow brick, with the rest of the building having terracotta detailing inside and out. Our church is one of three so called 'pot' churches.

The foundation stone was laid in 1874 and the church was consecrated on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1876 by Bishop Fraser of Manchester.



Julia Ripley paid for the vicarage in 1877.

The church was extended in 1891, by the addition of two arches and transepts at the west end of the nave, to a design by the local firm of Paley and Austin.



In 1930-31 choir stalls were placed in the chancel, and the sanctuary was panelled in oak. In 1978 some pews were removed from the back of church to create a meeting space at the same time as a kitchen and lavatory were added at the north-west corner. In 2001 the choir stalls were removed, a ramp was installed by the pulpit, and the altar was moved to its present location. In 2007 the area around the organ was levelled to create a space for choristers and other musicians.



Unusually, St Paul's church does not contain a war memorial, but the Parish Hall includes a stone in the south wall "to the memory of the men of this parish who fell in the Great War 1914-1919".

The Parish Hall was opened in 1924 and has been well used by the church and local community ever since.

From 1940 until 1945 the Parish Hall provided teaching space for children from Seedley Road School in Salford who had been evacuated to Lancaster. The Parish Office has been housed by the main entrance to the Parish Hall since the interior was reorganised in 2012.



The Hala Centre was opened in 1984 since when it has enabled the parish to provide a strong and visible presence close to the new housing at the southern end of the parish.

**More detailed information about the church, parish and school can be found in "Providence their Guide" by Wilfrid Wolfendale [1975] and "St Paul's Scotforth" by Peter Stanley Gedge [2001].**



The stained glass in the three arched windows, made by Seward & Co, was given in 1897 by former pupils of the Ripley Hospital in memory of its founders, Thomas and Julia Ripley. The Ripley Hospital opened as an orphanage in 1864 and now forms the present Ripley St Thomas Church of England Academy. The windows portray the purposes of the Institution as defined in St Matthew's Gospel, chapter 25 "I was a stranger and you took me in" represented by the giving of bread, "I was naked and you clothed me" represented by the giving of clothes, "I was sick and you visited me" represented by the giving of grapes from a basket of fruit.



As you return to the font, on your right are two windows installed in 1981 to commemorate 50 years of Scouting and Guiding in Scotforth. The windows were paid for by former members and were made by the Lancaster firm of Abbot & Co.

Copies of our parish magazine, containing details of our services, can normally be found near the door.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to our Church and will spare a moment to pray for our work and witness in Scotforth.

The stained glass windows were added in 1883 in memory of William Roper, one of the original trustees. In the centre stands Jesus as described in the Book of Revelation, with St Peter on his right hand and St Paul on his left hand.



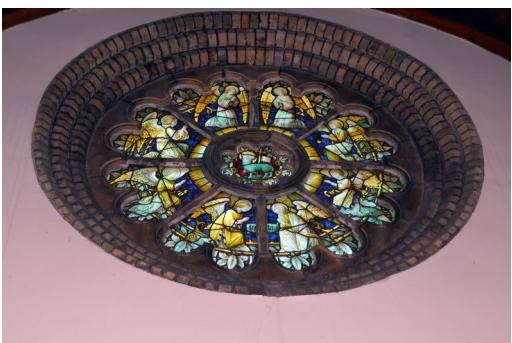
Returning to the nave by the organ console you will find "Olivia's Music Corner", a space created in 2007 for use by musicians. Originally music was provided by a harmonium. In 1885 an organ by Hewins of Stratford on Avon was purchased and remained in use until 1966 when it was replaced by an organ made by J Walker of Ruislip. The present electronic organ was installed in 1997. The Bluthner Grand piano dated 1892 was purchased in 2002.



A plaque commemorates Olivia Clarke, a budding musician, to whose memory the corner is dedicated.

The north wall contains four stained glass windows. The first two commemorate Joseph Statham and depict famous religious musicians, St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury 960-988, and King David. The second two commemorate Mary Statham and depict New Testament teachers with Gamaliel teaching the young Saul, who became St Paul, and Eunice teaching her son Timothy, who later accompanied St Paul on his travels.

A plaque nearby commemorates Richard Willis who was a Churchwarden from 1884 to 1909. Our policy now is for Churchwardens to serve a maximum of six years.



was given by Rev William Armitage in memory of his wife. The centre piece depicts the Paschal Lamb and is surrounded by a choir of angels singing "Alleluia".

### A Walking Tour—Starting by the font



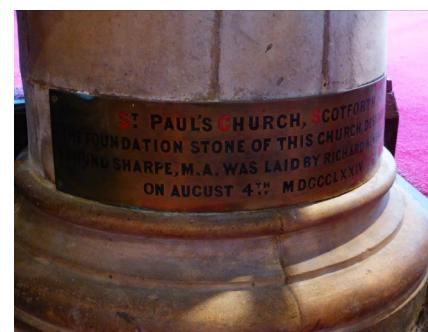
The Victorian font is located in the traditional position near the main entrance to the church, but today we normally use a portable font which can be placed in front of the congregation.

At this point you are at the west end of the nave. The term "nave" comes from the Latin word "navis", a ship, partly because the roof resembled the interior of the hull of a wooden boat, and partly because the church traditionally has been seen as a ship which supports people as they travel the sea of life.



Start your walk round the church down the south (1st) aisle.

On your right, the board listing the Vicars of the parish was installed as part of the centenary celebrations in 1976. It is interesting to see that there were only five incumbents in the first century.



The pillar by the pulpit stands on the foundation stone laid in 1874 and marked with a brass plaque.

To the south of the pulpit is a stand holding various flags belonging to groups associated with the church. The 16<sup>th</sup> Lancaster (St Paul's) Scout Group was formed in 1931 and currently has a Beaver Colony, two Cub Packs and a Scout Troop. A Guide unit affiliated to the church soon followed, and currently we have Rainbows, Brownies and Guides. The standard of the North and East Lancashire Women's Section of the Royal British Legion was laid up here in 2000.



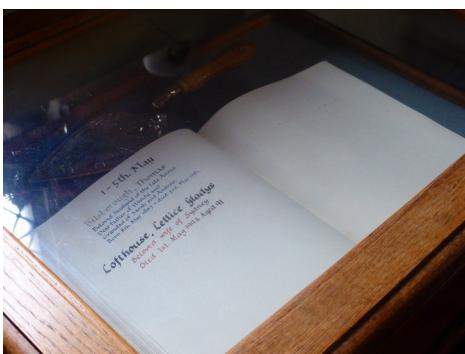
At the east end of the aisle is an area set aside for private prayer. The space was occupied by organ pipes until 1997 when the installation of an electronic organ made the pipes obsolete and allowed us to create this space.

In the corner is the original lectern in the traditional eagle design, replaced in 2005 by a lighter wooden lectern which can be moved easily.



The sugar model of the church originally was part of the cake made for the 125<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations.

The Book of Remembrance, and the oak case in which it is contained, were given



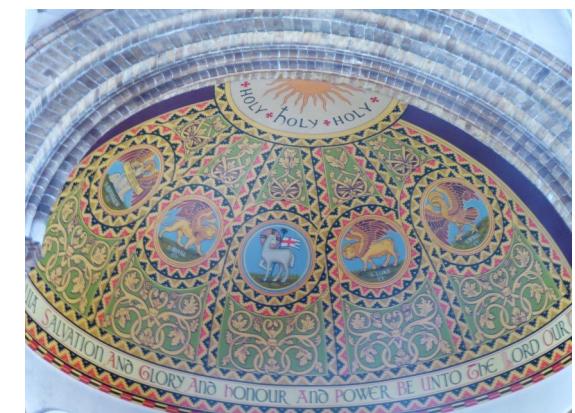
by the widows of Rev Donald Smart, the fourth Vicar and Mr W H Clark, his Churchwarden, to record the names of those whose ashes are interred in the consecrated ground on the north side of the church.

In 2010 the inscribed trowel used to lay the foundation stone was returned to the parish and is also contained in the oak case.

Moving into the chancel, the walls bear plaques commemorating John Brockbank who helped to raise funds for the building, Edmund and Elisabeth Sharpe, the church's architect and his wife, Rev William Armitage, first Vicar and Frederick Griffiths, second Vicar. The small green plaque by the vestry door was given to the parish in 1976 to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Diocese of Blackburn.



The apse ceiling shows the symbols of the four Gospel writers or "Evangelists" as described in Revelation 4 verses 7-8: the human face for St Matthew, the lion for St Mark, the ox for St Luke, and the eagle for St John arranged either side of the Lamb of God, otherwise referred to as the Paschal Lamb or Agnus Dei, a representation of Jesus bearing the flag of St George. The text is from Revelation 19. The ceiling was repainted to the original design in 1989.



The communion rail kneelers were embroidered in 1982 by five parishioners to designs by Guy Barton. The kneelers show the emblems of the Dioceses of York, Chester, Manchester and Blackburn which have been responsible for the Scotforth area since the Reformation. The central kneeler bears a Chi Rho which is the earliest monogram of Christ used in both the Eastern and Western churches. X P are the first two letters of "Christ" in the Greek alphabet.

Around the sanctuary, notice the crests on the panelling. Some of the crests show the implements of the Passion story such as the crown of thorns. Other crests show symbols used in the early church such as the entwined Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of the Greek alphabet used as a symbol for God in Revelation 1 verse 8. The remaining two crests are crossed swords representing St Paul, as a Roman Citizen he was martyred by beheading rather than crucifixion and the crossed keys with rose emblem of the Diocese of Blackburn.